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CHINA'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY AND PAKISTAN'S STRATEGIC CONCERNS

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ABSTRACT

The Middle East and China are the two regions that most people are now interested in. Even if the Middle East has descended into an intellectual conflict over Islamic fundamentalism, the hunt for new energy sources is still vital. China's policy framework, centered on non-interference, economic development, and the pursuit of a multipolar global environment, poses a strong challenge to the United States, which advocates for democracy and human rights while pursuing an interventionist foreign policy. Right now, the world's most powerful economies are competing fiercely for energy resources, and the same is true for oil and gas. China is the world's second-largest oil consumer, behind the United States (Bajpaee, 2006). China is seeking to strengthen its military, political, and economic might in the region without using force. Many predict that Saudi Arabia, China, and Russia will establish a new global power triangle because of their interdependencies, even if much more will become clear in the future. With a major focus on their bilateral ties, this article explores China's Middle East policy, its expanding influence in the region, and its implications for Pakistan. China is now taking a wait-and-see stance. Pakistan's future connections with the Middle East are greatly worried due to the intricate and multifaceted nature of the "Arc of crisis" in the area. Pakistan's neutral position on this matter exposes it to serious dangers, opportunities, and security concerns.

Keywords: China, Pakistan, Middle East, United States, India

INTRODUCTION

It is neither shocking or unexpected that China is becoming a more powerful nation in the area. The two nations have a long history of collaboration, economic investments, and the sale of military technologies, to name just a few. It is important to note that the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iranian Nuclear Program in 2015 elevated China's profile within the P5+1. In addition, Beijing's aspirations to deepen ties and foster collaboration with Arab countries were made clear in 2004 with the establishment of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, mostly due to China's increasing importance in the energy sector. China has said nothing about Syria militarily or diplomatically, even as it prepares to play a part in the nuclear negotiations with Iran. On the other side, China's stance toward the Middle East has improved since Xi Jinping became power in November 2012. "The Chinese Arab Policy" was published by the Chinese government in January 2016. It outlines the objectives and plans for China's ties with the Middle Eastern countries—that is, the Arab League members—in this region. China's cooperation with Arab countries should be based on the "1+2+3" formula, and the text highlights the region's significance for China. Still, energy cooperation will probably be the focal point of future coalitions (Castilla, 2016).

There are observable disparities between the Middle Eastern nations' development levels and their integration into the global economy. In general, the Middle Eastern countries may be divided into four categories according to their GDP, population, and exports. Huge oil exporters with tiny populations

make up the first category, whereas major oil exporters with sizable populations and significant earnings make up the second. On the other hand, there are two countries—low GDP, large population—that do not export oil but get a lot of foreign direct investment (FDI) (Balaam & Dillman, 2011: 351-352). China's strategic partnerships, according to Medeiros (2009), are founded on mutually agreeable bilateral exchanges including political, cultural, economic, and military relations. Instead of military alliances. It also offers a thorough synopsis of Chinese-Arab history, spanning from the two millennia-old interaction that existed along the maritime silk routes to the present.

China's connections with the region date back to the Maoist era, when the Cold War supplied the strategic and conceptual foundation for the development of bilateral relationships between countries (Shichor, 2000: 27–39). Though there were little commercial and economic relations, China offered logistical support and help to revolutionary groups. China saw the Middle East as a venue for evaluating the relative might of the US and the USSR (Daojiong & Meidan, 2015). Consequently, Beijing authorized people, groups, and companies to assist with construction, provide advisory services, and provide labor for the Middle Eastern markets. China, above all, has strong connections to the Middle East since it supported anti-colonial groups throughout the Cold War. With the intention of obtaining the local gas and oil deposits, this relationship has developed over time. Despite significant efforts to diversify its energy support sources, China currently imports half of its oil from the Middle East, with Saudi Arabia and Iran accounting for 30% and 30% of the supply, respectively (Bajpaee, 2006).

During the 1980s, China's biggest armament importers were Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and Iraq. However, the US and the UN issued sanctions on Iran and Iraq in the early 1990s, and by the end of the decade, the sanctions had all but disappeared. The Middle East's realization of how ineffective inexpensive Chinese weapons were in combat was a key contributing factor, as did the United States' efforts to restrict the distribution of weaponry and exert pressure on China. But since the mid-1990s, Arab countries have become China's main source of crude oil and its seventh-largest trading partner (Daojinag & Meidan, 2015).

China's Middle East Interests and Stakes

Three key aspects of China's resolute position toward the Middle East are noteworthy:

a) Safety Supplies for Fuel

b) Promoting commerce and transit

c) Identifying chances for cooperation in security, especially in the battle against terrorism (Castilla, 2016).

China is pursuing alternate energy sources, such those in Russia and Central Asia, but it still buys oil from the Middle East. According to Reuters (2017), this percentage grew at an average annual rate of 6.75 percent between 2010 and 2014. Although the Gulf's instability is a serious concern, the Middle East's immediate problem is stepping up energy cooperation with oil-producing countries. For instance, this nation now supplies 51% of China's imports of crude oil.

The Middle East is strategically significant for China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative, which seeks to link China's economy with the rest of the globe due to its position between Asia and Europe. China has to start developing ports and infrastructure as soon as possible in Central Asia and the Middle East in order to facilitate two-way trade. As part of its efforts to "promote [e] common development and prosperity for all countries," China primarily views Iran as an essential partner (http://isdp.eu/publication/chinas-evolving-middle-east-role/). Major worries include also the Islamic State in the Middle East and Chinese militants, especially in the western region of Xinjiang. for the simple reason that it aims to impose strict control over data collection, counterterrorism efforts, and anti-piracy measures.

China's economic and military policy trajectory in the Middle East suggests that the nation is more focused on growing its commercial presence than taking on a more significant security role. As part of President Xi Jinping's strategy for the 21st century 'Silk Road' and the restoration of the Maritime Silk Road Economic Belt - the 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, Chinese firms seek recognition in Middle Eastern markets, especially in the upstream oil sector. China has signed agreements to jointly monitor a plan to reestablish the old Silk Roads, which included an overland route via the Middle East, and has formed strategic alliances with eight Arab countries and agreements with six more in recent years. For instance, Iran, Turkey, and seven Arab countries founded the Asian Infrastructure

Investment Bank, which has its headquarters in Beijing and is essential to the financing of infrastructure projects (Minghao, 2016).

It is crucial to keep in mind that China's primary objective of obtaining natural resources for its economic growth is what motivates its search for export markets in the Middle East. For China's expanding enterprises, the region offers enormous economic potential, according to Alterman and Graver (2008) and Lian (2008). China's construction, communications, and financial industries may export a wide range of services to the Middle East, apart from contract services offered by construction companies (http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/). China is, thus, a financially successful and sustained enterprise. However, there are still certain issues that need attention. One significant issue is the frequency of battles in the region, which might provide a significant obstacle to China's aspirations to build the Silk Road. The second is that efforts to enhance the trade relationship and balance should be made by both parties. Consumer buying power has decreased as a result of budget discrepancies brought on by the present drop in oil prices. China is thus worried about this region's economic growth since it will be to everyone's advantage. Without a commitment to economic growth, all initiatives for economic development would fail (Mahar, 2016).

Middle East Chinese Priorities

China is gaining strength in the Middle East at the expense of the West. The Middle East's interest in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its 2013 debut will impact the next days. Meanwhile, the two regions will become much more intertwined as a result of China's extraordinary rise in gas imports. The analysis of China's Middle East policy must take into account imports of gas, logistical costs, and economic development. China resumed its emphasis on the Middle East in 2016 with the publication of the Arab Policy Paper. China has promised not to interfere in the Middle East, despite the fact that economic integration is a key component of its goal. China has grown to be a significant participant in Middle Eastern geopolitics despite its dependence on oil. These ground realities make it difficult for China to continue to maintain a political presence in the region. According to Romaniuk and Berger (2016), Chinese ties with the Middle East are thus expected to include more than simply political and economic cooperation; they may even lead to military cooperation or even conflict.

A Policy of Non-Interference

China has chosen to abstain from the Syrian war and has used its veto power to stop the UN Security Council from passing a resolution. Its future involvement in regional security and energy goals may become more complex due to this stance. Still, China could decide that it has to be more proactive to maintain regional peace and safeguard its own energy interests.

China's and America's Conflicting Interests

China relies on Middle Eastern energy even more than the US did, but US interests in the Gulf extend beyond oil and gas. China can no longer dodge its responsibility, particularly the financial burden of supporting the maintenance of stability in the region, thus it should expand its investments in the region's stability.

China's Innovative Diplomacy

Chinese academicians have said that China would need to be able to fill the potential void left by the United States' potential exit in favor of a financial "pivot to Asia".

Chinese Investments in the Field

In spite of this, Schenker (2013) contends that China need to be more politically involved in the region. Chinese troops have so far committed soldiers to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and stationed anti-piracy boats off the coast of Somalia. This is the very least that China should provide; it should do more.

China's Role in MENA Diplomacy

Because of the fast growth of its transport zone and energy development strategy, China is causing a major transformation in the Middle East. China's foreign policy is gearing up to capture the region's banal stage at the same time.

The Chinese-Islamic Relationship

Schenkar (2013) says that China's foreign policy ideals could not accord with the Middle East and North Africa's substantial religious relevance. China's ties with Turkey may worsen if the Muslim minority in Beijing is seen as a target, given that Beijing may find a middle ground with Islamist

regimes in the Middle East and that China's foreign policy is solely pragmatic.

China's Reaction to Libya

"This exorbitant eviction has constrained Chinese business leaders and policymakers to initiate thinking about the political peril of doing business in other conflict-prone areas like Algeria or Nigeria, and to begin thinking about how to soothe these dangers" (Foster, (2014)). When hostilities in Libya erupted, China had already evacuated 35,000 of its citizens by air and sea. China could have come to the realization that it is not only to blame for lost revenue and trade difficulties.

China and the Weapons Trade

China has long maintained cordial ties while adhering to the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other sovereign nations. Furthermore, as time went on, Chinese political strategies in the area changed as well. According to Willem Van Kamenade, a freelance writer based in Beijing, "China has replaced the United Kingdom as one of the top five arms exporters in the world, though not a primary arm supplier for Middle East," according to Shenker (2013). Due to China's backing of Syria, there have been widespread protests against both China and Russia. The dynamics were changed by the Arab Spring. A ―domino effect‖ resulted in the overthrow of partially legitimate Middle Eastern regimes, changing conventional power relations and collaboration models and posing a dilemma for China: pursue its low-risk, stumpy-payoff strategy in the Middle East in this post-Westphalian dystopia, or forge a more ambitious path that involved the use of regional pivots and military interests? (Unver, 2014). The Middle East is home to two thirds of the world's proven petroleum reserves, almost all of which are concentrated in the Persian Gulf (also known as the Arabian Gulf). The Gulf has over 75% of the world's oil reserves, with Saudi Arabia alone possessing around 25% of it. The region's substantial oil and gas deposits have a major role in shaping its political and economic tendencies and development (Camett, et al., 2009: 228, 24). However, China has the following strategic approach to its Middle East posture:

Energy Sources' Safety

The nations' foreign policies and energy dependency are closely linked. Regarding its future, the whole Middle East is going through a period of uncertainty. China is reportedly one of Iran's top net monthly buyers of oil. Iran and Turkey have emerged as potential targets for Chinese investments, notwithstanding the other Arab nations' relative weakness (Unver, 2014). Beijing's constant worry is energy security. China is now much more uneasy about the so-called Arab Spring, its ramifications on the Middle East, and particularly the U.S.'s dominating position in all of this. As a result, it has voiced serious concerns over dependence on Washington, D.C. for ensuring Middle Eastern security in the interest of the global public. The foundation of Chinese worry has also been molded by American efforts to reduce military spending and achieve energy independence as soon as possible. Even though there are a lot of unknowns, it is anticipated that the United States' increased energy production—which is mostly due to the management of its shale gas and oil reserves combined with declining demand—will reduce its need on imports from the Middle East and other regions (Mclaughlin, 2015: 23).

The security of smart energy sources has become a primary concern for the Chinese government. Growing salaries and earnings have hurt the nation's export competitiveness, and growth has slowed by 7%. The fact that large state firms make up 35% of the economy puts further weight on everything. Consequently, the Xi Jinping-led administration has launched a vigorous drive to combat corruption and move economic decision-making from politicians to the private sector.

From the perspective of energy commerce, the Middle East and China have an interdependent relationship that is balanced in that the Middle East needs China just as much as China needs the Middle East (Feng, 2015). The energy trade connection between China and the Middle East has extended beyond oil. One example is the growing interest of China in importing natural gas. Natural gas accounted for only 4.6% of China's overall energy consumption mix until 2011; this is much less than the global average of 23.8% (http://www.kreab.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2013/07/FYP-for-EnergyDevelopment.pdf). China has gradually increased its natural gas consumption at a pace of sixteen percent each year since 2006. The Chinese National Development and Reform Committee (NDRC) launched an implementation plan in 2012 to

promote the use of natural gas in a wide range of industries, from central heating to power production, further driving demand growth. To refute this fast-rising allegation, China will need to gradually rely more on imports from outside. China, which had no energy-related ties with Qatar in 2009, is now Qatar's fifth-largest natural gas client, purchasing 6.4% of its natural gas and LNG exports. By 2013, China was Qatar's second-largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) (Feng, 2015).

Different Global Power Structure

China is trying to build a soft power reputation in the area in addition to making sure there is enough energy to support its own economic development in the context of the new global order. China's aspirations for a more contemporary and comprehensive global order have grown since the 2008 global financial crisis (Peng, 2013). The country's main driving force is its desire to close the political and economic inequality gap with the North.

Justifications for Pakistan's concern

China views Pakistan as a ―spring board‖ for more connection with the Middle East, while also seeking to deepen its ties with the country (Chaziza, 2016). Pakistan is significant because to its proximity to the Persian Gulf countries, including Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, even though it is located at the nexus of the Middle East and Asia. Since China has served as Pakistan's closest friend in Asia, Saudi Arabia has historically been its closest Middle Eastern ally. China will be a more suitable best friend in the current situation given the nation's heterogeneous interests and demand, but this will rely on a number of circumstances, including its relationships with Afghanistan, Iran, and India. Pakistan does not want to sever its important ties with Saudi Arabia at the same time, but it does wish for Saudi to believe that Pakistan's military may not be actively involved in Middle Eastern affairs. When it comes to current Middle Eastern issues, Pakistan is caught between the devil and the deep sea. Pakistan has endeavored to assume the position as a mediator between Saudi Arabia and Iran since ancient times. Pakistan is reliant on Saudi Arabia for financial support, oil payments, and economic collaboration, but it also wants to maintain good ties with Iran. In light of economic projects such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan is required by the present state of the world to have a peaceful neighbor.

Given the circumstances, Pakistan must take a balanced stance toward its international obligations. Pakistan need to be urged to take on the responsibility of fostering peace in the Middle East. In this context, it is impossible to ignore the murders of the Shiite population in Karachi shortly after the CPEC Agreement. However, Pakistan's rejection in the Yemen case is yet another indication that it does not want to act as a middleman in the regional wars between Sunnis and Shias. Since the US and China have ties to Iran and the Middle East, Pakistan is working to balance its connections with both Saudi Arabia and Iran. Due to the ongoing Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project, Pakistan may need to take a more careful stance in its foreign policy dealings with the Middle East. Pakistan is attempting to preserve positive ties with Turkey as a result, and Turkey's tight relationship with Pakistan led to the strategy taken regarding the Yemen situation. Pakistan is going well beyond the potential with China rather than actively participating in Middle Eastern problems, which is a significant shift from its former position given the significant global changes taking place and the shift of the Center of power to Asia (Hussain, 2015). Pakistan has close ties with China and Saudi Arabia for a number of reasons. China Saudi Arabia is a long-standing friend, the home country of Muslims, a significant oil supplier, and a source of financial favors. China has significantly outperformed Saudi Arabia in terms of Pakistan's political, geopolitical, and economic interests at the same time. has throughout the years given Pakistan access to nuclear energy and technical help; it is also India's close neighbor and does not have cordial relations with the latter. Although it seems that China is becoming more strict, this does not mean that Pakistan is 'pivoting' away from the Middle East, at least not permanently. Due to their historical, ideological, cultural, and economic similarities, Pakistan and the Saudi Arabian-led area will undoubtedly continue to be allies. Pakistan cannot, however, court the Arab States by engaging in any direct military action in the Middle East due to its tight bilateral links with China (Shad, 2015).

China and Pakistan have a tight relationship due to a number of strategic reasons, the primary one being their shared fears over India's hegemonic ambitions. The area has improved as a result of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor's (CPEC) present

elevation to the status of the One Belt One Road initiative's flagship project. A few weeks after Pakistan chose not to participate in the Saudi-Yemen conflict, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the details of his first official visit to his home nation, unveiling a CPEC plan valued at USD 46 billion. According to Lin (2011), the multimodal China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) aims to provide infrastructure for energy production and telecommunications while also connecting Kashgar, China with Gwadar Port in Pakistan via roads, railroads, and oil pipelines. It is an ambitious project with great potential to improve both Pakistan and China's Western region, and there are indications that Pakistan is making a serious effort to address all issues raised by China (Lin, 2011), including the safety of its citizens employed on the project in Pakistan. It is important to note that initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and other investments in the area would help China gain access to port facilities on the Indian Ocean, as well as strengthen Pakistan's economy and relations with Western China.

Even though CPEC would have a significant impact, relations with India are already being strained. India has a tumultuous history with China and Pakistan. According to Hussain (2016), Beijing is very concerned about Pakistan's security position and believes that China's response would determine how South and Central Asia develops in the future. President Xi's promises that China would not sever connections with Pakistan are only one of the strong actions the Pakistani government has taken in response to save the nation's economy.

There are undoubtedly restrictions on this shift in ties since Pakistan's foreign policy may be clearly impacted by developments in both South Asia and the Middle East. Strategically, China will have easier access to Persian Gulf nations thanks to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Hence, this initiative benefits China both economically and politically from a geopolitical standpoint. Changes in India's strength and conduct, for example, might impact the relationship between Pakistan and China. Given that a portion of the construction project would go through Pakistani-administered Kashmir, which India claims is its own territory, the country has already declared that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is ―undesirable. Although this is not a worry shared by China or Pakistan, it would be interesting to see how far India pushes the matter. Since the economic corridor is a long-term project, India may try to use its influence over China to force China to halt development if the power dynamics in Asia significantly change over the course of the next ten or more years. In such scenario, it's possible that the Kashmir conflict will once again become a crucial global issue. However, it would be a sign of China's hatred for India and its steadfast ties to Pakistan if it carried out the whole plan in spite of Indian pressure.

According to Linn (2011), in light of several scenarios, Pakistan could need to keep its attention directed westward if the situation in Afghanistan worsens. This would inevitably include working with Saudi Arabia and other regional actors to attempt to ameliorate the situation. Pakistan has shown more concern for the situation in Afghanistan than in Yemen because of their close proximity and the realities of geography. Yemen thus continues to be a remote and isolated topic in comparison to its own neighbor. Since Afghanistan's stability—or lack thereof—will ultimately determine the destiny of the region, Pakistan views Afghanistan's stabilization as more crucial. At the same time, Saudi Arabia's significance from an Afghan standpoint cannot be disregarded. Concurrently, other obstacles concerning the Pakistani-Saudi relationship might arise even if Iran and the US manage to somewhat normalize their ties. Saudi Arabia worries that if Iran and the US form an entente, the US would stop imposing sanctions on Iran and recognize it as a threshold nuclear state. Saudi Arabia, which opposes Iran's nuclear development, may use Pakistan as a cover for its nuclear program, which could mean anything from utilizing Pakistan's nuclear power to discourage Iran from directly attempting to acquire nuclear weapons from Pakistan. Given the dire implications for Saudi Arabia, Pakistan's response to Saudi Arabia's plea in the event that Iran acquires nuclear weapons would have a significant impact on their impending relationship. As a result, Pakistan may face a variety of difficulties in this situation, from security concerns to its relations with Saudi Arabia and China and vice versa. China is interested in Pakistan as a conduit to the Middle East as it searches for energy resources. Consequently, commerce between China and the Middle East is facilitated by Pakistan's proximity to those markets.

Pakistan is being pulled by several powerful factors in the direction of China and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is, on the one hand, a longstanding ally, the

location of the holy cities of Islam, a significant oil provider, and a giver of financial contributions. At the same time, China has mostly outperformed Saudi Arabia in terms of achieving its economic goals. It is evident that China's leverage is greater at the moment, despite the fact that Pakistan is unlikely to be able to 'pivot' away from the Middle East in the near or long term. For Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the other nations in the area will always be important partners because of historical, cultural, and economic reasons. The main disagreement, however, is that Pakistan's tight security and economic ties with China mean that its armed forces won't need to intervene in the Middle East (http://uchicagogate.com/2015/06/15/pakistan-betweenasia-and-the-middle-east/). Pakistan is better at finding grounds of convergence than sorting out difference when it comes to the Middle East situation. Pakistan has never taken involved in intra-Arb conflicts, according to history. Intra-Arb rivalry must be the lens through which the current problem is seen. Pakistan finds the current geopolitical undercurrents confusing as a result. Before drafting any policies, the nation must take the Middle East's geopolitical and economic dynamics into account.

Its security interests need a practical revision. The nation may then participate in the Middle East if it has achieved political and economic strength. China has started a number of important, comparable projects, the main one of which being the resurrection of the ancient Silk Road trading route. These include of investing in UK nuclear facilities, increasing its development fund for Africa to USD 60 billion, and offering a range of financial incentives to the Middle East. The Middle East issue affects Pakistan's economy in two ways: it poses a danger to the country's remittance flow and its security. As a result, it is imperative that the nation pursue its own national story and endeavor to improve the region's economy. Pakistan may continue to participate on Middle Eastern economic fronts, but it should refrain from waging other people's battles. In order to maintain peace in the area and prevent any spillovers, collaboration with Saudi Arabia and other regional actors would unavoidably be required if the situation in Afghanistan worsens. Compared to the far-off situation of Yemen, the issue of closeness makes Pakistan's involvement in such matters all the more important. Given its long-standing links with both Afghanistan and Pakistan, Saudi Arabia would effectively be a major actor in any instability of the country.

Conclusion

Regarding China's long-term interests in energy security, as well as its ambitions for more international markets and investment possibilities, the Middle East presents an appealing package. This approach also represents the core tenet of Chinese policy, which searches for peaceful conditions that might result in advancement. Because China wants to advance via communication and negotiation, its Middle East strategy is thus focused on fostering economic and energy links (Chaziza, 2016). One of the main tenets of Chinese foreign policy is that Beijing is always opposed to regime change, even when it comes from Western powers, since it believes that these kinds of changes are likely to be replicated by other areas as well. This accounts for China's discomfort with the Arab Spring and its aftermath. In addition to damaging ties inside the governments that were changing, the Arab Spring unintentionally brought Beijing farther into the politics of the area. Beijing's anxieties are further heightened by Washington's "rebalance" towards Asia, sometimes referred to as the U.S. policy to control China, and its newfound involvement in the Middle East. It is difficult to uncover proof of China engaging in political action in the Middle East or having an impact on domestic issues since China has always maintained a policy of "non-interference in internal affairs" (Mclaughlin, n.d.: 23). Chinese interests have always been benefited by this steadfast approach. It's interesting to note that while major Middle Eastern crises like the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, and Iraq's and Iran's pariah status drew the United States further into the region's internal politics, China saw them as opportunities to further expand its own commercial sphere.

Furthermore, Chinese companies found it simpler to forge fruitful economic ties in certain nations due to the legal and comparable difficulties that western companies faced (Mclaughlin, n.d.: 3). Chinese companies are thus warmly welcomed in places like Africa and the Middle East, where everyone benefits from non-interventionist policies and a strong focus on socioeconomic development via commercial cooperation. However, the existence of many global powers in the Middle East, each with their own agenda, calls for more comprehensive approaches to world peace. In the end, all parties concerned will

have to put peace above conflict and war if they want to gain from world stability, even if Halford Mackinder's "Rimland" has given in to imperial aspirations.

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