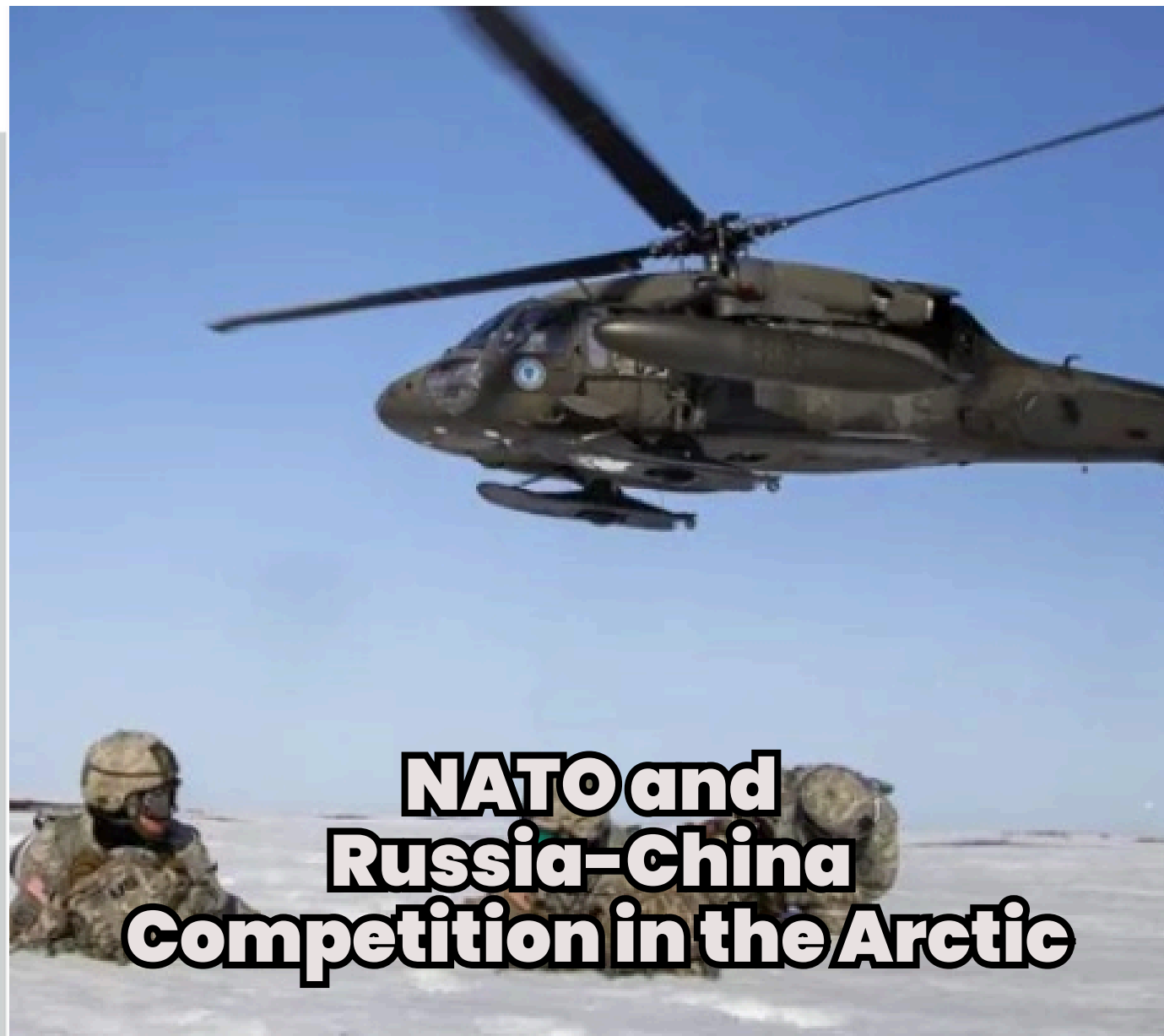




# ANKASAM

## bulletin

4 November 2024  
ISSUE: 2024/44



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**Japan's Space  
Program and  
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**Putin Urges  
China, Brazil  
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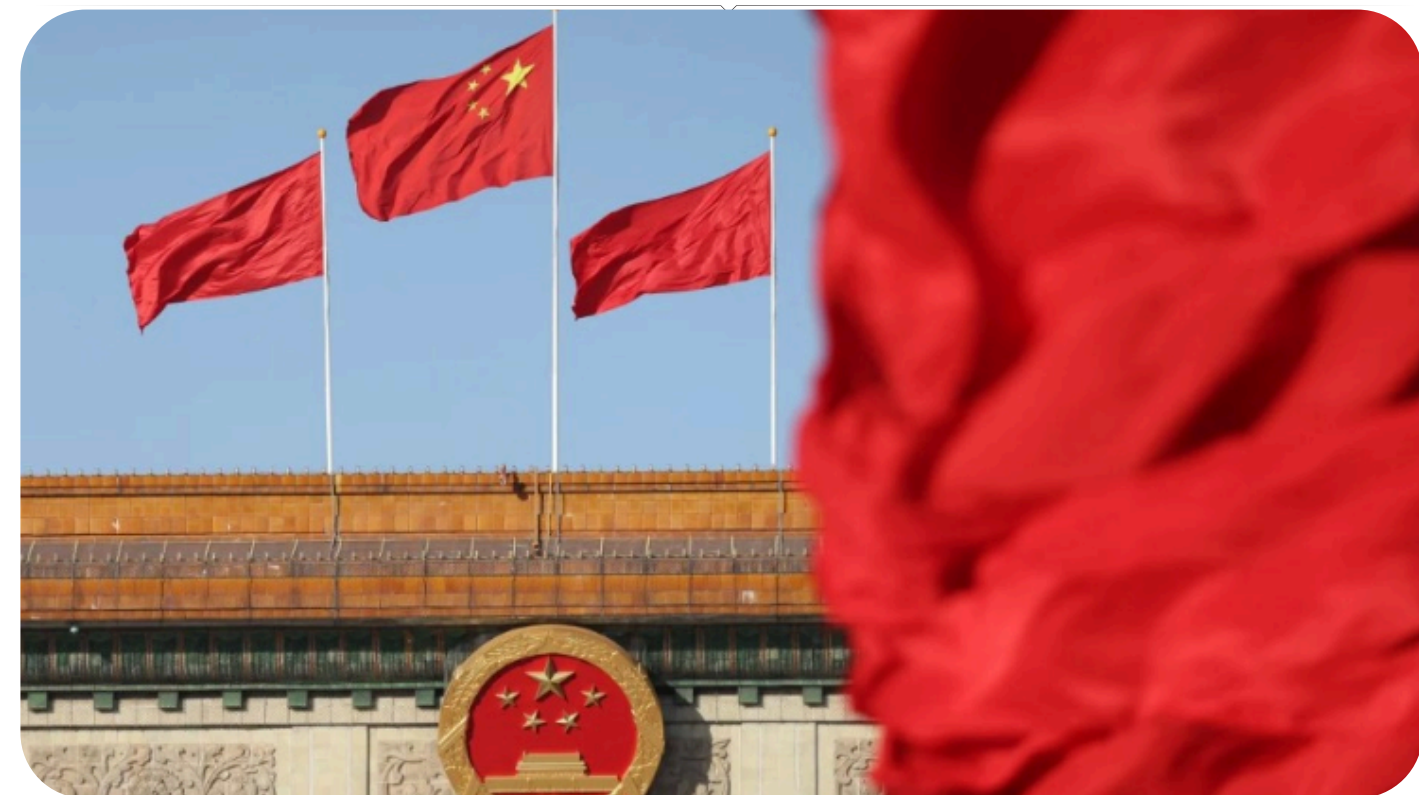
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## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# China's Success in Fighting Extreme Poverty



Simay GÜZEL

October 17 is celebrated as National Welfare Day in China and as Poverty Alleviation Day worldwide to draw attention to poverty. China's share in reducing poverty around the world is quite large, especially considering its huge population. According to the evaluation made based on the poverty line determined by the World Bank as 1.9 US dollars per day in 2011, the poor population in the world decreased by 1 billion 100 million people between 1981 and 2012. In the same period, China lifted 790 million people out of poverty and increased its share in the world in this field to 71.82 percent.[i] By 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping declared victory in this fight by reducing the extreme poverty rate to 0%.[ii]

China has achieved great success by reaching the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal, adopted by the United Nations in 2015, 10 years ago. Development, with emphasis on social inclusion, in the light of policies led by the government, has been identified as the main way to eliminate poverty.

### Fundamentals of Success

Although some steps were taken before the Deng period in the context of fighting against poverty, the wrong policies implemented in agriculture and their consequences caused Deng Xiaoping to focus first on agriculture and rural areas. In the policies implemented in this period, there was a socialist understanding and the awareness that it was a duty to fight against poverty in rural areas in line with this understanding.

With the opening-up policy within the scope of the economic reform program called “socialism with Chinese values” in 1978, China was opened to foreign investments and the country’s economic development was paved, resulting in an increase in per capita income.<sup>[iii]</sup> With the decollectivization of agriculture, agricultural production increased by 25 percent between 1975 and 1985, and with its positive reflection on the economy, in the early 1990s, poverty became a problem that spread throughout China and became a problem that only covers some regions and groups.<sup>[iv]</sup>

In 1994, the State Council committed to meet the basic needs of 80 million poor rural residents under China’s first Priority Poverty Alleviation Program (1994-2000), which had clear targets, measures and clear dates. In 1996, the authorities held the National Conference on Development-Oriented Poverty Alleviation, further clarifying the commitment to the goal of providing adequate food and clothing by the end of the 20th century and shifting from aid-based poverty alleviation to development-oriented poverty alleviation. By the end of 2000, the poor population in rural areas was reduced to 32.09 million and the poverty rate was reduced to 3.5% according to the poverty alleviation standard at that time.<sup>[v]</sup>

During the reigns of Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, various policies aimed at reducing poverty and developing the countryside continued to be implemented. China’s poverty alleviation effort has evolved from its primary mission of meeting the basic needs of the poor to a new phase of accelerating poverty alleviation and enhancing development capacity. As of the end of 2010, according to the poverty standard, the poor rural population decreased to 26.88 million and the poverty rate decreased to 2.8%. In 2011, per capita income increased to 2300 yuan and the poor population reached 122 million.<sup>[vi]</sup>

In the New Era of Digitalization: “Targeted Poverty Alleviation”

Since the 18th CPC National Congress held in 2012, the Chinese government has identified poverty alleviation as the core task of building a moderately prosperous society. The “精准扶贫 jīngzhǔn fúpín” (targeted poverty alleviation) strategy put forward by President Xi Jinping in 2013 ensured that each individual living in poverty was specifically monitored and special solutions were developed according to their needs. It has increased income in poor regions through tools such as accurate policies, local economic projects and education support.

During this period, unlike other periods, China used information technologies extensively to end poverty. A “national poverty database” containing comprehensive information about individuals and households living in poverty was created, and the situations of poor families were examined and interventions appropriate to their needs were determined and implemented. In this way, resources were used effectively and the efficiency of the implemented policies increased. In addition, with the widespread use of digital applications such as AliBaba, it has become possible for producers living in rural areas to sell their products and earn income by reaching a larger buyer base.

By 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced to the public that, as a result of continuous efforts, 98.99 million people living in rural areas and suffering from extreme poverty were rescued from poverty, and 832 districts and 128,000 villages were removed from the poor class by the end of 2020. Reforms in this context were carried out gradually, which helped businesses and the population adapt to the changes.<sup>[vii]</sup>

Although continuous policies are the basis of this great success, it is clear that another factor behind the success of the policies is ideological. Although China’s win-win policy and the idea of building a community with a common future for humanity seem to have been put forward in the early 21st century, it can be observed that it is based on the teachings of Marxism and Confucius, such as the peaceful improvement of the world and the elimination of hunger and poverty. (Khan, Wang & Ali , 2021) Based on the same ideology, it is a detail that should not be overlooked that the Belt and Road Initiative plays an important role in the fight against poverty in both China and the KYG countries.

*“He who wants himself to be successful must help others to be successful; He who wants to improve himself must help others improve as well.”*

Confucius

China’s success in developing its own society and fighting poverty, and the correct policies it follows while doing this, set an example in terms of reducing poverty around the world. The idea of fighting poverty based on development rather than aid has laid the groundwork for the lasting prosperity of Chinese society. In addition, in parallel with the economy that developed with the opening up to the outside world in 1978, the steps taken for the development of rural areas were strengthened, and rural regions continued to develop despite the fluctuations over time. Producing more accurate solutions through smart use of databases and digital tools has enabled the goal of combating extreme poverty to be achieved much more easily. As the Chinese society, which constitutes a significant part of the world’s population, develops and the poverty level decreases, its reflection on the world has and will continue to be equally large. Considering its economic and political power, its development in digitalization and the dominant ideology in its society, China will continue to take steps to reduce poverty worldwide with many projects, especially the Belt and Road Initiative.

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[iv]. Ibid.

[v]. Ibid.

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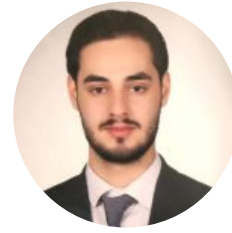
[vii]. Li, Xiaoyun and Chuanhong Zhang (2024), “Lessons from sustained poverty reduction in China”, in OECD, Development Co-operation Report 2024: Tackling Poverty and Inequalities through the Green Transition, OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/3d97c256-en>, (Date Accession: 20.10.2024).





## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Oil and Energy Economics Under the Influence of US Elections



Ömer Faruk PEKGÖZ

The presidential elections in the United States (US) cause fluctuations in the oil market due to the energy policies of different political parties. The Republican Party generally adopts less regulation and incentive policies in the energy sector, while the Democratic Party takes a stricter stance on environmental protection and transition to renewable energy. These policy changes have effects on oil prices, supply-demand balance and sector investments.

For example, with Joe Biden coming to power in the 2020 elections, the US imposed stricter environmental regulations and focused on clean energy investments, affecting global oil supply and demand, leading to volatility in prices.<sup>[i]</sup> This situation can be shown as one of the factors that increase oil prices due to concerns that the US may reduce oil production.<sup>[ii]</sup>

US energy policies have a direct impact on production costs and supply security. For example, during the periods when Republican presidents came to power, incentives for hydrocarbon production were increased and investments were made in production capacity to reduce oil prices. In contrast, Democratic presidents aimed to implement more restrictive policies on oil production by prioritizing an environmentally friendly production approach and renewable energy.

The Biden administration's pressure on fossil fuel projects, especially in 2022, and the limitations it has imposed on infrastructure projects have led to increased production costs and weakened the US's influence in global oil markets.<sup>[iii]</sup>

This situation, together with future elections, may create imbalances in the US's supply security and affect its competitiveness in the global market.

The impact of US elections on oil prices generally creates fluctuations in the short term, but can also lead to permanent changes in the long term. For example, with Donald Trump coming to power in the 2016 elections, there was a significant increase in oil production and a relative decrease in prices. During the Biden era, there were supply restrictions due to environmentally sensitive policies, which caused prices to rise again.<sup>[iv]</sup>

If Democrats win again in the upcoming elections, it is expected that environmental regulations will increase and more investments will be made to reduce carbon emissions. In this case, it is predicted that stricter regulations will be imposed on fossil fuel production, which will reduce oil supply and increase prices. On the contrary, if the Republicans win, a broader energy production strategy could increase oil supply and decrease prices.

US elections affect not only domestic energy policies but also strategies for the global energy transition. The Democratic Party's investments in renewable energy and efforts to reduce fossil fuel use could create a global trend toward reducing oil consumption. This situation has the potential to reduce oil demand and stabilize prices in the long run.<sup>[v]</sup>

The US taking a leading role in this process could also lead other countries to renewable energy and cause a change in the supply-demand balance in the global oil economy. In this context, according to the election results, the US taking the lead in the energy transition could significantly affect oil demand by accelerating the transition to renewable energy worldwide.

Political tensions in the Middle East, and especially tensions in Israel-Iran relations, are causing fluctuations in the global oil market. Israel's recent statements that its military steps against Iran should not focus on oil infrastructure have somewhat eased concerns about oil supply disruptions and led to a decline in prices. Developments in the energy policies of major consumers such as the US and China, especially China's moves to address slowing economic growth and the increase in oil stocks in the US, have had an impact on prices.

A report in the Washington Post that Israel could attack Iranian military facilities has caused oil prices to fall, partly reducing the risk of escalating conflict in the Middle East, which accounts for a third of global supply. Brent crude fell nearly 2.3% to \$75 a barrel, while U.S. crude oil fell below \$72 a barrel. Netanyahu's statement to the Biden administration that the targets of attacks would be military facilities rather than energy infrastructure has created broader market relief.<sup>[vi]</sup>

Oil prices have fluctuated in recent weeks due to political developments in the Middle East as well as concerns about a slowdown in the Chinese economy. The US has decided to provide military support to the region to protect its ally, particularly following Hezbollah's attacks on Israel. This has raised concerns that the conflict could escalate into a cycle of retaliation and disrupt oil exports from the Middle East.

On the other hand, China's steps to maintain its growth momentum also create uncertainty in oil demand. China's failure to announce new incentives in critical areas such as the real estate sector has increased growth concerns and affected prices due to concerns that oil demand may fall. The conflicts in the Middle East and the role of the Chinese economy in oil demand stand out as key determinants in the global oil market.<sup>[vii]</sup>

The increase in US crude oil inventories has raised questions about the supply-demand balance in global markets. According to data from the American Petroleum Institute, inventories have increased by 10.9 million barrels, well above market expectations. This increase has increased expectations of excess supply and limited the rise in prices. At the same time, OPEC's lowering of demand estimates supports long-term concerns about excess supply in the market.<sup>[viii]</sup>

[i] Smith, J. (2021). The Impact of U.S. Presidential Elections on Global Oil Markets. *Journal of Energy Economics*, 45(2), 123-145.

[ii] International Energy Agency (IEA). (2022). *Oil Market Report*.

[iii] U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). (2023). *U.S. Energy Policy and Its Impact on Fossil Fuel Production*.

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[v] International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). (2022). *Global Energy Transition and Its Impact on Fossil Fuels*.

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[vii] "Çin'den beklenen desteği bulamayan petrolde gözler Orta Doğu'da", Bloomberg, <https://www.bloomberght.com/cin-den-beklenen-destegi-bulamayan-petrolde-gozler-orta-dogu-da-2362246>, (Date Accession: 28.10.2024).

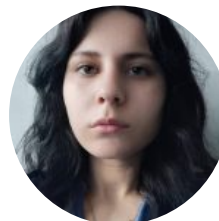
[viii] "Petrolde jeopolitik gerginlik", Bloomberg, <https://www.bloomberght.com/petrolde-jeopolitik-gerginlik-2362402>, (Date Accession: 28.10.2024).





## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# NATO and Russia-China Competition in the Arctic



İtir BOZDAĞ

The Arctic has recently emerged as a new arena for the longstanding tensions between Russia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Due to its strategic importance in terms of energy resources and location, competition between NATO and Russia in the Arctic is becoming increasingly contentious, with China's cooperation and investment in the region alongside Russia further intensifying the situation. Neither side has yet succeeded in establishing full dominance, but the positioning of bases and centers suggests that a Cold War-like rivalry in the Arctic may be possible in the future.

Russia's ambitions in the Arctic can be traced back to the era of the Soviet Union (USSR) and even earlier. The USSR was aware that it could leverage the region for economic gains, yet challenging economic conditions and insufficient technology prevented it from establishing control. After the 2000s, however, the situation shifted, and Russia began reshaping its Arctic policies, intensifying its rivalry with NATO. Since 2005, Russia has reopened and modernized former Soviet-era military bases. Additionally, it has developed new hypersonic missiles designed to evade U.S. sensors and defense systems.<sup>[i]</sup>

During the Cold War, despite NATO's limited technological capabilities, its presence in the region was seen as a challenge to Russia's strategic interests. Today, NATO's presence continues to serve as a balancing factor in the ongoing Arctic competition. Within the framework of the Arctic Council, the presence of eight countries in the Arctic is evident, with the United States being one of the member nations. However, according to some experts, it may take the West at least ten years to catch up with Russia's military presence in the Arctic.<sup>[ii]</sup> As a matter of fact, Russia currently has more military bases in the Arctic than NATO.

The poles have a rich potential as an energy source. As a matter of fact, it is estimated that there are 90 billion barrels of oil and 1,669 trillion cubic meters of natural gas.<sup>[iii]</sup> Given that the energy sector, particularly oil and natural gas, makes up a large portion of Russia's economy, the Arctic represents a significant economic resource for the country. Considering the limitations of Russia's economy and the potential depletion of its current oil and gas reserves, access to these resources in the Arctic could enable future economic growth for Russia. Furthermore, this access could even allow Russia to rival major oil powers such as Saudi Arabia, the Caucasus, and Norway in the future.

Russia's access to these resources could be seen as a potential threat for NATO. In this respect, NATO's dominance in the region could pose a risk to the future of Russia's economy. It seems unlikely that European countries will remain unaffected by this rivalry. Indeed, Russian dominance in the Arctic could exert pressure on European nations, especially those close to the Arctic, such as Norway, Finland, and Iceland.

Another potential in the Arctic lies within the transportation sector. The faster melting of Arctic ice is bringing significant changes to the Northern Sea Route. According to some analysts, this melting has highlighted the commercial viability of the Northern Sea Route (NSR), as shipping distances could be reduced by up to 40% with this route.<sup>[iv]</sup> Indeed, Russia's increased control in the Arctic could mean significant influence over the Northern Sea Route. Given the growing importance of this route, China's investment in the Arctic alongside Russia can be seen as a strategic move to strengthen its position in international trade.

Militarily, the Arctic holds strategic importance for Russia. The primary objective is to secure the second-strike capability of the ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) force stationed on the Kola Peninsula in the event of a potential conflict with NATO. This area hosts seven of the Russian Navy's eleven ballistic missile submarines. Another critical objective is to maintain Russia's ability to conduct operations in the North Atlantic and European Arctic regions in a potential NATO conflict.<sup>[v]</sup> From here it can be seen that the tensions with NATO have an important place in shaping Russia's policy in the poles.

NATO, however, does not appear likely to back down in response to Russia's military presence. Recently, Admiral Rob Bauer, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, made a statement affirming that NATO would protect the interests of its allies in the region.<sup>[vi]</sup> It seems highly likely that NATO will increase the number of its military bases in the Arctic in the future, as Russia continues to invest in its military presence in the region. However, the strain imposed by the Russia-Ukraine War on the Russian economy and military should not be underestimated. This could impact Russia's Arctic projects, at least until the war concludes.

China emerges as another superpower positioned alongside Russia in this rivalry. Due to the potential for additional security concerns arising from involvement in the Arctic struggle, China supports Russia economically in the region through investments. This strategy aims to alleviate security issues in the surrounding area while seeking to profit from cooperation with Russia in resource extraction and infrastructure development.<sup>[vii]</sup> In this context, it appears that China does not wish to jeopardize its relations with NATO countries while seeking to advance its cooperation with Russia. Moreover, China's presence in a resource-rich area where both NATO and Russia are already established serves as an indication of its determination to solidify its status as a superpower.

A significant part of China's investments in the Arctic focuses on digitalization. In this context, China aims to digitalize the Northern Sea Route using fiber optic cables. Furthermore, China is positioning polar satellites in the region, allowing it to monitor sea and ice movements and track shipping routes. However, China's satellite coverage in the Arctic now exceeds that of Russia, leading to an increased reliance of Russia on Chinese data for its activities in the region.<sup>[viii]</sup>

The diversification of Chinese investments across various sectors and its data dependence on Russia has the potential to increase China's dominance in the region in the future. However, at present, it appears that China prefers to remain in the background of the Russia-NATO tensions. Indeed, there is a significant volume of trade between China and NATO member countries, and China is avoiding actions that could jeopardize this relationship.

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[iii]. McVey, R. A. (2022). Russian Strategic Interest in Arctic Heats Up as Ice Melts. LSE IDEAS. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep45246>, (Access Date: 25.10.2024).

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[v]. Rumer, E., Sokolsky, R., & Stronski, P. (2021, March 29). Russia in the Arctic—A critical examination. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Retrieved October 25, 2024, from <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2021/03/russia-in-the-arctica-critical-examination?lang=en>, (Access Date: 25.10.2024).

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[viii]. Ibid.



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# EU Membership Process of North Macedonia



Sena BİRİNCİ

North Macedonia attracts attention as a Balkan country that has taken important steps towards entry into the European Union (EU). The country, which has adopted the goal of EU membership since 2000, has carried out both political and economic reforms in this process. North Macedonia's relations with the EU gained a new momentum, especially in 2019, during which the name issue continued, and after the Prespa transaction with Greece.

Invitation to membership negotiations is a continuation of the country's determination towards European countries and its search for stability in the region. One of the biggest goals of North Macedonia in this process is to achieve stronger compliance with the values and norms offered by the EU and through this way to further increase economic development, democratic standards and social welfare. However, the membership process is not just about technical negotiations, it is also linked to the country's internal political dynamics, its relations with its neighbors and the difficulties in the EU's expansion policy.

North Macedonia's EU membership process has been significantly challenged by its disputes with its neighbor Bulgaria. While European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen welcomed North Macedonia's reform efforts, she also underlined that constitutional changes are mandatory for EU membership.[i] It was especially emphasized that the Bulgarian minority should be included in the constitution, but the conservative government led by Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski resists these changes. Mickoski did not accept the conditions put forward regarding the constitutional changes, arguing that Bulgaria should approve the membership of North Macedonia. This situation has blocked the country's EU membership process and strained relations.

It is also understood that von der Leyen tried to reassure other countries in the region about the expansion perspective during her Western Balkan tour. Russia's attack on Ukraine has increased fears of instability across Europe and accelerated the efforts of the Western Balkan countries to join the EU. These difficulties in North Macedonia's EU membership process have affected not only this country but also other countries in the Western Balkans. In this context, the EU's expansion policies in the region have become an important element both in ensuring regional stability and in the EU's long-term expansion strategy.



Especially the Bulgarian minority issue, although it is seen as a technical issue that needs to be solved by constitutional amendments, has had a deep impact on political and social relations. Prime Minister Mickoski, in his meetings with European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in Brussels, expressed the public's disappointment due to the deadlock in his country's membership process.<sup>[ii]</sup> Although North Macedonia made important symbolic changes such as the country name, flag and paper money, it could not progress towards EU membership. Mickoski emphasized that it is unacceptable for his country to constantly face new ultimatums.

It has been stated that in order for the EU membership process to continue, Bulgarians must be counted among the founding peoples in the constitution. However, the North Macedonian government requests unconditional support from Bulgaria before making this change. While the Mickoski government resisted constitutional changes, the future of the negotiations faced uncertainty. In this context, the solution proposal called the "Plus French Proposal" envisages that constitutional amendments will be made now and will only come into force when EU negotiations are completed.<sup>[iii]</sup> With this solution proposal, North Macedonia requests guarantees from the EU in order not to encounter any other obstacles during the negotiations.<sup>[iv]</sup>

However, there continues to be uncertainty about whether this proposal will be successful. Considering the fact that North Macedonia's EU membership process is a long diplomatic and reform process, these disagreements with Bulgaria seem difficult to resolve. Although the Mickoski government is looking for solutions that will take the negotiations forward, it is still not clear whether these efforts will yield results. Although the EU's "cash in exchange of reforms" strategy for the Western Balkans is a promising model for countries such as North Macedonia, political tensions with Bulgaria undermine this progress.

The tension between North Macedonia and Bulgaria was not only limited to constitutional amendments, but also manifested itself in strategic infrastructure projects. The transportation project called "Corridor 8" is of vital importance for the integration of North Macedonia into EU trade and transportation networks.<sup>[v]</sup> However, allegations that Bulgaria did not fulfill its commitments regarding this project have become a new element of tension in the relations between the two countries. Mickoski brought up the issue of shifting the project to other routes if Bulgaria does not fulfill its obligations. While disruptions in such infrastructure projects negatively affect North Macedonia's EU integration efforts, Bulgaria's approach that blocks the process causes bigger problems.

Although the EU offers financial incentives to support the reform efforts of countries such as North Macedonia within the scope of its expansion policy in the Western Balkans, disagreements between member states create major obstacles in this process.<sup>[vi]</sup> Countries such as Bulgaria can prevent the progress of negotiations by using their veto rights, and this creates a situation that calls into question the effectiveness of the EU enlargement policy in the Western Balkans. Although North Macedonia continues its reforms, Bulgaria's approach continues to block the process, as full agreement must be reached among EU members at every stage.

As a result, North Macedonia's EU membership process has reached a serious impasse due to disagreements with Bulgaria. Constitutional amendments and disruptions in strategic projects make the country's EU membership bid difficult, and Bulgaria's attitude plays a critical role in blocking the process. Delays in strategic infrastructure projects, especially the Corridor 8 project, further strain the relations between the two countries. Bulgaria's attitude on this issue directly affects North Macedonia's reform efforts and the EU membership process and slows down the progress of the process.

Although the, financial support in return for reform, model offered by the EU to the Western Balkan countries has the potential to accelerate the integration of North Macedonia into the EU, political disagreements between member states threaten this progress. North Macedonia's EU membership process will be directly shaped not only by internal reforms but also by improving relations with neighboring countries. Unless the problems with Bulgaria are resolved, North Macedonia's goal of full membership in the EU will continue to face serious uncertainty. In this context, such disputes are a great test for the stability of the region and future expansion strategies. In short, North Macedonia's EU membership journey becomes even more important with the need to develop strategic cooperation and strengthen bilateral relations.

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[ii] Ibid.

[iii]. [Sinisa Jakov Marusic](https://balkaninsight.com/2024/09/20/north-macedonia-pm-voices-frustration-over-humiliating-eu-accession-demands/), "North Macedonia PM Voices Frustration Over 'Humiliating' EU Accession Demands", Balkan Insight, <https://balkaninsight.com/2024/09/20/north-macedonia-pm-voices-frustration-over-humiliating-eu-accession-demands/>, (Date Accession: 24.10.2024).

[iv] Ibid.

[v] [Mared Gwyn Jones](https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/09/30/why-renewed-tensions-with-neighbours-have-stalled-north-macedonias-eu-membership-bid), "Why renewed tensions with neighbours have stalled North Macedonia's EU membership bid", Euronews, <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/09/30/why-renewed-tensions-with-neighbours-have-stalled-north-macedonias-eu-membership-bid>, (Date Accession: 24.10.2024).

[vi] Ibid.



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# The EU's Test with Hungary

Erdem Baran ALKAN

Hungary is located at a significant crossroads in Central Europe, important in terms of travel routes between the east and the west. After gaining full independence following a Cold War marked by heavy Soviet pressure, the country came under the umbrella of the European Union (EU) during the 2004 enlargement. Since then, Hungary has been one of the most debated states within this supranational organization.<sup>[i]</sup>

Following Hungary's assumption of the European Union Council Presidency, which rotates every six months, on July 1, 2024, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán visited Kyiv first, then Moscow, and Beijing. It is a noteworthy development that the Hungarian government, under EU sanctions, visited Moscow, displayed the European Union flag in Kyiv, and used the Hungarian Presidential Logo in Beijing.<sup>[ii]</sup> Orbán claimed that he made these visits to establish peace and that Hungary is the only state capable of talking with all the involved parties.

Hungary, which has been criticized since 2018 for acting against democracy and the rule of law, holding the EU Council Presidency is considered unacceptable by many European actors.<sup>[iii]</sup> Having been deprived of nearly 20 billion euros in funding, Hungary has twice failed to pay the 200 million euro fine imposed by the European Court of Justice, even after its monthly deadlines passed. The European Commission has stated that if this fine is not paid, the amount will be deducted from Hungary's share of the funds. In parallel, the country faces a daily fine of 1 million euros for not complying with the European Court of Justice's decision and failing to lift its restrictions on the right to asylum.<sup>[iv]</sup>

Hungary disrupts the decision-making mechanism within the EU and causes difficulties in the enlargement process and the budget. The Hungarian government's opposition to and delay of the €50 million financial aid fund provided by the EU to Ukraine this year is considered the clearest example of this. As a result, at the beginning of 2024, the leaders of the 27 member states held a summit in Brussels solely due to Orbán's stance, and after significant efforts, Hungary was finally convinced.<sup>[v]</sup>



The aim behind Hungary's stance is to gain as much as possible from the crisis environment. To give a historical reminder: in the mid-19th century, when Hungarian communities were the region's largest grain producers, during the events of the 1848 Revolution, they produced just enough grain and goods to sustain themselves due to Vienna's harsh approaches and their demands for autonomy. In this process, known as "Passive Resistance," they boycotted the government by stopping tax payments. Another example is from 1903, when the Hungarian Parliament launched an attack by rejecting the empire's military budget in opposition to the imperial language law, similar to how it is currently blocking the EU's financial aid to Ukraine. Considering the outdated Habsburg weaponry at the time, this was an important factor contributing to the Austro-Hungarian Empire's military incompetence in World War I. Indeed, Emperor Franz Joseph first begged the Hungarians, who held a significant number of soldiers in the Imperial Army, and then, in a bluff, granted more voting rights to minorities, only to withdraw them once the Hungarian Parliament approved the budget.<sup>[vi]</sup>

As in history, the Hungarian government today continues to adopt similar attitudes, and its policies significantly conflict with the principles of the European Union. Since no results have been achieved under the current sanctions, a gradual contraction could even be considered within the EU, which advocates cautious enlargement. However, the Treaty on European Union does not provide a process for canceling a country's membership. Therefore, this process could either be initiated by the Council inviting Hungary to begin the withdrawal process under Article 50, or it would require a fundamental change in the treaty or laws. <sup>[vii]</sup> Such a change could also bring positive outcomes for European integration. The decision-making mechanism would accelerate, but the deterrent power for countries could also spark discussions related to EU principles.

In response to Orban's stance, Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union, which provides for the suspension of a member state's voting rights in the European Union Council, also stands as a potential measure. Belgium, during its previous presidency, attempted to apply this article against Hungary during its presidency, but no results were achieved. The article was also previously attempted against Poland during the tenure of its former government, but that too was unsuccessful. These examples highlight the weakness of Article 7. <sup>[viii]</sup>

Lastly, Hungary's ability to assert its own demands at such a level in matters beyond its capacity within a supranational organization reflects the skill of the country's politicians and the solid foundation of its political culture. However, if this approach is pushed further, it could lead to isolation. Therefore, this political mastery should be carefully evaluated and critiqued. Perhaps there is a dream of a federal structure within the European Union, achieved through regional integration.

Therefore, adopting a collective approach beyond individual national interests aligns with this ideal. However, as mentioned, the political cultures of many member states, particularly Hungary, are in significant conflict with this ideal. Ultimately, no country can be blamed simply for defending its own interests and seeking to gain advantages. In this regard, the same conditions apply to Hungary, which pursues a consciously strategic rise in its relations with other states, as Machiavelli described, and this is both valid and necessary.<sup>[ix]</sup>

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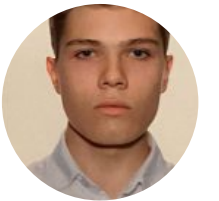
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## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Japan's Space Program and Global Competition



Nikita MARIANENKO

Japan's space program is managed by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). JAXA, established in 2003, conducts various projects for space research, satellite development, manned space flights, and more. Some of the program's significant achievements are as follows:

1. Hayabusa Missions: Hayabusa and Hayabusa2 are missions conducted to collect samples from asteroids. Hayabusa successfully collected samples from the Itokawa asteroid in 2005. Hayabusa2 successfully carried out a mission with the Ryugu asteroid in 2019.
2. Kibo Space Laboratory: Kibo, JAXA's module on the International Space Station (ISS), is an important platform for space research. Japanese astronauts are conducting various experiments here.
3. Space Telescopes: JAXA has developed telescopes capable of observing in space. The Hitomi telescope was launched in 2016 to study X-rays, but shortly after, it lost communication.
4. Mizusawa Project: Japan is also conducting research projects on water resources in space.

Japan places great importance on both national and international collaborations in space research, particularly developing joint projects with NASA and the European Space Agency. Space tourism and sending humans to Mars are also among the future plans.

Japan has successfully tested space with a heavy-duty rocket. JAXA carried out a successful test launch of the H3 heavy-duty launch vehicle. The first test, which took place a year ago, ended in failure. The rocket was launched from the Tanegashima Satellite Launch Center in Kagoshima Prefecture at 0:22 Tokyo time <sup>[i]</sup>. The rocket will launch two satellites into orbit. H3 is Japan's main launch vehicle for launching payloads into orbit. The device can launch a payload weighing more than four tons into a sun-synchronous orbit and about eight tons into a geosynchronous transfer orbit. Developed by JAXA and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries.<sup>[ii]</sup>



Work on developing the next-generation H3 heavy-lift rocket began 10 years ago to replace the current H2A launch vehicle, which has been operational since 2001 and is expected to be phased out next fiscal year, starting in April. With Saturday's launch, the country is seeking to confirm the rocket's ability to control its positioning and deploy satellites. In addition to satellite launches, the H3 launch vehicle can deliver materials and materials to the International Space Station and Gateway, an outpost in lunar orbit planned as part of the US-led Artemis space program.<sup>[iii]</sup>

Another microsatellite, TIRSAT, developed by Japan Space Systems and others, was also launched into orbit. According to JAXA, TIRSAT has an infrared thermal imaging camera that can monitor temperatures in factories around the world and help in supply chain monitoring.<sup>[iv]</sup>

It's worth noting that while Japan's H3 will offer flexible, reliable and cost-effective satellite transportation options, international competition is already intense, with SpaceX's reusable Falcon 9 rocket providing countries and businesses with cheaper options for getting their satellites into space. The H3 also competes with the European Ariane 6, which is expected to debut later this year.<sup>[v]</sup> And despite being a relatively small player in space in terms of number of launches, Japan is seeking to reinvigorate its program as it partners with ally the United States, all in the context of a global standoff with China. An active space race is currently unfolding between China, the United States and their allies, including working with private companies.<sup>[vi]</sup>

To summarize, we can say that Japan, in partnership with the United States, is actively resuming its space program and launching successful projects, which gives reasons to consider Japan as a new promising Asian actor in this market.

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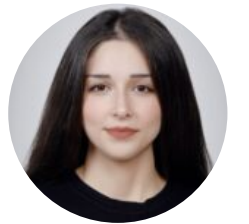
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## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# 16th BRICS Summit: The Search for Multilateralism



Zeynep Çağla  
ERİN

The 16th BRICS Summit, held in Kazan on October 22–24, 2024, represents a new turning point in global dynamics. Delegations from 36 countries participated in the summit, led by Russia. The symbolic and strategic importance of this summit was reinforced by Russian President Vladimir Putin's effort to define BRICS as a counterweight to Western-centered alliances such as the G7.<sup>[i]</sup> From the Western point of view, the capacity of this structure to act as a solid bloc is in question.

Daniel Fried, former United States (US) Coordinator for Sanctions Policy, is skeptical of the idea that BRICS can provide a counterbalance to the G7, arguing that despite the presence of economic powerhouses such as China and India, Russia does not play a strong enough role in this structure. Although the incompatibility emphasized by Fried undermines the practical value of the summit, the ideological divergence represented by the summit and its efforts to secure Russia's interests cannot be ignored.<sup>[ii]</sup>

The BRICS countries are acting in a multilateral approach to redress imbalances in the international system. This platform represents a social construction effort to protect and advance the interests of the Global South. In this context, social and economic solidarity is ensured under the BRICS umbrella, going beyond the power struggle of states proposed by realist theory. The emphasis on the need to reform Western-centered financial structures – such as the Bretton Woods institutions – is in line with BRICS' criticism of the need to restructure the international financial architecture. This is necessary to break the continued dominance of the current Western hegemony and provide a more equitable representation of the Global South.

The BRICS have been putting increasing pressure to reform the existing financial system, demanding a reorganization of global economic structures such as the Bretton Woods system. This system is seen as a structure dominated by Western-centered norms, deepening inequalities and triggering the debt crisis. Therefore, BRICS aims to build an alternative global financial order that serves the interests of the Global South.

In the context of economic developments, the BRICS summit discussed ways to create an alternative to the international payment system SWIFT. In this context, Russia's expulsion from the SWIFT system in 2022 with its attack on Ukraine has made the search for alternatives even more urgent. Russia, in particular, has been active in developing these alternatives in order to increase its financial independence and develop a sustainable solution in international trade. These efforts of BRICS can be considered as a reaction against the hegemonic structure in the international financial system and are seen as an important step in the construction of a multipolar world order.<sup>[iii]</sup>

Slow progress in achieving sustainable development goals is another issue that is in line with BRICS goals. Developing countries, in particular, face huge inequalities in access to technological advancements. At this point, BRICS aims to ensure the economic development of developing countries through digitalization by supporting the Global Digital Compact, which will bridge the digital divide. This is part of not only economic but also social construction efforts. Because access to digital technologies plays a key role in the economic and social development of societies.

The emphasis on international peace and security is also prominent in BRICS' strategic vision. The idea that the UN Security Council should have a representation that reflects the multipolarity of today's world coincides with the BRICS countries' demands for reform in the Security Council. It is important for the countries of the Global South to have a greater say in security mechanisms in order to encourage multipolarity by going beyond the Western-centered norms of the current structure. In this framework, BRICS countries advocate for the reform of the Security Council in order to ensure global peace and for developing countries to play an active role in this process.<sup>[iv]</sup>

BRICS advocates financial arrangements to support developing countries, especially for achieving sustainable development goals. On the issues of climate crisis and emission reduction, BRICS aims to strengthen internal solidarity by demanding that developed countries take more responsibility and increase financial support. These approaches represent a social construction effort to restructure the current Western-dominated system and take into account the priorities of the Global South in the fight against climate change.<sup>[v]</sup>

The momentum BRICS has gained in international relations in recent years has made the long-standing policy of ignoring Western powers unsustainable. This development was concretely demonstrated when the group welcomed four new members – Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – at its annual summit in Russia. BRICS' accelerated expansion, which has only accelerated since the admission of the Republic of South Africa in 2010, has been widely welcomed in circles that see it as an alternative to existing Western-led models of global governance. In particular, the growing criticism of Western policies and the need to restructure the Bretton Woods system are the main factors strengthening its global influence.

One of the members that has benefited the most from the expansion of BRICS has been India. The country has historically deep ties with the new BRICS members: Egypt stands out as a security and trade partner in the Middle East, while the UAE is one of India's most important trading partners. On the African continent, India has one of the longest-standing relations with Ethiopia. These ties allow India to consolidate its strategic interests in South Asia through the BRICS platform.

New Delhi is using the multilateral platform offered by BRICS as a strategic tool to remain outside the Western-led global politics. BRICS provides New Delhi with an opportunity to maintain its ties with Moscow. Moreover, India's cooperation with China under the BRICS umbrella provides an important diplomatic avenue to ease tensions between the two countries. The border patrol agreement between the two countries prior to the last summit can be seen as a step towards taking this cooperation to a more constructive level. These developments allow India to maintain its principle of strategic autonomy and enable New Delhi to position itself in a multipolar world order without entering into formal alliances with any bloc or country.<sup>[vi]</sup>

India's central role in the expanding BRICS structure reinforces the country's foreign policy approach based on the principle of strategic autonomy in the international arena. Through its strategic partnership with the United States, its active role in the Indo-Pacific Quadrilateral (QUAD), and its presence in BRICS, India is pursuing a balanced strategy to consolidate its position in a multipolar world. The long-term goals of BRICS complement India's diplomatic and economic engagement with Western-led institutions.<sup>[vii]</sup>

Another important detail about the summit is that Russia and China are developing joint projects in various sectors such as energy, industry, high technology and agriculture. In this context, Putin stated that this cooperation could contribute to the potential of creating a more balanced economic structure across the world. In the context of the expansion of BRICS and global balances, after the G7 froze \$300 billion of Russian assets, plans to use some of these funds to provide credit support to Ukraine came to the agenda.

Such economic sanctions from the US and Western countries are encouraging Russia and China to deepen their cooperation within BRICS, accelerating the search for a multipolar economic structure. This year, BRICS expanded to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. This strategic move gives BRICS a stronger platform for countries seeking alternative strategies to US dollar-based sanctions. The weaponization of the dollar and the sanctions against Russia have motivated BRICS member countries to build an independent economic structure. The deepening cooperation between Russia and China within BRICS has the potential to serve as a counterweight to US sanctions policies.

#### The decisions taken at the 16th BRICS Summit are as follows:

1. Encourage the use of local currencies,
2. Establishment of the BRICS Grain Exchange,
3. Supporting the BRICS R&D Vaccine Center,
4. Establish expanded cooperation in the fields of digital health and traditional medicine,
5. Increasing the visibility of the Global South,
6. Cooperation in the fight against terrorism,
7. Strengthening multilateralism,
8. Develop alternative financial systems,
9. Development of digital public goods,
10. Develop infrastructure projects while adhering to the principle of sovereignty,

In conclusion, the 16th BRICS Summit is an important turning point in global dynamics. This summit, organized under the presidency of Russia, not only strengthened diplomatic relations between the participating countries, but also became a step towards the redefinition of Russia in the international arena. The summit's discussions and decisions are a reflection of the BRICS countries' efforts to create an alternative to Western-centered orders.

The themes of cooperation and multilateralism emphasized by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres overlap with the ideological goals of BRICS. The construction of the global family proposed by Guterres is in line with BRICS' goals, which aim to give a greater voice to developing countries in particular. In this context, the BRICS platform promotes not only economic cooperation but also social solidarity.

The Summit underscores BRICS' demands for reform of the international financial system and the protection of the interests of the global south. More equitable representation of developing countries and steps to achieve sustainable development goals are among the strategic objectives of BRICS. The 16th BRICS Summit is not only a diplomatic meeting, but also an indication of BRICS' efforts to position itself in an environment where global power dynamics are being reshaped. As an actor with the potential to change the balances in international relations, BRICS aims to play an important role in shaping the future multipolar world order. In this process, India's strategic position within BRICS is critical for the reconstruction of multilateral relations and the balance of power.

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## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# COP29 in Azerbaijan: Significance and Impacts



Ekin GÜLLÜOĞLU

The Conference of the Parties (COP), an important milestone in the climate crisis and a sustainable world, will be held for the 29th time this year with the gathering of countries that have signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Each year, a different country hosts the COP, which is realized under the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change signed in 1992, and the Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and Finance signed in 2015.

The Conference of the Parties, acting together to stabilize the climate system at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference, will take place this year in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, on 11-22 November 2024, with the participation of thousands of professionals under the theme "In Solidarity for a Green World".<sup>[i]</sup>

Looking at the published agenda and the program of thematic days; presenting how far countries have progressed through the Paris Agreement, developing low greenhouse gas emission development strategies, creating incentives for low-carbon technologies, discussing ways to increase climate finance, ensuring collective progress, identifying sustainable digital transformations, solution proposals on food security, finding common points on financing urban climate actions, underlining the importance of providing aid to countries adversely affected by climate change, creating adaptation strategies and many similar topics.<sup>[ii]</sup> In addition, this conference is called the "COP on Finance" and the opportunity to align climate finance contributions to global needs is being pursued.<sup>[iii]</sup>

In particular, sensitization on climate justice is increasing year by year. Poor and developing countries, which are least responsible for emissions but most affected by climate change, are a major concern. Although about 4% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions come from Africa, it is also the continent most affected by the changes. Similarly, while the greenhouse gas emissions of island states are around 1%, these countries face the danger of extinction by being submerged underwater.<sup>[iv]</sup> It is considered contrary to the principle of "climate justice" for developed countries to leave developing countries alone with the consequences of the climate crisis while maintaining their economic growth.

Due to the presence of reserves in the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan's stance on sustainability is very important as the country's economy relies heavily on oil and gas exports. The EU is a major importer of Azerbaijani gas and in 2022 signed an agreement to double gas imports from Azerbaijan by 2027. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has said that he will "defend the right of other fossil fuel-rich countries to continue investment and production" because "the world needs it".<sup>[v]</sup> In addition, the country's goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2050 and increasing the country's renewable energy capacity to 30% were announced at COP29.<sup>[vi]</sup>

Living in a clean and healthy environment is a globally recognized human right. The climate crisis affects many other human rights, including the rights to life, housing, food, and water. Increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels, are trapping heat and causing severe consequences. In many countries, people are already being affected by this damage, and both the pace and scale of this will increase exponentially and variably in the foreseeable future.<sup>[vii]</sup>

That is why COP29, hosted by Azerbaijan, is a critical platform for strengthening international cooperation to tackle climate change. This meeting provides an opportunity for countries to update their climate targets, increase their emission reduction commitments, and reach agreements on issues such as financing.

The importance of COP29 can be summarized under the following headings:

1. Emission Targets: Countries are expected to review their commitments in the Paris Agreement and set new targets. This will contribute to efforts to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C.
2. Financing: Developing countries must be provided with the necessary finance to tackle climate change. COP29 could pave the way for new commitments in this regard.
3. Adaptation Strategies: Developing the necessary strategies to adapt to climate change will help countries become more resilient in this process.
4. International Cooperation: As climate change is a global problem, cooperation and solidarity among countries are vital to develop solutions.

This is why COP29 in Azerbaijan is considered an important milestone for climate action.

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## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Putin Urges China, Brazil and India to Act as Mediator



Dr. Cenk TAMER

On September 5, 2024, speaking at a panel discussion at the Russian Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, Russian President Vladimir Putin shared his views on which countries could lead the peace talks with Ukraine.<sup>[i]</sup> Putin said, “We respect our friends and partners, especially China, Brazil, and India, whom I believe are sincerely trying to resolve all issues related to this conflict. If Ukraine is willing to continue negotiations, I can do that.”<sup>[ii]</sup> Putin’s statements indicated that actors such as China, Brazil or India could become intermediaries in the Ukrainian peace negotiations.

Ukraine has recently stated that it will not negotiate directly with Russia, but is working with a number of intermediaries to help end the war. Among the countries contacted by Kyiv, some pro-Russian nations might include, and the aim is for these mediator countries to exert pressure on Russia, taking into account Ukraine’s 10-point peace plan.

Clarifying Putin’s call for mediation, Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that India could help facilitate a dialogue on the Ukraine issue. Underlining the existing “extremely constructive, even friendly relations” between Modi and Putin, Peskov noted that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi can freely communicate with all parties, especially Ukraine and the United States, and could guide them towards the negotiating table for a political solution.<sup>[iii]</sup>

It may be recalled that Modi visited Ukraine on August 23, 2024, where he pointed the parties to the war to the settlement table and conveyed India’s readiness to play an “active role” in restoring peace in the region. In these meetings, Modi emphasized that India has been on the side of peace since the beginning of the conflict and even wanted to personally contribute to the peaceful resolution of the crisis.<sup>[iv]</sup>

As a result of the initiatives of actors such as India and China, it is thought that Ukraine may warm to the settlement table. The visit of Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba to China in July 2024 to meet with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi can also be seen as a positive message. Ukraine may be willing to establish diplomatic relations with Russia and end the war under the intermediation of India and China.

However, Beijing refused to participate in the last summit in Switzerland in June, citing Moscow’s absence as the reason, saying that there was no equal participation. Ukraine’s goal is to persuade Beijing to attend peace summits and to support Ukraine’s peace formula. China, on the other hand, has expressed concerns that attending such peace conferences without equal participation from all parties would not be beneficial, and that these unilateral initiatives could further increase polarization.

While Beijing advocates for a fair and inclusive solution in Ukraine with equal participation, this position is perceived and criticized by the Western World as a pro-Russian position. However, China released its own peace plan to resolve the crisis in Ukraine on the first anniversary of the war and conducted shuttle diplomacy between Ukraine and Russia to implement this plan on the second anniversary of the war. These efforts were also appreciated by Ukraine, which called for China to exert more pressure on Russia.

China and Brazil attempted to organize an inclusive meeting on the margins of the UN General Assembly on 24–30 September 2024 to contribute to a peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, but its success was limited by the lack of interest of Western actors.

In his address to the UN General Assembly, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva emphasized the ongoing conflict, stating: “It is now clear that neither side can fully achieve its objectives through military means. At this critical moment, it is essential to create conditions conducive to the resumption of direct dialogue between the parties.”<sup>[v]</sup>

On September 27, 2024, on the margins of the UN in New York, the meeting of the “Friends for Peace” group on the Ukraine Crisis was attended mostly by countries of the Global South. More than 110 countries allegedly supported the six-point plan proposed by China and Brazil, designed to initiate dialogue and end hostilities. Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky has opposed the initiative of Brazil and China because he was not consulted in the drafting of these plans. This mediation effort by China and Brazil is seen as a “pro-Russian initiative” and criticized by the Western World, especially by Ukraine.<sup>[vi]</sup>

As the Russia-Ukraine War approaches its third year, initiatives for resolving the conflict are also divided between the Western world and Global South countries. It is evident from the division in the search for a solution that a two-sided bloc has emerged in the world, and that the Cold War-era polarization is being replicated today.

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[iv]. Ibid.

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## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# IHL and Cyber Warfare; Are the Current Laws Adequate?

Jameela RIZWAN

There is an ongoing debate about the adequacy of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) when it comes to applying to cyber operations in armed conflicts. Challenges in applying IHL to cyber warfare stem from cyberspace's distinct characteristics, such as concerns about proportionality and differentiating between attacks, despite similarities with traditional warfare. The Tallinn Manual offers advice without legal power, prompting some specialists to call for new laws focusing on cyber warfare<sup>[i]</sup>. In the end, although IHL can be applied, its success may need more explanation and adjustments to tackle the intricacies of contemporary cyber activities.<sup>[ii]</sup>

### The Characteristics of Cyber Warfare

Cyber warfare entails using digital attacks by a state or non-state actor to disrupt, degrade, or destroy critical infrastructure, military operations, or communication systems. Cyber operations are unlike traditional warfare because they are non-lethal, posing a challenge for categorizing them within current IHL standards that focus on regulating conflict involving physical harm and casualties.

### Critical attributes of Cyber Warfare

**Lack of Visibility:** Cyberattacks may be initiated without revealing the identity of the attackers, making it difficult to identify them.

**Non-Physical Impact:** While certain cyberattacks can result in direct harm (such as power grid disruptions causing civilian casualties), others may simply disrupt systems without causing immediate physical damage.

**Swift Escalation:** Cyber attacks can rapidly turn into large-scale military conflicts, blurring the distinction between peace and war.

These attributes present a difficulty for IHL, which typically distinguishes between fighters and non-combatants and restricts acceptable methods of war based on the principles of distinction and proportionality.

### Challenges to International Humanitarian Law in the realm of Cyber Warfare

#### 1. The Principle of Distinction:

The principle of distinction mandates that parties in a conflict differentiate between military targets and civilian objects. In cyber warfare, the difficulty lies in the interconnected networks relied upon by military and civilian infrastructures, such as telecommunications and power grids. Attacks targeting items with both civilian and military applications.

#### 2. Proportionality and Collateral Damage:

IHL requires that the harm to civilians and civilian objects must not be disproportionately in relation to the anticipated military advantage. Assessing proportionality in cyber warfare is challenging due to the potential for cascading effects from an attack on a single system (like financial institutions), which could cause significant economic or societal damage.

#### Current IHL Framework and Cyber Warfare

Despite facing these challenges, some individuals believe that the fundamental principles of IHL- distinction, proportionality, and necessity can be applied to cyber warfare. Primary initiatives aimed at narrowing the divide between international humanitarian law and cyber warfare consist of:

#### 1. The Tallinn Manual:

The Tallinn Manual on Cyber Warfare applies established IHL principles to cyber operations as an academic study, without legal binding. It proposes that cyber activities classified as an "armed attack" should be controlled by the same rules that regulate traditional military operations. Nevertheless, the manual acknowledges deficiencies in existing legislation, particularly concerning cyber activities of a less severe nature that do not reach the level of armed conflict.<sup>[iii]</sup>

#### 2. The Geneva Conventions and Traditional International Humanitarian Law:

The Geneva Conventions do not specifically discuss cyber warfare, but traditional IHL provides some direction. In theory, cyber operations can adhere to the principles of proportionality and distinction. Yet, the difficulty is in understanding how these principles relate to online actions that may not result in immediate tangible outcomes.<sup>[iv]</sup>

#### Shortcomings of IHL

#### 1. Describing Cyber Attacks within the Context of Warfare:

IHL has not defined what counts as a "cyberattack" during wartime. The point at which a cyber operation qualifies as an "armed attack" according to IHL is unclear, leading to uncertainty about its classification under IHL.

#### 2. Non-State Actors and Proxy Conflict:

The emergence of non-state actors and proxy groups in cyber warfare poses substantial legal obstacles. It is challenging to directly attribute actions to a state due to the involvement of non-state actors in numerous cyber operations. Presently, international humanitarian law faces difficulty in distinguishing between state and non-state actors in the cyber realm.

#### The Effects of Cyber Warfare on humanitarian efforts

The main focus of IHL is the safeguarding of civilians from physical harm. Still, cyber warfare can negatively impact civilians by interrupting critical services like healthcare, water, and food supply, without directly causing physical harm. Under the current IHL, indirect effects are not adequately controlled because the focus is on direct harm and its physical outcomes.

### Conclusion

Though International Humanitarian Law principles lay the groundwork for governing cyber warfare, they fall short in fully tackling the distinctive obstacles presented by the digital aspect of contemporary conflict. An international agreement is needed to define what counts as a cyberattack during times of war, including determining when cyber operations can be considered "armed attacks" according to International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

The fast-paced advancement of cyber operations requires the creation of precise legal standards and improved definitions under the IHL framework to guarantee adequate protection for civilians and civilian infrastructure. The global community needs to collaborate in updating and broadening the scope of International Humanitarian Law to adapt to the changing nature of cyber warfare.

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