



ANKASAM

bulletin

20 August 2023
ISSUE: 2023/33



Visit of the President of Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan: Significance for bilateral relations and regional cooperation

14

South Korea's Foreign Policy
the Context of "Threat
Perception"

20

Chinese Defense Minister Li
Shangfu's visits to Russia and
Belarus

CONTENTS

ANKASAM ANALYSIS

- 03 US-France Competition in the Western Pacific**
Dr. Cenk TAMER
- 06 The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the Belt and Road Initiative**
Zeki Talustan GÜLTEN
- 08 The Role of Japan in the Asia-Pacific Expansion Strategy of NATO**
Dilara Cansın KEÇİALAN
- 11 The 10th year of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor**
Zeynep Çağla ERİN
- 14 South Korea's Foreign Policy in the Context of "Threat Perception"**
Zeki Talustan GÜLTEN
- 16 Visit of the President of Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan: Significance for bilateral relations and regional cooperation**
Dauren ZHALİN
- 20 Chinese Defense Minister Li Shangfu's visits to Russia and Belarus**
Zeki Talustan GÜLTEN
- 23 India's Perspective on the US-China Competition in the West Pacific**
Dr. Cenk TAMER
- 26 The Camp David Negotiations and the US-China Rivalry**
Elcan TOKMAK
- 28 NATO's Intellectual Expansion**
Doç. Dr. Şafak OĞUZ
- 31 China's Construction of a Multipolar World in the Context of BRICS Expansion**
Dr. Cenk TAMER

ANKASAM IN PRESS

- 33 Media**

JOURNALS

- 34 Journal of International Crisis and Political Studies**

Journal of Regional Studies



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

US-France Competition in the Western Pacific

The global competition in the Western Pacific is not limited to just the rivalry between China and the United States (US). Among other actors, France is competing with both the US and China in regional policies. The tour that French President Emmanuel Macron has been conducting from July 23, 2023, to Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia indicates Paris's intention to protect and advance its

interests in the region. In this area, especially where the competition between the US and China is intensifying, France is trying to make its voice heard.

Above all, France is cooperating with like-minded Western countries to ensure that the Western Pacific remains free and open. Due to the rapidly changing circumstances, France is in-



Dr. Cenk TAMER
ANKASAM
Asia-Pacific
Expert

creasingly participating in the US's military influence operations in the region, its exercises, and patrols for freedom of navigation. The participation of French troops in large military exercises in the region led by the US-Australia coincides with Macron's Pacific tour. Developments such as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken attending the embassy opening in the Pacific Island nation of Tonga and the US recently signing a defense cooperation agreement with Papua New Guinea have heightened France's interest in the region.

While the US is increasing its presence in the Western Pacific, Paris is trying to enhance its political, economic, and military influence in the ongoing competition with Washington. A notable point is that both France and the US allege a "China threat" in the region, legitimizing their regional influence. During his visit to Vanuatu, Macron warned against the "new imperialism" in the Pacific and condemned the predatory behavior of major powers in the region. In this context, the French leader stated:[1]

"In the Indo-Pacific, especially in Oceania, a new imperialism is emerging, and this power logic threatens the sovereignty of the most vulnerable and smallest states. The modern world is shaking the sovereignty and independence of the Indo-Pacific. The primary reason for this is the predatory attitudes of major powers."

From the above words, it can be inferred that Macron's warnings target Western rival nations rather than China. Notably, France had recently objected at NATO's Vilnius Summit to the Alliance's proposal to open an office in Japan, emphasizing that this step would escalate regional tension. Due to France's objections, it will take time for NATO to focus on security issues in the Pacific. The US's goal is to direct NATO and regional partners such as Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand, especially against China. The biggest objection to this comes from France.

As Washington's Pacific policy becomes more aggressive, Paris sees the dangerous consequences closely. Indeed, France, which owns numerous island territories in the Western Pacific, including French Polynesia, intends to resist the US's dangerous steps if necessary to protect its millions of citizens in the region. France maintains 7,000 military personnel, 13 ships, and 11 fighter jets on these islands to protect its territories. Additionally, France has seven military bases in the Western Pacific.[2]

France explains its increasing military presence there with the intention to counter the "Chinese influence". In this context, it has developed close ties with like-minded countries, mainly India and Australia. Leaving Australia aside recently, the commonalities of these actors include favoring peaceful security measures to keep the Western Pacific free and open and avoiding actions that would escalate tensions with China. On the other hand, France's relations with Australia have been affected by AUKUS, which was established through the initiatives of the US and the UK. France's long-term strategic goal is to protect its interests, extend its influence, and assert its presence through displays of power.

In the competition in the Western Pacific, Paris is following in Washington's footsteps. France suffered its first major setback in the region against the US with AUKUS and later sought new collaborations with partners like India and Japan. Although France aims to ensure broad participation in military exercises in the Pacific with its Western allies, in the context of trilateral security dialogues, it works only with India and Australia. Indeed, Paris is concerned that its allies in the region tend to side with Washington. The close collaborations established by Australia and Japan with the US in recent times jeopardize France's regional interests.

The US's increasing "fight against China" rhetoric has been successful in the eyes of regional states and, to put it aptly, these actors have started to move "in Washington's orbit". Macron's Western Pacific tour should be evaluated in this context. France is trying to show

Pacific Island nations that it can be an "alternative" to the US. In this context, small and fragile Pacific Island countries, considering the dangers of being too dependent on China or the US, are open to developing relations with France.

The competition in the Western Pacific can be said to focus on relatively large and populous countries like the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. For instance, Papua New Guinea, the most populous Pacific Island country, after recently signing a security agreement with the US, is now working on a security agreement with Australia. On the other hand, China's security agreement with the Solomon Islands has been one of the most debated topics in the past 10 months. The US has focused on expanding its political-military partnerships with both regional actors and Pacific Island nations to counter China's growing influence.

Additionally, due to concerns about Beijing's maritime activities, Washington has intensified its security patrols in Pacific islands. Diplomatically, France is also monitoring the US's steps in the Pacific. A day after the visit of US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to Papua New Guinea on Thursday, July 27, 2023, Macron visited the aforementioned island nation. In general, the US and its regional allies are trying to deter Pacific Islands countries from establishing security ties with China. France is trying to find its place in this power struggle.

[1] "France's Macron Warns Against New 'Imperialism' in the Pacific", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/frances-macron-warns-against-new-imperialism-pacific-2023-07-27/>, (Date of Accession: 29.07.2023).

[2] "France: A Bridge between Europe and the Indo-Pacific?", CSIS, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/france-bridge-between-europe-and-indo-pacific>,(Date of Accession: 29.07.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the Belt and Road Initiative

China's foreign expansion policy,[1] initiated with Deng Xiaoping in 1978, began to give positive results in the 2000s. In the aftermath of the global economic crisis[2] that started in 2008, China surpassed[3] Japan in 2010 and became the second largest economy in the world after the USA[4]. It can be argued that the country's economy started to grow rapidly due to China's liberalization steps. With these developments, Beijing has risen to the top of the global supply chain in the following years.[5]

It can be said that since China is the second largest economy[6] in the world and is in a global struggle with the United States of America (USA), it follows more proactive economic policies. In this regard, it can be argued that the Belt and Road Initiative shapes the cornerstone of China's policies. This initiative has a significant place in China's goals for the global economy.



**Zeki Talustan
GÜLTEN**
ANKASAM
Asia-Pacific
Research Assistant

Beijing's global struggle against Washington and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has geopolitical, geostrategic and geoeconomic aspects. Therefore, international developments significantly impact the project and China's goals. The Russia-Ukraine War[7], which started on February 24, 2022, is the most significant example of this situation.

China's goal is to strive for an end to the Russia-Ukrainian War and to reactivate the corridor between Russia and Europe. Beijing aims to reduce the burden placed on the Middle Corridor due to the war in question. Because after this war, more than 60% of the goods transported to the West via Russia started to go through the Middle Corridor.[8]

For this reason, it can be said that Beijing approached the Russia-Ukraine War not only regarding its political influence but also in line with its economic interests. Therefore, it can be said that China is putting pressure on Russia to end the war in question. It can be said that Beijing's action is to reduce or even eliminate the economic cost of the war because it wants the risks and costs to be solved in the context of the Middle Corridor. The solution in question will be possible by making the corridor between Russia and Europe functional again. This situation can only be realized with the establishment of peace in the Russia-Ukraine War.

On the other hand, the West is concerned that Beijing will increase its military strength and accelerate its plans for unification with Taiwan after Chinese President Xi Jinping exceptionally receives his third term mandate.[9] Because the basis of China's military power is also based on economic power. As Beijing's economic power increases, it invests more in its military power. In this context, China has decided to increase its budget by more than 7% by 2023. This move will increase China's total budget to 230 billion dollars.[10]

As a result, Xi's third-term permit may enable China to achieve many of its economic goals. As the country grows economically, its military capacity is also developing rapidly. In this context, Beijing is trying to end the Russia-Ukraine War in the first place in order to ensure the aforementioned economic growth. In this way, the load on the Middle Corridor will be alleviated, and all corridors in the project will be actively used again.

[1] "China's Rise Relied on Ties to the West, Which Xi Is Now Loosening", The New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/23/business/china-xi-jinping-russia-putin.html>, (Date of Accession: 06.06.2023).

[2] "As PacWest Shares Dive, Are We Seeing the 2008 Financial Crisis All over Again?", Cable News Network, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/05/11/business/2008-banking-crisis-comparison/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 06.06.2023).

[3] "China Overtakes Japan as World's Second-Biggest Economy", British Broadcasting Corporation News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-12427321>, (Date of Accession: 06.06.2023).

[4] "The World's Largest Economies", World Data Info, <https://www.worlddata.info/largest-economies.php>, (Date of Accession: 06.06.2023).

[5] "China's Dominance in Global Supply Chains", GMF US Org, <https://www.gmfus.org/news/chinas-dominance-global-supply-chains>, (Date of Accession: 01.06.2023).

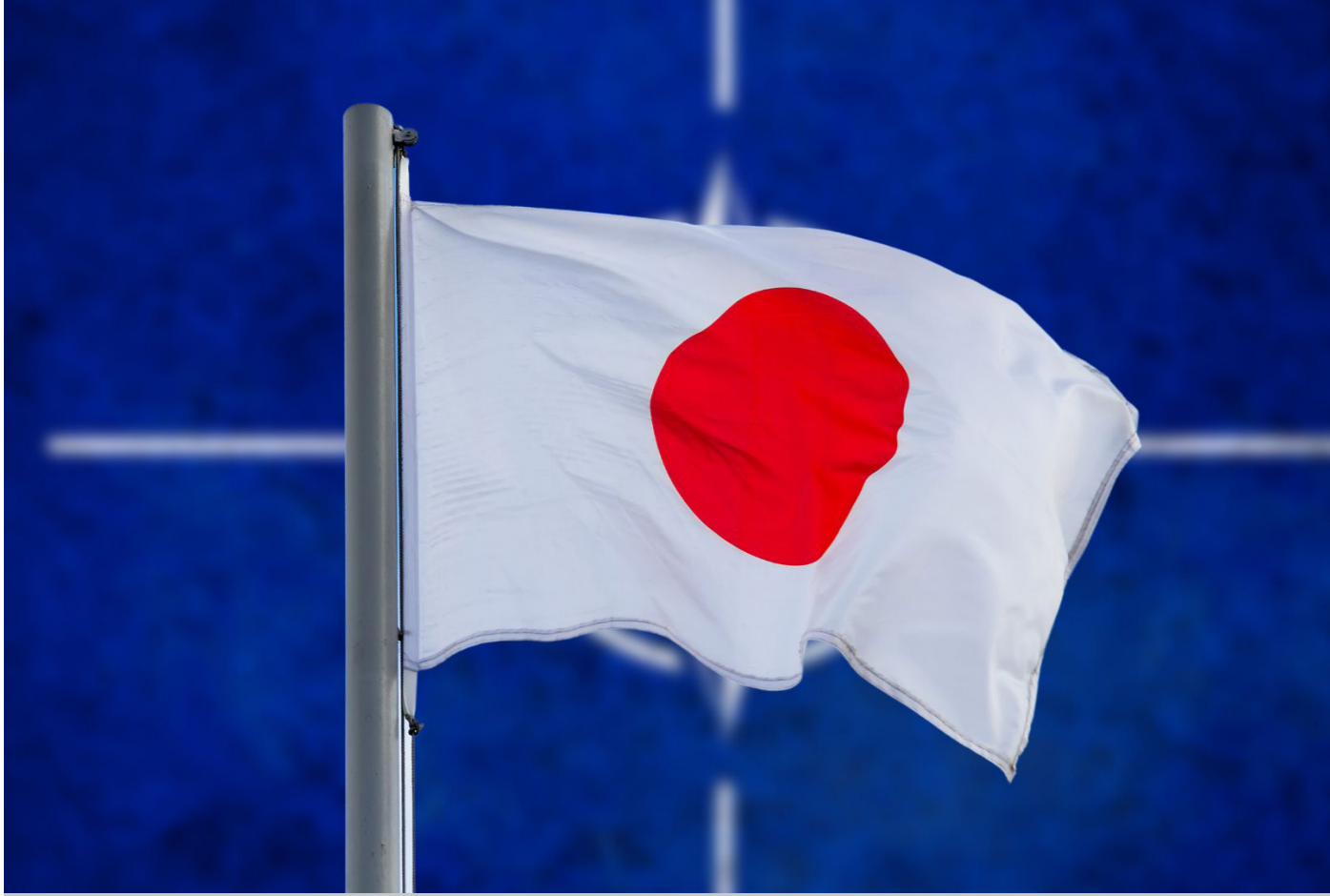
[6] Ibid.

[7] "Ukraine War: How Russia Took The South – And Then Got Stuck", British Broadcasting Corporation News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64718740>, (Date of Accession: 06.06.2023).

[8] "The Volume of Cargo On The Trans-Caspian Route Increased 2,5 Times in 2022", Quotidiano online di Agenzia Nova, <https://www.agenzianova.com/en/news/il-volume-delle-merci-sulla-rotta-transcaspica-e-aumentato-di-25-volte-nel-2022/>, (Date of Accession: 06.06.2023).

[9] "Xi Jinping Secures Unprecedented Third Term As China's President In Ceremonial Vote", Cable News Network World, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/03/09/china/china-xi-jinping-president-third-term-int-hnk/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 06.06.2023).

[10] "China Expands Defense Budget 7.2%, Marking Slight Increase", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/china-defense-budget-aircraft-carriers-cdac45c8d36a47c7fda68be99b7c9ee7>, (Date of Accession: 06.06.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Role of Japan in the Asia-Pacific Expansion Strategy of NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is a defence alliance that includes 31 countries from Europe and North America. In addition to recent attempts to open an office in Japan, NATO seeks ongoing dialogue with Australia and other regional allies. This is exacerbating tensions in the Asia-Pacific region. With recent developments, NATO is evolving from a Western security organisation to an alliance concerned

with global affairs. Although its 14-article founding charter defined it as an organisation concerned with North Atlantic geography, NATO is currently working to expand to the Asia-Pacific region.

The alliance justified the opening of the liaison office in Japan by facilitating communication with security partners such as South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. The main goal is to create a



**Dilara Cansın
KEÇİALAN**
ANKASAM Eurasia
Research Assistant

strategic advantage over China, which has left the United States of America (U.S.) behind in economic competition. In this context, the goal is to corner China in the region and deal a blow to the Belt and Road Initiative. Recently, Tokyo has increased its military and defense spending and established a series of security partnerships with allies.

It is clear that the Euro-Atlantic region is not at peace and is prone to constant crises. For this reason, NATO is seeking to build new alliances in the Asia-Pacific region on the basis of global security and is approaching Japan in this context. Security partnership and regional stability are among the most important issues. Indeed, NATO and Japan face similar regional threats. The security risks posed by North Korea's ballistic and nuclear missile programmes are a cause for concern between the two countries. Against this backdrop, the strategic objectives of NATO and Japan include intensifying dialogue, cooperation and addressing peace and crisis issues. They will also cooperate by providing each other with humanitarian assistance in times of disasters and emergencies.

Japan's national security strategy includes important issues such as strengthening regional dialogue, addressing threats and risks, and disarmament. Japan has a long-standing relationship with NATO. This is because they share important commonalities such as democracy, human rights, strategic interests and, above all, the rule of law.

For the second year in a row, Japan participated in the NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida signed a 5-page agreement on a "so-called partnership" to conduct joint exercises, training, exchange personnel and strengthen defence cooperation. This agreement also set strategic goals for the years 2023-2026.^[i] This situation was not welcomed by Moscow, Beijing and Paris. Beijing in particular frequently expresses its dissatisfaction with NATO's expansion into the Asia-Pacific region.

On July 12, 2023, during the NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, the 13th Secretary General of NATO said: "There is no other partner as close to NATO as Japan."^[ii] NATO the eastward expansion of Japan can also be interpreted as a policy to pressure Russia and China. This expansion will undoubtedly exacerbate regional tensions. As a result, cooperation between China and Russia is likely to increase. Ultimately, NATO's expansion strategy into the Asia-Pacific region can be seen as an important step that could affect the regional and global balance of power.

[i] "Why NATO's Growing Interest in Asia Is a Mistake", TIME, <https://time.com/6294499/nato-summit-vilnius-asia/>, (Erişim Tarihi:01.08.2023)

[ii]"NATO Tokyo Office Is 'Still On The Table, Says Stoltenberg", NIKKEI Asia, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Indo-Pacific/NATO-Tokyo-office-is-still-on-the-table-says-Stoltenberg> (Erişim Tarihi: 01.08.2023)

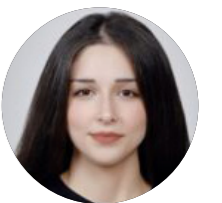


ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The 10th year of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) holds a central position within the strategic partnership between these two nations. Its inception occurred in 2013 via an agreement signed between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif. CPEC stands as an all-encompassing endeavor that connects Pakistan's Gwadar Port to Chi-

na's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and encompasses a diverse range of infrastructure projects. This particular corridor represents a pivotal element within South Asia, and is an integral component of China's Belt and Road Initiative. Additionally, it serves as a significant contributor to the ongoing development of China-Pakistan relations.



**Zeynep Çağla
ERİN**

Pakistan, with its strong ties to China, provides robust backing for the Belt and Road Initiative. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) offers a vital opportunity to ameliorate the region's underdeveloped conditions and address its energy deficit. The corridor includes various components, such as infrastructure investments and industrial centers, which are implemented in accordance with commercial applicability. Furthermore, the establishment of special economic zones is aimed at bolstering Pakistan's economic cooperation with the world. Overall, CPEC ushers in a new era of geopolitical significance in South Asia.[1]

The primary objectives of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are multi-fold and encompass various aspects of socio-economic development. These objectives include but are not limited to the following:

Infrastructure Development: Firstly, the CPEC aims to modernize and enhance Pakistan's infrastructure by undertaking the construction and improvement of a diverse range of infrastructure projects such as roads, ports, railways, power plants, and communication networks. This will not only facilitate the smooth movement of goods and people but also create new job opportunities and boost economic growth.

Economic Growth: The CPEC seeks to stimulate Pakistan's economy and enhance its growth potential by strengthening regional links and increasing investment and trade opportunities. The project aims to leverage the strategic location of Pakistan to create a regional hub for trade and commerce, which will help Pakistan emerge as a major economic player in the region.

Energy Security: The CPEC aims to address Pakistan's energy security concerns by reducing its dependence on external sources of energy. To this end, China has provided financing for a number of energy projects in Pakistan and has increased cooperation in the field of energy.

Regional Integration: Finally, the CPEC aims to promote regional integration by enhancing trade and economic ties between China, Pakistan, and other neighboring countries such as Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East. This will not only facilitate cross-border trade but also promote cultural and people-to-people exchanges, which will help build trust and promote peace and stability in the region.

Benefits of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC):

Economic and Trade Opportunities: The CPEC project harbors tremendous potential for bolstering economic and commercial prospects, envisaging the establishment of a more profound nexus between the two nations. This initiative holds the capacity to amplify investment influx and promote exports, ultimately leading to the expansion of both countries' economies.

Employment Opportunities: The construction of infrastructure projects in Pakistan has the potential to catalyze economic growth through the generation of novel employment opportunities.

Energy Security: The CPEC has the potential to enhance the energy security of Pakistan by granting access to novel sources of energy that can cater to the country's energy requisites.

Key Challenges and Criticisms:

Security: The implementation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has presented certain regions with security risks, which has become a major concern. The occurrence of terrorist attacks and ethnic conflicts has heightened the possibility of posing a threat to the project.

Environmental Impacts: Moreover, the execution of major infrastructure projects such as CPEC can lead to significant environmental impacts, including the destruction of natural habitats.

Transparency and Local Participation: Additionally, there have been criticisms regarding the transparency and participation of local people in the implementation of CPEC. The lack of transparency and participation has led to a lack of confidence and trust in the project.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a significant manifestation of the strategic alliance between the two nations. Its goal is to enhance Pakistan's economic growth and regional ties, and it recently celebrated its tenth year in July 2023. Overcoming the chal-

lenges mentioned above and implementing a lasting strategy are critical to the project's success. Pakistan's energy deficit is a pressing issue, which can be addressed through CPEC. Several energy projects, including coal, hydro, solar and wind energy projects, have been designed to cater to Pakistan's energy needs. CPEC also focuses on infrastructure development, with investments in road and railway, oil, gas and information communication infrastructures. Such projects enhance Pakistan's transportation and communication network. CPEC projects benefit both China and Pakistan by promoting economic growth and employment. They generate income and employment, and create economic opportunities for people living in underdeveloped areas.[2]

The noteworthy impact of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is evidenced by its effects on the three dimensions of social well-being, namely education, health, and housing. Projections indicate that the growth rates of these dimensions will be 3.85%, 4.74%, and 8.6%, respectively, leading to a substantial improvement in living standards throughout Pakistan. Of all the regions affected by CPEC projects, Balochistan, Sindh, and Punjab are expected to experience the greatest positive changes, including significant reductions in poverty and unemployment rates and improvements in overall quality of life. However, it is important to note that restructuring the education sector and ensuring regional stability represent major challenges that must be addressed to ensure the success of the project on the Pakistani side. Specifically, economic growth and stability and the restructuring of education are necessary prerequisites for achieving the desired outcomes.[3]

The implementation of the project in Pakistan encounters difficulties, especially due to internal security concerns. Fundamentalist groups supported by external actors in the region from China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to the Afghanistan border contribute to instability and security issues in Pakistan, including attacks on personnel and infrastructures. The Pakistani government has taken measures to address these problems, such as military operations and the formation of a special security unit, but a long-term resolution requires ending foreign intervention, socio-economic development, and improving education and employment in underdeveloped regions. The 10th anniversary of CPEC is celebrated despite increasing terrorist attacks in Pakistan, with some militant groups becoming more active along the Afghan border. According to Şevket Abbas, a senior officer in the counter-terrorism unit, measures must be taken to combat these groups.[4]

The United States is motivated by the long-term strategic implications of CPEC. The project's geostrategic and political implications affect US regional policy and interests. The regional influence of the US may decline significantly due to China's rise and changing geopolitics.[5]

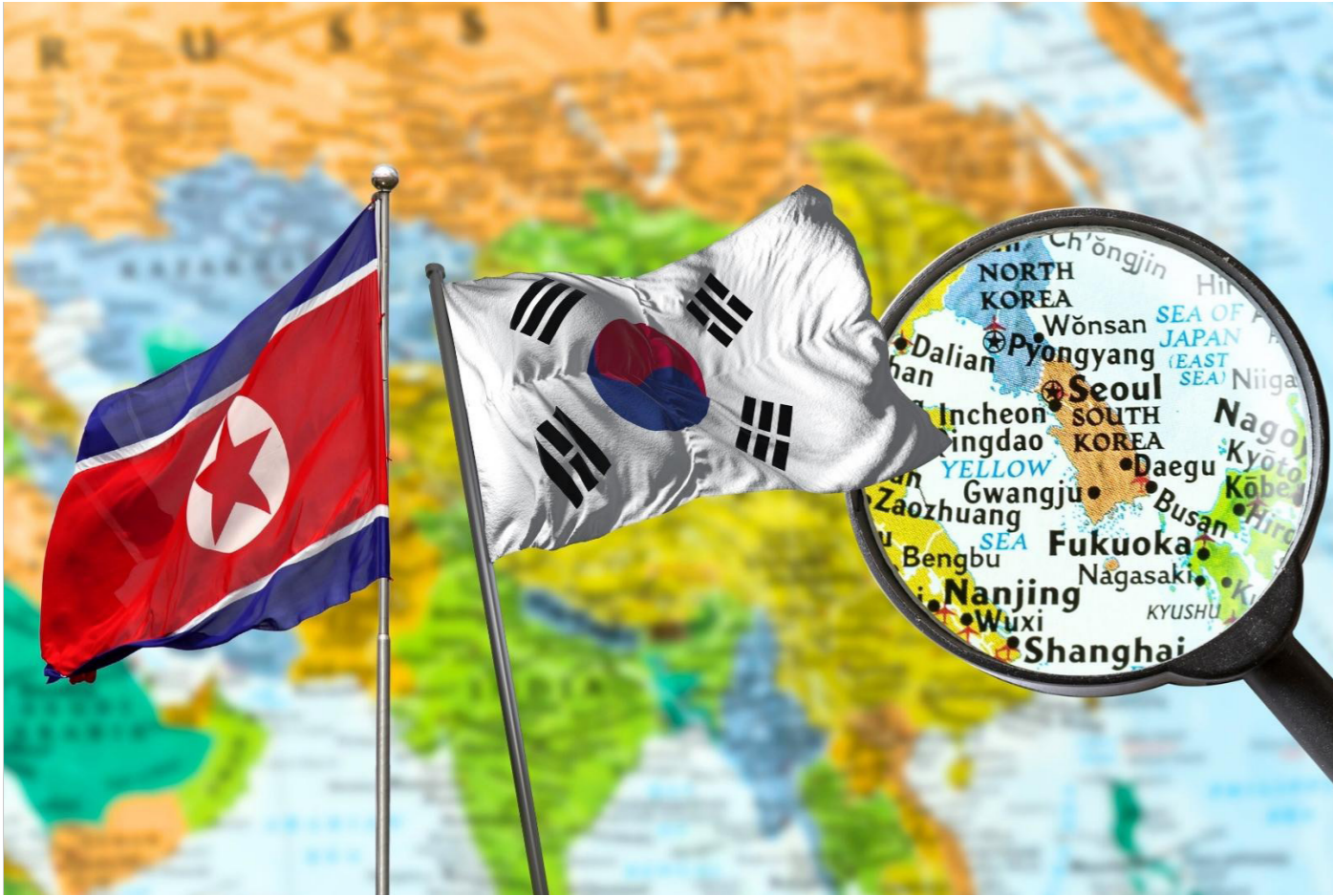
[1]Kerem Gökten, "Çin-Pakistan Ekonomik Koridoru ve Yeni Güney Asya Jeopolitiği", *Fiscaoeconomia*, 3(1), Güz 2019, s. 160.

[2] Shehryar Khan-Guijian Liu, "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Challenges and Prospects", *Area Development and Policy*, 4(4), Güz 2018, s. 466.

[3]Rashida Haq-Nadia Farooq, "Impact of CPEC on Social Welfare in Pakistan: A District Level Analysis", 32nd Annual General Meeting and Conference, 13-15 Aralık 2016, Munich.

[4] "Pakistan: DEAŞ Tarafından Düzenlenen Saldırı", *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/31/world/asia/pakistan-bombing-isis.html>, (Erişim Tarihi: 01.08.2023).

[5]Khalid Manzoor Butt-Anam Abid Butt, "Impact Of CPEC On Regional And Extra-Regional Actors: Analysis Of Benefits And Challenges", *International Conference on CPEC Held at GC University*, 9-10 Aralık 2015, GC University, Lahore, Pakistan.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

South Korea's Foreign Policy in the Context of "Threat Perception"

The Asia-Pacific Region is one of the sections where global security has become the most fragile and these sections attract the attention of the international public. There are many problematic issues in the region, such as Taiwan, the South China Sea, the Kuril Islands, Dokdo and Takeshima Islands, historical problems between South Korea and Japan and compensation cases for the Japanese occupation, instability in the Korean Peninsula. Among them, it can be said that North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile tests are of great concern, especially in terms of the globality of the threat it poses.

South Korea cannot get results from its efforts to completely denuclearize the Korean Peninsula and from calls for dialogue and negotiation towards North Korea. Pyongyang hardens both its rhetoric and actions and continues to make threatening statements. For this reason, Seoul is in search of a new method. It can be stated that the main reason for all this is to ensure the national and regional security of South Korea.

Moreover, it is worth noting that North Korea is a very large and important nuclear power.[1] It



**Zeki Talustan
GÜLTEN**
ANKASAM
Asia-Pacific
Research Assistant

can be said that the nuclear power of Pyongyang poses a significant threat both regionally and globally. Especially South Korea is one of the states that feels this danger most closely due to its geopolitical location, geographical proximity, historical hostilities and current struggles. Because North Korea and South Korea have critical problems with a historical background. At the same time, these two countries still have not been able to overcome the problems between them due to their ideological differences and their geopolitical positions. Moreover, the problems between Pyongyang and Seoul continue to increase.

It can be argued that Washington has an important place in Seoul's foreign policy pursuits and South Korea has hardened its rhetoric against North Korea for this reason. Seoul's discourses are far from constructive and escalates conflict rather than resolution. Because the alliance relations, exercises and discourses on the Asia-Pacific Region and especially on the basis of the USA, ultimately provoke North Korea even more.

Moreover, North Korea's frequent ballistic and nuclear missile tests also escalate the tension. In addition, the alliances formed by the USA and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the region within the scope of anti-Pyongyang are also provoking North Korea. Also, the USA and NATO actually aim to surround China by establishing these alliances. However, in doing so, they present the North Korea excuse to the global public, serving the "othering" of Pyongyang and creating a provocative effect.

Currently, South Korea and Japan can be said to be the strongest allies of the USA and NATO in the Asia-Pacific Region. It can be argued that the common threat perception of the said states plays a decisive role in this regard. Because both actors are countries that have historically serious problems. However, it is seen that common security concerns bring the parties together.

It can be said that the situation in question is beneficial for both the USA and NATO. Because the unity is important in terms of the influence these actors have in the region. In addition to all these, the West's allies and alliances in the region are of great importance in the policy of encircling China and deterring North Korea from nuclear tests.

On the other hand, the Pyongyang administration is trying to draw an independent perspective in security, economy and politics within the framework of the Juche policy, which can be called the official state ideology of the country. Because Juche policy is based on the idea of the country's self-sufficiency. At this point, it can be argued that North Korea will not give up its nuclear program. As a matter of fact, according to this understanding, there are some principles that governments should follow. These are; political independence is the achievement of self-sufficiency in the economy and the capacity to protect oneself in the field of national defence. It can be said that North Korea's nuclear program, which has been maintained almost since its foundation, constitutes the country's grand strategy within the framework of these principles.

In conclusion, the increase in threats in the Asia-Pacific, both quantitative and qualitative, has led South Korea, an important ally of the West in the region, to be more proactive in foreign policy. Therefore, it can be predicted that this attitude will continue unless Seoul's threat perceptions change.

[1] "Is It Time to Accept North Korea Is a Nuclear Power?", Cable News Network World, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/10/28/asia/north-korea-nuclear-threat-solution-analysis-intl-hnk/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 01.08.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Visit of the President of Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan: Significance for bilateral relations and regional cooperation

The December visit of the Dear President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to Uzbekistan is of great historical and political significance. It is the first foreign state visit of the Head of State after the inauguration ceremony, clearly confirming the priority in Kazakhstan's foreign policy of mutually beneficial cooperation and strategic partnership with neighboring

fraternal countries of Central Asia. In addition, the visit is especially significant due to the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two sister states.

It is also symbolic that the first state visit of the Dear President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Kazakhstan after his re-election to the presi-



Dauren ZHALIN

dential post was a landmark event of December 2021, designed to give a new impetus to the relationship between the two countries. On December 6, 2021, the heads of state signed the Declaration on Allied Relations between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, which became one of the most discussed topics in the discussions among the Central Asian expert community.

Over three decades, the cooperation between Astana and Tashkent has developed progressively, acquiring new content. The solid legal and contractual framework adopted over the past time is synchronous and exemplary in the region. These are the treaties on eternal friendship of 1998 and strategic partnership of 2013.

In addition, retrospective analysis of the past years shows the absence of serious political contradictions, mutual claims and territorial disputes. To a large extent, the building of constructive Kazakh-Uzbek ties is conditioned by the complementarity of economies and common economic pragmatism. This logic is the key driver of mutual rapprochement between the countries.

Speaking about today, Kazakh-Uzbek relations are at the highest level and are characterized by intensive dynamics and trust. In recent years, mutual trade turnover has more than doubled, approaching \$5 billion. Measures are being taken to increase this figure to 10 billion dollars.^[i] At the same time, according to experts, there are still a number of unused reserves for increasing bilateral economic cooperation.^[ii] In this context, one of the promising directions is the creation of joint industrial clusters in the manufacturing industry.

Therefore, I would also like to note the historic Treaty on the Demarcation of the Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan State Border signed by the leaders of the countries in Tashkent. This agreement will further intensify cross-border economic ties and humanitarian exchanges between the brotherly states, as well as serve as an exemplary model for resolving border issues in the region.

The experience gained in maintaining regular working contacts between the foreign ministries of the two countries is also gaining importance. The sides closely cooperate and coordinate efforts in addressing pressing issues on the regional and international agenda, including within the framework of the UN, the Organization of Turkic States, the OSCE, CICA, the SCO and other multilateral structures.

Thus, it is natural that at the end of 2022, the heads of state signed a full-fledged Treaty between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan on allied relations, which undoubtedly opened a new page in the history of relations between the two brotherly countries. This document marks further deepening of interaction in political, economic, investment, scientific and technical, cultural and humanitarian spheres between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Attention should be paid to a number of clauses of the Treaty, which have important practical significance for bilateral relations. Thus, Article 1 enshrines the principle of mutual consideration of national interests, respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of state borders.^[iii] Article 2 further provides that "in the event of a situation which, in the opinion of one of the Parties, constitutes a threat of armed attack by third States, the Parties shall immediately hold appropriate consultations with each other, both bilaterally and within the framework of international organizations to which they are parties, with a view to adopting measures conducive to its peaceful settlement".^[iv] In addition, the parties undertake not to participate in any blocs or alliances and to refrain from engaging in actions directed against each other.

We are very pleased to note that in the current geopolitical situation in the world, characterized by instability, turbulence and the erosion of international law, the Treaty is designed to strengthen security and defence co-operation between countries. Thus, the document talks about joint countering of such challenges and threats as combating international terrorism, religious extremism and separatism, transnational organized crime, cybercrime, illegal migration, human trafficking, drug trafficking and other problems.

Expanding contacts in the area of protection against hybrid threats and ensuring information security seems relevant. As you know, during the IV Consultative Meeting of Heads of State of Central Asia, held on July 21, 2022 in Cholpon-Ata, the Dear President of Kazakhstan called on colleagues to strengthen cooperation to prevent negative phenomena in the information space that are harmful to the entire region.^[v]

Strengthening military cooperation in order to strengthen the defence capabilities of the two countries is becoming an important area. A vivid example of interaction between Kazakhstan and Uz-

Uzbekistan in this area is the joint military exercises of special-purpose units of the armed forces of the two countries "Kalkan-2021" in the Zhambyl region of Kazakhstan and exercises "Hamkorlik-2021" at the Termez training range of Uzbekistan.

In addition, the Treaty contains provisions on deepening interaction in ensuring environmental security, including mutual assistance in preventing and eliminating natural and man-made emergencies.

Among other priority issues of interaction enshrined in the Treaty is cooperation in the field of food security, organization of joint ventures for agricultural production, as well as creation of favorable conditions on their territories, including simplification of procedures for transit transportation of agricultural goods.

Contacts at the highest level play a significant role in the development of Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan multifaceted cooperation. Taking into account this circumstance, as well as to strengthen strategic coordination of control over the implementation of agreements reached, and to address urgent issues between Astana and Tashkent, a Supreme Interstate Council headed by the leaders of the states is being established.

Parliamentary diplomacy plays a special role in strengthening allied relations, which has recently been gaining more and more progressive character. In this regard, the Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation Council will give an additional impetus to the promotion of ties between parliaments for legislative support of the implementation of all agreements, exchange of experience in lawmaking and parliamentary procedures.

In addition, the Treaty provides for the launch of the mechanism of work of the Special Representatives of the Heads of State to promote the whole complex of bilateral trade and economic interaction, as well as to increase the effectiveness of the Joint Intergovernmental Commission and the Forums of Interregional Cooperation.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the new level of Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan allied relations meets not only the national interests of the two brotherly states, but also brings a powerful creative potential to the trends of regionalization, contributes to stability and security in Central Asia.

[i] "Mutual trade between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan exceeds \$4 billion", Official Information Source of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, <https://primeminister.kz/en/news/mutual-trade-between-kazakhstan-and-uzbekistan-exceeds-4-billion-22115929>, (Date of Access:29.12.2022).

[ii] Assel Satubaldina, "Leading Experts from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan Explore President Tokayev's Recent Visit to Tashkent", The Astana Times, <https://astana-times.com/2022/12/leading-experts-from-kazakhstan-uzbekistan-explore-president-tokayevs-recent-visit-to-tashkent/>, (Date of Access:29.12.2022).

[iii] "О подписании Договора между Республикой Казахстан и Республикой Узбекистан о союзнических отношениях", Открытые НПА, <https://legacts.egov.kz/npa/view?id=14312865>, (Date of Access: 05.12.2022).

[iv] Ibid.

[v] "Speech by President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the Fourth Consultative Meeting of the Heads of States of Central Asia", Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, <https://www.akorda.kz/en/speech-by-president-kassym-jomart-tokayev-at-the-fourth-consultative-meeting-of-the-heads-of-states-of-central-asia-216535>, (Date of Access:29.12.2022).





ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Chinese Defense Minister Li Shangfu's visits to Russia and Belarus

The Asia-Pacific region has recently come to the forefront with military-security moves and regional tensions. China, which forms the world's second-largest economy following the United States (US), being an Asia-Pacific country,[1] further amplifies the significance of the region. Moreover, China is engaged in a significant struggle with the US, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the West in general.

In addition to the Asia-Pacific region, new poles are being constructed in the global system. In this context, the Russia-Ukraine War[2] that commenced on February 24, 2022, has had significant implications for both China's foreign policy and regional-global balances. In this regard, Chinese Defense Minister Li

Shangfu has decided to visit Russia and Belarus in support of the countries that the West is attempting to isolate due to Russia's occupation of Ukraine. It has been reported that Li will deliver a speech at the Moscow International Security Conference on August 14, 2023, and embark on a six-day visit during which he will also meet with defense leaders from Russia and other countries.[3]

According to Russia's official TASS News Agency, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will speak a conference on the topic of "The majority of countries in the world searching for alternative paths to development outside Western mechanisms, including strengthening new forms of multilateral partnerships" at the conference. Furthermore, it has been



**Zeki Talustan
GÜLTEN**
ANKASAM
Asia-Pacific
Research Assistant

stated that representatives from approximately a hundred countries and eight international organizations have been invited to this event.[4]

According to a statement from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it has been mentioned that "Under the conditions of establishing a multipolar world order, ways to reinstate constructive international cooperation will be discussed in the context of various aspects of security and the aggressive claims of the European-Atlantic elites for global dominance." [5] Moreover, Wang Wenbin, the Spokesperson for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, referencing the statement from the Ministry of Defense, has stated that Chinese and Russian leaders maintain "strategic communication in various ways on multiple issues." [6] Wang also used the phrase, "Both sides have engaged in regular high-level exchanges on comprehensive issues, including bilateral cooperation and common concerns." [7]

In this context, it can be argued that both countries will continue to advance the China-Russia comprehensive strategic cooperation partnership in the new era. The strategic cooperation partnership is a joint declaration of "unlimited friendship" between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping, issued in Beijing in 2022, just before Russia's February invasion.[8] On the other hand, Xi visited Moscow in March to send a message to Western leaders that their efforts to isolate Russia over the conflict in Ukraine were insufficient.[9]

At this juncture, Li's participation in the conference can be read as a result of Beijing and Moscow's efforts to harmonize their foreign policies through anti-Western sentiments. Furthermore, Russia's interest in the region can also be seen as Moscow's effort to send a message to the West that things are going well in the Ukraine War.

In conclusion, although Russia and China are geopolitical rivals in the long term, in the short term they are engaged in a joint foreign policy-making process based on anti-Western sentiments. This leads to positive relations between Moscow and Beijing. It can be argued that no serious deterioration in Russia-China relations will occur as long as the West's tensions with Russia and China do not diminish.

[1] "The World's Largest Economies", World Data Info, <https://www.worlddata.info/largest-economies.php>, (Date of Accession: 15.08.2023).

[2] "Treatment of Prisoners of War and Persons hors de Combat in the Context of the Armed Attack by the Russian Federation against Ukraine", Relief Web, <https://t.ly/7M4N7>, (Date of Accession: 15.08.2023).

[3] "Chinese Defense Minister to Visit Russia and Belarus in Show of Support Despite West's Objections", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-china-ukraine-defense-minister-49b036d4159dfe2543ce153b9f2ed94d>, (Date of Accession: 15.08.2023).

[4] "Chinese Defence Minister to Visit Russia, Belarus Despite West's Objections", Consumer News and Business Channel Tv 18, <https://www.cnbctv18.com/world/chinese-defence-minister-li-shangfu-to-visit-russia-belarus-ukraine-war-17527161.htm>, (Date of Accession: 15.08.2023).

[5] "Chinese Defense Minister to Visit Russia and Belarus in Show of Support Despite West's Objections", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-china-ukraine-defense-minister-49b036d4159dfe2543ce153b9f2ed94d>, (Date of Accession: 15.08.2023).

[6] "Chinese Defense Minister to Visit Russia and Belarus in Show of Support Despite West's Objections", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-china-ukraine-defense-minister-49b036d4159dfe2543ce153b9f2ed94d>, (Date of Accession: 15.08.2023).

[7] "Chinese Defense Minister to Visit Russia and Belarus in Show of Support Despite West's Objections", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-china-ukraine-defense-minister-49b036d4159dfe2543ce153b9f2ed94d>, (Date of Accession: 15.08.2023).

[8] "Putin and Xi Frame a New China-Russia Partnership", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2022/02/putin-and-xi-frame-a-new-china-russia-partnership/>, (Date of Accession: 15.08.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

India's Perspective on the US-China Competition in the West Pacific

Recently, competition among global powers in the West Pacific has been escalating. In such a period, two naval ships from India made a two-day visit to the capital of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby.^[1] This development has been an indicator that India does not want to stay out of regional competition. India, which holds the presidency of the G20, is seen to be trying not

only to preserve its historic influence in Asia but also in the Pacific.

After visiting Papua New Guinea, Indian navy ships set out to participate in the Malabar Naval Exercise in Australia. Approximately 10 months ago, after China signed a security agreement with the Solomon Islands, the United States



**Zeki Talustan
GÜLTEN**
ANKASAM
Asia-Pacific
Research Assistant

(USA) and its allies have been trying to deter Pacific island nations from establishing security ties with China. Just in May, Papua New Guinea signed a defense agreement with Washington and plans to sign a similar security agreement with Australia soon. Around this time, the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Papua New Guinea was noteworthy. At the end of July, the trip made by French President Emmanuel Macron to Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia has been an indicator that Paris will not stay out of the power struggle in the region.

In addition to France and India, senior officials from Indonesia, the US, and the UK have visited Papua New Guinea one after the other. On the other hand, the visit of Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare to China in July has been interpreted as taking bilateral relations a step further. It can be argued that there is a polarization between island states interested in China in the Pacific and those keen on cooperating with the West. Despite the West's recent interest in Papua New Guinea, it is worth noting that this island nation's largest trading partner is China. Generally, China's effectiveness in the Pacific is causing concern among Western countries with national interests in the region. Pacific island nations are quite pleased with the increased interest the West has shown in them recently. These small island nations, in need of development and infrastructure investments, are also seeking ways to get closer to China economically.

In the context of competition in the West Pacific, it can be argued that New Delhi's stance differs from other Western countries. The country with which India shares the most common interests in its regional policies is France. Representing Western-style democracy, India and France cooperate in various areas such as defense, space, and nuclear collaboration while also agreeing on regional policies. In the middle of last July, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who visited Paris, had an important meeting with his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron. Macron said that the two countries shared a joint vision for an Indo-Pacific region free from any hegemony.^[2] France is also one of the countries that invest the most in India's defense industry. Indeed, after the AUKUS agreement, Paris's defense cooperation with Canberra has deteriorated. Following this development, France began to prioritize its defense industry collaboration with India.

The US and China have entered an open power struggle over the West Pacific islands. Now actors such as India, France, Australia, and Japan are also joining this competition. In this context, New Delhi aims to invest in the Pacific region, where it has historic ties, and establish mutually beneficial partnerships. Strongly supporting the idea of a free and open Pacific, India is also against the idea of polarization that would raise regional tension. It can be argued that in the coming period, along with France, India will try to increase its presence in the region to ensure that the Pacific remains free and open. France already has a significant military presence in the Pacific. Similarly, India may aim to establish naval bases in the Pacific to show more strategic presence. However, New Delhi is well aware of the dangers of such military steps. Therefore, it is likely that India will try to stay away from regional tensions.

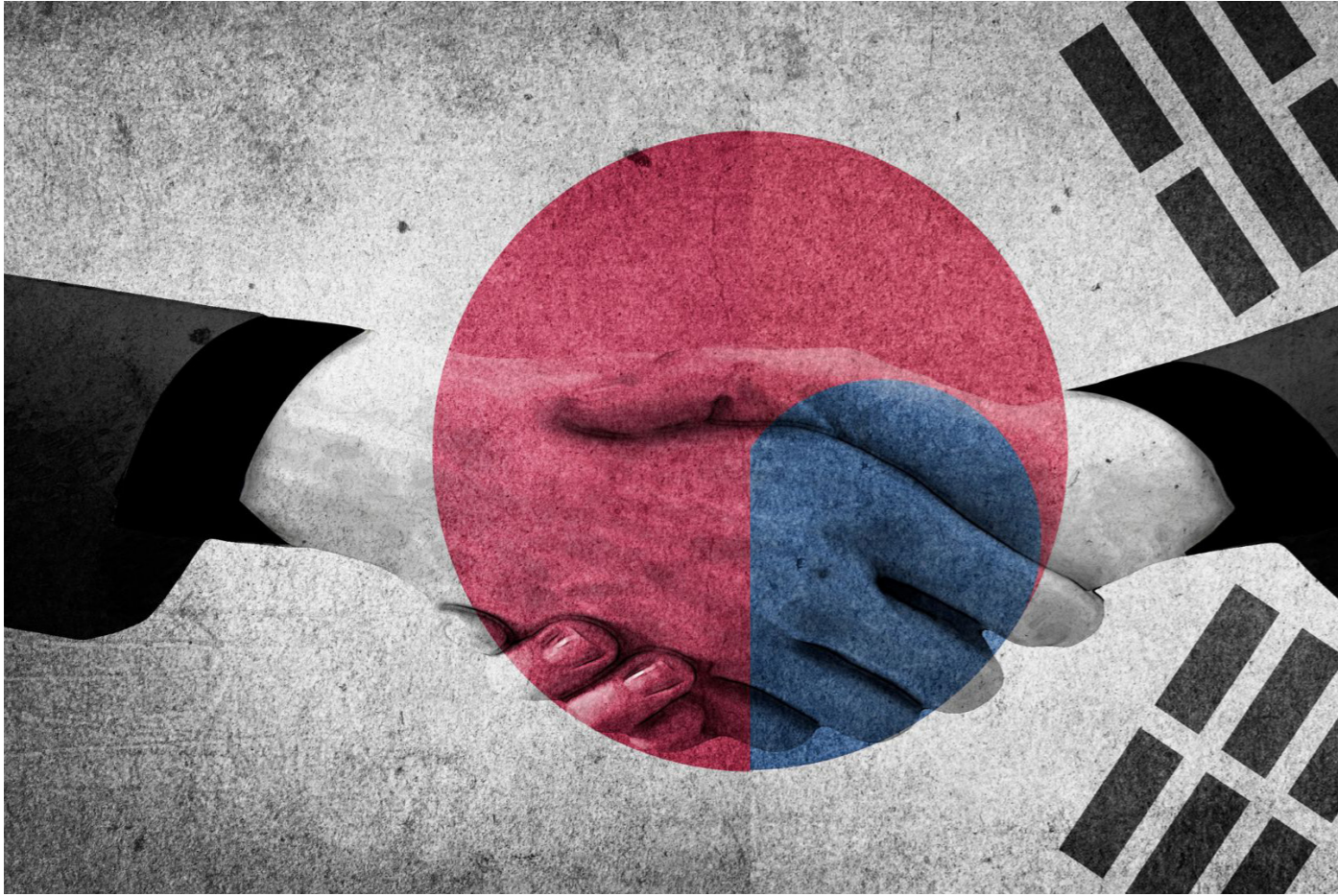
Ultimately, India may consider establishing a security network in close collaboration with Pacific island states and other Western partners. Apart from this, it can be argued that New Delhi's plans regarding the region are extremely peaceful. Prime Minister Modi announced a 12-step action plan last May to advance India's partnership with Pacific island countries.^[3] This plan focuses on investments serving the development of the regional population, ranging from health to water resources, from innovation to education, and from energy to technology.

The US's regional policies are based on "military power maximization." Therefore, India has started making intense efforts to secure its commercial and economic relations with Pacific countries and to maintain political balances in the region. The ultimate goal of India's Pacific policy is to ensure maritime security, increase its influence in the region, and strengthen its military relations to gain an advantage over other competitors. India's efforts to increase its economic, political, and military presence in the Asia Pacific can influence global power balances in the long term.

[1] "Indian Navy Ships Dock in Papua New Guinea as Interest in Pacific Sharpens", Times of India, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/indian-navy-ships-dock-in-papua-new-guinea-as-interest-in-pacific-sharpens/articleshow/102359106.cms?from=mdr>, (Erişim Tarihi: 05.08.2023).

[2] "France, India Share Common Vision of Hegemony-Free Indo-Pacific: Macron", AA, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/france-in-dia-share-common-vision-of-hegemony-free-indo-pacific-macron/2946136>, (Erişim Tarihi: 05.08.2023).

[3] "PM Modi Unveils 12-Step Action Plan to Strengthen India-Pacific Island Countries Partnership", BqPrime, <https://www.bqprime.com/nation/bqc-pm-modi-unveils-12-step-action-plan-to-strengthen-india-pacific-island-countries-partnership>, (Erişim Tarihi: 05.08.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Camp David Negotiations and the US-China Rivalry

The rivalry between China and the United States (US) is playing a significant role in the trajectory towards a multipolar world order. On one hand, China, being one of the major players in the global economy, while on the other hand, the US and the Western world. Under these circumstances, both poles are striving to resolve issues between friendly nations and to improve their ability to act more cohesively.

An excellent example of the US's current situation is the Japan-South Korea relationship, which has been strained due to issues dating back to the Japanese colonial period. However, the emergence of the US-China competition and their

shared concerns regarding China and North Korea have brought these two nations closer, allowing them to seek solutions to their problems. In this regard, the measures^[i] taken by both South Korea and Japan towards resolving their historical issues, as well as their mutual inclusion in each other's list of trustworthy^[ii] trade partners, are noteworthy developments.

The convergence of these two nations extends beyond the political sphere, encompassing varied fields, primarily in the realm of economics. Notably, tourism emerges as a key beneficiary of this rapprochement. As an instance, in 2022, approximately 1.01 million ^[iii]Korean tourists visited Japan,



Elcan TOKMAK
ANKASAM
Asia-Pacific
Research Assistant

which has, according to data released on June 31, 2023, surged to over 3 million^[iv]. In contrast, the number of Japanese tourists visiting South Korea has only slightly increased, rising from 300,000^[v] to 860,000^[vi].

While the aforementioned convergence may suggest resolution of all issues, unresolved border disputes and the Fukushima Nuclear Plant issue continue to persist. These matters, including the Dokdo/Takeshima Island dispute, endure despite occasional minor tensions in bilateral relations. Nevertheless, they are unlikely to result in any significant negative shift in the course of relations. Furthermore, the apprehension regarding the discharge of water from the Fukushima Nuclear Plant into the ocean has emerged as a source of concern not only for South Korea but also for other neighboring states. Nevertheless, it would be unrealistic to assert that this issue could significantly alter the trajectory of bilateral relations.

While the bilateral relations between Japan and South Korea appear to be positive, the growing rivalry between the United States and China is becoming increasingly palpable with each passing day. In this context, both the US and China have resorted to direct attacks against each other, with semiconductors, a crucial component of global technological tools, being among the items affected by this situation. Indeed, in response to US sanctions, China opted to impose its own sanctions on the US semiconductor manufacturer Micron on May 22, 2023, citing concerns over the potential threat posed by the chips produced by the company to its national security^[vii]. This situation has placed South Korea, which has strong commercial ties with China, in a challenging position.

The trilateral meetings held within the Seoul-Tokyo-Washington axis bear significant importance in the competition mentioned earlier. The upcoming meeting, scheduled for August 18, 2023, at Camp David, between Japan, South Korea, and the US holds the potential for positive outcomes for the US^[viii]. The US aims to play an active role in resolving issues within the bloc to enhance its global prestige and foster further development of intra-bloc relationships. In light of China's perspective, the US, South Korea, and Japan's efforts to establish a mini military structure in the North Pacific similar to NATO^[ix] may divide regional countries into allies and threats.

Despite their historical issues, South Korea and Japan have been working towards improving their bilateral relations in recent times. The positive atmosphere that emerged with Washington encouraging Seoul and Tokyo to address their problems has overshadowed minor issues. The Camp David meeting, scheduled for Au-

gust 18, 2023, can be seen as an endeavor by the US to strengthen its position in the North Pacific by helping its two ally states overcome their relationship issues and present a unified front against China.

[i] Kim Tong-Hyung-Hyung-Jin Kim "South Korean Plan Aims to Heal Forced Labor Feud with Japan", AP News, apnews.com/article/south-korea-japan-forced-laborers-colonial-rule-e8e828901148c2f2528ce557f445772b, (Erişim Tarihi: 06.08.2023).

[ii] Jo He-rim, "Japan Restores South Korea to Export 'Whitelist' After 4 Years", The Korea Herald, <https://shorturl.at/muxzZ>, (Erişim Tarihi: 27.08.2023).

[iii] "Number Of International Visitors to Japan in 2022, By Region of Origin", Statista, <https://shorturl.at/coxJY>, (Erişim Tarihi: 06.08.2023).

[iv] Shim Woo-hyun, "Over 3m Koreans visit Japan in H1", The Korea Herald, www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20230731000613#:-:text=The%20number%20of%20South%20Korean,according%20to%20government%20data%20Monday, (Erişim Tarihi: 09.08.2023).

[v] "Number of Japanese Travelers to South Korea from 2013 to 2022", Statista, <https://shorturl.at/clsw5>, (Erişim Tarihi: 09.08.2023).

[vi] "Shim Woo-hyun "Over 3m Koreans..", a.g.m

[vii] Dan Milmo-Graeme Wearden, "China Bans US Chipmaker Micron from Vital Infrastructure Projects", The Guardian, www.theguardian.com/business/2023/may/22/china-bans-us-micron-technology, (Erişim Tarihi: 22.08.2023).

[viii] "Biden To Host Camp David Summit with Japan and South Korea Next Month, Congressman Says", Reuters, www.reuters.com/world/china/biden-host-camp-david-summit-with-japan-south-korea-next-month-us-congressman-2023-07-27/, (Erişim Tarihi: 09.08.2023).

[ix] "Camp David Summit Could Be Dangerous for Japan, South Korea: Global Times Editorial", Global Times, www.globaltimes.cn/page/202308/1295785.shtml, (Erişim Tarihi: 09.08.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

NATO's Intellectual Expansion

Since taking over global leadership, the United States of America (USA) has been pursuing a policy of containment against the Soviet Union/Russia. As it was the case with many crises in many parts of the world during the Cold War, this policy is at the root of many of today's problems, particularly the Russia-Ukraine War. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) plays a critical role in this process. In the US containment policy, NATO has assumed different roles in three distinct periods. During the Cold War, NATO was established to contain the Soviet Union in Europe and was the basis of the containment policy in Europe.

In the post-Cold War era, NATO has continued this policy through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program in Central Asia and the Middle East while expanding in Europe. More recently, NATO has been tasked with the continuation of this policy in the Asia-Pacific region. As the US has shifted its focus to China, it has prioritized NATO as it seeks to include Beijing in its containment policy. In its recent official documents, NATO has begun to define China as a significant threat, while improving and even formalizing its relations with US allies in the Asia-Pacific. Leaders of these states attend NATO summits, while NATO plans to open an office in Japan. The policy of containment continues apace.



**Doç. Dr. Şafak
OĞUZ**
ANKASAM
Security Advisor

The Cold War-era US policy towards the Soviet Union was carried out on the basis of Nicholas J. Spykman's "Rim Belt Theory"[1] and the "Containment Policy", which was mainly developed within the framework of George Kennan's[2] views. In this framework, organizations and pacts such as the Balkan Pact, the Baghdad Pact (later CENTO), the Sadabat Pact, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), as well as NATO and the European Union (EU) were established in order to surround, if not destroy, the sphere of influence of socialism, and thus the Soviet Union, as Kennan put it. The Cold War-era struggle was shaped on the basis of these policies, and the policies of increasing the influence of the Soviet Union and preventing the United States continued in the form of proxy wars or struggles in which one of the parties was direct intervention in a wide range of areas from Korea to Vietnam, Afghanistan to Cambodia, Egypt to Iraq, Cuba to Nicaragua.

At the very beginning of the Cold War, the collaboration between Russia and the United States in many areas, especially in the fight against Weapons of Mass Destruction, gave the impression that this struggle of the Cold War had come to an end. Indeed, Russia's involvement in the Partnership for Peace (PfP), the transformation of the 1997 Permanent Joint Council into the NATO-Russia Council of equal partners in 2002, and the signing of agreements between the US and Russia on the reduction of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons gave the impression that the Cold War rivalry was over. Some have argued that the bipolar world has turned into a unipolar world and that the US has declared its hegemony.

In the light of the dissolution of the main threat, the Soviet Union, and these positive developments, discussions started that NATO had completed its mission. On the other hand, NATO's expansion proceeded as a continuation of the US policy of containment. In 1999, the former Warsaw States of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary joined NATO; in 2004, 7 states joined NATO, including the Baltic States, members of the former Soviet Union. After the accession of Albania, Croatia, Montenegro and, in fact, Macedonia after it overcame the Greek veto, Finland became a member in 2023, bringing NATO's expansion (in the US framing policy on the European leg) to its current stage. Other European states, notably Sweden and Bosnia and Herzegovina, are still in the process of becoming members. These states, which have entered the military sphere of influence within the framework of NATO, continue to be included in the economic and political sphere of influence in the EU membership process.

NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe, a Cold War-era buffer zone, has also led to an increased NATO-Russia border with Norway, which now stands at 196 km. In 2004, with the accession of Latvia (214 km.) and Estonia (294 km.), the NATO-Russia border increased substantially. In 2008, the Russian-Ukrainian War, one of the biggest crises of our times, was triggered and the green light was given to Ukraine and Georgia to join NATO. The membership of both states was intended to continue NATO's expansion in the Caucasus and Europe (containment for the US) and to squeeze Russia, which dominated all coasts except Turkey during the Cold War, into a very narrow area in the Black Sea. However, acknowledging NATO's expansion as one of the biggest threats to its national security, Russia tried to end this expansion by invading Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014/2021 (annexing Crimea and, thus, the most critical naval base in the Black Sea).

Time will tell how Georgia and Ukraine's accession process will unfold. However, it would not be surprising to expect that after the accession of these two states, it will be Moldova's turn in Europe, perhaps Belarus with a colorful revolution, and Azerbaijan and Armenia's turn in the Caucasus. Although the geographical boundaries of Europe are debatable, the fact that Azerbaijan and Armenia are also considered European, given their membership in the Council of Europe and their participation in events such as the Eurovision Song Contest and the European Football Championship, reveals the ultimate boundaries of NATO.

Accepting the Central Asian states as a natural extension of the Soviet Union, the United States established its containment policy from further south. In this process, the Baghdad Pact was established in 1955 between Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Iran, Pakistan and the United Kingdom to contain the Soviet Union from the south. After the Baathist regime pulled out of the pact after the coup in Iraq, the organization continued its existence as CENTO until 1979 and became a part of the containment policy. In the post-Cold War period, the US rapidly tried to increase its influence in the region. It attempted to contain Russia from further north by increasing its influence in the region, particularly through NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) program and economic and energy cooperation with states such as Azerbaijan. These efforts, carried out simultaneously with the turmoil in the Caucasus region during this period, took a military turn after the September 11 attacks. Indeed, after the invasion of Afghanistan, the US established military bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in 2001, and has now militarily supported its political and economic presence in Central Asia.

The containment policy pursued on all three legs. However, the declaration of a multipolar world by Russia and China in 2005 and the call for the US to leave the region resulted in bases being closed in Uzbekistan in 2005 and Kyrgyzstan in 2014. Events such as the 2005 Kyrgyzstan Color Revolution failed to reverse the process and the US policy of containing Russia through Central Asia was not as successful as in Europe. Russia has broadened its sphere of influence through organizations such as the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Economic Cooperation Organization. It has also tried preventing regional powers such as Iran, India and Pakistan from shifting to the western axis through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which, although it is a rival in the region, it has to act in partnership when it comes to the US.

Another pillar of the containment policy was the efforts in the Asia-Pacific region. During the Cold War, the most important leverage of the US in this regard was the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), founded in 1967 by the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore. Given its close relations with Japan, Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand and other states in the region, the US has also pursued a policy of containing Russia from the east. States such as Korea and Vietnam have emerged as indirect battlegrounds of the US-Soviet Union struggle. In 1979, when the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan threatened the security of the containment policy, the US declared the Carter Doctrine and established CENTCOM to prevent Russian intervention in the Middle East.

In the US containment policy, China and Sino-Soviet cooperation posed the biggest obstacle to the termination of the belt starting from the east of Europe on the Pacific coast. However, when relations between Russia and China worsened in the 1960-70s, the US seized the opportunity and with President Nixon's historic visit to China, the US aimed to contain the Soviet Union through China. Although US-China relations were not at a very good level, there were no major problems after this period. However, as China grew closer to Russia in the 2000s, it became irritated by the US influence and presence in the region and called for multipolarity. While tensions between the two states increased rapidly after this period, Obama's "Pivot to Asia" policy revealed that China was perceived as a bigger threat to the US than Russia, and the policy of containment of China through the Pacific, especially the Taiwan issue, became the priority. Although the "Russian threat" has come to the forefront again with the Russia-Ukraine War, the US has been following a policy of containment of China through the region thanks to its allies in the Pacific Simultaneously with this policy, NATO started to

get engaged in the Asia-Pacific region and the problems in this region. In this framework, China has started to be recognized as a threat to NATO. In the Strategic Concept, the alliance, which characterized Russia as a direct threat, stated that China had declared policies that pose a threat to the security and values of the alliance and that China's malicious hybrid and cyber attack activities, rhetoric and disinformation campaigns target allies and harm the security of the alliance. (Art. 13) While emphasizing the importance of the Indo-Pacific region and cooperation with partners in this region for the alliance, it was stated that existing and new partner states will continue to cooperate to solve the problems in this region.

The leaders of Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South Korea have been attending the NATO Leaders' Summit for the last two years. NATO and these states have signed various cooperation agreements. Although Japan has stated that the decision has not yet been finalized, it is known that NATO is planning to open a contact office in Japan. It is likely that this decision, which was postponed to a later stage due to China's reaction, will first be established in a state more distant from China (e.g. Australia) and then in Japan. In the medium term, a NATO mission/base could be established in the region under any excuse.

On a fundamental level, the threat posed by China to NATO has not been fully articulated and China has been targeted with forced statements. By ignoring the threat of terrorist organizations to Turkey's national security, NATO goes beyond its core mandate and lays the foundations for the US policy of containment of China and Russia. Technically, if the US-China rivalry turns into a heated conflict, Article 5 of the alliance will be implemented. However, given the current military capabilities of NATO members, their strategic ability to participate in an operation in the Asia-Pacific region (how much would be needed given the nuclear dimension of any US-China war) would be restricted and limited to US troop reinforcements. From a political perspective, however, NATO is providing a political containment belt from Portugal to New Zealand, just like the Balkan and Baghdad Pacts. NATO is expanding physically in Europe and intellectually on a global scale.

[1] Spykman'ın görüşleri için Bkz. Nicholas J. Spykman, *America's Strategy in World Politics: The United States and the Balance of Power*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1942; Nicholas J. Spykman, *The Geography of the Peace*, Helen R. Nicholl (der.), New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co, 1944.

[2] Kennan'ın görüşleri için Bkz. X, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, 25(4), 1947, s. 566-582; George Kennan,



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

China's Construction of a Multipolar World in the Context of BRICS Expansion

As the BRICS Leaders Summit, scheduled to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from August 22nd to 24th, 2023, draws closer, the substantial increase in applications for participation in this platform has attracted notable attention. In relation to this matter, Naledi Pandor, South Africa's Minister of Foreign Affairs, has made a statement disclosing that a total of 22 country leaders have formally declared their intentions to join the BRICS consortium.[1] Furthermore, Pandor has appended that a significant number of unofficial membership applications have also been received. Among the

nations with official submissions, the following are listed: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

Irrespective of membership applications, it has been underscored that 67 leaders from countries within Africa and the Southern Hemisphere have been extended invitations to partake in the BRICS Summit. The primary objective of



Dr. Cenk TAMER
ANKASAM
Asia-Pacific
Expert

BRICS resides in cultivating trade, political, and cultural cooperation amongst its constituent member states. However, the selection of leaders who were invited to the recent summit predominantly from nations within the Southern Hemisphere, while omitting Western countries, carries profound implications pertaining to the evolving global paradigm. Led by China and Russia, the BRICS platform is progressively evolving into a multi-lateral forum championing the interests of the Global South. Indeed, both Beijing and Moscow, in dissent to the unipolar world view guided by Western leadership, espouse a conceptualization of a global order marked by multipolarity and a more inclusive global participation.

On the other hand, the United States (US), United Kingdom, Germany, and some other European countries characterize the actions of Russia and China as “challenges to the international order” in their published national strategy documents. These two actors are referred to as “systemic rivals.” While criticizing Moscow and Beijing, the West consistently emphasizes the importance of the “rules-based international order.” This is because, within the current system, the Western bloc sees itself as a hegemonic power and rejects any attempts to change this status quo.

In contrast, Russia and China support the expansion of BRICS as a global cooperation platform against the backdrop of the US-centered Western hegemonic approach. However, the exclusion of the West from this endeavor raises concerns about the potential rise of BRICS as another influential pole. In this context, the Global South is expected to play a significant role in constructing a multipolar world. BRICS, in its turn, will contribute to this world-building process. For instance, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov criticized French President Macron’s intention to participate in the BRICS Leaders Summit, labeling it as “inappropriate guest” remarks.[2] The host country South Africa’s Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor confirmed Macron’s absence from the summit.[3]

The countries expected to be invited to the BRICS Leaders Summit are historically those that have opposed Western imperialist policies and are often categorized by the West as “third world countries.” These participants mostly consist of nations that were part of the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War era. Therefore, this platform will primarily contribute to the construction of a multipolar world. On the other hand, this formation could also evolve into another axis advocating for the Global South against the West. Hence, the potential for entering a new era of a “bipolar world” still exists.

China, a strong advocate for the expansion of BRICS, views this platform as a significant lever for building a global world. In this context, Chinese President Xi Jinping’s call to BRICS countries last year to establish a “global security community” serves a strategic purpose.[4] This call is also highly compatible with China’s ideals of a multipolar world, characterized by its “Global Security Initiative” and “Global Development Initiative.” Through BRICS, countries from the southern hemisphere are becoming part of this globalization process led by Russia and China. On the other hand, the West is in the process of revising its collective defense organization, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to address global issues. Western leaders argue that NATO must now have a “global concept” to effectively address contemporary challenges.[5]

As a result, the worldviews and globalization efforts of the West and China are driven by different motives. While the Western world adopts an approach focused on defense and security, China tends to prioritize peaceful globalization centered around economics and development. In this context, China prefers the expansion of the BRICS platform for shaping the new global order, while the West supports the enlargement of NATO as a defense organization. It is clear that the Global South has chosen to prioritize economic growth and development, and they strongly voice their opposition to a unipolar or bipolar world view. In this changing landscape, Germany, emerging as a prominent Eurasian actor within the Western bloc, is aligning itself with the advocates of a multipolar world order. As the inclination towards multipolarity grows worldwide, states are increasingly tilting towards platforms led by Russia and China to counterbalance the West. Both Russia and China, through the conduit of BRICS, aspire to promote multilateralism, reject Western hegemonic approaches, and build a collective community grounded in mutually beneficial principles.

Both Russia and China, through the conduit of BRICS, aspire to promote multilateralism, reject Western hegemonic approaches, and build a collective community grounded in mutually beneficial principles.

[1] “Güney Afrika: BRICS Üyeliği İçin 22 Ülke Başvurdu”, TRT Haber, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/guney-afrika-brics-uyeligi-icin-22-ulke-basvurdu-783102.html>, (Date of Accession: 11.08.2023).

[2] “Russia Objects to Presence of French President at BRICS Summit”, AA, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/russia-objects-to-presence-of-french-president-at-brics-summit/2928583>, (Date of Accession: 11.08.2023).

ANKASAM IN PRESS

15 August 2023

ANKASAM Chief Advisor to the President, Retired Ambassador Aydın Nurhan, evaluated the current developments in foreign policy on TVNET.



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 VIII, 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 VIII, ISSUE I.

