

Key regional players in the new global order

India, Kenya,
Colombia, Turkey

Key regional players in the new global order

**India, Kenya,
Colombia, Turkey**

At a glance

In this project, we have analysed the foreign policy positioning of India, Kenya, Colombia and Turkey – four very different countries that see themselves as key players in their respective regions. The following insight has been generated for the (foreign) policy of Germany and the European Union in their relations with these and other countries with which an intensification and expansion of strategic partnerships are desired:

1. Germany and the EU must move away from “two-camp thinking” and develop a greater tolerance of ambiguity.

- › The “West” as a political category is not very helpful if the goal is to attain a deeper understanding of the seismic shifts taking place at a global level. The “division of the world into two camps” implicit in this view does not do justice to the complexity of the world today and is moreover normatively overloaded and exclusive.
- › Germany and the EU need to develop a greater tolerance of ambiguity while prioritising the overarching importance of a partnership even when there are certain differences. Ambiguities should be tolerated and preconceived positions should be avoided, especially when they seek to secure the moral high ground. Above all, Germany and the EU would be well-advised to avoid forcing partner countries to “take sides”.
- › Germany and the EU must be prepared for (potential) partners positioning themselves in a pragmatic and challenging manner. Perceived inconsistencies on issues involving the international order are often an expression of a foreign, economic and trade policy that is driven by interests, implying that partners can increasingly turn to alternative offers of cooperation if it suits them.

Key regional players in the new global order

2. Germany and the EU should not neglect “positively inclined” powers.

- › Countries included in this study like Kenya and Colombia should not be erroneously stamped as “natural partners”, as this can sow the seeds of creeping neglect and is also perceived as a sign of neglect by them.
- › Germany and the EU should instead see these countries as important communication channels and bridge-builders in the so-called Global South, with whom it is moreover possible to openly discuss critical issues. Questioning one’s own positions and also accepting diverging views in any assessment of shifting global parameters are absolute musts here; frequently conflicting signals sent by the EU to partner countries often make it harder to gain traction there.
- › Medium-sized countries such as Kenya and Colombia are less in the international limelight and have fewer resources. Germany and the EU have something to offer these countries in a wide range of policy areas with a reasonable amount of resources with good prospects of being profitable for both sides. At a time when Germany’s own resources are increasingly stretched thin, this consideration should not be neglected in Germany’s foreign policy.

3. Germany and the EU should support partner countries’ efforts to bring about a reform of the international system.

- › All of the countries included in the analysis are laying understandable claims to greater representation and more say in the international system. In efforts to reform the international system, Germany and the EU can only be perceived as trustworthy partners if they sincerely address these expectations and provide support wherever this aligns with their own interests.
- › A reform of the international system will not be possible without substantial concessions on the part of Germany and the EU to the benefit of those countries that have been underrepresented to date. Despite domestic political constraints, Germany and EU need to cast off any and all blinders when it comes to these reform efforts if only to prevent Germany and the EU from losing credibility.

At a glance

4. Germany needs more strategy and coherence in its foreign policy.

- › In-depth knowledge of a particular country's actual matrix of interests and most urgent needs is indispensable if Germany is to develop and expand its cooperation with a particular country. German diplomatic missions abroad are key parts of the equation in this regard, but have been down-sized over the past ten to 15 years in favour of posts in Berlin. Effective coordination between all organisations working on behalf of the German government abroad is more important than ever in times of increasingly scarce resources.
- › Germany must clearly state what its priorities are in its cooperation with a specific country. It also needs coherent strategies that not only spell out values and principles, but also clearly stake out German interests and objectives across policy areas while also giving attention to geostrategic aspects. This provides partner countries more *terra firma* to recognise overlapping interests in the longer term.
- › By joining these outward and inward-looking elements, Germany could forge a policy hallmarking a pragmatic handling of values and interests. This would make Germany both more attractive and more credible in its international relations, thereby setting it apart from other players.

Table of contents

Introduction	8
India: The main beneficiary of the new global order	12
<i>Christian Wagner</i>	
1. India in the new global order	12
2. India's foreign policy positioning	14
3. How does India view the role of Europe/Germany in the new global order?	21
4. Outlook and recommendations for action for German and European stakeholders	23
Kenya: Europe's lifeline to the Global South?	31
<i>Karoline Eickhoff</i>	
1. Kenya in the new global order	31
2. Kenya's foreign policy positioning	37
3. How does Kenya view the role of Europe/Germany in the new global order?	43
4. Outlook and recommendations for action for German and European stakeholders	45

Colombia: Ambivalences of an aspirational power	52
<i>Günther Maihold</i>	
1. Colombia in the new global order	52
2. Colombia’s foreign policy positioning	56
3. How does Colombia view the role of Europe/Germany in the new global order?	57
4. Outlook and recommendations for action for German and European stakeholders	64
Türkiye: Remain in the West, act autonomously	70
<i>Bruno Hamm-Pütt, Daria Isachenko</i>	
1. Türkiye in the new global order	70
2. Türkiye’s foreign policy positioning	73
3. How does Türkiye view the role of Europe/Germany in the new global order?	80
4. Outlook and recommendations for action for German and European stakeholders	82
Recommendations for action and outlook	88
Voting patterns of India, Kenya, Colombia and Turkey in the UN General Assembly compared to other countries	93
The authors	95

Introduction

At the current juncture more than perhaps ever before, Germany and the European Union need reliable partners in the world. The extent to which they are guided by their own interests, including the implementation of their own values, in their search for (new) partners is a much-analysed aspect of foreign policy. What is rarely afforded attention in analyses are the perspectives of the (potential) partner countries, their own interests, specific dependencies, integration into regional orders and much more. This is precisely where this project comes into play.

Originating from a joint interest in the challenges facing Germany in this changing global order on the part of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, the aim of the project has been to analyse one country each from four of the world's regions and the foreign policy positions of these four countries in more detail. It is hoped that this approach will broaden the view of issues involving the global order. The respective perspectives of these four countries as regards the global order, foreign policy traditions, but also economic, military or political dependencies played a role in the analysis. Domestic political factors and how countries view themselves as a regional power or key player in their respective region were also analysed. Finally, part of the study was devoted to the question of how these four countries perceive Germany and the European Union in the changing world order.

Selection of countries

Four countries that are important players in their respective regions (measured in terms of indicators such as gross domestic product, population size and diplomatic engagement) were handpicked for the analysis, whereby it should be noted that their weights vary considerably both regionally and globally: India, Turkey, Colombia and Kenya. Three criteria were decisive for a country to be shortlisted: an assumed like-mindedness with Germany and the EU; the respective country's role in the region or in the global order as a whole; and the country's respective relationship with China and Russia.

Introduction

All of the selected countries are democracies, even though some of their democratic systems have been under severe pressure as of late.¹ India and Turkey are two very large and frequently analysed countries whose status as regional powers is undisputed and whose own ambitions go well further. Colombia and Kenya are two other countries included in the study that are important in their particular regions, but are not top contenders in the global concert of medium-scale powers.

Procedure

In addition to the secondary literature, the country analyses also profited from input from numerous workshops and background discussions organised and conducted between September 2023 and February 2024 by SWP experts and the offices of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Nairobi, Ankara and Bogotá. The workshops and background discussions were attended by representatives of government authorities, parliaments and political parties, universities, international organisations and think tanks as well as journalists from the respective countries. In the case of India, reporting from the international office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in New Delhi fertilised the analysis.

The Global South

The term “Global South” is used in this publication in the context of the portrayal and perspective of the country subject to analysis. It is often used as a shorthand designation of post-colonial countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Analytically, it constitutes a relational category mapping historically evolved political and economic inequalities in the international system that influence current global political developments. In this study, the term is employed by the authors in order to raise awareness of the significance of experiences of marginalisation among different countries. These experiences are being manifested in new multilateral alliances, for example. The term is therefore not primarily to be understood in geographic terms, nor is it intended to demote common characteristics or behavioural patterns among any particular group of countries.

In the view of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, the term is problematic if only because it is sometimes used to imply that there is a unitary bloc of countries

Key regional players in the new global order

with identical positions and interests. However, dividing the world into two halves – the underprivileged, poor South (formerly referred to as developing and emerging countries) and the rich North (formerly referred to as industrialised countries) – does not do justice to reality. This fogginess and vagueness allows the term to be easily instrumentalised or wielded politically – for example by countries that would like to pose as the mouthpiece of the Global South in order to forward and advance their own parochial interests. Originally coined in order to avoid stamping countries as nations that have not yet reached the development stage, in its current use it is not devoid of interests and values. The term is, rather, politically charged. Because it is also used in the countries included in the analysis, however, it has been used in the analysis of the four countries in the study in order to sharpen the understanding of their positioning.

This immersion in the perspectives of the partner countries and the resulting findings generated by this project are ultimately intended to help identify implications for the (foreign) policy of Germany and the European Union in their relations with these and other countries with which an intensification and expansion of strategic partnerships may be desired. We leave it to you, dear reader, to judge whether we have succeeded in this endeavour and look forward to your critical feedback!

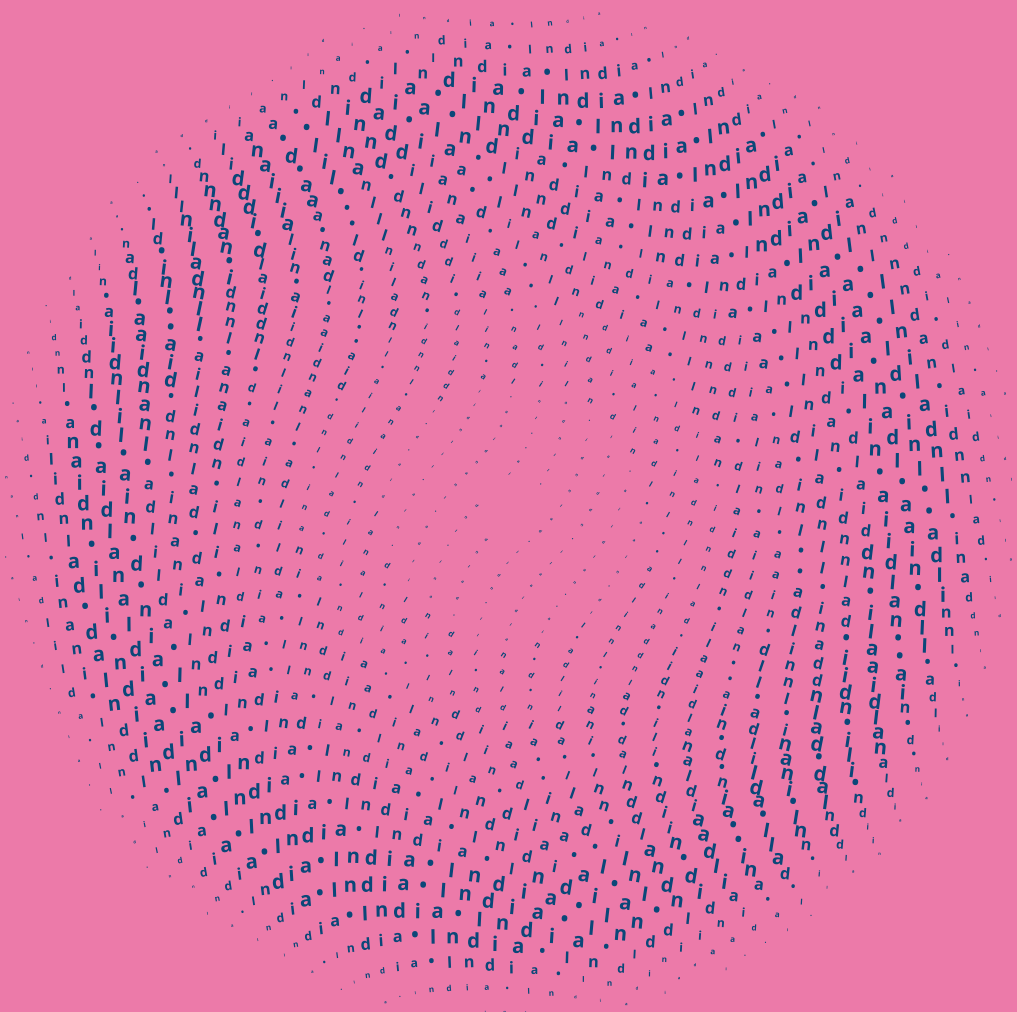
Dr. Peter Fischer-Bollin

Head of Division Analysis and Consulting, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Caroline Kanter

Deputy Head of Division European and International Cooperation,
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

¹ The question of whether and to what extent these countries are still or perhaps no longer democratic states was not of fundamental importance to this project.



India

India: The main beneficiary of the new global order

Christian Wagner

For German foreign policy, India is a key, but also difficult, partner. Both sides share an interest in a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. India's adherence to an independent foreign policy and autocratic tendencies on the domestic front there will require Germany to focus on common interests.

1. India in the new global order

India is undoubtedly one of the winners of the new global order. The country has seen a remarkable international ascendancy over the past few years. India has become economically more attractive thanks to its high GDP growth figures and sees itself as the fastest growing democracy in the world. The country is also profiting from the sharpening rivalry between China and the USA. India is seen as a natural and indispensable partner for Western countries in the Indo-Pacific, not least due to its democratic traditions. However, India views itself as a non-Western, although not as an anti-Western, country.¹ It is therefore unlikely that India will position itself unilaterally in the conflict between China and the USA and will instead opt to primarily pursue its own interests. Since independence in 1947, Indian governments have striven to play a leading role in the international system. India considers itself to be one pole in a future multipolar global order. Never has the chance of achieving this been better than under the current constellation.

India's international importance has so far been determined more by its demographic size than by its economic performance, its political initiatives or projection of its military power. With a population of 1.4 billion, India has around one-sixth of the world's population. India is therefore a key player in all global governance forums addressing environmental, climate and energy issues. India's affluent middle class is also a major player in any global comparison. Depending on how one defines it, the size of this group varies between

India

30 per cent of the population, i.e. around 450 million, and fewer than 100 million people.² If one assumes ten per cent of the population belong to the middle class with significant purchasing power, these approximately 140 million people would be among the ten largest countries in the world by global comparison. The Indian middle class is therefore an attractive market for companies, harbouring tremendous potential in terms of skilled workers for Germany and Europe. Despite India's economic development, a large number of people there continue to live in poverty by global standards. The global fight against poverty will only be successful if India achieves the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Although India is now the fifth largest national economy in economic terms, with a per capita income of around 2,400 US dollars (2022) it only belongs to the group of lower middle income countries.³ India has had a number of successes since liberalisation in 1991. At six to seven per cent, growth in GDP now outpaces China. Compared to Western industrialised countries, India has a young population structure, which will enable the country to reap a demographic dividend until around 2040.⁴ Its technological prowess is reflected in the successes registered by the Indian IT and software industry, as well as the unmanned moon landing it staged in the summer of 2023.

Economic development is also hampered by a number of structural problems, however. Low GDP per capita and a low tax rate compared to the peer group of G20 countries constrain efforts to convert resources into real capacity.⁵ The low level of investment in public goods such as education and healthcare poses a threat to the possible demographic dividend. India ranked only 132nd out of 191 countries on the Human Development Index for 2022.⁶ At around 77 per cent, the literacy rate in 2022 was below the global average and lags behind that of emerging countries in East and Southeast Asia.⁷ Expansion of the manufacturing sector remains sluggish, unemployment is considered one of the biggest problems, female employment at 23 per cent is low by regional and international standards and around 90 per cent of employees still work in the informal sector.⁸

To date, India has only benefited to a limited extent from the de-risking strategy adopted by many business enterprises seeking to reduce their dependence on China by relocating their production sites. Although there have been spec-

Key regional players in the new global order

tacular relocations of production sites accompanied by considerable media fanfare by companies such as Apple and Foxconn, India continues to suffer from poor infrastructure, a top-heavy bureaucracy, complicated labour legislation replete with red tape as well as inadequate levels of education in international competition to attract business and industry. Foreign direct investment is flagging, in 2022 reaching its lowest level since the mid-2000s.⁹ The share of domestic investment in GDP has also been waning since 2012.¹⁰ The new economic policy of *Atmanirbhar Bharat* (self-reliance), proclaimed by Prime Minister Modi in the summer of 2020, attempts to strike a balance between strengthening the national economy and promoting foreign investment.

India's international ascendancy, which is reflected by the increased number of strategic partnerships with G20 countries since the 1990s, is therefore primarily a bet on the future. The world's largest country automatically plays an important role in many international issues. If India succeeds in leveraging its economic potential, its abilities as a "rule shaper" will have an impact on more and more areas of international politics.¹¹

2. India's foreign policy positioning

The national level

There is a broad cross-party consensus on foreign policy issues. Since independence in 1947, all ruling parties have called for a greater international role for India and have pursued this by various means.

India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, predicted as far back as 1946 that the international system after the Second World War would be dominated by four states: the USA, the Soviet Union, China and India.¹² Nehru pursued non-alignment in order to give the new decolonised countries their own place in the international system. His daughter, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, underscored India's global ambitions with the country's first nuclear test in 1974. Since the 1990s, Indian governments have been clamouring for a permanent seat on the United Nations (UN) Security Council.

Since Prime Minister Modi took office in 2014, the discourse on Indian civilisation as the basis for India's international aspirations has come to the fore.

India

Nehru had already justified India's international claims by summoning up the country's civilisation, history and tradition.¹³ Nehru had a secular understanding of Indian civilisation encompassing all religious groups. Modi and his Indian People's Party, on the other hand, stand for Hindu nationalism, so the notion of civilisation has now taken on a stronger religious-nationalist character.¹⁴ Prime Minister Modi also derives from this concept of civilisation the claim that India is a teacher for the world (*Vishwaguru*) and the mother of democracy, even if its form has little in common with Western ideas.¹⁵ At the same time, evoking civilisation puts India on an equal footing with China. In January 2021, Foreign Minister Jaishankar assertively declared that "civilisational states like India and China must always take the long view."¹⁶

The agreement between the political parties can be explained by the fact that, due to the enormous domestic political challenges, foreign policy issues have mostly taken a back seat in elections. Foreign policy issues played a much bigger role in the 2024 election than before, however. Prime Minister Modi's extensive travel diplomacy, his appeal to the Indian diaspora, his desire to give India a proper place on the international stage and, last but not least, the 2023 G20 presidency are likely to have contributed to this. As part of its G20 presidency, the Indian government also organised numerous events in Indian cities, thereby elevating the salience of foreign policy issues in society more than ever before. This has also been reflected in surveys. In 2023, 68 per cent of the Indian population surveyed said that their country's global influence had grown. 33 per cent of respondents saw India as the country with the greatest influence in Asia, ahead of the USA and China.¹⁷ This self-perception does not align with the perception of other players, however. India's prestige in some Western countries has been tarnished in recent years.¹⁸ In Southeast Asia, India is seen as a country with little strategic relevance for the region.¹⁹

The foreign and security policy community in India remains relatively small. Public debates on foreign policy are primarily conducted by former diplomats and generals who share a broad basic consensus when it comes to foreign and security policy issues. Foreign trade issues, on the other hand, are not frequently subjects of discussion.

Key regional players in the new global order

Since Modi and his party BJP took office in 2014, autocratic tendencies in the country have also intensified. Firstly, the Hindu nationalist agenda of the BJP aims to establish a Hindu nation (*Hindu Rashtra*) in which minorities such as Muslims are only considered second-class citizens. The number of violent rampages against Muslims and Christians has been on the increase, and proposed laws such as a ban on the slaughter of cows or a reform of citizenship laws primarily target Muslims. Secondly, freedom of opinion and freedom of the press have deteriorated massively since then. Critical intellectuals and media as well as national and international civil society organisations are confronted with bureaucratic red tape or face criminal prosecution. The number of prosecutions for activities that pose a threat to the state, for example, has risen steeply since 2014. India was only ranked 161st out of 180 countries on the press freedom index in 2023. No other democracy has seen as many Internet shutdowns as India.

Secondly, the BJP has expanded its influence on institutions that were previously considered independent, such as the Election Commission and the central bank. Thirdly, the government is trying to limit the influence of the federal states. This was evident, for example, in the agricultural reforms that ultimately failed in 2021. In states ruled by the opposition, the governors appointed by the central government are trying to undermine the work of the elected state governments. These developments have led to India being downgraded on international democracy indexes in recent years and a debate has in the meantime flared up about “illiberal India”.²⁰

The regional level

Two regional contexts are important for India. The first is its immediate neighbourhood in the South Asia region, as defined by its membership in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Secondly, the Indo-Pacific, which in India’s understanding stretches from the east coast of Africa to East Asia. In both regions, relations with China are at the heart of Indian policy.

Looking at the map, India appears to be a “natural” regional power in South Asia due to its demographic, economic and military size. Since the 1970s, the Indira Doctrine, named after Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, has underscored India’s claim to being a hegemonic power in the region. Internal political

India

conflicts in neighbouring states were to be resolved with India's involvement and without external superpowers. India has pursued its interests through various political, economic and military means, ranging from friendship treaties (e.g. Bhutan) to economic sanctions (e.g. Nepal), political mediation (e.g. Sri Lanka) and military interventions (e.g. East Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives). India's record has been mixed at best, as neighbouring states have in turn sought to internationalise their bilateral conflicts with India, e.g. by involving external players such as China, the USA or the United Nations. India's foreign policy began to change in the mid-1990s, when Foreign Minister Gujral declared that India would in future be pursuing a policy of non-reciprocity towards its smaller neighbours and would be prepared to make major unilateral concessions in conflicts.

The gradual deterioration of Indo-Pakistan relations since 2016 has accelerated the decline of SAARC. Since then, India has been pushing ahead with regional cooperation in the guise of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). The idea is to connect India with the growth markets in Southeast Asia in the context of its Act East policy.

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has been shifting the balance of power in South Asia since the mid-2010s. India, along with Bhutan, refuses to participate in the BRI. India criticises the fact that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) runs through Kashmir, which is claimed by India, and that China's practice of granting of loans for infrastructure projects causes the indebtedness of these countries to swell, thereby ratcheting up their dependence on China.

Large-scale Chinese investments in countries neighbouring India have further boosted Beijing's influence in the region. The wrangling between India and China is always a function of domestic political constellations in the respective states, however. Due to the Kashmir conflict, India's influence is lowest in Pakistan and highest in Bhutan. In Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, elections and changes of government have led to a change in foreign policy orientation, tipping partly towards China, but also towards India. The most recent example is the presidential election in the Maldives, which President Muizzu won in 2023 with the slogan "India Out".

Key regional players in the new global order

In contrast to South Asia, India has tended to gain influence in the Indo-Pacific. Since the mid-1990s, Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have been a focus of India's foreign policy. Prime Minister Modi acknowledged the central role of the organisation for future stability in the Indo-Pacific in his speech delivered at the 2018 Shangri-La Security Dialogue.²¹ India is also involved in a number of minilateral formats in the region. The best known of these is the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) with Australia, Japan and the USA, which was once initiated by Japan. India is also engaged in minilateral formats, such as the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) with Japan and Australia.

It is striking, however, that India has thus far spurned participation in large trading blocs or corresponding agreements. In 2019, India withdrew its participation in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) initiative at the last minute. The Indian government feared that this would further increase the already large trade deficit with China. Nor is India participating in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Although India has joined the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) initiative led by the USA, it has not yet taken part in trade talks in this format.²²

In the face of the growing Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean, India is gaining traction through its own connectivity projects with other countries. These include the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) with Iran and Russia, with which India wants to expand its access to Central Asia. There have been plans for an Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) with Japan. The establishment of an India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) was agreed on the periphery of the G20 summit in New Delhi.²³

At the same time, India is upgrading its political, economic and military relations with the island nations in the Indian Ocean. India sees itself as a "security provider" in the regional context, which includes not only the military, but also the humanitarian sector. India has stepped up security cooperation with Indian Ocean island states like the Seychelles and Mauritius. In spring 2024, an airfield financed by India was inaugurated on the island of Agalega, which belongs to Mauritius, to help the country combat drug and human trafficking as well as illegal fishing, among other things.²⁴ India also sees itself as a "first

India

responder” to natural disasters and has supported numerous countries, for example following the 2004 tsunami and the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, as well as countries in Africa.

The global level

In addition to India’s importance in global governance formats (see above), its relations with China and the USA are particularly key factors in India’s rise.

The relationship with China is critical to an understanding of India’s foreign policy. In the 1950s, Nehru sought close cooperation with China and supported it in its quest to return to the international stage. At the time, democratic India was also viewed as a model for new countries emerging in the wake of decolonisation. The dispute over the frontier in the Himalayas, which remains unresolved to this day, sparked a brief border war in 1962, however. India’s military defeat ended Nehru’s dreams, and has gone down as a traumatic episode in India’s foreign policy. China’s permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and its position as a recognised nuclear power in the Non-Proliferation Treaty since the 1970s thrust the country into the leading role that India has cherished, but has been unable to attain down to the present day.

Toward the end of the 1980s, bilateral relations began to improve again. At that time, India and China were still at a comparable level of economic development. As a result of its accelerated economic development in the ensuing period, China became one of India’s largest trading partners. A host of agreements since the 1990s has stabilised the status quo along the border. On the international stage, both countries work together in the BRICS group and in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

China’s extensive investments in South Asia as part of the BRI (see above), its festering rivalry with the US in the Indo-Pacific region and India’s involvement in the Quad are putting a strain on bilateral relations, however. In the summer of 2020, relations reached rock bottom when 20 Indian and at least four Chinese soldiers were killed in a skirmish in Ladakh Province. Since then, around 50,000 soldiers have been facing off against each other on either side of the border in the Himalayas.

Key regional players in the new global order

In response to the clash in the summer of 2020, India has attempted to scale back its economic ties with China. The volume of trade has nevertheless continued to surge since then, and the trade deficit has widened.²⁵ Key sectors such as pharmaceuticals are dependent on imports from China.²⁶ Indian experts note that India would do itself more harm if it were to disengage or cut itself off from China.²⁷

Relations with the USA remained ambivalent during the East-West conflict. Despite extensive American support, both countries remained “estranged” democracies rather than “natural” partners during this phase. US military support for Pakistan since the 1950s, US rapprochement with China in 1971, different perspectives on regional conflicts such as Vietnam and the strained personal relationship between President Richard Nixon and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi stood in the way of closer cooperation.

All levels have seen a significant improvement in relations since the 1990s. The USA welcomed India’s economic opening and security policy interests have been converging, initially in the face of Islamist terrorism and later with a view to China. The comparatively wealthy Indian diaspora in the USA has planted the question of India in American domestic policy. With the 2005 nuclear accord, the USA paved the way for civil nuclear cooperation with India. A series of agreements such as the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016, the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018 and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020 have since then further expanded strategic cooperation between the two countries.

Alongside France and Israel, the USA is now one of the most important partners in efforts to upgrade and modernise the Indian armed forces. The USA hopes that this support will woo India away from its dependence on Russian weapons systems. As a reaction to India’s neutral stance on Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, the USA launched the initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) in May 2022. With their cooperation in multilateral formats such as the Quad and IPEF, India and participating countries are challenging Chinese claims to hegemony and seeking to produce alternatives to the BRI for countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

India

In contrast to China and the USA, relations with Russia have remained comparatively stable since the end of the East-West conflict. India has maintained close political, economic and, above all, military ties with the Soviet Union and Russia since the 1970s. Depending on the estimate, India is dependent on Russia for 50 to 70 per cent of its military equipment.²⁸ India is still one of the biggest arms importers in the world. Russia's share of arms imports has waned in recent years, however. The USA, France and Israel are now among India's most important partners in the modernisation of its armed forces. As a veto power in the UN Security Council, Russia is seen as India's most important and reliable international partner. In the words of Foreign Minister Jaishankar: "When I look at the history of independent India, Russia has never violated our interests."²⁹

3. How does India view the role of Europe/Germany in the new global order?

Germany and the EU are among India's largest trading partners and crucial partners when it comes to investment and technology transfer. Technology transfer is pivotal for modernisation if India wants to become a developed nation by 2047, when it celebrates 100 years of independence. To date, however, India's spending on research and development has peaked at only around 0.7 per cent of its GDP, compared to around 2.4 per cent for China.³⁰

India and the EU have forged a strategic partnership and devised a Roadmap 2025, which calls for a gradual expansion of relations. India is also a key associate in the European Indo-Pacific strategy. In response to India's neutral stance on Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the EU launched the Trade and Technology Council (TTC) in April 2022 to further expand technological cooperation with India. The two sides have been renegotiating a free trade accord since summer 2022, after initial negotiations from 2007 to 2013 failed to reach a conclusion.³¹

Germany's relations with India have traditionally been very good.³² A strategic partnership has been in place since 2000 and there have been intergovernmental consultations since 2011. Above and beyond economic cooperation, bilateral relations between the two countries place a premium on scientific and technological cooperation. Over 42,000 Indian students are now studying in Germany. The Indo-Pacific Guidelines 2020 have further strengthened India's

Key regional players in the new global order

role as a partner. The governing “traffic light” coalition in Germany has significantly intensified the political dialogue with India, both at the level of the heads of government and the line ministries. In 2022, both sides agreed on a partnership for green and sustainable development, a hydrogen partnership, and concluded pacts on triangular cooperation as well as migration and mobility. Military manoeuvres involving the air forces and navies planned in 2024 with India and other European partners underscore the fact that security policy cooperation is to be an additional focus in future bilateral cooperation.³³ Finally, the new salience of India in German foreign policy is also reflected by the establishment of a separate India Division at the German Federal Foreign Office in 2024.

Although Germany is by far India’s most important economic partner in Europe, it is eclipsed by France when it comes to geopolitical issues. Extensive French arms exports, French territories in the Indo-Pacific and France’s position as a veto power on the United Nations Security Council ensure that Paris wields more clout than Berlin on the foreign policy stage in New Delhi.³⁴

By the same token, India and Germany share a number of fundamental notions regarding the future international order. These include a rules-based order and a commitment to the multilateralism of the UN. India and Germany are working together with Brazil and Japan (G4) to reform the UN. There are also fundamental differences, however, in the assessment of foreign policy issues, e.g. with regard to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. India also sees itself as a representative of the Global South. One of the successes registered by India’s G20 presidency in 2023 was the inclusion of the African Union (AU) in this group of states. This also translates into shifting negotiating positions in global governance formats as well as frequently diverging voting behaviour in the UN.

Despite increasing geopolitical similarities, criticism of domestic political developments in India has also become more vocal in Germany recently. Many civil society organisations and their partner organisations in India are increasingly facing restrictions. This criticism is presumably being addressed in bilateral formats at government level. Public statements such as those issued in March 2024, when the German Federal Foreign Office addressed the arrest of New Delhi Chief Minister A. Kejriwal, are relatively rare.³⁵

India

The dilemma of foreign policy convergence versus domestic policy divergence can also be seen at the EU level. The Commission is in favour of strengthening ties with India, for example, but this is viewed quite critically by elements of the European Parliament (EP). In the summer of 2023, the EP addressed riots verging on civil war in the Indian state of Manipur in the northeast along the border with Myanmar shortly before Prime Minister Modi was hosted as the guest of honour at French National Day, much to the annoyance of India.³⁶ In January 2024, a large majority in the European Parliament adopted a recommendation for the Commission and the Council on the future shape of relations with India. Among other things, democracy and human rights were assigned primacy in future bilateral relations. Criticism was moreover directed at legislative initiatives in India such as the proposed Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).³⁷

These issues are in turn to be included in consultations on the planned free trade agreement, which must also be approved by the EP. India, on the other hand, adamantly rejects any such interference in its internal affairs. At the same time, India criticises the fact that the planned accord teems with topics such as sustainability and labour rights, which it considers to be a form of hidden protectionism.³⁸ Further strains could surface if the EU imposes sanctions on companies that help to circumvent sanctions against Russia. This could also involve Indian companies.³⁹

4. Outlook and recommendations for action for German and European stakeholders

India will leverage the rivalry between China and the US to further its own aspirations for ascendancy. This has been one of the lines of continuity in India's foreign policy since 1947, and the international arena has probably never been so propitious for India. India is in a comparatively convenient geopolitical position. It will therefore willingly accept Western overtures of cooperation in the field of defence or technology transfer. These will not bring about a sea change in India's foreign policy, however. The field of tension existing between the geopolitical convergence of interests on the one hand and differences over domestic political developments on the other is not a new challenge for German foreign policy, as this line of fire also characterises relations with other countries. In the case of India as well, it means that interests and values need to be constantly balanced.

Key regional players in the new global order

Recommendations:

1. There is a cross-party consensus in Berlin that relations with India should be expanded at all levels. In addition to high-level meetings at government level, contacts at parliamentary level and between the political parties in Germany and India should also be intensified.
2. Furthermore, relations at sub-state level between the German *Länder* and Indian states should be intensified. So far, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg have already concluded agreements with the states of Karnataka and Maharashtra. Other *Länder*, including North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony, are also considering entering into partnerships with Indian states.
3. India is aspiring to a greater say in the international system in order to satisfy its desire for a more elevated status. Unlike China, however, India is not seeking to establish its own international structures. For this reason, Germans and Europeans should back India's endeavours to attain a greater weight in international affairs wherever this appears feasible.
4. Economic relations are at the heart of the Indo-German relationship. Germany should therefore encourage a swift conclusion of negotiations on the Indo-European free trade agreement.
5. With regard to the planned recruitment of Indian skilled labour, Germany should offer new, cost-effective opportunities for language learning. This would improve Germany's attractiveness, especially for skilled labour and nursing staff from the lower middle classes in India.
6. Security cooperation should be further expanded. For example, contacts between the armed forces, especially the navy, should be expanded through an exchange of officers or more joint exercises. Military cooperation should also be bolstered in order to diminish India's dependence on Russian arms.
7. The increased interest in India is offset by a comparatively low level of academic expertise on modern India in Germany compared to China and

India

Southeast Asia. One possibility would be to establish professorships for modern India at handpicked universities or to establish non-university research institutes. Examples include the Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS), the Centre for East European and International Studies (ZOiS) or the Centre for Applied Turkey Studies (CATS) at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP).

Key regional players in the new global order

- 1 The Economic Times 2024: India is non-western, not anti-western: EAM Jaishankar, 3 January 2024, in: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-is-non-western-not-anti-west-eam-jaishankar/articleshow/106524570.cms?from=mdr> [4 January 2024].
- 2 Gupta, Surojit 2022: Nearly 1 in 3 Indians middle class, to double in 25 years: Report, The Times of India, 2 November 2022, in: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/middle-class-nearly-1/3rd-of-indias-population-to-be-2/3rds-by-2047-report/articleshow/95239621.cms> [28 February 2024]; The Economist 2018: India's missing middle class, 11 January 2018, in: <https://www.economist.com/briefing/2018/01/11/indias-missing-middle-class> [28 February 2024]; Reed, John 2023: Gauging India's middle-class opportunity, Financial Times, 17 May 2023, in: <https://www.ft.com/content/be53790c-ea16-4e5c-9410-bac189fb2636> [28 February 2024].
- 3 Statista 2023: Indien: Bruttoinlandsprodukt (BIP) pro Kopf in jeweiligen Preisen von 1981 bis 2022 und Prognosen bis 2028, in: <https://de.statista.com/statistika/daten/studie/19411/umfrage/bruttoinlandsprodukt-per-kopf-in-indien/> [27 September 2023].
- 4 Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (no year): National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015, New Delhi, p. 2.
- 5 Tellis, Ashley J. 2016: India as a Leading Power, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., 4 April 2016, pp. 2, 12.
- 6 UNDP 2022: "India ranks 132 on the Human Development Index as global development stalls", press release, 8 September 2022, in: <https://www.undp.org/india/press-releases/india-ranks-132-human-development-index-global-development-stalls> [8 August 2023].
- 7 Statista 2024: India: Literacy rate from 1981 to 2022, by gender, in: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/271335/literacy-rate-in-india/> [29 February 2024].
- 8 Banerji, Annie 2023: While India's population is growing, women's participation in its workforce is shrinking, 30 March 2023, in: <https://scroll.in/article/1045995/while-indias-population-is-growing-womens-participation-in-the-workforce-is-shrinking> [30 March 2023]; Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (no year), no. 4, p. 9.
- 9 Raghavan, TCA Sharad 2024: Why FDI in India is lowest in 16 yrs – no real ease of doing business, ill-considered treaty moves, ThePrint, 18 January 2024, in: https://theprint.in/economy/why-fdi-in-india-is-lowest-in-16-yrs-no-real-ease-of-doing-business-ill-considered-treaty-moves/1927937/?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email [19 January 2024].
- 10 Raghavan, TCA Sharad 2023: Private investment a shrinking slice of India's GDP pie since 2012. It's a vote of no confidence, ThePrint, 25 April 2023, <https://theprint.in/economy/private-investment-a-shrinking-slice-of-indias-gdp-pie-since-2012-its-a-vote-of-no-confidence/1535969/> [25 April 2024].
- 11 Puri, Hardeep S. 2023: From 'rule taker' to 'rule shaper', the evolution of India in international negotiations, The Indian Express, 19 January 2023, in: <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-diplomacy-mohan-kumar-indias-moment-hardeep-singh-puri-9071705/> [19 December 2023].
- 12 Nehru, Jawaharlal 1946: The Discovery of India, Calcutta, p. 535.

India

- 13 Nehru, Jawaharlal 1961: *India's Foreign Policy. Selected Speeches*, September 1946 – April 1961, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, pp. 21, 39, 43.
- 14 Hoeber Rudolph, Susanne 2010: *Four Variants of Indian Civilization*, in: Katzenstein, Peter J. (ed.): *Civilisations in World Politics*, London, pp. 137–156; Bajpai, Kanti 2014: *India's Grand Strategy: Six Schools of Thought*, in: Bajpai, Kanti / Basit, Saira / Krishnappa, V. (ed.): *India's Grand Strategy: History, Theory, Cases*, London, p. 130.
- 15 Tanwar, Raghuvendra / Kadam, Umesh Ashok 2022: *India: The Mother of Democracy*, New Delhi; Singh, Upinder 2023: *Why it may be wrong to ask whether India is the mother of democracy*, *The Week*, 20 August 2023, in: https://www.theweek.in/theweek/cover/2023/08/12/indian-historian-upinder-singh-about-non-monarchical-traditions-in-ancient-india.html?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email [20 August 2023].
- 16 Basu, Nayanima 2021: *China's 'Duality of Cooperation & Competition' Was Evident before LAC Standoff – Jaishankar*, *ThePrint*, 28 January 2021, in: <https://theprint.in/diplomacy/chinas-duality-of-cooperation-competition-was-evident-before-lac-standoff-jaishankar/593953/> [28 January 2021].
- 17 Vaishnav, Milan / Mallory, Caroline 2024: *In India, Foreign Policy Is on the 2024 Ballot*, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 12 April 2024, in: <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/04/in-india-foreign-policy-is-on-the-2024-ballot?lang=en> [12 April 2024].
- 18 *The Wire* 2024: *Despite His Claims, Modi's Rule Has Not Improved India's Image Abroad: Report*, 8 May 2024, in: <https://thewire.in/politics/despite-his-claims-modis-rule-has-not-improved-indias-image-abroad-report> [8 May 2024].
- 19 *The Wire* 2024: *India Among 'Partners of Least Strategic Relevance' for ASEAN: State of SE Asia Survey 2024*, 4 April 2024, in: <https://thewire.in/south-asia/india-least-strategic-relevance-asean-survey> [4 April 2024].
- 20 Ganguly, Sumit 2020: *An Illiberal India?*, *Journal of Democracy* 31: 1, pp. 193–202, in: <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/an-illiberal-india/> [9 June 2021].
- 21 Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs 2018: *Prime Minister's Keynote Address at Shangri La Dialogue*, 1 December 2018, in: <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/29943/Prime+Ministers+Keynote+Address+at+Shangri+La+Dialogue+June+01+2018> [12 August 2024].
- 22 Singh, Parminder Jeet 2023: *This strategic-economic bloc will only tighten the leash*, *The Hindu*, 15 May 2023, in: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/this-strategic-economic-bloc-will-only-tighten-the-leash/article66850659.ece> [15 May 2023].
- 23 Mitra, Devirupa 2023: *To Rival China's BRI, India and US Unveil Plans for Economic Corridor from India to West Asia, Europe*, *The Wire*, 9 September 2023, in: <https://thewire.in/diplomacy/india-us-economic-corridor-west-asia-europe> [9 September 2023].
- 24 *South China Morning Post* 2024: *Mauritius launches India-funded air strip on Agalega, denies it will be used as military base*, 29 February 2024, in: https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/south-asia/article/3253720/mauritius-launches-india-funded-air-strip-agalega-denies-it-will-be-used-military-base?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email [6 March 2024].

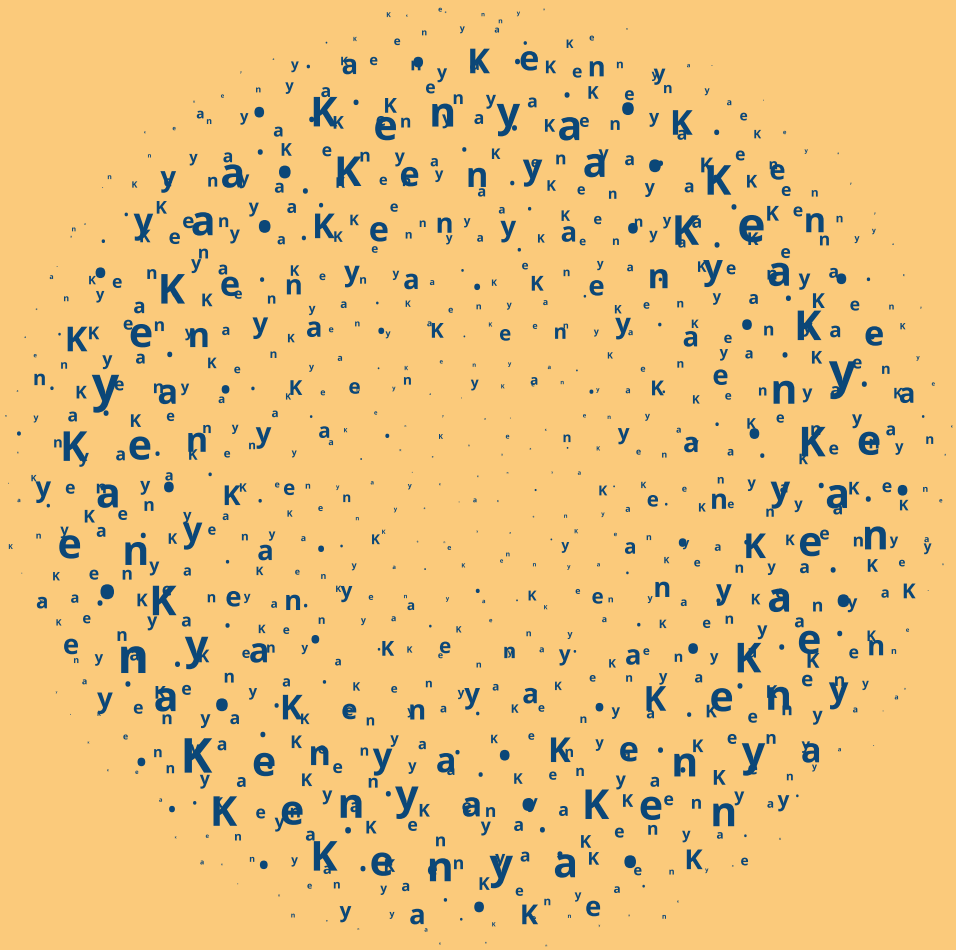
Key regional players in the new global order

- 25 The Wire 2023: India's Trade Deficit at Record High of \$31.46 Billion, Imports Shoot Up by 12.3%, 16 November 2023, in: <https://thewire.in/trade/indias-trade-deficit-at-record-high-of-31-46-billion-imports-shoot-up-by-12-3> [16 November 2023].
- 26 The Wire 2023: Chinese Imports Critical for Boosting India's Manufacturing, Finds New Study, 12 April 2023, in: <https://thewire.in/trade/chinese-imports-critical-for-boosting-indias-manufacturing-finds-new-study> [12 April 2023].
- 27 Verma, Raj 2023: India's Economic Decoupling from China: A Critical Analysis, *Asia Policy*, 18: 1, pp. 143–166, in: <https://www.nbr.org/publication/indias-economic-decoupling-from-china-a-critical-analysis/> [20 September 2023].
- 28 For an overview, see Haack, Adrian 2023: Indien und die „Russian arms question“, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 30 May 2023, in: <https://www.kas.de/de/web/indien/laenderberichte/detail/-/content/indien-und-die-russian-arms-question> [30 May 2023].
- 29 Jaishankar, Subrahmanyam 2024: Das globale Wirtschaftsmodell ist labil und unfair, in: *Handelsblatt*, 19 February 2024, p. 6.
- 30 Desiraju, Gautam R. / Bhattacharya, Deekhit 2024: The problem with India's science management, *The Hindu*, 20 January 2024, in: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/the-problem-with-indias-science-management/article67757103.ece> [20 February 2024].
- 31 Hilpert, Hanns Günther / Rudloff, Bettina / Wagner, Christian 2023: Verhandlungen über ein Freihandelsabkommen zwischen Indien und der EU. Ambitionen, Erwartungen, Widerstände und Anreize, *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*, 10 February 2023, in: <https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2023A11/> [11 February 2023].
- 32 Jain, Rajendra K. 2024: India and Germany in a Turbulent World. Perceptions, Perspectives, Prospects, New Delhi.
- 33 PTI 2024: Germany has planned 'never before' military deployment to India, says German embassy spokesperson, *ThePrint*, 7 March 2024, in: <https://theprint.in/diplomacy/germany-to-boost-indo-pacific-engagement-with-large-military-deployment-to-india/1991411/> [7 March 2024].
- 34 Singh Puri, Manjeev 2024: Still not Weatherproof. Threatened by China, India is relying on the United States and France instead of Germany. Must this remain so?, in: *Listening Beyond the Echo Chamber. Emerging Middle Powers Report*, Koerber Foundation, Berlin, pp. 8–9.
- 35 The Wire 2024: We Encourage A Fair, Transparent And Timely Legal Process for Chief Minister Kejriwal: US, 26 March 2024, in: <https://thewire.in/diplomacy/we-encourage-a-fair-transparent-and-timely-legal-process-for-chief-minister-kejriwal-us> [26 March 2024].
- 36 Gopinath, Vrinda 2023: European Parliament to Debate Manipur Violence, Modi Govt Deploys Law Firm in Counter, *The Wire*, 12 July 2023, in: <https://thewire.in/world/european-parliament-manipur-narendra-modi> [12 July 2023].
- 37 Legislative Observatory, European Parliament 2023: EU-India relations, 17 January 2024, in: <https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/summary.do?id=1772404&t=e&l=en> [22 February 2024].

India

38 Sharma, Shantanu Nandan 2024: FTA with EU will be the hardest nut to crack: Former Commerce Secretary Rajeev Kher, *The Economic Times*, 4 February 2024, in: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/fta-with-eu-will-be-the-hardest-nut-to-crack-former-commerce-secretary-rajeev-kher/articleshow/107390058.cms?from=mdr> [4 February 2024].

39 Bounds, Andy / Espinoza, Javier 2024: EU prepares sanctions on Chinese and Indian companies over Russia links, *Financial Times*, 12 February 2024, in: <https://www.ft.com/content/183af737-ef65-4cea-9b27-06c384a5accd> [12 February 2024].



Kenya

Kenya: Europe's lifeline to the Global South?

Karoline Eickhoff

The editorial deadline for this text was mid-June 2024.

Whilst for Europe the emerging global order of tomorrow is cause for concern, countries such as Kenya see opportunities to improve their position in the shifting hierarchy of nation-states. German and European actors seeking strategic cooperation need to be cognisant of these differing perspectives on the changing global order if they are to avoid talking at cross purposes in the political dialogue.

1. Kenya in the new global order¹

Changing foundations of power politics: multipolarity

For observers in Kenya, little about the current global order would appear at first glance to be new. Multilateral organisations such as the Bretton Woods institutions – the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – as well as the United Nations Security Council (UN) are products of a post-war order whose formal and informal rules were laid down in an era when many African countries were still under colonial rule.² Thus, the voting rights of African countries in the IMF are very limited (Kenya's share of voting rights: 0.14 per cent),³ while the institution is de facto under European leadership and the USA has by far the largest quota of Special Drawing Rights (with the proportionate share of voting rights being 16.5 per cent).⁴ The US dollar remains the dominant currency in the international monetary and trading system. Despite partial successes, such as the recently established G20 seat for the African Union (AU), demands for reform and more substantial participation, such as a permanent seat for Africa on the UN Security Council, have been unsuccessful to date.

Kenya

What is changing from a Kenyan perspective, however, is the power-political foundations upon which the current global order was negotiated. Economic and cultural influence as well as military power are shifting from “West” to “East”. Many countries are increasingly questioning the leadership role enjoyed by the USA down to the present day as well as the privileged position of US and European players in multilateral institutions. Against this backdrop, it is expected that the multilateral architecture will be renegotiated in the near future on the basis of the new balance of power – particularly given China’s expanding influence. And with the rise of new institutions such as the BRICS+, alternatives to a negotiated solution to the question surrounding the future of the existing order are increasingly taking shape.

New latitude opening up: relations

In a global comparison, these developments offer smaller but regionally significant countries of the Global South like Kenya options in the quest for greater recognition as well as opportunities to have a say in international relations.⁵ In another global comparison, Kenya cannot be placed among those countries that are able to challenge the status quo of the world order on the basis of their own economic or military strength. Kenya is a country in the lower middle income category, accounting for only 0.2 per cent of global gross domestic product measured in terms of purchasing power.⁶ But there are opportunities for Kenya to capitalise on its relationships. This goes first of all for relations with competing major and medium-scale powers. The USA, China, the European Union (EU), Russia, Turkey and the Gulf States are increasingly vying for co-operation as well as hearts and minds in Africa.⁷ From the perspective of these countries, Kenya is successfully positioning itself as an indispensable regional rock of stability and economic gateway to trade with East Africa.

Secondly, Kenya attaches importance to alliances on the continent (*strength in numbers*). The votes of 54 African countries carry weight in some multilateral forums.⁸ There is also talk of increasing African agency, i.e. the way in which African political actors are opening up and utilising room for manoeuvre in the international system.⁹ Over time, shifting influence between “West” and “East” is also helping to diminish the power imbalance between the Global North and the Global South.

Key regional players in the new global order

The future of the global order: Kenya's negotiating positions

Kenya is striving for more say in shaping the global order rather than overturning it or seeking to freeze it. In the UN, Kenya advocates preserving multilateralism based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law. The government has justified the country's willingness to lead a UN-mandated international intervention force in Haiti declared in 2023 (at a time when many countries are shying away from multilateral peace missions) by citing Kenya's commitment to international cooperation on peace and security issues.

The country opts for negotiations and greater cooperation rather than pursuing any revisionist foreign policy. The government has thus far been wary of the BRICS+, even though calls for a reduction in the dominance of the US dollar and a fundamental reform of the global financial architecture, including the Bretton Woods institutions, have met with a positive resonance in Kenya. On the international stage, Kenyan President William Ruto is calling for a fairer financial order and greater climate justice. Important affiliations for Kenya cited in this context are Africa and the Global South. At the same time, Ruto refrains from openly naming and shaming particular culprits of climate damage or actors blocking multilateral reform processes. With his opportunistic style of leadership, he has thus far avoided alienating international partners from any camp.

Tactical geopolitical manoeuvring and deadlocks between competing major powers are spurned by the Kenyan government, as these impede effective multilateral cooperation, for example in the area of international climate diplomacy. The country is considered open to all forms of cooperation that strengthen Kenya as a locus of business and attract investment without compromising national autonomy.

Politically, international observers nevertheless perceive Kenya as gravitating towards the West. Several internationally polarising conflicts have been especially in the limelight: In contrast to other African countries such as South Africa and Uganda, Kenya has repeatedly denounced Russia's invasion of Ukraine.¹⁰ The speech delivered by Martin Kimani, Kenya's UN Ambassador at the time, at the UN General Assembly in February 2022 attracted a great deal of attention, particularly in Western capitals. After the Hamas terrorist attack

Kenya

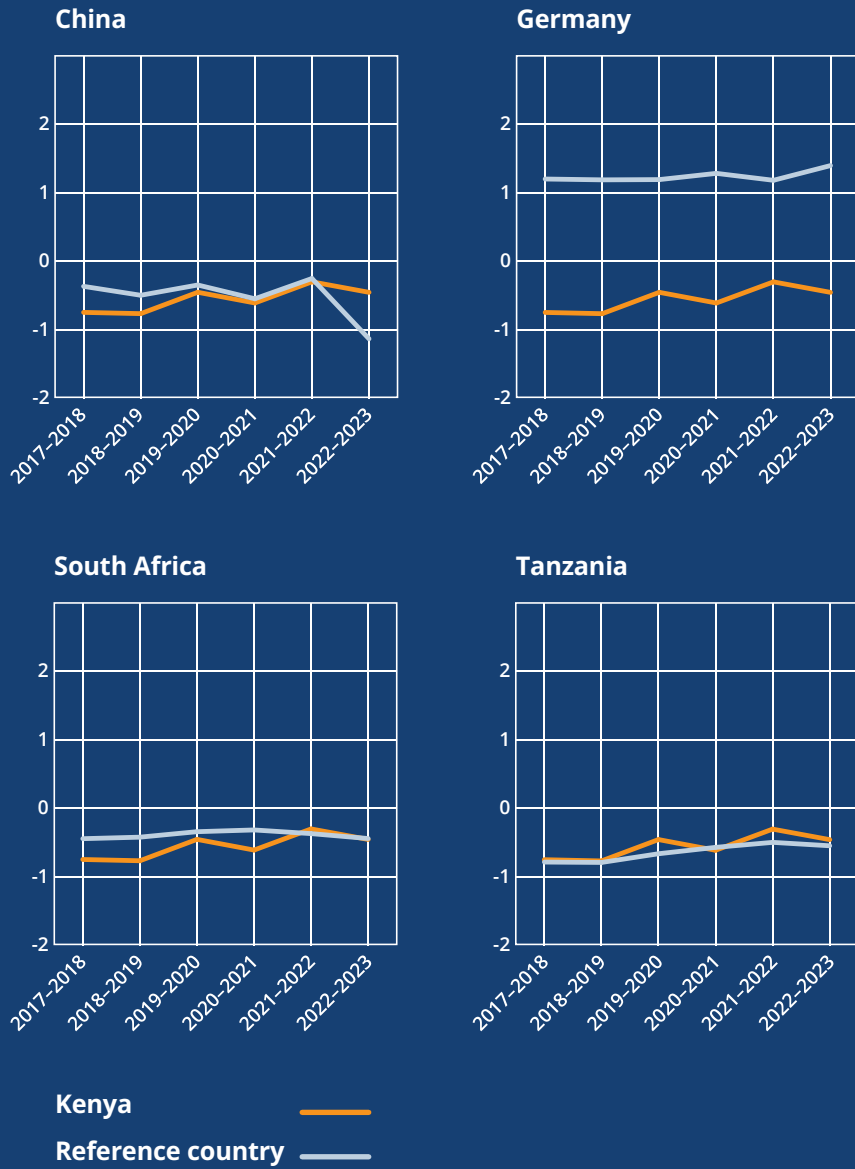
on Israel on October 7, 2023, President William Ruto expressed solidarity with Israel, thereby straying from the position of the African Union.¹¹

Nevertheless, Kenyan government representatives underscore that this is by no means tantamount to closing ranks with the West. According to the government, no one can dictate that Kenya only cooperates with certain countries in the interests of others.¹² Kenya, rather, is said to be pursuing the principle of “positive economic and political non-alignment”¹³, according to which the country has nurtured relations with both sides as far back as during the Cold War and continues to do so down to this day (see the next chapter on foreign policy traditions). In fact, figure 1 shows that Kenya’s voting behaviour in the UN General Assembly over time has been much more similar to that of other African countries, China and Russia than to that of Germany, the UK and the US. Depending on the perspective and policy framework (East-West/North-South), the country varies its position in the field of foreign policy.

The following analysis shows how historical experience, regional ambitions and domestic political dynamics influence Kenya’s perception of current changes taking place in the global order. It also indicates that political relations with the UK, the US and European states are close, but not free from differences, and that there is also a desire in Kenya for more autonomy in foreign relations.

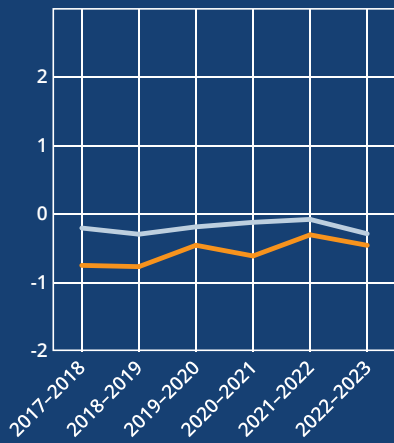
Key regional players in the new global order

Figure 1: Kenya's voting behavior in the UN General Assembly compared to other countries

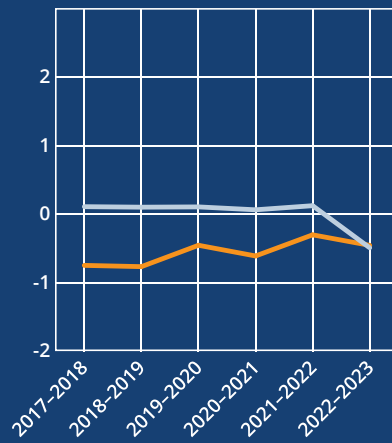


Kenya

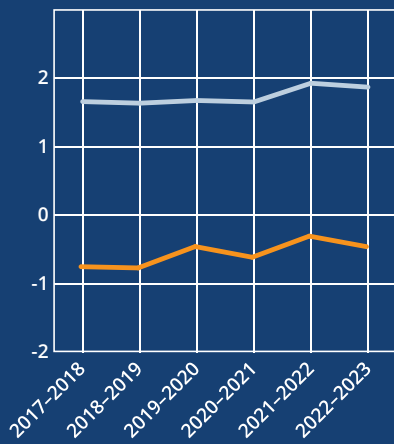
India



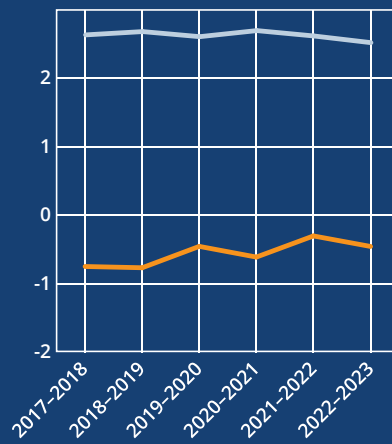
Russia



United Kingdom



United States



Notes: When two countries often agree on policy according to their voting behaviour, their "ideal points" in the diagram are close to each other. When two countries tend to disagree, their "ideal points" are far apart.

2. Kenya's foreign policy positioning

Historical experience and foreign policy traditions

Kenya has a long history of economic relations with governments and business enterprises from all over the world. Kenyan coastal cities such as Mombasa have played an important role in regional and international maritime trade across the Indian Ocean for centuries. Trade relations have extended to the Middle East, South East Asia, China and Europe. In the 19th century, the scramble for African resources and competition by European powers intensified, with conflicts emerging, particularly between Great Britain and Germany in East Africa. In 1895, Great Britain staked out its colonial claims to Kenya, establishing the protectorate of East Africa. This came to an end in 1963 in the wake of unremitting resistance against the colonial government and European settlers.

At the point in time of Kenya's independence, the Cold War was carving the region into zones of influence, constraining the first Kenyan government's room for manoeuvre in the foreign policy field. Political alliances with Great Britain were initially upheld and diplomatic relations were established with the European Economic Community and its Member States.¹⁴

Kenya joined the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), an organisation that was intended to create a third pole between the capitalist West and the communist East, and which many countries in the Global South still invoke today. While neighbouring countries such as Somalia, Ethiopia and Tanzania tilted towards the East, Kenya was considered capitalist and de facto Western-oriented. This is also due to the fact that in the wake of independence, a large part of the economic and industrial capital remained in foreign, for the most part British, hands.¹⁵

In international politics, the country practiced a form of "quiet diplomacy" for decades, refraining from taking a stance on polarising international conflicts, instead invoking the non-aligned principles of respect for peaceful coexistence and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.¹⁶

Kenya

In the sphere of security policy, Kenya co-operated with Great Britain and the USA. A cosier course vis-à-vis the USA also meant emancipation from Great Britain. At the latest when Kenya gave the go-ahead for the USA to station its air force and navy in Kenya in the 1980s in exchange for economic and military support in the fight against terrorism in the region, the country was no longer considered neutral in global politics. These security partnerships are still strategically important for Kenya in the present day.¹⁷

Kenya's above-mentioned willingness to lead an international interventionary force in Haiti, declared back in 2023, is said to have been primarily in response to a request from the USA.¹⁸ Kenya has also been the only East African country to support the US and UK airstrikes on Houthi bases in Yemen. This close security cooperation is also one explanation for a critical perception in parts of society that the government is paving the way for "Western interests" in the region.¹⁹ At the same time, regular renewal of the defence pact with the UK gives the Kenyan government leverage in negotiations, as London is keen on maintaining the British military presence in the region.

Economically, Kenya has gradually and little by little opened up to partnerships with countries from all over the world, regardless of their form of government.²⁰ Since the 1990s, Kenya's governments have opted to diversify foreign relations, particularly in the areas of trade and investment. Under President Uhuru Kenyatta (2013–2022), this "open-door policy" was also dubbed a "look East" policy – an economic pivot to the East, especially toward China.²¹ With Beijing's support, the government began investing heavily in the country's infrastructure and economic development from 2012 onwards.²² China and Kenya also have close trade relations. Chinese imports account for an approximately 21 per cent share in the Kenyan market.²³

The opening to the East and close cooperation with China have also been seen as an emancipation from the historical legacy of European influence. Relations with European partners have been put to the test during this period.

In 2010, the International Criminal Court (ICC) opened proceedings against several Kenyan politicians on suspicion of crimes against humanity in connection with the violent unrest during the 2007/2008 presidential elections, with indictments including Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto. The proceedings had

Key regional players in the new global order

an impact on alliances between the country's political and business elites – Kenyatta and Ruto ran on the same ticket in the 2013 presidential elections.²⁴

Diplomatic representatives of European countries had previously expressed misgivings about co-operating with political decision-makers indicted by the ICC (“decisions have consequences”).²⁵ In response, Kenyatta and Ruto set about denouncing Western meddling in their election campaign while appealing to African solidarity against the ICC's actions.²⁶ European development and trade partnerships retained their importance even in the aftermath of Kenyatta's and Ruto's election triumph, however, as did military co-operation with the USA and the UK. In retrospect, the episode is not viewed as a break in relations with the West, even though it remains a diplomatically sensitive topic to this day.

In the overall scheme of things, Kenyan governments have always found it expedient to expand their range of political and economic partners. A wide array of partnerships has translated into more autonomy in foreign relations – including the much maligned close economic ties with China.²⁷

Many Kenyans at present therefore still perceive the changing global order primarily as an opportunity and not as a threat. They expect their government to manoeuvre the multipolar world to engineer economic advantages (see the discussion of domestic political factors). It is evident that for Kenya it is not about the possible rewards of belonging to a geopolitical camp, but about the most diverse possible exchange relationships with governments and business enterprises from all over the world in order to mitigate the risks of one-sided dependencies. Kenyan experts underscore that permanent alliances are undesirable in a fluid world order.

Kenya's importance in the region

In a regional comparison, Kenya is one of the most influential countries on the continent. Kenya ranks alongside countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Angola as one of the largest economies in sub-Saharan Africa.²⁸

The country is the economic hub of East Africa. Neighbouring countries such as Uganda and South Sudan transport their imports and exports through the

Kenya

seaport of Mombasa. Numerous Kenyan enterprises operate in the region, for example in the banking sector. The country has an interest in trade relations and the unimpeded movement of goods, especially important imports such as petrol – global cooperation and a predictable global economy are essential for this. Kenya supports calls for greater regional integration and full implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), particularly in the East African Community (EAC) and the AU.²⁹

Kenya also has political and cultural clout in the region. In addition to the UN, many international organisations and corporations have their regional headquarters in Nairobi. Elections are held regularly in the country in line with democratic principles. Society is considered open and civil society actors are numerous and lively. Despite restrictions, freedom of expression and freedom of the press are more palpable than in other countries in the region.³⁰ Kenya is relatively proactive in the field of peace and security, both in multilateral peace negotiations (e.g. Sudan, Ethiopia) as well as military operations (e.g. Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo).

Regional alliances are an important lever used by the government to forward its interests in multilateral negotiations. William Ruto characterises himself as a pan-Africanist. He is currently making his presence felt internationally, particularly with his demands for climate financing. Here, he is showing ambition when it comes to forging alliances and being perceived as an advocate for African interests. In September 2023, Kenya and the AU jointly organised the first African climate summit, where an African agenda for global climate diplomacy was adopted. Ruto recently took over at the helm of the AU's institutional reform process, following in the footsteps of Rwanda's President Paul Kagame.³¹

Ruto had previously spoken out in favour of better positioning the AU for international negotiations and outfitting it with the authority to conclude agreements on behalf of the Member States. From the perspective of some observers on the continent, Kenya is one of the promising candidates that could increasingly work to promote African interests in multilateral negotiations in the future.³²

Key regional players in the new global order

However, Kenya's ambitions of becoming an opinion leader are not without controversy. Conflicts repeatedly flare up with neighbouring countries such as Uganda over politically motivated trade barriers.³³ The free trade agreement signed with the EU in summer 2023 aroused concern among representatives of the EAC that Kenya could jeopardise the EAC's common external tariff in the pursuit of its parochial national interests.³⁴

Ruto was also criticised for his domineering style at the climate summit in Nairobi. He was accused of pushing forward an African climate agenda that was in line with Kenya's resource profile and investment interests, but neglected the interests of other African countries.³⁵ The president has also faced criticism from neighbouring countries for his foreign policy, which is perceived as western-oriented.³⁶

Against this backdrop, it remains to be seen whether Ruto's regional ambitions will gain sufficient traction, as important issues – such as the relationship between development rights and climate protection and emissions trading – are also the subject of controversial debate between the countries of East Africa. In fact, the Kenyan government's aspirations to improve the country's standing are often more visible at international level (especially in the UN) than in the region.

"The government delivers": Domestic political factors

Domestic political dynamics influence the country's foreign relations. William Ruto came to power in September 2022 with the electoral pledge to improve the economic situation in the country, reduce the cost of living and create jobs for young people. His foreign policy is also measured in terms of these objectives. According to the Afrobarometer, management of the economy (39 per cent), corruption (35 per cent) and unemployment (32 per cent) are the population's biggest concerns, also with a view to the economic aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.³⁷ Accordingly, the government (like its predecessors) is focussing primarily on economic diplomacy in its foreign relations.

The President is the country's main foreign policy actor. His actions are considered to have a decisive impact on Kenya's international orientation. Ruto is a regular guest on international stages, for example at the UN General

Kenya

Assembly, the UN Climate Change Conferences and the Paris Summit for a new global financing pact. By December 2023, Ruto had already made almost 50 trips abroad in search of trade and investment partnerships (especially in the IT and renewable energy sectors) as well as employment opportunities for Kenyans abroad. These took him first to the UK, the USA and European capitals. In the meantime, however, Ruto and other government officials have also visited China and India. According to the Kenyan government, a skilled labour agreement with Germany is close to being concluded (as of May 2024).³⁸

The economic situation remains tense, however. According to the IMF, Kenya's national debt stands at 73 per cent (as of April 2024).³⁹ Clientelism and corruption in the public sector remain rampant, further fuelling discontent over governance and social inequality in the country. The state is facing a liquidity crisis and is dependent on support from external donors. China, Kenya's largest bilateral external donor, has so far shown no willingness to renegotiate the terms of repayment for Chinese loans. In 2023, Chinese investments in connection with the Silk Road (Belt and Road) in Kenya dropped to zero.⁴⁰

Multilateral development banks are more willing to cooperate at the present juncture. Between June 2021 and June 2023, the IMF tripled its lending to Kenya to 2.2 billion US dollars; further disbursements are in preparation.⁴¹ In return, the government has committed to consolidating the budget, implementing climate targets and economic reform measures, phasing out subsidies and levying new taxes to boost government revenue.

The country's close cooperation with the IMF has come under public criticism as it is associated with the rising cost of living, placing a particular strain on low-income households. The requirements of the IMF and other donors restrict the government's latitude to act and its autonomy in external relations.

Against this backdrop, Ruto and his government are perceived by the public as being driven primarily by the desires of external donors (and the president's ambitions of improving Kenya's status) in Kenya's foreign relations. There is also talk of flip-flopping⁴² between institutions and donors from whom the government hopes to attract investment, which does not exactly lend credibility to its demands for far-reaching global reform. Criticism of the multilateral financial architecture voiced by Ruto on the international stage loses its

Key regional players in the new global order

push-back punch in the eyes of the Kenyan public when the government negotiates with the IMF behind closed doors and then falls in line and does as it is told. The president's climate protection agenda is also perceived by many Kenyans as a source of income for the government.

3. How does Kenya view the role of Europe/Germany in the new global order?

In international politics, Germany and the EU are perceived as part of the Western camp in the escalating power struggle between the major powers. This camp includes many of the gatekeeper states that have an above-average influence on the institutions and rules of the current global order.⁴³ For many people on the African continent, the much-used expression "rules-based order" in the EU is therefore a euphemism for maintaining the status quo, in which Western players enjoy privileges but selectively interpret the rules of the global order to accord with their own interests. This privileged position is being challenged by ascendant actors, above all China, which is certainly welcomed.

In Kenya, these developments are being monitored in terms of the new opportunities they present. Kenyan experts maintain that the EU and its Member States should also take greater account of these opportunities. Contrary to widespread zero-sum thinking in the West, it is argued, a strengthening of the Global South does not necessarily mean a loss of importance on the part of the West. Nevertheless, current political developments, particularly in the USA, are seen by some observers as a sign of the decline of the Western state model.⁴⁴ Tendencies toward fragmentation within the EU, which has a certain role model status when it comes to regional integration, are also sometimes observed with disappointment in Kenya.

As for the future global order, there is a desire in Kenya for economic cooperation and investment with and from Germany and the EU. European institutions in the country are perceived as rather inactive, however. The Global Gateway investment programme and players such as the European Investment Bank are scarcely known. Individual Member States and their diplomatic missions are perceived as more active. Among the EU Member States, Germany is one of the most important partners for Kenya.⁴⁵

Kenya

The government is striving to attract more investment, nurture trade and assign the private sector a greater role in cooperation. Projects that are tagged as “traditional” development cooperation at times smack of a power imbalance between donors and recipients, which does not sit well with Kenya’s self-image in the future global hierarchy of states. Preferential conditions are to be preserved to a certain extent, however.⁴⁶

The EU’s self-portrayal as an actor pursuing a value-based foreign and security policy in the world is at odds with perceptions in Kenya – similar to many other countries in the Global South. Ruto’s public statements on Russia’s aggression on Ukraine and the new escalation in the Middle East conflict do not reflect the public discourse.⁴⁷ According to one Kenyan expert, the problem is not a fundamental divergence in values and principles, but the EU’s behaviour in connection with these conflicts, which is viewed as double standards in the Global South.⁴⁸

Diplomats from European countries in Nairobi are perceived as regularly discussing the war in Ukraine without addressing the violent conflicts taking place in Africa. The situation is similar with the war between Israel and Hamas. European actors tend to elucidate their own positions on these issues and then insist these be accepted without engaging in any dialogue. In the view of this expert, Germany and the EU need to recognise that other countries have their own moral compass.

In addition, the dismissive visa and migration policy of the EU and its Member States, social discrimination⁴⁹ and gathering right-wing populism, which is also directed against Africans, are perceived critically in Kenya. Reports of cases involving discrimination against Africans fleeing from Ukraine at Europe’s external borders, which were the subject of intense discussions on social media, have been particularly negatively received.⁵⁰

A critical view of the EU’s behaviour in international politics is therefore also widespread in Kenya, even though the government’s foreign policy stance towards European actors is constructive. Criticism of the EU’s self-portrayal as a value-guided actor is fuelled not least by a historically based mistrust of external interests on African soil.

4. Outlook and recommendations for action for German and European stakeholders

Expectations towards the multilateral system have changed over the decades. The ecological and social impact of economic activity and financial accountability has moved more into the focus of global public opinion. Current debates on the future of the global order serve as a reminder that it is after all a geopolitical construct that is up for renegotiation when the global balance of power shifts.⁵¹

In the political dialogue with Kenya, German and European actors need to be highly sensitive when it comes to recognising divergences in the assessment of changes to the global order, even when these differ from their own (more East-West oriented) policy framework. This is because the EU and Kenya come to similar conclusions for different reasons on the issue of preserving a rules-based global order.

As a democratically orientated state with liberal economic policies, Kenya has good prospects of moving up or becoming more integrated in the current liberal order. As a result of its constructive posture, the country could assume a certain mediating role between geopolitical camps. And Kenya is open to a stronger European presence, especially from the European private sector. This makes the country an important communication artery for the EU and Germany in the Global South, where the landscape of potential strategic partners is thinning out noticeably.

In the political dialogue, closer mutual attention needs to be focused on policy areas that require multilateral cooperation. Common interests between the EU and Kenya are unmistakably clear in the areas of climate protection and energy transition. As part of the Global Gateway, the EU has stated that it will support the Kenyan government's plans to promote green hydrogen.⁵² German players have also pledged the Kenyan government closer cooperation. But William Ruto is not just campaigning for more investment. He is combining the climate agenda with far-reaching demands for a reform of development banks and rating agencies, compensation payments for climate damage (loss and damage), global taxes on fossil fuels and more say for the countries of the Global South in climate and development issues.⁵³

Kenya

Kenyan experts view international trade rules, development financing mechanisms and the handling of responsibilities for climate change to be in particular need of reform.⁵⁴ These and similar demands are increasingly being voiced by alliances of countries from the Global South and international organisations. And in addressing these demands, which go far beyond additional investments, European and African states have often not been on the same negotiating side.

If support for the current global order in the Global South is to be strengthened (or at least prevented from declining any further), it is advisable to engage in dialogue with countries like Kenya that are open to cooperation on controversial issues relating to the future global order. It is important to demonstrate the efficiency and adaptability of the multilateral architecture that has been constructed.

The central challenge for German and European players is not to agree to the demands of historically disadvantaged countries such as Kenya on the international stage, but to reconcile actual substantive concessions, such as debt relief and the redistribution of voting rights, with their own concerns about Europe's loss of importance in the future global order. This is because concessions go hand in hand, at least in some cases, with additional financial burdens and fewer proportional voting rights for European states, the UK and the USA.⁵⁵

The timing for a closer exchange is propitious: At the end of 2023, the AU acceded to membership of the G20, a key forum for international economic cooperation in which the response to challenges such as climate change is also negotiated. In view of William Ruto's global ambitions, Kenya is likely to play an active role in formulating common African positions in this forum.

Key regional players in the new global order

- 1 In addition to the secondary literature, this chapter includes information from the workshop on “Kenya’s Role in the Emerging Global Order”, held in Nairobi on 8 November 2023. Around 25 representatives from government agencies, think tanks, international organisations and journalists took part in the workshop. In addition, background discussions were held with experts in Nairobi in September and November 2023.
- 2 Alene, Niguse Mandefrero / Ali, Mohammed Seid / Tadesse, Kebede Yiman 2023: Africa’s Quest for Reform of the United Nations Security Council, Accord, 28 July 2023, in: <https://www.accord.org.za/analysis/africas-quest-for-reform-of-the-united-nations-security-council/> [19 February 2024].
- 3 International Monetary Fund 2024: IMF Members’ Quotas and Voting Power, and IMF Board of Governors, 7 May 2024, in: <https://www.imf.org/en/About/executive-board/members-quotas> [7 May 2024].
- 4 Africa Confidential 2023: Demands Grow for Reforms, in: Africa Confidential 64, p. 21.
- 5 Chagas-Bastos, Fabrício H. 2024: The challenge for the ‘rest’: insertion, agency spaces and recognition in world politics, in: International Affairs 100, p. 1.
- 6 International Monetary Fund 2024: Kenya Datasets, in: <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/profile/KEN> [26 February 2024].
- 7 The Economist 2019: The new scramble for Africa, 7 March 2019, in: <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2019/03/07/the-new-scramble-for-africa> [5 February 2024].
- 8 Singh, Priyal 2022: Africa has a rare chance to shape the international order, Institute for Security Studies, 30 August 2022, in: <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/africa-has-a-rare-chance-to-shape-the-international-order> [6 December 2023].
- 9 Fisher, Jonathan 2018: African Agency in International Politics, Oxford University Press, 24 October 2018, in: <https://oxfordre.com/politics/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-709> [2 March 2024].
- 10 Mutambo, Aggrey 2023: Kenya, Uganda uphold opposite voting stances on Russia war, The East African, 24 February 2023, in: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/ukraine-war-kenya-uganda-uphold-opposite-stances-4136846> [7 May 2024].
- 11 Mugabi, Isaac 2023: Israel-Hamas conflict divides opinion in Africa, Deutsche Welle, 10 December 2023, in: <https://www.dw.com/en/israel-hamas-conflict-divides-opinion-in-africa/a-67074671> [7 May 2024].
- 12 Mwaura, Isaac Maigua 2023: “Transforming a Nation” Conference, Nairobi, 10 November 2023.
- 13 Republic of Kenya 2014: Kenya Foreign Policy, p. 15, in: <https://repository.kippra.or.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/624/Kenya-Foreign-Policy.pdf> [2 August 2023].
- 14 Bachmann, Veit / Müller, Martin (eds.) 2015: Perceptions of the EU in Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa, Looking in from the Outside, London, p. 148.

Kenya

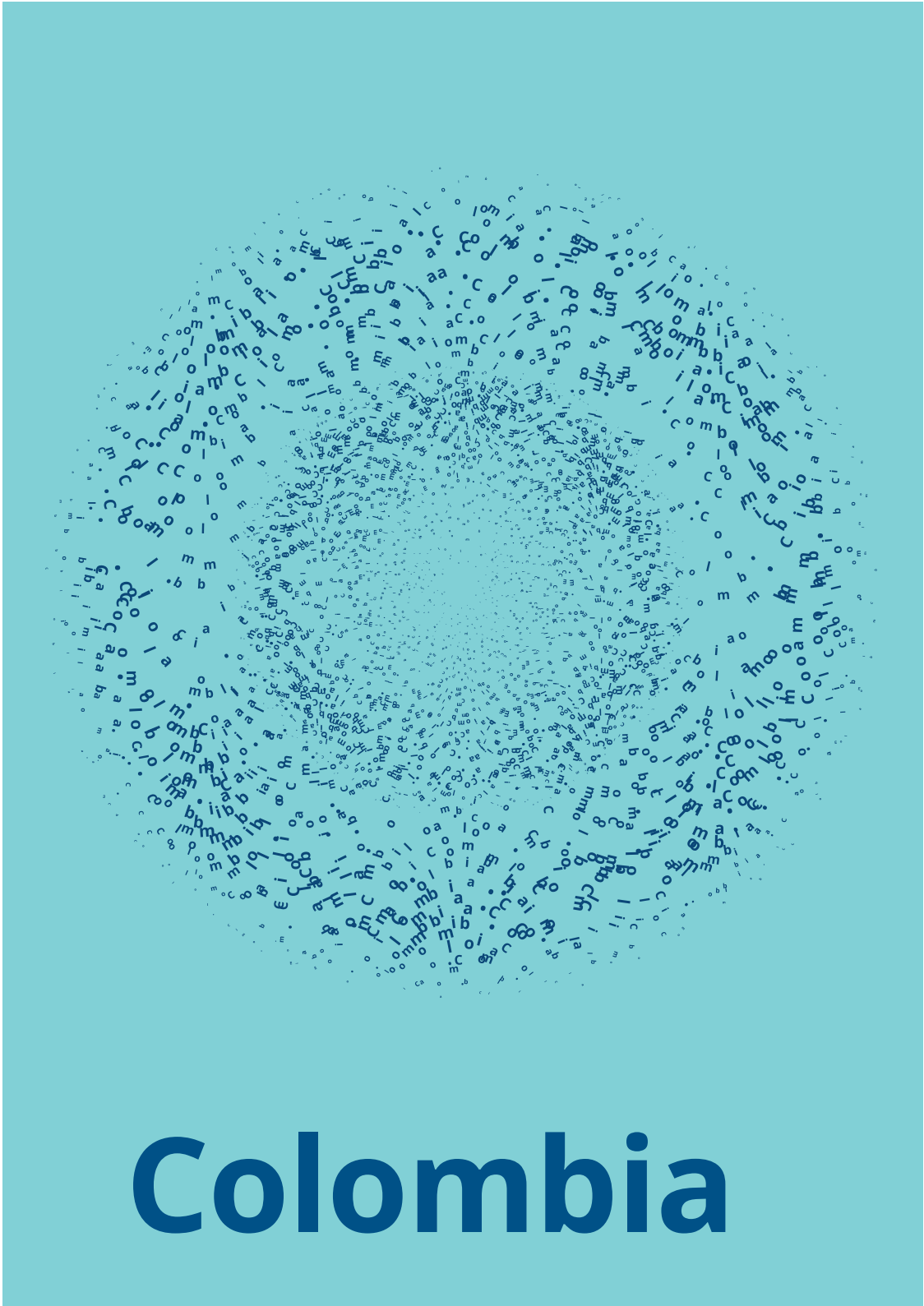
- 15 Juma, Thomas Otieno 2023: Kenya in World Politics, in: Nasong'o, Wanjala S. / Amutabi, Maurice N. / Falola, Toyin (eds.): *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Kenya*, Cham, pp. 445–454.
- 16 Makinda, Samuel M. 1983: From Quiet Diplomacy to Cold War Politics: Kenya's Foreign Policy, in: *Third World Quarterly* 5: 2, p. 303.
- 17 Background discussion, thinktank, Nairobi, 14 November 2023.
- 18 Buwembo, Joachim 2023: Nackter Kaiser, zwei Gesichter, *taz*, 30 July 2023, in: <https://taz.de/Kenias-Praesident-William-Ruto!/5947596/> [2 August 2023].
- 19 Eickhoff, Karoline 2024: Winning Hearts and Minds Abroad or at Home? Kenya's Foreign Policy under William Ruto, *Megatrends Afrika*, 12 March 2024, in: https://www.megatrends-afrika.de/assets/afrika/publications/policybrief/MTA_PB24_Eickhoff_Kenya_Foreign_Policy_Ruto.pdf [12 March 2024].
- 20 Nzomom, Maria / Rugutt, Winnie 2022: What Lies Ahead for Kenyan Foreign Policy: 2022–2027, *Australian Institute of International Affairs*, 8 September 2022, in: <https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/what-lies-ahead-for-kenyan-foreign-policy-2022-2027/> [7 August 2023].
- 21 Wamai, Njoki 2020: International Relations and the International Criminal Court, in: Cheeseman, Nic / Kanyinga, Karuti / Lynch, Gabrielle (eds.) 2020: *The Oxford Handbook of Kenyan Politics*, Oxford, p. 572.
- 22 Wanyeki, Muthoni 2020: Foreign Policy and Regional Relations, in: Cheeseman, Nic / Kanyinga, Karuti / Lynch, Gabrielle (eds.) 2020: *The Oxford Handbook of Kenyan Politics*, Oxford, p. 590.
- 23 Maurer, Andreas / Magis, Camilla / Tammelleo, Jimi 2023: Kenya and its role in intra-Africa regional trade: The prospects of the EU-Kenya EPA, *European Parliament*, 24 July 2023, p. 8, in: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EXPO_BRI\(2023\)702596](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EXPO_BRI(2023)702596) [8 August 2023].
- 24 Wamai 2020, n. 21.
- 25 Kagwanja, Peter 2014: Kenya's Foreign Policy: The Return of Geopolitics and the Revenge of the Liberal Order, *Observatoire des Grands Lacs en Afrique*, in: http://observatoire-grands-lacs.org/wp-lacs/uploads/Note_2_Kenya_Geopolitics_site.pdf [2 August 2023].
- 26 Mabera, Faith 2016: Kenya's foreign policy in context (1963–2015), in: *South African Journal of International Affairs* 23: 3, p. 373.
- 27 Eickhoff, Karoline 2022: Chinese Mega Projects in Kenya, *Megatrends Afrika*, May 2022, in: https://www.swp-berlin.org/assets/afrika/publications/policybrief/MTA_PB04_2022_Eickhoff_Chinese_Mega_Projects_in_Kenya.pdf [21 March 2023].
- 28 Omondi, Dominic 2024: Kenya economy to overtake Angola, IMF forecast shows, *The East African*, 23 April 2024, in: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/business/kenya-economy-to-overtake-angola-s-in-imf-forecast-4600628> [7 May 2024].
- 29 Wanyeki 2020, n. 22, p. 589.

Key regional players in the new global order

- 30 Sobel Cohen, Meghan / McIntyre Hopkinson, Karen 2023: Kenya: Despite Challenges, Growing Press Freedom in the Gateway to East Africa, in: Sobel Cohen, Meghan / McIntyre Hopkinson, Karen (eds.) 2023: Press Freedom and the (Crooked) Path Toward Democracy, New York.
- 31 Mutambo, Aggrey 2024: William Ruto inherits Paul Kagame headache to strengthen African Union amid varied interests, *The East African*, 25 February 2024, in: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/ruto-inherits-kagame-headache-to-unite-au-amid-varied-interests-4535688> [26 February 2024].
- 32 Exchange with university graduates from Eastern and Southern Africa, SWP, Berlin, 24 January 2024.
- 33 Rukanga, Basillioh 2023: How Kenya stands to lose from Uganda oil row, BBC, 22 November 2023, in: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67366652> [8 February 2024].
- 34 Africa Confidential 2023: Nairobi takes lead on economic accords, in: *Africa Confidential* 64, p. 17.
- 35 Africa Confidential 2023: Nairobi vies for green capital status, in: *Africa Confidential* 64, p. 18.
- 36 Eickhoff 2024, n. 19.
- 37 Kamau, Paul / Balongo, Samuel 2023: For the first time in a decade, Kenyans see management of the economy as their most important problem, *Afrobarometer*, 26 December 2023, in: <https://www.afrobarometer.org/publication/ad754-for-the-first-time-in-a-decade-kenyans-see-management-of-the-economy-as-their-most-important-problem/> [26 April 2024].
- 38 Okafor, Chinedu 2023: Germany to make provisions for 250,000 jobs for Kenyans, *Business Insider Africa*, 8 May 2023, in: <https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/markets/germany-to-make-provisions-for-250000-jobs-for-kenyans/f233lpc> [28 February 2024].
- 39 IMF 2024, n. 6.
- 40 Nedopil, Christoph 2023: China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Investment Report 2023, *Griffith Asia Institute*, p. 6, in: https://greenfdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Nedopil-2024_China-BRI-Investment-Report-2023.pdf [8 February 2024].
- 41 Business Daily 2023: IMF loans to Kenya triple to \$2.21 bn underfunding plan, *The East African*, 15 November 2023, in: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/business/imf-loans-to-kenya-triple-to-2-21bn-underfunding-plan-4434226> [6 February 2024].
- 42 Workshop 2023, n. 1.
- 43 Chagas-Bastos 2024, n. 5, p. 44.
- 44 Stockmann, Farah 2022: Kenya's Elite Talk About American Power in the Past Tense, *New York Times*, 3 August 2022, in: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/03/opinion/kenya-presidential-elections.html> [6 February 2023].
- 45 Workshop 2023, n. 1.
- 46 Bachmann / Müller 2015, n. 14, p. 154.

Kenya

- 47 Eickhoff, Karoline 2022: Kenia: Ablehnung der russischen Invasion, ohne Partei zu ergreifen, 3 May 2022, in: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (ed.): Jenseits des Westens: Wie afrikanische und nahöstliche Staaten auf den Russland-Ukraine-Krieg blicken, in: <https://www.swp-berlin.org/publikation/jenseits-des-westens-wie-afrikanische-und-nahostliche-staaten-auf-den-russland-ukraine-krieg-blicken> [2 March 2024].
- 48 Background discussion 2023, n. 17.
- 49 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2023: Black people in the EU face ever more racism, FRA, 25 October 2023, in: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2023/black-people-eu-face-ever-more-racism> [7 May 2024].
- 50 Essombe, Christiane Ndedi / Maiangwa, Benjamin 2022: Racist Europe: The Ukraine Conflict and the Dark Underbelly of Euro-Modernity, The Elephant, 25 March 2022, in: <https://www.theelephant.info/analysis/2022/03/25/racist-europe-the-ukraine-conflict-and-the-dark-underbelly-of-euro-modernity/> [25 April 2024].
- 51 Homolar, Alexandra / Turner, Oliver 2024: Narrative alliances: the discursive foundations of international order, in: *International Affairs* 100, p. 1.
- 52 European Commission 2023: Global Gateway: launch of the Green Hydrogen Strategy and Roadmap for Kenya, 5 September 2023, in: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_4324 [10 January 2024].
- 53 Financial Times 2023: Kenya's William Ruto: 'We are not running away from our debt', 10 August 2023, in: <https://www.ft.com/content/214dbc09-c8ad-4645-b943-8a182a08bd46> [7 May 2024].
- 54 Workshop 2023, n. 1.
- 55 Ryder, Hannah 2024: African Lending Needs a Better World Bank, *Foreign Policy*, 18 April 2024, in: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/04/18/africa-finance-development-world-bank-imf-lending-reform/> [7 May 2024].



Colombia

Colombia: Ambivalences of an aspirational power

Günther Maihold

Under President Gustavo Petro, Colombia has moved to change its standing in the international arena. The new foreign policy gravitates towards the positions of the Global South while maintaining the country's traditional ties to the West. This repositioning is manifested in Colombian initiatives in four policy areas: energy transition and climate policy, Amazonia policy, international drug policy and expanding relations with Africa and in the Arab world. This change in status is associated with ambivalences that Germany and Europe must be prepared for in their dealings with Colombia as key partners if they want to establish a new international order on a broader basis.

1. Colombia in the new global order

When a left-wing government came to office for the first time under President Gustavo Petro (in 2022), it was not only domestic political priorities that then shifted in Colombia. Foreign policy has been marked by an unparalleled activism in the international arena, which is intended to buttress efforts to elevate the country's standing in international politics and raise Colombia to a new level of international recognition. To this end, the president is seeking to clearly align foreign policy action with the positions of the Global South while maintaining existing ties to the West.

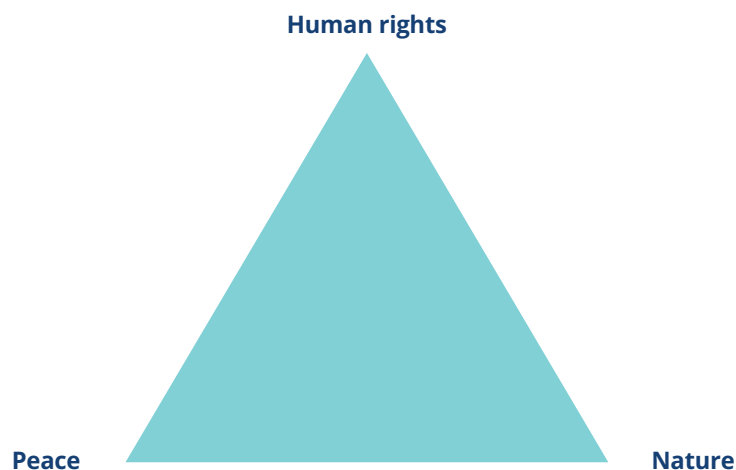
A much-feared veer towards China has failed to materialise; Colombia has so far been reticent about signing up to Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative, nor has it until recently shown any signs of moving closer to the positions of the BRICS+ countries. This changed during Brazilian President Lula da Silva's visit to Bogotá in April 2024, when Colombia's president proposed that his country join the BRICS in the near future, thereby enlisting Lula's support.

Colombia

So far, however, foreign policy has been more absorbed with setting national policy priorities rather than multilateral groupings. The country's political and diplomatic initiatives have remained limited to certain policy areas, while the president's continuous spate of foreign policy statements on X tend to weaken the country's international image.¹ Among these tweets, for instance, was an announcement of the president's highly controversial national decision that his government would abstain from awarding any more contracts for oil and gas exploration, coal exploration or hydrocarbons in general in order to drive the country's transition to a decarbonised economy.

Colombia wants to be perceived internationally as a "synonym for peace, diversity, nature and global leadership".² The president has summed up this policy programme under the banner "Colombia – potencia de la vida" (Colombia – power of life). This metaphor stands for a triad of objectives aiming to combine national priorities and international activism in these policy areas.

Figure 1: Political objectives of the Petro government "Colombia – potencia de la vida"



It is clear from this that Colombia's foreign policy pursues the image of an aspiring state seeking to improve its international standing through enhanced international visibility. The new era of active foreign policy is seen in close

Key regional players in the new global order

connection with the current era of global power shifts: The country wants to capitalise on these political reconfigurations.

President Petro clearly sees this in a strengthened positioning of the Global South: His actions are aimed at sensitising the international public to his policies and framing them so they can be integrated into transnational discussions. Much of the impetus for this comes from the president himself, however, who extensively leverages his central role in the formulation of the country's foreign policy to "denounce and eliminate inequality and injustice, show solidarity with fellow human beings, affirm their dignity and defend their integrity as autonomous and free actors" in the spirit of a foreign policy of the Global South.³

With his political statements on the attack by Hamas terrorists on Israel, which has played a central role in supplying Colombia with weapons to date, and the ensuing row with the Israeli government, Petro has clearly distanced himself from traditional Colombian foreign policy positions and sought through his rhetoric to close ranks with other countries of the Global South such as South Africa.⁴

This international activism is manifested in formal terms by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs being ordered to open ten more diplomatic missions during President Petro's four-year term, bringing the total number to 75 by 2026. These new embassies are to be located in Barbados, Haiti, Guyana, Ethiopia, Senegal, Saudi Arabia, New Zealand, the Czech Republic, Romania and Palestine. Colombia is also trying to make a name for itself as a host for important international conferences, such as COP 16 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Cali from 21 October to 1 November 2024 and as the venue for the next bi-regional summit between the EU and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños, CELAC) in 2025. In 2023, Colombia also joined the G7 Climate Club, which brings together countries with particularly ambitious climate policies that are committed to the Paris Agreement.

Colombia

Colombia's ties to the West: NATO and the OECD

Colombia's "unique selling point" compared to all other countries in the region is its status as a "global partner of NATO". The first formal steps towards partnership were taken in 2006, and a continuous process of formalisation has been underway since 2013.

The first step was the signing of an accord on cooperation and information security in 2017. The second step was the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) agreed upon in 2017 and ratified in 2018, thereby formally recognising Colombia as a "global partner". The most far-reaching agreement to date followed in 2021 with the signing of an Individually Tailored Partnership Programme (ITTP), providing for broad-based cooperation.⁵

In addition, Colombia was declared a "strategic ally of the USA outside NATO" by the USA in May 2022, opening up additional opportunities in the field of military cooperation. Both elements together were interpreted by observers as steps towards "transformation into a regional middle power and a locus for security, defence and peacebuilding at regional, hemispheric and global level".⁶

In addition to the rise of the Ministry of Defence as a foreign policy actor, this development was also associated with geographical diversification and an active presence in the multilateral realm, in particular the integration of countries with high material military capabilities into international institutions. In the region, Colombia's ties to NATO were perceived very critically,⁷ which can also be said for President Petro's political supporters. Nevertheless, cooperation with NATO has continued during his presidency.⁸ For the country's armed forces, opportunities for professionalisation and internationalisation have thus been preserved, further solidifying their Western orientation.

By joining the OECD in 2020, Colombia also made a bold move not only expected to help the country benefit from a significant boost in foreign direct investment and lower interest rates on international markets,⁹ but which was also celebrated as promotion to the "premier league" when it was announced in 2018. In terms of foreign policy, this move emphasised the Colombian interest in diversifying foreign relations and improving the image of a country that had long been on the fringes of international affairs and saddled with the image of a "problem country".

Key regional players in the new global order

After a lengthy admission process, Colombia has thus decided to commit to the OECD guidelines and to coordinate its economic policies with those of the OECD members; this sends a clear message to the international community in terms of economic security and the conditions for trade and investment as part of the Western camp. It is worth noting that Colombia is the only country in South America for whom the USA continues to be its main trading partner, while for its neighbouring countries China has had this status for more than a decade.

2. Colombia's foreign policy positioning

Security and peace are for Colombia central concepts in the context of its role in the international order. Domestic political priorities are decisive here: Close alignment with the USA, integration into regional or international alliances or extensive withdrawal from international affairs have alternated in wide swings over the decades.¹⁰ In this respect, subjecting the country to the dynamics of the international order dovetails with a certain domestic logic. The foreign policy orientations opted for by respective presidents have followed domestic political exigencies and have been strongly influenced by the simultaneity of an internal armed conflict with various guerrilla groups and a massive expansion of the drug economy – with a host of domestic and international consequences.

For example, the foreign policy pursued under President Juan Manuel Santos (2010–2018), which attained a high level of visibility on the international stage, was characterised by a very different approach to the US-oriented policy of his predecessor Álvaro Uribe Vélez (2002–2010).¹¹ Santos, as it were, sought to firmly integrate the country into multilateral formats – not least to support the peace process – under the banner of staunch internationalism and peace diplomacy. This strategy, dubbed “*respice omnia*”, was scaled back under his successor, Iván Duque (2018–2022), in an atmosphere of escalating political crisis with neighbouring Venezuela and subsequent massive migration flows to Colombia. Duque swung the focus back to the USA (referred to as Colombia's traditional foreign policy doctrine of “*respice polum*”)¹², coalescing with Colombia's neighbours to form an anti-Venezuelan front (Grupo de Lima¹³). The decisive linchpin here was to stress the duty of democratically governed states to take visible actions clearly promoting liberal values. Colombia was eager to finally be viewed as a solid member of the Liberal International Order (LIO).¹⁴

Colombia

Contributions to the international order, understood here as a constellation of functional and regional sub-orders characterised by differing levels of relevance and widely varying configurations of actors,¹⁵ boiled down more to heterodox contributions by a state that was and still is interested in the legitimacy and effectiveness of the LIO. Various Colombian governments have followed this orientation by repeatedly placing a strong focus on certain target groups abroad which are also relevant as sounding boards for domestic policy: These may vary from political circles in Washington to European states or the EU, depending on the political orientation of the respective president, and serve as a tool to scale certain values up or down and also craft supporting measures.¹⁶

Irrespective of all this, there is always an inherent interest in influencing the perception of one's own country through international positioning – be it through strategic membership in important organisations such as NATO or the OECD, membership in informal decision-making bodies such as the Lima Group or access to key financial sources, for example in the USA in the fight against “terrorism” as part of Plan Colombia. With this “performance” blueprint, Colombia is seeking to distinguish itself as a respectable member of the LIO, even if this was only possible in a secondary role for a long time.¹⁷

A more recent example of how Colombia has attained greater salience is its acceptance of an influx of more than two million refugees from Venezuela, which has decidedly boosted the country's international reputation thanks to its policy of granting these persons temporary protection status. The country has been termed a “global leader” in migration policy.¹⁸

3. How does Colombia view the role of Europe/Germany in the new global order?

Over the past decade, the European Union, its Member States and Germany in particular have served as stabilising international factors in the peace process in Colombia since the agreement forged with the FARC guerrillas in 2016 – often in opposition to the government of Colombia, as was the case under the presidency of Iván Duque. This role has been expanded into a common dialogue under President Petro, whose political initiatives in the areas of peace policy, climate change and drug policy are in line with central European narratives.

Key regional players in the new global order

The Colombian side is addressing clear demands to the EU and Germany, however, to ensure that plans become political reality. In particular, Colombia has presented plans aiming to drive forward changes in the international order in what Colombia considers to be key policy areas, although the country is also seeking international solidarity with other nations (particularly in the Global South).

Colombia's view of Germany and Europe underscores the difficulties faced by a country that is striving to change its international standing under the current government, but at the same time is not yet able to assume a clear position in the changing global order. Current conditions are favourable for cooperation with Germany, as it is Colombia's fifth largest trading partner with a trade volume of 53.6 billion euros (2023) and the largest trading partner in the EU. The areas of cooperation agreed upon so far are peace, social cohesion, migration, climate and energy as well as the environment and natural resources, especially forest and conservation of biodiversity, to which have been added a partnership for climate and a just energy transition since June 2023 as well as a migration agreement concluded in 2024.

Germany's bilateral engagement with Colombia is an element of its international development cooperation, with Colombia being the ninth largest recipient of ODA payments in 2022. Against the backdrop of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Colombia stepped in when Germany went shopping for a replacement for Russian energy sources. In Germany as in Colombia, the massive increase in coal production and electricity generation has been subject to criticism, with President Petro himself repeatedly making reference to the international challenge posed by the need to advance the phase-out of "fossil capitalism" and transform it into "carbon-free capitalism".¹⁹

Despite the strong cooperative ties between Germany and Colombia, it is much more difficult for the two countries to reach an understanding when it comes to shaping a new global order. Their different points of departure have not yet been able to converge. In Colombia, for example, one clear priority is an expansion of national autonomy, which is accompanied by a demand for compensation for damage inflicted (for example in the area of the environment due to the exploitation of resources or in the repatriation of objects from Colombia's archaeological heritage) with commensurately expanded financing options for cooperation.

Colombia

This attitude reveals a wariness of excessive international political and economic interdependence, a desire to avoid exposure and vulnerability and a prioritisation of national interests. These attributes, consistent with the foreign policy orientation of countries in the Global South,²⁰ imply that the constraints on common positions regarding how to reshape the international order are narrow and limited to certain policy areas.

There is only a very limited willingness to accept global concepts from Europe, for example, and Colombia adopts a defensive or reactive stance when it comes to its inclusion in propositions along such lines. This is not least due to the fact that the country wants to conserve and marshal its scarce foreign policy resources by avoiding commitments to comprehensive collective cooperation. This basic attitude is linked to the principle of “like-mindedness”, which is understood from the Colombian perspective as an “umbrella identity” and is not – as in the Western understanding – based on a notion of sharing fundamental political values and principles. European intentions of identifying an “in-group” of like-minded countries and differentiating these from an “out-group” in order to portray them as opposing or even threatening are thus spurned.

In terms of specific foreign policy actions, the Petro government wants to emphasise its multilateral commitment with Europe as a partner and at the same time underscore that Colombia’s one-sided ties to the USA under the previous government are a thing of the past. To this end, concrete initiatives are in the pipeline to achieve symmetrical relations between the countries of the Global South and North (in this case Europe) and bring about a balance in terms of development opportunities. The country sees itself as a “norm entrepreneur” in the policy field, with concrete demands for action addressed to Europe insofar as (behavioural) norms are to be questioned, their change influenced or new norms established. The European Union is thus being called upon by Colombia to walk the talk in order to bring about structurally effective changes to the global agenda.

Key regional players in the new global order

a) Swapping foreign debt for carbon credits in Amazonia (Debt for Nature / Climate Action Swaps)

This initiative by Colombia calls for a global issue of special drawing rights by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to enable the participating countries to obtain funds to promote adaptation to climate change as well as mitigation and thus strengthen sustainability policy. The motivation underlying this is the constraints on the fiscal latitude of countries affected by climate change due to foreign debt, which impairs their ability to fund adaptation and climate protection measures as well as compensate losses and damage worldwide. On top of this, Colombia led a proposal sponsored by France, Kenya and Ghana to swap foreign debt for climate change-related measures presented at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 28) in Dubai and the United Nations General Assembly.²¹

b) Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP)

Colombia has applied to the G7 for a JETP to gain access to this innovative decarbonisation financing model, which is in particular designed to support the transition away from coal production and consumption while mitigating the social impact. To date, South Africa (2021) and Indonesia (2022) have signed similar agreements for a socially just energy transition,²² which is to be achieved by creating alternative jobs for the workers affected and new economic opportunities for stakeholder communities. As the conclusion of further JETP agreements has been announced and four other countries will be participating, Colombia, with the support of Germany, is endeavouring to qualify for a JETP agreement and thereby expand the existing project cooperation on a bilateral basis in the International Climate Initiative (ICI).

c) Reorientation of international drug policy

At a meeting of the United Nations International Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) held in Vienna on 14/15 March 2024, a coalition of 62 countries led by Colombia called for a reform of the international drug control system, which has been in force unchanged since the height of the war on drugs under the rubric Vienna Consensus. A joint declaration issued there emphasised the catastrophic consequences of punitive drug policies, which foster

Colombia

violence, corruption and environmental destruction while undermining health, development and human rights.

In his speech, Colombia's President Petro described the current international system as "anachronistic and inert" and called for a transformation of global drug policy.²³ Against the votes of China and Russia, a resolution was passed for the first time in the history of the drug control regime that mentions the principle of "harm reduction", thus establishing a connection between drug policy and the system of human rights protection.²⁴ This has also been underlined in relations with Europe by Colombia agreeing to co-chair the CELAC-EU coordination and cooperation mechanism for drug issues in February 2024.

Closely linked to this is the transition away from the illegal economy (drugs, illegal mining, biodiversity theft) including in those areas of Colombia where the state does not have effective territorial control.²⁵ As a component of "total peace", as Petro's concept for achieving a peace agreement with all violent actors in the country is called,²⁶ ways and means are to be found to create legal economic opportunities on the basis of international support. This focus of government action is intended to completely pacify conflict zones where the presence of transnational multi-criminal gangs feeds and sustains the illegal economy.

d) Proposal for an environmental court and a NATO-like military treaty for Amazonia

At the Amazonia Summit United for Our Forests staged in Belém Do Pará, Brazil, during the fourth meeting of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organisation (OTCA) for the protection and restoration of the rainforest, President Petro proposed an International Environmental Court for Amazonia to adjudicate crimes against the region and afford recognition to the rights of the Amazon rainforest. He also called for an Amazonia NATO in the form of a military and legal treaty to monitor illegal economies and their routes through the Amazon rainforest through military co-operation. This is proposed to be carried out while respecting sovereignty, but through coordinated action, for which he suggested a meeting be scheduled to be attended by the defence ministers of the eight Amazon riparian states

Key regional players in the new global order

(Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guyana, Colombia, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela) to prepare a corresponding agreement.

This brought the Colombian president into open confrontation with his Brazilian counterpart Lula da Silva due to the former's criticism of "fossil capitalism" as well as in particular the refusal of the "left" in Latin America to abandon the use of fossil fuels and tendency to postpone corresponding decisions going in this direction.²⁷ Petro was clearly alluding to Brazil's interest in continuing to exploit oil and gas deposits in the Amazon Delta – a position that has also been strongly criticised internationally. Petro did not succeed in establishing his priorities regionally and gaining the support of his partners, however – not least due to the intransigence of the Brazilian president.

Ambiguities and convergences: The reach of Colombia as an aspirational power

Reference has already been made to a traditional element of Colombia's foreign policy: The excessive demands the country places on itself in its foreign policy activities.²⁸ These lofty demands are at odds with the inadequate economic and political resources with which to bring sustainable international influence to bear, foot the associated costs and leverage opportunities to set out on a successful trajectory toward global responsibility.

Much therefore is aspirational; the change in standing at the regional and international levels sought by the country runs the risk of remaining piecemeal. Power shifts in the international order do not immediately open up opportunities for countries such as Colombia; for this to happen, context (international contextual conditions), content (content of the new projection) and choice (political decisions) must be meaningfully related or even concur. It is not only because of the country's wide array of positions that an image of a fragmented and casuistic foreign policy has emerged, marked by the lack of an institutional approach to foreign policy and incoherent initiatives.²⁹

This affects Colombia's efforts to assert its weight more in the world, but at the same time also reflects the ambivalences characterising the foreign policy of key states in the Global South today.³⁰ If the aim is an active foreign policy

Colombia

profile for Colombia coupled with expanding international influence, as envisaged by President Petro, then the president's statements on X, which are more geared towards political activism (e.g. in relation to the Gaza war), are not particularly helpful,³¹ as they are highly personalised and largely void of any institutional underpinning from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They can therefore be read as populist foreign policy for domestic consumption, seeking to mobilise support on the home front.³² These proposals are based on a limited capacity for coalition-building and are aimed at a policy field-related "like-mindedness" that is not understood as an identity-based geostrategic practice, but rather as an "umbrella identity" of "like-mindedness" seeking to mesh with the discourse of the Global South.³³

Colombia is pursuing an active foreign policy in the present day, it is sponsoring initiatives in the areas of peace policy, energy transition and biodiversity policy (initiation of changes in norms, efforts to build coalitions, etc.) and strategically utilising the limited resources available. But for this approach to be successful and to turn its own aspirations into a reality, an expansion of foreign policy capacities is required. Whether the country systematically relies on a strategic ambiguity, adopting the discourse of the Global South on the one hand and embedding itself in Western structures on the other, currently seems to be more a function of the Petro government's domestic political priorities than of fundamental guiding principles.

In the face of a global order characterised by competition and a complex network of varying sub-orders, the Petro government would appear to be on the lookout for unsolidified power structures that offer opportunities for the country to advance its own proposals above and beyond the entrenched alliances of the West through an active – at times activist – foreign policy. The rhetorical and symbolic involvement in the Global South to be heard in the president's discourse and simultaneous bonding with NATO and the OECD enable Colombia to negotiate its position at the interfaces of these orders and leverage this in a manner that promotes its own national interests.

4. Outlook and recommendations for action for German and European stakeholders

Despite all the ambivalences, points of convergence with Germany and Europe need to be expanded and promoted. This applies to the area of energy and climate policy (where joint initiatives with Kenya and Turkey are also crystallising) as well as to the elaboration of international drug policy and in relation to Amazonia (constrained in this case, however, by Brazil's tough position). But even such options cannot overcome two fundamental problems facing Colombian foreign policy: On the one hand, much of the country's international behaviour is intended for domestic consumption; on the other, Colombia presents itself internationally as if it had already resolved its profound internal problems (insecurity, armed conflict, etc.).³⁴

When political community-building moves beyond interest-led cooperation in certain policy realms, thereby triggering the formation of camps, the limits of Colombia's willingness to cooperate are quickly reached. Possibilities for cooperation in the field of security and defence policy within the framework of German-Colombian and European-Colombian relations have been created in the guise of Colombia's global NATO partnership. Even if these opportunities must at the present juncture be viewed more as potential, they could be used to redefine the role of the military, as a great deal of trust and confidence has been built up within the armed forces in this connection.

German and European dialogue with countries of the Global South needs to take this into account if the very dynamic nature of bilateral cooperation as a whole is not to descend into a reciprocal adoption of perspectives, but rather develop into a perception in Europe that Colombia sees its in-between positioning as a country with an orientation towards the Global South while bonding with the West as an opportunity to expand the implementation of national priorities and its influence on international politics. Coping with what is perceived in Germany as the country's positional inconsistency in questions of the international order with regard to affiliations and recognition must be learnt in other formats, as it stands in contrast to the German desire for unambiguity and loyalty in times of change. "Politics in a world full of frenemies requires a high tolerance for ambiguity and must be able to withstand ambiguity. It must dispense with grand gestures and pseudo-radical proposals

Colombia

that suggest 'moral clarity', but would often achieve the opposite of what is desired."³⁵

In the web of relations between Germany/Europe and Colombia, Bogotá has always tended to react to the international environment and sought to consolidate political and economic room for manoeuvre. This position, labelled "active non-alignment" in the field of academia,³⁶ is very flexible in actual political practice and requires an intensive, in-depth exchange on a level playing ground, which cannot only be performed by traditional travelling diplomacy, and must instead extend to all levels of diplomatic action.

This also means abandoning preconceived notions and positions while engaging in coordination and negotiation processes that are time-consuming and not always successful. In describing this path and learning how to cope with the ambiguity and political ambivalences of a country that is seeking a change in its standing, it would be advisable for Germany to negotiate divergent positions with a key partner in Latin America (aside from Brazil) and possibly seek a convergence of these positions.

Key regional players in the new global order

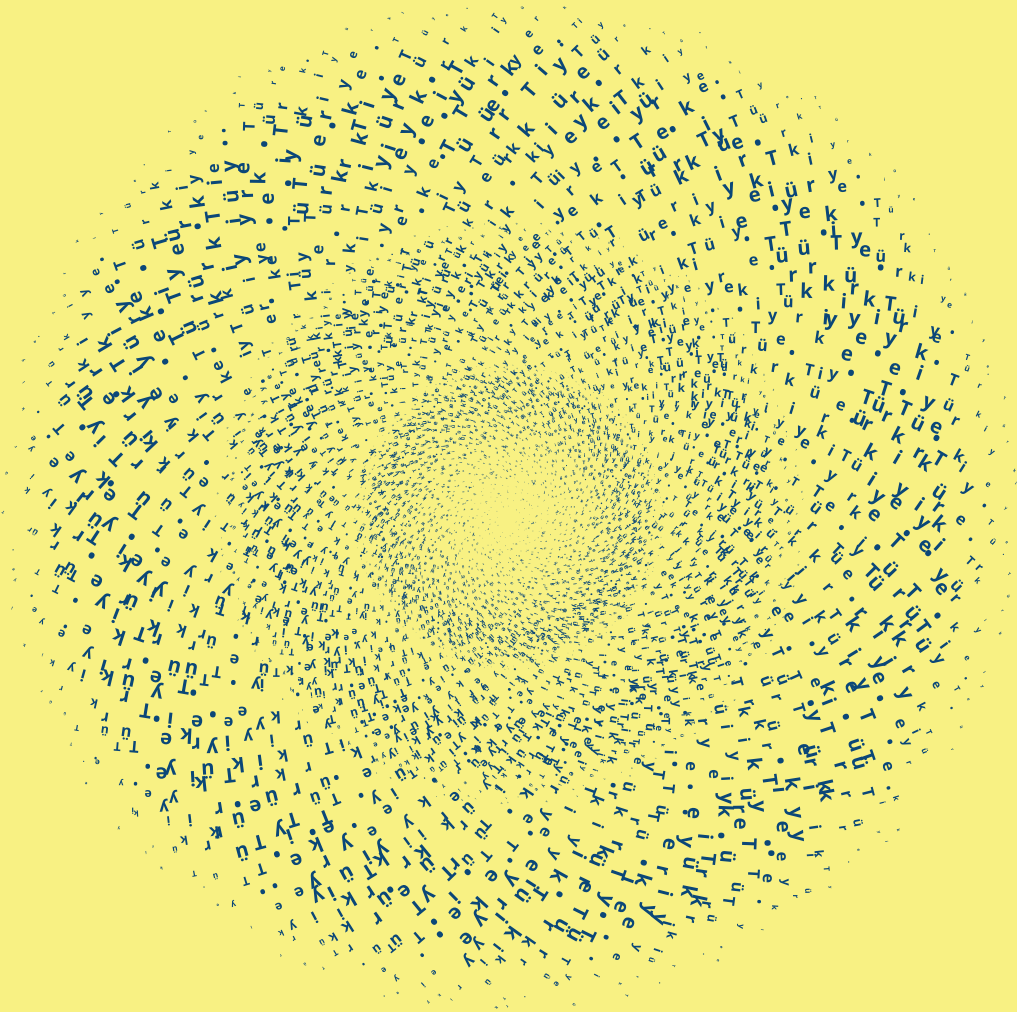
- 1 Restrepo, María José 2023: El presidente X: diplomacia tuitera de Petro debilita su voz ante el mundo, in: <https://www.lasillavacia.com/silla-nacional/el-presidente-x-diplomacia-tuitera-de-petro-debilta-su-voz-ante-el-mundo/> [12 August 2024].
- 2 Cancillería de Colombia 2023: Plan Estratégico Sectorial 2023-2026, 23 October 2023, p. 2, in: <https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/sites/default/files/2023-10-23%20Plan%20Estrat%C3%A9gico%20Sectorial%202023-2026%20versi%C3%B3n%20preliminar.pdf> [17 June 2024].
- 3 Tickner, Arlene B. / Monroy, María Catalina 2022: Política Exterior de Colombia: Más Allá De Los Lugares Comunes, *Desafíos* 34, p. 3.
- 4 El Colombiano 2024: Colombia manifestó su apoyo a Sudáfrica por demandar a Israel por genocidio, 14 April 2024, in: <https://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/gobierno-colombiano-expreso-su-respaldo-a-sudafrica-en-demanda-contra-israel-por-genocidio-HE23504553> [17 June 2024].
- 5 The parties are thus committed to sharing information, knowledge, experience and capacities in areas such as peacebuilding, cyber security, maritime security, transnational organised crime and humanitarian demining, anti-corruption, mitigating climate change and its impacts, improving the interoperability of the Colombian armed forces through training and education, and high standards and best practices in the areas of transparency, gender equality and the protection of civilians and children in armed conflict.
- 6 Calderón, Pardo / Ramiro, Daniel 2022: La política exterior colombiana en materia de seguridad y paz desde el constructivismo: consolidando identidades e intereses, *Desafíos* 34 (Especial), pp. 1–29.
- 7 González Martínez, Miguel Antonio et al. 2022: Colombia y la OTAN: ¿Una alianza estratégica de disuasión o de contención?, in: *Revista de Relaciones Internacionales, Estrategia y Seguridad*, 17: 1, pp. 87–100.
- 8 Reith, Stefan 2024: Kolumbien als globaler Partner der NATO. Eine Sicherheitspartnerschaft mit Substanz, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2 April 2024 (mimeo).
- 9 Castro, Rafael / González, Paula 2015: Las organizaciones de la arquitectura global y el posconflicto colombiano: el caso de la cooperación de la ONU, el Banco Mundial y la OCDE, in: Pastrana, Eduardo / Gehring, Hubert (eds.): *Política exterior colombiana. Escenarios y desafíos en el postconflicto*, Bogotá, pp. 293–315.
- 10 Borda Guzmán, Sandra 2019: ¿Por qué somos tan parroquiales? Breve y fragmentada historia de la política exterior colombiana, Bogotá; Ramírez, Socorro / Restrepo, Luis Alberto (eds.) 1997: *Colombia: entre la inserción y el aislamiento. La política exterior colombiana en los años noventa*, Bogotá, IEPRI.
- 11 “To progress towards democratic prosperity a greater diversification of Colombian international relations shall be necessary both, in the multilateral environment and in the search of new partners and strategic alliances within international scope.” Juan Manuel Santos, President of Colombia, August 2010, in: <https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/en/principles-and-outlines-colombian-foreign-policy> [17 June 2024].

Colombia

- 12 Monroy, María Catalina 2022: Foreign Policy of Colombia, Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies, 21 December 2022, in: <https://oxfordre.com/internationalstudies/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-741> [17 June 2024].
- 13 Busso, Anabella Estela 2021: El Grupo de Lima: entre las fallas de origen y la salida de Argentina, in: Nueva Sociedad 4-2021, pp. 1–10; Chaves García, Carlos Alberto 2020: La crisis política en Venezuela y el papel del Grupo de Lima: balance y desafíos de su acción diplomática, in: Revista de Relaciones Internacionales, Estrategia y Seguridad 15: 1, pp. 177–193.
- 14 Palma-Gutiérrez, Mauricio / Long, Tom 2022: Política exterior colombiana y performatividad: ¿Un ‚buen miembro‘ del Orden Internacional Liberal?, in: Desafíos 34, pp. 1–31.
- 15 Maull, Hanns W. 2018: Introduction: The International Order: A Framework for Analysis', in: Maull, Hanns W. (ed.): The Rise and Decline of the Post-Cold War International Order, Oxford, pp. 1–24.
- 16 Cf. on this logic of action: Börzel, Tanja / Panke, Diana 2013: Europeanisation, in: Cini, Michelle / Pérez-Solórzano Borragan, Nieves (eds.): European Union Politics, Oxford, pp. 115–127.
- 17 Palma-Gutiérrez / Long, n. 14, p. 8.
- 18 Rossiasco, Paula / de Narváez, Patricia 2023: Adapting public policies in response to an unprecedented influx of refugees and migrants: Colombia case study of migration from Venezuela, World Bank 4/2023, in: <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/7277e925bdaa64d6355c42c897721299-0050062023/original/WDR-Colombia-Case-Study-FORMATTED.pdf> [17 June 2024].
- 19 Fossil Fuel Treaty 2023: Colombia's President Gustavo Petro calls for a Fossil Fuel Treaty at COP28, 6 December 2023, in: <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/blog/petro-full-speech> [17 June 2024].
- 20 Allès, Delphine / Brun, Elodie 2023: Mobilizing the South: Pluralising and Complexifying Multilateralism, in: Guilbaud, Auriane et al. (eds.): Crisis of Multilateralism? Challenges and Resilience, Cham, pp. 177–198.
- 21 Freixes, Josep 2023: Colombia Reiterates Debt Swap for Climate Action at Dubai COP28 Summit, Colombia One, 29 November 2023, in: <https://colombiaone.com/2023/11/29/colombia-debt-exchange-climate-action-cop28/> [17 June 2024].
- 22 von Lüpke, Heiner / Aebischer, Charlotte / Bolaños, Martha 2023: Internationale Partnerschaften für eine gerechte Energiewende: Erkenntnisse aus der Zusammenarbeit mit Südafrika, Berlin: DIW Wochenbericht 5, pp. 47–54.
- 23 Fordham, Ann 2024: 'Starting here. Starting now.' Pro-reform coalition led by Colombia calls time on failed drug war at UN high level drugs meeting, IDPC (International Drug Policy Consortium), 18 March 2024, in: <https://idpc.net/blog/2024/03/starting-here-starting-now-pro-reform-coalition-led-by-colombia-calls-time-on-failed-drug-war-at> [17 June 2024].

Key regional players in the new global order

- 24 Commission on Narcotic Drugs 2024: Sixty-seventh session, Vienna, 14–22 March 2024, Agenda item 5 (e): Implementation of the international drug control treaties: other matters arising from the international drug control treaties, in: https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/CND_Sessions/CND_67/Documents/ECN72024L5Rev2_unedited_revised.pdf [17 June 2024].
- 25 Osorio, Camila 2024: Petro gana y pierde batallas en su empeño de cambiar el rumbo de la política de drogas, *El País*, 31 March 2024, in: <https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2024-03-31/petro-gana-y-pierde-batallas-en-su-empeno-de-cambiar-el-rumbo-de-la-politica-de-drogas.html> [17 June 2024].
- 26 Maihold, Günther 2022: Kolumbiens Weg zum „totalen Frieden“: Präsident Gustavo Petro kann nicht auf die FARC-Blaupause zurückgreifen, *Berlin SWP-aktuell* 55.
- 27 Petro, Gustavo 2023: Intervención del Presidente Gustavo Petro en la Cumbre de la Amazonía, Belém do Pará, Brazil on 8 August 2023, in: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ehsae42q_Mk [17 June 2024].
- 28 Pastrana Buelvas, Eduardo / Velosa, Eduardo / Vera, Diego 2023: Política exterior colombiana: la agenda de Gustavo Petro, Bogotá, p. 23.
- 29 Borda Guzmán, Sandra / Silva Luján, Gabriel 2023: La política exterior del gobierno de Petro. A la espera de una hoja de ruta, in: *Foreign Affairs Latinoamericana* 23: 3, p. 36.
- 30 Haug, Sebastian / Braveboy-Wagner, Jacqueline / Maihold, Günther 2021: The ‘Global South’ in the study of world politics: examining a meta category, in: *Third World Quarterly* 42: 9, pp. 1923–1944.
- 31 Santaaulalia, Inés 2023: La diplomacia de Twitter resquebraja la política exterior de Petro, *El País*, 15 December 2023, in: <https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2023-12-15/la-diplomacia-de-twitter-resquebraja-la-politica-exterior-de-petro.html> [17 June 2024].
- 32 Magalhães Teixeira, Barbara 2024: Room to Grow and the Right to Say No: Theorizing the Liberatory Power of Peace in the Global South, *Geopolitics*, 02 January 2024.
- 33 Destradi, Sandra / Plagemann, Johannes / Taş, Hakki 2022: Populism and the politicisation of foreign policy, in: *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 24: 3, pp. 475–492.
- 34 Borda Guzmán, Sandra 2019: ¿Por qué somos tan parroquiales? Breve y fragmentada historia de la política exterior colombiana, Bogotá, p.88.
- 35 Lau, Jörg 2020: Die große Ambivalenz, in: *Internationale Politik* 1, pp. 22–27.
- 36 Heine, Jorge 2023: Non-Alignment is Back in the Global South, Albeit in a Different Incarnation, *Global Development Policy Centre*, 27 February 2023, in: <https://www.bu.edu/gdp/2023/02/27/non-alignment-is-back-in-the-global-south-albeit-in-a-different-incarnation/> [17 June 2024].



Türkiye

Türkiye: Remain in the West, act autonomously

Bruno Hamm-Pütt, Daria Isachenko

1. Türkiye in the new global order

In Türkiye, current geopolitical diagnoses that see a polarisation into “camps” and “axes” harken back to outdated 20th-century bloc thinking, and fail to recognise the multipolar interdependencies of the present day.¹ For Ankara, the ideal situation would be a world that is neither unipolar, bipolar nor multipolar. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan has articulated this desire in pointed terms: Ankara would welcome “a robust system based on solidarity and not polarity”.²

One of the most important trends influencing Ankara’s positioning in this regard is the anticipated waning of the role played by the West, especially the USA. According to surveys, a majority of just under 60 per cent still regard the USA as the most influential player in global politics. In five years’ time, however, Washington’s current predominance is expected to erode clearly in favour of China. Only 33 per cent think that the USA will still be the most influential player, while China is expected to achieve parity.³

This forecast has already prompted the Turkish establishment to conclude that: “We are living in a less Westernised or perhaps even post-Western world.”⁴ The geopolitical sea change taking place is hence viewed by Ankara as an opportunity to expand its own role in the global order. At the same time, the Turkish leadership is convinced that this need not be to the detriment of the West, as Türkiye could act as a liaison in many regions where Western interests are also affected over the medium term.⁵

In fact, alongside increased self-confidence and efforts to assert its own interests, Ankara’s current aims and objectives still have a decidedly Western orientation.⁶ Against this backdrop, the Turkish foreign minister considers his

Türkiye

country's role to be that of “a problem-solver, system improver and transformer actor in the regional and in international affairs”.⁷ In October 2023, he spelled out what this means for Ankara's foreign policy in the form of four goals:⁸

1. Türkiye assigns priority to its security interests in the surrounding regions. A number of areas of conflict stand out: Russia's invasion of Ukraine to the north along with its repercussions for the Black Sea; on Türkiye's eastern border with the South Caucasus, where the role of Iran is also part of the equation; and to the south, the civil war in Syria. Türkiye's top security priority remains the containment of Kurdish aspirations to attain autonomy in Syria and Iraq, which it views as a threat to its own security. The military struggle against the PKK/YPG, ISIS,⁹ which Ankara considers to be proxies, has traditionally occupied a special place in Turkish foreign policy.¹⁰ Since 7 October 2023, the conflict between Israel and Hamas can be added to this list, with Ankara posturing as an outspoken supporter of Palestinian interests.
2. Ankara is striving to strengthen the institutionalisation of those foreign relations considered by Türkiye to be of strategic value, and is acting to deepen regional models of multilateral cooperation. Relations with the USA, primarily resting upon the NATO alliance, are also of key importance.¹¹ It should also be noted that, according to official statements by Ankara, full EU membership is also assigned “strategic priority”. In recent times, the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) has also been playing a more prominent role for Ankara. With Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan as Member States, the OTS is the only organisation in post-Soviet territory that is not headed by Russia. At the same time, the OTS links the South Caucasus with Central Asia.
3. Overall, economic interests are a prime motive underlying Turkish foreign policy.¹² In its cooperation with the EU, modernisation of the customs union as well as visa liberalisation and the easing of restrictions are of tremendous importance in order to assure the growth of the Turkish economy.¹³ Furthermore, Ankara believes that energy projects and connectivity are crucial in order to secure a key position in global trade and energy chains. Special emphasis is placed on the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP, part of the Southern Gas Corridor) and the Trans-Caspian

Key regional players in the new global order

East-West Corridor, the so-called Middle Corridor – a trade route that has gained currency for the EU after February 24, 2022. Together with Iraq, efforts are being made to accelerate the Development Road Project infrastructure project in order to establish a competitive goods transport conduit from East Asia to Europe.

4. Ankara is increasingly engaging outside its own region in order to “offer solutions to global problems”.¹⁴ Türkiye has been particularly active in Africa for a number of years, as shown for example by the framework agreement concluded with Somalia in February 2024 on defence and economic cooperation in the Horn of Africa. In Africa, Ankara likes to pose as an anti-imperial and anti-colonial alternative to the West. As regards to the Asian region, Türkiye presented the Asia Anew Initiative in 2019, in which Türkiye views itself as the “easternmost European and westernmost Asian country”, emphasising the potential for cooperation in matters of trade, investment, transport, logistics and infrastructure.¹⁵ There are also plans to strengthen links with Latin America and the Caribbean. With the Antalya Diplomacy Forum (ADF), a platform has been created along these lines, projecting Turkish ambitions in a prominent manner and generating media attention far beyond its own national borders.

Fidan’s analysis of foreign policy goals indicates that Ankara is seeking to exploit the potential of strategic autonomy in the newly emerging global order without wanting to drift away from the West. In realising these projects, the relationship between ideological preference and the pursuit of economic interests is not always consistent. Furthermore, communication tends to be spun to align with the perception of the respective recipient. Political justifications often diverge from governmental or diplomatic statements. Thus, members of the Turkish government at times employ harsh rhetoric, while representatives of the state assume a more solution-orientated posture and display a willingness to talk. How does this constellation affect Türkiye’s perception and role in the emerging systemic conflict?

In order to explore aspects relating to all this, the Türkiye office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung organised two workshops in Ankara (held in December 2023 and February 2024) with selected experts from the strategic community. The following text is largely based on the results produced by the workshops.

Türkiye

Especially against the background of the critical attitude toward Türkiye, its government and its President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan widespread in Germany, the focus was placed on arriving at consensus foreign policy positions over and beyond political (party) affiliations. This is also because German observers like to describe Türkiye's foreign policy as a continuation of domestic policy by other means.¹⁶ Such an approach is hence particularly relevant if the ultimate aim is to devise a strategic approach to dealings with Türkiye.

2. Türkiye's foreign policy positioning

The fact that perceptions of Türkiye in Germany and the West are generally preoccupied with Erdoğan is not least due to the extensive powers granted to the Turkish president since the constitutional reform that passed by referendum in 2017.¹⁷ In addition, Erdoğan's style of rule is highly personalised, not only in terms of domestic policy, but also foreign policy: High-level meetings with political actors from other countries constantly churn out images intended to underpin Erdoğan's importance and Türkiye's influence. While Erdoğan's policies are sometimes viewed as opportunistic and unpredictable in the West, his leadership style receives broad support in Türkiye: As long as foreign policy works toward Turkish interests, changes in course do not trigger any sustained debate.¹⁸ The main factors conditioning Turkish foreign policy are the Republic's historical heritage and Türkiye's geographical location.

Historical heritage: between grandeur and insecurity

As a post-imperial state, Türkiye's foreign policy discourse is marked by *grand narratives*.¹⁹ On the one hand, the imperial past transports a sense of greatness and pride while serving as a basis for legitimising regional claims.

In the wake of the East-West conflict, for example, former Prime Minister Turgut Özal described the 21st century as the "Turkish century", while former Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel situated the Turkish world "from the Adriatic to the Great Wall of China". Another example is the concept expounded by former Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, who sees Türkiye as a geopolitically "central country" (*merkez ülke*), giving it a key role in neighbouring regions.

Key regional players in the new global order

Even today, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan still refers to “Türkiye’s century”. On the other hand, Türkiye also has an ambivalent relationship with its imperial past. The protracted process of disintegration of the Ottoman Empire has left a legacy of insecurity that also characterises today’s elites in Türkiye.

In particular, the Syrian civil war that began in 2011 has caused a “siege mentality” to develop among the Turkish political elite. This revolves around the fear of autonomous Kurdish statehood on the border with Türkiye. In this context, the so-called Sèvres syndrome has often been invoked: The Treaty of Sèvres, signed in August 1920, sealed the fate of the Ottoman Empire and its dissolution after its defeat in World War I. Thanks to the successful Turkish war of liberation under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk), this was largely reversed in 1923 with the Treaty of Lausanne. Even today, however, there is still a widespread perception that the Western powers are striving for the territorial disintegration of Türkiye.

Thus, the aim and intent of being a recognised member of the West has been intertwined with a certain feeling of insecurity towards the West right from the outset. Since the founding of the state, Türkiye’s orientation towards the West has therefore been associated with the intention of warding off Western interference from the republic. For if the new Türkiye republic was perceived as part of the West and no longer as an enemy of Europe, then, in the mind of the Turkish political elite, it could escape the fate of the Ottoman Empire – Turkish territory would be protected.

Historically and at present, the West is therefore both part and parcel of the problem as well as part of the solution for Türkiye. This connection must be viewed as a structural factor that influences Turkish foreign policy in a manner transcending the particular government that happens to be in power.

Türkiye

Which West?

Ankara views the current crisis in the Western community of states with regard to its self-image, political model and role in the global order as the product of universalist presumptuousness and audacity. In the wake of the Cold War, the collective West set about imposing its notions and designs on other countries and regions outside the West and failed. At the same time, its universalist claim clouded the view of Western powers to the vital interests of other actors, such as Türkiye, whose role was not sufficiently taken into account.²⁰ From Ankara's perspective, the West also displays multiple facets: the cultural West, the West as a development model, the geopolitical West, the institutional West.²¹

The assertion of Ankara's own interests, particularly in terms of security policy, is in turn sowing the seeds of doubt as to Türkiye's ties to the West. This is also perceived in Türkiye. In response, it is then pointed out that the homogenising label "West" is a catch-all for very different aspects toward which Türkiye has a differentiated attitude. So when Türkiye's reliability is called into question in the West, this gives rise to the counter-question: Which West should Türkiye remain part of? Thus, Western values are affirmed in principle, but there is often a difference of opinion regarding their concrete implementation. This difference has been manifesting itself since 7 October 2023, particularly in relation to Israel's fight against the terrorist organisation Hamas.

Türkiye is also prepared to make strategic compromises when it comes to Western interests. Nevertheless, these need to be reciprocal. This is not the case, however, because while expectations are constantly being heaped upon Ankara, a blind eye is often turned to Turkish challenges and interests. From a Turkish perspective, this imbalance is particularly evident in Syria, in terror threats associated with Kurdish aspirations for autonomy and in Russia, whose geographical proximity to Türkiye is ignored. When it comes to the sanctions regime, the main criticism levied is that it is not coordinated with Ankara. Instead, Ankara is expected to fall into line.

And all this, so the argument goes, despite the fact that Türkiye is an integral part of the institutional West. Indeed, Türkiye joined the Council of Europe just one year after it was founded in 1950. Since 1963, Türkiye has had an associa-

Key regional players in the new global order

tion agreement with the EU, which was expanded in 1995 when Türkiye joined the customs union. Even though accession negotiations with the EU, which got underway in 2005, have been on hold since 2016, accession remains a strategic goal in the Turkish government's official statements.²²

NATO membership is key to Türkiye's perception of its role in the institutional West, however. The country became an early member of the defence alliance in 1952. Since the end of the Cold War and NATO's changing approach towards an alliance that is committed to a liberal-democratic mission and does not see itself solely as a military defence alliance, however, tensions have repeatedly cropped up.²³

Ankara's view of NATO is also influenced by the USA as a leading power. In particular, Washington's cooperation with the Kurdish YPG in northern Syria and the asylum afforded to Islamist preacher Fethullah Gülen, who is said to have been behind the attempted coup staged in 2016, are perceived as indifference toward Turkish security interests. This perception was also confirmed in the protracted NATO admission process for Finland and Sweden: Ankara demanded stepped-up action against international networks that pose a terrorist threat to Türkiye as a precondition for the Nordic countries to become part of the alliance.²⁴

Nevertheless, the Turkish armed forces' willingness and ability to operate within the framework of NATO missions is highly developed and an element of Türkiye's strategic self-image.²⁵ Surveys indicate that society also shares this view of the importance of NATO: Between 2021 and 2023, approval ratings for NATO and the importance of the defence alliance for the country's security soared from 70 to 80 per cent.²⁶

Against this background, it is in part understandable that it causes irritation in Türkiye when Türkiye's reliability is questioned on the basis of implicit comparisons – such as the discussions about "Türkiye-NATO relations" – without at the same time taking Ankara's ongoing contribution into account.

Türkiye

Türkiye's relationship with Russia and China

a) View of China

In Türkiye, China is primarily perceived as a partner, partly as a competitor and scarcely at all as a systemic rival.²⁷ Nevertheless, the Turkish view of China is marked by its own ambivalences.

One reason for this is China's treatment of the Muslim Uyghur minority, for whom Türkiye, as a Turkic nation, feels a special responsibility. Türkiye is home to the largest Uyghur diaspora outside of Central Asia.²⁸ Nevertheless, Ankara is reluctant to criticise the Chinese Communist Party in order to avoid the impression of interfering in China's domestic political affairs. Economic relations have also intensified over time. The two countries have been connected by a strategic partnership since 2010. This was followed by Türkiye being included in China's major Belt and Road Initiative project in 2015.

The current trade balance produces a mixed picture, however. While Türkiye exported goods worth 3.3 billion US dollars in 2023, it also imported goods from China worth 45 billion US dollars. Türkiye primarily sells raw materials and products with low added value to China while importing a wide range of goods: The ten largest imports only account for just under 30 per cent of total imports.²⁹

Obviously, trade relations are thus aggravating Türkiye's trade deficit, which cannot be in Ankara's long-term interests. It should also be noted that, if the strategic partnership between the two countries is interpreted as a sign of consolidated alliances beyond the West, no more than ten per cent of the bilateral trade volume is transacted in currencies other than the US dollar.

This understanding of an ambivalent relationship is also corroborated with regard to Russia's war in Ukraine. Ankara and Beijing support an immediate cessation of armed violence and are in favour of diplomatic solutions. At the same time, China is tilting much more toward Russia by refusing to pin the blame on Moscow for the war. Türkiye, on the other hand, has clearly condemned the actions of the Russian military in violation of international law and is in favour of returning to a status quo ante 2014.

Key regional players in the new global order

Turkish arms deliveries to Ukraine are also not concealed. On the contrary, especially at the beginning of the war, when Turkish Bayraktar drones played a decisive role in the successful battle for Kyiv, the state-affiliated and international media celebrated this as demonstration of Turkish arms industry capabilities.

b) View of Russia

For Türkiye, Russia is first and foremost a neighbour to be taken seriously, not only in the Black Sea region, but also in Syria. Since the resolution of the fighter jet crisis in November 2015, cooperation between Türkiye and Russia has picked up considerably.³⁰ A major difference in its relations with Russia and China is that Türkiye is heavily involved in a complicated regional conflict management with Russia on top of the two countries' bilateral relations.

The Soviet Union and Türkiye already maintained uninterrupted bilateral relations during the Cold War while Türkiye remained a member of NATO. On the one hand, Türkiye's accession to NATO can be traced back to Josef Stalin's territorial claims. On the other hand, Türkiye was the only country outside the Soviet bloc to send an official representative to Stalin's funeral in March 1953.

At the same time, it should not be forgotten that similar to the case with Germany, Russo-Turkish relations in the area of energy have their roots in the Cold War era. In 1984, Türkiye and the Soviet Union signed their first agreement on gas imports to Türkiye. Today, Türkiye obtains almost 40 per cent of its gas, a good 40 per cent of its oil and around 50 per cent of its coal from Russia.³¹ The construction sector and tourism are also important elements of bilateral relations.³²

Cooperation in the field of nuclear energy has also become another pillar of Turkish-Russian relations. Ankara's interest in this energy source dates back to the 1960s. The commissioning of the Akkuyu nuclear power plant built by Rosatom on 27 April 2023 was celebrated in Türkiye as a "step into the global nuclear league". The Akkuyu nuclear power plant is expected to generate ten per cent of Türkiye's electricity requirements in the medium

Türkiye

term. The construction of a second Russian nuclear power plant in Türkiye is also under discussion.

What links Moscow and Ankara especially under Putin and Erdoğan is regional conflict management in the Middle East, the South Caucasus and the Black Sea region. The Syrian conflict in particular has further stabilised Russo-Turkish cooperation. The model of cooperation that Moscow and Ankara have had in place since 2016 is primarily based on the interdependence of respective interests in various areas of conflict, as well as the ability and willingness to resolutely tackle regional problems and come up with a solution that is acceptable to both sides. This solution-oriented partnership in regional conflicts in turn strengthens the bilateral relationship.

After February 24, 2022, the economic importance of Türkiye for Russia has significantly increased.³³ Remaining in dialogue with Moscow has also made it possible to position itself as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine.³⁴ With the grain agreement concluded under Turkish auspices in July 2022, a way was found to export grain, alleviating the food shortage particularly in African countries for a while. Türkiye thus proved itself to be a diplomatically engaged and successful regional power on the international political stage. The negotiations between Russian and Ukrainian delegations that took place in Istanbul in March 2022 also generated some significant momentum at the time.

Ankara is primarily in a position to act as an assertive counterpart in discussions and negotiations with Moscow because it wields significant military deterrence capabilities as a member of NATO. One can thus sum up Turkish relations with Russia like this: On the one hand, Ankara sees a durable relationship with Russia as a necessity, but on the other hand, Russia is not an alternative or even a substitute for Ankara's relations with the West. The need to cooperate with Russia is in turn reinforced by the fact that Türkiye sees itself as marginalised by the West.³⁵

Key regional players in the new global order

c) View of the “Sino-Russian axis”

While Ankara cultivates bilateral relations with Moscow and Beijing, the rapprochement between Russia and China is being eyed with concern in Türkiye with a view to the long term.³⁶ Although Russia increasingly considers itself to be a Eurasian power, Türkiye views Russia historically and in terms of its mindset as part of the West. Russia is also culturally closer to the West than China. But not least due to Western sanctions against Russia, Ankara sees the ever snugger cooperative relationship between Moscow and Beijing as a harbinger of strategic disadvantage for both the West as well as Russia, with the only winner in the present trajectory being China.

Furthermore, it remains uncertain what impact a stronger alliance between Russia and China will have on the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). On the one hand, Ankara has been a dialogue partner of the SCO, which falls short of observer status, since 2013. Ankara sees cooperation with the SCO as a potential alternative to the EU. On the other hand, Türkiye does not want the SCO to become a NATO-like Eurasian organisation, as this would deepen the confrontation with the West, and would mean an intensification of conflict lines between East and West for NATO member Türkiye.

3. How does Türkiye view the role of Europe/Germany in the new global order?

Ankara’s perception of the role of the European Union in the new global order can be summed up as: “economically a giant, politically a dwarf”.³⁷

The EU is Türkiye’s most important trading partner, with a 31.8 per cent share. In 2022, the trade volume amounted to 198.3 billion US dollars. In view of a foreign trade deficit of more than 100 billion US dollars in the past two years, it is also important that exports to the EU (98.7 billion euros) and imports from the EU (99.6 billion euros) roughly balance each other out. Trade has thus swelled by a total of 75 per cent since 2012.³⁸

Nevertheless, the EU’s geopolitical weight is being put in question due to the lack of political leadership and a strategic vision. From Ankara’s perspective,

Türkiye

the EU's dependence on the USA in the area of security policy is of crucial importance, as it diminishes the EU's strategic autonomy. The fact that the EU's strategic compass does not include a role for Türkiye is also viewed critically.

The current geopolitical situation in particular offers wiggle room to move relations with the EU onto a new footing, however. As Foreign Minister Fidan argued in August 2023: "In an environment where the EU and NATO membership of all Balkan countries, Moldova and even Ukraine, are being discussed, the disruption of Türkiye's European Union membership process is a strategic blindness." Fidan concludes: "The European Union cannot truly be a global actor without Türkiye."³⁹ At the same time, expectations toward the EU are linked to the question of whether Türkiye's role in a future security architecture will continue to be that of a buffer state or an integral part of Europe.⁴⁰

Regardless of the future security architecture of the EU, relations with Türkiye are weighed down by two structural problems over the long term.

Firstly, the tensions between Türkiye and Greece over islands in the Aegean Sea and the still unresolved Cyprus conflict. From Ankara's perspective, the situation in the eastern Mediterranean is problematic not least because the EU is simultaneously acting as an actor swayed by its own interests as well as an arbitrator.⁴¹ The tense relationship is also due to the fact that Turkish foreign policy, for its part, is guided by its own interests in both the Cyprus conflict and the dispute over the Aegean islands, although Ankara takes the view that it should approach the conflict by citing the rights of stakeholders. While Turkish interests range from natural gas reserves, security perceptions to fears of isolation, Türkiye sees its actions namely as based upon rights, for example the rights of Turkish Cypriots and the remilitarisation of Aegean islands under the Lausanne Treaty.

Germany has a key role to play in moderating tensions, particularly in the eastern Mediterranean. Ankara attaches particular importance to Berlin due to its close social and economic ties: In stark contrast to the EU, Germany is perceived as an honest broker that can bring both sides together.⁴²

Secondly, there are fundamental differences between Türkiye and the EU regarding what the exact requirements for EU membership should be. While

Key regional players in the new global order

the EU officially cites acceptance of and compliance with the *acquis communautaire*, Brussels glosses over how crucial political will is when it comes to admission to the Union. Ankara, for its part, draws attention to changes in the geopolitical situation that make Türkiye's integration indispensable, but at the same time underestimates how key a unified legal framework is for Brussels. As long as the EU accession process remains hazy, the asymmetrical relationship will also put a strain on Türkiye-EU relations.

4. Outlook and recommendations for action for German and European stakeholders

What does this mean from a European and German perspective for dealings with Türkiye? The task of German and European policy should in principle be to review mutual interests to identify common ground and transform these into constructive solutions. With regard to Türkiye, an initial step would be to recognise its growing importance without denying the presence of differences. This would then need to be reflected in a strategy toward Türkiye, as recently called for by German MP Serap Güler (CDU).⁴³

The point of departure for Europe and Germany should be to critically question the sometimes exclusive logic of their own approaches and ideas. If a key player such as Türkiye has neither identical means nor identical goals in quite a number of areas, German and European tolerance of ambiguity remains indispensable. Especially in countries like Syria, where Germany and Europe only wield a very limited influence, but which are of vital interest because they are coupled with migration issues.

However, even in regions in which both Germany and Europe as well as Türkiye are players, the relationship should be viewed in terms of complementarity rather than rivalry. The extent to which situations can be transformed into strategic partnerships must be decided on a case-by-case basis. The prerequisite for this is that Germany and the EU identify areas of strategic interest for co-operation with Türkiye: Connectivity, logistics, energy or the Green Deal and security policy aspects should have priority here.

More specifically, with regard to Türkiye, Germany should work for a resumption of the high-level dialogue formats for the economy, energy and transport

Türkiye

that were discontinued in 2019. In the medium term, Chapter 15 on energy can be opened as part of EU accession negotiations. Domestic and European policy concerns about opening a new chapter in accession negotiations at this point in time can be allayed by alluding to the generally accepted time pressure associated with climate change.

Cooperation on energy issues has already intensified at the national level: The German Energy Agency launched the German-Turkish Energy Partnership in 2011. This partnership has now been transformed by the German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action into the German-Turkish Energy Forum, within the framework of which Federal Minister Robert Habeck (Alliance 90/ The Greens) visited Türkiye in October 2023. In addition, the German Foreign Ministry has designated Türkiye as a “climate location”. For his part, Turkish Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar (AK Party) is looking for international partners to exploit Türkiye’s potential in the green energy sector.

For the EU, this would mean Türkiye adapting to the EU’s own legal regulations, which would be used to lay down European standards. The frequently mentioned “positive agenda” between the EU and Türkiye would also be spelled out in more substantive terms. For its part, Türkiye would benefit from cooperating with European players on these issues, as this would prevent the trade deficit with China from further widening. By integrating Türkiye’s energy infrastructure more closely into European networks, cooperation with Ankara should be seen as an additional opportunity to diversify Europe’s own energy supply. If successful, modernisation of the customs union could also become an issue again in the medium term.

Germany should set up a dialogue platform with Türkiye to coordinate positions on geopolitical developments and regional challenges that are important for both Türkiye and Germany in the field of security policy. The format of High Level Cooperation Councils, which Türkiye maintains with more than 20 countries, could serve as a model. A format along the lines of the strategic mechanism established by Ankara and Washington in April 2022 would also be possible. Despite all differences, such a platform offers the opportunity to address bilateral issues and coordinate regional matters of common interest.

Key regional players in the new global order

- 1 Özcan, Taha 2018: Time to look ahead: The “geopolitical West” itself is in question, Körber Globals, in: https://koerber-stiftung.de/site/assets/files/19396/koerber_globals_does_turkey_still_belong_to_the_west.pdf [15 May 2024].
- 2 Fidan, Hakan 2023: Turkish Foreign Policy at the Turn of the ‘Century of Türkiye’: Challenges, Vision, Objectives, and Transformation, in: *Insight Türkiye* 25: 3, pp. 11–25, p. 14.
- 3 De Hoop Scheffer, Alexandra / Quencez, Martin / Weber, Gesine 2023: Transatlantic Trends 2023: Public Opinion in a Shifting Global Order, GMF, 12 September 2023, in: <https://www.gmfus.org/news/transatlantic-trends-2023> [15 May 2024].
- 4 Dalay, Galip 2022: Turkey’s Recurring Quest for Security, Status, and Geopolitical Identity, GMF, 1 April 2022, in: <https://www.gmfus.org/news/Turkeys-recurring-quest-security-status-and-geopolitical-identity> [15 May 2024].
- 5 Bayer, Lili 2023: Turkey is the headache NATO needs, Politico, 3 April 2023, in: <https://www.politico.eu/article/turkey-nato-sweden-finland-is-the-headache-nato-needs/> [15 May 2024].
- 6 Fidan 2023, n. 2.
- 7 “A problem solver, system improver and transformer actor in the regional and in international affairs.” Ibid, p. 14.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 The YPG are the military units of the Syrian-Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD), which Türkiye considers to be identical to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).
- 10 Speech by Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan to the General Assembly of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (Turkish), 16 January 2024, in: <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakanimiz-sayin-hakan-fidan-in-tbmm-genel-kurulu-na-bilgilendirme-amacli-hitaplar-16-1-2024-ankara.tr.mfa> [15 May 2024].
- 11 Fidan 2023, n. 2, p. 20.
- 12 On the role of economic factors in Turkish foreign policy, see Kirişçi, Kemal 2009: The transformation of Turkish foreign policy: The rise of the trading state, in: *New Perspectives on Turkey* 40, pp. 29–56.
- 13 Fidan 2023, n. 2, p. 22.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 “the easternmost European and westernmost Asian country”, Fidan 2023, n. 2, pp. 22–23.
- 16 Mayer-Rüth, Oliver 2023: *Der Allmächtige? Die Türkei von Erdogans Gnaden*, Bonn.

Türkiye

- 17 See, for example, the conclusion drawn by the Bundestag's Research Services: "President Erdogan sees himself as a Turkish nationalist and protagonist for a resurgence of the Islamic world as a whole. This position contains a strong anti-Western component, especially as he summons up the history and imperial greatness of the Ottoman Empire." In addition, areas of conflict such as in northern Iraq, Syria, Libya and Azerbaijan are placed among a series of "increasingly interventionist contexts, thus emphasising conflict". Wissenschaftliche Dienste 2021: Aktuelle Außenpolitik der Türkei, Einflussnahmen in verschiedenen Regionen, 4 January 2021, in: <https://www.bundestag.de/resource/blob/821376/14d182196f60aa5845bebbad2b802b68/WD-2-101-20-pdf-data.pdf> [15 May 2024].
- 18 Workshop "Pivotal Players", Ankara, December 2023.
- 19 Dalay, Galip 2021: Post-imperial ego and foreign policy (Turkish), Perspektif, 11 January 2021, in: <https://www.perspektif.online/post-emperyal-devlet-egosu-ve-dis-politika/> [15 May 2024].
- 20 Workshop 2023, n. 18.
- 21 Dalay, Galip 2022: Deciphering Turkey's Geopolitical Balancing and Anti-Westernism in Its Relations with Russia, SWP Comment 2022/C 35, 20 May 2022, in: <https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2022C35/> [15 May 2024].
- 22 Cf. for example Daily News 2024: EU membership remains Turkey's strategic priority: Erdoğan, 13 January 2022, in: <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/eu-membership-remains-turkeys-strategic-priority-erdogan-170756> [15 May 2024]. President Erdoğan also formulated his expectations towards the EU on the occasion of Europe Day: "It is long overdue for Türkiye and the EU to establish a stronger foundation for our relations, based on enhancing cooperation in all areas, including accession negotiations.", Turkish Press Scanner 2024: Erdoğan: Europe Lost Its Values In Gaza, 10 May 2024, p. 2.
- 23 Kirişçi, Kemal 2016: The End of the Cold War and Changes in Turkish Foreign Policy Behaviour, 29 November 2016, in: <https://foreignpolicy.org.tr/the-end-of-the-cold-war-and-changes-in-turkish-foreign-policy-behaviour-kemal-kirisici/> [15 May 2024].
- 24 Akin, Ezgi 2023: Erdogan says Turkey won't 'back down' on demands for Sweden's NATO bid, Al Monitor, 3 July 2023, in: <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/07/erdogan-says-turkey-wont-back-down-demands-swedens-nato-bid> [15 May 2024].
- 25 On Türkiye's involvement in NATO in the Balkans, see Zorić, Bojana 2024: Türkiye in the Western Balkans, Laying its cards on the table, Chaillot Paper 182, 7 May 2024 in: https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/CP_182_0.pdf [15 May 2024].
- 26 Transatlantic Trends 2023, n. 3.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Reuters 2022: Uyghurs in Turkey disappointed by UN report on China's Xinjiang, 1 September 2022, in: <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/uyghurs-turkey-disappointed-by-un-report-chinas-xinjiang-2022-09-01/> [15 May 2024].
- 29 Atli, Altay 2024: Forging New Frontiers: Türkiye's Economic Relations with the Asia-Pacific Region, Global Perspectives on Japan 7, pp. 205–221.

Key regional players in the new global order

- 30 Isachenko, Daria 2021: Türkei und Russland: Die Logik einer konflikträchtigen Zusammenarbeit, SWP study 2021/S 16, 30 September 2021, in: https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/studien/2021S16_TuerkeiRussland.pdf [15 May 2024].
- 31 Siccardi, Francesco 2024: Understanding the Energy Drivers of Turkey's Foreign Policy, Carnegie Europe, 28 February 2024, in: <https://carnegieeurope.eu/research/2024/02/understanding-the-energy-drivers-of-turkeys-foreign-policy?lang=en¢er=europe> [15 May 2024].
- 32 Isachenko 2021, n. 30.
- 33 Bechev, Dimitar 2024: Closer Ties to the West Don't Mean Turkey Will Give Up On Russia, Carnegie Europe, 7 February 2024, in: <https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2024/02/closer-ties-to-the-west-dont-mean-turkey-will-give-up-on-russia?lang=en> [15 May 2024].
- 34 Isachenko, Daria 2023: Die Türkei im Schwarzmeerraum: Reaktionen Ankaras auf den Krieg in der Ukraine vor dem Hintergrund regionaler Dynamiken und globaler Konfrontation, SWP study 2023/S 13, 17 October 2023, in: <https://www.swp-berlin.org/publikation/die-tuerkei-im-schwarzmeerraum> [15 May 2024].
- 35 Workshop "Pivotal Players", Ankara, February 2024. Cf. also: Hill, Fiona / Taspinar, Omer 2006: Turkey and Russia: Axis of the excluded?, in: *Global Politics and Strategy* 48: 1, pp. 81–92.
- 36 Interview with an expert on Türkiye, April 2024.
- 37 Workshop 2023, n. 18.
- 38 Council of the European Union 2024: EU-Türkiye trade relations, in: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/de/infographics/eu-turkiye-trade-relations/#0> [15 May 2024].
- 39 Speech by H.E. Hakan Fidan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, at the opening session of the 14th Ambassadors' Conference, 7 August 2023, in: <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-sayin-hakan-fidan-in-14-buyukelciler-konferansi-acilisinda-yaptigi-konusma--7-agustos-2023.en.mfa> [15 May 2024].
- 40 Interview with an expert on Türkiye, October 2023.
- 41 Workshop 2023, n. 18.
- 42 Meinardus, Ronald 2024: Bridging Divides: Berlin's Diplomatic Role in Greek-Turkish Relations, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 15 February 2024, in: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/athen/21011.pdf> [15 May 2024].
- 43 Güler, Serap 2024: Es ist Zeit für eine neue Türkeistrategie, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 26 March 2024, in: <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/serap-gueler-fordert-neue-tuerkei-strategie-weniger-vortraege-ueber-moral-19608646.html> [15 May 2024].



Recommendations for action and outlook

Recommendations for action and outlook

Magdalena Jetschgo-Morcillo, Lewe Paul

The objective of this section is not to summarise the previous studies of four countries and recommendations for action in any detail. Instead, the aim is to synthesise the lessons learnt from this project in such a way that, ideally, they can also provide food for thought above and beyond the four country analyses.

Bid farewell to “two-camp thinking” – a plea for greater tolerance of ambiguity

When analysing a country’s “partnering capability” from a German perspective, analysts fondly cite the closeness or distance of the respective country to the West. In a world that is becoming increasingly complex, the West as a political category can sometimes be useful in terms of the broader, overall picture. The term is not particularly helpful when it comes to acquiring a deeper understanding of the seismic shifts taking place at a global level, however. Ironically, Putin’s war of aggression against Ukraine has even caused the term to experience a short-lived renaissance, although subsequent voting in the United Nations quickly demonstrated how fragile a supposedly Western bloc really is.

The West should no longer be used as a category when analysing potential partners for Germany and the EU, however. One need not adopt Turkey’s argumentation here: In response to it being accused of a lack of loyalty by the EU, Ankara asks which West it is supposed to be loyal to. Nonetheless, it must be recognised that – just like with the concept of the Global South – dividing the world into two parts does not do justice to present-day complexities. Moreover, the notion of the West is not politically neutral, but rather normatively overloaded and exclusive.

Instead of leaning into this outdated dichotomy, Germany and the EU need to be more tolerant of political ambiguities in order to build solid and functioning

Recommendations for action and outlook

partnerships in a world currently undergoing sea changes. This means that Germany and the EU must be prepared for (potential) partners simply positioning themselves in a pragmatic and demanding manner. Supposed inconsistencies in questions of international order are often an implicit expression of a foreign, economic and trade policy that is guided by interests and has a lot to do with there being alternative offers of cooperation from other parts of the world on the table.

In cases where there are geopolitical similarities but concurrent differences over domestic political developments (as in the case of India), a greater tolerance of ambiguities would also ease the way for Germany and the EU to explore new avenues of partnership, thereby stressing the overriding importance of a solid partnership – instead of haggling over political concessions with regard to this or that issue.

Germany and the EU need to devote time and resources to discussing divergent positions with key players in relevant cases and, ideally, bringing both sides closer together. Ambiguities must be tolerated more than in the past, and preconceived positions must be avoided – especially when they seek to take the moral high ground. Above all, Germany and the EU are well-advised to avoid forcing partner countries to “choose sides”.

Do not neglect “positively inclined” countries

Countries that are (still) open to cooperation with Germany and the EU, where there is perhaps a tradition of cooperation and (still) a certain latitude for manoeuvre, such as Kenya and Colombia in particular in this study, should not be wrongly treated as “taken-for-granted partners” and “tending toward the Western camp”. This can lead to creeping neglect and is often perceived as such by them.

Instead, dialogue with these countries should be actively sought and intensified – and they should be esteemed as important communication channels and bridge-builders in the so-called Global South. An open-ended dialogue on critical issues (such as compensation transfers for climate damage) is a particularly promising approach to countries in this spectrum.

Key regional players in the new global order

Germany and the EU should be prepared and willing to scrutinise and question their own positions and reach out to the other side on a case-by-case basis. The fact that the EU does not always speak with one voice and often sends conflicting signals to its partner countries is not particularly helpful, however. In any assessment of the changing global order, there are of course going to be divergences between Germany or the EU and partner countries. Recognising these, then, is key in order to avoid talking at cross purposes in the political dialogue.

Medium-sized countries such as Kenya and Colombia are less in the limelight of current international discussions than, for example, India, Brazil and South Africa in their capacity as members of the original BRICS group. And because they have fewer political, economic and demographic resources, it is within the realm of the possible for Germany or the EU to achieve a relatively great deal there with a parsimonious investment of resources. In times when Germany's own resources are increasingly stretched thin, this consideration must be taken into account in German foreign policy. Above and beyond all this, good relations could also pay off in international organisations where the principle of "one country, one vote" applies.

Supporting partner countries' efforts to reform the international system

All of the countries included in the analysis are laying understandable claims to greater representation and more say in the international system. Reflecting on a new global order also means taking a sincere look at these claims and expectations and, wherever possible, supporting them. It is only in this way that Germany and the EU can support this process in a constructive manner and be perceived as trustworthy partners in efforts to reform the international system.

It is particularly important to listen very closely and intently to (potential) partner countries about the reforms or changes they are seeking (for example in the field of international financial institutions or the UN Security Council) in order to then examine where these desires overlap with our own interests or at least do not conflict with them.

Recommendations for action and outlook

Realistically speaking, a reform of the international system will not be possible without substantial concessions (such as debt relief or redistribution of voting rights in international organisations) by Germany and the EU in favour of countries that have been historically underrepresented. In times of tight public budgets and a debate raging in Germany on the fundamental legitimacy of development cooperation, reform approaches could be lost sight of instead of being pursued with the warranted foresight and vigour so that Germany and the EU avoid losing credibility and clout.

More strategy and coherence in German foreign policy

The conclusions from the four country analyses show that in-depth knowledge and understanding of a country's actual interests and most urgent needs are key if Germany wants to establish or expand its cooperation with that particular country. Apart from promoting country expertise, as one of the recommendations emanating from the India analysis states, German diplomatic missions abroad are essential when it comes to recognising and identifying needs and interests. However, the fact that these missions have been undergoing down-sizing over the past ten to 15 years in favour of posts in Berlin is a disadvantage in this context.

Germany should also reflect on how it can better leverage its considerable resources in international cooperation to promote its own strategic interests. Particularly in times of increasingly scarce resources, effective coordination between organisations working on behalf of the German government on the ground is more important than ever.

In the concrete case of a specific country, Germany needs to clearly state what its priorities are in its cooperation with the country – after all, it makes a difference whether the issue is raw materials, the safeguarding of free sea routes, cooperation in international organisations or the recruitment of workers.

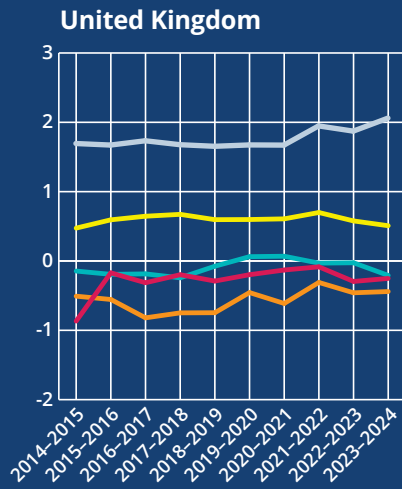
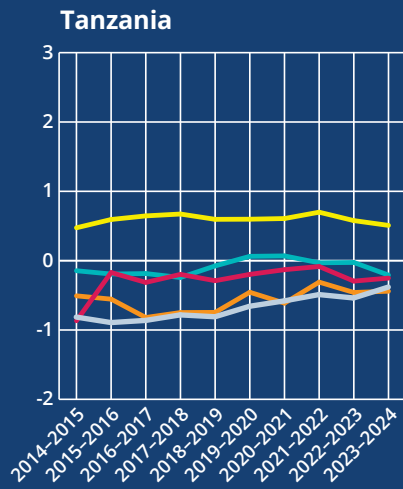
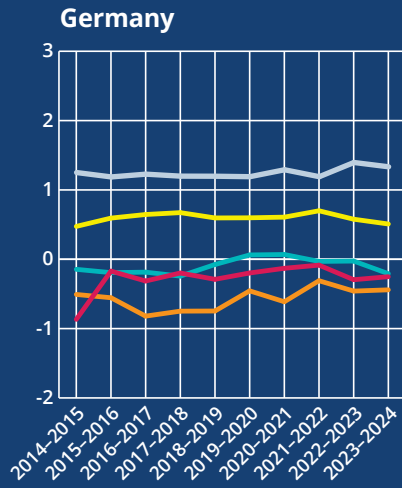
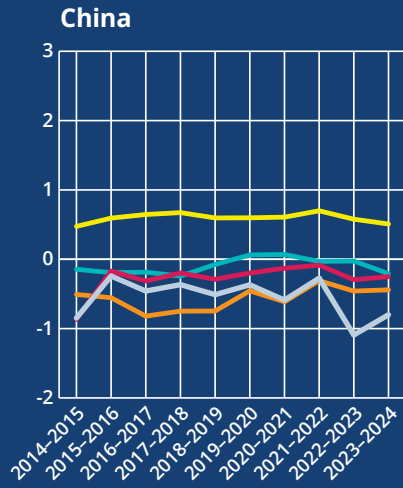
In addition to knowledge of the partner country and clear communication of its own priorities, an effective foreign policy also has to be footed on coherent strategies. These need to not only spell out values and principles, but also clearly define German interests and objectives across policy areas such as trade, the economy, development, humanitarian aid and security, while also

Key regional players in the new global order

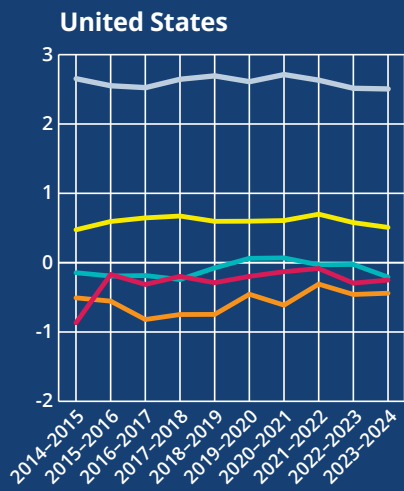
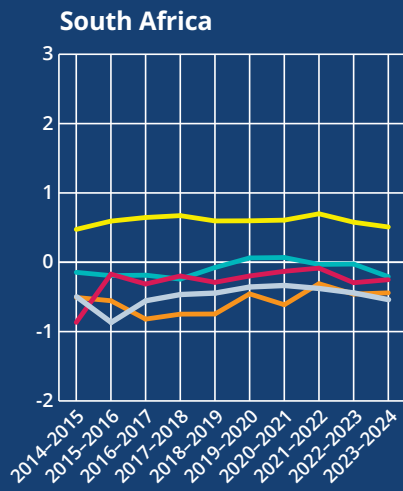
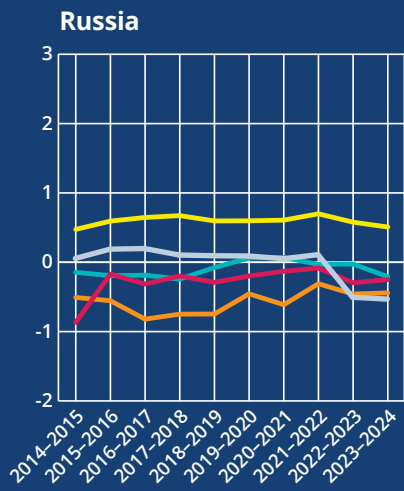
encompassing geostrategic aspects. Priority should be placed on the development and refinement of such interdepartmental strategies so partner countries can have a better basis and more readily recognise overlapping interests in the longer term.

By combining these outward and inward-looking elements, Germany could launch a policy of value-guided pragmatism, allowing it to shine in a more attractive light while radiating more credibility in its international standing – and thereby set itself apart from other players.

Voting patterns of India, Kenya, Colombia and Turkey in the UN General Assembly compared to other countries



- Reference country ———
- India ———
- Kenya ———
- Colombia ———
- Turkey ———



Notes: When two countries often agree on policy according to their voting behaviour, their "ideal points" in the diagram are close to each other. When two countries tend to disagree, their "ideal points" are far apart.

The authors

Dr. Karoline Eickhoff

Researcher in the project Megatrends Afrika and in the Africa and Middle East division, SWP

Since January 2022, Karoline Eickhoff is an associate in the research and advisory project “Megatrends Africa: Implications and Options for German and International Policy” and in the Africa and Middle East division at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin. Her research focuses on global power shifts in a multipolar world and their implications for Africa’s international relations, particularly for Kenya.

Before joining SWP, Karoline Eickhoff worked as an associate researcher and coordinator for the Berghof Foundation in the areas of peace mediation support and conflict transformation research (2019–2021), as an academic advisor to the German Federal Foreign Office on governance in areas of limited statehood and security sector reform (2014–2018), and as a project manager for the German development cooperation (GIZ) in the areas of rural development in South Sudan (2011–2012) and local governance in Pakistan (2012–2014). In 2018, Karoline Eickhoff completed her PhD thesis at the Freie Universität Berlin on external security sector interventions in the context of the peace process in Mali.

Bruno J. Hamm-Pütt

Research fellow and deputy director Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Türkiye

Since December 2022, Bruno Hamm-Pütt is research fellow and deputy director at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung’s Türkiye office in Ankara. From September 2021 until August 2022, Bruno Hamm-Pütt worked at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung’s Ukraine office in Kyiv.

Prior to that, he completed a double degree master programme in International War Studies at the University of Potsdam and the University College Dublin. His thesis examined Walter Hallstein’s biography before serving Konrad Adenauer as state secretary in the chancellery with a special focus on his role during national socialism as well as his tenure as the first dean of the

The authors

Goethe University Frankfurt after 1945. Hamm-Pütt pursued his B.A. in Jewish Studies and Philosophy. As a DAAD scholarship holder in 2018, he did research on Jewish exile in India between 1939 and 1947. From 2018–2021, Hamm-Pütt supported the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung think tank Analysis and Consulting as a student assistant, where he was concerned with questions on religious affairs, challenges of integration and migration as well as education policy.

Dr. Daria Isachenko joined the Centre for Applied Turkey Studies (CATS) at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in October 2019.

She studied International Relations at the American University of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan. Her master studies at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt were supported by a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). She has a doctorate degree (summa cum laude) from the Humboldt University at Berlin, where she was also a member of the Junior Scholar Group “Micropolitics of Armed Groups”, funded by Volkswagen Foundation. Before joining the SWP, she has had teaching and research experience in Peace and Conflict Studies.

Her current research interests include Turkey-Russia relations, Turkey's policy in the Black Sea, the South Caucasus and Central Asia as well as regional cooperation initiatives and alliances in Eurasia.

Magdalena Jetschgo-Morcillo

Since May 2024, Magdalena Jetschgo has been the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung's development policy advisor, prior to which she held the position of global order and systems competition policy advisor (January 2021–April 2024). She began her time at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Berlin with the organisation of dialogue programmes and the supervision of scholarship holders from Sub-Saharan Africa (July 2018–December 2020). This was preceded by four years as a research assistant in the New York (October 2016–June 2018) and Mexico City (June 2014–June 2016) offices. Before joining the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, she worked as an expert at the international aid organisation Jugend Eine Welt in the field of volunteer services abroad (2010–2013). Magdalena Jetschgo studied Political Science and International Development in Vienna and Zagreb.

Key regional players in the new global order

Prof. Dr. Günther Maihold

Studies of Sociology and Political Science at the University of Regensburg, Germany, where he received his PhD as well. He has specialised on Latin America and is a Professor for Political Science at the Institute for Latin American Studies of Freie Universität Berlin.

From June 1999 to June 2004 he has been director of the Ibero-American Institute, Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, Berlin. From June 2004 to June 2023 he has been deputy director of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs at Berlin/Germany; from 2011 to 2015 on leave to assume the Wilhelm and Alexander v. Humboldt-Chair at Mexico's National University UNAM and El Colegio de México, Mexico-City.

He has been a co-director of the Research Network Sustainable Global Supply Chains and a PI of the Graduate School for East Asian Studies, Freie Universität Berlin.

Lewe Paul

Since October 2019, Lewe Paul has been responsible for India, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines in the Asia and Pacific division of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. Prior to that, he worked as a policy advisor for Southeast Asia at the Federal Foreign Office. Paul studied Chinese Studies/East Asian Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin. After spending time abroad in the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, he completed a Master's degree in Asia-Pacific Studies at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Dr. habil. Christian Wagner

Senior fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Asia research group

In 1989 he completed his studies in Political Science, Modern History, and Sociology at the University of Freiburg with a doctorate. From 1991 to 1994 he was an administrative assistant and lecturer at the University of Mainz, from 1994 to 1995 a research assistant at the Research Center for the Modern Orient in Berlin. From 1996 to 2001 he was a research assistant at the University of Rostock, where he habilitated in 2002. From 2001 to 2002 he was a research assistant at the Center for Development Policy at the University of Bonn.

The authors

He has been with SWP since 2003 and was head of the Asia research group from 2008 to 2014.

He is a member of the German Association for Asian Studies (DGA) and the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS). In 2015, he was a Visiting Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) and at the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute for Advanced Studies (JNIAS) in New Delhi. In 2016, he was a visiting scholar at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) in New Delhi. 2019, he was a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) at the National University of Singapore (NUS). His research focuses on foreign and security policy issues in India, South Asia, and the Indo-Pacific.

Contact at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.

Magdalena Jetschgo-Morcillo

Development Policy, 2030 Agenda

Analysis and Consulting

T +49 30 26996-3866

magdalena.jetschgo@kas.de

Lewe Paul

Asia and the Pacific

European and International Cooperation

T +49 30 26996-3764

lewe.paul@kas.de

Imprint

Published by: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V. 2024, Berlin

Sources: pp. 35–36, figure 1, pp. 93–94, calculations by the SWP “Data and Statistics” team, based on Bailey, Michael A. / Strezhnev, Anton / Voeten, Erik 2017, Estimating Dynamic State Preferences from United Nations Voting Data, in: Journal of Conflict Resolution 61: 2; pp. 430–456, doi: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26363889>; dataset on “Agreement Scores” available at: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/LEJUQZ> (date: June 2024) © Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP).

Design and typesetting: KALUZA+SCHMID Studio GmbH, Berlin

This publication was published with financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany.

This publication of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V. is solely intended for information purposes. It may not be used by political parties or by election campaigners or supporters for the purpose of election advertising. This applies to federal, state and local elections as well as elections to the European Parliament.



The text of this publication is published under a Creative Commons license: “Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 international” (CC BY-SA 4.0), <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode>.

ISBN 978-3-98574-246-2

In the context of global power shifts and geopolitical fragmentation, it is a significant challenge for Germany and the European Union to establish stable and mutually beneficial partnerships. In this endeavour, the perspective of (potential) partner countries is rarely taken into account. What are the central interests of these countries? What specific dependencies shape their foreign policy decisions? In which regional orders are they integrated? And what factors influence their perception of Germany and the EU?

This project seeks to address these and other questions. With India, Kenya, Colombia and Turkey, four countries from four regions and their foreign policy positions have been studied in detail. Ultimately, the objective was to draw conclusions for German and European Union foreign policy in dealing with these and other countries with which strategic partnerships are to be intensified and expanded.