

Abstracts

From “Official Development Assistance” to “Total Official Support for Sustainable Development” : Statistical Reform of International Development Assistance

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Abstract: The concept of “Official Development Assistance” (ODA), which came into being at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s, has not only provided standards, norms, and guidelines for Western – led international development assistance, but also attached political and ideological conditions while assisting economic and social development, and intervened in the economic system, social development and political reform of recipient countries. In recent years, with the rapid development of “South – South Cooperation”, the weights of the north and south countries in international development assistance have changed significantly. Western donor countries have had a heated discussion on the effectiveness of ODA and put forward a new concept of “Total Support for Sustainable Development” (TOSSD) based on the experience of “South – South Cooperation”, which was introduced to regulate the financing and practice of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. Understanding the origin and reforms of ODA, the implication and methodology of TOSSD shall help to perceive better North – South relations and the status and role of “South – South Cooperation” in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development.

Key words: international development assistance; North – South relations; South – South cooperation; ODA; TOSSD; SDGs

The Predicament and Solution of Global Security Governance from the Perspective of Russia –Ukraine Conflict

Wang Lincong

Abstract: The Russia –Ukraine conflict is a typical case of current predicament of global security governance. It shows that global security governance is shifting from cooperation to confrontation. The conflict has exacerbated multiple global security crises, made traditional and non –traditional security issues worse, impacted the global security system severely, and triggered new security dilemma. Hegemonism and power politics are the greatest threats to global security, development and

governance. The United States is obsessed with great power competition, sticks to hegemonic thinking, and pursues absolute security, neo-interventionism, unilateralism, coercive diplomacy and exclusive alliances, which leads to serious global security crises and security dilemma. The Russia-Ukraine conflict highlights the urgency of global security governance. Against this background, every country needs to establish a sense of community with a shared future for mankind, follow the global security initiative proposed by Xi Jinping, adhere to the new concept of security, and promote the traditional concept of harmony, cooperation and coexistence. In addition, every country needs to respect the legitimate security interests of other countries, rebuild trust to achieve mutual security and universal security, and reshape security mechanism with tolerance, cooperation and shared benefits. These are rational choices to promote the construction of a global security governance system.

Key words: Russia – Ukraine conflict; security threat; security dilemma; coercive diplomacy; harmony, cooperation and co-existence; security governance

The Changing International Energy Order and the Role of the Middle East

Liu Dong

Abstract: The international energy order is not only relatively stable, but also partly affected by unstable factors. From the historical perspective of evolution of international energy order, it has experienced three historical periods since the middle of the 1970s: the domination by OPEC, the counterbalance between OPEC and the International Energy Agency, and the transition to competitive market. Changes in the relationship between energy supply and demand are the leading driving factors to the evolution of the international energy order. Russia is an important energy producer and exporter in the world. The outbreak of Russia – Ukraine conflict, as well as the economic sanctions imposed by the United States and the Western countries on Russia in late February 2022 will deliver important impact on the international oil and gas supply – demand balances, in addition, it will also change the global “carbon neutrality” process. And besides, the conflict and sanctions will “bite back” on the “sanctions hegemony” and “dollar hegemony” of the United States and the Western countries. In this context, the conflict will trigger the reconstruction of international energy order. Under the evolution of international energy order, the importance of the Middle East region to global energy security will be enhanced and Middle Eastern resources – rich countries will become

more independent in setting producing policies. In addition, the Middle Eastern region will attract more investment in their energy sectors.

Key words: international energy order; OPEC +; Russia – Ukraine conflict; energy market; Middle Eastern countries’ discourse power of Energy policy

Africa’s Food Security Dilemma in the Context of Russia – Ukraine Conflict

Zhang Mengying

Abstract: As a special commodity, food is a constituent part of human security and national security. From the global perspective, Africa has been trapped in the dilemma of food security for a long time, facing many difficulties such as the prevalence and severity of food security, the imbalance and shortage of food demand and supply, vulnerabilities of food system, and strong dependency for food imports. In recent years, extreme weather, natural disasters and the COVID – 19 pandemic have jeopardized the African food system to address food shortages. Since February 2022, the Russia – Ukraine Conflict has worsened Africa’s food security dilemma in the following aspects: Russia and Ukraine are main food suppliers for many African countries. The ongoing conflict brings an uncertainty to Africa’s food insecurity, which not only threatened the food supply chain and the purchasing power and exposed the international community’s food aids to high risks, but also exacerbated the social instability in African countries. In terms of structural and sudden risks, African countries should take short – term and long – term solutions through governments’ policy and investments, smart agriculture, optimization of food demand and supply chains and the South – South cooperation to enhance their ability to improve food security level.

Key words: African food security; Russia – Ukraine Conflict; supply chain; food self – protection level

The Biden Administration’s Africa Policy: Priorities and Essential Implications

Zhang Hongming

Abstract: As a logical extension of the US global strategic adjustment, it is the Trump administration that has completed the directional adjustment or strategic transformation of US – Africa relations at the policy level, but the Biden administration has perfected and put it into practice. The Biden administration’s work with Africa is carried out along two paths of key cooperation areas and key cooperation countries: the five priorities or cooperation areas are policy declarations oriented to the whole of

Africa, and it is a compromise product that balances the respective interests and needs of the United States and Africa, which also reflects the interests and concerns of African countries; but in the process of policy implementation, it focuses on meeting the interests of the United States itself. It is implemented by the United States through bilateral mechanisms with specific African countries, so country – specific policies can better reflect the United States’ essential connotation and strategic intent of the relationship with Africa. In the era of great power competition, although both the Biden administration and the Trump administration plan the US – Africa relationship from a strategic height, due to their different strategic visions, there are also differences in the role of Africa in their respective strategic concepts. The policy goal of the Biden administration’s pursuit of work in Africa is not limited to dealing with the competition of major powers in the African region. It also tries to squeeze China’s diplomatic space in Africa and weaken China’s “diplomatic foundation” by interfering with China’s economic layout in Africa. This in turn eliminates the role of Africa in China’s international strategy. Compared with the Trump administration, the Biden administration’s diplomacy towards Africa not only pursues the goals of the US policy toward Africa, but also conforms to the goals of the US global strategy, which makes its layout in Africa more strategic and overall. It is also the driving force behind its transformation strategy to strengthen its relationship with Africa. Because the Biden administration subtly embeds American needs into African interests and merges them into the common interests of the United States and Africa, it is also easier for Africans to accept.

Key words: Biden administration; African policy; priorities; essential connotation

The Biden Administration’s Diplomatic De – escalation towards Iran and the Trend of US – Iran Relations

Fan Hongda

Abstract: The national power and international status of the United States, as well as changes in the international political pattern, are important factors affecting the United States’ policy towards Iran. When President Joe Biden took office in early 2021, US – Iran relations were at a very severe moment, while Iran’s relations with China and Russia were deepening. Under the situation that the competition among world powers is gradually intensifying, the United States, as the world’s number one power, does not want to see Iran, which has a prominent geostrategic position, turn to the side of its competitors. The Biden administration has been forced to adjust

the previous Trump administration's "maximum pressure" policy on Iran. Iran, which has been subjected to severe international sanctions for a long time, also has a strong desire to improve the external development environment. Also, Iran's great-power balance diplomacy is also conducive to the easing and improvement of relations with Western powers such as the United States. The Biden administration, starting with participating in the Vienna talks to comprehensively resume the implementation of the Iran nuclear deal, has constantly made a gesture to Iran that it hopes to ease bilateral relations, which provides an opportunity for the further easing and better development of US – Iran relations. However, at the same time, the United States and Iran have confronted each other for more than 40 years. The serious psychological gap between the two sides is difficult to disappear in a short time, and the political mutual trust between the two countries is still relatively low. This has and will greatly restrict the speed and space for the relaxation and improvement of US – Iran relations.

Key words: US Diplomacy; Biden administration; Iran; "balance diplomacy"; great power competition; Iran nuclear deal

Proxy Wars under Principal – Agent Bidirectional Game: A Case Study of the Relationship between the United States and Kurdish Armed Forces in Syria (2014 – 2020)

Wen Shaobiao & Liu Zhongmin

Abstract: The use of local proxy armed forces to fight against terrorism is a significant component of US security strategy. Therefore, the Kurdish Armed Forces have become a major helper of the US Anti – ISIL campaign in Syria. This article places extra emphasis on the root causes of why the Principal – Agent (PA) relationship between the United States and Syria Kurdish Armed Forces shifts from close cooperation to gradual alienation. It uses the bidirectional game process of PA theory as a framework, and combines three analytical dimensions – interests, incentives, and supervision, to draw the following conclusions. First, the rise of ISIL in 2014 accelerated the formation of the common interests between the United States and the Syria Kurdish Armed Forces, and the United States gradually imposed empowerment incentives to the latter for more positivity and better combat capability. Second, when the ISIL was greatly undermined, the differentiation of interest between the two got intensified. The United States started to impose decapacitation incentives to Syria Kurdish Armed Forces to restrict its daily growing strength and autonomy. Finally, because of information asymmetry and the fragmented structure of

proxy armed forces, the United States is limited in its ability to supervise and control the Syrian Kurdish Armed Forces, which resulted in slack and diversion from the principal's regulation and commands. As the anti-ISIL campaign comes to its end, the United States becomes more reluctant to take Syrian Kurds' interests into account, which pushes the latter to seek new asylums from Russia and the Assad regime. This subtle slippage reflects the potential risk of proxy wars and the fragility of this PA relationship.

Key words: Syrian war; the United States; Syria Kurdish Armed Forces; principal-agent; bidirectional game; ISIL; agent autonomy

Iran's Changing Roles in the Evolution of the Middle East Regional Order since the Islamic Revolution

Jin Liangxiang

Abstract: As a nation-state with very strong personality, Iran has played very important roles in the evolution of regional order. From the Islamic Revolution to the end of Rouhani's rule, the Middle East regional order went through the bi-polar struggles, the American uni-polar and the weakened American uni-polar (the rise of regional powers) periods. The roles of Iran have changed from a limited revolutionary (1979-1989) to low-profile recipient (1989-2000), and passive beneficiary (2001-2008) in different periods of time since its 1979 revolution. Barack Obama's decision in 2009 to withdraw troops from Iraq and Afghanistan marked the beginning of the weakening of America's uni-polar order in the region. The rising of regional powers and their competition for sphere of influence, as a result of America's decline, has plunged the region into disorder. Iran not only played the role in undermining America's dominance but also triggered the geopolitical competition among regional powers. Ebrahim Raisi, regarded as successor of the Supreme Leader, will likely initiate a new era focusing on economic development at home, and Iran under Raisi's rule will hopefully play a constructive role in regional efforts to reshape regional order. However, internal and external factors will restrict Iran's roles in regional affairs.

Key words: Middle East regional order; Iran's roles; limited revolutionary; low-profile recipient; passive beneficiary; active changer; active participant

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