

*In The Name of God*

The Compassionate, The Merciful



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## Nord Stream; Geopolitical Weapon of the Ukrainian Crisis

*Maryam Ebadi<sup>1</sup>*  
*Nasrin Mosaffa<sup>2</sup>*

Despite the geopolitical importance of Ukraine for Russia, especially the geopolitical aspect of energy, due to the gas pipeline passing through this country to transfer Russian gas to Europe, Ukraine's Western tendencies and the gas crises that have occurred in different years have made Russia try to use it as a tool against Ukraine's actions by creating the Nord Stream facility in addition to providing an alternative option. Considering this issue, the question is how Nord Stream can be used as a weapon against Ukraine. In this regard, it is hypothesized that Russia, by imposing transit bans caused by the replacement of transit pipelines with Nord Stream facilities, and as a result, the weakening of the economic situation and security vulnerability of the pipelines, has turned it into a pressure lever against Ukraine. Investigations show that by ignoring Ukraine, Nord Stream is depriving this country of billions of dollars in revenue from the right of transit, and it also causes the destruction of a major strategic deterrent that always prevents the escalation of Russian aggression against this country. Also, this facility was used in the relations between Russia and Europe after this country invaded Ukraine as a lever of geopolitical pressure of the parties against each other.

▪ **Keywords:**

Gas pipelines, transit deprivation, energy security, geopolitical weapons, transit revenue.

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# The Causes and Security Consequences of the Lake Balkhash Environmental Crisis and Its Security Effects on Iran

*Seyed Mehdi Habibi*<sup>1</sup>

*Mahdi Karimi*<sup>2</sup>

## **Abstract**

One of the waters that cross international borders is the Ili River, which originates from the Tian-Shan Mountains in Xinjiang and flows into Balkhash Lake in eastern Kazakhstan. Ili as a transboundary river provides about 70 percent of the water input to Lake Balkhash in Kazakhstan. Currently, there are growing concerns about the future of this lake. However, very few studies have been done in this field. Following such a research gap, this article using a descriptive-analytic research method tries to answer this question: "What environmental and geopolitical threats does Lake Balkhash face?". The research findings show that climate change, competition over water extraction, Kazakhstan's economic plans and water policies, the lack of a joint comprehensive agreement, and China's development plans in the form of the Belt and Road Initiative have had destructive physical effects on Lake Balkhash and asymmetry relations between Kazakhstan and China has also hindered successful negotiations in this field.

## ▪ **Keywords:**

Lake Balkhash; Water; China; Kazakhstan; Environmental security.

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# Iran and the Geopolitics of Zangezzor Corridor

*Ali naseri<sup>1</sup>*  
*Abolfazl shakouri<sup>2</sup>*

## **Abstract**

In different historical periods, the South Caucasus region is one of the important geopolitical regions for Iran's security. China is trying to revive the historical Silk Road with a new one-belt-one-way plan, which used to start from China and lead to Europe through Iran and the Caucasus. Iran has a fundamental position in the plan of this corridor; the kind that reaches the Black Sea from Chabahar through the North-South corridor and passes through Armenia, Georgia, and Russia. However, the Karabakh war has caused many changes in recent years. After the ceasefire in the second Karabakh War, an agreement was reached between The Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia, one of the provisions of which is the plan to reopen the old roads. Still, The Republic of Azerbaijan has an idea beyond the old one-way under the supervision of Armenia and wants to create a west-east corridor in the Zangezzor region, directly under the supervision of Baku. This action violates the territorial integrity of Armenia, and also, destroys Iran's border with Armenia. On the way to creating the western-eastern corridor of Zangezzor, not only the Republic of Azerbaijan but also many countries support the creation of this corridor. Now, the main question of this research is, what is the effect of the plans of Azerbaijan and its allies to create a new corridor on Iran's security? The research data shows that these countries are pursuing goals such as creating NATO's Torani Corridor, a permanent source of energy, and ultimately this extravagance will lead to the blockade of Iran in the northwest and the loss of one of the old crossings and highways.

▪ **Keywords:**

geostrategic, South Caucasus, Zangezzor Corridor, NATO's Turani Corridor, Iran blockade.

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# Strategic Adaptation of China's Strategy of Foreign Policy in the Middle East Region

*Mohammad Reza Faraji<sup>1</sup>*

## **Abstract**

Changes in the international distribution of power create an incentive for strategic changes. With the emergence of emerging powers, global institutions are under pressure to adapt to the new realities of power. Based on the satisfaction of changing actors in power and the hard and soft nature of power transformations, the strategic adaptation of actors takes the nature of power bargaining, strategic partnership or strategic persuasion. This research tries to examine China's strategies in the Middle East region. To achieve this goal, the research explains China's strategy in the Middle East region with the assumption of power changes and their effect on the actors' strategies. The main hypothesis of the article is that China has adopted a strategy of creative adaptation in the regions with the experience of transformation in its power due to the reformist approach and having hard and soft power, and the Middle East is one of the regions that is in its strategic circle. Therefore, it seems that China's approach in the Middle East region is creative adaptation. On this basis, tries to avoid entering into controversial issues and tries to be active and adaptive in the region with innovative plans such as the Belt and Road and investing in different places.

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# Security Interaction between the Taliban and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Its Impact on the Politics and Economy of the Taliban Government

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Rohollah Eslami<sup>2</sup>*

## **Abstract**

After twenty years, the Taliban regained power for the second time in 2021. The Islamic Emirate must inevitably engage with regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to sustain its governance. Central Asian countries, which are gathered under the umbrella of the SCO, have an influential role in the political developments of Afghanistan. The main question is what impact does the security interaction between the Taliban and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization have on the economy and politics of the Taliban government? The research hypothesis is that the security interaction between the Taliban and the (SCO), through the fight against ISIS as a regional consensus, leads to security, political, and economic convergence between the Taliban and the organization. The findings indicate that the anti-ISIS policy of the Taliban and their fight against drug trafficking provide a basis for security cooperation with the organization. Moreover, the political alignment with China and Russia, who are among the main actors of the organization, stands the Taliban in the anti-unilateralism camp against the United States. The present research has utilized the explanatory method and library-based data collection approach.

### ▪ **Keywords:**

Taliban, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, ISIS, security cooperation, regionalism.

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# Analysis of Iran and Russia's Approach to the First and Second Nagorno-Karabakh War

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Akbar Valizadeh<sup>2</sup>*

## **Abstract**

The South Caucasus has always been of interest to major powers, and after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, it became a stage for regional and extra-regional power competition. Iran and Russia are among the countries that have focused on the South Caucasus and have sought to expand their influence in this region. This region holds significant strategic importance for both Iran and Russia. One of the important crises in the South Caucasus is the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which has had various stages throughout history. The First Nagorno-Karabakh War continued from 1991 to 1994. The Second Nagorno-Karabakh War began on September 27, 2020, and lasted for 44 days. According to the authors, the concept of a "shatter belt" can provide a useful framework for analyzing Iran and Russia's approach to the first and second Nagorno-Karabakh war. In this study, the South Caucasus is considered a shatter belt. In response to the question of "what approach Iran and Russia had towards the first and second Nagorno-Karabakh wars and what factors influenced their approach," the authors propose the hypothesis that "factors such as interest in preserving regional independence and security, mediating in regional conflicts, competing with regional and global powers, internal factors of each country, and the need to realize national interests have influenced Iran and Russia's approach to the first and second Nagorno-Karabakh wars." A descriptive-analytical method has been used to answer this question.

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# The Outcomes of Russia and Ukraine's War in Energy Area and Iran's Geopolitical Significance

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Manouchehr Ansari<sup>2</sup>*

## **Abstract**

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 not only damaged Ukraine's economy but also put so much pressure on Russia and European countries in gas trade due to the loss of big trade partners. This article aims to answer two main questions: 1- What are the impacts of Russia and Ukraine's war on the United States and the European Union in the energy area? 2- Does it impact the position of Iran in the energy part in global markets? This research has been done based on the narrative review approach. The findings show the gradual loss of former position in global markets for Ukraine, Russia, and the European Union and the increasing dependency of European countries on the United States in the energy area. If European countries avoid cooperating with huge oil and gas resource-owning countries like Iran, besides aggravating their dependency on the United States, they deprive themselves of cheaper energy resources.

▪ **Keywords:**

Russia, Ukraine, Europe, Energy, Iran.

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# Security Order of Central Asia after 2021

## Strategic Considerations of the Islamic Republic of Iran

*Seyyed Hasan Mirfakhrai<sup>1</sup>*

### **Abstract**

The security order in Central Asia has undergone a stable process in the transition to new conditions during the last decade. Two catalysts after 2021 have accelerated this process. First, the withdrawal of International forces from Afghanistan, which led to the fall of the government in this country and the rise to power and stabilization of the presence of the Taliban; And second, Russia's military invasion of Ukraine, which increased the tension between the great powers at the international level and created a situation that is interpreted as a new cold war in Russia's peripheral area. These conditions led to forming the security order governing Central Asia in new conditions. In such a situation, this paper seeks to answer this key question: how will the new security order of Central Asia after 2021 affect the security interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran? The hypothesis that is raised in response to this question is based on the proposition that these conditions, by intensifying the security situation of the great power, have caused a decrease in the security factor in Iran's peripheral environment. Strengthening the flow of multilateralism and strengthening expansive approaches in the new security order, implies opportunities. In this paper, I try to prove the hypothesis through the exploration method to discover systematic patterns in Central Asia's security dynamics. The Copenhagen school is considered as the conceptual framework of this research in the comparative approach.

▪ **Keywords:**

Central Asia, security order, Islamic Republic of Iran, war in Ukraine, Afghanistan.

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