The Rohingya Crisis: Conflict Scenarios and Reconciliation Proposals

By Andrew Korybko
Global Research, September 08, 2017
Oriental Review 7 September 2017

The Rohingya Crisis will probably get a lot worse before it gets any better, and it might even escalate to the point of prompting a multilateral international intervention, but the only real and globally acceptable solution that Myanmar might have left to avoid this eventual worst-case scenario is to involve the Rohingyas in some capacity in the ongoing Panglong 2.0 federalization peace talks.

The Rohingya Crisis has taken the world by storm over the past two weeks, but none of what's happened should come as a surprise for those who've been astutely following the Myanmar Civil War. The background into this conflict is very complex, and for that reason the author is going to simply refer the reader to some of his earlier published pieces on the matter in order for them to become familiarized with the overall situation:

June 2015:

"The American Plan For A South Asian "Kosovo" In Rohingyaland" (Part I and Part II)

October 2016:

"Hybrid War Country Study On Myanmar" (History, Political Transition and Geostrategy, Ethno-Regional Contradictions, and Scenario Forecasting)

September 2017:

"The Rohingya Crisis: Reality, Rumors, And Ramifications"

Instead of rehashing most of what's contained in the abovementioned materials, the present analysis will focus solely on Myanmar's conflict scenarios and the most realistic possibilities for bringing peace to the war-torn country, which will constitute the first and second parts of this research. The third and final one will then discuss the way that China could overcome the challenges to implementing the proposed peace plan in Myanmar and thereby play an indispensable role in facilitating the conflict resolution process there.

From Bad To Worse

The following scenarios aim to shed light on the most likely way that the Rohingya Crisis could escalate to the point of triggering an international "humanitarian intervention", which is understood as the worst-case scenario from a geopolitical perspective. The reader should be under no illusions that the below-mentioned conflict phases will necessarily happen in the order that they're described, or that any of them will even occur at all.

The whole point of this exercise is to obtain an accurate idea about the most likely trajectory that the country's war will proceed along given its current dynamics and the most probable ends that it could lead to.

It should be kept in mind at all times, however, that each stage of the conflict could either climax at its current level, or rapidly proceed to the final phase of a large-scale Libyan-like war if the US and/or its "Lead From Behind" regional allies decide to launch one on the pretext that the Tatmadaw is guilty of ethnic cleansing or genocide (whether against the Rohingya Muslims or the Christian peripheral minorities in the North and East).

***

Swift Success:

As the best-case scenario implies, the Tatmadaw achieves a swift success in stamping out the Rohingya's "terrorist"/"rebel" forces, thereby quickly ending the crisis. This may, however, result in disproportionate civilian casualties as "collateral damage", whether inflicted by the insurgents themselves, the military, or both. The media hype surrounding this affair soon dies down, although some international activists and foreign information outlets will continue to agitate for this cause. China's investments in Myanmar are secured, and a future high-speed railway is eventually built parallel to the two oil and gas pipelines leading from the central Rakhine port of Kyaukphyu, thereby formalizing the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) as a complement to CPEC in the other northern corner of the Indian Ocean.

Regional Crisis:

The Rohingya Crisis only gets worse in its humanitarian, military, and diplomatic dimensions, which leads to it becoming a globally recognized regional crisis due to the overspill into neighboring Bangladesh and the resultant destabilization that it inflicts on this already fragile state. India, China, the US, ASEAN, and the UN become more vocal about the evolving, though still obscured, events in Rakhine State, and uncertainty prevails over exactly what's happening there because Myanmar refuses to let international observers into the region ostensibly for their own security. Non-state actors such as concerned Bangladeshis, Muslim volunteers from abroad, NGOs, and even terrorist groups (none of which are mutually exclusive) begin to get involved, and this catalyzes a violent hyper-nationalist reaction from the country's majority-Buddhist population which ends up leading to deadly pogroms.

Due to these destabilizing events, the future viability of CMEC becomes uncertain, and China begins to worry about the safety of its oil and gas pipelines in Rakhine State, as well as the hefty investments that it's pouring into developing Kyaukphyu Port. Myanmar feels compelled to reach out to its Chinese and Indian neighbors for military aid, though attempting to play one off against the other in their New Cold War rivalry in a bid to reap the most benefits from this competition. For the time being, China and India avoid being drawn into an escalating security dilemma with one another in the territory of their mutual neighbor, though they begin to wonder which geopolitical direction Myanmar will ultimately lean closer towards if it's successful in resolving this regional crisis.

Jihad Central:

Rakhine State, and Myanmar more generally, becomes the new international jihadist destination after Daesh is driven out of "Syraq" and its supporters across the world decide to focus on the perceived plight of the Rohingya Muslims. It's still not clear exactly what's going on in the Southeast Asian country and who's truly at fault for the escalating violence there, but the outcome is undeniable as hundreds of thousands of refugees swarm into Bangladesh, and most international media organizations and their state allies unite in laying the blame solely at the feet of the Tatmadaw. Whether intentionally or not, this development and the attendant flood of fake news which will inevitably follow it end up encouraging the radicalization of Muslims in Southeast Asia (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines), South Asia (Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan), and the Mideast and inspiring them to wage militant jihad in Myanmar and repeating the Syrian scenario from a few years prior.

Rakhine State marked in yellow.

China gives up any plans that it ever had for developing CMEC, and its energy pipelines turn into an irresistible terrorist target and are soon brought permanently offline. China and India's in-country citizens are attacked by jihadists who are angry that their governments are providing military aid to the Tatmadaw, blaming them for being "complicit in the genocide of Muslims". Several lone wolf, or possibly even Daesh-coordinated, terrorist attacks occur in these two countries as a result, and India's Trilateral Highway through Myanmar becomes endangered, too. International investment plummets in this once-promising emerging economy while the US and its Western, and possibly even Eastern (ASEAN and some Organization of Islamic Cooperation [OIC]), partners contemplate sanctions against the country. The UN tries to push through heavily politicized resolutions which could open the door for multilateral military intervention just like they did in Libya, but this attempt is as unsuccessful as it was in Syria because Russia and China unite in opposing it.

The Ceasefire Ceases To Exist:

The Rohingya Conflict leads to a regional crisis, which eventually gives way to a terrorist one that in turn snowballs into a state of affairs whereby most or all of the previous ceasefire signatories realize that they have more to gain by pulling out of the agreement and recommencing full-scale hostilities against the state. The Panglong 2.0 federalization peace talks totally collapse, and more countries implement sanctions against Myanmar in response, which turns Suu Kyi into a "Southeast Asian Saddam" in terms of just how far she's fallen from being the one-time darling of the West to its now-hated pariah. Whether coordinated through some new mechanism or carried out independently of one another, the country's various rebel groups go on a large-scale offensive which inflicts heavy losses on the Tatmadaw, pushing it into relying on even more forceful countermeasures which lead to the ever-expanding conflict spilling over the border into Northeastern India (where it threatens to set off a [chain reaction of unrest](#)), Southwestern China, and Western Thailand.

Myanmar's two Great Power neighbors fortify their borders in response and begin contemplating emergency contingency measures for safeguarding their frontiers, which could likely involve China and India carrying out limited military operations modelled off of

Turkey's "Operation Euphrates Shield" in Syria. Russia joins with its BRICS and SCO partners to extend military and diplomatic support to Myanmar, though choosing to formally stay out of direct involvement in the conflict owing to Moscow's lack of immediate national interest in its outcome and the massive geographic distance to the battlefield which would severely strain the Kremlin's logistical networks. Many members of the Ummah take serious umbrage at China, India, and even Russia's support of Myanmar, and this is exploited by the US in order to fan the flames of distrust against these Great Powers with the ultimate intent of disrupting their connectivity projects through Muslim-majority countries (China's CPEC and its [Central Asian Railway](#) plans to Iran, and Russia & India's North-South Transport Corridor through Iran and Azerbaijan).

Myanmarese Meltdown:

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, as it's officially known, collapses into the type of Hobbesian conflict unseen since the dissolution of Yugoslavia, thereby triggering large-scale stabilization interventions from China and India. Herein lays the crux of the geostrategic problem, though, because one or both of these states might not have been invited by the central authorities to assist like how Russia was in Syria, thereby skyrocketing the security dilemma between these two Great Power rivals and raising the chances that they might clash somewhere in central Myanmar if their forces come within proximity to one another. There's of course the very faint chance that they'd coordinate their in-country operations or at least leave some sort of communication mechanism intact between them so as to avoid accidental military clashes, but this can't be taken for granted and it's much more probable that a direct engagement between the two forces would take place.

Libya 2.0:

Myanmar is completely in shambles as its ultra-diverse population goes on multi-sided killing sprees following the collapse of central authority that accompanies the rebel advance, and neither China nor India is able to put a stop to it, or at least not quickly enough. The US and its allies, one of which might very well have been India to begin with, decide that now is the right time to launch a "shock and awe" military campaign against the country in order to complete its "Balkanized" fragmentation into a constellation of identity-centric (and potentially mutually antagonistic) statelets.

The ostensible pretext for this massive intervention is that it's the only thing that can "stop the killing", but in reality it would serve the ulterior purposes of assisting Indian forces in their drive to secure the Trilateral Highway; preventing China from reestablishing control over its pipeline corridor and formerly envisioned CMEC one; and creating a checkerboard of "South Asian Kosovos" for the US to 'leapfrog' across in eventually deploying its military forces right on China's mainland doorstep. Just like with Libya, the US would leave behind an enduringly destabilizing regional legacy that would take years to fix.

Peace And Its Problems

Myanmar doesn't have to turn into the next Libya, or even the next Yugoslavia, so long as the Rohingya Crisis is nipped in the bud through a creative peace settlement before it spirals out of control in engendering the phased conflict escalations that were just described in the earlier section. To this end, here's the two-step process that's proposed for resolving

this issue, followed by an analysis of the three categories of problems which could impede its implementation:

Reconciling With The Rohingyas:

"Terrorists" vs. "Rebels"

It's hard for any observer to know the exact proportion for certain, but it's objectively recognized that there are militant Rohingya groups mixed in with the majority-civilian population. These organizations, especially the leading "Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army" (ARSA), are designed at "terrorists" by the Tatmadaw, though it can be assumed that many Rohingyas and of course their myriad international state and non-state supporters abroad lionize them as "rebels" fighting for "democracy" and "freedom". The intent here isn't in render outside judgement about which of the two categories the ARSA and other armed groups fall into, but just to draw attention to the fact that Myanmar sees the Rohingya militants as terrorists whereas it recognizes other fighting forces elsewhere in the country as rebels.

The Syrian Model

This distinction allows for the possibility that the Tatmadaw could come to consider some of the Rohingya forces as rebels too, though possibly in exchange for them taking up arms to fight against the ARSA, which Naypyidaw will probably never reconsider as less than terrorists. In exchange for rendering their anti-terrorist services, non-ARSA armed Rohingya could then be officially recognized as rebels party to the ongoing Panglong 2.0 federalization peace talks, following the "normalization" model first spearheaded by Russia in Syria when it abruptly switched from seeing Jaysh al-Islam as [terrorists](#) to feting its leader Mohamed Alloush as the [senior rebel representative](#) in Astana after the group turned against Al Nusra and Daesh. In theory, this model could also be applied to Myanmar's conditions in enticing "moderate" Rohingya militants to break ranks with the "hardline" ARSA.

Panglong 2.0

Should this plan be successfully put into practice, then official Rohingya representation in the Panglong 2.0 peace process could potentially placate the demographic's concerns that the government is criminally neglecting their needs, though Naypyidaw would of course first have to grant citizenship or some type of legal interim status to the Rohingyas (at least those who remained in Myanmar) in order to legitimize this group's participation. This is a lot easier of a scenario to talk about than to implement into action, though Myanmar might feel pressured to comply with the proposal in order to relieve the heavy international pressure being brought against it for its extant refusal to even recognize the Rohingya. Provided that this happens, then the non-ARSA Rohingya rebels would acquire a political-administrative stake in the country's forthcoming federalized structure.

Double Devolution

There's no chance that the central government, and probably even most of the Rohingyas' "fellow rebels", will ever allow this group to carve out their own separate federal state in the country, so what could conceivably happen is that they seek to nest a "federation within a federation", or in other words, engage in "double devolution". This model was described both in general and in specific pertinence to Myanmar in the author's article about "[Identity](#)

[Federalism: From 'E Pluribus Unum' To' E Unum Pluribus](link)'" for Russia's National Institute For Research Of Global Security last year, and the idea is that Rakhine State – just like its much more diverse Shan State counterpart in the East – could federalize within its sub-state administrative boundaries to form a "doubly devolved" constituent in a future Federation of Myanmar/Burma.

Bosnifying Burma

Essentially, this would be recreating the Bosnian Scenario, which in its namesake case is a state-wide federation comprised of Republika Srpska (Serbs) and the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina (Muslims and Croats). In the Myanmarese one, however, this would take place on a much larger geographic and population scale within the country's two prospective "federations within a federation". It might seem difficult to understand at first read, but this would basically see each state within Myanmar becoming a separate federal entity, with Shan and Rakhine States "doubly devolving" into "federations within a federation" due to their distinct demographic makeup. Of relevance to this research, the Rohingya would obtain control over the northern part of Rakhine State, while the Buddhist Rakhine would control the central and southern parts, making the former a de-facto extension of Bangladesh and the latter the guardians of China's New Silk Road terminal.

Roadblocks To Rapprochement:

Buddhist Bamar

It's expected that the abovementioned proposal for the state to enter into a rapprochement with the "moderate" Rohingyas and subsequently enact "double devolution" would be met with furious opposition from the Buddhist Bamar majority, the most hyper-nationalist and extreme elements of which could carry out pogroms against the ethno-religious minorities in their periphery out of anger at what they see as the imminent internal partitioning of their country. There could be other unspoken factors at play, though, such as the majority demographic's refusal to cede the sovereignty of the central government over the resource-rich minority-populated periphery, which the Tatmadaw would do anything to prevent. Moreover, if the authorities went forward with this proposal despite lacking the support of the Buddhist Bamar majority and Tatmadaw, then a Color Revolution or military coup could be launched against them in putting an immediate halt to this process.

Competitive Connectivity Complications

The other factor which could stand in the way of the peace proposal, though much more indirectly than the Buddhist Bamar, are China and India's concerns that their [competitive connectivity projects](link) through the country could be negatively affected by its "peaceful Balkanization". Neither Asian Great Power wants to have their trade and energy corridors going through a checkerboard of quasi-independent identity-centric statelets due to the inherent hard security risks that this entails if some of them become militantly at odds with one another. There are also worries that the devolution of a formerly centralized state into a collection of semi-sovereign stakeholders could lead to each transit entity competing with the one another, the federal government, and China over taxes and tolls, which could unnecessarily complicate what had hitherto been a smooth bilateral state-to-state agreement and consequently diminish the attractiveness of doing business along these routes if the issue isn't resolved.

Geopolitical Pitfalls

Expanding off of the previously mentioned point, the next logical one is that the quasi-independent and identity-centric statelets that would be formed from any forthcoming federalization of Myanmar (including its possible "double devolution" of "federations within a federation") could be exploited to function as "lily pads" for the US to "leapfrog" its military forces up to China's southwestern border. Beijing has every reason to be worried about this happening because it fully aligns with the US and its UK hegemonic predecessor's historic divide-and-rule stratagem all across the world, being seen most recently in relation to the US' desire to carve the "second geopolitical 'Israel'" of "Kurdistan" out of the Mideast for the same purposes vis-à-vis the four targeted and thenceforth surrounding states. The same springboard principle could be applied against China, too, except instead of one big "geopolitical 'Israel'", many so-called "South Asian Kosovos" could be created to this effect.

The Chinese Key To Success

China has the most to lose by far from what's happening in Myanmar out of any external stakeholder, so it therefore must play the leading role in offsetting the fast-developing [Hybrid War](#) there. Whether it plays out violently as per the first part of the research's scenarios or peacefully in accordance with the second one's proposals, the current dynamics in their present state are leading to a slew of outcomes which work out to China's grand strategic disadvantage in one way or another, so it must harness the political will to get involved in what's occurring. China, however, has no experience in anything of the sort that's required of it because of its long-standing policy of non-interference in its partner's affairs, though it's nowadays becoming compelled by the circumstances to consider modifying its approach in order to protect a major Silk Road investment.

Whether it's in Myanmar in the near future or elsewhere across the world in any of the countless countries that are participating in the One Belt One Road (OBOR) global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, China will eventually have to sooner or later take on a leadership role in safeguarding these corridors, so an argument can be made that it's better for it to experiment within doing so in its "Near Abroad" of Southeast Asia before it attempts to do so further afield in Afro-Eurasia. Bearing this in mind, it's worthwhile to consider the ways in which China could use its possible experience in the Myanmar case to develop and refine its own unique conflict resolution model for utilization all across any future Silk Road battlegrounds, so the concluding part of this research will attempt to create the structural basis for this approach.

Before proceeding, it should be mentioned that there are several situational qualifiers which will impact on the success of China's possible peacemaking initiative in Myanmar, just as other country-specific factors will influence the same in whatever other state Beijing might end up applying this strategy towards. In this instance, everything is conditional on India not interfering to the degree that it actively works to counter China's moves, which in this example would be either through the extraordinarily unlikely odds that it would support armed groups in Myanmar (which it has no history of doing and probably never will) or the more probable chances that it could seek to commence its own rival peace initiative instead. In addition, if the conflict escalates per the aforementioned scenarios, especially if actual or suspected ethnic cleansing and genocide are used to suddenly commence a Libya 2.0 "humanitarian intervention" scenario, then China might not have any chance whatsoever at success.

Having explained all of that, here's the four-step conflict resolution model that China could debut in Myanmar and perfect for future application abroad in any Hybrid War hotspots that the US succeeds in cooking up along the New Silk Roads:

Broker Third-Party-Hosted Talks:

China can learn a lot from Russia in this respect because of Moscow's experience in attempting to do this for Ukraine through the Belarusian-hosted Minsk Peace Process for Ukraine and its eventually much more successful Kazakh-based Astana one for Syria. The pattern here is for a Great Power to lead conflict resolution talks in the neutral territory of a relevant allied state, so in the case of Myanmar, China could request that Laos fulfill this role in hosting Rohingya peace talks or even the broader Panglong 2.0 ones if anything comes up to interfere with the latter's ongoing progress (i.e. repeated violations by either side and a subsequent breakdown in trust).

Become A Neutral Balancer:

Once again, China could take a useful cue from Russia when it comes to positioning itself as a neutral balancer. Just as Moscow's foreign policy progressives are working to diversify their country's foreign partnerships to the point of one day dispelling any plausible accusations of bias towards any given state or another, so too could Beijing attempt to do the same in counteracting the perception that it's too supportive of the Myanmarese government. In pursuit of this, it could expand its internal partnerships within the country with various rebel groups beyond those located in its immediate borderlands of Shan and Kachin States just like Russia has sought to do with its multidimensional outreaches to the "moderate rebels" in Syria.

The reason why it's important to become a neutral balancer is because it endows the relevant Great Power with the irreplaceable role of a trusted mediator, thereby allowing it to powerfully determine the course of any conflict resolution process and subsequently shape its outcome. In regards to Myanmar and in particular the Rohingya Crisis, however, this takes on an even more significant and sensitive purpose because it would contradict the weaponized infowar narrative that China is "anti-Muslim" because of its support for Naypyidaw. The US is hoping to exploit this carefully crafted and misleading perception in order to undermine China's New Silk Road projects in the Muslim-majority countries of Central Asia, the Mideast, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia (the latter of which is relevant for its billions of dollars of Vision 2030 investments).

So long as China can prove that it's not an "enemy of Muslims worldwide" by balancing its approach to the Rohingya Crisis, then it can avoid falling into the soft power trap that the US has set for it. Not only would this ensure the stability of China's Silk Road investments in the Ummah, but it would also provide less fuel for provocateurs to use in trying to stir up anti-government resentment in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, which is one of OBOR's main continental hubs. That being said, China mustn't ever waver from its unflinching zero-tolerance approach towards terrorism, especially that which is being waged under radical Islamic slogans, so it would have to work with Myanmar in separating "moderate" Rohingyas from the "hardline" ones just like Russia cooperated with Syria in doing the same concerning the former's armed groups.

Suggest Decentralization:

China should encourage conflict resolution outcomes which at the very least provide some sort of symbolic administrative-territorial decentralization rights for the "moderate" identity-centric adversaries which break from their "hardline" counterparts, as this could provide the basis for an enduring post-conflict political solution. The reader should remember that decentralization doesn't always mean devolution, with the former usually being known for its autonomous zones while the latter is marked by federal states. In any case, it shouldn't be assumed that either of them automatically endangers the unity of the host state, though that could end up being an inadvertent outcome which would predictably play out to the US' anticipated divide-and-rule "Balkanization" grand strategy for the Eastern Hemisphere.

For example, Uzbekistan has the Karakalpakstan autonomous republic, which in no way poses any threat to the centralized Uzbek state due to the practical limits placed on its actual autonomy. Likewise, China has several autonomous regions and even bestows local autonomy for certain minority groups in some prefectures and counties in the country, though this also doesn't impede with the centralized operations of the People's Republic. As for federations, Ethiopia is a good example of one in which federalism pretty much only carries a symbolic purpose, in this case for placating the main ethnic groups in the country after the end of the civil war, and it for all intents and purposes functions as a centralized state. Russia, too, is a federation, though one with considerably more rights granted to its subjects, especially those inhabiting autonomous republics, but it doesn't have any real problems. Bosnia, however, is the worst example of a federation and is utterly dysfunctional, representing the type of governing model that the US would ideally like to reproduce all across Afro-Eurasia.

The [Russian-written](#) "[draft](#) [constitution](#)" for Syria proposed controlled decentralization which could [in theory](#) broaden into devolution if the people voted for it, and this was suggested despite Damascus's previous [well-known opposition](#) to these [processes](#), so it wouldn't by any comparison be amiss for China to facilitate the already-ongoing federalization talks of its Myanmarese partner. What's absolutely imperative for either the Syrian or Myanmarese decentralization-devolution processes to succeed is for the prospective statelets to not have the power to conduct their own military-political relations with foreign states, except in a cynical sense if it's with Russia and China respectively. If the negotiations stall at this point, then it might be necessary for the central government to concede greater (resource) revenue flows to these entities in order to "buy" their "loyalty".

Silk Road Incentives:

Last but not least, and in connection with the "trade-off" that might have to take place in ensuring the "patriotic commitment" of the prospective decentralized-devolved entity to the country that they're (at least still) formally a part of, it would be best if China were to craft creative ways to make the transit statelets self-interested stakeholders in protecting and stabilizing its New Silk Road corridors. The possibilities for this include allowing them to reap a yearly payment from the People's Republic for securing and enabling the flow of resources and products across their Chinese-financed (and in some cases, -built) infrastructure; offering free educational and job-training programs for the locals; and assisting with post-conflict stabilization measures in the relevant territory.

About the latter point, Article 52 of the 2017 [Xiamen BRICS Declaration](#) emphasizes "the important contribution of BRICS countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and the importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations to international peace and security". This suggests that China, as the [world's largest contributor](#) to UN peacekeeping

operations, might seek to self-interestedly leverage its experiences in this field in one day safeguarding its Silk Road investments through Beijing-led UN or unilateral (as per the agreement of the host state and relevant, likely by then federalized, territory) missions in these strategic transit regions after an earlier conflict has been resolved (also through Chinese mediation per the aforementioned four-step model).

It should also be added that training local security forces would epitomize China's neutral balancing strategy between state and non-state actors as well, and it would provide the People's Republic with invaluable military-diplomatic knowledge that could be later applied elsewhere across the world as needed. If China can succeed in offering a host of Silk Road incentives to its partners in helping them and their warring compatriots resolve their differences in a win-win manner, then Beijing can solidify its role as the main driving force in the emerging Multipolar World Order and sustain all of the positive gains that it's achieved thus far. It would also make China the only country in the world capable of competing with the US in this regard, thereby elevating it from the level of a Great Power to a Global Superpower, though with all of the attendant strategic risks for overreach that this entails.

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare.

All images in this article are from the author.

The original source of this article is Oriental Review
Copyright © Andrew Korybko, Oriental Review, 2017

Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page

Become a Member of Global Research

Articles by: **Andrew Korybko**

About the author:

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.