

BÖLÜM IV

Foreign Policy of People's Republic of China: Historical Development, Principles, Objectives, Challenges, Strategic Priorities, and Effects on Global Politics¹

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Introduction

The People's Republic of China was established in 1949 under the leadership of Mao as a result of the “*Chinese Communist Party*” winning the war between the “*Chinese Communist Party*” (CCP) and the “*Nationalist Party*” (NP) (Tuoheti, 2016). As it can be understood, both political groups fought for a long time to seize

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power in the country. Behind this success of the “*Chinese Communist Party*,” the rural population contributed significantly, especially tired of famine and political oppression (Bekcan, 2017). On this occasion, the “*People’s Liberation Army*” (PLA), established in 1927, has shown significant benefits in this struggle (Bekcan, 2017). Therefore, it would be appropriate to say that China, which still exists in the global order, was founded by the “*Chinese Communist Party*” under the leadership of Mao Zedong. Since then, China has become the most populous country in the world (Sarıöz Gökten & Gökten, 2017) and the second largest economy (Yalın & Çetinbakış, 2019).

Although the “*Chinese Communist Party*” was victorious, the country's first years were not without pain. In addition to the economic problems experienced in the country and the social problems arising from it, the opposition actions of the anti-communists also made the process difficult. As a result, the “*Chinese Communist Party*” took a series of political measures and resorted to propaganda to ensure its power (Deniz, 2014; Sak, 2014).

Despite the mentioned negativities, the People's Republic of China continued to develop rapidly. As a result of the government's socialist policies, various reforms, state-owned commercial enterprises, and the transition to a planned economy, a social and economic transformation process has begun (Saray & Gökdemir, 2007). Today, the People's Republic of China, with a population of over 1.4 billion and the second-largest economy in the world, has taken its place among the great powers in the global economy and politics (Orhan & Bakkalcı, 2009; Deniz, 2014). With its established economic and political alliances, China is becoming an increasingly important actor in the global system.

1. Important Events in the History of the People's Republic of China

China has a rich and complex history. Although the founding years of the People's Republic of China passed with various difficulties, Mao implemented a political roadmap to eliminate the

traditional structures in China and design a new China (Harputlu, 2010). The roadmap included some pressures on religious and cultural practices (Altın Öztürk, 2013) and mass mobilization practices involving the general public (Bekcan, 2017; Türk et al., 2021). As a result, the “*Chinese Communist Party*” initiated a transformation process under the name of the “*Great Leap Forward*” between 1958 and 1962 for the country to realize the industrialization process and agricultural development. In this process, the public was mobilized to realize large-scale infrastructure projects, and some social policies were also implemented to maintain the process (Yantur & İşeri, 2021). However, it is not possible to say that the “*Great Leap Forward*” process has been successfully completed (Yalın & Çetinbakış, 2019).

Another important event during the Mao era was the Cultural Revolution, which aimed to liquidate the elements defined as “*counter-revolutionary*” in the country. The campaign resulted in widespread violence, social unrest, and persecution of intellectuals and other “*enemies*” of the revolution (Çalık, 2011). The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) can be considered a period of political turmoil and social upheaval. Mao Zedong launched the initiative to eliminate perceived “*bourgeois*” and counter-revolutionary elements from Chinese society (Gazi et al., 2020). This practice involved mobilizing millions of young people to engage in violent clashes with those who formed “*Red Guard*” groups and were perceived as the revolution's enemies (Border, 2020; Özdemir, 2022). The Cultural Revolution profoundly impacted Chinese society, displacing millions and destroying cultural artifacts and historical sites (Anbarpınar, 2020; Topcu, 2020).

Throughout its history, the political framework of China has also seen considerable transformations. In the latter part of the 1970s and early 1980s, for instance, Deng Xiaoping's leadership signaled a dramatic departure from Mao Zedong's strict intellectual orthodoxy and toward a more practical style of rule. The PRC implemented several political changes under Xiaoping's direction to decentralize

power and boost local political engagement (Tunç & Kızıl, 2018; Keyvan, 2021).

The People's Republic of China entered the Deng Xiaoping period in 1976, following the passing of Mao Zedong. China's opening to the outside globe was accelerated by Xiaoping's market-oriented economic policies and reforms (Tunç & Kızıl, 2018; Timurtaş, 2018). Xiaoping swiftly put several economic strategies into practice. These included the implementation of special economic zones, market-oriented economic policies, and a few trade and investment-related freedoms. China's economic development and modernization were hastened by this reform process, which began at the end of the 1970s (Çalık, 2011; Timurtaş, 2018; Kurt, 2019).

The 1989 riots at Tiananmen Square were one of the significant historical moments (Çakmak, 2022). These actions can be described as a *"series of pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen Square"* (Çalışkan & Aras, 2020). After the reform-minded Communist Party leader Hu Yaobang passed away, the demonstrations erupted into a more significant movement that demanded political openness and accountability from the government (Güler, 2015). Note that *"the Chinese government finally put a stop to the protests, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds or perhaps thousands of protesters"* (Çalışkan & Aras, 2020).

China's economic development in recent decades has been one of the main focuses of global attention. China's entry into the *"World Trade Organization"* (WTO) in 2001 was a significant milestone in the country's economic growth and development. The movement opened new export markets to China and increased foreign investments (Şimşek, 2005; Gündal, 2015). However, the results of this membership regarding China's national economic policies and their impact on trade with other countries have begun to be questioned (Aran, 2019; Esen, 2021).

It can be claimed that China has adopted a more assertive foreign policy since Xi Jinping took office in 2013. To increase China's influence in the world's economies and politics, Jinping has implemented several plans. The *"Belt and Road Initiative"* could be considered the most significant (Çalışkan & Aras, 2020; Keyvan, 2022a). Despite the initiative's emphasis on economic development (İkiz, 2019; Kutluay Tutar & Bahsi Koçer, 2019), there have been concerns raised regarding the potential detrimental effects it may have on the entire world (Koçakoğlu, 2020; Akbaş, 2020). Xi Jinping's ascent has brought about another significant change in China's political environment. Some claim that Jinping is moving China toward a more authoritarian type of government due to his consolidation of power and concentration of authority within the Communist Party (Islam, 2019; Oba, 2019; Kazimov, 2020). In addition, Jinping's signature *"Chinese Dream"* initiative aimed at revitalizing the country and national youth has also been one of the main focal points of his administration (Karamurtlu, 2020; Keyvan, 2022b).

Recently, China's *"Belt and Road Initiative"* (BRI) has become the main focus of the country's economic and geopolitical strategy. BRI can be defined as a global economic cooperation organization established by the People's Republic of China. Therefore, the system contains many commercial and economic opportunities. However, it should be noted that there are some concerns and criticisms in the literature on the environmental effects of the infrastructure projects that the initiative plans to realize, the possibility of China's increasing influence on the member states, and sustainability issues (Koçakoğlu, 2020; Akbaş, 2020).

As a result, the People's Republic of China has passed through many critical political, social, and economic phases since its establishment in 1949. The Leap Forward Project, the Cultural Revolution, and the Tiananmen Square protests are the prominent ones. Today, China is proliferating and increasing its global influence as a remarkable country in the global system. In the history of the PRC, significant political, social, and economic developments

have occurred from its establishment under Mao Zedong to the present day under Xi Jinping. While China makes enormous gains toward modernizing its social and economic systems, it also has several difficulties, such as political tension, breaches of human rights, and confrontations with foreign nations (Altın Öztürk, 2013; Yılmaz, 2020; Çakı & Fidan, 2020). It is possible to assume that China will keep playing an increasingly significant role in international affairs, even though the PRC's trajectory is currently unclear.

2. Foreign Policy of the People's Republic of China

Politically and academically, the People's Republic of China's (China) foreign policy has grown even more noteworthy in light of China's growing worldwide significance and influence on international relations. China has recently increased its assertiveness in the global system due to its measures to defend its national interests and broaden its global influence. This section attempts to clarify the state of the literature on the People's Republic of China's foreign policy and its trivets.

2.1. Historical Development of Chinese Foreign Policy

China has a lengthy, illustrious past (Azertürk, 2011). It is possible to find academic research investigating these extensive historical roots in the literature. These studies allow us to talk about three main periods if we need to categorize Chinese foreign policy into different periods. These can generally be categorized as ancient, modern, and contemporary.

2.1.1. Ancient China's Foreign Policy

With a history spanning several centuries, China has a lengthy history of interacting diplomatically and commercially with other countries and cultures. China's foreign policy has been impacted by its distinct geopolitical position, philosophical outlook, and historical interactions with adjacent regions and foreign countries from the earliest dynasties to the end of the imperial period. The diplomatic techniques of Chinese dynasties such as the Zhou,

Qin, Han, Tang, and Ming are mentioned in the literature on ancient China's foreign policy (Çelik, 2016). These studies are based on the Tianxia concept, which emphasizes China's tribute system and China's centralism, which includes forging diplomatic ties with neighboring states through tribute initiatives (Alperen, 2013: 90). Tianxia views China as the "*Middle Kingdom*" and the supreme authority over all of creation. Particular academics reject the conventional view that China is a passive tribute state. Instead, according to these academics, China's foreign policy is not just pragmatic and adaptable but also influenced by Confucian ideals (Sagin, 2013; Bayram & Emiroğlu, 2020).

2.1.1.1. The Influence of Geopolitical Position

With its vast landmasses and natural barriers such as mountains and deserts, China's geographical location has played a crucial role in shaping its foreign policy (Deniz, 2014). The ancient Chinese believed that they were the cultural and political center of the world and saw their empire as the "*Middle Kingdom*" or the "*Center of the Universe*" (Örmeci, 2022; Demir, 2022). This perception caused them to see themselves as superior civilizations, to expect appreciation and acceptance by other nations, and to shape their foreign policy within this framework.

Chinese rulers generally sought to maintain harmony and stability within their empires. However, this has sometimes led to a policy of isolation. For example, during the establishment period of the Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD), China focused on securing its internal affairs and strengthening its economy while limiting its interaction with foreign powers as it was not strong enough economically and militarily (Türker, 2015). However, during the Tang (618-907 AD) (Kılıç, 2018; Gökenç Gülez, 2022) and Song (960-1279 AD) (Camgöz, 2019; Taghiyev, 2019) dynasties of China, the Silk Road trade network There were also periods when the empire expanded its influence and actively engaged in diplomacy and trade with other nations.

2.1.1.2. Philosophy of State Administration

Ancient China's foreign policy was also shaped by Confucianism, which emphasized the principles of benevolence, righteousness, and conformity in administration from a philosophical point of view (Sayin, 2013: 223). Confucianism asserts that the legitimacy and authority of a ruler depend on his virtuous behavior and moral leadership both within the country and internationally (Köksal, 2014: 112; Dinç, 2020: 113). Confucian scholars who occupy influential positions in the Chinese government emphasized the importance of maintaining harmony and stability in international relations through mutual respect, reciprocity, and adherence to moral principles (Çoban Oran, 2018: 323).

Confucianism also advocates the concept of "*Authority of the Heavens*," which argues that a ruler's authority stems from the approval of the heavens and that the ruler can be dismissed if he fails to rule pretty and effectively (Pekcan, 2015; Yıldırım, 2020; Temiz, 2022). This concept has influenced China's foreign policy by promoting the idea that China has a moral obligation to maintain its superior civilization and spread its cultural values to other nations while also serving as a justification for intervention in neighboring regions to restore order and righteousness. Because Confucius's philosophy says, "*If you want peace, prepare for war*" (Karataş, 2018: 295).

2.1.1.3. Interactions with Neighboring Regions and Distant Powers

Ancient China's foreign policy also included interactions with neighboring regions and foreign powers. These interactions can be examined through China's relations with its neighbors such as Korea, Vietnam, and Japan, cultural influence, trade, and occasional conflicts (Atik, 2021: 101; Levent, 2021; Aktaş, 2022: 57). It is possible to say that in this period, China carried out its foreign policy through a tribute relationship with states that accepted its cultural and political superiority and were willing to pay tribute in exchange

for diplomatic benefits (Lu, 2018: 186; Bayram & Emiroğlu, 2020: 31; Aziz, 2022: 67).

China's relations with foreign powers, such as the Xiongnu in the north and nomadic tribes in Central Asia, have been shaped by the complex interplay of diplomatic alliances, military campaigns, and cultural exchanges. For example, it is said that China often organizes strategic marriages, gift diplomacy, and military expeditions to secure its northern borders and protect trade routes (Vaissière, 2016; Kahraman, 2017; Taşbaş, 2022). The Chinese also sent envoys to establish diplomatic relations with foreign powers such as the Parthians and Romans through the Silk Road trade network (Tezcan, 2014; Tosun, 2020).

However, Ancient China's foreign policy has not always maintained stability and achieved its goals. Conflicts and regional conflicts that resulted in military expeditions and territorial losses with both neighbors and foreign powers were also experienced in this process (Sandıklı, 2009; Yantur & İşeri, 2020). For example, during the Han dynasty, China is said to have faced difficulties in dealing with the Xiongnu, a nomadic confederation in the north, leading to military conflicts and diplomatic negotiations (Vaissière, 2016; Kahraman, 2017; Taşbaş, 2022). Similarly, during the Tang dynasty, China faced threats from neighboring Tibet. In response to these threats, Chinese foreign policy has made military actions and diplomatic efforts to establish peaceful relations (Yılmaz Şaşmaz, 2022; Kapusuzoğlu, 2023).

2.1.2. Modern Chinese Foreign Policy

Chinese foreign policy, which focused on revolutionary ideology during its establishment, has taken a more assertive and proactive stance today (Doğanlar, 2021; Keyvan, 2022b). The literature on modern China's foreign policy focuses on the period from the *“Opium Wars of the mid-19th century to the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949”* (Akdağ, 2019; Demirel, 2019). As China evolved from a rural civilization that was mainly isolated into a worldwide power with growing influence in regional

and international relations, the foundation of the PRC in 1949 marked a crucial turning point in its foreign policy (Sezen, 2007; Rüzgar, 2017). Since then, China has worked toward several international objectives, including defending its national security interests and advancing economic development and global influence (Sayın, 2013; Akdağ, 2023).

2.1.2.1. The Evolution of China's Modern Foreign Policy

China's foreign policy has changed substantially, adapting to shifting regional and global environments. China adopted a policy of self-assurance in the early years of the PRC and adhered to a revolutionary ideology that placed an emphasis on anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism and supported Marxist-Leninist forces around the world (Candan & Işık, 2019; Gazi et al., 2020; Türk et al., 2021). This period was marked by China's alliance with the Soviet Union and other socialist states and its relations with the Non-Aligned Movement (Kasım, 2020: 549; Crab Ersin, 2021).

However, with the start of economic reforms and opening up to the world in the late 1970s under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, China's foreign policy has undergone a significant change (Sümer, 2010; Demirel, 2019). This period began China's search for a pragmatic and flexible foreign policy aimed at economic development and modernization (Ermağan & Üstünel, 2014). While trying to establish friendly relations with developed and developing countries, China prioritized stability in its immediate vicinity. This approach is defined as a “*peaceful development policy*” in the literature (Turan & Keskin, 2017; Kaya & Mammadzade, 2019; Keyvan, 2022b).

2.1.2.2. Main Themes in China's Modern Foreign Policy

Some central themes reflect China's developing interests and strategies in the international arena and its growing modern foreign policy.

Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity: China attaches great importance to maintaining its sovereignty and territorial integrity,

especially in matters such as Taiwan, Tibet, and the South China Sea. China sees these issues as its main interests and defends sovereignty and national unity (Pekcan, 2016; Ayhan, 2016; Turan, 2016; Pekcan, 2017; Köksoy, 2019). That has led to conflicts regarding maritime borders and territorial claims, as well as tensions with neighboring countries and the USA (Atagenç, 2012; Armağan, 2021; Küçükdeğirmenci, 2021).

Economic Diplomacy: As China has transformed into a global economic power center, economic diplomacy has become the central pillar of its foreign policy (Yağcı, 2018: 67; Turgutoğlu, 2020: 87). China seeks to expand its economic influence through both bilateral and multilateral trade, investment, and infrastructure projects. The “*Belt and Road Initiative*,” launched in 2013, is the most critical example of China's economic diplomacy, which aims to improve connectivity and economic cooperation with countries on the ancient Silk Road routes (Li et al., 2018; Stec, 2018; Zou et al., 2022). China also actively participates in regional and global economic forums such as the “*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*” (SCO) and the BRICS group and advocates greater economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region (Maimaitiaili, 2018; Eminoğlu & Demir, 2018; Aşçı, 2019; Işık, 2021). The main themes of modern China’s foreign policy can be listed as follows:

- **Multipolarity and Global Governance:** China is trying to realize a multipolar world order that challenges the dominance of Western powers and supports a more inclusive and egalitarian global governance system (Efegil & Musaoğlu, 2009; Yarimoğlu & Koçarslan, 2012). To achieve this, China calls for reforms in international institutions such as the “*United Nations*,” the “*World Trade Organization*,” and the “*International Monetary Fund*,” especially on global economic issues (Özkan, 2010). China has also established its multi-stakeholder international organizations, such as the “*Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank*” and “*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*,” as an alternative to these

Western-origin traditional institutions and started operating through them (Dirik et al., 2016; Yıldız, 2019).

- **Diplomatic Access and Regional Cooperation:** China attaches great importance to diplomatic access and regional cooperation, especially with its neighbors (Gökten, 2019; Kutlu, 2021). China resorts to regional mechanisms such as “*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*,” “*China-Japan-ROK trilateral dialogue*,” and “*China-ASEAN Free Trade Zone*” to promote regional stability and prosperity, improve mutual understanding, manage differences, and establish high-level diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral dialogues (Maimaitiaili, 2018; Eminoğlu & Demir, 2018; Aşçı, 2019; Işık, 2021). China also supports the “*common future community for humanity*” approach, which emphasizes win-win cooperation, mutual respect, and joint development (Erkan & Eminoğlu, 2019; Marangoz & Tuncer, 2020; Chen, 2021; Çoban, 2022; Aras, 2022).
- **Security and Defense:** One of the most critical priorities of China's foreign policy is to protect its national security interests (Tabak, 2008; Çınar, 2018; Doğanlar, 2021). China is modernizing its military capabilities and updating its defense doctrine, especially in the fields of cyber security (Topcu, 2020), space (Ünal, 2020), and maritime security (Armağan, 2021). China's military modernization has caused concerns among its neighbors and other great powers and has impacted regional and global security dynamics (Yılmaz, 2016; İslam, 2019; Korkmaz & Köse, 2020). China also advocates the peaceful resolution of international disputes and opposes using force in international relations (Karakuş, 2018).

2.1.2.3. Opportunities and Threats

China's modern foreign policy has essential effects on regional and global dynamics. The rise of China as a worldwide power causes changes in the balance of power, regional alliances,

and international governance structures (Demirtepe & Özertem, 2013; Aşçı; 2019; Demir, 2021). China's uncompromising approach to sovereignty and territorial integrity (Akdağ, 2023), economic diplomacy (Yağcı, 2018), and seeking a multipolar world order (Efegil & Musaoğlu, 2009) has both opportunities and threats in its relations with other countries and the international system. The first threat is the potential for tension and conflict over territorial issues, especially in the South China Sea and Taiwan (Pekcan, 2016; Pekcan, 2017). The second major threat is China's expanding economic influence through initiatives such as the “*Belt and Road Initiative*,” its economic dominance in recipient countries, debt sustainability, and growing concerns about environmental impacts (Eralp, 2018; Akdağ, 2019). On the other hand, it is a fact that such regional economic structures created by China contain significant commercial opportunities (Yiğinoğlu, 2018; Maimaitiaili, 2020a). In addition, with its foreign policy that encourages polyphony in the global order, China provides an opportunity for other countries that want to make their voices heard (Kafkasyalı, 2012).

2.1.3. Current Chinese Foreign Policy

Current literature on China's foreign policy focuses on the period from the founding of the PRC in 1949 to the present. When the literature is examined, it is seen that the researchers examine China's foreign policy through Deng Xiaoping (e.g., Ermeydan, 2016; Koçakoğlu, 2021), Jiang Zemin (e.g., Cheng & White, 1998; Gilley, 1998; Duckett, 2018), Hu Jintao (e.g., Kamalak & Keser, 2018; Pekcan, 2019) and Xi Jinping (e.g., Çalışkan & İlhan, 2020; Öterbülbul, 2022; Kamalak, 2023) through the actions and discourses of different leaders. These studies highlight China's pursuit of national rejuvenation, economic reforms, and its evolving role in global governance.

In addition, China's relations with regional and global organizations such as “*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*,” “*Belt and Road Initiative*,” USA (e.g., Turan, 2016; Pekcan, 2017; Çakı et al., 2019), Russia (e.g., Bekcan, 2012; Örmeci & Kısacık, 2021) and

Japan (e.g., Malkoç, 2012; Görez, 2015; Duman, 2020) are among the critical topics of this period's research. In addition to these, the literature includes such as China's South China Sea (e.g., Pekcan, 2016; Temiz, 2022; Gökten, 2022), territorial disputes in Taiwan (e.g., Çakı & Fidan, 2016; Köksoy, 2019; Olkan, 2021). It also discusses its approach to issues and its relations with neighboring countries such as India (e.g., Pekcan, 2016; Keskin, 2019; Maimaitiaili, 2020b) and Vietnam (e.g., Çakı et al., 2019; Karluk, 2021).

China's foreign policy has witnessed essential developments and transformations in the contemporary period to increase its global influence and protect its national interests (Yiğinoğlu, 2018). An outline of China's current foreign policy is given in this section. In terms of content, China's foreign policy strategy in the twenty-first century is centered on pursuing sovereignty, economic diplomacy, multilateralism, regional cooperation, security, and defense. Furthermore, the contemporary foreign policy of China is studied, particularly its stance on territorial conflicts, economic hegemony, and global governance.

2.1.3.1. Principles of China's Current Foreign Policy

Several vital ideas that influence China's approach to international relations are the foundation for its foreign policy. One of the fundamental tenets is the pursuit of sovereignty, which highlights China's dedication to preserving its national security, political independence, and territorial integrity (Ayhan, 2016; Turan, 2016; Köksoy, 2019; Yorulmaz, 2021; Akdağ, 2023). China values its sovereignty highly as a result. Mainly Taiwan (Pekcan, 2016; Pekcan, 2017), Tibet (Köksoy, 2019), and the South China Sea (Pekcan, 2016; Doğan & Gürkaynak, 2019; Armağan, 2021; Yorulmaz, 2021; Gökten, 2022; Temiz, 2022) exhibits a rather aggressive attitude towards sensitive areas.

Another critical principle is economic diplomacy, which demonstrates China's emphasis on economic cooperation, trade, and investment as the key drivers of its foreign policy. It follows an

active economic diplomacy strategy that participates in global economic initiatives (Yağcı, 2018; Turgutoğlu, 2020). China aims to develop its economic interests, expand its markets, and increase its soft power and international influence through these economic initiatives.

Multilateralism is another principle that shapes China's current foreign policy approach. China advocates a multipolar world order where power is shared among multiple countries and no single nation dominates global issues (Efegil & Musaoğlu, 2009; Özdaşlı, 2012; Yardimoğlu & Koçarslan, 2012). Therefore, China seeks to increase its participation in multi-stakeholder institutions such as the “United Nations” (UN), “Shanghai Cooperation Organization” (SCO), and the “Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa” group (BRICS), among others. China also emphasizes the importance of dialogue, consultation, and cooperation between countries to address global issues and promote mutual understanding and respect (Üngör, 2009; Temiz, 2019).

2.1.3.2. Objectives of China's Current Foreign Policy

China's contemporary foreign policy is shaped around several key objectives that reflect its aspirations and interests in the international arena. One of these goals is to protect national sovereignty and territorial integrity (Akdağ, 2023). Accordingly, China is particularly sensitive to any challenge to its territorial claims, such as Taiwan (Pekcan, 2016; Pekcan, 2017), Tibet (Köksoy, 2019) and issues related to the South China Sea, and will seek to maintain its sovereignty through diplomatic means, negotiations and, if necessary, more decisive action (Pekcan, 2016; Doğan & Gürkaynak, 2019; Armağan, 2021; Yorulmaz, 2021; Gökten, 2022; Temiz, 2022).

Another primary goal is to support its economic interests and increase its global economic impact (Kutluay Tutar & Bahsi Koçer, 2019; Altun et al., 2021). China aims to expand its markets, secure access to resources, and promote economic cooperation with other countries through initiatives such as the BRI, which aims to connect

different parts of the world through infrastructure projects, trade, and investment. China is also trying to diversify its economic partners and reduce its dependence on a few key markets, such as the USA (Karaca, 2012; Çiçek, 2016; Şanlı & Ateş, 2020).

Regional cooperation is another important goal of China's contemporary foreign policy. China actively conducts diplomacy with regional organizations such as the “*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*” (SCO), the “*China-ASEAN Free Trade Area*” (CAFTA), and the “*China-Pakistan Economic Corridor*” (CPEC) to support regional stability and economic development (Kuşku Sönmez, 2020: 42). China also has diplomatic efforts to resolve regional disputes and conflicts through peaceful means such as dialogue, negotiation and mediation (Üngör, 2009; Temiz, 2019).

China's foreign policy also aims to strengthen its security and defense capabilities, especially in its evolving security environment. China faces various security challenges, including regional conflicts, border tensions, and non-traditional security threats such as terrorism and cybersecurity (Çolakoğlu, 2006; Duran & Pusevsuren, 2016). While at the same time defending regional and global security cooperation based on mutual trust, equality, and inclusiveness (Akdağ, 2019; Kaya, 2019: 67), China is trying to modernize its army, improve its defense capabilities, and protect its national security interests (Yılmaz, 2016; Islam, 2019; Korkmaz & Köse, 2020).

2.1.3.3. Challenges Facing China's Current Foreign Policy

China's current foreign policy also faces several challenges that shape its decision-making and actions in the international arena. One of the main challenges is the issue of territorial disputes, especially in the South China Sea (Pekcan, 2016; Doğan & Gürkaynak, 2019; Armağan, 2021; Yorulmaz, 2021; Gökten, 2022; Temiz, 2022). China's actions in disputed waters, including the construction of artificial islands, military deployments, and resource exploration, have increased tensions with neighboring countries and

triggered concerns among regional and global powers (Doğan, 2016: 33; Yılmaz, 2020: 95). Managing these conflicts and finding peaceful solutions that respect international law and regional stability remains a challenge for China's foreign policy.

China's rapid economic rise has led to concerns about economic dominance, especially in areas such as trade, investment, and technology (Duran & Yılmaz, 2019; Kurt, 2019; Kuşku Sönmez, 2020; Karamurtlu, 2020; Demir, 2021; Çaşkurlu, 2022). In addition, China's business practices, including intellectual property theft, unfair trade, and state-led economic policies, have led to concerns among trade partners and trade disputes with countries such as the United States (Simayi, 2014; Ermağan, 2018). Therefore, it can be said that balancing its economic interests with international norms, rules, and expectations poses a challenge to China's foreign policy.

Global governance is another challenge facing China in its contemporary foreign policy. As China's global influence increases, areas such as climate change (Karakaya & Sofuoğlu, 2015; Topçu, 2018), cyber security (Aldemir & Kaya, 2020; Göçoğlu & Aydın, 2019), and human rights (Falk, 2022) There are increasing expectations for it to play a more significant role in global governance, including (Shambaugh, 2016; Şimşek, 2019). However, China's approach to global governance, which emphasizes respect for national sovereignty and non-interference, may differ from the expectations of other countries and international institutions in various situations. That, in turn, could lead to divergences and tensions in China's foreign policy actions.

3. Strategic Priorities of China's Foreign Policy

Chinese foreign policy has witnessed significant changes in recent years due to changes in its global power status and geopolitical dynamics. Therefore, understanding China's strategic priorities in foreign policy is crucial to understanding its evolving role in the international arena. The literature on the strategic priorities of China's foreign policy can be broadly divided into four

main themes. These are regional, global, economic, and security priorities.

3.1. Regional Priorities

Literature on China's regional priorities in foreign policy China's Southeast Asia (Çınar, 2013), Northeast Asia (Çolakoğlu, 2009), Central Asia (Omonkulov, 2020), South Asia (Bilgen, 2020) and Asia-Pacific (İzol, 2022) focuses on its relations with neighboring countries and regions. When the literature is examined, it becomes clear that scholars investigate China's efforts to establish regional organizations like the *"China-ASEAN Free Trade Zone"* and the *"Shanghai Cooperation Organization,"* as well as its quest for regional economic integration through initiatives like the Belt-Road Initiative. (Gökten, 2019; Kutlu, 2021). Additionally, it can be noted that the research has focused on his assertive behavior in regional confrontations, including those in the South China Sea (Pekcan, 2016) and the East China Sea (Bahadır, 2017). These initiatives highlight China's efforts to strengthen its regional clout, uphold its territorial claims, and advance its economic ties with nearby areas.

3.1.1. Asia Pacific Region

China is highly dependent on the Asia-Pacific area because of its closeness, economic significance, and strategic importance. Economic considerations, concerns about regional security, and efforts to modernize its military influence China's foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific area (Yılmaz, 2016; Islam, 2019; Korkmaz & Köse, 2020). The cornerstone of China's strategy for the Asia-Pacific is the *"Belt and Road Initiative,"* which aims to encourage economic connectivity and infrastructure development in the area. China hopes to strengthen its economic relations with the neighboring nations through this project, as well as broaden its trade networks and boost its regional influence (Li et al., 2018; Stec, 2018; İkiz, 2019; Kutluay Tutar & Bahsi Koçer, 2019; Yılmaz, 2020; Zou et al., 2022).

In addition, China's Asia-Pacific foreign policy stands out with its assertive stance on regional disputes, especially in the “*South China Sea. China's claims on disputed islands and maritime zones in the South China Sea have increased tensions with neighboring countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines, and Japan*” (Pekcan, 2016; Doğan & Gürkaynak, 2019; Armağan, 2021; Yorulmaz, 2021; Gökten, 2022; Temiz, 2022). Moreover, China is pursuing a strategy of militarizing and constructing artificial islands in disputed waters. Due to this situation, China draws international criticism and causes concerns about regional security (Doğan, 2016: 33; Yılmaz, 2020: 95).

3.1.2. Central Asia Region

Central Asia is another critical region of strategic importance for China. China sees Central Asia as an essential component of its efforts to increase its economic connections and support stability on its western border (Nogayeva, 2011; Deniz, 2014; Alperen, 2018). Central Asia is rich in natural resources and a gateway to China's energy imports and exports (Duran & Yılmaz, 2019). The “*Silk Road Economic Belt*” initiative, part of China's “*Belt and Road Initiative*,” is a significant breakthrough in promoting economic development, infrastructure connection, and cultural exchange with Central Asian countries (Şimşek, 2018).

Also, China's engagement with Central Asia has security implications. For example, China has concerns about a leap in terrorist acts from Central Asia to the Xinjiang region, where Muslim Uyghur minorities live (Sen, 2009; Azer, 2012; Paker, 2017; Şen, 2022). For this reason, China is trying to maintain security cooperation with Central Asian countries to counter these and similar threats, including joint military exercises, intelligence sharing, and border management initiatives (Duran & Pusevsuren, 2016: 283).

3.1.3. South China Sea Region

The South China Sea is a contentious region for China's foreign policy. China claims almost all of the South China Sea, including disputed islands and maritime areas claimed by other countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines, and Malaysia (Pekcan, 2016; Pekcan, 2017; Genç, 2019). China's approach to the South China Sea stems from its pursuit of territorial claims, resource exploration, and strategic interests. China has built artificial islands and placed soldiers on disputed waters, including the construction of military facilities, which has caused tensions and concerns between neighboring countries and the international community (Pekcan, 2016; Doğan & Gürkaynak, 2019; Armağan, 2021; Yorulmaz, 2021; Gökten, 2022; Clean, 2022).

Through bilateral discussions and regional forums like the "*Association of Southeast Asian Nations*" (ASEAN) and the "*South China Sea Code of Conduct*" negotiations, China is also making diplomatic attempts to settle conflicts (Çoban Hastunç, 2022). But because things are not moving along as quickly as possible, tensions in the area remain high. Furthermore, China's forceful behavior in the South China Sea has raised worries about regional stability and security and heightened geopolitical rivalry in the area, especially that between China and other major countries like the USA (Pekcan, 2016; Doğan & Gürkaynak, 2019; Armağan, 2021; Yorulmaz, 2021; Gökten, 2022; Temiz, 2022).

3.2. Global Priorities of Chinese Foreign Policy

The literature on China's global priorities in foreign policy focuses on its interactions with major countries, including the United States, Russia, and the European Union, as well as its relations with organizations that support global governance, such as the "*United Nations*," "*World Trade Organization*," and the G20. Researchers have looked at China's pursuit of a multipolar world order, its efforts to strengthen its diplomatic clout in international fora, and its involvement in establishing universal norms and regulations in this framework (Efegil & Musaoğlu, 2009; Özdaşlı, 2012; Yardimoğlu

& Koçarslan, 2012). These studies shed insight into China's intention to play a more significant role in world events and the country's changing perspective on multilateralism and international cooperation. As a result, when the literature is analyzed, it becomes clear that there are three primary categories under which Chinese foreign policy's worldwide priorities can be divided. These include advancing the economy, engaging in international relations, and defending national interests.

3.2.1. Economic Expansion

China's foreign policy recently elevated economic expansion to the top of the goal list. China has grown to be the second-largest economy in the world and is now a crucial trading nation because of the priority it places on economic growth, trade, and investment (Yalın & Çetinbakış, 2019). Additionally, programs like the *"Belt and Road Initiative"* (BRI), which seeks to enhance infrastructure throughout Asia, Europe, Africa, and beyond, represent China's aspirations for the world economy. By fostering economic cooperation, investment, and trade with partners while boosting China's economic might globally, BRI is a significant strategic project that serves as the cornerstone of China's foreign policy (İkiz, 2019; Kutluay Tutar & Bahsi Koçer, 2019; Yılmaz, 2020).

China's interactions with international systems like the *"Shanghai Cooperation Organization"* (SCO), *"Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank"* (AIIB), and the *"Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa"* (BRICS) group, among others, also reflect the country's economic development. These institutions serve as a platform for China to further its economic goals, regional collaboration, and international trade relations (Tüysüzoğlu, 2019; Yıldırım, 2019; Islam, 2022).

3.2.2. Diplomatic Engagement

Another strategic aim of China's foreign policy is diplomatic engagement. China has aggressively maintained diplomatic ties with nations worldwide through bilateral and multilateral means. These

efforts of China aim to expand its diplomatic influence, establish strategic partnerships, and advance its national interests globally (Zhao, 2007; Yeh & Cheng, 2014; Ward, 2019).

China's active participation in regional and international forums such as the “*United Nations*” (UN), “*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*” (SCO), G20, and the “*World Trade Organization*” (WTO) is an actual example in terms of the importance it attaches to diplomatic participation. In addition, China has also been a stakeholder in diplomatic initiatives such as the Six-Party Negotiations on the Korean Peninsula issue (Çokgüçlü, 2021; Keyvan, 2023) and has been actively involved in efforts to resolve disputes peacefully at the table in regional conflicts in the South China Sea through dialogues and negotiations (Pekcan, 2016; Doğan & Gürkaynak, 2019; Armağan, 2021; Yorulmaz, 2021; Gökten, 2022; Temiz, 2022).

China's efforts to engage in diplomatic engagement are also an important underlying reason for its proactive attempts to build relationships with developing countries in Africa, Latin America, and other regions through aid, trade, and investment. China's emphasis on “*win-win*” cooperation and its approach not to interfere in other countries' internal affairs have been the cornerstones of its diplomatic strategy aiming to increase its global influence and soft power (Yıldırımçakar, 2019; Marangoz & Tuncer, 2020; Çoban, 2022).

3.2.3. Protecting National Interests

Protecting national interests is critical to China's strategic global priorities in foreign policy. While trying to defend its sovereignty and territorial claims, China struggles to advance its security and development interests internationally. China's efforts to protect its national interests, its territorial integrity, and its fundamental interests in Taiwan (Pekcan, 2016; Pekcan, 2017), Tibet (Köksoy, 2019), and Xinjiang (Şen, 2009; Parker, 2017; Şen, 2022) clearly understood.

China's efforts to protect its national interests are also reflected in its efforts to counter threats to its perceived security from the United States and other great powers. China is taking steps to improve its military capabilities, modernize its armed forces (Yılmaz, 2016; Islam, 2019; Korkmaz & Köse, 2020), and protect its maritime interests in the South China Sea (Pekcan, 2016; Pekcan, 2017). China's efforts in its national interest stem from its desire to become a great power and protect its economic and strategic interests globally.

3.3. Economic Priorities of Chinese Foreign Policy

China's foreign policy draws attention to its pursuit of strategic economic priorities to support its economic growth, expand its influence, and secure its national interests (Aydın, 2020; Akdağ, 2023). With its rise as a global economic powerhouse, China has adopted a proactive foreign policy approach emphasizing economic expansion, trade, investment, and regional economic cooperation (Doğanlar, 2021). The literature on China's economic priorities in foreign policy focuses on China's pursuit of economic diplomacy, trade, investment, and development initiatives abroad. Researchers analyzed China's economic relations with other countries, its use of economic tools for diplomatic leverage, and efforts to expand its trade and investment networks globally through initiatives such as the "*Belt-Road Initiative*" (Li et al., 2018; Stec, 2018; İkiz, 2019; Kutluay Tutar & Bahsi Koçer, 2019; Yılmaz, 2020; Zou et al., 2022). These research focuses on China's efforts to advance its economic model and course of growth internationally, as well as the economic drivers of its foreign policy, such as access to global markets, resources, and technology.

3.3.1. Belt and Road Initiative

The "*Belt and Road Initiative*," which became operational in 2013, is one of China's most important global economic vision organizations. The primary purpose of the organization is to bring together the countries on the historical Silk Road, promote economic growth along the route, facilitate trade and investment between

member countries, develop infrastructure, and implement opportunities that will produce mutual benefits such as economic cooperation (Li et al., 2018; Stec, 2018; Zou et al., 2022; İkiz, 2019; Kutluay Tutar and Bahsi Koçer, 2019; Yılmaz, 2020).

The "*Belt and Road Initiative*," a foundation whose impact transcends borders, is also critical regarding China's foreign policy. It allows China to develop economic relations with neighboring countries, create new markets for its goods and services, and secure its access to resources and energy resources. In addition, BRI also serves China's strategic interests (Günay. et al., 2019) by increasing its soft power (Islam, 2022), strengthening its diplomatic ties (Yağcı, 2018), supporting the image of a responsible global leader committed to economic cooperation and development (Amirbek & Hanayi, 2020).

3.3.2. Regional Economic Cooperation

China also prioritizes regional economic cooperation as part of its foreign policy strategy (Özdaşlı, 2015; Kutluay Tutar & Bahsi Koçer, 2019). Initiatives such as the "*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*" (SCO), the "*China-Japan-Korea Free Trade Agreement*" (CJK FTA), and the "*China-ASEAN Free Trade Area*" (CAFTA) can be cited as evidence for this situation. These regional cooperation efforts promote economic integration, facilitate trade and investment, and increase regional stability and prosperity (Gökten, 2019; Kutlu, 2021).

China's regional economic cooperation initiatives are shaped around several objectives. The first is China's goal of expanding its economic influence in neighboring regions and seizing regional leadership. The second is efforts to deepen economic interdependence with neighboring countries to promote mutual benefits and create financial results with a win-win principle (Yıldırımçakar, 2019; Marangoz & Tuncer, 2020; Çoban, 2022). Third, China promotes regional cooperation and stability at the strategic level by strengthening its political and diplomatic ties with neighboring countries (Gökten, 2019; Kutlu, 2021).

3.3.3. Trade and Investment Agreements

Trade and investment agreements are important strategic economic priorities for China's foreign policy. Therefore, China is actively negotiating and signing bilateral and multilateral trade and investment agreements to expand market access, increase exports, attract foreign investment, and strengthen economic ties with other countries (Güner, 2018). Notable examples include the China-EU Trade Agreement and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) (Sezen, 2011; İşcan & Uzunses, 2022; Ateş, 2022). However, it would be appropriate to say that some countries, such as Malaysia and Pakistan, have recently questioned these agreements (Akdağ, 2019).

China's trade and investment agreements are strategic tools for advancing its economic interests globally. It aims to open markets for Chinese goods and services, protect its intellectual property rights, and stimulate investment flows to support national economic growth and development. These agreements also serve China's strategic interests by improving its economic influence, soft power, and diplomatic ties with other countries (Tüysüzoğlu, 2019; Yıldırım, 2019; Islam, 2022). In addition, this situation provides a basis for China to shape global economic rules and standards compatible with its interests (Çaşkur, 2022).

3.3.4. Influencing the Global Economic Order and Stakeholders

China's strategic economic priorities in its foreign policy have significant implications for the global economic order and various stakeholders. First, China's emphasis on BRI and regional economic cooperation initiatives has the potential to reshape regional and international economic dynamics (Özdaşlı, 2015; Kutluay Tutar & Bahsi Koçer, 2019). Massive infrastructure investments, trade and investment facilitating measures, and financial cooperation under the BRI can accelerate economic growth and development in participating countries. However, it is necessary to mention the existence of criticism over concerns about the

potential debt burden, environmental impact, and lack of transparency associated with BRI projects (Koçakoğlu, 2020; Akbaş, 2020). In addition, China's regional economic cooperation initiatives can potentially change the balance of economic power in the region by affecting regional trade arrangements and supply chains (Akdağ, 2019; Filiz, 2020). China is trying to contribute to the economic development of its stakeholders by not only demonstrating its soft power by making its partners with whom it cooperates use funds from the Asian Development Bank for these activities but also by offering an alternative to the global economic order (Çınar, 2013: 7).

Second, China's pursuit of trade and investment deals may affect other countries and global economic governance. China's participation in regional and international trade agreements such as RCEP may affect existing trade arrangements and have implications for the multilateral trading system (Ateş, 2022). In addition, China's approach to intellectual property protection, market access, and state intervention in its economy has been a concern for some trading partners, leading to trade disputes and tensions (Simayi, 2014; Ermağan, 2018). These issues present the challenges and complexities associated with China's economic priorities and their impact on the global economic order. In other words, nothing is rosy.

3.4. Security Priorities of Chinese Foreign Policy

As a rising global power, China's approach to security issues plays a critical role in its interactions with other countries and its positioning in the international community. Therefore, the literature on security priorities in Chinese foreign policy generally focuses on China's approach to national security, military modernization, and defense diplomacy (İslam, 2019; Yorulmaz, 2021; Alagöz, 2021; Soner & Çiftçi, 2022; Öterbülbul, 2022). In this context, researchers have examined China's efforts to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity, its military modernization efforts to increase its regional and global influence, its military exercises, its participation in defense diplomacy through activities such as arms sales and

security cooperation (Aydın, 2015; Duran & Pusevsuren, 2016; Eli Küçük. Yıldırım, 2017; Göçoğlu & Aydın, 2019; Örmeci & Kısacık, 2021; Olkan, 2021). These studies reveal China's concerns about the security environment, its aspirations for a more robust military, and its efforts to protect its national interests through security-related actions.

3.4.1. National Defense

China gives high priority to national defense in its foreign policy. The “*People’s Liberation Army*” (PLA) (Çınar, 2008), the most significant military force in the world regarding the number of soldiers, plays a central role in protecting China's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national interests. A combination of deterrent tactics, military diplomacy, and defense modernization can be used to describe China's national defense policy (Atawula, 2020). To safeguard its national security interests, China strengthens its military capabilities, including cutting-edge technologies, contemporary weapon systems, and cyber warfare capabilities (Islam, 2019).

3.4.2. Territorial Integrity Concerns

Another strategic security goal for China's foreign policy is territorial integrity (Akdağ, 2023). As an essential component of its territory, China asserts sovereignty over Taiwan, the South China Sea, and a few other contested territories (Pekcan, 2016). China uses diplomatic, economic, and military methods to uphold its rights in various regional conflicts (Doğan & Gürkaynak, 2019). China actively defends its territorial claims because it views any harm to its integrity as a threat to its sovereignty and national interests (Yorulmaz, 2021).

3.4.3. Regional Stability

One of the crucial principles of China's foreign policy is that it attaches importance to regional stability in the geography, including its neighbors. For this reason, efforts are made to create a suitable regional security environment conducive to its economic

development and political stability. China's regional security priorities are evident in its relations with organizations such as the “*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*” (SCO) and its efforts to promote regional cooperation, dialogue, and confidence-building measures (Gökten, 2019; Kutlu, 2021). China also advocates for the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts (Pekcan, 2017) and has a negative attitude toward military interventions by actors outside the region (Ersoy, 2012: 52).

3.4.4. Global Governance and Multilateralism

China's strategic security priorities include global governance and multilateralism. China seeks to play a more prominent role in shaping global governance's institutions, norms, and rules aligned with its interests. China advocates a multipolar world order and opposes hegemony and unilateralism (Efegil & Musaoğlu, 2009; Özdaşlı, 2012). China is actively involved in multilateral forums such as the “*United Nations*” (UN), BRICS, and the “*Belt and Road Initiative*” (BRI) to support its vision of global governance and international cooperation (Gürcan, 2019; Arıöz, 2022).

3.4.5. The Effects of China's Foreign Policy on Global Politics

Chinese foreign policy also has substantial effects on the global order. Therefore, it would be appropriate to say that these effects on various aspects of global politics, including international relations, global governance, regional dynamics, and global economic and security architecture, are discussed in the literature.

One of the aspects of Chinese foreign policy that causes global controversy is the claim that it builds military facilities on disputed islands and seeks to gain new territory (Young, 2019). However, the literature shows that this issue is handled through the effects on regional stability, maritime security, and the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region. For example, Temiz (2022) argues that China's initiatives in the South China Sea have increased

tensions with neighboring countries, triggered security dilemmas, and challenged established norms of international law, raising concerns about a potential regional power shift and potential for conflict. On the other hand, Gökten (2022) argues that China's claims in the South China Sea stem from its historical claims and domestic political considerations rather than its desire to challenge the existing international order and, therefore, may not pose a significant threat to global politics.

China's "*Belt and Road Initiative*" (BRI) is another critical area of China's foreign policy with global implications. BRI is a massive infrastructure and economic development initiative that aims to connect China to other regions through land and sea routes (Yılmaz, 2020). Studies in the literature appear to focus on BRI's global economic governance, regional connectivity, and China's growing influence in other countries. For example, Özdaşlı (2015) argues that BRI has the potential to reshape the global economic order by increasing China's economic impact, promoting its development model, and challenging existing international development norms (Li et al., 2018; Stec, 2018; İkiz, 2019; Kutluay Tutar & Bahsi Koçer, 2019; Zou et al., 2022). However, it is also critically stated that there are severe obstacles to the sustainable implementation of the project due to reasons such as lack of coordination and cooperation among member countries, imbalance in economic development levels, differences in infrastructure opportunities, religious-ethnic differences, and different national governance structures (Bayramdurdyeva, 2020).

China's foreign policy towards great powers, especially the USA, is also an important field of study in the literature. Researchers have examined how China's interactions with the great powers affect regional stability, global power dynamics, and the likelihood of conflict. For instance, Montenegro (2021) contends that China's ascent and evolving foreign policy actions challenge the US-led established order and may change the balance of power in world affairs. In contrast, Dedekoca (2017) argues that China's foreign policy towards the United States is complex and multifaceted,

characterized by competition and cooperation, and may not necessarily result in a zero-sum game or conflict.

Another crucial topic for research in the literature is China's participation in international organizations and global governance. Researchers examine China's involvement in global governance organizations, such as the “*United Nations*”, the “*World Trade Organization*”, and international financial institutions, and how that participation affects global governance standards and laws (Gürcan, 2019; Ariöz, 2022). For instance, it is stated that China's growing influence in institutions of global governance can modify the current norms and regulations of the international order while China seeks to fulfill its interests, development model, and aspirations to be a worldwide leader (Aydn, 2020; Şimşek, 2021). However, Duran and Yılmaz (2019) state that the level of China's participation in global governance is still developing, so its impact on international politics is also about its ability to cope with local problems, address the concerns of other countries and play a constructive role in global governance processes, in other words, it depends on the ability to use of its soft power.

When Chinese foreign policy is examined from the outside, it is seen that issues such as China's “*Belt and Road Initiative*,” its claims in the South Sea, and its relations with the great powers come to the fore. Researchers state that China has become a more dominant country in the global order and uses complex economic, political, and military tools to achieve this.

Although China does not prefer to use hard power, its solid stance on territorial integrity and strengthening and modernizing its army to ensure this also signals that it can resort to this path. It can be evaluated that China's decision to solve the problems in the region that it cannot solve through economy or political communication with hard power may have consequences at the global level.

As China continues to develop economically, its influence in global politics can be expected to increase. In this process, it will not be surprising that China's foreign policy becomes more dominant,

demanding, and competitive regionally and globally. In addition, it will not be surprising that it establishes economic alliances with the BRI and similar organizations and defense-oriented partnerships with structures such as the “*Shanghai Cooperation Organization*” or expands existing collaborations.

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