

Chapter 12

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia: EAEU and SCO Within the Framework of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”

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ABSTRACT

The authors analyze the main characteristics of the EAEU – SCO partnership as a model of interstate interaction that can provide an institutional and value platform for the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”. The chapter provides the comparative analysis of the two regional associations, forms, and mechanisms of cooperation, identifies areas of intersection of their activities, and determines the synergetic effect of their interaction. The relevance of the study is determined, first of all, by the need to understand the new regional agenda, as well as to develop new approaches to the development of cooperation within the framework of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”. As a result of the study, conclusions are made about the prospects for the formation of a new model of cooperation in Greater Eurasia, its value and institutional content, the possibilities of achieving a new balance in the socio-economic development of the countries of the region.

INTRODUCTION

The process of building qualitatively new formats of interaction between the states belonging to the macro-regions of the world can become a major trend in the development of the modern world order. More and more countries are trying to form a system of stable economic relations. At present, regionalization is taking increasingly diverse forms, from classic examples of regional integration, which include the creation of supranational regulatory systems, to more flexible models of cooperation based on ‘open’

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or ‘new’ regionalism (Söderbaum Fredrik, 2013). New mixed partnership models are also created like ‘Greater Europe’ or ‘Greater Eurasia’. The goals and objectives of such partnerships are determined, first of all, by the need to solve urgent regional problems, the common desire of for dialogue and search for approaches to achieving mutually beneficial sustainable development of the entire region.

The idea of ‘Greater Eurasia’ (as a space from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean) was preceded by the idea of ‘Greater Europe’ as a project of integration or convergence of the leading European countries and Russia. After the creation of Eurasian Economic Union the implementation of the idea of ‘Greater Europe’ was associated not only with the interaction of the EU and Russia, but also of the EU and the EAEU – the Lisbon to Vladivostok connectivity (as declared by the President of Russia Vladimir Putin in his speech at the EU-Russia summit in 2005).

The idea of ‘Greater Europe’ started losing its relevance with the advent of the ‘Belt and Road’ Initiative (BRI) proposed by China’s President XI Jinping in 2013, as BRI had all the ingredient required to fundamentally alter the geopolitical situation in Eurasia. The ‘Belt and Road’ Initiative – now aggressively under implementation – would lead to an integrated economic corridor through the entire Eurasian space that will connect China with Russia and European countries. The implementation of the BRI hypothetically can give all the countries of Eurasia involved in the project such advantages as the economic growth; development of transport and logistics networks; prospects for creating a common economic space in Eurasia; etc. Both the Eurasian Economic Union and the European Union are particularly interested in the implementation of the Silk Road Economic Belt, at the same time; China proposed to create a regional free trade area in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. That means that in future ‘Greater Eurasia’ can represent a common space between Europe, EAEU, SCO and Asia, so the EAEU and SCO have new platform for cooperation and could play the new role of a centre of integration for Asia and Europe with the new form of the interregional cooperation (Söderbaum Fredrik, 2012).

This chapter analyzes the role and place of the Eurasian Economic Union and Shanghai Cooperation Organization the in the development of interstate and interregional cooperation in the Eurasian space, as well as the status and prospects of the main directions of multifaceted cooperation between the two regional organizations. The author analyzes the main characteristics of the EAEU-SCO partnership as a model of interstate interaction that can provide an institutional and value platform for the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”.

The concept of a Great Eurasian Partnership began with the speech of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who announced the Russian government’s desire for a greater Eurasian partnership at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum in June 2016 (President of Russia, June 17, 2016). Since then, Putin has consistently promoted the project in his addresses to the Federal Assembly, in meetings with foreign leaders, and at different international forums. The idea for the Greater Eurasian Partnership emerged at a time when the Kremlin tried to avoid isolation from the West and to develop Eurasian integration on new stage. In general the Greater Eurasian Partnership has two broad economic goals:

1. to connect Russia and the EAEU to China’s Belt and Road Initiative
2. to move beyond China and connect the EAEU with Iran, India, and Southeast Asia.

For the decision of the first aim Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping first agreed to connect the Eurasian Economic Union and the Belt and Road Initiative in. Putin asserted that the Eurasian Economic Union and the Belt and Road Initiative “are efficiently complementing each other. Harmonization of these projects

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