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ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

Trump's Election Victory Echoes in Russian Press

Halit HAMZAOĞLU

Donald Trump returned to power after a four-year hiatus by winning the American presidential elections held on November 5. Trump's second presidential victory, unlike his first, took place in an international environment dominated by geopolitical turbulence and uncertainty.

The question of how Trump would affect the course of the international environment, which has a fragile foundation, was one of the main agenda items of the election. Because Trump and his team were making serious criticisms of Biden's foreign policy and talking about the potential of these policies to lead to a major war. During his election campaign, Trump emphasized "stopping the war" in his foreign policy discourses. Trump promised to end the war in Ukraine and the chaos in the Middle East, and emphasized that he would "prevent World War III" within this framework.

The November 5 American elections were strategically important, considering the fragile international environment. In particular, how Trump would organize his relations with China, Russia and Europe was the main focus of the discussions. In this context, the American elections were closely followed by the Russian press. In general, the Russian press covered Trump's victory based on the motto of ending the war emphasized in the election campaign.

One of Russia's leading publications, Rossiyskaya Gazeta, has underlined that Trump has given extensive space to the Ukraine issue in his election campaign. The article, written by Aleksandr Gasyuk and Igor Dunayevskiy, focuses on Trump's campaign rhetoric. The newspaper, which draws attention to Trump's intense criticism of the Biden administration regarding Ukraine, includes Trump's claim that Biden does not have the capacity to take action to resolve the Ukraine issue. The newspaper sought the views of one of Russia's leading experts, Fedor Lukyanov. According to Lukyanov; "The outcome of the American election will not change the world. Long-term problems and processes will not end. However, this election can be considered an important indicator of long-term change."[1]

The analysis published in Izvesiya by Igor Karamzin focuses on what Trump's victory means for Russia and Ukraine. The article mentions that during the election campaign, Trump repeatedly stated that he would end the conflict in Ukraine even before the inauguration ceremony on January 20, 2025. Denis Denisov, one of the experts consulted in the article, commented that Trump made various statements regarding the conflict in Ukraine during his election campaign, but that he did not think that Washington's policy would actually change much. In this context, he emphasized that Ukraine would continue to receive weapons and money. Denisov believes that he does not expect real negotiation proposals that would benefit Russia and that the conflict will therefore continue. [2]

The analysis published on November 7 in Interfax included interviews conducted by the publication's special correspondent Vyecheslav Terehov with two important experts. One of the experts, Viktoriya Juravleva, emphasized that she does not expect a radical change in the political and economic dimensions of Russian-American relations. According to Juravleva, there can be only one change in terms of bilateral relations: "Trump, with the support of Republicans in Congress, can stop providing resources to Ukraine. Without American support, Ukraine's military resources are already very low, and in this case, it would be possible to move on to some negotiations." Another expert, Alexei Arbatov, focused on the issue of nuclear disarmament. Arbatov emphasized that "Trump may even withdraw from the suspended New START Treaty completely. Arbatov also predicts that the emphasis on the militarization of space and the strengthening of cyber warfare potential will increase during Trump's second term as president."[3]

TASS refers to Trump's "peace through strength" rhetoric, which he repeatedly voiced during his election campaign. It emphasizes that Trump, unlike the Biden administration, has declared that he will not fuel wars in the world.

The news published in TASS on November 20 is quite remarkable. According to the TASS report; Trump may lift the sanctions against Russia once the conflict in Ukraine is over. According to a representative from Trump's transition team; the Trump administration will use a "mix of sticks and carrots" method when interacting with Russia regarding the Ukraine Crisis. However, the representative states that the same method will be applied to Ukraine. Therefore, he emphasizes that this method will not be focused solely on Russia and will not be "unilateral."[4]

Ria Novosti has included the views of Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov. Peskov emphasizes that they are cautious about Trump's second term as president. According to Peskov, "It would be 'political myopia' to make a prejudice about Trump's possible policy towards Russia, and in this context, the actions of the new administration after it takes office will be examined."[5]

The perspectives of the conflicts in Ukraine are prominent in the approaches of Russia's liberal-leaning publications Kommersant and Vedomosty to Trump's policies. Kommersant, reporting on the thoughts at the meeting of the Expert Institute for Social Research (EISI), writes that Trump is not a pro-Russian politician and therefore an American patriot from whom Russia should not expect "gifts." The participants of the meeting at the research center are also skeptical about the promises of the future US president to resolve the conflict in Ukraine. According to the information in Kommersant, although Russian officials are still cautious on this issue, they also have some positive expectations.[6]

Vedomosty emphasizes that Russia is cautious about Trump's election victory. The article, written by Nurlan Gasimov and Vladimir Kulagin, includes the views of Sergey Kislitsyin. According to Kislitsyin, "it is likely that Ukrainian sponsorship will decrease, and this is due to the US's position that it does not spend its federal budget on third parties." Kislitsyin emphasizes that Ukraine is a convenient tool for keeping the Europeans under control under the pretext of the "Russian threat."[7] In general, news and analysis in the Russian press approach Trump's relations with Russia with caution. However, it is possible to say that there is also an optimistic expectation regarding the solution of the Ukraine issue. This expectation is materialized in the context of harmonizing Russia's national interests with Trump's pragmatic perspective.

[1] *"Chto rezulaty viborov v SSA oznachayut dlya Rossiyii", Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 06.11.2024, https://rg.ru/2024/11/06/tramp-pobezhdaet-v-amerike.html, (Access Date: 20.11.2024).*

[2] *"Vtoroye prishestviye: chto znachit pobeda Trampa dlya Rossiyii i Ukrayini", Izvesiya, 06.11.2024, https://iz.ru/1786384/igor-karmazin/vtoroe-prishestvie-chto-znachit-pobeda-trampa-dlia-rossii- i-ukrainy, (Access Date: 20.11.2024).*

[3] *"Pobeda Barter: Nas jdut 'kacheli' v mirovoypolitike", Interfax, 07.11.2024, https://www.interfax.ru/russia/993625, (Access Date: 20.11.2024).*

[4] *"TASS: Tramp mojet snyat santtsyii s RF pri zaversheniyii konflikta na Ukraine", TASS, 20.11.2024, https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/22448403, (Access Date: 20.11.2024).*

[5] *"Peskov prizeval ne obolshatsya naschet budusheypolitiki Trumpa", Ria Novosti, 17.11.2024, https://ria.ru/20241117/peskov-1984251844.html, (Access Date: 20.11.2024).*

[6] *"Takoy Tramp nam ne nujen", Kommersant, 15.11.2024, https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/7299486?from=glavnoe_0, (Access Date: 20.11.2024).*

[7] *"Kak pobeda Trampa povliyayet na osnovniye konflikti v mire", Vedomosty, 07.11.2024, https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/articles/2024/11/07/1073421-kak-pobeda-trampa-povliyaet-na-konflikti-v-mire, (Access Date: 20.11.2024).*

ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

The Donald Trump Era and the Ukraine Crisis: Uncertainties and Implications for Transatlantic Relations

Prof. Dr. Murat Ercan

Donald Trump's re-election as the President of the United States of America (USA) after winning the November 5, 2024 elections has brought many uncertainties in the international arena. Trump, who challenged the conventional norms of the global system with his "America First" policy and shook traditional alliance relations during his first presidential term, is now considered by the international community as the harbinger of a major transformation in both the economic and political spheres. The international community's expectations stem not only from Trump's re-election to the presidency but also from the effects of the policies he implemented in his first term and the concern that the new promises he voiced in his election campaign will further reinforce these effects. A review of Trump's actions during his first presidential term reveals a series of decisions that had far-reaching effects on international relations and domestic politics:

- He decided to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement. Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement called into question the US's role as a global environmental leader and put international cooperation on environmental protection in jeopardy.
- He criticized the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and demanded European allies to increase their defense spending.
- In 2015, it unilaterally withdrew from the nuclear deal with Iran and decided to reimpose tough sanctions against Tehran. This decision caused new tensions in the Middle East.
- It launched a trade war against China and imposed high tariffs on that country.

- It gave great support to Israel. He signed the resolution declaring Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moved the US embassy to Jerusalem. The international community, especially Middle Eastern countries, reacted strongly to Trump's decision.
- He took a stance against global free trade agreements by withdrawing the US from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. He also criticized the World Trade Organization and demanded reform of this organization.
- He decided to withdraw his military presence in the Middle East. However, Trump's decision caused tensions in his relations with allies such as Britain and France in Europe.
- He advocated the construction of a wall on the Mexican border and started to implement harsh anti-immigrant policies.
- He preferred unilateral actions rather than multilateral diplomatic approaches.

Trump's campaign during the 2024 election process includes a series of promises based on the policies he implemented during his previous presidential term. In the eyes of the international community, these promises are interpreted as a continuation and deepening of Trump's policies in his second presidential term. In his election propaganda, Trump stated that he could quickly end the Russian-Ukrainian War and the Israeli-Palestinian War, and argued that solving these two global crises was one of his primary goals. This promise reflects Trump's view that his foreign policy approach is consistent with his predecessor and that conflicts should be resolved through more direct intervention. Trump also criticized NATO, arguing that the alliance does not fairly compensate its members for their defense spending, and emphasized that allies should pay their fair share. This approach is a reflection of Trump's critical attitude towards multilateral security agreements and stands out as a policy proposal that corrects the imbalances in NATO's current structure.

Another important promise in Trump's election propaganda is the increase in tariffs. His promise to increase tariffs by 200 percent, especially in the automobile sector, reveals his goal of strengthening the protectionist approach in US trade policies. This is a parallel approach to Trump's previous term when he advocated the need to reshape global trade. Another promise is to reintroduce the immigration policies he initiated during his first presidential term. In this context, Trump has promised to reintroduce strict policies to prevent illegal immigration, and during the election campaign, he argued that he planned to introduce comprehensive regulations to restrict immigration into the US. This attitude reinforces expectations that Trump will continue his harsh policies on domestic security and his anti-immigrant rhetoric. Trump's promises for his second presidential term are an extension of the policies he outlined in the first term of his presidency and promise profound change and transformation at the global and domestic policy level. They reflect Trump's strategic orientation to pursue a more isolationist and protectionist foreign policy, to be more selective in international alliances, and to take tough security measures in domestic policies.

The "America First" approach that Trump adopted during his first presidential term criticized the traditional leadership role of the United States in international crises and developed a perspective to redefine this role. With this policy, he rejects the notion that the United States should bear the bulk of the global security burden and calls on allied countries to assume more responsibility. With this approach, Trump has questioned the traditional mechanisms of cooperation in the transatlantic security structure and promoted a new power-sharing model. If Trump continues these policies in his second presidential term, his approach to the Ukraine Crisis could have a profound impact not only on the dynamics of the regional conflict but also on Europe's security architecture and the balance of NATO's functioning. Trump's policies in this context have the potential to reshape US priorities in its relations with NATO, its obligations towards Europe's defense capacity, and its leadership approach in international crisis management. In such a period, Trump's leadership style is likely to lead to structural changes in the international system by redefining the US role in the transatlantic alliance.

Throughout his first presidential term, Donald Trump has frequently criticized the US interventionist policies in global conflicts. In this context, the US withdrawal plans from Afghanistan, limited military operations in Syria, and harsh criticism of NATO allies can be considered concrete examples of Washington's efforts to lighten its global security burden. When this approach is evaluated in the context of the Russia-Ukraine War, a possible scenario is that Trump would reduce the direct leadership of the United States and demand that European countries take responsibility for the resolution of the conflict. Trump's criticism of NATO allies, especially his insistence on insufficient defense spending, reinforces the idea that Europe should assume more financial and military obligations towards Ukraine. This raises the possibility that Trump may adopt a policy of limiting or completely cutting US aid to Ukraine during his presidency. Such a strategy would force European countries to take a stronger leadership position, which could turn the Ukraine Crisis into a regional showdown between Europe and Russia. Trump's adoption of such a policy could create new tensions in transatlantic relations, while at the same time redefining the US global leadership role and paving the way for structural changes.

Trump's past Russia policies and his relations with Putin could have a profound impact on the international dimensions of the Ukraine Crisis. Trump's soft tone towards Putin has caused great controversy not only in US domestic politics but also worldwide. This suggests that Trump's approach to the Ukraine Crisis may become more complex and reshape the current global dynamics. In particular, Trump's emphasis on his relations with Putin and his failure to take a tough enough stance against Russia's aggressive policies are interpreted by the international community as a shift away from the traditional US strategic approach towards Russia.

In his second presidential term, Trump is likely to pursue a more restrained policy on the Ukraine Crisis. Such an approach could lead to a scenario in which the US avoids direct involvement in the conflict and the burden is largely shifted to European countries. However, this could raise serious questions about the continuity of the transatlantic alliance and Europe's security. The withdrawal of the United States from a leadership role could put Europe in a more isolated position vis-à-vis Russia, requiring European countries to pursue an independent strategy in dealing with the crisis. This would mean greater European isolation vis-à-vis Russia and would require European countries to pursue a more independent path against Russia. This could hurt NATO's unity and effectiveness.

In such a scenario, Russia's strategic calculations should also be carefully considered. In an environment of US withdrawal and a more isolated Europe, Moscow is likely to perceive Europe as a weaker threat. This perception may lead Russia to take bolder steps in maintaining or expanding its aggressive policies in Ukraine. Thus, Trump's potential policies on the Ukraine Crisis could have profound and long-term implications not only for the future of transatlantic relations and European security arrangements but also for Russia's regional strategic objectives.

Trump's energy policies are of strategic importance in the context of the Russia-Ukraine War. During his first presidential term, Trump adopted a strategy of self-sufficiency in energy production and treated the US energy independence as a national security issue. Accordingly, he pursued various policies to increase energy production. While strengthening the US position in the global energy market, these policies had the potential to provide an alternative source for Europe's energy security. However, Trump's strategy was criticized because it would impose a financial burden on European countries. In the context of the Ukraine Crisis, Trump's energy policies are likely to support efforts to reduce Europe's energy dependence on Russia. In particular, he may be expected to encourage the supply of energy to Europe by increasing liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports. However, demanding a greater economic contribution from European countries in this process could create tensions in transatlantic relations. In such a situation, European countries could be in a weak position in terms of energy costs and strategic leadership in addressing the Ukraine Crisis. This could increase Europe's vulnerability to energy crises while at the same time reshaping US influence over Europe. Trump's energy policies could have important implications not only for the economic dimension but also for international security and transatlantic solidarity.

Another important issue is the possibility of a significant change in the dynamics of transatlantic relations as the US leadership role in the Russia-Ukraine War diminishes. In particular, Trump's criticism of NATO allies and his demands on defense spending within the alliance could lead to discussions questioning NATO's very existence. This will lead European countries to increase their defense capacities and develop an independent strategy. European countries will also need to increase their capacity to defend themselves against the security crisis with Russia, which will bring the European Army debate back to the agenda. However, these efforts may create new tensions within Europe in terms of resource allocation and political consensus. Under the influence of Trump's policies, it may become more difficult for European countries to formulate a common strategy to address the Ukraine Crisis. This could lead to deeper disagreements, especially in the area of security and defense policies, and complicate the process of building a common European defense force.

While the creation of a European Army aims to increase defense cooperation among EU members, different military capabilities and political priorities could increase the obstacles to this process. Indeed, while Trump's policies towards the transatlantic alliance have created some problems, they also offer European countries an opportunity to test themselves in terms of improving their defense capacities and strengthening defense integration. However, the uncertainty over who will control the management of the European Army, which is planned to be created within the scope of common defense, will inevitably lead to debates among member states where populism is influential. These debates could deepen divisions in Europe, leading to new crises and a weak stance against Russia.

As a result, Trump's possible policies toward the Ukraine War risk turning the conflict into a regional showdown between Europe and Russia. Within the framework of the "America First" approach, Trump questions the global leadership role of the United States and demands more responsibility from its allies. While this approach encourages European countries to take more responsibility in the Russia-Ukraine War, it also causes serious uncertainties in international security balances. The level of cohesion and cooperation of European countries in the face of this crisis is critical for the future functioning and resilience of the Western alliance. Trump's policies can be interpreted as reshaping not only the international position of the United States but also the basic structure of the transatlantic relationship.

ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

Coalition Government Crisis and Its Future in Germany

Sena BİRİNCİ

The year 2024 has become a pivotal moment marked by political crises and economic challenges in Germany. The government, known as the "Traffic Light Coalition," is effectively in a state of collapse. The downfall of the coalition became clear when Chancellor Olaf Scholz removed Christian Lindner, the Finance Minister from the Free Democratic Party (FDP), from his position and subsequently called for a vote of confidence.

The government can no longer secure a majority in parliament, and Scholz[1] will continue in office as a minority government until the confidence vote scheduled for January. If he loses the vote, early elections will be held in Germany. The early elections, expected in February 2025, are seen as a harbinger of significant changes in German politics.

The collapse of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's three-party coalition government has reopened discussions on both the domestic political dynamics within the country and Germany's international role as the largest economy in the EU. This situation will not only trigger a search for new leadership but also lead to a process of redefining Germany's domestic and foreign policy priorities.

Scholz's "Traffic Light Coalition" formed with the Social Democrats, Greens, and Free Democrats, initially set out with a promise of modernization.[2]However, deep disagreements over economic policies have exposed the fragile nature of the coalition. While there have been some successes in responding to the energy crisis and implementing social reforms, economic stagnation, rising debt restrictions, and proposals to cut social benefits have hindered the search for a common path forward.

The dissolution of the coalition was largely due to the inability to reconcile differing economic approaches. While Scholz advocated for borrowing to fund energy transition, welfare policies, and geopolitical responsibilities, Lindner's Free Democratic Party insisted on fiscal discipline and tax cuts. This impasse paralyzed the government, increasing public dissatisfaction.[3]

Chancellor Olaf Scholz's dismissal of Finance Minister Christian Lindner marks the peak of disagreements over budget discussions and the coalition's core policy priorities. Additionally, external threats such as potential tariffs from the United States and competition with China further complicate Germany's export-driven economy.[4]In light of economic stagnation, rising populism, and shifting international dynamics, the risks and responsibilities for Germany's new leadership are becoming increasingly significant.

While Scholz is not expected to secure the confidence vote, Friedrich Merz, leader of the Christian Democrats, appears to be a strong candidate for Chancellor in the upcoming early elections.[5] However, the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party is also gaining attention in the race. Particularly in the eastern states, their rising popularity, anti-government rhetoric, and anti-immigrant policies suggest that the AfD could significantly increase its vote share compared to previous elections.[6]This could accelerate the fragmentation of the political center in Germany and weaken the country's democratic stance in Europe.

Germany's political uncertainty could have repercussions not only within the country but also across Europe. The rise of the far-right could threaten solidarity within the EU, and Germany's military support for Ukraine and its leadership in EU policies may come under scrutiny. Additionally, the collapse of the Scholz government could lead to a loss of trust in environmental parties like the Greens, weakening the focus on global climate goals. In this context, the political structure that emerges after Germany's early elections has the potential to be a turning point, not only for the country but for all of Europe.

In this period, where polls show a lead for Friedrich Merz and the far-right AfD is gaining support, the elections could fundamentally alter Germany's political landscape. However, a fragmented government structure and the ongoing process of complex coalition negotiations remain. A government under Merz's leadership could likely form a grand coalition with the Social Democratic Party. In the process of economic recovery and defining Europe's role on the global stage, this uncertainty calls for decisive leadership.[7]

Experts suggest that this situation was inevitable for Germany, but the timing has been unfortunate for the EU. The potential re-election of Trump highlights the need for Europe to strengthen its security and defense policies. The political turmoil in Germany coinciding with Trump's possible return to office has created greater strategic concerns in Europe. As the US is likely to pursue a more inward-focused policy, the leadership vacuum in Germany could create significant vulnerabilities in Europe's security and economic policies. Furthermore, this crisis, occurring during a time of rising populist movements and far-right factions, could pose an even greater threat to Europe's unity and resilience.

In conclusion, the collapse of Germany's three-party coalition has become a critical development affecting both domestic and European political and economic stability. The downfall of the "Traffic Light Coalition" is pushing Germany toward early elections, marking a significant period that will reshape the country's political direction. Chancellor Olaf Scholz's dismissal of the finance minister following a crisis of confidence within the government has brought an end to the coalition and raised the prospect of early elections. This situation has left Germany facing a leadership vacuum, creating serious uncertainty regarding both the unity and resilience of Europe.

The main conflict within the coalition stemmed from the 2025 budget and fiscal discipline. Scholz's policy of relaxing the debt brake rule to increase public spending could not be reconciled with FDP leader Christian Lindner's proposals for tax cuts and reductions in social spending. This conflict has left critical issues such as social welfare policies and defense spending uncertain, especially during a period when Germany's economic growth has stagnated.

The resolution of the political crisis in Germany will not only shape the country's internal politics but also influence the future direction of Europe. The formation of a new government and the establishment of stable leadership are crucial for Germany to maintain its central role in Europe. Scholz's pursuit of a temporary solution with a minority government may alleviate the current crisis, but in the long term, it highlights the necessity of either a new coalition or early elections.

[1] "Five things to know about Germany's government crisis", AP News, https://apnews.com/article/germany-politics-government-collapse-new-elections-a316c7317ae47a3c6320c6902846f574, (Access Date: 18.11.2024).
[2] Ibid.
[3] Kate Connolly, "Why has Germany's government collapsed and what happens next?", The Guardian, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/nov/07/why-germany-government-collapsed-what-happens-next,
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[4] Ibid.
[5] Liv Stroud, "How the German government's collapse impacts the EU", Euronews, https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/11/07/how-the-german-governments-collapse-impacts-the-eu, (Access Date: 18.11.2024).
[6] Ido Vock & Damien McGuinness, "German coalition collapses after Scholz fires key minister", BBC, https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c7v3r046pzzo, (Access Date: 18.11.2024).
[7] Ibid.

ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

Turkey-Iraq Energy Diplomacy and Its Future

Ömer Faruk PEKGÖZ

In addition to bilateral neighborly relations and cultural bridges, relations between Türkiye and Iraq are rooted in the Crude Oil Pipeline Agreement signed on August 27, 1973.[1] Despite the geopolitical developments in the region, particularly the First Gulf War since the first delivery in 1976, oil has been as important a bridge as the security diplomacy between the Turkish and Iraqi governments.

The Iraq-Türkiye Crude Oil Pipeline was commissioned in 1976.[2] It connects the Kirkuk oil fields in Iraq to the Turkish port of Ceyhan on the Mediterranean coast of Türkiye, with a total length of approximately 970 kilometers. The system, consisting of two parallel pipes, initially had a capacity of 1.6 million barrels/day. However, over time, this capacity could not be fully utilized due to conflicts, infrastructure problems and political disputes in the region. The strategic importance of the line stems from the fact that it is the main route through which Iraq realizes a large portion of its oil exports. The viability of the line has greatly diminished, especially due to the Gulf wars, the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the post-2014 threat of the State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS).

The main problem of the line in the recent period was the decision of the International Court of Arbitration in 2022 and the subsequent closure of the line by Türkiye. This court decision stemmed from the dispute between the Iraqi central government and Türkiye over oil exports from northern Iraq. The court considered Türkiye's export of oil from Northern Iraq without Iraq's consent as a violation of international law.[3] However, Fatih Dönmez, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of the Republic of Türkiye, stated that 4 of the 5 applications made by the Iraqi Central Government were rejected and only 1 was accepted.[4] Following the decision, the line was closed in March 2023 and oil trade between Iraq and Türkiye came to a standstill. This situation negatively affected both Iraq's oil export revenues and Türkiye's income from energy transportation. In particular, Iraq lost approximately 450,000 barrels of oil exports per day.

Although it is known that Türkiye has fulfilled its technical obligations (maintenance, repair, line revisions, etc.), it can be said that the decision of the arbitration court was against Türkiye for not taking an interlocutor other than the central government based on the 1973 agreement. The arbitration process started with the lawsuit filed by the Iraqi Central Government (Baghdad) against Türkiye in 2014.

The main ground of the case was that Türkiye was exporting oil through the Kirkuk-Ceyhan Pipeline with the approval of the Kurdish Regional Government of Northern Iraq (KRG). In 2014, after DAESH terrorist organization captured some of the Iraqi territory, especially the oil fields, the KRG illegally operated these fields under the name of anti-terrorist operations for a period of time in its favor and sold them to Türkiye. As a result, regardless of the arbitration case or which side is right, it is well known that the line, which has been closed for years, has caused serious costs to both countries and affected stability in the region.

It is obvious that one of the biggest reasons for the oil crisis in the region is that there is still no agreement between Erbil and Baghdad. The lack of full agreement between the KRG and the Iraqi government on the production and transportation costs of oil is seen as one of the biggest obstacles to oil exports.[5] It is even known that there is no agreement on the daily production. For this reason, it is estimated that Iraq has suffered a revenue loss of 19-20 billion dollars since the process started in 2023. Although 90% of the Iraqi Central Government's budget consists of oil export expenditures, the deprivation of both the region and the global market from Iraqi oil affects stability. From Türkiye's perspective, it is known that an average of 120 million barrels flowed annually in the 2018-2022 period and a transit fee of $1-2 per barrel was collected from transit revenues. However, with additional revenues, it can be said that a relative revenue loss of five hundred million dollars was experienced from the closure of the line.

Finally, Türkiye stated that the issue should be resolved within the scope of the Development Road Project and that the parties should reach a solution through dialogue.[6] In fact, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan's statement that there would be no imposition on the Iraqi Central Government's choice of border crossing for the Development Road Project was the biggest indicator that Türkiye fulfilled its obligations. In June 2024, Iraqi Oil Minister Hayan Abdul Ghani said that progress had been made in talks with Kurdish Regional Government officials and representatives of international companies operating there on the resumption of oil exports to Türkiye via the Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline. "We have made progress in the talks," Abdel Ghani said in an interview with state-run Iraqiya TV.[7]

As a result, Türkiye has been pursuing a policy of balance in Iraq for years and has gained important experience in this regard. The failure to reach an agreement between the two governments over the oil is among the biggest reasons for the line to remain closed. In addition, the lack of consensus between international companies and governments is seen as a major technical obstacle. In terms of energy infrastructure in the region, Türkiye has the opportunity to play a leading role in the development of a regional interconnected system that is not limited to oil. Increasing interconnection inertia would increase energy stability in the region and could have a say in the region's thirst and climate problems, which have been very much in effect in the last 5 years. In addition to the fight against terrorism and security files, the problem of thirst, which is the biggest obstacle to stability in the region, has visibly disrupted welfare and shaken social dynamics within Iraq. Türkiye's economic policies that will pave the way for the Turkish private sector to invest in the region, along with the sharing of water resources, the reopening of the oil pipeline and energy investments, will be the biggest diplomatic bridge between Turkey and Iraq in the coming years.

[1] "Transit Boru Hatları", T.C. Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanlığı, https://t.ly/Gzvn2, (Date Accession: 22.11.2024).
[2] "Ham Petrol", BOTAŞ, https://www.botas.gov.tr/Sayfa/ham-petrol/13, (Date Accession: 22.11.2024).
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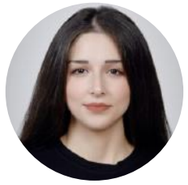
ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

G20 Summit in the Perspective of the Global South and "Low Politics"



Zeynep Çağla ERİN

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres' message at the G20 Summit, which took place on November 18-19, 2024, was notable for its call for leadership to address the multidimensional crises facing the global system. In Guterres' words, G20 countries should stand out not only for their economic and diplomatic power, but also for their primary responsibility in finding solutions to global problems.[1]

The Secretary-General emphasized the need for a faster and more effective approach to tackle key global challenges such as the climate crisis, conflicts, impunity, inequality, hunger and poverty. In this regard, the economic and environmental challenges faced by developing countries and the West-centric and unfair structure of the current international financial system were criticized. In particular, the inadequacy of this system's capacity to respond to the needs of developing countries draws attention to the growing demands of the Global South.[2]

Guterres' call for concrete and ambitious financing targets to address the climate crisis demonstrates once again the central role of low politics on the international agenda. Issues such as climate change, inequalities and access to technology are not just problems for governments; they are critical areas for the international community to regain legitimacy. The demands of the Global South and the issues of low politics are among the key elements that will determine the success of this leadership. The Summit has the potential to be a critical turning point not only for addressing current challenges, but also for restoring the credibility and sustainability of the global system.

In parallel with Guterres, Chinese President Xi Jinping stated that the G20 should assume a leadership role in a time of transformation and presented a vision titled "Building a Just World of Shared Development". The themes of Xi's speech centered on accelerating the development of developing countries, bridging the North-South divide and addressing inequalities in the international system.[3]

Xi laid out his country's global leadership ambitions and proposed concrete strategies to achieve these goals. In this context, making the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) more inclusive, increasing development support to the countries of the Global South and deepening cooperation with Africa were among China's priorities. In addition, China's success in lifting 800 million people out of poverty was presented as a model for developing countries, and sharing this experience with other countries would contribute to global poverty reduction efforts. These approaches offer a vision that prioritizes economic development, environmental protection, digital transformation and multilateralism, in line with the G20 theme "Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet". The eight concrete action plans put forward by President Xi provide important clues on how to make this transformation tangible:[4]

1. Sustaining BRI with High Quality Collaboration

China aims to transform the BRI into a multidimensional network of connectivity to promote green development and strengthen digitalization. In particular, infrastructure development and the integration of the digital economy aim to enhance global economic cooperation.

2. Implementation of the Global Development Initiative

Ensuring the functionality of the Global South Research Center and developing concrete cooperation projects for developing countries in areas such as poverty alleviation, food security and the digital economy are among the priorities on China's international development agenda.

3. Supporting African Development

The ten partnership actions announced at the Summit of the China-Africa Cooperation Forum Summit held in Beijing on September 4-6, 2024 demonstrate China's determination to deepen strategic partnership relations with the continent by providing financial support to Africa's modernization efforts.

4. Strengthening International Cooperation on Poverty Reduction and Food Security

China's support for the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty is seen as a step towards taking a leadership role in this area. In addition, China's commitment to ensure the continuity of the G20 Development Ministers' Meeting and to host the International Conference on Food Loss and Waste underscores the importance China attaches to these issues.

5. Initiative for International Cooperation in Open Science

China, together with Brazil, the Republic of South Africa and the African Union, has proposed the Open Science Initiative to increase the Global South's access to advances in science, technology and innovation. This initiative aims to engage developing countries in global scientific endeavors.

6. Promoting Practical Cooperation Mechanisms for the Global South

Support for the Beijing-based G20 Economies Entrepreneurship Research Centre and cooperation on digital education and digitization of museums and archives reflect China's willingness to promote sustainable development in cultural and technological fields.

7. Anti-Corruption and Security Policies

Within the framework of the G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan, China's efforts to strengthen cooperation with developing countries on issues such as extradition of fugitives, asset recovery and enhancing anti-corruption capacity are critical to building international security.

8. Opening-up Policies for Least Developed Countries

China has decided to apply zero-tariff trade treatment to less developed countries with which it has diplomatic relations, demonstrating its aim to deepen trade and development cooperation. This policy is seen as a concrete step towards reducing economic disparities and increasing trade integration.

The Summit focused on the Alliance Against Global Hunger and tackling critical challenges such as hunger and climate change, in light of rising geopolitical tensions and the unexpected return of Donald Trump to the US Presidency. The President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, opened the summit with a speech emphasizing that hunger is an existential threat to humanity, calling it a stain on humanity. Bringing together more than 80 countries, multinational banks and charitable organizations, the Government of Brazil stated that hunger and poverty are problems that are not only linked to famine but also to political decisions.[5]

With the Covid-19 pandemic pushing nearly 150 million people worldwide to the brink of starvation, G20 leaders are trying to find solutions to the food security problems caused by the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East. In addition to addressing this problem, Lula aims to promote various mechanisms to finance social programs to address malnutrition.[6] In the same regard, the leaders addressed the food crisis in Gaza, expressed concern about the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories, highlighted the tensions in Lebanon and called for a ceasefire that would allow citizens on both sides to return safely to their homes.[7]

This year's summit reflected the high stakes in international diplomacy as well as leaders' efforts to connect pressing local issues with the needs of the global community. International taxation, climate reform, and aid to war-torn regions took center stage at the summit, particularly as the G20 has undergone changes under the Donald Trump administration. Trump's re-election has led to proposals for fundamental changes in economic policies, especially in the context of negotiations and possible trade wars centered on Russia and Ukraine. Trump's skeptical approach to multilateral engagement risks weakening efforts on issues such as climate change and global poverty.[8]

The Summit reflected Brazilian President Lula's hope to restore multilateral cooperation. G20 delegates also engaged in an important dialogue on relations between their countries and on developing solutions to common goals at the global level. Tax reforms for rich countries and reparations for the Global South were among the key topics of discussion at the summit. The discussions on green energy transitions and climate policy were shaped by Brazil's vision, which is in opposition to the policies pursued by the Trump administration.

At the summit, former US President Joe Biden pledged a $50 million contribution to the Amazon Fund and supported his country's environmental protection efforts. In addition, the war crises in Ukraine and Palestine were heavily felt at the summit. With the prolongation of the war, the Biden administration increased military support to Ukraine and approved the procurement of long-range missile systems. The fact that Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov attended the summit instead of President Vladimir Putin reveals that diplomatic tensions were brought to the summit and the power struggle in international relations continued. In addition, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, concerned about relations with China, called for a more cautious approach to security risks arising from Chinese investments.[9]

On the sidelines of the meeting, Starmer held a face-to-face meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. This was the first direct contact between the British leader and the Chinese President since 2018. The main objective of the meeting was to emphasize the importance of strengthening UK-China relations and to reinforce cooperation between the two countries. Starmer stated that the cooperation with China should be in line with the UK's national interests and that the relations will be maintained in a stable and respectful manner. He also said that surprise developments in bilateral relations should be avoided and proposed a more comprehensive meeting between the leaders of both countries. Xi, on the other hand, said that the two countries should share the responsibility of dealing with global challenges and emphasized that their strategic partnership should be developed based on mutual respect, openness and the win-win principle. This development at the G20 Summit is considered as an important step towards the restoration of high-level diplomatic relations between the UK and China.[10]

The G20 Summit on November 18-19, 2024 highlights the efforts of global leaders to tackle multi-layered crises and the demands of the Global South. Guterres' call emphasizes the need to lead not only with economic and diplomatic power, but also with an understanding of fair and effective global governance. The climate crisis, inequalities, poverty and poverty alleviation issues highlighted by Guterres make clear the increasing demands of the Global South on the existing international system and the need for a more inclusive approach to meet these demands.

Xi's vision emphasizes the need to strengthen cooperation with developing countries and narrow the North-South divide, in line with the G20 theme "Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet". China's concrete steps to increase development support to developing countries are an important contribution to addressing inequalities in the global economy. In this context, major projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative will deepen global integration and promote sustainable development.

Lula's emphasis on hunger and poverty throughout the summit underscored the need for the G20 to take a leadership role in developing long-term solutions to the global hunger crisis. Themes such as strengthening international cooperation, tax reforms and environmental justice dominated the summit and are key elements that will shape future global governance processes.

In conclusion, the G20 Summit demonstrated that global leaders have a great responsibility to adopt a more equitable approach to the demands of developing countries. This summit not only called for an economic restructuring, but is considered a major step towards achieving global justice and promoting sustainable development. The future of the Global South will be shaped by a transformation based on strengthening such multilateral cooperation and meeting the needs of developing countries.

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ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

Romanian Elections: Europe's New Meloni

Sena BİRİNCİ

Romania is entering an important turning point in European politics with the 2024 Presidential Elections. The first round of the elections was held on November 24, and 13 candidates competed in the election. Since no candidate received an absolute majority, the second round will be held on December 8.[1] The elections are of great importance not only for the country's domestic politics but also for the future direction of the European Union (EU).

Before the second round, parliamentary elections will also take place on December 1. This could change the country's political landscape. Social Democratic Party (PSD) Leader and Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu is leading in the polls. Ciolacu, who aims to increase Romania's international reputation and economic growth, said: "I have a clear plan for a more developed Romania, based on economic growth and investment, that leaves no one behind, and I have a plan for a Romania that is more respected and influential abroad."**[2]**He continued his election campaign with his statements.

Among the candidates, the leader of the Alliance for the Unity of Romania (AUR) and far-right nationalist ultra-nationalist George Simion stands out with his striking populist rhetoric and tough stance against the EU. If Simion wins the election, it is eagerly awaited how Romania's relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its position within the EU will shape. Simion criticizes the current political class, promises to defend the economy and national sovereignty, rejects military aid to Ukraine and supports Donald Trump. While the high cost of living and support for Ukraine are among the voters' priorities, Ciolacu's government has tried to combat economic hardship by increasing the minimum wage and pensions.[3]

Simion, one of the main candidates in the elections, positions himself on the political line of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and US President-elect Donald Trump. Simion states that the AUR Party he leads is a Trumpist party, while at the same time expressing his pleasure that his party is aligned with the political family led by Meloni. Simion claims that Meloni has brought hope back to the European project in Italy, and that there is a "Meloni effect" in Europe and that he will create a "Simion effect" in Romania.

Simion states that Romania will continue its commitment to NATO and will work to reform the EU. However, he does not hesitate to openly state that he will take a tougher stance against Brussels. Simion, who says that he can violate EU rules, states that he will oppose any law that is against Romania's interests. Despite this, he stated that he has priorities such as full access to the Schengen Area, the establishment of a directly elected executive body in Europe and the increase of industrial production.

The AUR Party has been known for its anti-vaccine stance during the Covid-19 pandemic and has drawn criticism for some of its controversial statements.[4]Despite criticism, Simion says he defends conservative values and will work for a stronger Europe. His defiant stance towards Brussels shows that he is taking a closer approach to the policies of leaders such as Viktor Orbán.

Simion also advocates stopping military aid to Ukraine and brokering a peace deal through Trump. He hints that this deal could require territorial concessions from Ukraine, but says he has not directly called for such a deal. Simion also denies having ties to Russia and calls Vladimir Putin a "war criminal."[5] The 38-year-old candidate, founder of the AUR Party, who also said, "I want Romanians to feel that leaders are not just rule-takers, but rule-makers," is a name banned from entering Moldova and Ukraine.[6] However, this stance could significantly affect Romania's position within the EU and the political balances in the region.

Other major candidates include Elena Lasconi, leader of the Save Romania Union Party, former NATO Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoana, and former army general and center-right party candidate Nicolae Ciuca. The split in the center-right vote is likely to increase the support of Elena Lasconi, who is in third place. These center-right candidates make it difficult to predict the election outcome.

In the parliamentary elections, PSD is expected to come first with 30 percent of the vote. AUR is in second place with 21 percent. [7]Alternatively, a coalition between the PSD and the AUR could radically change Romania's position in the EU and NATO, but the PSD's promise to exclude the AUR could also raise the possibility of early elections.

In summary, Romania is entering a critical period in which it will evaluate the possibility of remaining on a pro-European line or shifting to a more nationalist orientation with the first round of the presidential elections taking place on November 24. The first round of the elections has been a decisive stage for the country's political future. This process may be effective in determining Romania's position within the EU and its support for Ukraine.

Romania's new president will face challenges including a slowing European economy, the need to reduce a high budget deficit and pressure to meet NATO spending targets. According to polls, leftist Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu is likely to win the second round on December 8. However, the strong second place of right-winger George Simion could affect the composition of the government. High living costs and domestic concerns make him particularly popular on the right. Ciolacu's government has tried to improve the economy with social benefits. However, the split in the centre-right vote is improving the chances of alternative candidates but also making the incumbent president's situation much more difficult.

Romania's election process could have a decisive impact on foreign policy. One of the strongest candidates in the election, Marcel Ciolacu, has also stated that he will maintain ties with the West. On the other hand, far-right candidates such as George Simion are advocating for Romania to pursue a more independent foreign policy, particularly by questioning military aid to Ukraine and the influence of the EU. If these candidates win, Romania could follow a less integrationist path in foreign policy. Romania's foreign policy could shift to a more pro-Western or independent stance depending on the election results. Therefore, this election will be an important turning point that will shape Romania's future policies.

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ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

China's Active Role at the APEC Summit

Simay GÜZEL

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) 2024 Summit was held on November 16, 2024 in Lima, Peru, and ended with decisions focused on economic inclusion, sustainability and digital transformation. Chinese President Xi Jinping was also present at the summit, along with many other leaders and heads of state. Unlike other participants, China made a strong entrance to the summit with a red carpet welcome and played an active role throughout the summit.[1]

In his speech at the summit, Xi stated that the world is entering a period of turbulent transformation and in response to recent criticism that China's growth rate is slowing down expressed his confidence that China will achieve its economic growth targets, while also noting that the stability of global supply chains must be maintained.[2]Calling for increased solidarity and cooperation despite the current developments in the Asia-Pacific, China emerged as a leading actor at the summit in line with its discourses on economic growth, digital transformation, sustainability and bilateral relations. It can be said that its strategic economic leadership, strong bilateral relations and initiatives in the field of environmental sustainability enabled it to play an effective role at the summit.

China's economic strategies have played a central role in APEC's trade and investment agenda. China's contributions to the APEC agenda in this regard are aimed at ensuring that the Asia-Pacific remains an attractive region for trade and investment. China supports APEC's goals of creating a free, open and relatively inclusive trading environment, and in the same line, China has announced that it will continue to support the World Trade Organization's multilateral trading system. [3] In this context, it can be observed that there is a concerted effort to take the lead, particularly in increasing the resilience of supply chains and promoting the digitalization of trade.

China's activity in this regard can be seen as a reflection of its efforts to consolidate its economic leadership in the Asia-Pacific region. Advocating the removal of barriers to international trade, China has deepened its economic ties with Latin America and developed policies in line with the Belt and Road Initiative. The progress made in regional integration and logistics infrastructure through various projects in Peru prior to the summit were factors that strengthened Xi's presence at the summit.

China has strengthened its bilateral relations with many countries in the region, especially Peru, which hosted the summit, and supported these relations with infrastructure projects and economic cooperation agreements. In the most recent example, large-scale infrastructure projects in Peru have demonstrated that China is making concrete contributions to APEC's inclusive growth goals. In particular, initiatives such as the development of the Chancay Port have increased China's economic influence in the region.

In addition to its economic impact, it can be observed that China's diplomatic approach stands out as an example of leadership that encourages cooperation among APEC members. China's adoption of a harmonized cooperation model with both developed and developing countries within the APEC framework has been a factor advancing regional integration goals. As a result, China has adopted a policy that has strengthened its position as not only an economic but also a diplomatic leader. China's encouragement of multilateral participation in trade negotiations has also been more decisive and result-oriented compared to the other economies in the region.

One of China's most talked about and most effective moves in recent times has been its breakthroughs in the field of environment and green energy. This issue was also the topic of the summit. The summit provided an important platform where sustainable development and environment-oriented policies were discussed. China has demonstrated its leadership in this area with its statements on clean energy and low carbon incentives. China's policies in this context set an example for both developing countries and large economies.

An important element of China's influence at the 2024 APEC Summit has been its digital transformation leadership. China aimed to accelerate economic development by taking a leading role, particularly in digital inclusion and technological innovation. While efforts to strengthen digital infrastructure in developing countries have increased regional solidarity, China's technology-oriented policies have again set an example for other countries in the transition to a digital economy. In his speech at the summit, Xi Jinping announced the launch of the "Global Cross-Border Data Flow Cooperation Initiative" and called for stronger cooperation to promote secure data flow.[4]

With its "Global Initiative on Data Security" announced in 2020, China has proposed inclusive approaches to global data governance instead of digital hegemony initiatives that prioritize countries' self-interests. These steps reflected China's effort to protect data security and take a proactive role in setting international data governance rules, while taking a stance against US digital supremacy strategies (such as the Cross-Border Privacy Rules system, which China was not included in). In this respect, it is possible to argue that China continues to show leadership with a new initiative in the field of data security, both to ensure its own digital development and to shape global data protection standards.

China's involvement in the APEC 2024 Summit was also noteworthy in the context of the global balance of power. Some media reports suggested that Xi's presence at APEC overshadowed US President Biden[5] The comparison that Xi was welcomed with a red carpet while Biden was not given such a special welcome, and the fact that China has filled the void left by the fact that Biden did not pay as much attention to Latin America as other regions during his presidency, can be interpreted as factors that strengthen these statements. From Xi's visit to Lima to the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro, China's economic diplomacy is expected to be supported by concrete cooperation and agreements, while the US is not expected to catch up with China in terms of economic steps in this critical process.[6] This can be characterized as a factor that will strengthen China's presence in the region after the summit.

China has taken steps to consolidate its leadership in the future as an actor promoting APEC's core values. When China hosted APEC, first in 2001 and then again in 2014, it was in a very different situation, and considering this year's summit, it can be said that each summit has witnessed a much stronger China. Speaking at the 31st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Lima, the capital of Peru, Xi announced that China will host APEC leaders in 2026.[7] Xi announced that he looks forward to working with all parties to deepen Asia-Pacific cooperation for the benefit of the people of the region,[8] signaling that he is preparing to host the APEC Summit again with an important mission. This mission is to bring Asia-Pacific countries together to advocate for open economic and trade cooperation while rejecting protectionist and confrontational trade tactics.

In conclusion, the 2024 APEC Summit provided an opportunity for China to showcase its economic leadership, advance its environmental sustainability policies and set an example in digital transformation. With its trade, technology and environment-oriented policies, China has increased its influence not only in the Asia-Pacific region but also on the global economic order. Its diplomatic capabilities and effectiveness in multilateral cooperation mechanisms enabled China to demonstrate strong leadership at the APEC Summit. These achievements demonstrate China's commitment to achieving its long-term global goals and its potential to enhance regional cooperation, while consolidating its position as a leading actor in economic growth, inclusiveness and sustainability, in line with APEC's goals.

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ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

Istanbul Energy Forum

Ömer Faruk PEKGÖZ

Istanbul Energy Forum, which launched on 22 November, 2024, is transforming into a concortium intention in favour of increasing the regional cooperations. The Istanbul Energy Forum, which also involves the participation of the business world, was attended by regional ministers.

Among the participating ministers were Azerbaijan's Minister of Energy Parviz Shahbazov, Bulgaria's Minister of Energy Vladimir Malinov, Hungary's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijjarto, Moldova's Minister of Energy Victor Parlicov, Russia's Deputy Minister of Energy Pavel Sorokin, and Serbia's Minister of Mining and Energy Dubravka Djedovic Handanovic. The forum addressed critical topics such as regional energy security, new technologies for energy transition, smart energy systems, and financing energy transformation. Participating ministers shared their experiences and insights on these issues.[1]

Following COP29, hosting such a major event with high-level regional actors is of utmost importance. Discussions at the ministerial level, particularly between Turkey and Azerbaijan, have consistently revisited topics such as the integration of the Zangezur Corridor into the interconnected system and increasing potential green energy investments in Azerbaijan. In addition to the dialogue aspect of energy diplomacy, investments focusing on technical aspects enhance sustainable collaborations. After the Karabakh War victory, renewable energy investments have become key to the region's rural development.[2] Azerbaijan's connection to the European interconnection system via Turkey not only strengthens relations but also bolsters energy security resilience.

On another front, initiatives related to the transportation of Turkmen gas to the European market through Turkey, first proposed in 2022 under a Memorandum of Understanding[3], were also discussed. Minister Bayraktar announced during the forum that efforts and operations in this regard had commenced. Previously, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Alparslan Bayraktar, stated that an initial volume of up to 2 billion cubic meters of Turkmen gas could be transported to Turkey[4] .While this volume increases Turkey's regulatory leverage as a transit country, there are concerns that investments funded by transit revenues may exacerbate energy dependency.

Another critical topic discussed at the forum was strategies for achieving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions. When compared globally to developed nations, Turkey requires significant progress in energy efficiency. However, substantial steps have been taken in recent years, particularly with projects aimed at energy conservation in public buildings. For example, Turkey adopted its National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP) in 2018, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 21% by 2030. Investments in energy efficiency are crucial to achieving these targets.[5]

In 2020, Turkey's energy efficiency index score was approximately 4.8, compared to the European Union average of 5.4. The greatest potential for improvement in Turkey lies in public buildings and the industrial sector, where energy efficiency investments are expected to generate annual savings of $30 billion.[6]Monitoring energy efficiency and conservation as a consistent national policy is more critical than many geopolitical gains Turkey might achieve.

From a geopolitical perspective, energy efficiency is vital for Turkey to ensure energy security and reduce external dependence. The increased use of renewable energy sources aligns with Turkey's strategies to minimize energy supply dependency, further strengthening its position. Economically, enhancing energy efficiency reduces energy imports, narrows the trade deficit, and boosts national income. However, renewable energy investments must be carried out in tandem with base-load power plant capacity to maintain a critical balance.

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ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

United Nations Declaration on Sustainable Tourism

Ekin GÜLLÜOĞLU

On November 20, 2024, at a summit organized by the United Nations (UN), more than 50 countries signed the Declaration on Sustainable Tourism. This document aims to balance the economic, environmental, and social impacts of tourism and transform the tourism sector in line with sustainable development goals. Considering the role of tourism in economic growth, job creation, and cultural change around the world, the importance of this initiative is better understood.[1] In analyzing the foreign policy implications of the Declaration, it is useful to focus on the economic benefits, environmental impacts, and opportunities for countries like Turkey in international relations.

The tourism sector is one of the largest and fastest-growing sectors of the global economy. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the tourism sector generated $1.5 trillion in worldwide revenues in 2023. However, this economic contribution, combined with an uncontrolled tourism approach, leads to negative consequences such as environmental destruction, cultural erosion, and social inequalities. For example, it is estimated that about 8% of carbon emissions come from tourism activities. Sustainable tourism is seen as a tool for solving these problems. In the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), tourism has a critical role, especially under SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 12 (Responsible Production and Consumption) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). In this context, the UN Declaration on Sustainable Tourism promotes the structuring of tourism on a global scale in line with these goals.[2]

Turkey is one of the world's most important tourism destinations with its geographical location, rich cultural heritage and natural beauties. In 2023, Turkey welcomed 51.5 million foreign tourists and generated USD 46.5 billion in tourism revenues. However, this success also poses challenges in terms of environmental sustainability and resource management. Turkey is taking important steps to support sustainable tourism policies. The Sustainable Tourism Certification Program, run by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, forms the basis of efforts in this area. This certification aims to ensure that hotels and other accommodation facilities meet sustainability standards and provides international recognition. As of 2023, 7,805 properties have received this certification and this number is expected to reach 25,000 by 2030. In addition, Turkey's promotion of sustainable tourism policies on international platforms is an important strategy that strengthens the country's image. For example, Turkey's active participation in the UN shows that it places sustainable tourism at the center of its international relations.[3]

The UN Declaration on Sustainable Tourism presents many opportunities and challenges for signatory countries. Turkey's potential foreign policy gains from this initiative can be evaluated as follows:[4]

1. Sustainable tourism sends a strong message about a country's environmental awareness and social responsibility. Turkey's active participation in this declaration can strengthen the country's international image. For example, increasing the number of hotels that promote the use of green energy can reinforce Turkey's identity as a "green destination" and become an effective tool in cultural diplomacy.
2. Sustainable tourism policies can make Turkey a more attractive destination for international investors and tourists. In particular, increasing incentives for environmentally sensitive and sustainability-oriented investments can increase foreign direct investments.
3. Turkey can assume a leadership role by sharing its know-how in sustainable tourism at the regional level. Developing cooperation mechanisms with countries in the Mediterranean basin can both revitalize regional tourism and create a collective action plan for environmental protection.
4. The environmental impacts of the tourism sector directly affect Turkey's response to climate change. For example, coastal erosion or forest fires pose a risk to the sustainability of tourism. Policies developed under the Declaration can offer long-term solutions to these problems.

The following strategies can be suggested to further strengthen Turkey's sustainable tourism policies and increase their impact on foreign policy:[5]

1. Further cooperation with international organizations such as the UN, UNWTO and the European Union, and increase funding and technical support opportunities.
2. Training programs and technical support mechanisms can be established for businesses in the tourism sector to comply with sustainability standards.
3. The success of sustainable tourism policies requires the active participation of local communities. In particular, it is important to support local communities to directly benefit from tourism revenues.
4. To reduce carbon emissions in the tourism sector, it would be beneficial to promote the use of renewable energy and increase environmentally friendly transportation options.

The UN Declaration on Sustainable Tourism is not only an environmental or economic initiative, but also a powerful foreign policy tool. By seizing the opportunities offered by this Declaration, Turkey can both sustain its success in the tourism sector and increase its influence in the international arena. In order for Turkey to maintain its leading role in this field, it is critical that it continues to implement sustainability policies with determination at both national and international levels.

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ANKASAM **ANALYSIS**

“Hundred Days” of the Interim Government in Bangladesh

Emin Mirbatur SEVAL

On August 5, 2024, Sheikh Hasina’s fifteen-year rule in Bangladesh fell after massive and bloody student uprisings demanding quota reforms. This was an important turning point in Bangladesh’s political history and an interim government was formed to replace the ousted government. After the fall of Sheikh Hasina’s government, the interim government in Bangladesh was headed by Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel laureate in 2006 and a consistent critic of Sheikh Hasina’s government. Muhammad Yunus is known as the pioneer of microcredit and co-founder of the Grameen Bank. This bank focuses on microcredit and provides collateral-free microloans to the needy.

The interim government has an important mission to ensure the political stability of the country and a return to the democratic process. It is responsible for carrying out fundamental reforms of the institutions and leading the country to elections. On the hundredth day of the interim government’s rule, Muhammad Yunus promised that elections will be held after the completion of the necessary and essential reforms and asked people to be patient. The interim government is trying to build a consensus with other parties, restructure democratic institutions and rebuild the system “point by point, sector by sector”. The objective is set to build a new and lasting electoral system.[1]

However, the government faced serious challenges. A number of problems have emerged, including political unrest, floods, pressure from those seeking to rush to elections and an increase in violence against minorities.

One of the first steps taken by the government under the leadership of Muhammad Yunus was to lift the political ban on the Jamaat-e-Islami Party, which was declared “militant and terrorist” and shut down during the student protests of the Sheikh Hasina government. Yunus’ lifting of the ban on this party was interpreted in some circles as paving the way for radical movements and caused uneasiness. However, Yunus assured that lifting the ban on this party would not pave the way for radical movements and that the influence of radical movements would not expand.

The fate of Awami League has been another issue of debate during the interim government. After Sheikh Hasina’s government was overthrown, senior members of her Awami League party tried to leave the country, their houses were looted and their bank accounts were frozen. On 23 October 2024, the Awami League’s youth organization was shut down by the Muhammad Yunus government on the grounds that it was engaged in terrorist activities. Yunus stated that Awami League no longer had any influence in Bangladesh and described the party as “fascist”. According to Yunus, Awami League poses a threat to democracy and therefore should have no place in the future of the country. Although Yunus commented that Awami League could disband, he declared that the interim government he leads will not take any decision on the party since it is not a political government.[2]

Upon Sheikh Hasina’s departure to India, the interim government filed a criminal complaint against Hasina, and one of the priorities of the government was to bring Hasina back to Bangladesh and bring her to justice. Yunus, however, argued that this process should not be a quick one, but a step-by-step one, and emphasized the need for a careful diplomatic approach in relations with India.

Bangladesh’s difficulties in terms of relations with India are not limited to the issue of Sheikh Hasina’s extradition. The interim government of Bangladesh has sought closer relations with Pakistan. Moreover, in the first hundred days of the interim government, attacks on the Hindu minority in Bangladesh reached two thousands.[3]These attacks were frequently covered in the media and became a major source of tension in relations between India and Bangladesh. Trump also defended the Hindu minority in Bangladesh. With this in mind, the Yunus government aims to improve relations with the United States of America (USA), one of its biggest trading partners.

One of the greatest dangers facing the interim government is the deepening of social fragmetations. The weakening of the Awami League and the re-emergence of Jamaat-e-Islami could pave the way for the rise of radical currents. If these radical currents cannot be controlled, there could be a serious split in the social structure of the country. An even greater danger could arise from a revanchist attitude against the Awami League or by the Awami League. Indeed, when the interim government came to power, the violence between the parties did not stop and this time Awami League supporters were the targets of violence, some of which even resulted in deaths. Many Awami League members went into hiding due to this situation.[4] It can be expected that these attacks on the Awami League will remain in people’s memories. If left unchecked, this could create a crack in society.

In Bangladesh, which has experienced many coups in its history, one of the deep threats facing the interim government is a military takeover. A military coup is possible if the reforms and preparations for elections are not carried out at the required pace, public discontent grows, political uncertainty deepens, or there is an intervention by major countries. Any coup can lead to prolonged instability and political turmoil in Bangladesh. It could also change the geopolitical balance in the region.

Although the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus initially enjoyed broad support, it is not yet clear whether Yunus’s reforms will be successful, given the balance in the country’s current situation. The success of this government, which constitutes a critical turning point for Bangladesh, is of great importance for the future of the country. However, if the interim government faces difficulties in achieving social and international balance and fails to properly implement the reforms and electoral processes, the country may face a deeper crisis.

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