

# افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد  
بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد  
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم  
از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

By Eduardo Lucita  
17.01.2022

## *New sources of tension on the world board*

**Sources:** Rebellion

The world economy is in recovery, the resurgence of the pandemic threatens that recovery while new political conflicts strain the world stage. Overall, uncertainty prevails.

At the beginning of this 2022 a global approach shows three scenarios. On the one hand a recovering economy concentrated in some of the major powers and therefore very unequal. The projections range from 4.1 to 5.6% growth for this year, driven by the rise in international trade (+11% in 2021 over 2019) where the China-US exchange stands out, which last December would reach its historical record (700,000 million dollars). On the other hand, a slowdown in growth is estimated due to a strong resurgence of the pandemic that, due to the extreme contagiousness of the Ómicron variant, grows vertically around the world, putting at risk the evolution of the global economy in the immediate future. The third scenario is dominated by the new sources of tension that shake the world board, is what interests us in this note.

If until a few months ago the region of Taiwan and the South China Sea was considered "... the most dangerous place on the planet" (as we explained in previous notes), today at the beginning of 2022 that podium is being disputed by tensions that cross both Eastern Europe and Central Asia and the Middle East.

**Strategic areas**

[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

All areas where there are pockets of tension are of geopolitical and commercial importance. The Indo-Pacific region is today the second destination for EU exports and is home to four of the bloc's top ten trading partners. The Middle East contains more than 60% of global oil reserves and is a point of global relevance. Ukraine and Kazakhstan are central to the reconstitution of a power bloc with Russia as the central pivot.

The decline of the US and the attempts of the Biden administration to recover spaces and international presence in the face of the rise of China and Russia are at the center of this conflict.

### *Middle East*

The US seeks to restore the nuclear agreement signed by the Obama administration with Iran and member countries of the United Nations Security Council (Vienna 2015) that aimed to stop the Iranian nuclear plan. In 2018 the Trump administration, pushed by Israel and the Arab monarchies, withdrew the US from the agreement and in parallel increased economic and financial sanctions. The argument, again without further evidence, was that the Persian nation was not fulfilling the agreement, but the undeclared objective, it is now evident, was none other than to dent Iran's influence in the region, which had grown after Russia unblocked the Syrian crisis in favor of the regime of Bashar al Assad allied with the Persians. As if that were not enough, On the outskirts of Tehran, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the main Iranian nuclear scientist, was assassinated and months before, in the vicinity of Baghdad, Commander Suleiman, considered an Iranian national hero. Cardboard full, the result of the economic-financial and military pressures was exactly the opposite of what was sought. Instead of stopping the nuclear plan, it accelerated. Recent reports show that Iran is about to complete the cycle of enriching uranium by a percentage that puts it within striking distance of achieving the nuclear bomb. Additionally, it has revealed itself as a military power (it has an important stock of precision and long-range missiles).

The recognition of the dangerousness of the situation and the responsibility for the unforced errors of the US are leading to a general rethink in the region, even in Both Israel and the emirates and other Arab hierarchies are already thinking about reaching some agreement with Iran. Meanwhile, China's presence is growing in the region and its New Silk Road project is gaining ground.

## *Europa Oriental y Asia Central*

Día a día crecen las tensiones entre Rusia, EEUU y los países europeos por la zona fronteriza que comparten Rusia y Ucrania y la por crisis en Kazajistán.

In 2014, after the Euromaidan protests, Russia invaded first and then annexed the strategic Crimean peninsula (where the largest Russian naval base is installed), for a few months it has been deploying troops along the entire border with Ukraine trying to deter or block Ukraine's approach to NATO, which would enable the expansion of the alliance to the east what Russia considers a military threat (cultural ties, ethnic and historical actions often justify diplomatic or military actions). As in the Indo-Pacific region the Biden administration has declared that it will not accept a new military invasion of Russia, threatening banking and financial sanctions and even blocking the Nordstream II gas pipeline, which turns on red lights in Germany that depends on that gas, especially when it has just closed numerous nuclear power plants. Moscow has responded that it would be "a colossal mistake" and that it would apply "military and technical measures", while NATO warned that there is "real risk of conflict" and that the alliance must prepare for "a diplomatic failure". This week (January 10-16, 2022) there will be two key meetings of the NATO-Russia Council, created in 2002, to seek to stop an otherwise dangerous crisis that would end up pitting nuclear-armed countries against each other. The Russians seek to stop the deployment of missiles in Europe and that neither Ukraine nor Georgia join NATO. While Europeans and North Americans defend the decision of the alliance to build "infrastructure" in the vicinity of Russia and the eventual sovereign option of the countries that decide to join the Atlantic Alliance.

Central Asia located between Iran and China and in the vicinity of Turkey is a new focus of conflict unleashed after popular protests in Kazakhstan – the richest country in natural resources and with the largest geographical extension in the region – for the increase in the price of gas to which other demands were added over the days. Unlike what happened when the Euromaidan, here there are strong signs of self-organization and class content in the protests, coming from a long tradition of workers' struggles and strikes in the country, but there are also disputes between power groups, palaces between clans and the presence of radical Islamists. Russia through the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) intervened militarily to sustain the rpeghimen, its ally, and control the situation in

Kazakhstan, which is the core of President Putin's geopolitical strategy to retake Greater Russia.

## **Uncertainty**

Thus, war drums resound in these three conflict zones that strain the entire world chessboard, while there are no details as to the extent and magnitude of the pandemic, which is imposing new restrictions on a global economy in which central banks are raising interest rates, which registers growing absenteeism from work that limits production and hinders the logistics of value chains, all accompanied by an inflation rate unknown in decades.

It all results in great uncertainty about the immediate future.

Note: when this column was already published, new information shows that the NATO-Russia Council negotiations would be failing and on the verge of rupture. The US would have reiterated the possibility of harsh sanctions and Russia responded that in its military-technical measures it does not rule out placing military infrastructure in Cuba and Venezuela. The Cuban missile crisis in 1962, perhaps the largest in cold War times, hovers over the world stage adding greater uncertainty.

Eduardo Lucita. Member of the collective Economistas de Izquierda (EDI).

Rebellion has published this article with the author's permission under a [Creative Commons license](#), respecting his freedom to publish it in other sources.

Rebellion 15.01.2022