

A Vision of the Future of Eurasia

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Eurasia is the largest territorial entity in the world, with a constant geo-strategic importance. It encompasses the former republics of the former Soviet Union, the Balkan countries, the former countries of the East Bloc in Central Europe, as well as Iran, Turkey, China, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

The critical center of Eurasia, a hotbed of crises, is mainly in the central region, i.e., Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Chechnya, Adjara, Ossetia, Karabakh, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and the Kurdish-inhabited regions of Turkey.

The United States, Russia, China, Germany, and Japan are countries that can play an important role on the Eurasian political scene and change its geopolitical situation. In addition to their economic impact, Germany and Japan can play a greater role in the development of events in Eurasia, but most of their neighboring countries would oppose their supremacy in this region.

Russia and China are the two major powers intervening in Eurasia. Due to their historical position and to international conditions, no foreign actor, acting alone, can weaken their historical role in the region.

One of the main objectives of the United States is to prevent the unification of Eurasia under the control of any one single power. They fear that were a single power to take over Eurasian reserves, it would change the balance of power worldwide to the detriment of their interests.

Indeed, the strategic future of the United States in Eurasia depends on two factors:

First of all, how membership in the Atlantic Alliance changed after the end of the Cold War.

Second, Russia's capabilities to become more powerful and play the principal role in that region.

The fragility of Eurasia stems mainly from security factors in Eastern and Central Europe, in the Balkans, and in the former Soviet republics, which tends to pro-



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Ali Rastbeen: "Eurasia, given the diversity of its capacities, constitutes one of the locomotives of the world economy."

long the rivalry between the major powers.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, U.S. macro-strategy was to channel the former Soviet republics, the East Bloc countries, and China into the international economic system.

Geopolitical Rivalry

Even after the end of the Cold War, Eurasia remained the main stage of rivalry between the two major powers. Some 75% of the world's population lives there and most of the planet's wealth is located in that region. Some 60% of worldwide income and nearly three quarters of known energy reserves belong to Eurasia. All the nuclear powers, with one exception, are in Eurasia.

For America, Russia's return to the stage of geopolitical rivalries in Eurasia means the return of the Cold War period.

U.S. interests in the new Eurasia fall into two categories:

In the short term, the U.S. insists on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which would challenge their security and that of their allies. In the long term, they are attempting to block the influence of the rival major powers or any opposition to American values and interests in Eurasia.

Russia and China are the two powerful countries with common borders with Central Asia and the Caucasus, and with the capacity to jeopardize American interests in the region.

The strategic appeal of Central Asia is not something new. What is new is the diversity of the strategies and the developments that threaten this region.

In the bipolar world after the Second World War, the wall between East and West formed the strategic line separating the two blocs. The division of Germany, the birth of Communist China and the obstacle of Formosa, the Korean War and the emergence of two Koreas, the crisis of the wars for independence in East and South Asia, the wars in Vietnam and Cambodia—and two pacts, NATO and Warsaw, confronted one another.

Before Europe, Asia, and the United States were faced with nuclear weapons and “Star Wars,” Moscow declared defeat, thus ending the 70-year nightmare of Western conservatives, and set the beginning of a new era on the world chessboard.

The vacuum that was created was gradually filled by the West. NATO remained intact, while the Warsaw Pact disappeared. The alliance of East European countries was quickly replaced with the help of local anti-communists, supported by the conservative regimes which allied with NATO.

These developments took place just as the capital of the Communist world had to deal with the crisis of transition from the socialist to the capitalist system. The new system, under Western control, set up the Russian Federation and 14 independent republics over a huge territory. Like London in 1945, Russia created a Commonwealth with these new republics, in order to preserve its supremacy.

More than 20 years after the fall of that regime, the Russian Navy’s base on the Black Sea [was] on Ukrainian territory, while the largest pipeline bringing Russian oil and gas to Europe crosses the same territory. The Baikonur Cosmodrome is located in Kazakhstan.

In these republics, where the 70-year domination of the Communist Party was not able to fundamentally change the social structure, there came, one after the other: the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh, the civil war in Uzbekistan against religious fanatics, the tribal and religious civil war in Tajikistan, internal conflicts in Georgia against the separatists of North Ossetia and Abkhazia, the ethnic and religious war in Chechnya against the republic backed by Moscow, etc., to which we should add the conflicts between Moscow and some of the republics that form Russia’s economic and military axes, such as the current situation in Ukraine.

The closest republics which were Russia’s industrial centers and trade routes with the West before the disintegration of the Soviet Union, became, with the support of Washington and thanks to the “velvet revolutions,” Russia’s rivals. NATO and the European Union

have been gradually advancing toward those territories. The war in Afghanistan was an opportunity for Washington to establish military relations with the relevant Asian republics.

While the United States staged a show of force in Afghanistan and in Iraq, Beijing and Moscow created a Shanghai defense pact [Shanghai Cooperation Organization—ed.] with the participation of the Asian republics of the former Soviet Union. Besides the strategic defense pact, Moscow became involved in creating a network around the Caspian Sea, extending its trade relations to the Persian Gulf basin.

The Caucasus was continuously under the control and influence of three regional powers: Russia, Iran, and Turkey. Although the United States and Europe also entered the region over the past years, the impact of the first three powers remains more important than the influence of the newcomers.

Cooperation Potential

The weight of Eurasia in maintaining international security is significant. That particularity has transformed this region into one of the international hotspots of rivalry among the major powers. The palpable, material interests, the common threats and preoccupations, the common cultural values, the historical backgrounds and geographical location of Eurasian countries led to the establishment of geopolitical relations among the countries of the region, and will likely lead to future forms of cooperation.

There can be no doubt that Eurasia, given the diversity of its capacities, constitutes one of the locomotives of the world economy, and that any development there will have an impact on the international order.

Likewise, Eurasia is plagued by many difficulties such as terrorism, extremism, drug traffic, economic and political backwardness, ethnic, border, and religious tensions, environmental problems and political conflicts that challenge the region’s stability and security.

To meet these challenges, growing cooperation and proper use of the region’s resources are more than indispensable.

To conclude, we would recall that the destiny of 7 billion human beings is in the hands of a few powers, which are constantly competing to secure their domination.

To reorganize the world, free from the major powers’ attempts to dominate and the conflicts thus generated, the United Nations Charter remains, to this day, the civilized world’s most efficient asset to manage the will of the major powers and alliances.

‘Universal History in Action’



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Jayshree Sengupta of the Observer Research Foundation in India chats with a conference participant.



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Jacques Cheminade, the leader of the Solidarity and Progress party in France, gives a briefing.



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Conference chair Elke Fimmen of Germany and Ray McGovern of the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS), United States.



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Concert performance of excerpts from Beethoven's opera "Fidelio."



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Helga Zepp-LaRouche, Prof. Shi Ze, and Dr. Natalia Vitrenko.