

## Tensions Grow as China, Russia and Iran Lead the Way Towards a New Multipolar World Order

By Federico Pieraccini Global Research, September 24, 2018 Strategic Culture Foundation Region: <u>Asia</u>, <u>Middle East & North Africa</u>, <u>Russia and FSU</u> Theme: <u>Global Economy</u>, <u>History</u>

Military and economic tensions are increasing due to the ramped up warlike stance of the US establishment. The impossibility of halting the shifting world order in favour of prolonging the unipolar moment has left the US deep state reaching for any available weapon at hand, taking no heed of the dangers and consequences of such a reckless foreign policy.

With the province of Idlib ever closer to being liberated from terrorists by the Syrian Arab Army (SAA), the tensions between the US and Syria (and Syria's allies) are <u>rising</u>. Every significant military campaign by the SAA seems to be accompanied by the <u>usual alarms</u> and false reports emanating from the Western media and governments warning of an imminent (staged) use of chemical weapons by the SAA. Tensions are rising as several American voices, including that of the President, have expressed the desire to strike Syria over any alleged use of chemical weapons, without even waiting for any <u>independent verification</u>. Threats by the US, the UK and France to bomb Russian troops in Syria are voiced everyday on Western media. The <u>insanity</u> is reaching disturbing levels.

These developments in Syria appear to be accompanied by the persistent attempts of Ukraine and the United States to sabotage the Minsk agreements, re-igniting the conflict in order to blame it on Russia. The <u>assassination</u> of **Aleksandr Zakharchenko**, charismatic leader of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), killed a few days ago in a terrorist attack, should be seen in this light.

More <u>false accusations</u> against Moscow, this time of having poisoned former Russian spy **Sergei Skripal** in the UK, follow on from allegations of Moscow interfering in the US presidential election. Added to this situation of rising tensions between great powers are the constant <u>threats</u>, together with economic and financial warfare, directed at Iran by Israel, Saudi Arabia and the United States.

It is not surprising that, given this context, the Russian Federation has just carried out the greatest military exercise in its history. The Vostok 2018 military exercise is extensively described by TASS:

The Vostok 2018 troop exercises have started in Russia's Far East. Taking part in the drills are about 300,000 Russian troops, over 1,000 aircraft, helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles, up to 36,000 tanks, armored personnel carriers and other vehicles, up to 80 ships and supply vessels. Exercises similar in scale have not been held since 1981 when the Zapad-81 drills that involved about 100,000 troops were held in the Soviet Union's Belarusian, Kiev and Baltic Military Districts and in the Baltic Sea. It should not come as a surprise that the People's Republic of China has sent thousands of men and materiel to participate in the exercise, sending a clear message to Washington and the West. As the West's warmongering continues, this widely controversial <u>article</u> in The Atlantic came out and provides the following hint:

The inclusion of a relatively small Chinese contingent in this year's edition [Vostok 2018 military exercise] is not quite the signal of a military alliance that some see, but it has certainly made the West take notice. It's hard to escape the symbolism when as Russian and Chinese troops were training together, Putin and Xi Jinping were <u>holding a summit</u> and pledging closer business and political cooperation. At a time when Washington and Europe have tried to isolate Moscow diplomatically, this is clearly intended as a message that Putin is still capable of making connections with countries not willing to follow the West.

The Eastern Economic Forum held in Vladivostok marks yet another significant point in the new Sino-Russian strategy to isolate and limit Western-induced chaos, strengthen the support for countries affected in one way or another by Washington, and expand cooperation in every direction possible. The economic ties between the two countries' production systems deserve attention, especially in light of future agreements between the industrial giants of the two countries. The partnership is broad and goes far beyond the territories of Russia and China. Technological cooperation is expanding in regions such as Africa and South East Asia, often symbiotically offering important agreements to third countries. Civil nuclear energy and arms sales seem to be Moscow's speciality, just as generous loans and joint development of basic resources (hospitals, schools, water networks, sewerage, motorways, ports) are Beijing's. Such offers of assistance are important for capturing not only the attention of Third World countries keen to break free from the West's colonial chains, but also of those countries that need to transition quickly into the new multipolar world order.

An example is Japan, with Abe also present in Vladivostok, exploring ways to balance the Chinese expansion in Asia. In reality, such a reading belongs very much to the Western way of thinking, in which everything must be seen in zero-sum terms. What many in the West struggle to understand, especially among European and American journalists and analysts, is how Washington's attitude over recent years is actually serving to push together the four Euro-Asian giants of China, Russia, Japan and India. While maintaining sometimes strong ties with the West, the trend is decidedly different from the past. Abe was in discussion with Putin to sign the <u>long-awaited peace agreement</u> between the two countries. India seems increasingly anxious to expand its strategic independence, especially from an energy point of view, cooperating with Iran and ignoring Western sanctions, and from a military standpoint, buying the S-400 air defence system.

In general, a multipolar environment of international relations already prevails in vast areas of the planet, both from a military and economic standpoint. De-dollarization appears to be an inevitable trend for the purposes of achieving significant economic sovereignty, thereby avoiding the vulnerability of US-dollar blackmail as a destabilization tool used by Washington and the Federal Reserve. With an imminent economic crisis in the West, fuelled and exacerbated by more than ten years of artificially printed money (quantitative easing), an economic prophylactic is a priority for Washington's declared rivals (Iran, China, Russia). The consequences for the international financial system could be much more serious than the two previous crises of 1929 and 2008, especially according to Chris Hedge in his recent <u>analysis</u>.

Unprecedented joint military exercises, economic cooperation as a means of diversification, strategic partnerships – these have become normal in Eurasia, especially for Russia, China and Iran, who continue to advance their formula for overcoming the chaos wrought by Washington and her Israeli and Saudi sidekicks. The prevailing modus operandi of Western policy-makers for countries they cannot control seems to be to sic onto them the dogs of chaos and destabilization in order to destroy them. This can be seen, for example, in the assassination of Zakharchenko in eastern Ukraine (Donbass) by the Kiev junta, probably even employing elements of Daesh or al Qaeda; the same tools used by the US in the Middle East to sow chaos.

The situation is not different in Syria, with Washington, London and Paris intent on stopping the liberation of Idlib, a remaining pocket containing thousands of Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorists. Seventeen years after September 11th 2001, the United States unstintingly supports the terrorists who, according to the official story, killed thousands of its own civilians on home soil.

Logic and reason seem to have been abandoned long ago in Washington's decision-making, even more so given that Trump has completely renounced all his electoral promises regarding foreign policy. The rapprochement with Moscow is now a distant mirage; the special relationship between Xi Jinping and Trump is just the latter's propaganda, anxious as he is to reach an agreement with the DPRK and show some example of success to his base.

The logic of imposing more than \$200 billion in tariffs on Chinese products, and then asking for strong support from Beijing in mediation with Pyongyang, seems more like the moves of a desperate person rather than those of an amateur. Even historical allies like South Korea, Pakistan, India and Turkey, as repeatedly <u>stressed recently</u>, fear Washington's irrationality and politics of "America First" and are running for cover. They are diversifying energy resources and ignoring American diktats, buying armaments from Russia, cooperating with China in large infrastructure projects to connect the vast Eurasian continent, and participating in economic and financial forums to diversify funding and cooperate on a new and industrial level.

Indeed, the strategic triangle that emerges between Tehran, Beijing and Moscow, seems to draw all the neighbouring countries into a large geopolitical waltz. A transition to a multipolar reality brings many advantages to Washington's allies, but it also brings many tensions with American oligarchs. The example of the sale of the S-400 in Ankara is an important wake-up call for the oligarchs of the American military-industrial complex, who see a potential loss in revenue. In the same way, the creation of an alternative system to SWIFT strongly reduces the centrality of American banking institutions and thus their political weight. We must also keep in mind Sino-Russian actions in Africa, which are progressively breaking the chains of Western neo-colonialism, thereby freeing African countries to pursue a more balanced foreign policy focused on their national interests.

This transition phase that we have been living in over the last few years will continue for some time. Like an already written script, the trend is easily discernible to a lucid mind free of Western propaganda. Erdogan certainly is not a person to be completely trusted, and the talks in Astana should be understood in this light, especially if viewed from the Russian-Iranian point of view. Yet such cooperation opens the door to an unprecedented future, although at present Astana seems more like an alternative to a bloody war between countries in Syria than a conversation between allies. Syria's future will unavoidably see the country's territorial integrity maintained, thanks to allies who are now disengaged from the Western system and are gravitating around centers of power opposed to Washington, namely Beijing, Moscow and Tehran.

The reconstruction of the country will bypass western sanctions and bring significant amounts of money to the country. In the same way Iraq, once under the rule of a dictator friendly to Washington, today openly and genuinely collaborates with Moscow, and especially Tehran, in defeating the Wahhabi proxies of Riyadh, an American ally.

The economic battle serves to complete the picture, with European allies forced to suffer huge economic losses as a result of sanctions against Russia and Iran. The tariffs on trade, especially to countries like Turkey, Japan and South Korea (although it <u>seems</u> that this proposal was intentionally sabotaged by a collaborator within the Trump administration), are further serving to push US allies to explore alternatives in terms of trust and cooperation.

China and Russia have seized the opportunities, offering through adroit diplomacy military, industrial and economic proposals that are drawing Washington's historical allies into a new political reality where there is less space for Washington's diktats.

The European establishment in some Western countries like Germany, France and the UK seems to have decided wait out Trump (this torture perhaps brought to an early end through a palace coup). But many others have instead intuited what is really happening in the West. Two factions are fighting each other, but still within the confines of a shared worldview that sees the United States as the only benevolent world power, and the likes of China and Russia as rivals that need to be contained. In such a difficult situation to manage, well-known leaders like Modi, Abe, Moon Jae-In and Erdogan are starting to take serious steps towards exploring possible alternatives to an exclusive alliance with the United States, that is, towards experiencing the benefits of a multipolar-world environment.

It is not just a question for these countries of breaking the strategic alliance with the United States. This aspect will probably not change for several years, especially in countries that have enormous military and economic ties with Washington. The path that South Korea, Turkey and Japan appear to be taking is deeply rooted in the concept of Multipolarity, which diversifies international relations, allowing countries to shop around to find the best opportunities. It is therefore not surprising to see the Japanese prime minister and the Russian president discussing at the economic forum in Vladivostok the possibility of signing a historic peace treaty. In the same way, if Turkey suffers a double political and economic attack from the US, it should not surprise us if they decide to purchase the S-400 defense system from Russia or start a full fledged campaign to de-dollarize. Such examples could be repeated, but the case of South Korea stands out. There is no need for Seoul to wait for Washington to mess things up diplomatically with Pyongyang before discussing the rebirth of relations between the two countries. Seoul is anxious to seize the opportunity for a renewed dialogue between leaders and solve the Korean impasse as much as possible. Finally, India, which has no intention of losing the opportunity for an economic partnership with Beijing and a military one with Moscow, launched the basis for a multi-party discussion between the Eurasian powers on the Afghan situation that has caused so much friction with Islamabad, especially with the new political phase that Imran Khan's victory as Pakistan's prime minister promises.

Washington faces all these scenarios with skepticism, annoyance and disgust, fearing losing important countries and its ability to determine the regional balance around the planet. What fascinates many analysts is the stubbornness and stupidity of US policy-makers. The more they try to prolong the US unipolar moment, the more incentive they give to other countries to jump on the multipolar bandwagon.

Even countries that probably have deep ties with the United States on an oligarchic level will have no alternative other than to modify and redesign their strategic alliances over the next 30 years. The United States continues along the path of diplomatic arrogance and strategic stupidity, mired in a civil war among its elites, with no end in sight.

Each scenario involving the US now has to be viewed with two factors in mind: not just the attempt to maintain an imperialist posture, but also an internal struggle involving its elites. This adds a further level of confusion for America's allies and the world in general, who strain to decipher the next moves of a deep state totally out of control.

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