



# ANKASAM

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## Putin's "Plan B" in the Ukrainian War



10

New Address of the Crisis in the Global Power Struggle: Pacific Islands and Chinese Strategy

16

Serbia's Position in the Russian-Ukrainian War

# CONTENTS

## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

- 03** **Popular Culture as the Soft Power of South Korea**  
Sevinç İrem BALCI
- 05** **Possible Oil Sanctions on Russia: The Gulf, Iran and India Dimension**  
Cenk TAMER
- 08** **Taliban's Policy of Purging the Ranks**  
Ahmad Khan DAWLATYAR
- 10** **New Address of the Crisis in the Global Power Struggle: Pacific Islands and Chinese Strategy**  
Mustafa Cem KOYUNCU
- 13** **Putin's "Plan B" in the Ukrainian War**  
Dr. Sabir ASKEROĞLU
- 16** **Serbia's Position in the Russian-Ukrainian War**  
Selinay İLGAZ
- 18** **France's Attitude Towards Germany's Decision on F-35 Purchasing**  
Gamze BAL

## NEWS-ANALYSIS

- 21** **Election Tension at the Kosovo-Serbia Line: Was Dialog Process Disrupted?**  
Sibel MAZREK

## ANKASAM IN PRESS

- 25** **Media**

## JOURNALS

- 26** **Journal of International Crisis and Political Studies**

**Journal of Regional Studies**



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Popular Culture as the Soft Power of South Korea

Soft power has great importance in the discipline of international relations, and contrary to the general belief, it can appear as a deflecting factor in politics.

The media and media management, which has the capacity to mobilize the masses in the 21st century, which is considered as the era of high technology, has become a tool of soft power and, when used effectively, has brought suc-

cess to countries in international politics. Since the development of the film industry and the spread of using television in the mainstream media, Western and especially American figures have always been talked about. However, since the 2010s, the popular culture elements of South Korea, which have emerged from Asia, have started to spread all over the world, and the music and movie industry that has become symbolic of this country has increased



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the soft power of South Korea in the international arena. As it is known, for over 120 years, the American film industry Hollywood has been closely watched not only in the United States of America (US); but also in all over the world and a cultural icon has been built. These films were exported all over the world and the US economy benefited from this immensely. With the increase of sound cinemas since the 1930s, movie stars have stood out even more, and their lifestyles were followed closely and people tried to resemble them.

Along with the movie industry, American culture has spread all over the world, with chain fast food restaurants and coffee shops. Thus, the US spread its hegemony all over the world with its soft power brought by 'Americanization' as well as her hard power. However, with the millennium, American hegemony started to lose its monopoly in the cultural field as well as in other fields and found new rivals.

Among these competitors is South Korea, one of the "Asian Tigers" whose soft power is gradually growing in popular culture. The Chinese word "Hallyu", which was introduced to the literature in the early 2000s, can be translated as "Korean Wave", and is an expression describing the importance of rising South Korean popular culture.

First, South Korean drama series began to be exported to the international market. Then, the use of Samsung branded technological tools became widespread around the world. While these developments were taking place in the early 2000s, the South Korean state became aware of the economic-cultural development in question and began to strive to turn this effect into "soft power".[1] Because, according to the news published in the BBC in 2012, the brand manager of the Seoul administration, Peter Kim, mentioned that a cultural brand has not yet been created in South Korea.[2]

When it was reached 2022, South Korea has signed "the firsts" in the popular culture. In 2012, South Korean Pop Music singer Psy's "Gangnam Style" has remained in the top of the music lists for a long time.

On the other hand, in 2020 the Oscar Academy Awards, for the first time, the best movie prize is given to a non-English film; to South Korean movie named "Parasite."

In addition, it was a series of South Korean made "Squid Game", which is one of the most monitored sequences in Netflix, is one of the most monitored sequences in Netflix and has made approximately 900 billion dollars.[3]

In addition to the film industry, the prestige of the popular music groups of Korea has started to increase worldwide. The ad-morous groups played an important role on the basis of the growth of these music groups known as K-POP. The number of Hallyu-related organizations that are cooperating with the Korean culture is increasing every day, while the number of these organizations is increasing 7%, and the number of the members increased 36% in each year.

As of 2020, the total number of members participating in the organizations on Hallyu in all countries of the world has reached approximately 100 million.[4] It is estimated that the famous K-POP group BTS has contributed more than \$ 3.6 billion per year to South Korea economy alone. In the period before Covid-19, it is stated that approximately 800,000 tourists visiting South Korea are affected by this group. Moreover, this figure is 7% of the total number of tourists.[5]

This success of course not coincidence for South Korea. Because the Seoul administration has been striving to remove national brand lack since 2012.

Creating the "South Korea" brand should not simply be called a nationalist movement. Because it includes much more. In addition to economic benefits, it also provides soft power, which is an indispensable element for medium-sized states such as South Korea.

As a result, the importance of soft power for states is increasing day by day, despite many "high" policy-related factors such as military alliances, the size of defense systems and economic sanctions. South Korea is one of the most successful states in this regard.

[1] "How South Korean Pop Culture Can Be a Source of Soft Power", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/12/15/how-south-korean-pop-culture-can-be-source-of-soft-power-pub-83411>, (Date of Accession: 21.02.2022).

[2] "Selling South Korea: No 'Sparkling' Brand Image", BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-16713919>, (Date of Accession: 21.02.2022).

[3] "How Much Money Did Squid Game's Creator Really Make From Netflix?", Looper, [https://www.looper.com/651415/how-much-money-did-squid-games-creator-really-make-from-netflix/?utm\\_campaign=clip](https://www.looper.com/651415/how-much-money-did-squid-games-creator-really-make-from-netflix/?utm_campaign=clip), (Date of Accession: 21.02.2022).

[4] "Hallyu to the World: The Incredible Rise of Korean Culture", The Drum, <https://www.thedrum.com/news/2021/10/27/hallyu-the-world-the-incredible-rise-korean-culture>, (Date of Accession 21.02.2022).

[5] "Beyond Security: South Korea's Soft Power and the Future of the U.S.-ROK Alliance in a Post-Pandemic World", Center for Strategic and International Studies, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/beyond-security-south-koreas-soft-power-and-future-us-rok-alliance-post-pandemic-world>, (Date of Accession: 21.02.2022).



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Possible Oil Sanctions on Russia: The Gulf, Iran and India Dimension

Russia, the world's third biggest oil producer, produces around 11.3 million barrels of oil per day, primarily in Eastern Siberia, the Yamal area, and Tatarstan. While 3.45 million barrels of crude oil and other petroleum products are consumed, the remaining more than 7 million barrels are exported mostly via pipelines and tankers.[1] However, according to the most recent study issued by "Energy Intelligence," Russia's total crude oil and processed product exports have declined by roughly 3 million barrels per day and are expected to drop by another 2 million barrels per day in the coming weeks.

That is, the country's oil exports might drop by 5 million barrels per day, bringing the country's daily exports down to about 2.3 million barrels. [2] That's approximately a third of what it was before Russia invaded Ukraine, when it produced 7 million barrels per day.

This drop in oil shipments might be an unintended consequence of the sanctions put on Russia as a result of the Ukraine crisis. Although no formal restrictions on Russia's energy trade have been imposed, sanctioned nations, particularly those in the West, have begun to cut



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their oil purchases from Russia and seek alternatives. Because 4.8 million barrels out of Moscow's daily oil exports of 7 million barrels are now flowing to Western countries who support Russia's sanctions. The remaining 2.2 million barrels are sent to nations that oppose Russian sanctions. To put it another way, Russia has to find new clients for its 4.8 million barrels of oil exports. However, there are two sides to this issue. In other words, Western nations will have to buy 4.8 million barrels of oil from other countries to replace the 4.8 million barrels they bought from Russia. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iran, the United States of America (USA), and Venezuela may all expand their oil output and replace Russia's 4.8 million barrels.

Russia, on the other hand, urges Gulf nations, Iran, and other oil-producing countries to avoid efforts that may create energy market price swings.[3] Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar are avoiding measures against Russia in the energy market due to regional security, military cooperation, and other geopolitical issues. Before the commencement of the Ukraine War, these countries guaranteed Russian President Vladimir Putin that they would follow the OPEC+ standards on oil output and would not politicize the energy market.[4] However, with this assurance, the Gulf nations backed the UN General Assembly's resolution to condemn Russia's aggression on Ukraine. Following this stance, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's diplomatic politeness in welcome his Qatari colleague, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, in Moscow was a "humiliating" warning message to the Gulf States. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, in particular, have the capacity to expand their oil output to 2.5 million barrels per day. However, in order to keep global oil prices high, these countries maintain output low. Gulf States might be an excellent option for Westerners if they limit their oil imports from Russia. As a result, Moscow may step up its pressure on the Gulf states.

Iran has begun to be seen as a competitor in the energy market by Russia. The conclusion of the nuclear agreement with Iran, therefore raising Iran's oil sales to the international market again, is the point that Moscow is uncomfortable with, while coming to him with (potential) oil sanctions. Iran was able to export 1.3 million barrels of oil per day before to the sanctions. Furthermore, Iran is said to have between 65 and 80 million barrels of oil stored on the seabed in tankers.[5] As a result, if Russia is hit with oil sanctions, Iran will be able to fill the world's energy gap for a while.

The United States has already begun purchasing Iranian oil. "Buying oil from Iran is on the table," stated Pete Buttigieg, the US Secretary of Transportation.[6] Moscow, on the other hand, does not want to put sanctions on any commerce between Russia and Iran once the nuclear agreement is signed, and asks that the US commit to this.[7] As the US administration nears a nuclear deal with Iran, Moscow is accused of attempting to sabotage the deal. There is still a chance that the nuclear deal with Iran will be inked as a P4+1 agreement without Russia. If Moscow continues to cause problems in this area, Tehran may no longer want Russia to be a part of the accord. In other words, Russia and Iran now face fresh challenges.

Russia has said that it is willing to sell oil at low rates in order to increase its oil exports, which have declined as a result of the Ukraine Crisis. India wants to take advantage of the low-cost oil opportunity as well. In this connection, it is stated that the New Delhi government is close to reaching an arrangement with Moscow to buy 3.5 million barrels of Russian crude oil at "significant discounts".[8] India meets 80-85 percent of its oil needs from abroad. However, Russia's part of this import (2-3%) is fairly little. Now, Russia is attempting to diversify its oil clients, with plans to sell additional oil at low rates to Asian buyers. As a result, it aspires to lessen its energy dependency with the West. To summarize, Russia is prepared to offer India additional oil in order to secure its energy security. White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki stated that the oil that India would purchase from Russia will not violate the sanctions, but that "India should be careful where it stands".[9]

Russia, like Iran, is concerned about "secondary sanctions" on oil shipments. In other words, foreign countries may be barred from doing business with Russia over oil. This is something that Moscow is thinking about. As a result, just striking new oil deals with Asian buyers would not enough. It must also solve problems with international money transfer systems. In this context, Russia has been creating its own system, SPFS, since 2014, with the goal of avoiding exclusion from SWIFT and expanding its usage. Russia is also exploring for alternative methods to get around secondary restrictions. Payments with China will be made in Ruble-Yuan and via Indian banks that do not do business in the West, for example. Payments with India will be done in Ruble-Rupee and through Indian banks that do not do business in the West. In addition, Russia has the option of paying in gold or barter.

In any event, while there are some possibilities for Russia to avoid impending oil sanctions, it does not appear that sales can be restored to pre-Ukraine Crisis levels. Russia earns 489 billion dollars a year from oil and natural gas sales, with crude oil and other petroleum products accounting for 180 billion dollars.[10] As indicated at the outset of the study, Russia's oil sales are anticipated to have dropped by 3 million barrels per day. Ending the war in Ukraine is the quickest and easiest way to halt this collapse. If oil sales continue to fall at the current rate, Russia may soon be forced to contemplate this alternative.

[1] "Here's Where Russian Oil Flows", Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/03/08/russia-oil-imports-ban/>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2022).

[2] "Russia's Oil Exports Keep Falling", Energy Intel, <https://www.energyintel.com/0000017f-6590-d580-a37f-f59b521b0000>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2022).

[3] "Balance of power: Gulf states, Russia, and European energy security", ECFR, <https://ecfr.eu/article/balance-of-power-gulf-states-russia-and-european-energy-security/>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2022).

[4] Ibid.

[5] "İran'ın Denizde Depoladığı Petrol Dünya Pazarına Girmeye Hazır", Tasnim News, <https://www.tasnimnews.com/tr/news/2022/02/26/2672660/>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2022).

[6] "ABD Ulaştırma Bakanı'ndan Tepki Çeken Açıklama: 'İran'dan Petrol Alımı Masada!'", Milliyet, <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/dunya/abd-ulastirma-bakanindan-tepki-ceken-aciklama-irandan-petrol-alimi-masada-6712546>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2022).

[7] "Iran Nuclear Talks on Hold over Last-Minute Russian Demands", The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/11/iran-nuclear-talks-on-hold-over-last-minute-russian-demands>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2022).

[8] "India Close to Clinching Oil Deal with Russia", Times of India, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/india-close-to-clinching-oil-deal-with-russia/articleshow/90242777.cms>, (Date of Accession: 19.03.2022).

[9] "India not Violating Sanctions on Russia Oil Deal but 'Think Where You Want to Stand': US", CNBC, <https://www.cnbc.com/india/india-not-violating-sanctions-on-russia-oil-deal-but-think-where-you-want-to-stand-us-12845612.htm>, (Date of Accession: 16.03.2022).

[10] "Russia's Government Can Keep Running Despite NATO Sanctions, Ruble Collapse", News Week, <https://bitly/3qjZRKH>, (Date of Accession: 16.03.2022).





## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Taliban's Policy of Purging the Ranks

It is alleged that the Taliban carried out some arbitrary executions in Afghanistan. As a matter of fact, the Afghan press asserts that in some cities Taliban elements have carried out armed raids on various houses and forcibly collected money from the public. This leads to critical comments that the Taliban is abusing its position. The Secretary General of the United Nations (UN) Antonio Guterres also reminded that the Taliban declared a general amnesty after dominating Afghanistan, noting that 100 people working in the security agencies of the ousted regime were killed by Taliban members despite the amnesty decision. Taliban officials, on the

other hand, denied Guterres' statements and have made it clear that they are against arbitrary arrests and persecution, stressing that they do not act out revenge.

At the first stage, the Taliban leaders followed a policy based on denying allegations that the forces affiliated with it had committed human rights violations and called for their soldiers to be treated well in public. In this context, Taliban Defense Minister Mullah Yakoob Mujahid warned that Taliban elements should stick to the amnesty and stated that they would punish those who violated the amnesty. But despite



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the denials of the Taliban rulers and their indoctrination of their fighters, this policy has not been successful. Therefore, the Taliban has started to follow a new method. In this context, the Taliban stated that the fall of Kabul was an unexpected development, stating that some people had joined the ranks of the Taliban during this process, and said that these people, who had not previously been affiliated with them, had taken actions trying to discredit the Taliban.

At the end of the day, increasing criticism both nationally and internationally against the powers which is bounded to the Taliban has pushed the organization to decide on internal cleansing. Following this decision, the Taliban has formed the "Commission of Purge the Ranks" on 13th October 2021. The commission has been constituted by the representatives of the Defence Ministry of Taliban, the Internal Ministry of Interior and the intelligence department with the decision of the Taliban's Leader, Molla Hibetullah Ahundzade. The leadership of the commission has been announced as Head of the Intelligence Department of Taliban and the main task of the commission is the purification of people, who has an ambiguous relationship with the Taliban, and who has corruption and misconduct in their records. In this context, the commission informed that people who comply with this definition would be suspended from the Taliban.

Chairman of the Commission, Mufti Latifullah Hakimi, has clearly stated that such an internal cleansing is needed for the survival of the Taliban administration and that the necessary purges will be carried out. Hakimi also has emphasized that they are decisive in solving the purity issue. After that, the commission has announced that thousands of Taliban elements were investigated, and, in this regard, necessary steps were taken.

Hakimi declared that the commission determined the crimes of 4350 people as a result of filing reports by the public and the investigations of the Taliban and that all criminals were disengaged from the Taliban, except for 130 people under the age of 18, at his press conference on the subject.

The commission's future is planned to lasting according to Hakimi's expression. Finally, Hakimi has paid attention to the fact that the expelled people used military equipment and vehicles for their own interests and that their relations with the terrorist organization Devlet al-Iraq and al-Sham (DEAS) were determined.[1]

The Taliban not only detract abusers from their ranks; it also investigates people who held high-level positions and were involved in corruption during the deposed regime. In this framework, the following statements by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Taliban, Abdul Ghani Baradar, are extremely significant:[2]

"In our negotiations with the United States of America (USA), the USA has demanded that we form a coalition government with some officials of the overthrown regime. But due to our unwillingness of the discretion of our government because of a few corrupt people, we have not been accepting this demand."

As this development signifies, the Taliban has adopted a sensitive attitude to issues such as corruption and abuse of power and demonstrated its stance on this matter with the formed commission. It is possible to claim that this process will contribute to the international legitimacy of the Taliban.

what is more to the point is the Afghani people is welcoming the Taliban's elimination of people who abuse their power and oppress the people, and not assign jobs to those who are corrupt in the old regime. Thus, the Taliban's policy of purifying the ranks is a significant step which would strengthen the organization's relationship with the public.

As a result, the Taliban has turned to a process of internal cleansing. Despite the internal characteristic of this process, it also includes the corruption of the overthrown regime. This process, on the other side, will open the gate for those who will take part in Afghanistan's future to establish healthier relations with the public. Further, the policy of purging the ranks may be the beginning of a process that strengthens the Taliban's ties with the Afghani people.

[1] "دندش جارخا «بولطمان» ب لاط ۳۵۰ و رازه راهج: ناب لاط فوفص هيفصت نویسی مک راک نایاب" Khaama Press, <https://www.khaama.com/persian/archives/97623>, (Date of Accession: 21.02.2022).

[2] "مى نكى من مان د ب ار ناب لاط ماطن: یلبق تلود دس فم یاه رهج اب: دارب الم" Jomhor Nesw, <http://www.jomhornews.com/fa/news/146411/>, Date of Accession: 21.02.2022).



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# New Address of the Crisis in the Global Power Struggle: Pacific Islands and Chinese Strategy

Academicians have characterized the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union as the Cold War since the mid-20th century and called the post-Cold War period a unipolar world order which is centred by the USA. This system, which have begun in the 1990s, has weakened over time and gradually moved into a stage of evolving into a multi-polar structure, especially with the rise of China.

The rise of China and its parallel actions against the Atlantic system have increasingly damaged relations between the United States and China. The Pacific Ocean is the most significant region reflected in this struggle between the two countries. While Beijing has been steadily increasing its power in economic terms with the Belt and Road Initiative since 2013 when Xi Jinping became the President of China, China has also simultaneously improved its military



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capabilities through the modernization of the Chinese navy and new warships. The increasing strength of Beijing: created new perceptions of security in the South China Sea, Taiwan, the Pacific Ocean and the island states in the region.

Along with its defence capabilities[1] which acting as a preventative mechanism against attacks from the land, sea, air and space; with its increasing naval power, Beijing has gained the ability to defend against attacks or military operations that may arise from many of the US military bases in the Pacific, including Guam, which is known as the “the tip of the spear”

In spite of the fact of its considerable capacity for defence, China is weakening at the rate of where it diverges from its coastline and where the intercepted land missiles come out of range. At this point, we are facing the influences and changes power of geography on the matter of strategies. The Pacific Ocean; is the world’s largest geographical area which is equal to the total size of the Indian, Atlantic and Arctic Oceans. This greatness of its size led to its being called the tyranny/challenge of distance. In these waters, the navies, which lacks replenishment stops and manoeuvrability, can move like birds without wings. Decision-makers in Beijing are also aware of this situation. Based upon this reality, in contrast to Beijing’s recent requests for maritime jurisdictions in the South China Sea, which is situated near small island states situated in the Pacific Ocean, its economic and diplomatic approach stems from the nature of geography-distance.

Island-states in the Pacific, which is consisted of 14 countries, emerging as an increasingly crucial sphere in the China-US competition. Within this framework, China, which has the desire of increasing its power on the island-states, has organised its first online meeting in with its diplomatic partners at the foreign ministerial level on October 21, 2021.[2] The joint declaration announced at the end of the meeting highlighted the strategic partnership with mutual respect and common development. Over the years, China has improved its diplomatic relations with the countries of the region and economic investments in the region have been welcomed in the Pacific countries.

There has also been significant momentum in trade and investment areas between China and the Pacific island countries. In 2020, trade volume among the islands countries in the Pacific and China 9 billion dollars, an increase of 1.3 per cent compared to the previous year. By the end of 2020, China had signed engineering contracts worth \$18.4 billion with these states, and completed \$12.7 billion of said contracts.[3] In addition, according to data released by the Guardian, China has imported more than half of the total seafood and minerals exported by the region in 2019. [4] The increase in trade figures even realized during the period when the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic was felt, has confirmed that China interpreted the region as a strategic area.

Chinese investments directed to the region; trade partnership and its soft-power diplomacy have also changed the status quo in the Pacific countries as in many parts of the world. In 2019, China’s actions proved positive for itself as Kiribati and Solomon Islands tore off their ties with Taiwan to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing, and interiorized a “One-China policy.” In this regard, while 10 of the 14 island countries recognize China; only Marshall, Palau, Nauru and Tuvalu Islands recognize Taiwan. However, recent developments in Solomon Island also indicate that the balance of power has changed. Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, who became the focus of criticism for breaking diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 2019, has faced protests in November 2021. The protests, which started with economic reasons, spread to many parts of the island. The Solomon Island Government, which requested security assistance from Australia, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and Fiji to suppress the protests, also requested assistance from China, and this offer was positively received by the Beijing administration.[5] This assistance call has demonstrated the growing influence of China.

One of the reasons of regional countries lean toward China and become more dependent on it is loans provided by Beijing and their repayments. Chinese credit accounts for more than 60% of Tonga’s total external debt burden and nearly half of Vanuatu’s external debt. Papua New Guinea is the country most indebted to China with \$590 million, representing nearly a quarter of its total foreign debt. [6] Samoa Island also is in danger of debt to China worth \$386.5 million, or 40 percent of the debt due to the islands.

Pacific islands territory; stands out as an area of great power competition, with the width of its exclusive economic zone, its location at the centre of significant sea routes, and the presence of telecommunication cables passing under the sea. Testing the current balance

of power under the influence of the USA-Japan-Australia with the moves of China was seen as a challenge by the countries in question, which advocated the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy. In particular, White House Indo-Pacific Coordinator Kurt Campbell's assertion that China is seeking a military base in the aforementioned region is considered as a national security threat by the United States and its allies. [7]

In the light of these developments, it would not be wrong to say that the Sino-West rivalry in the regional island countries in the region will increase. Considering that the USA and its allies will respond to the increasing Chinese influence in the region, it can be argued that the traditional power structure will experience a break and domestic and foreign interventions will increase. The main goal for both the US and China is to gain allies in their ranks in increasingly polarized international politics. Knowing that the island countries, which have a significant geopolitical influence in the centre of the Pacific Ocean, will provide a serious advantage to the alliance they will join, the USA and China will gradually increase their engagement in the region.

[1] David C. Gompert, "Sea Power and American Interests in the Western Pacific", Rand Corporation, s. 8.

[2] "Joint Statement of China-Pacific Island Countries Foreign Ministers' Meeting", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjdt\\_665385/2649\\_665393/202110/t20211021\\_9604831.html](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/202110/t20211021_9604831.html), (Date of Accession: 09.02.2022).

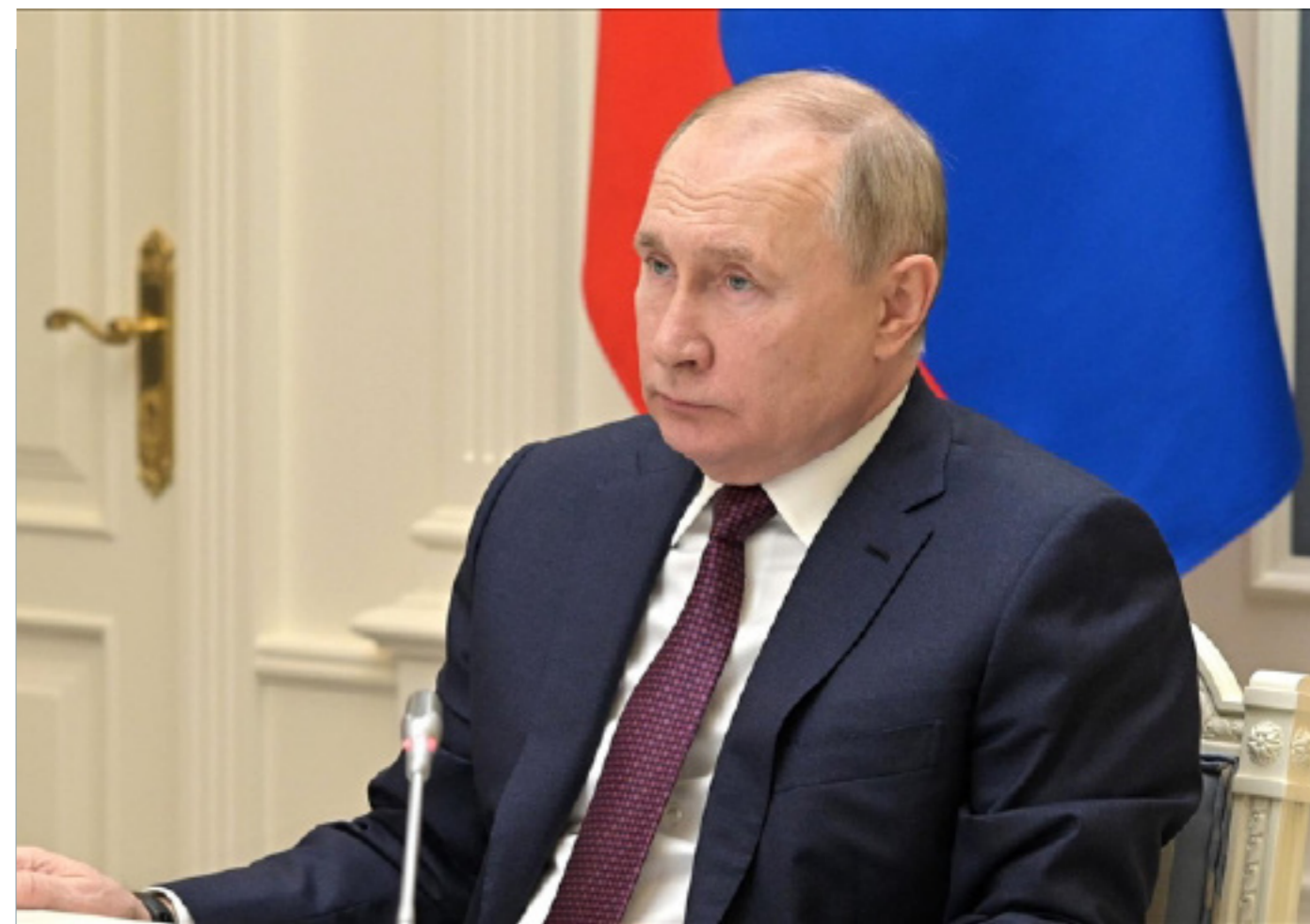
[3] Wang Yi, "China Should Step up Support for Samoa, Other Pacific Island Nations", Global Times, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202112/1242926.shtml#:~:text=At%20the%20end%20of%202020,slander%20by%20some%20Western%20countries>, (Date of Accession: 09.02.2022).

[4] Josh Nicholas, "The \$3bn Bargain: How China Dominates Pacific Mining, Logging and Fishing", The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/31/the-3bn-bargain-how-china-dominates-pacific-mining-logging-and-fishing>, (Date of Accession: 09.02.2022).

[5] "Solomon Islands Accepts Chinese Offer for Riot Police Assistance", Nation World News, <https://nationworldnews.com/solomon-islands-accepts-chinese-offer-for-riot-police-assistance/>, (Date of Accession: 09.02.2022).

[6] Charlotte Greenfield-Jonathan Barrett, "Payment Due: Pacific Islands in the Red as Debts to China Mount", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pacific-debt-china-insight-idUSKBNIKK2J4>, (Date of Accession: 09.02.2022).

[7] Alexander B. Gray, "The Pacific Shouldn't Be a 'Strategic Surprise'", Foreign Policy, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/01/25/us-china-in-do-pacific-military-strategy/>, (Date of Accession: 09.02.2022).



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Putin's "Plan B" in the Ukrainian War

On March 21, 2022, The Wall Street Journal (WSJ), citing statements by White House officials, suggested that Russia was turning to a new strategy after failing to achieve a quick victory over Ukraine and that Russian President Vladimir Putin had switched to "Plan B".

The WSJ quoted him as saying that Moscow no longer intends to seize the capital Kiev as well and wants to force the Ukrainian authorities to

"surrender" the southern and eastern territories. If it achieves this goal, it will have provided a "land bridge" between the western part of Russia and the Decimated Peninsula and expanded its control over the Donbas. Accordingly, Putin will continue to bomb Ukrainian cities in order to get Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelenskiy to agree to the Kremlin's demands. According to the WSJ, one of the goals of Russia is to force Ukraine to accept its neutral status.



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If Putin's demands for control over the "southern lands" and neutrality are rejected, he will try to retain all the territories occupied by Russian soldiers and continue the war.

The WSJ recalls that the comments about Putin's "Plan B" and his new strategy are not the result of an official assessment by the intelligence community, but the opinion of some White House officials who have access to classified information.[1]

There have been some changes in Russia's policy regarding the war against Ukraine. The most important of these changes has been the start of direct negotiations between Russia and Ukraine with a view to end the war. Russia has previously accepted the United States of America (USA) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as interlocutors on security issues. He considered Ukraine to be a passive actor guided by Washington and serving the geopolitical goals of the United States against Russia. The start of the talks indicates that Russia is moving away from these ideas.

The second change in Russia's policy towards Ukraine has been related to the goals announced with the start of the war. When the decision to intervene militarily was made on February 24, 2022, Russia listed several objectives of this "special operation". 1. Demilitarization/demilitarization of Ukraine. 2. The overthrow of Ukrainian power. 3. Ensuring the right of the peoples of Ukraine to self-determination, 4. Jul. The fact that nuclear weapons are not allowed to appear in Kiev. 5. Non-admission to NATO membership.[2]

On the second day of the start of the war; namely, on February 25, 2022, Mikhailo Podolyak, Chief Adviser to the President of the Ukrainian Presidential Office and a member of the Ukrainian negotiating team, announced that "Russia can discuss the country's 'neutrality status' in exchange for ending the war".[3] However, Russia has continued to maintain its military activities. On the tenth day of the war, changes in the conflict zone began to affect the Kremlin's plans.

Ukrainian Defense Minister Aleksey Reznikov on 5 March 2022, the fast depletion of resources, Russia's military offensive, and the slow-down due to the resistance of Ukrainians, within 48 hours of Ukraine the Kremlin conquer big cities, capturing the added power tilting to Russia and Ukraine starting to change their plan and tactics that failed, he said.[4]

On March 17, 2022, Moscow authorities announced that Russia does not intend to invade Ukraine, destroy its state, or overthrow the president. Two days later, on March 19, 2022, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that he hoped that this war would "end with the signing of comprehensive documents, including the neutrality status, guaranteeing Ukraine's security".[5] On March 19, 2022, Podolyak said that he had received signs that Moscow's position had become more "reasonable" in negotiations with Russia on ending the war against Ukraine; but he said that this process (negotiations and the war) could continue for at least a few more weeks.[6]

In a statement on March 20, 2022, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, Russia, and Ukraine is close to an agreement on the main issues of Ukraine's security in exchange for neutrality status where you want to be guaranteed, the guarantor countries of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) permanent members, together with Turkey and Germany that can be also reported.[7]

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennet, who is trying to mediate for the normalization of Russia-Ukraine and invited the parties to Jerusalem to sign a peace agreement, explained that the Russians no longer demand neither to overthrow the Zelenskiy government nor to completely disarm Ukraine; in addition, Ukraine no longer needs NATO membership.[8] Podolyak noted that the key issues in the negotiations with Russia are the conclusion of a ceasefire, security guarantees, the withdrawal of Russian troops and a "political solution in the disputed territories (Crimea and Donbas)".

The most problematic areas between Russia and Ukraine are the Crimean and Donbas regions under the occupation or control of Russia. Russia wants Ukraine to recognize "the sovereignty" of Moscow over the Crimea and "independence" of the secessionist Donetsk and Luhansk regions in Donbas and to start negotiations with them. Ukraine, on the other hand, argues that it does not make any concessions to Russia.[9] Ukraine believes that in order to reconcile with Russia, security guarantees should be signed first and

that the next stage should focus on the resolution of Crimea and Donbas issues.[10] On the one hand, while Russia's invasion of Ukraine is continuing, Ukraine is also trying to limit it by inflicting heavy losses on Russia. The military developments in the Ukrainian field, the pressures of the international community and the fact that the parties were approaching a compromise on some issues were seen in the diplomatic negotiations. The fact that the country adopted the status of a neutral state in exchange for providing Ukraine with a security guarantee is positively received by Russia. But the most important goal of Russia in the current situation is the recognition of Crimea as the "land of Russia". However, Ukraine shows that it will not make any concessions on its territorial integrity. Kiev's proposal is in the direction of a model of joint management of disputed territories within the territory of Ukraine. Moscow, on the other hand, wants the final agreement to be comprehensive and to include the status of the Crimea and the Donbas regions.

As a result, it is obvious that Russia is changing its strategy regarding Ukraine. The most important factor influencing this decision of the Kremlin has been the developments on the battlefield. The reduction of Russia's combat resources, the cessation of its advance by the Ukrainian Army, and the inconclusive outcome of the negotiations may lead Russia to a policy that will be limited to controlling the territories it occupies. In addition, it will continue air strikes and low-intensity clashes. This, in turn, will bring the Ukrainian War into a state of "neither war nor peace" and make the crisis unresolved.

[1] i "У США и Британии разные данные о планах Путина на Киев", ZN.UA, <https://zn.ua/UKRAINE/putin-uzhe-ne-stavit-tsel-zakhvatit-kiev-on-khochet-zastavit-ukrainu-sdat-juzhnye-i-vostochnye-territorii-wsj.html>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2022).

[2] "Путин объявил о начале военной операции на Украине", TASS, <https://tass.ru/politika/13825671>, (Date of Accession: 22.03.2022).

[3] "Советник Зеленского сообщил о готовности Киева обсуждать с Москвой нейтральный статус Украины", Kommersant, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/5230828>, (Date of Accession: 22.03.2022).

[4] "Резников: военные ресурсы врага в Украине заканчиваются, дальше будет логистический коллапс", Interfax-Ukraina, <https://interfax.com.ua/news/general/807521.html>, (Date of Accession: 22.03.2022).

[5] "Лавров надеется, что операция на Украине завершится

подписанием всеобъемлющих документов", TASS, <https://tass.ru/politika/14123651>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2022).

[6] "«Позиция Москвы стала более адекватной». Мирные переговоры с Россией могут продолжаться несколько недель — Подоляк", NV, <https://nv.ua/world/geopolitics/podolyak-peregovory-s-rossiey-mogut-prodolzhatsya-neskolko-nedel-novosti-ukrainy-50226491.html>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2022).

[7]"Çavuşoğlu: Rusya-Ukrayna temel konularda anlaşmaya yakın", Bloomberg, <https://www.bloomberght.com/cavusoglu-rusya-ukrayna-temel-konularda-anlasmaya-yakin-2302059>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2022).

[8] Lahav Harkov, "Bennett: Russia no longer wants to replace Zelensky or demilitarize Ukraine", The Jerusalem Post, <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-701889>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2022).

[9] "«Позиция Москвы стала более адекватной». Мирные переговоры с Россией могут продолжаться несколько недель — Подоляк", NV, <https://nv.ua/world/geopolitics/podolyak-peregovory-s-rossiey-mogut-prodolzhatsya-neskolko-nedel-novosti-ukrainy-50226491.html>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2022).

[10] "Зеленский: Вопрос Крыма, Донбасса надо решать после получения Киевом гарантий безопасности", Vzglyad, <https://vz.ru/news/2022/3/22/1149729.html>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2022).





## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Serbia's Position in the Russian-Ukrainian War

It is observed that Serbia did not take a decisive stance since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian War. The relations in the Belgrade-Moscow line could be described as a traditional alliance between two Slavic and Orthodox nations. As a result, Serbia, which is a candidate for membership in the European Union (EU), has said that it respects the sovereignty of Ukraine only. Also, Serbian radical groups influencing the region supported the Russian occupation of Ukraine and held marches with the slogans of "Russians and Serbs are broth-

ers". People's support of Ukraine by the other side also divided the society. When the process works like this: in the new system and geopolitical climate created by the war, will Belgrade be headed entirely towards Europe and the West or Russia.

Serbia, which operates on the principle of equality in foreign policy towards the EU, the United States (US), Russia and China, states its position as a neutral state. Furthermore, the country appears determined to remain mili-



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tarily neutral and refrain from joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or other military alliances. In particular, neither the opening of negotiations with the EU at the beginning of 2014, nor the crisis that was ongoing in Ukraine during that period, given the Russian dimension, have damaged Serbia's close relations with Russia. The Moscow administration firmly supported Serbia's claim on Kosovo and blocked official recognition of Kosovo's independence in the United Nations (UN), ensuring that the two countries remain allies. However, the strategy of approaching Moscow and Brussels at equal distance in the changing international arena has brought some risks as it has led Serbia to a conflict between the two parties. Nevertheless, given the aspirations of building energy unity, the country's integration into the EU is significant.

It can also be historically based on the Slavic and Orthodox heritage of Serbia and Russia and the alliance established during world wars in the 20th century. The relations between the two countries increased to the level of "strategic partnership" in 2013. In this process, Serbia's EU membership negotiations started but the country did not vote for the UN resolution in 2014 which annulled the referendum in Crimea. Today, Moscow's influence in Serbia continues in the context of the fact that a significant part of the country's energy sector benefits from Russian oil and natural gas. Serbia's dependence on Russian gas stands at 89%. In fact, in a speech delivered in 2021, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic summarized the situation as follows:[1]

"For us, what is important is the European road. But Serbia has always valued its friends, and we never turned our backs on our friends, even when it was hard to resist pressure. That is why Serbia buys its natural gas at the lowest price in Europe. And we will not deny our friendship with Russia on Kosovo and Metohija issues."

Another point to note here is that a large majority of Serbs consider Russia a friend. Accordingly, Serbs living in different parts of the Balkans supported Moscow during the Russo-Ukrainian War. During the war, the supporters organized demonstration marches from time to time. In general, demonstrations by Serbian radical groups emphasized statements that "Russians are our brothers". The "People's Patrons", known in the region for their Russian affiliation, are a radical group that made its mark in the demonstrations. The Group stated that if one of the actions decides to sanction Russia, it would stage a demonstration again, with twice as many demonstrators at this time. The goals of the

demonstrations were stated in a speech by Damnjan Knezevic, the representative of the People's Patrons:[2]

"Let those who tried to oppress us in 1992 and Russia today know that the pressure is like "a drop of water in the ocean" for those who carry the Slavic spirit. There is no Serb who would sanction Russia or Belarus."

In addition, like other radical groups, the People's Patrons stood out regarding Kosovo and Metohija. Such Russian sympathism from the Serbs gained momentum as Russia helped the Serbs get into the conflict between Serbia and Kosovo. In addition, historical closeness, and the idea that the Russians supported them during the wars of the Serbs enabled the continuity of this sympathy.

In short, the Serbian government seeks to maintain good relations with the West. It also tries to address the pro-Russian supporter base. Because the Russian invasion started weeks before the parliamentary and presidential elections in Serbia. This is a significant pro-Russian experience. It has also narrowed Vucic's area of movement. Unlike other countries in Eastern Europe, any kind of alienation against the Russians because they are seen as allies rather than threats; it would be an undesirable decision for the Russian people in the country. For years, Vucic has managed to strike a delicate balance. Russia's turn against Vucic could have unintended consequences for the polls in the April 2022 elections. Any misstep in this regard could throw Serbia's efforts towards EU membership out of shame.

As a result, Vucic cited in the early days of the Russian invasion the words "I have been 10 years old in the last three days" and "Our country has a position, and we will protect as much as we can." [3] can summarize the current process.

[1] "Serbia Will Never End Its Friendship with Russia-president" TASS, [https://tass.com/world/1367373?utm\\_source=google.com&utm\\_medium=organic&utm\\_campaign=google.com&utm\\_referrer=google.com](https://tass.com/world/1367373?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com), (Date of Accession: 17.03.2022).

[2] "Brothers FOREVER: Many in Serbia Back Russia amid Global Outcry", France 24, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220309-brothers-forever-many-in-serbia-back-russia-amid-global-outcry>, (Date of Accession: 18.03.2022).

[3] Ibid.



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# France's Attitude Towards Germany's Decision on F-35 Purchasing

On March 14th, 2022, Germany's Federal Minister of Defence Christine Lambrecht has announced that they will purchase 35 of the F-35 Lightning II fighter jets which are produced by the United States (USA) based Lockheed Martin Corporation. Due to Russian intervention in Ukraine, a major shift has occurred in Germany's security politics. Chancellor Olaf Scholz has committed 100 billion euros (\$113bn) in military spending for the modernization of the German Army by declaring "It's clear we need to invest

significantly more in the security of our country, in order to protect our freedom and our democracy."<sup>[1]</sup> Thus, this saying can be shown as a basis for such a decision about purchasing F-35 type jets.

These F-35 type jets, which cost around \$400,000, are aimed to replace the Tornado warplanes, which entered the inventory of the German Air Force more than 40 years ago and have the ability to target the American atomic



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bombs when necessary.<sup>[2]</sup> This decision of Germany can be evaluated from the historical perspective from the point of France. Considering the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, the First World War of 1914-1918 and the Second World War of 1939-1945 in Europe, Germany has been adopted a revisionist policy towards France; when the framework is expanded a little more, it is seen that Germany's revisionist policies have devastating consequences all over the world. In this atmosphere, France has interpreted the disarmament of Germany as a crucial measure for the protection of its territorial integrity and ensuring its sovereignty. During the ongoing process, France has supported the controlled rearmament of Germany, having a policy toward preventing the occurrence of militarist Germany in an independent sense.

Armament can trigger Germany to re-enact the ideals it desired to realize in history. Therefore, the armament of Germany may pose a threat to the security of France.

France, on the other side, has wanted to come into being a leading country within the European Union (EU). Most particularly, Paris has been willing to constitute a European Army under its leadership. French leaders, from Charles de Gaulle to Emmanuel Macron, have shared a belief that the EU should create its army and act autonomously without being dependent on any state or organization in the field of defence. Due to the refusal of the member countries, which think that European security may realize that under the umbrella of NATO, a European Army could not be constituted. Although a European Army of 5 thousand people was foreseen in the Strategic Compass adopted on March 21, 2022, past attempts show that the EU has failed in this regard. Therefore, it makes us believe that the probability of realizing this target on the compass has a slight chance.

France and Germany had started the significant defence project of Europe with the Future Combat Air System (FCAS), which they agreed on February 20, 2020. This project was taken notice as an important step to ensure a strategically autonomous EU presence.

Within the concept of this project, the main intentions are EU be responsible for the defence of its territory, having the ability to deploy its missions and operations without the assistance for the support of other international organizations or actors. In this regard, it was thought that the EU should be supported by an effective European defence industry that would meet its defence and military requirements. With the developing new

generation weapon system, the Germans planned to replace Eurofighter aircraft while France planned to Rafale jet fighter.

Despite the negotiations for the project being successful, there are differences in the approach of France and Germany toward the project. In the eye of France, FCAS plays a major role in the country's nuclear deterrence mission; it represented the first step in the development of national capabilities for defensive and offensive purposes but for Germany, the project was considered for just defence purposes.<sup>[3]</sup> Although the two countries agree on the production of new generation warplanes, including the development of drones, sensors, and remote carriers, their attitude toward the project is divergent. Within this framework, F-35 type jets offer more opportunities to the German army than expected in the FCAS project because the F-35s, equipped with many features such as intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and not being detected on the radar, is known as the best fighter aircraft with both superiority and attack capabilities in the air.

In other respects, although Germany has increased its defence expenditures against the Russian threat and supported Ukraine's freedom, there is a limitation to these expenditures whereat France, which gives weight to the development of a defence project with its European stakeholders, may be concerned about Germany's withdrawal from the FCAS project. To relieve France's concern in this issue, Germany's Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht has stated that they seek to purchase 15 Eurofighter type warplanes which are produced in Europe to overcome the deficiency in Germany's electronic warfare capability. Further, Defence Minister Lambrecht also stated that there are adequate financial resources for the advancement of the FCAS project. For Lambrecht, FCAS fighter aircraft will likely be more modern, more sophisticated and more valuable.<sup>[4]</sup> Thus, by emphasizing that the FCAS project has a special place for Germany, they declared that they did not want to renounce the project. However, this statement does not change the reality of France's neighbour, Germany, will have a powerful weapon like the F-35 type jets.

France has stated that it desires to provide European security independently from the USA and NATO at every opportunity. In present conditions, the USA trying to realize European security off Germany's back. On the other hand, a military alliance (AUK-US) was formed between the USA, Austria, and the UK, covering many areas such as artificial intelligence, cyber warfare, development of submarine capabilities and increasing long-range

attack capability. The existence of the USA's cooperation in the field of defence with two of the trio of France, Germany, and England, which are called the big three of Europe, shows that the USA is trying to exclude France from European security. Restricting France's area of operation in Europe affects French arms companies.

As a result, Germany's F-35 decision is a significant step in the effort to establish regional leadership in the military and defence field. The development of the German Army and its support by the USA make Germany the leading actor in ensuring European security. This situation demonstrated that the policy of France to "Germany should not weaponing, even they are weaponing it must be controlled by Paris" came to an end.

Germany's decision to modernize the army in general, and in particular the F-35 decision, should not be viewed as a decision that it can only evaluate in the light of current threats, as it will affect France's efforts to create a self-sufficient autonomous European Army independent of all other actors.

Paris's lean towards Germany's armament contradicts France's basic paradigm regarding Germany and Europe. On the other side, Germany, which is an important economic power, takes its place on the European stage as a military power with its policies in the field of defence. Not be routed in Europe; on the contrary, it affects the European leadership policy of France, which desires to be the main determinant of European policies and a country that guides the decision-making process.

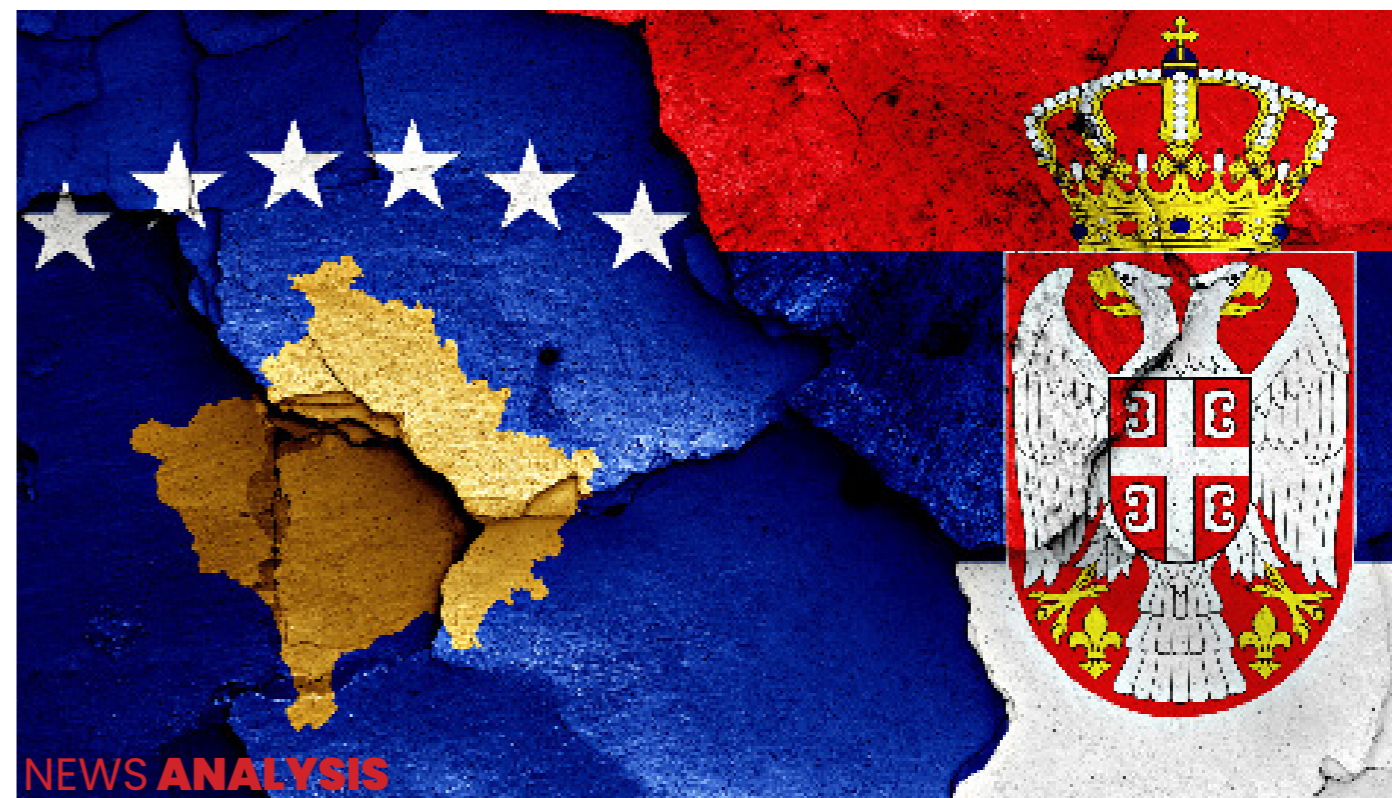
Moreover, the revisionist policies of Germany against France in the past engender a historical trauma in France. Although the French authorities have commented on Germany's armament decision, that the conditions required Germany's armament, referring to Russia's intervention in Ukraine, France does not favour Germany's armament due to psychological reasons. The fact that Germany increases its defence expenditures and embodied this with the F-35 decision may lead France to feel itself in a cloud of suspicion. In this direction, the security dilemma experienced by France is may inevitably morph into an arms race.

[1] "Germany to Ramp up military Spending in Major Policy Shift", Aljazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/27/germany-to-ramp-up-military-spending-in-major-policy-shift/>, (Date of Accession: 25.03.2022).

[2] Peter Hille, "France is Disturbed by the F-35 plan of the German Army", Hanlire, <https://hanlire.com/france-is-disturbed-by-the-f-35-plan-of-the-german-army/>, (Date of Accession: 22.03.2022).

[3] "The Future Combat Air System (FCAS): Towards the Next Generation Fighter Aircraft", European Army Interoperability Centre <https://finabel.org/the-future-combat-air-system-fcas-towards-the-next-generation-fighter-aircraft/>, (Date of Accession: 26.03.2022)

[4] Peter Hille, "France is Disturbed by the F-35 Plan of the German Army", Hanlire, <https://hanlire.com/france-is-disturbed-by-the-f-35-plan-of-the-german-army/>, (Date of Accession: 25.03.2022).



## NEWS ANALYSIS

# Election Tension at the Kosovo-Serbia Line: Was Dialog Process Disrupted?

Tension that has been longing between Kosovo and Serbia for years have mounted, once again. Serbia's upcoming elections, scheduled for April 3rd, 2022, have raised tensions between the two countries. The Kosovo government rejected the demand from Quint countries – including the United States (US), Britain, France, Germany, and Italy – that Serbs in Kosovo vote in Serbia's general elections.

The Quint countries, also known as the Five-Group, responded to the Kosovo Government by saying "we note the decision as a disappointment." In another development that has sparked tensions between the two countries, Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti fired the head of the Mitrovica Court, Serb-born Ljiljana Stevanovic, for attending a meeting of the National Security Council in Serbia. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic reacted by saying, "Kosovo Prime Minister Kurti decided to attack the Serbs." Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic

said Kosovo has applied violence against Serbs in the country, explaining that the leadership in Pristina had violated international agreements and therefore the Brussels Treaty was out of date. Protests were then held in northern Kosovo due to the lack of voting in Serb-dominated municipalities.

There has been a question of how these developments that are escalating tensions will affect the dialog between the two countries, which has been under the auspices of the European Union (EU) since 2011. EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell also said that in the days ahead the dialog was not going well and that he was disappointed. Experts, who assessed the process between Kosovo and Serbia with the Ankara Center for Crisis and Political Research (ANKASAM) considering the latest events, say the problem between the two countries is difficult to solve.



**Sibel MAZREK**  
ANKASAM Media  
Coordinator





**Doç. Dr. Nuri KORKMAZ**  
ANKASAM Eurasia  
Consultant

### **“Serbia has faced a similar problem with Montenegro.”**

According to ANKASAM Eurasia Consultant Assoc. Prof. Nuri Korkmaz, between Kosovo and Serbia, where a relapse exists due to elections, there is a setback. Dr. Nuri Korkmaz said the experience undermined the dialog between the two countries. “Kosovo needs both EU countries and the US to; So, he received a lot of criticism from all the Quint countries. This is because it is interpreted as preventing Kosovo from exercising its constitutional rights for Serbian citizens. There is also concern about the war in Ukraine that Belgrade’s government might also undertake some initiatives in the Balkans,” he said.

Korkmaz highlighted that Serbia had similar problems with Montenegro, noting that the past elections in the country did not exactly respond to the Belgrade administration’s request to open five ballot boxes and that two were opened.



**Prof. Dr. Çınar ÖZEN**  
Ankara University  
Professor

### **“The major problem between Kosovo and Serbia is that Mitrovica’s future is uncertain.”**

The future of Mitrovica, a Serb-dominated province in the north of Kosovo, remains uncertain, as the crisis between the two countries continues, according to Professor Çınar Özen of Ankara University, who said that rising tension due to the elections would make Kosovo Prime Minister Kurti politically weak.

Özen emphasized that Mitrovica is not actually in Kosovo. “There should be something in common about the future of Mitrovica. The Serbs are there, acting on their own. The EU needs to decide what needs to be done about this. Unless it has been completed, similar crises will continue to occur.” he stated.

Özen also claimed that Russia’s policy towards the Balkans has changed. He said Kosovo and Serbia have stabilized the Balkans through EU enlargement policy. “While these countries are part of the enlargement policy, they are states that cannot take part in the EU in the future. The EU has no influence on Serbia. Because Serbia has pro-European and anti-European parties. Here, the EU can help bring Serbs to a more conciliatory point, as much as it can turn public opinion in her favor. To do so, she needs to promise Serbia a membership, but this does not happen and Russia’s hand is strengthening naturally. The main weakness of the EU is the stalling of its enlargement policy. Otherwise, the EU would not like to see such a conflict in the Balkans; Because the order he established in the Balkans would be devastated.”



**Prof. Dr. Darko TRIFUNOVIC**  
Director of the Ser-  
bian National and  
International Secu-  
rity Institute

### **“One should be optimistic, though many successes have not been reached.”**

The process of ongoing dialog between Kosovo and Serbia has not changed significantly, according to Serbian National and International Security Institute Director Professor Darko Trifunovic, who said international politics play a major role in Kosovo. Emphasizing the US’ role in the Balkans, Trifunovic said, however, that Kosovo Prime Minister Kurti would have to consider requests from Wahsington.

Trifunovic said that Kosovo is not seen as an internationally recognized state; the problem of recognition was present and that he was therefore not a member of the United Nations (UN). He said that this would not happen without Serbia’s consent and that even if the EU-mediated talks did not yield much success, optimism should be exercised.

In addition, Trifunovic said, “The negotiations need to be approached rationally. You have to see exactly what is accepted and what is not done. If it is not, then the negotiations will not go in the right direction.”



**Hüseyin DIRIÖZ**  
Retired  
Ambassador

### **“Quint’s anti-Kosovo stance could spell trouble for the country.”**

Stressing that the EU has a significant influence in the dialog between Kosovo and Serbia, Retired Ambassador Hüseyin Diriöz said that now is not possible to resolve tensions between the two countries. “I think that the closer the EU holds the chances of the two countries’ accession, the easier the solution will be.”

Discussing Quint countries’ demand for an election, Diriöz says “The EU and Quint support both continuing talks and voting by Kosovo Serbs through the rhetoric of democratic rights. This could spell trouble for the Pristina leadership. It is not good that Kosovo is against Quint,” he said.





**Ünal  
ATABAY**  
Retired Staff

### **“Voting by Kosovo Serbs violates Kosovo’s sovereignty.”**

Referring to the Brussels Agreement signed between Kosovo and Serbia in 2013, Retired Staff Ünal Atabay claimed that the parties did not want to comply with the agreement and that the process was not sustainable because he believed that some sovereign rights were being violated.

Breaching the Brussels Treaty has fueled instability in the Balkans, Atabay said. “Serbia does not recognize Kosovo and considers it its own territory. As such, even in order to solve the most basic sovereignty issue between the two countries, the EU’s mediation is insufficient and ineffective.” he said.

Atabay cited electoral tensions between the two countries, saying “The fact that Kosovo Serbs voted creates a future sovereignty concern for Kosovo. This situation is unacceptable to Kosovo; because it is a matter that will violate the sovereignty of Kosovo. So, Serbia has no good will in this case. Serbia says it has the initiative to lead Serbs in Kosovo. That’s where the trouble comes from. So, neither has the EU’s mediation initiative, nor are normalization processes failing,” assessments.

Finally, Atabay addressed the EU position as well, saying “The EU is trying to corner Kosovo. But there is no Russian factor. Russia actually makes some manipulations in the Western Balkans via Serbia. In short, the EU is undermining Russia’s efforts, squeezing Kosovo and plunging the region into instability. And that’s where the error comes in. So the peacekeeping mission does not come true.”



**Bayram POMAK**  
Journalist

### **“Among Kosovo and Serbia, the main problem is the Union of Serbian Municipalities.”**

Kosovar journalist Bajram Pomak says talks between the two countries have reached a major deadlock, especially over political issues. He says the process is made more difficult by a team reflecting Kurti’s nationalist profile. “At the moment, negotiations have stopped. The ongoing dialog process in Brussels has entered a major deadlock.” he said.

The most fundamental problem in the dialog process is the fact that Kosovo does not allow the formation of the Union of Serb Municipalities, Pomak said, adding that the agreement to establish the Serbian Union of Municipalities was in breach of the Kosovo Constitution and the EU could not find a solution to this issue. “The process is not moving forward. It seems to stay that way. At the moment, we see that the parties are not in a position to talk. It is not expected that the EU will make an intensive effort on this issue, due to the Russia-Ukraine War.” assessments.

# ANKASAM IN PRESS

## **28 March 2022**

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol evaluated the Russia-Ukraine negotiations in A News Ajans Today program.

## **28 March 2022**

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

## **28 March 2022**

Retired Ambassador Aydın Nurhan, Chief Advisor of the President of Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM), was the guest of the “Nedir Ne Değildir” program hosted by Mehmet Akif Ersoy on Haber Türk.

## **28 March 2022**

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol spoke to A News about the Russia-Ukraine War.

## **29 March 2022**

ANKASAM Chief Advisor of the President, Retired Ambassador Aydın Nurhan, evaluated the Russia-Ukraine War on TVNET.

## **29 March 2022**

Retired Ambassador Aydın Nurhan, Senior Advisor of the President of Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM), was the guest of Ülkede Today, hosted by Hande Koçyiğit, on Ülke TV.

## **30 March 2022**

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol spoke to TVNET about the Russia-Ukraine War.

## **31 March 2022**

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) International Relations Advisor Dr. Kadir Ertac Celik was the guest of the Ozu of Work program hosted by Muhammed Acar on On4 TV.



*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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# JOURNAL OF REGIONAL STUDIES

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