

Maritime Trade Routes Are Necessary for Globalization: The Case of Türkiye

Küreselleşme İçin Deniz Ticaret Güzergahları Gerekli: Türkiye Örneği

Ali Oğuz DİRİÖZ

Assoc. Prof. Dr., TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Department of International Entrepreneurship, ORCID: 0000-0001-7110-3849, e-mail: adirioz@etu.edu.tr

Tolunay DOĞRU

M.A. Student at TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Department of Political Science and International Relations, ORCID: 0009-0001-6954-487X, e-mail: tdogru@etu.edu.tr

Abstract

This study analyzes Türkiye centered alternative trade routes initiatives from an interdependence and peace theoretical perspective; recognizing necessity of maritime trade. Land routes such as the Silk-Road in the past did not necessarily create an interdependent relationship. However, today, both the New Silk Road and other alternative routes encourage new dependency networks. Maritime routes are also of great importance in this trade network. It is also thought that there is a strong link between interdependence and international conflicts. This study examines trade routes and international conflicts specifically for Türkiye. First the concepts of interdependence and globalization are discussed by examining literature on interdependence and conflicts. Second part discusses Türkiye's role in the midst of current crises. Then international trade routes and Türkiye's initiatives are assessed. The conclusions highlights necessity for Türkiye to develop alternatives with several regions.

Keywords: Trade Routes, Türkiye, Middle Corridor, Global Supply Chain, Interdependence And Conflict

Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye merkezli alternatif ticaret yolları girişimlerini karşılıklı bağımlılık ve barış teorik perspektifinden incelemekte; deniz ticaretinin gerekliliğini vurgulamaktadır. Geçmişte, İpek Yolu gibi kara güzergahları her zaman karşılıklı bağımlılık ilişkileri yaratmadı. Ancak bugün, gerek Yeni İpek Yolu gerek diğer alternatif rotalar yeni bağımlılık ağlarını teşvik etmekte. Bu ticaret ağında deniz rotaları da mühim önem tutmaktadır. Ayrıca karşılıklı bağımlılık ve uluslararası çatışmalar arasında da güçlü bir bağ olduğu düşünülmektedir. Bu çalışma ticaret rotaları ve uluslararası çatışmaları Türkiye özelinde incelemektedir. Çalışmada öncelikle karşılıklı bağımlılık ve çatışmalara ilişkin literatür incelenerek karşılıklı bağımlılık ve küreselleşme kavramları tartışılmaktadır. İkinci bölümde Türkiye'nin mevcut krizlerdeki rolü ele alınmaktadır. Daha sonra uluslararası ticaret yolları ve Türkiye'nin girişimleri değerlendirilmektedir. Sonuçlar, Türkiye'nin çeşitli bölgelerle alternatifler geliştirmesinin gerekliliğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ticaret Rotaları, Türkiye, Orta Koridor, Küresel Tedarik Zinciri, Karşılıklı Bağımlılık ve Çatışma

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Introduction

Over the last decade or more, interests to revive the historic trade routes such as the Silk Road, and to develop new networks of trade route have been discussed globally. The initiation of the One Belt One Road – OBOR initiative by China (now referred as the Belt and Road Initiative – BRI) has been a major driver for land based global supply chains, trade routes, logistics and other infrastructure projects across Eurasia (Dirioz, 2022). Türkiye's initiatives on trade routes, and why at the current level, maritime trade routes are still essential for Globalization and the global supply chain. According to Gu & Liu (2024), over 90% of global trade still relies on maritime routes and thus this asymmetric reliance on sea trade implies multiple vulnerabilities. Past studies suggest that on-land trajectories such as the historical Silk-Road existed but did not necessarily create an interdependent relationship over the vast distances, and hence were not boosters of peace and prosperity during the Middle Ages.

The Silk Road, through its networks of caravans and relays of caravan seraglios, benefited regions such as in Central Asia (UNESCO, 2024) for millennia. During the Timurid Renaissance, Central Asia experienced a golden age, but the extent remained regional and were not across the Asian continent either. Hence, several initiatives are in place (many through Türkiye), to promote alternatives for the global supply chain and global trade. In this manuscript, these initiatives are analyzed from the perspective of interdependence and peace.

In the first part of the research, the concept of interdependence and globalization will be discussed. Then, the literature on interdependence and international conflicts, which form the theoretical basis of the study, will be examined. In the second part of the study, today's crises and the role played by Türkiye will be discussed. In the third and fourth parts of the article, Türkiye's role in international trade routes and Türkiye's individual initiatives in this direction will be discussed. The necessity for Türkiye to develop alternatives to trade with several regions (trans-Caspian Middle Corridor from Central Asia and also the Development Road through Iraq to Türkiye) is a conclusion of this analysis.

Interdependence and Globalization

Throughout world history, the formations established by humans have interacted with each other to a greater or lesser extent. Although this interaction of communities with each other includes many conflicts and wars, economic-based interaction has also been an important element that shapes human history. This interaction has become increasingly developed with the establishment of the system of sovereign states. With the Industrial Revolution, the mass production norm emerged and the economic relations of states with each other gained a different dimension. At this point, in the recent past, some states have specialized in some areas and have become large suppliers. However, no matter how advanced they are, every state has needed each other more or less economically. As a matter of fact, this situation has forced states to cooperate in their mutual areas of expertise and created a network of dependency. This network of interdependence constitutes one of the fundamental foundations of liberalism, which has been the dominant ideology of the world system, especially from the Cold War period and its end until today. The basis of the liberal system lies in an open, transparent and rules-based vision in which states trade and cooperate for mutual gain (Ikenberry, 2009: 72).

Interdependence, when viewed at the state level, means that countries are dependent on each other, especially economically. This dependency does not always have to be mandatory. However, states that are considered rational actors are expected to prioritize mutual gain. Famous economist David Ricardo's frequently used theory of comparative advantages explains the general outlines of this situation with a simple example. In Ricardo's example, a quantity of wine was cheaper in England than in Portugal; It is assumed that some fabric is produced cheaper in Portugal than in England. In such an imaginary scenario, according to Ricardo, if England specializes entirely in cloth and Portugal specializes in wine, there will be an advantage in each unit of production, as more of each product can be produced (Dimand, 2000: 8). As a matter of fact, this relationship will create a dependency where both parties gain mutual benefit.

In addition, the situation of relative superiority or mutual dependence is not static for the parties. Changes in any of the determinants that enable a country to have a relative advantage in a product may change the side of this dependence or specialization over time (Gupta, 2015: 11). Therefore, these relative advantages can be reconstructed when appropriate variables are provided. Moreover, this reconstruction is not only valid for relations between two states. An actor's specialization in a field does not necessarily mean a monopoly. Especially with globalization, both supplier and market options of actors have increased.

Another concept that should be considered together with interdependence is globalization. Interdependence, which forms the pillar of the liberal system, gained a new dimension towards the end of the Cold War. Globalization, which has been discussed since the 1980s and is still a trend today, has greatly transformed the world system. Globalization; It can be expressed as the expansion, deepening and acceleration of the interdependence between states in the economic, political and cultural fields (Keyman, 2019: 510). The key point here is that almost all of the states, which are the dominant actors of the international system, are in relations with each other. Globalization is more than dependency between two states; It corresponds to broader and global connection networks (multiple relationships) (Keohane & Nye, 2011: 225). Therefore, with globalization, interdependence has become more complex and covers almost the entire world.

When we look at today's world, we see that complex networks of interdependence are strongly woven. Liberal theory expects rational actors to prefer cooperation in terms of benefit/cost. This cooperation largely includes economic networks established with various actors. The expected benefit of the international system from these economic networks, that is, mutual dependency, is to reduce conflicts or bring them to more reasonable grounds.

Interdependence and War

Although the mutual dependence of states on each other has many different consequences, in all the processes discussed above and in much earlier times, the main expectation from these relations of dependence was the reduction of wars. If we accept states and their rulers as rational actors, increasing interdependence also increases the costs of possible conflicts. On the other hand, when viewed from the opposite side, the economic introversion of states also increases the possibility of conflict. For example, 'Low global trade in the aftermath of the Great Depression in 1929 and economic protectionism were

considered as cause for rising Axis Powers (Militarist regime in Japan, Fascist regime in Italy, and Nazi Party in Germany), which eventually led to WWII. According to some, this inverse relationship between economic dependency and conflict continued during the Cold War. For example, the study written by Gasiorowski and Polachek (1982) demonstrated with numerical data the argument that as the economic relationship between the Warsaw Pact and the USA increased, the conflict decreased. While there are many studies examining the correlation of interdependence and conflict, there are also approaches that expand this relationship and offer different perspectives.

There is also another reading regarding international conflicts and peace through regime type. Democratic peace theory, in short, suggests that democracies will conflict with each other less. However, Mousseau (2013) argues that this situation has more to do with economic institutions than regime type. At this point, the effect of independent variables on each other can be mentioned. The reason why democracies do not fight each other may be due to the fact that democracies are developed economies and have strong networks of interdependence, rather than their regime types.

In addition to these theoretical discussions, there are also sub-discussions that address the relationship between interdependence and conflict differently. In his book on the relationship between economy and power, Mansfield offers approaches and interpretations of this subject from many perspectives. In his criticism of works dealing with the correlation of interdependence with wars, he questioned the dependent variables and drew attention to the distinction between war and conflict (Mansfield, 1995: 120). On the other hand, thinking of interdependence as static, as traditional theories do, can lead to some problems. At this point, it would be appropriate to mention the 'trade expectation' theory put forward by Copeland. Copeland criticizes mainstream approaches that deal with static economic relations; he argues that not only current data on trade but also future trade expectations are effective in this regard. According to Copeland (1996: 39), if leaders' expectations for trade are positive, the possibility of war will decrease; If he is pessimistic, this probability will increase. As mentioned above, interdependence networks are candidates for change, as Copeland also mentioned. As a matter of fact, this situation emphasizes the importance of expectations. In this study, the analysis of these expectations will be made through trade routes. At this point, we claim that trade routes are an important indicator for the future expectations of leaders or, at a more general level of analysis, states.

Since the beginning of the history of civilization, interdependence has been part of the system to a greater or lesser extent. And in every period, trade routes have been at the heart of bilateral relations. Trade routes appear as a factor that increases dependence by increasing the commercial relations of states with each other. In addition, trade routes also contain clues about the trade expectations of states:

1. Making existing trade routes more active, starting to build a trade route, or having an intention regarding these two is in itself a product of expectation.
2. On the other hand, it is not always necessary for a state to lead the trade routes. The desire to be involved in another actor's initiatives on trade routes also reflects a positive attitude towards the future.

All of these attitudes towards trade routes have an intention to increase interdependence. Additionally, the formation of a trade route system can be considered as a contribution to globalization. On the other hand, the initiatives or requests in question also lead states to achieve a more peaceful momentum, as emphasized above. Therefore, establishing or participating in a trade route can be interpreted as an indication that no future conflict is expected between states in the system. When these initiatives exceed the discursive dimension and the necessary cooperation is achieved, the possibility of conflict will decrease as the trade route in question will strengthen the mutual dependency of the relevant states.

Current Threats to Globalization and Türkiye

The world, which saw two major world wars and global economic crises in the 20th century, entered the 2000s with high hopes. However, the Iraq Intervention, which occurred in the first quarter of the 21st century, called into question these well-intentioned expectations, as did the 2008 Economic Crisis and the Arab Spring. In all of these processes, globalization and the world system have been criticized from different angles. Other major issues can be added to these events. But perhaps none of them created the threat to globalization that the two wars that continue today pose. These problems; The Russia-Ukraine issue, which reached the level of a war in 2022, and the Israel-Palestine war, which started in October 2023. These wars, which are still ongoing in the first quarter of 2024, have brought to the agenda the discussions of 'returning to the darkness of the Middle Ages' with the blow they dealt to globalization.

Acting with the claim and vision of becoming a regional power, Türkiye emerges as an important actor for peace talks both in the case of Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Gazza. However, this section will focus on the economic dimensions and consequences of both the Ukrainian and Palestinian issues' repercussions on World trade, rather than their political dimensions and peace negotiations. Türkiye's role in this context; it will be discussed through the Grain Road initiative in the Russia-Ukraine War and the Suez problem in the Israel-Palestine War.

The Grain Corridor Initiative (Grain Road Initiative)

The Russia-Ukraine War, which started in early 2022, has created many global effects. While some of these were security-related, a significant part of them was the impact of the war on the global economy. In economic terms, the majority of concerns are focused especially on energy. As it is known, Russia is a major natural gas supplier. As a matter of fact, European countries are largely dependent on it in this regard. In addition, another concern about the economic foundations created by the war is about grain. The fact that both Russia and Ukraine are major grain suppliers has brought into question the impact that the war could have at this point.

Türkiye has maintained dialogue with both sides and engaged in mediation activities since the beginning of the war. This intention has clearly demonstrated itself with the Black Sea Grain Corridor Initiative Agreement. The Grain Corridor Agreement was signed in Istanbul on July 22, 2022, with the efforts of the UN and Türkiye. After the agreement, shipments were made to many different countries, from China to Egypt, from Türkiye to Spain. In this total shipment of nearly 33 million tons, the most transported products were

corn with 51% and wheat with 27% (Black Sea Grain Initiative Joint Coordination Centre). Unfortunately, these initiatives and shipments, which were highly praised by many people and institutions, could not be made permanent. It was not possible to extend the agreement for the fourth time, which was extended three times after it was signed, and Russia withdrew from the agreement on July 17, 2023.

Ukraine and Russia, both major grain exporters, are important suppliers in almost every region of the world. On the other hand, this trade is also an indicator of interdependence with other countries. As a matter of fact, as mentioned above, shipments were made to actors with many different identities. Although it was later interrupted, this initiative shows the importance of Türkiye for the economic order in the region. On the other hand, such initiatives also hold an important place for the global order, as the parties' economic ties with other states increase and underdeveloped countries can access vital foods.

The Suez Problem

Suez, one of the world's most important and busy channels, is of vital importance for the global supply chain. Today, approximately 12% of world trade goes through this canal, which connects the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, consequently connecting the Atlantic shores of Europe, Africa and Asia to the Red Sea and then on the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. This port, used by many countries, has an important place in making these countries more connected to each other through trade. Therefore, the Suez Canal is a very important route for both the global economy and, as a result, peace based on interdependence. Therefore, negative events that occur in the channel in question may cause major impacts. As a matter of fact, this situation has happened twice recently and trade via Suez has been largely disrupted. The first of these disruptions occurred in March 2021, and the other one started in recent months and still continues today.

The first disruption in the Suez Canal occurred in March 2021, when the ship Ever Given blocked Suez. The ship, which set out from China to Rotterdam, had an accident near Suez on March 24, 2021, stopping traffic in the canal for six days. As it is known, maritime trade is cheaper and more effective than land trade. More than 80% of international trade goods are transported by sea (Review of Maritime Transport, 2021: 111). Suez's place in maritime trade is particularly important. The canal, which enables the shortest sea route between Asia and Europe, is of vital importance for world trade. As a matter of fact, according to the data of the Suez Canal Authority, approximately 19,000 ships passed through the canal in 2019 (Navigation Statistics, 2019). Therefore, this six-day blockage in the canal had a negative impact on global trade, albeit on a small scale. In this process, the daily loss of Egypt, which controls the Suez Canal, is estimated to be approximately 12-14 million dollars, while the daily damage caused by the Ever Given to global trade is stated to be around 10 billion dollars (Aşkın, 2021).

The problem experienced in Suez today is related to security rather than a technical mistake. While the war between Ukraine and Russia continues, another blow to global peace was dealt with the start of the war between Israel and Palestine. The conflict that started on October 7, 2023 has affected the world in many ways. The negative impact of this war on global trade was realized by what happened in another fragile region. The attacks, which made shipping in Suez very risky, came from the Houthis group in Yemen, which has been experiencing a civil war for more than nine years. In Yemen, where

regional actors are directly involved in the crisis, there are three groups claiming sovereignty: the Yemeni Government, the Houthis and the Southern Transitional Council, and these groups are supported by Saudi Arabia, Iran and the UAE respectively. The underlying problem in Suez lies in the attacks launched by the Iranian-backed Houthis against Israeli ships.

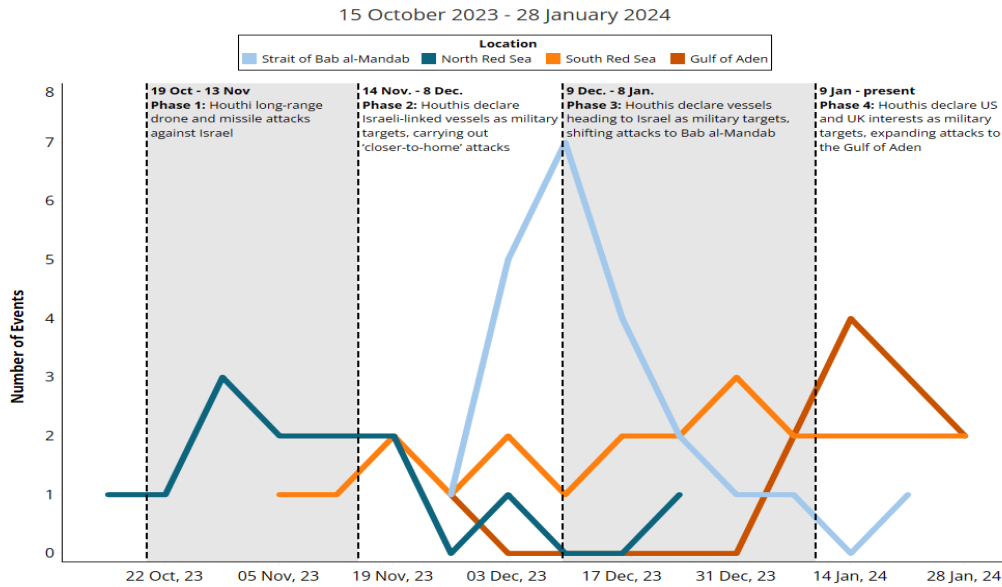


Table 1: Houthi Attacks in the Red Sea (Source: ACLED, Yemen Conflict Observatory, Yemen Conflict Observatory “Yemen Situation Update: January 2024”, <https://acleddata.com/2024/02/05/yemen-situation-update-january-2024/>)

After the start of the war between Israel and Palestine, the Houthis clearly stated their support for Palestine. Table 1 shows the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea south of Suez after the war. As can be seen in the table, shortly after the start of the war, the Houthis took their support for Palestine to an action level with long-range missile attacks against Israel. However, when Israel's advanced defense systems neutralized these attacks, the Houthis resorted to another method. The Houthis, who control Hodeidah, Yemen's coastline overlooking the Red Sea, launched attacks on Israeli ships passing through Suez. Additionally, as seen in the table, these attacks also include further south, including Bab-ul Mandep and Aden.

These attacks continue to pose a life-threatening threat to ships using the Suez. This threat in the channel, which is one of the most important points of global trade, showed its effect very quickly. According to UNCTAD's declaration dated 15 February 2024, the volume of trade passing through Suez has decreased by 42% in the last two months due to Houthi attacks (UNCTAD, 2024). Due to the attacks, many ships had to turn to another route, the Cape of Good Hope. Although this natural route, used before the opening of Suez, is important and valuable, it is costly and long. Data show that the Suez Canal shortens transportation between Asia and Europe between 9 days and 2 weeks (UTİKAD, 2023). Therefore, using the Cape of Good Hope both increases costs and slows down the global supply chain.

Both events, which caused disruption in the Suez Canal, caused major material damage. However, the impact of these events is not limited to visible material damage. The disruption of one of the world's most important trade routes has brought about question marks about the future of global trade. The events that social sciences are interested in rarely contain a certain systematic, so they are less predictable. For example, despite many calculations, a ship may block a trade route, or a war in one place may trigger unexpected events elsewhere that could have a global impact. Therefore, every trade route carries the risk of disruption at any time. This situation shows how important alternative trade routes are. This issue came to the agenda again during the problems in Suez.

During the Suez crises, some actors and potential alternatives came to the fore. One of these is Russia, which points to the North Sea, and the other is the joint channel project of Israel and the UAE (Abay, 2021). Türkiye, which proposed a land route alternative to Suez, was also one of the prominent actors in this period. Considering the costs of both passing through the North Sea and opening a new and long canal, Türkiye's proposal constitutes a rational option. After the Ever Given disrupted the canal traffic, the then Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Karaismailoğlu pointed out the Middle Corridor (Which includes a Trans - Caspian component so may sometimes be referred as the Trans-Caspian Corridor or the Middle Caspian Corridor), which starts from Türkiye and reaches China, as the most suitable alternative route to Suez (T.R. Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, 2021).

The strategic Choke Points have been vulnerabilities and risk factors to global maritime transportation for some time. Draught conditions over the Panama Canal have lead certain ships to seek passage through the Northern Passages and the Strait of Magellan, which are Arctic and Antarctic passages. Because of global warming and melting of icecaps, Arctic and Antarctic passages and especially the Polar Silk Road have been discussed over the last decade as a possibility for commercial vessels (Winter, 2020), but still remain treacherous territories under severe weather conditions. Not to mention that the Bering Strait itself is another treacherous passage and a strategic choke point between the United States and Russia. Hence, while these extreme North and South passages can become considered alternatives overtime, they would also bring along additional risks and vulnerabilities. This is why Türkiye is developing also its own alternative projects such as the Dry Canal or the Development Road through Iraq.

Development Road Project (Kalkınma Yolu Projesi)¹

Another important trade route initiative that Türkiye has recently initiated is the Türkiye-Iraq Development Road Project. The project, which will connect Iraq's Faw Port in the Persian Gulf to Türkiye, has come to the agenda again with concrete steps being taken in 2023. When we look at the location of the route, we see an alternative route that connects the Persian Gulf countries and distant Asian countries to Europe and the Black Sea. The

¹ This chapter was drafted and ready for submission just as Iran launched multiple drone and missile attacks to Israel on the night of 13 to 14 April 2024. This causes continued regional uncertainties including on the fate of the Development Road and the South of the Caspian Route. The India Middle East Europe Corridor – IMEC is even more vulnerable and uncertain due to continued crisis in Gazza, and tensions in the Red Sea. Israel (and the ports of Eilat and Haifa) as well as Iran (and the port in Bender-Abbas) remain vulnerable and at risk, and seem to remain so since October 2023.

project, which President Erdogan defines as the new Silk Road, has a complementary structure to the Middle Corridor, which includes Türkiye (TRT Haber, 2023). The problems experienced today in both the Northern and Southern Corridors around the Caspian have again shown the importance of the Middle Corridor.² In this respect, it is important that Türkiye feeds the Middle Corridor from the South through Development Road.

As mentioned above, Suez, where international maritime trade is concentrated, experiences major problems from time to time, and these problems lead to global effects. As a matter of fact, when the Development Road is implemented, it will create a more reasonable alternative to Suez than the Cape of Good Hope. Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Uraloğlu discussed the current Suez problem and said that a cargo departing from Beijing could reach the Suez Canal in 35 days and from the Cape of Good Hope in 45 days, and stated that if the Development Road were implemented today, this route would reduce the transit time to 26 days (T.R. Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, 2024). Considering that the Suez Canal has been disrupted twice recently, it can be seen that the Development Road offers a very important alternative for Asian and European trade.

Finally, the project will contribute to economic peace in the region by increasing the interdependence of the Basra countries and helping the development of Iraq. Türkiye has added its improving relations with the UAE to its long-standing cooperation with Qatar, one of the important countries in the region. Türkiye's potential importance for the region showed itself strongly during the Qatar crisis. As it is known, Qatar has a land border only with Saudi Arabia. In case the Saudis impose an embargo on Qatar, Basra is the only option route for Qatar. As a matter of fact, during the Qatar crisis, most of the aid could be provided by sea and air. On the other hand, states such as the UAE and Oman must pass through Saudi Arabia for land connection with the North. Considering the slippery regional dynamics of the Middle East, the Development Path will constitute an important alternative for states such as the UAE, Oman and Qatar in case of a potential problem with Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, this project also has great meaning for Iraq. As it is known, Iraq has been struggling with political instability and economic problems for a long time. The Development Road project is also important for the development of Iraq with the economic advantages it will provide to Iraq. The project, which has a length of approximately 1200 kilometers, passes through strategic cities for Iraq such as Najaf, Baghdad and Mosul. As a matter of fact, Farhan al-Fartousi, General Manager of Iraqi Ports, thinks that the Development Road will help the development of large regions of Iraq in addition to transporting goods or passengers (Azhari, 2023). This project, which is planned to be completed within the next five to 10 years, will connect the Iraqi economy

². The Northern Corridor referred here is the trade route North of the Caspian Sea (Caspian Body of Water) through the Russian Federation, and especially the Trans-Siberian Railroads as the key logistical component. The Southern Corridor in this case is the trade route South of the Caspian, through Iran, with a combination of land highways and railroads, as well as the use of the port of Bender-Abbas. Both Iran and Russia are under various sanctions and thus the use of these routes for an effective East-West trade corridor is questionable.

more tightly to the global network of interdependence. In addition, economic contributions will pave the way for reducing Iraq's political instability. Increasing economic interests with regional countries will help even actors with different identities in Iraq to abstain from conflicts.

As a result, the Development Path Project will strengthen the global interdependence network with the alternative route it offers. Considering the trade between Asia and Europe, the strategic role of this route comes to the fore. This route, which can seriously rival Suez, will minimize the negative impact of possible blockages on global trade. In addition, alternative routes are very important in terms of connecting the countries of the region to the global economy. Therefore, through development, Iraq will strengthen its trade-oriented relations with many actors and will increase the interdependence of Basra's countries with different identities.

Conclusion

Several Trade Routes initiatives and trade corridors may be seemingly competitive. However, they are also complementary towards one another if the aim is to maintain a Global Supply Chains and continue Globalization. Considering the vulnerabilities of strategic maritime passages, and the hindrance of global maritime trade and transportation over the past few years, availability of alternatives are not simply a matter of competition, but a necessity if the global supply chain is to remain global (unless production and supply chains would be limited to more local and regional concentrations).

These multiple trade route, logistics and connectivity projects are mutually alternative and complementary towards one another as they each have their own risks and vulnerabilities. Dirioz (2022) suggested that even the Middle Corridor and the Belt and Road Initiatives were both alternatives and complementary towards one another. Yet any dry canal or on-land project through railways or highways are still more complex and expensive than the cheap and flexible maritime transportation. Maritime transportation and cross-ocean trade had started since the age of explorations and ended the Middle Ages in Europe and started the early phases of globalization. The hindrance of global maritime trade may inevitably pose the risk of having more regionalism and the emergence of deglobalization and possibly Neo-Medievalism. Neo-Medievalism in a sense of reducing Globalization and Global liberal trade and interconnectivity in a situation where there are more local and regional powers rather.³

Türkiye, in both cases (Whether Globalization continues, or whether supply chains become more local) still needs to develop alternatives routes, in order to continue trade with several regions (trans-Caspian Middle Corridor from Central Asia and also the Development Road through Iraq to Türkiye) because historically warzones have always been close to Türkiye, and Türkiye had benefited from being at a natural geo-strategic location connecting East and West, as well as North and South. Türkiye must ensure alternative routes to maintain connections to several regions in order to continue its comparative advantage resting on its geographic location.

³. Though one should duly not that Medievalism concepts may often criticized as Eurocentric (De Souza, 2024); Medieval and backward relative to Europe and not necessarily in other societies.

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