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Japan's interests and priorities in central Asia establishment and formation

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Abstract

This article describes the interests of the Japanese state in the Central Asian region and its economic, political and social relations with the countries of the region. Japan's foreign policy and its specific doctrinal aspects are mentioned separately. Among them is the adoption of a foreign policy doctrine called "Eurasian diplomacy", which provides for the implementation of Japan's foreign policy in Central Asia. The Japanese government will also discuss the "Ipak yo'li" Action Plan, which envisages the development of broad political ties, multilateral economic cooperation and assistance in the transition to a market economy. Japan is implementing various assistance projects to Central Asian countries through the International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Foreign Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF). The main reason for this is that the geopolitical situation of the states is very important in terms of ensuring stability in the Asian region. Due to the global instability in the energy market, Japan is trying to actively participate in the development of Central Asian energy resources. In addition, security and stability issues that Japan's foreign policy pays special attention to, especially the Afghan problem in Central Asia.

Keywords: Japan, foreign policy, Asian region, "Eurasian diplomacy", "Silk Road", (JICA), (OECF), "Central Asia + Japan", security, stability

Introduction

Japan's modern foreign policy in the 21st century is based on two principles:

First, Asia and the adjacent regions of the world are a priority for Japan. Therefore, it should be emphasized once again that Central Asia has always been and will remain an integral part of foreign policy relations in the Asian system. However, it is known that the region was "geopolitically" closed to the outside world and cut off from secular ties with Southeast, South Asia, and the Middle East;

One of the second main principles of Japan's foreign policy strategy is that Japan should take a similar role in the system of political-strategic and economic relations in global and regional politics, based on its national interests [1].

While the first stage was related to the independence of the new states in Central Asia, it was one of the most important goals for Japan, which is vying for the status of a leading state in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan was one of the first to recognize their status, established diplomatic relations, and began to develop a "Central Asian direction" that was new to Japanese diplomacy in foreign policy. The attractiveness of the region for Japan's national interests was that it had an abundance of natural resources, including hydrocarbons and minerals, and precious metals. Also, the availability of the most skilled and relatively inexpensive labor force in Asia, which significantly facilitates the extraction and processing of raw materials, did not leave Japanese businessmen indifferent.

The major changes took place on January 1, 1993, when the five Central Asian republics became members of the Development Cooperation Committee of the Economic Cooperation Organization and were included in the list of developing countries. This allowed them to attract economic aid from abroad. Japan took this opportunity to seek to expand its influence in the region through its Official Development Assistance program, one of the main forms of cooperation with developing countries.

The transition of Japan to the second stage of development of relations with Central Asian countries depends more on its interests in the extraction of mineral resources and their export to Japan. To intensify economic cooperation, the Japanese government in 1994 introduced a

state foreign trade insurance system for Kazakhstan. In 1995, Japan introduced a system of medium and long-term preferential insurance to Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and in 1996 to Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and in August 1997 to Kyrgyzstan ^[2].

Main Part

Assessing the positive position of the Central Asian republics in foreign policy, Japan decided to deepen and expand ties. The result was the adoption in July 1997 by former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hasimoto of a foreign policy doctrine called "Eurasian Diplomacy", which reflected the foreign policy of the Central Asian republics and aimed at significantly strengthening relations with the countries of the region. "Eurasian diplomacy", which envisages the implementation of the Central Asian direction, consists of three important components:

- political negotiations on confidence-building and solidarity;
- cooperation in the field of economic cooperation and development of natural resources;
- Achieving peace, democracy and stability in the region through the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons ^[3].

In order to implement a new policy towards the Central Asian republics, the Japanese government has adopted the Ipay Way Action Plan, which provides for the development of broad political ties, multilateral economic cooperation and assistance in the transition to a market economy ^[4].

On the other hand, the Great Silk Road policy is aimed at overcoming the geographical isolation of Central Asia and promoting its economic integration into relations within the global system. In addition, the revival of the concept of the Great Silk Road is seen as a new project "stemming from strong and close cooperation between the countries concerned in the economic, political and cultural spheres of the XXI century." "To identify prospects for cooperation in the field of development and development of energy resources. In turn, the development of the region's natural resources, primarily large oil and gas fields, represents a project that "combines global, regional and local interests." By stimulating the growth of the local economy through the use of Central Asia's raw material potential, it will lead to a significant supply of sustainable raw materials to major energy importers, including Japan ^[5]. Leading Japanese companies have participated in the repair and construction of oil refineries in Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and a number of cities in Kazakhstan.

On the other hand, efforts to overcome geographical isolation, in particular ensuring access to the region's depleted energy resources, imply the development of transcontinental railways, highways and pipelines. Japan's approach to the development of transcontinental transport systems "will accelerate the integration of Central Asia into global trade, as well as provide access to raw materials for the region." It should be noted that according to a long-term plan, Tashkent, which is relatively central in Central Asia, Europe and Asia, North and South, can become a major transit ring in the airline system ^[6].

On the other hand, the presence of hotbeds of instability, as well as the training camps of international terrorist militants in Afghanistan, which forms an integral part of Central Asia, make it urgent to expand international counterterrorism efforts in this part of the world ^[7]. Japan

Crisis in Afghanistan, as well as realizing that Japan itself is a serious obstacle to access to the resources of this region. Japan's concept of counterterrorism goes beyond geopolitical concepts to address this threat. In this regard, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I.A Karimov has repeatedly stated that "security is a continuous situation, it has no borders ^[8]." This demonstrates the compatibility and closeness of the positions of Japan and Uzbekistan in the fight against international terrorism. It should be noted that the new geopolitical significance of the region for Japan is explained by a number of new geopolitical factors for other dominant countries in the region:

First, the location of Central Asia at the heart of the Eurasian continent is of strategic importance in terms of having a significant impact on security and stability in much of the continent.

Second, the focus on the development of the situation in each of the Central Asian states and in the region as a whole may further determine the prospects for a balance of power on the Eurasian continent.

Third is the concentration of natural resources of global importance, primarily hydrocarbons, in this region. In this way, the strategy of the world and regional dominant states pursues clear geopolitical goals that may affect the situation in the region, such as the control of fuel and energy resources, their transportation.

Fourth, it is located at the crossroads of Eurasian transport corridors and extensive transport and communication networks. The countries of the region have access to the Persian Gulf via Iran, the Indian Ocean through Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the Asia-Pacific region through China. ^[9] In addition, the growing political and economic presence of Japan in the region is also related to the central geopolitical factors of Central Asia.

The general situation after September 11, 2001, vividly illustrated the decline in Russian activism with the simultaneous increase in the role of the United States.

This means, first of all, that Russia will end its military-political dominance in the region.

Second, the intensification of U.S. efforts to develop transportation routes for hydrocarbons is in Japan's national interest. At the same time, the U.S.'s overwhelming interest in building oil pipelines bypassing Russia does not diminish the importance of the Trans-Siberian Highway for Japan.

On January 1, 1993, the Central Asian countries were included in the list of developing countries by the Development Assistance Committee. Economic assistance to countries is "Japan's most effective contribution to the international arena." Such assistance will ensure the political, social and economic stability of the region. According to experts, "Central Asia is in dire need of such assistance ^[10]."

The Japanese government is pushing for faster aid to the former Soviet republics in Central Asia. Because "their geopolitical situation is very important in terms of ensuring stability in the Asian region." At the same time, "access to sources of raw materials and markets for the sale of products" is one of the key components of Japan's national security ^[11]. The growing interest of Japan in the region can be explained by another fact. If the maximum financial assistance initially provided to each of the Central Asian countries through official development assistance is 100 million. Then up to \$ 200 million a year to lend to some countries in the region. Multiplied by USD. Support is

provided through Japan's international cooperation governmental organizations ^[12]. This will be done primarily by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Foreign Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF).

Through these organizations, Japan continues to invest heavily in major infrastructure in the region. So, one of the main directions of Japan's investment policy is to improve the social and industrial infrastructure of the republics of the region, to develop the region as a whole. Japan is actively working to develop relations with Central Asian countries on a bilateral basis. Thus, the countries of the region, "the intensity and level of Japan's cooperation with Central Asia is sufficiently stratified ^[13]" can be divided into two groups: Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan - countries that are actively developing relations with Japan; as well as Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, for a number of reasons of political significance, Japan is less present in the region.

Japanese private investment in Kyrgyzstan is currently insignificant. Currently, Japanese firms are only involved in government-funded projects. In order to attract Japanese investment to Kyrgyzstan, it is necessary to intensify the country's effective integration into transport and communication projects, infrastructure reforms, which are of practical interest to the Japanese economy.

The existence of an authoritarian regime in Turkmenistan poses a serious obstacle to trade and economic cooperation between Ashgabat and Tokyo, despite the country's vast hydrocarbon reserves. In addition, the lack of reliable data on the situation in the Turkmen economy further complicates the situation. The situation in Tajikistan is perceived by Japan as a civil war that has pushed the country back several years and severely limited the development of economic cooperation with Japan. In addition, the post-conflict situation was such that Japan was content to provide grants and funds to rebuild the economy, eradicate poverty, and improve living conditions in the country in developing relations with Tajikistan.

Some political dialogue between Japan and Tajikistan is intensifying due to the ongoing military operations in Afghanistan by the United States and its allies. As long as Japan participates in these events militarily as part of its commitments to the international community, it will be even more important to be present in the country bordering the country where military operations are taking place.

In August 2004, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguti paid his first visit to Central Asia. This visit, which has taken place over the past five years, is a testament to the region's growing importance in world politics.

The visit was initiated by Japan at the first Central Asia + Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting and became a new form of cooperation to become an effective mechanism and stimulus for the development of partnership between the countries of the region and Japan. In addition to the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, the meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Peace and stability in Central Asia is a guarantee of stability for the entire international community. Therefore, the Japanese side expressed serious assistance in resolving a number of regional problems. "The Japanese Foreign Minister stated that Japan will continue to provide various assistance to each of the Central Asian states in supporting their actions ^[14]."

A new concept of dialogue between the foreign ministers of the five Central Asian countries and the Japanese foreign minister was first tested in August 2004 in the Kazakh capital. It is aimed at ensuring Japan's greater influence in Central Asia and strengthening Japan's pro-Japanese views in the region of strategic importance. In particular, the actions of Japanese politicians in this regard may contradict the political influence of China and Russia in Eurasia ^[15]. Observers say Japan does not want to give in to Russia, which is seeking to influence the situation in Central Asia ^[16].

Japan is ready to assist in the development of regional transport infrastructure, including access to seaports through Afghanistan. There are ready projects to implement these ideas: the construction of a railway from Uzbekistan to Afghanistan. Japan is currently assisting the Uzbek government in building these roads. The form of dialogue cooperation between Central Asia and Japan is based on three fundamental principles: "respect for different views, competition and coordination, and transparent cooperation ^[17]."

The main emphasis in this direction is given to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). In 1993, the agency announced the opening of training courses for specialists from Central Asian countries. In these courses it will be possible to acquire practical and theoretical knowledge necessary for the implementation of market economy reforms.

It can be concluded that the main directions of Japan's foreign policy strategy in the region are to combat international terrorism, support market reforms, promote the region's integration into the world economy, and promote political, economic, cultural and environmental cooperation with the region and all countries. cooperation in the field of environment. Japan supports the idea of multilateral regional domestic cooperation with Central Asian countries and their efforts to form an independent state, in particular, democratization and the development of a market economy. Global development at the beginning of the 21st century is primarily explained by fundamental geopolitical changes resulting from the strong repressive influence of ruling states. The strategic balance of power is pushing the dominant states, including Central Asia, to seek and strengthen their strategic position on the planet in the new environment. Japan, which is dependent on natural and mineral resources, primarily hydrocarbons, is no exception.

Conclusion

Global instability in the energy market requires that Japan's oil and gas exports should be diversified, as the supply of hydrocarbons is of strategic importance to Japan. Therefore, Japan is trying to take an active part in the development of energy resources on the Eurasian continent, including Central Asia. In this regard, it regularly holds bilateral consultations with Russia, China, India and Iran on energy security.

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