



Red-Apple: 'Post-Security Geopolitics Less Resources More People'

Dear Ministers, Chief of Staff, bureaucrats, guests, welcome to the 7th Istanbul Security Conference, which is organized by TASAM. A series of important meetings, concerning the proactive aspects of security concept, will be held one after the other in different halls during the two-day schedule of the conference.

We are delighted to have you with us at the opening session of the 7th Istanbul Security Conference. We are also sincerely grateful to the Dear Ministers, Chief of General Staff, Chiefs of Intelligence, which are joining us from abroad, and our JSGA Commander and his delegation, distinguished representatives and participants of our country's authorities, and the representatives of diplomatic civil-public and military missions. We are also grateful to our senior veterans and ambassadors for their presence. We are also grateful for the efforts and contributions made by a large number of people under the supervision of TASAM Vice Chairman Assoc. Prof. Dr. Brig. Gen. (R) Fahri ERENEL and under the team leadership of our Project Manager, Mustafa Onat MENDİL. We are also grateful to our sponsors for their support, to relevant ministries and institutions for their institutional contributions.

The security business is an ecosystem issue. We have not achieved yet a well-functioning ecosystem, but we also aware of keeping the need for a well- functioning ecosystem on the agenda in such meetings and studies is not in vain, and progress has been made, to a certain extent. The Istanbul Security Conference, of which 2020 meeting was held online in a hybrid format as it was previous year due to the pandemic crisis, continues without any interruption. As part of this year edition of **7th Istanbul Security Conference** following meetings, as it was in the previous editions, will be held as well, namely, **5th Turkey-Gulf Defence and Security Forum**, under the title "Building Unity and Security in Diversity"; **4th Turkey-Africa Defence Security and Space Forum**, under the title "Security and Defense: Strategic Transformation"; and **3rd Marine and Maritime Security Forum**, under the title "Turkish Marine Ecosystem: Proactive Policy, Product and Technologies".

I outlined my keynotes into five sections under the following topics, which I hope to clarify them as briefly as possible:

- **Istanbul Security Conference - Proactive Past and Future**
- **Rethinking Priorities, Hostilities, and Management of them**
- **Red-apple: Common Values for Humanity and Moral Revolution**
- **Post-Security Geopolitics and Competition** (New Literature, Space etc.)
- **National/Global Priorities for Rebalancing Soil-Water-Air-Fire in Man/Nature**
- **Circular (Green) Economy**
- **Strategic Transformation with Multi Task/Skill Based "Staff Security/Army" Doctrine**
- **Rebuilding the Institutional (Meritocracy) Structure**
- **Less Resources More People**
- **Institutional Infrastructure with Coordinated Political, Economic and Sectoral Goals**





- QUAD, AUKUS, BLUE DOT NETWORK, D10, T12
- Mediterranean-Atlantic, Indo-Pacific
- Integrations and CPTPP, RCEP etc. Opposites
- China, Russia, India, Japan and NATO

- New Power and Property Ecosystem
- Cyber Security, Food Scarcity,
- Safety and Competitive Governance of the Production-Consumption Chain
- Transformation of the Middle Class, Future Democracy

The developments experienced during and after the Covid-19 crisis confirmed our keynote that "the biggest threat or risk to security is the prevailing production, consumption and growth model", which was the first article of the final declaration of the first Istanbul Security Conference. We pointed out, during our keynote speech, which was delivered two years ago, that "The current competition model has become largely unreasonable due to the common risks to humanity. Societies and states, however, cannot live without competition. So, the prevailing rivalry between major powers should be moved, as much as possible, to the space domain or some other areas of competition. Otherwise, this fierce competition would do more harm than good, because it is being experienced at the most inopportune moment possible for humanity". Today, there are widespread discussions, conspiracy theories, scientific theses or antithesis that suggest that there is a huge risk to humanity at this period of time.

We are trying to do a large number of security-related studies, while maintaining our efforts for the National Defense and Security Institute and the Istanbul Security Conference. One of the most important factors in security studies and in increasing the effectiveness of a think tank is to act proactively through critical thinking and competency, while drawing up practical policy options. I think that providing studies such as opinions and analysis is only a small part of the works that have to be undertaken by think tanks. In fact, it is a proper service that universities have already rendered well, which resulted in millions of scientific articles and books. I believe that think tanks should work with a more specifically organized approach that is able to have influence on politics, as a positive contribution to the decision making processes, within the scope of its research areas. In this regard, I believe that a significant percentage of think tanks, including those from the western countries, will eventually lose their proper function, which is a process already in progress.

Once again our proverb "a bad experience is better than a thousand advice", turns out to be true, considering the local and global effects of the Covid-19 crisis. Today, there are global threats, many of which are serious and exceeding the capacity of any individual country, because of the historical mistakes in which the human being directly involved, the failure of the international system, as well as the weakening of nation states and the lack of sufficient institutional capacity. As we have observed, for instance, during the Covid-19 crisis, large-scale armies could not contribute much to the fight against this crisis. These armies have only been able to step in at the logistics support efforts or contribute to certain health-based logistics services. The pandemic was not only a crisis that is unexpected for all countries, but also a process that had to be conducted with a sort of warfare approach with security measures. We are inclined to think that we will need more time to





analyze this crisis better or to figure out the degree of adaptation of countries and the extent to which this approach has been applied either in observable or non-observable fashion.

Today, we should reconsider the issues that we identified above as adversaries or priorities, which in fact it should have been done previous decades. We are going through a period of time when we need to reconsider the management of priorities and adversary relations. Of course, everyone is free to make some inferences based on the particular point of view. We think, however, it is the western civilization that has largely shaped the last two centuries, in terms of not only "security" but also lifestyle. Now, however, there is a transition to the multi-polar world order of which references are different from, in certain aspects, and identical to, in some other aspects, conventional order. The rules of the international system have largely been determined by a single center and by a single structure. That's why we believe that we need "Red Apples" and new doctrines or new ideas on a national, international and global scale -rather than an ideological discourse. This doctrine is the idea of Phoenix for China. It could be something else in some other part of the world. Our Chinese friends gave us a description that "we followed a wrong development model". However, "we will rise from our ashes like the Phoenix". This idea of Red Apple may be expressed differently in each culture. However, considering that we are experiencing a civilization crisis, which is not independent from security issues, we believe that there is a desperate need for "common values" and a global "moral revolution" for humanity. For this objective, we need better social and individual role models. I believe that Turkey and friendly countries or its allies have the capability to make a qualified contribution to such a revolution. When we use the concepts such as "Post-Security" or "Beyond-Geopolitics", it means that we step in an area that is beyond the classical approaches and the meanings in there become open to interpretation (conjecture).

We are in a period of time in which institutional infrastructures, professions and experiences either cannot respond to current risks or are insufficient. We believe that such a lack of infrastructure, or incapacity will continue to increase globally. So, it is extremely important to analyze the extent of competition correctly and to carry it into space -as I have just mentioned- away from the areas that pose a risk to humanity, or to develop studies on possible new areas of this competition, which would be the biggest contribution by academics and experts. Because we desperately need such studies and discussions on the matter.

It is of course essential to conduct national and global studies in order to restore the equilibrium between "earth, water, air, fire" both in human and nature, which is disrupted by the imbalance in power-struggle itself. The most striking example of this is perhaps the climate crisis which is accompanied by some other serious problems with the deterioration of the natural order. There are, however, a lot of ongoing significant studies and organizational efforts concerning the climate crisis around the world.

This balance has already been disrupted by the insistence on pushing through the current production-consumption and growth policies, which has fueled a massive humanitarian crisis. We are also experiencing a production crisis, as well as a consumption crisis. Alarm bells are ringing around globe. Almost 60% of China's rivers have been poisoned, as a result of its development policies during the last three decades. It appears that if this relentless production pace is continued, the world would reach an impasse in a very short run.





This is one of the main reasons why it has become difficult and been further complicated to access goods and services during the Covid-19 outbreak. To put the life back on the right track, or restore its nature therefore means to ensure the safety of people. Otherwise, it is likely to witness mentally abandoned cities or countries in the near future. It is not a coincidence, in this context, that the entire financial market is being reorganized in line with the green economy, which is a new economic model that has often been brought to the agenda in particular over the last two years.

A largely linear economy has brought us this far, from Industrial Revolution onwards. Today, there is a shift of 10% to the Green Economy, which is based on the approach "produce, consume and recycle" instead of "produce, consume and dispose". If this figures goes much higher up to 100%, there would be a shift in economic model towards the optimum level. China for instance has already declared that it will no longer finance coal-fired power plants. Or international financial markets for that matter, which find it difficult to finance "non-circular" economic infrastructure projects or offer higher prices.

Over the last couple of months, Turkey has set a number of objectives for this matter as well. These objectives, however, involve an inclusive process that requires major infrastructure shift to this economic model, which is one of the most important mental thresholds of a new period for both Turkey and friendly countries or its allies.

Another important point is the multi-tasking and skill-based security staff/military-centered shift. We do not necessarily call it army, but it is important to emphasize it in terms of institutional know-how. We need a strategic shift based on this approach. We believe, however, that it is too late, unfortunately, for world as whole to do so. There are certain countries, of course, that are succeeded in this regard, it is obvious, however, that the ordinary people should be convinced that every issue should be "securitized", and then the military staff should have competency or governance infrastructure concerning the public life. We believe that it should become a conduct of management style without leading to any unnecessary military-public debate.

Today, security starts at the Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Economy. At every level of the meritocratic infrastructure, "securitization" will reflect itself in society as a form of government. We believe that we are in need of a similar strategic shift for the good of the whole world, because the "vice" continues increasingly to squeeze the throat of humanity. We would like to emphasize that Turkey is among the countries that can achieve the related objectives.

In my personal view, meritocracy means not only bureaucracy but to put everything in its proper position and to maintain that position. Meritocracy should be reorganized on the basis of competency and critical thinking towards the social equilibrium in order to tackle with all these security risks and the new world's problems. I think that the basic slogan of meritocratic and economic shift is "less resources, more people". It has been a very strong structural phenomenon, especially during the last two decades, which was emphasized by TASAM, on a number of occasion.

We always put this point across strongly but unfortunately we tend to do the opposite of it. In fact, if we establish the infrastructure based on the approach "less resources, more people", we would become more resilient against risks and crises. Turkey in this context has not only an institutional history but also a historical background, which goes approximately 2200 years back. Its friendly and brotherly countries have similar backgrounds as well. There is therefore a desperate need for a





paradigm shift based on the “less resources, more people” approach, which is the contemporary key to both manageability and security.

I believe that if we take a three-decade break from enjoying the opulence and from the sources that we use for infrastructure, we wouldn't need another one of this kind of break in the future. Of course, the form and duration of this break may vary from country to country. Political, economic and sectoral objectives would have to be coordinated within this shift.

We drain away 80% of our energy into the ground, as these political, economic and sectoral objectives do not operate in harmony with each other. And this requires to make some sacrifices, which lies with certain individuals and institutions. History witnessed many repeated events that carry the societies back further in past in the absence of visionary leaders and leading figures, or in the presence of cultural changes. You can find many cases similar to this kind of events throughout either our history or world history. Therefore, I think that the coordination of political, economic and sectoral objectives is also decisive for the competitive infrastructural capacity in security domains.

The topics underpinning the title of "Post-Security Geopolitics", which is the main topic of the conference, include the new integration efforts particularly those in the Mediterranean, Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions. Some of them have officially declared, some of them are still in the process of negotiation, and some others have been declared without any official initiative. These are the integrations that are about to set again the standards and reorganize the division of task in different areas. There are certain actors from Europe, Indo-Pacific region, and the United States involved in these integrations, including the QUAD, the AUKUS, the BDN (Blue Dot Network), the D10 and the T12, while counterpart integrations, such as CPTPP and RCEP have launched a new reorganization process.

China's ability to set international standards has improved as a result of its increasing superiority in certain technology domains, which has become a competitive edge in the context of the international system. Because the actors who set the standards also sets the ends. For example, T12 is intended to be a structure that brings together techno democracies against techno autocracies. All these integrations will have significant outcomes over the years to come not only in terms of security, but also society, economy and technology. There is a desperate need for comparative studies on these issues in terms of how a possible balance of power within or between the countries involved in these integrations will be shaped and in that regard what position they will occupy. It is obvious that the initiatives or political models driven by the major powers, including China, Russia, India, Japan and NATO -of which Turkey is a member with its second largest army within the alliance-, will be decisive over the coming decades. So, to conduct in-depth analysis on the possible scenarios of this situation is of great importance.

In the light of all these challenging parameters and in the “new power and prosperity ecosystem”, we are in a period where everything conventional has considerably lost its meaning, as well as its value. As a striking example, Turkey's flag carrier airline, the apple of our eye, Turkish Airlines with 350 aircraft has a market value of 2 billion dollars. On the other hand, Uber, which is just a car hailing application and it does not even have any vehicle, has recently reached a market value of 100 billion dollars. You can find so many cases like this.





Although there have not been any significant commercial changes related to space domain yet, there are space companies worth 100 billion of dollars in the United States. For many years, TASAM has had questions about “where and in which route we see ourselves and what we will face” for our country and the world. So what type of policy that we will follow in order to turn our infrastructure and capacity into current assets/new convention would be decisive for both our future and security.

The issues that are expected to be the case following the Covid-19 crisis would include cyber security, food scarcity, security of the production-consumption chains and sustainability of governance, as we have pointed over and over again. The cyber security domain has now become somewhat natural part of life or indispensable. Following the pandemic crisis, there have been serious problems in accessing goods and services, and we are facing persistently higher inflation rates on a global scale. The underlying reason for this situation is that China has changed its development model partly because of the fact that the United States and European Central Bank have been printing too much "unbacked" money. The problems in accessing goods and services resemble the period before China's rising, while unit prices are constantly rising. In fact, this is a complex issue that goes far beyond the border of national inflation figures, as well as economic policies. If you are, on a country basis, in a fragile position in this period of time, you would certainly feel the consequences much worse. I think, such signs are indications of imminent turbulence both in terms of security and sustainability of states and societies. In other words, the consequences that may arise from hindering people's rights to, totally or partly, access goods and services have to be analyzed in depth.

To conclude, does the world we have described above promise to us a middle class? As a matter of fact, the nature of government of the countries without a middle class are either turning into autocracies or chaos. It is obvious then that humanity has lost its proper position as there are no forces to balance each other in the international arena. We witness that every day the humanity is further degraded by the current global conjuncture. In our meetings with the countries such as the United States and Germany, which are among the most developed and prosperous economies, we have often discussed about the consequences of the "transformation of the middle class" and its possible effects on security. So we believe that in this challenging conjuncture, there are certain topics that should be the subject matter of constant comparative studies, which requires underlining the downgrading status of nation states, the transformation of the middle class and the future of democracies.

(From the “Opening Speech of the 7th Istanbul Security Conference” delivered by Süleyman ŞENSOY, Chairman of TASAM, November 4, 2021)

