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ANKASAM OUTLOOK

Turkmenistan: From the Accumulation of the Past to the Dynamism of Youth

According to the information reported by the Turkmenistan State News Agency on March 14, 2022, the early elections held on March 12, 2022, resulted in the victory of Mr. Serdar Gurbangulyevich Berdimuhamedov, who received 72.97% of the votes, and thus the Turkmenistan Democratic Party.[1] This victory means the rejuvenation of Turkmen politics and Turkmenistan taking its place in the international arena as a dynamic state. In this sense, Turkmenistan

will continue on its way within the framework of a visionary approach that synthesizes the dynamism of the youth with thousands of years of historical culture and more than thirty years of independence experience.

In his speech during the 9th Extraordinary Congress of the Turkmenistan Democratic Party, where he announced his candidacy, he said, "If I am elected President; I assure you that I will



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run for our country based on the legacy and principles of our ancestors and will work for our people making no concessions of my talents.”[2] saying that, Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov actually revealed the road map of the new era.

This roadmap is based on the envisagement of creating a dynamic future by utilizing the experiences of the past, especially in the period of Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. The aforementioned future vision means that Turkmenistan will continue its cooperative, multifaceted and constructive relations within the framework of the “Permanent Neutrality Status” and includes the goal of creating a prosperous society.

As a matter of fact, after the announcement of the election results, Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov received congratulatory calls from the President of Uzbekistan, Mr. Şevket Mirziyoyev, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kasım Cömert Tokayev, and the President of Tajikistan, Mr. Imamali Rahman, and told his colleagues that Turkmenistan will develop cooperation with the states of the region and stated that his country will continue to exhibit an approach based on mutual interests through projects in line with a perspective based on multidimensional relations.[3]

At this point, it should be stated that it is very valuable that Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov paved the way for the rejuvenation of politics at a time when he was healthy by showing great democratic maturity. The Turkmen people and their will thus gave the message that they wanted to take part in the process of building a new world order dominated by uncertainties. This message emerges as a historical decision in Turkmenistan after the permanent neutrality decision.

The transformation in question will be led by Serdar Berdimuhamedov, whom the Turkmen people consider worthy of the title “Son of the Nation”. The Turkmen people’s definition of Serdar Berdimuhamedov as the “Son of the Nation” and the fact that they elected him to the Presidency with the votes on March 12, 2022, reflects the confidence created by his state administration experiences and education in the context of domestic and foreign policy.

Who is Serdar Berdimuhamedov?

Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov is a person who has worked at almost all levels of the state, gained significant experience on the way to the Presidency, and achieved important success in his duties. Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov has gained different perspectives and gained various experiences by taking a multidisciplinary education life. Serdar Berdimuhamedov, who graduated from the Turkmen Faculty of Agriculture as an engineer in 2001, received his education at the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Russia in 2011, thus being awarded the title of International Relations Specialist.

In this context, Serdar Berdimuhamedov, who served as a consultant at the Russian Embassy of Turkmenistan between 2008 and 2011, served as a consultant at the Permanent Representation of Turkmenistan to the United Nations (UN) between 2011 and 2013. Serdar Berdimuhamedov, who also worked as the Head of the European Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan between August and December 2013, also received training at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy during this period.[4]

Serdar Berdimuhamedov, who gained a master’s degree in 2014 and a doctorate degree in 2015 in the field of Technical Sciences, worked as the Deputy Director of the Turkmenistan State Agency on Management and Use of Hydrocarbon Resources in 2016.

Serdar Berdimuhamedov, who served as the Head of the International Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 2016 and 2017, was elected as a deputy in November 2016 and chaired the Legislation and Norms Committee in the parliament.

Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov was re-elected to the Turkmenistan Assembly in March 2018, receiving more than 90% of the votes in his region. Afterward, he first became the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and then was appointed as the Governor of Turkmenistan’s Ahal Province in 2019. He was also awarded the “Patriotism Award” in 2019.

It is known that Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov became the Minister of Industry and Urbanization in February 2020. He also served as the person responsible for reforming the country’s digitalization and technology breakthroughs. Thus, he became the Head of the Turkmen-Japanese, Turkmen-Russian and Turkmen-Chinese International Government Cooperation Desk.

Ultimately, Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov, who was appointed as the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers in February 2021, has become one of the most reliable figures in the country’s politics thanks to his performance in his duties. As a result of this whole process, he became the President of Turkmenistan as of the results announced on March 14, 2022.

The Era of Serdar Berdimuhamedov in Turkmenistan: How future will be shaped?

It is possible to understand the answer to the question of what kind of future vision Turkmenistan has adopted from the statements of Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov. Because Mr. President of Turkmenistan has promised to continue to adhere to the policies of neutrality and to further develop the policies of his predecessors in order to transform the country into a prosperous nation.[5]

In this context, it can be said that the Turkmen leader will continue to work towards two goals. The first of these is to ensure the continuity of the multi-vector foreign policy approach shaped by the “Permanent Neutrality Status”. The second is the implementation of reforms that will add the dynamism of youth politics to the policies implemented to increase the welfare of the Turkmen people.

What Kind of Foreign Policy?

Located in Eurasia, which is the central playing field of the global power struggle and in this context, the “New Great Game”, Turkmenistan has succeeded in securing its independence and stability through its “Permanent Neutrality Status”. Moreover, Turkmenistan is in the position of a country that can lead to regional stability.

Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov, just like his father, will display an active neutrality approach in the resolution of crises at the regional-global level within the framework of an approach that sees dialogue as the guarantee of peace, and with his peaceful policies that have earned the respect of the whole world, people centered, and aims to transform Ashgabat into a mediation center like Helsinki. It can be said that it will continue to take strong steps. The most concrete example of this is observed in the Afghan Question. In this direction, it can be stated that Ashgabat will continue its efforts to transform areas of competition and conflict into cooperation basins through projects such as the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) Pipeline and the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan Power Interconnection Project (TAP). Moreover, considering the diplomatic experience of the Turkmen leader, it will not be surprising that some new projects for cooperation are on the agenda.

As can be expected, the diplomatic experiences of the President of Turkmenistan will facilitate the implementation of the country’s multi-vector foreign policy approach. Because Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov has the knowledge to correctly coordinate his country’s four orientations based on Russia, China, the West and the Turkish World.

The fact that Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov received education in Russia and served as a consultant at the Russian Embassy in Turkmenistan reveals that he knows this country closely and shows that he will deepen the relations between the two countries on the axis of cooperation based on trust. Considering that Serdar Berdimuhamedov served as the Head of the Turkmen-China International Government Cooperation Desk in the past, it can be said that the relations on the Ashgabat-Beijing line will be conducted on a healthy basis. Turkmenistan on November 12, 2021; when it is considered that Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov was included in the Organization of Turkish States with the status of “Observer Member” when he was the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, it can be argued that Ashgabat will advance its relations with Turkey and the Turkish World within the framework of economic interests based on mutual respect. Finally, when it is remembered that Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov was a consultant to Turkmenistan’s Permanent Mission to the UN, it becomes easy to guess that he had important contacts in the West as well. Therefore, it can be said that Turkmenistan will accelerate its orientation to the West. In this context, Ashgabat can develop cooperation in the export of Turkmen gas to

Europe. At the same time, these collaborations include the Central Asia-Caspian Sea-Caucasus-Turkey-Europe route; in other words, it can create a process that is suitable for the interests of all regional states by bringing the Middle Corridor to the fore.

In short, Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov, as one of the architects of Turkmenistan's multi-vector foreign policy, will serve the efforts to build peace at the regional-global level. Respect for the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of states will continue to be the cornerstone of this foreign policy.

What Kind of Domestic Policy?

The ultimate goal of Turkmenistan's foreign policy is to attract investments in the country as a reflection of constructive relations with other states. In this sense, the aim of domestic politics is to create a society where the people live in prosperity. Referencing from the emphasis of the great Turkmen poet Mahtumkulu Firaki on the unity of the Turkmen, Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov will strive to make the Turkmen a nation living together in wealth. In line with this purpose, it can be said that the state staff, who will add the dynamism of the youth to the accumulation of the past, will realize some reform breakthroughs in the liberalization of the economy.

At this point, Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov's role as the person responsible for the reform of digitalization and technology breakthroughs in the past can turn into a great advantage. Under the leadership of Mr. Serdar Berdimuhamedov, Turkmenistan can turn into one of the world's most substantial technology societies. At this point, it can be easily stated that the experiences of the young Turkmen leader during his time as the Minister of Industry and Urbanization will play a vital role.

As a result, on the occasion of the early elections held on March 12, 2022, Turkmen politics and state staff have become younger and a vision that wants to build the future without rejecting the accumulation of the past has been put forward. This is the sign of Turkmenistan's multi-vector foreign policy built on the "Permanent Neutrality Status" in foreign policy, and the idea of creating a prosperous society in domestic politics.

[1] "The Results of the Presidential Elections", The Asia Today, <https://theasiatoday.org/news/central-asia/the-results-of-the-presidential-elections/>, (Date of Accession: 15.03.2022).

[2] "Türkmenistan Devlet Başkanı Berdimuhamedov'un Oğlu Devlet Başkanlığına Aday Oldu", TRT Haber, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/turkmenistan-devlet-baskani-berdimuhamedovun-oglu-devlet-baskanligina-aday-oldu-654894.html>, (Date of Accession: 15.03.2022).

[3] "Türkmenistan cumhurbaşkanı seçilen Serdar Berdimuhamedov'un Aldığı Oy Oranı Açıklandı", Independent Türkçe, <https://www.indyuturk.com/node/484896/d%C3%BCnya/t%C3%BCrkmenistan-cumhurba%C5%9Fkan%C4%B1-se%C3%A7ilen-serdar-berdimuhamedovun-ald%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1-oy-oran%C4%B1>, (Date of Accession: 15.03.2022).

[4] "Газета НТ опубликовала биографию кандидата в депутаты Меджлиса Сердара Бердымухамедова (NT diurna published in vita videlicet quod vicarius est candidatum Mejlis Serdar Berdimuhamedov)", Hronikatm, <https://www.hronikatm.com/2018/03/gazeta-nt-opublikovala-biografiyu-kandidata-v-deputaty-medzhliisa-serdara-berdyimuhamedova/>, (Date of Accession: 15.03.2021).

[5] "Serdar Berdimuhamedov Succeeds Father as Turkmenistan's New President", Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/serdar-berdimuhamedov-succeeds-father-as-turkmenistans-new-president/2535622>, (Date of Accession: 16.03.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

What is China's Stance on the Ukraine Crisis?

Russia's military intervention in Ukraine on February 23, 2022 generated a range of reactions from countries throughout the world. Many governments and international organizations, particularly European countries, the United States of America (USA), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), supported Ukraine in its conflict with Russia. Although the states that came together against Russia did not send their own soldiers to fight in Ukraine, both military equipment aid and economic sanctions against Russia had a compelling effect on Moscow. In addition to the reaction of the

West, the eyes of the international public have been drawn to the approach of China, one of Russia's main allies, to the issue in the context of their search for a multipolar world.

As is well known, Sino-Russian ties improved after the Cold War ended, and several agreements were reached between the two nations in the commercial, military, and diplomatic spheres. China and Russia, who have frequently clashed and experienced border wars throughout history, have decided to work together to oppose the Atlantic-centered uni-



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polar system. The fact that the national strengths of the parties covered their weaknesses formed the basic dynamic of this relationship. For instance, the energy demand and geographical route required by China's export-based economic expansion, which began in the 1980s, had been assumed to be easy to satisfy by Russia. Similarly, the investment necessary for Russia's economy has become an opportunity for China's stockpiled foreign exchange to be converted into investment. These two Asian powers have created a solid collaboration for their primary purposes, in opposition to American hegemony.

The relationship between Russia and China has been put to the test at times. The process that began with Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 resulted in the imposition of numerous economic sanctions by Europe and the United States. While the serious decline in the ruble and the recession in the economy as a result of the sanctions forced Moscow; China has decided to invest more in this country and has relatively reduced the effect of Western sanctions. Sanctions imposed by Europe and the United States both failed to prevent the annexation of Crimea and strengthened Russia's relationship with China. According to some analysts, the West's approach was a strategic mistake. In summary, the Beijing-Moscow axis emerged stronger from the crisis arising from Crimea's annexation.

The second crisis, in which the relations between Russia and China were severely tested, are the developments originating from Russia and based on Ukraine, as in 2014. Russia, which has been making a military build-up on the Ukrainian border for a while, has signaled that it will resolve the issue by military means. Anticipating that this operation would be criticized by the public, Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Chinese President Xi Jinping during the Beijing Olympics and created the image that he had received Beijing's assistance.

Xi, on the other side, welcomed the visits because some nations had protested the Olympics. During this visit, Russia and China officially released a joint statement. The aforementioned declaration stressed that the two nations' solidarity and cooperation deepened, and the discourse of unity against NATO and the USA came to the fore in the text.

Confirming that its relations with Russia had reached a strategic level before the intervention, China made statements explaining its support to Russia during and after the intervention. However, rather than being an outright Russian supporter, Beijing's position on the occupation has evolved within the context

of a perspective that calls for peace and appeals to all parties to solve the problem. It should be highlighted that in international relations, states act in their own self-interest. With this in mind, China, on the one hand, seeks not to leave its ally Russia alone in the international arena; on the other hand, it avoids harsh statements that would trigger a reaction from international public opinion. In short, China is making statements of support with a strategy that will protect itself from the sanctions that Russia is exposed to. Furthermore, Beijing's statements in favor of Moscow reflect its own agenda.

In a meeting with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock on February 26, 2022, by saying that Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi the Cold War is finished and NATO should reconsider its role and duties, reaffirming this stance. While Beijing made a statement in favor of Moscow; it mainly emphasized the limitation of NATO and the world evolving into a multipolar structure. [1] On the same day, Wang issued a five-point statement outlining China's position on the current Ukraine crisis, with the goal of striking a balance between Russia and the opposing side. Wang supports Ukraine's territorial integrity in this statement while emphasizing that Russia has valid reasons.[2]

The most noteworthy statement made by the Beijing government, which expresses its displeasure with Russia's invasion of Ukraine and clues at its future policy, was delivered on February 28, 2022, during the regular press conference of the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin. Because the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' spokesman made the following comments:[3]

"The sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries should be respected and upheld, and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter should be jointly upheld. This is a principle China always follows and a basic norm governing international relations that all countries should adhere to. At the same time, China believes that one country's security cannot be at the expense of others' security; still less should one country flagrantly undermine others' sovereignty and security for its own absolute military advantage and absolute security. All countries' legitimate security concerns should be respected... As I said just now, China will continue to develop the friendly cooperative relationship with Ukraine based on mutual respect and non-interference."

On the same day, the statement of the Chinese Foreign Minister, who spoke At the Meeting in Commemoration of the 50th

Anniversary of the Shanghai Communiqué, which is considered the beginning of China-US relations, should also be carefully noted:[4]

"China is open to U.S. participation in the Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative. We are also ready to consider coordinating with the Build Back Better World initiative of the United States to provide more quality public goods for the world."

In addition to the statements of China's high-level state officials, some academicians at China's important universities published a statement supporting the Ukrainian people and criticizing Russia's military operation.[5] Moreover, People's Daily, the official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China shared news of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine including "Ukraine's health ministry said that 352 civilians, including 14 children, had been killed since the beginning of Russia's military operations in the country. It also said that 1,684 people, including 116 children, had been wounded." contrary to Russian rhetoric. These example show us the flexibility of Chinese foreign policy in the current situation and the depth of the Russian-Chinese divergence.

Economic embargoes are viewed as the most legitimate basis for China's split from Russia. First and foremost, China is deeply integrated into the global economy. As a result, it is a reality that it will be more affected than Russia in the event of a potential embargo against China. Because exports are the major driver of the Chinese economy, and it need foreign markets. An embargo on its economy and commerce will have a direct impact on China. Given the lack of economic resources such as oil and natural gas, taking a neutral posture is the most logical alternative for Beijing.

When comparing the situation before and after Russia's intervention, it is possible to conclude that China differs from Russia in its geopolitical system of thought. Russia is recognized as a disrupting power, whereas China is known as a constructive power in international relations. In other words, while Moscow does not care about going out of the round table; Beijing wants to sit in a strong position at the international relations table. For this reason, the intervention in Ukraine is an operation that China should oppose. Because, China has based its foreign policy on "non-interference in the internal affairs of countries and respect for their territorial integrity". However, a clear opposition to Moscow by China will harm Russia, with which it is an ally, in

order to break the hegemony of the Atlantic alliance. It is possible to explain this situation as "China's Russia Paradox".

Indicators such as the next steps in the current scenario and the path of the conflict will play a significant role in defining the direction of China-Russia ties. If Russia does not get what it wants in Ukraine, it is inevitable that Moscow will become more dependent on China. The energy embargo imposed on Russia, in particular, will allow China to deliver energy at a lower cost than Russia. As a result, China believes that the current status quo should be maintained for a length of time. Because the force opposing Russia (Europe-USA) is a geopolitical rival of China, and it is obvious that a conflict in which two rivals lose power will strengthen China even more. At this point, it is a vital question to what extent the USA, which wants to surround China in the Indo-Pacific, will push Russia into China?

If Russia changes the direction of the battle and establishes dominance in the areas it seeks, Sino-Russian ties may become turbulent. Because the Moscow administration, which has expanded its area of influence to the west, will now turn its attention to the east. At this point, Russia's approach to China will be a factor that will affect the negotiations on the removal of the Western sanctions against Russia. Even if not stated clearly, Russia's negative or vengeful attitude toward China (through Central Asia-South Asia-Arctic-and-so-on) will be directly proportionate to the easing of sanctions. Without a question, the Ukraine Crisis reflects an international order that did not settle after the Cold War. Depending on how the situation develops, ties along the Beijing-Moscow axis may take on a new character.

[1] "Wang Yi Speaks with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock on the Phone", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202202/t20220227_10645996.html, (Date of Accession: 28.02.2022).

[2] "Wang Yi Expounds China's Five-Point Position on the Current Ukraine Issue", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202202/t20220226_10645855.html, (Date of Accession: 28.02.2022).

[3] "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference on February 28, 2022", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/202202/t20220228_10646378.html, (Date of Accession: 28.02.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Effects of the US Policy on Depletion of Afghan Reserves

The Taliban has dominated all of Afghanistan as a result of its struggle against foreign powers, especially the United States (USA). The government proclaimed by the Taliban is not recognized by any state and international organizations. In fact, the United States signed the

Doha Treaty with the Taliban and again turned a blind eye to the Taliban rule over Afghanistan. However, the Washington administration did not recognize the Taliban and blocked its reserves in the country's banks and international financial institutions. The reduction of foreign



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aid to this country due to the blocking of Afghanistan's national reserves has plunged Afghanistan into an economic crisis, which has led to a humanitarian crisis.

Over the past 20 years, many countries, especially the United States, have provided assistance to Afghanistan. The Government of Afghanistan has kept some of its aid money as a reserve in the United States and international financial institutions for bad days. As a matter of fact, it is known that Afghanistan had reserves of 9.6 billion dollars, including foreign currency, gold and valuable securities, before the Ashraf Ghani administration was overthrown. Of this, \$ 7 billion is held in the US Federal Reserve Bank in New York, and the rest in Swiss banks and international financial institutions. Of this money, \$ 2.5 billion belongs to the private sector of Afghanistan and \$ 7 billion to the state.

The neighbors of China, Russia and Afghanistan, especially the Taliban, are demanding the release of Afghanistan's reserves in order to keep the country's economy afloat and prevent a humanitarian crisis. The United States did not heed these demands and asked the organization to take serious steps in accordance with the wishes of the international community in its negotiations with the Taliban. In addition, the Washington administration has also announced that Afghanistan's reserves will not be released until the wishes of the international community are met. Recently, it has been observed that the United States is pursuing a "melting pot policy" towards Afghanistan's national reserves. As a matter of fact, US President Joe Biden announced that \$3.5 billion from Afghanistan's reserves would be provided to the families of the victims of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks as compensation and that \$3.5 billion would be distributed to the Afghan people as humanitarian aid in a decision he made. The approval of the US Federal Court was also required to implement the decision taken. The planned \$ 3.5 billion in humanitarian aid will first be transferred to a humanitarian fund and then distributed to the people of Afghanistan through international organizations.

The decision of the Washington administration regarding Afghanistan's reserves caused the reaction of the Afghan people, politicians, and the Taliban. It should be noted that there are also states and international organizations that support this reaction. In a statement issued on the subject, the Taliban stated that the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 had nothing to do with Afghanistan. In addition to that, it was stated in the statement that if the Washington administration does not change

its decision on this issue, the Taliban's policy towards the United States will be reviewed.[1]

Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai also said that the Afghan people are victims of terrorism, no one should punish victims, and that Osama bin Laden, the leader of terror organization al-Qaeda, was killed in Pakistan. Therefore, Karzai reacted to Biden's decision by stating that the Afghan people should not pay the price of the attacks.[2] The people of Afghanistan organized protests in many cities of the country and emphasized that the USA should pay compensation for the 20-year occupation instead of seizing Afghanistan's reserves.

Human Rights Watch called for the Afghan people not to be punished by citing the Taliban as the reason, claiming that Biden was trying to seize Afghanistan's assets.[3] Hua Chunying, the spokesperson of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, criticized in a statement on his social media account, "The world's richest country plundering the wealth of the world's poorest people visibly".[4] Also, Maria Zaharova, the spokesperson of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accused the Washington administration of deepening the humanitarian crisis in the country.

There are various reasons for this policy of the USA. First, this decision reveals that the USA and the Taliban cannot agree. In addition, this policy shows that the Biden administration is trying to drag Afghanistan into an economic crisis and provoke the Afghan people against the Taliban. Because the Taliban have to rule Afghanistan and find a solution to the economic and humanitarian crisis in the country. The top executives of the movement point to the USA as responsible for the economic and humanitarian crisis due to the blocking of the country's reserves.

The second aim of the USA is to want to completely collapse the economy of the country, leaving the Afghan currency vulnerable. In economic terms, the reserves of a state are the most important mechanism that keeps the economic system of that country alive. Therefore, the USA is trying to increase the inflation in the country in question by distributing half of Afghanistan's reserves. Because under current conditions, it is not easy for the Taliban to replace the money that will be melted. In such a situation, it is difficult for Afghanistan's economy to survive based on foreign aid and imports.



Moreover, while calling on the international community of the USA to help the Afghan people; the seizure of Afghan people's money points to a serious paradox. It can be said that the USA is in the psychology of defeat and is trying to take revenge on the Afghan people by using the Taliban as an excuse. But it should be noted that this decision once again showed that Washington is unreliable. Because the USA; when talking about human rights, justice, and liberal values; seizes the money of an oppressed nation.

Ultimately, it should be emphasized that Biden's action did not provoke the public against the Taliban, as the US President expected. On the contrary, during the second Taliban era, for the first time, most of the Afghan society developed a common reaction. Therefore, this decision took place as a development that would strengthen the relationship between the Taliban and the people contrary to the expectations of the American decision-makers. As a result, what has happened is a result of the deficiencies in international law. Because there is no mechanism in the international system that will deter the USA from its wrong decision.

[1] دیوشن فرصنم دوخ میمصت زا رگا: اکیرم هب نابلاط رادشه" [1] "میکیم یرگنزاب ار اکیرم هرابرد دوخ تسایس", Sputnik, <https://124.im/PHB>, (Date of Accession: 14.02.2022).

[2] ینابرق ناتسناغفا مدرم: ندیاب نامرف هب یزک شنکاو" [2] "دهدیمن ازج از ینابرق یسک، دنامزیوروت", Afghanistan Internitonal, <https://www.afintl.com/202202138017>, (Date of Accession: 14.02.2022).

[3] یاه یاراد بحاصت لابند هب ندیاب وج: رشب قوقح نابهدید" [3] "تسا ناتسناغفا", Haşti Subah, <https://8am.af/human-rights-watch-biden-seeks-to-seize-afghan-assets/>, (Date of Accession: 14.02.2022).

[4] روط هب ناهج روشک نیرتدنم تورث: نیج هجراخ ترازو یوگنخس" [4] "دنک یم تراغ ار اه نیرتریق تورث راکشآ", Sputnik, <https://124.im/fh71Y9>, (Date of Accession: 14.02.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Indo-Pacific Strategy of the European Union

The world's economic, political, and military center of gravity has begun to shift from an Atlantic-centered framework to an Indo-Pacific-centered system at the beginning of the 20th century. The Indo-Pacific area is a unique region in which Asia's countries with dynamic populations and cheap labor markets, particularly China, trade with Europe and the United States, the world's two largest consumer markets, and is also at the core of the "New Great Game" strategies. This strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific geography created a natural call to regional and non-regional actors and

accelerated the orientation of countries to the Indo-Pacific region. As a result of the aforementioned trends and the announced strategies, the European Union (EU) has also started to show interest in the region.

Following the publication of the Council Declaration on the "Council Conclusions on an EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific"[1] by the General Secretariat of the European Council on 16 April 2021, the EU announced on 16 September 2021 the long-awaited Indo-Pacific Strategy Document titled "The EU Strategy for



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Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.[2]

Without a doubt, the official strategy statement of a union, such as the EU, which includes countries with diverse interests and engagements, on the geography in question, where the great power struggle is intense, is significant in terms of providing a clue as to which side it will take in this conflict. The publication of Indo-Pacific strategy documents by the countries in a strong position in the EU such as France, Germany and the Netherlands, and the 300 billion Euros "Global Gateway Project" developed by the EU as an alternative to the Belt-Road Project contributed to this step of the union.[3]

In the 17-page strategy document, Southeast Asian Nations Association (ASEAN) Centrality, supply chain, trade agreements, green transformation and maritime security issues come to the fore. Besides the topics highlighted by the EU, perhaps the most curious issue was how the union would position China. Beijing, which is a key pillar of the Belt-Road Project initiated by China in 2013, has different meanings for Europe.

On the one hand, many European countries are economically dependent on China in terms of import-export-investment; On the other hand, the conflict of China's values and ideology with those of Europe is one of the most challenging issues for decision makers. From this perspective, the EU's strategy creates the im-

pression that a balance is maintained. EU; While criticizing Beijing on fundamental issues such as human rights and stating that will continue to protect and support these values against China, EU said that will continue its multi-faceted engagement by cooperating on common problems and common interests. The EU's emphasis, which includes security concerns in the report, indicates criticism of China.[4]

"In recent years, geopolitical dynamics in the Indo-Pacific have given rise to intense competition, including tensions around contested territories and maritime zones. There has been a significant military build-up, including by China, with the Indo-Pacific's share of global military spending increasing from 20% of the world total in 2009 to 28% in 2019. The display of force and increasing tensions in regional hotspots such as in the South and East China Sea and in the Taiwan Strait may have a direct impact on European security and prosperity. There is also an increase in hybrid threats, including on cyber security."

There is no doubt that economic relations with the region are vital for the EU. Due to the global economic damage caused by the Covid-19 epidemic, the EU's development of a strategy without intensely entering the global power competition and without categorizing the economic dynamics shaped around China as revisionist is seen as the most inclusive move in terms of its internal and external dynamics. Because, Europe's economy is deeply connected with Indo-Pacific trade in terms of investment, and supply networks. In 2018, EU-Asian goods trade totaled 1.5 trillion euros (\$1.8 trillion), while foreign direct investment between the two countries exceeding 90 billion euros (\$107 billion). More than a third of all European exports flow to the area, with the most passing through the Indian and Pacific Oceans' maritime routes.[5] The EU intends to establish new trade agreements in addition to current economic partnerships. In fact, the agreement signed between ASEAN and the EU, which would elevate the two organizations' relations to the level of "strategic partnership," is one of the most significant moves made in this direction.

Although the EU's current view of the Indo-Pacific geography represents an economy-based approach, there is no guarantee that it will follow the same strategy in the future. Because, as tensions between the United States and China rise in the global system, it is inevitable, based on past experiences, that polarization will spread from nations to regions and unions. This

is one of the reasons for the initiative of the EU to the Indo-Pacific region. The Union wishes to prove that it is one of the players at the table in the new global order. Indeed, the statements of Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, in her address on September 15, 2021, refer to the EU's future vision:[6]

"Europe needs to be more present and more active in the region. So we will work together to deepen trade links, strengthen global supply chains and develop new investment projects on green and digital technologies."

Once upon a time; Europe, which is known as the cradle of development, production, dynamic population, entrepreneurship and research and development, leaves its place to the countries in the Indo-Pacific region discovered by European explorers. States in Asia with a growing population and a cheap labor market, particularly China, have succeeded in shifting the power center from Europe to Asia. Europe is eager to emerge as a political, economic, and security actor in the Indo-Pacific region, as demonstrated by the new Indo-Pacific document. The EU's fate, and the influence it will have in the future, will determine how solid it can be in the growing Sino-US struggle, and on which side it will be positioned.

[1] "Council Conclusions on an EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific", General Secretariat of the Council, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7914-2021-INIT/en/pdf>, (Date of Accession: 11.02.2022).

[2] "The EU Strategy for Cooperation in The Indo-Pacific", European Commission, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/jointcommunication_2021_24_1_en.pdf, (Date of Accession: 11.02.2022).

[3] "Global Gateway", European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/global-gateway_en, (Date of Accession: 11.02.2022).

[4] a.g.r.

[5] Pierre Morcos, "The European Union is Shaping Its Strategy for the Indo-Pacific", CSIS, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/european-union-shaping-its-strategy-indo-pacific>, (Date of Accession: 11.02.2022).

[6] Ursula von der Leyen, "2021 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen", European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_21_4701, (Date of Accession: 11.02.2022).

ANKASAM IN PRESS

14 March 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) Specialist Dr. Dođacan Bařaran made evaluations about the Russia-Ukraine War in the program "İřin Özü" hosted by Muhammed Acar on On4 TV.

14 March 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) Chief Advisor to the President, Retired Ambassador Aydın Nurhan, was the guest of the Açık ve Net program with Kübra Par, hosted by Kübra Par on Haber Türk.

15 Mart 2022

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

15 March 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Specialist Dr. Dođacan Bařaran evaluated the Russia-Ukraine War in A Haber.

15 March 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol commented on the developments in international politics as a guest of the program "Gün Ortası" hosted by Yeřim Eryılmaz on the Ulusal Kanal.

15 March 2022

ANKASAM Chief Advisor to the President, Retired Ambassador Aydın Nurhan, evaluated the Russia-Ukraine War on Ülke TV.

15 March 2022

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol evaluated the Russia-Ukraine War on the TRT News Birinci Sayfa program.

16 March 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Specialist Dr. Dođacan Bařaran evaluated the Russia-Ukraine War on Ülke TV.

16 March 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Consultant Dr. Kadir Ertaç Çelik evaluated the Russia-Ukraine War on Bengütürk TV.

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16 March 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Specialist Dr. Dođacan Bařaran evaluated the Russia-Ukraine War in A Haber.

16 March 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) International Relations Advisor Dr. Kadir Ertaç Çelik evaluated the diplomatic attack initiated by Turkey after the Russia-Ukraine War to United World.



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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