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EU Geostrategy

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The EU

Guillaume Perigois, Unsplash CCO

EU - Geostrategy Rising

It used to be the way, that the EU was orienting itself nearly exclusively towards its own region and close neighborhood.

But with Trump a lot of things changed. And these things will not "change back" with Biden. The EU has realized that it simply must embrace a truly global role - independent of the USA.

EU - Economic Geostrategy - Success

The Comprehensive Agreement on Investments (CAI) signed by the EU and China on the last working-day of December, 2020 was a strong EU-strategic move in a global EU-geostrategy and in Autonomy vis-à-vis the USA. The USA and Biden hate the EU for it. But the EU wants it. With the Eurasian Landbridge (the busy train-line connecting Chongqing with Duisburg) the whole Eurasian

landmass has become strategic as long-distance connection for the EU - and not only with China. Whole Central Asia is developing as a hub connecting the EU with China, the Persian Gulf, Pakistan, and India, connecting to India's [International North-South Transport Corridor](#) via Iran. All this will strengthen EU strategic access to the vast natural resources in Central Asia and the Middle East.

In an article on Euractiv 9 March 2021, it is clear to see how the geostrategic power of the EU increases towards Eurasia:

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/eastern-europe/news/eu-warms-to-more-integration-with-georgia-moldova-and-ukraine/>

It is an EU expansion of economic and diplomatic connections - not military. Note how strategic EU trade-integration even with Georgia and Armenia are mentioned in the Euractiv piece. Yerevan is 3,400 km from Brussels - so this is quite a reach. Georgia and Armenia are also part of the EU's geostrategy, because they are needed for pipelines to bring oil and gas from the Caspian basin (incl. Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan) to Europe. Connecting the EU with energy in Turkmenistan is a 4,500 km diplomatic distance from Ashgabat to Brussels. Pakistan has interests, access, and connections in Central Asia too. This makes Pakistan an important potential partner for the EU. The distance from Brussels to Islamabad is 5,800 km - so the EU is "nearly there" with Pakistan.

Gas pipeline connection from Turkmenistan would give the EU two important aspects. It would (theoretically) make the EU a little less dependent on Russian gas. And it would (theoretically) make Turkmenistan a little less dependent on selling gas to China. But it has to go through Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, which form a "belt" between Russia and Turkey. But Turkey and Russia are dominating the southern Caucasus region with military, diplomacy and old cultural connections - so the EU has to cooperate with Russia and Turkey anyway. The EU just has to find a way to do it.

India has problems with itself about trade-deals. India withdrew from RCEP with East Asia and China. India has no comprehensive trade agreement with the USA either. With the "Buy American First" of Trump+Biden, the USA isolates itself from using big future trade-deals to increase US strategic influence anywhere. India had problems with the WTO. The EU in 2007 tried to start negotiating a trade deal with India, but India lost itself in resistance to unimportant details about wine and cheese and [lost the whole deal in 2013](#). The EU, however, is India's biggest and most promising strategic partner to enhance development through trade. India now again [knocks the EU's door](#) for a strategic trade agreement with the EU.

The EU sees Africa as a strategic partner. The EU Commission after being appointed prioritized to visit Africa as the first travel abroad. China works strategically with African business too. Africa is never mentioned in Biden's global agenda, which is maniacally focused on China. Trump never went to Africa. The USA practically cares little about Africa. South Africa has bigger exports to China than to the USA.

The EU made a big trade deal with [Mercosur](#). The EU is already Mercosur's no. 1 trading and investment partner, and this is an important geostrategic move for the EU further into South America. China is already a bigger trading partner than the US with Mercosur countries Brazil and Argentina, and with [Chile](#). The USA has widely lost South America - what was long the US' own "backyard" - to China and the EU. And the USA hasn't even really started to discover it yet.

The EU goes up in global importance. The key to the EU's geostrategic success all around the World is not guns, but trade, cooperation, and diplomacy.

EU - Military Geostrategy - Failure

The USA has by far the biggest military in the World - but that does not help the USA from a constant decline in relative importance. Big military failures of the USA and France are key to understand geopolitics today – and tomorrow.

France represents the military part of EU geostrategy.

As long as France could save one of its dictator-friends like Mobuto with a few Foreign Legion soldiers to Katanga province in Zaïre (now DR Congo), it worked fine for France. For too long, Africa was a place where France could cheaply inflate its self-image as a “great power” by sending out just a few hundred soldiers. France has nothing close to the military power to sustain its grandiose ambitions in the Middle East, Caucasus, Eastern Mediterranean (Turkey), Africa – even sending a navy ship faraway to the South China Sea.

France just as much as the USA is a failure when it comes to big interventions. That was true for France's defeat in Algeria, and it is true today for France's failed war in Sahel. France helped destroy Libya but cannot fix it. France wanted to meddle in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, but cannot.

The USA in many places, also in the Sahel, operates an undisclosed (but high) number of "[Lilly-pad bases for drones and intervention](#)". This way, the USA can kill people. Stability in Africa will not be achieved this way. It is the same kind of US "drone-failure" which we sadly know all too well in Pakistan and Afghanistan. But France happily copies the military failures of the USA.

As I have argued for some time, Sahel is the road to defeat for France in Africa. This is drawing lines back to France's earlier catastrophic defeat on the continent, in Algeria. Recently, yet one more report confirms my observations on France's failure in Sahel:

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel/299-course-correction-sahel-stabilisation-strategy>

Sahel is many times bigger than Afghanistan, where the USA now after 20 years of war is coming to a humiliating defeat. A defeat which Trump accepted. But Biden seemingly doesn't want to see the real world, so Biden is now burning down the small rest of US military credibility in Afghanistan.

[Obama](#) tried to apply [more than 100,000 soldiers in Afghanistan](#). In addition, just as many "civilian-military" primarily US contractors were applied. In spite of up to over 200,000 western military-related personnel and 20 years of war, the USA has thoroughly lost its way in Afghanistan.

Sahel and the theater in North Africa is on a scale several times bigger than Afghanistan. To operate in this much bigger theater, France has fewer soldiers in the Sahel than the USA and its allies deployed in Afghanistan. And as intellectual foundation for this, France has no other military doctrines for its counter-insurgency operations, than what the USA has. In fact, the US "COIN" doctrine for counter-insurgency warfare relies very much on a French officer [David Galula](#), who wrote a book on the subject in Algeria. Everybody can see this by reading Galula's book – I did.

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It testifies to the failure of the counter-insurgency strategy which both the USA and France rely on, that France lost the war in Algeria which their COIN "theory" is based on. COIN is a recipe for failure for France today, like it was for France in Algeria 60 years ago (1954-1962). Even over half a century, Western militaries just don't learn.

The EU - represented by France and its copy of US president Bush's concept of "alliance of the willing" with Denmark, Sweden, Estonia etc. – is heading for military disaster in the Sahel.

EU – Geostrategic Conclusion

EU geostrategy develops fantastic with economics and diplomacy – all over the World.

EU expansion fails, once it like France engages in military interventions.

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