



## Decentralized Central, Distributed Instruments Business Model, Meritocracy and Revolution in Security

Dear Ministers, Bureaucrats, Ambassadors, representatives of governments, representatives of our National Security Council and security authorities, representatives of security affairs/ministries from both our country and friendly countries, academics/scholars, experts/scientists, students/graduates, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 8th Security Conference coordinated by TASAM. I am delighted to be together with you once again at the opening of the conference. We will have the opportunity to listen to more than 100 national and international presentations, papers and key note speeches on a large variety of topics in three separate rooms, as part of the conference program with a very busy schedule. So, I would like to use the time effectively as much as possible.

This is the eighth event of **Istanbul Security Conference** series and thankfully it continued without interruption even during the pandemic. Istanbul plays well its own role, which fits both its historical backgrounds and Turkey itself, in such meetings, especially that of regional and global security policies. I believe that this conference, and the other events as part of it, will eventually become much more systematic. We continue to keep our contacts and correspondence with 120 countries and international organizations without interruption. We have also a network connecting us with about 50 think tanks from various countries, which allows us to exchange ideas and information in a regular basis. We would like to thank each of the participants for their contribution to the conference, especially BMC and İNCE Shipping companies, our main sponsor ASELSAN, each of our ministries and their departments. We also thank our Vice-Chairman Assoc. Prof. Fahri ERENEL and his team members Esra Nur EKİNCİ, Mustafa Onat MENDİL, Verda ŞENSOY and our young professionals, and those who assisted the event by their support.

**8th Istanbul Security Conference**, with a focus on “Post-Security Dilemmas, Integrations, Models and Asia”, includes additional events, which take place at the same time as the main event, as part of a fixed annual schedule. These events are as follows: **6th Türkiye - Gulf Defence and Security Forum** with a focus on “New Balances, New Roles, New Alliances”, **5th Türkiye - Africa Defence Security and Aerospace Forum** with a focus on “The Future Security Ecosystem and Partnership for Strategic Transformation”, **4th Maritime and Marine Security Forum** with a focus on “Asian Century, Maritime State Ecosystem and Blue Planet”. We have an extra event, this year and following years probably, **Istanbul Cyber-Security Forum** with a focus on “Post-Security, Digital Revolution, Circular Economy, and Cyber Ecosystem”. This event, considering the increasing significance of global and regional cyber-security trends, may give us the opportunity to discuss the emerging parameters in this domain as much as possible.

I believe that this conference, with the contribution of these events additional to it as well, will increasingly be more effective. Mostly because of the fact that Turkey, due to its location, is a country that plays a central role as the security regulator between the East and the West. It becomes more important as Turkey realizes this fact and plays its role better. So, we, as think tanks, need to contribute to this trend as well. I also believe, in this sense, that both all the activities under this conference and by TASAM National Defence and Security Institute will continue to make great contributions.



My keynote speech includes five sections or slides. Let me try to give you a quick recap;

## 1) Istanbul Security Conference and its Co-Events - Proactive Past and Future

### Post-Security Dilemmas

One World - One System; Micro States

One World - Multiple System; Nation States - and others

Red-apple: Common Values for Humanity and Moral Revolution

## 2) Post-Security Geopolitics, Competition and Asia

'Debt Money Debt' Global Resource Crisis

Russia, Lever of the History

Decentralized Center, USA - UK - China Matryoshka

EU - Japan - Germany - Turkey Power Regulation

## 3) Decentralized Center and Distributed Instruments

Revolution in Business Model, Meritocracy and Security

Elimination of the Middle Class and Democracy

Promoting Autarchy and Idle Capacity

Demographic Cancer

## 4) Strategic Transformation

Less Resources - More People

Staff Security Centered Transformation of National Meritocratic Infrastructure

Post-Security Civil - Soldier Governance Models

Circular (Green) Security Economy

## 5) Leadership and Cooperation Vision

Alliances within the Alliance

Rethinking Priorities/Hostilities and their Management

'Soil - Water - Air - Fire' Ecosystem Security

New Pandemics; Cyber Security, Food Scarcity, Production-Consumption Security

### Global Regional Security and Integration

UN, NATO, QUAD, AUKUS, BLUE DOT NETWORK, D10, T12, CPTPP, RCEP, OTS and others



Today, it appears that it is not inconvenient to question whether the world is shifting towards a new international order under the idea of “one-world with one-system and minor-states”, or towards some “globalist” and “nationalist” approaches. This question, which we put it as “post-security dilemmas”, is the primary focus of our conference. We have laid great stress on this point for almost 15 years as part of the 2023 and 2053 Projects that we lead. There seems, in this sense, to be a global risk of rising “micro-nationalistic” approaches. We need time, however, to see whether this option will be the case or the other option, which suggests that “nation-state” will sustain itself within a “multi-polar” international system. It appears that the second option is the prevailing one, even though it will definitely be faced with daunting challenges. Each of these two dilemmas, one way or the other, will be decisive for the future of international relations. If we tend to the first option that suggest "one-world with one-system and minor-states", then it would be imperative to understand that this will be a daunting and burdensome, intimidating attempt at a cost of catastrophic breakdowns and unbearable, inconsolable griefs.

Today, the world is experiencing an “ethical crisis” and “decline in morals and manners”. Both human and nature is still going through a lot of trauma caused by disruptive actions such as the current patterns of production, consumption and growth chains and associated standardization procedures. Each country has already experienced this trauma in its own way. Western Europe suffers from the "failure in success" syndrome for instance. When it comes to the countries in Africa and Latin America most of them have been experienced this crisis as a form of deprivation both caused by and resulted in poor living conditions. Considering that the system built after World War II lost its momentum after the 2000s, it is clear that we need a revolution in morals and manners. So, I think it is not possible for us to understand these problems only by strategic analyses or making certain power-correlations between geopolitical actors. We need a “Red Apple Goal”, which is the leitmotiv running through our previous keynotes. Chinese friends have the Phoenix, which they repeatedly glorified. I believe that if the world, the regions and the countries to be safe, then it would be necessary for each country and international organizations make a “moral revolution” in a way of self-rehabilitation or recovery or reborn. I will not go further into this point, which we have already discussed many times in previous conferences.

Asia, in terms of “post-security geopolitical rivalry”, is the center of today's world. It was considered to be strictly ideological, after we named our organization as the Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM) two decades ago. But, in fact, the “Turkish Asia” was the focal point we took as a reference for the one of the “pair of compasses” to be fixed. TASAM has carried out very important works for the last two decades all over the world, including Latin America, Europe and Africa. Today, Asia is taking shape as the new production/consumption center of the world, which seeks to have the security brought by this wealth. It is shaped as a geography where the existing economic pie and new ownership transfers are being shared. Asia will increasingly be more decisive than before in both security and other parameters. In 2008, we coined the following slogan; “19<sup>th</sup> century was the European age, the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the American age, the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be the Asian age”.

There is a resource production model, which is "printing unbacked money". Despite all the extensions and the efforts to save this vicious cycle after the 2008 crisis, it has reached a point that is unsustainable. The world, which its GNU is 100 trillion dollars, has a debt of 305 trillion dollars. The system of creating financial resources out of nothing or in a form of debt is about to come to a dead end and what is happening today is to play for time. If the current system falls into a deeper financial crisis, its impact would be devastating



for a large number of countries, private companies and individuals. So, I would like to rephrase that the current resource crisis is the underlying reason of the re-defined security/conflict concept and fierce competition.

The Russia-Ukraine war is one of the live issues. The Russians are both our close allies and rivals. We have a 300-year of common history with ups and downs. The concept of "higher cooperation and higher competition", which was embraced in defining our relations with Russia and achieved in 2008, has been a successful form of relationship. Today we have better and stronger relations with Russia. We want this cooperation and competition to be constructive, not destructive. Russia, however, had once played a central role, leveraging its historical background, especially its socialist experience. This period makes possible for Russia to build its own middle class but in the Western countries. It runs for gaining back its central position as a result of the fact that the world is polarized on the security issues again. I think, in this sense, Russia should be distinguished as an actor. The professors, among our guests, will better analyze the effects of this repositioning acts on Turkey, considering the deepening regional engagements and extending global reach of Turkish foreign policy.

When we look at the current international system, we see a "center" which I describe it as a "decentralized center". I am not talking about, however, a center that is tangible or visible, identifiable and accountable. The influence of this center has surpassed the nation-state for the first time. In such an environment where the USA, England and China are intertwined like a matryoshka, the plans or goals of decentralized center would be decisive for the rest of the world. So, it should be noted, at this point, that China, no matter how opposing it appears to be, is actually in cooperation with this center.

What England has to elaborate is the impact of these initiatives, which tends to change the world's political landscape, as it reviews its regional policies after Brexit and tends to reset its conventional position, in cooperation with certain countries and on certain domains of influence, which were previously left by England for the benefits of the United States. The British invisibility policy is, as usual, again the case, which, of course, fits well with the national interests of the British government.

It appears that there are also some efforts to reregulate the accumulated energy within a seemingly polarized world between China-Russia block and the rest of the countries. Today, the European Union is the name of the location that is capable of providing prosperity for its habitants, but not capable of safeguarding their security, which is a typical syndrome of "failure in success". Furthermore, Germany's current dominant economic position among the EU members might even be regarded as a Fourth Reich, despite the fact that there is the lack of security infrastructure to underpin such a position yet. On the other hand, Turkey has emerged as a regional actor and geopolitical power during the last two decades. Japan, which is a western ally in the Pacific region, is one of the biggest economies, but it has suffered from the major barriers that resulted from the World War II. We can assume that the power concentrated in the hands of these countries and the EU will be re-regulated and eased to a large extent by competition.

The center that we have called as a "decentralized center" has a large variety of distributed instruments. The concept of "distributed" has become an important part of the literature, including NATO's strategy documents, you may very much aware of that. To put it simply, there is a cryptocurrency epidemic as part of this process. It is estimated that about \$10 trillion has been sucked out of the market during this process.



Furthermore, there is hardly any authorities in this domain, which can be hold accountable to the financially damaged users for the damage. The same is true of the distributed-ledger technologies, such as block-chain or cryptocurrencies. There is an assumption, for example, that all public/private records will be uploaded to these distributed-ledger technology platforms and the whole system of digital chains will operate based on these platforms. One may wonder the answers for such questions: what if these uploaded data are completely lost, who would be the authority that can be held accountable for this kind of damage. Here again there is hardly anyone to contact. There is no central bank or national government to compensate the damage. We have noted, for a long time, that these distributed-ledger technologies, have a disruptive potential to make major changes not only in the business landscape, but also security domain and “meritocratic” infrastructure, which means the countries having to cope with a severe lack of infrastructure are the most vulnerable to this disruption.

So, we can imagine, in this business or employment model, that the demise of the middle classes because of lack of leverage countries like the Soviets, and China with the reverse leverage of cheap labor decreasing the middle class, is likely to further undermine the democratic regimes, as the autocracies rise.

The fluctuation that the world is going through also encourages autarky, in other words, pave the way of isolation or self-reliance type of regime. This concept of self-reliance does actually mean not to share the capacity that exists in many countries. This was regarded as a solution once, which was supposed to mobilize the economies a little more, but it is not sustainable because the world's resources are very limited.

One of the most important consequences of these distributed-ledger technologies is the human crisis which can be described as a demographic cancer in terms of ethical or moral values. This crisis has also been experienced in many other ways such as epidemics, obesity and technology addiction. Do we have enough data-analyzes concerning the Z generation? What kind of future is this generation imagining? What are the necessary characteristics of rulers for this generation? The demographic landscape that we are facing with today is the deprivation from the traditional values and the essential conditions for being a human. I think these concerns deserve much more discussion.

It appears that in this background picture a strategic transformation is necessary for both the world and the individual countries. The "less resource, more people" model, which we have highlighted in such meetings is the basic concept for today's world. We do not need further resources, "less resource, more people" is the traditional cure and underlying factor all successful “meritocracies”. There are three well-known great meritocracies: China, Iran and Turkey. The rest is still new...

Another reason why today's world has come to a dead end is the linear economy, which implies the “take-make-dispose” process. This economy model brought the world to a sharp collapse, more specifically after World War II. Today, there are some efforts that seeks to shift from “linear economy” to “circular economy”, which seems to be included in the essence of nature and man. Currently the size of circular economy is 9%, which needs to increase up to a much higher level, above 50% for instance, in order for the world to be able to recover or breath. Certain other issues including security, technology and necessary policies need to be upgraded as part of this circular economy model, which should also be discussed.



Securitization of every sector and the economicization of every securitization, as we often point out, are important in terms of the superstructural-security-centered transformation of the national meritocratic infrastructure. Although it is easy to put it as a problem, but many countries, even the world in general, have handicaps when it comes to achieve the goals in having a proper productive system and necessary infrastructure. In the context of the USA's ideology, liberal philosophy as well as the influence of the EU, there is a need for serious research on how civil-military relations should be in the decades to come. In fact, it is necessary to see that the earlier prescription is largely ineffective. We are entering a period where military governance models should form more effective units, as well as hard power, additional expert domains that cover the areas of life beyond the conventional ones such as agriculture, biotechnology, nanotechnology and public health issues like pandemics.

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In the light of these facts, it appears that this strategic shift requires a visionary leadership, cooperation between countries, regions and international organizations, in a way of alliances and small circles within each alliance, for instance, as well as much stronger "center-periphery" relations, which are among the issues currently discussed by the EU members. To review priorities and adversaries is a necessary thing to do, taking into consideration the risks facing humanity. Some adversary relations are too luxurious and unnecessary. However, many countries tend to maintain that, because organization itself, or institutional structure, does not allow them to do things otherwise.

Natural equilibrium is one of the significant issues when it comes to the survival of the earth, nations, armies etc. Similarly, possible pandemics along with cyber security and food shortage as well as threats to production/consumption chains, and the possible measures against these risks should also be among the priorities of the policies.

There are some other priority issues, in the context of global security and integration, that need to be well discussed, such as reforming the UN organization, NATO's enlargement plans, as well as the approach of the integration organizations in Asia to the expectations including constructive competition and global cooperation, and the symmetrical and asymmetrical effects of these expectations. I hope, within this framework, that the Conference will deliver exclusive outcomes, which make distinguished contribution to Turkey, friendly countries and the world.

**( TASAM Chair Süleyman ŞENSOY, Opening Speech Transcript, 8<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Security Conference, 03 November 2022 )**