

## **International Security in Central Asia: geopolitical risks and perspectives**

**Zhomart Simtikov, Murat Sembinov\*, Tatyana Chumachenko, Aimen Kurmangali, Lyazat Matakbayeva**

Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Department of International Relations, Almaty, The Republic of Kazakhstan

\*E-mail: muratsemb@mail.ru

Tel.: +870 5 220 60 74

Received for publication: 24 December 2016.

Accepted for publication: 03 March 2017.

### **Abstract**

The article presents the results of investigation of the problem of international security in Central Asia in the modern geopolitical turbulence. We studied the problem of the new geopolitical challenges in Central Asia at the present stage in the context of existing and potential threats to international security in the region. Through methods of system analysis, comparisons and analogies, modeling and forecasting the events and situations, were revealed the most potential challenges and threats to international security in Central Asia in the short and medium term. This paper offers the most rational and acceptable ways of their solution and prevention.

**Keywords:** International security, international relations, Central Asia, geopolitics, the USA, Russia, China, the military potential, The New Great Game.

### **Introduction**

The international situation in the geopolitical space of the former USSR is permanently unstable for more than 25 years. Escalated in the last years of the Soviet Union, ethnic and inter-ethnic conflict between the Soviet republics and within them turned into a whole series of armed conflicts and wars after the collapse of the Soviet Union. As a result, by mid-2016 the former Soviet Union, with the exception only of Belarus, Kazakhstan and the former Baltic republics, virtually had no countries without "hot spots" (Nagorno-Karabakh, Donbass), frozen conflicts (Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia) and recently of completed internal wars (the first and second Chechen war in Russia, civil war in Tajikistan), but which have not brought the expected peace and stability to the local population.

The historical experience and analysis of contemporary international relations shows that the Central Asian region has been, remains and will be in the medium term the scene of global geopolitical confrontation. The Great Game of the nineteenth – early twentieth century between the British and Russian empires was one of the most acute and dangerous geopolitical confrontations for control over the strategically important territories of Central Asia (Hopkirk, 1992). After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the declaration of independence of Kazakhstan and other former Soviet Central Asian republics The New Great Game began – a struggle between China, the USA, Russia and the European Union and Iran for influence and access to their natural resources, especially energy and transport corridors (especially in the context of the project of the New Silk Road), control of geopolitical space (Collins & Bekenova, 2016; N. Contessi, 2013; Edwards, 2003; Smith, 1996). In this regard, the issue of maintaining stability in Central Asia acquired even greater significance in international politics.

Therefore, the purpose of the article is to study the problems of international security in Central Asia in the modern geopolitical turbulence. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of the USA, Russia and China rivalry in the region and the study of military capabilities of the republics in Central Asia.

The problem of the new geopolitical challenges in Central Asia at the present stage in the context of existing and potential threats to international security in the region is investigated for the first time.

### **Methodology**

Conducted scientific and theoretical analysis with the use of the system analysis method, method of comparisons and analogies, modeling and forecasting of developments and the situation revealed the most likely challenges and threats to international security in Central Asia at the present stage of development of international relations, in the short and medium term. There were offered the most rational possible and acceptable for the subjects of international relations solutions to the identified problems.

Study of the formation of a new system of international security in Central Asia was started almost immediately with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the declaration of independence of five former Soviet Central Asian republics. In the mid-1990s, there were the first studies on the possible start The New Great Game since 1991 – a kind of reincarnation of the Great Game of the nineteenth – early twentieth centuries international struggle for influence in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the weakening of Russia's influence in the traditional for it regional presence and the appearance of actors such as the USA, China and the European Union (Blank, 1995; Smith, 1996). Due to the fact that at the international level the post-Soviet Central Asian countries have become an important area of foreign policy. The region has become the subject of consideration, especially after the beginning of autumn 2001 in the neighboring region of Afghanistan, the international anti-terrorist operation "Enduring Freedom", which also touched the problem of international security in the region (Butler, 2009; Edwards, 2003; Luong & Weinthal, 2002; "Q & A: US Military Bases in Central Asia," 2005). A separate large and important issues in the 2000s and now were the power rivalry (and co-operation at a time) between the Russian, American, European and Chinese companies for access to oil and gas resources of Central Asia (Denoon, 2015; Edwards, 2003; Karimi, 2015; Liedy, 2011; Mahnovski, Akramov, & Karasik, 2006).

However, the beginning of the development and implementation of China New Silk Road project the studies of the first half of the 2010s has shifted to the study of Chinese strategy in relation to the Central Asian countries (Fallon, 2015; Laruelle, 2015a, 2015b; Peyrouse & Raballand, 2015). At the same time international security issues though discussed, but not as a separate subject of the study, but mostly in the context of the New Great Game, and the so-called Chinese expansion in the region (Chan, 2016; Er, 2016; Fingar, 2016; Scobell et al., 2014; Stegen & Kuszniir, 2015).

Because of the rapid changes in the environment of the political situation around Central Asia and the instability of the general international situation in West Asia and Eastern Europe, the recently published popular and interesting scientific works should seem to become obsolete quickly (Blank, 2008; NP Contessi, 2015; McGlinchey, 2016 ; Patnaik, 2016). Therefore, the study of the question of international security in Central Asia in the modern geopolitical turbulence in the context of new challenges and threats is relevant and cannot be stopped at any historical point of the recent past.

## **Results**

### ***External geopolitical turbulence***

Historically, that Central Asia is a strategically vast geopolitical space, traditionally having a value in the global and regional scale, with regardless of time – whether it is the first millennium, the 19th century or the beginning of the third millennium. Central Eurasia has always played a huge role in world politics. Currently and in the near future, the importance of this region and the countries of Central Asia will be sufficiently large and serious. Being at the crossroads of continents and civilizations, taking strategic geopolitical position, with rich resources and convenient transportation routes and communications, of the region is a bridge between the West and the East, the focus of the USA, Chinese, Russia, the EU, Iranian and Indian interests. At the same time, Central Asia is a tangle of internal contradictions, caused by a complex history of formation of the local ethnic groups and the statehood of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

According to the eminent American scholar, diplomat and a specialist on the former Soviet Union Brzezinski Z, Central Asia is a major component of the so-called Eurasian Balkans – a complex geopolitical education that includes all former Soviet Central Asia countries, the Caucasus, as well as the north-western part of Turkey, all north and center parts of Iran, almost all of Afghanistan, north-east China, south of the Russian East Siberia (Brzezinski, 2007). Eurasian Balkans are filled with a huge number of internal political and economic problems, ethnic and religious differences. And without permanently explosive situation inside, complicated by the fact that they are surrounded by the outer contour of an extensive zone of instability, to which the Brzezinski Z. considers almost all of Western Asia and part of Eastern Europe, which is putting pressure on the Eurasian Balkans, but is under very strong external forces (Brzezinski, 2007).

Of course, the external factor is a crucial component in the development of international relations and security in Central Asia. Those external forces create a zone of geopolitical turbulence around Central Asia and can both stabilize and destabilize the situation in the strategically important region.

The situation worsens with very aggravated since 2011 international conflicts in the Middle East. Arab Spring in Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen and other countries, accompanied usually overthrow the current government and the armed civil confrontation, the intensification of radical extremist groups, LIH terrorist activity, the war in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, the attempt of the state armed coup in Turkey, the total destabilization of the political and economic situation in West Asia – this has formed the external conditions for a potential complication of the international situation in Central Asia for the last 5 years.

The collapse of the Soviet Union changed the geopolitical map of Central Eurasia, led the Central Asia to the international political arena. Former Soviet Central Asia from previously inaccessible for other countries in the region, its advantageous geopolitical and geo-economic situation, the presence of significant natural resources, especially oil and gas, the prospective of the creation of transport infrastructure linking the West and the East, the role of a springboard fight against international terrorism (particularly after September 11, 2001 in the USA), has become one of the most attractive object for the great powers, geopolitical ambitions and geo-strategic games. These circumstances have led to a confrontation between geopolitical centers of power for influence in Central Asia; Central Asia turned up to be in the center of the New Great Game – the struggle for strategic dominance by its main players – the USA, China, Russia, the EU and other countries and intergovernmental organizations.

### ***Geopolitics and geo-economics of the New Great Game***

One of the main challenges of the stability and security of Central Asia are the attempts of external geopolitical players to build their own geo-strategy and embed it in other parties, guided only by their own interests.

On the edge of 2 and 3 thousand years, and especially after the beginning of international military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and the deployment of the USA military bases in Uzbekistan (Khanabad) and Kyrgyzstan (Manas) – the total number of more than 2,000 officers and soldiers, the USA geo-strategy in Central Asia became a part of its more general Eurasian strategy, involving in its sphere of influence in addition to the countries of Central Asia, the Caspian and Caucasus regions, Russia, Afghanistan, the Middle East, South Asia and even China.

Central Asia has occupied an important place in the frame of the administration of the President George. W. Bush draft, promoted in the 2000s, a so-called Greater Central Asia. The plan was to tie into a single military-political and geopolitical the whole Central Asia and Afghanistan, and then combine the Greater Central Asia and the Greater Middle East into a single geo-strategic space; the United States could allow to build a common security system in the future. The most important target of the USA in the region was the establishment of a long-term control of its energy resources, which in conditions of very high oil and gas prices in the mid-2000s – the beginning of the 2010s and by the beginning of large-scale shale oil production would gave the United States an undeniable geo-economic advantage. However, the project remained unrealized, and it is not just a change in the Afghan or Iraqi policies. One of the main factors were the actions of the opponents, especially China.

Unlike other countries, trying to play the regional card in Central Asia, China is directly bordered with three of five republics – Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, and the history of diverse relations with Central Asian nations has several millennia. Beijing's interest to the region, which increased significantly after the collapse of the USSR and was due to several reasons, among which in the first place should mentioned its natural resources and geostrategic position, has grown considerably in 2009-2016.

In an effort to diversify the energy sources of income and reduce dependence on Saudi and Russian oil and at the same time to push the opponents in 2009-2010 from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to China, oil and gas pipelines of different power were built: "Kazakhstan – China" and "Turkmenistan – China". They are designed to ensure reliable supplies of hydrocarbons to China from Central Asia, which, in turn, with an increase in oil and gas production is calculated to strengthen its position. Not stopping there, in 2010-2013 only in 2.5 years China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) has built the Central Asian gas pipeline from its concession in Bagtyyarlyk in northern Turkmenistan, through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan to Xinjiang in northwest China's with the length of 2.2 thousand kilometers. The implementation of "One Belt One Road" project, which provides the formation of "economic belt of the Silk Road", where the main role is given to the Central Asian countries, even more will strengthen the China's position in the region.

To carry out its policy in Central Asia, Beijing utilizes the potential of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which has been regarded in Moscow as a support mechanism for regional security for a long time. However, this Russian-Chinese cooperation is actually opened up China's access to Central Asia, including the local hydrocarbon fields. This had a negative impact on the positions of Russia, which was not ready to compete with China that was able to offer the countries of the region an attractive energy and other economic projects. In the second half of the 2010s, Russia has not implemented a single major economic project in Central Asia.

### ***Economic problems and international security***

Today Central Asia is under scrutiny of modern world power centers, largely determined by the development of vectors of both regional and global international relations. Globalization is a concept of geopolitics, as the geographical distance no longer exists: the world is quite cramped and very sensitive to any fluctuations in the international community and the leading world powers and their associations, unions are able to project its influence and generate powerful impulses in politics and the economy virtually anywhere.

The fall in oil prices and the so-called war of sanction between the USA and the EU on one side and Russia on the other in 2014-2016 had a severe blow to the economies of the Central Asian countries. Investment, remittances from migrant workers, and commodity turnover decreased significantly, and inflation, unemployment, capital flight rose strongly, as well as the discontent of the local elites and population. According to Nate Schenkkan (2015), the crisis will cripple public spending and result in more lost years in a region that never recovered from the post-Soviet collapse in infrastructure, social services, and education. At worst, the crisis could lead to violent unrest. The long-term significance for the region will depend on how long the crisis lasts and how severe it becomes. But long-term consequences for regional economic development are already taking shape (Schenkkan, 2015, p. 6). The main result will be an even larger loss of Russia's positions in Central Asia and the role of China. The USA and the EU in these circumstances have not developed a strategy of foreign policy.

Although Washington and Brussels have provided political support to the countries of the region for a long time, especially in matters of production and transportation of hydrocarbon resources. At the end of the 1990s - 2000s, the West saw as the main problem a reorientation of flows of oil and gas in the region to Europe in order to reduce their dependence on Russia and diversify the sources of energy for the EU. After the start of the international counter-terrorist operation "Enduring Freedom" in Afghanistan in autumn of 2001, the importance of the region has increased significantly. There were 2 deployed bases of the USA Air Force (in the Uzbek Karshi-Khanabad and Manas Kyrgyz), opened air corridors for the USA aviation and ground lines of the international coalition supply in the so-called Northern Distribution Network, as well as several transport and logistics centers of the NATO countries. However, in the late 2000s - early 2010s most of the programs of the military-political partnership ended and were not prolonged, which obviously will not help to establish the security dialogue between NATO and the CSTO.

This is especially dangerous because of the possible destabilization within countries, as political regimes in those countries, formed in the wake of the collapse of the USSR and the third wave of democratization, has not reached the level of acceptable dynamic trajectory of their socio-economic and political development in a quarter of century. They do not have a clear model of economic development and there is no understanding, of what to do with the current socio-economic crisis. This is largely due to the lack of modernization and full integration of the world market, as well as the peculiarities of elite formation processes in the post-Soviet countries.

Currently, largely authoritarian regimes have formed in post-Soviet Central Asian countries; it has absorbed all the contradictory experience of political management that has been preserved in the public consciousness and mentality of the population of the newly independent states of the region.

The well-known American diplomat Henry Kissinger explains the presence of the conflict potential of a number of regions, including the former Soviet Union that "the state preceded the nation; it was and often remains as the main element of its formation» (Kissinger, 1994). Political parties, reflect the hard, usually communal unity in the place. where they exist; belonging to a minority or majority usually is permanent. "In such societies, the political process is reduced to the

question of dominance, and not to a change in power, which takes place rather through unconstitutional coups, if it really does. The concept of the loyal opposition – the essence of modern democracy – occurs rarely. More often, the opposition is seen as a threat to national unity, equates to treason and ruthlessly suppressed", - writes Kissinger (Kissinger, 1994). This fully applies to the countries of post-Soviet Central Asia. That is what carries the main threat to stability in the region. It must be added the fact that almost all the political leaders of these countries approach the moment of truth: the question of legitimation and organization of the transfer of power to a new breed of politicians. Very much will depend from his decision.

Real threat is a destabilization of the situation in Afghanistan, where a stable political regime was not able to set up to lead the country from a state of permanent chaos for 35 years and where the economic welfare of the country and the majority of the population today is firmly associated with the production and export of drugs.

In addition, Afghanistan has become almost permanent place of deployment of various radical groups. There is no guarantee that after the termination of the active phase of the war in Syria, namely Afghanistan does not become a new arena of full-scale hostilities, and, as a result, the situation in Central Asia would not be out of control.

#### ***The military potential of countries in the region***

In connection with mentioned above, there is a logical question on accordance of Central Asia military capabilities to existing and potential threats.

The most numerous army today belongs to the Republic of Kazakhstan. The number of the army, together with the forces of the Interior Ministry and the National Guard is about 130-135 thousand. Kazakhstan army represented all branches of modern army troops, including troops for special purposes and reconnaissance. Kazakhstan army is the most equipped army in the region; in its arsenal are the best examples of Soviet time's military equipment, and the latest samples of Russian military equipment. According to Global Firepower, it is armed with 300 tanks, 1600 armored vehicles, 744 artillery pieces, and 393 missile systems. The number of military aircraft is up to 233 units. Among them are nearly 100 fighters and 84 helicopters (including 18 assaults).

With a population of almost 18 million people, the defense of the country may rise to 8.3 million citizens. In addition, Kazakhstan's Army has a budget of \$ 2.4 billion. In recent years, Kazakhstan has improved the position of the army in the updated world ranking, which was the organization of Global Firepower. The list contains 126 countries; Kazakhstan has risen from 80th to 66th place.

Second place on the fighting capacity among the countries of post-Soviet Central Asian has the army of the Republic of Uzbekistan, whose number is about 120 thousand people. Equipping of military equipment is lower than of the army of Kazakhstan and is represented mainly by the Soviet Union military hardware of the late 1970s - early 1980s. The number of units of military equipment is several times lower than in Kazakhstan. The military budget of Uzbekistan is also significantly less.

Third in size and in technical equipment can be regarded the armed forces of the Republic of Tajikistan. The armed forces of Tajikistan are about 10 thousand soldiers. Military equipment is also presented by obsolete examples of Soviet times. In view of the reality of the threat of a breakthrough of militants from Afghanistan of great importance to the security of the country plays a Russian military base, where the 201st Motor Rifle Division is quartered, which has sophisticated weapons.

The Army of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, as well as the army of Tajikistan, few and mostly equipped with military equipment of Soviet manufacture. The total number of military personnel, including the National Guard, the Interior Ministry, Border Troops is about 25 thousand people. A Russian military base is on the territory of Kyrgyzstan in Kant, represented primarily by the Air

Force. Slightly higher on the technical equipment number of the army of Turkmenistan. The armed forces of the country are about 50 thousand people with the modern models of equipment.

According to Dmitry Gorenburg, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan appear to be building reasonably capable military forces. In Uzbekistan, the security service (SNB) will likely remain pre-eminent and enjoy the best access to the president. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are struggling to maintain even small rapid reaction forces; Bishkek and Dushanbe would likely need Russian military support in the event of a security crisis. Turkmenistan has the wealth to formulate a major military force, but Ashgabat has been unwilling to spend on training and maintenance (Gorenburg, 2015).

In general, the military potential of the Central Asian countries is quite sufficient to preserve internal stability and order during latent threats, but it is clearly not enough to prevent a strong external threat or full internal unrest and terrorist attacks. Therefore, armed forces especially of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as other countries, are in need of urgent upgrading, particularly with regard to military logistics and increase the monetary and material allowances of servicemen.

### **Discussion**

The comparative analysis of the scientific literature shows that there are different views on regional security issues, challenges and threats, and responsible entities for their prevention among scholars of international relations in Central Asia.

According to Annette Bohr(2010), Particularly during the years following the US invasion of Iraq, Central Asian leaders have discovered what much of the world had already learnt: they do not need to take their marching orders from Washington or respond to US advice on democracy-building unless they deem it is in their interests to do so. In her opinion, in the 2000s, All five states were adept, albeit to varying degrees, at the game of multivectoring, in which leaders play the main international actors against each other in order to maximize strategic gains (Bohr, 2010).

In this regard, Dmitry Gorenburg notes that all of the regional governments are worried by the rapid increase in drug addiction in their countries (Gorenburg, 2014). He proposes to use this situation in the following way. If cooperation on counter-narcotics process successful, planners can work to encourage Central Asian states to cooperate on critical energy infrastructure protection. Given existing sensitivities about sharing information with neighbors about potential security weaknesses, this effort should begin slowly. A good start would involve regional seminars on best practices in countries that have extensive experience with offshore energy production in potentially vulnerable environments such as the USA, the UK or Norway. If this type of interaction leads to greater trust, regional collaboration could expand to include information sharing about best practices and eventually joint projects to protect shared infrastructure such as pipelines, tankers transiting the Caspian Sea, and offshore platforms located near borders. However, given the existing political relationships in the region, such efforts should be seen as a long-range target at best (Gorenburg, 2014).

However, the issues on democratization of local societies, regional security, the fight against drug trafficking, to ensure a mutually beneficial energy cooperation, cannot be solved without building a USA-Chinese partnership in Central Asia ( "ISIS and Central Asia: A Shifting Recruiting Strategy," 2016; Levine, 2016). Niklas Swanström confident: The CA states are interested in preventing one hegemon (Soviet Union) being by another (China). The “third” neighborhood policy, i.e. diversification, is becoming more important when reaching out to non-regional actors. In addition, he believed that only Closer cooperation with China could decrease the Russian influence in the security sector but it is important to remember that the CA states are not ready to exchange one overlord against a new one. In addition, The U.S. would benefit from increased bilateral security

cooperation with Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan. Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are arguably too closely aligned with Russia for any significant cooperation to occur (Swanström, 2015).

A similar view is held by General James L. Jones, Jr., USMC (Ret.) (President and founder of Jones Group International and chairman of the Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security at the Atlantic Council), who called the government of the USA in 2013 to take an active part in the development of the international economy and security in the geo-strategic and vitally important region of Central Asia. This, according to the general, will not only allow better control of the situation in and around Afghanistan, but will contribute to the development of the USA economy (Jones Jr., 2013).

A number of researchers serve the broader cooperation in the sphere of international security, because in weakness or even absence of such cooperation, including with Russia, which has the largest military-political presence in Central Asia (Popov, 2016), they see one of the main threats of international security after the withdrawal of the main NATO forces from Afghanistan (Dunn, 2012; Rumer et al., 2016; Zenn, 2013) under conditions of geopolitical turbulence and the crisis in the economies of countries in the region (Schenkkan, 2015).

This diversity of opinions and views on a wide range of security issues in the international relations of Central Asia and the role of the United States, Russia, China, NATO and other countries and international organizations allows us to state with certainty that this region is one of the strategically important regions of the world. What is happening there and around processes show great interest in the leading countries of the world, and none of them is profitable, and it is unnecessary to take sole responsibility for security for the safety of the Eurasian Balkans during the New Great Game in the conditions of geopolitical turbulence.

### **Conclusions**

Over the past twenty-five years since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the declaration of independence by former Central Asian republics, Central Asia has become an important part of the geopolitical space of Eurasia, and again turned into an arena of confrontation between the major powers. However, distinction of the last Great Game from the contemporary New Great Game is not only in the fact that it involves the United States, China and the global oil and gas companies. Now, on the one hand, the participants in the game are the Central Asian countries themselves as subjects of international relations, and on the other hand, they are also the object of international rivalry.

The recent history of the end of XX - beginning of XXI century pushed Central Asia among the regions, which significantly affect the safety of the world, therefore they are under several threats at once.

The first and the main threat for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan is a danger of losing the subjectivity, become hostages of a great geopolitical game, trying to play on the contradictions between the USA, China, Russia and the EU and among themselves within the region or embark on either side. The response to this challenge must be the multiple vectors of foreign policy of Central Asian countries in accordance with the national interests and intraregional unity in ensuring international security.

Without such unity, none of the countries, even the most economically developed Kazakhstan, will be able to guarantee the adequately military security and protection from potential internal and external terrorist threats in 15-20 years. The experience of war with international terrorist organizations in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Iraq, shows that they cannot inferior in numbers to government forces, and the level of armed, military-technical equipment and capability even exceed them.



In connection with this, the great anxiety and concern is the fact that Central Asian countries are armed largely with machines and weapons of Soviet production, which are already largely obsolete and outdated, and/or have a very limited resource for modernization. In the medium term by 2030-2035, the Central Asian countries will face a huge challenge inconsistencies military protection potential, not only from external threats and challenges, but even from internal related to the activities of radical Islamist groups and drug traffickers. Therefore, it is important to begin to conduct a comprehensive modernization of the armed forces and at the same time to form a new system of regional security, taking into account the balance of forces and interests of all stakeholders, including the United States, Russia and China, to establish an effective dialogue between NATO and the CSTO.

Thus, the preservation of international security in Central Asia in terms of geopolitical turbulence is an important international goal, with which is impossible to cope for any country in the region by oneself and for any global players, whether it is the United States, Russia or China, NATO and the CSTO. Only within the close international cooperation of the political, military and economic cooperation, it is possible to maintain stability in a main region of Eurasia, to ensure the security of international energy and transport infrastructure, effectively resist the external and internal terrorist threats, to successfully carry out the modernization of economies and armies of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan to the interests of the people of each country and the international community.

### References

- Blank, S. (1995). Energy, economics and security in Central Asia: Russia and its rivals. Retrieved from <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/doctrine/research/centasia.pdf>
- Blank, S. (2008). Rethinking Central Asian Security. Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program. *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*. 6(2), 23–39.
- Bohr, A. (2010). Central Asia: responding to the multi-vectoring game. In R. Niblett (Ed.), *America and a Changed World: A Question of Leadership*. London: Wiley-Blackwell. 109–124.
- Brzezinski, Z. (2007). *The Grand Chessboard American Primacy And Its Geostrategic Imperatives*. Basic Books.
- Butler, K. (2009). U.S. Military Cooperation with the Central Asian States.
- Chan, Y. (2016). The Greater Game: Qing China in Central Eurasia. *History Compass*. 14(6), 264–274. <http://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12314>
- Collins, N., & Bekenova, K. (2016). Fuelling the New Great Game: Kazakhstan, energy policy and the EU. *Asia Europe Journal*. 1–20 <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10308-016-0451-4>
- Contessi, N. (2013). Central Eurasia and the New Great Game: Players, Moves, Outcomes, and Scholarship. *Asian Security*. 9(3), 231–241. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14799855.2013.832214>
- Contessi, N.P. (2015). Foreign and Security Policy Diversification in Eurasia: Issue Splitting, Co-alignment, and Relational Power. *Problems of Post-Communism*. 62(5), 299–311. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2015.1026788>
- Denoon, B.H. (2015). *China, The United States, and the Future of Central Asia: U.S.-China Relations*. New York: NYU Press.
- Dunn, A. (2012). NATO in Central Asia. Retrieved from <http://www.eurodialogue.eu/nato/NATO-in-Central-Asia>
- Edwards, M. (2003). The New Great Game and the New Great Gamers: Disciples of Kipling and Mackinder. *Central Asian Survey*. 22: 83–102.
- Er L.P. (2016). China, the United States, Alliances, and War: Avoiding the Thucydides Trap? <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00927678.2016.1150765>.

- Fallon, T. (2015). *The New Silk Road: Xi Jinping's Grand Strategy for Eurasia*. Ceased.
- Fingar, T. (2016). *The New Great Game: China and South and Central Asia in the Era of Reform*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gorenburg, D. (2014). *External Support for Central Asian Military and Security Forces*. Stockholm . Retrieved from <https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/SIPRI-OSFno1WP.pdf>
- Gorenburg, D. (2015). *Central Asian Military Capabilities*. Retrieved from <https://russiamil.wordpress.com/2015/06/28/central-asian-military-capabilities/>
- Hopkirk, P. (1992). *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*. Kodansha International.
- ISIS and Central Asia: A Shifting Recruiting Strategy. (2016). Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2016/05/isis-and-central-asia-a-shifting-recruiting-strategy/>
- Karimi, M. (2015). Rivalry of global powers in Central Asia after the Cold War. *Geopolitics Quarterly*. 10(4), 122–148.
- Kissinger, H. (1994). *Diplomacy*. Simon & Schuster.
- Laruelle, M. (2015a). Envisioning a region. *The US "Silk Road" as an object of academic enquiry. Eurasian Geography and Economics*. 56(4), 357–359. <http://doi.org/10.1080/15387216.2015.1098556>
- Laruelle, M. (2015b). The US Silk Road: geopolitical imaginary or the repackaging of strategic interests? *Eurasian Geography and Economics*. 56(4), 360–375. <http://doi.org/10.1080/15387216.2015.1098555>
- Levine, I. (2016). *US Policies in Central Asia: Democracy, Energy and the War on Terror*. Routledge.
- Liedy, A. (2011). *The Great Power Rivalry in Central Asia*. Retrieved July 29, 2016, from <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-great-power-rivalry-central-asia>
- Luong, P.J., & Weinthal, E. (2002). New Friends, New Fears in Central Asia. *Foreign Affairs*. 81(2), 61–70.
- Mahnovski, S., Akramov, K. & Karasik, T. (2006). *Economic dimensions of security in Central Asia*. Retrieved from [http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND\\_MG417.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG417.pdf)
- McGlinchey, E. (2016). Leadership Succession, Great Power Ambitions, and the Future of Central Asia. *Central Asian Affairs*. 3(3), 209–225. <http://doi.org/10.1163/22142290-00303001>
- Patnaik, A. (2016). *Central Asia: Geopolitics, Security and Stability*. Routledge.
- Peyrouse, S. & Raballand, G. (2015). Central Asia: the New Silk Road Initiative's questionable economic rationality. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15387216.2015.1114424>.
- Popov, D. (2016). *The USA Policy in Central Asia and Russia's strategic interests*. Retrieved from <http://riss.ru/analitycs/30426/>
- Q&A: U.S. Military Bases in Central Asia. (2005). *The New York Times*. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/cfr/international/slot2\\_072605.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/cfr/international/slot2_072605.html?_r=0)
- Rumer, E., Sokolsky, R. & Stronski, P. (2016). *U.S. Policy Toward Central Asia 3.0*. Retrieved from <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/01/25/u.s.-policy-toward-central-asia-3.0-pub-62556>
- Schenkkan, N. (2015). Impact of the Economic crisis in Russia on Central Asia. *Russian Analytical Digest*. (165), 3–6. Retrieved from <http://www.css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/RAD-165-3-6.pdf>
- Scobell, A., Ratner, E. & Beckley, M. (2014). *China's Strategy Toward South and Central Asia An Empty Fortress*. Retrieved from [http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR500/RR525/RAND\\_RR525.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR500/RR525/RAND_RR525.pdf)

- Smith, D.L. (1996). Central Asia: A New Great Game? *Asian Affairs: An American Review*. 23(3), 147–175. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00927678.1996.9933727>
- Stegen, S.K. & Kuszniir, J. (2015). Outcomes and strategies in the “New Great Game”: China and the Caspian states emerge as winners. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*. 6(2), 91–106. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.euras.2015.03.002>
- Swanström, N. (2015). The Security Dimension of the China -Central Asia Relationship: China’s Military Engagement with Central Asian Countries. Retrieved from [http://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Swanstrom Testimony\\_3.18.15.pdf](http://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Swanstrom%20Testimony_3.18.15.pdf)
- Zenn, J. (2013). Terrorism and Islamic Radicalization in Central Asia. Washington. Retrieved from [http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/Jamestown\\_articles\\_-\\_Terrorism\\_in\\_Central\\_Asia\\_February\\_2013.pdf](http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/Jamestown_articles_-_Terrorism_in_Central_Asia_February_2013.pdf)