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THE USA AND RUSSIA POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP AFTER THE 9/11 ATTACK		
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ABSTRACT

The 9/11 attack in the USA has significantly shaken the world, and it overwhelmingly changed the core of the international system. The incident became a breakthrough in the fight against global terrorism and massive awareness of the threat of nonstate actors. To grasp how a global phenomenon influences states' relationships with one another, this review aims to determine the political relationship between the USA and Russia in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack. This paper argues that Russia and the USA had momentous cooperation in counter-terrorism after the 9/11 incident. However, the anticipated advancement of collaboration did not happen eventually. Both countries only shared common perspectives and grounds against terrorism. Nonetheless, the cooperation of Russia with the USA in line with fighting terrorism was not beneficial to Russia's national interest. Thus, both states' collaborative partnership was shortlived.

Keywords: Russia, USA, 9/11 attack

ÖZ

ABD'deki 11 Eylül saldırısı dünyayı önemli ölçüde sarsmış ve uluslararası sistemin çekirdeğini büyük ölçüde değiştirmiştir. Olay, küresel terörizme karşı mücadelede bir atılım ve devlet dışı aktörlerin tehdidine ilişkin büyük farkındalık olmuştur. Küresel bir olgunun devletlerin birbirleriyle ilişkilerini nasıl etkilediğini anlamak için oluşturulan bu derleme, 11 Eylül saldırısı sonrasında ABD ve Rusya'nın siyasi ilişkisini belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu makale, 11 Eylül olayından sonra Rusya ve ABD'nin terörle mücadelede çok önemli bir iş birliğine sahip olduğunu belirtmektedir. Buna karşın, iş birliği beklenen şekilde ilerlememiştir. Her iki ülke de teröre karşı sadece ortak bakış açılarını ve zeminleri paylaşmıştır. Bununla birlikte, Rusya'nın ABD ile terörle mücadele doğrultusunda iş birliği yapması, Rusya'nın ulusal çıkarlarına fayda sağlamamıştır. Böylece, her iki devlet işbirlikçi ortaklık kısa ömürlü olmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Rusya, ABD, 11 Eylül saldırısı

INTRODUCTION

The hijacking of the four planes by the alleged terrorists, stroke hardly to the towers, resulted in the great loose of almost three thousand people. The economic condition of America had also been highly affected. The attack turns out to be a watershed in the global consciousness of terrorism. The terror attack in the USA has been associated with the so-called extremist group headed by Osama Bin Laden (Kapucu et al., 2007). This 9/11 attack has been considered a breaking point for global security. In the USA, certain acts, such as the *USA Patriot Act*, have been adopted purposely to protect the country against any possible terrorism from migrants or immigrants (Rizvi, 2004). The 9/11 incident inspired several countries to adopt reforms and

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develop counter-terrorism policies. The attack also forced terrorist organizations to modify their weapons and innovate their attack strategies.

Furthermore, studies and research on terrorism have become ubiquitous and widespread (Demir, 2021). The USA focused on the international terrorist threat as part of the “global war on terror” policy. It targeted both regimes and nonstate actors harboring terrorists (Leffler, 2011). The USA also considered the chances of the country’s increase of military capabilities domestically and even in the Central Asian region (Meena, 2019). The aftermath of the 9/11 attack ushered the modern era of the USA’s vulnerability (Litwak and Litwak, 2007).

On the other hand, Russia asserted its support for the USA after the 9/11 incident (Freeman, 2002). After the attack, President Putin called US leader Bush, and the “40 minutes” call from the Russian Leader to USA's highest official turned out to be the latest phase of both countries’ good relationship (O’loughlin et al., 2004a). President Putin of Russia was the first state leader to call US President Bush to express his condolence to the attack victims and his support in the fight against terrorism (O’Loughlin et al., 2004b; Roberts, 2004). Putin became too expressive and sympathetic to the USA after the attack. He strongly criticized and condemned the attack on Russia’s national television. Russia likewise dedicated a moment of silence to the victims of the 9/11 attacks (O’loughlin et al., 2004a).

West has always been at the core interest of Russia as part of its foreign policy. Thus, Russia’s re-engagement with the West might regain its superpower status. Putin is inclined to Western values, including “personal freedom, the market economy, and international law.” Moreover, Putin made new agendas for partnership, including fighting against terrorism and cooperation in energy matters. After the September 11 attack, Russia wanted to refresh the bad image relationship between Russia and the USA due to the Kosovo war (Tsygankov, 2019). Since 1991, there has been a consistent flux between the USA and Russia. The Cold War's impact led both countries to restrain cooperation (Roberts, 2004). The 9/11 attack became the watershed of the Russian and American relationships and the evolution of Russia. Both states were able to stalemate the hatred in the late 1990s (O’Loughlin et al., 2004b). The aftermath of the terrorist attack had manifested that the disagreements between both states could finally disappear.

Nevertheless, the issues between the USA and Russia continued and reemerged after a brief hiatus or peak of the attack (Kanet, 2009). Determining how a particular global terrorist attack affects states' relationships, this paper aims to examine the political relationship between the USA and Russia after the 9/11 attack. This work begins by discussing the 9/11 incident, the relationship between the USA and Russia before the attack, and the aftermath relationship between both states after the 9/11 attack.

1. The September 11, 2001 Attack

On the 11th day of September 2001, significant atrocities in New York and Washington DC was committed by the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization (Herd, 2002). The melancholy event of 9/11 did not just accidentally happen; it was allegedly planned and well-executed. The hijacking of the American airplane was the beginning of the tragic event. Around 9 am, flight 11 of the American aircraft flew into the upper place of the North Tower. The floors of the said

buildings were impassible; many were trapped at that moment, and many civilians were killed and immediately lost their lives. When the jet fueled and caused a fireball, the burning fuel produced smoke. Eyewitnesses surrounded the New York City 911 system. Many noncombatants were trapped on the building's floor, mainly on the 92nd floor. The 911 emergency cannot accommodate due to the massive number of calls. For these reasons, access to information from the twin towers became too challenging (The 9/11 Commission report, 2004). Some people had already begun mobilizing themselves without waiting for further instructions from the Intercom System. Some people in the South Tower were unaware of the occurrence in the other building. While some were conscious that the bomb had exploded and had evacuated the building. The FDNY had started to move for assistance. Many of its officers also saw the plane strike in the North building and instantaneously reported it to their communication dispatchers (The 9/11 Commission Report, 2004).

The terrorist attack created patterns of material and human disasters, economic and even psychological (Sacco et al. 2003). Despite the devastating effects of 9/11, the USA's long-term trajectory did not transform rapidly. However, the event altered America's threat perception of radical Islamism and non-state actors' significance globally (Leffler, 2011).

2. USA-Russia Relationship Before 9/11 Attack

The United States of America has known to be a "revolutionary power." The USA also reached development in economic fields (Graham, 2008). The Americans perceived Cold War's ending as their triumph and the victory of their interest and democracy (Stend, 2015). Meanwhile, when the Soviets disintegrated in 1991, the former empire was divided into '15 newly independent states. Political organizations were adopted by the first leader of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin has positively transformed the country from political and economic stagnation (Rose et al., 2006). However, for the population of the Soviet Union, it was pretty hard to accept that their kingdom declined due to its "internal weaknesses." Hence, despite Gorbachev's effort to reform the kingdom, his policies and strategies were weak, late, and premature. The economic reform was ruined and ineffective. In 1991, when the coup against Gorbachev occurred, it brought sudden surprise and disappointment to Washington due to Gorbachev and Bush's good working relationship (Stent, 2015). The Soviet leader supported the United Nations (UN) coalition led by the USA to free Kuwait from the occupation of Iraq. Gorbachev similarly supported the US-Soviet arm control efforts. After the coup, Gorbachev was weakest, and the Baltic States declared their independence from the Soviet Federation. As an incoming leader, Yeltsin challenged the authority of Gorbachev and started to appeal to other leaders of the Republic for the suit. Later on, although the coup was unsuccessful, Gorbachev lost the capacity to assert his authority. Hence, in September 1991, he accepted the independence of the Baltic States. On the other hand, Bush was perplexed about whether to support Gorbachev or Yeltsin during those demanding situations. Upon the resignation of Gorbachev, other remaining Republics had also become independent (Stent, 2015).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia faced some terrible humiliation. The country suffered from socioeconomic dilemmas, and it aimed to "status quo ante" revival in 1991 in line with its international status (Graham, 2008). After Yeltsin, Russia's transformation continued with the leadership and management of Vladimir Putin. Putin was replaced in the

meantime by Medvedev as Russia's president. However, Putin again won and gained the highest position in the country. The leadership rulings in Russia are Western-inspired which include simulation of institutions coming from the West (Shevtsova, 2012). Putin's policy focuses on improving the country's economy. Putin envisioned Russia regaining its former prestige as a superpower (Freeman, 2002). When Putin won the election as the Russian president in 2000, he adopted measures for counter-terrorism. Putin even amended the Federal Law (2006) that included military employment.

Some of Russia's anti-terror rules were also inspired by the 9/11 attack and resulted in cooperation in the global war against terror. The attack became a justifying factor of Russia's strategies toward its counter-terrorism campaign in Chechnya (Sjadivera, 2012). Meanwhile, The incident attack yielded the USA's national security vision which has been redefined by the nature of the 9/11 threat and the country's reaction (Litwak and Litwak, 2007). Under Boris, the USA and Russia faced differences in stance on the NATO enlargement and the Chechnya crisis. Nevertheless, the USA had recognized the productive progress of their relationship. In the change of leadership of both countries, under Bush and Putin of Russia, both established cooperative relationships, particularly in the post-September 11, 2001 attack in New York. Putin showed unequivocal support to the USA in its fight against terrorism (Aje & Chidozie, 2017).

3. USA & Russia After The 9/11 Attack

After the 9/11 attack, the USA pressured terrorist organizations and the Al-Qaeda group to avoid further attacks on the state's residents and soil. The USA also pulled off success in Libya's abandonment of nuclear programs. Thus, America considered establishing strong connections and keeping ties with rising states such as China, India, and Russia (Leffler, 2011). The USA's relationship with the states mentioned above has been closed since the end of the Second World War. Hence, Moscow of Russia also presaged Al-Qaeda's threat to the USA being the leader of a liberal and international economy (Litwak and Litwak, 2007). In the aftermath of the 9/11 attack, the USA, accelerated intelligence, defense expenditures, and military capabilities. In Central and Southwest Asia, construction of new bases took place, and initiatives on counter-insurgency increased in production. Thus, the Bush administration worried about national security issues (Leffler, 2011). The 9/11 fire up the US administration under Bush. The event triggered sustainable action out of fear. Hence, before the 9/11 attack, the US security policy was taken for granted (Leffler, 2011). The 9/11 attack marked the USA's advent period of vulnerability and impulsive danger than the past Cold War. The event posed the availability of methods for mass violence and the menaces of non-state actors (Litwak and Litwak, 2007).

The incident of 9/11 attack became a challenge after the Cold War relationship of the USA and Russia. Hence, rather than optimism and warm connections, both countries' ties were considered strained (Roberts, 2004). In the aftermath, Russia aligned itself with the USA. Russia focused on strategies against the war on terror by enforcing military actions that included invading the terrorists' bases to eliminate the threat (Kennedy-Pipe & Welch, 2005). Russia desired to attain the power to secure and protect its sovereignty. The country envisioned counterbalancing the USA's unilateralism. Russia's participation in the "collective security

system” to combat international terrorism was a strategic option to recover influence in the system (Sjadivera, 2012). During the 1999 Second Chechnya conflict, Putin no longer considered the attack a ‘civil war’ but declared the conflict as international “terrorism.” He believed that terrorists in Chechnya received assistance or financial help. This Chechnya incident brought more awareness and consciousness to the US policymakers regarding threats from terrorists. Besides, after the 9/11 attacks, some positive responses came from the USA. It fathomed the Russian struggle against terrorism in Chechnya (Kennedy-Pipe & Welch, 2005). As a result, Russia’s perspective on the country’s terrorism struggle campaign has received fewer criticisms from the West (Lapidus, 2001).

The common interests of Russia and the USA stand out in the post-9/11 attacks. In the June 2001 meeting of both leaders, Putin assumed both states were allies, and Bush saw Russia as a strong nation-state and could be a ‘good partner.’ The US president correspondingly argued on bilateral cooperation and ignored the bitter memories of the post-cold war. He considered cooperation in poverty and the energy crisis. Hence, the scenario anticipated a new beginning between the parties (Oleksandr, 2003). During the state meeting in November (2001), America mentioned its ten-year plan, which included reducing the nuclear arsenal of strategic missiles. Due to the strong expression of mutual agreement by Putin, later on, Bush agreed with him. This talk resulted in the initiation of the *START-3* negotiation in Geneva when Bush visited Moscow in May 2002. They agreed that both parties would reduce and limit their nuclear warheads (Shoemaker, 2014). In 2002, Putin called for a meeting and decided on defense policy. He emphasized the threat was not coming from the USA and NATO but from the South. Putin also asserted Russia was no longer the enemy of the USA, and the country no longer needed the “nuclear arsenal.” However, Putin wanted the best for his military, so he proposed that money would be for “conventional forces” rather than nuclear weapons. After the 9/11 attack, the concept of a “common enemy” was established in Putin’s thinking (Belkin, 2003).

In the 2003 hostage-taking crisis and bombing, Putin decided to end the crisis in the theatre and used gas to terminate the lives of the terrorists. Some innocent lives were spared being hostages. Here, President Bush defended Putin’s actions for opting for the tragic measure against terrorism (Kennedy-Pipe & Welch, 2005). In Return, Russia did not contradict the USA’s decision to establish bases in Tajikistan as part of its measure in counter-terrorism. Instead, Russia became suspicious and accused Georgia of supporting terrorism in Chechnya. The USA advocated this perception in defense of the country on Iraq intervention (Kennedy-Pipe & Welch, 2005). Russia’s experience in fighting the troops in Chechnya triggered feelings of sympathy for the 9/11 attack. The Chechnya incident became one analogy in Russia’s insights into the 9/11 attack. As part of Putin’s script, he saw the 9/11 attack as a “global version” of the Chechnya terrorist incident (O’loughlin et al., 2004a). Russia also anticipated that the terrorist in Chechnya had something to do with the terrorist in the USA attack; the same thinking with the USA of 9/11 to the Afghanistan group (O’loughlin et al., 2004a). Islamic fundamentalism was considered to be the enemy of both countries, and this concept has become a similar struggle (Russel, 2005)

Russia has maintained its influence in the former Soviet region, such as Central Asia. These locations were necessary for the USA to pursue its war on terror. Russia was not hesitant about

the USA's demand for military bases in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Russia was very active and cooperative as it faced the same problem of terrorism in Chechnya (Oleksandr, 2003; Sjadijeva, 2012). Furthermore, the Russian leader committed to backing America and adopted specific measures for aiding the US-led coalition as a counter-terrorism action in Afghanistan (O'loughlin et al., 2004a). Indeed, Putin supported the USA in its fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan (Oleksandr, 2003; Tsygankov, 2019). Russia gave technical assistance during the USA-Afghanistan operation. It opened its air space to the Americans for humanitarian aid. Russia permitted the USA base establishment in former Soviet lands, and the working group for infrastructure elimination that was terrorist-related in Afghan took place (Oleksandr, 2003). As mentioned, the severe cooperation between Russia and the USA after the 9/11 attack was considered remarkable due to Russia's accommodation to the USA to achieve its military action, like in Afghanistan. Russia allowed the USA to exercise its influence on its land as part of its cooperation (Sjadijeva, 2012).

One of the breaking points in the USA-Russia relationship was the USA invasion plan of Iraq (Sjadijeva, 2012). Russia was not sympathetic to the USA's war with Iraq (Oleksandr, 2003). When the USA declared war against Iraq, Russia became part of the "anti-war coalition." Russia recognized the UN's ability to stop the war using force (Tsygankov, 2019). Nevertheless, the USA and Russia did not share a similar stand on Iraq. The crisis had placed Russia in a predicament due to Russia-Iraq's developed relationship. Even during the earlier Soviet era, Iraq has been getting a considerable amount of "military equipment" from the country. The "multibillion-dollar depth" of Iraq to Russia was one of the legacies of both parties' relations in the year 2000-2001 for the sake of developing the oil field in the southern part of Iraq. Russia has publicized its initiative of having a trade agreement between the two nation-states. When America motioned a resolution for Iraq for disarmament, Russia agreed to resume the tasks of weapon inspection by the UN. Russia had also disagreed on any endorsement of military action. Nevertheless, Russia supported the UN resolution in the above statements (Shoemaker, 2014).

The closeness of Russia to the USA manifested in Russia's engagement and cooperation on disputed matters, such as the program on "oil for food." However, Russia faced a dilemma about the unstoppable plan of the USA to attack Iraq in 2002 because Russia was also concerned about the attack's effect on the country's relationship with Iraq and its economic interest. Despite the crisis, the economy of Russia moved forward and gained economic benefits. Russia adopted some strategies, including asking the UN security council for its fair verdicts to prevent the possibility of going to war and trying to prolong the conflict for the sake of the Russian economy. Russia tried to maintain contact with the USA and Iraq leaders. However, the Iraqi leader was quite unsatisfied with the behavior of Russia, and their economic relationship was quite rocky. The USA-Russia relationship had begun to deteriorate due to some ideas and interests contradictions before the USA and Iraq war on the issues, including the unwanted action of the Russian approach to the UN security council in line with war. Also, the reportedly secret action of Russia in selling "military equipment" to the other party (Iraq) created disappointments (Freeman, 2002).

Putin showed deference by allowing the presence of NATO in Central Asia. However, NATO's presence caused dissatisfaction among the Russian military. They perceived the presence of the US troops to be horrific. Besides, the KGB and the intelligence services also felt unwilling. Despite some criticisms, others agreed and shared sympathy with the USA. The latter later expressed some possibilities of good cooperation, such as recognizing Russia as no longer a successor state of the Soviets, encouragement for Russia's membership in the WTO, creating an alliance between Russia and NATO, and pushing for a close relationship with the EU. Likewise, the suggestions for replacing the old ABM treaty with new concessions and support for Russia's democratization have also been presumed (Carnegie Endowment, 2011). The close cooperation between Russia and Western organizations like NATO after the attack was also subject to skepticism among Russian armies (O'loughlin et al., 2004a). When America withdrew from the ABM treaty, Russia had resistance because the country saw the treaty withdrawal as a mistake. However, Russia was silent and gave no reaction on this issue because the treaty presumably did not harm Russia (Tsygankov, 2019). When Putin visited the USA almost a month after the attack, some published criticisms of the Russian government came out. Some commented, "American war is not our war." The country's military intelligence did not agree with Putin's verdict on closing the "intelligence-gathering" in Cuba after the 9/11 attack. Some perceived Putin's decision was too much in favor of the USA and that Russia would have nothing to gain in return (Belkin, 2003).

In the change of leadership in the USA and years after the attack, the USA has consistently encouraged Russia's cooperation with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which was concerned with drug trafficking prevention. Some believed that Russia's collaboration in this program might be a turning point for the "resettlement" of the relationship between both actors. Moreover, the participation of both parties in the program was seen as an opportunity for fighting terrorism as well as the trafficking of drugs (Koolae, 2015). However, even though Russia and American relations turned out to be on good terms after the attack, the cooperation between the two parties was said to be limited. No further concessions took place or were executed. Besides, at a certain point, both parties' interests or political agendas were not accomplished, and their cooperation became "incompatible." Through this, Russia decided to "double-cross" and chose to establish cooperation with other actors such as China. Even before the 9/11 attack, Russian policy was already in the "Western direction." However, due to the 9/11 attack, Russia's direction to the West was given attention. As mentioned, the collaboration in international counter-terrorism served as a tool for Russia to resume its political strength. Still, Russia realized that cooperation would not be enough to realize its vision (Sjadijeva, 2012). Also, the policy of both countries to each other has not significantly changed. Before the attack, USA's unilateralism and the war on terror were feared by Russia. Russia similarly saw the intensified hegemony of America due to Bush's policy which can strain their ties in the future. Despite both nations' common ground for counter-terrorism, their cause was not considered an international agenda (Roberts, 2004).

CONCLUSION

Russia and the USA started a new relationship after the September 11, 2001 attack. Both parties shared the same sentiments against terrorism. Both countries' common perspectives and goals

of fighting against global terrorism inspired a collaborative ambiance for the USA and Russia. As mentioned, Russia supported the USA's fight against terrorism by offering assistance. Both parties were at their highest peak of military cooperation. The aftermath of the 9/11 attack signaled Russia's opportunity to renew its relationship with Western power, particularly with the USA. Nevertheless, the momentum of their political relationship was short-lived. Russia had not benefited much from working with the USA. The USA did not help Russia in fulfilling its national interest. The anticipated further partnership in other aspects of development did not occur eventually. Hence, the aftermath of the 9/11 attack only intensified common grounds between the USA and Russia against terrorism and is only limited with it.

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