



ANKASAM

bulletin

30 April 2023
ISSUE: 2023/17



Macron's Beijing Visit: Is France Getting a Rematch of the AUKUS?

34

Bulgarian Elections:
What Kind of
Future?

36

Montenegrin Presidential
Elections: The Fall of
Dukanovic

CONTENTS

ANKASAM ANALYSIS

- 03 The Decision to Reduce Oil Production and Its Possible Effects**
Dr. Emrah KAYA
- 06 Serbia-Kosovo Normalization in the Shadow of Global Competition and the Role of the EU**
Veli Can AKKAŞ
- 08 The Joseph Era in Scottish Politics**
Ahmet İlhan KAPLAN
- 11 The Situation of Afghanistan and Pakistan in the Global Terrorism Index**
Şeyma KIZILAY
- 14 New South Wales and Aston Elections: Labor Victory**
Elcan TOKMAK
- 16 Russia's Efforts to Maintain Initiative on the Afghan Issue**
Dr. Doğacan BAŞARAN
- 19 Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez Visits China**
Yiğit KIRDÜK
- 21 Political Economy of Increasing Drought in Europe**
Gamze BAL
- 24 The US Approach to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU Convergence**
Veli Can AKKAŞ
- 26 UK-EU Arms Trade Under Brexit**
Hatice Nur SARI
- 29 Multidimensional Cooperation in India-Kazakhstan Relations**
Şeyma KIZILAY
- 32 The Impact of Brexit on the British Economy and UK Foreign Policy in the Future**
Mahmut Melih BOSTANCI
- 34 Bulgarian Elections: What Kind of Future?**
Han KARAYEL
- 36 Montenegrin Presidential Elections: The Fall of Dukanovic**
Ahmet İlhan KAPLAN
- 38 Macron's Beijing Visit: Is France Getting a Rematch of the AUKUS?**
Dr. Doğacan BAŞARAN

ANKASAM IN PRESS

- 40 Media**

JOURNALS

- 41 Journal of International Crisis and Political Studies**

Journal of Regional Studies



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Decision to Reduce Oil Production and Its Possible Effects

The Russia-Ukraine War, which started on February 24, 2022, not only affected the relations between the two countries; it has brought with it the energy crisis that deeply shook the global system and the economic order. One of the main reasons why the crisis occupied the world

agenda and affected the policies of countries is the dependence of Europe on Russia. In this process, although rests are constantly drawn between the parties, the Western World has implemented various sanctions to weaken Russia and neutralize the energy trump card.



Dr. Emrah KAYA
ANKASAM
Central Asia Expert

One of the most important decisions taken by the West in this process was the application of a ceiling price for Russian petroleum products. As a matter of fact, a ceiling price limit of 60 dollars per barrel was imposed on Russian oil.[1] With this step, the West aimed for the collapse of the Russian economy and for Moscow to become unable to sustain the war by keeping the value of Russian energy below the world markets.

The Kremlin administration, on the other hand, has started to follow a policy of developing its relations with other states in a multidimensional way, including energy, in response to the step taken by the West. For this purpose, Russia, which started to sell cheap oil to India, wants to sell natural gas to Pakistan. It also offered gas union to the Central Asian states and deepened its relations with the Gulf countries.

The policy in question and the steps taken in this context have broken the effect of the West's strategy to weaken Russia. In particular, the decision of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and OPEC+ to reduce oil production by 2 million barrels/day on October 5, 2022 gave Russia a breather.[2] Because the decreasing oil production led to an increase in prices in the energy markets during a period when the energy crisis intensified, Russia's hand was strengthened and the West had to supply more expensive energy.

The cut of 2 million barrels was thought to be made from the production of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). While this situation puts the West in trouble; it has also shaken the relations between the Gulf Countries and the Western World.[3] However, within the scope of the meeting within OPEC and OPEC+ held on April 2, 2023, it was decided to reduce oil production again, despite the reaction of the West.[4]

Among the OPEC and OPEC+ states, Saudi Arabia has announced that it will reduce by 500,000 barrels, Iraq 211,000, UAE 144,000, Kuwait 128,000, Kazakhstan 78,000, Algeria 48,000 and Oman 40,000 barrels/day. Thus, the states have voluntarily decided to cut about 1.15 million barrels per day in oil production in the context of "precautionary measure". Russia also decided to extend a cut of 500,000 barrels until the end of 2023. The cuts, which will be implemented in May 2023, were taken in addition to the reduction decision in October 2022. [5] In other words, 3.16 million barrels of oil will not be produced in total.

The decision to reduce production will affect world politics, the global economy and the Ukraine War in various ways. First of all, it is obvious that it will adversely affect the world markets. Because decreasing oil production will mean an increase in energy prices. It can be said that especially Western countries and companies will come under significant pressure. The energy crisis that the Western World is trying to overcome will bring a significant economic burden to both European countries and the USA. Because, the decision taken at a time when various banks collapsed in the USA and the Western-centered economic system was shaken, will increase costs and deepen concerns. This situation will challenge the West's plans to overcome the energy crisis and prepare for the next winter. At this point, one of the states that should not be ignored is China. Because the Beijing administration may have to import more expensive oil or it may turn to Russia's cheap resources.

On the other hand, the effect of Western sanctions against Russia will weaken. Because Russia will gain the opportunity to sell the oil that it sells cheaply at a higher price. This situation will once again reveal the importance of Russia in energy. It is known that Russia

sells oil cheaper than the ceiling price in order to break the effect of Western sanctions. Thanks to the oil prices that will increase with the decision of the cut, Russia will continue to continue the Ukraine War and will be able to act more confidently in a process where the West is under economic pressure.

As a result, it is obvious that the states that decide to reduce oil production act by taking into account their own national interests. In this sense, it can be argued that the actors in question think about politics, thinking that the Russia-Ukraine War and the West-Russia rivalry do not concern them. In this context, it is understood that oil producing and energy exporting countries are trying to increase their economic gains by taking advantage of increasing energy prices. However, this situation will increase the pressure and economic cost on the West and will make it easier for Russia to breathe. For this reason, it will increase Western pressure on states such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the UAE. USA, on the other hand, will read the resolution as support for Russia in the Ukraine War. As it will be remembered, similar criticisms have arisen from the USA in October 2022.

[1] "EU Sanctions Against Russia Following the Invasion of Ukraine", European Commission, https://eu-solidarity-ukraine.ec.europa.eu/eu-sanctions-against-russia-following-invasion-ukraine_en, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2023).

[2] Salma El Wardany- vd, "OPEC+ Rebuked by US After Cutting Output to Keep Prices High", Bloomberg, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-10-05/opec-panel-recommends-2-million-barrel-cut-to-output-limits>, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2023).

[3] Emrah Kaya, "Rusya ve Körfez Ülkelerinin Enerji Dansı: ABD'nin Tepkileri", ANKASAM, https://www.ankasam.org/rusya-ve-korfez-ulkelerinin-enerji-dansi-abdnin-tepkileri/#_edn1, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2023).

[4] "Kazakhstan to Cut Oil Production Following Latest OPEC Agreement", The Astana Times, <https://astanatimes.com/2023/04/kazakhstan-to-cut-oil-production-following-latest-opec-agreement/>, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2023).

[5] "OPEC+ Oil Alliance Announces Surprise Production Cuts from May", Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/2/opec-oil-alliance-announces-surprise-production-cuts-from-may>, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Serbia-Kosovo Normalization in the Shadow of Global Competition and the Role of the EU

The European Union (EU) has been taking various steps towards the normalization of Kosovo-Serbia relations for some time. Recently, these moves seem to have gained momentum. In this case, the desire to prevent Russia from taking advantage of a potential tension between two actors that do not officially recognize each other by finding room for maneuver is effective.

As a matter of fact, European countries are taking steps to ensure peace and stability in the region due to security concerns. At this point, it is clear that the EU, whose influence in the region is growing, intends to have the last word. However,

regional developments show that the balances in the global system are not shaped around a single actor and are dynamic.

The Balkans are of global importance both geographically and diplomatically. The region has stood out as an arena of struggle during critical periods of history, especially as the global system evolved. Although the EU wants to keep the region under its control, there are several factors that prevent it from doing so comfortably.

In addition to the EU, the United States of America (USA) has also recently increased its influence in



Veli Can AKKAŞ

the region. Especially in today's world, where the global system is evolving and new powers are being discussed, the US statements on the Balkans draw attention along with the power struggle debates.

The US, knowing that the historical legacy between the Serbs and the Russians is quite strong, has recently made various statements in order to weaken this historical legacy and win the sympathy of the Serbs in order for the course of the Serbia-Kosovo meetings to work in favor of the West. In this context, US Ambassador to Serbia Christopher Hill stated that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) bombing of Serbia in the past was a diplomatic failure and emphasized that this incident should not be forgotten.[1]

Today, new dynamics are emerging in many regions. There are rising regional and global actors. In this transitional period, when the old dominant actors cannot easily rule and the new order is not clear, the Balkans are also becoming a diplomatic competition. In particular, the conflict between Kosovo and Serbia occupies the international public opinion.

Serbia has not recognized Kosovo since its establishment and considers it a part of itself. Since the demographics of the Balkan states are quite heterogeneous, some states that do not want minorities to have any demands also do not recognize Kosovo. However, with the EU's efforts to resolve the tension between the two actors, there is an approach that Kosovo's recognition problem will be solved through the EU. Albin Kurti, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, stated that his country could be recognized by Belgrade thanks to increased pressure from the West.[2]

At the suggestion of the EU, meetings have started between Kosovo and Serbia. The EU has provided various incentives and economic pressures to the parties. At the meeting of the two actors in Ohrid, no agreement was signed, especially at the request of Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. However, this attitude of Vucic does not mean that the talks will end. Because the two leaders continued their talks in Brussels on April 4, 2023.[3] This initiative of the EU is not the only step taken to ensure peace in the region. The European states, which turned against the Moscow regime in the wake of the Russo-Ukrainian war, want to include Serbia in this effort.

The demographic situation in the region affects many states in the event of any unrest, and various attempts are being made to establish peace. It can be said that the steps taken in this context are basically aimed at weakening the relationship between Serbs and Russians, ensuring that Serbia becomes a part of Europe and breaking the influence of the far right. In addition to Europeaniza-

tion efforts, some moves are also being made towards regional integration. The Memorandum of Understanding signed between North Macedonia and Serbia on the facilitation and acceleration of the movement of people and commercial flows and the integration of an electronic toll collection system is indicative of this.[4]

On the other hand, Russia's recent moves have caused great security concerns in the region. Therefore, it is possible to state that these initiatives aim to break the Russian influence in the region. This is evidenced by the statement of Ragmi Mustafa, President of the Albanian National Council, that the mission of the American Ambassador Christopher Hill is to separate Serbia from Russian influence.[5]

Attempts by the US, the EU, and states in the region are strengthening hopes for the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. In particular, the economic pressure on Serbia seems to be crucial for Belgrade to clarify its position towards Russia. On this issue, although Vucic has tried to pursue a policy of balance, the right-wing opposition in the country has organized many protests against the plan to normalize relations.[6]

Although these pressures have accelerated Serbia's EU integration and tried to make the country an important actor for the EU, it is not possible to say that all Serbs see themselves as part of the EU. In fact, in a survey conducted by the Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), one third of respondents expressed a negative view about the EU.[7] Therefore, this attitude of the Serbs also finds its place in politics. In fact, 28 representatives of the Serbian opposition filed a criminal complaint against Vucic for accepting the plan on Kosovo.[8]

From this point of perspective, it can be said that Serbian nationalism has come to the fore in many periods in the historical process. It can be stated that this situation also affected Vucic. Despite all the pressures, Vucic could not turn his back on the opposition and expressed that he thought his decision not to impose sanctions on Russia was the right one.[9]

In sum, the demographic structure of the Balkans causes the negative effects of nationalism to be felt quite strongly. This gives many actors in the global system room for maneuver in regional politics. Peacemaking activities are also shaped in this context.

As a result, it can be said that the recent EU initiatives have increased expectations for the normalization of Kosovo-Serbia relations. The West's goal here is to break the Russian influence. However, it is obvious that the opposition of nationalist Serbs complicates the process.



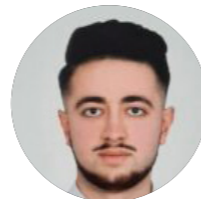
ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Joseph Era in Scottish Politics

After the surprise resignation of Prime Minister Nicola Sturgeon in Scotland, which is part of the United Kingdom, debates over who will be the new leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) and the new Prime Minister have flared up. Sturgeon, who took the post of Prime Minister from Alex Salmond, who resigned after the majority voted no in Scotland's independence referendum in 2014, is a long-time influential figure in the country's politics. However, Sturgeon has decided to resign from her post after the con-

troversial gender law. Announcing this decision on Twitter, Sturgeon said in a statement, "Even though many people think that the time has not come, my heart and mind are telling me that the time has come. I will show this courage" and announced that he was leaving his job.[1]

After this decision, the agenda in the country's politics changed very quickly and the eyes were turned to who would be the candidate. Three candidates emerged for the position of Chairman of the Party



**Ahmet İlhan
KAPLAN**

and Prime Minister. These; Kate Forbes, Ash Regan and Hamza Joseph. The most striking name among the candidates was Joseph, known for his Muslim and immigrant identity.

Known for his conservative views among the candidates, Forbes assumed the role of Minister of Economy in the cabinet and performed important duties in the difficult times the country was going through. He has come to the fore frequently as the Minister of Economy at a time when the country was busy with the most challenging issues of recent times, such as the Covid-19 epidemic, the Russia-Ukraine War, rising energy prices and the cost of living. Forbes, who did not hesitate to openly state that he had a disagreement with the Party Chairman and Prime Minister Sturgeon on social issues, also expressed his opposition to the new gender reform introduced by the party.[2]

Saying that he did not participate in the vote on the reform in the parliament for various reasons, Forbes wrote an open letter with 15 deputies from the SNP, announcing his opposition to this bill. At the same time, Forbes voted against the law that paved the way for same-sex marriage in 2014. Expressing that he is also against abortion, Forbes emphasized that these ideas come from the Independent Scottish Church, of which he is a member, and that he will defend these principles. Forbes, on the other hand, considers that the idea of independence, which occupies a large place in the country's agenda, is a medium-term goal and that it is of greater importance to combat current problems of the country.[3]

Regan served as Minister of Security from 2018 until his resignation in 2022. Regan, who is part of the "Women for Freedom" movement, is one of the 15 lawmakers who, like Forbes, wrote an open letter to the controversial bill. Known as a strong supporter of independence, Regan states that more negotiations with the UK Government are needed at this point. Regan had to resign after Sturgeon's law allowed individuals who had reached the age of 16 to self-identify without any medical documentation.

The last candidate is Joseph, who received 52.1% of the votes and became both the Party Chairman and the new Prime Minister. Joseph, who won the race where his closest rival Forbes received 47.9% of the vote, previously served as Minister of Justice and Minister of Transport in the cabinet. Born to a Pakistani father and a Kenyan mother, Joseph most recently served as the Minister of Health in the country. It is known that his family came to Scotland in 1960; During your university education, you served as the President of the Muslim Students Union. Joseph, who was Sturgeon's assistant in the past, was also supported by Sturgeon in this race.

With the influence of Joseph's identity, it is clear that he will blow a new wind in Scottish politics. He stated that he shared the same ideas with Sturgeon, despite being a Muslim on social issues. In this context, Joseph said, "Islam is my religion, but I do not base it on state affairs." He painted a secular Muslim portrait.[4]

The newly elected leader of the ruling party in Scotland will be approved by the forward parliament. Later, this name will be presented to the king in a symbolic way. Thus, the UK, which has a Prime Minister of Indian origin, will also witness a Muslim Scottish Prime Minister of immigrant origin.[5] This situation in Scottish democracy also reveals the cosmopolitan nature of society.

However, the main purpose of the SNP is independence. This idea, which flared up as a result of the UK's departure from the European Union (EU) with Brexit, will be one of the main topics on Joseph's agenda. As it is known, Scotland voted to stay in the EU, unlike the UK, in the Brexit vote.

As a result, Sturgeon's basic perspective will be maintained in Scotland with the period of Joseph. In this sense, in line with the nature of the SNP, independent demands will continue to exist. Therefore, the developments reflecting the continuity in Scottish politics will continue during the Joseph period.

[1] Glenn Campbell, "Nicola Sturgeon Says Time is Right to Resign as Scotland's First Minister", BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-64647907>, (Date of Accession: 15.02.2023)

[2] Jennifer Scott, "The SNP Leadership Race's Contenders to Replace Nicola Sturgeon: Kate Forbes, Ash Regan and Humza Yousaf", SKY, <https://news.sky.com/story/snp-leadership-contest-who-will-replace-nicola-sturgeon-as-next-party-leader-and-scotlands-first-minister-12815798>, (Date of Accession: 13.03.2023)

[3] Dominic Penna, "Who Could Replace Nicola Sturgeon and Where They Stand on Key Issues", Telegraph, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/03/27/who-replace-nicola-sturgeon-snp-leader-candidates-kate-forbes-ash-regan-hamza-yousaf/>, (Date of Accession: 27.03.2023)

[4] Yunus Emre Erdölen, "İskoçya'nın ilk Müslüman başbakanı Hamza Yusuf: Bağımsızlık Yakın, Elhamdulillah", Serbestiyet, <https://serbestiyet.com/gunun-yazilari/iskocyanin-ilk-musliman-basbakani-hamza-yusuf-bagimsizlik-yakin-elhamdulillah-123169/>, (Date of Accession: 27.03.2023)

[5] David Torrance, "How is a First Minister of Scotland Appointed?", Commons Library, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/how-is-a-first-minister-of-scotland-appointed/>, (Date of Accession: 27.03.2023)



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Situation of Afghanistan and Pakistan in the Global Terrorism Index

The global dimension of terrorism brings with it the fact that countries are seriously affected by various acts of violence and radical movements. In particular, geographies where ethnic-sectarian divisions are triggered and where armed separatist groups operate intensively are more prominent and seen as areas that produce threats. At this point, the annual

reports of the Global Terrorism Index are important in order to follow the main trend of violence in terrorism.

The Global Terrorism Index 2023 Report, prepared by the Sydney-based Institute for Economics and Peace using various data, was published on 14 March 2023. The report, which



Şeyma KIZILAY

includes terrorism-related deaths, injuries, violent incidents, and attacks, also includes the ranking of countries. In 2022, it is seen that South Asia stands out as the geography where the deadliest groups in the world are located.

Afghanistan and Pakistan are notable for being the region where the so-called Emirate of Khorasan (ISKP) and the Balochistan Liberation Army (Balochistan Liberation Army), the most affected and deadliest groups by terrorism, are the most affected and deadliest groups by terrorism. As a matter of fact, it is known that since the withdrawal of the United States of America (USA) from Afghanistan, the tendency to violence, the mobility of radical groups and terrorist activities have increased in the region. The resulting power vacuum has encouraged various structures to operate more widely and increase their effectiveness. When the report data is examined, it is understood that this situation is confirmed.

The report found that approximately 66,000 terrorist incidents occurred between 2007 and 2022; it is stated that the deaths due to terrorism in 2022 decreased by 9% to 6,701. The peak period of these deaths was 2015 with a rate of 38%.[1] Afghanistan and Pakistan are among the 10 countries most affected by terrorism. While Afghanistan is at the top; Pakistan ranks sixth. Afghanistan has been the country most affected by terrorism for the fourth consecutive year, despite attacks and deaths falling by 75% and 58%, respectively.[2]

In Pakistan, there has been a significant increase in the rate of terrorism. Pakistan ranks first in the list of the deadliest attacks in 2022. On February 2, 2022, 195 people were killed in attacks by the Balochistan Liberation Army. The eighth attack in the same list is the suicide attack carried out by the ISKP in the Pakhtunkhwa region.[3]

Furthermore, there were an estimated 643 terrorist-related deaths in the country in 2022, an increase of 120% compared to the previous year. The increase in the mobility of the Balochistan Liberation Army has led to the fact that this organization has been characterized as the fastest growing group in the world. Because it has been determined that there has been a 9-fold increase in the attacks of the Balochistan Liberation Army in 2022. The organization caused the death of a total of 233 people.[4]

One statement in the report is that the number of casualties decreased by 28% to 3,955, largely due to the decline in the intensity of the conflict in the Middle East and Afghanistan. Likewise, it is stated that the deaths due to terrorism in Afghanistan have decreased by 58%.[5] However, it is known that there are still conflicts and attacks in the region.

As a matter of fact, the ISKP's attacks have developed to such an extent that Afghanistan has become one of the top ten countries in the deadliest attacks. The ISKP caused 498 deaths in 141 attacks and the ISKP became the 3rd deadliest organization of 2022.

The organization has carried out critical attacks on several targets in the country, including minorities, ethnic groups, embassies, and Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Finally, on March 9, 2023, the group attacked, the Taliban's governor of Balkh, Mohammad Dawood Muzamil. With the attack, Muzamil was the most senior official of the Taliban who was attacked and killed since he came to power in the country. The Taliban's strategy of turning to high-ranking figures reveals that Daesh prioritizes individual attacks as a new target group after diplomatic missions.

Another deadly organization of the region is the terrorist organization TTP, which caused 137 deaths in 90 attacks. This ratio has positioned the TTP in the 8th place in the list of the deadliest organizations. Currently, the TTP has become Pakistan's biggest security chal-

lenge. As reflected in the figures, the increase in attacks in the country on the one hand poses a threat to national security; On the other hand, it is also negatively affecting Taliban-Pakistan relations. Because one of the main reasons for the tensions between the purgatory is the TTP. In the short term, there is no talk of a negotiation process between the Government of Pakistan and the TTP. Therefore, it can be predicted that the trend of violence will continue, and this will be reflected in Pakistan's relations with the Taliban.

However, it is seen that the mobility of Baluch groups, which affect the instability of the Balochistan region, will continue to increase. It can be said that these two factors will continue to be decisive in terms of the Pakistani security mechanism and their negative reflections on foreign relations.

The changes in the activities and attack methods of the ISKP indicate that the fight against the ISKP terrorist organization will continue in both countries. The organization is demonstrating its effectiveness by deepening ethnic sectarian divisions, targeting diplomatic representations of countries that have established a dialogue with the Taliban, and launching attacks on Taliban representatives in order to undermine the Taliban's presence in the country.

As a result, it is seen that the change in the global index data caused by the developments centered in Afghanistan and Pakistan is significant. This situation makes the security environment in this geography fragile. It may also adversely affect the international outlook towards the region. However, the increase in the effectiveness of these organizations may also trigger the development of regional cooperation mechanisms. There are already attempts to address this. Therefore, some steps can be taken to strengthen existing partnerships or to take action for new mechanisms in terms of establishing regional security.

[1] "Global Terrosim Index-2023", Reliefweb, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-terrorism-index-2023>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2023).

[2] "Afghanistan Most Impacted by Terrorism: Global Terrorism Index", Times of India, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/afghanistan-most-impacted-by-terrorism-global-terrorism-index-report/articleshow/98650136.cms>, (Date of Accession: 21.03.2023).

[3] "Global Terrosim...", a.g.r., s. 10.

[4] "Global Terrosim...", a.g.r., s. 4.

[5] Ibid.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

New South Wales and Aston Elections: Labor Victory

While economic and political bloc-based struggles continued unabated in the Pacific region, Australia's Aston constituency witnessed a historic moment on April 1, 2023. The region was previously governed by the Liberal-National Alliance led by the Liberal Party. On the other hand, in the last elections, Mary Doyle, the candidate of the Australian Labor Party led by Anthony Albanese, defeated her rival Roshen Campell with a 53.58% vote rate (47,408 thousand votes).[1]

Besides the fact that the election was won by the Australian Labor Party candidate, the rea-

son that makes the result so important is that it was the first government that succeeded in winning a region from the opposition party for more than 100 years, apart from the general elections. This election, which went down in Australian history, also means that the Albanese government is in power in all of Australia, except for the State of Tasmania.

On March 25, 2023, approximately one week before the Aston snap election, elections were held in New South Wales (NSW), and Labor Party candidate Chris Minns was elected as the new president of NSW after 12 years of alliance rule.



Elcan TOKMAK

[2] While the successive defeats reveal the situation that the Liberal Party has fallen into, various ideas have been put forward about how the Liberal Party got into this situation. For example, in an article by Mail Online, the reasons why the NSW elections resulted in the Liberal Party's defeat were given.

While increasing living costs and some taxes were at the top of the list, the establishment of a company called "Energy Security Co-operation", which will be owned by the state, which Minns promised as an election promise, and the privatization of state properties and public enterprises were among the reasons.[3] In addition, Minns has promised to amend the NSW constitution so that companies named "Sydney Water" and "Hunter Water", which may be sold to China, remain state-owned.

It should be noted that before the election, the Labor Party made many promises in the fields of health and infrastructure. These promises include building a new 300-bed hospital in Rouse Hill, building a new hospital in the Aerotropolis area, and improving Canterbury and Fairfield hospitals to provide more than 600 new hospital beds for West Sydney. For infrastructure projects, it has promised approximately 1.3 billion dollars worth of investment.[4]

Although the promises of the Labor Party seem to have won the election, there are experts who do not accept this proposition. For example, some experts argue that the people actually empowered the Labor Party as a reaction to the Liberal-National Alliance. This indicated that the people gradually began to get closer to the Labor Party due to their hatred of radicalism and instability.[5]

In addition to these, it can be thought that the developments in foreign policy were also effective in the Albanese government's success. The fact that the relations with China show signs of normalization and this is an important development in terms of trade potential, as well as the decision of the two states to continue the defense talks, which were suspended in 2019, are among the important developments in foreign policy. Considering the reasons such as the desire of the Australian people for stability and economic concerns, these developments are likely to be a plus for the Labor Party.

On the other hand, it is obvious that the alliance relationship with the United States of America (USA) means support in the region for Australia. It can be thought that the fact that Australia will have nuclear submarines, especially within the scope of AUKUS, increases the importance of the USA and the West in the eyes of the public, and therefore, a good alliance relationship with the USA gives confidence to the Australian people.

As a result, the Australian Labor Party won a great victory against the Liberal-National alliance in the New South Wales elections on 25 March 2023 and in the early elections held in the Aston constituency on 1 April 2023 and went down in Australian history. Although there are many views on how the Labor Party achieved this result, it can be thought that both the election promises and the concerns of the Australian people about instability and radicalism had a significant impact on the election result. The possibility that the balance policy followed by the Albanese government in foreign policy will also have an impact on domestic politics and the possibility that trade and economic developments will affect the election should not be ignored.

[1] ASTO VIC, Australian Electoral Commission, tallyroom.aec.gov.au/HouseDivisionPage-28791-197.htm, (Date of Accession: 02.04.2023).

[2] Sarah Liversidge, Telling map shows how the Labor Party now runs the entire Australian mainland – as the three key reasons why NSW voters abandoned Dominic Perrottet are revealed, Mail Online, www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11901461/NSW-election-2023-Map-shows-Labor-Party-runs-entire-Australian-mainland.html, (Date of Accession: 26.03.2023).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Sarah Liversidge, "Telling map...", a.g.m.

[5] "Is Australia's Liberal Party in Terminal Decline?", The Diplomat, thediplomat.com/2023/03/is-australias-liberal-party-in-terminal-decline/, (Date of Accession: 01.04.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Russia's Efforts to Maintain Initiative on the Afghan Issue

After 20 years of occupation, the United States (US) and its allies withdrew from Afghanistan on August 31, 2021, and the Taliban, who took control of Kabul on August 15, 2021, dominated the entire country from September 2022, when they also gained control of the Panjshir Valley. Although more than 15 years have passed since the beginning of the second Taliban era, the Taliban administration has not been offi-

cially recognized by any state. The states of the region, which are likely to be directly affected by the risks inherent in the Afghan Issue, have sought to develop de facto cooperation with the Taliban administration and taken steps to include Afghanistan in various projects.

In this sense, these countries are concerned that the risks posed by the rise of radicalization



Dr. Doğan BAŞARAN
ANKASAM
AF-PAK Expert

and terrorism in Afghanistan may spread to them. Because radicalization and terrorism have the capacity to affect Central Asia through the Wahan Corridor and the Muslims of Russia through the Central Asian states. As a matter of fact, it is known that many radical groups operating as terrorist organizations by the states of the region have declared their loyalty to the so-called Emirate of Khorasan (ISKP) of the terrorist organization al-Dawla al-Islamiya fil Iraq wa al-Sham (Daesh). This leads the region to develop a collective attitude towards the Afghan Issue. In this sense, it is possible to say that Russia wants to keep the initiative in the Afghan Problem under its control.

As it will be remembered, while many states closed their embassies in Afghanistan during the days when the Taliban entered Kabul, Russia was the first state to announce that it would keep its diplomatic mission in Kabul open. As a matter of fact, the Kremlin administration hosted the Taliban in Moscow before the Taliban entered Kabul. This was the first sign that Russia's influence in Afghanistan would increase during the second Taliban period.

Indeed, Russia, on the one hand, sat the same table with the states of the region at the Moscow Format Meeting in 2021; on the other hand, the 18th edition of the event, which was held from 18 to 21 October 2021. At the Valdai Think Tank Forum, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that the Taliban could be removed from the list of countries recognized by Russia as a terrorist organization.[1]

Despite this environment, it was seen that the Taliban was not invited to the Moscow Format Meeting in 2022. The reason for this can be mentioned as two main reasons that shaped Russia's attitude in the said period. The first of these is that the Taliban, which could not overcome the problem of recognition, established contact with the US and its allies during the period in question. In this sense, it can be said that the Kremlin felt the need to send a message to the Taliban. Second, Russia wanted to show its frustration that the Taliban ignored calls for an inclusive government in conference diplomacy conducted by the states of the region.

In September 2022, the ISKP's attack on the Russian Embassy in Kabul and the increase of Daesh's attacks targeting diplomatic missions caused Russia to reduce its diplomatic presence in Afghanistan. However, as of April 2023, Moscow has again intensified its diplomatic contacts with the Taliban.

As a reflection of the situation, Russia's Special Representative for Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov announced the activation of the Russian Consulate General in Mazar-i Sharif on April 4, 2023.[2] Of course, this situation can be interpreted as the development of diplomatic relations between the parties.

As it will be remembered, Russia recently handed over the Moscow Embassy of Afghanistan to a diplomat appointed by the Taliban. Therefore, it can be stated that the Moscow-Taliban line has returned to the atmosphere in August 2021. In addition, upon the call of Kabulov, under the leadership of Russia, a conference on Afghanistan was held in Uzbekistan on April 13, 2023, and it was seen that the states of the region participated in this meeting.[3]

On the other hand as Kabulov points out, organized by Russia; However, the summit was held in Uzbekistan shows that the "Afghanistan without Central Asia"[4] format proposed by Russia in the recent past cannot be implemented. As it will be recalled, on February 12, 2023, Kabulov proposed a format on the Afghan Issue in which Russia, China, Iran, India, and Pakistan would participate. Therefore, the summit on April 13, 2023 means that Moscow has accepted that it will not be possible to push the Central Asian countries out of the process.

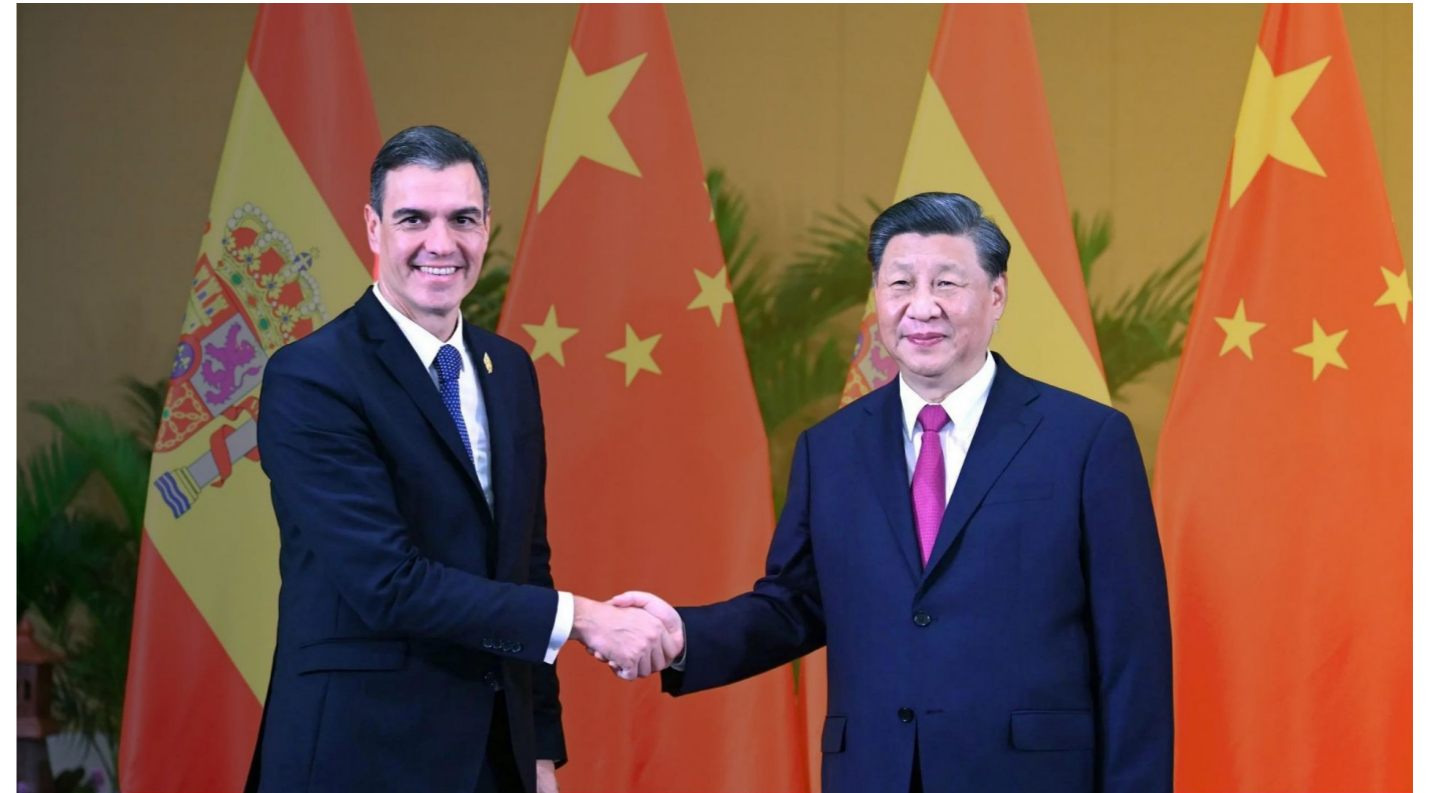
As a result, as of April 2023, the atmosphere in Russia-Taliban relations in August 2021 has been recaptured. The summit was held in Uzbekistan on 13 April 2023 confirms this. Developments reveal that Moscow wants to keep the initiative in the Afghan Issue. However, another reality revealed by the meeting is the Kremlin's admission that it is not possible to solve the Afghan Issue by excluding the Central Asian states.

[1] Nilgün Hande Öztürk, "Rusya Taliban'ı Terör Örgütleri Listesinden Çıkaracak mı?", ANKASAM, <https://www.ankasam.org/rusya-taliban-teror-orgutleri-listesinden-cikaracak-mi/>, (Date of Accession: 06.04.2023).

[2] "Russian Consulate General Open in Mazar-e-Sharif: Kabulov", TASS, <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-182821>, (Date of Accession: 06.04.2023).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Şeyma Kızılay, "Russia's Equation for Afghanistan Without Central Asia: The Five Format Proposal", ANKASAM, <https://www.ankasam.org/russias-equation-for-afghanistan-without-central-asia-the-five-format-proposal/?lang=en>, (Date of Accession: 06.04.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez Visits China

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez visited China on March 30 and 31, 2023, to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Spain and China. The visit, just as intended, provided a favorable environment in which many issues could be addressed. In this regard, issues such as bilateral relations, Spain's aspirations during its Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) in the second term of 2023, and China's peace plan amid the Russian-Ukrainian war are likely to broaden and set the parameters of the discussions between the sides.

Economic relations are of particular importance in the bilateral relations between Spain and China. China is the largest import destination for Spain worldwide.[1] On the other hand, of the countries in the Asian continent, Spain exports the most to

China.[2] Therefore, China emerges as Spain's primary economic partner in Asia. Notwithstanding, economic relations between Spain and China have become chronic for Spain in the last decade. For instance, last year, in 2022, the value of Spain's imports from China amounted to €49.653 billion, whereas the value of its exports to China hovered around €8.013 billion.[3] In other words, Spain's overall exports to China are far from meeting its imports from China. While these figures reflect the economic relations of many countries with China at present, Sánchez advocates an adjustment, as the situation appears to be unsustainable.

The import-export imbalance is not the only source of discomfort for Spain in its economic relations with China. The economic policies pursued by Chinese President Xi Jinping prevent about 600 Span-



Yiğit KIRDÜK

ish companies present in China from operating more efficiently in the Chinese economy. In the same vein, as a consequence of these policies, restrictions on access to foreign capital in China have been emerging and investment flows from Spain to China have been slowing down. For instance, while China invested 435 million euros in Spain in 2021, Spain invested only 51 million euros in China. [4] Therefore, Sánchez is thought to have mentioned these inconveniences during the talks.

On the other hand, two other issues, which are assumed to be the subject of the talks, are closely interrelated. Sánchez will take over the Presidency of the Council of the EU in June this year, and his primary goal during his mandate is to initiate peace talks between Russia and Ukraine over the conflict, in accordance with a set of conditions that the EU could support. As things stand, both the EU and non-EU allies of Ukraine support the 10-point peace plan presented by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in late December 2022.[5] On the contrary, a 12-point peace plan has been drafted by Xi in the past months, which has been adopted by the Chinese government. However, Western countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Poland, are skeptical of China's proposed plan, especially given the close ties between China and Russia. Besides, they point out that China's peace plan does not demand the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukrainian territory nor does it explicitly state that Ukraine is a sovereign and independent country.

The two seemingly contradictory peace plans, as a matter of fact, present an opportunity for Sánchez and Xi. On the one hand, Xi aims to assert China's position in the international arena through its soft power as a mediator in the conflict, on the other hand, Sánchez aims to fulfill the goal he set during his Presidency of the Council of the EU and become a major actor in the EU's peace negotiations with Russia. Therefore, it can be inferred that the sides endeavored to make the other side better acquainted with their plan and to influence the other side during the talks. Thereby, the goal during the talks was to reach a compromise between the two plans.

Finally, following Sánchez, it was seen that French President Emmanuel Macron and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen visited China. For this reason, it can be stated that unlike the bloc led by the USA, which pursues a policy of excluding China, the EU is aware of the fact that China is a key actor in order to achieve a ceasefire within the scope of the Russia-Ukraine war and follows a different policy from the USA. Therefore, the policy of contacting China started with Sánchez and continues with other EU countries.

[1] "China se convierte en el primer proveedor de España", Consenso del Mercado, <https://consensodelmercado.com/es/noticias-destacadas/china-se-convierte-en-el-primer-proveedor-de-espana>, (Date of Accession: 22.03.2022).

[2] "España – Exportaciones de Mercancías", Datosmacro, <https://datosmacro.expansion.com/comercio/exportaciones/espana>, (Date of Accession: 2022).

[3] "Comercio bilateral España-China", Fundación Consejo España China, <https://spain-china-foundation.org/relaciones-economicas-espana-china/>, (Date of Accession: 2022).

[4] "Inversiones bilaterales España – China", Fundación Consejo España China, <https://spain-china-foundation.org/relaciones-economicas-espana-china/>, (Date of Accession: 2022).

[5] "What is Zelenskyy's 10-point peace plan?", Aljazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/12/28/what-is-zelenskyy-s-10-point-peace-plan>, (Date of Accession: 28.12.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Political Economy of Increasing Drought in Europe

The consequences of climate change, which started as a result of many human-induced factors such as industrialization, urbanization, rapid population growth, uncontrolled consumption of natural resources and deforestation, have recently been felt across Europe. The driest summer in the last 500 years was experienced in 2022, and in 2023 it was observed that the drought problem continued to increase in Europe. The report titled "Drought in Europe" published on March 16, 2023 by the European Drought Observatory, which examines the drought situation in the European continent using precipitation, humidity and satellite measurements, clearly demonstrates this.

In the report, it was stated that the winter months were characterized by less rainfall and

higher temperatures than expected, that the lack of sufficient snow water in the Alps affected European countries, especially France, Italy, Spain, the UK, Ireland, Switzerland, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece, and that drought posed an alarming threat.[1]

Drought affects many areas such as agriculture, animal husbandry, water supply, energy, tourism, human health, transportation and biodiversity. Therefore, drought, which has a complex network of impacts, also has economic consequences. When the impact of drought on economic activities is analyzed, the first sector that draws attention is agriculture. For example, the 39% decrease in olive oil production in Spain due to extreme hot and dry weather led to a decline in both European Union (EU) con-



Gamze BAL

sumption and exports.[2] Another example is the drying up of rivers. For example, the Po River, Italy's longest river, which stretches from the Western Alps to the Adriatic Sea, is running dry and farmers have been forced to change their crops. It has also limited the production of feed needed to ensure the sustainability of meat and milk production.

Another sector affected by the drought is energy. The continent faced an energy crisis as Europe's access to Russian gas was disrupted due to the Russia-Ukraine war. In order to reduce the pressure of the energy crisis on gas and electricity markets, alternative energy sources such as hydroelectricity and nuclear power plants have been strengthened. However, due to the lack of water, hydroelectricity activities have been reduced or stopped. Similarly, nuclear power plants cannot be actively used due to insufficient water for cooling the reactors and decomposing waste. For example, French energy supplier EDF decided to temporarily reduce production at its nuclear power stations in August 2022 due to high temperatures in the Rhone and Garonne rivers, which increased river temperatures and limited its ability to use river water to cool factories. As a result, the company announced a loss of €5.3 billion.[3]

The winter months are also dry in France, which could negatively affect the country's energy production throughout the year.[4] At this point, considering that a quarter of the EU's energy is nuclear energy and more than half of it is produced in France[5], and that 70% of France's electricity needs are obtained from nuclear energy, it can be predicted that if the drought continues, energy prices will rise across the continent and costs in production will increase.

Another area where the drought is having an impact on the European economy is logistics. Water scarcity adversely affects the transportation of many materials, from fuel to car parts and from food to chemicals, due to the unavailability of important waterways. As a matter of fact, the Rhine River, which is an important transportation route for raw materials such as grain, chemicals, minerals, coal and oil, is running low due to high temperatures and lack of rainfall, affecting the supply chain. In fact, in August 2022, Roberto Spranzi, the director of the DTG maritime cooperative, which operates around 100 ships on the Rhine, stated that the ships were only able to use between 25% and 35% of their capacity.[6] This not only disrupts product trade, but also delays the delivery of coal to power plants, deepening Germany's energy crisis at a time when alternatives to Russian gas are being sought.

Moreover, many European rivers, from the Loire to the Danube, are experiencing declining water levels. This increases the financial losses of the European economy in the areas of agriculture, energy supply and transportation, and reduces the purchasing power of individuals. Due to the drought, Spain has lost €1.5 billion annually, Italy €1.4 billion annually and France €1.2 billion annually. The annual loss from drought in the EU and the UK is estimated at around €9 billion each year. In the absence of an effective policy, this figure could rise to more than €65 billion.[7] Figures show that the economic impact of drought will only deepen. It is therefore increasingly important for European countries to both conserve existing resources and develop the capabilities to cope with drought.

In fact, European countries support international agreements on climate policy, such as the Paris Agreement, to slow global warming and aim to zero greenhouse gas emissions under the European Green Deal. In 2007, Europe is aligning with the European Commission's recommendations on the preparation of operational drought management plans to prevent and mitigate the impacts of drought on the environment, society and the economy.

On the other hand, while temporary policies such as compensating farmers' losses and restricting water use are implemented to alleviate the periodic effects of drought, countries are developing national policies to combat the threat of drought that has become chronic. For example, French President Emmanuel Macron announced a water saving plan that includes preventing water leaks, reusing wastewater and sharing water, stating that they have created an emergency fund of 180 million euros.[8]

Germany has also established a national water strategy to guarantee drinking water supply, protect groundwater and ecosystems and ensure adequate water supply for agriculture and businesses. In addition, Germany wants to adapt its urban planning to the sponge city concept. This means that rainwater is stored where it falls, cleaned by the soil and returned to the groundwater through evaporation and infiltration. To cope with limited water availability, the Netherlands has established an irrigation project to retain more water in the system, manage groundwater levels and develop efficient irrigation technologies.

Solar power generation is at the forefront of meeting the energy needs of Europe, which is struggling to utilize natural gas, hydroelectric and nuclear energy. Sunny weather and an increase in solar installations across the continent increased the use of solar energy by 28% compared to the previous summer.[9] Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Hungary have started to meet some of their electricity needs from solar energy.

In fact, given the extent of the damage caused and to be caused by the drought, the concrete policies of European countries do not seem to be a permanent response to the problem. If the necessary measures are not taken, if the policies implemented do not keep up with the pace of the drought or if alternatives are not created, it is likely that European integration will be the main area to be affected. Just as the energy crisis and rising inflation have led to street protests in Europe, so too will the shortage of water and food supply, rising costs and rising unemployment. Moreover, crises increase support for nationalist views in European societies and weaken commitment to European integration.

On the other hand, severe droughts may lead to disputes between countries over the allocation of resources. Countries with advantages in production and supply may use food and energy as a tool for political sanctions, as in the Russia-Ukraine War. Therefore, the sharing of resources may be considered as an existential threat and pave the way for the emergence of a conflict environment. For example, Spain, one of the most drought-affected countries on the European continent, transfers water to Portugal in accordance with the Albufeira Agreement. However, due to the extreme drought, Spain stated that they could not fully fulfill the requirements of the agreement, but backed down after a short diplomatic crisis.[10]

Although the issue between Spain and Portugal has been resolved for now, tensions in bilateral relations could escalate as countries become more vulnerable to drought. Given the number of transboundary waters in Europe, there is a risk that increasing drought will make it more difficult to sustain peace on the continent.

In conclusion, although the drought has been overshadowed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russian-Ukrainian War and the energy crisis, Europe is feeling the effects of the drought more and more each day. Water scarcity in Europe, coupled with increasing drought, is damaging agricultural crops, making it difficult to use hydroelectric and nuclear power plants, and slowing down trade on waterways. All this harms the economies of European countries and increases socioeconomic vulnerability.

[1] "Drought in Europe Macrh 2023", European Comission", https://edo.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/news/GDO-EDODroughtNews202303_Europe.pdf, (Date of Accession: 03.04.2022).

[2] "Agriculture and rural development", European Commission, https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/data-and-analysis/markets/outlook/short-term_en, (Date of Accession: 03.04.2022).

[3] Julia Kollwe, "EDF Cuts Output at Nuclear Power Plants as French Rivers Get too Warm", The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/aug/03/edf-to-reduce-nuclear-power-output-as-french-river-temperatures-rise>, (Date of Accession: 03.04.2022).

[4] Benjamin Wehrmann, "Catastrophic" Winter Drought in France Bodes Ill for Europe's Power Production in 2023", Clean Energy Wire, <https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/catastrophic-winter-drought-france-bodes-ill-europes-power-production-2023>, (Date of Accession: 03.04.2022).

[5] "Macron Unveils France's Plan to Share, Reuse and Save Water in the Face of Drought", Euronews, <https://www.euronews.com/green/2023/03/30/macron-unveils-frances-plan-to-share-reuse-and-save-water-in-the-face-of-drought>, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2022).

[6] "Rhine's Low Water Levels Hit German Shipping, Minister Touts Dredging", Deutsche Welle, <https://www.dw.com/en/rhines-low-water-levels-hit-german-shipping-minister-touts-dredging/a-62740312>, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The US Approach to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU Convergence

Today, as the nation-state debate continues, the role of supra-state structures in the global system is gaining importance. In this context, the European Union (EU), which has a unique structure, is one of the prominent organizations. Since its founding, the EU has made an important contribution to the economic development and democratic development of Europe. The EU stands out in international politics not as a military power, but as an economically important actor. While providing these benefits to member states, it also prevented the reoccurrence of conflicts by encouraging diplomacy instead of war. In particular, it prevented the re-emergence of conflicts between European states that competed for resources and were characterized as arch rivals with each other. The EU can be considered as a structure that protects Europe above all from itself and is extremely

beneficial for relatively small states. It has a particularly strong economic structure.

The EU, while influencing the policies of its member states, faced significant difficulties during the Russia-Ukraine War. Russia's move that challenged the USA and NATO had a negative impact on the EU as well. Russia, an important energy provider of Europe, has disrupted the energy needs of European states by cutting off its energy supply. For this reason, European states aimed to follow common foreign and security policies within the EU. They especially wanted to take a collective stance against Russia. To achieve this goal, they turned to the Balkans, based on their belief in the rapid integration of Europe.



Veli Can AKKAŞ

The EU has decided to tighten its dialogue with Bosnia and Herzegovina while increasing its strategic focus on the Balkans. Although the EU's goal of European integration has gained momentum recently, it does not want to compromise on two issues: the first is cooperation against possible security problems within the borders of the EU, and the second is economic integration. In addition, democracy indices are also important for the EU. While the EU process of Bosnia and Herzegovina is gaining momentum, it is frequently emphasized that the parties are open to cooperation and consultation. Bosnia and Herzegovina held the OSCE Security Cooperation Forum in the organization of its Permanent Representation to the OSCE, the UN and other international organizations in the international community and successfully held the OSCE Security Cooperation Forum Presidency between January-April 2023. These meetings show the importance that Bosnia and Herzegovina attaches to international cooperation and dialogue.[1]

Bosnia and Herzegovina is an important issue that needs to be agreed on the economy in the EU membership process. The EU implements various policies to support the economy of its member states. Therefore, it is clear that the EU wants to adopt a common approach to trade with Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the EU expects Bosnia and Herzegovina not to take unilateral trade measures without prior consultation with it. The European Commission also draws attention to the need to pay attention to this issue.[2]

Security concern is one of the main drivers of the strengthening relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU. In particular, the EU's candidacy status for incorporating Bosnia and Herzegovina can be considered as an important step. The Head of the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina stated that he sees this step as a clear signal to local authorities and citizens.[3]

Even though the relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Union are in an improving trend, it is not possible to say that the process has progressed completely smoothly. The reason for this situation is that Republika Srpska cannot be ignored in this relationship. Especially Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik has an extremely negative influence. Dodik is known for his closeness, especially with Russian President Vladimir Putin, and his steps make it difficult for the parties.

With the start of the Russia-Ukraine War, the EU has implemented various sanctions against Russia. However, there are many EU and NATO member European countries that do not implement these sanctions. In addition, while NATO's activities in the region increase, the USA also imposes sanctions on Russia. After the

energy crisis in Europe, the economic crisis became inevitable, which damaged the interests of EU member states. Based on this situation, the USA aims to remove the obstacles to European integration. The trust of EU member states in NATO is an important factor, especially in terms of security, although there are different opinions. For this reason, the USA is taking measures against Dodik in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to maintain its influence on European countries and not leave room for political maneuvering against Russia. US Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina Michael Murphy emphasized that his country will not remain silent against corrupt politicians.[4]

These statements increased the long-standing public pressure against Dodik. In addition, it can be said that the investments of the USA in Bosnia and Herzegovina may also be affected. To date, 638 million dollars has been invested in Republika Srpska by the USA.[5] Relations between the USA and Republika Srpska have been the scene of not only economic but also diplomatic tensions. In particular, the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's statement about Dodik, which he likened to Putin, aroused great repercussions in the international public opinion.[6] These meetings were interpreted as a new approach of the USA to Bosnia and Herzegovina. While Blinken likened Dodik to Putin and was expected to take a step back, Dodik's statement that he was pleased to be compared to Putin clearly reveals his attitude towards Russia and the USA.[7]

It is clear that Bosnia and Herzegovina is an important actor in the process of European integration, considering the increased security concerns of the EU and its orientation towards the Balkans after the Russia-Ukraine War. However, Republika Srpska leader Dodik is not on the same footing as the other parties. The similarity of NATO and EU members requires the US to pass a test. In this process, the USA, which does not want to leave room for maneuver to Russia, takes the initiative to remove the obstacles in the Bosnia-Herzegovina-EU rapprochement and displays a determined stance against Dodik.

[1] "Successful Realization of BiH's Chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation", Sarajevotimes, <https://sarajevotimes.com/successful-realization-of-bihs-chairmanship-of-the-osce-forum-for-security-cooperation/>, (Date of Accession: 30.03.2023).

[2] "EC Expects BiH to Refrain From Undertaking Unilateral Trade Measures", Sarajevotimes, <https://sarajevotimes.com/ec-expects-bih-to-refrain-from-undertaking-unilateral-trade-measures/>, (Date of Accession: 31.03.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

UK-EU Arms Trade Under Brexit

The Brexit process started with the decision to leave in the referendum held in 2016, and the UK's tensions from the European Union (EU) took place on 29 March 2019. This process has had significant effects on the trade relations between the EU and the UK. However, as a result of the inability to reach an agreement in the reconciliations, ongoing negotiations are still being carried out for the execution of the proceedings. These negotiations also include sensitive issues such as the arms trade.

Historically, arms have been traded between the UK and European countries. They traded weapons in colonial areas during their colonization operations, especially in the United

Kingdom and other European countries in the 19th century. After the Second World War, the United Kingdom and other European countries took part in international defense organizations such as NATO, and this widespread arms trade continued.

Towards the end of the 1990s, the United Kingdom and other European countries signed several agreements on arms trade. The Council of Europe adopted a set of rules called "Principles and Criteria" in Vienna in 1998. These rules aim to prevent the sale of arms to countries that do not respect human rights.[1]



Hatice Nur SARI

In 2013, the United Kingdom and other EU countries signed the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which includes stricter rules on arms exports. This treaty aims to prevent arms sales to countries that may create human rights violations or regional instability. ATT encourages the UK and other EU countries to adopt a common approach to arms exports.

According to the treaty, countries to which arms will be exported must respect principles such as respect for human rights, not endanger regional stability, not support terrorist activities and not engage in war crimes. In addition, the countries to which weapons will be exported should be clearly stated, the objectives of the export and the characteristics of the weapons should be clearly explained.[2]

The signing of the treaty is important for the UK and other EU countries to set stricter rules on arms exports. The ATT aims to ensure that the UK and other EU countries respect human rights and maintain regional stability in arms exports. However, the UK's departure from the EU as a result of the EU referendum in 2016 caused it to draw its own path in determining national arms export policies, rather than complying with the EU's arms trade policies. These new policies adopt a more liberal approach in contrast to the strict rules adopted by the EU.

After Brexit, the UK prioritizes its own national interests when trading arms with other countries. This increased Britain's control over the arms trade. Without being a member of the EU, the UK can set its own rules on the arms trade and therefore does not have to adhere to the EU's arms trade policies. This allows the London government to have more freedom for the arms trade. This also allows the UK to adopt a more flexible approach to the arms trade.

The UK Government has adopted some regulations governing the international arms trade. Among these regulations is the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty. ATT aims to prevent the use of weapons in violation of human rights by aiming at strict regulation of the arms trade. For this reason, the United Kingdom has become a party to international treaties such as the ATT and has accepted regulations for international arms trade.[3]

The UK stands out as one of the EU's largest arms suppliers, and after Brexit, uncertainties arose about how this trade would be conducted. After the Brexit referendum in 2016, there has been a lot of discussion about the arms trade in the UK.

The United Kingdom realized an arms export of 13.3 billion dollars worldwide in 2020, and this figure indicated an increase of 16%.

However, annual arms trade data are not fully released until 2021, as the UK's formal departure from the EU took place in 2020. The UK's arms export ranks third in the EU after the United States (US) and Russia.[4]

In the light of the above data, it can be said that the EU can continue to import arms from the UK, but new agreements must be made for this transaction and certain conditions must be met after the UK leaves. However, since the UK's arms trade policies include arms exports to countries that do not respect human rights, the majority of the international community criticizes these policies and demands that such exports be stopped.

The effects of Brexit on the arms trade could not only negatively affect the UK's arms and defense industry, but also its exports. The EU is one of the UK's largest markets for defense exports, so the UK's departure from the EU could result in more bureaucracy and costs in export transactions. However, the British government follows a strategy of increasing its exports by making free trade agreements with countries outside the EU. Implementation of this strategy can help companies operating in the British defense industry increase their exports and reduce their dependence on the EU market.[5]

This situation could adversely affect the UK's participation in EU defence, research and development projects. Because the EU carries out joint research projects in the defense industry and the UK makes significant investments in these projects. With the UK leaving the EU, participation in these projects may become more difficult. However, the UK Government has announced that they will continue to invest in defence, research and development projects. [6]

The effects of the UK's departure from the EU on the defense budget are also a matter of debate. The EU strives to act together in defense spending, but the UK does not participate in these initiatives. Therefore, Brexit may reduce the impact of the EU on the defense budget. However, the UK Government has announced that they will not cut the defense budget, or even increase it.

Britain, one of the biggest arms suppliers of the EU, is experiencing uncertainties about how competitive it can be after Brexit. While the UK will no longer have to comply with the EU's regulations, it will have to create its own regulations. This could create additional costs and new uncertainties for the UK's arms industry.[7]

The effects of Brexit on the arms trade are not only limited to the relations between the UK and the EU, but may also increase the potential of the London administration to trade arms with other

capitals. Britain, which left the EU, can now determine its own arms trade policies and trade more freely with other countries. However, arms trade is a contentious issue in the international community, and the UK gaining more freedom with other countries could increase global security risks. This situation may be deepened by increases in the international arms trade.

There is some uncertainty about the effects of Brexit on the arms trade. However, it is possible for the UK to introduce new regulations on arms exports to avoid the negative reaction of the international community. These arrangements can make the UK more transparent and accountable in the arms trade and increase its reputation in the international community. However, Brexit's lowering of political commitment to the EU may cause the EU to be skeptical of the UK, and this attitude may negatively affect the UK's arms trade talks with other EU states. In addition, the fact that the UK will now contribute less to the EU's defense projects may reduce its influence on the EU's defense budget. However, the UK Government has announced that it will not cut or even increase the defense budget.

In 2020, defense industry cooperation between the UK, Germany and France stands out as a critical strategic area for the development of strong defense projects and increasing defense capabilities in Europe. In particular, under the leadership of French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and then UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, various agreements were signed to increase defense industry cooperation.

The Lancaster House Treaty, a treaty aimed at increasing cooperation between the two countries, was signed between the United Kingdom and France in 2020. The treaty aims to promote cooperation on issues such as conducting joint military operations, developing equipment and technology, logistics and intelligence sharing. On the other hand, arms trade between the UK and the EU is now based on bilateral agreements and arrangements. This trade, which was previously subject to the EU's common arms export policies, consisted of arms exports to the United Kingdom, which accounted for around 10% of the EU's total arms exports at the time the Lancaster House Treaty was signed.

The Future Combat Air System Project (FCAS) between Germany and France is an important project that aims to jointly develop next-generation fighter aircraft, strengthen aviation industries and increase military capabilities. With an agreement signed in 2019, Spain was also included in the FCAS Project.[8]

Ultimately, the effects of Brexit on the arms trade are complex and varied. After Brexit, London will be able to set its own arms trade policies and trade more freely with other countries. However, the relations between the UK and the EU are full of uncertainties, especially regarding the arms supply. In addition, the UK's arms trade with other countries could increase global security risks.

[1] "Vienna European Council 11 and 12 December 1998 Presidency Conclusions", European Parliament, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/wiel_en.htm, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[2] "Annual Report", AT&T, <https://investors.att.com/financial-reports/annual-reports/2013>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[3] "Treaty Text", The Arms Trade Treaty, <https://thearmstrade-treaty.org/treaty-text.html?templateId=209884>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[4] "UK Authorised £1.4bn of Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia AFTER EXPORTS RESUMED", The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/feb/09/uk-authorized-14bn-of-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia-after-exports-resumed>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[5] "The Impacts of Brexit on the Security and the Defence Industry in the European Union and the United Kingdom", Warsaw Institute, <https://warsawinstitute.org/impacts-brexit-security-defence-industry-european-union-united-kingdom/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[6] "Brexit and UK Defence: An Explainer", UK Parliament, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8676/>, (Date of Accession: 06.04.2023).

[7] "Brexit's Implications for UK Defence Industrial Cooperation with Europe", RUSI, <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/brexits-implications-uk-defence-industrial-cooperation-europe>, (Date of Accession: 06.04.2023).

[8] "France, Germany, Spain agree on moving on with FCAS warplane development", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/france-germany-spain-agree-next-phase-fighter-jet-development-source-2022-11-18/>, (Date of Accession: 06.04.2023).

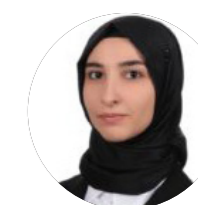


ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Multidimensional Cooperation in India-Kazakhstan Relations

The convergence between the actors of different regions in the Asian geography has reached a remarkable level in the last few years. In this case, the changes in the internal dynamics of these countries and the new equations brought by regional and global developments play a role. In this context, one of the mutually beneficial interactions that develops and strengthens is experienced between India and Kazakhstan.

Celebrating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, Astana and New Delhi have an ever-expanding dynamic of cooperation. Kazakhstan is India's largest trading partner in Central Asia. In the last few years, there have been significant developments in the relations between the parties.[1]



Şeyma KIZILAY

As it is known, India was one of the first countries to recognize Kazakhstan's independence and did not delay in establishing diplomatic relations. The two countries, which have developed their relations and partnerships over the years, attach great importance to each other. Both countries have common views, goals and interests in economic development and regional stability.

In addition, Kazakhstan for India; stands out with its energy and natural resources. Kazakhstan, the world's largest uranium producer, is also India's most important supplier. The country meets about 80% of India's uranium needs.[2] Astana and New Delhi, which signed an agreement to supply 5,000 metric tons of uranium in 2015, renewed their nuclear agreements for the 2020-2024 period in 2019.[3] Kazakhstan, which is also rich in oil production, is an alternative resource for India.

The second basic element that makes Kazakhstan important is the geostrategic position of the country. Being located between Russia and Asia and bordering with China increases the strategic importance of the country. India also attaches importance to this position of the country. At this point, it can be said that the North-South Corridor also plays an important role in the ties between the two.

As will be remembered, the Strategic Cooperation Agreement signed in 2009 became a milestone in the development of relations. Developing their partnerships in the following years, Astana and New Delhi established cooperation mechanisms in many fields. In addition, the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Kazakhstan for the opening of the SCO Summit and EXPO 2017 in 2017 also accelerated the relations.[4]

In recent years, high-level visits between the two countries have come to the fore. In October 2021, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev hosted the Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, who came to Kazakhstan to attend the 6th Foreign Ministers Meeting of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA).[5]

Economic relations and diplomacy-oriented cooperation between the parties are developing rapidly. The SCO Summit, which will be hosted by India, which holds the SCO Term Presidency, will also contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations. India will use the opportunity provided by the SCO Presidency to increase interaction and partnerships.

It is seen that commercial relations have also developed. As of 2020, about 700 Indian companies are registered in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the interest of Indian companies towards Kazakhstan continues. A Joint Business Council was established between the two countries in order to strengthen commercial ties and increase investment cooperation.[6] Bilateral trade volume is also increasing. Bilateral trade volume reached 2.5 billion dollars in 2022. In 2021, Kazakhstan exported 473 million dollars to India; India, on the other hand, exported 207 million dollars to Kazakhstan.[7]

Another influential platform in the development of cooperation is the Indo-Kazakh Intergovernmental Commission. At the same time, Honorary Cossack Consulates in India operating in Mumbai, Chennai and Gandhinagar also positively affect relations.

There is a harmonious process between India and Kazakhstan in terms of both investment and political relations. The importance New Delhi attaches to Astana also showed itself in its attitude during the Tragic January Events.

Another indicator of India-Kazakhstan cooperation is defense cooperation. The sixth drills, known as "KazInd Exercises" and lastly held on 14-28 December 2022,[8] advance cooperation in the field of defense. At this point, it can be said that the partnership within the framework of the SCO is also effective and nurtures military relations. It is possible to state that the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) also plays an important role in this regard.

On the other hand, there are approximately 7,800 Indian citizens in Kazakhstan. This contributes to the development of cultural ties between the two countries. After the visit of Shatmanov Samat Bekturovich, Deputy Minister of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policies of the Kyrgyz Republic on April 3, 2023 to India, a new page has been opened for the development of tourism between Kyrgyzstan and India.[9]

Another step that improves cultural relations is the installation of busts of Kazakh poet and thinker Abai Qunanbaiuly in New Delhi in June 2022 and of Mahatma Gandhi, one of the important political figures of India, in Astana in October of the same year.[10] Therefore, not only political or commercial partnerships are established; a multidimensional policy is followed in order to deepen the relations.

Another example of multidimensional cooperation is the agreement signed by the parties on 16 February 2023 on diversifying bilateral cooperation in the fields of medicine, pharmacology, agriculture, information technology, space and energy. The eighth political consultation tour was held in New Delhi on 13-14 February 2023 between Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Kanat Tumysh and Secretary (West) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sanjay Verma, and the aforementioned agreements were signed after the negotiations.[11]

As a result, New Delhi has become one of the most important strategic partners of Astana in Asia, with collaborations developed in every field. Steps are taken to strengthen cooperation between the parties in every field. While there are developments in the existing sectors; new partnerships are also formed. In this context, it is possible for India and Kazakhstan to focus on cyber security, military-technical cooperation and counter-terrorism at the point of cooperation in the future. In this framework, it can be foreseen that new mechanisms will be established to improve relations.

[1] "India's Ties with Kazakhstan are of Mutual Benefit", Times of Oman, <https://timesofoman.com/article/129073-indias-ties-with-kazakhstan-are-of-mutual-benefit/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[2] Ibid.

[3] "India-Kazakhstan Sign Memorandum of Understanding", GK Today, <https://www.gktoday.in/topic/india-kazakhstan-sign-memorandum-of-understanding/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[4] "Kazakhstan and India Move Toward New Horizons of Cooperation", Astana Times, <https://astanatimes.com/2019/07/kazakhstan-and-india-move-toward-new-horizons-of-cooperation/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[5] "Kazakhstan President Receives External Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar of India", Akorda, <https://www.akorda.kz/en/kazakhstan-president-receives-foreign-minister-subrahmanyam-jaishankar-of-india-1291641/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[6] "India-Kazakhstan Emerging Ties: A Look Back at 30 Years of Strategic Cooperation", News on Air, <https://newsonair.com/2022/01/24/india-kazakhstan-emerging-ties-a-look-back-at-30-years-of-strategic-cooperation/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[7] "India-Kazakhstan", OEC, <https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/ind/partner/kaz/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[8] "KazInd 2022: India and Kazakhstan Carry Out Joint Military Drill in Meghalaya", Economic Times, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/kazind-2022-india-kazakhstan-carry-out-joint-military-drill-in-meghalaya/vedioshow/96534794.cms>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[9] "Kyrgyzstan's Deputy Minister Visits India to Explore Bilateral Tourism Opportunities", TTJ, <https://traveltradejournal.com/kyrgyzstans-deputy-minister-visits-india-to-explore-bilateral-tourism-opportunities/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[10] "Kazakhstan, India Explore Ways to Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation", Astana Times, <https://astanatimes.com/2023/02/kazakhstan-india-explore-ways-to-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation/>, (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[11] Ibid.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Impact of Brexit on the British Economy and UK Foreign Policy in the Future

Brexit is a term that has been on the agenda for many years and symbolizes the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union (The UK left the EU with the Brexit agreement, thus withdrawing itself from many EU plans, conditions and programs that it had difficulty accepting before). It is possible to say that fundamental differences of opinion between the parties are at the heart of the UK's Decoupling

from the Union. Britain has been known as a country that generally prepares the ground for different ideas, unacceptable conditions in relations since 1957, when it took the step of EU membership, and stays away from common policies. This situation can be better summed up by the UK's membership of Schengen, which determines the EU's border and visa policy, and the rejection of the use of the euro, which has



**Mahmut Melih
BOSTANCI**

become the EU's common currency. All of this stems from the fact that Britain is known as the "empire on which the sun never sets" and hence its desire to emphasize the difference between it and other EU countries. All these reasons have led to the UK leaving the EU on February 1, 2020. This development has affected the UK quite a lot from a social and economic point of view.

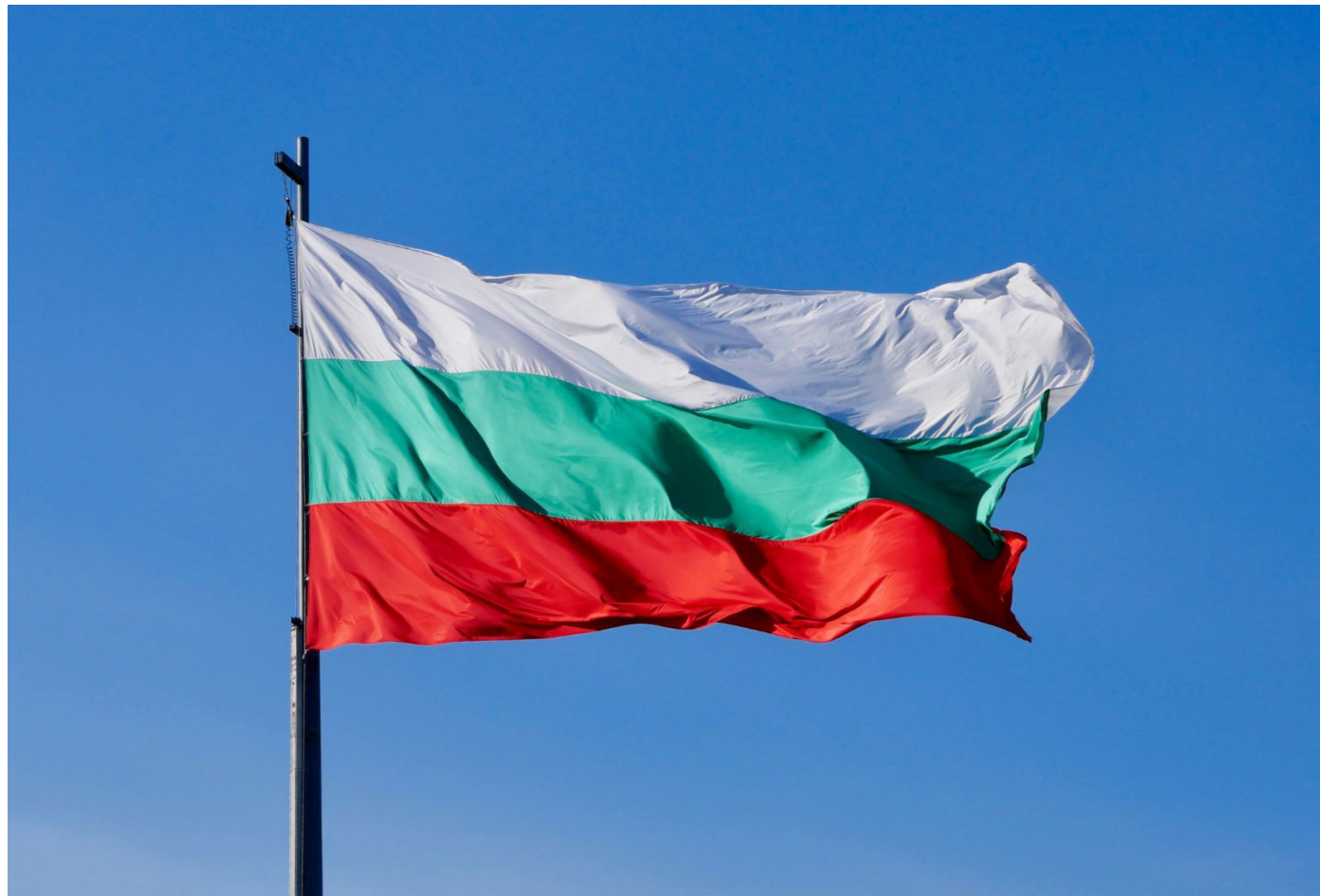
England has prepared itself for this process with differences such as not being included in the Schengen Area and using sterling instead of euro. The UK's inability to adapt to the EU's foreign policies in general and its adoption of an attitude that it is economically and socially superior has facilitated separation. Brexit, which was adopted by taking the opinions of the people in the referendums held in various periods, became clear with the result of the secession obtained by a small margin in the last referendum. It is known that this referendum emerged with the wish of the far-right leader James Cameron to be prime minister for another term. At that time, it is a well-known fact that people with far-right views and pro-Brexit attitudes throughout the country wanted a new referendum. In order to serve as prime minister for another term, Cameron organized his election campaign according to this situation and promised a referendum. Although the result of the referendum was in the direction of separation, Cameron refrained from taking this responsibility and transferred this task to Theresa May's administration. The Foreign Minister of the time, Boris Johnson, who was at the forefront and willing to leave the Brexit, resigned after Theresa May could not take the situation seriously and obtained the parliamentary majority together with the Conservative Party leadership. This situation has resulted in the approval of Brexit.

It is claimed that the damage done to the British economy by Brexit, which is described as a victory by far-rightists, is equivalent to Covid-19. It is stated by the authorities that it is not possible for the UK to return to pre-Covid-19 economic conditions within the next 5 years. The majority of the citizens began to appear to complain about this separation, which took place by a small margin. It is also known that in recent years, Brexit and corruption scandals have reduced the confidence of the people of the United Kingdom in the government. A survey published in the previous days reveals that citizens trust the EU and the European Parliament more than the government. Whether the second referendum, which Boris Johnson blocked with the elections, will bring about separation from the EU is one of the other important situations being discussed. Accordingly, recent developments and the economic situation show that the British people trust the EU more and are not satisfied with Brexit. This situation may be a method by which British politicians will shape their foreign policy in the

future, and the agreements made by British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in the name of strengthening economic formations and financial policies are steps that can somewhat restore the British economy. Despite all this, the damage seen is quite large and serious. Sunday agreements with the EU account for a considerable amount of the British economy. Although it is known that this rate, known as 4%, can be recovered with an important economic agreement to be concluded despite the separation, the EU does not look at this agreement very well.

Another chance of the UK is based on re-membership. In this context, the UK Government seems to be preparing for this situation as well. King of England III. It can be said that, together with Charles's trip to Germany, a new one was added to the travels of the King or Queen, which was seen many times in the history of England, to solve the foreign policy crises. King Charles, who impressed the deputies with his speech in the German Parliament and acted with a constructive rhetoric, may have made this visit a precursor to a possible unification request. On the other hand, the Scotland Agreement signed with the EU in the previous days is also of great importance in terms of UK policy. The Agreement in question says that the UK's seats will not be transferred until the European Parliament elections. Although factors such as economic conditions and social difficulties of citizens in obtaining work permits from EU countries increase the desire to reunite, the EU's attitude shows that they view this situation negatively. This visit of King Charles may reverse expectations and thoughts. Despite the risk of economic deterioration in the future, Britain's search to find new economic allies may result in its turning to Asia. This situation can be seen as another way out.

As a result, England took a pretty big risk with the decision to leave. The impact of EU separation on the economic reflection of Covid-19 may affect the British economy, sterling and governments in the future. In this context, King Charles' visits to Europe are of great importance. Even if there is no reversal from Brexit, the UK can restructure its economic agreements with the EU and get through this process with less damage. Factors such as the gradual decline of citizens' trust in the government and frequent changes in the office of the Prime Minister are factors that negatively affect the economic stabilization. These factors may raise the possibility of re-membership. In summary, the UK is trying to get out of the process unscathed or with less damage. Although the public seems to regret this, it is not known what kind of agreements the next period may bring or whether this situation will benefit Britain in the long run. In the empire where the sun does not set, time is gradually increasing its importance.



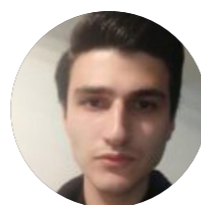
ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Bulgarian Elections: What Kind of Future?

Bulgaria, due to the ongoing political instability and economic problems in the country, being the poorest country in the European Union (EU), and as a result of concerns such as the war in Ukraine, which is only 200 km from the border, On April 2, 2023, it held the fifth parliamentary election in less than two years. The reason for the "Election Feasts" in question, it is stated that the high level of political polarization in the country prevents the parties from forming a stable coalition and thus the election of a prime minister to lead the country.

Bulgaria has been struggling with a deep di-

vision and political polarization between ideological groups in the country since its democratization in the post-Cold War period.[1] Although Bulgaria seemed to have left its political divisions behind in the early 2000s, this situation has been changing in recent years. Political tensions increased and public confidence in the government came to a breaking point, especially due to corruption scandals involving the former prime minister and the leader of the conservative Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria (GERB) party, Boyko Borisov. As a result of the polarization created by these



Han KARAYEL

scandals, permanent coalitions and even the formation of a government in Bulgaria became difficult. Most parties refuse to cooperate with GERB and Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria (DSB), which are involved in corruption allegations. In addition, Revival, which refuses to cooperate with any other political formation and has pro-Russian new radical right thoughts, has been gaining strength in recent years.[2]

Using the political vacuum in Bulgaria to his advantage, President Rumen Radev has turned the political crisis in Bulgaria in his favor in order to gain power over foreign policy, which is traditionally one of the areas beyond his constitutional privileges. Unlike many of Bulgaria's largest political parties, which support Ukraine in its war against Russia, Radev has used his own platform for pro-Russian purposes. It is foreseen that the elections will not change Radev's pro-Russian foreign policy. However, Bulgaria will continue to thwart Radev's parliamentary will and divert his country's foreign policy away from the European consensus on war until the adopted foreign policy finds a solution.

One of the names who carefully followed the elections in the country is Russian President Vladimir Putin. Since the invasion of Ukraine, Bulgaria's major political parties have taken an anti-Russian stance and supported sending military aid to Ukraine alongside NATO allies. President Radev, on the other hand, opposed these efforts and clearly adopted a pro-Russian stance. Radev's admiration for Russia, when he entered the political scene in the 2016 presidential elections, his words about a Russian flag flying over Crimea have been remembered.[3]

Bulgaria has been among the largest ammunition manufacturers in Europe for a long time and is closely followed by Putin because of this feature. It will be very critical for Putin that the possible change in the support given to Russia with Radev before the election in favor of Ukraine will emerge with the election. Radev, who accuses the pro-Ukrainian lawmakers in Bulgaria of being "warmongers", recently announced that Bulgaria will not support a European indent for the supply of bullets to Ukraine.

Pollsters believe that voter fatigue and politicians' distrust of the will to fight corruption will result in low turnout and a fragmented parliament, which will once again face an uphill battle to form a stable government.[4] It is also thought that the war, inflation and the widening gap between Russia and the pro-European camps may lead more Bulgarians to vote for nationalist and pro-Moscow parties on election day.

As a result, it seems likely that the political crisis in Bulgaria will continue after the elections on April 2, 2023. This situation will significantly affect the political and socio-economic policies of the country, as economic issues become a secondary problem due to prominent political polarizations. With these elections, which do not promise any hope for overcoming the political stalemate or for stability, the debate will continue in the country's foreign policy until a government is established in Bulgaria. On the other hand, the outcome of the elections, which is important for Putin, will result in favor of Russia as long as Radev remains in his presidency and will prevent possible Ukrainian support. In this context, it is seen that the confusion and disagreements between the parties strengthen the pro-Russian foreign policy.

[1] "Bulgaria Is Stuck in an Electoral Doom Loop", Foreign Policy (FP), <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/03/31/bulgaria-election-parliament-president-radev-putin-russia-ukraine-polarization/>, (Date of Accession: 01.04.2023).

[2] "Bulgaria Is Stuck in an Electoral...", op.cit.

[3] "Bulgaria's Outgoing Foreign Minister Criticises President-elect Over Statements on Crimea", The Sofia Globe, <https://sofiaglobe.com/2016/11/24/bulgarias-outgoing-foreign-minister-criticises-president-elect-over-statements-on-crimea/>, (Date of Accession: 01.04.2023).

[4] "Bulgaria Heads to 5th Election in 2 Years, But 6th May Loom", ABCNEWS, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/bulgaria-heads-5th-election-2-years-6th-loom-98266177>, (Date of Accession:01.04.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

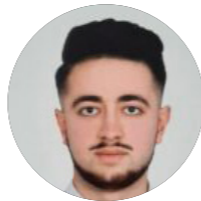
Montenegrin Presidential Elections: The Fall of Dukanovic

Montenegrin politics has faced perhaps the most striking elections in the country's history. On March 19, 2023, the first round of the presidential elections was held and on April 2, 2023, the second round was held and President Milo Dukanovic, a name that has long marked the country's politics, lost the elections against Jakov Milatovic, who was twenty-four years younger than him. The 2023 presidential elections are of great importance not only in Montenegro but also in the region and for the Montenegrin diaspora.[1]

As it is known, Montenegro went to the presidential elections under the shadow of the coalition government that could not be suc-

cessfully sustained after the 2020 parliamentary elections. Given that President Dukanovic's Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro (DSP) has been on a downward trend for a long time, Dukanovic's chances in the elections were considered low. Nevertheless, Dukanovic's party and he himself have always resonated with his constituency because of his achievements representing Montenegrin nationalism, playing a role in the country's independence, making the country a member of NATO and an official candidate for the European Union (EU).

In Montenegro, the president is directly elected by the people. On March 19, 2023, the first round of elections was held and Dukanovic received



**Ahmet İlhan
KAPLAN**

35% of the votes. His closest rival, Milatovic, the candidate of the "European Movement Now", received 29% of the votes.[2] The second round of the elections was held on April 2, 2023 as no candidate was able to exceed 50%. According to the election results of the second round, Milatovic defeated Dukanovic by a large margin; 59% to 41%.[3] The election results announced the beginning of a new era in the whole country and the end of the Dukanovic era, which has been present in the country's politics since the 1990s.

Milatovic, who increased his votes in the second round, received votes from Serbian parties, while Dukanovic increased his votes with Bosniak and Albanian minorities. The fact that Serbian parties openly declared in the second round that they wanted to end the Dukanovic era in Montenegro as soon as possible and declared their support for Milatovic had a decisive impact on the election results.

Dukanovic campaigned on the influence of Serbia and Russia, especially in the aftermath of the Russia-Ukraine War. Dukanovic stated that an unstable government took over the country after the parliamentary elections in 2020, which his party lost, and that the country was struggling to make the necessary reforms in the EU harmonization process.[4] However, it should be noted that Dukanovic has sometimes used his presidential powers to put obstacles in the way of the government.

At the same time, Dukanovic stated that the Serbian Orthodox Church in the country had ceased to be a religious institution and became a political one, and wanted to nationalize its assets.[5] Upon this, major protests took place in the country. In 2020, with the new government established, an agreement was reached between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Government of Montenegro. Dukanovic, on the other hand, characterized this process as a compromise and claimed that the government was not national.

The "Europe Now Movement" is a very young movement, but it became part of the government after the elections in 2020 and achieved a great success in the previous local elections, winning the capital Podgorica. It also nominated Economy Minister Milatovic as its candidate in the presidential elections. Milatovic is known as a young and successful politician who studied at Oxford University. The accusations against Milatovic were that if he were to become president, the country would be under the control of Serbia and Russia. The singing of Serbian flags and songs by some of the citizens who took to the streets for victory celebrations after it became clear that he had won the elec-

tion suggests that this may be true. However, it should be noted that Milatovic, as the name of the movement he belongs to suggests, has a pro-EU political stance. He has also announced that his first foreign visit will be to Brussels, despite an invitation to Belgrade by Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic.[6] Milatovic's statements that Russia has invaded Ukraine, that Serbs committed genocide in Srebrenica and that his country will not give up its desire to recognize Kosovo indicate that Milatovic will pursue a foreign policy compatible with the EU.[7] Stating that his country will become a member of the EU within five years, Milatovic also said that he will fight against corruption, which is one of the main issues blocking the reform processes.

The corruption and lack of transparency in the country has often been swept under the rug by Dukanovic, who is seen as a friend by the United States and the EU. Although Milatovic's messages are positively evaluated by the West, it can be said that the West will choose to watch the new political atmosphere in Montenegro objectively for a while.

On the other hand, although Dukanovic resigned as party chairman after losing the elections, he has not yet announced that he will leave politics. This situation will become clearer after the early elections to be held in June 2023. Considering that the parliamentary arithmetic will also be decisive for the new political atmosphere, it can be said that the eventful weeks in Montenegrin politics are not over yet. It remains to be seen how Milatovic and his political movement, which was supported and elected by Serbian parties, will proceed after the parliamentary elections.

Whatever the case, Montenegrin politics experienced a major change on the occasion of the presidential elections and Dukanovic suffered a heavy defeat. The upcoming parliamentary elections and the government to be formed afterwards will make the future of the country's politics more predictable.

[1] Samir Kajosevic, "Montenegro President Courts Minorities to Stave off Election Defeat", Balkan Insight, <https://balkaninsight.com/2023/03/23/montenegro-president-courts-minorities-to-stave-off-election-defeat/>, (Date of Accession: 23.03.2023).

[2] "Dan je odluke za Crnu Goru, prvi rezultati ocekuju se oko 21 sat", NI Info, <https://niinfo.hr/regija/dan-je-odluke-za-crnu-goru-prvi-rezultati-ocekuju-se-oko-21-sat/>, (Date of Accession: 02.04.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Macron'un Pekin Ziyareti: Fransa AUKUS'un Rövanşını mı Alıyor?

On 5-7 April 2023, French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Beijing took place. The date of the visit became clear on February 24, 2023, after the Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a statement on Beijing's position and proposals for ending the Russia-Ukraine War, and the timing of the visit was approximately two weeks after the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Moscow on March 20-22, 2023. Therefore, it can be said that the main purpose of Macron's contacts with Xi is to end the Russia-Ukraine War through China's mediation. It is not a coincidence that Shi's visit to Kiev came to the fore

in parallel with Macron's visit. In this sense, it will not be surprising that the mediation of China on the Russian side and France on the Ukraine side come to the agenda. However, it would be an incomplete reading to limit the purpose of the French President's visit to China to the war in Ukraine.

As a matter of fact, the development and deepening of economic relations between the European Union (EU) and China was also discussed during Macron's visit to Beijing. Undoubtedly, EU countries, especially France, have a serious economic interdependence with Chi-



**Dr. Doğan
BAŞARAN**
ANKASAM
AF-PAK Expert

na. Therefore, the Paris administration attaches importance to relations with Beijing. This does not coincide with the expectations of the United States of America (USA), which wants to consolidate Europe against China. In fact, the statements made by Macron on April 9, 2023 confirm this. In his statement, Macron stated that Europe will not gain anything from the acceleration of the Taiwan Crisis and that European states should follow a strategy independent of both Washington and Beijing; in other words, he stated that they should prioritize their own interests.[1]

As it is known, the USA repaired the damage in trans-Atlantic relations to a large extent after Russia's intervention in Ukraine and brought the European states together against Russia within the framework of a common threat perception. The Washington administration wishes for a similar situation to occur in the Asia-Pacific Region and for the EU to be positioned against China. Because the main rival of the USA in the global power struggle is China. For this reason, there is a Washington administration that wants to drag China into the status of an aggressor state through Taiwan and takes steps to provoke Beijing for this purpose. However, Macron's aforementioned statements indicate that France in particular and Europe in general will not act in accordance with the expectations of the USA.

In fact, the stance of France is shaped by the policies of the USA itself. Because the Washington administration is pursuing a strategy to contain China in the Asia-Pacific. The USA, which tries to use the conflicts in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Question for its own interests, through alliances in the region; it is seen that they implement a policy that can be called "Asian NATO's". In this sense, it can be said that the USA is trying to benefit from two main alliances. These are QUAD and AUKUS. France, on the other hand, considers AUKUS to be a betrayal.

As it will be remembered, in September 2021, the Canberra administration came together with the USA and England and signed the AUKUS Pact. While this agreement foresees the acquisition of nuclear submarines by Australia; Canberra withdrew from the submarine agreement it signed with the Paris administration.[2] During this process, French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said, "We were stabbed in the back" the explanation in the form of has attracted attention.[3]

At this point, it should be reminded that France's seven overseas regions, which make up 9 million km2 of the 11 million km2 Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), are located in the Asia-Pacific. 1.6 million French citizens live in the region and 7,000 French military personnel are on duty.[4] In this sense, the Paris administration seems to

be excluded by the USA itself in a region where it wants to be active at the geopolitical level. Therefore, it is possible to interpret Macron's visit to Beijing on 5-7 March 2023 as France's search for a new alliance in the region.

As a matter of fact, although Europe seems to have shifted to the USA axis due to the Russia-Ukraine War, it desires to be positioned as a power center in the polarized world. In this sense, France is trying to assume the political leadership of the EU. It is possible to say that Macron has a desire in this direction, especially in terms of the situation in Germany after Angela Merkel. Therefore, Macron's visit to China and the message he gave on Taiwan in this context can be interpreted as that France will not act in line with the wishes of the USA in Asia-Pacific. It is also possible to describe this as the revenge of AUKUS.

As a result, although the USA has turned to various alliances to limit China in the Asia-Pacific Region, its stance that excludes France has made it difficult for Washington to achieve success in consolidating Europe against Beijing. Because Macron's Beijing visit, to the USA, "I am not with you." can be read as the transmission of the message. When the aim of the Continental Europe to be positioned as a pole in the multipolar world is included, it can be argued that the Washington administration will not be able to receive European support against China, its main rival in the global power struggle.

[1] "Macron: Europe Should not follow US or Chinese Policy over Taiwan", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/macron-says-europe-should-not-follow-us-or-chinese-policy-over-taiwan-2023-04-09/>, (Date of Accession: 10.04.2023).

[2] "AUKUS: Fransa, ABD'den Sonra Avustralya Büyükelçisini De İlişkiler Yeniden Tanımlanacak' Diyerek Geri Gönderiyor", BBC Türkçe, <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-58826799>, (Date of Accession: 10.04.2023).

[3] "Batı Blokunda Denizaltı Krizi: Fransa, Washington ve Canberra Büyükelçilerini Geri Çağırıyor", Euronews, <https://tr.euronews.com/2021/09/17/bat-blokunda-denizaltı-krizi-fransa-washington-ve-canberra-buyukelcilerini-geri-cag-ir-d>, (Date of Accession: 10.04.2023).

[4] Mustafa Cem Koyuncu, "Fransa'nın Hint-Pasifikteki Etkisini Arttırma Çabaları", ANKASAM, <https://www.ankasam.org/fransa-nin-hint-pasifikteki-etkisini-arttirma-cabaları/>, (Date of Accession: 10.04.2023).

ANKASAM IN PRESS

28 April 2023

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) Asia-Pacific Expert Mustafa Cem Koyuncu's, "Is China becoming the new mediator of the Russia-Ukraine crisis?" his evaluation titled was featured in Sputnik Türkiye.



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.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CRISIS AND POLITICAL STUDIES VOLUME VI, ISSUE I

JOURNAL OF REGIONAL STUDIES

The latest issue of the Journal of Regional Studies, an international peer-reviewed journal operating within the Ankara Crisis and Political Research Center (ANKASAM), has been published. Our journal is scanned by Academic Keys, ASOS Index, CEEOL, Cite Factor, DRJI, Index Copernicus, Ideal Online, Research Bible, Index and TUBITAK DERGIPARK databases. You can reach our journal via the link below.

ANKASAM JOURNAL OF REGIONAL STUDIES VOLUME VI, ISSUE I.

