

# The Effect of the Russia - US Alliance on Turkish Foreign Policy

*Rusya - ABD İttifakının Türk Dış Politikalarına Etkileri*

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## ÖZET

Bu makale, Rusya-ABD ittifakının küresel ve bölgesel düzeydeki etkilerini ele almaktadır. Çalışmada, Trump'ın başkanlık döneminde ABD ve Rusya arasında gelişen ilişkiler ve bu yakınlaşmanın çeşitli alanlardaki iş birlikleri incelenmektedir. Özellikle, enerji, silah kontrolü ve terörle mücadele gibi kritik konularda yakınlaşmaların yaşandığı vurgulanmaktadır. Sonrasında ise bu ittifakın bölge jeopolitiğindeki yansımaları ve Türkiye üzerindeki etkileri analiz edilmektedir. Rusya ve ABD'nin iş birliğinin Orta Doğu'daki güç dinamiklerini nasıl değiştirdiği ve Türkiye'nin bu yeni dengelerden nasıl etkilendiği üzerinde durulmaktadır. Türkiye'nin dış politikası, bu ittifakın oluşturduğu yeni zorluklarla nasıl başa çıktığı ve değişen güç dengelerine göre nasıl konumlandığı tartışılmaktadır. Araştırmada ayrıca Türkiye'nin bu iki kutuplu dünya düzeninde pozisyonunu nasıl belirlemesi gerektiği üzerinde durulmaktadır. İNG-AB-ÇİN ve ABD-RUSYA-HİNDİSTAN eksenleri arasında bir tercih yapmaya zorlanan Türkiye'nin, bu bağlamda attığı adımlar ve izlediği politikalar analiz edilmektedir. Makale, Türk dış politikasının bu süreçte hangi stratejileri benimsediğini ve gelecekte hangi eksenle yer alabileceğine dair öneriler sunmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, Türkiye'nin bu ittifaklar karşısında dengeli bir yaklaşım benimsemesi gerektiği, bölgesel istikrar ve ulusal çıkarları doğrultusunda hareket etmesi gerektiği sonucuna varılmaktadır.

## ABSTRACT

This article examines the global and regional impacts of the Russia-US alliance. In the first section, the developments in US-Russia relations during The Trump presidency and the collaborations in various fields are explored. It highlights the convergences in critical areas such as energy, arms control, and counter-terrorism. The second section analyzes the reflections of this alliance on regional geopolitics and its effects on Türkiye. It discusses how cooperation between Russia and the US has shifted power dynamics in the Middle East and how Türkiye has been affected by these new balances. The adaptation of Türkiye's foreign policy to these new challenges and its positioning amidst changing power dynamics are also discussed. The third section focuses on how Türkiye should define its position in this bipolar world order. Faced with the necessity of choosing between the UK-EU-China and the US-Russia-India axes, the article analyzes Türkiye's steps and policies in this context. It presents suggestions regarding the strategies adopted by Turkish foreign policy during this process, and the potential axis with which it might align in the future. In conclusion, the article argues that Türkiye should adopt a balanced approach to these alliances, acting in accordance with regional stability and national interests.

### Anahtar Kelimeler:

Rusya - ABD İttifakı,  
Jeopolitik Etkiler,  
Trump Dönemi,  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recent developments in international relations are reshaping the global balance of power. At the global level, power centers are undergoing a period of significant transformation. The new world order established in the aftermath of the Cold War has a great impact on this. In particular, the post-Cold War relations between the two major powers in the region, the US and Russia, have led to a shift in the global balance of power in the fields of security, economy, and politics. In other words, these two opposing powers act as key determinants of when, where, and how power is exercised globally (Şahin and Okur, 2024:432).

This article aims to examine the scope of the Russia-US alliance, the reasons for its formation, and the impact of this rapprochement on the world. In particular, it will focus on how these collaborations have gained momentum during the Trump presidency and in which areas strategic partnerships have taken shape. Amid the shifting paradigm of international relations under the Trump administration, cooperation on issues such as energy and arms control emerged as key elements of new geopolitical dynamics. At the same time, the impact of this alliance on power dynamics and crisis points in sensitive regions such as the Middle East is one of the focal points of the article.

At the regional level, the strategic cooperation between Russia and the United States is most evident in regions of turmoil, such as the Middle East. This is particularly evident in the Syrian civil war and the reshaping of power dynamics in Iraq. In the second part of this article, the US's approach to Russia's efforts to increase its influence in the Middle East and Türkiye's role in this new balance of power will be discussed in detail. Due to its historical and geographical position, Türkiye is at the center of such strategic changes and has to revise its foreign policy approach in line with these new realities (Baran, 2024:15).

In addition, the effects of the Russia-US alliance on Turkish foreign policy and the position Türkiye should take in this bipolar order are also among the topics of discussion in this article. The strategic choices Türkiye faces in determining its position between the UK – EU - China (Zhunissova, 2024:53) and the US – Russia - India axes are critical in terms of how they contribute to the country's long-term interests and regional stability. The third part of the paper will examine these strategic choices and Türkiye's best possible foreign policy strategies.

As a result, Türkiye's foreign policy should adopt a balanced and pragmatic approach towards regional balances and global alliances within the reshaped power equations on the world stage. This paper aims to comprehensively analyze the Russia- US alliance, its implications for Turkish foreign policy, and the role Türkiye can play in this new world order. The article aims to provide useful policy recommendations for Türkiye and to reveal trends on how to become an effective player in these new dynamics.

## 2. RUSSIA - US ALLIANCE

Relations between Russia and the United States constitute one of the most complex and strategic interactions in international politics. During the Cold War, the two countries were engaged in ideological and military rivalry (Kostak, 2024:205-206). In this process, both superpowers shaped global politics through the nuclear arms race and regional power struggles. The partial détente, especially during the detente period in the 1970s, helped to stabilize relations with the signing of agreements such as SALT (Kantarıcı, 2012:49).

The 1991 dissolution of the Soviet Union opened the door to a new era in relations between the United States and Russia, a development that reverberated around the world. With the end of the Cold War, Russia took steps to develop closer relations with Western countries. However, despite these positive initiatives, NATO's eastward expansion (Kaya, 2024:83) and the steps taken by the US to ensure global security have increased Russia's security concerns and complicated the strategic relationship between the two countries.

In the early 2000s, the fight against terrorism pushed the two countries to cooperate more closely in certain areas, especially after the September 11 attacks. During this period, the US and Russia had the potential to take a common stance against the global threat of terrorism (Yıldız, 2024:19). However, Vladimir Putin's policies aimed at increasing Russia's influence on the international stage created both new areas of cooperation and points of competition in bilateral relations (Babahanoğlu, 2023:381).

The economic dimension of the alliance is also noteworthy. As a global giant in the energy sector, Russia is an important actor, especially in oil and natural gas. This may provide a basis to encourage cooperation on the security of energy resources and markets (Özdemir G., 2022:91). Moreover, agreements on strategic arms

control and nuclear security, such as START, are considered symbols of the trust the two countries have in each other. These agreements are part of global efforts to limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons and show that both countries bear responsibility in this regard (Alım, 2021:141).

Today, Russia-US relations have taken on a new dimension with the emergence of China as a rapidly rising global power (Kişi, 2025:240). As China has steadily increased its economic and military power, it has added new dynamics to the geopolitical calculations of Russia and the US (Ormecı and Kısacık, 2021:3). This may lead to changes in the strategic positioning of the two countries (Alparslan, 2024:206). In conclusion, a potential alliance between Russia and the United States, although driven by mutual interests and global security concerns, may occasionally be overshadowed by strategic rivalry. The success of such an alliance depends on the overlapping interests of both states and flexibility in foreign policy.

## 2.1. Evolution of Russia-US Relations in the Trump Era

### 2.1.1. Changes in International Relations in the Trump Era

Donald Trump's term as the President of the United States between 2017 and 2021 is seen as a period of significant change in international relations. The Trump administration has attracted attention by displaying an approach that differs from the traditional American foreign policy (Bardakçi, 2023:41). This foreign policy vision, summarized with the slogan "*America First*", has directly affected the US's stance on international agreements and organizations, economic relations, and security strategies (Akdağ, 2019).

Trump has reviewed many international agreements and decided to renegotiate or withdraw from some of them. One example is the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran (Agha Mohammadi, 2024:44). The decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement marked a significant change in the US position on its environmental commitments and led to fluctuations in global environmental policies. Similarly, its withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) had a significant repercussion on global trade policies. These decisions showed that Trump prioritized bilateral agreements and protectionist policies over multilateral cooperation (Demir A., 2022:163).

Traditional alliances like NATO have also faced challenges under the Trump administration. Trump pressured NATO members to increase their defense spending and made statements questioning the US commitment to the alliance. This caused anxiety among European allies and strained transatlantic relations (Tokatlı, 2022:63).

The US policy towards Asia also took a different direction during the Trump era. Direct talks with North Korea were another noteworthy foreign policy move of this period. The summits with Kim Jong-un moved to the center of global security debates. On the other hand, the trade wars launched with China were among the important strategic decisions affecting international trade balances and the global economy (Çokgüçlü, 2021:512).

The Trump administration's relations with Russia have also been characterized by an interesting balancing act. Trump, who has adopted a softer stance towards Russia, has occasionally clashed with his bureaucracy and Congress on this issue. This relationship dynamic has also had a significant impact on US policies in Europe and the Middle East (Battır and Yiğittepe, 2021).

### 2.1.2. Critical Areas of Cooperation

In the relations between Russia and the US, energy, arms control, and counterterrorism stand out as critical areas of cooperation based on the two countries' mutual interests. Due to their strategic importance, these areas assume decisive roles on the international political scene (Yorulmaz et al., 2024:70).

- **Energy Policies and Cooperation:** Energy is a key element of cooperation and competition in the relations between Russia and the United States. As one of the world's largest energy exporters, Russia is a key actor in supplying oil and natural gas, especially to the European market. The US, on the other hand, has increased its energy production thanks to the shale gas revolution and emerged as a new player in global energy markets (Sivış, 2019:1375). Changes in energy policies bring opportunities for cooperation between these two countries. For example, there may be common interests in securing energy supplies and infrastructure. However, at the same time, the US strategy of increasing its LNG (liquefied natural gas) exports in its efforts to reduce Europe's energy dependence is seen as a factor exacerbating competition in Russia's traditional market (Oral, 2020:390).

- **Arms Control and Diplomatic Developments:** Arms control represents one of the most protracted and complex diplomatic contacts between Russia and the United States. Since the Cold War, strategic nuclear weapons have been one of the most carefully managed issues for both countries. Treaties such as START (*Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties*) and INF (*Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty*) are important milestones in arms control and non-proliferation. However, the collapse of the INF Treaty in 2019 and the risk of the expiration of the agreements increased tensions between the two countries and raised uncertainties for global security (Çevirme and Asal, 2024:9-10). Continued diplomatic developments in this area are vital for both countries to fulfill their global responsibilities. New agreements and the extension of existing ones are critical for keeping nuclear proliferation under control worldwide (Limon and Limon, 2023:231).
- **Cooperation in the Fight Against Terrorism:** Counterterrorism is an area where Russia and the United States see it as a strategic imperative to work together against common threats. Especially in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, intelligence sharing, coordination, and international cooperation have become vital for an effective fight against terrorism. Both countries have, at times, cooperated in dismantling regional and international terrorist networks. However, this cooperation may be complicated by cross-border arrangements and political differences. In regions where terrorism and geopolitical interests converge, such as Syria, the strategies of the two countries may not coincide. Despite such challenges, intelligence sharing and operational partnerships in the fight against terrorism have been points of agreement between the two powers from time to time (Demir G., 2022:46).

### 3. REGIONAL GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RUSSIA- US ALLIANCE

#### 3.1. Redefining Power Dynamics in the Middle East

The Middle East has always been a complex and volatile region where the political, military, and economic interests of great powers intersect. Russia and the United States have alternated between cooperation and confrontation in their pursuit of strategic objectives in the region. The developments in countries such as Syria and Iraq have created remarkable interactions and volatile partnerships between the two superpowers (Sezer, 2024:162).

The Syrian civil war has turned into an arena in the Middle East where Russia and the United States have been jockeying for position, trying to protect their interests, and at times being forced to cooperate. While Russia supported the Assad regime with its military intervention in Syria in 2015, the US focused more on the fight against ISIS by assisting opposition groups. Although this situation has led the two countries to stand on different sides, coordination on some issues has become inevitable (Ercan and Tezcan, 2021:71).

The limited cooperation between Russia and the US has been mostly limited to coordinating the use of airspace and exchanging views on counterterrorism operations. However, the reshaped situation in the region following the withdrawal of some US forces in 2019 has allowed Russia to increase its influence in Syria. This balance of power in Syria is highly fragile due to the position of the US-allied Kurdish forces and Türkiye's operations, complicating strategic calculations for the two superpowers (Harunoğulları, 2021:50).

In Iraq, the main focus of the US has been on neutralizing ISIS and stabilizing the country. While Russia has had a more limited military engagement in Iraq, the potential for cooperation, especially in the areas of intelligence sharing and counterterrorism, has been raised from time to time. However, Iran's growing influence over Iraq has indirectly affected US-Russia relations here as well. While both countries support the strengthening of the central government in Iraq, they tend to keep control of this process in their own hands for different reasons (Dağdeviren, 2021:302).

As a pivotal actor in the Middle East, Iran is subject to divergent foreign policy strategies by both Russia and the United States. The US has long seen Iran as a threat to regional stability and has pursued a policy of pressure through sanctions and nuclear agreements. Especially during the Trump administration, the decision to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal was one of the most remarkable steps of this strategy (Kahraman, 2016:32).

Russia, on the other hand, has been trying to improve its cooperation with Iran and deepen bilateral relations. The existence of areas where they can act together in Syria has paved the way for the development of strategic partnerships between the two countries. On the other hand, Russia pursues a policy of balance that does not want Iran to become too powerful in the region (Askeroğlu, 2022:582).

Russia and the United States also have complex relations with key regional countries such as Israel, Saudi

Arabia, and Türkiye. While the United States maintains strong relations with its traditional allies Saudi Arabia and Israel, it sometimes experiences tensions with Türkiye. While Russia tries to balance its relations with Israel over Syria, its dialogue with Saudi Arabia and Türkiye is based on diversifying geopolitical balances and energy policy expansions in the region (Koç, 2020:1958).

In conclusion, the redefinition of power dynamics in the Middle East is shaped around the efforts of Russia and the United States to balance their strategic interests in the region. These powers are playing a complex diplomatic and military game intending to stabilize the Middle East and maximize their national security interests. This process is also being carried out in concert with other regional actors seeking to increase their influence by exploiting power vacuums in the region.

## 3.2. Impacts on Türkiye's Foreign Policy

### 3.2.1. Geopolitical Position, Security Issues, and Related Challenges

Türkiye is geographically located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, which increases its strategic importance. In particular, the crisis in Syria has directly threatened Türkiye's borders and internal security. The influx of refugees increases economic and social pressure on the country and causes security problems in the border regions. Türkiye has been forced to organize military operations against the terrorist threat stemming from the civil war in Syria. This situation creates a constant security and foreign policy problem for Türkiye and limits its room for maneuvering in the international arena (İnan, 2025).

- **Tensions with the United States:** Relations between the United States and Türkiye have historically had ups and downs, but in recent years, they have faced critical problems, especially in the context of Syria. The US support for the YPG/PYD in Syria is perceived as a threat to Türkiye's national security, leading to serious diplomatic frictions between the two countries (Karabulut and Eryılmaz, 2016:18-19). Moreover, the US CAATSA sanctions against Türkiye and steps such as exclusion from the F-35 program have made it difficult to function in the field of defense cooperation. Such developments may have consequences that call into question Türkiye's position as a reliable NATO ally (Dilek and Oğuz, 2021:187).
- **Rapprochement with Russia:** Increasing diplomatic and economic relations with Russia have contributed to Türkiye's search for diversity in its energy security and defense policies. The acquisition of the S-400 air defense systems has pushed Türkiye into a different position within NATO but has also provided Türkiye with an important defense capacity. Improved relations with Russia have allowed Türkiye to increase its influence in the Middle East and play an important role in the peace process in Syria. However, this rapprochement may at times lead to problems in relations with the West and put Türkiye in a strategic dilemma (Yeltin, 2021:67).

### 3.2.2. Opportunities

Türkiye's geographical location provides a strategic position on energy lines and international trade routes. By making good use of this position, Türkiye can play the role of a bridge between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. In terms of energy security, steps can be taken to become a regional energy hub with natural gas and oil pipeline projects. At the same time, trade moves toward Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, creating opportunities for economic growth and the expansion of political spheres of influence (Telli and Kanuşağı, 2024:2).

Within the framework of a multidimensional foreign policy, Türkiye is increasing its maneuverability in the international arena by establishing balanced relations with countries in both the West and the East. This approach provides Türkiye with ample room to forge both economic and strategic partnerships. Ankara can focus on developing new partnerships with Asia, Africa, and Latin America while maintaining its ongoing relations with the European Union (Erdağ, 2013:66).

The competition between Russia and the United States provides an opportunity for Türkiye to make its defense and security policies more flexible. Türkiye's efforts to develop its domestic defense industry increase this flexibility and enable it to take steps towards building an independent defense capacity. By diversifying its defense industry, Türkiye can both encourage local production and develop new partnerships in the global defense market (Tan, 2013).

### 3.3. Reshaping Regional Security and Economic Relations

Changes in regional security and economic relations have led to a reshaping of Türkiye's foreign policy strategies. Türkiye needs to revise its economic relations, especially its security cooperation, in line with increasing threats and opportunities.

In the security domain, Türkiye's relations with NATO remain important due to the strategic advantages offered by the Western alliance and geopolitical tensions. However, recent disagreements have led Türkiye to reconsider its role in the alliance and diversify its security policies. In this context, efforts to establish new partnerships in the field of defense and strengthen the domestic defense industry stand out as strategic steps to enhance Türkiye's national security (Al and Aslan, 2019:498).

Relations with Russia offer important opportunities, especially in the Syrian crisis and defense technology cooperation. Türkiye's balanced relationship with Russia requires Türkiye to pursue equilibrium in its ties with the West while taking advantage of the benefits of this cooperation. Thus, Türkiye can create a wider field of action for itself in terms of active participation in the peace process in Syria and regional stabilization (Babahanoglu, 2023:411).

In economic relations, trade ties with the European Union play a critical role in Türkiye's economic stability. Updating the Customs Union Agreement and modernizing trade could strengthen Türkiye's position in the European market. At the same time, growing economic ties with Asia and the Middle East help Türkiye diversify its markets and build resilience to economic vulnerabilities. Strategic partnerships with China and India, especially in the fields of energy and technology, have the potential to expand Türkiye's economic horizons (Özdemir and Koç Aytekin, 2016:49).

Reviewing relations with other countries in the region is also an important element of Türkiye's foreign policy. Improving relations with countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt, where there have been tensions in the past, is strategically essential. Strengthening economic cooperation, energy agreements, and expanding trade networks with these countries can contribute to maintaining regional stability (Mehmet, 2020:77-78).

## 4. TÜRKİYE'S POSITION IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

### 4.1. Global Axes of Power and Türkiye's Strategic Preferences

On the global political scene, the axes shaped around the great powers play a decisive role in international relations (Kan, 2023:286). For Türkiye, these axes have become elements that need to be carefully evaluated when making strategic choices. The two main axes that stand out are the UK-EU-China and the US-Russia-India axes. Both axes offer different advantages and constraints in terms of multilateral relations as well as economic and security policies.

#### 4.1.1. UK-EU-China Axis

The relations between Türkiye and the European Union go far beyond economic cooperation and include political, cultural, and social ties. Türkiye has maintained an integrated trade relationship with the EU under the Customs Union Agreement since 1996 (Alacahan and Akarsu, 2017:27). This agreement allows Türkiye to engage in duty-free trade with the EU in industrial products. Today, this relationship could be updated to adapt to modern conditions, which would mean expanding its scope, especially in areas such as agriculture, services, and public procurement. Such an update could increase Türkiye's access to the European market and contribute to its economic development.

Politically, although Türkiye's accession negotiations with the EU have at times been difficult, its status as a candidate country to the EU has encouraged various reform processes for Türkiye. In this context, progress has been made in areas such as human rights, rule of law, and democratization. Türkiye's Relations with the EU are important for strengthening geopolitical and strategic cooperation on both sides (Çalışkan, 2023:351).

After leaving the EU, the UK has sought to further deepen its relations with Türkiye at the bilateral level. Brexit accelerated the UK's search for new trade partnerships, which led to the signing of a Free Trade Agreement with Türkiye. This agreement offers customs duty exemptions, especially on industrial products, while maintaining

the existing trade volume. It may also allow for increased cooperation in the services and innovative technology sectors. There is also potential for deepening cooperation in areas such as tourism, education, and investment (Köse, 2022:32).

The strategic cooperation between the UK and Türkiye allows for the expansion of cooperation in the defense industry and energy sectors. Britain's new position on the global stage offers opportunities for Türkiye to strengthen cooperation both in Eurasia and the Middle East (Tulgar, 2024:59).

China has emerged as an important economic partner for Türkiye due to its rising role in the global economy (Kılıç, 2024:123). Trade between Türkiye and China has been developing, especially within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Ateş and Seymen, 2022:281-282). This project is a large-scale infrastructure and economic development initiative that aims to revitalize the historic Silk Road. Türkiye's participation in this initiative could allow the country to develop its logistics and transportation infrastructure, which could enable Türkiye to become an important trade bridge in the Eurasian region (Altun et al., 2021:82).

The energy sector is also an important area of cooperation between China and Türkiye. By attracting Chinese energy investments, Türkiye can increase its energy security and ensure energy diversification. China's progress in renewable energy technologies is in line with Türkiye's goals in this field (Akbal, 2021:124).

However, there are some sensitivities that need to be taken into account in relations with China. Türkiye should follow a careful policy to balance China's economic influence in the region. It is important to shape its relations in a way to protect its sovereignty and ensures the independence of its economy from external influences (Tiryaki and Ekinici, 2023).

In conclusion, Türkiye must maintain a balance in its relations with the UK-EU-China axis to both reap economic benefits and maintain its strategic autonomy. By diversifying and deepening its relations with the powers in this axis, Türkiye can gain a stronger position in the international arena and gain an advantage in achieving its long-term development goals.

#### **4.1.2. US – Russia - India Axis**

The United States has been one of Türkiye's most important NATO allies for many years. The Alliance provides Türkiye with strategic security guarantees and offers the concept of deterrence in regional conflicts. However, on some issues, such as Syria policy, the fight against terrorism, and regional energy security, Türkiye sometimes experiences strategic conflicts of interest. Türkiye's strained relations with the United States have taken on a new dimension, especially after the acquisition of the S-400 air defense systems from Russia. This led to Türkiye's exclusion from the US F-35 program and a strong process in bilateral relations (Canar, 2024:66-67).

To balance its relations with the United States, Türkiye aims to increase its defense independence and develop its domestic defense industry. In this framework, Türkiye aims to reduce external dependence through alternative defense partnerships and increasing domestic production capacity. In challenging regional conditions, Türkiye's continued dialogue with the United States through a strengthened and multilayered cooperation framework can preserve its strategic balance (Bayraklı, 2024:208-213).

Türkiye's relations with Russia have diversified due to geographical neighborhood, energy dependence, and regional policies. In the Syrian conflict, Türkiye and Russia have been able to cooperate despite sometimes taking different positions. This relationship has enabled us to keep the conflicts under control through a dialogue embodied in the Astana Process (Dinçer, 2023:52-53).

Energy cooperation constitutes one of the most important dimensions of relations with Russia. Türkiye imports a large part of its natural gas needs from Russia, and this dependence highlights the fact that energy is a strategic element of the relationship between the two countries. In addition, large-scale energy projects such as the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant have also contributed to the deepening of Russian-Turkish relations. However, military and economic relations with Russia can sometimes put relations with the West in a difficult position. Therefore, Türkiye should pursue a delicate balancing policy in its relations with Russia while keeping its relations with the Western world at a sustainable level (Al, 2024:21).

In recent years, India has attracted attention as a global actor with its economic growth, population advantage, and technological developments. Türkiye's relations with India can provide mutual benefits, especially in the fields of trade, technology, and the defense industry. Increasing trade cooperation between Türkiye and India in

recent years allows for deepening mutual investment and economic relations. India's position in the information technology and software sectors can offer Türkiye opportunities for cooperation in technology transfer and innovation. There is also potential for mutual trade in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, and agriculture (Al and Akman, 2017:88-89).

Moreover, the South Asia and the Pacific region, where India is expanding its influence, offers new diplomatic and economic opening opportunities for Türkiye. In this context, deepening Türkiye's relations with India could be important in terms of developing a strategic balance in the Asia-Pacific region as well as new markets and partnerships in this region (Akdemir and İncili, 2024:456).

In conclusion, Türkiye's strategic choices on the US-Russia-India axis are balanced with a multidimensional foreign policy approach. Deepening relations with all three countries would help Türkiye increase its global economic and political influence. By assuming a balancing role among these global powers, Türkiye endeavors to protect its national interests in the best way possible.

#### 4.2. Foreign Policy Strategies

A balanced and pragmatic approach play a central role in Türkiye's foreign policy. First, multilateral diplomacy allows Türkiye to have a broader influence in the international arena. Establishing balanced relations with multiple centers of power frees Türkiye from dependence on a single axis, giving it flexibility and maneuverability in the international arena. This approach paves the way for Türkiye to develop and maintain strong relations with both the West and the East (Donghui, 2024:414).

A comprehensive approach to economic partnerships is another important dimension of foreign policy strategies. Türkiye needs to diversify its trade and investment partnerships to enhance its economic security. Diversifying energy sources and increasing access to new markets are critical to ensuring economic independence. At the same time, the development of a domestic and national defense industry contributes to meeting Türkiye's security needs with its resources and reducing external dependence (Balçı, 2023:203-204).

Cultural and humanitarian diplomacy offers important opportunities for Türkiye to strengthen its soft power elements. Türkiye can use its historical and cultural heritage to build a positive image in the international arena. Developing solution-oriented approaches to global problems and organizing cultural events in this context will not only contribute to Türkiye's international prestige but will also help build positive relations between peoples (Ünalı, 2019:140).

In addition, Türkiye's role as a mediator in conflict zones and its active participation in peace processes an important diplomatic initiatives to ensure regional stability. Türkiye should increase cooperation with regional countries on critical security issues such as counterterrorism and border security. Improving intelligence and security sharing will help Türkiye effectively position itself as part of the security architectures in the region (Yumuşak, 2023:169).

**Table 1.** Possible Scenarios and Their Consequences

Scenario	Description	Possible outcomes
<b>Strengthening Relations with the West</b>	Updating the Customs Union Agreement with the EU and strengthening its role in NATO (Afşar, 2022:899).	Economic growth, increased investment, technology transfer; but relations with Russia and China may need to be re- evaluated (Bülbül and Kaygısız, 2023:59).
<b>Asia-Pacific Focused Strategy</b>	Deepening economic and trade ties through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Alperen, 2018:19-20).	Increased activity in global economic networks, energy, and supply chain diversification; the need to balance relations with the West (Özkoç, 2024:39).
<b>Regional Mediation and Peacebuilding</b>	Active contribution to peace processes in the Middle East, Caucasus, and Eastern Mediterranean (Kısacık and Gülbay, 2022:438).	Increased regional leadership and reputation; the need to develop policies that are resilient to tough diplomatic efforts and pressures.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

Relations between Russia and the United States are among the most complex interactions in international politics, and this dynamic continues to influence Türkiye's foreign policy preferences. The historical rivalry and occasional cooperation between the two superpowers is one of the most important factors shaping Türkiye's strategic positioning and regional policies. The new post-Cold War world order has encouraged Türkiye to



develop a multifaceted foreign policy.

In recent years, as relations with the United States and Russia have fluctuated, how Türkiye balances the two countries has been among the most debated issues in foreign policy. Strategic partnerships with these countries have required Türkiye to reassess their impact on regional security, economic growth, and energy policies. A careful policy in relations with both powers, especially in conflict zones such as Syria, has also reinforced Türkiye's role as a regional stabilizer.

Türkiye is endeavoring to use its status as a bridge between the Atlantic and Eurasia to strengthen its position in the international system. Diversifying its economic and strategic cooperation has deepened its ties with the West while strengthening its ties with the rising powers in the Asia-Pacific. Developing trade relations and strategic partnerships in the UK-EU-China triangle have contributed to Türkiye's economic growth and increased its international prestige.

Energy and infrastructure cooperation with Russia and China have increased Türkiye's energy security while requiring a careful balancing of its integration with the Western world. Türkiye's steps in areas such as the development of its domestic defense industry and technology transfer are important strategic moves to reduce external dependence. Increasing domestic production capacity and improving multilateral diplomatic relations allow Türkiye to pursue a more independent path in defense and security.

Economic partnerships and trade agreements have also been an important part of Türkiye's foreign policy. The modernization of the Customs Union Agreement with the European Union is seen as an opportunity to strengthen Türkiye's position in the Western market. At the same time, economic expansions to the Middle East and Africa serve to diversify Türkiye's access to global trade networks and reduce economic vulnerabilities.

In its quest for strategic autonomy, Türkiye's multidimensional policies can enable it to take advantage of the competition among global powers and protect its national interests. However, this process requires complex diplomatic balances and a flexible management approach. Türkiye will become a more effective actor in the international arena if it develops new partnerships and collaborations in the diplomatic arena and follows a strategy in line with global and regional dynamics. While establishing these balances, Türkiye's preparedness for the changes on the global stage will enable it to achieve its peace and development goals in the long term.

#### **YAZAR BEYANI / AUTHORS' DECLARATION:**

Bu makale Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine uygundur. Beyan edilecek herhangi bir çıkar çatışması yoktur. Araştırmancının ortaya konulmasında herhangi bir mali destek alınmamıştır. Makale yazım ve intihal/benzerlik açısından kontrol edilmiştir. Makale, “*en az iki dış hakem*” ve “*çift taraflı körleme*” yöntemi ile değerlendirilmiştir. Yazar(lar), dergiye imzalı “*Telif Devir Formu*” belgesi göndermişlerdir. Mevcut çalışma için mevzuat gereği etik izni alınmaya ihtiyaç yoktur. Bu konuda yazarlar tarafından dergiye “*Etik İznine Gerek Olmadığına Dair Beyan Formu*” gönderilmiştir. / This paper complies with Research and Publication Ethics, has no conflict of interest to declare, and has received no financial support. The article has been checked for spelling and plagiarism/similarity. The article was evaluated by "at least two external referees" and "double blinding" method. The author(s) sent a signed "Copyright Transfer Form" to the journal. There is no need to obtain ethical permission for the current study as per the legislation. The "Declaration Form Regarding No Ethics Permission Required" was sent to the journal by the authors on this subject.

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