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## CONTENTS

### RISS Reports

#### Geopolitical Issues Concerning Development of South Asia's Transport Corridors.

The report observes the geopolitical rivalry of the main Asian powers – India and China – in South Asia. The focus is on the analysis of various Chinese and Indian initiatives dealing with development of infrastructural projects in countries of the region. The authors note that in the current environment New Delhi and Beijing consider those projects as opportunities to strengthen their economic, military-political, informational, and other ways of influence, promoting the respective national geopolitical interests.

Keywords: *Indian Ocean – India – China – the CPEC – South Asia – the USA* ..... 11

### International Policy

#### Frolova I. Y. China in the Balkans: Interests and Issues.

China has intensified its economic cooperation with the Balkan countries during the recent years. Beijing has build up trade with the region, allowed credit, participated in many regional infrastructural projects. The growing Chinese presence at the South European "soft underbelly" has met a cautious response by Brussels. The EU feels uncertain about objectives and aims of China's long-term strategy in the Balkans, including the promotion of its Belt and Road initiative. The article observes various aspects of the Chinese regional presence, its issues, and prospects for cooperation between Beijing and the Balkan countries.

Keywords: *the PRC – the Balkans – CEE – the EU – Piraeus – investments* ..... 61

#### Andreeva E. S. Current State and Future Prospects for Development of Iran's Transport Infrastructure.

The author observes Iran's main infrastructural projects which have been developed during the recent decade, as well as the U.S. sanctions' impact on their realization. The focus is on building up port infrastructure and railway corridors.

Keywords: *Iran – infrastructure – sanctions – ports – railway communication* ..... 76

#### Sharafetdinova A. I. Prospects for Restart of the U.S. – North Korea Dialogue Dealing with the Korean Nuclear Issue and Russia's Stance.

The U.S. – North Korean summit in 2018 showed some emerging trend for improving the bilateral dialogue, which motivated Russia to enhance its participation

in the issue through its traditional role as a mediator. Moscow has assumed a leading role during the six-party talks dealing with the North Korean nuclear problem since 2003. Regardless of differing approaches to the issue by various actors, the Russian foreign policy is always intended to ease the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Keywords: *Russia – the USA – Kim Jong-un – the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea – denuclearization – the Korean Peninsula situation – international policy* ..... 91

## **New Eurasia**

*Popov D. S.* Tajikistan’s Foreign Policy Dealing with the Central Asian Countries: Issues and Dynamics of Relations.

Relations between the Republic of Tajikistan and its Central Asian neighbors have recently undergone fast and qualitative evolutions. Among them are renewal of the strategic dialogue with Uzbekistan, the most serious at least for the latest 5 years border clash with Kirghizia, and the visible cooling in relations with Turkmenistan. The regional political stability, economic environment, and security are all dependent on the further developments of the aforementioned interactions.

Keywords: *Central Asia – Tajikistan – Uzbekistan – Kazakhstan – Kirghizia – Turkmenistan – border conflicts in the post-Soviet space* ..... 102

## **Defense and Security**

*Rogachev S. V., Vilovatykh A. V.* Impact of the U.S. – China Technological Rivalry on the Artificial Intelligence Development in the European Union.

The article deals with the EU approach to developing technologies of artificial intelligence in the context of the U.S. and China’s strive for the global technological leadership. The authors define some breakthrough digital innovations as an important constituent for major powers’ strategies aimed at the global dominance. Prospects for improving the Russia – EU cooperation in the area of advanced technologies are also set out in this article.

Keywords: *advanced technologies – artificial intelligence – digitalization – military affairs – international rivalry – global dominance – national security* ..... 121

*Selyanin Y. V.* The U.S. National Policy in the Area of Artificial Intelligence: Aims, Objectives and Prospects for Realization.

Creating artificial intelligence has become a trending topic worldwide. In the presence of undoubtedly tangible practical achievements in that sector,

the government of the United States has made another venture into it – after two previously failed attempts, followed by the so called AI winters in the 1970-ies and the 1990-ies. Nowadays, Washington considers superiority in the area as one of necessary conditions for the U.S. global dominance. The article provides an insight into the U.S. aims and objectives in the AI development, observing the governing documents which navigate the national technological policy. A review of various public officials' and IT-industry leaders' stances concerning future sectoral issues and prospects is presented here.

Keywords: *the USA – artificial intelligence – machine learning – the U.S. national policy in the area of science and technology development – China* ..... 140

## Economy

*Shashkina E. O.* Trend Analysis of Transnational Banks' Investments in Fintech: Organizational, Geographical, and Sectoral Aspects.

The article deals with the issue of major global banks' efforts in digitalization. The author analyses those banks' partnerships with fintech startups, especially by the way of capital investments. She observes special aspects of structuring that investment process, testing the assumption about the leading role of online payment services in the banks' product strategies. Some peculiarities of geographical diversification of investments made by major banks are also revealed here.

Keywords: *banks – digitalization in business – investments – innovative product – fintech startups* ..... 164

## History

*Surguladze V. Sh.* Defender of the Russian Land (on the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Alexander Nevsky's Birth).

The 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Alexander Nevsky – the outstanding Russian statesman, military commander, and diplomatist – will be celebrated in Russia in 2021. The current uneasy international environment gives reasons for some fresh considerations about the Prince's role in history and its parallels in the modern Russian developments. The author argues that Alexander Nevsky has contributed greatly to Russia's state-building and thus has become one of the iconic symbols of national independence and self-sufficiency in geopolitical, cultural, and civilizational senses. The celebration of the Prince's anniversary is used as a cause for more reasoning about the complexity of Russia's geopolitical position, and its self-sufficiency as a culture-historical type and as a civilization-state.

Keywords: *Alexander Nevsky – history of Russia – geopolitical and civilizational choices – national consciousness* ..... 184

**Reviews**

*Vilovatykh A. V.* Transforming Configuration of Future Military Conflicts.

Book review: *Bartosh A.A.* The Fog of Hybrid War : Uncertainties and Risks of Conflicts in the XXI<sup>st</sup> Century. Moscow : Telecom Hotline, 2019. 324 p.

Keywords: *military conflict – hybridization – information warfare – technologies – digitalization – world order transformation – security of the state* ..... **199**

*Sadykova E. L.* World Politics at the Age of Global Instability.

Book review: *Surguladze V.Sh.* World politics in the mirror of modern political science analysis : Political processes, identity politics, strategy and technology. Moscow : Analiticheskaya gruppa "S.T.K.", 2019. 652 p.

Keywords: *world politics – international relations – foreign policy – political processes – strategic planning – strategic forecasting – political science* ..... **208**

*Bakonina M. S.* Afghan Wars: the Strategic Underestimation.

Book review: *Martin M.* An Intimate War : An Oral History of the Helmand Conflict, 1978–2012 / Mike Martin. N.Y. : Oxford University Press, 2014. 325 p.

Keywords: *the USA – Afghanistan – Helmand province – civil conflict – clans – tribal entities – the Taliban – finance – resources* ..... **213**

*Glazova A. V.* Evaluating Social and Strategic Lessons of World War I.

Book review: Society. The state strategy. War : Political and strategic lessons of World War I / By V.K. Belozarov, I.S. Danilenko, A.T. Yemelyanov, A.Y. Kasyuk, A.V. Solovyov. Moscow : Neolit ; SPI CIS, 2019. 192 p.

Keywords: *World War I – the Entente – the Triple Alliance – concept of warfare – information warfare – the state strategy* ..... **219**

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