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بحران خاورمیانه و لزوم تجدید نظر در سیاست خارجی بازیگران منطقه ئی
و ضرورت همکاری ایران و ترکیه برای جلوگیری از تجزیه طلبی در منطقه

Iran's Silent Revolution in Balkans

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Editorial

Journal of Security, Strategy and Political Studies (SSPS) published by Gazi University Center for Strategic Studies Research and Implementation. SSPS is an international, peer-reviewed academic research journal. It is an open-access online scientific journal which is free of charge. It publishes the scientific outputs.

Journal of Security, Strategy and Political Studies aims to create a common academic platform made up of distinct disciplines. The journal provides a forum for disseminating and enhancing theoretical, empirical and/or pragmatic research across the social sciences and related disciplines. The journal primarily addresses the issues related to security and strategy within the context of international relations. It provides a framework to analyze traditional and contemporary approaches to security, power, cooperation, conflict, military and non-military threats, international crisis, political and economic inter-dependency and etc. It aims to bring together historical, theoretical and practical aspects of political research. It is our intention to make a contribution to the understanding of strategy and security within the field of international politics so as to ignite creative academic discussions that will help to analyze a volatile and complexly interconnected political arena by applying a multi-disciplinary approach and; thus, filling the gap in the literature.

The Journal is an international refereed journal which publishes scientific papers mostly on the fields of political science and international relations, as well as history, economics, sociology, law, culture, psychology and geography. Interdisciplinary papers will be examined by the referees expert in those areas. Our journal publishes twice in a year as in Winter (December), and Summer (June). For our journal, all articles, research, compilation and translation papers on social sciences and international relations will be accepted.

SSPS is published in different languages for the first time. The language of our journal is multilingual and all papers prepared in whichever languages are welcomed for publication. SSPS includes original scientific articles more particularly in English, Arabic, German, Persian, and Russian.

Volumes, issues and single articles are available as online. There are several articles in other languages. The following is a list of articles published in this issue:

- Neo-Ottomanism in Turkish Foreign Policy Through the Lenses of Principal Agent Theory
- Vom Gastarbeiter zum TransmigrantenD
- Foreign Fighters and Turkey's Problem
- Alteration and Reconstruction in Russian Internal Politics During Vladimir Putin's Presidency Period Between the Years 2000 and 2008
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- Generations and Their Relations in Social Processes

Dear readers,

We thank you all for contributing to the success of our journal. We would like to thank in particular Rector Süleyman Büyükberber for the many times. We are grateful to all authors who sent their valuable works of great effort, to all members of the Editorial Board, to the journal team and also communication team. We intend to continue to contribute to the scientific literature. We are in the hope of meeting you in our 2nd issue.

Best regards,

Prof. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol

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Alteration and Reconstruction in Russian Internal Politics During Vladimir Putin's Presidency Period Between the Years 2000 and 2008*

Pınar Özden Cankara**

Abstract

The Russian Federation which is established following the disintegration of Soviets Union had less population and land than the USSR. Because of the lack of an equitable legislation, the weakness of administration, the unlimited power of the illegality and oligarchy; the political and economic system were in a chaos. Vladimir Putin, elected as the second president of Russian Federation in 2000 so as to overcome these difficulties, has strengthened his position by weakening some significant powers, which are independent of economic and political aspects in internal policy, by increasing the control on the press and re-establishing the influence of the country on the region. In addition to this, Russia has improved her national economy by using mainly the country's natural gas resources as a trump card against other countries. She has become a petro-dollar rich country thanks to the rise in international petroleum prices and started to pay her external debts rapidly. Economic recovery ensured improvement in national welfare, which experienced a decline in the post-Soviet period. The support to the President has grown in the country and thus Putin has been elected again as president in 2004. This study intends to analyze the changes that are experienced in internal policy of Russia during the presidency of Vladimir Putin between the years 2000 and 2008.

Keywords: Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, Federalism, Boris Yeltsin, Soviet Union

Introduction

Vladimir Putin encountered numerous problems when he became the second president of the Russian Federation on 1st of January 2000. New President summarized the chaotic situation in which the country was with those words¹; "Russia is in the middle of one of the most difficult periods throughout her history. It is facing the danger of sliding to second and even maybe to the third phase internationally, in real for first time within the recent 200-300 years". The economy of the country was just a wreck, the political system was in chaos. Social and ethical structure was about to fall down. Vladimir Putin has become the second elected president of Russia by receiving %52 of the votes on 26th of March 2000 in the first round of the elections². Vladimir Putin took over not only the power from the president Yeltsin but also the ongoing problems

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¹ Vladimir Putin, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium", *Pravitel'stvo Rossiyskoy Federatsii*, <http://www.government.gov.ru/government/minister/article-vvp1.html>, 20.01.2000.

² Dale R. Herspring, "Introduction", *Putin's Russia Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, Second Edition, Dale R. Herspring (ed.), USA: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2005, pp. 1- 3.

requiring solutions such as economic problems, disputes between the centre and regions, the problematic situation of the country in the international arena, population and immigrants' problems, gross capital environments that want to manage the government³.

Unsteadiness and weakness in the state structure were decreasing the capacity of the government. The regional autonomy seems to receive the senior authorization. The centrifugal force has gained such a speed so as to create a fear of the state destroying itself. It was time to establish a bridge between the centre and unsteady regional "power islands". For this reason, various reforms were required to be made in order to strengthen the vertical authority and to increase the central power⁴. Russian President wanted to strengthen the central authority by changing the administrative structure in the country in order to make Russia manageable. However, the democracy or market economy should not be driven away for this aim. Democracy is volatile in such circumstances in which an operational state mechanism is not available⁵. Hence, Putin tried to strengthen the central structure primarily by starting to construct a vertical authority in the internal structure. The aim of this study is to analyze the internal politics of Putin in order to make his country a new great power. After solving domestic problems, Putin focused on foreign policy and turned Russia's face to the Central Asia where US was trying to construct a military base. Afterwards, Eurasianism became central policy in the foreign policy concept. Thus, between 2000 and 2008 Russia became a rising power in her region but it was still far from competing with the US political hegemony.

Administrative Structure of Russian Federation and the Obstructions Within the System

The change, started in the Russian Federation that is newly established following the disintegration of Soviets Union, caused numerous crisis to occur. The most important crisis which is encountered on political aspect has appeared in the federal relations that arose in the state system. Russian Federation had to struggle with the problems that arise from the ethnical-federal structure remaining from the Soviets period. Graeme Herd has stated in a study he made in 1999 that Russians are unsuccessful in establishing a long-lasting, sustainable state system and the country is facing a federal disintegration after the financial crisis that happened in 1998. According to Herd, the federal administration is not established in a planned manner in Russia⁶. Due to the

³ Fatih Özbay, "Tarihsel Süreç İçerisinde Ruslar ve Rusya", *Rusya Stratejik Araştırmaları-1*, İhsan Çomak (ed.), İstanbul: TASAM Yayınları, 2006, p. 25.

⁴ David Cashaback, "Risky Strategies? Putin's Federal Reforms and the Accommodation of Difference in Russia", *Journal On Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe (JEMIE)*, Vol: 3, 2003, p. 5.

⁵ Peter H. Solomon, "Vladimir Putin's Quest For A Strong State", *International Journal on World Peace*, Vol: 22, No: 2, 2005, pp. 3-4.

⁶ Graeme P. Herd, "Russia: Systemic Transformation or Federal Collapse?", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol: 36, No: 3, 1999, p. 261.

lack of planning, the central authority has weakened and getting authorities transferred to periphery caused disintegrations in the political system⁷.

The 1st article of the Russian State's Constitution defines the state as a federal state⁸. Both 1992 Federation Treaty and 1993 Russian Federation Constitution declare that a federal democracy has been established⁹. In the 3rd paragraph of the 11th article of the Constitution, there is a provision stating that the authorization and the responsibility between the government organs of the federal units and the government organs of the federation shall be concluded by other agreements which are conducted as related to the determination of constitution, federal agreement and authorizations. Yet, there is not any provisions in the constitution stating how the legal status establishing the relations between federal units should be¹⁰. The Federation Agreement has been conducted in order to compile, as a law, how should the power be distributed by the federal center among the units that are included in the union with Moscow, and the agreement aimed to repair the differences between the republics and the other units which are included in the union¹¹.

The provisions that are included in the 3rd chapter of the Constitution entitled "Federal Order" specifies the authorization and responsibility distribution between the administrative units and federal administration. Accordingly all administrative units have equal rights before state and federal institutions and are represented in Federation Council with equal number of representatives. Local governments are provided with liabilities such as administration of public property, preparation and implementation of the budgets, collection of local taxes and protection of legislation order, as included in the 8th chapter of the constitution¹². In addition to the current regulation, the authorization and responsibility distributions have been specified by the bilateral agreements that are concluded between federal government and administrative units¹³. According to the 2nd paragraph of the 4th article of Federal Constitution, federal constitution and federal laws dominate everywhere within the borders of the country¹⁴.

Federal relations seen in Russia are Russians specific¹⁵. An exact federal system could not be moved into in Russia after USSR. There are asymmetrical

⁷ Mikhail A. Alexseev, "Decentralization Versus State Collapse: Explaining Russia's Endurance", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol: 38, No: 1, 2001, p. 101.

⁸ "Article 1: 1. The Russian Federation-Russia shall be a democratic, federative, law-based state with a republican form of government. 2. The names Russian Federation and Russia shall have one and the same meaning."; Vladimir V. Belyakov - Walter J. Raymond, *Constitution Of The Russian Federation*, Virginia: Bwnswick Publishing Corporation, 1994, p. 16.

⁹ Nicholas J. Lynn - V. Novikov Aleksei, "Refederalizing Russia: Debates on the Idea of Federalism in Russia", *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, Vol: 27, No: 2, 1997, p. 187.

¹⁰ Bekir Demir, "Rusya Federasyonu Cumhuriyetleri'ndeki Siyasi, Ekonomik ve Etnik Yapının Federasyon Milli Güvenliği Üzerindeki Etkisi", *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, No: 31, www.academical.org, 10.05.2007.

¹¹ Cashaback, *ibid.*, p. 3.

¹² Belyakov - Raymond, *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

¹³ Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu (DEİK), 2006, "Rusya Ülke Bülteni", <http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/Rusya-Ekim2005.pdf>, 10.05.2007, p. 4.

¹⁴ Demir, *ibid.*

¹⁵ Mikhail Dmitriev, "Public Administration Reform and the Development of Civil Society in Russia", *Russia The Next Ten Years*, Andrew Kuchins - Dmitri Trenin (eds.), Carnegie Moscow Center, Moscow, 2004, p. 21.

relations between the federal units and the autonomous regions and the republics where other ethnical groups live more intensely¹⁶. At this point, attention should be attached on the terms of "federalism", "federal politic systems" and "federation". Federalism is a normative term, is an ideology that defends the multi-layered administration which incorporates the factors that include mutual dominance, and the self-dominance of the regions. Federal politic systems is a descriptive statement that belongs to a general category related to the non-unitary states, that converts semi-federal states into confederation. Federation is a type of federal politic system. According to the classification of R. Watts, neither federal nor constituent factors of the administration are dependent on the other legally in federations. Each of them is independent power. Each of them has been provided with the authorization to manage its citizens by using the authorization of legislation, administration and tax collection. Each of them is chosen directly by their citizens¹⁷.

When it is examined from this aspect, Russia uses all features of being a federation and contains most key rules of federalism and democracy. But in practice, neither federal authorities nor federal subject comply with the entire federal rules. A democratic federal state structure of which basis is the rules of federalism couldn't be established in Russia yet¹⁸. The federal system in Russia in post-Soviet period tried to get developed with an inadequate experiences and inadequate corporate structure which can be saved from the former system¹⁹.

The blocks encountered in federal system have started by authorizing federal units in big amounts actively in 1990s. This situation has created the preconditions of their individual actions. Boris Yeltsin, the first president of Russian Federation, has removed the hindrances of republics on the way to dominance, in his call that he made to the autonomous republics²⁰; "*the more you can bear, the more dominance you take*". As result of this, the republics have emerged as national-states of which "individual demands" have acquired ethnical colour. The ethnical tension which threatens the security of Russia arises from the establishment structure of the state, according to Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin has used those statements in his President Message that he sent to the Federal Parliament in February, 1994²¹:

"Many national problems which arise from two principles (being adhered to the ethnical basis and relying on the land basis) which conflict with each other that constitute the state structure of Russian Federation hinder Russian State to get strengthened. Today, whenever it is discussed to redistribute the functions and authorizations of the state among federal and federal units, these problems reveal nettably"

¹⁶ Muhammet Karadağ, "Rus Federalizminin Tarihi Gelişimi ve Geleceği", *Rusya Stratejik Araştırmaları-1*, İhsan Çomak (ed.), İstanbul: TASAM Yayınları, 2006, p. 29.

¹⁷ Cameron Ross, "Putin's Federal Reforms and the Consolidation of Federalism in Russia: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back!", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol: 36, 2003, p. 30.

¹⁸ Ross, *ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁹ James Alexander, "Federal Reforms in Russia: Putin's Challenge to the Republics", *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol: 12, No: 2, 2004, p. 233.

²⁰ Karadağ, *ibid.*, p. 34.

²¹ Demir, *ibid.*

This structure is a heritage of Tsarist Empire and Soviet federalism model. For this reason it is hierarchical, asymmetrical, ethnical and a federation with a constitution and an agreement which is comprised of mixture of federal units on land basis. The federal structure which is symmetrical in 1993 Constitution but is asymmetrical in practice, caused oblast and kray managers to be named as state like republics and claiming legal and politic demands. This restructuring in Russia has been named as "republication". Republication is deemed as a solution way of the problems which are experience between centre and the federal units. However at this point, federal system is likely to turn into other systems²².

When situation of regions which are within the body of federalism is examined, almost the entire population is comprised of ethnical Russian people in the regions, unlike the republics. The regional leaders who used the resources on their favors and strengthened the dominance on their regions by making use of the weakness in the center, acquired the control of the federal representatives. The powers of regional leaders increased so as to hinder the implementation of the presidency policies. Moreover, regional governments turned into autocratic governments and started to run their own rules. For example, regional elites have become commissioners of political future of Russia, according to Huskey²³.

Regional-government structure which remained from Soviets Union period, contributed to the weakening of center in Russia. According to Leonid Smirnyagin, a member of Russian Presidency Council, the problems which remained from national-regional structure of Russia constitute a problem to the creation of a "vertical federal structure"²⁴. Accordingly, the federal system in Russia has encountered many problems. Federal government couldn't get the ability to implement its policies throughout the country. The most important, as regional leaders often establish commercial walls among the regions; they were deprived of a unified market²⁵.

Vladimir Putin, when he became the second elected president of Russia, has tried to create an ideal to strengthen the country among the citizens by getting the structuring in Russia more holistic. Though the Constitution of Russian Federation includes a provision as "Russia is a democratic, federal law state", the system encounters problems between unitary state structure and the federal system. System was required to be established as jure and de facto²⁶.

²² Demir, *ibid.*

²³ Matthew Hyde, "Putin's Federal Reforms and Their Implications For Presidential Power in Russia", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol: 53, No: 5, 2001, p. 719.

²⁴ Lynn ve Aleksei, *ibid.*, p. 194.

²⁵ Robert Ortung, "Putin's Federal Reform Package: A Recipe For Unchecked Kremlin Power", *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol: 9, No: 3, 2001, p. 341.

²⁶ Karadağ, *ibid.*, p. 42.

"Vertical Authority" Establishment of President Putin

Presidency of Vladimir Putin has started with anti-federalist reforms. According to Nikolai Petrov, the aim of President Putin in making such reforms is not removing Russian federalism. However the policies he pursued caused such a result²⁷. Leonid Smirnyagin upheld an opposite of this interpretation in a study of him about the subject. According to Smirnyagin, the federal reforms of Putin have caused strengthening of federalism in Russia, although they are anti-federalist²⁸.

In order to make an analysis about the result of Putin's reforms, the components of first reform package are required to be examined. By the reforms, primarily seven administrative regions have been established where president is in charge with full authorization. The Federation Council membership and structure have been changed so as to increase the power of the control power of Kremlin. It is made possible to discharge Presidents of the Republics which are within the Federation Council, and the senior authorities of Russian legislation. Dominance of republic rules over federal rules has been removed²⁹. A draft of law which changes the election method of the Federation Council, and a reforms package that authorizes regional leaders to dismiss the tasks of the local governments followed these reforms on 19th of May³⁰. According to J. Kahn, Putin's reforms have been made as a response to the weak federal institutions which remained from Yeltsin³¹.

Putin, with seven administrative regions partition, shelved the term of North Caucasus. The name of Northern Caucasus Federal Region has been changed as South Region. He assigned to 5 of these 7 super regions the former officers of army or police and administrators of the former State Security Committee (KGB-Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti) and thus, the activities to put across the authority of Moscow³². 7 Representatives of the Federal Administration supervise the presidents and governors of Republics in order to unsettle their autonomies and to command them³³. Thus, President Putin has acquired a control mechanism over the regional

²⁷ Nikolai Petrov, "Russia Under Putin: Consolidating the Centralized State, Weakening Democracy and Federal System", *East-West Institute Russian Regional Report* 6, No: 23, 2001, file:///C:/Users/9480/Downloads/rrr010620.pdf, 20.05.2016.

²⁸ Leonid Smirnyagin, "Federalizm po Putinu ili Putin po Federalizmu", *Brifing Moskovski Tsentri Karnegi*, No: 3, 2001.

²⁹ Nikolai Petrov, "Will Russian Federalism Live to See 2014?", *Russia The Next Ten Years*, Andrew Kuchins - Dmitri Trenin (eds.), Carnegie Moscow Center, Moscow, 2004, p. 55; Feryal Kalkavan "Rusya Federasyonu'nda Federalizm ve Ünitarizm Tartışmaları", Erhan Büyükkakıncı (ed.), *Değişen Dünyada Rusya ve Ukrayna*, Ankara: Phoenix Yayınevi, 2004, p. 18; İlyas Kamalov, "Putin'in Merkeziyetçi Politikası Çerçevesinde Tataristan Cumhuriyeti", *Stratejik Analiz*, Cilt: 6, No: 61, 2005, p. 69; Lee Peterson, "Başkan Putin ve İcraatları Rusya'da Eskiye Dönüş Olarak Kabul Edilebilir mi?", *Avrasya Dosyası Rusya Özel*, Cilt: 6, No: 4, 2001, p. 18.

³⁰ Hyde, *ibid.*, p. 719.

³¹ Cashback, *ibid.*, p. 5.

³² Timothy J. Colton - Michael McFaul, "Putin and Democratization", *Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, Dale R. Herspring (ed.), Second Edition, USA: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2005, p. 18.

³³ Michael McFaul, "Re-engaging Russia and the Russians New Agenda For American Foreign Policy", *Center For American Progress*, 2004, p. 8.

administrator³⁴. Seven powerful semi-regional states have been established by the reforms. These regions gained little states appearance by the constitutions that are created by the representatives³⁵.

The main task of the full-authorized representatives who were assigned by President Putin and who were responsible solely to him, was making sure of federal government policies are carried out by the regional leaders. Many regional leaders, in the period of Yeltsin, used to pay no mind to the federal laws and the regional law used to be valued above it. The regional leaders have been removed from the upper wing of Russian Parliament by this policy of President Putin. Federation Council and President have gained a legal power so as to dismiss regional leaders who challenge the federal laws³⁶.

President Putin wanted to increase the administration incomes and to finance politic aims (struggling against crimes and terrorism, expanding the influence of central units over the regional governments). Another aim to use the full authorization was preventing or making ineffective the separatist movements³⁷. This way President Putin wanted to stop separations which happened in the federal structure of Russia in an environment that is formed after disintegration of USSR, and to prevent emergence of "state within the state"³⁸.

Nikolay Fedorov, President of Chuvash, used those statements in a interview made with Izvestia newspaper about the reforms³⁹;

“Nobody can stop regional separation by using the method of redistribution the power between the federal centre and federation subjects, on the politic aspect. Establishment of vertical power in such a way is very sad. President must understand a fact; either Russia will be established as a federative state that is governed by law, or shall be destroyed by getting separated into seven or more pieces. No doubt, the reason behind creation of seven administrative regions is removing the sole power system.”

President Putin signed a reforms package which predicts appointment of regional administrators from the centre although being elected by the votes of the citizens, and determination of parliament by the relative election system, in order to struggle with terrorism in a more effective way, especially after the school shooting

³⁴ Anar Somuncuoğlu, “Rusya Federasyonu’nda Merkez-Bölge İlişkilerinin Ekonomik Boyutu”, *Avrasya Dosyası Rusya Özel*, Vol: 6, No: 4, 2001, p. 60.

³⁵ Cameron Ross, “Putin’s Federal Reforms”, *Russian Politics Under Putin*, Cameron Ross (ed.), New York: Manchester University Press, 2004, p. 160.

³⁶ Mark A. Smith, “Putin’s Nationalist Challenge”, *Conflict Studies Research Centre*, Vol: 5, No: 20, 2005, p. 1.

³⁷ Marcel Haas, “Putin’s External and Internal Security Policy”, *Conflict Studies Research Centre*, Vol: 5, No: 5, 2005, p. 4.

³⁸ İlyas Kamalov, *Putin Dönemi Rus Dış Politikası: Moskova’nın Rövanşı*, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2008, p. 264.

³⁹ Ildus G. Ilishev, “Putin’s Perestroika and the Future Of Federalism In Russia: Dilemmas Of State Formation”, *Caspian Brief*, No: 14, 2001, p. 2, <http://www.cornellcaspien.com>, 31.10.2006.

happened in September, 2004 in Northern Ossetia⁴⁰. Appointed regional leaders are not likely to withstand the president. Removal of independent members means that independent deputies, especially those who are from the parties that are opposing to President Putin will not be able to be elected for a long time⁴¹. On the background of the new system, there was the opinion of electing deputies from only big parties. A party which constitutes the majority in the parliament can form the government. As most of the big parties and groups are "Putinist", Duma shall be suppressed by a majority which is a party to the presidency chair⁴².

Administrative Reforms of President Putin

Vladimir Putin, after being a President, felt the need making reforms also in administrative aspect in order to bring state mechanism into force. Russian State has become clumsy during the period of President Yeltsin and the need of bringing administrative structure to a more eligible form has emerged in order to run market economy in Russia. State mechanism did not interfere to the areas where intervention is not required. Some departments and ministries can copy the functions which are enforced by others. This way, twice workload has been removed. Functions of state departments have been brought to a more effective form. Assignment of limits of the authorizations between federal centre and regions has been defined more clearly. Procurement of money source to the state programs has been concluded and civil service has been renewed⁴³.

The number of Deputy Prime Minister which was 6 once, has been reduced to one. President has been held responsible for the activities of 5 ministries, 5 federal services and 2 federal departments. These are; Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Emergency, Department of State, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice. Prime Minister has been charged with State News Service, Foreign Intelligence Service, Federal Security Service, Federal Service of Controlling Narcotic Trade and Federal Measure Service. Other Ministers have been appointed by prime minister and directly attached to him⁴⁴.

Another step which is taken by President Putin on administrative ground is discharge of bureaucratic team that remained from the period of President Yeltsin. President Putin first accused Prime Minister Mihail Kasiyanov with slow implementation of reforms. Also President and Prime Minister collided also in the incident of arrest of Mihail Hodorkovski. When Valoshin, President of Presidency Administration from President Yeltsin's team, resigns after this arrest incident in 2003, President Putin dismissed Prime Minister Kasiyanov and assigned Mihail

⁴⁰ Kamalov, *ibid.*, p. 265.

⁴¹ Smith, *ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴² www.kremlin.ru/eng/articles, 13.10.2008.

⁴³ Smith, *ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁴ Smith, *ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

Fradkov to the same position in February, 2004. Fradkov gained the trust of President Putin in a short while as a person who is loyal to the regime⁴⁵.

As result, when economic effects of President Putin's administrative reforms are examined, primarily the number of President's representatives is reduced. It is ensured to create closer relations between Representative and President. Regional representatives have been created in the capacity of federal observer. Better federal control has been created on the personnel who work in the regional departments of the federal Ministries. Administrative leaders of the regions have been withdrawn from the council. Representatives are assigned by the regional administrators and legislation assembly since January, 2002. Regional legislation assembly and the institutions have been synchronized with national institutions and federal laws. Regional governments and legislation assembly have been held responsible against the risk of dismissal. Parliamentarian impunity has been ended for the regional governments. Asymmetry among the regions has been reduced. A vertical authority is tried to be created which allows regional leaders to dismiss local bureaucrats from work and at the same time which allows central government to move regional leaders away. In general, it has become a threat for the regional leaders⁴⁶.

President Putin's Efforts to Improve Russian Economy

Milestones of the Economy Which Was Transferred From Soviets to the Russian Federation

In the beginning periods of the establishment of socialism, the industrialization and modernization were carried out by the state, not by the private enterprises or big joint stock companies. State was dominant on the economy. Soviet State has produced heavy industry products and established electricity grids by the rapid industrialization policy that was started especially in the Stalin period. Accordingly, a system which is managed from the centre was established. The growth that happened in economy and a big portion of the Soviet resources (approximately 1/4 of the national income) have been transferred to the armament race that started prior to the World War II and continued in coming years⁴⁷.

In 1960s, lack of workforce appeared. Over-centralized Soviet model enterprises couldn't acquire productivity in high capacity. A new mechanism could not be established which would ensure the resources canalized to the most efficient and innovative enterprises. Almost all Soviet products remained as de-mode, rough and low quality products. The manufactured products other than the military materials, had no competition chance in international markets. The reason of goods' being able to be bought in domestic market was country's having a monopolist

⁴⁵ İhsan Çomak, "Rusya, Putin ve Avrasyacılık", *Rusya Stratejik Araştırmaları-1*, İhsan Çomak (ed.), İstanbul: TASAM Yayınları, 2006, p. 95.

⁴⁶ James Alexander, "Federal Reforms in Russia: Putin's Challenge to the Republics", *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol: 12, No: 2, 2004, p. 241.

⁴⁷ N. Filiz İrge, *Sovyetlerden Rusya Federasyonu'na Kapitalist Kuşatma*, 1. Baskı, İstanbul: IQ Yayınları, 2006, pp. 99-100.

structure, that is closed to the foreign competition. Another reason of having low quality products is the machines and the equipments that are used were old⁴⁸.

When it is the last times of the union, the source allocation which is done through "State supply system-Gossnap" couldn't run efficiently, and when the ruble which is taken for the sold goods did not meet the procurement of the material, the enterprises could not make sales directly to each other. When Soviets, which did not want to fall behind USA in the military competition in bipolar system, allocated a big portion of their resourced to the defence industry, the general economy went worse. Besides, the activities of the Union in the Third World Countries started to become more costly⁴⁹.

The Soviet Economy which was in recession in 1980's, couldn't compete with capitalist system and reached a stalemate because of its theoretical and ideological situation. In the last periods of Brejnev, some solutions are sought and following this, the stuck points of economy have been determined in accordance with "Novosibirsk Memorandum" and solution recommendations have been presented. The memorandum which couldn't be realized because of the political uncertainty in which the union is into, has been expanded later and set forth by Gorbachov by the principles of restructuring (perestroika) and openness in politics (glasnost). However these policies caused in the community to get "socialist" values to be questioned and an ideological gap to be experienced. Thus separatist movements gained strength among the nations within USSR. The last period of the Union can be formalized like economic crisis, struggles to overcome crisis, social crisis and ideological gap, nationalist movements, and collapse⁵⁰.

Changes made by Putin in the Economy

The Russian Federation of which economy has recessed gradually had to declare moratorium on 17th of August 1998 in President Yeltsin period. Ruble has been re-evaluated and a big economic crisis has been experienced. The August crisis has shown that the macroeconomic policies are insufficient and it is set forth that Russian Economy needs structural changes in order to overcome this financial crisis. In 1991 when socialist regime was collapsed, while the income difference rate between the top and bottom ends was 1/8, this difference reached up to 1/70 in 2000. Also the organized crime organizations and mafia which emerged in the last periods of USSR have gained strength so as to increase to income distribution difference. Because the biggest impact of these organizations done on the economy was increasing the subterranean economy in 2001 to the 40% of the Gross Domestic Product⁵¹.

While the aim of Yeltsin was strengthening the economy, he caused Russian economy to get into jam because of his attempts. In this period, state enterprises have

⁴⁸ İrge, *ibid.*, pp. 111-112.

⁴⁹ Güngör Turan, *Sovyet Sonrası Orta Asya*, İstanbul: TASAM Yayınları, 2006, p. 19.

⁵⁰ Erel Tellal, "1990-2001 Rusya'yla İlişkiler", *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, 6. Baskı, Cilt: II, Baskın Oran (ed.), İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, p. 158.

⁵¹ Fevzi Uslubaş, *Küresel Terör, Afganistan, BOP ve ABD İmparatorlukların Bataklığı*, İstanbul: Toplumsal Dönüşüm Yayınları, 2005, p. 111.

been privatized rapidly. Some state enterprises of which economic and strategic importance is very high have been sold either to influential parts of the those notable people from former Communist Party or to the rich entrepreneurs, for prices much less than their actual values⁵². In this period which is started in 1992, while 80% of the total enterprises of the country by end of 1997 were transferred to the private sector, by giving primacy to the agriculture, service and small industrial enterprises; equipments wore off, and opportunity to renew the monopolized industry pattern has been missed because of excluding non-productive state enterprises from this process⁵³.

Realizing reforms rapidly first caused in the Country an extreme devaluation and then a unique inflation. Prices have increased approximately 26 times and Ruble lost value against dollars, the savings of the nation in the banks and in their hands have gone immediately and poverty has increased. While the capitalist system which suddenly entered in to Russia was enriching some part of the nation quite much, the rest of the community become impoverished⁵⁴. The cause of prompt increase of inflation in the country especially between years 1991-1998 was the failure of supply to meet the demand. Closing of many factories and small enterprises during the system conversion decreased the production and caused goods and service failure in the country. In this situation, foreign debts have increased by the obligatory imports that are made in order to meet internal demand, while inflation was increasing on one hand. Economy exactly got pressed for money. Russian economy entered a growth phase as result of the value increase of natural resource products such as natural gas and petroleum, which constitute the 70-75% part of export in Russia on the global markets. In addition to this, the exportation has been encouraged by high ratio devaluation of Ruble, the formation of entrepreneurs and production of current factories with higher capacity have been ensured⁵⁵.

Vladimir Putin let Ruble to a controlled fluctuation when he gets into force, and switches to the tight money policy. The expenditures of the state started to reduce, the foreign debts of Russia started to be paid rapidly by increasing petroleum prices. While Russia's foreign trade surplus reaches at approximately 60 billion dollars level, its economy increased approximately 7%⁵⁶. International economy's growing at the same time facilitated Russia's work for sure.

The government succeeded to remove budget deficit that become chronic in recent years, Russian Federation Central Bank succeeded to ensure macro economic stability and took a significant way in elimination of the mistrust against economic policies. Also the Banking sector which was affected from the crisis in 1998 entered in recovery process. Government resorted to make reforms which cover a ten years of period in order to ensure development of growth in a programmed way⁵⁷.

⁵² Özbay, *ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵³ Uslubaş, *ibid.*, p. 111.

⁵⁴ Özbay, *ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵⁵ Hasan Selçuk, *Türkiye-Rusya Ekonomik İlişkileri*, 1. Basım, İstanbul: TASAM Yayınları, 2005, p. 22.

⁵⁶ <http://www.rusyaofisi.com/putinliyil.html>, 27.06.2006.

⁵⁷ Selçuk, *ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

The main reason in experiencing rapid changes in Russian economy is petroleum prices. Russian economy which entered in crisis by reducing petroleum prices down to 10 dollars per barrel, was living the brightest moments together with petroleum countries of Middle East by the prices around 60-80 dollars. Russia become the biggest petroleum producer of the world without being a member of Organization of Petroleum Exporter Countries (OPEC). Petroleum export incomes which were approximately 123 billion dollars by the beginning of 2003 contributed to get Russia's gross foreign debts paid. This dependence on petroleum and natural gas made Russian economy very sensitive against the shocks which will be encountered in the foreign-caused petroleum prices. More clearly, Russia develops a petroleum economy although it makes very less structural reforms and investments in the sectors of the economy which are out of the petroleum such as production and technology⁵⁸.

In 2004 459 million tons raw petroleum has been produced in Russia and 277 million tons of this has been exported and Russia accordingly has become the second biggest petroleum exporter, following Saudi Arabia⁵⁹ Petroleum economies such as Saudi Arabia and Venezuela do not provide a long-term model for development however although this, Russian has an eligible environment for accelerating reforms as long as petroleum prices are high and Putin government inclines to benefit from the advantages provided by the high prices for imposing the reforms in social welfare and energy sector. President Putin wants to reduce poverty so as to get less than 15% of the Russian citizens under the poverty line before 2008 and to double per capita income according to the purchasing power before 2010. At the same time President Putin wants to re-create the government control on the energy sector by giving weight gradually in an increasing way to the state monopoly and by increasing the tax on petroleum exportation⁶⁰.

President Putin had serious problems in the economy as well. Because, the State could not collect taxes because of the subterranean economic activities which could be reduced down to 22,5% in 2003. Another negative impact of the subterranean economy was constantly exuding capital from Russia. Significant amount of money, such as 11,1 billion dollars in 2001, 16,3 billion dollars in 2002 and 24,8 billion dollars in 2003, has been exuded to abroad⁶¹. President Putin has applied rigid policies towards capital class in the country in order to prevent this situation and tried to keep capital exuding to abroad in a reasonable level in order to boost the banking sector and investment financing in Russia.

Russia which was opposing party of the capitalism during Soviets period, took place among the countries which are preferred by the foreign capital by President Putin. Though it is a risky country for investment, investors carry out their activities specially in Moscow. Russia retains its attraction for many domestic and foreign investors in spite of the insufficiencies in the labour regulation and the difficulties in the life conditions. Foreign companies take all risks in Russia and carry out their

⁵⁸ Strategic Survey, "Russia and the West: The End of the Honeymoon", Vol: 104, No: 1, 2004, p. 121.

⁵⁹ Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu (DEİK), "Rusya Ülke Bülteni", 2006, <http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/Rusya-Ekim2005.pdf>, 10.05.2007.

⁶⁰ Strategic Survey, *ibid.*, p. 121.

⁶¹ Uslubaş, *ibid.*, p. 111.

investments because its real market is more profitable than its portfolio market⁶². Because, the foreign investment amount, which penetrated into Russia in the first 9 months of 2004, was 29.1 billion dollars. Russia, which was preferred once by small and middle scaled foreigner enterprises, now attracts also global states⁶³.

As a result, the Russian economy has shown a growth in a high ratio with President Putin, after a long collapse period that lasted during 1990s. The Country has grown each year approximately 6.7 percent during the period that follows the crisis in 1998. The per capita income in the period between 1999 and 2003 has shown an increase in the ratio of 1/3. What is important at this point is, whether or not Russia can maintain the high growth ratio also in the next one decade⁶⁴.

Russia needs a big amount of know-how, technology, capital and experts. The Government understood that it cannot maintain the reforms without external support. Kremlin thinks that a real market economy can be established in Russia with foreign capital. The sole method to pay the price of goods and services coming externally is selling war and product materials. To find appropriate markets for petroleum, tank, bus etc. are the strongest factors which guide Russian diplomacy. Because Moscow sells arms to its former enemy China as well as to the countries from which China perceives threat, such as India and Vietnam. Economic factors lead Russia to establish good relations with all countries⁶⁵. Accordingly, Russian foreign policy is led by economic factors which increasingly become modernized and ensuring it to be like other normal countries. Russian foreign and security policy has been restricted because of international trade and other matters concerning it had privilege (debts in the world trade system, stability of active money, payment balance etc.). Economic factors play a significant role in the foreign policy options of Russia⁶⁶.

Conclusion

The period of change and restructuring has started in Russia by the election of Vladimir Putin as the second President of the Russian Federation in 2000. Putin and his team started to seek answers for the question of "How can Russia be saved?" since the country was experiencing a social collapse and the economy was getting worse. Russia has shown respect in the international arena only because of her UN Security Council Membership and her capacity of nuclear. The Russian Federation was being referred as "a lost former great power" in the international arena but rather than being a regional power she wants to return to the international politics as a "global power" which can compete with the US.

⁶² Selçuk, *ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶³ Ali Külebi, "Putin, Avrasyacılık ve Türkiye", *Cumhuriyet Strateji*, Cilt: 1, No: 23, 2004, p. 14.

⁶⁴ Yevgeny Gavrilenko, "Economic Growth in Russia: Opportunities and Limitations", *Russia The Next Ten Years*, Andrew Kuchins - Dmitri Trenin (eds.), Carnegie Moscow Center, Moskow, 2004, p. 12.

⁶⁵ Yevgeni Bajanov, "Rusya'nın Değişen Dış Politikası", *Menfaatler Çatışması Ortasında Türkiye*, Yılmaz Tezkan (ed.), Ülke Kitapları, 2000, p. 78.

⁶⁶ Celeste A. Wallander, "The Economization, Rationalization and Normalization of Russian Foreign Policy", *PONARS, Policy Memo*: 1, 1997, p. 1.

It is observed that President Putin and his team have given privilege to fix the Russian economy in order to realize these aims. Russia became a petro-dollar rich country by benefiting from rapid rise in international petroleum prices. Thanks to this, Russia started to pay her foreign debts (actually did so before the due date) and even gave foreign trade surplus. In addition to this, President Putin has pursued rigid policies towards capitalist class, in order to stop inequitable income distribution throughout the country as well as their attempts to be dominant on the politics by using their economic power.

The programs to tackle with the black market and informal economy have been started and the income of the state tried to be increased. These improvements in national economy led to the recovery in the welfare of the nation which became poorer falling into social collapse in the post-Soviets period. The administrative schema of the country has been changed and a ground which is required to reap the fruits of the reforms has been established by creating a structure where the power is held in one hand. Thus, the support given to the President has increased within the country and the President Putin has been re-elected in 2004 by gaining much needed national support to accelerate the restructuring. National moral has increased within the country and the people of Russia tried to be gathered around the idea of being a big power again.

However, Russia could not exactly use the opportunity that she held by the beginning of the 2000s. Russia did not invest the income acquired from petroleum to the sectors such as industry and technology which would diversify the country's economy. Instead, she concentrated the entire income to the hydrocarbon resources. If Russia could have taken advantages of the improvements of that period to invest more on technology, she could have had a stronger economic situation today. On the contrary, Russia has missed a big opportunity by not doing so. Russia will inevitably start paying the price of her dependence on the hydrocarbon resources while the barrel price of petroleum is starting to fall due to Syrian crisis.

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