



ANKASAM

bulletin

13 January 2025
ISSUE: 2025/2



China–Russia Military Cooperation

03

China–Laos Relations and Regional Power Balances

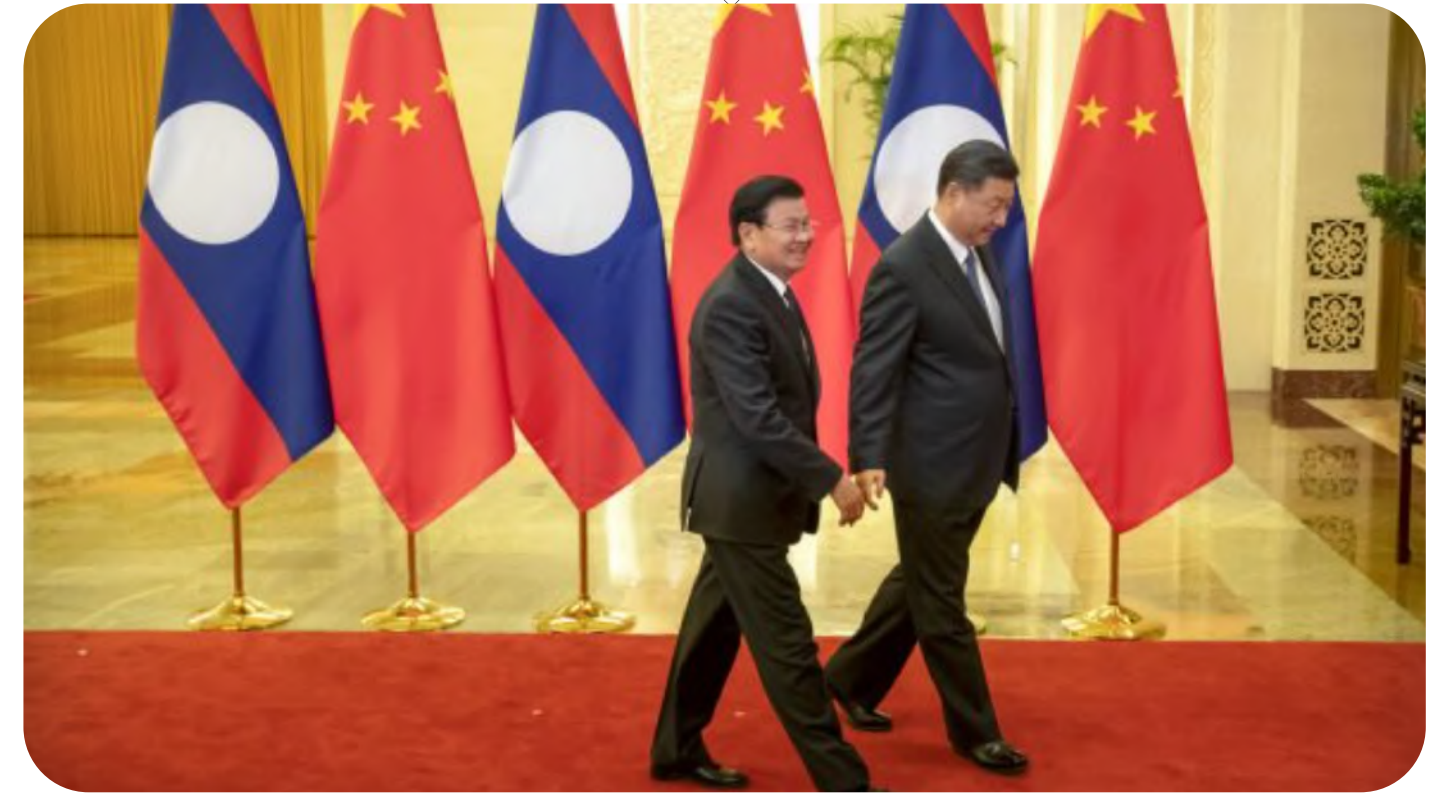
26

Paraguay’s Search for Balance Between China and Taiwan

CONTENTS

ANKASAM ANALYSIS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>03 China-Laos Relations and Regional Power Balances
Simay GÜZEL</p> <p>05 Energy Transition in 2024: Geopolitical Tensions and Nuclear Security
Ömer Faruk PEKGÖZ</p> <p>07 Fiji-China Closer Ties: Power Competition in the Pacific
Zeki Talustan GÜLTEN</p> <p>09 East-West Divide in German Politics
Erdem Baran ALKAN</p> <p>12 The Future of the Amazon: Reflections on Global Climate and the Environment
Ali Caner İNCESU</p> <p>15 China-Russia Military Cooperation
Zeki Talustan GÜLTEN</p> | <p>18 Europe's Readiness for Potential Developments in the Russia-Ukraine Conflict
Gamze BAL</p> <p>21 Lai Ching-te's Pacific Tour
Simay GÜZEL</p> <p>24 A Strong Ally in Central Asia: Japan
Şeyma KIZILAY</p> <p>26 Paraguay's Search for Balance Between China and Taiwan
Ali Caner İNCESU</p> <p>29 Xi Jinping's Thought on Culture
Zeynep Çağla ERİN</p> <p>31 Trump's Northern Strategy: Canada and Greenland
Ali Caner İNCESU</p> |
|--|--|



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

China-Laos Relations and Regional Power Balances



Simay GÜZEL

Laos, as a landlocked country in Southeast Asia, holds a strategic position in the global power struggle due to its geographical location and limited economic resources. Like other Asia-Pacific countries, Laos has become an important player in the competition between China's economic influence and the United States' (US) power strategies. In particular, China's Belt and Road Initiative projects and the US's policies on environmental protection and human rights have made Laos a key point in the regional balance. The evolution of China's influence over Laos, the presence of the US in the country, and the roles played by regional actors such as Vietnam have shaped the power dynamics in the region.

The relationship between China and Laos is not only economic but also deeply rooted in historical, cultural, and political dimensions. In recent years, China has become one of Laos' most important strategic partners, and during this period, the two countries have developed cooperation projects based on a "win-win" understanding. It can be said that the Belt and Road Initiative has provided a significant opportunity to accelerate Laos' economic development. Laos has made important steps toward modernization through China's infrastructure projects. One of the most notable projects, the China-Laos Railway, has not only enhanced Laos' regional trade integration but also alleviated the economic disadvantages stemming from the country's landlocked position.[1] Through this project, China has connected Laos to the Southeast Asian transportation network and contributed to the region's economic development. The project has stimulated the growth of sectors such as agriculture and tourism, thereby increasing Laos' geoeconomic importance in the region.

Chinese Premier Li Qiang's visit to Laos on October 11, 2024, highlighted efforts to deepen the economic cooperation between the two countries.[2] During this visit, a series of agreements were signed to expand projects in agriculture, energy, and infrastructure. Based on these agreements, it is expected that the China-Laos Railway will enhance economic integration and increase trade volumes. These types of investments not only reinforce China's regional influence but also make significant contributions to Laos' development goals. The work carried out by the External Relations Department of the Communist Party of China also demonstrates China's determination to strengthen its political ties with Laos.[3] Such initiatives deepen the relationship between Laos and China not only at the economic level but also within a political and ideological framework. China's strategy aims to position Laos as not only an economic partner but also an ally in regional and international affairs.

ANKASAM IN PRESS

- 34** **Media**

JOURNALS

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

Journal of Regional Studies

China's influence in Laos is not limited to economic investments. Xi Jinping's leadership diplomacy, known as "Xiplomacy," aims to strengthen the political and cultural ties between the two countries. In this context, high-level meetings and agreements between Chinese and Laotian leaders have enabled the development of policies that promote mutual interests.[4] China's comprehensive support to Laos seeks to enhance the country's economic independence and improve the living standards of its people.

On the other hand, the United States has pursued a strategy based on soft power elements to increase its influence in Laos. Investments in areas such as environmental protection, human rights, and education aim to enhance the impact of the US on the Laotian people and government.[5] US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to Laos reflected the United States' efforts to develop diplomatic relations with the country. During Blinken's visit, opportunities for cooperation in areas such as human rights, environmental protection, and education were discussed.[6]

The United States highlights democratic values and environmental sustainability projects to increase its influence in Laos. However, this strategy is unable to provide a sufficiently concrete solution to compete with China's large-scale economic investments. The US approach towards Laos can be seen less as an alternative to China's economic projects and more as a strategy to balance China's influence in the region. In this context, Antony Blinken's meeting with China's Foreign Minister in Laos can be interpreted as a direct indication of the two superpowers' struggle to protect their interests in the region. Furthermore, the US presence in Laos is not limited to economic or diplomatic competition. Laos can be seen as part of the US's Indo-Pacific strategy to counter China's influence.[7]

Laos-Vietnam relations represent another key aspect to consider within the context of the China-US competition. There is a historical connection between Laos and Vietnam dating back to the Cold War years. This relationship serves as an important balancing factor for Laos in the context of the China-US rivalry. It is noted that Vietnam's influence over Laos helps balance China's increasing economic influence in the region and indirectly contributes to Laos' relations with the United States.[8]

Vietnam maintains strong ties with Laos, particularly through security and infrastructure cooperation. This demonstrates that Laos is not only balancing its relationships between China and the US but also with regional actors such as Vietnam. The Vietnam-Laos relationship also supports the United States' strategic goals in Laos. The US's anti-China policies, combined with Vietnam's influence over Laos, emerge as a factor that mitigates China's strategic dominance in the region. In this context, Laos' relationship with Vietnam should be seen as a crucial power-balancing mechanism in the China-US competition.

In conclusion, Laos emerges as a strategic partner closely monitored by both China and the United States. While China increases its influence over Laos through economic investments and political cooperation, the US focuses more on soft power elements to balance China's influence. However, the most noticeable difference between the two countries' approaches lies in China's modernization of Laos' infrastructure through concrete development projects, directly supporting its growth. In contrast, the US aims to support Laos in areas like democratic values and environmental sustainability. China's approach offers a long-term and comprehensive development strategy, while the US's strategy remains more limited in scope. This situation has led Laos to pursue deeper collaborations with China in foreign policy, while ensuring that the US remains an important balancing factor in the region. Contributions from regional actors such as Vietnam further support this balancing policy. In the future, how Laos will strike a balance between these two powers will play a critical role in shaping regional geopolitical dynamics.

[1] "China-Laos Bri cooperation a successful model for participating countries", Global Times, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299858.shtml>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[2] "China willing to deepen all-round cooperation in all fields with Laos-Chinese premier", Xinhua, https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202410/12/content_WS6709551c6d0868f4e8ebbf.html, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[3] "Liu Jianchao meets with Thongsavanh Phomvihane, Minister of the International Department of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party", International Department of Central Committee of CPC, https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/bzhd/202411/t20241115_165967.html, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[4] Subramanian, S., "Laos and 'Xiplomacy'", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2022/10/laos-and-xiplomacy/>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[5] Hunt, L., "Leadership change in Laos: A shift away from China?", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/01/leadership-change-in-laos-a-shift-away-from-china/>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[6] France-Presse, A., "Blinken arrives in Laos, set for talks with Chinese foreign minister", Voice of America, <https://www.voanews.com/a/blinken-arrives-in-laos-set-for-talks-with-chinese-foreign-minister/7715061.html>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

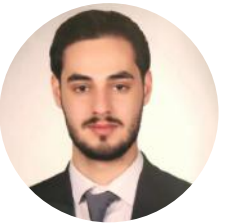
[7] "China-Laos Bri cooperation a successful model for participating countries", opcit, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[8] "Recalibrating the Laos-Vietnam special relationship for the 21st Century", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2024/08/recalibrating-the-laos-vietnam-special-relationship-for-the-21st-century/>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Energy Transition in 2024: Geopolitical Tensions and Nuclear Security



Ömer Faruk PEKGÖZ

The year 2024 has gone down in history as a critical period in which transformational effects are experienced in the field of energy, changes are increasing and energy geopolitics is being reshaped. Investments in renewable energy have intensified, the reuse of nuclear energy has increased and interest in artificial intelligence has increased. While global geopolitical tensions shape energy dynamics, they have also become the pioneer and trigger of energy technologies.

In this period when the role of renewable energy continues to be discussed, it is determined that one of the biggest countries that stands out is China. It is seen that the largest share in clean energy investments, with 680 billion dollars, comes from China, followed by the European Union (EU) and the United States of America (USA). It is seen that these three components constitute 60% of the total global capacity in the global clean energy transformation.[1]

It can be said that all kinds of R&D development and technological studies to be carried out in energy play a more key role in energy security than geopolitics. Especially in the field of raw materials, China's economic paradigms on the super commodity cycle determine the strengthening of the global demand side, supply and, more importantly, forecasts. However, while the world's globalization efforts are being dragged into failure with increasing migration crises, the withdrawal of academic studies to national borders may prevent the spread of technological development to the global level.

On the other hand, the increasing use of energy storage signals that countries have started new energy economy models and will be the leading actor of the development economy in the coming years. The development and introduction of advanced energy storage systems such as lithium-ion batteries and network-scale energy storage solutions will increase the resilience of energy systems. It will help create a more stable economic environment by reducing the risk of energy supply disruptions by balancing the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources.

Another area, the opening of hydrogen, contributes to supply security with new alternatives. Focusing on green hydrogen production will open up new industrial sectors, especially in regions such as Europe, Japan and the Middle East. This will provide new supply chains, job creation and economic diversification. The potential of hydrogen as a clean energy carrier for industries such as steel, cement and heavy transport will reduce carbon footprints and support the growth of global industrial economies.

Major companies in the oil and gas sector have taken significant steps to increase clean energy investments in order to adapt to the energy transition. In 2024, these investments reached \$30 billion, approximately 50% of which was directed to mergers and acquisitions. This shows that transformation efforts in the sector are not limited to financial support, but also include strategic partnerships and reorganization of company assets. Despite this increase in absolute values, clean energy investments account for only 4% of total capital expenditures. This rate reveals that the sector has not yet reached the desired level of prioritizing the energy transition.

With real figures, it is seen that the world is still far from the 2050 targets. It is not even remote that the global demand for natural gas will increase, especially with the transformation of natural gas infrastructures, where oil and gas will continue to lead. However, the peak consumption of fossil fuels expected in 2030 will increase the dependence of countries on these resources in the future and will solidify the demand for fossil fuels. Here, the dominance of liquefied natural gas (LNG), one of the most important components of natural gas, in the energy sector is seen to be ahead of most fuels as of 2024.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) analyzes this situation and states that the risk of overinvestment casts a shadow over the sector. The world must act quickly to achieve net zero emissions targets by 2050 and combat climate change. The energy transition is of critical importance not only for the purpose of achieving climate targets, but also for maintaining economic efficiency in the sector and preventing financial losses. The energy transition is of critical importance not only for the purpose of achieving climate targets, but also for maintaining economic efficiency in the sector and preventing financial losses. Apart from this, it also shows that countries are leaving welfare economies behind and moving to security economies within the framework of geopolitical tensions experienced in 2024. For example, the fact that the "energy supply security" file is now being processed among the articles of the Munich Security Conference is cited as evidence.[2]

On the other hand, it is seen that countries are returning to the capacity increase of nuclear energy as a real policy. In 2024, 31 countries committed to triple the global nuclear energy capacity by 2050. The USA plans to increase its capacity by 200 GW by 2050 in line with the goal of at least tripling its current nuclear capacity.[3] It is expected that large nuclear energy projects will start in developing countries in the coming days. Moreover, the installation of new generation reactors in these countries may be a sign that modern nuclear energy will rise from developing countries. In particular, Turkey's statements on the installation of SMR (Small Modular Reactor) are evidence for the given assessment.[4]

The year 2024 stands out as a period in which major challenges continue on a global scale in terms of energy security. While the increasing conflicts in the Middle East and the Russo-Ukrainian War are among the main factors threatening energy supply, this situation has made energy security risks even more apparent worldwide. Although the immediate effects of the global energy crisis have partially diminished in 2023, the risk of interruptions in energy supply is still high and increasing.

Experience in recent years has shown that energy supply dependencies can quickly become fragile. This lesson applies not only to traditional fossil fuels, but also to clean energy technologies. As of 2020, more than 200 trade measures (mostly restrictive) affecting clean energy technologies have been introduced worldwide, compared to only 40 in the previous five years. This highlights the increasingly fragmented nature of clean energy markets, increasing the fragility of supply chains.

Energy security is gaining more importance every year as a core mission of the IEA. As the impacts of climate change once again highlight the need for clean energy transitions, it is becoming clear how these transitions will shape energy security. More efficient and cleaner energy systems have the potential to reduce energy security risks. However, this requires not only independence from traditional energy sources, but also the resilient clean energy supply chains.

Finally, it is expected that Chris Wright, who is expected to be the Minister of Energy in the cabinet formed during Trump's second term after the US elections, will implement Trump's energy dominance doctrine in terms of fossil fuels. It is observed that more LNG is formed on the supply side, and that strong signals are given that the policies of preserving the US leadership in oil production will continue. In particular, the EU's increasing need for US LNG may pave the way for the market to be expanded in this area and to open up to Asia via Turkey. However, it is inevitable that the US will compete with China, which has become stronger in oil and gas during the Biden period, in return for the energy steps it will take in this area.

[1]"Clean energy soars but IEA warns of 'fault line' in World Energy Investment 2024", IIGCC, <https://shorturl.at/ibUtg>, (Access Date: 30.12.2024).

[2]"Munich Security Report 2024", MSC, https://securityconference.org/en/publications/munich-security-report-2024/?utm_source=chatgpt.com, (Access Date: 30.12.2024).

[3]World Energy Outlook 2024: The IEA predicts continued nuclear growth until 2050", Foro Nuclear, <https://shorturl.at/jdlVc>, (Access Date: 30.12.2024).

[4]"Modular Reactor Technologies: The Future of Nuclear in Türkiye", NBP, <https://shorturl.at/mXM0T>, (Access Date: 30.12.2024).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Fiji-China Closer Ties: Power Competition in the Pacific



Zeki Talustan GÜLTEN

Fiji Leader Sitiveni Rabuka stated that he hopes to cooperate with Chinese President Xi Jinping to upgrade his country's shipyards and ports. Sitiveni Rabuka, who is more distant from China compared to the previous leader Frank Bainimarama, visited Canberra in October 2023 and emphasized that "it is more comfortable to work with traditional friends like Australia.".[1]

Sitiveni emphasized the economic ties his country has built with China over 50 years of diplomatic relations. Meeting with Xi Jinping during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in San Francisco, the Fijian leader stated that China's assistance is vital for Fiji's post-COVID-19 economic recovery.[2]

Sitiveni stated that China's Belt and Road Initiative is aligned with Fiji's development agenda and that China has contributed to a series of grants and aid packages. Stating that the main focus of sustainable economic growth in Fiji is the comprehensive upgrading of infrastructure, Sitiveni used the following expressions:[3]

"Considering China's globally competitive shipyard capacity, I expect a potential collaboration with China on this matter."

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning stated in her daily briefing that Fiji is a good friend and partner, and that they have previously cooperated on infrastructure. Mao Ning said, "Our goal is to support the improvement of people's lives and to help them achieve development and prosperity."[4]

Fiji's move coincides with a period when China is trying to expand its soft power in the Pacific. In 2022, China made an ambitious attempt to sign a comprehensive agreement with 10 Pacific countries, covering a wide range of areas from security to fishing. However, this initiative raised concerns throughout the Pacific immediately after the Solomon Islands signed a security pact with China.

Fiji Leader Sitiveni's statements regarding the pursuit of cooperation with China can be seen as a reflection of a strategy to diversify international relations in order to meet the country's economic needs and achieve development goals. This situation indicates various strategic and economic dimensions.

As Sitiveni emphasized, the foundation of Fiji's pursuit of cooperation with China lies in economic needs and development goals. It has been noted that especially during the economic recovery process following the Covid-19 pandemic, the aid provided by China to Fiji and the support under the Belt and Road Initiative hold critical importance for Fiji. This underscores China's contributions to regional development projects and indicates that Fiji is seeking external support to strengthen its economic independence.

Sitiveni has been inclined to establish closer ties with China recently. This indicates a shift in regional geopolitical balances. Especially China's efforts to increase its influence in the Pacific region reflect the attempts of countries in the region to adapt to this shift in balance. Fiji, under the leadership of Sitiveni, intends to maintain its relationships with traditional allies while increasing cooperation with China. This indicates Fiji's multi-faceted foreign policy strategy.

The cooperation that the Fijian leader plans to undertake with China is particularly focused on upgrading port facilities and shipyards. This can be considered not only as strengthening infrastructure but also as a strategic move towards enhancing maritime transportation and trade. Emphasizing China's globally competitive shipyard capacity indicates that this cooperation holds significant potential for trade and economic growth.

The cooperation between China and Fiji has the potential to deepen the global power struggle in the Pacific region. This is happening in harmony with China's infrastructure investments and economic collaborations with other island countries in the region. China's increasing presence in this region may lead to a shift in regional power dynamics and heighten competition with other major powers.

In conclusion, Fiji Leader Sitiveni's pursuit of cooperation with China represents a strategic effort to support the country's economic development goals. However, how this approach will interact with regional and global political dynamics and how Fiji will find its place within the framework of foreign policy will become clearer with future developments.

[1] "Fiji's Leader Says He Hopes to Work With China in Upgrading His Country's Shipyards and Ports", Associated Press News, <https://apnews.com/article/fiji-china-pacific-shipyards-ports-xi-rabuka-6a0c6ed5a8e72f943b2c820cce886a67>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

East-West Divide in German Politics

Erdem Baran ALKAN

After German Chancellor Olaf Scholz failed to receive a vote of confidence in the Federal Parliament (Bundestag) on December 16, Germany entered an early election process. In November, disagreements over aid to Ukraine were among the main reasons behind the breakdown of the tripartite coalition. The deepening government crisis in Germany is strengthening the opposition's position. Among the opposition groups gaining momentum recently, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party is at the forefront.

The AfD (Alternative for Germany) is becoming a reflection of the rising right in the country.[1]. Founded in 2013, the party initially took a stance against immigration from the Middle East and later gained popularity with rhetoric surrounding violence attributed to migrants. The party enjoys significant popularity, especially among young people, and has attracted attention in German politics due to its radical ideology and controversial positions. In fact, its youth organizations have been labelled as "extremist" by the Federal Government and placed under surveillance.[2].

Following their relative underperformance in the 2019 elections, the AfD made significant gains in recent regional elections, particularly in eastern cities such as Saxony and Thuringia, achieving vote increases unseen since the Nazi era. This, combined with the further weakening of the Traffic Light Coalition, has positioned the AfD as a destabilizing factor in German politics. The party has skillfully leveraged key events such as the Russia-Ukraine War, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Energy Crisis to bolster its influence. Since the 1990s, growing anti-American sentiment has found expression through the AfD, enabling the party to resonate with diverse segments of the population.

The AfD's rise, especially in eastern Germany, is not surprising. The formation and evolution of political cultures are long-term processes, heavily shaped by historical events. The ongoing tension between eastern and western Germany reflects these deep-seated cultural and political divides.

Before their unification through the efforts of Otto von Bismarck in 1871 and the crowning of Wilhelm I in Paris, the German principalities were fragmented. Among them, Prussia was the dominant power, primarily located in what is now eastern Germany.^[3] This dominance can be viewed as the first step in the political-cultural divide between eastern and western Germany. However, the true division occurred after World War II. In the lead-up to the war, the Weimar Republic ended in 1933 with Hitler's rise to power. Germany then embarked on a path of continuous industrialization coupled with a mercantilist economic model.

The rise of Nazism and the devastation caused by World War II led to significant disputes over the postwar future of Germany. The country's territories were divided among the victorious powers – France, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet Union. With the onset of the Cold War after 1949, this division became more pronounced. The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was established under the control of the United States, France, and the United Kingdom, while the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) came under Soviet control. As a result, the early postwar years were marked by territorial struggles, and efforts to purge radicals from domestic politics were not highly effective.

This process in history is known as "denazification." After 1949, it was carried out in sharply different ways in the western and eastern parts of the country. The process itself was fraught with internal conflicts. Although there were initial failures in West Germany, denazification was implemented more harshly there compared to East Germany. In West Germany, the release of many Nazi criminals, who were not sentenced to death in the Nuremberg Trials, and attempts to undermine these proceedings, including the Auschwitz Trials, by higher authorities contributed to the initial failure of the denazification process. Later, the process was accelerated with the support of the Western powers in the country, along with contributions from pro-European integration Chancellor Konrad Adenauer.

In contrast, the nearly forty years of Soviet Union dominance in East Germany led to the formation of a political culture there that was distinctly different from the West. During this period, strict governance prevailed, and a climate of fear developed among the population. However, the key issue was the appointments made by the Soviet Union in East Germany. While the denazification process in West Germany was carried out, it was almost nonexistent in East Germany, remaining limited to bureaucratic levels. There were even instances where some military officials, whether or not they had previously been members of the Nazi paramilitary organization SS (Schutzstaffel), were still included in the East German ranks.

According to Dr. Johanness Kiess, Deputy Director of the Else Frenkel-Brunswik Institute at Leipzig University, East Germany, which reunified with West Germany in 1990, sought to benefit from the capitalist world. Alongside the flow of capital and infrastructure development, many innovative projects were designed. However, many factories and workplaces were closed, leading to unemployment. As a result, the post-reunification process has been a complex and controversial one, open to criticism.^[4]

Today, the reason the AfD mainly finds support in eastern Germany is due to the region's historical processes, particularly after World War II. In the country, several extremist factions, including neo-Nazis, have emerged, with the majority being in the east. The fact that, for the first time since the Nazi era, a right-wing party has become the leading party in Thüringen, located in eastern Germany, explains this connection.^[5] The political conflicts the country has been facing in recent times also contribute to the rise of this connection. This situation, which could also be detrimental to the European Union, will undoubtedly cause concern among the left-wing in Europe. However, the argument that the entire country will be influenced by this faction seems questionable. Ultimately, according to polls, the majority of the population holds negative views about the party.

[1] Le Monde (September 2, 2024), "The worrying rise of Germany's far right.", https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2024/09/02/the-worrying-rise-of-germany-s-far-right_6724463_23.html, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[2] Benson, Robert (October 30, 2024), "A Bellwether for Trans-Atlantic Democracy: The Rise of the German Far Right." CAP20, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/a-bellwether-for-trans-atlantic-democracy-the-rise-of-the-german-far-right/>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[3] Baker, Nick & Quince Annabelle (November 13, 2024), "What's behind the rise of the far right in Germany?", ABCNEWS, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-11-14/far-right-alternative-for-germany-afd/104573296>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[4] Ibid.

[5] Hawes, James (September 7, 2024), "Everyone is terrified of a far-right return in Germany. Here's why it won't happen.", The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/sep/07/everyone-is-terrified-of-a-far-right-return-in-germany-heres-why-it-wont-happen>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Future of the Amazon: Reflections on Global Climate and the Environment

Ali Caner İNCESU

The Brazilian National Institute for Space Research (INPE) stated in a press release on November 7, 2024, that 6,288 square kilometers of forest were destroyed in the Amazon between August 2023 and July 2024.^[1] The Amazon rainforest has formed one of the most critical parts of the world's ecosystem. Covering an area of approximately 5.5 million square kilometers, these forests harbor 10% of the world's wildlife.^[2] The Amazon, often referred to as the "lungs of the world," plays a vital role in annual carbon absorption and oxygen production. However, in recent years, this natural balance has been severely disrupted, particularly due to deforestation and construction activities.

The destruction of the Amazon rainforest has affected not only regional ecosystems but also global climate systems. The expansion of agricultural land, deforestation, and industrial projects have been among the main factors threatening this unique ecosystem. The losses in the Amazon have increased carbon emissions, strengthening the greenhouse effect, and have also led to irreversible consequences for the region's water cycle.

The Amazon rainforest can be described as one of the indispensable elements of the world's ecosystem. These forests play a critical role in regulating the annual carbon cycle. According to research, the Amazon rainforest has helped reduce the impact of greenhouse gases by absorbing approximately 2 billion tons of carbon from the atmosphere.^[3] Forests have served as a natural buffer against global climate change thanks to this characteristic.

However, the effects of the Amazons are not only vital for the carbon cycle but also for the water cycle. The dense vegetation in the region has released large amounts of water vapor into the atmosphere, directly affecting South America's rainfall patterns. The moisture provided by the Amazon forests has created a water cycle known as "flying rivers," which has supported the continent's critical hydrological systems for agriculture and energy production.

Agricultural and livestock activities have emerged as a primary cause of the destruction of the Amazon rainforest. Especially soybean production and cattle ranches have accelerated deforestation. A study conducted in Brazil has shown that 80% of the deforested areas are allocated for livestock activities.^[4] In addition, global timber trade and illegal logging have been among the other significant factors contributing to forest loss.

Industrialization and construction activities have also posed another threat to the Amazons. Especially mining projects have caused serious environmental destruction in the region. According to research, due to mining activities in the Amazon basin, gold mining activities have led to the disappearance of 1.4 million hectares of forest from 2001 to 2020.^[5]

The destruction of the Amazon rainforest has created environmental and climatic impacts worldwide. Firstly, deforestation has severely reduced carbon absorption in the atmosphere and has caused the region to cease being a carbon sink, turning it into a source of carbon emissions. Studies have shown that deforestation causes approximately 2.6 billion tons of carbon emissions per year.^[6] This situation is increasing the greenhouse gas effect, which accelerates global temperature rise.

The effects on the water cycle have also been quite devastating. The Amazon has played a vital role in regulating the amount of rainfall in the region. However, deforestation has increased the risk of regional drought and jeopardized the sustainability of water resources. This situation has directly affected the agricultural sector, threatening food security as well. For example, one of Brazil's largest agricultural regions, Mato Grosso, has faced decreasing rainfall amounts due to the destruction of the Amazon forests.

The impacts on biodiversity are another serious consequence of the destruction. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), approximately 10,000 animal species living in the Amazon rainforest are endangered due to habitat loss.^[7] This situation has affected not only the ecosystem but also sectors that directly contribute to human health, such as the global pharmaceutical industry.

The destruction of the Amazon rainforest has not only been limited to environmental impacts but has also caused serious problems in socioeconomic and cultural areas. The indigenous people in the region have been forced to leave their habitats due to deforestation. According to United Nations data, approximately 1 million indigenous people living in the Amazon are losing their habitats every day.^[8] This situation threatens the economic independence and cultural identity of indigenous communities.

Additionally, the destruction of the Amazon rainforest has shaken regional economic balances. Sectors such as tourism based on forest resources and sustainable agriculture have suffered greatly. The annual economic benefit derived from the ecosystem services of the Amazon rainforest is approximately 8 billion dollars.[9]. However, deforestation significantly reduces this potential.

The protection of the Amazon rainforest is an issue that requires coordination not only at the regional level but also at the global level. In this regard, it is necessary to regulate the activities that cause deforestation. The adoption of sustainable methods in the agriculture and mining sectors will reduce the environmental impacts in this area.

At the international level, it is necessary to increase financial support mechanisms for the protection of the Amazon forests. It is important for developed countries to cooperate in the fight against deforestation by offering financial incentives to Amazon countries. Additionally, projects that support the economic independence of local populations in the region will contribute to these communities' resilience against deforestation.

In conclusion, the future of the Amazon rainforest is a shared responsibility not only of the regional countries but of all humanity. The measures taken to protect the forests will play a critical role in combating global climate change. Therefore, decisive steps must be taken to protect the Amazons for a sustainable future.

[1]. Meyerfeld, Bruno. "Deforestation of the Amazon at a Nine-Year Low", Le Monde, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/environment/article/2024/11/09/deforestation-of-the-amazon-at-a-nine-year-low_6732182_114.html, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).

[2]. World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). "Amazon Rainforest Facts", WWF UK, <https://www.wwf.org.uk/where-we-work/amazon>, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).

[3]. World Economic Forum. "Deforestation in the Amazon Is Causing Parts of It to Release More Carbon than It Absorbs." World Economic Forum, Feb. 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2020/02/amazon-deforestation-carbon-sustainability-climate-change/>, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).

4 Skidmore, Marin Elisabeth, et al. "Cattle Ranchers and Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon: Production, Location, and Policies." *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 68, May 2021, article 102280. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959378021000595>, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).

5 World Resources Institute. "Mining Is Increasingly Pushing into Critical Rainforests and Protected Areas." World Resources Institute, <https://www.wri.org/insights/how-mining-impacts-forests>, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).

6 Ritchie, Hannah. "Carbon Emissions from Deforestation: Are They Driven by Domestic Demand or International Trade?" *Our World in Data*, <https://ourworldindata.org/carbon-deforestation-trade>, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).

7 Eisenhammer, Stephen, and Oliver Griffin. "Over 10,000 Species Risk Extinction in Amazon, Says Landmark Report." Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/over-10000-species-risk-extinction-amazon-says-landmark-report-2021-07-14/>, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).

8 United Nations Environment Programme. "In the Heart of the Amazon, a Forest-Friendly Model for Development Takes Root." United Nations Environment Programme, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/heart-amazon-forest-friendly-model-development-takes-root>, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).

9 Brown, Sarah. "A Standing Amazon Rainforest Could Create an \$8 Billion Bioeconomy: Study." Mongabay, <https://news.mongabay.com/2023/07/a-standing-amazon-rainforest-could-create-an-8-billion-bioeconomy-study/>, (Accessed Date: 12.15.2024).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

China-Russia Military Cooperation



Zeki Talustan GÜLTEN

Russian President Vladimir Putin has consistently underscored the necessity of enhancing military cooperation between Moscow and Beijing, particularly in areas such as military satellites and other advanced defense technologies. In recent statements, Putin has emphasized the increasing strength of defense ties between the two allies and highlighted the significance of further developing these military collaborations. Noting that high-tech cooperation remains a top priority, Putin,[1] remarked during a speech:[2].

"I am referring to space, including high-orbit assets, and new potential types of weapons that will secure the strategic safety of both nations. Russia and China are not establishing military alliances based on Cold War models. These collaborations are a serious factor in stabilizing the international situation."

Putin has previously stated that the two countries have shared highly sensitive military technologies, significantly enhancing China's defense capabilities. The Russian leader also emphasized that his country assisted China in developing an early warning system for detecting ballistic missile launches in October 2019.[3].

In 2022, Beijing declared a “limitless” friendship with Moscow. China condemned Western sanctions imposed on Russia and accused NATO and the United States of “provoking” Russia. At the same time, Beijing sought to maintain a neutral stance regarding the Ukraine conflict. On the other hand, Russia frequently expressed its support for China on matters related to Taiwan.

President Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping have developed strong personal connections in order to establish a “strategic partnership” in response to the increasing tensions with the West. In March 2023, Xi Jinping visited Moscow to further strengthen the ties, while Putin traveled to Beijing for the Third Belt and Road Forum.^[4]

Referring to NATO’s efforts to extend its reach into the Asia-Pacific region, Putin described this as an “attempt to exceed its geographical sphere of influence.”^[5] The Russian leader stated the following:

“The United States has sought to guide alliance members towards escalating tensions in the Asia-Pacific region and has made efforts to form new military-political alliances driven by its own selfish interests.”

He stated that Russia and China have responded to this “calmly and in a balanced manner,” collaborating through air force and naval drills to ensure their security. On this matter, Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission of China, Zhang Youxia, noted the following:

“Russia is warning the West with red lines, demonstrating that it will not avoid challenges. China respects you for this.”

During his meeting with Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu, Zhang Youxia stated that bilateral relations are at their “highest level in the new era” and that the purpose of this visit is to further strengthen military cooperation. Sergey Shoigu, in turn, made the following statement, emphasizing that the bilateral defense ties are not aimed at third countries:^[6]

“Unlike certain aggressive Western nations, we are not establishing a military bloc. This situation exemplifies strategic engagement based on mutual trust and respect. Our armies regularly conduct operational and combat exercises on land, in the air, and at sea, successfully carrying out combat training missions of varying levels of complexity side by side. All these actions are not directed at third countries and are undertaken solely in the interest of one another.”

This development reflects the determination of Russia and China to further deepen their military cooperation. The joint military exercises and technology transfers between the two countries signify the signs of a strategic alliance. Considering Russia’s strained relations with the West and China’s emerging global power status, this cooperation can be viewed as a response to Western policies.

As emphasized by Putin, although this cooperation forms an alliance “not based on Cold War models,” the collaboration in high-tech military fields is of critical importance for the strategic security of both nations. The focus on space technologies and new weapon systems particularly reflects efforts to prepare for potential future military conflicts.

It can be said that Russia and China aim to create balance on the international stage. Putin’s comments in response to NATO’s expansion into the Asia-Pacific region demonstrate that this cooperation is aimed at ensuring regional and global equilibrium. Additionally, China’s declaration of an “unlimited friendship” and Russia’s resistance to the West reflect the political dimension of this alliance.

This partnership is unfolding in a period of shifting power dynamics in international relations. By forming an alliance to limit the West’s influence and protect their regional interests, Russia and China seek to play a more impactful role in global politics. This is particularly significant during a time when challenges to the U.S.’s global leadership position are intensifying.

[1] “Vladimir Putin Calls for Closer Russia-China Cooperation on Military Satellites and Prospective Weapons”, South China Morning Post, <https://www.scmp.com/news/world/russia-central-asia/article/3240848/vladimir-putin-calls-closer-russia-china-cooperation-military-satellites-and-prospective-weapons>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[2] “Putin Calls for Closer Russia-China Cooperation on Military Satellites and Prospective Weapons”, Gv Wire, <https://gvwire.com/2023/11/08/putin-calls-for-closer-russia-china-cooperation-on-military-satellites-and-prospective-weapons/>, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[3] “Vladimir Putin Calls for Closer Russia-China Cooperation on Military Satellites and Prospective Weapons”, South China Morning Post, opcit, (Date Accession: 31.12.2024).

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Europe's Readiness for Potential Developments in the Russia-Ukraine Conflict



Gamze BAL

Donald Trump, set to assume the presidency of the United States on January 20, 2025, has asserted that he will conclude the Russia-Ukraine War within 24 hours of his inauguration and that American assistance to Ukraine will be diminished. These declarations highlighted the potential for settling the conflict through negotiations, resulting in the entrenchment of the parties' policies aimed at consolidating their positions in the discussions; in essence, it precipitated an escalation of the war. In this environment, Russia has expedited its progress in eastern Ukraine and obtained military assistance from North Korea. Ukraine has solicited further assistance from its friends, expressing its willingness to welcome European forces within its borders, and has obstructed the transit of Russian gas to Europe via Ukrainian territory. Europeans are approaching this situation from two perspectives: actions to be taken in anticipation of potential peace and the position to adopt should the conflict persist.

The prospective peace process is inherently complex. Consequently, to engage in negotiations, Putin must secure a benefit that preserves his prestige, or the military assistance provided to Ukraine must escalate to a level that dissuades him. Nonetheless, Trump asserts that he would address the conflict between Russia and Ukraine; however, he fails to elucidate the methods and conditions necessary for achieving a ceasefire. Nonetheless, Trump's remarks concerning a ceasefire initiative have expedited deliberations among European nations, which maintain the view that "European security is unattainable without European participation," contemplating the deployment of a peacekeeping contingent in Ukraine. The proposition to deploy soldiers to Ukraine was put forth by French President Emmanuel Macron in February 2024; yet, it failed to get approval. Following Trump's electoral triumph, the matter has resurfaced; discussions over the potential for France and England to spearhead a military coalition in Ukraine have commenced.[1]

On December 12, 2024, during Macron's visit to Warsaw, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk declared that they had no preparations concerning the issue. Boris Pistorius, Germany's Defense Minister, indicated that the deployment of a peacekeeping force would be assessed contingent upon a potential ceasefire. EU nations, who hold divergent views on the peacekeeping mission in Ukraine, are unable to operate cohesively. Conversely, even with the approval of member states, the EU lacks the capacity to send a mission including 40,000 to 100,000 troops in Ukraine. Consequently, the implementation of a peacekeeping operation capable of effectively implementing a ceasefire in Ukraine is deemed an impractical strategy for the EU. A coalition of European nations, including England, can be established. Trump has suggested delaying Ukraine's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) by 20 years and establishing a European peacekeeping force in Ukraine that incorporates British personnel.

From Putin's viewpoint, it seems that Russia has secured a strategic superiority over Ukraine regarding military capabilities and personnel. This environment also provides Putin the ability to assert ceasefire conditions. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov expressed dissatisfaction with the Trump administration's proposals to postpone Ukraine's NATO membership by 20 years and to deploy British and European peacekeeping forces to Ukraine; he articulated that Trump's objective was to halt hostilities along the contact line and shift the responsibility for the conflict with Russia to the Europeans.[2] From this viewpoint, it is evident that a ceasefire will not transpire as rapidly as asserted by Trump. Consequently, on a continent beset by ongoing conflict, Europe has no alternative but to assist Ukraine in its struggle against Russia, deemed the paramount threat to European security. The economic crisis confronting European nations, precipitated by the energy crisis stemming from the Russia-Ukraine War and compounded by the lingering consequences of the Covid-19 outbreak, may impede the provision of adequate support to Ukraine. Conversely, the expenses associated with the conflict, approaching its third year, should not be regarded only as economic concerns for Europe. Since February 24, 2022, Europe, motivated to support Ukraine, has begun to encounter challenges in democracy.

Support for far-right factions in Europe, characterized by their estrangement from democratic institutions, has risen since the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The socioeconomic repercussions of the war have precipitated political and economic challenges in France and Germany, seen as the principal engines of the EU. Simultaneously, the geopolitical landscape of Europe, previously characterized by a prevailing sense of peace following World War II, commenced its transformation. During the Cold War, Sweden and Finland, which maintained their neutral status, joined NATO claiming the "Russian menace"; Germany has commenced rearmament. Nuclear armament has emerged as a prominent issue in the election campaign, exemplified by German Chancellor candidate Friedrich Merz. Likewise, the EU, recognized for its normative influence, has designated 72 billion euros for defense investments. The European Defence Agency regards this figure as a precedent in EU history.

In light of current developments and the intricate consequences of the Russia-Ukraine War for Europe, encompassing economic, security, and liberal values, resolving the war is a prudent plan from Europe's perspective. Europe seeks to aid Ukraine in attaining a lasting ceasefire in the Russia-Ukraine war. In response to Trump's request for a ceasefire, European leaders, keen to unite with the Trump-Putin alliance, assembled and declared, "Peace negotiations in Ukraine cannot go without the participation of Ukrainians and Europeans.[3] This statement signifies that the aim is to aid Ukraine in a way that forces Putin to abandon his maximalist aspirations, leading to negotiations with European stakeholders.

For Putin to be compelled to negotiate through deterrence, Trump must strengthen European nations by supplying military aid to Ukraine. Trump's primary objective is to diminish the financial burden of European security on the US and concentrate on the Asia-Pacific region. Nonetheless, this does not imply that the U.S. will entirely disengage from European security. The historical connections, economic interactions, current circumstances, and established partnerships with Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran preclude the United States from fully disengaging from European security. In this context, Trump may facilitate the creation of a coalition like to AUKUS, referred to as the NATO of the Asia-Pacific, within Europe. Given the current circumstances, European nations recognize the imperative of enhancing Europe's security and defense but have resorted to minilateral security coalitions due to the inability to establish a unified policy within the EU; thus, a European AUKUS that incorporates Ukraine and receives support from the USA may be established.

This coalition may convince Ukraine, which aspires to NATO membership for security reasons but has challenges in the short term, to participate in an endeavor outside of NATO membership, despite its stated reluctance to engage in such an initiative. Conversely, it may alleviate the United States' responsibilities concerning European security. From Europe's viewpoint, a security partnership featuring a limited US participation might mitigate apprehensions regarding European defense. By enhancing European defense through collaboration, Ukraine's military capabilities can be augmented with the offered assistance, thereby establishing a buffer zone against the potential persistence of the Russian threat in Eastern Europe. Although Ukraine obtains the anticipated assistance from its friends against Russia, this coalition could dissuade Russia and compel it to concede on its extreme objectives. The persistent security problem between the West and Russia may expedite the peace process. In this context, it is imperative to acknowledge Russia's apprehensions, viewing Ukraine's NATO membership as a potential catalyst for conflict; it should be characterized as a coalition addressing security issues rather than a military assurance from the West. The involvement of nuclear powers among the direct and indirect participants in the Russia-Ukraine War amplifies the need of maintaining a balance between deterrence and credibility.

In conclusion, while it appears improbable to occur swiftly as Trump asserted, a ceasefire in the Russia-Ukraine War is expected in 2025. Europeans seek to remain integral to the process, whether prior to negotiations or during a potential ceasefire. European backing for Ukraine is ongoing, with the objective of establishing a robust and allied Ukraine at the negotiation table. The subsequent phase involves the formation of a peacekeeping force in Ukraine. Nevertheless, although the parties have failed to reach consensus on the negotiation parameters, the establishment of a deterrent security coalition featuring the United States may be expedited in lieu of the concept of a European peacekeeping mission. A ceasefire is imperative for Europe; yet, it is important that this ceasefire is attained in a manner that safeguards European interests. In this regard, they are formulating strategies to avert the creation of a bargaining table that would confer more advantages to Putin.

[1] Chloé Hoorman, Elise Vincent ve Philippe Ricard, "Discussions over sending European troops to Ukraine reignited", Le Monde, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/11/25/discussions-over-sending-french-and-british-troops-to-ukraine-reignited_6734041_4.html, (Access Date: 01.03.2025).

[2] "Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's interview with TASS news agency, December 30, 2024", The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Russian Federation, https://mid.ru/en/press_service/photos/meropriyatiya_s_uchastiem_ministra/1989723/, (Access Date: 01.03.2025).

[3] "Joint Declaration by the Foreign Ministers of Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom as well as the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (12 December 2024)", France Diplomacy, <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/ukraine/news/article/joint-declaration-by-the-foreign-ministers-of-germany-france-italy-poland-spain>, (Access Date: 01.03.2025).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Lai Ching-te's Pacific Tour



Simay GÜZEL

Taiwan's relations with Pacific countries are intricately woven within the framework of political motivations, cultural ties, and the struggle for international recognition. During a week-long Pacific tour that began on November 30, 2024, Taiwan's Leader Lai Ching-te visited three Pacific allies as well as made transit stops in Hawaii and Guam, shedding light on Taiwan's diplomatic strategies in the region. These visits, marking Lai's first overseas tour as Taiwan's leader, reflected efforts to consolidate Taiwan's Pacific strategy in the context of tensions with China and its relations with the United States (US).

Taiwan's relations with Pacific countries largely hinge on its quest for international recognition. The fact that Taiwan is currently recognized diplomatically by only 12 countries has further fueled its pursuit of global support.[1]. Lai's week-long Pacific trip included visits to the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, and Palau, with brief transit stops in US-controlled territories such as Hawaii and Guam. In response to the diplomatically significant visit and Lai's transit stops, the US underscored its support for Taiwan by holding reasonably high-level engagements. On the other hand, China condemned Taiwan's transit through US-controlled territories and reiterated the "One China" policy in its statements regarding these visits.

During his Pacific tour, Lai Ching-te pursued several diplomatic strategies, with “transit diplomacy” standing out as the most notable approach to strengthening alliances in the Pacific region. Previous Taiwanese leaders have also employed transit diplomacy, using symbolic visits to Pacific Islands as part of their strategy. In this context, Lai’s brief layovers in US-controlled territories such as Guam and Hawaii represented a significant tactic in Taiwan’s efforts to bolster its diplomatic ties. Such transit diplomacy can be seen as aimed not only at fostering closer relationships with Pacific countries but also at deepening Taiwan’s security relationship with the US. However, this approach has provoked military and diplomatic responses from China, challenging the existing status quo in the region.^[2]

Lai Ching-te’s choice of attire, including a Hawaiian shirt worn during his Pacific visits, symbolized the cultural and diplomatic elements of Taiwan’s strategies. The shirt was interpreted as a symbol to emphasize Taiwan’s cultural ties with Pacific communities. Additionally, it was viewed as a diplomatic tool to highlight Taiwan’s shared heritage with Austronesian-speaking communities that extend from Taiwan to Polynesia. Taiwan advocates that the spread of Austronesian languages across a vast region, from Taiwan to Polynesia, underscores cultural connections that could strengthen its relations with Pacific islands. Lai’s visits, in this sense, highlighted Taiwan’s efforts to approach the Pacific Islands through a shared Austronesian heritage. ^[3]

This emphasis on heritage and symbolism, as showcased in Lai’s wardrobe, aimed to make Taiwan’s diplomacy in the region more friendly and community-focused. However, such symbols often have only surface-level effects in Taiwan’s relations, and they sometimes fall short in establishing profound political connections. Lai’s Hawaiian shirt and the cultural message it carried demonstrated Taiwan’s intent to forge closer bonds with Pacific countries. Nevertheless, diplomacy rooted in symbols and efforts to foster relationships through cultural identity often remains limited in impact compared to sustainable collaborations in the region.

On the other hand, the strategy of transit diplomacy is criticized for reflecting the symbolic nature of Taiwan’s international relations. For instance, Lai’s brief visit to Tuvalu, lasting only a few hours, was perceived as indicative of Taiwan’s symbolic ties with its Pacific allies. Furthermore, in Guam, Lai’s remarks referring to the region not only as “Austronesian” but also as part of the broader “Indo-Pacific” highlighted Taiwan’s balancing act between its cultural and political interests.^[4] This rhetoric also mirrored the US perspective on the region. Some critics argue that Taiwan’s focus on such visits for bolstering its international standing often overlooks genuine relationships in the region.

Taiwan’s diplomatic efforts in the Pacific hold immense importance as part of its quest for international recognition and support. At the same time, the geopolitical implications of these efforts cannot be overlooked. China, for instance, reacted to Taiwan’s enhanced ties with the US during its Pacific visit, including Taiwan’s stops in US-controlled territories, with heightened military drills.^[5] In China’s view, Taiwan’s interaction with the US in the Pacific carries the potential to disrupt regional dynamics and balance. This situation underscores that Taiwan’s Pacific diplomacy is not merely about cultural and strategic ties but also an issue intricately tied to Taiwan’s relationship with the mainland. In his New Year message, Xi Jinping reiterated China’s position by stating that the people across the Taiwan Strait are part of one family and that the historical trend toward reunification is unstoppable.^[6]

Taiwan’s diplomatic endeavors in the Pacific are shaped by cultural ties, strategic goals, and the struggle for international recognition. Against this backdrop, Lai Ching-te’s Pacific tour stands out as a demonstration of various diplomatic strategies during his first overseas trip. Taiwan uses symbolic and cultural ties, such as Austronesian diplomacy, to strengthen its relationships with Pacific allies while also deepening its strategic relations with the US. However, these strategies are accompanied by diplomatic challenges, particularly given China’s regional power and the potential for escalating tensions. Following these visits, Taiwan, under Lai’s leadership, appears determined to strike a balance in its diplomatic and security strategies, solidifying its position on the global stage while continuing the policies of its predecessors.

[1] Marinaccio, J., “The risks of Taiwan’s ‘Austronesian’ diplomacy”, Devpolicy Blog from the Development Policy Centre, <https://devpolicy.org/austronesian-diplomacy-and-indigenous-rights-in-taiwan-visit-to-the-pacific-20241217/>, (Date Accession: 07.01.2025).

[2] “Taiwan’s president Lai visits Pacific Ally Tuvalu”, Voice of America, <https://www.voanews.com/a/taiwan-s-president-lai-visits-pacific-ally-tuvalu/7886519.html>, (Date Accession: 07.01.2025).

[3] “The risks of Taiwan’s ‘Austronesian’ diplomacy”, a.g.e., (Date Accession: 07.01.2025).

[4] Ibid.

[5] Wu, T., Wu, H., & Mcavoy, A., “Taiwan’s president arrives in Hawaii for a 2-day stop in the US as part of South Pacific visit”, AP News, <https://apnews.com/article/taiwan-us-china-lai-ching-te-hawaii-guam-21442df9a4d2f41827764f67d5701e07>, (Date Accession: 07.01.2025).

[6] “Full text of president Xi Jinping’s 2025 New Year message”, 中华人民共和国外交部, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xw/zyxw/202412/t20241231_11524948.html, (Date Accession: 07.01.2025).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

A Strong Ally in Central Asia: Japan



Şeyma KIZILAY

In recent years, the geography of Central Asia has gained greater prominence than in the past. The multifaceted repercussions of the Russia-Ukraine War and the environment engendered by the energy crisis have rendered the nations of the area appealing on the global stage. Central Asian nations are advancing their national objectives while enhancing their cooperation in response to the aforementioned impacts. Consequently, an extensive interaction process occurs.

Interest in the region is rising not only within the Western bloc, which is pursuing new alliances, but also among several Asian nations. Japan, a pivotal nation in the Asia-Pacific Region, exemplifies this scenario as it pursues the development of relations with Central Asian countries. Tokyo is enhancing its influence in the region through several measures in regional and bilateral ties.

As an instance, during the regular meeting of the intergovernmental commission on economic, technical, and scientific cooperation held in Dushanbe in 2023, the topic of seeking Japanese investment in the Tajik economy was addressed. The parties have agreed to enhance collaboration in commerce, economy, investment, agriculture, industry, energy, transportation, communication, and contemporary technologies.[1]

The discussion primarily focused on the formation of cooperative industrial ventures, including free economic zones in Tajikistan, involving Japanese investors. Tajikistan is recognized as a prominent partner in numerous operations undertaken by Tokyo. Japan contributes grant monies to Tajikistan for the execution of infrastructure investments, as well as medical and agricultural initiatives. Tajik personnel educated in Japan actively participate at multiple levels in Tajikistan, including ministerial positions. In December 2022, under the auspices of the Central Asia-Japan Dialogue, the parties convened at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs level and instituted the "2023-2025 Cooperation Program".[2]

Following the initial visit by former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2015, the frequency of high-level exchanges between Tajikistan and Japan has progressively escalated. This situation is essential in illustrating the evolution of bilateral relations. During the visit, Abe committed \$7.5 million in grant assistance to enhance water infrastructure and agricultural efficiency in Tajikistan. Moreover, Tokyo has assisted Dushanbe in enhancing border security between Tajikistan and Afghanistan.[3]

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has been engaged in Tajikistan for numerous years. JICA implements diverse grant, financial assistance, and technical cooperation initiatives to enhance the living conditions of the Tajik populace in areas including agriculture and rural development.[4]

Furthermore, Japan collectively aims to undertake substantial investments in Central Asia. In December 2022, Turkmen businesspeople attended the International Apparel Industry and Textile Equipment and Systems Fair in Osaka, where they engaged with Japanese suppliers. Consequently, prospective avenues for collaboration have been established.[5]

Kyrgyzstan offers the potential to emerge as a focal point for Japanese investments in hydroelectric power. A memorandum of understanding and a roadmap have been executed between the parties for the advancement of hydroelectric projects, specifically the establishment of small hydroelectric power plants, to foster the development of renewable energy sources.[6]

Kazakhstan is a crucial partner for Japan regarding economic collaboration. Tokyo endorses the reform initiatives undertaken by Astana and the endeavors to deliver humanitarian assistance to the Afghan populace. In April 2022, an Action Plan for the years 2022-2023 was executed by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both nations.[7]

Japan's position is crucial for Central Asian nations seeking to recruit investors. Consequently, the nations in the region express satisfaction with Tokyo's measures and seek to augment collaboration.

Conversely, it might be asserted that Tokyo's growing interest in Central Asia is also connected to Japan's connections with the United States (US). Japan is a prominent ally of the United States in Asia, contending with Russia and China. The established linkages with Central Asian nations also aim to diminish Russian and Chinese influence in the region.

Recently, Japan's growing inclination towards the Central Asia region has been significant. Tokyo's interest is perceived as advantageous by the regional countries. The relationship between the parties is being reinforced through the Central Asia+Japan Dialogue. Japan's creation of the C5+1 arrangement positions it as a pivotal player in enhancing Central Asia's international relations.[8] Consequently, Tokyo has been instrumental in the multifaceted interactions established among the regional countries. Japan's creation of the C5+1 arrangement positions it as a pivotal player in enhancing Central Asia's international relations. Consequently, Tokyo has been instrumental in the multifaceted interactions established among the regional countries.[9] Measures are being implemented to improve regional collaboration via the Central Asia+Japan Dialogue. In this framework, collaborations in domains like as counter-terrorism, health, environment, scientific endeavors, energy, trade, and investment are being enhanced.

The measures to improve collaboration between the parties are not novel. The initial plan of Tokyo concerning Central Asia was introduced in 1997. Ryutaro Hashimoto, the former Prime Minister of Japan, introduced the "Silk Road Diplomacy Concept," characterized by a three-tiered framework.[10] Subsequent years witnessed the implementation of many cooperative measures via established bilateral and regional partnerships. The offerings of assistance, technological investment, and economic benefits by Tokyo captivate the attention of Central Asian nations. The region concurrently presents substantial energy potential for Japan. In this context, it can be asserted that the parties confer benefits upon one another.

Ultimately, Japan is significantly crucial to the region due to its essential role in enhancing Central Asia's international linkages and the bilateral contacts it has established with the countries in the area. Simultaneously, Tokyo is recognized as a favored partner regarding infrastructure and investment. The neighboring countries also present several chances for Japan. In this setting, it is anticipated that Japan-Central Asia relations will persist in their expansion and deepening.

[1] "Вопросы привлечения инвестиций обсуждены в ходе заседания таджикско-японской Межправкомиссии", Avesta, <https://avesta.tj/2023/03/14/strong-voprosy-privlecheniya-investitsij-obsuzhdeny-v-hode-zasedaniya-tadzhiksko-yaponskoj-mezhpravkomissii-strong/>, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[2] "Japan-Tajikistan Foreign Ministers' Meeting", MOFA, https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_003200.html, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[3] "What did Abe Accomplish in Central Asia", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2015/10/what-did-abe-accomplish-in-central-asia/>, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[4] "Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Tajikistan", JICA, <https://www.jica.go.jp/tajikistan/english/office/about/about.html>, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[5] "Turkmen Entrepreneurs Visited Japan in order to Expand Business Contacts and Exchange Experience", Zemin, <https://www.yerzemin.com/display/turkmen-entrepreneurs-visited-japan-in-order-to-expand-business-contacts-and-exchange-experience/227649>, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[6] "Japan and Central Asia: Dynamics of the Current Partnership", News Central Asia, <https://www.newscentralasia.net/2022/12/21/japan-and-central-asia-dynamics-of-the-current-partnership/>, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[7] "Kazakh President Discusses Expansion of Economic Cooperation with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan", Astana Times, <https://astanatimes.com/2022/04/kazakh-president-discusses-expansion-of-economic-cooperation-with-minister-of-foreign-affairs-of-japan/>, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[8] "Japan in Central Asia: Declining Partner or Key Player?", Carnegie Endowment, <https://carnegiemoscow.org/2022/02/24/japan-in-central-asia-declining-partner-or-key-player-event-7821>, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[9] "Japan's Engagement with Central Asia: 15 Years of the Dialogue", Eurasian Research, <https://www.eurasian-research.org/publication/japans-engagement-with-central-asia-15-years-of-the-dialogue/>, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).

[10] "Japan's Silk Road Diplomacy Paving the Road Ahead", Silk Road Studies, https://www.silkroadstudies.org/resources/pdf/Monographs/2008_12_BOOK_Len-Tomohiko-Tetsuya_Japan-Silk-Road-Diplomacy.pdf, (Access Date: 12.31.2024).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Paraguay's Search for Balance Between China and Taiwan

Ali Caner İNCESU

On November 29, 2024, during a press conference held in Taiwan, Paraguayan Foreign Minister Ruben Dario Ramirez Lezcano stated that Paraguay would not sever its relations with Taiwan in favor of China, but it is open to diplomatic and commercial relations with China. He also emphasized that the United States (US) has not made any request regarding Paraguay maintaining its relations with Taiwan.[1].

Minister Lezcano's press statement has been considered a continuation of the remarks made by Paraguay's President Santiago Pena during his visit to Taiwan on July 14, 2023. President Pena stated that he is "fully committed" to Taiwan, but at the same time expressed his desire to trade with China, indicating that he aims to establish a balance between Taiwan and China.[2].

Paraguay-Taiwan relations began during the Cold War years, and Taiwan's anti-communist stance won Paraguay's support. In 1957, Paraguay's official recognition of Taiwan opened a new chapter in the relations between the two countries, and this diplomatic step played a critical role in increasing Taiwan's international recognition.

Paraguay has actively worked on international platforms for the recognition of Taiwan as an "independent country" and has continued this support despite Taiwan's increasing diplomatic isolation. Paraguay's loyalty has distinguished it among the few countries supporting Taiwan, and this long-standing bond has become a reflection of Paraguay's ideological and strategic stance in foreign policy.

Taiwan has strengthened the economic dimension of the relationship between the two countries over the years by providing economic aid in areas such as agriculture, education, technology, and infrastructure to Paraguay. Especially the projects in the agricultural sector have made significant contributions to Paraguay's rural development and increased its agricultural production capacity. This economic cooperation has also been supported by the political dimension of diplomatic relations.

Taiwan is strongly continuing its educational cooperation with Paraguay. As of 2023, it has been reported that the number of Paraguayan students going to Taiwan on scholarships for education has exceeded 600.[3]. Additionally, the establishment of the Taiwan-Paraguay Polytechnic University in Paraguay on May 31, 2018, demonstrates the deepening educational cooperation between the two countries and Paraguay's determination to continue this collaboration in the future.

Taiwan provides an average of 150 million US dollars in financial support to Paraguay in areas such as education, agriculture, and health every five-year period.[4]. However, the amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) that Taiwan makes in Paraguay is only about 4 million US dollars per year.[5]. This figure is quite low compared to the amounts of direct foreign investment China has made in Paraguay's neighboring countries in South America.

China has been increasingly showing an economic presence in Latin America in recent years. With its projects under the "Belt and Road Initiative" and massive infrastructure investments, China is seen as an "attractive partner" for countries in the region. China's economic power has not only created commercial but also diplomatic impacts on Latin American countries. Countries like El Salvador and Panama have severed their diplomatic ties with Taiwan and established relations with China, resulting in economic collaborations and development projects. This situation is considered part of China's strategy to reduce international support for Taiwan.

It is believed that Paraguay's diplomatic loyalty to Taiwan limits the growth of the Paraguayan economy. Paraguay, despite being one of the world's largest producers of soy and beef exports, does not have direct trade relations with China, so these products reach the Chinese market through indirect routes. Establishing diplomatic ties with China could provide Paraguay with a significant market advantage and also increase its potential to attract direct foreign investment and infrastructure projects.

This strategic dilemma requires Paraguay to consider the broader implications of its foreign policy decisions. Maintaining relations with Taiwan provides a significant advantage in gaining the support of major powers like the USA; meanwhile, the political and economic benefits that could be obtained by establishing ties with China are also quite attractive. Establishing relations with China could open up a massive market for Paraguay's agricultural products and provide resources for infrastructure projects. In this context, Paraguay's future foreign policy requires a strategic reassessment aimed at striking a delicate balance between loyalty and opportunities.

Many countries in Latin America have severed their ties with Taiwan, taking advantage of the economic and diplomatic benefits offered by China. For example, countries like El Salvador and Honduras have established diplomatic ties with China, gaining large infrastructure projects and trade opportunities. Apart from El Salvador and Honduras, other Latin American countries such as Panama, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic have also chosen to sever their ties with Taiwan to take advantage of China's economic power. This trend is believed to have created regional pressure on Paraguay due to its relations with Taiwan.

Paraguay is at the center of the global competition between the United States, China, and Taiwan. While the US provides indirect support to its allies to prevent Taiwan from being isolated on the international stage, China aims to sever Taiwan's remaining diplomatic ties using its economic power. Paraguay's loyalty to Taiwan in this competitive environment contributes to creating a positive image in its relations with the United States. However, it is also a fact that establishing ties with China could provide significant opportunities in terms of economic development and trade.

In this context, Paraguay's goal of regional leadership and desire to pursue an independent foreign policy necessitates developing a balancing approach between Taiwan and China. The country's strategic position could serve as a model for other countries in Latin America.

In conclusion, seeking ways to develop commercial and diplomatic relations with China without completely severing ties with Taiwan could be a strategic approach for Paraguay. Such a balancing strategy would preserve the benefits of existing relations with Taiwan while also providing the opportunity to take advantage of the economic opportunities offered by China. Paraguay's successful management of this difficult equation will not only optimize its own national interests but will also serve as a model for other countries in Latin America.

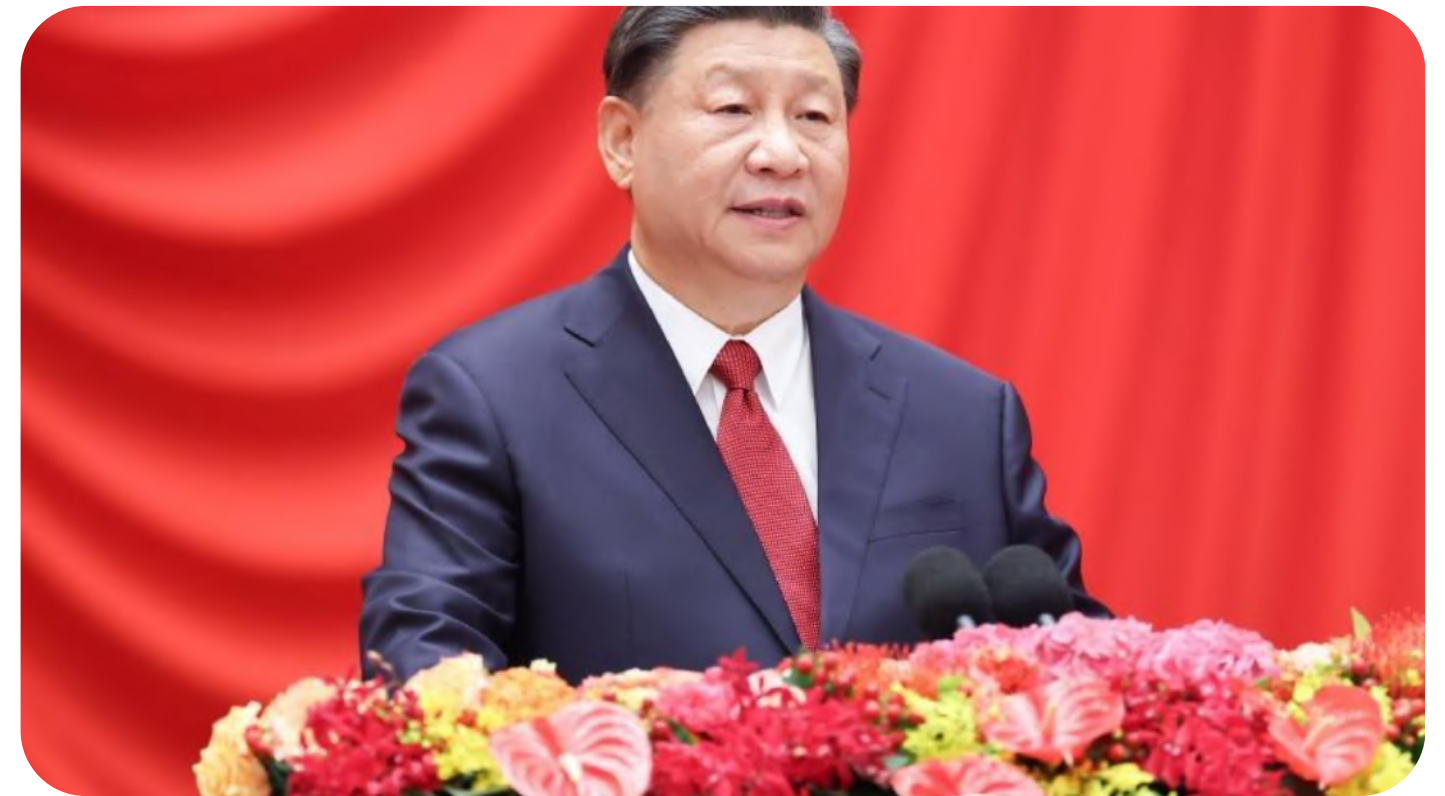
[1] Lai, Johnson, and Huizhong Wu. "Paraguay, One of Taiwan's Remaining 12 Allies, Says It Won't Cut Ties in Favor of China." AP News, 29 Nov 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/taiwan-paraguay-china-relationship-6462a3936a5ba14094cdee51ad8ba92c>, (Accessed Date: 12.01.2024).

[2] Blanchard, Ben. "Paraguay Would Love More Trade with China, Taiwan Better for Development." Reuters, 15 July 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/paraguay-would-love-more-trade-with-china-taiwan-better-development-2023-07-15/>, (Accessed Date: 12.01.2024).

[3] Letter to the Editor: 32 Years of Taiwan-Paraguay Educational Cooperation." Taiwan News, 7 Nov 2023, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/news/5034533>, (Accessed Date: 12.01.2024).

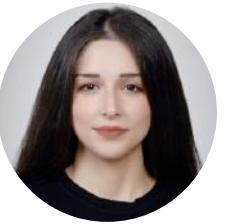
[4] Baronu, Uma. "An 'Eternal Brother'—Strengthening the Taiwan-Paraguay Relationship." Global Taiwan Institute, 10 July 2024, <https://globaltaiwan.org/2024/07/an-eternal-brother-strengthening-the-taiwan-paraguay-relationship/>, (Accessed Date: 12.01.2024).

[5] Ibid.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Xi Jinping's Thought on Culture



Zeynep Çağla ERİN

Ahead of the Lunar New Year, China, led by Xi Jinping, is organizing various promotional activities in the cultural field. Chinese President Xi Jinping's cultural thinking has been praised across the country. Xi emphasizes that cultural thought is crucial for making China a stronger country, dynamizing the nation and creating powerful inspiration.[1] Under Xi's leadership, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is actively promoting culture as a policy to support the country's modernization.

In 2012, Xi included the concept of "cultural trust" in his report to the 18th CCP National Congress. Later, Xi integrated this concept into Chinese socialism, defining national trust in Chinese culture as an enduring strength.[2] In the post-Cold War world, where different civilizations and value systems compete and struggle to coexist, China believes that a cultural renaissance is needed to rebuild national identity.

Since assuming leadership of the CCP, Xi has issued more than 170 important reports and instructions on cultural heritage, archaeology and intangible cultural values. He has also conducted on-site inspections at more than 100 historical and cultural sites. [3]

Today, China's mission of "cultural nationalism" in the global and national arena has been widely studied in the West. However, its manifestations in Asian (especially Chinese) contexts have not been sufficiently explored. Research in the literature has shown that cultural nationalism in Asian countries such as Taiwan, Japan, China and Malaysia should be understood from the perspective of reinventing and modernizing traditional culture in order to keep up with and surpass the West.[4]

Chinese traditional cultural thinking differs from the approaches of other nations. Since it focuses on political relations between modern states compared to the Westphalian System, it does not directly engage with issues such as cultural superiority. China is precisely questioning the modern system of states at the existing Western level. Therefore, it emphasizes that one culture cannot be superior to another culture and that the norms of the Western dominant system cannot be accepted without question.

Throughout history, culture has been combined with power and influence in inter-state relations. China's influence and cultural perspective in its region may be incompatible with the Westphalian system and may lead to conflicts in cross-cultural relations. This sense of cultural superiority in China's history may have shaped the dynamics of international relations. From this perspective, it is possible to say that the concept of 'culture' in China's roots is very important in foreign policy.

In traditional imperial times, most Chinese emperors saw the world in a hierarchical perspective, dividing it into “civilized” or “barbarian” nations. They claimed that China was the center of the world, not only in terms of geography but also in terms of civilization, and that neighboring barbarian nations should welcome adaptation to Chinese culture in order to progress. Because of the adversities that China had been subjected to by the 19th century, it approached its history from an objective point of view. Confucian nationalists, for example, believed that history was created by rulers who broke Confucian rules and that it was therefore necessary to return to the authentic Chinese way of life and build a nation based on Confucian classics. In the 1910s and 1920s, liberal thinkers in the New Culture Movement questioned and blamed traditional Chinese culture for causing these unfortunate events. Based on the understanding that culture is a political battlefield, it was argued that only socialist culture, rather than traditional or Western culture, could be the solution.^[5]

Table 1. China’s Grand Strategies (1949–Present)

Great Survival Strategies (1949-1989)	
Objective: Dealing with Existential Threats to the Regime	
Three Approaches	Purpose of Approaches
Sino-Soviet alliance (Mao Zedong)China-US harmony (Mao)China-US harmony (Deng Xiaoping)	Receiving military support/economic aid Gaining military supportGain military support/economic cooperation
Major Rejuvenation Strategies (1992-Present)	
Objective: Repositioning as a Developed Country and Great Power	
Three Approaches	Purpose of Approaches
Hide and wait (Deng Xiaoping)Peaceful rise (Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao)The Cultural Chinese Dream (Xi Jinping)	Build wealth and power for China’s rise (keep a low profile and join the existing Western order)Reducing concerns about China’s rise (reassuring and accommodating the existing order)Shaping the world for China’s rise (building trust, developing an alternative discourse to the existing order and cultural resilience)

Source: Goldstein, 2020

In contrast to the approaches in the table above, Xi’s version of cultural nationalism differs from other versions of Chinese cultural nationalism in a number of ways. For Xi, what is important is the existence of an overarching, abstract Chinese culture that can be called a unified whole in order for China to maintain and strengthen its sovereignty. Xi’s cultural nationalism seems to be consistent with his other nationalist initiatives, such as tightening regulations on foreign capital, strengthening the use of Mandarin nationwide, improving the status of the Chinese language vis-à-vis English, academic development, etc.^[6]

As a result, China organizes various promotional events to emphasize the cultural trend adopted by Xi. By promoting culture as an active policy tool, Xi aims to modernize China and improve its governance. While China’s cultural nationalism mission has been widely studied in the West, its manifestations in Asia have been less explored. Xi’s cultural nationalism can be read from the perspective of embracing traditional culture, modernizing culture, and challenging the West.

[1] “How Does Xi Use Mix Of Marxism And Traditional Culture To Pursue Chinese Dream?”, Xinhua News, <https://english.news.cn/20240204/d6ac2a6638c84b31a87a4dda05712cd0/c.html>, (Date of Access: 05.12.2024).

[2] Ibid.

[3] “Xi Focus–Profile: Xi Jinping, man of culture”, Xinhua News, <https://english.news.cn/20240201/8e74c32a0c5748ed9c0f9e53846b5224/c.html>, (Date of Access: 05.12.2024).

[4] Jason Cong Lin, “The rising China is not a ‘sick man’anymore: Cultural nationalism in the Xi Jinping era.” *Journal of Contemporary China* 33, no. 145 (2024): 83-100.

[5] Avery Goldstein, “China’s grand strategy under Xi Jinping: Reassurance, reform, and resistance.” *International Security* 45, no. 1 (2020): 164–201.

[6] John Garrick, ve Yan Chang Bennett. “Xi Jinping Thought”. *Realisation of the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation?*, *China Perspectives* 2018, no. 2018/1-2 (2018): 99-105.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Trump’s Northern Strategy: Canada and Greenland

Ali Caner İNCESU

In the last week of 2024, Donald Trump’s statements that the United States (US) should take control of Greenland and Canada are considered as an attempt to reshape the boundaries of US international policies. While these statements are important in terms of national security and strategic interests, they can also be considered as a reflection of expansionist policies. How Trump’s statements can be evaluated in the context of international law, hegemony, economic interests and geopolitical strategy is important for understanding the current dynamics of not only the US but also the global order.

Greenland has long attracted the attention of global powers due to its geographical location and natural resources. US military assets in Greenland, such as the Pituffik Spaceport, emphasize the strategic importance of the region. With its location between the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, Greenland is a critical logistical point for the US military and commercial activities in both Europe and Asia. In addition, Greenland’s underground resources, especially rare earth elements, are seen as a great source of attraction in line with the US’s goals of reducing its foreign dependence in the technology and defense industry.

Trump’s statements on Greenland stand out as part of the US’ efforts to realize its geopolitical goals. In 2019, Trump made similar statements regarding the purchase of Greenland, but this proposal was described as “absurd” by Denmark.^[1] Following this proposal, Trump canceled his planned state visit to Denmark. In 2024, he revived his rhetoric on Greenland on a more comprehensive national security ground. However, Greenland Prime Minister Múte Egede’s statement that “we are not for sale” shows that this goal of Trump will face serious resistance within the framework of international law.^[2] Similar to his statements on Greenland, Trump also used expressions emphasizing the pursuit of national security and strategic control for Canada.

Trump's proposal to make Canada the 51st state of the United States stands out as an unusual discourse in US-Canada relations. Trump's statements, backed by promises of economic prosperity and offers of military protection, are not taken seriously by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other Canadian leaders. However, such rhetoric clearly demonstrates Trump's intention to exert hegemonic pressure on neighboring countries and his desire to expand US economic interests. In the Canadian context, such rhetoric has the potential to threaten the delicate balance in US-Canadian relations. Canada is one of the largest trading partners of the United States and the economic ties between the two countries are deep and extensive. Trump's rhetoric can create political tensions that can complicate economic and military cooperation. Canada's steps to increase border security can be characterized as an indirect response to Trump's rhetoric.

Trump's statements on Greenland and Canada can be interpreted not only as a reflection of strategic interests but also as a show of power and a claim to hegemony. Within the framework of his foreign policy defined by the slogan "Make America Great Again", Trump emphasizes the goal of re-establishing the US supremacy in the global system. In this context, Trump's discourses on buying Greenland and making Canada a state are considered as a strategy to redefine US power and create unpredictability in international relations.

In line with Trump's so-called "madman theory", this strategy demonstrates unpredictability and the intention to use chaos as a diplomatic tool. In international relations, such a strategy can cause other states to be confused about the real intentions of the US, which can give the US an advantage at the negotiating table.

Trump's rhetoric is in direct conflict with international law and principles of sovereignty. Greenland is an autonomous territory, part of Denmark, and the acquisition or control of such a territory would be considered an unacceptable intervention by the international community. Similarly, the idea of Canada as a sovereign state being annexed to the United States is contrary to the basic principles of the international order. Such rhetoric is seen as a threat that could jeopardize US relations with its allies and destabilize the global system in the long run.

Trump's rhetoric has the potential to have not only political but also economic effects. American control over Greenland's natural resources can have a major impact on global technology and energy markets. The rhetoric against Canada risks undermining economic cooperation in North America. The future of trade arrangements, such as the US-Canada-Mexico Agreement (USMCA), can be jeopardized by such rhetoric.

From a geopolitical perspective, Trump's rhetoric is also seen as a strategy to strengthen the US position against China and Russia. Efforts to balance Chinese and Russian influence in the Arctic require the United States to assume a more active role in the region, and the rhetoric over Greenland emerges as part of this strategy. This further increases the importance of US geopolitical interests in the region.

Trump's statements on Greenland and Canada can be interpreted not only as the rhetoric of an individual leader, but also as an attempt to reshape the US place in the global system. These statements are linked to the goals of national security, economic interests and strategic hegemony. However, such statements carry serious risks for international law and stability. Trump's rhetoric also has the potential to create tensions in relations with allied countries.

Trump's approach can be considered as an example of unpredictability and use of force strategies in international relations. However, in the long run, such rhetoric has the potential to weaken US relations with its allies and destabilize the global system. The rhetoric over territories such as Greenland and Canada requires not only the US but also the international community to take a clear position against such expansionist policies. Such statements could have important consequences that could shape both US foreign policy and the future of the global order.

[1] "Danish PM Says Idea of Selling Greenland to U.S. Is Absurd", Euronews, www.euronews.com/2019/08/18/danish-pm-says-idea-of-selling-greenland-to-us-is-absurd, (Accessed Date: 01.05.2025).

[2] Armstrong, Kathryn. "Greenland Again Tells Trump It Is Not for Sale", BBC News, www.bbc.com/news/articles/c791xy4p1lqo, (Accessed Date: 01.05.2025).

ANKASAM IN PRESS

📌 08 January 2025

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin EROL is on TRT Voice of Türkiye Radio!

📌 12 January 2025

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol is on Akit TV!



ULUSLARARASI KRİZ ve SİYASET ARAŞTIRMALARI DERGİSİ
Cilt | Volume: 03
Sayı | Issue: 01
Mayıs | May 2019
e-ISSN | 2597-3269

İhtilafın Güncel ve Gelecekteki Potansiyeli
Current and Future Potential of the Conflict
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

İki Düşmanın Birlikte Olması: Çözümün Rolü ve Beklenenin Önemi
The Role of the Enemy in Peace: The Importance of the Solution and the Expected Outcome
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Process and the African Union: A Case Study for the "Complete Union"
Process and the African Union: A Case Study for the "Complete Union"
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Krizin Ekonomik Etkileri ve Çözümün Ekonomik Potansiyeli
Economic Impacts of the Crisis and the Potential of the Solution
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Evrensel Güven ve Güvenlülükün Ekonomik Etkileri
Economic Impacts of Global Security and Stability
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Kitap İncelemeleri / Book Reviews
Book Reviews
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Bölgesel Araştırmalar Dergisi
Journal of Regional Studies
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

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.



BÖLGESEL ARAŞTIRMALAR DERGİSİ
Cilt | Volume: 03
Sayı | Issue: 01
Mayıs | May 2019
e-ISSN | 2597-3234

Türkiye ve Türk Cumhuriyetleri Arasındaki Bölgesel Güven ve Güvenlülük
Regional Security and Stability Between Turkey and Turk Republics
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Different Aspects of the Russian-Georgian 2008 War: Representation of the Turkish Perspective
Different Aspects of the Russian-Georgian 2008 War: Representation of the Turkish Perspective
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Türkiye'nin Güvenli Sınır Politikası ve Güvenlülükün Ekonomik Etkileri
Turkey's Secure Border Policy and the Economic Impacts of Stability
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Türkiye-Malaysia İlişkileri ve 21. Yüzyıla
Turkey-Malaysia Relations in the 21st Century
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

1979-2014 Yıllarında Afganistan Sorununda Genel Dışişleri ve Birleşik Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi'nin Rolü
The Role of General Secretariat and Security Council in Afghanistan Crisis (1979-2014)
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

An International Wrongful Act of an International Organization on Terrorism: The UN Human Rights Council Resolution 40/1 for Sri Lanka
An International Wrongful Act of an International Organization on Terrorism: The UN Human Rights Council Resolution 40/1 for Sri Lanka
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

Kitap İncelemeleri / Book Reviews
Book Reviews
Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

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.