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СЕКЦИЯ 5. МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ

ПОДСЕКЦИЯ 5.1 ЦИФРОВАЯ ДИПЛОМАТИЯ, МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ БЕЗОПАСНОСТЬ И ВНЕШНЯЯ ПОЛИТИКА РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН

UDC 327

THE ROLE OF CENTRAL ASIA IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES

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For nearly three decades, successive US administrations, business circles and the American expert community have paid close attention to the Central Asian region, declaring it strategically important for Washington's long-term foreign policy interests. One of the reasons for introducing the region was the concept of "Greater Central Asia", which, apart from the five new independent states of Central Asia, would include other loyal Asian states, thereby alienating the former Soviet republics of Central Asia from Russia.

Three stages of US foreign policy towards Central Asia have been declared since 1991, when five states - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan - gained independence. First - from the collapse of the USSR to the attacks of September 11, 2001 - the United States had three priorities: to protect weapons of mass destruction inherited from the USSR; to help the Central Asian countries strengthen and defend their newly acquired sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity in the event of a revival of Russian imperialism and destroy Russia's monopoly on pipeline systems and transit routes for Central Asian oil and gas as a guarantee of the region's independence from Moscow [1].

According to some researchers, The United States unambiguously rejected the geopolitical approach to Central Asia in favor of a long-term policy of supporting the formation of a democratic system in the region, a free market and economic integration. The US efforts to strengthen stability, security, ensure economic prosperity and improve governance in the region were moderate. The described approach can be called "US policy in Central Asia 1.0"[1].

After the events of September 11, Washington's attitude towards Central Asia and the nature of cooperation with the states of the region changed dramatically – the next stage - formation of "Politics 2.0" began. Of course, interest in implementing a long-term program of political and economic reforms was preserved, but considerations related to military tasks and security came to the forefront. The need for logistical support of the US military operation in Afghanistan, and hence dependence on access to the region's military infrastructure has prevailed over the desire to promote political and economic reforms. Washington began to attach greater importance to security cooperation with the countries where it had bases, and the geopolitical positions of the United States in the region as a whole. On the other hand, Central Asia has become a region that has played an important role in the US strategy, even if it was not connected with its own significance, but with a supporting role in efforts to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan.

The first two stages of America's relations with independent Central Asia are connected by a common theme: the interests of the US lay outside its borders - and Washington's actions were the result of politics, priorities and relations with the countries surrounding the region. Now, when the presence and role of US combat units in Afghanistan is significantly reduced, Washington needs to re-define its interests, build priorities and relationships in the region - and in a situation where Russia's willingness and ability to interfere in the internal affairs of its neighbors have increased. Moreover, the long-term goal of strengthening the influence in Central Asia pursued by both Moscow and Beijing can increase tensions between them, and between the states of the region

itself. The rivalry between the two superpowers encourages the Central Asian states to strive to ensure that Western participation in affairs of the region is preserved in order to contain the ambitions of Russia and China. All these events are the context for the "US Policy in Central Asia 3.0"[1].

Of course, US policy towards Central Asia is not developed in a vacuum - the course will be formed in the context of America's interests and priorities in the world arena, restrictions on allocations for defense and assistance to foreign states and competition with other issues that require attention of the US political leadership. Moreover, a number of crises that erupted at the same time in other regions have displaced Central Asia from the Western agenda in the sphere of foreign policy and security. The campaign against the self-proclaimed "Islamic state" in Syria and Iraq, the crisis in Ukraine, the civil wars in Yemen and Libya, the entry into force of the nuclear agreement with Iran and the opposition to the growing pressure of China surpass the events in the region, which is neither an arena of large-scale disasters, no source of serious threats to US security. In fact, due to the reduction of the American contingent in Afghanistan, the opportunities for advancing American interests in Central Asia are diminishing. Here are a few key questions, the answers to which should help shape the US policy and strategy in Central Asia:

- ✓ What are the interests and goals of the US in Central Asia, how important are they for the security and welfare of America, for solving the most important tasks in the sphere of foreign policy and security?
- ✓ How to build these goals in priority if some of them contradict each other? What compromises are the United States willing to make?
- ✓ Which goals are the most realistic and achievable in the next ten years, and which are long-term and rather ambitious?
- ✓ What strategy for achieving these goals is most effective and reliable, and what means of its implementation do the US have?
- ✓ What are the sources of US influence on the policies of the Central Asian states? What steps can the United States take to strengthen and improve its effectiveness?

These questions and their answers should be considered in the context of the history of US relations with the countries of the region over the past twenty-seven years, given the successes and failures of American policy. The experience gained along with domestic political and geopolitical tendencies in the region shows that in the future opportunities for the realization of American interests will be limited and relations with the countries of Central Asia will not be easy.

The projection of US strategic interests in the Central Asian region was first clearly recorded in April 1997 in a special report sent to Congress by the US Department of State. The document indicated that the United States, as the world's largest consumer of energy, is interested in "expanding and diversifying" the world's energy resources. Moreover, it was stated that, by its nature, American interests in this region are not only economic, but also strategic in nature, During the period 1998-2005, The United States allocated \$ 1 billion to countries in the region as a significant amount for countries so far located from America [2].

It is clear that the US is trying to prevent the restoration of Russia's strategic presence in this territory, as well as the creation of a political alliance between Moscow, Beijing and Tehran. It is also important that for the US Central Asia serves as a strategically important base for eventual confrontation of the United States with Russia and China in the region.

At the same time, it seems (and many Western political scientists write about this), the US needs cooperation with Russia to prevent destabilization in Eurasia. The United States views Central Asia as part of the broader geopolitical designs presented in various strategic concepts: the Baltic-Black Sea-Caspian Democratic Union, the Greater Middle East, Greater Central Asia. At the same time, according to experts, any form of US-Russian confrontation threatens to split Central Asia [2].

US Deputy Secretary of State William Joseph Burns formulated an "export" version of Washington's policy in the region in one of the policy statements on the Central Asian issue. In particular, it was stated that "the United States is extremely interested in stability, prosperity,

security strengthening, political and economic modernization of Central Asia and strive to cooperate with the governments and peoples of the region to achieve these goals"[3].

In its Central Asian policy, the United States has in mind to focus primarily on the comprehensive development of the energy resources of Central Asia, which should become a factor of stability and predictability in the global economy, providing a variety of sources, markets and transit routes for energy carriers, while at the same time opening new economic prospects for the region itself.

American diplomats assert that interest in strengthening of ties and expansion of practical cooperation with the United States has awakened in the countries of Central Asia. Efforts are being made to build mechanisms for the development of high-level relations with each of the countries of Central Asia on the basis of a structured dialogue, within the framework of a regional partnership.

Each of these bilateral dialogues across the region have four main interrelated elements: energy, economic and political modernization, security and human contacts. As stated in the US policy documents: "We intend to make progress in relations with the countries of Central Asia in all four areas. We understand that positive steps in one area accelerate progress in other areas, for instance, energy policy serves as a guarantee of long-term economic prosperity. Healthier and more prosperous societies find it easier to ensure their own security and contribute to strengthening regional security. Successful fight against groups of militant extremists creates opportunities for the emergence of modern economic and political institutions. Moreover, the expansion of human exchanges between us highlights the fact that a strong relationship stems not only from intergovernmental relations, but also from the links between individuals and societies" [4].

By engaging in putting their own finances, the US is also encouraging partners in the region to adopt strategies for economic diversification and sustainable growth, in particular by integrating national economies into the global trading system.

During the next visit of American representatives on Central Asia, an agreement was reached to intensify existing trade mechanisms, including the framework agreement on trade and investment (TIFA). TIFA provides an opportunity to develop joint strategies in support of trade, investment, development and regional cooperation. This agreement has sufficient flexibility to become a format for discussing any topical issues and make specific decisions on them. As part of TIFA, it is meant to take steps to reduce trade barriers and liberalize markets[1].

The energy component was and remains the central element of the US strategy in Central Asia. A number of pipeline projects have been involved, including the expansion of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium and implementation of the "Kazakhstan Caspian Transportation System" project, which promise an increase in the volume of oil supplies from the Caspian fields to the world markets (mainly bypassing Russia).

The US is also working with Turkmenistan in the direction of increasing natural gas production,



bearing in mind that it will be transported along the Trans-Caspian highway. The recent signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Nabucco project was a new stage in the opening of an additional corridor for the supply of natural gas to Europe, including Turkmenistan. American

strategists believe that in order for the Southern Corridor to become a reality, it is necessary to make progress in gas pricing, transit and all other unresolved problems [5].

The United States also intends to continue to provide technical assistance to stimulate trade flows and improve the business climate across the region. In September 2012, the World Bank Group included Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in the top ten countries that achieved the greatest success in reform, which facilitates entrepreneurs the creation and expansion of enterprises. The US Agency for International Development has established partnership relations with Central Asian countries in streamlining the procedures for company registration and customs clearance, improving banking services and strengthening the legal and regulatory framework as a pledge to increase the competitiveness of the private sector. These programs allow firms to reduce their transaction costs and create a more transparent environment for the operations of commercial enterprises. The key condition for success, according to American experts, in this direction is the fight against corruption. The organization of Transparency International noted in its report that an effective civil society and independent media have not yet been developed in Central Asia, capable of helping governments in the fight against corruption.

Another important link in American policy in the region was the formation of a new network of pipelines, trade and transport communications along the East-West route (the TRACECA project). The Americans did not hide that one of the main reasons for the proclamation of such a strategy was the desire to isolate Iran, the attitude towards in Washington has become much tougher. However, the new configuration of pipelines and communications proposed by Washington harmed the economic interests not only of Iran, but also of Russia. First, these pipelines (Baku-Ceyhan and Trans-Caspian) would bypass not only Iran, but also Russia, through the territory of which the majority of Caspian energy carriers are being transported to the European and world markets. Secondly, Russia is one of the key participants in the North-South corridor and is very interested in developing both this corridor and bilateral cooperation with Iran. Moreover, realistic assessments of the scale of the Caspian energy resources, the cost of their development and transportation, made their significance far from indisputable from the point of view of US energy security, at least in the foreseeable future. The commercial attractiveness of the new pipelines was also more than doubtful. All this, especially in combination with the transfer of the functions of the curators of the Caspian energy projects to the National Security Council and the State Department of the United States (and not to the Ministry of Trade and Energy), could not but create the impression that the slogans of the struggle against monopolism and diversification of routes for



transportation of energy carriers and communications serve only as a cover the policy of Russia's economic ousting from the region and the difficulty of Moscow's cooperation with Tehran[5].

According to Blake, Assistant Secretary of State for Central Asian Affairs, the main interest from the American point of view is to bring economic and political stability to this region. And there is a hope that Central Asia, developing its economic potential, will be able to finance itself independently. The role of the West in these processes is expected to be small. According to Blake, external economic assistance is a "secondary factor". However, the role of the United States as a donor remains very limited. "But, for example, China, in the opinion of American analysts, would be ready to finance the construction of a railway from Afghanistan to Shinzhan in order to extract

copper reserves. India also plans to sponsor the construction of a railway from the Persian Gulf through Iran to Afghanistan. In none of these projects does America participate. The main concern of America is to create a harmonious relationship, and to be a stronghold in the security sphere, "concluded Blake [2].

Focusing on security and stability issues in the region, US diplomats point out that, given the complexity of the political and socio-economic environment within the region, the United States lacks the means to succeed. But if we take into account the need for external power to ensure stability and integration of the region, then the US is the only force capable of guaranteeing this. If the US can not guarantee stability through a military presence, it can do so through diplomacy.

The United States, as it is regularly declared at the governmental level, is an active supporter of building modern political institutions in the region. Official publications state that the United States provides technical assistance and training to create an active network of non-governmental organizations, enhance the capacity of judicial structures, and the development of local authorities in Central Asia. The funds allocated by the US, US officials say, are sent to the training of journalists and training in the basics of citizenship for more than 130,000 students in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. It is explained that such programs lead to greater accountability and transparency of the government. This, in turn, is supposed to lead to increased investment and further prosperity, which fundamentally "corresponds to the interests of American friends in Central Asia and the world."

As emphasized in the American strategy for Central Asia, another important factor contributing to the growth of intra- and inter-regional trade and investment is the security sphere in which the United States allegedly found serious allies in Central Asia. The Central Asian states have established multi-faceted security relations with their neighbors, as well as within the framework of NATO's Partnership for Peace program, including the preparation and conduct of joint activities to combat terrorism, maintain peace and fight against drugs. It is planned to create an autonomous Central Asian coordinating center to combat drug trafficking, with the active participation of the United States in its activities [2].

The American administration proceeds from the premise that building Afghanistan's capacity in the fight against drugs and countering terrorism while ensuring a secure internal situation is one of the top priorities for the United States. The Central Asian states are officially expressing their gratitude for the efforts of the coalition in Afghanistan. At the same time, it indicates the assistance they provide in supplying Kabul with electricity, food and medicine, building schools and hospitals. The statements of American representatives particularly appreciate the efforts of American partners in Central Asia in the transit of military cargo through the region to supply coalition troops in Afghanistan. The Northern supply network has a great potential, primarily in terms of improving the transport infrastructure and stimulating trade routes linking Central and South Asia, which will have a long-term stabilizing impact on the economy [6].

It is emphasized that the development of communications and contacts between people, one of the most important functions performed by the ancient Great Route, which served as a conductor of culture, is considered an important factor of the US Central Asian strategy. This concept, according to many European political scientists, remains relevant today.

In Central Asia, the United States has succeeded in fulfilling some of the strategic goals, but many have remained unrealized.

Successes:

- ✓ The support of the countries of the region was justified: they approved their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence;
- The United States ensured the security of the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Kazakhstan and the dismantling of its nuclear infrastructure, the legacy of the USSR;
 - ✓ No state succeeded in achieving hegemony in the region;
- ✓ Russia no longer has a monopoly on the transportation of oil and gas from Central Asia;
 - The US managed to effectively use the facilities in the region to support military

operations in Afghanistan and the withdrawal of US troops;

✓ The USA in the format of C5+1 is considered as important factor for the development of Central Asian countries.

Failures:

- ✓ The countries of Central Asia failed to make significant progress towards a democratic, open society based on a market economy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. On the contrary, in all these areas there is a rollback;
- ✓ The US project to connect Central Asia with Afghanistan and Pakistan through the New Silk Road has not yet moved from a dead center;
- ✓ Promotion of closer economic integration and security cooperation led by the United States in the region was insignificant.

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COMPARATIVE INTEGRATION: A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION (EAEU) AND THE COMMON MARKET OF THE SOUTH (MERCOSUR)

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Nowadays the development of Eurasian integration in geostrategic location is subject of interest of national as well as foreign researchers. The strengths and weaknesses of the EAEU are determined on the basis of comparison. Therefore, it would be appropriate to compare the bloc with the organization with similar features, like Mercosur, and to learn from its experiences. Regions' states have common historical, political, economic and social backgrounds. In addition, both blocs have dominant lingua franca. Here arises a question about possibility to compare these blocs.

Modern integration processes are developing within the framework of formal models of regionalization, differing in the degree of equality or asymmetry of economic potentials of members of integration. In particular: the model of common center (ex.: EU), the model of the dominant party (ex.: leading TNCs in NAFTA), and model of intergovernmental agreements (EAEU, MERCOSUR, ASEAN). At this point, this paper shall discuss briefly the historical background of the Eurasian Economic Union and the Common Market of the South.

After the collapse of USSR former Soviet republics protested to reintegration initiatives, but