

Editor's Note

The current issue of the Caucasus Strategic Perspectives (CSP) journal entitled “*Sovereignty, Strategic Choices and Survival in the 21st Century*” is dedicated to the theoretical and practical dimensions of sovereignty in an era of shifting global norms and exploring how regional states assert sovereignty amid geopolitical competition and conflict. The CSP’s summer issue also featured off-topic, yet timely-written article covering the relevant developments beyond the South Caucasus region.

The CSP’s new issue includes 8 articles. The CSP’s current authors studied strategic partnership between Azerbaijan and the Central Asian states, the nexus between energy sovereignty and resource geopolitics, structural realism and securitization theory to safeguard sovereign, the concept of state sovereignty in the context of expanding global obligations under international law, the diaspora engagement policies of Turkic states, various forms of connectivity, the EU-Central Asia cooperation, and etc.

The new issue’s **Highlight** is the article of **Zhanat Momynkulov** titled “*Azerbaijan and Central Asia: From Shared Turkic Heritage to a Full-Fledged Strategic Partnership*”. The article examines the evolution of a strategic partnership between Azerbaijan and the Central Asian states, focusing on the transformation of their relations from a shared historical and cultural foundation to the pursuit of new regional interests. The study highlights the role of common Turkic identity, linguistic ties, geography, and cultural heritage as a soft power base that now complements pragmatic cooperation in economics, energy, transport, and security.

The new issue’s **Articles Section** follows with the article of **Liliana Śmiech** titled “*Energy Sovereignty and the Geopolitics of Critical Resources*”. This article explores the nexus between energy sovereignty and resource geopolitics in the 21st century. It argues that sovereignty must be redefined from self-sufficiency to resilient control over supply chains, generation technologies, and strategic resources. The article concludes that energy policy is inseparable from geopolitics: the future of sovereignty will be

determined not by borders alone, but by control over pipelines, grids, and critical mineral supply chains.

Atia Ali Kazmi's article of "*Reconstituting Sovereignty: Strategic Realignments and Connectivity in a Fractured World*" synthesizes structural realism and securitization theory to argue that sovereign robustness today hinges on the collective safeguarding of non-traditional domains – trade, energy, transport, and data – alongside classic defence concerns. The article concludes that sustainable sovereignty in Eurasia's interior increasingly rests on a cooperative securitization of connectivity, treating shared infrastructure as stabilizing public goods rather than zero-sum prerogatives.

Orkhan Yolchuyev's article of "*Revisiting State Sovereignty in the Context of Global Obligations*" revisits the concept of state sovereignty in the context of expanding global obligations under international law. The article argues that modern sovereignty is best understood as a form of accountable authority – legitimate only when exercised in conformity with universal legal norms. The central question of the article asks how contemporary international law reconciles the classical notion of sovereignty with collective responsibilities owed to the international community as a whole.

Aidar Kurmashev, Amina Urpekova, Amirbek Alibi and Houman Sadri's joint article of "*Diaspora Policies within the Organization of Turkic States: Opportunities for Strategic Engagement*" evaluates the diaspora engagement policies of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan by comparing legislative frameworks, institutions, and the intensity of engagement. The analysis identifies distinct policy profiles aligned with five ideal types and maps each Organization of Turkic States member to the nearest cluster.

Laszlo Vasa and Peter Barkanyi's joint article titled "*Connectivity in the new world order – Reason or consequence?*" discusses how various forms of connectivity – such as trade, digital networks, cultural ties, and diplomacy – are linked to international cooperation in the South Caucasus region. It examines how these

connections interact with the efforts of multilateral organizations active in the region. One of the key results of this study is that the countries of the South Caucasus are increasingly seeking to rely on their own regional initiatives whenever external actors appear less effective.

Ikboljon Qoraboyev and Nazym Umirzakova's article "*A Geopolitical Europe in Action: Pragmatism and Partnership in EU–Central Asia Relations beyond the Samarkand Summit*" examines how the EU's evolving geopolitical posture is articulated through four dynamics: the elevation of Central Asia's centrality in EU discourse, the prioritization of material interests with critical raw materials at the core, the discursive and policy shift from globalization to connectivity, and the rise of quid pro quo diplomacy in place of conditionality. The analysis highlights both the promise and limitations of the EU's emerging geopolitical actorness in Central Asia, underscoring the need to balance strategic realism with long-term credibility.

Lala Khalilzade's article titled "*Iraq's Development Road and its Potential Linkage with the Zangezur Corridor*" examines the strategic, economic, and geopolitical implications of the Development Road Project for Iraq and Türkiye, situating it within broader regional connectivity frameworks such as the Middle Corridor. Special attention is given to the potential integration of the Zangezur Corridor, a proposed route that could link Azerbaijan with Türkiye via Armenia.

Finally, on behalf of the CSP team, we hope this issue provides food for thought and contributes to and enriches the discussion on subject-matter issues.

Sincerely
Farid Shafiyev
Editor-in-Chief of CSP Journal