

NATO and National Missile Defense

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Abstract

The clarification of the present situation in the relations of large powers including the United States, Russian Federation, China, European Union, and India is implying a new cold war in geopolitical, political, economic and military aspects which the member countries of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), led by USA, have against the member countries of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), led by China and Russia. The new cold war includes all aspects of the relationships of Eastern Powers with Western countries and In the first place the political relations between Russia and US worsen up. To find the emerging signs of the new cold war in the beginning of the third AD Millennium, the main part of the focus is on geopolitical areas of central Eurasia, Eastern Europe and Middle East. Among these signs the following could be mentioned; Moscow Vs. Washington arms race as the US missile defense shield in the former Soviet Union satellites and the exit of Russia from the conventional forces in Europe, the development of NATO to the east and middle east districts, the Russian-American confrontation over Balkan and the independency of Kosovo, Russian aggression to Georgia and the NATO's reaction; concerns of the west due to the Russian dominance on the energy sources and Moscow's endeavor to employ this as a political tool, and also the disagreement between the White House, European capitals and Peking and Moscow over Iran's nuclear power profile.

Keywords: New Cold War, New Heartland, Central Eurasia, American Missile Defense Shield, NATO's Development to the East.

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1. Introduction

Like the situation in the Classic Cold War, the New Cold War is also happening around the geopolitical pivot. As before this pivot is part of Heartland defined by Mackinder. The Caspian-Persian Gulf pivot with the emphasis on global change, from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea, is being firming as the geopolitical change pivot in the international system. It is based on the new cold war whose signs already could be seen. The relations between two world's energy and geopolitical centers, i.e. Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea areas are very important. Therefore, competition for gaining domination over the connection pivots of these two centers is the base of changes in the evolutionary international systems. The New Great Game is a term used to define this episode of competitions among the global and regional powers to get control over the new geographic pivot of history or the New Heartland.

Heartland is a recent concept driven from Mackinder Heartland (1919: 194) theory to show the importance of a critical geopolitical area with the Caspian-Persian Gulf pivot as its center. The new Heartland consists of southern part of Mackinder's Heartland and part of Rimland which was considered by Spikeman. This has extended the Twentieth Century heartland towards the south of these areas and includes major parts of the Islamic world. The New Heartland, geographically, has a close relationship with concepts like the Great Near East, Middle East, Southwest Asia and the strategic energy ellipse. And also includes Central Asia, Caucasus and the Middle East. The new Heartland has gained an important position in the geostrategy and geopolitics of the main world powers and the nearby countries in the Twenty-first century. This position has been brought up by three factors: the existence of great energy resources, its geographical position in the heart of the old world and the fact that it has made critical part of the global system and a center for international politics. That is why the New Great Game, Mackinder Heartland and Spikeman Rim land theories, one after another, while completing their own historical profiles are being performed in this area and have regained their previous power and are also applicable today.

The New Cold War entails all aspects of the relationships of Russia and to some degree China with the Western powers mostly in political fields; the Russian–American relations get worse (Hafeznia and others, 2007: 103-104; Mullerson, 2008b: 584). Central Asia, southern Caucasus and the Middle

East are among the most important geopolitical areas which make the new arena for the competitions of the New Cold War (Mullerson, 2008a: 3). Therefore, the study of the basis, aspects, features and signs of the New Cold War in the geopolitical field of the new Heartland, along with identification of the powers, deploying face to face, in this competitions, make the general perspective of this paper.

2. Research Methodology

This is a study of descriptive-analytical type and considering the subject and its nature, data collection is done through different ways, basically the library method (books, papers interviews, newspapers) and the internet (net articles, news, statistical information) with an emphasis on historical data and evidences, have been applied.

3. Theoretical Fundamentals of the Research

3-1. Geopolitics

Geopolitics is an approach to foreign policy that attempts to explain and predict political behavior and military capabilities in terms of the physical environment. Geopolitics, therefore, involves varying degrees of historical determinism based on geography (Plano & Olton, 1998: 98). Geopolitics as a branch of political geography with scientific nature, which similar to the other scientific disciplines has two dimensions: Basic and Applied. In the basic approach, scientific theorems, propositions and theories can be produced, so the theoretical knowledge and scientific literature of geopolitics can be developed. The applied dimension, emphasizes on the application of geopolitical knowledge to meet the needs of human societies, and to some extent is under the influence of world view, ideology, interest and attitudes of the users (Hafeznia, 2008: 1). Therefore, geopolitics as a branch of political geography is the study of reciprocal relations between geography, politics and power and also the interactions arising from combination of them with each other. According to this definition, geopolitics is a scientific discipline and has a basic science nature (Hafeznia, 2006: 37).

3-2. Geopolitics of Domination

Although colonialism has a wider range than geopolitical ideas, applying science and geopolitics opened the door to colonialism (Yazdani and Touiserkani, 2007: 130). The discourse of domination in geopolitics begins

from the European colonialism period. European powers in this period had authority over many lands and nations in Africa, Asia and America and derived profit from their sources. Because of some theories which emphasize on the explanation of the relation between geographical space and power in the direction of control and domination of the world by the great powers, geopolitics was accused that domination seeking behavior of the power is justified by it, and it helps to development of dispute and war, and basically geopolitics is a knowledge which is used by the owners of political power. The concept of domination has not changed since the 19th century but its form, its instrument and its methods has been developed. In this concept, colonialism is divided into four periods:

- 1) The period of European powers colonization over other geographical spaces which continued to the middle of 20th century;
- 2) The period of dispute and war between colonialist powers in the first half of the 20th century. Appearance of the first and second wars is the main indicator of this period;
- 3) The period of new colonialism and invisible domination in terms of influence on countries during the cold war and in the second half of 20th century;
- 4) The period of global domination related to the end of 20th century, after the collapse of the bipolar system and cold war.

Thus, although colonialism classic methods have lost their use in the transition period after the cold war, neo-colonialism methods for gaining power that just as before follow the goal of influencing geopolitical vital places are applied constantly. The neo-colonialism is also called globalization occurred in an atmosphere with no competitor and based upon information technology and economic power. It also has an influence on the identity, personality and weak countries in the Africa, Asia and Latin America continents. Domination process attempts to annihilate local resistances that concern for their culture, their identity and their economical capacities against globalization waves (Hafeznia, 2006: 107-108).

4. Research Findings

4-1. Development in the Nature of New Great Game

It has been about half a century that the world has had the nightmare of a war between the former Soviet Union and the United States, and the eruption of an atomic bomb which could have demolished the whole world.

The classic Cold War was simple and without complexities in which both parties had equal mutual destructive power at a balanced level. Both parties quarreled trying to strike terror into each other. Then during 1989-91 the world experienced deep alterations including the Berlin Wall collapse and the Soviet Union break up.

The Soviet Union collapse was an end to the Cold War in Europe and divisions in the global arena. However could this be regarded as the end of the cold war? Or isn't it possible to find other signs of the Cold War which the US is grappling with? Seemingly it is not easy to answer the latter question. In fact, we should seek for another cold war which has obsessed the West after two decades. Some analysts yet believe there is no point of being worried because a cold war as extensive as before won't be repeated again. They believe in this new cold war there is no place for incompatible ideologies, the world super power rivalries or arms race (Mullerson, 2008b: 583). Above all, Russia doesn't enjoy its previous empire, and to some extent has started democratization and entering the market economy, which are all values of the Western society (Yuan, 2002). They believe in the new chain of cold war the commercial and economic factors play a much more important role than security and ideological factors. Based on some reasons, however, this view seems to be rosy and naïve. Another realistic interpretation believes that the new cold war has more profound roots. The new cold war has joint roots which could be named systemic. Furthermore, these systemic incentives push both parties to a persistent divergence. The main view is that this highly depends on the west and not east, especially Russia, to use this opportunity for collaboration and convergence.

The sources of new challenges could be categorized as security, ideology and geopolitics. The security facet, results from the Russia's weak economy and government, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which put the federation at the breakup verge (not only geopolitically but also economically). Therefore, after the Soviet disintegration, when Russia faced a revitalized NATO and a clear siege, it naturally adopted a defensive strategy which the west interpreted as an increasing animosity. Unfortunately, the world is reverting back to its past, for example Russia's permanent membership in NATO is impossible, and this recent situation will lead to dangerous consequences. NATO more pressure on Ukraine and Georgia's membership will make Russia revitalize its past policies. This in turn, encourages anti-Moscow extremist in the West to follow their anti-Russia policies which produces a vicious circle (i.e. the cold war period) (McKnight, 2002: 187-204).

The ideological aspect follows the security view dramatically. The new Russian leadership by Putin's presidency, after the 1990's events, realized that Moscow needs to nationalize the post-totalitarian reform programs. He expelled the foreign inspectors from Russia and mopped up the government from the influence from Oligarchies connected to abroad. The ideology of a governing Cromlinian Democracy required to be sure of the fact that economic and political elites tried to affiliate to the government and not to diverge from it. In addition, the Russian democracy was a guided one, which imposed a control so as to be able to defuse hidden or real divergent inclinations. This democracy is based on independence without limits and emphasize that Russia needs to develop some political institutes which are in accordance with its political nature. But these are unperceivable to the West and even sometimes misunderstood by them. Only a few of the Western analysts recognize that more than controlling what is moving, Putin believed on an effective democracy.

For the Western interpreters this is an unacceptable and simplistic perception to say that Putin feared the permanent crippling of the government (from the Ukrainian or Russian type in 1990s) more than democracy (Sobell, 2008). Following the recent events in the global economy and after the Communism failure in Russia and China, the geopolitical factor aggravated. Revitalizing of these ancient civilizations comes true by transferring them into Capitalism. This is not another balance in the distribution of the world powers but a base for a change in the relationships between Russia and the West. The present Russia and China are unique phenomena in the international political arena, at the beginning of the third millennium.

After the Soviet collapse, the basic condition to maintain its territory is to accept democracy and internal development within this federation. Like all Western powers, for Russia, maintaining security and developing economic and commercial interests are on the top of its agenda. Russia is growing and getting stronger, which is taken as a menace by the West. After the Soviet Union, therefore, peaceful processes and customizing the relations, done through democratization and market economy, resulted in Russia's growth in political, economic, technologic and military aspects, while the West is still considering Russia as an intrinsic threat.

4-2. Indexes and Signs of the New Cold War in a Geopolitical Arena

Russian's gradual return to the scene of world power and the inclination of political and military elites of this country to renew Moscow's former position in the international arena has lowered friendly relations and strategic cooperation between US and Russia to its lowest level (Galbreath, 2008). This, along with NATO's development as a specific focus plan on Central Asia and Caucasus's affairs, and stabilizing American missile defense shield in Russia's borders, all show the formation of a New Cold War (Sanford, 2007). The recent developments around the Persian Gulf-Caspian pivot are signs of turning the two important political and geopolitical centers of Eurasia and Central Asia to a great pivot for the New Cold War.

Therefore, the New Cold War should be sought around two important strategic centers, i.e. the Persian Gulf and Caspian Basin. Yet, for Westerners, the penetration to the lands under Russian colony seems to be a pre-condition for their influential presence in the new heartland. That is why to find signs of the new cold war, in the beginning of the third millennium; the main concentrations have been on Central Eurasia, East Europe and the Middle East (Mullerson, 2008a; Copley, 2007: 4-5). Among these signs are; Washington-Moscow arms race as the American missile defense shield plan, the exit of Russia from the treaty of conventional forces in Europe, NATO's Eastward Policy and the Middle East, Russia-America confrontations in Balkan, Kosovo's independence, Russia's attack to Georgia and NATO's reaction, the west concern about energy resources which is used as a tool by Moscow and hard disputes over Iran's civilian nuclear program between US and European on one side, and Moscow and Beijing on the other side.

4-2-1. The American Missile Defense Shield plan in the former Soviet Union's Satellites

The Missile Defense Shield is a system which uses signals from ground and orbital advanced radars, which determines the direction of missiles launched in their activity areas. If it is foreseen that the target is the US (or any target which is covered by the missile defense shield), is tracked down, applying tracking missile. The American missile shield in Russia's west border is also a military plan to be straightened up in Eastern Europe so as to complete a system which is now set up in the US, Greenland and Britain (Blix, 2008; Cohen, 2008). This follows a decision upon which in 2001, the White House

has announced that from 13 June 2002, will come out of the treaty against the production of Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM). This treaty was signed by Washington-Moscow in 1972, yet referred to afterwards (The White House, 13 December 2001).

Washington emphasized that this anti-missile shield is to protect the US and its allies against any attack from the Middle East. Russia, which is armed with a multi-purpose S400 missile system (Space War, 17 June 2007), however is against the American missile shield plan. This opposition is so strong, as the political observers say, that may push Russia and the US into a second cold war, if the performance of American Missile Defense plan is emphasized more (Isachenkov, 2007). The US and Republic of Czech signed an agreement to deploy a US missile defense system radar in a site in the south of Prague, in 20 June 2008 (Washington Times, 8 July 2008), which not only brought up geopolitical tensions between US and Russia but also received a strong reaction by Moscow. As a justification, the supporters of this agreement rely on its necessity to defend Europe against possible missile threats from countries like Iran and North Korea. While the Russian side strongly believes the goal of the missile defense system is Russia and not Iran (Barnett, 2009: 53). The performance of this plan weakens and endangers the political, military position of Russia. Therefore in a meeting in 15 July Russian president said this only complicates the situation and Russia will respond it expediently. He accused the US of gradual weakening of the strategic stability in US-Russia relationships (Guardian, 15 July 2008).

The European anti missile systems acts only when the missile enters into ballistic trajectory, while the tip is not separated from the base. Iran and North Korea don not have such missiles, and only have short and medium range missiles which cannot get to Poland (Pullinger & others, 2007: 3-10). Only a day after the US-Czech agreement signed off, Moscow said it would take every measure to stop any potential threat against Russia's security. In this manifesto it has been asserted that Russian's resolution, not only include political movements but may also include military ways (The Other Russia, 9 July 2008).

Russia declared that a cross continental ballistic missile system named Topol would be deployed in a period of two or three years (RIA Novosti, 29 May 2008). Vladimir Mikhalov the senior commander of Russian Air force had also declared formerly, if it is needed, Russian fighter planes will destroy any kind of American missile defense system which is located in Caucasia. Putin also passed his opinion at the end of the summit meeting of

Russia and Europe union in Lisbon (October 2007) and revived the memories of one of the most dangerous confrontations in order to emphasize more the opposition of Russia with American Missile defense shield project and compared this defense project with Cuban missile crisis 45 years ago (Fox News, 26 October 2007). Now Kremlin is thinking of a counter act against the Washington's decision to deploy tracking missiles and radar apparatus in Poland and Czech Republic. While it has not publicly declared its decisions yet, Russia considers this as a factor which disturbs the strategic stability of the world. Yet, defense experts believe Kremlin's reaction would include enhancing nuclear missile arsenals, installing missiles on portable launching platforms and transporting nuclear submarine fleets to the North Pole. Russia would also be able to put the new American missile nests within the range of its Iskandar missiles which probably will be launched from Calingrad (Harding, 2007; Sakwa, 2008: 26). Dimitri Peskof, the Kremlin spokesman had said at the beginning of the trend of this project within talking with the Guardian Newspaper: 'Moscow feels that Pentagon has betrayed Russia through this action' he stated that any kind of reaction in this regard is within the framework of available technologies (Guardian, 11 April 2007). Negotiations about the new arms race between the US and Russia is going on while the two countries' relationships have had challenges in a decade. In Munich security conference on February 2007, the Russian former president accused the Bush's government of following "one emperor in the world" policy. Putin, as a practical reaction to the America missile defense shield plan, also suspended Russia's collaboration with conventional forces in Europe, in 14 July 2007 (BBC, 14 July 2007). In this regard Sergei Rogov, manager of America and Canada research institute in Russia believes that establishing anti missile defense system on behalf of America in Europe and Moscow's reaction against it is a serious threat for beginning a new arms race. This expert pointed out that strategic stability in the world is provided by the protocol of strategic offensive armaments and prohibition of anti missile defense systems. Rogov states in continuation validity of the first contract of strategic offensive weapons would end the next two years. The second contrast was also wiped out without performing the next six years validity of strategic offensive potentials contract ends which was signed in 2002 on behalf of George Bush and Vladimir Putin. Thus for the first time after 40 years, there hasn't been any agreements between Russia and America for restricting offensive and defensive armaments. This means playing without any law. He asserts that

in this situation the contract of medium and short range missiles can not come to existence, emphasizing that a serious threat is made for the beginning of a new arms race. This expert also believes that in the future the new arms race in the world will not be between two powers but among several ones, among all China may join the trend. According to him installation of the American anti missile defense system in the world means that America has started a trend which doesn't have any restriction through which Americans are trying to gain absolute military supremacy. This means a new arms race may begin (RIA Novosti, 25 April 2007). That's why experts have forgotten treaties like CFA, when talking about a new arms race (Joffe, 2008: 25; Cienski & Ward, 2008: 3).

Following the exit of Russia from CFA, in a similar act, this country started flights of strategic bombers on the basis of permanent program from 17 August 2007, and thus, Kremlin resumed the policy which had been quit after the end of the Cold War. After visiting common military maneuver of Russia with China and four Central Asian republics in the Oral Mountains of Russia Putin declared that "we have decided to resume regular and permanent flights of Russian strategic air forces, we hope our partners confront the issue reasonably" (CNN, 17 August 2007).

On the other side Russian nuclear forces according to Vladimir Putin's speech should remain on alert to react suitably with a probable attack. Meanwhile, the Russian president declared that the need for nuclear strategic struggle power of his country in order to react any attacker. Thus, according to his speech nuclear warheads that are installed on Russian long range missiles should be kept on alert. Putin, while giving a speech among senior generals of his country, confirmed Russia exit from restriction contract of conventional military forces. According to his words going out from this contract was necessary for reaction against NATO parade in Russian borders. Since Moscow is not going to leave the violation of former agreements without a respond, the former president and present prime minister, said that contract suspension of conventional forces, which restricts the number of tanks, airplanes and other conventional weapons in Europe is part of the reaction of this country against greediness of the West (Fox News, 20 November 2007).

4-2-2. NATO's development to the east and Middle East

After the Second World War and by the start of the Cold War, NATO's defense-military treaty came into existence by USA and its allies in 1948, to

maintain the Western Europe security. In 1952, the Warsaw Treaty Organization was formed by Russia and its allies, to stand against NATO's military threats (Hamre, 1998: 167). After the Soviet Union collapse and Warsaw Treaty cancellation, some rambling were heard about NATO's dismissal, however today NATO has not finished its mission but entered into a new phase through the development and variations in its activities.

Basically the American plan for deployment of missile defense system in Eastern Europe is related to NATO's development (Litovkin, 2008: 20) , and after the Soviet Union break up, US has attempted to make its military presence permanent in Europe and Russia's territory (Ziegler, 2009: 138; Kampmark, 2008: 443). These changes have caused serious concerns for Russia and Beijing. On this basis, Putin believes that vulnerable peace between former USSR and America was more reliable than the present situation (RIA Novosti, 10 February 2007).

Before the Soviet Union disintegration, NATO's main goal was to defend against dangers from the eastern borders but after the collapse in 1991, NATO's aims in Europe were changed which turned to its development strategy towards East (Kornblum & Mandelbaum, 2008: 57).

Therefore, the idea of partnership for peace was proposed by Les Aspin, the American secretary of defense in that time, in October 1993. The plan received its final verifications in the NATO's heads meeting in Brussels, in June 1994 (Bill, 1994: 3). This plan as the most important mechanism to develop NATO to the east encouraged the member countries to develop their military and defense cooperation with NATO (Talbot, 1999: 290).

Due to the atmosphere made by Partnership for Peace (PfP) program , Bulgaria, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and then Czech, Hungary and Poland became members of NATO, increasing the number of members to 26 and it might be said that the West could achieve nearly all its aims in the first stage of NATO's extension to the regions of east Europe, with performing the project and Russia which was involved with its internal affairs in 1990's could not react suitably in front of the wave (Kampmark, 2008: 442-444). In continuation of NATO's extension trend towards east, the issue of joining Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Ukraine and Georgia to this organization was raised in Romania's meeting. After long discussions Croatia and Albania were accepted as members of NATO and the membership of Ukraine and Georgia was not agreed on due to severe reaction of Russia. Also Macedonia's membership was not accepted because of the opposition of Greece (Radio Liberty, 3 April 2008).

A strategic shift could be taking place in the Middle East as the states of West slowly but surely gravitate closer to their eastern Asian neighbors (Mossalanejad, 2008: 90). So, in 2004 meeting of NATO's heads in Turkey, Istanbul, fighting international terrorism, fundamentalism, and development of weapons of mass destruction were referred to as the goals of NATO's development to the Middle East (NATO Press Releases, 28 June 2004). NATO's development to the Middle East can be summarized in four main axes: first, through the presence in Iraq, second, through attraction of countries in the south of Persian Gulf, third, through the Alliances of Mediterranean Dialogue and fourth, through presence in Afghanistan and accepting responsibility of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

NATO was activated in Iraq due to increasing security benefits which this organization feels in the Middle East. NATO's decision based on interference in Iraq affairs was the result of consultations and negotiations that its members started in 2002. In November 2002 the leaders of NATO members, in Prague conference requested Iraq to surrender itself immediately in return for No. 1441 resolution of the United Nations Security Council and declared that the policy of NATO vis-à-vis Iraq is to support decisions of the United Nations (NATO Press Releases, 21 November 2002).

About other Arab countries in the Persian Gulf, NATO's innovations in the leaders meeting in Istanbul, was the solution to many problems and a justification for the NATO's presence in the Persian Gulf. Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait were the first countries that joined to this project formally at the beginning of 2005. Then, United Arab Emirates joined the project in June of the same year. Based on Istanbul cooperation initiative, security cooperation among NATO and the Middle East countries are based on mutual contracts and on the basis of the interest of each country. The third issue, i.e. the extension of NATO's activities to the Middle East, is the Mediterranean conversation of allied countries. Design of Mediterranean conversation of allied countries include seven Middle East countries: Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania and Israel that was created in 1994, at the same time with participation design to establish peace for east Europe countries. Substantial goals of Mediterranean conversation are affirmed to be strengthening security foundations and the Middle East regional stability, making trust in relations among NATO and the Middle East Mediterranean countries (Lesser & Others, 2000: 49-53).

In Afghanistan, NATO has pledged its future in the region in return for accepting responsibility on behalf of ISAF by sending its forces to this

country. NATO's obligation in Afghanistan is huge and irreversible. Lack of stability and mission failure in Afghanistan may cause damage to the NATO's contract. In Europe NATO's contract was not required to put into action while NATO had not performed any operations in far reaching countries before (Ullman, 2007: 54). Recently in a two-day summit meeting of NATO which was held in the presence of 26 member countries in Bucharest, Romania, from the 2nd to the 4th of April 2008, a topic which was discussed in details by members was the conditions of Afghanistan's war (VOA News, 2 April 2008). But it was not the situation that Moscow could get along easily. Russian analysts believe that America uses Afghanistan as a strategic station, while at the same time Moscow tries to cooperate with China, Pakistan, Iran and the Central Asian countries.

It could be generally said that after 11 September and the US trooping to Iraq and Afghanistan, NATO could reinforce its presence in the leading international security atmosphere through redefining its strategic principles and geographical areas. NATO is now a strong military-security arm for the West in the international military-security developments. To this end, NATO has added fuel to the rivalry fire with Russia and China within Shanghai Treaty Framework by gaining a military base in Manas, Kyrgyzstan.

4-2-3. US and Russia Confrontation in Balkan (Kosovo's Independence)

Kosovo's declaration of independence in 18 February 2008 aroused the reactions of those who were for and against it. Serbia and Russia expressed their severe disagreements, asserting immediately that its independence is not official (CNN, 19 February 2008). Moscow truly believes west's endeavor toward Kosovo's independence is an indirect action to strengthen the maneuvering power of Kremlin in the international system (Jia, 2009: 28). Russian foreign minister had also asserted that Kosovo's independence would result in ending the European Union. Russia threatened that if Kosovo declared independency, it would retaliate in some way against the Western countries (Spiegel Online, 7 February 2007).

Certainly, that Kosovo's independence should be analyzed as a competition between the East and West. As the world super power, USA tries to increase its own hegemonic power (Legvold, 2009: 155). This is why when Kosovo declared its independency; the American president sent several messages of victory to people of Kosovo, describing it as right, just and

according to the world peace (Fox News, 18 February 2008). Like America, great European countries considered this as being correct and peaceful. England, Italy, France and Germany are among major western countries that in the first hours of independence announcement formally recognized this government and supported it. Yet, countries like Spain, Macedonia and some others that were afraid of nationalism confronted the issue cautiously (Topix, 18 February 2008; Global Voices, 20 February 2008). Certainly, the West and particularly the US want to increase their power through this action while decreasing the security borders of Russia and East. Hence, Russia which is worried about the west expansion policy proclaimed that Kosovo's independence could have distressing results which may damage all the world peace (Jia, 2009: 28-30). Due to this, Muammar Al-Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, foresaw Kosovo's independence as a reason for another cold war to occur in the field of the East and West geopolitical races. The action of West from his point of view is a counted threat for Russia more than any other sides. While threatening Russia attacking and insulting this country is not doing any good to the world peace (IRNA, 15 November 2007).

At the present time Russia has a lot of challenges with Europe and America and is worried about the fact that autonomous regions of this federation in north Caucasia, like north Ossetia-Alana are straggling for independence. In fact, Moscow wants to restrict NATO and American forces in the borders of Russian's security lines to the country's frontiers. For this reason, Russian government supports South Ossetia and Abkhazian separatists located in Georgia, attempting to take its revenge from westernized Tbilisi government and also to restrain more infiltration of NATO to Russia's eastern borders, through the independence of these two republics under its flag. Undoubtedly, the entrance of Western powers to the East, Central Asia and Caucasian limits will cause the Russia's behavior in the international arena. One can say this is trough about China too (Mullerson, 2009: 5-12; Hilpold, 2009: 52-57). China is a country which has leapt forward economically and politically since 1979 and wants to see its power as equal to America by 2015. Such demand has made the United States worry. Thus, the White House tries to minimize the security borders of Shanghai Treaty and reduce the affinity of these two Eastern powers. Trough disparaging power in the east, NATO's infiltration in the region and also through drawing these tiny powers toward West and signing political, economic and military –security contracts, America tries to put itself in the security margins relative to empowering of eastern countries, among which

China and Russia are the top ones. In this regard, America wants Russia to discharge its forces from Georgia and Moldavia.

4-2-4. Russia's attack to Georgia during the South Ossetia Crises

Following the years of struggle between Russia and Georgia, and months of fights and unrest in separatist areas of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the war between Georgian and Separatist forces began in August 2008. In a shocking military operation in 7 August, Georgia's military forces occupied Tskhinvali, the unofficial capital of South Ossetia, which caused a strong reaction by Russia. Moscow under the excuse of defending Russian citizens and Peace Corps deployed its military tanks to South Ossetia to advance to the heart of Georgia, and bombarded a lot of Georgian sites all over the country (Telegraph, 9 August 2008).

American's weaponry and financial support to Georgia was a result of US-Russia confrontation (Dutton, 2008: 437). The former US president, George.W.Bush, and his foreign minister, Rice, accused Moscow of its aggression to Georgia and asked Russia to draw its forces back from Georgia where a democratic government has been elected by people (Guardian, 21 August 2008). Condoleezza Rice accused Russia of using cold war tactics and stated that: 'now it is not the year of 1968 to attack Czechoslovakia, when Russia could occupy a capital by threatening its neighbors and overthrow a government while nothing happens' (U.S. Department of State, 13 August 2008). In her view Russia is playing a very dangerous game with America and its allies. She warned that NATO would not allow Moscow win in Georgia making Europe unstable or drawing a new iron wall around it. As American secretary of state believed that any kind of attempts to create cold war again by drawing new borders among Europe and intimidating former USSR republic countries and former lunar governments who obey Russia will encounter failure. Rice added 'we don't permit Russia to make decisions for countries that have not been merged in European-American frameworks'(Yahoo News, 18 August 2008). Accusing Russia of aggression against Georgia, the White House's spokesman announced that US would reconsider its all relations with Russia (Fox News, 25 Aug 2008).

Following the US criticism to Russia for its presence in Georgia's territory, a Russian top military authority said Poland has posed itself to a similar attack by permitting the deployment of American missile in its territory (ISNA, 17 August 2008). Donald Tusk, the Polish prime minister,

expressed that the recent fights between Russia and Georgia has reinforced signing this agreement which has been declined by Poland a month before, and finally, the deputy of Poland foreign minister, in a new phase of negotiations, signed the agreement of deployment of American Missile Defense Shield in Poland (BBC, 20 August 2008).

After the Russian-Georgia conflict, the foreign ministers of NATO's member countries gathered in Brussels, to take part in an emergency meeting to analyze the proper response to Russia attack to Georgia. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the former NATO's Secretary General, said this organization's relations with Russia would not be as before. He expressed that he cannot imagine the possibility of NATO-Russia Council to be called for another meeting. Moscow angrily denied NATO's warning, and accused it of supporting Georgian regime in ethnic cleansing of southern Ossetians (CNN, 20 August 2008). Angela Merkel, German chancellor, supported joining Russia to NATO as a sign of unity with Georgia and emphasized that Tbilisi would be a member of the NATO very soon (Press TV, 17 August 2008).

On the other side, while Russia denying the warning of NATO accused it for supporting Georgian criminal regime in the genocide of South-Ossetian people. Sergei Lavarov criticized the west reaction severely and said Washington has entered a dangerous play by supporting Mikhail Saakashvili. He affirmed that 'we are aware that the current leadership of Georgia is a particular project of the United State. But one day the United States should choose the one between defending its prestige about an imaginary project or real cooperation which needs common action' (Telegraph, 14 August 2008). In continuing of raising the issue losing contact between NATO and Moscow, Russian president announced that his country is ready to end its relations with NATO. Medvedev, in visiting Dmitry Rogozin, ambassador of the country in NATO said it is not Russia that likes to cooperate with NATO, but countries which are members of NATO tend to cooperate more than others. He added 'if countries who are members of NATO don not cooperate with Moscow, no frightening incident will happen to Russia and his country Is ready to adopt any decisions as cutting relations completely' (RIA Novosti, 25 Aug 2008).

Finally, based on an agreement proposed by Nicolas Sarkozy, the French president, Russia accepted to stop its military operation in Georgia and pull its forces out. However the Russian foreign minister emphasized that Abkhazia and south Ossetia will never be affiliated to Georgia again (Civil,

22 August 2008). And at last, the Russian president in response to the country two parliaments' request, officially accepted Abkhazia and South Ossetia's independency. This action caused a strong reaction by United Nations, European countries, NATO and the United States. At the same time Dmitry Medvedev, within hours after southern Ossetia and Abkhazia were declared to be authorized, announced that his country is not afraid of a New Cold War, while not following it. He has told Itar Tass, the Russian news agency that 'we are not afraid of anything including the perspective of a new cold war, yet we don't want that, it all depends on the conditions of our allies' (Msnbc, 26 Aug 2008).

What is now happening in Georgia has been predictable since for some time, and even following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the conflict between the interests of Russia with those of the West was unavoidable. However, the crisis in Georgia is undoubtedly Russia's harshest and most important response to a series of attempts made by the West against Russia's international and regional interests since the collapse of the Soviet Union (Vaezi, 2008: 72).

4-2-5. The West concern about Russia's domination over energy resources

Considering the Russia's veto power in UN Security Council, its unique position in providing European gas, and its control over one of the two greatest arsenals in the world, the influence of energy in the Russia's internal development and its role in International Society seems to be very significant. Russia is the second largest producer of oil in the world, and has one fourth of the world known gas resources (EIA, 2007: 37&48). Europe imports one fourth of gas from Russia (Tomberg, 2007). Russia also has the 8th place in having the known world crude oil resources (about 60 milliard barrels) (EIA, 2007: 38). Therefore, the Russian Reserve Fund which receives money from oil export and oil exploratory operations had over 129 milliard dollars in August 2008 (Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation, 1 August 2008), which has been given to Kremlin to clear the countries debts and control the oil price fluctuations.

Nowadays following the above changes, Moscow ignores the international warnings about the amount of controls that Kremlin imposes on this country's internal politics. The prime minister of this country calls himself as a defender of international law and order against the United State's intrusions; he uses energy as an important tool in his negotiations and conflicts with their recently realized neighboring countries like Ukraine and Georgia. He also resists the Europe's pleas to establish a comparable

right for its investors in Russia. This is true while Russia rebuts the verification of the covenant of energy treaty. While this treaty guarantees the transit right of Russia to pass the energy lines across this country, prevents it from cutting these lines as a political weapon (Pascual, 2008).

Like Iran, Russia is interested in using gas as a geopolitical means against its Western rivals in areas where energy is very important. Russia has a gradual perspective in this regard. It has never clearly shown its inclination to form a Gas Cartel but has always been waiting for this opportunity to arise (Cohen, 2007). Russia as the world leading gas producer has learnt how to frighten the westerns well. However, it is trying to show its superiority over US by forming a gas cartel (Escobar, 2007). Through the formation of gas OPEC, Russia can dictate conditions in which it can impose and issue the price of its exported gas to Europe, which increases the European Union economic dependence on Russia's political wills (Kommersant, 19 March 2007).

The Telegraph Newspaper, referring to Edward Lucas (2008)' new book, says 'the West has not yet well operated against the cold war which may begin in Russia, it will gradually lose its power in this challenge' (Telegraph, 13 June 2008). In his latest estimate of the political procedures in the world society, Lucas in his new book called the New Cold War, refers to Vladimir Putin, the former president of Russia, as a serious threat against the west and the Russia itself along with the Kremlin allies. He emphasizes that Putin has shed over East Asia continent while bridging to the west making them dependent on him. In the book he also mentions that under the influence of Putin and his beloved friend Dmitri Medvedev, Kremlin may turn into a threatening power against the west and the government itself. When the Western Europe does not have any more power to fight against Russia, if tries to confront with it, it may lose its oil and gas. Lucas in his book, the New Cold War, asks a few questions related to Russian goals and policies against a new revolution in this country and the fact that the new leaders of Moscow can be the only defendants of the national profits.

Thomas L Friedman (2006), an author in New York Times, also believes that the disagreements between Russia and Europe over energy issues are the commencement of a new cold war which Europe again has divided after the Berlin wall collapse. The author of the editorials in New York Times also expresses that today when Europe is talking about a new cold war; they really mean the air temperature. There is a threat that if Russia wants to cut the gas exports, the European communities will really be faced with cold weather.

That's because 40 percent of Europe needed gas imports from Russia, while it is predicted that the amount may reach 70 percent by the year 2030. Friedman, considering high prices of oil and gas, assets Russia has turned from the Europe's patient to the chief of the green continent. He cites from Jose Joffe (2006: 143) the specialist in German foreign embassy, and the writer of the book of superpower; the imperial temptation of America, writing the influence of Russia over the Western Europe due to its gas lines is much more than its influence due to its long-range missiles, SS20.

4-2-6. US –Russia disputes over Iran's Nuclear Profile

Russia plays a major part in Iran's nuclear issue because on one hand it transfers the technology to Iran and on the other hand, it is a permanent member of Security Council of UN. Russia, with no doubt, is having a profiteering look at Iran's Nuclear Profile. Iran–America clash is among the many different global tools used by Russia to turn to a world power as its global strategy. The Islamic Republic of Iran is the most serious challenge to the USA in today international arena (Noisy Room, 9 March 2006). In this atmosphere Russia is seeking two main goals:

- A- gaining economic profits by signing nuclear contracts with Iran;
- B- developing and demonstrating its nuclear power technology to the world.

Russia in due times to gain advantages puts Iranian and American parties under pressure. Russia does not like the powerful Iran with an international nuclear power, nor does it favor Iran as an American ally in its neighborhood. In this regard powerful Iran which my challenge Russia or any normalization of relations between Iran and America may cause excessive concern for the Russian government (Taghavi, 2009: A.7). Therefore, one can say that the present situation is favorable to Moscow since Iran needs Russia's technology in its nuclear sites, and on the other hand, it has strong challenges with the world power (America) and this helps Russia to benefit from the present conditions.

It is clear that Moscow have had a very active role in issues related to Iran's Nuclear Profile. Russia has made its role a critical part by proposing creative suggestions to settle the disputes down. Considering the dignity and wide relations of Russia with all other parties of this issue, especially with Iran, this country has a pivot role in this profile. On the other side, through providing suggestions and creativities to solve this crisis, Moscow has gained a very significant role. However, its role is mainly to satisfy its

important political and economic profits. Russia's position related to Iran's nuclear issue revolves round three factors. These factors have helped Russia to make precise decisions in its political borders about Iran's nuclear crises. These factors are: First; Russia's nuclear and economic cooperation with Iran, Second; Russia's commitment to Iran is not to achieve nuclear weapons, Third; the confidence crises which governs Russia's relations with the US and West (Blitz & Morris, 2008: 10; Kerr, 2005: 35-36).

Yet, Russia has been against imposing more pressures to Tehran for its nuclear ambitions. This mostly refers to Russia's concerns about its role and position in the international system. Among the reasons are: Fear of enforcement of Western position in the Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asia as a geopolitical and geostrategic area in the world; losing the large economic and military markets in Iran; and declining the bargaining power of Russia in front of the West. Therefore, Russia's main goal in supporting Iran is to fight the Western hegemonic plan with the leading power of USA.

4-3. The Impact of Obama-Medvedev Cooperation on Eurasia

In March 2009 in Geneva, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to "reset" the relationship between the two countries and discuss a broad range of issues, including nuclear proliferation and arms reduction. These diplomatic efforts have produced practical results, the most important being renewed nuclear leadership and the New START agreement that may reduce the threat of nuclear war.

President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) on 8 April 2010 in Prague. This treaty puts Washington and Moscow back on the path of verifiable reductions of their still-bloated Cold War nuclear arsenals and requires the United States and Russia to cut their deployed strategic nuclear warheads by about 30 percent to no more than 1,550 each within seven years. The statement called on the two nations to work together on arms control, missile defense, nuclear proliferation, international terrorism, Iran policy, Korea policy, and Russia's World Trade Organization membership, but the focus of their bilateral cooperation is on nuclear issues. The spread of nuclear weapons to different states is an unacceptable risk to global security raising the specter of arms races from the Middle East to East Asia.

At the same time, new national security strategy of America puts away unilateralism approach and procures circumstances in order for America to

cooperate with other great powers in the world such as Russia. The new U.S. national security doctrine emphasizes broader cooperation with other countries to face the threats and challenges of the 21st century. The doctrine also outlines the development of U.S. defense capability, nuclear non-proliferation as top priorities and includes the principles of multilateral cooperation. Finding a way to escape from zero-sum logic of geo-strategic competition in Eurasia is an essential dimension of this renewed cooperation.

Russia is pursuing a policy of multilateral integration in the new states of Eurasia through the international bodies that it dominates: the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC). Moreover, when its energy resources or infrastructure assets (e.g., pipelines and refineries) are involved, Russia usually tries to deal with its CIS partners in Central Asia from a position of strength and control of the region's access to foreign markets.

The Obama Administration should assess how energy issues fit into wider U.S. strategic interests in the region and develop balanced and nuanced policies that enable the U.S. to remain engaged in the region. To achieve these ends, according to American exports, the U.S. should (Cohen, 2009: 4):

- *Support projects to increase and diversify non-Russian energy transit routes for Central Asian oil and gas;

- *Further develop ties with Central Asian states to expand trade and security relations with the U.S.;

- *Continue to encourage good governance, development of modern institutions, and legislative reforms in Central Asia; and

- *Adopt an approach that allows security and energy cooperation, even if there are disagreements on democratic values and governance.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

A fact which the world has been faced with, for years and years, is that the 1991 Persian Gulf War was not due to the occupation of Kuwait, neither was the American attack to Iraq and its occupation because of Sidam's weapons of mass destruction. After the Cold War and collapse of the Eastern bloc, Washington, relying on its military authority, tried to impose its unique dominance over its rivals such as Europe, Russia, China and Japan as its main strategy. All the US past 17 years of war, whatever the

justifications may be, has been to pursue this goal. However after the deadlock in US military strategy, its worldwide rivals have put their plans into practice to get ahead in this competition and satisfy their recent expectations to share world's wealth and power. Putin's speech, expressing his strong opposition to the American uni-lateralization and its affiliation and help to anti-West states, is not less of oppression in this power challenge. Putin as a flag bearer of Russian nationalism from this perspective, within the present situation of the world and especially in the Middle East, tries to stand up against the deadlocked US. China also has plans in Asia and Africa. The European Union along with the US is deploying against Russia and China. Therefore, the power balance among the imperialistic line ups has been disturbed irreversibly against Washington. Hence, it can be said that the US military superiority, beginning with the 1991 Persian-Gulf War as the New World Order, is on its last legs.

On the other side; the US dragging Russia into a new arms race, tries to prevent this country's renewal of power. The US plan to set up the missile defense system in the East of Europe is related to the development of NATO and entails the countries of the Caucasus region. Therefore, after the Soviet break up, USA with the excuse of fighting the hypothetical threats and by establishing the missile defense system in East of Europe and the Caucasus region tries to make its military presence in Europe and Russia's territory permanent. The Missile Defense System is an ambitious plan with part of it in the US and Washington which through its implementation in Europe, the Caucasus and East of Asia, Washington wants to develop its unilateralism. Accordingly, the implementation of the American Missile Defense Shield Plan will put the international security at risk.

Reacting to this plan, as a threat to its security, Russia has increased its continental missiles, has armed its missiles with multi-purposed tips and also suspended its membership in the Conventional Weapons Reduction Treaty in Europe. These changes have brought up concerns in the world, livening up the nightmare of another arms race and cold war. Therefore, Washington's military policy has again pushed the world towards a direction which could be named as a New Cold War.

The US aim in this New Cold War is to prevent the formation of any rival power. Indeed, the districts around the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea make a very critical point in the global system, making sure of getting the political control of these areas is a vital target in the US foreign policy. In

addition to commencing a mutual relationship based on influence, with the countries of this area NATO is also an important means for the White House to gain a geopolitical dominance over this new heartland. The United States seeks three basic goals by developing NATO. Firstly, to develop NATO to Russian southern and western borders and to annex all the recently-became independent republics of the southern Caucasus and Central Asia. Secondly, to approach in the southwest of Asia in order to have an influence on the development of this area. Thirdly, to create a geopolitical link between Caspian Sea domain, the Persian Gulf and Mediterranean Sea.

Accordingly, if the US can separate the recently became independent republics from the Russia's present geopolitical body, it surely has imposed another rein to Russia, which constrains its siege circle. On the other hand, with its presence and influence in this area, the US gains an appropriate opportunity to monitor China's activities and prevents its superiority. Americans believe, making a geopolitical link between the Caspian Sea, Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea can provide a tri-siege control of Iran, Russia and China while making an unprecedented energy hallway in the area with American main dominance over it. Russia is also trying to include China in the Shanghai Treaty so as to use this treaty against the west. Today the geopolitical divisions in the world have economic and military basis, in which the oval-shaped area from Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea is like a new Heartland. Hence Russia, along reinforcing its economic and military facets, strongly tries to stop NATO to get to its borders.

Therefore, the New Cold War geopolitical negotiations could be demonstrated based on a geopolitical dominance perspective. For USA, a concordance between geostrategic and geopolitical borders of the new heartland was the base for a plan named the "Great Middle East Project". This has been the most important task on American strategists' agenda from the beginning of the third millennium. If the US extends its political dominance over this area, the development process of the world in future would be in favor of Washington and its political, economic and military hegemony. On the other hand, non-Western main powers, especially china and Russia cannot observe that through realization of this desire, the current of unilateral profits moves towards Washington. Therefore, Beijing and Moscow, while adapting a realistic perspective through reinforcing their forces in this geopolitical center of the world, i.e. Central Asia, the Caucasia and the regions near the Persian Gulf have turned into a structure of

geopolitical relations based on their dominance and influence over the countries of these regions.

In fact, after the Soviet Union and Warsaw Treaty collapse, the west interpreted it as the beginning of a new mono-polar era. Developing NATO to the East (Eastern Europe, Central Eurasia and Middle East) was on the top of the West agenda to improve its global dominance, and to envelope Iran from north and east, while increasing pressures from its north borders. Furthermore, the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea have large energy resources which the west absolutely needs. Needless to say that more pressures on Iran provides the American most intimate friend, Zionist Regime, with more security.

At that time, considering the tumults after the collapse and economic crises, the Russian Federation did not have an active role in the international issues and kept silent inactively in front of American force presence in Central Asia under the excuse of fighting the Taliban Regime and Osama Bin Laden.

But soon the great Asian and Eurasian states like China and Russia stood against the West operations in Eastern Europe, Central Eurasia and the Middle East. By the economic growth in China and Russia, with the membership of some other Asian states, Shanghai Treaty was formed. In its formation phase, the Westerners did not oppose against it a lot, because they thought it would pose no serious security and defense influence against NATO. However later, when Iran and India entered the treaty as observer members, to be turned to formal members in future, they turned against it. The Shanghai's treaty with its sensitivity to the presence of western forces in the central Asia warned while asking them to leave the region.

The development of this treaty shows that it is now a counterbalance against NATO, which gradually leads the west's dreams about being the unrivalled dominant power in the world to a decline and failure. Since the four major Shanghai Treaty powers (Russia, China, Iran and India) have a strong anti-west potential, the West would never be able to achieve its goals in this area if the four powers work for their strategic cooperation. On the other side, dislodging the West from these regions will bring about uncontrollable crises which may threaten the mere existence of NATO.

Therefore, the hasty endeavors of the West and specifically the US, to develop NATO towards East, so as to be extended to the east of Europe, Southern Kazakhstan, Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan is only to make sure there could be no strategic affiliation among the aforementioned

four powers. The US, which once (especially after the Russian break up) had an active strategy toward the universal issues, nowadays has failed in Iraq and Afghanistan while it is stuck in an inactive position, tries to develop NATO to the east and set up its Missile Defense System Shield In Europe only to prevent its downfall.

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