The Legacy of the Non-Aligned Movement: The Rise of BRICS and the Multipolar Order

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On 27-28 July 2023, St. Petersburg, Russia, hosted the Russia-Africa Summit, at which Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that Russia will ship 25-50 thousand tons of grain free of charge to 6 African countries (Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Mali, Somalia, Central African Republic and Eritrea). Considering that this situation occurred after Russia’s refusal to extend the Black Sea Grain Corridor Agreement, it can be said that it was Russia’s move to draw African countries to its side in its conflict with the West.

The agreement, signed in Istanbul on July 22, 2022 with the initiative of Turkey and the United Nations, was seen as an effort to heal the global...
of food crisis that grew with the Russia-Ukraine War. On July 17, 2023, Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitri Peskov said that the agreement would not be extended, and the reason was that the West did not comply with the terms of the agreement. According to Peskov, certain export bans applied to Russia and its removal from the SWIFT system were basic principles that the West violated in the context of the agreement. The importance of Russia's own lands and the Crimean Peninsula and Donetsh-Luhansk basins, which it currently controls in Ukraine, for world agriculture has been voiced by experts since the war began. Recently, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmitri Kuleba said in a statement that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan could persuade Russia to return to the Black Sea Grain Corridor Agreement. President Erdogan also announced that he supports Russia’s grain promise to Africa.

The African Continent has constantly faced internal turmoil, economic instability and coups dictat after the period of decolonization. Although African countries mostly joined the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War and moved towards establishing a policy of balance within the bipolar world politics, African countries were seen by the Nordic countries as potential areas of contention or medium-term partners. Today, Russia's efforts to get closer with African countries can be read within the framework of Moscow's search for an ally in its conflict with the West. The West's moves to squeeze Russia economically pushed Russia to consolidate the idea of Eurasianism. Russia's move to expand the anti-Western bloc by getting closer to African countries in parallel with its increasing trade with China and its ever-advancing relations with BRICS countries can be considered as Putin’s move to strengthen his hand in the Ukraine War.

The coup that took place in Niger during the dates of July 27-28, 2023, when the Russia Africa Summit was being held in St. Petersburg, has highlighted the prospective role of Africa in the ongoing Russia-West rivalry. Niger, which gained independence from France in 1960, is one of the world’s significant suppliers of Uranium. For instance, Niger is France’s third most important uranium supplier and ranks seventh globally in uranium supply. The coup in Niger carried out by the National Council for the Safeguard of the Nation under the leadership of General Abubakar Tini has been condemned by countries such as the United States, France, and Germany, while it has been praised by the Russian Wagner Group. To the extent that civilians supportive of the coup demonstrated in Niamey, the capital of Niger, marching to the French Embassy with Russian flags and chanting “long live Putin” slogans. The new junta claims that France is preparing for a military intervention, while a solidarity-driven resistance has been promised against a potential Western-backed military intervention from Mali and Burkina Faso.

Meanwhile, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a supporter of the West, has announced sanctions against the junta government and stated that if Deposed President Mohamed Bazum is not released within one week, a military intervention will be carried out. Josep Borrell, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, also mentioned their solidarity with ECOWAS leaders, stating that “the EU will swiftly and decisively support all measures taken by ECOWAS in response to the coup.”[4] Borrell, however, has denied the accusation of external intervention.

While the Russian Federation has not officially recognized the junta in Niger, it has cautioned Western countries and ECOWAS against military intervention. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has stated that a potential intervention could lead to a protracted conflict in the region and an unstable environment. The effort to consolidate Africa in Russian foreign policy dates back to the past. The Soviet Union, following the process of decolonization after World War II, consistently emphasized that the West was “racist and colonialist” in order to increase its influence in the region. Building on this perspective, Russia's attempts to establish a foothold in Africa and its manner of doing so are not new in terms of Russian politics. For Russia, which consistently threatens the West with critical commodities like natural gas in the energy sector, the occurrence of problems in Western uranium supply presents a significant opportunity.

Following the coup, the junta in Niger canceled all military agreements with France and reached an agreement for the entry of Wagner private military contractors into the country. Since its establishment, Wagner has indeed contributed to Russia’s economic, political, and military influence in the Middle East and Africa. The Wagner group previously operated under the directives of the Russian state in internal conflicts in Mali, Burkina Faso, and the Central African Republic. They also played significant roles in points like the Mariupol and Bahmut Battles during the Ukraine War.

During the Wagner uprising that began on June 23, 2023, and ended the following day, confusion arose. Due to the unclear internal structure of the group and its formal relationship with the Russian state, both sides provided different explanations for the motivation behind the start and end of the uprising. In a general sense, it can be said that a power and authority struggle took place between Wagner's leader Yevgeny Prigozhin and Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoygu, and that this rivalry turned into a kind of administrative crisis due to the morale decline on the Russian side as the Ukraine War stalled. While negotiations that followed Prigozhin's ending of the uprising were not conducted transparently, observing Wagner’s continued efforts in West Africa aligned with Russian interests remains significant for Russian politics.

At this very point, Russia's move towards Africa can be seen not only as a strategic move against the West but also as an attempt to address the internal disagreements, administrative confusion, and morale issues arising from the Ukraine War. Wagner potentially fighting a proxy war in West Africa in the event of a conflict aligns with Russian interests, which means Russia is simultaneously consolidating the bloc it's trying to build against the West.

Russia’s approach to Africa holds significance not only for its foreign policy but also for its domestic policy. Establishing military and economic ties with African countries, which are important suppliers of raw materials that matter to the West, in response to the economic pressures from the West, can lead to Russia gaining allies in its foreign policy efforts and also potentially increasing its soft power through the propaganda of these motivations.

China and Non-Regional Actors in the Context of Issues in the Asia-Pacific

China, within the context of its claim to global hegemony through its growing power and challenges posed to the United States (US) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), engages in a global competition against the West. Indeed, this competition encompasses geopolitical, geo-economic, and geo-strategic dimensions. Particularly, under the framework of containment policies pursued regionally by the US and NATO against Beijing, this situation compels China to establish alliances and cultivate new partnerships.

In this context, it can be argued that Russia and North Korea stand out as states that develop their foreign policy processes from an anti-Western perspective. This manifests itself in various ways. For instance, the sighting of two Russian warships near Taiwan on June 27, 2023, as well as the report from Russia’s Pacific Fleet on June 23, 2023, through the Interfax news agency, stating that a ship from the Russian Pacific Fleet crossed the South China Sea and then entered[2] southern regions near the Philippines. Similarly, on July 15, 2023, the Chinese Ministry of Defense announced via their WeChat account that a Chinese fleet consisting of five warships and four helicopters departed from Qingdao Port in the east, and it was stated that this fleet would participate[1] in a joint exercise with Russian naval and air forces in a pre-determined area over the Sea of Japan, aimed at ensuring the security of strategic waterways. These events are significant outcomes of the situation at hand.

Moreover, the absence of an official boundary in the Taiwan Strait between China and Taiwan leads Western actors to perceive a lack of deterrence regarding crossing this boundary. Taiwan’s standoff on this matter highlights China’s ongoing military exercises in the region. However, Beijing does not accept this argument, categorizing Taiwan as a “separatist region” that needs to be integrated into the mainland. Within the framework of the “One China Principle,” China’s perception of Taiwan as its own territory legitimizes Beijing’s exercises.

These developments are leading to increased interest from Washington in the Asia-Pacific region in terms of alliances and collaborations. Currently, the US already holds significant influence in the region through mechanisms such as the AUKUS Pact, the ANZUS Treaty, and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), along with arms agreements with various actors and regional powers. However, the ongoing process also prompts the United States to enhance its military presence in the region. For instance, on July 13, 2023 Chinese fighter jets observed a US Navy patrol aircraft crossing the Taiwan Strait. This aircraft was identified as a P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft, serving as an anti-submarine warfare asset under the US Navy’s 7th Fleet.[4]

In a statement issued by the US Navy, it was stated that “Operating in the Taiwan Strait in accordance with international law, the US is safeguarding the freedom of navigation and overflight for all nations.” On the other hand, the Chinese military termed this action as a “deception” and noted that aircraft were dispatched to monitor and warn the American plane in the region.[5]

The statement from the Chinese Army’s (PLA) Eastern Theater Command on their WeChat account reads, “The troops on the scene are always in a state of high alert and will resolutely defend national sovereignty and security, as well as regional peace and stability.” This situation at hand carries the potential for a localized conflict that could escalate into a global event with participation from various external actors, should a hot confrontation arise, possibly over Taiwan or the South China Sea.

In conclusion, the global objectives of external actors are fueling the escalation of competition in the Asia-Pacific region. As a result, both China and the US are intensifying their efforts to collaborate with and form alliances among regional actors.

References:

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China Wants to Increase Foreign Investment

China attaches great importance to foreign investment to achieve its economic growth and development goals. Foreign investment contributes to the economy in the form of capital, cooperation and technology. The country is developing good relations with investors. China, which is growing in all areas, has established a series of policies aimed at attracting foreign investors to ensure a steady increase in economic development. The goal is to strengthen economic development through foreign investment.

By proclaiming 2023 as the “Year of Investment,” China aims to increase foreign investment in the long term through new policies. In this regard, in recent years, China has strengthened its relationship with foreign business organizations by creating a market-oriented, legal and international business environment.

Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, a document was prepared on July 25, 2023, to achieve foreign investment. The goal was to make foreign investment important in the country and make future investment seem attractive. On August 13, 2023, China’s State Council and Cabinet issued a 24-point declaration, setting out 6 key ways to ensure the steady progress of the country’s economy. The document aims to take advantage of the country’s market, create an international environment, and attract high-quality foreign investment.[1]

The aim of the newly established policies is to encourage foreign investment in all regions, institutions and departments of the country, create a more favorable environment for investors, ensure coordination between regions and strengthen confidence. It was also agreed that the interests of foreign investors would be treated equally. The country, which expects investors in various fields with each article, is taking important steps to provide all kinds of facilities.

Foreign investors are allowed to set up research and development centers in China and are encouraged to carry out large scientific research projects. Especially projects in the biomedical field will be implemented quickly. In addition, foreign companies are allowed by law to fully participate in government procurement activities. Foreign-invested enterprises that invest in state-supported sectors will be given priority.

The 6 main paths are: National Treatment of Foreign Enterprises, Improving the Quality of Their Investment, Protection of Foreign Investment, Ease of Doing Business, Tax and Financial Support, and Investment Encouraging Factors. In addition, investors are temporarily exempted from withholding tax. This is to ensure foreign investment incentives.

Improving cross-border data flow and security is also an important issue. It is expected that cybersecurity and personal information protection will be rigorously implemented. To this end, foreign-invested abroad should benefit from secure data flow services. It has been agreed to test pilot applications to enhance security in strategic locations such as Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

According to official data, 23,536 new foreign enterprises were established in China in the first half of 2023, an annual increase of 35.7%. From this, it can be seen that China is constantly receiving foreign investment and occupies an important position in this field.

China is taking decisive steps to attract foreign investment by creating a favorable business environment. China’s attempts to reverse the situation that has led to a decline in foreign investment in the country will be seen in the coming processes. In this way, an increase in foreign investment will be observed.

China has a complete industrial chain with more than 220 industrial products, making it the world leader in manufacturing. Pang Ming, chief economist of global consulting firm JLL China, said that the country’s goal is to attract foreign investment in various sectors with strong policy support and that China is in an important geographical position.[3]
The Legacy of the Non-Aligned Movement: The Rise of BRICS and the Multipolar Order

The Non-Aligned Movement is an international political and diplomatic trend that emerged during the Cold War era, particularly from the 1950s to the 1980s. This movement is commonly defined as a group of countries that aimed to remain independent from the influence of major powers like the United States (US) and the Soviet Socialist Republics Union (SSR), advocating for neutrality.

During World War II, certain countries had come together as allies to fight against Nazi Germany and Japan. However, with the conclusion of the war, a new era in world politics began. The emergence of the Cold War led to a division of the world between two major powers. The Non-Aligned Movement also emerged during this period.

A transparent policy toward foreign companies is implemented. By standardizing foreign economic and trade policies, future problems should be identified much earlier. Business ideas and procedures will be considered in accordance with the laws of the country and help create new policies. This will ensure a fairer process and a solid foundation for international trade relations.

The government will update its residency policies to facilitate the smooth entry and exit of foreign workers, accommodation, visas and residence. Embassies and consulates will provide assistance in applying for visas for executives of multinational companies. It will also include issues such as employee safety, medical care and the provision of financial services. Another point of the declaration is to facilitate the entry, exit and stay of executives, technical personnel and their families.

The main objective of the Non-Aligned Movement was to maintain their own independence and sovereignty without being affected by the competition between superpowers like the US and the USSR. Among the prominent figures of the movement were India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, and Indonesian President Sukarno.

During World War II, the foundations of the Non-Aligned Movement had not yet been established. However, with the conclusion of the war, among the newly independent countries, a notion of avoiding the influence of major powers began to take shape. This notion laid the groundwork for the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Non-Aligned Movement played a significant role in the complex international dynamics of the Cold War era. Its members aimed to protect their own independence by resisting the influence of major powers.[i]

After World War II, global politics entered a bipolar Cold War era. However, some countries chose to maintain their neutrality by not aligning with either of the two major blocs. These countries became known as “non-aligned” and preferred to pursue their independent foreign policies. Today, the legacy of these non-aligned nations has been revitalized through new formations like BRICS, which have the potential to reshape the global political balance. China’s references to “non-alignment and non-Western-centric modernization” in its foreign policy have also been evident. In the BRICS meetings held between August 22-24, 2023[2], the rise of BRICS can be seen as a multipolar step in contrast to Western-centric institutions like the G7 and the World Bank. These nations have united to wield greater influence in the global economy and politics, safeguard their own interests, and represent the developing world.

The Non-Aligned Movement reflects countries’ efforts to maintain economic and political independence. These nations aimed to shape their own destinies without falling under the influence of major powers, particularly the US and the USSR during the Cold War. In the present day, BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) have come together with a similar motivation. These countries have united to wield greater influence in the global economy and politics, safeguard their own interests, and represent the developing world.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has defended the country’s participation in BRICS by emphasizing his support for neutrality and non-alignment policies. Ramaphosa stated that his country continues to uphold its policy of neutrality and, within this framework, joining BRICS aims to diversify and strengthen South Africa’s global relationships.[3]

The expansion of BRICS with the decision to include 6 new members holds not only economic and financial significance but also represents a political and strategic power balance. The BRICS group is increasingly attempting to play a balancing role against the dominance of forums led by the West, such as the G7 and the World Bank. During the summit in Johannesburg from August 22-24, 2023, BRICS announced that Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia were invited and their memberships would commence in January 2024. This expansion showcases BRICS’ effort to enhance its global influence and create a counterbalance in international dynamics.[4]

The BRICS group has stated its aim to bring diversity to the world power structure in the midst of increasing polarization. Smaller countries in the world have often been pressured to choose sides in global competition. BRICS, on the other hand, has offered a sort of “middle way strategy” for situations like these, allowing countries to maintain a more neutral and balanced stance amidst the global power dynamics.

Indeed, Saudi Arabia’s potential inclusion in BRICS as a member, being already a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), could have significant implications on the global political and economic order.

1. Energy and Economic Balance: The convergence of Saudi Arabia and China within BRICS signifies a strengthening of collaboration among major players in the realms of energy and economy. Saudi Arabia’s energy wealth and its membership in OPEC would substantially influence the direction of the global energy market. Meanwhile, China stands as one of the world’s largest economies and a rapidly growing energy consumer. This union could further impact the equilibrium of energy supply and demand.

2. Geopolitical Implications: Saudi Arabia’s strategic position in the Middle East and China’s influence in the Asia-Pacific region can reverberate across global geopolitical dynamics. This alliance, particularly in terms of shaping policies in the Middle East and addressing security concerns in Asia, may carry heightened significance.

3. Trade and Economic Relations: China’s robust economy coupled with Saudi Arabia’s energy resources could amplify collaboration in the domains of trade and investment. Enhanced economic ties between the two nations, particularly through significant projects like China’s ‘Belt and Road Initiative’, could contribute to regional and global economic integration.

4. Global Political Balance: This merger could potentially disrupt the traditionally Western-centric global political balance. The convergence of BRICS and OPEC might exert increased competitive pressure on international institutions and policy-making processes led by the West.

5. Quest for Political Balance and Collaboration: Saudi Arabia’s inclusion in BRICS alongside Russia and China could prompt an increase in global balance-seeking and collaboration efforts. These countries might have come together to champion their own interests and attain greater influence in the evolving global order. This situation can be interpreted as a step toward a multipolar framework.

In conclusion, global politics has been invigorated by the expansion of BRICS, laying the foundation for today’s multipolar order. The ascent of BRICS and the inclusion of six new members could be seen as a reflection of the endeavor to establish an alternative to Western-centric economic and political hegemony. This development demonstrates a shifting balance in international relations; hinting at the potential emergence of a more multipolar order in the future.


It can be argued that Warsaw is a very important actor in the conjuncture in question. Poland is the 5th most populous country in the EU and the 6th with the best economy. Moreover, Poland is one of the countries with the most intense right-wing and populist politics. On the other hand, it is known that the Polish economy has achieved rapid growth.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the importance of the religion factor is at an undeniable level in both the political and sociological structure of Poland. At this point, it can be said that the fact that the Warsaw administration has an extreme right-wing ideology has an effect. As a matter of fact, Poland is home to the sharp nationalist ideas rising in Europe.

All these situations cause Poland to react differently and more harshly to the Russo-Ukrainian War. At this point, it can be argued that Warsaw took a tougher stance than Germany, the United States of America (USA) and France in the Russo-Ukraine War. In this context, it can be said that the religion factor also plays an important role. There is a strong Catholic faith in Poland.

Poland thinks that the ongoing war in Ukraine has devastating effects for Europe as well. Especially the oil ceiling price application, many sanctions against Moscow, are implemented by the EU. However, this situation also deeply shakes the EU economy. In this context, it can be said that Warsaw wants the war in question to be concluded as soon as possible and the geopolitical order between the East and the West to be restored.

The Pope appointed Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz as his ambassador. After that, Cardinal made a statement about the ongoing war in Ukraine and stated that what happened in Europe in front of the whole world is unacceptable with the following words:

“This war deprives our brothers in Ukraine of their land, their right to life, their language and culture, and brings death and destruction. Slavic brothers cannot fight each other. They should not kill each other, they should not bring destruction. They should not multiply the enormity of the suffering we are witnessing. This war must be stopped. We must put an end to this war based on hatred, violence and fratricide. Enough bloodshed! Brothers, Slavs, let us set an example for a world of fraternal coexistence, not blind hatred among our peoples. Let the Virgin Mary be our guide on the ways to end this war, reconciliation and peace. Together with Pope Francis, we put the future of humanity in the hands of Mary Queen of Peace.”

Regarding this, it can be said that Poland wants this war to end and it can even be said that this view is defended more strongly by the public. As a matter of fact, it can be said that Poland is against the devastating effects of the Russo-Ukrainian War on European soil.

As a result, the prolongation of the Russia-Ukraine War will also have negative consequences for Europe. This situation will continue to shape the foreign policies of actors such as Poland with radical right ideologies in Europe.


[7] Ibid.
Zimbabwe’s Wealth: Opportunities and Future Potential

Located in the east of the South African continent, Zimbabwe is bordered by Zambia to the north, Botswana to the west, the Republic of South Africa to the south, and Mozambique to the east. The country is generally covered with high plateaus and hills. Until 1980, Zimbabwe, known as Southern Rhodesia, which was under British control until 1980, gained its independence in 1980 and took its current name.

However, in the following years, political and economic problems were experienced under the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government led by Robert Mugabe. During this period, problems such as land reforms and hyperinflation affected the country. In 2017, a popularly supported military coup attempt emerged in the country, which led to the fall of Mugabe. During this period, problems such as land reforms and hyperinflation affected the country. The Mugabe government was overthrown in a coup attempt led by Emmerson Mnangagwa in 2017.

The country is experiencing difficulties in agriculture due to natural disasters, political and cultural power, presents both opportunities and challenges for Zimbabwe's development. For example, Zimbabwe is dependent on the Republic of South Africa as its gateway to the world market. However, the country's lack of sea access increases export costs and affects the country's foreign policy.

The Republic of South Africa, the region's leading economic, military, political, and cultural power, presents both opportunities and challenges for Zimbabwe's development. For example, Zimbabwe is dependent on the Republic of South Africa as its gateway to the Indian Ocean. This often leads to trade, economic, and political tensions between the two countries.

Zimbabwe also has some disputes with its other neighbor, Mozambique. Diplomatic steps are being taken to reach an agreement on the revenue, operation, and maintenance of the Cahora Bassa Dam, the largest power plant in Southern Africa.

Another issue that indirectly affects Zimbabwe is the sharing of the Rovuma River between Mozambique and Tanzania. The two countries dispute the ownership of the islands on the river. This situation creates regional trade and security problems for Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe can play the role of mediator between the two countries and pioneer a solution to the problem. It can further strengthen its geopolitical position in the region.

In 2017, Emmerson Mnangagwa came to power and implemented a number of reforms. These reforms were mainly in the field of economy and foreign relations. On the other hand, Zimbabwe is a mineral-rich country. It attracts the world's attention in terms of both underground and above-ground resources. Zimbabwe is one of the major producers of gold minerals in the African continent, as well as platinum, diamonds, nickel, and coal.[1] Therefore, we can say that the country has structured its foreign exchange needs and employment policies on mining.

Despite the country's socio-political situation, there are many natural and cultural wonders within its borders. For example, natural and cultural beauties such as Victoria Falls, Hwange National Park, Great Zimbabwe Ruins are located in Zimbabwe. Thanks to these beauties, Zimbabwe is called “Wonderland”.[2]

The country is experiencing difficulties in agriculture due to natural disasters. This situation renders the country inadequate in agriculture and livestock production and dependent on foreign sources. Zimbabwe has based its development policies mainly on underground resources and their export to the world market. However, the country's lack of sea access increases export costs and affects the country's foreign policy.

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Socio-political issues and border disputes are obstacles to the development of a rich country like Zimbabwe. As a result, Zimbabwe is a landlocked country, despite its rich underground and above-ground resources. Recent steps towards cooperation with land-locked countries, especially Mozambique, show that the country is determined to open up to the world. This will reduce Zimbabwe’s dependence on the Republic of South Africa, which accounts for 62% of its imports.[4] This is because the reason for this dependence is the country's lack of a coastline. Another advantage of Zimbabwe is nature tourism. Such geographical opportunities are essential for the country's image and promotion.

Another advantage of the country is China's Belt and Road Project.[5] In this context, investing in the country's transportation infrastructure will help Zimbabwe increase its raw material exports. As a matter of fact, most of Zimbabwe's exports go to China.Especially for the country with Africa's largest gold reserves, this situation shows us the fact that Zimbabwe may have a say in the region in the future.


Italy’s Security Moves in the Context of the Russia-Ukraine War

The Russia-Ukraine War, which started on February 24, 2022,[1] deeply affected the international system. This war[2] had such a great impact on the global system for the first time after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the end of the Cold War in 1991.[3] Russia’s use of the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as the reason for starting the war[4] and the rivalry between Russia and the United States of America (USA) dating back to the Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) era means that the West and especially Moscow are in full swing caused it to open.

The European Union (EU) countries are the states that defend the “rules-based international order” based on “liberal democracy” established on the basis of the USA and NATO after the Cold War. Like[5] the founding and Reforms of the European Union *, Luxembourg Center for Contemporary and digital History *, https://www.ecco.eu/en/education/unit-content/*-unit/d9506a695-4f163-4603-85f7-0cabc24f86fe/9c8b79f2-4e02-47e2-8da5-98f8c3f98057, (Date of Accession: 07.08.2023).


The rising far right in Europe and governments with these ideologies also argue that more resources should be allocated to their countries’ military expenditures and investments. From this point of view, EU countries, which have a rising far-right trend in Europe, have hardened their attitudes towards the Russia-Ukraine War. In this context, Italy can set an important example. As a matter of fact, on October 22, 2022, the Brothers of Italy Party, which has far-right ideologies, came to power in Italy[6] and the leader of the party, who also has far-right ideologies, Giorgia Meloni was elected Prime Minister.[8] Thus, Rome increased its right-wing rhetoric and started to spend more on its military capacity.

It is of importance that Italy signed an agreement with a local company on August 2, 2023 to replace the obsolete battle tanks and replace them with Leopard tanks. Within the scope of this agreement, it is known that Rome will use Italian industrial input for Leopard tanks and the business sharing will involve Italian companies. The amount of the agreement was stated as 948 million euros.[10]

On the other hand, Italy is making important developments in terms of warships. As a matter of fact, Rome signed an agreement with Leonardo and the Italian shipyard Fincantieri for the purchase of three offshore patrol vessels called “IPP” for a total of 925 million euros. Within the scope of the agreement in question, 95 meters long ships with a capacity of 2,300 tons and capable of accommodating 97 crews will be produced.[11]

Meloni, who had a far-right stance in Italy, became prime minister, Rome’s defense and military expenditures increased. As a matter of fact, this basically shows the security concerns of Europe and even Western Europe. As the Russia-Ukraine War continues, it can be predicted that the military expenditures of Europe and Italy will continue to increase.

On August 2, 2023, Italy signed an agreement with a local company, the application of oil ceilings, which was capable of accommodating 97 crews will be produced. The amount of this agreement was stated as 848 million euros. (18)

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Southeast Asian Countries’ Perspectives on the US–China Competition

Following the confrontation between the Philippines and Chinese coast guard ships in the South China Sea on August 5, 2023, some Western countries made statements supporting Manila and criticizing Beijing. However, it was noteworthy that Southeast Asian countries remained neutral on this issue. However, countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei also have conflicts with China on the same seas. It seems that the regional states are careful to remain neutral in the competition between the United States of America (USA) and China.
Surveys conducted by some public opinion research companies have also revealed that Southeast Asian countries prefer to remain neutral in this competition, and even some states have a positive attitude towards China[2]. For example, Pew Research Center conducted a survey on the US-China rivalry with the participation of 25,000 people from 19 different countries. While countries such as South Korea, Japan, France and Australia, which are generally seen in the camp of the West, have positive views of the USA in the survey, it was stated that Singapore and Malaysia, two Southeast Asian countries, viewed China positively.

Singapore is currently one of the Southeast Asian countries that has benefited most from China’s economic projects. Because the most strategic of the main logistics supply points in China’s Blue Economy Corridor are Singapore Port and Malaysia’s Port Klang and Malacca Ports. They are located on the strategic transit route of ships from China to Europe, the Mediterranean and Africa. In fact, Singapore Port is one of the ports with the strongest connection with Chinese ports in Southeast Asia. Then comes the Port of Manila in the Philippines and then Port Klang in Malaysia.[3]

We can say that Singapore and Malaysia are more friendly towards China due to economic and more generally geostrategic factors. In terms of security, these two countries are included in the Five Powers Defense Arrangement (FPDA), as they are former colonies of Britain. They are therefore closer to the UK’s security strategy. China, on the other hand, is trying to create a balance against the USA by supporting these countries that are not included in the bloc politics.

The Philippines has been struggling to find the balance in the US-China rivalry lately. However, the Philippines is one of the countries that benefited most from the maritime leg of China’s Belt and Road Initiative. As a matter of fact, during the Rodrigo Duterte period, the Philippines became politically close to China and trade and investment relations increased in this process. To put it in general terms; In the last 10 years, Southeast Asian countries have benefited greatly from the investments made by China within the scope of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Western actors are making efforts to change the Southeast Asian countries’ view of China and to attract them to their side. It can be said that after the Philippines, other regional states will also come under the pressure of the USA. The fact that US President Joe Biden plans to visit Vietnam in the future is indicative of this. Likewise, Australian President Anthony Albanese has announced that he may visit the Philippines next month.[4] These steps show that the states of the region, especially the Philippines, are under great pressure at the point of US-China rivalry. It can be said that especially the USA, Japan and Australia are trying to include them in an anti-Chinese axis by establishing close relations with the regional states.

But it is very difficult to get Southeast Asian countries to take an open front against China. As a matter of fact, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is an organization that is neither in the camp of the USA nor China, and in this sense adheres to the principle of neutrality. For many years, China, together with the ASEAN countries, has been trying to promulgate a declaration setting the rules of conduct in the South China Sea. In 2002, China agreed with this organization on a Code of Conduct (DOC) between Parties but failed to take it a step further and proclaim a Statement of Rules of Conduct (COC).[5] As tensions rise in the region, Beijing is trying to sign this agreement as soon as possible.

Japan’s efforts to develop its ties with Southeast Asian states are also noteworthy. Tokyo seeks to cooperate with each of the regional states in the field of defense. In this context, Japan’s defense cooperation with Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia comes to the fore. The USA and its allies Japan and Australia are trying to include Southeast Asian countries in Western alliances in the long run.

As a result, while the US-China rivalry continues to shake the global balance of power, the geopolitics of South Asia is also seriously affected by this earthquake. China, on the other hand, warns that the countries of the region should not be used as “chess pieces”[6]. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs comes out intense diplomatic traffic to prevent Southeast Asian countries from being under the influence of the USA. In this context, China calls on ASEAN countries to oppose the US-led security and trade blocks. Southeast Asian states that do not want to be included in any bloc may make a new opening in the axis of multipolarity soon.

[1] @duandang, “Noticeably Missing, However, Are Statements from The ASEAN Member States!”, Twitter, 9 Augosutus 2023, https://twitter.com/duandang/status/1688995302543969745, (Erişim Tarihi: 09.08.2023).


Has Germany’s Perspective on the Russia-Ukraine War

The Russian-Ukrainian War, which started on February 24, 2022, undermined the European policy and affected the global system significantly. This war is one of the most important security threats to the global system since the end of the Cold War in 1991. Therefore, the historical rivalry between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), United States (USA), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a determinant in the course of the war. Thus, the Russian-Ukrainian War created more complicated relations in the West-Russia context.

On one hand, the economic relations in the framework of interdependence between Russia and the European Union (EU) are important. On the other hand, the USA demands Brussels more harsh and intense policy towards Moscow. However, interdependent relations that have been built economically also affect the EU’s approach to the situation. Therefore, the EU has imposed many sanctions to Russia, including maximum oil pricing application. However, these sanctions have deeply affected the EU’s economy as well as Russia.

The situation paved the way for disagreements in Western society towards the war and towards Russia in general. The aforementioned disagreements of opinion deepened after the Russia-Ukraine war, while the initial cracks started with Brexit.

In this context, the divergence is mainly between transatlantic actors such as the USA and England in Continental Europe led by France and Germany. As a matter of fact, while Washington and London advocated a tougher and more aggressive policy against Moscow, Berlin and Paris favor a more moderate policy within the scope of economic interests, energy crisis and interdependence. At this point, it can be argued that there is a pressure on Germany in the context of the Russia-Ukraine War. As a matter of fact, it can be argued that external dynamics may play a decisive role in the aforementioned situation. Because the pressure of anti-Russian Eastern European countries such as Poland to Berlin may trigger a crisis process, just as seen in the case of Leopard tanks.

For example, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz faced increasing pressure to supply Ukraine with cruise missiles. As a matter of fact, it is known that Scholz behaved more cautiously than his coalition partners at the point of opposition to Russia. However, two members of parliament from the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), chaired by Scholz, supported those calling for the Swedish-German-made missiles to be sent to Kiev.

Andreas Schwarz, a member of the SPD Member of Parliament, stated that Ukraine was inadequate against Russia due to insufficient air power. Nils Schmid, the SPD’s Foreign Policy Spokesman in parliament, said it was crucial that the command authority over these weapons be left to the Ukrainian troops rather than the Germans, otherwise Berlin would be “dangerously close to participating directly in the war.”

As a result, there is a disagreement in Europe in the context of the Russia-Ukraine War. This puts a significant pressure on Germany to take a tougher stance towards Moscow. Because, it is not certain how this pressure will turn out and how hard Berlin can struggle with Russia or how long it can continue its support for Kiev. Because of the point of energy crisis, Europe still has not found a clear alternative to Russia. This may mean that the summer of 2024 will be quite difficult for Europe if the war in question continues and even gets tougher.
Rising Tension in Poland and EU Relations

The Prime Minister of Poland, Mateusz Morawiecki, who has far-right ideologies, has announced that a referendum will be held within which voters will be asked whether they are willing to accept “thousands of illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa”. Morawiecki announced that the referendum on the European Union (EU) immigration reforms will coincide with the parliamentary elections to be held on 15 October 2023. It is known that Morawiecki’s Law and Justice Party (PiS) is trying to hold power in this. The effort of PiS to extend its eight-year rule began with the announcement of Defense Minister Mariusz Blaszczak on 15 August 2023 that 10,000 soldiers would be put on the Belarusan border. The statement in question came after Belarusan military helicopters breached Polish airspace and Wagner group mercenaries set up camp in Belarus. Warsaw interprets these moves as a direct provocation and shows them as growing evidence of the threat created by Minsk to Poland and the EU.

In the forthcoming referendum, voters will also be asked questions such as whether they support raising the retirement age, which was lowered to 60 for women and 65 for men, and whether they support the privatization of state-owned enterprises. At a historic political rally in Chelm, near the Ukrainian border, Kaczynski said that EU-led privatization of forests would prevent Poles from collecting mushrooms, a popular national pastime. The peak of the mushroom picking season coincides with the voting date. This raises question marks about the rate of participation in the election in question.

The EU tries to distribute migrants equally among its member states and to share the responsibility of those who enter the bloc without permission. The Morawiecki Government has been against these plans for a long time. Despite the objections of some members, especially Hungary and Poland, the agreement was officially approved by the EU Interior Ministers in June.

Morawiecki said that the following question will be asked in the referendum:

“Do you support the admission of thousands of illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa under the forced deportation mechanism imposed by the European bureaucracy?”

The video released by Morawiecki features burning buildings, vehicles, and street violence in Western Europe as a reference to the recent riots in France. The speech of Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the leader of PiS, is placed in the background of the pictures in question. In the video, Morawiecki asks, “Do you want this to happen in Poland as well? Do you want to stop being the master of your own country?”

Morawiecki’s party seeks to draw attention to the growing number of African and Middle Eastern immigrants entering Poland via Belarus, which is not a member of the EU and with which Poland shares a 400 km border. In 2022, a total of 10,000 crossings were made to the country. This year, about 10,000 transition ation attempts have already been made. Currently, about 2,000 Polish soldiers and 9,000 border guards guard the border. Part of the border is protected by a 186 km metal wall.

In total, Poland granted asylum to more than 1 million Ukrainians. However, for years, especially at the height of the 2015 Refugee Crisis, political leaders have objected to hosting Muslims and other peoples of different cultures on the grounds that it threatens the country’s cultural identity and security.

In any case, Poland’s administration with far-right ideologies continues to perceive migration and security as the main topics of the election.

Kaczynski said this about this topic: [5]

“We have this freedom. We can go mushroom picking. It’s part of our freedom and we won’t let that freedom be taken away from us.”

Particularly by political analysts, the Polish leader’s anti-EU rhetoric is compared with the “Take back control” slogans used by pro-Brexit campaigners in the UK. Kaczynski brings up issues such as security fears and racism, as well as the anti-German rhetoric that his party has used to support its base since its establishment in 2001.

For example, Kaczynski said that Germany should be forced to pay Poland 13 trillion euros in compensation for Nazi war crimes during the Second World War. Germany refused the demands. Kaczynski cites the devastating life experiences of Poland under Nazi and Soviet rule as the justification for the fears and demands of the Poles. As a result, it can be argued that as long as Poland’s administration with far-right ideologies continues, the tension and disagreements between the EU and Warsaw will not decrease.


[3] Same one.


[5] Same one.


“Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant” Tension in the World

On August 24, 2023, the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in Japan began to discharge water into the ocean. This decision caused global concern due to the safety and environmental implications, especially in countries like China and South Korea. The discharge, which started on August 24, aimed to clear the water that had been stored since the 2011 tsunami. 

The discharge of water into the ocean began, China imposed a ban on all Japanese seafood. By August 28, 2023, Russia was considering increasing its seafood exports to China. Thus, the escalating tension between Japan and China has enabled Russia to increase its seafood imports to China.

Considering that Japan is China’s largest partner in seafood trade, the seriousness of the rising tension between Beijing and Tokyo is evident. In fact, the value of seafood imported by China from Japan in 2022 increased by 35% compared to the previous year and reached 191.5 billion dollars. However, the high trade volume was replaced by tensions between the two countries due to the ban on seafood imports following Japan’s statements.

On August 28, 2023, China’s Ambassador to Tokyo, Wu Jianhao, was summoned to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs due to statements made by Beijing. During his meeting with Ambassador Wu, Japan’s Deputy Foreign Minister Masataka Okano pointed out that China urgently needs to stop misinforming its people and unnecessarily raising concerns over unscientific claims. As it can be seen, although South Korea’s stance, on the other hand, could be long-willing to turn a blind eye to Japanese and Western pressures, the recent ban on seafood trade with Japan can be read as a sign that Beijing is no longer willing to turn a blind eye to Japanese and Western pressures.

As Japan-China tensions continued, Seoul announced on August 28, 2023 that tritium castration in ocean water was well below the limit after Japan discharged water from 2011 into the ocean. In addition, according to the statement made by the South Korean President’s Office, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol had a seafood lunch on August 28, 2023 in order to alleviate public concerns about seafood. As it can be seen, although South Korea’s stance, on the other hand, could be interpreted as a sign that the situation is likely to take a political turn.

As a result, the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant’s water evacuation, which began on August 24, 2023, brought the long-standing tensions between Beijing and Tokyo to the surface once again. Despite the huge volume of bilateral trade, China’s suspension of seafood trade with Japan can be read as a sign that Beijing is no longer willing to turn a blind eye to Japanese and Western pressure. Russia and South Korea’s stance, on the other hand, could be interpreted as a sign that the situation is likely to take a political turn.

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Ankara Center for Crisis and Political Studies (ANKASAM) Security Advisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şafak Oğuz evaluated Kazakhstan’s recent work on nuclear disarmament and atomic energy for Khabar 24, one of Kazakhstan’s leading televisions.

ANKASAM Bulletin

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