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The geopolitical interests of the USA in the Central Asian region

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Introduction

Our research is devoted to develop and analyze the foreign policy strategy of the leading geopolitical actor as the USA in the Central Asian region. After gaining independence, Central Asian countries faced two types of geopolitical changes – internal and regional. The political, ethnic, territorial, and other problems inherited since the Soviet period promoted the emergence of severe geopolitical questions in the countries of this region. An example of that is several crises that arose because of geographical or ethnic disputable situations and the influence of both the first and second factors.

The USA, acting as world hegemony, pursues several specific interests in Central Asia to which number, it is necessary to refer access to control of its energy resources, prevention of ensuring interests and influence of Iran, and also prevention of influence of Russia on the region. In particular, we should note of NATO's interest caused by taking into account the carried-out operation "International Powers of the Help of Safety" to a position of Central Asia directly adjoining on Afghanistan¹.

According to Halford Mackinder, who developed Heartland's theory, the central region of the Eurasian continent, which not used for navigable purposes in 1904, represents the critical fortress on the land. Mackinder's followers convinced access to it can provide control over the world land in general. Thus, they considered the USSR as "the candidate for world powers²."

Other theory known as the theory of borders or Rimland developed during the period after World War II by Nicholas J. Spykman, mainly, accents on the critical value of the Navies, underlining thus, the geopolitical importance of the Central Asian region because of existence in it of the unique possibility of association of sea and overland forces³.

Subsequently, becoming independents region's states, it became a region where the interests of the world's giant states are strengthening. One of these countries is the United States, the only powerful state in the world today. Central Asia recognized that the United States has long been one of the countries with its national interests. The principal element contributing to the unique relations of Washington to Central Asia is the emergence of Central Asian independent states with the collapse of the USSR, a weak socio-economic situation, and no military-political doctrine.

However, the United States did not have coherence and consistency in its initial actions concerning the republics in the region. It is since the implementation of US foreign policy

¹ Arif Bağbaşıoğlu, "Beyond Afghanistan NATO's partnership with Central Asia and South Caucasus: A tangled partnership?" in *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 5 (1), January 2014, pp. 88-96.

² B. Bailey, *Halford Mackinder – The Heartland Theory*, 16 April 2016 (retrieved from <https://prezi.com/gphtqwhcn5xa/halford-mackinder-the-heartland-theory/>).

³ Colin S. Gray, "Nicholas John Spykman, the Balance of Power, and International Order" in *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 38 (6), 2015, pp. 873-897.

programs can be explained by the fact that the White House is the leader of the party that takes the place of the president. For example, the year of the presidential election in the United States in 1992 was a good year for presidential candidates to implement American foreign policy towards Central Asia because presidential candidates spread their views on Central Asia during the election campaign.

However, during this period, Washington focused on issues related to its national security. The most crucial problem for Washington was the fact that the Republic of Kazakhstan, one of three new nuclear-weapon states that were the result of the collapse of the USSR, increased US interest in the region. However, in May 1992, Kazakhstan signed the Lisbon Protocol, an addendum to the SFR-1 Treaty⁴. As a result of this event, Kazakhstan became one of the countries that received US assistance under the Nunn-Lugar Program (Joint Threat Reduction Program). This program aimed to dismantle intercontinental ballistic missiles and the transportation of enriched uranium in Kazakhstan to the United States. To achieve this goal, the United States divided a significant portion of the four donor countries (80 million dollars), which is much more co-financing than the United States⁵.

1. Justification of the choice of the subject

The international events of recent decades have changed international actors' considerations regarding this territory because of international highlights, particularly the geostrategic area of Central Asia. Also, the extensive raw resources of these states have become attractive in the eyes of international actors. The essentialness of the Central Asian area for the world and territorial forces lies not just in the circle of economic and political changes. The situation in the states of Central Asia can affect international security by countering the existing threats of the modern world. The region fenced by foci of instability, able at any time to harm the territory's states' security and the world.

Besides, Central Asian countries will participate in various regional security organizations, which are influenced by major geopolitical forces. Exploring the US geopolitical interests about the region's proximity to hotbeds of instability raises the thesis's relevance. The international factor straightforwardly influences the financial advancement of the area, the foundation of external relations. The natural assets of the region's states are essential to international actors. Currently, experts and politicians consider the territory a platform for the energy game in the Caspian Basin. While China views its energy strategy as

⁴ Kingston Reif, "The Lisbon Protocol at a Glance" in *Arms Control Association*, March 2014.

⁵ *Nuclear Successor States of the Soviet Union. Project of the Monterey Institute of International Studies and the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace*, Monterey: MIIS, 1994-1996, pp. 6-7.

part of its energy guarantee, Russia is committed to reinforcing its southern borders and supporting Russian companies in the region.

Countries like Russia, China, the USA, Turkey, Iran, Japan, India, and the EU countries, increasing the region's importance on the world stage, are working towards their goals. In this regard, the US is one of the leading players in world politics, whose activities chiefly affect the state of contemporary and following international relations and the development of independent regions and countries. The USA has consistently engaged in its interests in every region.

Washington's policy in the area takes on a considerable and outstanding significance to many factors. At present, the situation around Central Asia is unstable. Afghan and Pakistani relations have become more acute; the American policy towards Iran has become more complicated. Internal political problems have arisen in the region's states, especially in Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic: the terrorism's growth, an indication of strict radicalism, drug trafficking. All these can cause the rise of insecurity in Central Asia. According to experts, the USA has become entrenched in the region, will not surrender their positions.

The implementation of the American strategy in the region affects the interests of other enormous countries. In particular, the USA faces China's expanding force and Russia's stable international impact in the district.

The projects proposed by Washington "the New Silk Road" and "Greater Central Asia," which envisage the trader routes' improvement through Afghanistan, Central and South Asia, regarding the withdrawal of alliance powers from Afghanistan projects, provide broad, understandable assessments. Recently referenced elements are in interaction, which, of course, affect the formation of the USA's Central Asian policy. Consideration of these processes in terms of them evaluates the relevance of this research. The doctoral research delves into American foreign policy features in these three stages. Specifically, the essential objectives, undertakings, and techniques for the US's strategy about the newly independent states in the part of their advancement and change considered the accomplished consequences of the American relations with the conditions of the region throughout the long periods of independence assessed. Suggestions created to expand the capability of cooperation between the region's states with Washington.

2. The positioning of the research

First, our thesis represents a research approach in political science, international relations, and international security. We foresee transversal research which has at its core, the study of the effects of military interventions on humanitarian grounds, on the democratization process of vulnerable, newly independent states of the Central Asian region, with a focus on

the vulnerable and unstable area of the whole Asia, which can have an impact on the international security system. Besides, we will also analyze the effect of humanitarian interventions of the US armed forces in Afghanistan, and its influence on the national construction of the region's states, and also the global effects of the produced by the international hegemons like the USA, Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the region's stability and former Soviet Republics' future development.

Furthermore, the positioning of our work is made by analyzing several key-pieces of literature and official doctrines and agreements in the region in general (theoretical focus). To add to the neutrality and completeness of our approach, we will envisage our methodological study to encompass some references to international law and international organizations' roles, which have a significant impact on improving and developing Central Asian countries. We aim to provide both a comparative study and an in-depth analysis of the US foreign policy in Central Asia since the period of gaining independence of the region's countries after the collapse of the USSR. In our research, we will quantify the obtained data, which will serve policy-makers, experts in international relations, and international organizations, which will have applicability in the future development of the Central Asian region.

3. The main issue of the chosen subject

The main issue we will address in our thesis centered on the effects of the US geopolitical interests in Central Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, with regards to the quality of democracy and the democratization process, essential tools towards ensuring stability, security and continued development of the region. In our research, we will concentrate on Washington's long-term interests in the region, such as:

- 1) Advancing the stabilization of the states of Central Asia by democratization.
- 2) Eliminating the political influence of other international actors in the region (Russia and China).

Mike Pompeo's visit to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan and the unveiling of a new US strategy in Central Asia remain focused on the region's attention. The US strategy in Central Asia is updated every five years. The document is traditionally edited by the State Department, skillfully placing accents and changing nuances depending on Americans' interests in the region. The peculiarity of the new strategy is that Washington, for the first time, recognized the self-sufficiency of Central Asian countries regardless of the situation in Afghanistan, China, or Russia. The region's importance to the United States continues to determine the Afghan factor, and it shows interest directly in Central Asia.

The updated document highlights some of the critical ideas of the megaproject. One of them is to complete CASA-1000, the construction of LES from the region to Afghanistan,

Pakistan, and India. Another project that Americans are willing to invest in is the construction of the Lazurite Corridor. Washington has been promoting it since 2012. The corridor involves laying railways and roads from Afghanistan to Turkmenistan and further through the Caspian Sea to Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey.

The new strategy focuses on the security of Central Asia and calls for preventing terrorist and extremist threats from entering the region. Moreover, in this direction, the Americans promise to provide possible assistance. The actions of the authorities of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan to reform the economy show that realism is gradually taking precedence in this issue.

For the United States, democracy's promotion is to create healthy and stable political parties committed to democracy. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute were involved in establishing such parties. This area included programs to assert the rule of law and respect for human rights, improving the effectiveness of democratic forces, promoting dialogue in different sectors of society to address national challenges.

US interest in Central Asia required encouraging regional states to build on democratic principles in shaping new independent policy. It was to ensure that regional countries not only political support but also Washington's economic assistance.

Despite the commonality of their historical past, the countries of the region began to develop in different ways with independence. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan were the most focused on developing relations with the West. Despite the severe problems in the formation of democratic institutions, these three States stood out as roughly the same aspirations to reform their socio-political and economic systems and shape the modern state's image and mechanisms.

For the United States, the Central Asian region's democratization has been linked first of all with the relevant achievements in these three States. Although there were common mechanisms for the US democratization policy, its results differed in a particular specificity in each of these three states. Next, we will look at this for each of them.

First of all, we should understand that the practical work of democratic institutions implies certain conditions and a certain level of development of society and economy. The higher the GDP per capita, the better the chances of a successful and sustainable work of democratic institutions. Exceptions are economies in which natural rents play a significant role (usually oil exporters). In such economies, often even with high per capita incomes, democratic institutions are poorly held. Historical experience plays an equally, and sometimes more significant, role in the emergence and sustainability of democratic institutions. In countries where democratic institutions existed before (most often in the form of urban and community

self-government), democracy is more easily established than in countries with no such experience. In Central Asia, the traditions of local government and the participation of the general population in public life, if once, were in their infancy. By the time of independence had long since been erased from popular memory. It is impossible not to note the excellent work of the Soviet social system, which formally proclaimed democracy, but in reality, gave all the power to the party nomenclature.

4. Research design

4.1 Two main aspects make the temporal delimitation of our doctoral work: starting from the gaining independence of Central Asian countries, subsequently the USSR's downfall, and the increase of the terrorist activities since September 11.

During the first period, American policy based on three priorities: providing security from the Soviet weapons of mass destruction, helping the newly independent states of Central Asia to defend sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and to prevent Russia's monopoly over pipelines and transit routes for regional oil and gas.

From the second period of geopolitical interests of the USA in the Central Asian region, security and military considerations became more important to the US's side because of the terrorist attacks.

4.2 Research questions

To indicate the importance of the chosen topic for doctoral research, we would like to present the following questions to understand this topic.

Here are some essential inquiries that can help to understand the American international strategy in the region:

1. The importance of the region in American preservation and prosperity in the security challenges.
2. What compromises is the United States willing to make to achieve its goals in the region?
3. What is the best strategy for the USA to accomplish its objectives?
4. Which framework of the concept could be suitable for Washington's strategy in this area?

5. What could help the American government to improve and increase capability? How suitable is the strategy of American democratization to the Central Asian countries?

We can respond to the initial three of them using all the chronicled reviews that developed throughout the long stretches of the relationship between the USA and region's states since the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Although Washington's foreign policy has not been unambiguous about this region, having concluded all three stages of US foreign policy, we will be able to set the main task of the American side in this work.

While responding to the following question, it becomes understandable that the theoretical part of this work becomes a necessary concept for formulating a reasonable answer to research questions.

Considering the subsequent integral part of the American strategy, built to democratize these countries, we can say that the main idea is to create healthy and stable political parties committed to democracy. An alternative means of maintaining their dominant position obtains the promotion of liberal democratic values on the world stage. Washington's interest in Central Asia maintained the need for encouraging regional states to establish democratic principles in influencing new independent policies. This action was to provide regional countries not only with political support but also with American economic support.

5. Methodology and theoretical basis of research

This thesis's theoretical basis is the primary foundation of American international strategy regarding the Central Asian area on the world stage. The well-known analyzing method was political realism – the appeal to the history of international relations there described by a deep focus on its practical applicability. Thus, our study of American political realism as a method of researching the American strategy in Central Asia became more significant because supporters are not only the most numerous among researchers of international relations but, besides, possess a significant weight in the development of foreign policy decisions.

From examining the history of international relations methodology, it can be clear that American political realism defined as a direct historical, structural, objectivist rationalistic, normative-ideological method. There is additionally a specific evolution from the historical interpretation method of classical realism to the structuralism of the neorealism of Waltz, and then again to the historical-interpretation method of post-classical realism. From a tight perspective, realism represents a state-centric approach of analyzing and studying, concentrated on the investigation of contention and security. Protestant pessimism, which Niebuhr called "Christian realism," served as one of the justifications for the American leadership's decision to oppose the Soviet Union.

The fact that Niebuhr unambiguously supported the Cold War had a severe impact on the USA's intellectual life. In this way, it was born the American liberalism of the Cold War era, combining the ideas of building a welfare state with a realistic foreign policy. Realism turned into the Cold War's scholarly establishment, and Niebuhr, also others, became the leading philosopher of this new American realism.

Changes in international relations led to the building of private theories, while realism as a whole was more of a worldview than a single theory, always included the most contradictory provisions. Nevertheless, the following principles of the US political realism continued:

- the state is the main actor at the moment.
- the most severe problem in international relations is security and conflicts between states.
- conflict resolution is difficult because there is no world government.

In realism, we can include almost everything.

After a debate between representatives of political realism and other currents and paradigms, the study of the American scheme in the region identified with the need to combine elements of different approaches, researchers return to the historical method of Thucydides. In this manner, American political realism, always striving to base its provisions on historical material, made its development a full circle from the historical method through its denial and fascination with pure science and again to the historical method.

In this regard, we propose considering a realist theory and the theory of political realism, as the primary method of conducting international relations the US heads towards other countries. Realism in Washington keeps on being the dominant approach. Political realism's analysis may support to understand the reasons for its vitality.

The founders of modern American political realism considered fleeing to the United States from Nazi Germany, Hans Morgenthau, John Hertz, Arnold Wolfers, as well as the Americans – the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, geopolitics Nicholas Spykman, diplomat George Kennan. It assumed that in the late 1970s, there was a structural realism or neorealism, considered the founder of Kenneth Waltz.

For all narrow and limited applicability of realism, which overlooks many factors in world politics, it hardly surprises its commonness. American strategy bases its actions on the postulates of political realism and identifies other countries' actions through the prism of this paradigm. Therefore, in the following chapters of our work, we would like to dedicate to the theory of realism because of being the fundamental theory in the world policy and the United States' interests in this exact area.

The research's methodological premise represents a geopolitical conceptual approach that allows us to investigate the arrangement of worldwide relations. The way to Central Asia as a specific system interacting with other systems and environments predetermines the direction of the systematically structural methodology of scientific cognition.

Additionally, the global affairs' scheme's shape carries out the values' scope. Consequently, in our research, we used social studies' fundamental and specialized concept, that was widely recognized, in conjunction with global affairs' area, a systems approach.

It used to review the American foreign policy line in Central Asia, considering its constituent areas (economic, political, strategic, cultural, informational).

It used a comparative analysis by which the US's international strategy, Russia, China, and some states of the region, analyzed finding a competent, appropriate, and suitable forms for them and the states of the region to participate in regional development. An expert assessment method identified and analyzed the opinions of many reputable American experts in the Central Asian region.

6. Envisaged thesis structure and details

The first chapter is devoted to political realism and realism theories in general in US foreign policy. The subsequent chapter defines and fleshes out the United States' role in this area of Central Asia after the USSR's breakdown. To be explicit, American international strategy and the acknowledgment by Washington of the new regional governments considered. It considers the following essential issues:

- the economic and natural resource potential of Central Asian value in the arrangement of worldwide relations.
- establish nature, shape, and critical areas of competition between world leaders.
- contradictions in the regional states' economic improvement and world leaders' enthusiasm identified.
- threats' examination to international and regional security that Central Asia is presently carrying, as well as the threats, are infiltrating the region from neighboring states and using the Central Asian region's transit capabilities for further proliferation.
- classification and characterization of threats to regional and international security provided, and the ways and methods of their localization and neutralization decided.

The third chapter provides an analysis of the American reciprocal relationship together with countries of the region after subsequently September 11. Here were presented the results of the study of the effectiveness of the US carrying out foreign policy in cooperation with the regional countries against terrorism. The issues, also logical inconsistencies of the American

improvement of reciprocal ties at the region's territory, revealed the ways and methods of their resolution outlined, the conceivable outcomes and possibilities of improving the American situation inside territorial combination structures resolved, and appropriate practical recommendations made. The fourth chapter of this paper examines Washington's principle aspirations in this area.

We figured out the US foreign policy's leading priorities concerning the Caspian Basin, raw materials' transit routes in consideration of the economic importance, the focal point of the area's democratization process, and the way of accomplishing it. The conclusion summarizes all work, formulates key conclusions, results, and outlines the proposed further studies on the topic.

Analyzing the policy of Washington towards Central Asian countries, we can draw the following conclusions:

The first is the preparatory period. This stage based on an attacking foreign policy. If a state pursues a neutral US policy, the US government will focus on diplomacy with human rights violations in this country.

Secondly, we call for a partnership to strengthen and stabilize democratic principles. It means that if Washington expects a change in its foreign policy and wants a pro-American orientation, Washington's actions concerning this area will undergo radical changes. At the national level, human rights violations denied, and the human rights situation in this country is improving.

Third, the creation of American bases. The United States is aware of its military presence in this region and must ensure that the newly created state's power does not have the political will to disperse the American military. In this situation, Washington is trying to bring people to power in a country that is not just a pro-American regime, but also its influence.

Fourth, the stage of strengthening its stabilization. At this stage, violations of human rights reappear, and the US diplomatic establishment begins the process of forming a democratic opposition in this area. Washington's side is well versed in these four phases, depending on its interests and goals for the countries of Central Asia. At the same time, human rights issues are used by Americans not only for political purposes but also for commercial purposes.

Based on the study's stated goal, we have pinpointed the following tasks:

- Identify the standard motives of the American international strategy backbones concerning regional governments.
- Analyze fundamental needs, consider the strategies, instruments of Washington's strategy approaching the countries of this area.

- Accomplish a necessary examination of “Greater Central Asia⁶,” “New Silk Road⁷” programs.
- Determining Washington’s approach’s tasks and significance following international strategy needs’ advanced pattern priorities of the region’s states.
- Establish the US’s relevance relating to the local security framework.
- Identify critical issues conducive to transforming the American regional policy after September 11.

In consequence of examining this topic, it is possible to put forward the following provisions:

- The American foreign policy towards the region’s states dependent on international control. Transformation takes place in the sphere of essential international strategy principles of regional strategy.
- Dynamically interpreted development of democracy of regional states is an essential motive of American policy by solving geopolitical, economic, and energy problems.
- Democratization as a proclaimed priority of American foreign policy system can interpret as an instrument of pressure and comparable to a weakening element. Along these lines, Washington’s geostrategic projects’ implementation, such as “Greater Central Asia” and the “New Silk Road,” can create significant barriers on the way of Central Asian development.
- Even with authoritarian leaders, the orientation towards stability is more important than the establishment of democratic values that could destabilize the region, in the form of “Color revolutions⁸.”
- The dynamics of aid provided to the countries of the region are vital factors signaling American priorities.
- As the main conditions for the formation of the subjectivity of the region’s countries, we should point out the acceleration of qualitative interaction processes and the development of optimal mechanisms for resolving struggles, which will minimize any impact of foreign geopolitical forces.
- In connection with the Afghan⁹, this area became one of Washington’s priority territories.

⁶ Fatima Kukeeva, *Greater Central Asia. Strategic assessment of the United States and Kazakhstan partnership in the XXIst century: status, problems, and prospects: materials of the “round table”*, Almaty: IMAP, 2008, p. 11.

⁷ Adam Nobis, “The New Silk Road, Old Concepts of Globalization, and New Questions” in *Open Cultural Studies*, No. 1, 2017, p. 204.

⁸ David Lane, “Colored revolution as a Political Phenomenon” in *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol. 25 (2-3), 2009, pp. 113-135.

⁹ Shereena Qazi and Alia Chughtai, “US war in Afghanistan: From 2001 invasion to 2020 agreement” in *Aljazeera*, 29 February 2020 (retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2020/02/war-afghanistan-2001-invasion-2020-taliban-deal-200229142658305.html>).

During the next visit of American representatives on Central Asia, an agreement reached to intensify existing trade mechanisms, including the framework agreement on trade and investment (TIFA)¹⁰. This agreement has sufficient flexibility to become a format for discussing any topical issues and making specific decisions. As part of TIFA, it meant to take steps to reduce trade barriers and liberalize markets.

Nevertheless, the energy component was and remained the central element of American strategy in the region.

Washington is also working with Turkmenistan to increase natural gas production, bearing in mind that it will transport along the trans-Caspian highway. The recent Nabucco project was a new stage in the opening of an additional corridor to Europe, including Turkmen. 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 other unresolved problems¹¹.

Another important link in American policy in the region was forming a new network of pipelines and trade and transport communications along the East-West route (the TRACECA project)¹². The USA 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 which Washington has become much more stringent. However, the new configuration of pipelines and communications proposed by the USA harmed the economic interests not only of Iran but also of Russia.

First, these pipelines (Baku-Ceyhan¹³ and trans-Caspian¹⁴) would bypass not only Iran but also Russia, through the territory of which most Caspian energy carriers transported to the European and world markets.

Secondly, Russia is one of the key participants in the North-South corridor and is extremely interested in developing this corridor and bilateral cooperation with Iran.

Furthermore, realistic assessments of Caspian energy potential's extent, their development and transportation's cost, made their significance, far from indisputable, from the American energy security, at least in the foreseeable future. The commercial attractiveness of the new pipelines was also more than doubtful.

¹⁰ Ross Wilson, "US Policy in Central Asia" in *The House International Relations Committee, US Congress*, 24 July 2012 (retrieved from <http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/112/HRG-112-FA14-WState-WilsonR-20120724.pdf>).

¹¹ Ariel Cohen, "Energy Security in the Caspian Basin" in *Energy Security Challenges for the XXIst Century*, 2009, p. 124.

¹² Liz Fuller, "TRACECA: Euphoria and Infighting" in *RFE/RL Caucasus Report*, Vol 1, No. 29, 15 September 1998, pp. 1-5.

¹³ G. Chufirin, *The Security of the Caspian Sea Region*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 178-194.

¹⁴ Michael J. Bradshaw, "Global energy dilemmas: a geographical perspective" in *Geographical Journal*, Vol. 176, No. 4, 2010, pp. 275-290.

The United States, as it declared at the governmental level, is an active supporter of building modern political institutions in the region. Official publications state that Washington provides technical assistance and training to create an active network of non-governmental organizations, enhance judicial structures, and develop local authorities' development.

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 the first concern to Washington. Region's 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 US partners' efforts to transport military cargo through the region to supply coalition troops in Afghanistan. The Northern supply network has excellent potential, primarily in improving transport infrastructure and stimulating trade routes that link Central and South Asia.

The Secretary Assistant Eli Wells noted Washington's hope in improving dialogue with Kyrgyzstan. In this way, we can see the great interest of the American administration in the region. Frederic Starr said that for Washington, the fate of Afghanistan, in connection with other region's states interconnected, also the American presence will eventually be positive. In the region, a new format of cooperation C5 + 1 (Central Asian countries plus the USA)¹⁵ created to expand intra-regional cooperation and relations of the region with the USA in four areas: economy and regional interaction, environment, and security.

However, the project has not brought any particular results for the last years since the creation of this format. Instead, Washington's systematic work continued to expand its impact. It reformatted into a new regional project, C5 + 1, which means the countries of Central Asia plus Afghanistan. Thus, for further comprehensive development, governments of this area are keen on relations with the world's significant force. Also, Washington needs strategic partners in the Central Asian region to conduct its international policy.

Conclusion

While writing our thesis and conducting a study on Washington's strategy in the region's states, we tried to understand the region's importance, not only for the Washington side but also for all world powers. American governance was including the first states that recognized the region's governments' sovereignty, subsequently the Soviet Union's downfall.

¹⁵ "Economic Development Through Regional Connectivity" in *USAID*, 13 November 2019 (retrieved from <https://www.usaid.gov/central-asia-regional/documents/economic-development-through-regional-connectivity>).

White House's advanced scheme of influence in this area's direction adopted for the period till 2025 keeps working on the previous one concerning the region.

Washington side has the next broad and complementary tasks and aims in the interest of this newly developed policy. They are:

- encouraging and bolstering the region's governments' self-determination and self-government.
- decreasing radicalism and terroristic units' risks and hazards.
- widening and upholding balance's assistance and protection in the Afghan area.
- advancing links among region's states and Afghan area.
- popularizing the legislation's reforms, along with recognizing civil liberties.
- helping in providing financial aid, together with improving the region.

The way that Washington chose contrary to narcotic production, extremism, and terrorism also led to counterproductive results in this area¹⁶.

The carried-out complex research of Washington's leaders' global strategy in the region's states helps us to make next inferences:

1. We could construe and determine White House's geopolitical regulations: improving the democratization process¹⁷, carrying out civil liberties and freedom activity¹⁸, operations contrary to WMD¹⁹, establishing and bolstering of a dominant role²⁰.

2. Taking everything into consideration, with our research, we can prove that Washington's scheme in the direction of the regional governments affords leading position in this area. It is useful to note the region's other talented geopolitical players in the Russian Federation and PRC face. We have to mention the fact that in the way of establishing American influence in this area, it has to oversee these actors' policies here²¹.

3. This way, we were able to trace why the improvement of the region's states' democratization process serves as the primary motive and critical instruments in the solution of geopolitical, financial, and power tasks²².

Considering above mentioned US's planning system, we move on towards addressing exactly how our research effort has managed to provide a satisfactory resolution to our

¹⁶ Hakan Edstrom and Dennis Gyllensporre, *Pursuing strategy: NATO operations from the Gulf War to Gaddafi*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, pp. 140, 144.

¹⁷ S. Fish, "Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies" in *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 17 (1), 2006, pp. 5-10.

¹⁸ Eugheniy Zhovtis, "Democratization and Human Rights in Central Asia: Problems, Development Prospects and the Role of the International Community" in *CEPS Policy Brief*, No. 134, July 2007, pp. 1-11.

¹⁹ Jozef Goldblat, "Denuclearization of Central Asia" in *Central Asia at the Crossroads*, No. 4, 2007, pp. 25-32.

²⁰ R. Pomfret, "Central Asia Since 1991: The Experience of the New Independent States" in *OECD Development Centre Working Paper*, No. 212, 2003.

²¹ Richard Weitz, *China-Russia Security Relations: Strategic Parallelism without Partnership or Passion?*, Carlisle, Penn: Strategic Studies Institute, Army War College, 2008, pp. 34-35.

²² Sean R. Roberts, "Doing the Democracy Dance in Kazakhstan: Democracy Development as Cultural Encounter" in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 71, No. 2, Summer 2012, pp. 308-330.

questions. We were able to identify the leading causes of the slow progress' features of geopolitical circumstances in the region's governments:

- Refusal of Washington's democracy; another ways' advancement and fulfillment.
- Different tendencies of authoritative improvement caused by the assistance of the USSR's legacy.
- Internal strategic conflicts and issues are interfering with carrying out the broad policy. Effecting of stage-by-stage changes in the political line in the direction of formation environment for encouraging democratic institutes.
- Balance is the most necessary condition in this administration state. It then develops a democratization process that can cause conflicts in the region's territory, in the role of "Color revolutions."
- Approbation of freedom questions in the character of instruments, tensions, influence, and undermining element in the region's states.
- Problems of democracy and freedom considered together with the realization of safety issues, energy programs, and political problems and struggles.

4. Nevertheless, despite the problems mentioned above, from the research done, we can understand that Washington is not particularly afraid of these issues. Dynamics of help regarding region's governments testify to the shown White House's preferences. At first, to Kazak government, concerning the eradication of WMD, on the finding routes of raw materials' transportation, avoiding Russian and Iran's areas²³. Next, to Uzbek and Tajik governments in connection with the significant role and position in the operations and activities contrary to terrorism and extremism in the Afghan area²⁴. Nevertheless, the situation altered from 2004 when Washington's side reduced the volume of help to the region's governments connected with regional leading establishments' issues.

To the greatest extent, regional states' administrations mostly influenced by ties and connections alongside the Russian Federation. Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Tajik governments interact with the Russian side within CSTO²⁵. In the present circumstances, the White House tries to achieve the approach to the region's countries, mainly Uzbek and Turkmen administrations, which are not that dependent out of possession of Russian geopolitics in this area, comparing with other states. The specified states, in proper sequence, try to benefit from the developing environment. For example, the Uzbek side is motivated in broadening and developing its role not only in this area but also in Afghan territory, along with Turkmen government shows self-reliant and self-sufficient behavior as possesses essential hydrocarbons' source.

²³ Paul Kubicek, "Energy politics and geopolitical competition in the Caspian Basin" in *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 4 (2), July 2013, pp. 171-180.

²⁴ Barnett Rubin, "It's Much Bigger Than Afghanistan: US Strategy for a Transformed Region" in *Center on International Cooperation*, 25 April 2017 (retrieved from https://cic.nyu.edu/news_commentary/its-much-bigger-afghanistan-us-strategy-transformed-region).

²⁵ Dadan Upadhyay, "NATO versus CSTO: The Clash between Competing Military Alliances" in *Global Research*, 11 January 2012 (retrieved from <https://www.globalresearch.ca/nato-versuscsto-the-clash-between-competing-military-alliances/28612>).

5. Having said this, we also need to note that for the realization of the strategic ambitions, Washington aims to improve connections among southern and central parts of Asia with the assistance of “Greater Central Asia²⁶.” Achievement of this approach, which assumes help to the development of regional commerce and transportation schemes, prevents significant obstacles and restrictions on the way of region’s creation in the role of a sovereign system²⁷.

6. New Silk Way program of 2011, represents the furtherance of White House’s GCA strategy²⁸. This new planning by Washington’s representatives in the direction of the area means American aid concerning the region by attracting sponsors through the region’s commerce, including the southern and central parts of Asia. According to western opinions, this way of influencing and offering help to the states has to be an optimal variant for keeping stability and peace in this area²⁹.

Washington’s side attained several outcomes with the assistance of this project, having constructed highways, energy routes, and the railway, which takes beginning from Uzbek territory till Mazar-i-Sharif. Nevertheless, the remaining Afghan area’s conflicts that make specific difficulties in realizing this planned act as the significant tasks needing the solution first³⁰. Washington’s aspiration to rebuild together these parts of Asia makes Russian, PRC, along with Iran’s side, to worry.

Project’s fulfillment builds upon the solution of issues’ complex connected alongside questions of geopolitics, financial situations, and safety.

First and foremost, the region’s governments need to understand the importance and impact of each world actor, how these sides can provide peace and freedom, also will help in other spheres. In this case, through the research that we have done, we can offer the next suggestions to the region’s states:

- Egression of armed units from this area, bolstering and extending protection systems in current circumstances, level of safety of region’s governments connected with issues and conditions in the Afghan area. In this plan, the optimal variant is represented by conducting effective and productive talks among the region’s establishments and the leading strategical powers, which are challenging a vital role in providing protection. Formation of efficient and adequate methods of cooperation alongside institutions that could grant to consider their strategical ambitions.

²⁶ J. Blank, “Strategic Surprise? Central Asia in 2006” in *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 2, May 2006, pp. 109-120.

²⁷ M. Crosston, *Fostering Fundamentalism: Terrorism, Democracy and American Engagement in Central Asia*, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006, p. 15.

²⁸ B. R. Deepak, *China’s Global Rebalancing and the New Silk Road*, Singapore: Springer Nature, 2018, pp. 130-136.

²⁹ “US Support for the New Silk Road” in *The US Department of State. Diplomacy Action* (retrieved from <https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/sca/ci/af/newsilkroad/index.htm>).

³⁰ Ahmad Tamim Sediqi, “Freight Railway and Trade Logistics. A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Hairatan Railway in Afghanistan” in *Research Gate*, September 2017, pp. 2-13.

- Carrying out the analysis of vulnerability's causes and components in furtherance of bolstering and sustaining safety through the medium of multilateral ties. Most significant are competent and efficient instruments of safety, strictly speaking, the formation of safety's system, able to grant accepted decisions for the region's circumstances and conflicts, for advancing states' balance, cooperation, and alliance.

- Alliance procedures' spurring and hastening, along with the improvement of instruments of settling all types of conflict situations and struggles in all levels, develop circumstances for weakening global powers' influence. Reaching negotiations on the region's protection and balance in it with the assistance of mutual efforts' standards, together with granting laissez-faire in the direction of the region's governments' domestic questions.

- Advancement and improvement of the region's states' design of democracy corresponding to the governments' specifics and needs, considering Washington's background, grant balance among states, which will help develop ties alongside Washington.

In this way, cooperation, and ties with one of the influential global players are significant in furthering additional all-around advancement and progress to the regional governments, consecutively Washington, regarding maintaining global strategy and policy requiring allies in this area.

Last but most certainly not least, the study of the American geopolitical system in the direction of this region can also provide huge help not only to the region's countries but also will influence the other sovereign states' decision-making process, that can play a role on the global stage. Research on this subject can become a valuable tool in studying and understanding of the region's social, political, financial, cultural life level and also in improving living standards, democratization process and region's importance on the international scene.

To sum everything up, the research efforts of the concept and execution of our thesis added value to the study of this topic, which will help find the middle ground of this world policy.

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