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Tekno-Political Conflict: The New Digital Front of US-China Rivalry

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European Security Architecture, Transition Plan, and the Strait of Hormuz Crisis in the Post-NATO Ankara Summit Era

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Post-Ankara NATO Summit European Security Architecture, Transition Plan, and the Strait of Hormuz Crisis



Retired Navy Captain Dr. Ferhan ORAL

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summit, which is planned to be held in Ankara in July 2026, should not be interpreted merely as an ordinary and routine high-level gathering in which the North Atlantic Alliance assesses existing and emerging security threats. Rather, it increasingly appears as a critical inflection point marking a deeper structural transformation within the transatlantic security architecture. In this sense, the summit is being conceptualized as a strategic threshold that reflects not only incremental policy adjustments but also a broader and more systemic restructuring process that extends beyond NATO's traditional and historically established security paradigm.

In the post-Cold War period, the institutional and operational structure of NATO has been predominantly shaped by a United States-centered security architecture. This configuration positioned the United States as the principal provider of strategic deterrence, military capability, and logistical coordination within the Alliance, while European members largely assumed complementary roles within a broader collective defense framework. However, in recent years, this structural balance has come under increasing scrutiny due to both intensifying security concerns within the European continent and significant shifts in global power distribution. The emergence of new geopolitical rivalries, the reactivation of interstate warfare in Europe, and the diffusion of military-technological competition have collectively contributed to the reopening of debates regarding NATO's long-term strategic design and functional sustainability.

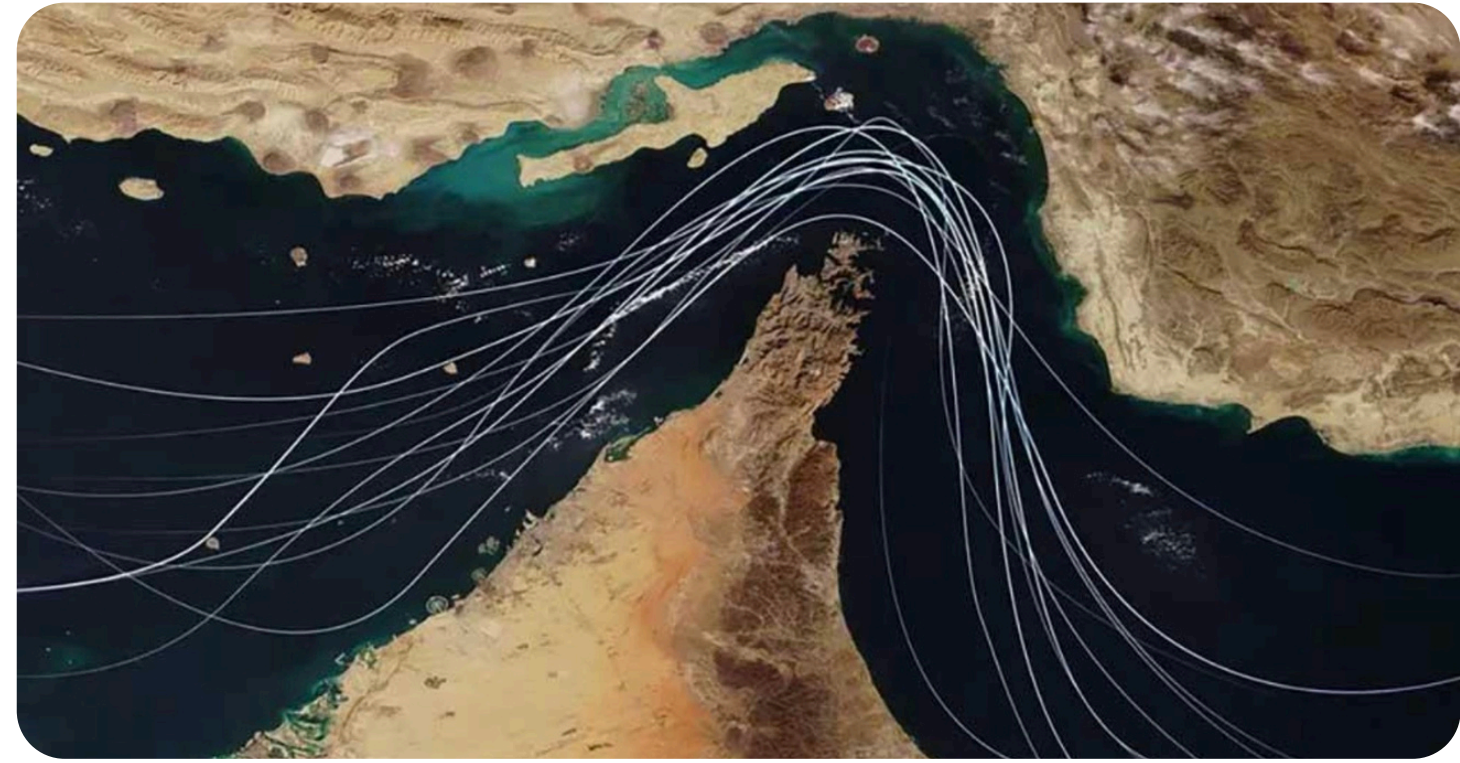
In particular, the European Union's initiatives aimed at expanding its defense industrial base, its growing emphasis on strategic autonomy, and its efforts to enhance indigenous military production capacity have introduced a new and increasingly central dimension into NATO's internal debates. These developments have not only reflected a desire for greater European responsibility but have also raised structural questions regarding burden-sharing, capability distribution, and long-term dependency patterns within the Alliance. Within this evolving context, a conceptual approach frequently described as "controlled capability transfer" has gained prominence. This approach envisages the gradual, conditional, and strategically managed transfer of selected United States military capabilities to European allies, with the objective of enhancing European operational autonomy while preserving NATO's overall cohesion and deterrence capacity.

Within this transitional process, Europe is increasingly expected to assume greater responsibility across a wider spectrum of security and defense functions. However, this shift is not envisioned as occurring outside the NATO framework; rather, it is intended to remain embedded within the institutional structure of the Alliance. Accordingly, this transformation does not indicate a dissolution or weakening of NATO as an organization, but instead points to a gradual and internally managed evolution of its operational logic. The emerging configuration therefore suggests a hybrid transition period in which responsibilities, capabilities, and strategic burdens are more evenly and dynamically distributed among allied actors, rather than concentrated in a single dominant power.

Within this analytical framework, the Atlantic Council has developed a series of policy-oriented recommendations aimed at strengthening NATO's institutional effectiveness and enhancing the efficiency of transatlantic cooperation mechanisms. Among these recommendations, one of the most significant proposals is the establishment of a "NATO Transition Planning Group." This proposed institutional mechanism is designed to function as a structured coordination body responsible for defining, organizing, and managing the systematic transfer of critical United States military capabilities within the European security architecture.

Under the scope of this proposal, several key dimensions are to be addressed in a highly detailed and operationally structured manner. These include the identification of which specific military capabilities will be transferred to European allies, the precise timelines under which such transfers will be implemented, and the institutional, logistical, and strategic conditions that must be met for the process to proceed in a stable and controlled manner. In this context, strategically significant assets such as strategic airlift capabilities, air-to-air refueling systems, satellite-based intelligence and reconnaissance infrastructure, and integrated air defense systems are envisaged as core components of a gradual capability redistribution process.

This approach should not be understood solely as a technical or administrative adjustment within military planning structures. Rather, it represents a deeper redefinition of NATO's institutional identity and operational logic. By redistributing critical capabilities and responsibilities, this process fundamentally reshapes the Alliance's internal balance of power and requires European member states to assume a more proactive role in the generation, sustainment, and deployment of military capabilities. Consequently, NATO is increasingly transformed from a reactive security organization primarily focused on crisis response into a more complex and multidimensional platform that actively manages capability transfer, coordinates strategic transformation, and structures long-term burden-sharing among its members.



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The Strait of Hormuz and Submarine Cables: The Legal and Geopolitical Vulnerability of Global Digital Infrastructure



Toghru VALIKHANI

The Strait of Hormuz has today become not only a critical transit point in terms of energy security, but also a multi-layered geopolitical center that contains the vulnerabilities of the digital world. Although this narrow waterway has long been considered one of the main arteries of global energy trade, in the contemporary international system it no longer possesses a strategic significance limited solely to the transportation of oil and natural gas. On the contrary, this region has now emerged as a critical node where both energy flows and data flows intersect.

In the modern international system, the concept of power is directly associated not only with the control of physical resources but also with the management of information and data flows. Within this framework, the Strait of Hormuz has become not only a passage route for oil tankers, but also an important component of the invisible infrastructure that ensures the continuity of the global digital economy. This transformation is fundamentally changing the nature of geopolitical competition.

Fiber optic cables laid on the seabed constitute the backbone of the communication infrastructure of the modern world. These cables form the physical backbone of the global digital network, connecting a wide range of systems including financial transactions, cloud-based systems, military communication networks, and artificial intelligence systems. For this reason, the regions through which these cables pass must be considered not only as technical infrastructure zones, but also as strategic security areas.

When the Strait of Hormuz is evaluated from this perspective, it stands out not only in terms of energy transit but also in terms of the continuity of global data flows. Many important submarine fiber optic lines connecting the Gulf region to Europe and Asia pass through this geographically narrow strait. This situation leads to an excessive concentration of global internet infrastructure in specific geographic locations.

This dependency reveals an invisible area of fragility in the modern world. Because this infrastructure is often physically invisible and remains outside public attention. Unlike tangible and visible structures such as oil pipelines, energy terminals, or military bases, it does not attract comparable attention. However, despite this, the functioning of the global economic system is largely dependent on these invisible networks.

In this context, even a few hours of data interruption may cause significant fluctuations in global financial markets. The high dependence of financial systems, particularly high-frequency trading networks and international payment systems, on real-time data flow further increases this vulnerability.

Since the Strait of Hormuz is located at the center of this vulnerability, any physical or political crisis in this region has the potential to directly affect not only energy markets but also the global digital economy. Therefore, the Strait of Hormuz can no longer be defined merely as an energy corridor, but also as a critical bottleneck of the global digital system.

A significant portion of global data traffic still relies on physical infrastructure. Thousands of kilometers of submarine fiber optic cables constitute the backbone of global internet traffic. Through these cables, data flows are maintained between continents and the functioning of the modern economic system becomes possible.

However, the main weakness of this system is its concentration in specific geographic transit points. The Strait of Hormuz stands out as one of these concentration areas. For this reason, this region constitutes a strategic vulnerability not only in terms of energy security but also in terms of digital security.

This situation demonstrates that global internet infrastructure inherently possesses a physical security dimension. No matter how advanced digital systems become, their operation depends on physical cables and infrastructure. Therefore, the regions through which this infrastructure passes become the most sensitive points of the global security architecture.

The proposal put forward by Iranian media organizations regarding the collection of transit fees from submarine internet cable operators passing through the Strait of Hormuz also brings the economic and political dimensions of the strategic importance of this region to the agenda. Such proposals demonstrate that submarine cable infrastructure is perceived not only as a technical system but also as a geopolitical instrument.

A significant portion of the world's most critical submarine cable routes passes through the Middle East. Narrow passages such as the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, the Suez Canal, and the Strait of Hormuz are not only physical trade routes but also main corridors of digital data flows. For this reason, these regions have become strategic areas that can be defined as "digital chokepoints."

These digital chokepoints form the foundation of economic and technological connectivity between Europe, Asia, and Africa. Therefore, any interruption occurring in these regions has the potential to produce effects not only at the regional level but also at the global level.

The submarine cable disruptions experienced in the Red Sea in 2024 caused approximately one quarter of internet traffic between Europe and Asia to be interrupted. This situation clearly demonstrated how fragile the global digital system is. A similar situation occurring in the Strait of Hormuz could produce much larger-scale consequences.

The effects of such interruptions are not limited solely to the field of communication. A disruption in global communication infrastructure may directly affect the functioning of economic systems, the stability of financial markets, and even military communication networks. Developing countries in particular are disproportionately affected by such interruptions due to the lack of backup infrastructure.

From a financial perspective, high-frequency trading systems and global banking networks are heavily dependent on instantaneous data flow. Therefore, even a small interruption in data flow may lead to large-scale financial volatility.

From a military perspective, modern armed forces are highly dependent on secure and rapid communication networks. The coordination of long-range operations, real-time data sharing, and command and control systems depend on this infrastructure. Therefore, an interruption in submarine cables may produce serious consequences not only economically but also in terms of strategic security.

The increasing strategic importance of the Strait of Hormuz in the digital age is further enhanced by economic transformation processes in the region. Gulf countries, while developing policies aimed at reducing dependence on oil, are also turning toward data economy and digital infrastructure investments. However, this transformation creates a new form of dependency.

This new dependency generates a vulnerability based on data flows instead of energy flows. For this reason, the Strait of Hormuz is becoming not only an energy transit point but also a critical dependency center of the digital economy. Submarine cables are considered critical infrastructure under international law. The protection of these cables is not only a technical issue but also part of international obligations. However, the legal status of the maritime areas through which these cables pass varies.

Although coastal states have certain economic rights within exclusive economic zones, other states retain the freedom to lay cables. In the high seas, this freedom is even broader. However, in strategic regions such as the Strait of Hormuz, these legal arrangements are often tested by geopolitical realities.

The identification of damage to submarine cables and the determination of responsibility often create serious legal difficulties. Because in such incidents, identifying the perpetrator is not only technically difficult but also politically contentious. This situation often causes legal processes to evolve into diplomatic crises.

Historically, the first international regulation on the protection of submarine cables began with the 1884 Convention, and later became more comprehensive with the 1958 Geneva Conventions and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Today, this legal framework recognizes the importance of submarine cables in the international system.

However, modern cable systems perform not only communication functions but also much broader roles such as energy and data transfer. This situation further increases the strategic importance of submarine cables.

In conclusion, the risks emerging regarding submarine cables in the Strait of Hormuz are not merely technical or legal issues, but are also considered part of global power competition. This region has become one of the most sensitive points of the international system as a critical geopolitical center where energy and data flows intersect.



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The United States–Israel–Iran War: A Prelude to a New Global Conflict?



Prof. Dr. Murat ERCAN

The direct military confrontation between the United States, Israel, and Iran in 2026 has generated a multidimensional geopolitical rupture that extends far beyond the Middle East and produces systemic effects on the global order. This conflict is not merely an intensification of regional security tensions; rather, it constitutes a structural transformation process reshaping the architecture of the international system.

In particular, coordinated airstrikes conducted by the United States and Israel against Iran, Iran's retaliatory response through ballistic missile and drone capabilities, emerging energy security crises in the Strait of Hormuz, and the involvement of regional proxy actors indicate that the war has developed into a multi-layered and expanding conflict system. Accordingly, the situation cannot be reduced to a limited confrontation between two or three actors; instead, it represents a complex crisis architecture with both regional and global spillover effects.

Interpreting this conflict solely through the lens of Iran's nuclear program or Israel's security doctrine would be analytically insufficient. The war simultaneously reflects the gradual erosion of the US-centered post-Cold War international order and the increasing visibility of a multipolar global system. In this regard, the conflict functions not only as a regional crisis but also as a strategic rupture accelerating systemic transformation.

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has maintained a central position in global order formation. However, over time, the rise of emerging powers, intensification of great-power competition, deepening energy security crises, and increasing global interconnectedness of regional conflicts have collectively contributed to the weakening of this structure. Thus, the current war represents a catalyst for systemic reconfiguration rather than an isolated conflict.

Since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, US–Iran relations have been characterized by persistent tension, evolving into a multidimensional rivalry shaped by ideological, geopolitical, and security dimensions. Iran's post-revolutionary anti-American foreign policy orientation and anti-Israel rhetoric have continuously destabilized not only bilateral relations but also the broader security architecture of the Middle East.

Within this context, Iran's nuclear program, ballistic missile capabilities, and its network of proxy forces—commonly referred to as the “Axis of Resistance” (including Hezbollah, Iraqi Shiite militias, and the Houthis in Yemen)—are perceived by the United States and Israel as direct security threats. The expansion of these capabilities through non-state actors has challenged traditional deterrence frameworks and created asymmetric strategic dynamics.

From the Israeli perspective, Iran's nuclear capability is not merely a military threat but a structural risk capable of altering regional power balances. Consequently, Israel has long engaged in covert operations, cyberattacks, and targeted assassinations aimed at disrupting Iran's nuclear infrastructure. Iran is therefore conceptualized within Israeli strategic doctrine as an existential threat, rooted in both contemporary security concerns and historical-geopolitical perceptions.

Over time, this latent confrontation evolved into a covert conflict regime. However, the intensification of regional crises, the decreasing controllability of proxy actors, and the lowering of escalation thresholds have gradually transformed this structure into a high-intensity overt war phase. By 2026, direct US military involvement marks the transition from covert confrontation to open interstate warfare.

For the United States, the Iran issue extends beyond nuclear proliferation or regional behavior. Iran is also perceived as a critical geopolitical node linking the China–Russia axis to the Middle East. In this sense, Iran is not merely a regional actor but a structural pivot within global power competition.

Iran's geostrategic position along key energy corridors, particularly its control over access to the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, grants it the ability to influence global energy flows. As a result, any intervention involving Iran affects not only regional balances but also China's energy security, the geographic extension of the Belt and Road Initiative, and Russia's indirect spheres of influence.

The Strait of Hormuz constitutes the most critical transmission mechanism through which this conflict generates global effects. As one of the world's most important energy chokepoints, it regulates a significant portion of global oil flows. Iran's position in this region provides it with asymmetric capabilities to disrupt energy supply chains, thereby transforming geography into a strategic coercive instrument.

For Iran, this is not merely a defensive mechanism but also a form of geoeconomic leverage over the global economy. Any disruption in Hormuz has the potential to trigger immediate supply shocks in global energy markets.

From the US perspective, the importance of the Strait of Hormuz is not limited to energy supply continuity. The central issue is the identity of the actor controlling this strategic chokepoint, as control over energy flows constitutes a fundamental determinant of global power distribution.

According to data from international energy institutions, approximately 20–21 million barrels of oil pass through this corridor daily. Any disruption in this flow generates immediate price volatility and macroeconomic instability, particularly affecting China and European economies.

China remains heavily dependent on energy imports transiting through Hormuz, making it particularly vulnerable to disruptions. Although Europe has attempted to diversify its energy sources following the Ukraine War, it remains exposed to external shocks in global energy markets.

Such disruptions not only generate economic instability but also increase inflationary pressures globally, potentially intensifying stagflation risks. This demonstrates that the conflict is not solely military in nature but also constitutes an economic crisis.

From an international relations theory perspective, control over strategic chokepoints is a central concern of both neorealist and neomercantilist frameworks. Historically, similar dynamics have been observed in the lead-up to both World Wars, underscoring the structural significance of maritime chokepoints in global conflict systems.

The 2026 Hormuz-centered crisis therefore represents not merely a regional energy dispute but a critical front in global power competition. The transition from energy rivalry to direct military confrontation has effectively transformed proxy conflicts in the Middle East into interstate warfare.

The involvement of proxy actors such as Hezbollah, the Houthis, and Iraqi Shiite militias has further expanded the conflict into a multi-front war. This has significantly increased systemic fragility within the regional security architecture.

Moreover, the involvement of actors with nuclear capabilities, either directly or indirectly, raises the risk of escalation into a global security threat. This process accelerates systemic polarization toward a multipolar bloc structure.

In this context, the positions of China and Russia are particularly significant. China maintains strategic relations with Iran due to energy dependency, while Russia views Iran as a balancing actor against Western influence.

This configuration produces an emerging geopolitical polarization between the US–Israel axis and the China–Russia–Iran alignment. Unlike the Cold War, however, this emerging structure is more fragmented, multidimensional, and technologically embedded.

Although a full-scale global war cannot be asserted as inevitable, current developments indicate the emergence of a new era of systemic conflict. Energy security, trade routes, nuclear deterrence, and technological competition constitute the primary determinants of this evolving structure.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Thucydides Trap: US–China Rivalry and the Global Hegemonic Struggle



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa
ÖZALP

The concept of the Thucydides Trap refers to a theoretical framework in international relations describing the structural tensions that arise when a rising power challenges an established hegemon, increasing the likelihood of conflict between them. The origin of this concept is attributed to the ancient Greek historian Thucydides, who analyzed the Peloponnesian War.

Thucydides argued that the rise of Athens generated fear and insecurity in Sparta, ultimately making war between the two powers highly likely. This historical observation has been adapted into contemporary international relations theory to explain systemic tensions arising from shifts in global power distribution.

In modern scholarship, the concept was reintroduced prominently by Graham Allison, who argued that in many historical cases, power transitions between rising and ruling states have resulted in war. This interpretation emphasizes the structural risks inherent in hegemonic transitions.

The logic of the Thucydides Trap is typically explained through three stages. First, a rising power emerges rapidly within the international system through economic, military, or technological growth. Second, the established hegemon perceives this rise as a direct threat to its position. Third, this perception increases security dilemmas, accelerates arms competition, intensifies crises, and increases the likelihood of miscalculation. Ultimately, these dynamics raise the probability of war.

In the contemporary international system, this framework is primarily applied to US–China relations. China is positioned as the rising power, while the United States remains the established hegemon. Their rivalry spans military, economic, technological, and geopolitical domains.

Key areas of competition include trade wars, technological dominance, the Taiwan issue, regional influence in the Asia–Pacific, and competition over rare earth elements. These dynamics suggest that the international system is currently undergoing a power transition process that remains incomplete.

This period can be characterized as an intermediate phase in which global hegemonic structures are undergoing reconfiguration. During such transitions, strategic uncertainty increases, and new areas of competition emerge across regional and global levels.

However, the Thucydides Trap has also been subject to criticism. Historical evidence suggests that power transitions do not necessarily lead to war. In the modern era, nuclear deterrence and economic interdependence significantly reduce the probability of direct great-power conflict.

Nuclear weapons function as a major stabilizing factor by increasing the cost of large-scale war. Similarly, global economic interdependence raises the cost of conflict, thereby discouraging escalation.

Therefore, the Thucydides Trap should not be understood as a deterministic outcome but rather as a risk framework highlighting structural tensions in power transitions.

Historically, the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE) serves as the archetypal reference point for this theory. The war between Athens and Sparta illustrates the dynamics of rising versus established powers.

Although Sparta ultimately emerged victorious, the war resulted in mutual exhaustion and long-term structural weakening of both sides. The resulting power vacuum facilitated the rise of Macedon under Philip II, demonstrating how systemic wars often benefit third actors rather than the primary belligerents.

This historical analogy is frequently applied to contemporary US–China relations. In this interpretation, China corresponds to Athens as the rising power, while the United States corresponds to Sparta as the established hegemon.

This raises a critical question: which actor will fill the potential power vacuum in the event of a systemic US–China confrontation? Possible candidates include Turkey, the Turkic States Organization, India, Russia, the United Kingdom, or the European Union.

These considerations highlight that power transitions generate not only bipolar rivalry but also opportunities for third-party actors within emerging power vacuums.

A significant diplomatic development occurred in 2026 during a meeting between Donald Trump and Xi Jinping in Beijing. The meeting emphasized the importance of avoiding direct confrontation and managing competition through controlled mechanisms.

Xi Jinping’s statement—“Let us not fall into the Thucydides Trap”—underscored the relevance of this theoretical framework in contemporary diplomacy. It reflected an awareness that a systemic war would not produce long-term benefits for either side.

During the meeting, the Taiwan issue emerged as a key point of contention, with China explicitly identifying it as a strategic red line. Meanwhile, trade tensions escalated through reciprocal tariffs and economic restrictions.

China’s reduction of imports of certain US agricultural products and its diversification toward alternative suppliers further illustrate the restructuring of economic relations. Nevertheless, bilateral trade remains at significant levels, indicating continued interdependence despite rivalry.

In conclusion, US–China relations represent a complex structure characterized simultaneously by competition and interdependence. This duality reflects the contemporary manifestation of the Thucydides Trap within the modern international system.

Any potential conflict between the two powers would have systemic implications extending far beyond bilateral relations, affecting the global economic order and international stability.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

From the Cold War to the 2022 Madrid Strategic Concept: NATO's Evolving Threat Perceptions and Strategic Transformation



Prof. Dr. Murat ERCAN

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established in 1949 as a collective defense alliance designed to counter military threats originating from the Soviet Union. From its inception, its primary objective was to prevent large-scale war in Europe and institutionalize deterrence under a Western security umbrella.

During the Cold War, NATO's central objective was the deterrence of Soviet expansion into Europe. Within this framework, the doctrine of massive retaliation, based on US nuclear superiority, formed the foundation of alliance deterrence strategy.

However, this approach gradually became subject to criticism due to its lack of flexibility, leading to the development of the "flexible response" doctrine in 1967 (MC 14/3) and the Harmel Report. These reforms marked a critical turning point by introducing a dual-track strategy combining defense and détente.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, NATO's strategic rationale was fundamentally challenged. The 1991 Rome Strategic Concept redefined NATO as not only a collective defense organization but also a framework for crisis management and cooperative security.

The 1999 Washington Strategic Concept further expanded NATO's operational scope, enabling out-of-area missions. Operations in the Balkans, including IFOR/SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Kosovo intervention, the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, and the Libya operation in 2011, demonstrated NATO's transformation into a multidimensional security actor.

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 marked a critical turning point in NATO's threat perception. For the first time in its history, Article 5 of the Washington Treaty was invoked, redefining terrorism as a collective security threat.

Following this period, NATO expanded its operational scope to include maritime surveillance in the Mediterranean, air policing, and intelligence sharing. This reflected a shift toward comprehensive risk management.

During the 2000s, asymmetric threats reshaped NATO's strategic agenda. The 2010 Lisbon Strategic Concept incorporated cyber threats, energy security, missile defense, and hybrid warfare into NATO's core priorities.

The 2007 cyberattacks on Estonia and energy crises involving Russia highlighted the growing importance of cyber and energy security. These developments expanded NATO's threat perception into a multidimensional and technologically driven framework.

The 2008 global financial crisis imposed budgetary constraints on defense spending, leading to the adoption of the "Smart Defence" initiative. This approach emphasized capability sharing, multinational cooperation, and efficiency in defense investments.

Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 fundamentally reshaped NATO's strategic environment. The 2022 Madrid Strategic Concept identified Russia as the most direct and significant threat to Allied security, while China was defined as a systemic challenge.

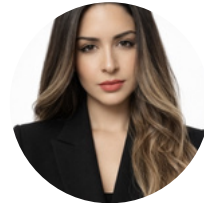
This reflects NATO's transition from a regional alliance to a global security actor engaged in great-power competition. Cybersecurity, disinformation, space security, and energy weaponization have become integral components of NATO's strategic agenda.

In conclusion, NATO has continuously evolved from a Cold War collective defense alliance into a complex, multi-layered security organization. Its transformation reflects broader changes in the international system and demonstrates its adaptive capacity in response to emerging global threats.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

2026 Évian G7 Summit: An International Political Economy Perspective



Zeynep Çağla ERİN

The contemporary international system is undergoing a period of systemic stress characterized by asymmetries in power distribution and increasing limitations of hegemonic actors. Within this context, the 52nd G7 Summit held in Évian-les-Bains, France (15–17 June 2026) represents a significant case for analyzing the tension between institutional global governance structures and shifting power realities.

From the perspective of Robert Gilpin's theory of hegemonic stability, the international system is sustained through the provision of public goods by a dominant hegemon. These include security, open trade routes, and a stable reserve currency. However, as hegemonic powers reach their capacity limits, structural imbalances emerge between systemic responsibilities and domestic capabilities.

The Évian Summit took place precisely within this tension. The United States' increasing reluctance to bear disproportionate systemic costs, combined with pressure on allies to assume greater responsibility, reflects a transition in hegemonic burden-sharing.

A notable symbolic moment was the delayed arrival of the US President Donald Trump and his statement "I am the boss," which can be interpreted as a manifestation of hegemonic legitimacy strain. In Gilpin's framework, effective hegemony depends not only on material power but also on institutionalized consent.

The absence of overt confrontation among G7 members indicates institutional resilience; however, it simultaneously reveals growing strategic divergence within the transatlantic alliance. This divergence is closely linked to Europe's increasing strategic autonomy discourse.

The escalation of the US–Israel–Iran conflict and the resulting crisis in the Strait of Hormuz significantly impacted global energy markets. The resulting disruptions in global supply chains led to renewed diplomatic efforts within the G7 framework.

The summit proposal to link the limitation of Iran's nuclear capacity with the lifting of maritime blockades reflects a cost-reduction strategy rather than a stable systemic settlement. Such arrangements are inherently fragile due to ongoing regional tensions.

Another key issue was China's state-subsidized export model, which continues to generate structural pressure on Western economies. This has placed China at the center of G7 economic security discussions.

The G7's response reflects a shift from economic coordination toward strategic economic security governance. This includes collective responses to industrial overcapacity and supply chain vulnerabilities.

Artificial intelligence emerged as a central dimension of geopolitical competition. The participation of major US technology firms highlighted the growing role of non-state actors in global power structures.

The United States continues to maintain technological leadership in AI, while the European Union seeks to balance this dominance through regulatory frameworks and digital sovereignty initiatives.

The presence of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky further emphasized the issue of burden-sharing within the transatlantic alliance. European states are increasingly expected to assume greater financial responsibility for Ukraine.

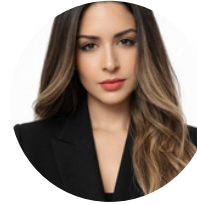
The summit concluded with a leaders' statement rather than a formal communiqué, reflecting limited consensus within the G7. The growing influence of Global South countries and the emergence of multipolarity further constrain the G7's governance capacity.

In conclusion, the Évian G7 Summit reflects the structural transformation of the international system. While institutional frameworks persist, their functional capacity is being reshaped by shifts in global power distribution. The G7 is increasingly evolving from a global governance center into a coordination platform managing systemic tensions among competing power centers.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Tekno-Political Conflict: The New Digital Front of US-China Rivalry



Zeynep Çağla ERİN

The twenty-first century international system is witnessing a transformation that transcends classical geopolitical theories based on territorial expansion, resource control, and conventional military power projection. At the center of this transformation lies the systemic rivalry between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

This rivalry has moved beyond ideological confrontation and industrial competition into a new domain defined by digital infrastructures, data flows, and algorithmic governance. The primary arena of hegemonic competition is now the domain of "cloud capital," which refers to the integration of cloud computing systems, artificial intelligence networks, digital platforms, and global data centers.

Neorealist theories, which emphasize military and material capabilities, and liberal theories, which highlight interdependence, are both challenged by the emergence of "weaponized interdependence." Critical infrastructures such as submarine cables, semiconductor supply chains, and cloud platforms now constitute strategic chokepoints in the global system.

Sovereignty is increasingly defined not by territorial control but by the capacity to regulate data flows and digital infrastructures. The United States and China are therefore engaged in a structural competition over the governance of cyberspace.

Major US-based cloud providers such as Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, and Google Cloud have become central actors in global data governance. These entities function not only as private corporations but also as geopolitical actors shaping global information flows.

The relationship between the US state and cloud capital is particularly evident in the integration of AWS with defense and intelligence institutions. Legal instruments such as the CLOUD Act further reinforce the extraterritorial reach of US digital governance.

China, in contrast, is developing an alternative digital ecosystem through its "Digital Silk Road" strategy. Companies such as Huawei, Alibaba, Tencent, and Baidu play central roles in expanding China's global digital influence.

Huawei's expansion of 5G infrastructure across Africa, Asia, and parts of Europe demonstrates the geopolitical dimension of telecommunications networks. US restrictions on Huawei highlight the national security framing of technological competition.

Similarly, China's development of digital financial systems such as Alipay, WeChat Pay, and the digital yuan challenges the dominance of Western financial infrastructures such as SWIFT.

The semiconductor industry represents another critical dimension of this competition. US firms such as Nvidia dominate advanced chip design, while Taiwan-based TSMC remains a key production hub. US export controls targeting China aim to restrict access to advanced computing capabilities.

In response, China is investing heavily in domestic semiconductor development, including Huawei's Ascend processors. This reflects a broader strategy of technological self-reliance.

Artificial intelligence has become a defining factor of global power distribution, with capabilities in data processing, algorithmic efficiency, and machine learning increasingly determining strategic advantage.

China's rising share of global patent applications, particularly in AI, 5G, and quantum technologies, reflects its growing role in setting international technological standards.

Standard-setting authority is increasingly equivalent to structural power, as it determines global technological dependency networks.

In conclusion, US-China rivalry is not merely a trade or security competition but a structural struggle over the architecture of the global digital order. States are increasingly required to align with competing digital ecosystems, fundamentally reshaping sovereignty and international hierarchy.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Changing European Security Equation and US–Türkiye Relations



Gamze BAL

The post–World War II transatlantic security architecture was established on the basis of United States military capabilities, nuclear deterrence, and the central leadership role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). During the Cold War period, European security was predominantly defined through a collective defense framework directed against the Soviet Union under the strategic leadership of the United States.

However, structural transformations in the twenty-first century have necessitated a comprehensive reassessment of this security architecture. The rapid emergence of China as a systemic competitor, the renewed assertiveness of the Russian Federation, and the proliferation of regional conflicts—including the war in Ukraine, the Gaza conflict, Iran-related tensions, instability in the Syria–Iraq theater, and security risks in the Red Sea region—have collectively generated a multi-layered and complex global crisis environment.

This evolving environment has compelled the United States to simultaneously manage great-power competition with China, the strategic containment of Russia, and multiple regional crises. In the aftermath of the operational experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States has increasingly transitioned toward burden-sharing arrangements with regional partners, rather than relying predominantly on direct military intervention.

This strategic shift should not be interpreted as a withdrawal of the United States from Europe; rather, it reflects a reconfiguration of European security within a broader framework of interconnected regional partnerships. Within this conceptualization, European security is no longer geographically confined to the European continent, but is increasingly embedded within a wider network of interdependent geopolitical regions.

Accordingly, the United States has progressively relied on regional actors to contribute to the stabilization of adjacent strategic environments, including the Black Sea region, the South Caucasus, the Middle East, and the Eastern Mediterranean. Collectively, these regions constitute an integrated security belt that exerts a direct influence on the stability of Europe.

Within this emerging structure, Turkey occupies a uniquely strategic position due to its capacity to function as a connective actor across multiple geopolitical regions. Its significance derives not only from its geographic location but also from its ability to operate simultaneously across diverse and interlinked crisis zones.

Turkey's functional roles in this architecture include maritime security governance in the Black Sea under the Montreux Convention, diplomatic mediation efforts in the Russia–Ukraine conflict, contributions to NATO's southern flank security, stabilization initiatives in Syria, maritime security operations in the Eastern Mediterranean, normalization processes in the South Caucasus, and its central role in the Middle Corridor, which connects Europe and Asia.

The evolving diplomatic relationship between President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and United States President Donald Trump reflects a pragmatic, leadership-centered channel of communication that contributes to the management of structural tensions in bilateral relations.

Furthermore, the appointment of United States Ambassador Tom Barrack as Special Envoy for both Syria and Iraq signals Washington's intention to pursue greater policy coordination with Ankara at the regional level.

As United States European security strategy continues to evolve, Turkey's role becomes increasingly central to the broader European security architecture. Nevertheless, the European Union's approach remains partially exclusionary toward Turkey, particularly in relation to defense industrial cooperation and institutional security frameworks.

This inconsistency reflects a structural misalignment between the evolving requirements of European security and prevailing political preferences within certain European institutions. In this context, the United States no longer conceptualizes European security solely through a framework of permanent military presence in Europe, but increasingly through a network-based model of regional partnerships extending into adjacent strategic zones.

Turkey constitutes a critical node within this network due to its NATO membership and its multidimensional connectivity across multiple regions. The exclusion of Turkey from European security mechanisms increases strategic costs and reduces the overall capacity of Europe to effectively manage regional crises.

In conclusion, the principal challenge facing Europe is not limited to interpreting the rise of China or the strategic threat posed by Russia, but also involves accurately understanding the evolving security model of the United States. Within this model, security is increasingly generated through interconnected partnerships rather than centralized military deployment. Turkey represents one of the most significant nodes within this emerging security architecture, and its exclusion would substantially weaken European strategic resilience and crisis-management capacity.

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