



Mukesh SHANKAR BHARTI 

Jawaharlal Nehru University, Centre for European Studies, New Delhi, India

China-Russia Bilateral Security and Military Partnership in Changing World Order: Security Challenges for the United States of America in Asia and Beyond

**Bilateralne partnerstwo Chin i Rosji w zakresie bezpieczeństwa i wojskowości
wobec zmieniającego się ładu światowego. Wyzwania bezpieczeństwa stojące przed USA
w Azji i poza nią**

• Abstract •

The objective of this research is to assess the defence partnership of Russia and China after the Cold War period. This study analyses the military cooperation and strategic relation of Russia and China in the post-Cold War period. Further, the article highlights the main contradicting areas between the United States of America (USA) and the Russia-China alliance in international politics. It also elucidates the Russia-China relationship across the diplomatic paradigm and economic aspects in the global economic system. China's flagship economic New Silk Road Initiative is a challenging concept for the US on land and maritime across the world. Thus, the study uses the research question: how do China and Russia compete with the US challenges in the new world order? The qualitative comparative method is used to investigate answers to the research questions and objectives of this study. This article attempts to use an analytical framework to describe the countries' vision for joint development in the area of security issues. Russia and China have

• Abstrakt •

Celem podjętych badań jest ocena partnerstwa Rosji i Chin w zakresie obronności po okresie zimnej wojny. W niniejszym opracowaniu poddano analizie współpracę wojskową i strategiczne relacje Rosji i Chin w okresie postzimnowojennym. Ponadto w artykule zwrócono uwagę na główne obszary konfliktu w polityce międzynarodowej między Stanami Zjednoczonymi Ameryki (USA) a sojuszem rosyjsko-chińskim. W tekście podjęto też próbę wyjaśnienia stosunków rosyjsko-chińskich w świetle paradygmatu dyplomatycznego i aspektów ekonomicznych postrzeganych w ramach globalnego systemu gospodarczego. Sztandarowa inicjatywa chińskiej gospodarki, Nowy Jedwabny Szlak, stanowi wodno-ładowe wyzwanie dla USA w perspektywie globalnej. Stąd pytanie badawcze: jak Chiny i Rosja konkurują z wyzwaniami stawianymi przez USA w nowym ładzie światowym? Do zbadania odpowiedzi na tak postawione pytanie wykorzystano metodę jakościowej analizy porównawczej. W artykule podjęto próbę wykorzystania narzędzi analitycznych do

deep military cooperation and commit to working together against the US domination in the Asia Pacific and other parts of the world. In a conclusion it is stated that Russia and China have been accelerating bilateral military cooperation in a positive direction, which is a success story between both countries, and the US is facing stiff competition in Asia as well as in the Asia Pacific Region (APR).

opisania wizji wspólnego rozwoju obu państw w obszarze zagadnień bezpieczeństwa. Rosja i Chiny zawiązały głęboką współpracę wojskową i zobowiązały się do wspólnego działania przeciwko amerykańskiej dominacji w regionie Azji i Pacyfiku oraz w innych częściach świata. Konkluzję artykułu stanowi stwierdzenie, że Rosja i Chiny przyspieszają dwustronną współpracę wojskową, co stanowi duże osiągnięcie obu krajów, natomiast Stany Zjednoczone zmagają się z ostrą konkurencją w Azji, a także w regionie Azji i Pacyfiku (APR).

Keywords: China; Russia; US containment policy; China-Russia Cooperation; Indo-Pacific; geopolitics

Słowa kluczowe: Chiny; Rosja; amerykańska polityka powstrzymywania; współpraca chińsko-rosyjska; Indo-Pacyfik; geopolityka

Introduction

In May 1989, the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev visited Beijing to improve relations with China. Both sides steadily nurtured this relationship during the 1990s (Ambrosio, 2017, p. 119). The Chinese-Russian partnership has changed the dynamics of international politics and its scenarios, gaining importance at the global level. Both countries have huge geographical areas from Europe to Asia, which is strategically important for global partnership. China has a huge population, ranking first position in the world, it is also strategically good for Russia as China has to import gas and energy which strengthens the Russian economy. This relationship builds mutual cooperation to help each other boost several aspects of cooperation. Both countries' deeper partnership is critical for world order and it is not only mutual benefit (Ying, 2016). Russia and China are in debate in various Western capitals, however, there are many different types of thought processing and narratives that prevail. According to policymakers and political scientists, the rising relationship between both countries is posing challenges to the US and its allies countries in the Western world (Dibb, 2019; White House, 2017).

Russia-China military relations were established in the early 1990s when confidence-building measures (CBMs) were introduced between the two countries. It was focused on the joint border of China and Russia with a purpose of demilitarisation and de-securitisation. Russia tried to resolve the border issues with China in early 2000 and the CBMs were the tools to develop a common mechanism of military cooperation and to facilitate common development agenda between both countries

on bilateral military-technical cooperation (MTC). According to this cooperation, both countries primarily focus on common military training and exercise. China has become a closer partner in the context of MTC (Kuo, 2022). The agreement between Russia and China in 2001 allowed China to use Russian military technology (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001).

In 2012, Russia and China entered into a comprehensive strategic deepen partnership which covers several areas, for example, mutual trust and support, equality, common prosperity, and long-lasting friendship. In 2014, both countries superseded the 2012 mutual cooperation and extended the most robust agreement, which has become a reality between Russia and China. This agreement increased mutual bilateral cooperation on political, economic and military issues. There was an agreement of USD 400 billion in trade between both sides, and China agreed to purchase natural gas from Russia for 30 years. The two countries pioneered the international security organisation and initiated the “Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia” (CICA) (Chen & Kinzelbach, 2015). Xi Jinping treats Russia as a key strategic partner in the world and that is why, since he became the President of the PRC, he has made a state visit to Russia more than twenty times (Cunningham, 2017).

Over the past decade, Russia has been declining continuously, the US has successfully achieved consistency, and China is growing multi-dimensionally in several areas and its grip has been increasing across the world. However, some realists expect tensions between Russia and China in the near future, although there is a rather small chance that a tense atmosphere could develop between the two countries. In recent years, tension between the US and China has been growing, although several years before the dynamics of the balance of power theory expected fruitful relations between both countries (Mearsheimer, 2014). China is far behind the US in the context of projecting offensive military action, high quality of technology productions, and consistent economic strength. These elements show that the US has the calibre to do something different in comparison to other economic giants in the world. This kind of ability shows that US power is still larger than that of China across the world (Brooks & Wohlforth, 2016). This study tries to answer the following question: to what extent does the US mitigate the power of the Russia-China alliance in Asia and APR? Further, this article empirically evaluates the results of the research. The research uses primary and secondary data to investigate the answer to the research question and the key findings.

Literature review

The China-Russia relations have longstanding strong defence ties. China's increasing economic opportunities for Russia in the European market. China purchases oil and gas from Russia and both sides reached an agreement in 2008. The Chinese government have multi-dimensional cooperation with Russia and both countries have stronger defence cooperation (Bradshaw, 2014; Røseth, 2017, 2019; Shadrina, 2014). Paul Schwartz (2017) states that China and Russia have had deeper defence cooperation. 2016 is the year known as a banner year for defence relations based on joint exercises and evaluation of technology transfer. Weitsman elaborates that a broader view on bilateral or multilateral cooperation provides some component between signatories on the issues of security (Weitsman, 2003). Snyder says that alliances and coalitions are formally associated between states for the use of military forces or, in specific cases, this kind of alliance could use the powers against other states and coalitions (Snyder, 2007). Russett describes the typology of military cooperation as still relevant among power stakeholders at the global level. During the formation of military alliance and cooperation between the member states it contains features that cover the background of allies' formation (Russett, 1971). According to Leeds and colleagues, the performance of military alliances contains useful indicators of the internal institutionalisation of the alliance (Korolev, 2019).

The character of most alliances is to unite members for additional interests in the form of maintaining power in their respective areas of the world (Walt, 1997, 1997). In recent years, the importance of geopolitical legacies has become more attractive between states. The former US president Bush supported the expansion of global partners to the geoeconomics agenda for trade and business worldwide. The Bush administration shifted the foreign policy agenda toward the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) for deeper trade and commerce partnerships in this region (Kleszczyńska, 2021, p. 130). And the US has been involved in dealing with security issues and tackling maritime piracy. Cooperation at a military level is a binding security guarantee against the aggressor countries (Tertrais, 2004, p. 136). In this context, Russia and China have deepened military cooperation to minimise the US expansion in Eurasia and the Indo-Pacific region. There seems to be speculation concerning the possibility of military ties and their expansion between China and Russia. It is signalling the deep military ties and alliance formation for larger cooperation at the global level between the two countries. Both have a common understanding of US power and Western cooperation. In recent years, the EU relationship with China has been deteriorating on a larger scale (Karaganov, 2020; Kashin, 2019).

There is an opinion spreading in the US-China relations that ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war is caused by the tense environment between Russia and West. The global world order looks unstable after the coronavirus pandemic. The realist theories of international relations are in debate across the world in the midst of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In recent years, the global order started to exist in a new binarism. The one side is the US and its partner countries and another side is the alliances of Russia and China (Wright, 2018). China and Russia are defined as the “axis of authoritarians” (Ellings & Sutter, 2018) and as a quasi-alliance between both countries (Karaganov & Bagchi, 2018; Kashin, 2019). Russia and China are fully against the domination of external forces in their adjacent areas. Both countries have a common understanding to counter the outside forces in their region. The sides agreed to and are against further expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Russia and China have been involved in creating strategic alignment for systematic balance. Both countries’ leaders paved the way for non-formal alliances at the international level. Russia and China have a common understanding to closely work together for direct and indirect support to each other (Korolev, 2016).

The objective of this article is to theoretically use the neoclassical realist approach system for variable interaction and to assess a deeper partnership between Russia and China (Lobell, Ripsman, & Taliaferro, 2009). Russia-China relations rely on multi-prolonged nature, which is based on helping each other in the context of a neoclassical realist model in the path of empirical analysis. BRI projects are spreading all over the world and China focuses on and promotes its culture and language, which is China’s soft power policy to accelerate economic growth. Thus, China’s soft power has grown along with the New Silk Road (NSR) policies in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America (Krickovic, 2017). Russia and China have traditional cultures and the majority of people speak Chinese and Russian languages in the Eurasia region. There are various state-sponsored institutions that have been involved in spreading culture and values in third countries across the world. Joseph Nye, coining the concept of soft power, states that US soft power is unchallenged by either country across the world in the near future. In recent years, China has tried to dominate US policy in Asia. China wants support from Russia to increase its defence strength on land and ocean as well (Nye, 2013).

Data and methods

Russia has been coming closer to Beijing after the Western countries-imposed sanctions. These sanctions have been imposed on Russia due to the conquest of

Crimea. China supports Russia to counterbalance economic stability in the country. Russia and China have long deepened their relations in the Eurasia region (Lo, 2020). Political and economic relations shape strong cooperation in the area of security between both countries. China's People Liberation Army (PLA) has participated in joint military exercises with the Russian Army on various occasions, which have been led by both countries regardless of whether the venues are in China or Russia (Gorenburg, 2020a). The Russian foreign and defence policies increase its influence in the Asian region. China imports a huge amount of military equipment, and also acquires technology. Russia is afraid of US and Western influences in Asia and the Indo-Pacific.

China and Russia are highly vigilant in the Asia Pacific Region and are opposed to the formation of other camps. Both countries are against the position of the US and its strategy for the Indo-Pacific concept in this region. In maritime policy, China and Russia have made consistent efforts to construct an inclusive and open rule base system in APR (Kremlin, 2022). Both Russia and China take seriously the trilateral security partnership between the US, Australia, and the United Kingdom (AUKUS); there is a deeper link in the area of involvement in strategic stability. Russia and China have a common understanding that the AUKUS is a contrary action to the US-led initiatives. The US-led strategy is to gain security mileage over Russia-China in the APR (Bharti, 2022).

Since the era of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), China has traded arms with Russia. Under the security concern, China has engaged with Russia to procure heavy, sophisticated weaponry. In 2015, after a long negotiation with Russia, China signed on a contract with Russia to purchase six battalions of the S-400 anti-aircraft missile system. This deal amounted to totalling USD 1.9 billion (Malle, 2017). Russia had a successful deal with China on the SU-35 fighter jets for USD 2 billion. China has 24 SU-35 fighter jets, incorporated into the Chinese Air Force. Russia has a long-standing relationship with China and this relationship is rated +8.1, which is highly friendly in the global scale. Both countries have a common, identical goal and strategic positions on global issues. Russia and China share a larger border and there are cross-border marriages between the Russians and Chinese on a larger scale. This is a key approach to strengthening the Sino-Russian partnerships in the context of diaspora (Korolev & Portyakov, 2019). The Chinese government has dealt to acquire over 200 Mi-171 medium-range helicopters from Russia. China uses about a thousand Mi-171 (Goldstein & Kozyrev, 2020).

The research and development (R&D) mechanism tracks the military-related joint cooperation to design weapon systems between both countries. However,

China has increased its military equipment and has received technology transferred from Russia under the joint venture programme. China accepts military suppliers from the Russian side without any restrictions. For example, Russia successfully procured the naval diesel engine from a Chinese company (Henan Diesel Engine Industrial company) rather than from a German defence corporation. The joint defence industries were established in the Chinese territory and these units provide weapons for both countries. Thus, there is the production of fighter aircraft and anti-aircraft systems to fulfil the gap in weapons which is the most extensive bilateral joint defence program. China National Aero-Technology Import and Export Corporation and Chernyshev Moscow Machine-Building Enterprise are jointly manufacturing and modernising the Klimov RD-33 turbofan engine. It is useful in light combat aircraft and is the main engine in the Chinese CAC/PAC JF-17, which is a lightweight multi-role combat aircraft (Kuo, 2022).

Table 1. A Comparison of the Economy and Military Metrics of Russia and China

Country	Population in 2022	GDP in 2021	GDP per capita (2021)	Military expenditure (2021)	Research and development (2018)
China	1.41 billion	USD 16.6 trillion	USD 11,819	USD 293 billion	USD 465.2 billion
Russia	142 million	USD 1.7 trillion	USD 11,654	USD 65.9 billion	USD 41.5 billion

Source: CIA World Factbook; International Monetary Fund; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

China seems to be reforming the world order rather than replacing it, because China benefits from the current world order, which is much more suited to its interest at the international level. In 2000, China joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and accelerated its multi-dimensional development in different areas. China praises the country's economic development in a peaceful way rather than military conflicts with its counterparts in South Asia and the South China Sea. While the country faces challenges from the US and India, it is a major player in these areas. China is accelerating the Maritime Silk Road Initiatives (MSRI) instead of becoming involved in a conflict with the US and its allies' powers. Chinese President Xi Jinping is expanding his iconic economic ties around the world through the expansion of the Belt and Road Initiatives. (BRI) (Maizland, 2022).

Defence agreements and military cooperation

China's military cooperation could be divided into two main periods: from 1992–2007, and from 2007 to the present. The first period is an important part of the Chinese and Russian relations after the Cold War. China successfully acquired military equipment on a larger scale, which was developed in the Soviet era and specially made for the use of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The second phase of military cooperation is characterised as a balanced military approach. By 1999, both countries had agreed on the project of Su-27-hitherto, which is one of the largest defence agreements between Russia and China concerning the transfer of technology. The Chinese company Shenyang Aircraft Corporation (SAC) procured a license from Russia to assemble two hundred Su-27 fighter jets. This acquired technology helped to develop China's Shenyang J-11 B fighters (Korolev, 2020a). In May 2015, Putin and Xi Jinping signed an agreement on the joint construction of military helicopters. This agreement was a big deal between the two countries to construct larger military helicopters for mutual use. Another big joint defence programme is the manufacturing of wide-body aircraft. The deal was signed during Chinese Premier Li Keqiang's visit to Moscow in 2014 (Korolev, 2022). There is another Chinese project to acquire and maintain Russia's S-400 anti-aircraft weapons. Until 2007, the People's Republic of China (PRC) successfully acquired 138 combat aircrafts, which have been inducted into the PLA as 76 Sukhoi fighter jets called Su-27 variants, 38 Su-30MKK, and 24 Su-30MK2. Apart from these, Russia supplied 40 Ilyushin heavy lifters and aerial tankers (Muraviev, 2014, p. 172).

Since the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Russia and China have shown immense security partnership. Both countries have demonstrated strong nature of interest in the defence sector in any form of military cooperation. China as an alliance partner of Russia has been pioneering a deeper bilateral military partnership. Moreover, recently new Defence White Paper of China has openly supported military ties with its Russian counterpart (Blank, 2020, p. 257). Russia and China continue to develop the military partnership at a high level to boost the comprehensive strategic partnership in the current international geopolitical approach. It aims to maintain global stability and tries to minimise the US domination in Asia, APR, and Africa. The Russian and Chinese authorities focus on bridges in both countries at various levels, for example, exchange mechanisms, expanding cooperation, joint military training, transfer of technology and equipment and counter-terrorism are core emerging sectors between both countries for extensive cooperation. Both sides agreed to an active partnership with a joint voice of coordination in the international institutions (XinhuaNet, 2019).

Russia and China have jointly developed an early warning system for any kind of missile attack. Russian Tundra satellites and Voronezh modular ground base radar station are being established in the Chinese territory. This system is advanced to provide clear information about incoming missiles, through the interception power it is very much aware of trajectory, speed, target point and other pieces of information. Such kind of advanced interceptor missile system was also developed by the US, the United Kingdom, and France. This joint military integration and interdependence strengthen the position of Russia and China's advanced alliance cooperation. Russia and China have contracts to develop software for this new system worth USD 60 million (Korolev, 2020b).

Chinese President Xi Jinping, a pioneer in military partnership with Russia, visited Russia on his first state visit as the country's president. As a guest of honour, Xi attended Russia's 9th military parade in Moscow in 2013. Military relations with Russia have the highest priority among Chinese scholars (e.g., Wang, Haihan & Zhang, Jian) and political leaders. The question of rebalancing the Asian continent is a prime focus of China against the US domination in the South China Sea and Southeast Asia. China wants to gain peaceful navigation in the Indo-Pacific region, while the US strategy is to counter the Chinese Maritime Silk Road Initiatives (MSRI) (Yu & Sui, 2020, p. 325). China claims that the US strategy for Asia and the Indo-Pacific region is mainly containment of China's rising position. US involvement in this particular region precludes the Chinese stronghold in maritime politics (Wang, 2013; Zhang, 2013).

Russia and China are against the US domination

At the global level, Russia and China have no conflict of interest and both countries agreed to restrict the US challenges across the world. In contrast to Russia-China collaboration, the US and its allies continue to work for strengthening their power. China's first preference is for Russia to cooperate at the global level to counter the US-led allies. Russia is scared of NATO's further expansion near its frontier border. And similar threat for China is in the Taiwan Strait, becoming the focal point of US strategic positioning. Russia and China claim that both cases are the external interference in domestic affairs and violations of the concept of multilateral world order. Both countries agreed in 2001 against military occupation in third countries (Ye, 2022).

Russia and China conduct joint naval exercises and expand military partnership, which creates a high probability of deepening defence cooperation. The US has been

expanding its position with allies in the Mediterranean and Pacific region. Both Russia and China hold additional joint naval exercises that have been conducted in the Mediterranean Sea, the Baltic Sea, and the South China Sea. Thus, these expanded naval exercises encouraged both countries toward their respective purposes, the future theatres which would include both countries in the Indian Ocean, Pacific and the Atlantic region. Russia and China want a long-lasting presence in areas where the US and its allies are shaping a stronger position in the maritime region. Russia is willing to have more visibility in the APR and China seems to be establishing greater visibility in the European maritime areas. In fact, both countries have a common understanding to restrict the US freedom of navigation in the maritime zone and the Western Hemisphere. The Caribbean Sea is important in the context of geoeconomics connectivity in littoral states and Latin America. In the coming days, Russia and China may participate in naval exercises in the Caribbean Sea, organised by Venezuela or Cuba (Gorenburg, 2020b).

Figure 1 shows that Russia has been fulfilling the Chinese military needs since the 1990s. China's armies are fully dependent on Russian defence imports and jointly developing defence systems for China's military modernisation. At the international level, there is full competition between the US and Russia to export their military equipment and technology to third countries across the world. In the Asia region, the Gulf countries are a large market for defence imports from the US, Russia, France, and the UK. Thus, India and Pakistan are big markets for these arms exporting countries.

The increasing military cooperation between Russia and China is indirectly threatening the US strategic policy in Asia and Europe. A nightmarish situation is emerging for the US, and the concept of a two-front war against the US could become a reality in the upcoming changing world order. It seems that the indirect war in Eastern Europe between Russia and China is capable of destroying the concept of "pivot to Asia". According to retired Gen. Ben Hodges, "the United States does not have the capacity to do everything it has to do in Europe and in the Pacific to deal with the Chinese threat".

Discussions and result

According to Mearsheimer, the US political scientist, China is unable to rise peacefully and needs to work out how to become wealthier, and it could be able to become a military superpower that can heavily challenge the US in global politics (Mearsheimer, 2003). The political scientists and China's foreign policymakers

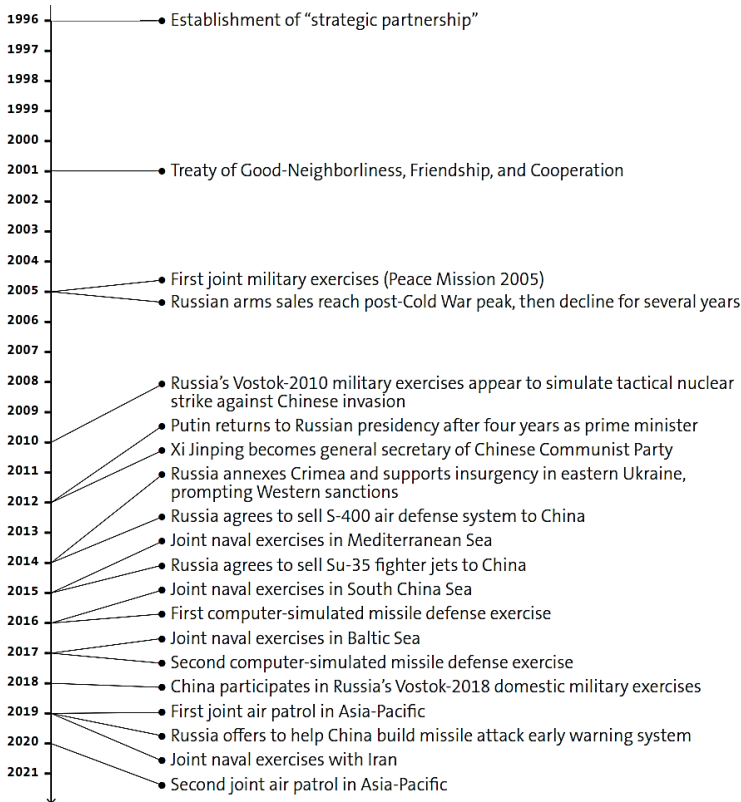


Figure 1. Russia-China Defence Cooperation and Agreement

Source: author's own compilation.

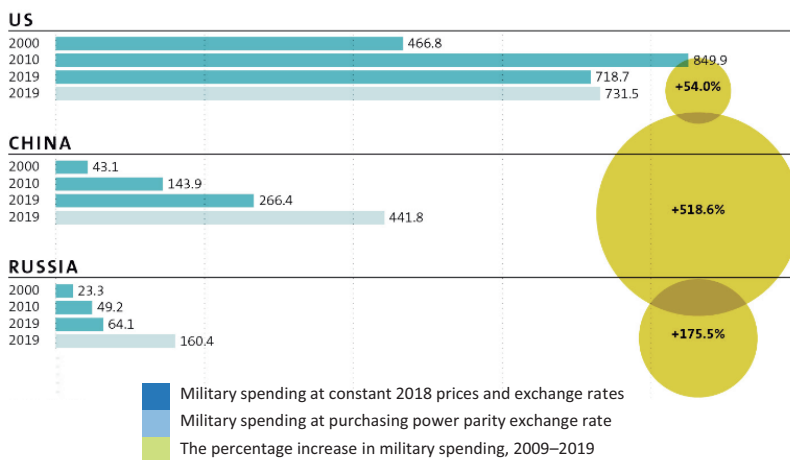


Figure 2. Military Spending in Billions (USD)

Source: <https://www.research-collection.ethz.ch/>.

observe that the relationship between the US and China can never be in a better position. There is huge competition to grasp geopolitical achievements across the world, thus, strategic objectives and overlapping interests are the key approaches of the US and China, which is not a good sign for a peaceful settlement between both countries concerning global issues. China is always looking to Russia to boost the defence sector and both countries have an equal interest in restraining US policy in international politics (Yu & Sui, 2020). China is in a stronger position in APR in comparison to the US naval presence. The US overcame many adversities to make base area in the Pacific Ocean. US objective is not yet fulfilled in the area of Senkaku Islands in the region of the East China Sea.

There is inevitable strategic cooperation between Russia and China in the current world order. And the US policy for Asia concentrates on China's activities in international politics (Ross, 2020). This research suggests the unity of the two countries to balance the power against powerful allies at the global level. Moreover, US policy contains hard lines towards both countries, be it China or Russia. The US diplomats understand that Russia and China are restricting the South China Sea and other parts of the world at every stage of international politics. In recent years, both countries have been tightening and deepening their cooperation on Taiwan, Hongkong, and Ukraine. This research highlights that the existing international order could be effective at a broader level in the upcoming years (Krickovic, 2017). The US has key priorities to limit the Russian-Chinese strategic cooperation through the policy of reducing the promotion of liberal democracy and regime change. Ideas are spreading around the world that the liberal form of democracy is in danger at the international level (Owen, 2020).

Russia and China have formidable military and defence capabilities and possess enduring strength. It seems to come from the vastness of their geography around the Eurasian region and other parts of the world. Russia wants to reassert itself after the collapse of the Soviet Union due to its recovered economic, demographic and political affiliations with China, India and the rest of like-minded countries. Both countries have common global agenda to expand their military influences in the Indian Ocean and the Asia Pacific. Amidst the war between Russia and Ukraine, the Russian economy deteriorated in comparison to China and the US. A country like India decided to purchase Russian gas and oil during this crucial time for Russia. And indirectly Russia is also getting support from China. The US helps Ukraine with military weapons and heavy arms. Thus, the US and China are indirectly involved in the war between Russia and Ukraine. Russian leaders and Putin want to regain the great power position in international politics. But in the upcoming time, it is impossible for Russia to regain the Soviet position as an international

player. China seems to be gaining ground over the US and Xi Jinping believes that China is an influential nation and will achieve its ultimate goal of becoming a world superpower (Deng, 2014).

Russia's GDP is shrinking and is projected to decline from its current level of four percent to three percent by 2030. China's GDP is growing rapidly in comparison to the year 2000, it has quadrupled from 2000, making China the world's second-largest economy. Only the US is ahead of China; in 2000, its GDP was four percent and today it is twelve percent. The United States has 22 percent of the world's GDP. According to the current project of slower growth, China would have a GDP of 50 percent and it is possible that it will overtake the US by 2050 (Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2015).

This study highlights that China's modernisation policy of the PLA is an integral part of its defence strategy against opponents. In recent years, the US military intervention in the South China Sea and Taiwan has intensified. China is military prepared to minimise or restrict the US military position in the region. The Chinese government focused on two big issues; China wants to protect its territorial sovereignty mainly in the South China Sea, because the US's strategy of "pivot to Asia" and "free navigation operations" is increasing tension for China in Asia. The second point is that China's dream is to gain great power and rejuvenate the country. China's understanding is that in the Asia Pacific region and other parts of the world, the US policy is trying to mitigate the China's development opportunities (Yu, 2020, p. 240). China is not a direct military threat to the US beyond Asia and APR. But Russia has an interest in former parts of the USSR. The current Russia-Ukraine war proves Russia's plans for Ukraine, Moldova and the Caucasus region. China has been modernising its defence system and strengthening its military power for many years. But all of China's actions concern its neighbourhood in the APR. The Chinese aggressive policy in Asia and the APR region is an immediate concern for the policy of the US in this region (Carlson, 2021, p. 21). Russia supports Chinese policy in Asia and the concept of the Pacific region. China indirectly supports Russian claims in Eurasia and selected countries of Eastern Europe.

The US President Biden is very keen to get support from European allies. During his speech at the February 2021 Munich Conference on Security, he appealed in front of the European leaders: "We must prepare together for long-term strategic competition with China". Biden's speech at the Munich Security Conference was welcomed by European leaders. It is not easy to establish transatlantic cooperation against Russia and China. According to Merkel, any kind of block formation is not good for humanity and social security. She said it at the World Economic Forum in 2021, further criticising and opposing the establishing of blocks. Germany seconded

Biden's thoughts on security issues in the world and embraced the concept of the struggle of Western democracies. Biden expressed at the Munich Security Conference that people need to unite and fight against authoritarian Russia and China (Sanger, Erlanger, & Cohen, 2021).

Conclusion

These research findings indicate that Russia-China military partnership lies at the heart of shaping the path to becoming an economic giant in the current world order. Russia is eager to boost its economy through the export of military weapons to China. Russia's economy is backsliding and in near future, there is little chance of reforms. This study investigates China's need for a reliable partner to dominate in Asia and APR. In the South Asia region, India is another Asian giant, but China does not have the best relations with India since 1962. Russia from the Eurasia region has been providing all support to China. Both countries need each other to strengthen their geo-economic strategies in Asia, the Pacific and other parts of the world. It is beneficial for the two powers through their collaborative relationship to counter the US-led confinement and containment efforts. The US and China have a similar vision to gain more power to accelerate economic aspirations. Russia's support for China is the geopolitical and geoeconomics strategy to gain security and military superiority over the US presence in APR and the South China Sea. Moreover, Australia, the UK, and the US had formed a security coalition (AUKUS). The US has gained support from India in the Indo-Pacific region and the US-India cooperation seems to dominate Chinese strategy in the region. China's Maritime Economic Silk Road Initiatives are engaging with US policy across the Pacific domain (Yilmaz & Changming, 2020).

The Russia-China relations develop for several international motives. This relationship has some sort of historical roots in the communist legacy. There are many political scientists stating that the authoritarian nature of both countries brought them together in world politics. The strategic relationship between both countries has pioneered deep defence partnerships. Since 1992, China has been a major importer of arms from Russia and the Russian economy has been crushed by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia started arms export to China and India to boost its economy. Russian and Chinese military expansion lags slightly behind the United States. This study finds the key point that China is an emerging economic power not only in Asia. Its economy is booming across the world and dominating the land and sea worldwide. In contrast, the US is trying to maintain its economy

and add like-minded countries to its alliance. Similarly, China's diplomacy is the expansion of the BRI projects at the inter-continental level. Thus, Chinese policy is to connect many countries under BRI and MSRI projects to dominate the US's economic and security policy. This research suggests that it is a great opportunity for further work to find rational results on how Russia-China alliance may want to bypass the US strategy in Asian region as well as in the world politics.

In the current world order, the US is the leading power in the Pacific and Indian Ocean region. Apart from this, Russian-Chinese allies do not have a better mechanism of managing the international system in comparison to the US. The United States and its Western allies believe in democracy, human rights, respect the rule of law, and believe in humanity. Russia and China believe in an authoritarian kind of rule and norms in their countries. Thus, the US is far ahead of Russia-China in world politics in various aspects. US diplomacy successfully minimises Chinese aggression in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region. Finally, the research highlights that the US has strong support from the littoral states in the Indo-Pacific region and obtains open support from India, which is a rival country of China and does not support Chinese policy in the South Asia region. These reasons strengthen the US position in Asia and the Pacific.

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