

The Quarterly of Central Asia and the Caucasus Studies

The Disintegration of the Soviet Union and formation of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) entailed an urgent need for establishment of study centers in research institutes worldwide to concentrate on the developments in Russia, Central Asia and the Caucasus and other republics of the former Soviet Union.

In the same vein, the *Center for Central Asia and the Caucasus Studies* was formed in the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS) in 1993. Hundreds of years of cultural, historical, artistic, literary, religious commonalities with deep ties between the people of Iran and the newly independent republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus provided an extensive ground for activities of this center.

In continuation of the mentioned trend today, IPIS recognizes the highlighted significance of study and research about this important area in the neighboring of Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Quarterly of Central Asia and the Caucasus Studies was published in 1993 in order to provide appropriate ground for dissemination of scientific - scholarly papers on political, economic, security, strategic, social, cultural and historical fields related to this region.

The Quarterly is mainly focused on the following themes:

- Politics; Political Sociology, Policy Making, Comparative Studies, Ethnic Studies.
- Economy; Political Economy, Comparative Economics.
- Social Studies and Field Surveys in Russia, Central Asia, the Caucasus and Eurasia.
- Strategic and Security; Security Arrangements, Security Policy and Strategic Studies.
- Geography; Political Geography, Geopolitics.
- Islamic Republic of Iran's Contemporary Relations with Russia, Central Asia, the Caucasus and Eurasia.

The Institute for Political and International Studies, believes that a better insightful understanding of Russia and other CIS republics could assist the restoration of national identity of people of Central Asia and the Caucasus and boost their economic development and social welfare and provide peace and stability in such a wide region.

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Anti-Immigration Attitudes in Russia

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The issue of immigration is not a choice for Russia, but it is an essential factor for maintaining the rate of its population and labor force. However, Russian immigration policy is not comprehensive; it endures a lack of clear expression of the goals. In addition, foreign immigrants are often not only accused of depriving Russian citizens of their social-economic rights, but also they are considered as a threat to the cultural and ethnic homogeneity of Russian society and national identity. This paper addresses the phenomenon of immigration both from the perspective of economic competition and nationalism, national identity, and ethnic prejudice. The author addresses the following question: "Why Russian major ethnicities, especially the Russians are mostly against the mass immigration to Russia?" The hypothesis examined in this paper is that "major Russian ethnicities especially the Russians are against the mass immigration due to the fear of immigrants' incompatibility with culture and values of Russian society, rather than racial and ethnic prejudices." Using library data and a descriptive-analytical methodology, the author tries to tell why the research findings provide an answer to the research question.

Keywords: Migration, Ethnicity, Xenophobia, Ethnic Russians and Russian Ethnic Minorities.

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**Russia's Energy Leverage against the European Union
under the Shadow of Sanctions**

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The existence of a significant level of asymmetric interdependence in Russian-European Union energy relations has fueled Western concerns about the conversion of Russian energy resources into political capital and Kremlin's use of energy leverage to infiltrate Europe and the Near East. At the same time, being engaged with political consequences of dependence to Russian energy, the European Union, in the new security environment following the Ukraine crisis in 2014 and the imposition of unilateral US sanctions on Russia's energy sector, faces new challenges for supplying energy resources. Addressing the mentioned concerns and challenges, the present article seeks to respond to the following question: "How is Russian gas export strategy assessed following Western sanctions since 2014?" The author argues that although Western sanctions have led into decreasing foreign capital and technology investments in Russia's energy sector since 2014, the EU's needs for gas imports from Russia have increased meanwhile; therefore the sanctions have not had a significant impact on Russia's energy weapons performance." Using descriptive-analytical method and an inferential methodology the authors try to find an answer for the research question. While confirming the mentioned hypothesis, the findings show that Russian-European Union interactions in the area of energy will continue under the shadow of US sanctions.

Keywords: Russia-EU Energy Relations, Energy Leverage, Energy Security, Asymmetric Interdependence.

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Renewable Energy and Regional Cooperation in Central Asia

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Central Asia has many capacities to generate and use renewable energy. Addressing energy insecurity in the region may be the strongest incentive for Central Asian governments to develop renewable energy resources. Central Asia is rich in hydrocarbon reserves, but the uneven distribution of these resources across countries, burnout of facilities and inefficient energy management, threaten development of the whole region. However, moving towards alternative energy will also have many other advantages for the Central Asia region, including decreasing concerns about energy security in the region. Promoting regional cooperation is one of the definitive benefits of expanding renewable resources in Central Asian countries that the present paper seeks to address. The present literature tries to find an answer for the following questions: "How do implementing renewable energy projects by central Asian countries affect regional cooperation; and why?" The author argues that due to interdependence of the Central Asian countries in the field of energy, the renewable energy resources as their common interest (and not as a parallel, divergent or conflicting interest) as well as the need for regional countries to have an integrated energy system, implementing renewable energy projects by the Central Asian countries can enhance intergovernmental cooperation in regional integration arena. Using descriptive-analytical method and the causal methodology the author tries to tell why the research findings provide an answer to the research question.

Keywords: Renewable Energy Resources, Energy Security, Central Asia, Regional Cooperation and Water-Energy Equation.

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**Russia and the Arctic's Security Environment:
Military Modernization or Militarism?**

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Although there are currently no indications of conflict in the Arctic, Moscow's attempts to strengthen its assets and military positions in the region have been interpreted largely as militarism by Western media and political think tanks. However, all Russian strategic documents emphasize on Russia's economic profits being gained through the resources and routes of the Arctic and do not refer to any particular military threat in the region. This literature is to assess the nature of Moscow's military presence and expansion in the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation, in order to discover its relation with two concepts of military modernization and militarism. Therefore, the author tries to find out the nature of the presence and expansion of Russian military capabilities in the Arctic over the past decade has mainly been based on military modernization or militarism, and its reasons. The basic findings prove that the nature of the presence and expansion of Russian military capabilities in the Arctic over the past decade have been due to Moscow's strategic goals (including defending its sovereignty in the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation against NATO, supporting economic interests and shipbuilding and benefiting them, and formalizing the role of Russia as a major power); based on military modernization and not militarism. Using descriptive-analytical method and relying on a defensive-invasive dualism under the theoretical approach of neo-realization, the author tries to tell why the research findings provide an answer to the research question.

Keywords: the Arctic, Militarization, Military Modernization, NATO, North Pole, Russia.

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De-Securitization in Central Asia: Causes and Contexts

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Central Asia has been characterized by some regional disputes and tensions including the securitization of border and territorial disputes, water and environment issues, ethnic and linguistic identities, communication corridors and energy transmission lines for more than two decades. However, it has gradually entered a new era of detente and de-securitization since a decade ago that is the transformation of an issue from an urgent political situation into a normal one. This trend has intensified in the past decade with the new generation of regional leaders and the normalization of Tajikistan-Uzbekistan relations. As a result of these developments, many issues such as water, environment, borders and crossings, communication corridors and energy transmission lines, have been gradually taken out of their past securitized situation and have entered into a normal one. The present literature addresses the question that what causes and contexts have led to the détente and de-securitization in Central Asia? In order to reply the mentioned question, the hypothesis can be put forward that "the advent of a new generation of Central Asian leaders as securitizing actors, the new discourse of new leaders and elites, the shared benefits of expanding energy transmission lines and communication and transit corridors as well as common water and environmental threats, have led to detente and de-securitization in Central Asia". In order to evaluate the proposed hypothesis, the author attempts to provide a better understanding of the new developments taking place in Central Asia by applying the theoretical concepts and components of securitization and de-securitization as presented in Copenhagen security school.

Keywords: Central Asia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, ShavkatMirziyoyev, Securitization and De-Securitization and Copenhagen School of Security.

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Drug Trafficking and Terrorist Violations in Central Asia

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The linkage between terrorism and drugs in Central Asia is commonly based upon a simplified perception of Afghanistan's situation. Accordingly the violation that is derived from the drug trafficking in the region is usually understood within the same conceptual framework. The present literature addressed the concept of Narco-terrorism and believes that drug trade is not the main factor for terrorist activities in Central Asia. The authors try to find an answer for the following question: How does drug trafficking from Central Asian corridors impact the spread of terrorism in the region? The authors argue that drug trafficking through the Central Asian corridors, facilitate the terrorism in the region but still the violations are less relevant to transnational terrorist groups and more linked to indigenous combatant ones. Using descriptive-analytical methodology and library resources, the authors try to tell why the research findings provide an answer to the research question.

Keywords: Central Asia, Terrorism, Narco – Terrorism, Drug Trafficking and Human Trafficking.

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