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in Greece-US
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Regional Rivalries in
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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan Line Compromise on UCAV/UAV

As post-Soviet states, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are at odds over various issues such as borders and water. At various times, armed conflicts occur between the parties and regional stability is disrupted. This situation causes insecurity between the states and leads to a security dilemma in the region.

One of the policies pursued by states in this process has been to purchase armed/unarmed unmanned aerial vehicles (UCAV/UAVs), one of the most talked about technologies on the world agenda and in industrial defense, and to produce them with national capabilities. Weapons that changed the course of conflicts



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and wars in the field provided countries with a significant psychological advantage. In addition, the fact that UCAV/UAVs inflict heavy casualties despite their low cost was an important advantage on the world agenda.

At this point, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have also turned to purchasing UCAVs. This has led to discussions of deepening tensions and insecurity in the region. However, after the last conflict in September 2022, changes and transformation in both regional dynamics and global dynamics prevented the parties from resorting to the use of military force.

After the September 2022 conflict, Tajikistan turned to peaceful means more intensively as a result of Kyrgyzstan's foreign policy and Russia's statements on the process. In this context, contacts and meetings have started to be held continuously at various levels between various institutions, including both capitals and officials in the field, in order to determine the borders. As a result, thanks to the strong will of the parties to solve the problems, the work to determine the borders continues rapidly.

The first reason for the parties to prioritize peaceful means over the use of military force is the realization that violence will not solve the problems. Secondly, conflicts in the region destabilize both states and Central Asia. Central Asia has adopted the principle of peaceful settlement of bilateral conflicts for the sake of secure and stable development. In this context, regional actors put pressure on both Bishkek and Dushanbe to make peace. Moreover, conflicts and the use of military force impose a significant cost on the economies of both states. The damage caused by the security dilemma and the losses incurred in conflicts reduce the attractiveness of a possible victory.

On the other hand, conflicts will make it easier for terrorist, radical and separatist threat sources to establish a presence in the region. As is known, Afghanistan is one of the most important threat bases in the region. A conflict in the region has the potential to increase the influence of various terrorist organizations. For example, according to a statement by the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the so-called Khorasan Emirate (ISKP) of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) is based in Afghanistan near the border with Tajikistan.[1] A potential violent and sustained conflict would make it easier for the ISKP to infiltrate and entrench itself in the region, posing a greater threat to the Dushanbe administration.

Finally, on May 2, 2023, Human Rights Watch published a report titled "When We Moved, They Shot" on how the clashes between Kyrgyz and Tajik security forces between September 14-17, 2022 harmed civilians. In the report, the organization argues that both sides committed war crimes during the conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.[2] The organization pointed out that security forces from both sides attacked civilians during the clashes and that war crimes were committed at this point. The report also stated that the people of the region paid the heaviest price during the clashes.[3]

It can be said that the Human Rights Watch report further increased the pressure on Bishkek and Dushanbe. On top of that, the parties had taken various steps to reduce violence in a possible conflict. Due to previous conflicts, the parties had established a direct line of communication with the influence of other countries and regional actors. Secondly, and especially in the period after the report, the Bishkek and Dushanbe administrations took decisions on the use of UCAVs. In this context, the Kyrgyz administration announced on May 24, 2023 that the parties had agreed not to use drones on the common borders. This agreement is a rare development in terms of conventional weapons.[4] However, this can be considered as a preliminary step to new agreements between the parties.

The agreement is an important development in regional and bilateral relations. It is normal for it to be accepted today, when tensions are low. However, there is a possibility that in the event of a conflict, and especially on the side that suffers the greatest casualties, UCAVs could be used. Therefore, the use of UCAVs in a new conflict would undermine the trust and cooperation steps recently built between the parties. While the agreement signed in this context is important for regional stability, preventing a new conflict is of utmost importance for sustainable cooperation. In the end, it can be said that UCAVs have led to regional rapprochement in a "balance of terror"-like manner.

[1] "6500 ISIS-K Terrorists Operating in Afghanistan: CSTO Chief", BNN, <https://bnn.network/conflict-defence/6500-isis-k-terrorists-operating-in-afghanistan-csto-chief/>, (Date of Accession: 26.05.2023).

[2] "When We Moved, They Shot: Laws of War Violations in the September 2022 Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan Border Conflict", Human Rights Watch, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2023/05/kyrgyzstan_tajikistan0523en.pdf, (Date of Accession: 26.05.2023).

[3] "Kyrgyzstan/Tajikistan: Apparent War Crimes in Border Conflict: Justice Needed for Lethal Attacks on Civilians", Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/02/kyrgyzstan/tajikistan-apparent-war-crimes-border-conflict>, (Date of Accession: 26.05.2023).

[4] "Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan Agree Not to Use Drones in Border Areas", The Defense Post, <https://www.thedefensepost.com/2023/05/25/kyrgyzstan-tajikistan-drones-border/>, (Date of Accession: 26.05.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

North Korea and Increasing Regional Competition

North Korea is one of the world's largest nuclear powers. At the same time, Pyongyang conducted a record number of intercontinental ballistic missile tests and nuclear drills in 2022.[1] In this context, it can be said that the threat and danger in question are increasing day by day.

Moreover, North Korea is in serious competition with the United States of America (USA) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Both this threat and Pyongyang's anti-Western foreign policy approach constitute a situation that needs to be taken seriously for the US and the West.

North Korea, on the other hand, is gaining an advantageous position in the global system due to both the rivalry between China and the United States and the Russia-Ukraine war [2] that started on February 24, 2022. This is because Washington and NATO have a variety of problems on which to spend their resources and energy.

This situation allows North Korea to find room for maneuver and implement its actions more easily. In this context, the West's sanctions resolutions against North Korea in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) are rejected by China and Russia. This causes the West to be unable to adequately channel North Korea-centered developments.



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Pyongyang attempted to launch a spy satellite on May 31, 2023,[3] but this attempt is known to have failed.[4] The incident raised serious concerns in countries geographically close to North Korea, particularly South Korea and Japan. Following the launch, authorities in Seoul, the capital of South Korea, issued warnings over loudspeakers in the city and sent messages to cell phones urging the public to move to safe places. Japan activated a missile warning system for the city of Okinawa.[5]

Therefore, it is possible to say that North Korea's action has created a very serious concern in the region. This could lead to a further hardening of Seoul and Tokyo's stance towards Pyongyang. It can also be argued that tensions between the US and North Korea will increase. However, it can be predicted that the actions to be taken jointly by the US, Japan and South Korea will provoke North Korea rather than deter it.

Moreover, on June 15, 2023, the South Korean military stated that North Korea launched two short-range missiles and fired them from the east coast. It is noteworthy that the launches took place immediately after Pyongyang warned of an "inevitable" response to military exercises organized by South Korean and US troops.[6]

Japan's Defense Ministry said in a statement that two ballistic missiles probably flew in an irregular trajectory and fell into the country's exclusive economic zone. Japanese officials said that one of these missiles fell into the Sea of Japan, also known as the East Sea, about 110 km northwest of Hegura Island, part of Ishikawa prefecture, while the other fell about 250 km away.[7] A joint statement was then issued by the United States, South Korea and Japan condemning Pyongyang's action. The following statements were made in the statement:[8]

"These launches are in clear violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions and demonstrate the threat that North Korea's illicit weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs pose to international peace and security in the region and to global non-proliferation"

In this context, it can be argued that tensions in the region are rising and evolving into a dangerous dimension due to North Korea's nuclear actions. This may lead to a hot conflict in the future. However, it can be argued that the US will not want any hot confrontation in the North Korea dimension in the short term due to the Russia-Ukraine War and the problems with China.

To conclude, it is clear that this problem will not be solved in the short term and tensions will increase. However, it is also clear that

this tension is not expected to turn into a hot conflict. On the other hand, it can be predicted that the threat posed by Pyongyang will strengthen the consolidation of the Seoul-Tokyo-Washington line.

[1] "North Korea's Record Year of Missile Testing is Putting the World on Edge", Cable News Network, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/12/26/asia/north-korea-missile-testing-year-end-intl-hnk/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 01.06.2023).

[2] "Russia-Ukraine War Live Updates: Russian Missiles Strike Zelen-sky's Hometown", Australian Broadcasting Corporation News, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/live-updates/russia-ukraine-war/?id=99926452> (Date of Accession: 01.06.2023).

[3] "North Korea's Spy Satellite Launch Fails as Rocket Falls into Sea", The Korea Times, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2023/05/103_352070.html, (Date of Accession: 01.06.2023).

[4] "North Korea Spy Satellite Launch Fails as Rocket Falls into the Sea", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/north-korea-launch-military-spy-satellite-db6ce3f08e1ec8e23674aef-519d04403>, (Date of Accession: 01.06.2023).

[5] "North Korea's Spy...", a.g.m.

[6] "North Korea Fires Two Missiles After South Korea-US Drills", Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/15/north-korea-fires-two-missiles-after-south-korea-us-drills>, (Date of Accession: 19.06.2023).

[7] "North Korea Fires Two Short-Range Missiles After Warning of Response to Allied Drills", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/north-korea-fires-ballistic-missile-south-korea-2023-06-15/>, (Date of Accession 19.06.2023).

[8] "North Korea Launches 2 Ballistic Missiles toward Sea in Protest of US-South Korea Military Drills", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/north-korea-ballistic-missile-launch-82fc44d-252d20d33f15708177d84ffc6>, (Date of Accession: 19.06.2023).

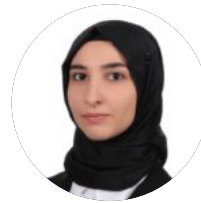


ANKASAM ANALYSIS

New Era in India-US Relations?

United States President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met on June 22, 2023, in Washington. Modi's visit to Washington is significant in many aspects. Firstly, it holds symbolic importance as it is Modi's first official visit to the United States since 2009.[1]

Furthermore, it has been a strategic visit aimed at deepening bilateral cooperation. The statements of both leaders, along with defense and trade agreements, signify the beginning of a new phase in the bilateral relationship. During the meeting, Biden used the expressions "two great nations, two



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great friends, and two great powers," while Modi stated that "regional stability has become one of the core concerns of our partnership." [2] Agreements were reached between the two parties on semiconductors, critical minerals, technology, space cooperation, and defense collaboration.

The visit in question has also resolved some disputes within the framework of the World Trade Organization, with India lifting certain tariffs on US goods. It is known that the two countries have close ties in terms of trade partnership, making every step in this regard crucial. Additionally, India has agreed to join the US-led Artemis Accords in space exploration and to collaborate with NASA on a joint mission to the International Space Station in 2024.[3] It is worth mentioning that India joined the 14-member Indo-Pacific Economic Framework led by the US in May 2023.

As a result, Modi's visit, due to its content and areas of cooperation, has led to the use of the discourse of a "new era" and a "turning point" in the bilateral relations between the two countries. Other agreements reached between the parties can be listed as follows:[4]

Through an agreement with Hindustan Aeronautics, General Electric has been allowed to produce jet engines in India to provide power to Indian military aircraft.

Under a maritime agreement, US Navy ships can dock at Indian shipyards for repairs, and India will procure armed MQ-9B SeaGuardian unmanned aerial vehicles from the US.

The US company Micron Technology is planning to build a \$2.7 billion semiconductor testing and packaging unit in Gujarat.

The process of obtaining and renewing US visas for skilled Indian workers will be facilitated.

The Critical and Emerging Technology Partnership Agreement will facilitate collaboration between US and Indian companies and universities in various sectors, including information technology, space, defense, artificial intelligence, education, and healthcare.

It should be noted that the US needs India in the global struggle against China. The high-level reception and attention given to Modi in Washington are a reflection of this. In fact, a state dinner was held in Modi's honor, a gesture that was previously reserved for leaders of France and South Korea. This indicates the desire of the White House to elevate its relations with the New Delhi government to higher levels, making the visit interesting and significant.

In this context, we can see an example of the strategic moves of the US in global politics. India's closer ties with Russia and its purchase of the S-400 air defense system have prompted the Biden administration to take action in strengthening ties with New Delhi.

It is important to emphasize that India's actions and policy preferences are shaped within the framework of a multifaceted foreign policy approach. New Delhi not only aligns with Washington but also implements strategies in response to global developments.

In pursuing its goals of maintaining an independent foreign policy and strategic autonomy, India's steps sometimes lead to disagreements with the US. For example, New Delhi has been establishing various partnerships and enhancing dialogue with Moscow, particularly since the start of the conflict in Ukraine. The two countries have also elevated their energy cooperation to a significant level during this process. Therefore, while the Biden administration may desire a India that stands by its side, Modi continues to take steps in line with a multifaceted foreign policy strategy.

Despite all the challenges, the said visit will have a positive impact on the New Delhi-Washington relations. The agreements reached during the visit also indicate this. Additionally, regional and global developments show that the China factor will continue to be a key dynamic in shaping US-India relations.

Finally, besides its global implications, the visit can also be seen as having significance for the internal politics of both countries. The year 2024 will be marked by election processes in both nations. Therefore, Modi's visit and the agreements reached between the two sides will also influence public opinion in their respective countries.

In conclusion, Modi's visit is important in terms of highlighting the priorities of the US, the strategy of India, and the policies of both countries. Moreover, the visit has revealed that a new era in India-US relations is about to begin.

[1] "Modi's White House visit Highlights Deep Diaspora Divides", NBC News, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/modis-white-house-visit-highlights-deep-diaspora-divides-rcna89275>, (Date of Accession: 23.06.2023).

[2] "Biden, Modi Hail New Era for US-India Ties and Tout Deals", English Aawsat, <https://english.aawsat.com/world/4397351-biden-modi-hail-new-era-us-india-ties-and-tout-deals%C2%A0>, (Date of Accession: 23.06.2023).

[3] "Biden, Modi Hail New Era for US-India Ties and Tout Deals", TBS News, <https://www.tbsnews.net/world/biden-modi-hail-new-era-us-india-ties-and-tout-deals-654782>, (Date of Accession: 23.06.2023).

[4] Ibid.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Putin Prepares to Visit China

The February 24, 2022 Russia-Ukraine War led to the isolation of the Moscow regime from the international community, and both the United States of America (USA) and the European Union (EU) countries imposed various sanctions with the aim of crippling the Russian economy. In this process, the energy sector, Russia's most important source of income, was particularly targeted. The EU countries have moved towards eliminating their dependence on Russia

for natural gas and have implemented price ceilings for oil. At this point, Moscow's closest ally is China, which claims to compete with the US-centered international order.

Although Beijing has maintained its neutrality from the beginning of the war, experts characterize China's position as a "neutrality close to Russia". US officials have even suggested that China is preparing to supply arms to Russia.[1]



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Nevertheless, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the war, on February 24, 2023, the Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a statement expressing its willingness to mediate between Moscow and Kiev. Indeed, in the first article of the declaration, Beijing emphasized the need to respect the territorial integrity of states.[2]

Following this declaration, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Moscow on March 20-22, 2023. Two issues came to the fore during this visit. The first is China's desire to mediate between Russia and Ukraine. In fact, this is the expectation of European actors, particularly France. The second issue has been the search for a multipolar world, which constitutes the basic dynamic of China-Russia relations. Already during his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Xi said, "Changes are taking place in the world that have not happened for 100 years. We will manage this change together." [3]

Following Xi's visit to Moscow, it was suggested that he might also visit Kiev, but no such visit has taken place yet. In addition, on April 26, 2023, Xi held an hour-long telephone conversation with Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky. Following the meeting, Zelenski posted the following on his official account on the social media site Twitter:[4]

"I had a long and meaningful phone call with President Xi Jinping. I believe that this call and the appointment of the Ukrainian Ambassador to China will give a strong impetus to the development of our bilateral relations."

As it can be understood, the Shiite administration has been in contact with Russia on the one hand and Ukraine on the other and has been trying to mediate. Beijing considers it in its own interests to end the conflict as soon as possible. This is because the war is increasing the sense of solidarity in trans-Atlantic relations due to the perception of the Russian threat and is turning into an "open-ended" war of attrition.

However, Beijing-Moscow relations are not limited to the war in Ukraine and China's mediation diplomacy in this context. The two countries have an allied relationship through structures such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS. Indeed, the SCO and BRICS are the platforms that Beijing and Moscow have effectively used to articulate their desire for a multipolar world. There are also energy-based relations between the parties. This is because Russia's main source of income is energy, while China is an energy-dependent country due to its advanced industry and dense population. Therefore, the energy factor also plays a decisive role in the relations between the parties. The two countries also cooperate in the field of defense-security through joint exercises.

Moreover, it is known that on February 4, 20 days before the start of the Russian-Ukrainian War, on February 4, 2022, Putin visited China to attend the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics and signed a declaration of "unlimited friendship" during his meeting with Xi. At its most basic level, the declaration symbolizes a challenge to American hegemony.[5] Of course, one dimension of this objection is represented by the search for cooperation in the Asia-Pacific and Arctic geographies.

A recent development reflecting the search for cooperation between the two sides is the announcement by Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov that Putin's visit to Beijing is planned for July 12, 2023. "Of course, Putin's visit to China is on the agenda. He will decide on the timing and we will inform the media when the exact date is set." [6]

It should be noted that Putin's visit was on the agenda during Xi's visit to Moscow on March 20-22, 2023 and the Chinese President invited his Russian counterpart to Beijing. Undoubtedly, Xi's visit to Russia and his invitation to Putin can be interpreted as China's effort

to show its alliance relations with Russia in the competition against the US leadership. It can also be stated that the parties want to increase coordination in international organizations, desire to advance military-security-based cooperation and seek to deepen energy cooperation. The Russian leader's acceptance of this visit and Peskov's raising the issue on July 12, 2023 stem from Moscow's desire to tell the world "I still have friends."

[1] "China May Be on Brink of Supplying Arms to Russia, Says Blinken", The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/19/china-may-be-on-brink-of-supplying-arms-to-russia-says-blinken>, (Date of Accession: 13.07.2023).

[2] "China's Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis", FMPRC, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202302/t20230224_11030713.html, (Date of Accession: 13.07.2023).

[3] "China's Xi Stresses Close Ties with 'Dear Friend' Putin During His First Visit to Russia Since Ukraine Invasion", CNN, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/03/20/europe/xi-putin-china-russia-visit-monday-intl-hnk/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 13.07.2023).

[4] @ZelenskyyUa, "I had a long and meaningful phone call with 🇨🇳 President Xi Jinping. I believe that this call, as well as the appointment of Ukraine's ambassador to China, will give a powerful impetus to the development of our bilateral relations.", Twitter, <https://twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1651184756623802368>, (Date of Accession: 13.07.2023).

[5] Sabir Askeroğlu, "Russian-Chinese Entente Against Collective Western Alliance", ANKASAM, ankasam.org/russian-chinese-entente-against-collective-western-alliance/?lang=en, (Date of Accession:13.07.2023).

[6] "Песков: визит Путина в Китай – на повестке дня", Vesti, <https://www.vesti.ru/article/3449432>, (Date of Accession: 13.07.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Future of China-US Relations

China's steady growth, based on the reform and opening-up policy initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, started yielding results in the 2000s. After the global economic crisis in 2008 [1] China's economy surpassed Japan's in 2010, making it the world's second-largest economy. [2] Indeed, China is the largest economy in the world after the United States,[3] leading to significant global competition between Washington and Beijing. This situation implies that China's global ambitions may clash with those of the US, as there is an ongoing struggle between the two actors with geopolitical, geostrategic, and geo-economic dimensions.

In this struggle, it is argued that the US's most crucial strategy is to implement the containment policy, which it previously used against the Soviet Union during the Cold War, against China to gain an advantage. The US aims to execute this policy through regional alliances such as the QUAD, AUKUS Pact, and ANZUS Agreement. Despite these efforts, both Washington and Beijing strive to prevent this competition from turning into a hot conflict, as they have mutually interdependent economic relations.



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The visit of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to China on June 18-19, 2023, holds great significance.[4] During the meetings, positive messages were conveyed, and both Blinken and Chinese President Xi Jinping, as well as Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang, refrained from escalating the competition and instead delivered constructive messages.

However, on June 20, 2023, following Blinken's visit with positive messages, US President Joe Biden used the term "dictator" to refer to the Chinese President.[5] During a fundraising event in Northern California on June 20, 2023, Biden drew attention to the "Spy Balloon" incident and made the following statements:[6]

"When the US shot down a Chinese spy balloon, Xi was deeply saddened. The reason was that Xi was unaware of the balloon's presence. This was a significant embarrassment for a dictator."

Subsequently, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning made the following comment regarding Biden's statement:[7]

"These remarks are extremely absurd and irresponsible. Moreover, they are entirely inconsistent with the facts and seriously violate diplomatic protocol. Furthermore, these statements are damaging to China's political dignity."

In this context, although the meetings may have progressed positively and the actors may emphasize their intentions to avoid turning the competition into a hot conflict, it can be predicted that tensions will not decrease in the short term.

Furthermore, Biden's use of the term "dictator" may indicate a divergence within the US foreign policy-making process between the Secretary of State and the President. This could potentially strengthen China's position in the long run, as the mentioned divergence may become more pronounced over time.

One of the reasons for this divergence can be attributed to the differences in objectives between the parties, especially considering the approaching US Presidential Elections. Consequently, it can be argued that Biden is attempting to consolidate public support through framing an "other" in the context of these elections and prioritizing domestic politics. Indeed, during the election process, Biden could employ the competition with China to create a perception of "threat." The Foreign Minister, on the other hand, might be inclined to pursue a rational approach of softening relations with Beijing, considering the multitude of global issues at hand and

the economic stance.

As the divergence becomes more pronounced with the approach of the elections, it could potentially place Beijing in a more advantageous position in global competition. Consequently, Washington might be perceived as an unsteady actor in the eyes of both its global allies and alliances in the Asia-Pacific region.

In conclusion, it is evident that the competition between the US and China will persist. However, as the US Presidential Elections draw nearer, differences in the adopted policies towards China between Biden and Blinken may come to the forefront.

[1] "As Pac West Shares Dive, Are We Seeing The 2008 Financial Crisis All Over Again?", Cable News Network World, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/06/18/china/blinken-china-visit-wang-yi-meeting-intl-hnk/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 22.06.2023).

[2] "China Passes Japan as Second-Largest Economy", The New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/16/business/global/16y>, (Erişim Tarihi: 22.06.2023).

[3] "The World's Largest Economies", World Data Info, <https://www.worlddata.info/largest-economies.php>, (Date of Accession: 22.06.2023).

[4] "Why is US Secretary of State Antony Blinken Going to China?", Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/16/why-is-us-secretary-of-state-antony-blinken-going-to-china>, (Date of Accession: 22.06.2023).

[5] "Biden Likens Chinese President Xi Jinping to a Dictator", Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/21/biden-likens-chinese-president-xi-to-dictators>, (Date of Accession: 22.06.2023).

[6] "Biden Likens China's Xi to a Dictator; Beijing Slams Remark as 'Absurd, Irresponsible'", France 24, <https://www.france24.com/en/americas/20230621-biden-calls-china-s-xi-a-dictator-a-day-after-blinken-s-talks-in-beijing>, (Date of Accession: 22.06.2023).

[7] "Fierce Backlash in Beijing to Biden Likening Xi to a Dictator Comes as He Hopes For a Thaw", Cable News Network Politics, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/06/21/politics/biden-xi-china-dictators-fundraiser/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 22.06.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Era of Strong Cooperation in Greece-US Relations

The elections in Greece were won by the New Democracy Party and Kiriakos Mitsotakis was elected as Prime Minister of Greece for another term. The Greek elections were also welcomed by the international community. Indeed, the West would like to see a stable partner in Greece. Especially given the growing tensions in Europe, relations with a new actor were likely to be exhausting.

In addition to its efforts to ensure economic and political stability in domestic politics, the Athens administration is also attempting to

create a favorable climate in foreign policy. To elaborate, Mitsotakis is seen as an important ally both for his European partners and for the United States of America (USA). Recognizing this role and the importance of its geopolitical position, the government is engaged in contacts to turn the situation in its favor. In this context, it has particularly strengthened its relations with the United States.

As can be understood, Mitsotakis' foreign policy orientation is to create a positive atmosphere in relations with the West rather than aggres-



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sion and to ensure a moderate debate. Most fundamentally, this orientation is influenced by Greece's attempt to benefit from the strategies of global powers. Therefore, Athens' foreign policy approaches are aimed at establishing new cooperation and partnerships.

What is important to emphasize is the relations between Washington and Athens. The US sees Greece as indispensable for its interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. In this regard, US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller's remarks on Greece confirm the aforementioned. [1] In its struggle against Russia and China, Washington seeks to maintain its power in both the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Hence, it considers Greece as an important implementer of its policies. This relationship stems from the US being seen as a catalyst by Athens.

The Mitsotakis administration, reading the situation well, aims to play a leading role in the policies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the region. This has led to a deepening of US-Greece relations. Therefore, Athens is likely to take confidence-building initiatives in the region in the coming period. Neither NATO nor Athens can succeed in implementing its policies in the absence of healthy diplomatic dialogues and stability.

It should be noted that after the elections in Greece, the Mitsotakis administration has the potential to increase its credibility in foreign policy. Indeed, due to its majority in the Greek Parliament, the government has the means to implement its reforms with ease. [2] Ultimately, this creates a favorable atmosphere for the development of the country's economy. Therefore, Athens is becoming an attractive center for actors developing various policies in the region.

Athens seeks to ensure that the positive climate in the region continues in a consistent and sustained manner. Given the power of the United States and its strong relations with the Washington administration, it would be in Athens' favor to pursue a policy of appeasement in the region. Accordingly, the Mitsotakis administration is expected to increase its contacts with states in the region on issues such as tourism, technology and trade. In a region where there is cooperation and interdependence, it is difficult to experience tensions.

Taken together, this environment serves Greece's interests. This is because a foreign policy in this direction facilitates the support of the United States. In the end, Greece benefits both from its co-

operation and its relations with the US. In fact, Bob Menendez, the Chairman of the US Foreign Relations Committee, assured that allies such as Greece would remain strong.[3]

To put it bluntly, the Biden administration recognizes the importance of Athens for its interests in the region. This is why actors with whom Athens has conflicting interests face pressure from Washington. Moreover, Athens is a willing partner for NATO's new rearmament initiatives in the region. The bet also helps Greece to project a "credible" image in the eyes of the West.

Athens seeks to make more friends than enemies in the region and to encourage negotiations in this regard. What should be emphasized here is that although Greece emphasizes a positive climate in its foreign policy, it ultimately wants to be the main power in the region.

As can be understood, Greece-US relations will continue to develop with increasing momentum in the coming period. Especially with the Russia-Ukraine War, the West started to see Greece as an important "energy hub alternative". This increases the strategic importance of cooperation with Greece for European actors and the United States.

As a result, US-Greece relations are being built on solid foundations. In particular, Washington supports Athens in its foreign policy, as it is one of the most important implementers of NATO in the region. What needs to be emphasized is that the US has pursued a policy of appeasement towards the actors with whom Mitsotakis has clashed in the region.

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[2] "Analysts: Strong Gov't in Greece to Benefit Its Economy", Ekathimerini, <https://www.ekathimerini.com/economy/1214985/analysts-strong-govt-in-greece-to-benefit-its-economy/>, (Accessed: 08.07.2023).

[3] "Senator Menendez assures that Congress Will Ensure Greece's Strong Position", Ekathimerini, <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/1215096/sen-menendez-assures-that-congress-will-ensure-greeces-strong-position/>, (Accessed: 10.07.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Vilnius Summit and the Future of NATO

After the Cold War, Western-Russia relations experienced a brief period of detente, but tensions began to rise again when NATO decided to include Ukraine and Georgia in its expansion process during the 2008 Bucharest Summit. The situation was further aggravated by the Russia-Georgia War in August 2008. However, in 2014, the Russia-Ukraine Crisis and the unlawful annexation of Crimea, followed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, brought about a dangerous escalation reminiscent of the Cold War era. The insufficiently firm and effective response of Western countries to the Russia-Georgia War made it more difficult[1] to prevent the escalation leading to the Ukraine Crisis, and the necessary reaction only came after Ukraine's invasion.

As known, the danger between NATO and Russia is escalating day by day. Both sides' refusal to step back and their inclination to make moves that escalate tensions have further intensified the crisis. The provision of military aid to Ukraine by Western countries, especially the United States, has shifted developments on the frontlines in favor of Russia's detriment, while Russia has raised the stakes, even resorting to the threat of nuclear weapon use and a potential Third World War.[2]

The NATO Vilnius Summit took place on July 11-12, 2023, amid such a tense atmosphere. Sweden's membership issue dominated the summit, and the final declaration expressed satisfaction with the developments on this matter. Undoubtedly, Swe-



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den's membership will alter the dynamics in the Baltic Sea and the North Ice Sea regions, leading to an expansion of competition between Russia and NATO in the north. The increasing competition was reflected in the summit's declaration. Particularly noteworthy in the text was the expression of determination that NATO will defend "every inch of territory." The participation of the Presidents of Ukraine and the Foreign Ministers of Georgia, Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the meeting signaled a possible expansion process for NATO. While expressions of support for the membership process of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Moldova were used, no concrete commitment was made.

Regarding Ukraine's membership, the commitment was reiterated, but it was announced that the Membership Action Plan phase will not be sought. Instead, the NATO-Ukraine Council, where both sides sit at the table on equal terms, replaced the NATO-Ukraine Commission. However, despite the resolute statements, no specific timetable was set for membership. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg made it clear that Ukraine cannot become a member until the war ends, putting an end to the debate.[3]

In the summit, where Finland participated for the first time, Finland's rapid progress towards full integration into the alliance's deterrence and defense capabilities was welcomed, and a strong determination to complete this process as soon as possible was expressed. Finland and Sweden's membership was emphasized to enhance the security of the alliance against the increasing threat from Russia in the North Sea.

NATO has defined three main tasks in the post-Cold War era: collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security. Until the Russia-Ukraine War, crisis management and cooperative security were more prominent on the agenda, but after this period, NATO's primary task of collective defense has come to the forefront. In recent times, as evident in the summit declaration, the key task is now being articulated as deterrence and defense, and the alliance's role in deterrence is being emphasized once again. Indeed, prior to the Ukraine Crisis, the alliance documents did not highlight this key task as prominently.

In the declaration, the alliance clearly identified two main threats. Similar to the Strategic Concept, Russia is considered the direct and greatest threat to the security of the alliance and Europe, while terrorism is described as the most significant asymmetric threat to the citizens of the alliance. Therefore, NATO faces two primary threats: Russia and terrorism. Until the Ukraine Crisis, Russia, which was referred to as a partner, has now been defined as the main adversary, similar to the Cold War era.

Under the pressure from the United States, China has also started to be characterized as a threat to the alliance, and this was clearly expressed in the 2022 Strategic Concept. With each new official document, the alliance increases its criticisms of China and its actions. In the Vilnius Summit, the threat posed by China's actions received significant attention. The participation of the Prime Ministers of Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea in the summit also indicates the alliance's focus on the Pacific and intensified regional cooperation against China, which it perceives as a threat. Beijing has already reacted to the statements in the declaration.[4]

NATO, originally established for the security of the North Atlantic region, is, in a way, shifting its focus to the Pacific within the framework of the threat perception of the United States. The declaration also states that the actions of Belarus and Iran, supported by Russia, threaten Europe's security.

Examining NATO's Strategic Concept documents and other papers after the post-Cold War era, it can be seen that the likelihood of nuclear weapon use was characterized as "quite/very low." Although the same statement is still present in the new Strategic Concept and summit declaration, the Russia-Ukraine War has changed this perception. The cessation of nuclear weapon cooperation between the US and Russia, their withdrawal from existing treaties, their pursuit of new and more dangerous nuclear weapon activities, and changes in their nuclear weapon use concepts have significantly increased the threat posed by nuclear weapons in a short period.

Indeed, both US President Joe Biden[5] and former Russian President Medvedev[6] have emphasized that the world has entered a more dangerous period than the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. As in recent times, the nuclear threat was reflected in the Vilnius Summit, and the declaration highlighted the alliance's preparedness for a nuclear attack and the importance of nuclear deterrence. Similar to the

Strategic Concept, the possibility of a chemical, biological, or radiological attack and preparations to counter such threats were also mentioned in the declaration.

The Madrid Summit emphasized the importance of the New Force Model and the alliance's new defense plan in the context of conventional threats. It was decided to enhance the NATO Response Force (NRF) established after the 2014 Ukraine Crisis to become more modern and comprehensive. Both of these developments indicate a return to the Cold War era. On one hand, NATO is preparing for conventional warfare by increasing the number of rapidly deployable forces (100,000 within the first 10 days, 300,000 within 10-30 days, and 500,000 within 30-90 days). On the other hand, the role of nuclear weapons is being highlighted once again. The original concept of the NRF, planned in the early 2000s with a force of 25,000 personnel, has now evolved into a figure of 500,000 within 90 days, signifying a return to the Cold War era.

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In conclusion, the 2008 Russia-Georgia War triggered a response from NATO but did not lead to significant impact and change. However, the 2014 Ukraine Crisis and Russia's unlawful annexation of Crimea, as well as the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, completely changed the Western security understanding. The conflict led Europe to revert to its Cold War mentality, celebrating the return of American weapons and troops to Europe, which had been withdrawn shortly before the 2014 crisis. Since 2014, the security architecture in Europe has rapidly changed, and the Cold War mindset is re-emerging. Both the New Strategic Concept and the Vilnius Summit Declaration reaffirm this trend.

[1] Şafak Oğuz, "NATO's Mistakes That Paved the Way for Russia-Ukraine Crisis", Journal of Black Sea Studies, 12(45), 2015, s. 1-12.

[2] "Rusya'dan NATO'ya Tehdit Gibi Uyarı: 3. Dünya Savaşı Yaklaşıyor!", Akşam Gazetesi, <https://www.aksam.com.tr/dunya/rusyadan-na-toya-tehdit-gibi-uyari-3-dunya-savasi-yaklasiyor/haber-1382132>, (Date of Accession: 16.07.2023).

[3] "NATO: Savaş Devam Ederken Ukrayna Üye Olamaz", Independent Türkçe, <https://www.indyturk.com/node/646976/d%C3%BCnya/na-to-sava%C5%9F-devam-ederken-ukrayna-%C3%BCye-olamaz>, (Date of Accession: 16.07.2023).

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[5] "Ukraine War: Biden Says Nuclear Risk Highest Since 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis", BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-63167947>, (Date of Accession: 16.07.2023).

[6] Jon Jackson, "Ex-Russian President Calls Nuclear Apocalypse 'Probable'", Newsweek, <https://www.newsweek.com/ex-russian-president-calls-nuclear-apocalypse-probable-1810555>, (Date of Accession: 16.07.2023).

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Regional Rivalries in Asia-Pacific and North Korea

North Korea is one of the world's largest nuclear powers.^[1] At the same time, the Pyongyang regime has conducted a record number of Intercontinental Ballistic Missile tests and nuclear exercises in 2022.^[2] In this context, it can be stated that the nuclear danger is increasing day by day.

Moreover, North Korea is also in serious competition with the United States (USA) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This is one of the reasons why the West focuses its attention on the Asia-Pacific geography.



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On the other hand, North Korea also gains an advantageous position in the global system due to both the competition between China and the USA and the Russia-Ukraine War that started on February 24, 2022^[3] that started on February 24, 2022. Because all of these issues are issues that the US and NATO should spend their energy on.

This situation, which is in question, allows North Korea to find space for itself and be able to carry out its actions more comfortably. In this context, the sanctions resolutions that the West is trying to take against North Korea in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) are also rejected by the votes of China and Russia. This leads to the West's inability to focus enough on the problems centered on North Korea.

At this point, it should be noted that North Korea last attempted to launch a spy satellite on May 31, 2023,^[4] but it is known that it failed. ^[5] Of course, this has caused serious concerns in countries that are geographically close to North Korea, and especially in South Korea and Japan. After the launch took place, the authorities in Seoul, the capital of South Korea, issued warnings on loudspeakers in the city and sent messages to mobile phones that the public should go to safe places. Japan has activated a missile warning system for the city of Okinawa.^[6]

The events taking place in the region show that North Korea's actions cause serious concerns. Of course, because of this, Seoul and Tokyo's attitude towards Pyongyang is also hardening. In addition, the tension between North Korea and Dec is also increasing day by day. However, it can be suggested that the actions to be implemented in partnership with the United States, Japan and South Korea will provoke North Korea more than deter it.

Moreover, on June 15, 2023, the South Korean Military announced that North Korea had launched two short-range missiles and fired them from the country's east coast. The launches occurred immediately after Pyongyang warned that it would respond to military exercises organized by South Korean and US troops.^[7]

In a statement, the Japanese Ministry of Defense stated that two ballistic missiles probably fell into the country's exclusive economic zone by flying on an irregular trajectory. Japanese officials stated that one fell into the Sea of Japan, also known as the East Sea, about 110 km northwest of Hegura Island, which is part of Ishikawa Prefecture; the other fell about 250 km away.^[8]

Later, a joint statement by the United States, South Korea and Japan was issued and Pyongyang's action in question was sharply condemned. The following statements were made in the statement:^[9]

"These launches are a clear violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions and demonstrate the threat that North Korea's illegal weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs pose to the region, international peace and security, and global nuclear non-proliferation hotspots"

In this context, it can be said that the tension in the region is gradually rising due to North Korea's nuclear actions and has evolved to a dangerous dimension. This indicates that there may be a possibility of a hot conflict in the future. However, it can be argued that the United States will not want a hot conflict in the short term, even over North Korea, due to the Russia-Ukraine War and problems with China.

As a result, it is obvious that the tension caused by North Korea's nuclear tests will not be resolved in the short term and the tension will rise even higher. However, it is also not expected that this tension will turn into a hot conflict. On the other hand, it is obvious that the threat posed by Pyongyang will strengthen the consolidation on the Seoul-Tokyo-Washington line.

^[1] "Is It Tim to Accept North Korea is a Nuclear Power", Cable News Network, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/10/28/asia/north-korea-nuclear-threat-solution-analysis-intl-hnk/index.html>, (Eriřim Tarihi: 06.07.2023).

^[2] "North Korea's Record Year of Missile Testing is Putting the World on Edge", Cable News Network, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/12/26/asia/north-korea-missile-testing-year-end-intl-hnk/index.html>, (Eriřim Tarihi: 04.07.2023).

^[3] "Russia-Ukraine War Live Updates: Russian Missiles Strike Zelenskyy's Hometown", Australian Broadcasting Corportaion News, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/live-updates/russia-ukraine-war/?id=99926452> (Eriřim Tarihi: 05.07.2023).

^[4] "North Korea's Spy Satellite Lanuch Fails as Rocket Falls into Sea", The Korea Times, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2023/05/103_352070.html, (Eriřim Tarihi: 05.07.2023).

^[5] "North Korea Spy Satellite Launch Fails as Rocket Falls into the Sea", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/north-korea-launch-military-spy-satellite-db6ce3f08elec8e23674aef519d04403>, (Eriřim Tarihi: 06.07.2023).

^[6] Aynı yer.

^[7] "North Korea Fires Two Missiles After South Korea-US drills", Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/15/north-korea-fires-two-missiles-after-south-korea-us-drills>, (Eriřim Tarihi: 19.06.2023).

^[8] "North Korea Fires Two Short-Range Missiles After Warning of Response to Allied Drills", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/north-korea-fires-ballistic-missile-skorea-2023-06-15/>, (Eriřim Tarihi: 19.06.2023).

^[9] "North Korea Launches 2 Ballistic Missiles toward Sea in Protest of US-South Korea Military Drills", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/north-korea-ballistic-missile-launch-82fc44d252d20d33f15708177d84ffc6>, (Eriřim Tarihi: 19.06.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Reflections of Historical Problems between Japan and South Korea on the Current Conjuncture

An analysis of Asia-Pacific geopolitics suggests that North Korea and China are important rivals of the West, the United States ("USA") and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In this framework, it can be argued that while the rivalry between the West and North Korea has a more regional course, the struggle between the West and China has an impact on global balances.

In this context, it is worth mentioning that North Korea is one of the world's largest nuclear powers[1]. On the other hand, Pyongyang conducted a record number of Intercontinental Ballistic Missile tests and nuclear drills in 2022.[2] Moreover, sanc-

tions resolutions within the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) against North Korea's growing nuclear power and increasing nuclear drills are blocked by Chinese and Russian vetoes.[3] In addition to all these, Pyongyang's anti-Western and anti-US rhetoric also increases tensions.

Looking at the Chinese dimension of these competitions,[4] it should be noted that the country surpassed Japan [5] to become the world's second largest economy in 2010 following the global economic crisis that started in 2008.[6] Indeed, Beijing's growth has led it to challenge the US and NATO-based Western order. In this framework, it



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can be argued that there is a geoeconomic, geopolitical and geostrategic competition between the West and China.

This rivalry has led the US to gain important allies in the Asia-Pacific region by building alliances and creating grounds for cooperation. In this context, it can be stated that Australia, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, New Zealand and the Philippines are important regional allies of the West. However, it is clear that South Korea and Japan stand out among these states. In fact, Japan's admission to the UNSC as a non-permanent temporary member has strengthened the US hand against China and North Korea.[7]

On the other hand, there are many historical problems between Seoul and Tokyo dating back to the Japanese occupation. These problems include compensation for forced labor during the war, comfort women, and the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands. However, the West has been able to consolidate these two actors, especially since they feel the nuclear threats posed by North Korea closely and because of their anti-China stance.

Although the two sides are able to find common ground over common opponents in foreign policy-making processes, historical problems between Japan and South Korea still persist. For example, Seoul's conduct of exercises over the disputed Dokdo/Takeshima Islands was condemned by Tokyo as "extremely regrettable".[8]

On July 7, 2023, Japan's Foreign Ministry announced that a senior diplomat was summoned to the South Korean Embassy in Tokyo and a senior South Korean official was summoned to the Japanese Embassy in Seoul.[9] At the same time, the following statements were also included in the statement in question:[10]

"Takeshima is indisputably a natural territory of Japan in light of historical facts and based on international law. The South Korean Army's drills are unacceptable and extremely regrettable."

This situation shows that states still keep their historical problems in their minds, even if they display a unity against a common opponent. In this context, it can be stated that conflicts over these problems are likely to harm the US's regional alliances. Moreover, China and North Korea may also bring these disputes to the agenda and bring an anti-Western policy to the agenda through these disputes.

In conclusion, it can be argued that even though the US can unite regional actors through the perception of a "common enemy", the historical problems between these states will not be resolved in the short term and will continue to stand as a grenade with the

pin pulled within the Western alliance in the Asia-Pacific.

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[3] "China and Russia Veto New UN Sanctions on North Korea for First Time Since 2006", Cable News, Network World, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/26/asia/us-north-korea-united-nations-intl-hnk/index.html#:~:text=Russia%20and%20China%20on%20Thursday,develop%20nuclear%2Dcapable%20missile%20systems>. (Date of Accession: 10.07.2023).

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[7] "Japan Joins U.N. Security Council as New Nonpermanent Member, Kyodo News, <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2023/01/6c679e2ec5bf-japan-joins-un-security-council-as-new-nonpermanent-member.html>, (Date of Accession: 10.07.2023).

[8] "Japan Protests to South Korea Over Military Drills on Disputed Islands", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/japan-protests-skorea-over-military-drill-disputed-islands-2023-07-07/>, (Date of Accession: 10.07.2023).

[9] Ibid.

[10] "Japan Protests to...", a.g.m.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Difficult Process in Serbian Foreign Policy

In recent times, tension in the Balkans has been shaped through Kosovo-Serbia relations. In particular, the tensions in northern Kosovo have deepened disputes between the parties and caused the West to harden its stance towards both actors. Considering Serbia's relations with Russia, Belgrade's Western policy is noteworthy. At the NATO Vilnius Summit, in addition to focusing on Ukraine, it was highlighted that its relations with Serbia would affect overall regional security.

To elaborate, the Belgrade administration is far from stable in its relations with Pristina. Recent

crises are considered threats due to their potential to lead to conflict. Especially when looking at the geopolitical equation, this threat is of great importance as it directly affects Europe. Therefore, Europe and its most important partner, the United States (US), are closely interested in the matter. Rather than the West's attitude towards Pristina; its stance towards Belgrade is relatively more prominent. Because Serbia is a potential partner for Russia.

In the end, Serbia's good relations with its neighbors make it easier to follow a common security policy against Russia throughout the



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region. However, there are many obstacles in establishing these relationships. Especially in recent times, the US's repressive attitude pushes Serbia towards Russia and China. Indeed, the inclusion of Aleksandar Vulin, head of the Serbian Security and Information Agency, on the sanctions list by Washington, proves this pressure.[1] Therefore, it is possible to claim that Belgrade will be cautious about following a common policy with the West.

It should be noted that; The West aims to show its support for Ukraine within NATO with a unified stance. To ensure this unity, Europe must first end its security concerns within its own borders. The actor that stands out at this point is Serbia. Therefore, it is likely that diplomatic contacts will intensify in NATO-Belgrade relations in the coming period. These contacts could primarily take shape through Moscow-Belgrade and Pristina-Belgrade relations. Especially because Serbia's relationship with Kosovo is at a deadlock, this issue is seen as a problem that needs to be solved for the West.

In short, the instability between Kosovo and Serbia affects the entire region. NATO invites the parties to reduce tension and return to dialogue. However, without putting in extra effort, it is very difficult to achieve this with only rhetoric.

As can be understood, the focus of Serbia's recent foreign policy is security. Belgrade, which wants to escape political isolation, is trying to carefully maintain its multidirectional balance policy and find new allies for itself. This makes Beijing and Moscow attractive for the Belgrade administration. Especially, Serbian President Alexander Vucic, who is in a difficult situation with Western sanctions on the issue of Kosovo, has intensified his contacts in his relations with Russia and stated that the tension in the region has increased due to the attitude of Pristina in a meeting with Russian Ambassador Aleksandar Bochan-Karchenko.[2]

As can be seen, Belgrade's interest in elements outside the West is increasing. However, turning its back on the West in one stroke is difficult for both security and economic reasons. Because Serbia is a part of the West and is aware of the benefits of Europe. Therefore, while trying to reduce the sanctions to be applied by the West, it is maintaining its contacts with actors like Russia and China on the one hand; on the other hand, it is trying to improve its relations with the West.

In fact, it can be argued that Vucic wants to implement a multi-directional balance policy to overcome the critical situation he is in. Another point to focus on is Vucic's initiatives for cooperation in the region. Belgrade, wanting to gain maneuvering space for itself, is trying to prove that it is a potential partner rather than a threat for Europe by demonstrating its importance for the region on the one hand, and on the other hand. The memorandum of understanding signed with Austria and Hungary shows this effort. Vucic's emphasis on the interests of Europe should not be overlooked here.[3]

In conclusion, the most important issue in NATO's policies is the issue of Ukraine. However, in order to display a unified stance against Russia, the West first needs to address the security concerns within its own borders. At this point, the problems between Serbia and Kosovo stand out. Because a conflict between the two actors would affect the entire region. Therefore, the West's pressure to end the crises on the Belgrade-Pristina line and re-open the path of dialogue is increasing. Especially considering Serbia's relations with Russia, Vucic's stance is significant. But as the West hardens its stance towards Belgrade, Vucic is turning to alternatives like Russia and China. Nevertheless, it is not expected that Serbia will completely turn its back on the West.

[1] "Aleksandar Vulin, važna ličnost u Vladi Srbije, stavljen na listu sankcija SAD-a", Al Jazeera, <https://balkans.aljazeera.net/videos/2023/7/11/aleksandar-vulin-vazna-licnost-u-vladi-srbije-stavljen-na-listu-sankcija-sad-a>, (Date of Accession: 11.07.2023).

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25 July 2023

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

25 July 2023

Ankara Crisis and Political Research Center (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol commented on the changes made in Israel's judicial reform and its effects on regional policies for TVNET.

25 July 2023

Ankara Crisis and Political Research Center (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's evaluations on the strategic development plans implemented in Uzbekistan under the leadership of Mr. Şevket Mirziyoyev were shared on O'zbekiston 24 TV.



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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