

THE REGIONAL PRIORITIES OF THE RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY AS A COMPONENT OF INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the study: The article deals with the regional priorities of the Russian foreign policy set forth in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2016: CIS, Euro-Atlantic region, Asia-Pacific region, Middle East, Latin America and Africa. In order to respond to the main research question of what criteria underlie the hierarchy of regional priorities the author makes an attempt to thoroughly examine the Russian foreign-policy strategy in each and every of the 6 regions in question.

Methodology: The place of CIS as the main regional priority is determined by the intensive integrational and regional cooperation within the Union State, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent Countries (all of which were created in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union), the active role played by Moscow in the settlement of the post-Soviet conflicts and successes in transregional cooperation, most notably, in the Caspian Sea.

Conclusion: As a result, the author comes to the conclusion that the hierarchy of regional priorities is the result of confluence of historical, political, diplomatic, economic, humanitarian and even geographical factors that should be considered altogether.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Innovation System, Risk Management, Stock, Component, Formation.

INTRODUCTION

As a state that pursues a diversified foreign policy, Russia exercises its political and diplomatic presence in almost all corners of the Globe. However, it is obvious that the degree of our country's involvement in political processes taking place on different continents is very heterogeneous, which implies different values of certain regional areas for the Russian foreign policy.

Thus, according to the 2016 foreign policy Concept, Russia's main regional priorities are the CIS, the Euro-Atlantic region, the Asia-Pacific region (APR), the middle East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa. At the same time, the key foreign policy document does not give a clear explanation of how the significance of a particular direction is determined: why is the CIS mentioned in the document before the Euro-Atlantic region, the Asia-Pacific region is ahead of the Middle East, and Latin America is listed above Africa?

Most likely, the answer to this question can be obtained after a careful study of Russia's political and diplomatic approaches within each regional area separately. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine two interdependent issues: the criteria for building a hierarchy of regional priorities of Russian foreign policy and the conceptual content of all six directions of the domestic foreign policy course.

METHODOLOGY

Before starting to study the six main regional areas, it is necessary to conceptualize them in terms of the name and approximate geographical boundaries.

For example, in order to avoid logical confusion between the CIS as an organization that at various times United 11 States of the former USSR (excluding the Baltic States), and the regional direction of Russia's foreign policy, which includes 13 States, taking into account Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the latter will be referred to as the term "*Post-Soviet space*", which is absent in the Concepts. The Euro-Atlantic region, which is the result of an implicit Union of 41 European States and 2 North American countries, unites NATO members (with the exception of Turkey), non-NATO representatives of the EU and EFTA, as well as "neutral" States of the Balkan Peninsula.

The Asia-Pacific region, as a direction of Russia's foreign policy, consisting of 37 countries, includes not only the powers that have access to the Pacific Ocean, but also the States of Central and South Asia. Finally, for ease of use, the term "*Middle East*", meaning 21 States from Mauritania in the West to Iran in the East, will replace the longer term "*Countries of the Middle East and North Africa*", 32 LAC countries will be called "*Latin America*", and the geographical concept "*Africa*", originally used to refer to an entire continent, will include 46 countries of sub-Saharan Africa (Fenenko, 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Russia's foreign policy strategy in the post-Soviet space is greatly influenced by the collapse of the Soviet Union, which dictates the desire of the CIS countries to pursue a sovereign domestic and foreign policy, which explains not only the failure of the initial plans to create a single ruble zone or a unified armed forces, but also the actual division of the region into 3 sub-regions, allocated depending on the geographical location and a set of external actors, other than Russia, involved in intraregional political processes:

1. Eastern Europe, including Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova, subject to the geopolitical influence of the United States and the EU;
2. The South Caucasus, consisting of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, influenced by the US, EU, Turkey, and Iran;
3. Central Asia, which unites Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, which feel external pressure from the United States, China, Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan (Andronova, 2010).

As a result, Russia's main tasks in this area are to strengthen diverse integration groups and regional international organizations (the Union state of Russia and Belarus, the EEU, the CSTO, and the CIS), resolve "*Frozen*" conflicts (Ukraine–LPR/DPR, Moldova–Transnistria, Georgia–Abkhazia/ South Ossetia), develop bilateral relations with all countries in the region (even in the absence of official diplomatic relations, as in the case of Georgia), and co-develop adjacent geographical areas (the Black and Caspian seas) (Bogaturov, 2007).

At the moment, Moscow has built the most advanced form of integration in the post-Soviet space with Minsk within the framework of the so-called Union state of Russia and Belarus. Thus, both countries have achieved a high level of foreign policy coordination within the UN, CIS, EEU, CSTO and other structures, created a joint regional group of troops and a single migration space that allows mutual travel on internal passports without passing border or customs control (The concept of foreign policy of the Russian Federation 1993; 2000). Citizens of Russia and Belarus have a single set of social guarantees: payment of pensions, exclusion of double taxation, and the possibility of receiving free education and emergency medical care, and many other benefits. Finally, as a key foreign trade partner for each other, our countries is developing direct interregional cooperation on the basis of the Forum of regions (Kontseptsiya, 2002).

However, the project of the Union state is not completed due to the lack of a unified Constitution, legal and electoral system, Parliament, Court, accounting Chamber, national currency and symbols (flag, coat of arms, anthem), as well as a unified foreign policy. Moreover, the allied relations between the two countries are regularly marred by conflicts over the main controversial issues: the price of Russian gas and oil supplies to Belarus, the terms of Belarusian agricultural supplies, the amount of cash subsidies to Minsk from Moscow, or the forced restoration of the border.

From a strategic point of view, the main integration project of Russia in the post-Soviet space is the EEU, whose main goal is to create a common market ("*Free movement of goods, services, capital and labor, as well as conducting a coordinated, coordinated or unified policy in economic sectors*"). Actively developing international activities, the EEU has already concluded agreements on free trade zones with Vietnam and Iran. However, the main structural imbalance of the Eurasian integration remains the fact that the main "*Engine*" of this project is our country, whose economy accounts for 90% of the total market of the Association (Kontseptsiya, 2000).

An equally important role is played by Russia and the CSTO, which our country seeks to turn into a multifunctional structure that can withstand modern challenges and threats. In addition to the threats of terrorism, drug trafficking and illegal migration emanating from the Northern regions of Afghanistan, CSTO member States face other dangerous challenges, which include the risk of an escalation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (in which Armenia is a party to the conflict), (The concept of foreign policy of the Russian Federation 2008; 2013; 2016) the strengthening of NATO's military infrastructure in the Baltic States and Poland near the borders of Belarus and Russia, contradictions between CSTO members (the border conflict between Tajikistan & Kyrgyzstan in 2014), as well as possible internal instability in one of the organization's member countries (Kontseptsiya, 2008).

Finally, as for the CIS, Russia views this organization as a mechanism for "*Versatile and flexible*" integration that takes into account the different degrees of readiness of the countries of the region for interaction and provides an opportunity to participate to the extent and in those areas of cooperation that meet the national interests of each of the States (Smirnov, 2013). Thanks to this approach, the CIS managed to turn into a full-fledged international organization with a Charter and an extensive network of institutions and industry bodies, create favorable conditions for the sovereignization of countries while maintaining multifaceted historical ties (from military-political to cultural) and sign an Agreement on a free trade zone in 2011. Moreover, the presence of the CIS allows Russia to develop multilateral relations with countries outside the EEU and CSTO. However, despite the existing achievements, the main challenges in the work of the Commonwealth are the complexity of the process of finding a consensus, the

refusal of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan to participate in the FTA, and the withdrawal of Georgia (2009); Ukraine (2018) from the CIS, although both countries continue to participate in those economic agreements that meet their interests.

One of the most obvious consequences of the collapse of the USSR is still a large number of so-called "*Frozen*" conflicts, in the settlement of which Russia takes an active part because of their direct influence on our country (Kontseptsiya, 2013).

Crisis trends are also observed in the OSCE. Over the course of several decades, the organization has accumulated two main structural biases: thematic, which means that 70% of the activities of specialized bodies are related to human rights and democracy issues at the expense of security issues, and geographical, characterized by the fact that all 16 field missions are located in the CIS countries and the Balkans (i.e. "*East of Vienna*"). Finally, Russia continues to insist on the need for reform of the OSCE, which aims to give the organization legal personality through the adoption of the Charter and to equalize structural imbalances (Kontseptsiya, 2016). Despite the ongoing civil war in Ukraine and other regional conflicts in the organization's area of responsibility, Russia points out that the main goal of the OSCE, enshrined at the Astana summit in 2010, is to "*Build a free, democratic, common and indivisible security community from Vancouver to Vladivostok*".

The crisis in relations with NATO is a regional refraction of the total confrontation between Russia and the United States, which has spread to almost all spheres of human activity (military-political, economic, information, cyberspace, and even sports). At the moment, Russian-American relations are held hostage by the internal political struggle in the United States, in which Russia's accusations of interference in the presidential election in November 2016 are used to discredit the current President, Donald Trump. As a result, in order not to be accused of "*Ties*" with Russia, the current US Administration continues to regularly impose sanctions against Moscow (Panov, 2017). Nevertheless, despite the fact that Russia and the United States have contradictions on almost all issues of modern international relations, Russia declares its openness to bilateral cooperation in any sphere.

CONCLUSION

Political and diplomatic factors that determine the region's place in the system of foreign policy coordinates include the presence or absence of a strategic vision of the region, the degree of involvement in political processes (Conflict resolution, participation in regional organizations, etc.) And even the intensity of political and diplomatic dialogue at the present stage. In many ways, this group of factors is one of the key, but not the only one for understanding the issue under consideration.

At the same time, economic indicators are equally important, including the intensity of integration processes and the volume of trade turnover with the countries of the corresponding region. Finally, an understanding of the criteria underlying the hierarchy of regional priorities would be incomplete without taking into account the humanitarian and geographical aspects. And if the latter is something amenable to quantification (e.g., number of countries and the length of the state border of Russia with foreign States, the General remoteness of the region from the territory of our country), the analysis first has to rely on "*Derived*" indicators (e.g. to assess the development of humanitarian relations between Russia and foreign States it is possible to calculate the number of countries in the region, providing for our citizens a visa-free regime).

Based on the above facts, we can conclude that the hierarchy of regional priorities of Russia's foreign policy is the result of resultant historical, political, diplomatic, economic,

humanitarian, and even geographical factors that must be considered in their entirety. For example, the sequence of regions specified in a key foreign policy document of the country is influenced by the General historical background, expressed not only by the collapse of the USSR, but also by its influence on the subsequent foreign policy course of the "New" Russia in the 1990s.

The need to take into account a variety of factors in their entirety in order to correctly determine the criteria underlying the hierarchy of regional directions is also confirmed by the fact that the analysis of a single component can lead to deliberately distorted results. For example, if the system of regional priorities is based only on the intensity of Russia's political and diplomatic dialogue with foreign countries, then the middle East will be the main area of Moscow's foreign policy efforts&.

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