

The ethno-political context of the median hedging of Turkey as a model for ensuring national stability

Етнополітичний контекст серединного хеджингу Туреччини, як модель забезпечення національної стійкості

Iryna Aliksieienko^A

Dr of Political Sciences, Professor, e-mail: ppvch@ukr.net, ORCID: 0000-0002-6873-003X

Liudmyla Kovalyshyn^A

Candidate of Political Sciences, Associate Professor, e-mail: k.liudmyla2000@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-1521-8577

Ірина Алексєєнко^A

д.політ.н., професор, e-mail: ppvch@ukr.net, ORCID: 0000-0002-6873-003X

Людмила Ковалишин^A

к.політ.н., доцент, e-mail: k.liudmyla2000@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-1521-8577

^A Yevhenii Bereznyak Military Academy, Kyiv, Ukraine

^A Воєнна академія імені Євгенія Березняка, м. Київ, Україна

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Purpose: to illuminate the ethno-political aspects of Turkey's median hedging strategy, which has been significantly influenced by the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. This strategy serves as a potential model for maintaining national stability amidst the challenges of globalisation.

Method: analysis and synthesis, comparative, modelling, analogies, and functional.

Findings: Determination of the conceptual foundations of Turkey's foreign policy against the background of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine; analysis of Turkey's median hedging policy as a model for ensuring the national stability of the state in the face of challenges and threats of globalisation.

Theoretical implications: It consists of determining the main ethno-political features of Turkey's median hedging as a mechanism for ensuring the national stability of the state against the background of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the formation of a foreign policy course.

Practical implications: This study sheds light on the evolving security architecture of Europe and the world, particularly through the lens of Turkey's median hedging policy. The findings suggest a need for reevaluating defence and foreign policy strategies, enhancing state stability, increasing military expenditures, and forging new alliances. These insights can be valuable for professional researchers, geopolitics and geostrategy analysts, security and defence sector representatives, international organisations as well as state and local authorities.

Originality: This research stands out for its exploration of the ethno-political dimensions of Turkey's foreign policy, particularly in the context of escalating globalisation challenges and the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. The study underscores the state's deepening median hedging policy as a response to these dynamics.

Paper type: theoretical, practical.

Мета роботи: виявити етнополітичні особливості серединного хеджингу геополітичних стратегій Туреччини, як своєрідної моделі національної стійкості на тлі збройної агресії російської федерації проти України в частині глобалізаційних викликів.

Метод: метод аналізу і синтезу, компаративістський, моделювання, аналогії, функціональний.

Висновки: Визначення концептуальних засад зовнішньої політики Туреччини на тлі збройної агресії РФ проти України; аналіз політики серединного хеджингу Туреччини як моделі забезпечення національної стійкості держави в умовах викликів і загроз глобалізації.

Теоретичні висновки: полягає у визначенні основних етнополітичних особливостей серединного хеджингу Туреччини, як своєрідного механізму забезпечення національної стійкості держави на тлі збройної агресії РФ проти України та формування зовнішньополітичного курсу.

Практичні наслідки: Виокремлюється тренд переосмислення архітектури безпеки Європи та світу, через політику серединного хеджингу, що призводить до перегляду стратегій оборони та зовнішньої політики, забезпечення стійкості держави, збільшення військових витрат та пошуку нових союзів. Запропоноване дослідження може бути корисним фаховим дослідникам, аналітикам в царині геополітики та геостратегії, представникам сектору безпеки і оборони, міжнародним організаціям, органам державної та місцевої влади.

Оригінальність: полягає у виявленні етнополітичних особливостей зовнішньополітичного курсу Туреччини в умовах загострення викликів і загроз глобалізації, що спонукало державу до поглиблення політики серединного хеджингу на збройної агресії Російської Федерації проти України.

Тип статті: теоретичний, практичний.

Key words: ethno-politics, foreign policy, geopolitics, national stability, Turkey, Russian military aggression against Ukraine, national security, median hedging, globalization.

Ключові слова: етнополітика, зовнішня політика, геополітика, національна стійкість, Туреччина, збройна агресія РФ проти України, національна безпека, серединний хеджинг, глобалізація.

Introduction

As a result of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, a complex system of geopolitical, technological, and security challenges arose. The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which began in 2014, became not only a reflection of regional tensions but also significantly transformed the geopolitical context of Europe and affected the global balance of power between key states, in particular between the Russian Federation and the United States. Accordingly, the Russian military aggression against Ukraine contributed to rethinking and reformatting both states' geopolitical and technological strategies, especially within the scope of military and security policy. In that regard, there are changes in military doctrine, security strategies, and innovative technological developments that have been introduced or modified according to the needs and challenges generated by the conflict. An essential role in the analysis is played by the actions and reactions of the international community, particularly the United States, which affect global security dynamics and technological development. This situation, which has developed as a result of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, affects regional stability, international security, and global technological innovations, taking into account the growing military presence, the development of the latest weapons and cyber threats. Understanding these transformations is essential in today's geopolitical context because these changes have far-reaching consequences for the parties directly involved and the international community as a whole. Accordingly, there is an urgent task of deepening the understanding of the complex processes shaping the modern international order and determining possible ways to strengthen global security and stability.

Theoretical background

Several works by foreign and Ukrainian researchers are devoted to the issue of changes in the geopolitical and technological space in the context of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. Możgin W. analyses the geopolitical position of Ukraine in the context of competition for influence in the region between the West and the Russian Federation. The author examines various aspects of Ukraine's foreign policy course and the impact of international organisations and states on the domestic political situation in the country. The article highlights how geopolitical dynamics affect Ukraine's strategic decisions. Lane D. focuses on analysing the international context of relations between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, which led to an increase in the confrontation between the East and the West. The author examines the key events and decisions that contributed to the escalation of the conflict and discusses the possible consequences of this confrontation for international relations. Abdulhameed A. studies the geostrategic approaches of the Russian Federation and the United States to conflict management. The author examines how both great powers use political, economic, and military tools to achieve their goals and how this affects regional and global security. Matsaberidze D. delves into evaluating relations between the Russian Federation and Western countries through the prism of events in Georgia and Ukraine. The author considers these conflicts as part of a broader confrontation between the Russian Federation and the West, focusing on the impact of these crisis phenomena on relations between states and on international security as a whole. Sydoruk T. and others analyse the consequences of the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine for Euro-Atlantic security architecture. The authors examine the conflict-affected political and security relations between NATO and the EU and their ability to adapt to new challenges and threats. Special attention is paid to changes in strategic doctrines and military cooperation. Girgin D. points to the deep geopolitical problems behind this conflict. The author details the historical, political, and economic aspects of relations between the two countries and the international reaction to the conflict. Emphasis is placed on the importance of understanding the geopolitical context to find ways to resolve the conflict. Chupriy L. examines how the conflict contributes to forming a new geopolitical reality in the world. The author analyses the changes in

international relations resulting from the conflict and discusses the potential consequences for the global balance of power. Special attention is paid to the impact of the conflict on regional stability and countries' security strategies.

A generalised understanding of studies of the conflict and its impact on international security from Ukrainian scholars is presented below. B. Parakhonskyi and G. Yavorska consider the conflict to be a key moment significantly affecting the international security system. The authors analyse how Russian armed aggression became a catalyst for changes in approaches to international security, highlighting the basic narratives developed in the world community regarding the conflict. Kuchyk O. and Gogosha O. explore the geopolitical component of the conflict, focusing on the military and political ambitions of the Russian Federation. The work describes how the interests of the Russian Federation in the conflict affect international geopolitical dynamics. The study synthesises various views of Western scholars and analysts on the conflict. The work allows assessing the diversity of opinions and analytical approaches in the international community regarding this problem. Galaka S. studies how the conflict caused crisis phenomena in the global and regional security systems. The consequences of the war for international security are analysed, and suggestions are made for resolving this conflict. Blaziy A. analyses the international reaction to the conflict and draws attention to the EU's contribution to countering the Russian aggression in Ukraine. The work describes the EU's diplomatic and economic efforts to support Ukraine and strengthen international security.

The reviewed studies deepen our understanding of complex geopolitical processes within the conflict framework and the interaction between critical international actors. They also provide a synthesis of the challenges and strategies that shape contemporary international politics in the region.

However, the issue of median hedging of the ethnopolitical and geostrategic context of Turkey, the Russian Federation, the United States, and other actors of international politics in the context of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine has not been sufficiently considered among the previous array of studies and needs further study.

Statement of the problem

The participation of the forces and means of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine in joint actions of security forces and defense forces within the stabilization (defense) on restoring control over the state border of Ukraine in the de-occupied areas of the state border of Ukraine is stipulated by the Action Plan for 2023-2025 on the implementation of the Integrated Border Management Strategy for the period until 2025 (On the approval of the Action Plan for 2023-2025 on the implementation of the Integrated Border Management Strategy for the period until 2025, 2023).

Based on the analysis of the State Border Guard Service experience on the involvement of border command posts in the performance of missions to restore control over the state border of Ukraine, it was established that the effectiveness of their activities depends on the nature of the situation and the specifics of the tasks. Therefore, in order to achieve the required level of efficiency, there is a need for a systematic analysis of the conditions and specifics of the involvement of border command posts in the performance of tasks to restore control over the state border.

The results of the analysis of the scientific and methodological support of border command posts indicate the lack of a comprehensive approach to the study of the conditions and specifics of the involvement of border command posts in the performance of tasks to restore control over the state border of Ukraine.

Therefore, the problematic issue of increasing the effectiveness of restoring control over the state border due to the development of a single unified approach remains unresolved.

Formulation of the problem. To reveal the ethnopolitical peculiarities of the median hedging of Turkey's geopolitical strategies under the influence of the Russian military aggression against

Ukraine regarding technological challenges and other fundamental changes as a factor of ensuring national stability.

Results

The transformation of the geopolitical and technological space of the Russian Federation and the United States in the context of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine is a complex process that covers a wide range of aspects, from international relations and military strategy to technological development and information warfare. We will highlight these aspects below.

Geopolitical transformation: the Russian military aggression against Ukraine significantly changed the international position of the Russian Federation, isolating it from many Western countries. The imposition of economic sanctions, the refusal of Russian energy carriers, and the strengthening of military alliances against the Russian Federation (for example, the expansion of NATO) reflect these changes. The USA intensified its role in Europe and international relations broadly, supporting Ukraine with military aid and leading in the imposition of international sanctions against the Russian Federation. It also contributed to the deepening of transatlantic ties and the strengthening of NATO as the alliance responded to the challenges arising from the conflict. It also stimulated the debate on energy security and reducing dependence on Russian energy resources [2].

Technological transformation: technological sanctions imposed by the West have limited the Russian Federation's access to Western technologies, especially in high technology and computer chips. This stimulated the Russian Federation to look for alternative sources of technology and contributed to attempts to develop its technological solutions. Still, it also led to lagging in some key sectors. The United States continues to be a leader in technological innovations, actively developing and implementing the latest military and cyber security technologies. The conflict prompted the strengthening of defence capabilities in cyberspace and investments in the development of artificial intelligence, unmanned technologies, and other innovative solutions [4].

Information warfare and hybrid operations: Armed conflict has accelerated the development of information technologies used in hybrid warfare, including cyber-attacks, propaganda, and disinformation. Both sides actively use digital technologies to wage information wars, spread their narratives, and influence public opinion worldwide. The Russian Federation uses its state media and social networks to spread propaganda and misinformation, trying to influence the international community and destabilise the situation in Ukraine and Western countries [8]. Cyber-attacks have become another tool of hybrid warfare, targeting government institutions, infrastructure, and the private sector of adversary countries. Meanwhile, the US and its allies use their technological resources to defend themselves against cyberattacks and counter-propaganda as well as detect and block disinformation. This includes developing software for monitoring and analysing the information space, improving cyber defence mechanisms, and cooperating with technology companies to combat the spread of fake news and manipulation in social networks [9]. The US and its partners are also actively working to increase public awareness of information warfare techniques and to teach critical information perception.

Impact on international relations: the Russian military aggression against Ukraine contributed to rethinking the security architecture of Europe and the world, stimulating countries to review their defence and foreign policy strategies. In particular, this led to increased military expenditures, a transformation of defence doctrines, and the search for new security alliances and partnerships [3].

Technological Confrontation and Innovation: Armed conflict has emphasised the importance of technological superiority in modern conflicts, driving innovation in military technology, cyber security, communications, and intelligence. This highlighted the importance of investment in

scientific research and development and the need to adapt to the rapidly changing world technological ecosystem.

In general, the Russian military aggression against Ukraine has become not just a “local crisis” but a significant test for the international order, causing large-scale geopolitical and technological changes. This conflict highlighted the importance of new military technologies and information warfare and pushed many countries to rethink their defence strategies and security policies. In particular, the influence on the relations between the Russian Federation and the USA, which had already undergone significant tensions, became even more apparent, forcing both countries to reconsider their positions in the international arena [6]. The conflict also increased the international community’s attention to security issues in Europe, prompting the reform of defence alliances and searching for new approaches to military cooperation and diplomacy. There is a need for a new approach to international law and order that would consider both traditional and new challenges related to cyber security, hybrid wars, and the spread of information technologies [12]. On the other hand, the conflict contributes to the intensification of international discussions about the role of international organisations, such as the UN, NATO, and the EU, in the modern geopolitical context. Predominantly, the Russian military aggression against Ukraine has caused significant changes in international relations – old paradigms of interaction between states require revision, and new approaches are to be implemented in the context of the constant global changes. This creates opportunities for developing new forms of international cooperation but also poses complex challenges to the world community that require responsibility, flexibility, and innovation in approaches to international security and stability [5].

The modern features of the autocratic regime of the Russian Federation, including the use of war as a tool of foreign policy, have a profound impact on regional security and stability, strengthening confrontation with the West and causing international concern.

Hence, it is essential to consider the policy of median hedging of third parties, particularly Turkey.

Changes in geopolitical reality and growing threats of international terrorism affect the general nature of the Republic of Turkey's national security, significantly shifting the emphasis on its provision.

The problematic situation in the Middle East, related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the explosive situation in Iraq, the aggravation of the situation around Syria and Iran, the growth of Kurdish separatism, the armed conflict in Ukraine, as well as the intensification of the activities of international terrorist organisations in the region influenced awareness in Ankara for its responsibility for ensuring not only national security but regional security [7].

Turkey’s responsibility for regional security is discussed in the work “Strategic Depth” by A. Davutoglu, who believes that Turkey’s national security issues go far beyond its borders due to its geographical location in the centre of Eurasia. According to the author, Turkey should guarantee security and stability within its borders and in neighbouring countries. Turkey’s constructive role in ensuring order, strength, and security at the regional level will enable it to acquire strong positions at the international level.

Today, scientists consider Turkey’s efforts in the field of guaranteeing national security and national stability from the perspective of the median hedging and note that its position is determined, first of all, by the country’s geostrategic position, NATO membership, relations with major world powers, primarily with the USA, Russia, and EU countries as well as the desire to play the role of a leader in the Islamic world and to be a mediator in the resolution of regional conflicts [1].

Turkey’s views on the problems of ensuring national security are outlined in the “Political Document on National Security” (Milli Güvenlik Siyaseti Belgesi), which is called the “red book” or “secret Constitution”. It formulates the main provisions of Turkey’s national security concept

alongside its country's leadership system of views on the content and main directions of domestic and foreign policy ensuring their effective implementation.

The modern concept of Turkey's national security strategy includes ethnopolitical and ethnopsychological factors and is based on the following principles:

- ensuring the guaranteed protection of the independence, territorial integrity, and the republican system of the state;
- application of effective measures to prevent crises and conflicts, both at the national and regional levels, which significantly minimises international tension;
- participation in the system of collective security, and fulfilment of obligations imposed on the Republic of Turkey within the scope of the collective agreement [10].

NATO membership is still a key element in guaranteeing Turkey's national security. It also emphasises Turkey's regional importance. Turkey is a Eurasian state whose foreign policy strategy has great potential and can influence the situation in the Middle East, the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. It is especially highlighted that Turkey's policy in assuring national security should be proactive. In this regard, the task is to organise and carry out measures that can have a positive impact on regional security [8].

The socio-political block of Turkey's national security concept includes three fundamental principles:

- deterrence (or maintaining the "deterrence potential", which allows eliminating threats to national security without the use of military force);
- creation of a favourable external environment (settlement of existing and prevention of new conflicts along the border perimeter);
- crisis management (early adoption of military and non-military measures to overcome threats caused by ethno-political, military, and humanitarian crises) [11].

The geostrategic and ethnopolitical analysis of the nature of global and regional threats led to the reviewing of the question regarding the role and place of Turkey in the global and regional security system, as well as the way to counter them.

Internal threats include radical Islamism, the activities of far-left groups, Kurdish separatism, and others. At the state level, the interrelationship between internal and "asymmetric" threats was emphasised, which include international terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration, human trafficking, the threat of nuclear proliferation in the region, the problem of the lack of water and natural resources, etc [13].

When determining the nature of external threats, Turkey does not consider neighbouring countries as a potential enemy, admitting that threats to national security may still arise from individual states. At the current stage, Turkey adheres to the principle of median hedging to counter them, which involves using political and diplomatic methods which are strengthened by the appropriate level of the state's defence capability and ensure its national stability.

Conclusion

The modern transformation of the geopolitical landscape requires the Turkey's leadership to significantly adjust the content of new domestic and foreign policies' aspects to ensure national and regional security, which contributes to the national stability of the state as a whole. In particular, the priority of NATO membership, which for Turkey has become the guide of its ideas, in the context of the US-proclaimed plan for the democratisation of the Middle East and North Africa, today no longer affects the development of foreign policy decisions by the Republic of Turkey, which increasingly focuses on its vision of the situation and ensuring national interests.

Turkey's adherence to the principle of median hedging, which is based on the ethnopolitical and ethnopsychological features of its domestic and foreign policy, forces the Turkish government to

develop a policy of cooperation in the field of security and defence with the Russian Federation since this direction meets the interests of both countries and aims to create a regional security system.

In this regard, the emergence of new challenges, threats, and military conflicts affects both states' interests and Turkey's national stability policy. Despite the significant ongoing expansion of military-technical cooperation between Turkey and Ukraine, Ankara's position on the Russian military aggression against Ukraine is relatively restrained. Turkey is in favour of ending the conflict, offering a peaceful plan for its settlement. However, Ankara does not officially support any of the parties to the conflict and calls for a peaceful resolution, expressing readiness to also act as a mediator in negotiations, given the level of its relations achieved with Kyiv and Moscow.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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