

remain traditional: clan affiliation, ethnic origin, protectionism, clientelism and paternalism.

Russian political scientists have come to the conclusion that conflicts in the republics of the North Caucasus are usually compound and complex in nature. There can also be multilateral and long-term conflicts rooted not only in the specific group interests, but also in fundamental ideological values.

The author identifies the reasons that give rise to conflicts in the republics of the North Caucasus as follows: economics; politics; social stratification; ethno-politic, historical and cultural background; religious differences; and search of identity. The potential of ethno-political elites in stabilizing the political situation in the North Caucasus is not used to its fullest extent. This is largely due to the lack of a sound regulatory strategy of the federal elites vis-à-vis the regional political elites.

The author comes to the conclusion that an effective governing of the region requires not only a clear understanding of its current socio-economic and political state, but also a detailed knowledge of its history, culture and traditions.

VALENTINA SCHENSNOVICH. COOPERATION BETWEEN RUSSIA, KYRGYZSTAN, KAZAKHSTAN, TAJIKISTAN AND UZBEKISTAN WITHIN THE SCO AND THE EAEU // *The analytical review was written for the bulletin "Russia and the Moslem World."*

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Abstract. The review deals with prominent aspects of the interaction between the SCO Member States in the field of politics, economics, science and education. Special importance is attached to digitalization, youth projects, scientific and educational cooperation of universities and the activities of international information and scientific centres that have an impact on the integration processes in the Eurasian area.

Introduction

The world is changing, and changing fast. There is a shift in global balance of power, primarily due to the emergence of new centres of development in Asia. The interrelatedness and interdependence between states is growing. At the same time, the global political and economic situation remains tumultuous and tense. The process of economic globalization is facing the increase in unilateral protectionist measures along with other challenges of international trade.

The SCO acts as a reliable platform for fruitful cooperation in order to create a polycentric world order that ensures the rule of international law, primarily the UN Charter; implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and respect for the independent choice of the peoples of their political and socio-economic path.

Bishkek Declaration of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Heads of State Council (2019)

The SCO Member States emphasise the importance of initiatives to promote cooperation in building international relations of a new type, based on the principles and standards of

international law and mutually beneficial cooperation. The Member States, relying on the SCO Development Strategy until 2025, intend to develop cooperation in politics, security, trade and the economy, finance and investment, and their cultural and humanitarian ties.

The Declaration stresses that the increasing challenges and security threats that are becoming cross-border in their nature such as terrorism, the spread of terrorist and extremist ideology, including on the Internet, require special attention, close coordination and constructive cooperation of the entire international community. The Member States call on the international community to promote global cooperation in combating terrorism with the central role of the UN in compliance with the UN Charter and the principles of international law without politicisation and double standards and with respect for the sovereignty and independence of all countries. They condemn all forms of propaganda of the ideology of terrorism, extremism and religious intolerance, as well as manifestations of discrimination based on religion or convictions.

The Member States state the importance of keeping outer space free from all types of weapons of any kind as well as the crucial importance of compliance with the current legal system, which provides for peaceful uses of outer space. They also stand for strict compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons. One of the key factors of preserving and enhancing security and stability in the SCO space is a prompt settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. The Member States support the efforts of the government and people of Afghanistan aimed at restoring peace, economic development of the country, countering terrorism, extremism and drug crime. They stress that there is no alternative to settling the conflict in Afghanistan through political dialogue and an inclusive peace process conducted by Afghans themselves, and urge to step up cooperation of all the concerned nations and international organisations, with the central coordinating role of the UN.

In this context vital importance is given to further interaction in different multilateral formats.

The Member States reaffirm their common stance on the lack of alternatives to Syria settlement through dialogue on the basis of ensuring sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the country. They stress the significance of continued international efforts to assist Syria in the post-conflict restoration of the country.

The SCO Member States speak in favour of improving the architecture of global economic governance, deepening cooperation to build a predictable and stable environment for the development of trade, economic and investment cooperation, and strengthening of the multilateral trading system based on the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). They stress the importance of further deepening cooperation in order to bring forth an open world economy, strengthen an open, transparent and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, and to prevent any protectionist actions in international and regional trade.

The SCO Member States support China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and note the ongoing work to jointly implement this initiative, including the efforts to align the Eurasian Economic Union projects with those under the BRI. The Member States consider it a priority to improve the well-being and living standards of the population by further strengthening cooperation in trade, production, transport, energy, financial, investment, agricultural, telecommunications, innovation and other areas of mutual interest. In this regard, they aim to promote favourable conditions for the development of trade, economic and investment activities within the SCO. In this respect, the development of the draft Road Map to increase the share of national currencies in mutual settlements between the SCO Member States will be continued.

Cooperation in the field of science and education

M. Kazakov, a post-graduate student at Pacific National University, examines the mechanisms for international scientific cooperation and synergies in the SCO space. The article offers possible ways of increasing communication between young scientists of the SCO countries. In the 21st century, the emerging international environment demonstrates the increasing role of regional international organizations in addressing the challenges of politics, economy and regional security. Such developments are linked to the expanding international relations in the era of globalization and the complementarity of the economies of the Member States. The SCO unites the largest developing countries with the highest rates of economic growth, which account for approximately half of the world's population. Following the admission of the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the SCO at the summit held in Astana in 2017, the economic potential of the organization and its political authority in the international arena has increased noticeably. Also, the organization's geographical area of cooperation was expanded to South Asia.

Currently, there are eight full members of the SCO: the Republic of India, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan. Four states have observer status in the SCO and six states are dialogue partners. The territory of the SCO including the observer states reaches 37.53 million square km, which is about 61 per cent of the Eurasian continent.

As the legal successor of the Shanghai Five, the SCO has retained its main objectives and areas of cooperation. The SCO has never positioned itself as a military organization or alliance similar to NATO. The Member States uphold the objective of developing the SCO as a multi-purpose regional organization that does not imply the formation of a military-political union or an economic

integration grouping with supranational governance institutions. While addressing political and economic issues and security challenges, the SCO members are working to create favourable conditions for developing ties in the fields of science, technology, education and culture. Currently, the mechanisms of cooperation between the states are upgrading within the framework of SCO University, which unites more than 70 leading universities of the SCO States. Since network universities have proven to be effective, the establishment of a similar structure within the framework of a regional organization in Central and South Asia is a natural way to develop educational ties. In 2016, the Agreement on the Establishment of the University of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization set out essential guidelines for the functioning and administration of SCO University. The network university trains specialists in the following areas: Regional Studies, Ecology, Energy, IT-technologies, Nanotechnology, Pedagogy and Economics.

The author notes that graduates are expected to advocate the SCO core values and the "Shanghai spirit", which in the long term will contribute to effective interaction between the states and the establishment of intercultural communication.

The potential for scientific cooperation between the SCO Member States deserves special attention. The author points out that China and Russia are leading in research and development investment. The number of researchers as a percentage of the total staff of every Scientific Research Institute vividly demonstrates the potential for cooperation between the SCO States; this large number of researchers can be involved in international scientific activities throughout the SCO region. The leaders of the states recognize that in the 21st century the leading positions in the field of research, development and deployment of new technologies allow not only to maintain the growth rates of national economies, but also to promote competitiveness in the world market. In this regard, the Governments consistently pursue a policy of comprehensive support of scientists and scientific researches.

Nevertheless, the author notes that the mechanisms of scientific cooperation in the SCO space provide no regular scientific framework for young scientists. In this regard, the author welcomes the initiative to establish the Youth Forum of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

Cooperation with international organizations

Speaking about the civilizational purposes of the Greater Eurasia project, N. Stupakov, Director of the CIS Security Problems Institute, notes the peculiarities of economic and political conditions for the establishment of inter-State institutions. The EAEU, SCO and BRICS are becoming engines of the historical development process of non-Western civilizations, offering an alternative path of Eurasian globalization without the Anglo-Saxon world at the helm. The emergence of a multipolar world has triggered current integration processes and the formation of institutional framework of cooperation in Eurasia. At the Summit in Astana in 2016, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin put forward the idea of establishing the Greater Eurasian Partnership with the participation of the EAEU, China, India, Pakistan, Iran and the CIS countries; by the beginning of 2019 it became a key political union of Eurasian state. The Northern Sea Route and the New Silk Road, which are the Eurasian economic projects assessed as historical international factors of the “great migration of peoples”, are especially relevant for the Greater Eurasia project. Such mega-projects, which cover the territories of a significant number of European and Asian states, are becoming the ideological foundation for modern strategic planning of infrastructure investments. This is accompanied by the establishment of international financial institutions, designed to enable lending for such projects, and foreign exchange reserves. These include the SCO Interbank Consortium and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which finances the New Silk Road project.

Political cooperation within Greater Eurasia is driven by the need to counter external military threats posed by NATO. The United States and Great Britain deem the Eurasian space as an area of their global political and economic influence; therefore, Greater Eurasia, as a comprehensive partnership between Eurasian states, is viewed as a new political mechanism to address the threats of the modern world. In his Munich speech in 2019, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov announced that a common Eurasian economic space was being created within the framework of cooperation between the EAEU and BRICS, as well as through increasing contacts between the EAEU, SCO and ASEAN.

At the same time, under pressure from the United States, the European Union distances from the Eurasian mechanisms of mutually beneficial cooperation with Russia and other states. Comprehensive understanding of the history of relations between the Russian Federation and the EU shows that the development of mutually beneficial cooperation remains the most important objective of strategic partnership. After all, a reliable and stable system that guarantees increased competitiveness of the economies of Russia and the EU is closely connected with the Greater Eurasia project, with the EU as one of possible strategic investors.

In the researcher's opinion, Russia aims to create the Greater Eurasian Partnership, a single space in which the Russian Federation and the EAEU states will have a key role. Nevertheless, stages of establishment of such architecture, which is now viewed more as a political paradigm, are extremely complex.

In addition, there are certain integration parameters for cooperation that might limit the potential benefit of a particular member state. Thus, a number of various integration communities within Greater Eurasia can complicate negotiations on mutually beneficial and forward-looking terms of partnership between the states.

V. Anikin, Doctor of Economics and Professor at the Diplomatic Academy of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, writing about the development of integration processes in the post-Soviet space assesses the role of Russia in the multilateral cooperation within the CIS. The author puts forward proposals for the conceptual framework of establishing a single economic, financial and information space of the CIS and the EAEU, as well as strategic directions of interaction among countries in the world community.

A large-scale impact on the processes of the world economy is a contemporary threat that affects international security and is accompanied by major political risks at global level. The researcher points out, that it is essential for Russia to find the optimal format for interstate cooperation.

The Greater Eurasia concept, which was put forward by Russia in 2016, implies a number of bridges in the Eurasian area, namely, between the EAEU and the EU; between the EAEU and the largest countries in Eurasia (China and India); and between the EAEU and ASEAN. According to the author, this project can be viewed as a way for Russia to create its own platform for integration into the world economy. Thus, an initiative for interaction between all regional integration groupings of the BRICS countries could become one of the platforms. Regarding the use of positive experience in integration groupings, the endeavours of Russia within APEC also deserve attention.

Conclusion

The Bishkek Declaration (2019) stipulates the basic principles for cooperation between the SCO Member States and supported the initiatives to promote regional and international cooperation to ensure peace, stability and sustainable development in the Central Asian region. The Declaration stresses that the challenges and security threats, which are becoming cross-border in their nature such as terrorism, the

spread of terrorist and extremist ideology, including on the Internet, required special attention, close coordination and constructive cooperation of the entire international community. In connection with the growing security challenges, the Declaration emphasises the need to continue work on building within the SCO a system for monitoring possible threats in the global information space and countering them.

While condemning all forms of propaganda of the ideology of terrorism, extremism and religious intolerance, as well as manifestations of discrimination based on religion or convictions, the SCO Member States welcome the adoption of the resolution on Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance by UN General Assembly. The Member States consider it a priority to step up the international community's joint efforts to counter the attempts to involve young people in the activities of terrorist, separatist and extremist groups.

The Member States support further deepening cooperation in order to build a predictable and stable environment for the development of trade, economic and investment cooperation through the consistent strengthening of the multilateral trading system based on the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). They stress the importance of creating an open world economy and preventing any protectionist actions in international and regional trade.

The Member States recognise the importance of innovation and the digital economy. Based on the adopted Concept of Cooperation of the SCO Members States in the Field of Digitalisation and Information Technology, they intend to join efforts to implement innovative programmes and projects, as well as to promote effective cooperation in science, technology and innovation. The Member States consider it necessary to maintain ties in the scientific, technical, cultural and humanitarian areas, which will contribute to the further strengthening of cooperation. The importance of deepening cooperation in the field of education is underscored. Modernization of mechanisms and

expansion of the areas for cooperation are currently underway within the framework of the SCO University that unites more than 70 leading universities in the SCO States.

Nowadays, prompted by the formation of a multipolar world, integration and institutional foundations for Eurasian cooperation are being created. International organizations like EAEU, SCO and BRICS put forward mega-projects, which cover the territories of a significant number of countries in Europe and Asia (the Greater Eurasia initiative) and become the foundation for modern strategic planning of infrastructure investments. This is accompanied by the establishment of international financial institutions to lend to such projects. In conclusion, it is important to emphasise the necessity to ensure coordination of actions within the framework of APEC, WTO, SCO and G20 using their positive experience.

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