

The Impact of the War in Eastern Ukraine on Russian–Chinese Relations

1. Introduction

Obviously, Russia and China are significant actors in the world's politics. Their significance originates from their sheer size, nuclear arms and their economic strengths for the last two decades. These two countries have realised after World War II that if they cooperate, they can have a much more significant influence on the world. This cooperation has touched both ends of the scale, and it was a warm friendship; nevertheless, they fought local wars against each other. Regardless of the quality of their relationship, these two countries will remain the world's leading players.

Our study examines the relationship of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China in the view of how the Russo–Ukraine War shaped their cooperation. Hence, the main goal of these two powers is dominance over Eurasia, the state of this dominance is at the centre of our paper.

2. Historical background

2.1. The situation in Ukraine before the war

By the early 2000s, Ukraine seemingly reached a dead-end. There were only two ex-Soviet states whose GDP did not reach the level it was on in 1991. These two states were Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. At the moment of independence, the GDP per capita was higher than in Lithuania or Romania and almost reached the Polish level. However, by 2013, this index was twice more significant in Poland. The Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) was as low as in Iraq or in El Salvador.

The population of Ukraine has declined by 10 million people since 1991. One third of the Ukrainian people were living under the threshold of poverty, the Q1 2014 unemployment rate was 9.3%, which could have been even more significant if many workers did not leave to Russia or the EU for a better job. In 2014 the inflation was extremely high, 20%. Thanks to the two-decades-long lousy government, the services were in decline, the average monthly salary has fallen at about 200\$, which is four times smaller than in Poland and nine times smaller than in Moscow.¹

¹ The World Bank: *GDP Per Capita (Current US\$) – Ukraine*. 2021.

Besides the general decline of living standards, another worrying phenomenon was the presence of the so-called “stealth tyranny”. The quality of the justice system was also in a fall, the state organisation was in pieces, corruption has ruined the armed forces, and meanwhile, the political atmosphere was more poisonous than ever.² The country has broken into two pieces, a “yellow” and a “blue”. The yellow color represented the pro-West political forces, while the blue side was the pro-Russian political forces. The political debates quickly gained an ethnical context, fueled by the oligarchs, whose only goal was to support the color that assures their further enrichment.

The Ukrainian armed forces were also in disarray. In 1991 Ukraine inherited all of the equipment and infrastructure of the Soviet Army, which was in her territory. Of course, this was too much, and it had to be rationalised. But underfunding and corruption caused severe damage to the Ukrainian armed forces. In the first defence review, the manpower was cut from nearly 800,000 to 295,000. But it appeared to be still too expensive, so in 2004, another Strategic Defence Overview was announced, but the global economic crisis of 2008 nullified the program. After Yanukovich gained power in 2010, the situation became even worse. The years between 2010 and 2014 was an era of decline. Military exercises were cancelled, military equipment was dismantled due to cannibalisation, and even salaries have started to arrive late. This era was later referred to as the “Yanukovich disaster”.³ However, the official number of the armed forces was 250,000, and 60,000 soldiers were involved in the ATO (Anti-Terrorist Operations); it is clear that at the time of the breakout of the war, the Ukrainian Army was incapable of defending the country.

2.2. Preliminary events

On 21 November 2013, President Viktor Yanukovich announced that he would not sign the EU Association Agreement. In the following three days, massive protests broke out. The centre of the protests was the Maydan Square in the heart of Kyiv. The deployed police forces were poorly trained, unprofessionally led and as a result of this, they could not seize the protests, but sometimes grave atrocities were committed against peaceful protesters. On 18 February 2014, the protesters suffered shocking casualties: 20 dead. As a result of that, the leaders of the opposing political parties and Yanukovich signed an agreement about the peaceful transition of power and elections were brought forward, but on the next day, the Ukrainian Parliament has stripped Yanukovich from all his powers, and he left the country. The speed of the political transition had made the leaders of the Kremlin worry.

Moscow decided to seize the opportunity and get back Crimea, which was considered an ancient Russian territory. Even before the practical exile of Yanukovich, pro-Russian

² Richard Sakwa: *Frontline Ukraine. Crisis in the Borderlands*. London, I.B. Tauris, 2015.

³ József Padányi – János Tomolya: Háború és béke Ukrajnában, avagy keleten a helyzet változatlan. *Hadtudomány*, 27, nos. 1–2 (2017). 73.

political parties had raised their voice against the Maydan movement. It is still a matter of debate how much Russian secret service backup these voices had. However, it quickly became a philosophical debate. Hence “Green Little Men” have appeared at the critical points of the whole of Crimea. Meanwhile, pro-Russian protesters have stormed the buildings of local administration, unmarked Russian speaking soldiers occupied public buildings, staffed checkpoints and blockaded Ukrainian military installations. In the first few days of March, all Ukrainian forces surrendered, and the new Ukrainian Government withdrew all available forces from Crimea.

Nearly the same events happened in Eastern Ukraine, too. This part of the country was the most industrialised; the living standards were higher than in the Western part. However, most importantly, the locals were mostly Russian-speaking, and they watched the nationalist political agenda of the new Ukrainian Government with great fear. The whole region was practically the basin of the Donets River. It was called Donbas by the Ukrainians. Regarding this, it is not a surprise that in April 2014, pro-Russian protests started in all of the bigger cities and towns of the Donbas. On 7 April, masked and armed people occupied the buildings of the SBU (Ukrainian Secret Services) and the police in Donetsk and Slovyansk, and on 8 April, in Luhansk.⁴ In Luhansk, the Luhansk People’s Republic, and in Donetsk, the Donetsk People’s Republic had been declared independent states, but it was clear that these “states” had strong support from the Kremlin. Ukraine considered this an attack against her sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In response to this, the head of the interim government, Olexandr Turchinov, declared Anti-Terror Operations in the region in order to break the pro-Russian efforts.

2.3. Main battle events

The war, which we will refer to as the “Russo–Ukraine War”, can be divided into four stages:

1. The Russian occupation with the means of hybrid warfare (March 2014 – April 2014)
2. The Ukrainian counterattack (May 2014 – August 2014)
3. Large scale Russian intervention (August 2014 – June 2015)
4. Ditch warfare (June 2015 – ongoing)

In the following, we will write about the actual combat activities. It has to be emphasised that the scale and the ferocity of combat were in a growing tendency. For example, in late April 2014, only a Ukrainian mechanised infantry battalion was enough to seize the city of Slovyansk. However, as the infantry companies tried to infiltrate the city itself, they met with even fierce resistance, and they could capture the city only on 5 July.⁵

⁴ BBC News: Ukraine Crisis: Protesters Declare Donetsk ‘Republic’. *BBC News*, 07 April 2014.

⁵ Márk Takács: *A kelet-ukrajnai háború szárazföldi műveleteinek bemutatása*. Thesis. Budapest, University of Public Service, 2020. 22.

After recapturing Slovyansk, the Ukrainian forces turned to Krematorsk to drive a wedge between Luhansk and Donetsk. They have successfully taken the city, but due to the lack of highly trained troops and combat worthy military equipment, the Ukrainian advance was paused. The pro-Russian side exploited the pause. Militias and mob blockaded the barracks of the Ukrainian border guards and smaller military units, practically paralysing them.

After a short force gathering period, the Ukrainians have decided to liberate their blocked forces and launched the most significant and boldest military manoeuvre since World War II. This manoeuvre was later named the “Great Raid” or after its commander, Zabrodskiy’s Raid. The raid was conducted by a Ukrainian brigade combat team based on the 95th Airborne Brigade and the 30th mechanised Infantry Brigade. The Ukrainian troops have marched 470 km, from which 150 km was made in contact with the enemy. With this large scale military operation, the Ukrainians had seriously hampered the communications between the two splitters “republics” and inflicted heavy casualties on them. This operation warned the Kremlin that Ukraine could close this conflict by winning it.⁶

As a result of this, a large number of Russian troops was deployed into Ukraine. The Russian forces started a full-scale offensive which culminated in the great battle Ilovaysk, the “Second Stalingrad” at the Donetsk International Airport and the Cauldron of Debaltseve. In these three battles, the Ukrainian armed forces suffered high casualties in both human resources and equipment and were forced to retreat to a line they departed from in May 2014. By the end of spring 2015, the Ukrainians did not have enough power to launch another counteroffensive to recapture their territories, and the Russians did not have the intention to continue the advance; hence the situation met their goals.

Since late spring 2015, the war can be described as ditch warfare. The two warring parties have dug serious trenches and have built fortifications. As we mentioned, Ukraine does not have the strength to recapture its territories because it practically means defeating the best units of the Russian Army. While Russia is more than satisfied with the fact that Ukraine is involved in a war, neither the EU nor NATO can consider inviting Ukraine as a member because they will not import a live conflict.

3. International relations between Ukraine and China

Albeit, the relations between Ukraine and China is of course not tightly linked to the Russian–Chinese relations, we must take a brief look at it. It is important because China’s intentions in Ukraine largely shape her reactions to the war which of course has a great impact on the Russian–Chinese relations.

Ukrainian–Chinese diplomatic relations were established in 1992, but their intensification has been taking place since 2008. The success of the cooperation is

⁶ The Ellis Group: 21st Century Maneuver. *Marine Corps Association*, 01 February 2017.

evidenced by the fact that almost every year since 2010, there have been occasions when leaders or delegates from the two countries have met.

In June 2011, the Chinese President visited Ukraine, and during the visit, the two countries signed a joint declaration on the establishment and development of a strategic partnership between Ukraine and China.

In order to further strengthen the relations between the two countries, a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China and a Joint Declaration on the Further Deepening of Strategic Partnerships were signed in 2013.⁷

In October 2014, Mr Pavlo Klimkin, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, held a meeting with Mr Wang Yi, the Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the margins of the Milan ASEM Summit.⁸

In January 2015, Mr Petro Poroshenko, the President of Ukraine, met with Mr Li Keqiang, Chinese Premier, in the framework of the Davos World Economic Forum.⁹

In April 2016, in the framework of the Washington Nuclear Security Summit, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko held a short meeting with President Xi Qing. The heads of state discussed enhancing Ukraine–China cooperation. On 27–28 April 2016, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Pavlo Klimkin paid a working visit to China, where he had negotiations with Minister of Foreign Affairs of China Wang Yi, held meetings with high-level Chinese officials, as well as taking part in the Fifth Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States and Observers of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia. The Parties discussed a whole range of issues concerning cooperation between Ukraine and China, as well as topical issues of international agenda.¹⁰

During the 2017 Davos World Economic Forum, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko met with Chinese President Xi Jinping. At the meeting, the two heads of state expressed interest in enhancing political dialogue at the highest level and deepening economic cooperation between Ukraine and China. In addition, agreements were reached on holding the next meeting of the Ukraine–China Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee in 2017 and on the participation of the Ukrainian delegation in the “One Belt, One Way” International Forum (held in Beijing in May 2017). Xin Qing-ping also reaffirmed China's support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

On 18 September 2017, a meeting of the two countries' foreign ministers was held in New York as part of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly. The central topic of the discussion was the cooperation of the two countries in international organisations. Also,

⁷ Embassy of Ukraine in the People's Republic of China: *Legal Basis of Ukraine and China*. 27 October 2020.

⁸ Embassy of Ukraine in the People's Republic of China: *Political Relations between Ukraine and China*. 26 May 2022.

⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China: *Li Keqiang Meets with President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine*. January 2015.

¹⁰ Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine: *Pavlo Klimkin Will Pay a Working Visit to the People's Republic of China*. 27–28 April 2016.

in December of the same year, Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine, and Volodymyr Groysman, Prime Minister of Ukraine, held talks with Ma Kai, Head of the Chinese Delegation to the State Council of the People's Republic of China, in December of the same year in Kyiv. The main topic of the meeting was the discussion of the most urgent issues of bilateral relations for further successful cooperation.

On 21–22 January 2019, Beijing hosted the Ukraine–China Political Consultations, where current issues of bilateral relations and UN-related issues were held at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers of the two countries. Two days later, on 24 January, the Ukrainian President met with Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan. The parties agreed to continue to develop bilateral trade, economic and investment cooperation, which should be facilitated at the 2019 regular meeting of the Ukraine–China Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee. The Vice President also confirmed full support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.¹¹

3.1. New Silk Road initiative in Ukraine

“In mid-2013, the Secretary General of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping, announced the concept of the Silk Road Economic Belt. It seemed then that it was a policy mainly referring to the area where the western neighbors of China are located, but this area can also be extended to other areas, particularly Europe. The following year, China presented a plan of action, first ventures were announced and new institutions were established. The Silk Road project is intended to increase the position of China as the creators of standards that make a significant contribution to the global economy. Other benefits include the internationalisation of yuan and Chinese enterprises, increasing the technological level and production capacity. The idea of the New Silk Road can be described as a comprehensive concept of China's foreign and internal policy, aimed at protecting the political and economic interests of that country.”¹²

Ukraine's strategic location along the land route from China to the EU is outstanding, allowing its territory to be a significant transport hub. Without Western help, financing infrastructure projects in Ukraine will be a severe problem for the country's leadership. Due to substantial Russian influence, neither the European Union nor the United States could cope with these difficulties, and the Kiev authorities turned to China for help. Due to its strategic location, Ukraine needs to develop its infrastructure to be rejected. Investments can significantly strengthen the state economy. The Chinese Government, for its part, has shown interest in Ukraine as a vital link in the New Silk Road.

¹¹ Cui Zheng: China–Ukraine Relations Will Go Unhindered. *CGTN*, 01 April 2019.

¹² Łukasz Wojcieszak: Economic Expansion of China in Ukraine. Can the New Silk Road Project Support Ukrainian Statehood? *Review of Nationalities*, 8, no. 1 (2018). 238.



Figure 1: The OBOR's main routes, overland and maritime

Source: Kyianytsia (2019): op. cit. 23.

Two factors were crucial for China: the geographical proximity of the EU and possible investment. Chinese investment in the Ukrainian economy has focused on industry, agriculture, transport, and retail and wholesale. Ukrainian joint ventures in Ukraine have merged and created the China Trade Association, which is a platform and a bridge for the business environment of both countries. The launch of a new communication route linking China with Ukraine was the first step in preventing Russia from transiting goods between Europe and the Far East.

4. Russian–Chinese relations

4.1. Relationship from the fall of the USSR until the occupation of Crimea

At Christmas 1991, when the USSR has officially ceased to exist, this has resulted in a massive power vacuum in Eurasia. The People's Republic of China was not yet an economic power big enough to take Moscow's position in the lives of post-Soviet states. Moreover, the leaders of the newborn states had robust ties to Moscow. Altogether it has resulted that during the nineties, the post-Soviet states and Eurasia remained in the Russian sphere of interest.

The first step to each other was made in 1996 in Shanghai, where Russia and the PRC announced that they are strategic partners. Later, in 2001 they signed an agreement

of friendship. The main topics of these agreements were cooperation in military modernisation, energy politics, raw materials, and challenges such as hampering the spread of radical Islamism and the influence of the U.S. in Central Asia. In the same year, they have created the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), in which, in addition to Russia and China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan can be found as founding members.¹³

After the Russian economic depression in the 1990s and the early 2000s, the two countries economic ties have started to become stronger. In the six years between 2001 and 2007, they have multiplied their volume of trade by six times. Of course, the volume of the growth has not remained the same, but by 2017 the trade in goods has reached 86 billion USD. Although if we look at the quantity of the U.S.–Chinese trade in goods, which is at about 500 billion USD, we can state that the Russian–Chinese trade is still not that significant.¹⁴

In the first decade of the 21st century, the most important security challenge – that affected the two countries – was the breakthrough of radical Islam. This phenomenon resulted in strengthening the first two central common values of the SCO: mutual peace support and respecting each other's territorial integrity. But right after that, the third leading goal and challenge were to step up against extremism, radicalism and illegal weapons and drugs trafficking, supporting these activities.

But apart from that, the Russian–Chinese relations were shaped by mainly economic topics and goals both bilateral and in the SCO. Hence in this era, the volume and depth of economic ties were growing, all in all, we can speak about a relationship getting more vigorous. Furthermore, the 2008 economic crisis did not affect substantially negatively China, such as it did the USA and Europe, so after a slight recession, the expansion could continue at an even higher level.

The Georgian war of 2008 also did not bring any fracture. During the five days of the conflict, Beijing has maintained its polite and diplomatic relations with Moscow. However, behind the curtains, China has expressed to all of the post-Soviet states that they are worried about the Russian recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.¹⁵

4.2. Relations right after the occupation of Crimea

To the emerging situation in Ukraine by spring 2014, China gave a complex answer, shaped by multiple factors. China's comprehensive approach to Europe is mainly similar to the one it has to Russia. China's genuine interest is to maintain uninterrupted economic relations with Russia. However, it is also China's interest to prevent Russia from regaining its influence in the post-Soviet countries, so China supports the independence goals of the

¹³ Gergely Bimba: *Kína gazdasági kapcsolatai Oroszországgal a geopolitikai érdekek tükrében*. Budapest, Külügyi és Külgazdasági Intézet, 2018.

¹⁴ Bimba (2018): op. cit. 5.

¹⁵ Camille Brugier – Nicu Popescu: Ukraine: The View from China. *Alert*, no. 17 (2014). 1.

former Soviet states. The main difference is that while the Eastern Partnership countries are important for Europe, the Central Asian countries have greater importance for China.

There are numerous reasons for China not being delighted by the Russian aggression. Right before the occupation of Crimea, China has invested 10 billion USD in building a blue water port in Crimea in order to pave the path of Chinese products to Eastern Europe. Of course, the armed conflict seriously hampers this project.

On the other hand, China and the EU may have similar interests in the region, the way the Maydan Square revolution happened was unsympathetic to Beijing. From this point of view, Beijing's opinion is pretty close to Moscow's, hence overthrowing an autocratic regime by revolution is not acceptable by neither countries. Furthermore, how Yanukovich tried to oppress the civil unrest was very similar to the one that happened at Tiananmen Square 24 years before, so it is improbable to irritate the guts of the Chinese Government. Like Moscow, Beijing also had trust in the agreement made between Yanukovich and his opposition, providing time for a peaceful transition. But the revolutionary escalation and the suspicion of U.S. intervention quickly harmonised the Russian and Chinese way of thinking about the Ukrainian events.

Right after the breakout of the war, we can characterise China's attitude like this: sympathy with the EU's strategic interests in the region, but also sympathy with the Russian suspicion related to the way of changing power. We will never see direct attacks and insults in Russian–Chinese relations like we usually see in Russian–EU relations. The diplomatic relations between Moscow and Beijing has far more layers of diplomacy and hypocrisy.¹⁶

4.3. Economic reasons in the development of Russian–Chinese relations

As we have mentioned above, a strategic partnership between Russia and China was announced at the 1996 Shanghai Summit, and a friendship agreement was signed between the two countries in 2001, the main directions of which were also strategic. The convention covered armaments and technology cooperation, energy policy and trade in raw materials, as well as joint action against challenges such as the spread of radical Islam in Central Asia or the global dominance of the United States.

In the same year, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was established, in which, in addition to China and Russia, the countries of Central Asia participated/are participating. The primary spectrum of cooperation is trade and energy policy. Russia's exports of oil and natural gas play a key role in bilateral trade relations, and wood, metal, chemical, automotive and agricultural products are also essential commodities in terms of exports. In addition, the arms trade is also an essential factor: more than 12% of exports of Russian military products go to China. The range of goods coming from China to Russia is much broader and more diverse, but it can still be said that the leading role is played by automotive and textile products.

¹⁶ Brugier–Popescu (2014): op. cit. 2.

Closer cooperation between the two countries in energy policy began after the sanctions imposed on Russia in 2014 after the occupation of Crimea, as Western sanctions forced Moscow to look for a new partner.

As a result, Rosneft and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) signed a strategic cooperation fund, and a Chinese oil company acquired twenty significant stakes in Jamal's natural gas pipeline projects in Europe.

Russia has acquired additional financial resources to further develop its raw material extraction infrastructure, and China has developed another alternative sourcing route, thus increasing its influence in Russia. Energy policy is a critical element of the development of both states: while China is a source of economic growth, it is a source of revenue for Russia.

Another critical element of economic cooperation is the aforementioned One Belt One Road, also known as the New Silk Road initiative, which could attract huge Chinese capital for both trade and railways and other infrastructure development. This cooperation also benefits both parties.



Figure 2: Planned areas of infrastructure building

Source: Zoltai (2018): op. cit.

Due to the effects of global warming, the Arctic is becoming increasingly available, bringing new opportunities. In addition to an active Russian presence, China is also formulating strategic goals for its territories. In the Cold War, the Arctic was also the confrontation between the Soviet Union and the West. In recent years, Russia has been the most active militarily in the region, whether on land or at sea. From an economic point of view, the situation is different. As ice is melting, untapped raw material deposits are becoming increasingly available. In its 2018 White Paper, China formulated its new

Arctic strategy differently.¹⁷ Their economic interests are most closely linked to the construction of the Arctic Silk Road, the exploitation of raw materials and fishing, as trade routes in the North Sea can be reduced by up to 15 days with transport times to Europe.

China has the opportunity to realise its Arctic ambitions not only through Russia, so “The Big Dragon” has good relations with other states in the Arctic as well: for example, it is setting up research centres in Norway and Iceland. However, in some northern countries, the rapprochement of the Chinese state is not welcome, but this option does not significantly affect its efforts to cooperate with Russia.

The last key region of Russian–Chinese economic relations is the Russian Far East, as the population density is very low on the lengthy shared border compared to the large area. In addition, it is rich in natural resources such as oil, natural gas, iron ore, copper, diamonds, gold, pristine freshwater and has a very significant stock of trees and fish. Consequently, China has a good reason to maintain close ties with the region.

Conclusion

The relationship between China and Russia is based on economic growth, cooperation in the field of trade and the field of energetics. The most significant projects are those, which are commonly led and managed by Chinese and Russian sides. Their common interest is to enhance each other’s economic development and act as a counterbalance to the U.S. in the struggle for global hegemony. In this struggle the Chinese and Russian interests can collide in certain geographic regions. These important regions are the Arctic and Middle Asia. China is admittedly interested in the dominance of these two regions in order to exploit their resources and opportunities. At the same time, Russia is desperately trying to maintain her dominance over these regions. In this race for dominance, China leans on her economic power and Russia on her military might (till it exists) and favourable geographic location.

In order to achieve their respective goals in Middle Asia, both China and Russia has to have a balanced relationship with the post-Soviet states. It is clear to see that the ongoing war with Ukraine makes it difficult to have a relationship like this between Ukraine and Russia. One of the main reasons of the breakout of the Russo–Ukraine War is that particular interest of Russia to keep Ukraine in her sphere of influence. This aggressive Russian way of enforcing her will threatens the other post-Soviet states. This phenomenon provides an ideal field for China.

Hence, in the fear of Russian aggression, other post-Soviet states are more likely to cooperate with China in order to have a “big strong friend” in face with the “Russian Bear”. An exact example for this phenomenon is the Chinese behaviour with Ukraine. As we mentioned in section 3 of our study, China strengthens her ties with Ukraine, mainly in the field of economy. This perfectly fits in China’s New Silk Road initiative.

¹⁷ The State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China: *Full text: China’s Arctic Policy*. 26 January 2018.

It can be seen that China is trying to strengthen its positions in the Middle–Eastern European region, and in order to do that, China plays a double play. Using their well-known “win–win” principle, China supports Ukraine’s independence efforts by economic and political means. But on the other hand, China puts a great emphasis on balanced relations with Russia. This “swing policy” and the New Silk Road initiative forms a network of policies the goal of which is to strengthen the influence of China through both economic, political and military means.

Regarding the common and competing goals of China and Russia, the Russo–Ukraine War does not provide any reason to worsen the relationship between Beijing and Moscow, but it fits harmoniously into the Chinese plans executed for the dominance over Eurasia.

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