



POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR ON GERMANY

Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which started in February 2022, affected not only Moscow-Kiev relations, but also global and regional balances. The war which gradually deepened raised the security concerns for all European countries which also brought the European Union (EU) and Russia relations into a new turning point. Because the occupation of Ukraine, which is both a buffer state between Europe and Russia and a potential member of the EU and NATO, causes a change in some of the EU countries' policies towards Russia. This is the case especially for Germany, which has been advocating dialogue and cooperation with Russia for years. In this context, it is an important issue to focus on how the Russia-Ukraine war affected and will affect Germany, the locomotive country of the EU.

First of all, the Russia-Ukraine war is a serious turning point for the Russian policy of Germany, which has been maintaining the closest commercial-economic cooperation with Russia for many years in the EU. During the war, Berlin is making unusually hard moves towards Moscow, which has intense commercial-economic relations, especially energy cooperation. Germany had already suspended the licensing process of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline in response to Russia's recognition of Ukraine's separatist regions of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent states. On the other hand, Germany announced that immediately after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, heavy economic sanctions would be imposed on Russia and military aid would be provided to Ukraine. Giving strong solidarity support to Ukraine with its allies, Germany is leading the EU's comprehensive economic sanctions targeting Russia's sectors such as economy, finance, foreign trade, production, energy, mining, transportation, aviation and space. In this context, Germany and other EU countries, which have taken a decision to remove Russian banks from the international financial system SWIFT and to block foreign exchange reserves, within the scope of five rounds of economic sanctions against Russia so far, it has also targeted the assets of many Russian politicians and oligarchs in the EU, including President of Russia, Vladimir Putin. In addition, Germany and other EU countries, which closed their airspace to Russia, banned the export, transfer and investments of Russia's goods, services and technologies, especially for the energy, aviation and space industry.

In particular, the Russia-Ukraine war radically changed Germany's defense and security policy. Whereas after the Cold War, Germany tried to display a more cautious, balanced and pacifist attitude in the field of

defense and security policy. Therefore, Germany, which has not been very positive about armament for years and tried to keep its defense budget limited, gave more importance to being an economic power rather than a military power in Europe. From this point of view, it is quite remarkable that after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Germany significantly increased its military and defense expenditures and provided direct military aid to Ukraine. Germany, so far delivered various anti-tank weapons, anti-aircraft missiles, machine guns, ammunition, armored vehicles and other military equipment to Ukraine which is the first time in its recent history to provide a military aid to a fighting side. Moreover, in March 2022, the Ministry of Defense of Germany announced its plan to replace the PA-200 Tornado fighter jet, which has been used in the German Armed Forces since 1981, with the F-35 fighter jet. The concrete steps taken by Germany in the field of military and defense show that Berlin has begun to abandon its pacifist defense and security policy.

In fact, Germany's steps towards becoming a military power can also be considered as a phase of Berlin's geopolitical awakening in recent years. In view of the global and regional geopolitical and geoeconomic developments in recent years, have caused the geopolitical and geostrategic approaches of all EU countries, especially Germany, to be reconsidered. Besides the important geopolitical and geoeconomic changes in recent years such as the refugee crisis, the Brexit problem, the Iran Nuclear Deal problem, the trade war between the USA and China, and the global economic recession, the EU-Russia tension, which gradually deepened after the Ukraine Crisis that started in 2014, also played an important role in this process. In this context, the foreign policy strategy titled "Germany - Europe - Asia: Shaping the 21st Century Together" for the Indo-Pacific region in September 2020 will play an important role in shaping its multilateral policy. At this point, Russia's occupation of Ukraine further accelerated the geopolitical awakening of Germany. In this context, in March 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany announced that the country's new National Security Strategy would be developed. Emphasizing that Russia's war on Ukraine almost endangered European security, the statement emphasized that the NATO alliance should be strengthened and the European defense industry should be developed further. From this point of view, it can be predicted that Germany will try to play a more active role both in EU geopolitics and in the international arena in the coming period. Germany, which has already

played an important role in strengthening NATO's Eastern border since 2017, has decided to send an additional 350 soldiers to NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) forces in Lithuania in March 2022. While there are a total of 1,600 soldiers in the eFP forces serving in Lithuania since 2017, 900 of them are German soldiers. The eFP forces were positioned by NATO in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, with the aim of giving confidence to the Baltic States and Poland and for joint defense against possible threats. However, considering the dependence of many EU countries, especially Germany, on Russian oil and natural gas to meet their energy needs, the Russia-Ukraine war will have a profound negative impact on the trade-economic relations between Germany and Russia, as well as between the EU and Russia. The partial or complete suspension of oil and natural gas exports from Russia by Germany and the EU may reveal the energy problem in the EU. Therefore, there is no doubt that Germany and EU countries will try to take important steps in the field of renewable energy as well as developing cooperation in the field of energy with other oil and natural gas owner countries in order to ensure energy security in the upcoming period.

In summary, it is not possible to predict exactly how the possible effects of the war will take shape, while it is still uncertain how long the Russia-Ukraine war, which continues with its bitter results, will last. However, even if a final ceasefire agreement is signed between Moscow and Kiev, it can be predicted that the geopolitical and geoeconomic potential negative effects of the war on a global and regional scale will unfortunately continue for many years. The crisis of trust between the USA and the EU during the Donald Trump era continues in the Joe Biden era, as the Australia-France submarine agreement was canceled after the AUKUS agreement signed between the USA, the UK and Australia in September 2021. Despite these insecurities when we look at the big picture from a geopolitical point of view we will see that the bilateral relations of the EU countries, including Germany, with the USA, and if necessary, the cooperation under the umbrella of NATO will gradually deepen. On this point it is also seen that the start of the Russia-Ukraine war at a time when the EU tried to act as a more independent political power due to the weakening of traditional trust in the relations between the USA and the EU in general, allowed the alliance between the USA and the EU to consolidate again.

Politics, Foreign Affairs, and Security

- The Parliament of Kazakhstan ratified an agreement between the Government of Kazakhstan and the Cabinet of Ministers of Kyrgyzstan on rendering military and technical assistance to ensure security in the Central Asian region. The agreement was signed on December 7, 2021, pursuant to the task of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Kazakhstan and the request of Kyrgyzstan on rendering military and technical aid. Kyrgyzstan will use the equipment for the sole purpose of ensuring security (Kazinform, 11.05.2022).
- The Acting Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Vladimir Norov had a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov, within which they discussed topical issues of bilateral cooperation in the political, trade, economic, transport and communication, cultural and humanitarian spheres. The parties highly appreciated the current state of strategic partnership relations. The Ministers noted a significant intensification of contacts between business circles and mentioned that direct air traffic connecting Tashkent with Baku has been resumed (Kun.uz, 14.05.2022).
- The United States and Russia will build checkpoints and border detachments to strengthen the Tajik-Afghan border. The construction of a new border post in Chaldovar on the Tajik-Afghan border will cost \$3 million, while the construction of a border detachment will cost \$30 million. The Tajik parliament also approved a grant agreement with Russia on the allocation of \$1.1 million by the Russian Federation for the construction of a border checkpoint on the Tajik-Afghan border (ASIA-Plus, 11.05.2022).
- Dushanbe hosted a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). During the meeting, the CIS Foreign Ministers discuss prospects of cooperation within the framework of the Commonwealth. Special attention was given to the issues related to international security and further expansion of humanitarian and scientific collaboration. The Ministers also held talks on the sidelines of the meeting to discuss bilateral issues (ASIA-Plus, 11.05.2022).
- State Councilor and Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi held an online meeting with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Wang Yi assured his Pakistani counterpart that China would continue to support Pakistan in enhancing its counter-terrorism capability and was ready to join hands with Pakistan to develop China-Pakistan relations. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that Pakistan was ready to strengthen cooperation with China to enhance its counter-terrorism capability and ensure the safety of all Chinese citizens in Pakistan (English.news.cn, 12.05.2022).
- The Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the countries of Central Asia and Russia was organized in Ashgabat. At the parliamentary meeting, high-ranking delegates discussed significant issues related to strengthening multilateral mutually beneficial partnerships in the legislative and other important areas. The meeting was aimed at expanding interregional cooperation, strengthening trusting relations and mutual understanding between nations, and developing the legal framework and prospects for women in Central Asia and Russia (Centralasia.news, 12.05.2022).

Economy, Finance, and Energy

- Chairman of the Kazakh Senate Maulen Ashimbayev discussed economic cooperation with the Chairman of the Upper Chamber of Turkmenistan's Parliament Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov. It was mentioned that the trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan since the beginning of the year has exceeded \$100 million, which was two-thirds more than in 2021. The countries fruitfully cooperate in energy and agriculture and plan to strengthen partnerships in the field of rail, road and water transport, as well as logistics (Qazaq TV, 13.05.2022).
- The President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev had a meeting with major representatives of Turkish business in Ankara urging them to invest in Kazakhstan's economy and guaranteeing comprehensive support. Turkish entrepreneurs are already implementing large projects in the chemical, agricultural, and construction sectors. Nearly 4,000 companies with Turkish capital are successfully operating in Kazakhstan. In 2021, direct investments from Türkiye in Kazakhstan's economy reached a record high of \$680 million. Following the meeting, 30 documents were signed between the two countries (Qazaq TV, 11.05.2022).
- According to the Central Bank of Uzbekistan, money transfers from abroad have amounted to \$2.54 billion for four months since the beginning of 2022. The flow of remittances increased by 27% compared to the same period last year, when it was equal to \$1.99 billion. In April 2022, migrants sent \$1.07 billion to Uzbekistan, which was 88% more than the level of the previous month of April. In 2021, the total amount of remittances amounted to \$8.1 billion (Kun.uz, 13.05.2022).
- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) announced that it would issue risk-sharing instruments to selected local banks and a leasing company in Ukraine to a total value of €53.25 million to boost food security in the war-time period, which was a key element of the Bank's five-pronged support plan for Ukraine's economy. The EBRD is also supporting trade, energy security, vital infrastructure, and the pharmaceuticals industry through €1 billion of investment planned in Ukraine this year (Ukrinform, 12.05.2022).
- Azerbaijan's Economy Minister Mikayil Jabbarov had a meeting with Turkmen President Serdar Berdymukhamedov, where the parties discussed transport and energy cooperation. The sides noted the need to strengthen the role of the bilateral Intergovernmental Turkmen-Azerbaijani Commission on Economic Cooperation as a coordinating body for the development of relations in various sectors. They emphasized the importance of providing the most favorable land and sea routes for the transportation of goods, and their integration into the international transport infrastructure (AzerNews, 12.05.2022).
- According to a member of the Board of the Hungarian-Kyrgyz Development Fund Alymbek Orozbekov, the Fund is ready to accept applications for business proposals from residents of Kyrgyzstan and Hungary for funding. Conditions and priority areas for applications include the minimum interest rate which will be 1.5%, while the maximum will amount to 7.25%. Orozbekov added that the Fund has several priority areas, including the construction of small hydropower plants, the development of livestock breeding, beekeeping, and fish farms (Kabар, 12.05.2022).

Society and Culture

- The Turkish city of Bursa hosted the 8th Meeting of National Commissions of TURKSOY member countries to UNESCO. The meeting was attended by representatives of Turkic states, UNESCO and international organizations. The participants came together in seminars on various fields of cultural heritage set by UNESCO such as Intangible Cultural Heritage, Cultural and Natural Heritage, World Memory and Education, and discussed the status of various items of cultural heritage, current issues and future activities to be carried out in this respect (Turksoy.org, 13.05.2022).
- The First International Symposium on Music and Dances of the Turkic World was held on the campus of Aegean University in the city of İzmir in Türkiye. The event was organized in cooperation with TURKSOY with the State Conservatory of Turkish Music of the Aegean University and the Turkic World Research Institute of the Aegean University. The symposium featured various workshops, interviews, concerts of art ensembles from the Turkic World, and paper presentations of scholars from various countries of the world (Turksoy.org, 13.05.2022).
- The Fifth Festival of Traditional Handcrafts took place in the Turkish city of Bursa. The festival was held within the framework of events carried out in Bursa, the Cultural Capital of the Turkic World 2022, and featured artworks by more than 80 craftsmen from various countries of the Turkic World. The event was organized jointly by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye, TURKSOY, the Metropolitan Municipality of Bursa, and the City Council of Bursa (Turksoy.org, 12.05.2022).
- The Second Working Group Meeting of the Space Agencies and Relevant Authorities of the Organization of Turkic States was held in Tashkent. The meeting was attended by relative space authorities of Azerbaijan, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Türkiye. During the meeting, the parties discussed the details of developing a joint cube satellite and organizing joint workshops and youth camps within the Organization of Turkic States (Turkkon.org, 12.05.2022).
- Tashkent hosted the sixth international scientific and practical conference on the development of diasporas in Central Asia entitled "The development of diasporas in Central Asia is an important factor in sustainable development". More than 100 representatives of scientific, academic and analytical institutions of Azerbaijan, Germany, Poland and Russia took part in the conference. During the conference, the scholars presented their practical works on diasporas in Central Asia (Centralasia.news, 11.05.2022).
- The World Bank will allocate \$25 million to Kyrgyzstan for the reform of the education system. The goal of the program is to increase the efficiency of students of higher educational institutions in Kyrgyzstan, as well as to expand the teaching potential. Particular attention to the distribution of grant funds will be given to the improvement of human capital. The money will be provided as a non-refundable grant under the Learning for the Future project (Centralasia.news, 12.05.2022).