

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نیاشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2014/12/27/italy-russia-peace-geopolitics-in-eurasia.html>

Italy – Russia: Peace Geopolitics in Eurasia

Andrei VOLODIN

12/27/2014



The international conference «The Great Infrastructure of Eurasia: New Industrialization and Geopolitics of Peace» (Le Grandi Infrastrutture Euro-Asiatiche: Nuova Industrializzazione e Geopolitica Della Pace) took place in Rome on November 27-28, 2014. It leaves the impression that Europe has begun to mull its future relationship with Russia.

* * *

Pepe Escobar, a well-known international relations analyst, has said that Russia is wired for «playing the long game with the West» with tangible results to appear on «the grand chessboard» after some time. That is something to agree with. At that there is something more important in

question than just a game to play or, perhaps, this is a game with a win-win outcome.

Today we witness the transformation of outgoing West - oriented world into a new polycentric global system with inherent unity in diversity.

Dilip Hiro, an Indian political scholar living in England, believes that the world emerging after empire will not be centered on America... «The modus operandi of the future is accommodation between leading powers at certain times and deterrence at others – a flexible combination of the main actors emerging to thwart the excessive ambitions of one of them. In other words, an international set-up where great powers will be able to thwart the unbridled aims of an aspiring superpower. Back to the age-old balance of power at work». (1) Sometimes the new world order is defined as «loose geometry of international relations».

The Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) offers the same world vision in its report which says «Moscow needs a world order in which none of the players is able to monopolize global sources of growth and cut Russia off from them if political differences arise. Multipolarity is acquiring a conceptually new meaning. Once understood as the coexistence of great powers, it now supposes the presence of several alternative sources of growth and development. One of which, of course, is Russia itself».

Russia enjoys a unique geographic position in the world heartland with the most convenient routes passing across its territory to link Western Europe and Eastern Asia. This is an important factor making Russia a «gravitational field» of world politics.

It does not apply to the continental part of Eurasia only, but also to the Arctic zone: the Northern Sea Route (the Northeast Passage) opens new opportunities for world trade as climate goes on changing.

One thing should be taken into consideration to grasp the significance of this factor - the West has a complex problem to face. It must overcome the implications of deindustrialization – the process which had been welcomed for a long time as the advent of «post-industrial age» with the fast growing service sector generating more wealth than the manufacturing sector of the economy. But soon it became an obstacle on the way to progress.

It prompted the European Commission to adopt a new Communication on Industrial policy «For a European Industrial Renaissance» in January 2014. It calls for taking urgent measures to revive the European industry. The same trend is visible in the United States.

We live in the age of new industrialization or reindustrialization. The transport revolution will have a prominent role in the process which has great importance for the world and especially for its largest continent – Eurasia. Communications are changed and new routes to link countries and continents appear. This is a complex process encompassing not only transport and related areas (land, air, water and pipelines) but the whole industrial clusters, including high-tech industry.

The transport revolution is an element of new industrial revolution. Unlike the classic industrial revolution of XVIII-XIX centuries that took place after the age of constant wars, the new

industrialization puts to the fore the imperative of nonviolent geopolitics or the geopolitics of peace based on multilateral cooperation, the principles of reciprocity, non-confrontational diplomacy and the mutual respect for the interests of each other between parties to the international process.

To my mind, the paradigm of progress is to become the basis for geopolitics of peace in Eurasia. It presupposes economic growth inherently interconnected with high employment rate and relatively balanced distribution of national income inside national communities and between states.

The following megaprojects acquire special significance within the framework of transport revolution.

1. The Northern Sea Route

The interest in the Arctic is explained by a number of geopolitical reasons. Besides oil and gas, the region contains significant deposits of strategic materials such as coal, zinc, silver, rare-earth metals etc. The Arctic region opens great prospects for new sea lanes to appear and boost the world trade. The anticipated global warming makes northern communications linking Asia, West Europe and North America more accessible and easily usable. For instance, the Northeast Passage going around Greenland and along the Russia's Arctic shore links China with West Europe. The Northern Sea Route starts from Murmansk. Being a part of the Northern Passage, it is the shortest seaway between Europe and Asia.

2. The International North–South Transport Corridor

In 1999, a group of Indian, Iranian and Russian transport companies signed a general agreement on import and export transportation of containers in the Sri Lanka – India - Iran - Caspian Sea - Russia international transport corridor. In May 2002, the transport ministers of the participating countries signed a protocol on the corridor's official opening in St. Petersburg. Then the North-South container shipping was limited by the Russia-Iran-Russia route. The shipping through Astrakhan was frozen. At that the project remained to be attractive enough to make Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Oman and Syria join in. Turkey and Ukraine also applied to join. The prospects for the accession of the European Union to the North-South Corridor look promising as it would provide easy access to India and South-East Asia.

3. The Silk Road on the Sea (Maritime Silk Route)

The Eurasian route may start from deep water port of Duisburg (Germany) to cross Western Europe, Russia, Kazakhstan and China as it runs to the south. The various versions of the route envisage linking the sea ports of China and India which will get access to Siberia, Europe, Iran, the countries of Arabia Peninsula and South East Asia.

4. Eurasian pipelines

The geography of oil and gas production defines the directions of main Eurasian pipeline routes.

Around 90 world oil deposits are located in Eurasia stretching from the Russian Arctic to the Persian Gulf. This is a fact of fundamental importance.

The Eurasian Economic Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan will start to operate from January 1, 2015. Armenia and Kirghizia are to join on the same date. One more step will be taken on the way to reaching Eurasian consensus. It will allow to create political prerequisites for emergence of Eurasian «corridors of growth» leading the world out of the systematic economic downturn that has been lasting for the recent five years.

* * *

Sui generis is a Latin phrase. It has many meanings and can be translated as "of its own kind/genus" and hence "unique in its characteristics." In geopolitics it applies to a «civilization-state» – a state pursuing the global interests of its own. China, India, Russia and Brazil are good examples. Italy sets much store by sui generis in geopolitics. The old time ties with the East, the traditionally active diplomacy of the Republic of Venice and the insatiable desire for discovery – all these factors can really make Italy advance to the forefront of the second discovery of Eurasia.

Rome- Moscow

November-December 2014.

(1) Hiro, D. After Empire. The Birth of a Multipolar World. N.Y.: Nation Books, 2010, p. 5-6.