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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Estonia's Restrictions on Russian Citizens: Security Measures or the Rise of Russophobia?

On July 28, 2022, the Government of Estonia announced that it had reduced the opportunities for applying for residence permits and employment visas for citizens of Russia and Belarus. In his statement on the subject, Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Reinsalu declared:[1]

"Russian citizens can no longer apply for a temporary residence permit or visa for the purpose of studying in Estonia. Belarusians can still apply for employment visas. Additionally, citizens of Russia and Belarus who are working in the country but have no legal right to stay in Estonia, for example while on a visa issued by another European Union (EU) Member State, will



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not be granted a temporary residence permit or allowed to work either.”

As Baltic states’ increased threat perception regarding the Russian-Ukrainian War, and Estonia has its share of this situation. In this context, in addition to global and regional sanctions and measures, states are also making moves to ensure their security. Estonia’s move in the matter of Russian citizens may be a sign that a Russophobia phenomenon has taken root in the country and that this sensitivity will deepen further.

Estonia has donated almost 40% of its annual military budget and more than 0.8% of its gross domestic product (GDP) to Ukraine. The country acts with the highest motivation to stop Russia, before taking its turn, by aligning with Ukraine. Moreover, it can be seen that all political parties in Estonia agree on supporting Ukraine. This can be viewed as a natural reflection of the historical processes between Russia and Estonia.

Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940, then by the Nazi Germany, and again by the Soviet Union in 1994. The country, which gained its independence in 1991, still had lands belonging to the Russian Army, with Russia’s enginery and weapons not leaving the country until 1994.[2] Today, there are various Soviet-era military facilities in Estonia, just like in Ukraine. In this context, Estonia can still feel its past wounds with Russia; they share a profound history of relations, and thus, Estonia is alarmed by its perception of threat.

Moreover, there is also a border dispute between the two countries that still continues implicitly. With the start of the war in early February 2022, the parties took steps to resolve the dispute in question, but they remained inconclusive.

Estonia is one of the few countries previously occupied by the Soviet Union, with Russian people practicing the Russian culture living and working in its border regions intensively. Although the vast majority of these people have lived in Estonia throughout their lives, they have been under the influence of Russian television, politics and culture.[3]

The effect in question has led to different perceptions since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian War on February 24, 2022. Countries such as Estonia suspect that Estonia residents of Russian origin could be taken advantage of by the Moscow administration, since Russian head of state Vladimir Putin described himself as a defender of the Russians in his speech given on the morning of the beginning of the war.

It is reported that currently 25% of the Estonian population is ethnic Russian.[4] In addition, 81% of Estonians think that armed resistance is necessary in case of any attack, and therefore support the country to increase its defense expenditures. This shows that people increasingly consider war as a concrete possibility, and that they might be feeling the need to be prepared for interstate or civil attacks.

In this context, there is also an increase in hate speech against Russian people. So much so that, after the beginning of the war, Russians living in various European countries reported that they encountered hate speech. For example, “Russians are here-State Security Committee (KGB)” is written on the wall of a Russian person’s house in Czechia.[5] Similarly, it can be predicted that the phenomenon of Russophobia will rise in countries that host a dense Russian-origin community such as Estonia over time.

The proportion of Russians in Estonia makes them the largest ethnic minority in the country. Today, about 330 thousand ethnic Russians live in Estonia. This figure is remarkable for the country with a total population of approximately 1 million 300 thousand. Approximately 120 thousand of these 330 thousand people have Estonian citizenship. Approximately 100 thousand of them are Russian citizens. The remaining 100 thousand are people who do not have the right to citizenship, and thus don’t have all citizenship rights.[6] It will be increasingly difficult for those of Russian origin, especially those who do not yet have citizenship, to live in the country.

It is not the first time that the Russian population caused tension between the two countries. After Estonia gained its independence, a large part of the ethnic Russian minority in the country was not given citizenship due to the country’s citizenship policies. The reason for this was Russia’s military presence in the country. At this point, it can be said that Estonia uses the issue of citizenship against Russia, in order for them to withdraw from the country. At this stage, there is a concern that Russia will take advantage of ethnic Russians.

Unlike Ukraine, Estonia is a member of the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In this context, the country is more integrated into Europe and the West. But as is the case for many states, it is dependent on Russia regarding its energy needs. As a matter of fact, Estonia asked for an exemption in the last EU sanctions, which called for cuts in the union’s natural gas consumption.

On the other hand, it is known that Estonia has not been in favor of Russia’s pipeline projects for a long time. The country leaders warned that Russia posed a threat from time to time, and that Europe’s being energetically dependent would cause problems. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that the country feels partly secure, thanks to its EU and NATO membership. Therefore, Estonia is not an “open target” as much as Ukraine. For these reasons, it can be brave in its criticism of Russia.

Internal and external conflicts, border problems and land problems in the world increase the feeling of opposition towards a nation, community, minority or, at the very least, a group. The Afghans who fled the Taliban, the Chinese in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the people who were forced to emigrate by the Syrian Civil War have been experiencing such events. The Russia-Ukraine War, on the other hand, makes Russians a target in European geography, mostly due to the fact that the aggressor is understood to be Russia. The step taken by the Estonian Government is an indication of this. It is certain that the security concerns of the country and the Estonian people are way too serious to be ignored. However, it is obvious that the decision resulted in Russian citizens being perceived as potential Russian spies. This indicates that Russophobia will rise in many countries, especially in Estonia.

[1] “Estonia Further Limits Visas for Russians, Belarusians”, Err.ee, <https://news.err.ee/1608669361/estonia-further-limits-visas-for-russians-belarusians>, (Date of Accession: 29.07.2022).

[2] “Relations with Russia”, CountryStudies, <http://countrystudies.us/estonia/22.htm>, (Date of Accession: 30.07.2022).

[3] “How One of Russia’s Neighbors is Dealing with Putin’s Propaganda”, NPR, <https://www.npr.org/2022/05/11/1096856581/how-one-of-russias-neighbors-is-dealing-with-putins-propaganda>, (Date of Accession: 30.07.2022).

[4] “Estonia Demographics”, World Population Review, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/estonia-population>, (Date of Accession: 30.07.2022).

[5] “Russians Abroad: Blamed for a Regime They Sought to Escape”, The Moscow Times, <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/03/04/russians-abroad-blamed-for-a-regime-they-sought-to-escape-a762>, (Date of Accession: 30.07.2022).

[6] “In Estonia, Life is Good, Maybe too Good, for Ethnic Russians”, <https://qz.com/344521/in-estonia-life-is-good-maybe-too-good-for-ethnic-russians/>, (Date of Accession: 30.07.2022).



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Normalization Talks in Armenia

As of late July 2022, ceasefire violations are being observed in Karabakh-based contact zones; that is, on the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia. This can be interpreted as an attempt to sabotage the negotiation process for the signing of a permanent peace agreement between the two countries. In this context, it can be said that both the pro-war nationalist

groups, which have an influence on Armenia's politics and society, and the third countries have committed certain provocations. Meanwhile, both Baku and Yerevan aim at signing a lasting peace agreement as soon as possible.

It can be stated that Azerbaijan feels more comfortable with the signing of the peace



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agreement. This is because Azerbaijan is ready to sign an agreement confirming its victory in the Second Karabakh War. In that sense, Baku tries to protect the gains it has achieved in the field at the table as well. In this context, the people of Azerbaijan are eager to see the implementation of an agreement that will confirm the Second Karabakh Victory.

On the other hand, the situation is relatively difficult for the Yerevan administration. Although Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan takes a stance that supports regional cooperation, security and peace pursuits; and regards the normalization processes as part of the strategy that will prevent Armenia from being isolated from the international community and enable it to open up to the West, he faces a serious opposition. Moreover, it is known that some opposition circles within the army and bureaucracy, advocating the invasion of Karabakh, stand against the normalization process. Essentially, it is necessary to approach the provocations at the border within this framework.

As it is known, the Armenian opposition sees Pashinyan as responsible for the Second Karabakh War. As a matter of fact, according to these groups, the reason Russia took a relatively neutral attitude during the war was that she wanted to punish pro-Western Pashinyan. It should be noted that the Armenian opposition has a point about the attitude of the Moscow administration. Accordingly, if Pashinyan becomes overthrown, those who advocate good relations with Russia may come to power in Armenia. If that happens, revisionist initiatives that can change the status quo established after the Second Karabakh War might be carried out.

Due to this approach, there were anti-Pashinyan protests after the Second Karabakh War, and the Armenian Army attempted a military coup during these events. The Prime Minister of Armenia managed to eliminate both the social movement and the risk of a coup by taking the decision of early elections. Moreover, Pashinyan achieved an overwhelming victory in the elections. This victory reveals that the Armenian people are also tired of pro-occupation policies. In other words, most Armenians are aware that the occupation in Karabakh does nothing but impoverish the country. This means that most of the Armenian people want peace.

Pashinyan is aware of this situation. The Armenian leader thinks that Armenia could attract investment from Western states, especially its neighbors, with the help of the normalization process to be carried out in the region, and that these investments would aid in employment creation. In addition, with the help of normalization processes, Armenia will become an important transit country when corridors are in question and will become one of the key countries of the Central Asia-Caspian Sea-Turkey-European route; that is, the Middle Corridor. This means building a prosperous future for the Armenian people. Therefore, the signing of an agreement that will establish lasting peace is the most rational scenario for the region.

Despite all these opportunities, there is a serious opposition movement in Armenia. Therefore, it is seen that social movements come to the fore from time to time. The latest example of this is the following statements of Mourad Papazian, Co-Chair of the Coordinating Council of the Armenian Organizations of France (CCAF) and Member of the Dashnaksutyun Bureau (ARF):^[1]

"Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is turning Armenia into an authoritarian state. Democracy is being trampled on and individual freedoms are being ignored. Pashinyan creates an atmosphere of terror. We do not accept that, and we never will. We will fight for Armenia to get rid of this regime and we will succeed."

There is no doubt that although there are criticisms in Armenia that Pashinyan has become authoritarian, the basis of these criticisms is the nationalist reaction that emerged after the Second Karabakh War. In this context, both Papazian's party and the council he serves as co-chairman stand out with their radical nationalist features.

They also include the messages of diaspora through French Armenians. This is because the Armenian Diaspora industrialized the Karabakh Conflict. This means that the diaspora enriched itself by taking advantage of this conflict and ignored the impoverishment of Armenian people. In addition, the relations of the diaspora with other states involves the intervention of third-party actors in peace processes. In the case of Papazian, the main purpose of radical Armenian nationalists is to sabotage the normalization processes

carried out with Azerbaijan and Türkiye. It may be argued that the groups that internalize this idea will continue their anti-Pashinyan work. Therefore, it should be emphasized that it is an opportunity for Pashinyan to be in power in Armenia in terms of establishing and maintaining regional peace.

In the face of all these developments, Pashinyan seems to have taken steps through its Civil Contract Party to ensure public support for the peace process. Indeed, with the support of Armenian people, it will not be easy to undermine the negotiations. In this context, important statements are being made by the members of the Civil Contract Party. The words of Armenian Economy Minister Vahan Kerobyan about Azerbaijan are remarkable. Kerobyan expressed his belief that the re-establishment of the railway connection with Azerbaijan would connect Armenia to large markets, and that achieving an advanced industry without the railway connection would be impossible.[2]

At this point, it should be emphasized that the will of the parties on the road to peace is of great importance. Therefore, the determination of the parties to continue the negotiations is crucial in terms of eliminating the provocations experienced or likely to occur. As a matter of fact, Kerobyan's statements are of great importance in terms of revealing the commitment of the Yerevan administration to the pursuit of peace.

In fact, Kerobyan clearly revealed the direction that Armenia wants to move forward in its foreign policy by his statements. The Yerevan administration recognizes that the thirty years of occupation have made the country dependent on Russia and Iran. Reversing this dependency requires Armenia's access to the West. This is only possible by establishing healthy relations with Türkiye and Azerbaijan. Based on all this information, it can be predicted that much more concrete steps regarding the normalization processes shall be taken in the future, such as making important moves towards actualizing the Zangezur Corridor Project. However, it is understood that Yerevan will first focus on successfully carrying out the persuasion process that will provide public support.

Armenia's former Minister of Health and Civil Contract Party MP Arsen Torosyan's statement is like that of Kerobyan. His words "We made a mistake 30 years ago when, during the agony of a collapsing empire, we again chose death and war, became

"winners", and were blinded by pride." highlighted an important self-criticism.[3]

His statement is remarkable in that it indicates how the occupation in the region does not bring any profit to Armenia. Indeed, for thirty years, Armenia has been dragged into the aggressor state status by United Nations (UN) resolutions, its trade relations have been disrupted due to the closure of the Turkish border, and it has become unable to make a significant move in its foreign policy other than strengthening relations with Russia and Iran. Balance politics could not be carried out in the country and Yerevan's capabilities were limited. This prevented Armenia from becoming a prosperous state.

As a result, the Pashinyan administration favors the emergence of a situation that prioritizes regional security, stability, and prosperity with the help of normalization processes in the region. Although there is a strong will in Yerevan in this regard, it is understood that it is important to get the Armenian public opinion. Therefore, the messages given by Kerobyan and Torosyan in a narrow scope, and by the deputies of the Civil Contract Party in a wider scope, can be interpreted as a reflection of the effort to persuade the public.

[1]"AP little Дашнакцут little: Будем бороться за освобождение Армении от действию режима", News.am, <https://news.am/rus/news/714437.html>, (Date of Accession: 04.08.2022).

[2]"Армянский министр: Свободная торговля с Азербайджаном поможет выйти на крупные рынки", Vesti, <https://vesti.az/v-mire/armyanskii-ministr-svobodnaya-torgovlya-s-azerbaidzanom-pomozet-vyti-na-krupnye-rynki-468871>, (Date of Accession: 04.08.2022).

[3]"Депутат от правящей в Армении партии: Мы 30 лет назад ошиблись и выбрали войну", News.am, <https://news.am/rus/news/714462.html>, (Date of Accession: 03.08.2022).



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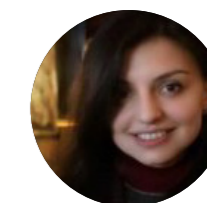
The Competition Area of the West and Russia: Caucasus

The energy agreement signed by the European Union (EU) with Azerbaijan, followed by the visits of United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) President William Burns and Russian Foreign Intelligence Agency Head Sergey Naryshkin to Yerevan, reveals an important truth regarding the negotiation process between Armenia and Azerbaijan. This truth is that the Caucasus region is one of the areas of competition between the West and Russia.

The agreement signed between the EU and Azerbaijan on July 18, 2022, has already been

evaluated as a historical development in Baku. The agreement envisages that Azerbaijan will increase its natural gas supply to the EU by 12 billion cubic meters. In this context, the volume of natural gas exported by Azerbaijan to the EU is expected to increase to 20 billion cubic meters by 2027.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, who came to Baku, stated that this was a mandatory step taken after Russia pulled out its natural gas card. In this context, Leyen said, "The EU has decided to leave Russia



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Avrupa Birliği'nin (AB) Azerbaycan'la imzaladığı enerji anlaşması ve ardından sırasıyla Amerika Birleşik Devletleri Merkezi (ABD) Haber Alma Teşkilatı (CIA) Başkanı William Burns ile Rusya Dış İstihbarat Teşkilatı Başkanı Sergey Naryshkin'in Erivan ziyaretleri; Ermenistan ile Azerbaycan arasında yürütülen müzakere sürecine ilişkin mühim bir gerçeği ortaya koymaktadır. Bu da Kafkasya bölgesinin Batı ile Rusya arasındaki rekabet alanlarından biri olduğudur.

AB ile Azerbaycan arasında 18 Temmuz 2022 tarihinde imzalanan anlaşma, Bakü'de şimdiden tarihi bir gelişme olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Söz konusu anlaşma, Azerbaycan'ın AB'ye sağladığı doğalgaz arzını 12 milyar metreküp arttırmasını öngörmektedir. Bu kapsamda Azerbaycan'ın AB'ye ihraç ettiği doğalgaz hacminin 2027 yılına kadar 20 milyar metreküpe çıkması beklenmektedir.

Bakü'ye gelen Avrupa Komisyonu Başkanı Ursula von der Leyen, bunun Rusya'nın doğalgaz kartını çekmesi sonrasında atılan zorunlu bir adım olduğunu dile getirmiştir. Bu kapsamda Leyen, "AB, Rusya'yı terk etmeye ve daha güvenilir tedarikçilere yönelmeye karar verdi. Azerbaycan'ı bu ülkelere dahil etmekten mutluluk duyuyorum" demiştir.[1] Ayrıca AB, Azerbaycan'da başta hidrojen ve rüzgâr enerjisi olmak üzere yeşil enerjiye yatırım yapmayı da planlamaktadır. Bu durum, Azerbaycan'ın "fosil yakıt tedarikçisi" bir ülkeden, Avrupa için ortak bir "yenilenebilir enerji tedarikçisine" dönüşmesine olanak yaratacaktır.

İmzalanan anlaşma, Rusya'nın tepkisini çekmektedir. Nitekim Rus medyası, Bakü'nün kararının Moskova'yla olan müttefikliğine zarar vereceğini dile getirmektedir. Buna karşılık Azerbaycan Hükümeti yetkilileri ise Rus Barış Güçleri'nin Karabağ'daki eylemlerinden duydukları memnuniyetsizliği ifade eden beyanatlarda bulunmaktadır.[2] Zira Rusya'nın 1 Temmuz 2022 tarihine kadar bölgede Ermenistan Ordusu unsurlarının kalmayacağını taahhüt ettiği; fakat bu vaadini yerine getirmediği belirtilmektedir.[3] Dolayısıyla Böyle bir ortamda AB'yle imzalanan anlaşma, Bakü'ye güven vermekte ve Moskova'nın üzerindeki baskıyı arttırmaktadır. Dahası Azerbaycan, Rus Barış Gücü'nün görev süresinin beş yıl olduğunu vurgulayarak vazifelerinin 2025 senesinde sona ermesi gerektiğine ve bu görevin uzatılmayacağına dikkat çekmektedir.[4]

Tüm bunlara ek olarak bölgesel istikrarı sağlayacağı öngörülen barış anlaşmasına ilişkin müzakerelerde hem tarafların ilgisinin Batı'ya kaydığı görülmekte ve hem de Batılı aktörlerin sürece dahil olmaya çalıştığı anlaşılmaktadır. Vurgulamak gerekir ki; bunun temel nedeni enerjidir. Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşı'nın da etkisiyle Kafkasya'da güvenli bir ortamın tesis edilmesi, AB'nin enerji güvenliğinin bir parçası haline gelmiştir.

Öte yandan Ermenistan da ilginç olaylara sahne olmaktadır. Ülke tarihi olarak Rus etkisindeki bir aktör şeklinde değerlendirilse de Erivan'ın son iki yılda Rusya'ya ilgisi azalmıştır. Çünkü Ermenistan, normalleşme süreçlerini fırsata çevirerek Batı'ya açılma arzusundadır. Bu kapsamda son dönemde yaşanan gelişmeler, özellikle de ABD'nin Ermenistan'la yakın münasebetler geliştirmek istediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bunun yansıması olarak ABD Başkanı Joe Biden'ın Erivan Büyükelçisi olarak ülkesinin en üst düzey diplomatlarından Christina Quinn'i görevlendirmeyi planladığı iddia edilmiştir.[5] Quinn, Beyaz Saray'da ve Dışişleri Bakanlığı'nda nüfuz sahibi bir isimdir.

Moskova ise Washington'un ilgisini, Ermenistan'daki nüfuzuna yapılan bir meydan okuma olarak algılamaktadır. Bu da Rusya'nın tepkisini çekmiştir. Üstelik ABD'nin yanı sıra Batı'nın Kafkasya'da Rusya karşıtı bir eylem içerisinde olduğunu düşünen Moskova yönetimi, Kanada'nın Ermenistan'da Büyükelçilik açma kararı almasına bile tepki göstermiştir. Bu da bölgedeki Rusya-Batı rekabetinin artacağına göstergesidir.

Ermenistan merkezli en dikkat çekici gelişme ise Ermenistan Başbakanı Nikol Paşinyan ile Burns arasındaki görüşmedir. Bu görüşmeden yalnızca üç gün sonra Naryshkin'in Erivan'a gitmesi de tesadüf değildir. Ziyaret trafiği, ABD ile Rusya arasında Ermenistan konusunda ciddi bir rekabetin başladığına işaret etmektedir.

Kuşkusuz Batı ile Rusya arasındaki Kafkasya merkezli nüfuz mücadelesinde Karabağ, önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bu bağlamda 16 Temmuz 2022 tarihinde Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan Dışişleri Bakanlarının Gürcistan'da gerçekleştirdiği müzakerelerin önem arz ettiği söylenebilir. Zira söz konusu görüşme, savaşan ülkeler arasında aracısız yapılan ilk müzakerelerdir. Dolayısıyla Tiflis'teki görüşme, tarafların konu-

ma ve müzakere etme konusundaki kararlılığını gösterdiği gibi, sürecin üçüncül aktörler tarafından sabote edilmesini önleyebilecek bir gelişme şeklinde de yorumlanabilir. Sürecin Rusya'nın inisiyatifinden çıkmaya başlaması ise AB açısından memnuniyet vericidir.

Bakü açısından mevzubahis görüşme, Azerbaycan'ın savaşa değil; diyaloga hazır olduğunu göstermesi bakımından oldukça mühimdir. Bu bağlamda görüşmenin AB ile Azerbaycan arasında imzalanan enerji anlaşmasına olumlu bir şekilde etki ettiği öne sürülebilir. Ermenistan'ın ise doğrudan diyaloga yönelmesi, Rusya'dan bağımsız hareket etme iradesini ortaya koymaktadır. Tüm bunlara ek olarak taraflar, Rusya'nın arabuluculuk çabalarının sonuç vermediğini görmüştür. Belki de Moskova, bölgeyi bir donmuş çatışma bölgesi statüsünde bırakmak istemektedir. Bakü ve Erivan ise kalıcı barışa ulaşmanın yollarını aramaktadır. Bu yüzden de taraflar, Kremlin'in çatışmayı çözmekle değil, her iki ülke üzerinde de siyasi etki sağlayan arabulucu statüsünü sürdürmekle ilgilendiğini düşünüyor olabilir. Mevcut gelişmeler, tarafların arabulucuya ihtiyaç kalmadan bu işi çözmek istediğini; fakat arabuluculuk noktasında da Rusya'ya kıyasla AB'ye daha sıcak yaklaştığını gözler önüne sermektedir.

Tahmin edileceği üzere bölgede yaşanan gelişmeler ve Batı'nın etkisi Rusya'yı kaygılandırmaktadır. Çünkü Moskova yönetimi, Soğuk Savaş sonrasında nüfuzunu sürdürmeyi başardığı post-Sovyet alanın Kafkasya boyutunda denklemin dışına itilme ihtimaliyle karşı karşıyadır. Bu nedenle de Rusya, Naryshkin'in Erivan ziyaretinde de görüldüğü gibi ön almaya çalışmaktadır.

Sonuç olarak Kafkasya'da Batı-Rusya rekabetinin arttığı bir dönem başlamıştır. Hem Ermenistan'ın Batı'ya açılma arzusu hem de Azerbaycan'ın AB'yle yaptığı anlaşma, Moskova yönetiminin bölgedeki etkisinin azalacağına işaret etmektedir. Üstelik son dönemdeki temasların hızı, ABD ve müttefiklerinin Rusya'nın Ukrayna'yla meşgul olmasını fırsata çevirmek istediklerini göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla bölgedeki denklemlerin Batı'nın beklentileriyle uyumlu bir biçimde hızlıca değişmesi mümkün gözükmemektedir. Ancak Moskova'nın da çeşitli girişimlerde bulunarak bölgedeki dengeleri kendi kontrolünde tutmaya çalıştığı öne sürülebilir.

[1] "Євросоюз Домовився Про Подвоєння Постачання Газу З Азербайджану – Голова Єврокомісії", LIGA, <https://biz.liga.net/ua/ekonomika/tek/novosti/evrosoyuz-dogovorilsya-ob-udvoenii-postavok-gaza-iz-azerbaydjana-glava-evrokomissii>, (Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2022).

[2] "В Баку Недовольны Миротворцами России В Карабахе", Ng.Ru, https://www.ng.ru/week/2022-07-17/7_8488_weekcis.html, (Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2022).

[3] "Армения Ответила На Недовольство Алиева Указанием Сроков Вывода Войск Из Карабаха: Eadaily", Eadaily, <https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2022/07/19/armeniya-otvetila-na-nedovolstvo-alieva-ukazaniem-srokov-vyvoda-voysk-iz-karabaha>, (Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2022).

[4] "«Кризисным Моментом Станет Истечение В 2025 Году Пятилетнего Срока Пребывания Российских Миротворцев В Карабахе»", Cast.Ru, <http://cast.ru/comments/krizisnym-momentom-stanet-istechenie-v-2025-godu-pyatiletnego-sroka-prebyvaniya-rossiyskikh-mirotvor.html>, (Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2022).

[5] "Что Известно О Кристине Квин, Которая Выдвинута На Должность Нового Посла США В Армении", Verelq News, <https://verelq.am/ru/node/111146>, (Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

France, West Africa, New Colonialism and Competition

On July 31, 2022, the Government of Mali called on the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, to abandon the "neo-colonial" attitudes. In this context, France is accused of pursuing "neo-colonial" policies, with its military presence in the country and the region, and its economic impact. In military terms, the bases that France established in the country on the grounds of combating Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, and in economic terms, the CFA franc, which was printed in the Bank of France and used in seven West African coun-

tries, including Mali, constitutes the essential foundations of criticisms based on colonialism. [1] Although these two facts are presented as tools for stabilization by France, they caused adverse reactions against the Paris administration. The case of Mali also sheds light about France in all West African colonies.

Mali, located in West Africa, has most of the Muslim population. At the end of the 19th century, the country, which was then a colony of France under the name "French Sudan," gained



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its independence in 1960. In the country, which was ruled by a dictatorship until the elections in 1992, both the intense inter-tribal conflicts and the strong terrorist organizations continued the turmoil in the political life of Mali. The country sought help from France in 2013 for attempts to overthrow the government.[2] Both this situation and the fact that one of the official languages of Mali is French form the basis of the current colonial debates. Moreover, the issue is not limited to Mali because it can be said that these issues are also valid in other West African colonies of France.

The colonial activities of France in West Africa started in 1637 by the Atlantic Ocean of the Senegal River and spread inland over time. French colonialism ended shortly after France's Fifth Republic Era began, extending to Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Niger. For over 300 years, France has exploited the region's resources and people through various methods, including trafficking enslaved people in West Africa. In other words, the Paris administration developed the French economy through the colonies.

As observed in other colonial empires, France maintained its ties with its former colonies in the post-colonial period. As a matter of fact, the economic system of France was shaped within the framework of the exploiter-exploited relationship. The colonies are generally countries that export raw materials outside crucial production chains. This situation creates a system that works for the benefit of capitalist states like France because even after independence, these colonies were seen as a "market."

Military coups took place in Mali in August 2020 and May 2021, and in addition to the security crisis in the country, a political crisis emerged. France first sent troops to Mali in 2013 to fight a jihadist insurgency. At the beginning of 2020, Paris announced that it would withdraw its military forces in this country. Mali Government Spokesperson Colonel Abdoulaye Maiga, after the statements made by Macron during his three-day visit to Benin, Cameroon, and Guinea-Bissau on July 25-28, 2022, is the "The transitional government demands President Macron permanently abandon his neo-colonial, paternalistic and patronizing posture to understand that no one can love Mali better than Malians," he said.[3]

Referring to the situation in Mali during the visit, Macron said that they have an essential responsibility, such as creating a framework for the Malian people to express their sovereignty and to continue the fight against terrorist groups. Macron also referred to the relations between the Government of Mali and the Russian private security firm Wagner.[4] However, Malian decision makers reject claims that the Wagner Group will be deployed in the country.[5]

Economically, France is considered a vital supplier of resources by Malian decision-makers. However, in recent years, China's share in the country's economy has exceeded that of France.[6] In this regard, the Paris administration is in a struggle for influence with Beijing and Moscow. In fact, behind France's policies described as "neo-colonial" is the power struggle with these actors.

At this point, it is necessary to talk about the dynamics of competition in the region. First, it is helpful to state that China is West Africa's largest investor and trading partner.[7] Because, within the scope of the Belt-Road Project, the ports of the countries with a coast to the ocean make the region attractive to China. Also, West African countries have an interest in China because, unlike the West, Beijing does not seek "democracy" in return for investment.

On the other hand, China also provided military aid to the region's countries to ensure security within the piracy and terrorist activities framework. For example, Beijing offered \$100 million in financial assistance to The African Standby Force (CADSF) in 2017. China wants to increase the region's security to protect its investments there. Beijing is thus challenging Paris' influence in West Africa, especially in economic terms.

It is seen that Russia is increasing its commercial relations with African countries every year. In addition, military training and arms sales come to the fore in the regional policies of the Moscow administration. For example, as France withdrew from the region, it was observed that the Wagner Group became more active in Mali. At this stage, it should be underlined that the Wagner Group serves the interests of Russia.[8]

As a result, France's relations with West African countries are shaped by a neo-colonial perspective. This situation is closely related to the colonial past of the country. Paris acts with the logic of colonialism to achieve its interests. However, these policies are marketed with the instrumentalization of Western values such as "democracy" and "human rights." On the other hand, West African countries have been dragged into a whirlpool of crises, with the effect of being exploited for centuries. This triggers anti-colonial sensitivities. Accordingly, the influence of China and Russia in the region is increasing. Therefore, it can be predicted that France's influence will decrease in Mali and in West Africa in general due to its colonial past. Therefore, the increase in the influence of Russia and China will not be surprising.

[1] "France Tries New Tactics After Losing Influence in West Africa", Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/analysis-france-tries-new-tactics-after-losing-influence-in-west-africa/1720306>, (Date of Accession: 02.08.2022).

[2] "Mali Country Profile", BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13881370>, (Date of Accession: 02.08.2022).

[3] "Mali Junta Criticises Macron's 'Neocolonial and Patronising' Attitude", France 24, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20220801-mali-criticises-macron-over-patronising-neocolonial-attitude>, (Date of Accession: 04.08.2022).

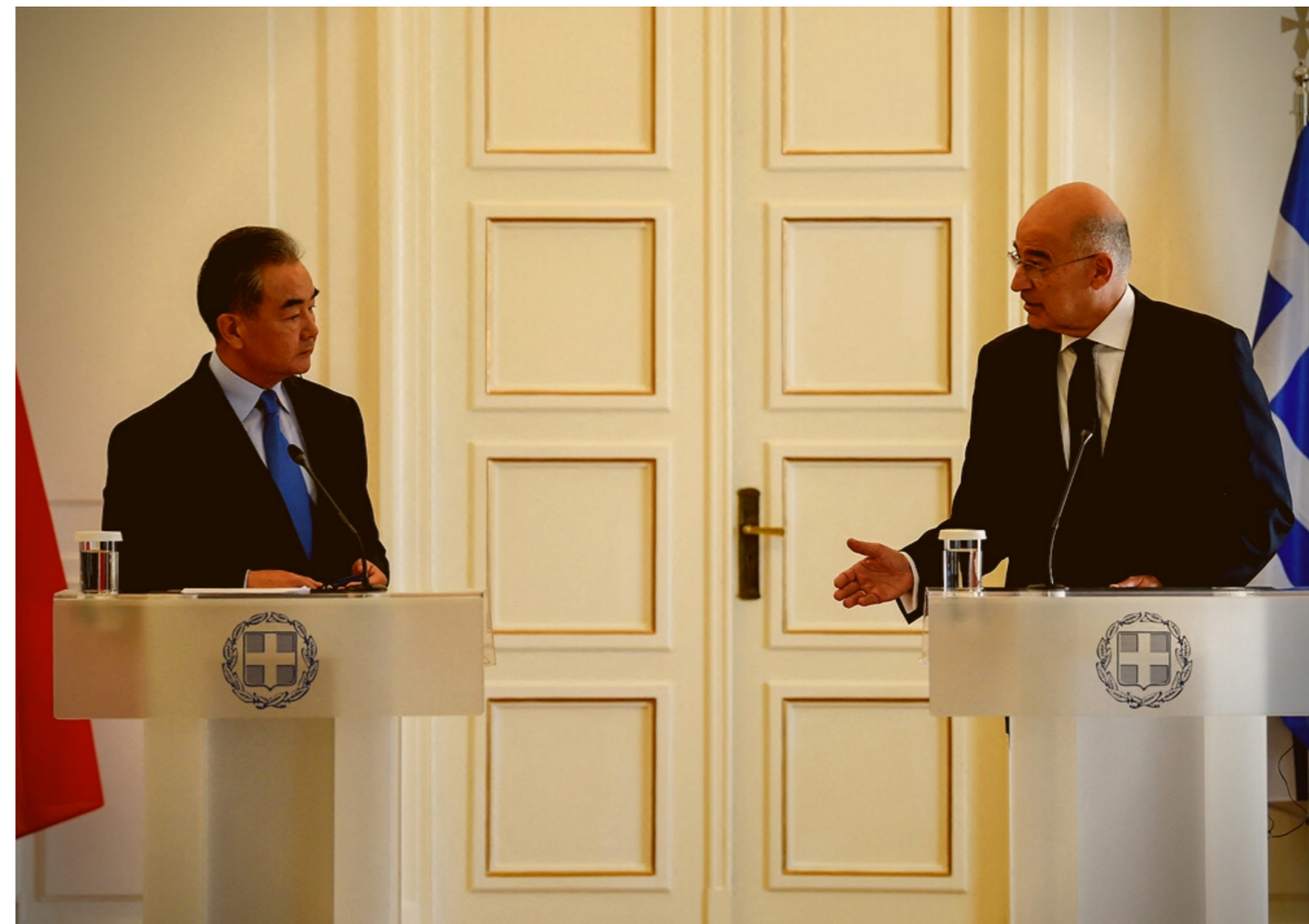
[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] "Mali", OEC, <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/mli>, (Date of Accession: 02.08.2022).

[7] "China's Involvement in West Africa", Fire Watch Solutions, <https://www.firewatchsolutions.com/chinas-involvement-in-west-africa/>, (Date of Accession: 05.08.2022).

[8] "As Europe Withdraws from Mali, Russia Gets the upper Hand", Anadolu Agency, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/as-europe-withdraws-from-mali-russia-gets-the-upper-hand/>, (Date of Accession: 05.08.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Meetings of the Foreign Ministers of Greece and China within the Scope of the ASEAN Meeting

On the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Athens and Beijing, relations between the two countries are improving rapidly. Greece has an important place in China's Belt-Road Project due to its ge-

ographical and geopolitical position. Athens is also important as the first European Union (EU) member to sign to this project of China.[1] All of these shows that the relations between Athens and Beijing are based on solid foundations.



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On August 3, 2022, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias met on the sidelines of the 55th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) foreign ministers' gathering in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. At this meeting, the two counterparts called for respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states.[2]

One of the issues raised in the meeting was to increase the economic cooperation between the two countries. Beijing is willing to expand cooperation with Athens in the fields of transportation, energy, finance, and the digital economy, promoting flagship projects under the Belt-Road Project, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said. Greek Foreign Minister Dendias stated that Greece and China share a common language on defending sovereignty and territorial integrity and maintaining international order, noting that Athens will continue to firmly support the "One China" policy.[3]

Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias expressed Athens' firm support for the "One China" policy at a time when tensions between the United States (US) and China have reached a high level due to the visit of the Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan.

Therefore, it can be said that Greece has taken an attitude that is on the side of China rather than the US in the face of this problem. In addition, China's investments in Greece are pushing Athens to pursue a policy closer to Beijing in the face of the Taiwan issue. In 2021, the foreign trade volume between the two countries increased by 55.6% compared to the previous year, reaching over 12.1 billion dollars, is important in terms of showing the increasing cooperation in the economic field.[4]

Although the economic relations constitute the basic building blocks of relations between China and Greece, relations have turned into a strategic partnership in a way with China's purchase of the Port of Piraeus Athens in 2016. Because, in China's sight, the Port of Piraeus is a gateway to Europe. In addition, it has a very strategic importance in terms of the policy pursued by Beijing within the scope of the Belt-Road Project. Although the US perceives the initiative as a geopolitical tool used by China to achieve global supremacy, it is thought-provoking that it remains silent on this issue. The reason for this can be sought in the activities of the Greek lobby, which is influential in the US. Moreover, the negative approach of the US towards Türkiye in recent years has somewhat overshadowed these activities of Greece.

Based on the example of China's purchase of the Port of Piraeus, it seems likely that a strategic struggle will take place on Greek territory over the ports in the future. Although China owns the Port of Piraeus, Russia has purchased the Port of Thessaloniki and the US has purchased the Port of Alexandroupolis. While it is observed that China and Russia are aiming to make economic gains from the Greek ports, it is noticeable that the US' goal is in the military field. Thanks to this port, the US is both surrounding Russia and trying to prevent China, which the latter has invested heavily in the Port of Piraeus, by piling up in Greece, which is an important route within the framework of China's Belt-Road Project.

Given the limited power of Greece, how it can balance these three countries arises as a question mark. Greece's territory, which is also a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), is becoming a focus of the struggle for influence between the US, China and Russia. It can be said that the weakest side in this equation Russia. Because Russia's launching of an invasion operation against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, caused Moscow to be isolated, especially in the Western geography. Russia has recently added Greece to the list of unfriendly countries.[5] In this context, it would not be wrong to say that the main struggle for the sphere of influence over Greece will be between Beijing and Washington.

Greece, which is a member of both the EU and NATO, comes to the forefront as the only state that is a member of these two organizations and maintains such close relations with China. However, Greece's continuation of this policy of equilibrium depends, in a sense, on how the relations between China and the US will develop. In this context, relations of Greece with China may be shaped according to the progress of the divergence between the US and China. If the divergence intensifies, there is a possibility that Chinese influence in Greece could be loudly raised by the US. Therefore, the US can pursue a policy that forces Greece to choose sides.

Consequently, Dendias and Wang Yi's talks within the framework of the ASEAN Meeting was an important meeting for Athens and Beijing to emphasize their commitment to each other's territorial integrity and national sovereignty. The two ministers also agreed on the strengthening of already developing economic relations. The most important detail of the meeting is that Athens reiterates its support for the "One China" policy, indirectly siding with Beijing at a point when tensions between the US and China have reached their peak.

From the Beijing's point of view, relations with Greece are very important. These relations have a strategic dimension as well as an economic dimension, and this should not be ignored. Because the Port of Piraeus, which China owns in Greece, is a bridge between China and Europe. Furthermore, China has also settled in the Eastern Mediterranean via Greece. If a third party does not intervene in the relations between the two countries, – which seems unlikely according to the current conjuncture- it can be said that the relations will develop at a rapidly increasing momentum.

[1]"Ancient civilizations, modern friends: 50 years of Greece-China relations", China Global Television Network CGTN, <https://newseu.cgtn.com/news/2022-05-28/Ancient-civilizations-modern-friends-50-years-of-Greece-China-bonds-1anVNHWMJRS/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 08.08.2022).

[2]"Dendias meets China counterpart on sidelines of ASEAN gathering", Ekathimerini, <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/1190473/dendias-meets-china-counterpart-on-sidelines-of-asean-meeting/>, (Date of Accession: 07.08.2022).

[3]"China, Greece vow to expand bilateral economic cooperation", Global Times, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202208/1272163.shtml>, (Date of Accession: 07.08.2022).

[4] Ibid.

[5]"Russia adds Greece, Denmark, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia to its unfriendly countries list", TASS Russian News Agency, <https://tass.com/politics/1483331>, (Date of Accession: 08.08.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The “Third Phase” and Referendum Debates in the Russian Intervention in Ukraine

On August 8, 2022, Evgeniy Balitskiy, the so-called leader of Ukraine’s Zaporizhia region under Russian occupation, announced that a referendum is going to be held in the region to become a part of Russia.[1] The announcement is quite significant in terms of shedding light on the course of the war and the strategy of the Moscow administration.

Considering the current condition of the war

waged by Russia in Ukraine, it can be said that the Moscow administration maintains its goal of transforming the mentioned country into a landlocked state. At this point, it can be argued that the openness of the Grain Corridor limited the Russian interventions in Odessa and made the target difficult. However, it is obvious that in the future, if Russia takes Odessa under control, Ukraine’s exit to the Black Sea will be almost entirely blocked. Moreover, it is also claimed that



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Russia did not operate only in the context of the Black Sea in the Ukraine War and has recently raised its targets.

To elaborate the claim, it is stated that the Ukrainian Army has strengthened with the help of the aid from the West and is preparing for the attack. At this point, Russia, who is aware that things on the field are not going as it was planned, will have to make a choice. This is to admit a defeat in Ukraine or to expand the scope of Russian attacks before the Ukrainian Army takes the offense. It can be predicted that Russian President Vladimir Putin will not agree to end the war without achieving what he can describe as a “victory” in Ukraine. Therefore, it is possible to predict that the Kremlin will choose to expand the war to a wider geography by aiming for the sky. As a matter of fact, this heralds the transition to the third phase of the war called “Special Operation”.

As it is known, Russia set two main targets in the first phase of the war. The political goal of the war can be summarized as the overthrow of the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Its military goal can be described as transforming Ukraine into a landlocked state. However, in the first phase of the war, the Russian forces encountered an unexpected resistance and faced the fact that the overthrow of Zelenskyy was not as easy as it was thought. Therefore, Russia reduced the siege in Kiev and turned to the east of the country. Since the announcement of the transition to the second phase of the war, the conflicts shifted to Eastern Ukraine.

At the current stage, the Moscow administration is preparing to increase the target and actually gives the signals of the transition to the third phase of the war. As a matter of fact, the Russian officials, especially Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov mentioned the goal of overthrowing the Zelenskyy administration after a long break, confirms this. In other words, Moscow increased its target to prevent Ukraine from attacking and saving its lands, and turned its eyes to Kiev once again. As a matter of fact, the air attack carried out by the Ukrainian Army on the Russian base in Crimea obviously reveals that the Kyiv administration has a determined stance in establishing the territorial integrity of the country, including Crimea. For this reason, it seems that Russia will try to take the lead by expanding the scope of the operation.

At this point, the idea that the Dnieper River can be positioned as the “Berlin Wall of the New Cold War” appears. To make another analogy, the Dnieper River may be planning as to take over the function that the Euphrates took in the Syrian Civil War. In other words, on one side of the river, Russia; On the other hand, it may be desired to create a status quo in which the West will be decisive.

On the way to this status quo, it is a matter of curiosity what kind of strategy the Kremlin will follow regarding the lands it controls. Because when Russia intervened in Ukraine in 2014, it implemented a hybrid model. On the one hand, Kremlin, which established so-called states for the separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk and recognized the independence of these so-called states in 2022. On the other hand, it annexed Crimea in violation of international law through the so-called referendum it organized in Crimea. In this sense, the statement that a referendum will be held in the Zaporozhian region can be interpreted as an attempt to operate the Crimean model.

The choice of the Crimean model, on the other hand, points to a paradox. Because one of the reasons for Russia’s intervention in Ukraine is its statements that it wants to create a buffer zone between itself and the West. As it is known, until the colored revolutions, decision makers in Kiev carried out politics by considering the Russia-West balance and positioned Ukraine as a buffer zone. However, this country’s loss of its qualification as a buffer zone caused Moscow to internalize the feeling of being surrounded, and this led to its tendency to aggressive and revisionist policies. But if the Kremlin really wanted to create a buffer zone with the West, it would prefer the Donbas model, prioritizing the buffer zone option.

In both scenarios, Russian intervention in Ukraine is against international law as it violates the borders and territorial integrity of a sovereign state whose borders are recognized by the United Nations (UN). However, the Crimean model has a more special dimension. Because this method, the purpose of Russia’s policies is not to create a buffer zone; indicates that it is to expand its territories.



On the other hand, when Moscow does not have a goal in this regard; It is also possible that the separatists in Zaporizhia may have a demand in this direction. As a matter of fact, from time to time, referendums are held in the South Ossetia region of Georgia or attempts are made to organize them; However, it is seen that Moscow has not taken any steps on this matter.

Moreover, it is possible that the statement specific to Zaporizhia is the product of a study carried out to increase the war motivation of the separatists in the region. The promise of Russian citizenship can be turned into a motivator for those who will fight at the hybrid war point. But what happened in Crimea reminds us of the option of annexation. Moreover, it does not seem realistic for the separatists supported by Russia to make such a statement despite Moscow.

Consequently, it is thought that the geography where the conflicts took place in the Russia-Ukraine War will expand; In the separatist regions, the issue of being a part of Russia's territory is being discussed. This is rather than creating a buffer zone by the Moscow administration; indicates that it was in Ukraine with the aim of gaining land.

[1] Dmitri Chirciu, "Ukrayna'nın Zaporijya Bölgesinde Rusya'ya Katılmak İçin Referandum Düzenlenecek", Anadolu Ajansı, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/ukraynanin-zaporijya-bolgesinde-rusyaya-katilmak-icin-referandum-duzenlenecek/2656740>, (Date of Accession: 12.08.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Assessment of Pelosi's Taiwan Visit in the Context of Indo-Pacific Strategy of the US

The visit of Nancy Pelosi, President of the House of Representatives of the United States of America (US) to the Taiwanese Parliament on August 2, 2022, have caused important discussions. In particular, the US, which is faced with a great reaction from China, is trying to lead the process to a different point.

It would not be the right approach to consid-

er Pelosi's visit to Taiwan independent from the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the US. The US is concerned about the Washington administration's ongoing struggle for hegemonic supremacy over the international system with the newly rising China, and the predictions that China will shake the hegemony of the US in the international system by the 2030s. It is known that the Belt-Road Initiative announced by China in 2013



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is the country's most important tool for establishing its economic leadership. Therefore, the US aims to take measures against the initiative and maintain its global hegemony as long as possible. For this reason, the US withdraws in a controlled manner from many regions of the world and directs all its power towards policies regarding China. In addition, the US strives to maintain its influence by using proxy forces in the regions where it is withdrawn from. This preference is clearly observed in Syria and Afghanistan.

The US, which withdrew from Afghanistan in 2021, managed to create a chaotic environment in the country. The Taliban's administrative take over was not recognized as a legitimate government by any country, resulting in a situation that served the US's regional chaos plans. As a matter of fact, the power vacuum and the political turmoil that emerged after the withdrawal of the US from the country have deeply been affecting all countries in the region, especially Russia and China.

The Ukrainian War started by Russia on February 24, 2022, brought Moscow's power to a single point, resulting in a lack of energy to deal with the situation in Afghanistan. Undoubtedly, this situation catalyzes the US's operations in the Asia-Pacific region. In this context, one of the reasons behind the US's intense support for Ukraine against Russia is to limit the support provided to China in the Asia-Pacific region.

As it is known, the fact that the US made alliance agreements with the countries of the region in 2021 within the framework of its Indo-Pacific strategy brought along some discourses about the birth of a NATO-like system in the Asia-Pacific region. The US, aiming to increase its influence in the region particularly with alliances such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) and AUKUS, also aims to improve its bilateral and multiple relations with the countries of the region.

In addition, it is seen that the Washington administration, which is trying to take measures against the rise of China, wants to destabilize the Belt-Road Initiative accordingly. Therefore, China is aware of the US's moves and its desire to capture China. For this reason, Beijing reacted strongly to Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. In this regard, China tried to intimidate Taiwan by organizing a military exercise and protested Pelosi's visit by inviting US's Ambassador to Beijing Nicholas Burns to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Following Pelosi's announcement that she would visit Taiwan, China's harsh rhetoric was considered an attempt to prevent the visit. Whereas the Beijing administration could not prevent this visit, it managed to create an area for political activity by warding off provocations by the US. Zhang Hanhui, China's Ambassador to Moscow, emphasized that the US was trying to implement a similar way in Taiwan to that in Ukraine, which he regarded to be mainly provoked by the US.[1] This clearly shows that the Beijing administration has analyzed the US's role in Ukraine well and is well aware of the political move that is trying to be implemented towards China through Taiwan. The fact that China did not take concrete steps after Pelosi's visit despite its previous harsh rhetoric gave the impression that its effectiveness in the international system could be shaken. However, it seems that China has analyzed the intention of the US well and has chosen to act moderately.

As a result, the US aims to be rapidly involved in the Asia-Pacific region, to create regional actors acting in accordance with itself, and to develop bilateral and multiple relations with these states. In doing so, it should be noted that US's primary purpose is to preserve its hegemonic power in the international system. For this reason, the US aims to capture China and destabilize the Belt-Road Initiative, which is expected to create an opportunity for China to become an economic giant. In this direction, it tries to revive the dynamics of the region and create unstable structures by aggravating the regional problems, and undermine the rise of China this way. Given that Taiwan is a sensitive issue for China, it can be said that Pelosi's move is part of the strategy to strengthen American leadership by stirring up crises.

[1]"Chinese ambassador warns of Nato expansion eastward into Asia", Morning Star, <https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/w/chinese-ambassador-warns-nato-expansion-eastward-asia>, (Date of Accession: 14.08.2022).



The "Fund" Problem in Hungary – European Union Relations

Hungary, a former Eastern Bloc country that joined the European Union (EU) in 2004, has started to benefit from EU funds since that year. Viktor Orban, who previously served as Prime Minister in Hungary from 1998-2002, came to power in 2010, marking a turning point in EU-Hungary relations. Orban, serving as a Prime Minister since 2010, drew the reaction of Brussels for the policies he followed in his country. Especially between the EU and the Hungarian Government, there are significant differences in democratic principles, human rights, immigration to Europe and finally the sanctions against Russia.

In April, the EU took punitive action against Budapest, warning Hungary that financial aid could be cut.[1] This initiative of the EU has been considered a mile-

stone, as no such criminal action has been taken by EU official institutions against any member state before. It should not be considered as a coincidence that the decision in question came after Viktor Orban won the elections again on April 3, 2022.

From the perspective of the EU, Hungary appears to be a grumpy ally. The fact that the funding cut to Hungary has come to the fore is a clear indication that the patience towards Orban in the union is now exhausted. Given the serious loss of value of[2] Hungary's national currency Forint, it is clear that the possible funding cut that the EU will impose on Hungary will have a significant impact on Budapest.

Viktor Orban came under increasing pressure to



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strike a deal with Brussels amid rising inflation in the country. Since June, negotiations have been held between the EU and Hungary to resolve the funding problem, but the Brussels administration has said that it has not updated Hungary on providing access to 15.5 billion euros for the Covid-19 recovery fund. [3] In July, Hungarian Minister of Justice Judit Varga said that negotiations with the European Commission became more constructive as Budapest made concessions on judicial reform, legislative and energy system issues, EU officials emphasized that several problems remained unresolved.[4] In particular, the EU's grand expectations from Hungary on issues such as "fighting corruption" caused the talks to stall at one point.

In the process of continuing the funding problem between the EU and Hungary, Orban also puts the functioning of the EU decision-making mechanism in a tricky situation. In July 2022 German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said: "We can no longer afford national vetoes in foreign policy for example, if we want to continue to have our voices heard in a world where great powers compete." [5] Although Scholz did not mention the name of a country, it would not be wrong to say that this country is Hungary. Because Hungary has been the only EU member to raise its voice against the sanctions against Russia and has followed a policy that prevents the bloc from complying with its foreign policy decisions. Due to the structure of the EU, all member states have the right of veto. However, the fact that the veto right is not used by Orban in the interests of the bloc, according to the EU, creates unrest in Brussels. In this way, Orban can directly influence the decisions taken by the EU. This unrest will have reached such a point that the "veto issue" has been brought to the agenda even by Germany, which is described as the strongest state of the EU. In this respect, it can be expected that the EU will go through a revision within the veto framework in the future. All of this shows [1]the problems Orban has created for the EU and in a way points out why the bloc has a funding problem with Hungary.

As can be seen, the EU is clearly trying to play the economy card in resolving the disputes with Hungary. The EU is trying to take advantage of Hungary's bad economic situation to get Orban to accept its demands. In Hungary, whose economy is getting worse, Prime Minister Viktor Orban wants to benefit from EU funds to find a solution to this problem. For this reason, Orban has recently sent a senior official to Brussels to take advantage of the funds frozen during the EU's disciplinary process against Hungary. Hungary will lose 4.64 billion euros [6] in Covid recovery funds if no agreement is reached on blocked EU funds by the end of the year. Tibor, Hungary's chief negotiator While Navracsics told The Guardian that it is optimistic about a deal on a

potential €15 billion Covid recovery fund by the end of the year [7], the trend does not look very encouraging for Hungary.

The unrest that Orban created within the bloc caused the EU to condition aid funds for Budapest. Some circles within the EU even came to the agenda to stop the funds to Hungary completely.[8] Unless concrete steps are taken in the direction desired by the EU, it seems unlikely that Hungary will benefit from EU funds. Because the EU's approval of the aid fund would mean the approval of the Orban administration in a way. This is the point that makes the EU think. From this point of view, the EU will wait for the right time and the fulfillment of its demands.

As a result, the EU has put on the agenda the cutting of financial aid as a last resort to get the Hungarian Government to accept its demands and has imposed some conditions on Hungary for the granting of these aids. The initiation of criminal proceedings against a member state for the first time in EU history is remarkable in that it shows the point where the tension in EU-Hungary relations has arisen. It would not be wrong to say that the EU will implement the carrot-and-stick strategy in its relations with Hungary in the future. Hungary's ability to receive financial aid from the EU; it will only happen if the EU accepts its terms.

[1] "Brussels triggers rule of law mechanism for very first time against Hungary," Euronews, <https://www.euronews.com/2022/04/27/brussels-triggers-rule-of-law-mechanism-for-very-first-time-against-hungary>, (Date of Accession: 12.08.2022).

[2] "Hungarian forint: one of the world's weakest currencies," Daily News Hungary, <https://dailynewshungary.com/hungarian-forint-not-only-the-regions-but-the-worlds-weakest-currency/>, (Date of Accession: 12.08.2022).

[3] "No updates on unlocking billions for Hungary, says EU Commission", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/hungary-economy-eu-idUSKBN20AIEK>, (Date of Accession: 12.08.2022).

[4] "Hungary optimistic on €15bn EU funds after pledges on energy and corruption", Financial Times, <https://www.ft.com/content/c8b56137-f769-451d-8408-928767652897>, (Date of Accession: 12.08.2022).

[5] "Germany's Scholz Says EU Can No Longer Afford National Vetoes," Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty, <https://www.rferl.org/a/eu-scholz-no-veto/31947439.html>, (Date of Accession: 12.08.2022)

[6] "Hungary tries to unlock funds frozen amid EU disciplinary process", The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/08/hungary-tries-to-unlock-funds-frozen-amid-eu-disciplinary-process>, (Date of Accession: 13.08.2022).

[7] Ibid.

[8] "MEPs, rule of law experts calls on the commission to cut all EU funds to Hungary," Euractiv, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/news/meps-rule-of-law-experts-call-on-the-commission-to-cut-all-eu-funds-to-hungary/>, (Date of Accession: 13.08.2022).

ANKASAM IN PRESS

15 August 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's article titled "From Ukraine to Taiwan: "Polar Wars" or "Chaos Order" was published on Timetürk.

15 August 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's article titled "From Ukraine to Taiwan: "Polar Wars" or "Chaos Order" was published on Güneş.

16 August 2022

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

16 August 2022

ANKASAM Energy Chief Advisor Dr. Cenk Pala evaluated the energy crisis in Europe on the TVNET News Center program.

17 August 2022

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol evaluated the current developments in foreign policy on the TVNET Mid-Day Generation program.

17 August 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's reviews about the Taiwan Crisis to Ihlas News Agency (IHA) were published on SonDakika.com.

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ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol evaluated the current developments in foreign policy on TRT News First Page.

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ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol made assessments to TVNET about the Russia-Ukraine War.

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ANKASAM International Relations Specialist Dr. Doğan Başaran evaluated Erdogan's visit to Ukraine on TVNET.

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17 August 2022

News about the conference, titled "Constitutional Reforms in Uzbekistan: Fundamental Changes and Additions" organized by Ankara Center for Crisis and Politics Studies (ANKASAM) and Development Strategy Center (DSC), one of the leading think tanks of Uzbekistan, was published on Uzbekistan's news portals yuzuz and knews.uz.

19 August 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Consultant Dr. Kadir Ertaç Çelik evaluated the latest developments in foreign policy on the Bengütürk TV Report of the Week program.

19 August 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's evaluations on the Russia-Ukraine War were published on Axar.az.



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

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