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Strategic Partnership of the Post-Soviet Countries (Asian Dimension of the Balancing Partnership)

An attempt has been made to analyze the implementation of the strategic partnership in a number of countries in the post-Soviet space, including the countries of the Asian region. The influence of historical, political, and economic imperatives, in particular, the influence of the breakup of the Soviet Union on the formation and implementation of the partnership through deepening of relations with Western countries, China, and Russian Federation, is analyzed. The necessity of further analysis of the strategic partnership of the countries of the Asian space in its geopolitical dimensions is proved. The author noted the need for further analysis of the study of the transformation processes of the post-Soviet countries of Asian space through their, without exaggeration, key influence on the geopolitical processes of the Eurasian region. It is noted that the Asian region is crucial in the process of further transformation of the political processes, which will be implemented taking into account the growth of China's economic indicators.

Keywords

Strategic partnership, post-Soviet countries, Asian region, globalization, the USA, the Russian Federation.

Стратегічне партнерство країн пострадянського простору (Азійський вимір хиткої рівноваги)

Здійснено спробу проаналізувати реалізацію стратегічного партнерства низки країн пострадянського простору, зокрема країн азійського регіону. Аналізується вплив історичних, політичних, економічних імперативів, зокрема розпаду Радянського Союзу на формування та реалізацію партнерства через поглиблення відносин з західними країнами, Китаєм та РФ. Доводиться необхідність подальшого аналізу стратегічного партнерства країн азійського простору в його геополітичних вимірах. Автором зазначено про необхідність здійснення подальшого аналізу дослідження процесів трансформації пострадянських країн азійського простору через їхній безперебійний ключовий вплив на геополітичні процеси Євро-азійського регіону. Зазначено, що азійський регіон є ключовим в процесі подальшої трансформації політичних процесів, що відбуватимуться з врахуванням росту економічних показників Китаю.

Ключові слова

Стратегічне партнерство, пострадянські країни, азійський регіон, глобалізація, США, РФ.

Statement of scientific problem and its meaning.In our research, it is quite interesting to study the transformation processes in the political, economic, and historical dimensions of the countries of the Asian space due to the fact that the Asian countries can significantly influence the processes of gradual democratization of the entire Eurasian region. We consider it urgent to study the establishment of strategic partnership of a number of Asian countries through rather ambiguous geopolitical location and influence of Asian region on the processes of globalization in its all dimensions.

Analysis of the recent studies.It should be noted that the foundations of strategic partnership in the Asian dimensions of the post-Soviet countries are explored by foreign and domestic scientists.It is necessary to name the following famous scientists that created some works on the strategic partnership of Asian countries: S. Vidnianskyi, B. Humeniuk, A. Hutsalo, I. Zhovkva, A. Zlenko, Ye. Kaminskyi, B. Kantseliaruk, A. Kruhlashov, M. Kulynych, V. Lytvyn, Yu. Makar, Ye. Makarenko, H. Perepelytsia,

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I. Pohorska, N. Pipchenko, N. Ryzhkov, V. Smolii, B. Tarasiuk, S. Feduniak, V. Chalyi, O. Shevchuk, I. Tsependa, etc. The works of the following foreign authors are also quite relevant: Z. Brzezinski, S. Garnett, D. Ding, G. Kissinger, S. Kay, P. Cronin, W. Cooper, H. Milner, D. Mitrani, E. Rostow, M. Sariolghalam, K. Sylvester, R. Skidelsky, H. Snyder, D. Feit, O. Holst, K. Holst, J. Chekel, and Yu. Yafe.

Main materials and grounding of the obtained results. Let us consider the conditions for formation of the "balancing strategic partnership" between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In particular, the peculiarities of Kazakhstan's interstate cooperation implementation at the level of strategic partnership are reflected in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the period from 2014 to 2020, which notes the strengthening of the relations with the Russian Federation in all the spheres of political, trade, economic, cultural, and humanitarian cooperation, based on the Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Alliance in the 21st Century. Researchers note that Kazakhstan, like Russia, has its own strategic interests with those states, the relations with which, on the other hand, are of competitive or tense nature, for example, the Russia-USA and Kazakhstan-USA interaction. The tension in the relations between Russia and the United States were caused by the events in the East of Ukraine, which also has a destructive effect on the relations between Kazakhstan and Russia. Let us note that Kazakhstan does not fully support Russia's policy towards the new political leadership of Ukrainian. However, together with the debatable moments in the foreign policy activities, it is possible to see the activation of the integration processes between Russia and Kazakhstan in connection with the "Caspian breakthrough", in particular, in 2014, the leaders of Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Iran agreed a political statement, in which the Caspian Sea status was recorded for the first time².

The Republic of Kazakhstan also strengthens the Asian vector of the foreign policy through intensification of the trade, economic, investment, and technological cooperation with the countries of East, South, Southeast Asia and their regional associations. In particular, the interaction with Japan and the Republic of Korea is focused on attraction of the latest technologies, introduction of energy and water saving technologies in Kazakhstan, promotion of the development of the Kazakh education system, and strengthening of the dialogs "Central Asia + Japan" and "Central Asia and the Republic of Korea"^{3, 4}.

In addition, Kazakhstan is deepening its all-round strategic cooperation with the People's Republic of China in the framework of the political dialog at the high and highest levels and developing the energy, investment-and-technology, trade-and-economic, cultural-and-humanitarian cooperation, as well as it is interacting in the transit-transport sphere and joint use of the transboundary water resources⁴. Let us note that China and Kazakhstan traditionally have long-standing friendly contacts, which was reflected in the signing of the joint declaration on formation of strategic partnership between the two countries (2005). In his turn, Xi Jinping also noted that the strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and China is being continuously strengthened, which allows development of the mutually beneficial cooperation⁵.

Let us separately note that Kazakhstan continues to strengthen its strategic partnership with the United States, aimed at the development of the political, trade, economic, investment, energy, scientific

² Кузменкин, В. (2014). Казахстан четко определил своего стратегического партнера. Это – Россия! *The world and we*. available at: http://www.worldandwe.com/ru/page/dmitriy_frank_kazakhstan_chetko_opredelil_kto_yavlyayetsya_generalnym_strategicheskim_partnerom_eto_rossiya.html#ixzz4cibzdMFW (accessed 6 October 2017).

³ Концепция внешней политики Республики Казахстан на 2014-2020 годы (2014) *МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН* *mfa.gov.kz* available at: <http://mfa.gov.kz/index.php/ru/vneshnyaya-politika/kontsepsiya-vneshnoj-politiki-rk-na-2014-2020-gg> (accessed 10 October 2017).

⁴ Совместное заявление Премьер-Министра РК и Министра экономики, внешней торговли и индустрии Японии в укреплении стратегического партнерства в целях мирного использования атомной энергии. (2007). *МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН* *mfa.gov.kz* available at: <http://mfa.gov.kz/index.php/ru/vneshnyaya-politika/dogovorno-pravovaya-baza/dvustoronnie-mezhdunarodnyedogovory-respubliki-kazakhstan/12-material-orys/600-yaponiya> (accessed 2 October 2017).

⁵ Главы Казахстана и КНР подписали декларацию о стратегическом партнерстве (2015) *Ритм Евразии* *www.ritimeurasia.org* available at: <http://www.ritimeurasia.org/news--2015-09-01--glavy-kazahstana-i-knr-podpisali-deklaraciju-o-strategicheskom-partnerstve-19400> (accessed 4 October 2017).

ic, technical, and humanitarian cooperation, as well as resolution of the topical issues on the international agenda. Furthermore, Kazakhstan is actively developing the relations of the strategic partnership with the European countries, with which relevant treaties have been concluded or are being developed, as well as with the European institutions and associations. In particular, in the future, the efforts will continue to deepen the relations with the EU as an important trade, economic, and investment partner of the state, conclude an agreement on enhanced partnership and cooperation, liberalize the visa regime with the prospect of gradual transition to the visa-free regime for the citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the European Union². Let us add that, at present, there are some agreements on strategic partnership with Spain (2010), France (2010), Italy (2011), and Great Britain (2013)^{6, 7, 8, 9}.

Let us emphasize that the strategic partnership of Kazakhstan with the European countries is based on a special cooperation with the EU, with which it is planned to expand the economic and energy cooperation. Kazakhstan also expects some support from the EU to get the non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council.

In order to strengthen its own positions within the Caspian region, Kazakhstan pays considerable attention to deepening of the all-round strategic cooperation with the Republic of Turkey and Islamic Republic of Iran, which is based on the commonality of historical and cultural values, mutually beneficial interests in the trade, economic, transit, and transport spheres, as well as on the provision of the stability in the Caspian Sea¹⁰.

The development of multifaceted relations of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Republic of Uzbekistan is focused on unification of the efforts of the region countries to jointly counteract internal and external threats and active the political, economic, cultural, and humanitarian cooperation on the mutually beneficial and parity basis. The Republic of Kazakhstan continues the traditional and mutually beneficial cooperation with the Republic of Belarus, Ukraine, and Republic of Moldova, as well as with the South Caucasus countries – the Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia, and Georgia, which occupy an important place in the system of political, economic, transit, and transport interests of the country^{2, 11, 12, 13}. Thus, Kazakhstan, when developing the relations of strategic partnership, tries to balance between the Russia Federation,

⁶ Договор о стратегическом партнерстве между Республикой Казахстан и Королевством Испания. (2016) МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН <http://mfa.gov.kz> available at: <http://mfa.gov.kz/images/DogovornayaBaza/spain/651.pdf> (accessed 10 February 2017).

⁷ Договор о стратегическом партнерстве между Республикой Казахстан и Французской Республикой. (2016) МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН <http://mfa.gov.kz> available at: <http://mfa.gov.kz/index.php/ru/vneshnyaya-politika/dogovorno-pravovaya-baza/dvustoronnie-mezhdunarodnye-dogovory-respubliki-kazakhstan/12-material-orys/594-frantsuzskaya-respublika> (accessed 16 February 2017).

⁸ О ратификации Договора о стратегическом партнерстве между Республикой Казахстан и Итальянской Республикой. (2011) Закон Республики Казахстан 18 апреля 2011 года (№ 427-IV) available at: https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30972493 (accessed 4 October 2017).

⁹ Е. Идрисов (2016) Испания является одним из самых надежных стратегических партнеров Казахстана в Европе и в мире. *МИА «Казинформ»* www.inform.kz available at: http://www.inform.kz/ru/e-idrisov-ispaniya-yavlyetsya-odnim-iz-samyh-nadezhnyh-strategicheskikh-partnerov-kazahstana-v-evrope-i-v-mire_a2896671 (accessed 10 October 2017).

¹⁰ Договор о стратегическом партнерстве между Республикой Казахстан и Турецкой Республикой. (2011) МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН <http://mfa.gov.kz> available at: <http://mfa.gov.kz/index.php/ru/vneshnyaya-politika/dogovorno-pravovaya-baza/dvustoronnie-mezhdunarodnye-dogovory-respubliki-kazakhstan/12-material-orys/589-turetskaya-respublika> (accessed 10 October 2017).

¹¹ Договор о стратегическом партнерстве и союзнических отношениях между Республикой Казахстан и Азербайджанской Республикой. (2005) МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН <http://mfa.gov.kz> available at: <http://mfa.gov.kz/images/DogovornayaBaza/Azerbaisjan/1742.pdf> (accessed 10 October 2017).

¹² Договор о стратегическом партнерстве между Республикой Казахстан и Республикой Узбекистан (2013) ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЕ УСЛУГИ И ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОНЛАЙН <https://egov.kz> available at: <https://egov.kz/cms/ru/law/list/Z1400000201> (accessed 12 October 2017).

¹³ О ратификации Договора о стратегическом партнерстве между Республикой Казахстан и Республикой Таджикистан Закон Республики Казахстан от 31 октября 2016 года (№ 19-VI ЗРК) (2016) available at: https://tengrinews.kz/zakon/parlament_respubliki_kazakhstan/mejdunapodnyie_otnosheniya_respubliki_kazahstan/id-Z1600000019/ (accessed 12 October 2017).

People's Republic of China, United States of America, and European Union, the bilateral interaction among which is now partially complicated by the military events in the East of Ukraine and presence of different political vision of the development of Syria and Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan is based on the Constitution, laws "On the Concept of Foreign Policy" (2012), "On International Treaties", other normative legal acts of the state, and presidential statements, as well as on the international conventions and treaties, to which the country has joined. The main objectives of the country's foreign policy activities became the formation of the balanced system of strategic partnership with the world's leading states and international organizations, support of the geopolitical balance in the region, diversification of the trade, economic, technological, transport, and other relations of Uzbekistan; preservation and strengthening of peace and stability in Central Asia, transformation of the region into the zone of security and sustainable development, promotion of peace and stability in Afghanistan; use of the bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms in order to increase the process of attracting direct foreign investments and advanced technologies into the priority sectors of national economy; formation and development of the system of international transport and communication corridors that would ensure a reliable and stable exit of Uzbekistan into the world markets¹⁴.

Let us note that the consistent development and strengthening of the relations with Russia on the basis of the Strategic Partnership Treaty dated June 16, 2004, Treaty on Allied Relations dated November 14, 2005, and Declaration on the deepening of the strategic partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation dated June 4, 2012 meet the interests of both countries in terms of strengthening of the stability and security in the region. The important aspects of the Uzbek-Russian relations include the further build-up and diversification of trade and economic relations, as well as the investment cooperation and cooperation in combating transnational threats¹⁵. Therefore, the strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and Russia aims at ensuring mutual security, counteracting global threats and challenges, strengthening regional stability, expanding cooperation in the political, economic, and humanitarian spheres on a long-term basis. Let us also add that the relations with Azerbaijan are also considered as a strategic partnership¹⁶.

The development of mutually beneficial and constructive cooperation with the United States, based on the provisions of the Declaration on Strategic Partnership and Basics of Cooperation between the Republic of Uzbekistan and United States of America dated March 12, 2002, are also top-priority in Uzbekistan's foreign policy. When taking into account the fact that the main areas of bilateral cooperation included the promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan, combating transnational challenges, expanding cooperation in the field of investment and technology in order to support the modernization processes in the country. Uzbekistan also gives importance to deepening of the mutually beneficial cooperation with the EU and NATO in order to develop the trade, investment, and financial cooperation, transfer high technologies, and strengthen regional security¹⁷.

Let us note that Uzbekistan is interested in strengthening of the strategic partnership with People's Republic of China as a regional actor, which plays a leading role in solving of global problems. In particular, the development of the relations with China is based on the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of the Strategic Partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the People's Republic of China dated June 6, 2012, Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation, and Joint Declaration on Further Development and Deepening of Bilateral Strategic Partnership dated September 9, 2013¹⁹.

A separate place in the post-Soviet space is occupied by Georgia and Moldova, as well as Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, that have chosen their own way of foreign policy positioning and development

¹⁴ Внешняя политика. (2017) Министерство иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан. *МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ УЗБЕКИСТАН* www.mfa.uz available at: www.mfa.uz/ru/cooperation/policy/ (accessed 12 October 2017).

¹⁵ Договор о стратегическом партнерстве между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Узбекистан Ратифицировано Федеральным законом РФ (N 180-ФЗ) (2004) АО «Кодекс» <http://docs.cntd.ru> available at: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/901903614> (accessed 23 October 2017).

¹⁶ Сотрудничество Республики Узбекистан со странами СНГ и Грузией. (2017) *МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ УЗБЕКИСТАН* www.mfa.uz available at: <http://www.mfa.uz/ru/cooperation/countries/60/> (accessed 12 October 2017).

¹⁷ Международное сотрудничество. (2017) *МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РЕСПУБЛИКИ УЗБЕКИСТАН* www.mfa.uz available at: <http://www.mfa.uz/ru/cooperation/> (accessed 12 October 2017).

of strategic relations. In particular, the essence of the "European and Euro-Atlantic partnership" between Georgia and Moldova is reduced to deepening of participation of the states and prospective membership in such international structures as the EU and NATO, which, in turn, led to deterioration of cooperation with the Russian Federation.

The main foreign policy priorities of Georgia in the sphere of strategic partnership are set out in the concept of national security, which also defines the main national values, national interests, and country's vision of its safe development, as well as sets out the main directions of the national security policy. In particular, the document focuses on the relations with the United States, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, and Russian Federation. Let us note that, at present, Georgia's relations with Azerbaijan have developed into the strategic partnership through the implementation of joint energy, transport, and communication projects. An example can be the transport corridor Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, which will increase the international transit role of the rail networks of the two countries and improve their competitiveness¹⁸.

Let us add that Georgia continues to deepen its strategic partnership with the USA, which is recorded in the Charter on Strategic Partnership (2009), which focuses on the development of relations in the spheres of defense, security, economy, trade, energy, democracy, and intercultural exchanges. The Georgian leadership emphasizes separately the US support of the problems, associated with the de-occupation of Georgian territories, as well as signing of the agreement on free trade zone. In order to maintain an adequate level of defense capacity, the Georgian units, trained in within the framework of the US assistance programs, participate successfully in NATO programs in Afghanistan²⁰.

Georgia intends to build a strategic partnership with Ukraine not only at the bilateral level, but also in multilateral formats such as the UNO, OSCE, Council of Europe, Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, and GUAM, which will allow both countries to be actively involved in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration and participation in the EU Eastern Partnership program. The Georgian leadership is also ready to develop good-neighborly relations with the Russian Federation on the basis of the equality principle, which is impossible without respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and beginning of the process of de-occupation of its territory²⁰.

The "economically beneficial partnership" of Azerbaijan is based on the elimination of all foreign policy threats, directed against the state independence, assurance of national security, prevention of occupation of the country's territory, and work with leading countries, international and regional organizations, as well as with the international institutions, to defend national interests. The other foreign policy priorities include the protection of regional interests, settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, determination of common interests with Iran, Russia, and Turkmenistan, continuation of development of the allied relations with Turkey, Ukraine, Georgia, as well as definition of the status of the Caspian Sea and implementation of energy, transport, and communications projects East-West and North-South^{19, 20, 21}.

The basis of the foreign policy doctrine of Turkmenistan was the "neutral partnership", which was approved by the President's decree "On Approving the Concept of the Foreign Policy of Neutral Turkmenistan for the Period from 2017 to 2023". According to the document, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan was instructed to ensure implementation of this concept, and the ministries, industry departments, and other government agencies were ordered to be guided by its provisions when developing national strategies and programs. Paying attention to the issues of cooperation with authoritative international structures, Turkmenistan attaches special importance to the development of

¹⁸ National Security Concept of Georgia. *MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GEORGIA* (2017) <http://www.mfa.gov.ge> available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.ge/MainNav/ForeignPolicy/NationalSecurityConcept.aspx> (accessed 23 October 2017).

¹⁹ Внешняя политика Азербайджана. (2007) *Управление делами Президента Азербайджанской Республики* <http://files.preslib.az> available at: <http://files.preslib.az/projects/azerbaijan/rus/gl8.pdf> (accessed 23 October 2017).

²⁰ Декларация о дружбе и стратегическом партнёрстве между Азербайджанской Республикой и Российской Федерацией (2008) АДМИНИСТРАЦИЯ ПРЕЗИДЕНТА РОССИИ <http://kremlin.ru> available at: <http://kremlin.ru/supplement/250> (accessed 23 October 2017).

²¹ Мамедьяров: Отношения между Азербайджаном и Россией носят характер стратегического партнерства (2017) *REPORT INFORMASIYA AGENTLIYI* <https://report.az> available at: <https://report.az/ru/vneshnyaya-politika/mamed-yarov-sovremennye-otnosheniya-mezhdu-azerbajdzhanom-i-rossiej/> (accessed 25 October 2017).

close strategic partnership with the UNO, which is reflected in this concept. The document also includes initiatives and proposals of the political leadership on the wide use of the tools for preventive diplomacy, as well as political and diplomatic means in order to solve complex international political problems. Hence, it is expected to further strengthen Turkmenistan's cooperation with the UNO, OSCE, Non-Aligned Movement, and other international organizations. According to the concept, the states of Transcaucasia, Ukraine, Republic of Belarus, and Moldova are called to be traditional partners of the country, with which the cooperation in the trade, economic, investment, cultural, and humanitarian spheres will be expanded²².

Conclusions and recommendations for further research. Having carried out our scientific study, it is worth noting the need for further study of the models for implementation of strategic partnership, which can be analyzed in the Asian region, and the above analysis of such processes will enable us to better understand the dynamics of changes in the system of international relations.

Therefore, we consider it expedient to conduct further analysis of the strategic partnership of the Asian region in its political dimensions since the ambiguity and multitasking of this process is reflected in all spheres of the process of gradual globalization of the world community.

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