

The Afro-Eurasia Proposal Would be a Timely Alternative to the US Sponsored “Indo-Pacific”

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Russia’s repeated rejection of the US’ ‘Indo-Pacific’ concept that Foreign Minister Lavrov claims is a ruse for “containing China” highlights just how urgently it is that a more inclusive and non-hostile trans-regional integration alternative emerges, which can be embodied by the Afro-Eurasia proposal that brings together the Belt & Road Initiative, CPEC+, and the Greater Eurasian Partnership in a Community of Common Destiny.

Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov harshly condemned the US’ “Indo-Pacific” concept as a ruse for “containing China” while speaking at India’s Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, following up on comments that he made a year prior which were analyzed by the author at that time in his piece about how “[Russia Regards The ‘Indo-Pacific Region’ As An ‘Artificially Imposed’ Pro-US Concept](#)”. According to [Sputnik](#), the Eurasian Great Power’s top diplomat said the following at the high-profile event on Wednesday:

“Our Western friends’ aim in using the term Indo-Pacific instead of Asia-Pacific in matters of cooperation is to contain China and Indian friends are smart enough to understand that. It’s not even hidden...We are not against terminology, but it should be understandable. When people say we want to develop cooperation in Asia-Pacific as Indo-Pacific strategy, we asked how it is different; we were told it is more democratic. We don’t think so. It is rather tricky. We have to be careful about the terminology which looks benign but is not. Terminology should be unifying, not divisive. Neither Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) nor BRICS is exclusionary.”

It’s clear from his words that the time has come to propose a more inclusive and non-hostile trans-regional integration alternative to replace the “Indo-Pacific”, and therein lies the relevance of the author’s proposal for the Afro-Eurasia. This not only refers to the integration of the two primary landmasses of the Eastern Hemisphere, but also carries with it dual connotations of both mainland and maritime cooperation, unlike the “Indo-Pacific’s” implied focus on mostly maritime connectivity.

The inclusion of Africa isn’t just for historic justice by simply not forgetting that it exists (as is regrettably the case whenever many discuss the future of International Relations), but also has more practical relevance as well which incorporates the continent’s growing role in world affairs by virtue of its geostrategic location, demographic trends, and expected economic growth. The “Indo-Pacific” by default excludes Africa and over-emphasizes the role of India, which is located at the northern-central part of its eponymous ocean.

The very presumption that the aforementioned body of water should even be described as “Indian” is a fallacy for several reasons, not least of which is that the country’s modern-day

name refers to the Indus River that's currently located mostly in Pakistan and is called Sindhu by the locals. That misnomer can be traced to the Persians but was continued by the British and went along with by the post-independence authorities, but regardless of their domestic political choice, it's still inaccurate to call their southern ocean "Indian".

The African continent has a longer coastline along that body of water than the Indian subcontinent does so a more accurate reconceptualization of it could be the "Afro-Asian Ocean" seeing as how that ocean lies between both of them. Building upon that, the Afro-Asian Ocean can then be broadened to become the Afro-Pacific instead of the "Indo-Pacific", thereby giving Africa joint ownership over it and calling to attention that continent's growing role in this trans-regional space.

Accepting that this century therefore won't just be an Asian one but an Afro-Asian one given Africa's predicted growth across the proceeding eight decades, though also not forgetting the lingering role that Europe is expected to continue playing during this time as well for a variety of reasons, one can therefore begin to speak of the Afro-Eurasian Century. As Lavrov said, "terminology should be unifying, not divisive", and speaking about an "Asian Century" or the "Indo-Pacific" doesn't pay credit to either Africa or Europe's contributions.

Simply speaking about Afro-Eurasia won't make it a strategic reality, however, which is why it's important to point out the three main initiatives that are poised to unify the Eastern Hemisphere. First and foremost among them is China's [Belt & Road Initiative](#) (BRI) that's linking together both continents through large-scale infrastructure projects funded by low-interest loans. Its flagship is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the expansion of which along the northern, western, and southern vectors is referred to is [CPEC+](#).

CPEC+ is strategically located in the central part of the Eastern Hemisphere and includes both mainland (N-CPEC+ to Russia via Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics, and W-CPEC+ to the EU through Iran and Turkey) and maritime (S-CPEC+ to Africa) portions, thus making it the most crucial connectivity superstructure in BRI. As for Eurasia itself, Russia's Greater Eurasian Partnership (GEP) aims to bring together the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), BRI, the SCO, ASEAN, and eventually the EU and even the Mideast.

Altogether, BRI, CPEC+, and GEP form the three complementary parts of China's envisaged Community of Common Destiny, which Beijing believes will restore equality among nations, improve their socio-economic development, and reduce conflict by creating a hemispheric (and possibly eventually global) system of complex interdependence that deters all parties from unilaterally undermining the security of others. The end result would be the institutionalization of the [emerging Multipolar World Order](#).

In pursuit of this, it's incumbent on the three countries associated with each respective component (China's BRI, [Pakistan's CPEC+](#), and Russia's GEP) to jointly take the lead in conducting more research into the Afro-Eurasia proposal for replacing the US' "Indo-Pacific" and exploring more effective modalities for cooperation among them such as the creation of a trilateral organization framework that could be abbreviated as CPR (China-Pakistan-Russia).

That would also be symbolic since CPR is given to breathe life into people during emergency situations the same as this variation of that concept would be breathing much-needed life into International Relations during the current emergency situation of widespread global

uncertainty. Without a clear sense of vision that articulates an alternative future for global affairs, the three countries most negatively affected by the US' "Indo-Pacific" concept will have difficulty countering it, potentially making that project a fait accompli.

Such a future would be detrimental to their individual and collective interests, hence the urgency with which they should pool their efforts to cooperate on bringing about Afro-Eurasia instead. The author is aware that his proposal is very ambitious and fraught with both organizational and other challenges but is confident that the three leading countries tasked with implementing it will be successful so long as they have the political will. The first step is to officially introduce the concept of Afro-Eurasia, after which everything else will follow.

By that, what's meant is either one, some, or all three of those governments talking about this alternative in some capacity or another, whether through formal statements or via their academic-policymaking communities. Then, concerted research should be commenced upon all parties expressing interest in this concept, after which concrete policies can be proposed that make the best of their respective integration advantages.

The sooner that this process starts, the better, since time is of the essence after the US and its allies already had at least several years to work on the "Indo-Pacific" whereas Afro-Eurasia is only now just being introduced as a viable alternative. The CPR states must urgently prioritize this trans-regional integration replacement strategy in order for it to stand a credible chance of succeeding, but given their excellent relations with one another bilaterally and their growing multilateral strategic convergence, this game-changing goal is certainly attainable.

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