

**R.T.  
YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL  
RELATIONS**

**MASTER OF ARTS THESIS**

## **CHINA'S REGIONAL SECURITY POLICY**

**EMINE TEZEL  
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**ADVISOR  
Prof. Dr. CENGİZ ÇAĞLA**

**ISTANBUL  
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**DissertationDate:05/10/2020**

**The thesis has been found successful with consensus**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **CHINA'S REGIONAL SECURITY POLICY EMINE TEZEL MAY, 2020**

This thesis focuses on the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue within the general framework of 'China's Regional Security Policy'. Firstly, the US-China bilateral relations and the changing nature of both countries' relationship in the Asia-Pacific region is significant. The South China Sea and the East China Sea have always been a hot topic, particularly due to territorial disputes, and over time new problems have aroused concerning both seas. The increasing importance of the oil and gas exploration has enhanced in direct proportion to sovereignty claims. China has adopted the New Silk Road project under the leadership of Xi Jinping, which is associated with the assertive behavior of the country. The Belt and Road Initiative consists of two interrelated projects: Silk and Road Economic Belt (SREB) and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. While the SREB is planned to reconstruct and modernize the traditional silk road which would connect Central and South Asia with Europe, the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) is designed to integrate the maritime countries notably in Southeast and South Asia. The Quad might be founded a short time ago; however, the basis of the establishment goes back to the relief activities after the tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004. The first Quad attempt failed due to the wariness of bilateral relations with China. Nevertheless, in the light of the developments in the Asia-Pacific or Indo-Pacific (the new term that is used to describe the region especially by the Quad members) and China's actions have led the Quad member's want to try it again. Even though the future of the dialogue remains uncertain, it is still promising.

**Keywords:** Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, South China Sea, East China Sea, Territorial Disputes, Belt and Road Initiative

## ÖZ

### ÇİN'İN BÖLGESEL GÜVENLİK POLİTİKASI EMINE TEZEL MAYIS, 2020

Bu tez ‘Çin’in Bölgesel Güvenlik Politikası’ genel çerçevesi içerisinde ‘Dört Taraflı Güvenlik Diyalogu’na odaklanmaktadır. İlk olarak, ABD-Çin ikili ilişkileri ve her iki ülkenin Asya-Pasifik bölgesindeki ilişkilerinin değişen doğası önemlidir. Güney Çin Denizi ve Doğu Çin Denizi, özellikle toprak anlaşmazlıkları nedeniyle her zaman sıcak bir konu olmuştur ve zaman içerisinde her iki denizle ilgili yeni sorunlar ortaya çıkmıştır. Petrol ve gaz aramalarının artan önemi egemenlik iddialarıyla doğru orantılıdır. Çin’in, Xi Jinping önderliğinde Yeni İpek Yolu projesini benimsemesi ülkenin agresif davranışlarıyla ilişkilendirilmiştir. Kuşak ve Yol Girişimi birbiriyle ilişkili iki projeden oluşmaktadır: İpek Yolu Ekonomik Kuşağı ve 21. Yüzyıl Deniz İpek Yolu. İpek Yolu Ekonomik Kuşağı, Orta ve Güney Asya’yı Avrupa’ya bağlayacak geleneksel ipek yolunu yeniden inşa ve modernize etmesi planlanırken; Deniz İpek Yolu, deniz ülkelerini özellikle de Güneydoğu ve Güney Asya’ya entegre etmek için tasarlanmıştır. Dörtlü Diyalog kısa süre önce kurulmuş olmasına rağmen kuruluşunun temeli 2004 yılında Hint Okyanusu’ndaki tsunamiden sonraki yardım faaliyetlerine dayanmaktadır. İlk Dörtlü Güvenlik Diyalogu girişimi Çin’le ikili ilişkilerdeki ihtiyatlılık nedeniyle başarısız oldu. Bununla birlikte, Asya -Pasifik veya Hint-Pasifik (özellikle Dörtlü Diyalog üyeleri tarafından bölgeyi tanımlamak için kullanılan yeni terim) ve Çin’in eylemleri Dörtlü üyelerin yeniden denemek istemesine yol açtı. Diyalogun geleceği belirsizliğini korusa da hala umut vermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Dört Taraflı Güvenlik Diyalogu, Güney Çin Denizi, Doğu Çin Denizi, Toprak Anlaşmazlıkları, Kuşak ve Yol Girişimi

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Istanbul May, 2020

Emine Tezel

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AAGC:</b>	Asia-Africa Growth Corridor
<b>ADB:</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>ADIZ:</b>	Air Defense Identification Zone
<b>AIIB:</b>	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
<b>ARF:</b>	ASEAN Regional Forum
<b>ASEAN:</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>BRI:</b>	Belt and Road Initiative
<b>CICA:</b> in Asia	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures
<b>CMS:</b>	China Marine Surveillance
<b>CoC:</b>	Code of Conduct in the South China Sea
<b>CPEC:</b>	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
<b>CSCAP:</b>	Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific
<b>CTBT:</b>	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
<b>DoC:</b>	Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea
<b>ECS:</b>	East China Sea
<b>EEZ:</b>	Exclusive Economic Zone
<b>EIA:</b>	US Energy Information Administration
<b>FOIP:</b>	Free and Open Indo-Pacific
<b>IMF:</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>LNG:</b>	Liquefied Natural Gas
<b>MEA:</b>	Ministry of External Affairs
<b>MSR:</b>	Maritime Silk Road
<b>NEACD:</b>	Northeast Asia Cooperation and Development
<b>NPC:</b>	National People's Congress
<b>NPT:</b>	Non-Proliferation Treaty
<b>NSG:</b>	Nuclear Suppliers Group
<b>NSS:</b>	National Security Strategy
<b>OBOR:</b>	One Belt One Road
<b>ONGC:</b>	Oil and Natural Gas Company

<b>PLA:</b>	People’s Liberation Army
<b>PBoC:</b>	People’s Bank of China
<b>PRC:</b>	People’s Republic of China
<b>RoC:</b>	Republic of China (Taiwan)
<b>SCS:</b>	South China Sea
<b>SOA:</b>	State Oceanic Administration
<b>SREB:</b>	Silk Road Economic Belt
<b>QUAD:</b>	Quadrilateral Security Dialogue
<b>TCG:</b>	The Tsunami Core Group
<b>TPP:</b>	Trans-Pacific Partnership
<b>UNCLOS:</b>	United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea
<b>UNSC:</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>UNTAC:</b>	United Nations Transitional Authority of Cambodia
<b>WB:</b>	World Bank
<b>WTO:</b>	World Trade Organization

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Chinese foreign policy and their objectives have transformed over the years. Especially, it is naturally more remarkable how the country evolved before and after the Cold War. Although there is no single policy during the whole time, we could say that the Chinese government's main focus is to keep the country as integrated and develop it without attracting too much attention. I personally believe that China has pursued this policy successfully up until the Xi Jinping administration. On the other hand, the relationship between China and the United States has been changeable over time due to international affairs and leadership transformation in both countries. At the end of World War II, the US became one of the most prominent parties in the Asia Pacific, while China focused on internal politics and pursued a peaceful coexistence policy on the region. The so-called weakness of China by Chinese leaders had continued almost 30 years, and when the Deng Xiaoping came to power, the external policies of the PRC government had started to shift. Especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, China has tried to build closer ties with the neighbor countries by breaking the reluctance against multilateral institutions and engaged with the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as commenced the talks of territorial disputes with the Central and Southeast Asian countries. However, it can be said that China's maritime approach did not completely overlap with its general foreign policy.

The modern territorial claims over the South China Sea (SCS) and East China Sea (ECS) have been made as early as 1951 by the declaration of China's sovereignty over the Paracel and Spratly Islands in 1951. Throughout the years, the legal basis is mostly based on the historical claims and "nine-dashed line", which supported the Chinese sovereignty, alleges that cover 80-90% of the SCS. These areas are highly disputed by the PRC, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, and Vietnam. Also, the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands are disputed between Japan and China which is currently under the control of the Japanese government. It should be noted that the Obama government has clearly expressed for the first time

that the Senkaku islands are under the protection of Article 5 of the 1960 Treaty, which mentions territories with an existing Japanese administration like the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. Another issue that creates problems related to maritime disputes is the competition over the oil and energy resources which mainly coincide with the territorial claims of the littoral countries.

Notably, including China, Vietnam, and the Philippines has started to explore oil and gas in their claimed area, which led the Chinese government to take action against them. Besides, the involvement of the other countries via contracts that have been signed with other claimants of the SCS and the increased importance of the energy resources by China has added to the situation heightened significance. Furthermore, the leadership has changed in China which was seen that the Chinese government had taken major steps and became more assertive in international affairs. One of the actions that were taken under the Xi Jinping administration was the formation of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was composed of the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road. While the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) is designed to integrate the maritime countries notably in Southeast and South Asia, the SREB is planned to reconstruct and modernize the traditional silk road which would connect the Central and South Asia with Europe. To carry out the integration, ports, railways, and roads would build which will put China at the center of the economic activity. Six land corridors that have been identified: the China-Mongolia-Russia corridor, the China-Central Asia-West Asia corridor, the China-Indochina Peninsula corridor, the new Eurasian Continental Bridge, the China-Pakistan corridor, and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar corridor. At the same time, China has aimed to fund these projects itself and established the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and also used the People's Bank of China (PBoC).

In the light of these developments in the Asia-Pacific region, the four countries consisting of Australia, India, Japan, and the US had initiated a Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) attempt in 2007, which the idea was shaped during the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004. The first steps had taken by the leadership of Japan with notions such as freedom and prosperity in broader Asia. However, the tentative behaviors and the leadership changes in the member countries

has brought its end of the initial Quad attempt. Ten years later, the four countries relaunched the Quad in 2017. During the period between Quad 1.0 and Quad 2.0, three-tiered dialogues have continued (Australia-Japan-the US, India-Japan-the US, and Australia-India-Japan dialogues), some joint military exercises took place, and the perception of China has altered. Even though there are discussions about the purpose of the new security dialogue and the ambiguity of the future of the Quad, the security dialogue maintains its existence.

### **Evaluation of Sources**

This thesis will be based on qualitative analyses of the data collected towards the issues mentioned above. Secondary sources will be the main sources for the thesis due to limited access to the primary sources. The issue of “China’s Regional Security Policy” is examined within the framework of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). Therefore, it should be marked that the topic of the research is relatively new to the area of international affairs, which brings advantages and disadvantages within itself. Firstly, it is not consumed as much as the other subjects of the Asia-Pacific relations due to the newness of the issue. Secondly, it directly reduces the amount of time and geographical area to study due to the fact that subject is already self-limited. Nevertheless, the very same reasons also cause negative effects. On the one hand, not many people have studied in the related issue, or the studies are not too comprehensive so far. On the other hand, the scope and purpose of the security dialogue are still uncertain as well as the expected outcome of the member countries. Even so, the subject is open to development, and the member countries hold the power of the influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Finally, as far as I am concerned, the resources have been divided into two groups with or without intention. In the first group, it is clear that the text is written with a Westernized and hegemonic way. On the other hand, the second group has usually focused the relationship with powers such as the US instead of given enough place for the regional power struggle or relationships. As for me, it was difficult to find the necessary information I was looking for according to the pattern I created in my mind. Hopefully, with the changes in international affairs as well as changes of mindset, the number of reliable sources from which we can have a more diverse perspective increase.

## **Outline of the Thesis**

This thesis is planned to have an explanatory background about the Chinese foreign and security policy and the alterations behind its objectives. That is why it is quite possible to think that the first chapter's sole purpose is to complement the whole and create a meaningful perspective overall thesis. To be able to understand the process of how the Quad has been constituted and why a new security organization was necessary, the remaining of the thesis is divided into four chapters: a review of the US-China relations, China's regional security policy: maritime issues, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and quadrilateral security dialogue. In the first chapter, the US-China relations are reviewed from World War II to 2011, the Obama administration's rebalancing strategy. Not to lose the main focus, China's relations with other countries are not mentioned unless it is related to international engagement. Following that, the US-China relations are studied in the context of the Asia-Pacific region, which includes China's changing attitude toward Asian countries and the position that the US has taken against the PRC. In the second chapter, China's regional security policy is analyzed under the maritime disputes concerning the South China Sea (SCS) and the East China Sea (ECS). This chapter focuses on territorial disputes and competition over oil and gas exploration. In the third chapter, the BRI initiative, the purpose of the initiative, why it is vital to China, and the response and the fears of the Quad members are discussed. In the final chapter, the creation process of the Quad, the period between the two Quad's, the revival of it, and the future of the dialogue is examined. Generally, the chapters are considered as complementary puzzle pieces which give a holistic approach.

## **Research Questions**

The main questions of the research: How did the idea of constituting the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue take shape? and what kind of factors were affected in the foundation of the Quad?

The reason of having previous chapters before Quad is basically to understand why these four states needed to build a new security dialogue. This question can be answered only what kind of changes happened in the Asia-Pacific relations and how the regional powers responded to it. I think the essential subject would be maritime disputes. Almost all of the conflicts underlying reasons are

related to the sharing of naval areas. Both of the East China Sea and the South China Sea have overlapping historical claims, and when the highly rich oil and gas reserves add to the equation, it becomes more problematic. Also, the US does not want to give up its long-standing dominance in the Asia-Pacific region. However, China continues to rise and expands its scope of influence all over the world. China's approach to disputes with countries in the area can be defined as dismissive. So, how does China achieve this? This is where the development plans, projects as the BRI brings come into play. In the long term, the regional states waive the control over their economy, even have to make political concessions. The Chinese government's tactic can be called modern "divide and conquer". In this thesis, I have tried to analyze why a new security dialogue consisting of such capable countries is important and how they can affect the region's future if their perspectives change.

-How has China's foreign and security policy changed?

-How have China-American relations changed after the Second World War until the rebalance strategy?

-What are China's historical claims in the South China Sea and the East China Sea?

-What are the other coastal states approach in both sea, and what are their demands?

-What are the purposes of the Belt and Road Initiative?

-Why did the first Quad attempts fail?

-What did change between Quad 1.0 and Quad 2.0 in the member countries and their perception?

-What were the main objectives of the second Quad meeting?

-What was the outcome of the second Quad meeting?

-Does it possible to evolve into a Quad-plus organization?

-What are the prospects of the Quad and China's reaction to it?

### **Methodology and Methods**

This thesis can be defined as a kind of explanatory research in terms of its purposes. The study is based on the information of the existing literature, which will focus on cases and changes of both internal and external alterations. Three primary sources have been used, especially while scrutinizing the Quadrilateral Security

Dialogue: official statements, articles including policy reports, and news. At first, statements made by foreign ministers and deputies reflect a countries facade in international relations. While evaluating those kinds of resources, discursive analysis becomes prominent, and if the subject is a multi-party institution like in the Quad, a comparative analysis is also necessary. Initially, it should be looked at that what is included in the statements by each member and which elements have been left outside of it. Hence, the diversification of objectives and expectations of the member countries can be seen through discourse and comparative analysis. Then, to be able to do an in-depth reading, articles related to the subject are reviewed, and the development stages are examined in a historical array. It helped to see the disposition of the four countries and the alteration of their foreign policy behaviors, which enables foreign policy analysis. Lastly, the news is the sources of information that can be consumed faster, and they provide the opportunity to demonstrate the changes swifter because it might take time to show the flow of information in a quickly evolving international affairs area. Furthermore, the thesis mentions the leadership changes from time to time which will show the overall impact on the foreign policy decision and actions that are or will be taken.

## **2. AN OVERVIEW OF CHINESE FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY**

At the end of World War II, two countries became the most powerful states among the others, which were the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). These two countries having a completely different view of politics and ideology, forced the remaining states to choose. It is possible to divide the Cold War period into two parts to demonstrate different approaches of both superpowers and China's foreign and security policy changes. The first part starts from 1945 to the 1970s, and the second part comprehends from the 1970s to 1990. Also, I think China's domestic governance and international relations are directly related to the leadership and their perspectives. That's why I plan to evaluate the transformations through the change of the leadership and the international arena in the aftermath of the Cold War.

### **2.1. During Cold War**

The first and one of the most influential leaders of the modern Chinese political history was Mao Zedong. Following the People's Republic of China's foundation in 1949, the Chinese Communist Party leader Mao decided to trail the Soviet Union path. One of the reasons was that the American government was supported the nationalist while the Soviet Union was supporting the communists during the Civil War prior to the foundation. Right after, China and the Soviet Union signed a Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance. It contained a mutual defense article concerning in any case of direct or indirect Japanese aggression.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, China had copied almost all Soviet institutions like the economic planning system, education, health, and bureaucratic structures naming it as the largest technology transfer in history. When the outbreak of the Korean War and

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<sup>1</sup> "Conclusion of the 'Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance'", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/ziliao\\_665539/3602\\_665543/3604\\_665547/t18011.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/ziliao_665539/3602_665543/3604_665547/t18011.shtml) [28.07.2020].

1954 Taiwan Strait Crisis added, the Sino-American relations remained broken until the Nixon administration in 1971-72. However, these two incidents led the Chinese official to think about the dependency of their relations with the Soviet Union. The Afro-Asian or Bandung Conference in 1955 held particular importance for Chinese foreign policy. On the one hand, the Five Principle of Peaceful Coexistence declared formerly by Zhou Enlai, entered the conference's final statement. On the other hand, it also helped China develop external ties with African and Asian countries, which led to more foreign aid programs with these countries.<sup>2</sup> The Sino-Soviet split has started ideologically and then became prominent with the withdrawal of the Soviet advisors and experts in 1960. Two years later, a conflict occurred between China and India over sovereignty in both countries' border regions triggered by the Chinese road construction. After the split, the Soviet Union militarily supported India while the US and Britain refused to sell advanced ammunition.<sup>3</sup> During the 1960s, China had preferred the self-reliance, and premier Enlai visited some countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe. Through diplomatic relationships with the non-aligned countries, China wanted to gain friends among the "Free World".

In 1965, Mao launched the Cultural Revolution, which was the lowest point of the government's foreign policy. There were almost none major pronouncements, and contacts were limited with other friendly nations consisting of occasional visits.<sup>4</sup> This period also remarks the radical opposition against the US, USSR, and their allies, which caused China to lose its ground in the eyes of some of the Asian countries such as North Korea, North Vietnam, Cambodia, and Burma. Additionally, the Chinese government's support of insurgencies toward various non-communist administrations in Southeast Asia highlighted the country's image as a threat to the region. Nonetheless, a possible annexation or nuclear strike coming from the Soviet side led the Chinese officials to step back.<sup>5</sup> At the beginning of the 1970s marks a turning point for Chinese foreign policy, which can be accepted as the Sino-American rapprochement era. Yet, the international power struggle over the Asia

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<sup>2</sup> Stuart Harris, **China's Foreign Policy** (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014): 36.

<sup>3</sup> P. R. Chari, "Indo-Soviet Military Cooperation: A Review", **Asian Survey**, Vol. 19, No. 3 (March 1979): 232.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Yahuda, **Towards the End of Isolationism: China's Foreign Policy After Mao** (Hong Kong: The Macmillan Press, 1983), 67.

<sup>5</sup> Robert G. Sutter, "China's 'backyard': relations with the Korean Peninsula and Southeast Asia", **Handbook of China's International Relations**, ed. Shaun Breslin (London: Routledge, 2010): 147-156.

region between the US, China, and USSR had continued. In 1973, China favored the US-North Vietnam compromise at the Paris peace conference, while assuring Thailand and the Philippines (known as US allies) improving their ties with the country. After the Mao administration, Deng Xiaoping rose to the leadership and initiated specific reforms. Deng aimed to have an independent foreign policy while pursuing a peaceful development strategy. This policy targeted protecting sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as creating an international environment suitable for China's economic opening up and modernization. The Deng administration's most significant challenges were mainly domestic that came from the Chinese Communist Party. To hinder a complete "bourgeoisie liberalization", Deng stressed the four cardinal principles: socialist road, the proletarian dictatorship of the CCP, Marxism-Leninism, and Mao thought.<sup>6</sup> The political stagnation and the reforms brought by rapid social and economic adjustments created tension between the state and society. The tension showed itself in mass demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in 1989, which induced the Sino-American split. The details of the incidents will be explained in the next chapter more clearly. The same year, the whole world witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall which was an important symbol that divided the East and West. Even though the Cold War's official end was two years later, certain incidents in 1989 (the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the communist states of Eastern Europe) convinced people that the war had already finished. Deng Xiaoping's 24 characters strategy occurred approximately at that time and stated as "Observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership".<sup>7</sup> This was a strategic move to prove China's determination about the "reform and opening up" plans did not involve challenges to America's position.

## 2.2. Post-Cold War

It is possible to conclude that the Chinese government's perception had changed with the end of the Cold War. The Chinese officials became more open to building multilateral relations by economic exchange and international organizations.

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<sup>6</sup> Jian Chen, "From Mao to Deng: China's Changing Relations with the United States", **Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Working Paper**, (November 2019): 19.

<sup>7</sup> Allen S. Whiting, "Chinese Nationalism and Foreign Policy After Deng", **The China Quarterly**, Vol. 142 (June 1995): 301.

I believe that China seized an opportunity to fill the power vacuum stemming from the Soviet Union's collapse. As primary steps to become a regional power, the Chinese officials started to build diplomatic relations with South Korea, Singapore, and Indonesia; while trying to normalize its relations with Vietnam. Also, they began to engage in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and worked more closely with ASEAN as well as ARF (security group of the ASEAN). Starting from the middle of the 1990s, China participated in multiparty talk nuclear weapons development of North Korea and establishing a more permanent peace mechanism. The Chinese-American relations had indeed deteriorated after the Tiananmen, but it did not mean that they entirely isolated each other and avoided any interaction.

In addition to the Korean peninsula's peace, the US sought China's support during Iraq's intervention to Kuwait, and the two countries worked together in the Asian financial crisis. These examples displayed the Chinese intentions being an international/regional power that contributes to society. However, the Chinese government gave huge importance to Asia, especially concerning the South China Sea. The activities backed by the Chinese military (Taiwan problem can be included) met severe concern of the other neighborhood countries. They perceived the Chinese actions as assertive and ambitious. Briefly, China's regional strategy shaped around economic competition for markets and foreign investment, territorial disputes in the SCS, concerns over regional security, and military modernization.<sup>8</sup> China clearly expressed its position during the intervention to Kosovo in 1999 and the Iraqi War in 2003 that the Chinese government did not want to meddle with European and Middle Eastern affairs. To maintain economic growth and integrate its economy into the economic globalization, China tried to strengthen the economic ties with Japan, South Korea, ASEAN, and other regional powers through free trade agreements. There are many more aspects of Chinese foreign and security policies. Nevertheless, not to exceed certain limitations of the subject, remaining issues will be eliminated.

### **2.3. Policy Objectives**

It is possible to say that Chinese foreign policy is continuously transformed and continue to change over the years. According to my deductions from the articles,

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<sup>8</sup> Jisi Wang, "China's Changing Role in Asia", **The Rise of China and a Changing East Asian Order**, (January 2004): 6.

the Chinese government's foreign policy objectives have evolved nearly every ten years. The underlying reasons for the particular foreign policy preferences will not be repeated due to the analysis mentioned above. In the beginning, China's strategy can be explained as "lean to one side". The first ten-year period symbolizes the choice of the Chinese officials among two superpowers by choosing the Soviet Union and adopting the socialist-communist regime principles. As the Sino-Soviet relations went sour, China opted to build ties with the free world (the resources generally have used the Third World term, but I believe the name can be pejorative, so instead, I substitute with the "Free World"). At the end of the 1960s, China started to enhance its relations with Washington under the Nixon administration. But this time, Beijing did not want to develop an ideological reliance due to prior experience. That's why the country adopted more balance of power-oriented foreign policy and established a strategic partnership with the United States. In the 1980s, China's relations with the Soviet Union became gradually warmer while having some problems with the US. As a result, China became an independent player between the two superpowers. When the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union, international politics turned into a multipolar world system. In this multipolar global environment, Beijing put emphasis on mutual respect among nations, non-interference in each other's domestic affairs, and peaceful coexistence. Furthermore, it is significant to note that China called "responsible major power" during the Asian Finance Crisis in 1997-98. The term was probably represented by the United States officials to reiterate the post-Cold War era's engagement policy. I think China wanted to grow economically and be one of the most important actors in the long term. Although they possibly did not want to bear the burden at the time, if we re-think the Deng's ideology of "hiding the talent". Also, then the Deputy Secretary of the State of the US Robert Zoellick's speech referred to China as a "responsible stakeholder", which might have been targeted to prevent China escape from the global security duties. Later on, Hu Jintao became the new leader in 2003, and the Chinese government embraced the "peaceful rise" in a harmonious world as the latest foreign policy. In agreement with the term, the officials stated that China does not seek hegemony in international affairs. Moreover, with the Xi Jinping administration, China prioritized its "core national interest". Xi's overarching projects are perceived as assertive, notably by Asian states as well as the US. The details of the Xi administration will be discussed in the next chapters.

### 3. REVIEW OF CHINA-US RELATIONS

#### 3.1. A General Framework of US- China Relationship

At the end of World War II, the United States became one of the prominent countries in the Asia-Pacific region. From then on, China's stance in the area, the relationship between the US and China, and the attitudes of both countries towards the area had changed dramatically. The main concern of China was the border settlement and security between 1950 and 1953. Most of the Chinese external activity was dedicated to the consolidation of the lost territories like Tibet and Taiwan, but also intervened in the Korean War. The foreign policy of China from 1954 to 1965 demonstrated a swinging pattern of aggression and peaceful coexistence. During these years, China's relations had directly influenced by the changes in its internal politics.<sup>9</sup> In the 1955 Bandung Conference, China had declared the Five Key Principles of Peaceful Coexistence which the term used over the years. The principles are; mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.<sup>10</sup> China viewed itself as weak during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, and the policymakers thought that a war between the two superpowers-the US and Soviet Union- was inevitable.<sup>11</sup> Depending on the deterioration of the Chinese- Soviet Union relations at the end of the 1960s and with the help of the Nixon Doctrine, a rapprochement period had been monitored between the PRC and the US. Through Nixon Doctrine (in 1969), the US to be able to integrate China into the Asian security system and advocated the idea that Asian

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<sup>9</sup> James C. F. Wang, **Contemporary Chinese Politics: An Introduction**, Second Edition, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1985), 272.

<sup>10</sup> "Backgrounder: Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence", China Daily, [https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2015xivisitpse/2015-04/22/content\\_20509374.htm](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2015xivisitpse/2015-04/22/content_20509374.htm) [15.04.2020].

<sup>11</sup> Shaun Breslin, "Understanding China's regional rise: interpretations, identities and implications", **International Affairs**, Vol. 85, No. 4, (July 2009): 819.

countries should contribute their defense more, which resulted in the withdrawal of the more than six thousand US forces from the region.<sup>12</sup>

After Mao's death, Deng Xiaoping came to power in 1978 and under his leadership, China's foreign, domestic, and economic policy had changed immensely. The view of "reform and opening" under the Deng administration included economic, political, cultural foreign policy, and science and technology reforms for achieving social and economic prosperity and growth. Deng's strategy was based on keeping a low profile and strengthening the nation without attracting too much attention. The Deng administration decided that the primary reason for the country's backwardness was economical, and the answer was systemic reform and opening to the world trading system. Although the new concept of China under Deng, the Prime Minister of Singapore then, Lee Kuan Yew, told that Southeast Asian countries considered China as a threat, which was caused by Beijing's continuous support of the communist insurgencies.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, it was understood that foreign policy choices could affect the economic policies, and in a period of transition, China did not want to be involved in conflicts. To stress this argument, Deng insisted that China was not looking for hegemony, which was necessary not to create resistance for further purposes of the country.<sup>14</sup> Besides, Deng improved engagement with the international community with participation in inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly financial ones. Nonetheless, the contribution to the international community was insufficient in proportion to the expected privileges. In 1983, the President of the US, Reagan, declared that China fell into the category of "friendly, non-allied countries" which included Western Europe, India, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. In the 1980s, while the US exported advanced technology to China in areas of telecommunications, precision instruments, aircrafts, and computers as well as arms sales, the PRC exported textile products to the US. However, the American economy was highly protected until then

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<sup>12</sup> Robert G. Sutter, **The United States and Asia: Regional Dynamics and Twenty-First-Century Relations**, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 32.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Scobell, "Learning to Rise Peacefully? China and the security dilemma", **Journal of Contemporary China**, Vol. 21, No. 76, (2012): 716.

<sup>14</sup> Marcus Vinicius De Freitas, "Reform and Opening up: Chinese Lessons to the World", Policy Center for the New South, Policy Paper, (May 2019): 16.

and America's trade surplus had turned into a deficit in a short amount of time, which led the US accusations of China about keeping its currency undervalued.<sup>15</sup>

There were also political tensions between both countries. After the 1989 Tiananmen incident, the US condemned the actions taken by the Chinese government, halted military sales, and stopped the technical assistance and teaching programs.<sup>16</sup> In the 1990s, the PRC started to extend its link with the world; for instance, China had begun to normalize or found relations with the countries that were Soviet successor states following the collapse of the Soviet Union. At the same time, the reluctance against multilateral institutions was abandoned and commenced its engagement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The Chinese government started to hold an annual meeting with ASEAN officials and assisted in initiating the ASEAN+3 mechanism. In addition, China tried to resolve some of the territorial disputes with Central and Southeast Asian countries.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, China had joined in peacekeeping operations to enhance its stance in the international area. The contribution involved military observers, police officers, and the only exception was the participation of the engineering troops in the UN Transitional Authority of Cambodia (UNTAC) mission in 1992-1993.<sup>18</sup> It is important to note that even though US-China relations had cooled the aftermath of the Tiananmen, the US looked for China's help to pass a UN resolution which approves the use of force in regards to Iraq's intervention in Kuwait in 1990-1991. Though China did not vote in favor of the resolution, they chose to take a leave of absence in exchange for some of the sanctions of the US that would be eased.<sup>19</sup> Overall, China's involvement with multilateral mechanisms during the 1990s can be listed as; ASEAN Regional Forum, Korean Peninsula Four-Party Talks, Northeast Asia Cooperation and Development (NEACD), Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Council for Security Cooperation in

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<sup>15</sup> Rosemary Foot, "Power transitions and great power management: three decades of China-Japan-US relations", **The Pacific Review**, Vol. 30, No. 6, (2017): 834.

<sup>16</sup> "Tiananmen Square, 1989", Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/tiananmen-square> [15.04.2020].

<sup>17</sup> Evan S. Medeiros and M. Taylor Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy", **Foreign Affairs**, Vol. 82, No. 6, (November/December 2003): 25.

<sup>18</sup> Andrea Ghiselli, "Diplomatic Opportunities and Rising Threats: The Expanding Role of non-Traditional Security in Chinese Foreign and Security Policy", **Journal of Contemporary China**, Vol. 27, No. 112, (2018): 618.

<sup>19</sup> Rosemary Foot, "China's Foreign Policy in the Post-1989 Era", **China in the 1990s**, ed. Robert Benewick and Paul Wingrove (London: Macmillan Press, 1995): 234-244.

the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP), Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).<sup>20</sup>

In 1999, the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was bombed by the US planes during NATO involvement in Yugoslavia, in which three embassy employees were killed, and 27 were injured. Later on, President Bill Clinton apologized both publicly and directly to the Chinese President Jiang Zemin on the phone, stating that it was an accident.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, the Chinese did not believe the US side of the story and demonstrations followed attacks to the US embassy in China. Then Vice-President Hu Jintao acknowledged the protests in a speech and warned that they should stay in accordance with the law.<sup>22</sup> At the end of August of the same year, the US made a voluntary humanitarian payment to the families (\$4.5 million), and four months later, officials from both sides announced that they reached an agreement. According to this, “the United States would seek funding for \$28 million in compensation for damage to the Chinese Embassy facility, and that China would pay \$2.87 million in compensation for damage inflicted by rioting crowds to the US”.<sup>23</sup> Right after that, President Clinton signed the US-China Relations Act of 2000 which was granting normal trade relations with the US and a step towards China’s entry to the World Trade Organization (WTO).<sup>24</sup> The act covered anti-dumping measures to impede a flow of inexpensive Chinese goods to the US that might damage the American industries producing the same products.<sup>25</sup> China formally became a member of the WTO in December 2001 and permanent normal trading relations status with the US granted.<sup>26</sup> The trade between the US and China was nearly worth \$8 billion in 1985;

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<sup>20</sup> Baiyi Wu, “The Chinese Security Concept and its Historical Evolution”, **Journal of Contemporary China**, Vol. 10, No. 27, (2001): 281.

<sup>21</sup> Kerry Dumbaugh, “Chinese Embassy Bombing in Belgrade: Compensation Issues”, Congressional Research, <http://congressionalresearch.com/RS20547/document.php> [15.04.2020].

<sup>22</sup> Kevin Ponniah and Lazara Marinkovic, “The night the US bombed a Chinese embassy”, BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-48134881> [15.04.2020].

<sup>23</sup> “Chinese Embassy Bombing in Belgrade: Compensation Issues”, Every CRS Report, <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RS20547.html> [16.04.2020].

<sup>24</sup> “US-China Relations Act of 2000, 2000”, USC US-China Institute, <https://china.usc.edu/us-china-relations-act-2000-2000> [16.04.2020].

<sup>25</sup> “Clinton Inks China Trade Bill”, CBS News, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/clinton-inks-china-trade-bill/> [16.04.2020].

<sup>26</sup> “President Grants Permanent Trade Status to China”, President George W. Bush White House, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/12/20011227-2.html> [16.04.2020].

it increased to approximately \$285 billion in 2005; however, the imbalance of trade also rose substantially.<sup>27</sup>

Throughout the 2000s, China's position in international politics had changed. Firstly, the Deputy Secretary of State of the Bush administration, Robert B. Zoellick, accepted China as an emerging power and encouraged to become a responsible stakeholder in the international system.<sup>28</sup> In 2006, the PRC was the world's major surplus country in addition to the imbalance of trade between US-China; the US had emerged as the largest deficit country in the same year. Secondly, the Chinese officials announced that the government would increase military spending by almost 18 percent, which would have accounted for nearly \$45 billion. Pentagon's prediction was third times bigger if equipment purchases were counted which was still so small compared to the proposed US military budget for 2008, which was \$623 billion.<sup>29</sup> A global financial crisis had erupted in 2008 and influenced most of the economies in a negative way. The same year in a G-20 meeting, Chinese President Hu Jintao suggested a gradual reform of the international financial institutions which composed of changing representation mechanisms and supporting regional financial cooperation alongside the diversification of the present currency regime.<sup>30</sup> Only two years later, China had surpassed Japan's seat of the world's second-largest economy. Hereafter, the political context of the US-China relations will be examined under another heading due to a huge extent of the relations is associated with the Asia-Pacific region.

### **3.2. China-US Relations in the Asia-Pacific Region**

The primary intention of the United States was to prevent military aggression and contain the area dominated by communist dictatorships since 1945. The threat of use of force, especially coming from Japanese militarism, ended through the usage of nuclear bombs and the immediate occupation of the country. In the aftermath of

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<sup>27</sup> "Trade in Goods with China", United States Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5700.html> [16.04.2020].

<sup>28</sup> Foot, 2017, 836.

<sup>29</sup> Edward Cody, "China Boosts Military Spending", Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/04/AR2007030400401.html> [16.04.2020].

<sup>30</sup> Xu Wang, "Hu urges revamp of finance system", China Daily, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-11/17/content\\_7208992.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-11/17/content_7208992.htm) [16.04.2020].

World War II, Asia was relatively free from military tensions except from the Korean and Vietnam War.<sup>31</sup> The US formed a military alliance system in the Asia-Pacific region which composed of US-Japan, US-South Korea, US-Philippines, and US-Australia alliances. When the Chinese government built diplomatic relations with the US, they also started to establish friendly relations with most of the countries involved in the alliance system which helped China to protect itself from the rising threat of the Soviet Union.<sup>32</sup> Briefly, the Asia policy of the US in the region was based on two things: a Cold War commitment to Asian security and America's outstanding economic power. However, the Soviet Union had collapsed, and the Cold War ended, which meant the US had lost both of these foreign policy pillars in Asia.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the Sino-American relations came to a halt after the 1989 Tiananmen for almost a decade. The road to the Tiananmen incident started with student protests and turned into mass demonstrations when thousands of people had joined the protests. They complained about corruption and inflation while demanding political and economic reforms, especially called for a more open and democratic government. At first, demonstrations were not perceived as a political threat by the Chinese officials. Nonetheless, Gorbachev's welcome ceremony, which was initially planned for Tiananmen Square, heightened foreign media's awareness of the protestors and their requests. On June 4, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) entered the Square with tanks opening fire, crushing, and arresting protestors to regain control. Leaders all around the world, including Gorbachev, condemned the military actions, and the United States Congress voted to impose economic sanctions (as well as military sales suspension) on China criticizing human rights violations. It is significant to know that even on the 20th anniversary of the incident/massacre, the Chinese government prevented journalists from entering Tiananmen Square and obstructed access to foreign news sites and social media.

During the 1990s, China's historical claims over the South China Sea and the East China Sea under the nine-dashed line continued. 1992 Territorial Sea Law and 1998 Exclusive Economic Zone Law promulgated as well as the United Nations

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<sup>31</sup> George H. Quester, "The United States and Asia After the Cold War", **Southeast Asian Affairs**, (1994): 35.

<sup>32</sup> Jun Niu, "The evolution of post-war China-US relations and the Asia-Pacific security order", **China International Strategy Review**, Vol. 1, (2019): 241.

<sup>33</sup> Stephen W. Bosworth, "The United States and Asia", Foreign Affairs, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/1992-02-01/united-states-and-asia> [16.04.2020].

Convention on the Law of Sea ratified in 1996. Meanwhile, China carried out missile tests in the waters surrounding Taiwan while aiming to influence the Presidential elections of Taiwan in 1995-96 (known as the Taiwan Strait Crisis as well). As a response to the PRC government, the US dispatched two aircraft carriers to the Taiwan Strait and supported the presidential elections in Taiwan.<sup>34</sup> The incident showed that limited contact with China could cause more risks; that is why the Clinton administration declared a policy of comprehensive agreement with China to be able to extend discussions concerning bilateral and multilateral problems. This resulted in the opening of the Strategic Economic Dialogue in 2005 on bilateral economic issues and turned into the Strategic and Economic Dialogue four years later, which debated security questions as well.<sup>35</sup> Following the September 11 attacks, China was one of the first countries that advocated the Global War on Terrorism in exchange for the US did not take any action about China's suppression on Uighur nationalists.<sup>36</sup>

Ten years later, when Obama took office, he declared the "rebalance to Asia" policy of the US. The policy's one of the main intentions was to deal with China's rise and assertive actions in the SCS and ECS. Increase engagement with China in terms of strategy and economy was a part of the rebalance. According to the rebalance strategy, the Obama administration focused on three areas: the political, economic, and military. Related to the military dimension, the US planned to reposition its navy from a 50-50 balance between the Pacific and Atlantic to 60-40 share. The US has already forces based on Okinawa; however, a new base in Darwin as well as five bases in the Philippines together with the troops with the help of allies and partnerships.<sup>37</sup> At the same time, the trilateral dialogues between Australia-Japan-the US, India-Japan-the US, and Australia-India-Japan have been promoted the cooperation. In 2012, Xi Jinping became the new leader of China and chose to pursue more assertive policies both in international and domestic affairs. As a continuation of China's territorial claims, the Air Defense Identification Zone

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<sup>34</sup> Taryn Shepperd, **Sino-US Relations and the Role of Emotion in State Action: Understanding Post-Cold War Crisis Interactions**, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 64.

<sup>35</sup> Harry Harding, "Has U.S. China Policy Failed?", **The Washington Quarterly**, Vol. 38, No. 3, (2015): 101.

<sup>36</sup> Joel R. Campbell, "US Foreign Policy towards Northeast Asia", Center for Strategic Research (SAM), <https://sam.gov.tr/us-foreign-policy-towards-east-asia/> [18.04.2020].

<sup>37</sup> Stephen F. Burgess, "Rising bipolarity in the South China Sea: the American rebalance to Asia and China's expansion", **Contemporary Security Policy**, Vol. 37, No. 1, (2016): 122.

declared in both of the seas which overlap with Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea's zone as well.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, China has continued its oil and gas exploration activities in the EEZ's that are claimed by Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam, adding another factor to the disputes. President Obama has regularly participated in the East Asia summits, and the issues of freedom of navigation became an important interest area for the US. Besides, Obama declared that the US would defend Japan in a militarized dispute under the scope of Article 5 of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan, which was signed in 1960.<sup>39</sup> Another project was the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which would be financed by the Asian Infrastructure Development Bank (AIIB). The AIIB created a competition with the existing international lending institutions such as World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and Asian Development Bank (ADB). The economic dimension of the rebalancing strategy was to establish economic influence, notably through the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Nevertheless, the new Trump administration withdrew from the partnership as soon as he came to the presidency. In spite of the discourses of Trump during the presidential election campaign, the US became a member of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). In the final chapter, the Quad is examined in a detailed way which also mentions the US position towards China.

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<sup>38</sup> Michael Green and others, "Counter-Coercion Series: East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone", Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, <https://amti.csis.org/counter-co-east-china-sea-adiz/> [18.04.2020].

<sup>39</sup> Ankit Panda, "Obama: Senkakus Covered Under US-Japan Security Treaty", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2014/04/obama-senkakus-covered-under-us-japan-security-treaty/> [18.04.2020].

#### **4. CHINA'S REGIONAL SECURITY POLICY: MARITIME DISPUTES**

Over the years, the importance of maritime issues has been increasing significantly for China. These issues can be listed as territorial disputes, competing over oil and energy, and fights over fisheries. At the same time, the sphere of influence of the problems listed above is not only limited to the countries in the region. Nonetheless, rivalry over fish and other ocean resources is primarily related to territorial disputes. The vast majority of the problems that arose between neighboring countries about fishing is that which parts of the waters belong to whom. That is why this thesis does not tackle fishery problems.

##### **4.1. China's Historical Claims**

The modern ground of China's territorial claims can be found in a statement that Zhou Enlai promulgated in 1951, which declared China's sovereignty over the Paracel and Spratly Islands. During the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis in September 1958 (also known as Jinmen Crisis), China repeated its claim to these islands when it asserted rights to territorial waters. Through the declaration in 1958, China connected its territorial sovereignty with maritime rights for the first time.<sup>40</sup> This understanding over the islands has been used from the mid-1970s to the present more or less in the same way. Even though the 1958 Declaration had described some geographical extents, as the international maritime legal regime transformed, it was started to be seen as inadequate and lacked the legal status of the Chinese legislature. That is why the National People's Congress (NPC) issued "the Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone of the People's Republic of China" which reaffirmed the 1958 Declaration, gave legal basis. In addition to those, while the declaration was issued in a crisis environment which focuses on the sovereignty and integrity of land; the 1992 Law ratified in an area of economic development which includes resource

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<sup>40</sup> Taylor Fravel, "China's Strategy in the South China Sea", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (2011): 293.

development, navigation as well as security.<sup>41</sup> It is important to note that 1992 Territorial Sea Law Article 2 stated as;

“The PRC's territorial land includes the mainland and its offshore islands, Taiwan and the various affiliated islands including Diaoyu Island, Penghu Islands, Dongsha Islands, Xisha Islands, Nansha (Spratly) Islands and other islands that belong to the People's Republic of China. The PRC's internal waters refer to the waters along the baseline of the territorial sea facing the land.”<sup>42</sup>

The described area covers the disputed territories (Paracel Islands-Xisha Island, Spratly Islands-Nansha Island, Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands) with other countries in the region. Furthermore, despite the PRC signed 1982 the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the first day; ratified it in 1996 which can be seen as controversial because of the conflicting articles of the 1992 Law and 1982 UNCLOS.<sup>43</sup> Four years later, the Chinese government declared the baselines of the territorial sea of the PRC for the mainland of China and Xisha/Paracel Islands on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1996.<sup>44</sup> In 1998, the NPC announced the Law on the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf (The EEZ Law), which set a regime for China for additional maritime claims in SCS such as contiguous zone. It should be stated that China accepts the straight baseline method to imply all of its coasts, whether they are profoundly hackly or not which may be questionable for some of the provisions of the UNCLOS. Also, when the Territorial Sea Law take into consideration with EEZ Law, the extent of the PRC's territorial sea measures had been acknowledged as 12 nautical miles from the baseline of the territorial sea as well as the contiguous zone of China identified as the waters that are outside of, but adjacent to, its territorial sea and has a width of 12 nautical miles (Article 3 and 4 of the 1992 Law). Thus, the contiguous zone is accepted as an extension to the territorial sea where China exercise its powers and in an area within the exclusive economic zone, which gave a

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<sup>41</sup> Liyu Wang, Peter H. Pearce, “The new legal regime for China's territorial sea”, **Ocean Development and International Law**, Vol. 25, No. 4 (1994): 434.

<sup>42</sup> “Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone of 25 February 1992”, United Nations, Oceans Law of Sea, [https://www.un.org/depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/CHN\\_1992\\_Law.pdf](https://www.un.org/depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/CHN_1992_Law.pdf) [10.02.2020].

<sup>43</sup> Max Herriman, “China's Territorial Sea Law and International Law of the Sea”, **Maritime Studies**, No. 92 (January-February 1997): 15.

<sup>44</sup> “Declaration of the Government of the People's Republic of China on the baselines of territorial sea, 15 May 1996”, United Nations, Oceans Law of Sea, [https://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/CHN\\_1996\\_Declaration.pdf](https://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/CHN_1996_Declaration.pdf) [12.02.2020].

special meaning for both the territorial sea regime and the EEZ regime.<sup>45</sup> The main purpose of the 1998 EEZ law explained at the beginning of the act as

“...to safeguarding the sovereign rights and jurisdiction by the People Republic of China over the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf and the protect China’s maritime rights and interests.”<sup>46</sup>

In 2011, the PRC government repeated this understanding in the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf by expressing that the Spratly Islands were fully entitled to territorial waters, an EEZ and a continental shelf. Nevertheless, the maritime rights and jurisdiction allegations of China stand obscure. Firstly, the areas defined as islands do not coincide with the description that is made in Article 121 of the UNCLOS and could not possibly be accepted under the EEZ. Secondly, common concerns are surrounding the PRC historical rights and its scope in which some have suggested that SCS is Chinese historic rights even though the 1998 Law did not spell out.<sup>47</sup> In addition, there is no Chinese law that outlines what these rights might include.<sup>48</sup> Xi Jinping’ coming to the leadership in 2013 is considered a milestone for both China’s position in the international system and the changing perception of China. Right after the Xi’s succession, the NPC took certain steps to centralize maritime agencies. A new State Oceanic Administration (SOA) is founded to strengthen the coordination and planning of naval issues. Hence, four existing agencies -China Marine Surveillance, China Marine Surveillance, Maritime Border Police, the Fishing Regulation Administration, and General Administration of Customs- are consolidated under the SOA.<sup>49</sup>

It is significant to mention that although the discussion over the South China Sea and claims made by China, surprisingly, the PRC government has never given a

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<sup>45</sup> Keyuan Zou, “China’s exclusive economic zone and continental shelf: developments, problems, and prospects”, **Marine Policy**, Vol. 25, No. 1 (2001): 73. and “Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone of 25 February 1992”, United Nations, Oceans Law of Sea, [https://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/CHN\\_1992\\_Law.pdf](https://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/CHN_1992_Law.pdf) [12.02.2020].

<sup>46</sup> “Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf Act”, United Nations, Oceans Law of Sea, [https://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/chn\\_1998\\_eez\\_act.pdf](https://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/chn_1998_eez_act.pdf) [15.02.2020].

<sup>47</sup> Fravel, 2011, 294.

<sup>48</sup> Research made by date and context in Law of China, <http://www.lawinfochina.com/index.aspx> [22.02.2020].

<sup>49</sup> Nong Hong, “China’s Maritime Law Enforcement Reform and Its Implication on the Regional Maritime Disputes”, Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, <https://amti.csis.org/chinas-maritime-law-enforcement-reform-and-its-implication-on-the-regional-maritime-disputes/> [28.02.2020].

clear explanation about what is their demands are. However, according to one of the relatively recent statements made in July 2016, China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interest in SCS explained as;

- I. "China has sovereignty over Nanhai Zhudao (SCS Islands), consisting of Dongsha Qundao (Pratas Islands), Xisha Quandao (Paracel Islands), Zhongsha Qundao (consist of two islets: Macclesfield Bank and Scarborough Shoal), Nansha Qundao (Spratly Islands);
- II. China has internal waters, territorial sea and contiguous zone, based on Nanhai Zhudao;
- III. China has exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, based on Nanhai Zhudao;
- IV. China has historic rights in the South China Sea."<sup>50</sup>

#### **4.2. Territorial Disputes**

China is a country that is a party of multiple territorial disputes in the East China Sea (ECS) and especially in the South China Sea (SCS). However, this chapter only scrutinizes three central and widely known claims between China and many different neighboring countries in the region. Besides, the underlying reasonings of the claims and claimants will be analyzed. These can be sorted consecutively as Paracel Islands, Spratly Islands, and finally Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. The logic in the array is that disputes are generally concentrated on the SCS, and the importance given to this region is relatively higher. Moreover, the general structure of both seas and the logic behind why they are subject to competing should be clarified. Initially, the East China Sea (ECS) accommodates natural gas and oil reserves which are hard to project its total value. Additionally, China and Japan have overlapping claims in the means of the continental shelves and the EEZ. While Japan has an equidistant line from each country involved should separate the EEZ, China demands an extended continental shelf beyond the equidistance line to the Okinawa Trough. The main dispute of China in the ECS is the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and maritime borders.<sup>51</sup>

South China Sea (SCS), as a semi-enclosed sea hosts various islands, islets, rocks, shoals, and reefs which contains ample living and non-living resources. It also

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<sup>50</sup> "Statement of Government of the People's Republic of China on China's Territorial Sovereignty and Maritime Rights and Interest in the South China Sea", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the South China Sea Issue, [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/nanhai/eng/snhwtlclwj\\_1/t1379493.htm](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/nanhai/eng/snhwtlclwj_1/t1379493.htm) [29.02.2020].

<sup>51</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, **Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2015** (2015), 27.

provides vital sea routes for maritime shipping and naval mobility.<sup>52</sup> The countries that have a coast to the sea are the People's Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, and Vietnam, which are all different both politically and economically as well as expectations of gain. As a result of the complexity of claims and the number of claimants, the South China Sea has been called as "mother of all territorial disputes".<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, the SCS has a critical role in the Northeast and Southeast Asian security, notably for the flow of oil and commerce. China illustrates its sovereignty claims in the SCS using a map called "nine-dashed line" which covers approximately 80-90% of the whole SCS. In this way, it exceeds the limitations defined as territorial waters in UNCLOS and includes waters that are claimable EEZs of the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Vietnam.<sup>54</sup> The nine-dashed line refers to the line with nine segments off the Chinese coast on the SCS, even though it does not have to be shown by literally nine lines. The other terms that have been used to characterize the region are the Chinese maritime boundary line, U-shaped line, nine-interrupted lines, the nine-dashed intermittent line, the line of a national boundary, the dotted line, and the tongue-shaped line.<sup>55</sup>

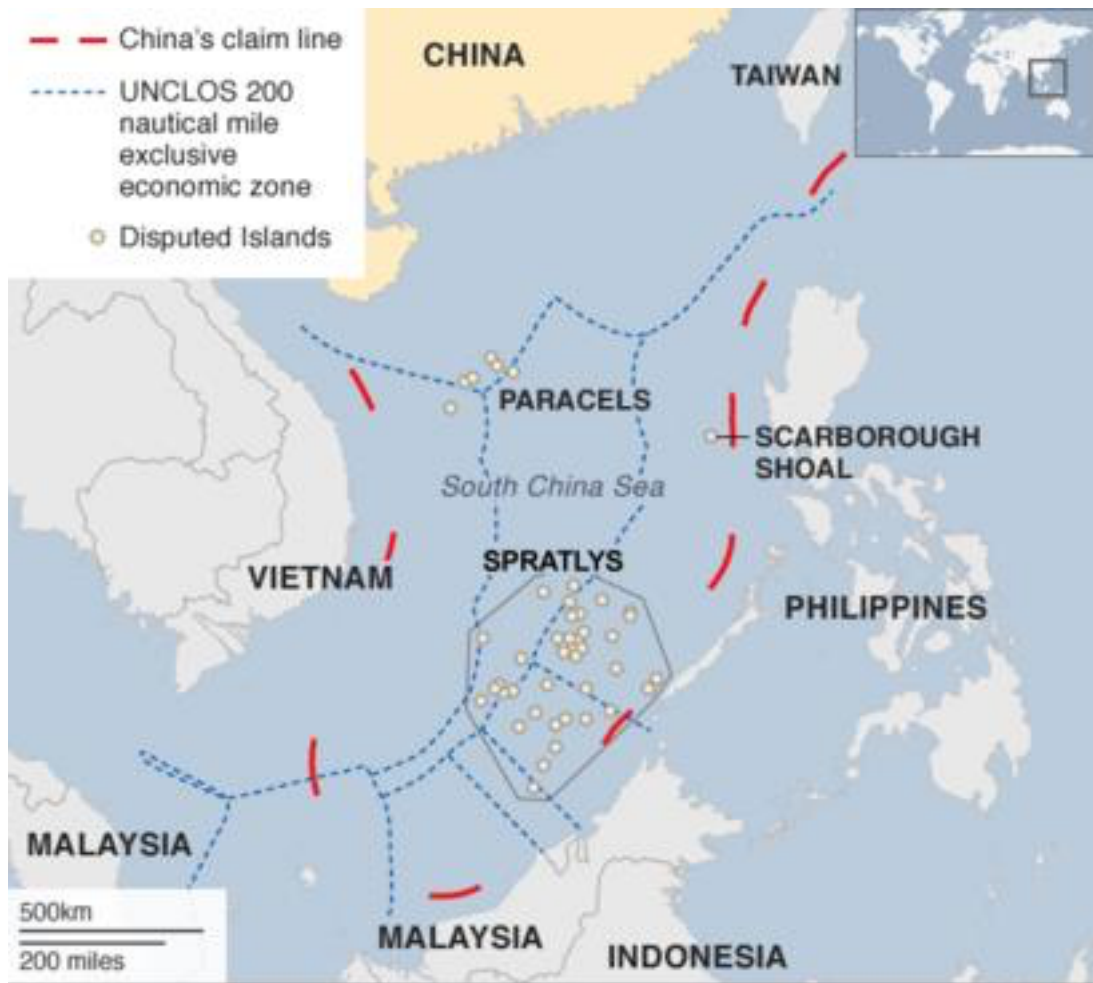
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<sup>52</sup> Shicun Wu and Keyuan Zou, "Maritime Security in the South China Sea: Cooperation and Implications", **Maritime Security in the South China Sea: Regional Implications and International Cooperation**, ed. Shicun Wu, Keyuan Zou (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009): 3-12.

<sup>53</sup> Erik Beukel, "China and the South China Sea: Two Faces of Power in the Rising China's Neighborhood Policy", Working Paper, Danish Institute for International Studies, 2010.

<sup>54</sup> Congressional Research Service, **China's Actions in South and East China Seas: Implications for U.S. Interest-Background and Issues for Congress** (January 31, 2019), 88.

<sup>55</sup> Keyuan Zou, **Law of the Sea in East Asia: Issues and prospects**, First Edition (New York: Routledge, 2005), 44.



**Figure 1: The Map of Nine-Dash Line**

“Abominable: A DreamWorks movie, a map, and a huge regional row”, BBC News, Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-50093028> [3.03.2020].

#### **4.2.1. China’s Approach over the Paracel and Spratly Island**

The Paracel Islands consisted of 130 reefs and coral islands which is contested by China and Vietnam, and currently under the Chinese government control since 1974.<sup>56</sup> The Chinese government first direct claim over the archipelago in 1951 based on the dotted line maps published by the Ministry of International Affairs of the Republic of China.<sup>57</sup> Even though SCS had been/still a hot spot for decades, a military encounter did not occur until the 1970s. The position of Vietnam is interchangeable before and after its unification. At first, the Vietnamese government recognized China’s sovereign rights in the Paracel and Spratly Islands as

<sup>56</sup> Steve Rolf and John Agnew, “Sovereignty regimes in the South China Sea: assessing contemporary Sino-US relations”, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol. 57, No. 2, (2016): 256.

<sup>57</sup> Beukel, 2010, 11.

early as 1956. Notwithstanding, when the country unified, they started to make claims over both archipelagos. However, it should be marked that then South Vietnam had a territorial claim on the Paracels and Spratlys.<sup>58</sup> The Spratly Islands are the most disputed island groups, consisting of more than 700 maritime features such as small islands, islets, coral reefs, shoals, and cays.<sup>59</sup> The islands have no indigenous inhabitants, however, witnesses to the intense competition over oil and gas reserves. The primary reason that causes complications is that there are six claimants over the Spratly Islands, and these are; China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei as for now.<sup>60</sup>

The second military confrontation broke out in 1988 between Vietnam and China in the western part of the Spratlys when the Chinese forces took control of seven rocky islands and reefs claimed by Vietnam which resulted with the death of 74 (the number varies in different sources as 72, 74 and 80) Vietnamese sailors.<sup>61</sup> In the 1990s, the legalization attempts made by China through certain laws mentioned above, caused discomfort for the neighboring countries. The overall consequence of these incidents was the solidarity of a unified Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) political position in opposition to China's behavior. Previously, ASEAN had generally provided a platform for the promotion of regional economic growth, alongside the social and cultural exchange. Yet, the association announced its first formal pronouncement related to regional security which is known as the ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea in 1992. The Declaration urged for the peaceful resolution of the disputes and called for the regional cooperation relevant to the safety of navigation and communication, and so on.<sup>62</sup> Gradually, China grew into a more flexible in participating to talks with ASEAN on the SCS, and at the China-ASEAN summit in 2002; both parties issued the Declaration on the South China Sea (DoC). According to DoC, the parties resolve their territorial and jurisdictional

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<sup>58</sup> Zou, 2005, 48.

<sup>59</sup> National Institute for Defense Studies, **NIDS China Security Report 2011** (2011), 18. & Rolf and Agnew, 2016, 256.

<sup>60</sup> Feng Liu, "China's Security Strategy towards East Asia", **The Chinese Journal of International Politics**, Vol. 9, No. 2, (2016): 174.

<sup>61</sup> Michael Yahuda, "China's New Assertiveness in the South China Sea", **Journal of Contemporary China**, Vol. 22, No. 81, (2013): 450.

<sup>62</sup> Rodolfo C. Severino, "ASEAN and the South China Sea", **Security Challenges**, Vol. 6, No. 2, (Winter 2010): 41.

disputes by peaceful means without threat or the use of force regards with universally recognized principles of international law.<sup>63</sup>

Since the DoC was a political statement and it was legally non-binding, the members of ASEAN wished to change into a legally binding Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (CoC). Nevertheless, the negotiation on the CoC leads to a stalemate due to the PRC's strong preferences for bilateral negotiations.<sup>64</sup> One of the reasons why China opposes multilateral discussion is that the bilateral negotiation gives room for Chinese domination to the process. Besides, the fear of manipulation by the United States and others as well as the fear that Taiwan may use the Spratly dialogue to seek international recognition.<sup>65</sup> Although the DoC issued in 2002, no consensus has been achieved on the CoC yet. In the ASEAN 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Jubilee Summit in 2017, a framework was officially announced as an outcome of China-ASEAN Summits which is only another base for negotiation.<sup>66</sup> Throughout these years, China's land reclamation and construction in the Spratly Islands has continued. On the other hand, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian & Pacific Security Affairs of the United States David Shear stated that between 2009-2014 Vietnam was the most active claimant in terms of outpost upgrades and land reclamation in the SCS. In the same testimony, 2015, Shear noted that Vietnam has 48 outposts, the Philippines 8, China 8, Malaysia 5, and Taiwan 1 in which all the claimants are involved in construction activities in different scopes.<sup>67</sup> The final position of the PRC about the disputed areas can be seen in the explanation made by

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<sup>63</sup> "2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea", National University of Singapore, Centre for International Law, <https://cil.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/2002-Declaration-on-the-Conduct-of-Parties-in-the-South-China-Sea.pdf> [9.03.2020].

<sup>64</sup> Hidetaka Yoshimatsu, "China, Japan and the South China Sea Dispute: Pursuing Strategic Goals Through Economic and Institutional Means", *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, Vol. 4, No. 3, (December 2017): 298.

<sup>65</sup> Mark J. Valencia, Jon M. Van Dyke, and Noel A. Ludwig, *Sharing the Resources of the South China Sea*, First Edition (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1997), 77, 83.

<sup>66</sup> Christian Shepherd and Manuel Mogato, "ASEAN, China adopt framework for crafting code on South China Sea", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-asean-philippines-southchinasea/asean-china-adopt-framework-for-crafting-code-on-south-china-sea-idUSKBN1AM0AY> [9.03.2020].

<sup>67</sup> David Shear, "Statement of David Shear Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian & Pacific Security Affairs Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations May 13, 2015", United States Committee on Foreign Relations, [https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/051315\\_Shear\\_Testimony.pdf](https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/051315_Shear_Testimony.pdf) [15.03.2020].

Xi Jinping in 2018, which was “we cannot lose even one inch of the territory left behind by our ancestors.”.<sup>68</sup>

#### 4.2.2. The Other Coastal States’ Approach

Taiwan is one of the claimants, albeit the political and international position or condition whether the PRC government acknowledges or not (which this topic exceeds the purpose of this work). Taiwan or the Republic of China (RoC) has placed its claims on the same historical legitimization context that has been used by the PRC. The logic behind this understanding is that the Nationalist government of Taiwan was in control of China at that time and commenced to publish maps with the nine-dashed line in the SCS present maritime boundaries.<sup>69</sup> Today, both Taiwan and PRC pursue their claims over the dotted line as their maritime boundaries due to the fact that neither of them has given up sovereignty claims over each other’s territories. The claims of indisputable sovereignty of Vietnam over the Paracel Islands (Vietnamese named as Hoang Sa) and the Spratly Islands (Vietnamese named as Truong Sa) based on historical arguments.<sup>70</sup> After the reunification of Vietnam, the government had claimed a large amount of SCS (called Bien Dong by Vietnamese) including the Paracel and Spratly archipelagos.<sup>71</sup> At present, Vietnam possesses the most features in the Spratly Islands with 21 features composed of islands, reefs, and cays.<sup>72</sup> While the PRC/Taiwan and Vietnam have claimed all of the two archipelagos, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei made partial claims only in the Spratly Islands.

The Philippines’ claims are based on discoveries made by a Filipino citizen in 1956. The Philippines referred to the Spratly Islands as terra nullius (no man’s

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<sup>68</sup> Thomas Gibbons-Neff and Steven Lee Myers, “China Won’t Yield ‘Even One Inch’ of South China Sea, Xi Tells Mattis”, The New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/27/world/asia/mattis-xi-china-sea.html> [15.03.2020].

<sup>69</sup> Kamrul Hossain, “The UNCLOS and the US-China Hegemonic Competition over the South China Sea”, *Journal of East Asia and International Law*, No. 6-1, (April 2013): 117.

<sup>70</sup> Todd C. Kelly, “Vietnamese Claims to the Truong Sa Archipelago [Ed. Spratly Islands]”, *Explorations in Southeast Asian Studies*, (August 1999): 6.

<sup>71</sup> Thuy Huu Tran Giang, “Coasted Space: National and Micronational Claims to the Spratly/Truong Sa Islands- A Vietnamese Perspective”, *International Conference on East Sea Disputes, July 25th-July 26th, 2014* (Ho Chi Minh City: Ton Duc Thang University, 2014): 57-67.

<sup>72</sup> Alexander L. Vuving, “South China Sea: Who Occupies What in the Spratlys?”, The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/05/south-china-sea-who-claims-what-in-the-spratlys/> [21.03.2020].

land).<sup>73</sup> In 1978, the Philippines formally annexed a group of eight islands in the Spratly Islands named as Kalayaan Island group by a presidential decree.<sup>74</sup> The rationalization pointed out as history, indispensable need, and effective occupation which also the areas that are occupied do not legally belong to any state or nation. The Presidential Decree expressed these areas vital to the security and economic survival of the Philippines.<sup>75</sup> Malaysia's claims are based on the occupation and geographical proximity, and especially the continental shelf provisions of Article 76 of the UNCLOS. Malaysia controls the five features in the Spratlys; Swallow Reef (Layang Layang), Ardasier Reef (Ubi), Mariveles Reef (Mantanani), Erica Reef (Siput), Investigator Shoal (Paninjau). It had also established military troops on Swallow Reef in 1977, and since then started to station on them (Malaysia has made claims over 12 features).<sup>76</sup> The only claim made by Brunei in the Spratly Islands is Louisa Reef, and Brunei is the only state that has not established a military presence in any of the islands.

#### 4.2.3. Senkaku/Diaoyu Dispute

The Senkaku/Diaoyu islands consist of five uninhabited islands in ECS which are claimed by the PRC/Taiwan and Japan and currently under the control of the Japanese government. However, for specific reasons that will be explained later in this part of the thesis, the United States (US) cannot possibly be separated from the dispute. When Japan was defeated in World War II, the Cairo Declaration of 1943 was signed by the US, UK, and China. This declaration stated that “*all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China.*”<sup>77</sup> According to the Chinese view, the Diaoyu Islands were part of the Pescadores; thus, the return of annexed land should also include the Diaoyu Islands. Later on, Japan reaffirmed Chinese

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<sup>73</sup> Robin Emir Gonzales, “The Spratly Islands Dispute: International Law, Conflicting Claims, and Alternative Frameworks for Dispute Resolution” (Undergraduate Thesis, University of Nevada, 2014), 32.

<sup>74</sup> Bradford L. Thomas and Daniel J. Dzurek, “The Spratly Islands Dispute”, **Geopolitics and International Boundaries**, Vol. 1, No. 3, (1996): 305.

<sup>75</sup> “Presidential Decree No.1596, s.1978”, The Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1978/06/11/presidential-decree-no-1596-s-1978/> [21.03.2020].

<sup>76</sup> Christopher C. Joyner, “The Spratly Islands Dispute: Rethinking the Interplay of Law, Diplomacy and Geo-politics in the South China Sea”, **The International Journal of Marine and Coastal Law**, Vol. 13, No. 2, (1988): 203.

<sup>77</sup> “Cairo Communique, December 1, 1943”, National Diet Library, [https://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryo/01/002\\_46shoshi.html](https://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryo/01/002_46shoshi.html) [22.03.2020].

sovereignty over Formosa and the Pescadores in the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951.<sup>78</sup> The truth is the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were under the control of the US after World War II and were a place for the army's bombing practice. In 1969, the US and Japan signed the Okinawa Reversion Treaty in which the Senkaku/Diaoyu were returned to Japan in 1972 as a part of Okinawa.<sup>79</sup> The aforementioned 1992 Law was defined as the Diaoyu Islands as a part of the PRC.

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the controversy over the islands continued to intensify due to Japan's plans to buy three of the Senkaku Islands from their private owner but did not actualize.<sup>80</sup> Japan observed that China had become more and more active around the waters off the Senkaku islands, and China Marine Surveillance (CMS) vessels recurrently appeared in those areas. In 2008, two of CMS vessels violated Japanese territorial water.<sup>81</sup> Two years later, a Chinese trawler hit one of the Japanese coast guards that were trying to chase them away from the Senkaku/Diaoyu Island. The crew sent back to China, while the captain was imprisoned.<sup>82</sup> The Japanese government purchased the three of disputed islands from a private Japanese owner in 2012 which revitalized the sovereignty dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Island.<sup>83</sup> As a response to Japan, the Chinese government firstly published a white paper that marked the Diaoyu Dao as "inherent territory", then announced the creation of the East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) that covered the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands as well as previously established Japanese, South Korean and Taiwan ADIZ in 2013.<sup>84</sup> It should be noted that territories with an existing Japanese administration like the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are under the protection of Article 5 of the 1960 Treaty signed by the US and Japan.<sup>85</sup> In a meeting between Tokyo and Washington in April 2014, President

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<sup>78</sup> "San Francisco Treaty", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/russia/territory/edition92/period4.html> [23.03.2020].

<sup>79</sup> Janet Xuanli Liao, "Sino-Japanese Energy Security and Regional Stability: The Case of East China Sea Gas Exploration", *East Asia*, Vol. 25, (2008): 63.

<sup>80</sup> James J. Przystup, "The US-Japan Alliance: Review of the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation", Institute for National Strategic Perspectives, No.18, (March 2015): 15.

<sup>81</sup> National Institute for Defense Studies, *NIDS China Security Report 2011* (2011), 26.

<sup>82</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, "How New and Assertive Is China's New Assertiveness?", *International Security*, Vol. 37, No. 4, (Spring 2013): 21.

<sup>83</sup> Liselotte Odgaard, "Maritime Security in East Asia: Peaceful Coexistence and Active Defense in China's Diaoyu/Senkaku Policy", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 26, No. 103, (2017): 119.

<sup>84</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2015* (2015), 5.

<sup>85</sup> Congressional Research Service, *China's Actions in South and East China Seas: Implications for U.S. Interest-Background and Issues for Congress* (January 31, 2019), 67.

Obama clearly expressed for the first time; Article 5 involves the Senkaku islands as well.<sup>86</sup> Trump's stance about the dispute is not any different in case of a conflict in the Senkaku Islands.<sup>87</sup>

### 4.3. Competing over Oil and Energy

The South China Sea has abundant reserves of oil and natural gas which primarily lies in the contested areas such as the Spratly and Paracel Islands. The littoral countries generally consist of large-scale energy-consuming countries that draw more and more attention as well as cause competition from both regional and international actors. In 1993, China became a net oil importer, and its import continued to increase swiftly. The growing demand led both the Chinese government and state-owned companies' search for supplies as well as invests in the exploration for new oil reserves and the construction of pipelines.<sup>88</sup> Ten years later, Chinese President Hu Jintao highlighted the significance of China's oil security, and the Chinese news dubbed the South China Sea as the "Second Persian Gulf" due to having one of the most strategic oil and gas resources. In addition, the PRC government strongly believes that the other claimants in the region exploited the energy resources in the 1980s while China was still lack of technologies and funding.<sup>89</sup>

In the mid-2000s, Vietnam advanced its attempt to improve its offshore petroleum collaboration with foreign oil companies. As a result, China issued eighteen diplomatic objections against international oil companies involved in exploration and development projects between 2006-2007. For instance, an Indian national oil company, Oil and Natural Gas Company Nidesh (ONGC) signed a contract with Vietnam for production and sharing purposes. However, China argued

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<sup>86</sup> "U.S.-Japan Joint Statement: The United States and Japan: Shaping the Future of the Asia-Pacific and Beyond", The White House President Barack Obama, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/04/25/us-japan-joint-statement-united-states-and-japan-shaping-future-asia-pac> [27.03.2020].

<sup>87</sup> "Trump reiterates US support for Japan over Diaoyus in meeting with Abe", South China Morning Post, <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/diplomacy/article/2070017/trump-and-abe-vow-deeper-trade-and-security-ties-us-and-japan> [28.03.2020].

<sup>88</sup> Christian Wirth, "Ocean governance, maritime security and the consequences of modernity in Northeast Asia", *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2, (2012): 230.

<sup>89</sup> Mingjiang Li, "Reconciling Assertiveness and Cooperation? China's Changing Approach to the South China Sea Dispute", *Security Challenges*, Vol. 6, No. 2, (Winter 2010): 51.

that ONGC's project fell within a contested territory; hence it was illegal.<sup>90</sup> In 2010, China described protecting its sovereignty in the SCS as a core interest for the first time and the government's willingness to respond to actions perceived as a threat.<sup>91</sup> Right after this announcement, two CMS vessels tear off the exploration cables of the Vietnamese oil survey ship (Binh Minh), searching oil and gas fields in Vietnam's EEZ nearly 120 kilometers off the southern Vietnamese coast.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, China deployed its oil rig the Haiyang Shiyu (HYSY-981) within Vietnam's claimed EEZ near the Paracel Islands in 2014. One year later, China announced that the platform had accomplished its work and withdrew it.<sup>93</sup> According to the latest calculations, the Vietnam economy's energy demand will grow between 8.5 and 9.5 % per year over the next five years. To cover the needed energy, Vietnam is investing in renewable energy and looking for the United States-based partners to develop oil and gas supplies and gas-fired power plants. Currently, Vietnam is collaborating with Exxon Mobil in the country's most extensive offshore energy project Blue Whale (Ca Voi Xanh). It is predicted that the gas field has a reserve of 150 billion cubic meters.

The Vietnamese government has strategic reasons to opt for US-based companies.<sup>94</sup> I think the most important motivation is the US stance against China's coercive actions in the South China Sea. Vietnam is actively seeking backup in times of confrontation with China concerning the disputed waters, and the US government is capable of giving diplomatic support, especially in a matter of Chinese assertive actions. Secondly, the US politically advocates a free and open Indo-Pacific while preserving peace and stability under international law. The Secretary of State of the United States, Michael Pompeo, clearly expressed in a press statement in July 2020 that *"Beijing's claims to offshore resources across most of the South China Sea are*

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<sup>90</sup> Patrick M. Cronin and et al. , "Cooperation from Strength: The United States, China and the South China Sea", Center for a New American Security, January 2012.

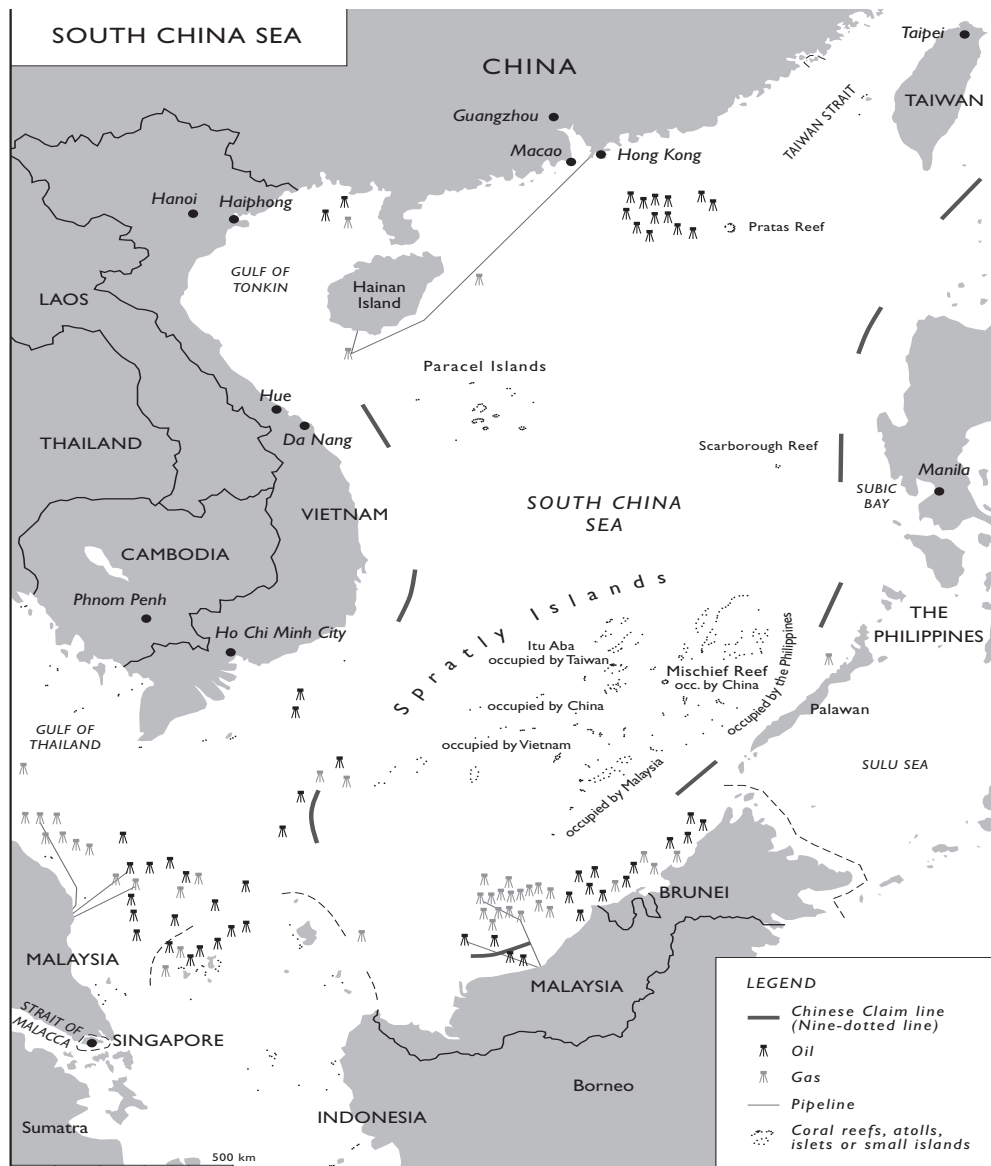
<sup>91</sup> Jihyun Kim, "Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea: Implications for Security in Asia and Beyond", **Strategic Studies Quarterly**, Vol. 9, No. 2, (Summer 2015): 119.

<sup>92</sup> Hong Zhao, "The South China Sea Dispute and China-ASEAN Relations", **Asian Affairs**, Vol. 44, No. 1, (2013): 31.

<sup>93</sup> Le Thu Hong, "China's dual strategy of coercion and inducement towards ASEAN", **The Pacific Review**, Vol. 32, No. 1, (2018): 7.

<sup>94</sup> Le Hong Hiep, "The Strategic Significance of Vietnam-US Oil and Gas Cooperation", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/the-strategic-significance-of-vietnam-us-oil-and-gas-cooperation/> [8.09.2020].

*completely unlawful, as is its campaign of bullying to control them*<sup>95</sup>. Yet, Vietnam has been trying to maintain a balance in its relationship between China and the US. Nevertheless, it is impossible to keep avoiding any confrontation with China and searching for potential oil and gas reserves in the South China Sea with or without American companies. Therefore, I firmly believe that the Vietnamese government has to choose sooner or later.



**Figure 2: Oil and Gas Supplies, Pipelines and Maritime Features**

Erik Beukel, “China and the South China Sea: Two Faces of Power in the Rising China’s Neighborhood Policy”, (Working Paper, Danish Institute for International Studies, 2010), 10.

<sup>95</sup> Michael R. Pompeo, “U.S. Position on Maritime Claims in the South China Sea”, U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-position-on-maritime-claims-in-the-south-china-sea/> [20.07.2020].

The Philippines also has had problems with China. The government of the Philippines has plans to enhance self-sufficiency in oil production and aim to propose 15 exploration contracts over the next few years for offshore exploration off Kalayaan (a part of the Spratly Islands) which is claimed by China as well.<sup>96</sup> In 2011, the Philippines reported a series of incidents about Chinese harassment. The Philippines formally protested at the UN and looked for the ASEAN's support, after two Chinese patrol boats harassed an oil exploration ship in the zone that is claimed by the Philippines. Nonetheless, the Chinese response was the accusation of the invasion of its waters. Then, China had deployed a maritime patrol ship called Haixun-31 which the Philippines responded by sending a naval vessel, the *Rajah Humabon*, to the conflicting zone. The Philippine removed markers implanted by China in some parts of the Spratly Islands including Reed Bank.<sup>97</sup> The very same year, the Filipino government decided to refer the SCS as the "West Philippine Sea" and the president declared "what is ours is ours" regarding Reed Bank.<sup>98</sup> According to a Chinese scholar, the neighboring countries of China have 1511 drilling oil wells and 1871 developing oil wells and discovered 308 oilfields by August of 2011, which 556 oil wells and 133 oilfields are within China's nine-dashed line.<sup>99</sup>

In 2013, the Philippines filed a case to the Permanent Court of Arbitration against China relating to the Chinese so-called nine-dashed line and its legality. Three years later, the court has ruled in favor of the Philippines and decided to reject China's arguments about the U-shaped line. Thus, historical rights to the sovereign have no validity under international law. Simultaneously, the tribunal concluded that Chinese reclamation and construction activities in the Spratly Islands are not legal under the UNCLOS. Moreover, after the ruling, President Xi Jinping reasserted China's claim to sovereignty over the South China Sea in a meeting with the

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<sup>96</sup> Leszek Buszynski, "The South China Sea: Oil, Maritime Claims, and U.S.-China Strategic Rivalry", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 2, (2012): 141, 142.

<sup>97</sup> Leszek Buszynski, "The Internationalization of the South China Sea: Conflict prevention and management", *East Sea (South China Sea) Studies*, <http://nghiencuubiendong.vn/en/conferences-and-seminars/-the-third-international-workshop-on-south-china-sea/660-the-internationalization-of-the-south-china-sea-conflict-prevention-and-management-by-leszek-buszynski> [5.04.2020].

<sup>98</sup> Crisis Group, *Stirring Up The South China Sea (II): Regional Responses* (2012), 7.

<sup>99</sup> Guoqiang Li, "China Sea Oil and Gas Resources", *China Institute of International Studies*, [http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2015-05/11/content\\_7894391.htm](http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2015-05/11/content_7894391.htm) [5.04.2020].

European leaders. The Chinese Foreign Ministry also issued a statement affirming China's position of non-acceptance and non-recognition of the arbitral tribunal's decision.<sup>100</sup> It should be noted that even though the Hague's decision is legally binding, there is no mechanism to enforce the losing parties, which means China will probably continue to use its coercive mechanisms over the littoral states. In spite of China's objections, both the Philippines and Vietnam tried to cooperate with foreign oil companies for exploration. Some of the international oil companies which signed contracts with the various countries in the region can be sorted like BP, Mobil, Exxon, Crestone, CEP, Hydro Carbon India, Shell and Petrofina of Belgium, Secab of Sweden, Alcorn Petroleum and Minerals, Vaalco Energy Inc and Sceptre Resources of Canada.<sup>101</sup>

The ECS also has a substantial amount of hydrocarbon reserves that would be invaluable for both Japan and China, the two largest energy consumers in Asia. Yet, it is difficult to estimate how big the reserves are because the area is still underexplored, and the territorial claims prevent further exploration attempts.<sup>102</sup> Japan and China had had active energy cooperation from the 1970s up to the early 1990s. However, the energy competition had accelerated over the gas explorations at the beginning of the 2000s. The two countries consumed 585 million tonnes (mts) of oil in 2006, which accounts for 15% of the world's total consumption.<sup>103</sup> Chinese territorial claims over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands has had caused some problems from time to time about the violation of the demarcation line, especially for drilling and exploring oil and natural gas.<sup>104</sup> According to the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) data, the SCS is a major trade route for crude oil which the region accounts for more than 30% of the global shipping and almost 40% of liquefied natural gas (LNG).<sup>105</sup> As shown in the table below, Asia's three biggest

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<sup>100</sup> "Remarks by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the Award of the So-called Arbitral Tribunal in the South China Sea Arbitration", [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjb\\_663304/wjbz\\_663308/2461\\_663310/t1380003.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/wjbz_663308/2461_663310/t1380003.shtml) [23.07.2020].

<sup>101</sup> Jian Sanqiang, "Multinational oil companies and the Spratly dispute", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 6, No. 16, (1997): 595.

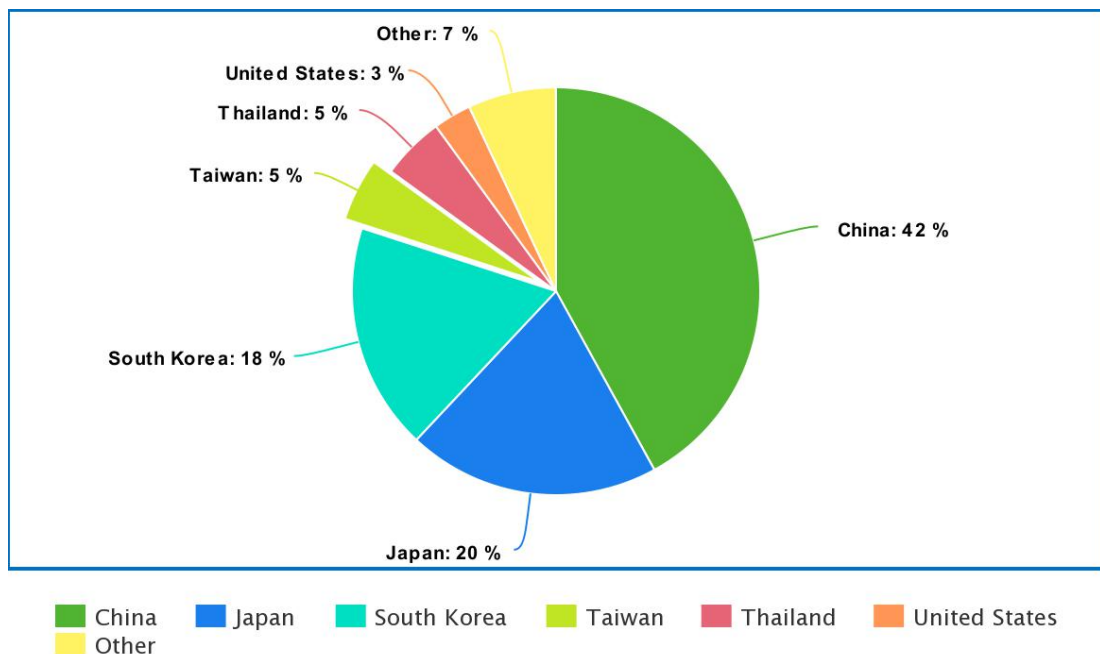
<sup>102</sup> Alessio Patalano, "Seapower and Sino-Japanese Relations in the East China Sea", *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 45, No. 1, (2014): 36.

<sup>103</sup> Liao, 2008, 58.

<sup>104</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2015* (2015), 27.

<sup>105</sup> "More than 30% of global maritime crude oil trade moves through the South China Sea", U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=36952> [8.04.2020]. & "Almost 40% of global liquefied natural gas trade moves through the South China

economies are also the largest crude oil importers that account for 80% of total crude oil passing through SCS in 2016. Due to China’s rising energy demand, the amount of imported oil has substantially increased in recent years, and the country surpassed the US as the world’s largest crude oil importer. Furthermore, the SCS has proven oil reserves of 7.5 billion barrels and an estimated 900 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.<sup>106</sup> As long as the territorial claims and demand for the energy resources have continued, the rivalry over hydrocarbon resources will surely keep going. On the other hand, both regionally and internationally, the need for energy supplies has been enhanced, which spark off explorations in the region and highlight the necessity of protection of the transition routes.



**Figure 3: South China Sea Crude Oil Trade Flows-Importers (2016)**

“More than 30% of global maritime crude oil trade moves through the South China Sea”, U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=36952> [8.04.2020].

Sea”, U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=33592> [8.04.2020].

<sup>106</sup> Christo Odeyemi, “UNCLOS and maritime security: the ‘securitisation’ of the South China Sea disputes”, *Defense & Security Analysis*, Vol. 31, No. 4, (2015): 295.

## **5. THE BELT and ROAD INITIATIVE (BRI)**

China's Belt and Road Initiative is a long term plan that intends to cover China, Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia with the ocean areas between them through the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The initiative was announced by Xi Jinping, and it aims to create connectivity and enhance trade for all the areas that have been counted. Yet, a project this big requires large-scale infrastructure investments to create designed connections. Hence, to solve the problem, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank was founded in 2014 following the statements about structuring the BRI. It should be stated that officially there is not any linkage between the bank and initiative in which the AIIB presents itself as a multilateral institution. Even so, the AIIB acts as a source of funding for the projects of the initiative' partner countries while the Chinese companies have gained the right to operate many of the ports along the routes that have been planned for the BRI. This situation will probably give China an incredible bargaining chip to control the energy import, which will undoubtedly cause some disturbance among the neighboring states that depend on oil and gas export.

### **5.1. Forming the BRI**

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched in 2013 under the Xi Jinping government and formerly named as the One Belt, One Road (OBOR). China has followed a more passive foreign policy while paying attention to the development programs domestically for over two decades. However, an alteration had started to be salient following the 2008 financial crisis. But, Xi Jinping's election to the Communist Party Secretary-General and becoming the head of state, led to a drastic change in China's global posture.<sup>107</sup> Xi advocated that China must strive and achieve

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<sup>107</sup> Gordon Barrass and Nigel Inkster, "Xi Jinping: The Strategist Behind the Dream", *Survival*, Vol. 60, No. 1, (2018): 42.

the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the nation.<sup>108</sup> He set his vision for the Chinese to be rich, powerful, and respected. The US rebalance to Asia strategy has been interpreted as attempts to balance China's growing influence while keeping the US primacy in the Asia-Pacific region. Meanwhile, increasing territorial disputes in the SCS and ECS put China in a disadvantaged position due to new strategic adjustment and alignment promoted by the US. The countries in the region started to need US existence to balance growing military and strategic actions taken by China.<sup>109</sup> The economic diplomacy has become one of the main instruments of Chinese foreign policy with the help of China's rapid economic growth and increasing economic ties with Asia. This idea has reflected itself in the BRI which is a long-term plan for the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road. Xi announced his concept of the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) in Kazakhstan in September 2013, suggesting the five connectivity components: policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people bonds.<sup>110</sup>

The BRI envisions closer economic ties between China and South Asia, Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa.<sup>111</sup> Also, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank was declared in 2014 and entered into force two years later. Even though the AIIB is a multilateral institution with no official link to the BRI, the initiative was the essential motivation behind it.<sup>112</sup> The primary purpose of the bank is to provide funds for the growing demands of the region for infrastructure construction.<sup>113</sup> The AIIB led some concerns like the bank could threaten existing international lenders such as the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) which the US had tried to prevent the participation of its allies at

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<sup>108</sup> "Xi vows to press ahead with 'Chinese dream'", China Daily, [https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013npc/2013-03/17/content\\_16314303.htm](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013npc/2013-03/17/content_16314303.htm) [11.03.2020].

<sup>109</sup> Jian Zhang, "China's New Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping towards 'Peaceful Rise 2.0'?", **Global Change, Peace & Security**, Vol. 27, No. 1, (2015): 7.

<sup>110</sup> Shin Kawashima, "Toward China's 'Hub and Spokes' in Southeast Asia? - Diplomacy during the Hu Jintao and First Xi Jinping Administrations", **Asia-Pacific Review**, Vol. 24, No. 2, (2017): 80.

<sup>111</sup> Daojiong Zha, "China's Economic Diplomacy: Focusing on the Asia-Pacific Region", **China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies**, Vol. 1, No. 1, (April 2015): 100.

<sup>112</sup> Veysel Tekdal, "China's Belt and Road Initiative: at the crossroads of challenges and ambitions", **The Pacific Review**, Vol. 31, No. 3, (2018): 375.

<sup>113</sup> Shogo Suzuki, "Will the AIIB Trigger Off a New Round of Rivalry in Economic Diplomacy Between China and Japan", **Center for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation (CSGR) Working Paper**, Vol. 279, No. 15, (December 2015): 2.

first.<sup>114</sup> In addition to the AIIB, the Chinese government has founded the Silk Road Fund which is under the management of the People's Bank of China (PBoC).<sup>115</sup>

While the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) is designed to integrate the maritime countries notably in Southeast and South Asia, the SREB is planned to reconstruct and modernize the traditional silk road which would connect the Central and South Asia with Europe. To carry out the integration, ports, railways, and roads would build which would put China at the center of the economic activity.<sup>116</sup> Six land corridors that have been identified: the China-Mongolia-Russia corridor, the China-Central Asia-West Asia corridor, the China-Indochina Peninsula corridor, the new Eurasian Continental Bridge, the China-Pakistan corridor, and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar corridor.<sup>117</sup> Some of the corridors will alleviate China's dependency on the Malacca Strait in terms of energy imports from the Persian Gulf and Africa. Furthermore, China would have the leverage of power projections and influencing capacity over the Eurasian partner and broaden the strategic hinterland and geopolitical space of the PRC.<sup>118</sup> Finally, the BRI involves over 70 countries and represents nearly 65% of the world population and almost one-third of the world GDP<sup>119</sup> as well as it is open to all countries and regional and international organizations membership.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> T. J. Pempel, "Regional decoupling: the Asia-Pacific minus the USA?", *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, (2019): 261.

<sup>115</sup> Tekdal, 2018, 375.

<sup>116</sup> Mark Beeson, "Goeconomics with Chinese characteristics: the BRI and China's evolving grand strategy", *Economic and Political Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 3, (2018): 249.

<sup>117</sup> "The 13th Five-year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China", National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) People's Republic of China, [https://en.ndrc.gov.cn/policyrelease\\_8233/201612/P020191101482242850325.pdf](https://en.ndrc.gov.cn/policyrelease_8233/201612/P020191101482242850325.pdf) [13.03. 2020].

<sup>118</sup> Weifeng Zhou and Maria Esteban, "Beyond Balancing: China's approach towards the Belt and Road Initiative", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 27, No. 112, (2018): 492.

<sup>119</sup> "Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)", European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, <https://www.ebrd.com/what-we-do/belt-and-road/overview.html> [13.03.2020].

<sup>120</sup> Emre Demir, "Fragmented or Integrated Asia: Competing Regional Visions of the US and China", *Rising Powers Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (2018): 52.



**Figure 4: Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime Silk Road Map**

James McBride, “Building the New Sil Road”, Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.cfr.org/background/buiding-new-silk-road> [13.03.2020].

## 5.2. The Perspectives of the Quad Members

One of the reasons why an alignment was established between the Quad members was China’s behaviors in disputed territories in the SCS and ECS that continues for a long time. However, the foreign policy of China has become more comprehensive including economic, political, and security elements under the Xi administration. The BRI has plans for both a large continental land and naval area. The most important underlying reason of India’s opposition to the BRI is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which violates sovereignty (due to the Kashmir region) and opens the Indian Ocean to China’s access where India wants to pursue its dominance. Another argument of India is that the BRI lacks in terms of international norms and transparency.<sup>121</sup> As a result of the BRI, India’s investment and economic

<sup>121</sup> Purnendra Jain, “The Emerging Significance of Indo-Pacific: Japan, China, US and the Regional Power Shift”, *East Asian Policy*, Vol. 10, No. 4, (2018): 33.

engagement choices with the countries close by have reduced.<sup>122</sup> Japan has worried about whether the countries' energy flow would be affected or not because Japan imports approximately 90% of its energy requirement.<sup>123</sup> Formerly, the Chinese government used the dependency of Japan on rare earth materials to pressure the release of a Chinese fishing boat captain in 2010.<sup>124</sup> Japan, together with India, formed the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) to compete with China's BRI.<sup>125</sup> It should be stated that Australia demonstrates the contradictory attitudes about the issue. Australia is a part of the AIIB; however, it does not participate in the BRI. The US had been the only dominant actor in the Asia-Pacific region for a long time. The pivot policy and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) were seen as a counterbalancing act of the US to the BRI.<sup>126</sup> But the new Trump administration withdrew from it, which provided an opportunity to widen the Chinese influence. It could be one of the reasons why the US has joined the Quad 2.0.

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<sup>122</sup> Jagannath P. Panda, "India's Call on China in the Quad: A Strategic Arch Liberal and Alternative Structures", **Rising Powers Quarterly**, Vol. 3, No. 2, (2018): 102.

<sup>123</sup> Jesse Barker Gale and Andrew Shearer, "The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue and the Maritime Silk Road Initiative", Centre for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) Briefs, (March 2018): 3.

<sup>124</sup> Yoshimatsu, 2017, 301.

<sup>125</sup> Anak Agung Banyu Perwita and Joseph Terttia, "India-Japan Maritime Security Cooperation in Indo-Pacific: Creating a Maritime Power Nexus in Balancing China (2012-2017)", (2018): 8.

<sup>126</sup> Alek Chance, "American Perspectives on the Belt and Road Initiative: Sources of Concern, Possibilities for US-China Cooperation", Institute for China-America Studies, (November 2016): 11.

## 6. QUADRILATERAL SECURITY DIALOGUE (QUAD)

Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) is a security dialogue composed of Japan, India, Australia, and the United States. The history of the Quad goes back to more than a decade ago; however, the dialogue attempt has failed even before it has finalized. Ten years after the first Quad experiment, the four countries relaunched the Quad in 2017. This chapter examines the first Quad and the reason why it has ended, the period between the dialogue as well as the member countries' approaches to the entity.

### 6.1. The First Quad Attempt

The concept of the Quad has emerged initially during the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004. The Tsunami Core Group (TCG) was established by the US, India, Japan, and Australia for coordination of the relief activities.<sup>127</sup> Three years later, the prime minister of Japan Shinzo Abe expressed his vision for the Quad cooperation in his speech in front of the Indian Parliament. In his remarks, he mentioned the idea of the confluence of the two seas which emphasized the connectivity of the Indian and Pacific Oceans as the countries located two sides of both oceans.<sup>128</sup> Abe argued that maritime democracies like India and Japan should promote freedom and prosperity in the “broader Asia”. The perception for the broader Asia would reach out to the US, Australia, and the other Pacific countries which would create an incredible amount of network alongside the free flow of goods, knowledge, and people.<sup>129</sup> The first Quad meeting including the four countries held on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in May 2007 in Manila.<sup>130</sup> At the end of the first Quad meeting, neither

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<sup>127</sup> H. D. P. Envall, “The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue: Towards an Indo-Pacific Order?”, Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Policy Report, September 2019.

<sup>128</sup> Yuki Tatsumi and Jason Li et. al, “International Disaster Response: Rebuilding the Quad?”, Stimson, March 2019.

<sup>129</sup> Tetsuo Kotani, “Can the ‘Indo-Pacific’ compete with China?”, The Japan Times, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2018/01/10/commentary/%20japan-commentary/can-indo-pacific-compete-china/#.XrtmJhMzau7> [13.04.2020].

<sup>130</sup> Cheng-fung Lu, “Australia and the Revival of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue”, **Prospect Journal**, No. 19, (2018): 75.

formal agendas were released, nor the next meeting date was determined. Besides, contrasting expectations of the participant countries and the possible reactions of the Chinese government could have been given, had led to disagreements.<sup>131</sup> The Chinese authorities officially protested the meeting questioning their objectives and claimed that the containment of China was the purpose. Even so, following this meeting, the four countries plus Singapore conducted the Malabar naval exercise.<sup>132</sup> However, Australia's hesitations showed itself when Australian Defense Minister Brendan Nelson visited China and giving signs of withdrawal in July 2007. Then, he clarified in his trip to India that Australia might be interested in quadrilateral engagement but only in peacekeeping and economic subjects.<sup>133</sup> The Japanese Prime Minister Abe resigned in September 2007, and Kevin Rudd became the new prime minister of Australia in November of the same year. After he came to office, Australia voluntarily departed from the Quad taking into consideration close economic cooperation between the Chinese and the Australian governments. The country took its' leave from the dialogue during the formal discussion in 2008, at the same time, refused to attend joint military exercises.<sup>134</sup> These incidents marked the end of the first Quadrilateral Security Dialogue.

## 6.2. Between QUAD 1.0 and QUAD 2.0

Since the failure of the first Quad attempt, the four countries have tried to enhance their defense capacities. Even though the Quad 1.0 was a short-lived dialogue, the members have built and strengthened their mutual ties in the fields of security and defense through bilateral and trilateral discussions. These three-tiered dialogues can be listed as; Australia-Japan-the US, India-Japan-the US, and Australia-India-Japan dialogues.<sup>135</sup> In 2015, Japan participated in the US-Australia joint military exercise Talisman Sabre for the first time. The same year, the Japanese

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<sup>131</sup> Premesha Saha, "The Quad in the Indo-Pacific: Why ASEAN Remains Cautious", **The Observer Research Foundation (ORF) Issue Brief**, No. 229, (February 2018): 3.

<sup>132</sup> Gurpreet S. Khurana, "Joint Naval Exercises: A Post-Malabar-2007 Appraisal for India", **Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS) Issue Brief**, No. 52, (September 2007): 1.

<sup>133</sup> Tanvi Madan, "The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of the 'Quad' ", War on the Rocks, <https://warontherocks.com/2017/11/rise-fall-rebirth-quad/> [15.04.2020].

<sup>134</sup> Cuiping Zhu and et. al, "Annual Report on the Development of the Indian Ocean Region (2018)-Indo-Pacific: Concept Definition and Strategic Implementation", Research Series on the Chinese Dream and China's Development Path, 2018.

<sup>135</sup> Sophie Eisentraut and Bart Gaens, "The US-Japan-India-Australia Quadrilateral Security Dialogue: Indo-Pacific Alignment or Foam in the Ocean?", **Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA) Briefing Paper**, No. 239, (May 2018): 4.

Maritime Self-Defense Forces took part in the US-India Malabar exercise as a guest.<sup>136</sup> Furthermore, Australia demanded to join the Malabar exercise since 2015, which has been rejected by India.<sup>137</sup> Shinzo Abe declared a new policy doctrine named “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” at the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development in 2016.<sup>138</sup> Throughout the period, China has risen more and more while starting to assert its dominance in the Asia region. Also, the four countries’ perceptions and expectations have changed which helped them to give another chance to the security dialogue. The Quad re-invigorated by the US, Japan, India, and Australia during the ASEAN Summit in Manila in November 2017.<sup>139</sup> The revival of the Quad created some concerns in Chinese media and perceived as an “Asian NATO”, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China stated that will dissipate like ocean foam.<sup>140</sup>

### 6.3. The Revival of QUAD

The very first effort of the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to build the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue among the former Tsunami Core Group countries was unsuccessful. The four countries have shared the concept of broader Asia, which would have established an astonishing network and brought many potential economic gains. However, protecting the diplomatic and economic relations with China has outweighed than being in a security dialogue that the Chinese government has clearly opposed according to Australia’s perception. In ten years, both the Quad members and China’s position have drastically changed in which the member countries of the security dialogue decided to give another try. At the end of 2017, senior officials of each Quad countries have convened again with certain interests such as the freedom of navigation and overflight, respect for international law,

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<sup>136</sup> Yasushi Tomiyama, “ ‘Quad’ from the Japanese Perceptive”, **National Security**, Vol. 1, No. 1, (2018): 112, 113.

<sup>137</sup> Ryosuke Hanada, “The Role of U.S.-Japan-Australia-India Cooperation, or the ‘Quad’ in FOIP: A Policy Coordination Mechanism for a Rules-Based Order”, Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) Strategic Japan, 2019.

<sup>138</sup> Hosoya Yuichi, “FOIP 2.0: The Evolution of Japan’s Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy”, **Asia-Pacific Review**, Vol. 26, No. 1, (2019): 18.

<sup>139</sup> Renato C. De Castro, “The Revival of the Quad and the Emergence of the Indo-Pacific as the 21st Century Geopolitical Region”, Albert Del Rosario Institute for Strategic & International Studies, 2018.

<sup>140</sup> Bill Birtles, “China mocks Australia over ‘Indo-Pacific’ concept it says will ‘dissipate’ ”, ABC, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-08/china-mocks-australia-over-indo-pacific-concept/9529548> [17.04.2020].

promoting connectivity, countering terrorism, maritime security, rules-based order in Asia, and threat and nonproliferation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Yet, it should be marked that prospected benefits still vary among them, and the capacity and capability of the dialogue are open to discussion.

### 6.3.1. Australia

Australia was the reason why the first Quad has lived shortly by unilateral announcement of withdrawal. The fear of possibly antagonizing China has become more significant at that time for Australia as its economy was highly dependent on China for more than any member of the Quad.<sup>141</sup> In 2009, an Australian defense department official revealed the Chinese donations to Australia's major political parties<sup>142</sup> and then, efforts to influence the political process.<sup>143</sup> In addition to donations, the Australian government declared that local companies are under an extensive cyber-attack backed by the Chinese government which was the first time that Canberra holds responsible China.<sup>144</sup> As a response to China's actions, the Australian government antecedently reviewed its espionage laws and started to ban foreign political donations.<sup>145</sup> Later on, Australia banned a Chinese firm (Huawei Technologies) from supplying equipment for its 5G mobile network by justifying probable risks of foreign interference and hacking reasons.<sup>146</sup> All in all, the bilateral relations between China and Australia have deteriorated over the years. Nevertheless, it should be said that China is still the largest trade partner of Australia with approximately covers one-third of the total Australian exports (32.7%).<sup>147</sup> However, Australia has been looking for trade partners to reduce the dependence of China

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<sup>141</sup> Eisentraut and Gaens, 2018, 5.

<sup>142</sup> Richard Baker, Nick McKenzie, and Philip Dorling, "The go-betweens", The Sydney Morning Herald, <https://www.smh.com.au/interactive/2017/chinas-operation-australia/the-go-betweens.html> [18.04.2020].

<sup>143</sup> Charlotte Gao, "Australia and China Spat Over Foreign Interference Escalates", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/12/australia-and-china-spat-over-foreign-interference-escalates/> [18.04.2020].

<sup>144</sup> Matthew Doran, "Australian Government joins global condemnation of Chinese hacking", ABC, Politics, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-21/australia-joins-condemnation-of-chinese-espionage/10645414> [18.04.2020].

<sup>145</sup> Lai-Ha Chan, "Australia's strategic hedging in the Indo-Pacific: a 'third way' beyond either China or the US", Australia-China Relations Institute, April 2019.

<sup>146</sup> "China says Australia has made 'wrong decision' after Huawei ban", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-australia-china-mofcom/china-says-australia-has-made-wrong-decision-after-huawei-ban-idUSKCN1L81J8> [18.04.2020].

<sup>147</sup> Daniel Workman, "Australia's Top Trading Partners", World's Top Exports, <http://www.worldstopexports.com/australias-top-import-partners/> [18.04.2020].

which led to signing free trade agreements with Japan and South Korea, as well as China in 2015. The Abbott government of Australia has intended to increase defense spending to 2% of GDP by 2024.<sup>148</sup>

### 6.3.2. India

India was far more hesitant about irking China and giving an impression that would have been thought of as containment of China during the first Quad. In between the two Quad, India continued its trilateral ties and joint military exercises. As a result of the strong desire of the US to strengthen its bilateral relations with India, the new President Donald Trump made his first overseas trip here. In this trip, the US has enhanced cooperation in defense procurement, and India has signed more defense deals with Washington. On the other hand, India has become one of the top five military spenders in 2018.<sup>149</sup> After the return of Shinzo Abe for his second term of the premiership, Japan restressed its posture to recognize India as a significant security partner. India's engagement with Japan was accelerated under the Prime Minister of India's, Narendra Modi, Act East policy. India has adopted a more proactive stance Act East policy under the new leadership which envisions increasing economic and security cooperation in the region.<sup>150</sup> In 2014, India and Japan elevated their relations to Special Strategic and Global Partnership, and one year later, they built India and Japan Vision 2025. Afterward, the two countries aimed to enhance maritime cooperation and improve connectivity in a broader Indo-Pacific region while strengthening cooperation with ASEAN via the alignment of the FOIP policy of Japan and the Act East policy of India.<sup>151</sup> Also, India is still wary of Australia due to pulling the plug off the first Quad. It is critical to understand that India has far-reaching relations with China. On the one hand, the Indian government's largest trading partner is China. India has bilateral and multilateral engagements with Beijing, which India is one of the members of the BRICS and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). On the other hand, China rejected the membership of India

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<sup>148</sup> David Lang, "The not-quite-quadrilateral: Australia, Japan and India", Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), 2015.

<sup>149</sup> Saheli Roy Choudhury, "Trump's visit highlights importance of US-India relationship, BJP general secretary says", CNBC, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/02/24/trumps-visit-highlights-importance-of-india-us-defense-relationship.html> [18.04.2020].

<sup>150</sup> Manish Chand, "Act East: India's ASEAN Journey", Ministry of External Affairs Government of India, <https://www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?24216/Act+East+Indias+ASEAN+Journey> [19.05.2020].

<sup>151</sup> Perwita and Tertia, 2018, 7.

to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) permanent membership request.<sup>152</sup> Furthermore, China has desired to constitute a China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with the help of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which would include some parts of Kashmir (is a disputed region between India, Pakistan and China).<sup>153</sup> Nevertheless, both countries are trying to bolster their economic and diplomatic ties after the military border standoff in 2017. The confrontation occurred when India placed troops to prevent China from building a road into Doklam, which was claimed by Bhutan and China.

### 6.3.3. Japan

The Quad dialogue started and revitalized for a second time by the Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe's effort. Japan has been an important actor in the Asia-Pacific for a long time. However, the PRC has also risen an equally significant power in the region and started to challenge the neighboring countries by using its economic and military supremacy. After World War II, Japanese security heavily dependent on the US by agreements that renounced the use of force of Japan.<sup>154</sup> In the early 1990s, the US decided to reduce its military presence in Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines which caused concern in those countries.<sup>155</sup> Nonetheless, the political stance of Japan shifted drastically in the second term of Abe's government. The Japanese government declared the first National Security Strategy (NSS) of Japan and modernized the National Defense Program. In the NSS, Japan's national security interests and national security objectives as well as the global security environment and challenges were described. The new threat perception which was coming from both international and regional actors revealed. In the documents, Japan's defense objectives were drafted, and the strengthening of Japanese military capabilities was aimed. The terms such as "Proactive Pacifism" and "Proactive Contribution to Peace" demonstrated that the interpretation of the Japanese Constitution's right to

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<sup>152</sup> Ashok Rai, "Quadrilateral Security Dialogue 2 (Quad 2.0)- a credible strategic construct or mere 'foam in the ocean'?", **Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India**, Vol. 14, No. 2, (2018): 143, 144.

<sup>153</sup> Abhijnan Rej, "Reclaiming the Indo-Pacific: A Political-Military Strategy for Quad 2.0", **The Observer Research Foundation (ORF) Occasional Paper**, No. 147, (March 2018): 8.

<sup>154</sup> The Constitution of Japan", Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, [http://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution\\_and\\_government\\_of\\_japan/constitution\\_e.html](http://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html), [16.04.2020].

<sup>155</sup> Tomohiko Satake and John Hemmings, "Japan-Australia security cooperation in the bilateral and multilateral context", **International Affairs**, Vol. 94, No. 4, (2018): 5.

collective self-defense clause could be abolished in the future.<sup>156</sup> When Abe returned to the office in 2012, he wrote an article calling for the development of Asia's democratic security diamond which would include Japan, India, Australia, and the US.<sup>157</sup> One critical factor to revive the Quad was China's assertive actions in the East and South China Seas. China is seen as coercive by the nations surrounding the two seas due to its attitudes about territorial claims, which Japan has a dispute with China over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Abe's policy of the FOIP designed to promote maritime security and broader access in the Indo-Pacific Ocean has become a significant drive for the Quad 2.0 and adopted by the Trump administration and other Quad members.<sup>158</sup>

#### 6.3.4. The United States

The US has dominated the Asia-Pacific region for a long time since the end of World War II. While some of the American administration showed more attention, some did not so much based on the conditions both domestically and internationally. Up until the rise of China, it is generally accepted that the US is the only source of defense and regulator of the region. The Obama administration demonstrated a great deal of interest in Asia. In February 2009, Secretary of the State Hillary Clinton gave a speech about the United States-Asia relations and the future of the relations stated as irreplaceable. After the speech, Clinton made her first overseas trip to Asia. As Secretary of the State, she visited Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, China, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat. Later, Clinton attended the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and began to proceed admission criteria of the "Treaty of Amity" and "Cooperation in Southeast Asia". It was also emphasized that the US returned to Asia.<sup>159</sup> Two years later, Secretary of the State Hillary Clinton issued a paper in Foreign Policy titled "America's Pacific Century".

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<sup>156</sup> Bhubhindar Singh, "The Development of Japanese Security Policy: A Long-Term Defensive Strategy", *Asia Policy*, No. 19, (January 2015): 51-52, 57.

<sup>157</sup> Szu-hsien Lee, "Japan's Indo-Pacific Policy Changing Strategic and Global Relationship between Japan and India", Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association, <https://www.koryu.or.jp/Portals/0/nittaichiteki/fellow/2018lisixian.pdf> [13.10.2019].

<sup>158</sup> K.J.M. Varma, "China hopes Quad meet at Asean summit not directed against it", <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/DFPYeUMtS6hvYbHKNgxzcJ/China-hopes-Quad-meet-at-Asean-summit-not-directed-against-i.html> 13 nov. 2017 [22.04.2020].

<sup>159</sup> Wei Ling, "Rebalancing or De-Balancing: U.S. Pivot and East Asian Order", *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol. 35, No. 3, (2013): 149.

In the text, she used the term “pivot” more than once, instead of rebalancing. According to Bill Clinton and Barack Obama administrations, the future of politics will be determined in Asia, instead of Afghanistan or Iraq. She touched upon the withdrawal of American forces from those locations. In this way, the US can pay more attention to the Asia-Pacific Region. It is noted that the rising power of Asian countries started to play global significance and have diplomatic and economic roles in the international community.

The relations with Japan were seen as the linchpin for peace and stability in the region, and China evaluated an emerging power that should take international responsibility, for instance, the emittance of greenhouse gasses.<sup>160</sup> Even though both terms of the Obama administration statements about pivot or rebalancing to Asia, the US could not be an active player in the region as much as they wanted to due to the other hot topic in the other parts of the world. During the new presidential elections campaign, the current president of America Donald Trump has followed a different path of discourse compared to his predecessors which initially alarmed Asian countries. He promised to adopt an “America First” policy during his campaign, and just after three days into his presidency Trump withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).<sup>161</sup> The other countries were uncertain whether the US would join the Quad or not under President Trump. They still are not quite sure about how to approach the new president of America while being wary of his future decisions. Besides, the trade war between the US-China which began with a condemnation of China for unfair trade practices, quickly escalated when China reciprocated. Since July 2018, the US has imposed \$550 billion worth of Chinese products while China has imposed \$185 billion worth of American products, which has been damaging both countries.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Hillary Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century”, Foreign Policy, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/>, [20.12.2019].

<sup>161</sup> Aaron L. Connelly, “Autopilot: East Asia Policy Under Trump”, Lowy Institute, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/autopilot-east-asia-policy-under-trump> [17.03.2020].

<sup>162</sup> Dorcas Wong and Alexander Chipman Koty, “The US-China Trade War”, <https://www.china-briefing.com/news/the-us-china-trade-war-a-timeline/> [13.05.2020].

#### 6.4. The Outcome of 2017 Quad Meeting

The resurgence of the Quad occurred in November 2017, and a senior official from each member joined the working-level meeting, which showed that member countries still need time to organize ministerial or leader level. The central theme of the gathering was establishing a free of open Indo-Pacific. The meetings' core interests were the freedom of navigation and overflight, respect for international law, promoting connectivity, countering terrorism, maritime security, rules-based order in Asia, and threat and nonproliferation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (or North Korea).<sup>163</sup> At the end of the meeting, each country's foreign affairs departments released an official statement that demonstrated some differences regarding the precedence of them. The Australian statement included all of the matters that are counted above. The media release clearly expressed that officials agreed to work together in terms of international peace and security caused by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in conjunction with North Korean nuclear and missile programs.<sup>164</sup>

India's statement mentioned peace and stability in an interconnected region, free and open Indo-Pacific, terrorism, and proliferation principles. However, they remained silent about freedom of navigation, respect for international law, and, most importantly, the maritime security issues. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of India stressed that "India's Act East Policy as the cornerstone of its engagement in the Indo-Pacific region".<sup>165</sup> The Japanese governments' press release after the meeting indicates rules-based order, respect for international law in the Indo-Pacific, handling the proliferation threats counting North Korea's nuclear and missile issues, ensuring freedom of navigation, countering terrorism, and maritime security. At the

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<sup>163</sup> Kallol Bhattacharjee, "India, Japan, U.S., Australia hold first Quad talks at Manila ahead of ASEAN Summit", The Hindu, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-highlights-indo-pacific-cooperation-at-the-first-quad-talks/article20317526.ece> [25.05.2020].

<sup>164</sup> "Australia-India-Japan-United States consultations on the Indo-Pacific", Australian Government of Foreign Affairs and Trade, <https://www.dfat.gov.au/news/media/Pages/aus-india-japan-us-consultations-on-the-indo-pacific> [25.05.2020].

<sup>165</sup> "India-Australia-Japan-U.S. Consultations on Indo-Pacific (November 12, 2017), Ministry of External Affairs Government of India, [https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/29110/IndiaAustraliaJapanUS\\_Consultations\\_on\\_IndoPacific\\_Manila\\_November\\_12\\_2017](https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/29110/IndiaAustraliaJapanUS_Consultations_on_IndoPacific_Manila_November_12_2017) [25.05.2020].

same time, there is no acknowledgment about enhancing connectivity.<sup>166</sup> The press statement of the United States remarked all the components of the 2017 meeting as well as highlighting the significance of the democratic values and principles.<sup>167</sup> China had questioned the intentions of the meeting, whether the new understanding of Indo-Pacific is directed against it. Previously, the US was using the term of the Asia-Pacific region instead of the Indo-Pacific before the Trump administration. Nonetheless, a senior Trump administration official explained that the concept refers to the importance of India's rise along with the growing relationship between the US and India.<sup>168</sup> Also, the Chinese officials criticized that the relevant proposals should be open and inclusive and not exclude the relevant parties.<sup>169</sup>

The first ministerial meeting of the Quad took place in New York in September 2019, which can be seen as a remarkable boost of the dialogue. The subjects such as advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific, counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, maritime security cooperation, development of finance, and cybersecurity were discussed.<sup>170</sup> It should be noted that the Quad has met only four times with senior-level officials in the last two years until the first ministerial meeting. The most recent meeting of the Quad members was about the COVID-19 and how to respond to the pandemic. The distinctive feature of the conference is that New Zealand, South Korea, and Vietnam have participated, including the Quad members. In the teleconference, the Quad-plus countries not only talked about the current pandemic situation but also sharing technologies and put the global economy back on its track before a substantial decline.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> "Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Consultations on the Indo-Pacific", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, [https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e\\_001789.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_001789.html) [25.05.2020].

<sup>167</sup> "Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Consultations on the Indo-Pacific", U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/australia-india-japan-u-s-consultations-on-the-indo-pacific/> [25.05.2020].

<sup>168</sup> Louis Nelson, "In Asia, Trump keeps talking about Indo-Pacific", Politico, <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/11/07/trump-asia-indo-pacific-244657> [25.05.2020].

<sup>169</sup> (Varma, [22.05.2020]).

<sup>170</sup> "'Quad's 1st ministerial meeting significant elevation of level", Outlook, <https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/quads-1st-ministerial-meeting-significant-elevation-of-level/1628374> [25.05.2020].

<sup>171</sup> Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, "Towards a Quad-Plus Arrangement?", Perth USAsia Centre, <https://perthusasia.edu.au/getattachment/Our-Work/Towards-a-Quad-Plus-Arrangement/FINAL-2004-Towards-a-Quad-Plus-Arrangement-Perth-USAsia-Centre.pdf.aspx?lang=en-AU> [25.05.2020].

**Table 2: The Statements Issued by the Quad Members and Its Inclusions**

	<i>AUSTRALIA</i>	<i>INDIA</i>	<i>JAPAN</i>	<i>UNITED STATES</i>
Free and Open Indo-Pacific	“a shared vision for increased prosperity and security in the Indo-Pacific region and to work together to ensure it remains free and open”	“a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region serves the long-term interests of all countries in the region and of the world at large”	“measures to ensure a free and open international order based on the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific”	“a shared vision for increased prosperity and security in the Indo-Pacific region”
Rules-based order	“upholding the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific”	“cooperation based on their converging vision and values for promoting of peace”	“direction for cooperation, including with countries in the region, in upholding the rules-based order and respect for international law in the Indo-Pacific”	“upholding the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific”
Freedom of Navigation & Overflight	“freedom of navigation and overflight”	<i>N/A</i>	“ensuring freedom of navigation ... in the Indo-Pacific”	“freedom of navigation and overflight”
Respect for International Law	“respect for international law”	<i>N/A</i>	“respect for international law in the Indo-Pacific”	“respect for international law, and the peaceful resolution of disputes”
Connectivity	“increase connectivity”	“stability and prosperity in an increasingly inter-connected region that they share with each other and with other partners”; “enhancing connectivity”	<i>N/A</i>	“increasing connectivity consistent with international law and standards, based on prudent financing”

**Table 2: The Statements Issued by the Quad Members and Its Inclusions (cont`d.)**

	<i>AUSTRALIA</i>	<i>INDIA</i>	<i>JAPAN</i>	<i>UNITED STATES</i>
Maritime Security	“upholding maritime security in the Indo-Pacific”	<i>N/A</i>	“maritime security in the Indo-Pacific”	“coordinating on ... maritime security efforts in the Indo-Pacific”
North Korea/proliferation	“threats to international peace and security passed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the DPRK’s nuclear and missile programs”	“proliferation linkages”	“tackling proliferation threats, including North Korea’s nuclear and missile issues, against which maximized pressure needs to be applied”	“further cooperating to curtail the DPRK’s nuclear and missile programs and unlawful acts”
Terrorism	“coordinate on efforts to address the challenges of countering terrorism”	“addressing common challenges of terrorism”	“countering terrorism”	Coordinating on counterterrorism”
Next Steps & Misc.	“The participants committed to continuing quadrilateral discussions and deepening cooperation on the basis of shared values and principles.”	“The Indian side highlighted India’s Act East Policy as the cornerstone of its engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.”	“The participants affirmed their commitment to continuing discussions and deepening cooperation based on shared values and principles.”	“The quadrilateral partners committed to deepening cooperation, which rests on a foundation of shared democratic values and principles, and to continue discussions to further strengthen the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.”

Ankit Panda, “US, Japan, India, and Australia Hold Working-Level Quadrilateral Meeting on Regional Cooperation”, The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/11/us-japan-india-and-australia-hold-working-level-quadrilateral-meeting-on-regional-cooperation/> [25.12.2019].

## 6.5. The Ambiguity of the Quad's Future

This part mentions possibilities about the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue and evaluate under the light of information given before. Firstly, what kind of steps will be taken by the members and how influential it will be under the Quad is still uncertain. Even though the first founding attempts to go back to more than a decade ago, there is not much data to assess the current situation due to being a relatively new organism. Secondly, the Quad has four members as of now. But the question of “is it likely to add more member and turn into a Quad-plus appears”. If so, which Asian countries will participate and what kind of criteria is necessary to be chosen as member countries such as Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines have rapidly growing economies; however, these countries might not want to choose between China and another organization. It might be out of fear of the Chinese assertiveness or the advantages they attain from the Belt and Road Initiative and Asian Investment Bank. Thirdly, the Quad countries have their agendas in which their perceptions and expectation from the membership might change in the future. Their relations might take a turn with China, or the domestic and international affairs force them to act in a certain direction than they had planned before. According to Freedom in the World 2019 report by the Freedom House, countries such as Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar, and Cambodia demonstrated notable democratic declines in recent years.<sup>172</sup> Besides, Chinese President Xi promotes authoritarian capitalism, which also plays a supporting role in the region's autocratic regimes. This regime preference could complicate a possible future Quad membership situation for the Southeast Asian countries in which systematic alterations are not easy to achieve and take time.

When World War II ended, Japan was under the provisional government of the US. During this period, they imposed a post-war constitution that shaped Japan's future due to the renunciation of the war clause under Article 9.<sup>173</sup> Basically, it meant that Japan could not use force except for defensive purposes. However, Abe's government reinterpreted the existing clause and decided that Article 9 allow the

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<sup>172</sup> “Freedom in the World 2019”, Freedom House, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2019/democracy-retreat> [05.08.2020].

<sup>173</sup> “The Constitution of Japan”, Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution\\_and\\_government\\_of\\_japan/constitution\\_e.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html) [05.08.2020].

Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to undertake collective security measure to aid allies and security partners. The Japanese government has the capacity to produce weapons, technologically and economically. In case of a change of constitution, Japan could have the ability to assist to Quad members militarily. As the most recent development, the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has declared his resignation due to health problems. He was replaced by Yoshihide Suga, who plans to hold a Quad meeting in October 2020, not even after a month later. It can be perceived as the new Prime Minister of Japan will take more serious steps toward security dialogue and be more active and follow a more determined politics about it. India is the other Quad member who has territorial disputes with China. Nevertheless, on the contrary to Japan, India is more defenseless to Chinese retaliation. China and India have long-standing territorial disputes, which surfaces again in 2017 (conflict has risen for the same area as in the Sino-India War in 1962). Compared to India, China has more military capacity and supported Pakistan's military for some time which would have given the upper hand to the Chinese government in any case of direct or proxy war. Another disadvantage for the New Delhi is that China can use the BRI projects to strategically and politically encircle to India with the excuse of the insufficient infrastructure of India's neighbors such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Besides, India has followed a non-alignment policy for a long time, and historical uncertainties prevented India from building strategic partners. Relatively, Australia has the most secure position among the Quad members. The reasons can be counted as; not having close geographical proximity, no direct territorial disputes, and alliance with the US. Lastly, the US government sees China as the revisionist state and benefits a system that the American government built in the post-war. After World War II, the US might not be the only power in the region, but it did dominate the area while providing military protection. When the Chinese government started to overrule the US's predominance in the Asia-Pacific region, it bothered the Washington administration. However, I believe the two most significant powers for the Indo-Pacific should start to learn that they have to share.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This thesis is analyzed “China’s Regional Security Policy” within the framework of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). After World War II, the Chinese government had focused on internal politics and development more and more which had created a gap for the dominance of the United States, especially in the absence of a prominent power in the Asia-Pacific region. However, even though China had pursued a more subtle approach in the bilateral relations with the American government, the Chinese government had revealed their claims clearly in the early years of the after-war period in the issues related to particularly the South China Sea and the East China Sea. Basically, China has almost claimed all of the sea areas, which will also give both economic (exclusive economic zone, oil, gas, and fishing) and political rights (flight and defense zones) within itself. The claims of the nine-dashed line are based on historical rights which goes even before the Christian era. The modern grounds of these demands build on the promulgation of various law that has been declared unilaterally. It can be said that though the long period of peaceful coexistence policy worked out fine generally (especially with the other parts of the world), the PRC government has always been a little over-protective and assertive toward the SCS and ECS. Besides, although the US holds a position and military bases in the Asia-Pacific region, they chose to remain unresponsive to the issues that concern the maritime disputes of the coastal states in which the speech made by Obama about the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in 2014 can be seen as an exception. When Xi Jinping became the new leader of the Chinese government in 2013, he adopted more assertive policies which are considered a milestone for both China’s position in the international system and the changing perception of China.

Furthermore, China has developed rapidly and still continues to develop which requires a lot of sources in terms of energy. Also, one of the important reasons of the maritime disputes in both seas is energy which is not hard to estimate when the SCS is a major trade route for crude oil and has prospected 900 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, as well as the ECS, also has a substantial amount of hydrocarbon

reserves. That is why, firstly, China's aim is to secure the energy routes in which the Belt and Road Initiative's Maritime Silk Road project will help to serve this target too. When the map of the region is taken into account, the Chinese sees it as fragile due to openness any threat coming from Gulf countries exclusively former experiences taken into account. Owning most of the energy resources in the area as one of the main oil consumers, China could use in internal demand and export to the world. Moreover, the other littoral countries and the other countries that have signed contracts with them make the situation more complicated. Nevertheless, there had been cases of the Chinese marine surveillance vessels torn off the exploration cables of the Vietnamese oil survey ship or harassment by deploying maritime patrol ships. It shows that China might not use actual physical power, but they used their power over the neighboring by forcing them to act in a way. Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) members -Australia, India, Japan, and the United States- came together with the purpose of balancing the Chinese increased importance/assertiveness if not containment. However, it should be noted that any of the member countries has ever mention neither balancing nor containment intentions against China. Nonetheless, the core interests of their first meeting were stated as the freedom of navigation and overflight, respect for international law, promoting connectivity, countering terrorism, maritime security, rules-based order in Asia, and threat and nonproliferation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (or North Korea). Moreover, considering things like the naval issues in the Asia-Pacific, China's reluctance to implement certain international decision concerning disputes in the region, the declaration of the air defense identification zone (ADIZ) which coincides the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands as well as previously established Japanese, South Korean and Taiwan ADIZ and so many other led the researchers to think that the security dialogue's tacitly trying to counter-balance Chinese power. The first attempt of the same Quad by the same members has failed mostly Australia's drawback because of the economic relationship between them and China. Yet, Chinese donations to influence the political process for the behalf of them had surfaced in a relatively short amount of time after the first failed attempt of the Quad. In the span of ten years between two Quad attempts, the sphere of influence of China has also expanded and become the closest rival/power-sharer of the US which has given another reason to the participation of America on the contrary of the doubts that has arisen due to the new Trump administration' expressions during the

presidential election campaign. Nevertheless, the statements made by the four countries at the end of the second Quad meeting has shown that they emphasized different things. Up until now, even holding a ministerial-level meeting has seen success in a span of thirteen years of history of the dialogue, which might have seen not so promising. However, although the prospect of the Quad is uncertain, the member countries have the capacity to impact and hold an important amount of both economic and political power in general. Shortly, there is still time to decide whether this security dialogue will last and achieve or not.

I would like to add final remarks about the thesis in general. First of all, some scholars started to name this age as the New Cold War to describe the growing tension between China and the United States. I do not agree with the term exactly. Currently, we do not live in an international environment led by ideological blocs. It is true that both countries have different perceptions of governing. However, the underlying tension cause is far from ideological but more of an economic and power struggle. It is possible to argue that the two poles of a multi-polar world outweigh. Also, they do not have a fully divided sphere of influence; instead, alliances are constantly transforming. Furthermore, if the Quad members want to balance China's position, they need to take the security dialogue more seriously. For instance, the annual meetings led by presidents or prime ministers and joint military operations at least two times in a year is absolutely necessary. As mentioned before, Australia still does not participate in the Malabar exercise due to India's objections. It is not possible to move forward and form an actually working dialogue with this kind of attitude. Therefore, rather than holding grudges against each other, they should focus on a structure that enables interoperability.

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## **RESUME**

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#### **EDUCATION:**

**MA:** Yildiz Technical University, Department of Political Sciences and International Relations September 2017-Present GPA: 3.71/ 4.00

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#### **EXPERIENCES:**

Charles University in Prague, Social Sciences Department / Erasmus Student September 2014 - February 2015

#### **RESEARCH INTERESTS:**

International Relations, Asia-Pacific Relations, International Organizations, Human Rights, Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies

#### **PROJECTS:**

1. The Security Relations between the US and Japan from the End of the World War II to 2016 (Undergraduate Thesis)
2. The Causes and Consequences of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis
3. The Korean War (1950-1953)
4. The Comparison of Plato's 'The Republic' and Al-Farabi's Al-Madina al-Fadila (The Virtuous City)

5. The Advantageous and Disadvantageous of the Global Companies to the Turkish Economy
6. 2010 European Capital of Culture Istanbul: “Mosque from Church & Church from Mosque: The Example of Hagia Sophia and Cordoba”
7. TUBITAK History Project Competition “From Past to the Present Palestine-Israel Problem”

#### **CERTIFICATES:**

1. Yıldız Technical University, the Wise Men Center for Strategic Studies (BİLGESAM) and the Atlantic Treaty Association: Threats at NATO’s South Eastern Flank (May 12th, 2015)
2. Istanbul Bilgi University Global Issues Platform and Peace Academy: Conflict Resolution and Peace Training (March 21st, 2015)
3. Bahcesehir University Government and Leadership School: Global Leadership Forum (May 3rd - 4th, 2014)
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5. The Association of International Relations Studies of Turkey Balkan Research Center and Yıldız Technical University Balkan and Black Sea Research Center: The Balkans Yesterday, Today and Imaginations of Tomorrow (February 18th - 19th, 2014)
6. The Association of International Relations Studies of Turkey Jewish Studies Center: Jewish Immigration in the World, Ottoman and Turkish Jews (December 2nd - 3rd, 2013)
7. Bahcesehir University Government and Leadership School: Diplomacy School Programme 5 (October 26th - November 23rd, 2013)

#### **SEMINARS and CONFERENCES:**

1. 4th Korean Peace and Unification Seminar (June 30th, 2017)
2. Cyprus Problem: Perception of History, The Church and Negotiations (December 22nd, 2016)
3. The New Term in Turkish-Russian Relations (November 29th, 2016)

4. Ottoman-Turkish Image in Popular History in Greece (November 17th, 2016)
5. From Past to the Present: Chameria Issue (October 27th, 2016)
6. Comprehending Turkish-Russian Relations from Historical Perspective (February 19th, 2016)
7. Neighborhood Watch: Turkish Foreign Policy in A Changing World (May 21st, 2015)
8. The Importance of Social Media in US Elections (April 7th, 2015)
9. Round Table Meeting: Ways out of the crisis in Europe and the EU (March 9th, 2015)
10. Democracy, State and Informal Politics in Comparative Perspective (December 20th, 2014)
11. ISA Human Rights and Change Conference (June 16th - 18th, 2014)
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#### **COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS:**

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