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**RUSSIA-CHINA INTERACTION IN COUNTERING TERRORISM AND  
ENSURING INTERNATIONAL STABILITY**

5.5.4. International relations, global and regional studies

Abstract of the thesis submitted for defense of political science degree candidate

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**The main results of the thesis of T.N. Bukreeva**  
**«Russia-China interaction in countering terrorism and ensuring**  
**international stability»**

The thesis for defense of a candidate degree in political science in specialty 5.5.4. International relations, global and regional studies of T.N. Bukreeva is a complete independent study of Russia-China interaction in ensuring international stability and countering terrorism as one of the main threats to stability at the present stage of international relations. The research presents conclusions that contain scientific novelty and contribute to the development of certain theoretical aspects of political science and social science discourse. The research results have a practical component and include proposals for improvement of Russia-China bilateral cooperation in maintaining stability and guidance for countering such global threat as international terrorism.

**The relevance of the thesis** is based on the growing geopolitical turbulence in the international arena, including issues caused by terrorism, and its transformation leads to the fact that the terrorist threat remains a serious challenge for nation states, groups (unions) of states, as well as international institutions. Bioterrorism, cyberterrorism, the intensification of religious terrorism, military conflicts, and threats to nation states initiated by military alliances draw increasing attention to terrorism-related issues and international instability. The situation in the world system puts on the political agenda the importance of enhanced interaction between the world's heavyweight nation states with the most natural resources and capabilities. The Russian Federation (RF) and the People's Republic of China (PRC) belong to the group of politically influential countries, which have a serious impact on world politics. In this regard, the study of Russia-China interaction in the international arena to counter terrorism and strengthen international stability has a particular relevance.

Firstly, the relevance is related to the need to expand the fundamental knowledge determining the similarity of the approaches of Russia and China to

building bilateral relations and forming collective positions based on similar values and common interests in shaping a multipolar world without hegemony and external pressure of other countries and groups of states. The study of models and practices of interaction focused on effective cooperation (despite the factors of rivalry) strengthens international stability and strive of a significant part of states for real sovereignty, also builds trust to the foreign policy of Russia and China, all these will further develop bilateral cooperation in new directions.

Secondly, the world scientific community and the general public should understand the role, real goals, interests and results of international actors' activities (nation states, intergovernmental organizations); also know their official position declared in the global public space on countering terrorism and creating conditions for maintaining international stability. The ongoing analysis of the Russian-Chinese activities in priority directions of interaction allows to assert that both states, basing on bilateral and multilateral relations, make serious efforts in solving acute world problems. The study of the activities between the two states highlights the positive experience of combating political destructions.

Thirdly, the relevance of studying Russia-China interaction in solving international problems gains certain interest, because insight of interstate cooperation reveals the regularity of resource increment and capability enhancement of the two countries, and elicits the phenomenon of a synergistic effect strengthening the two states in the international arena. The study of the interaction between Russia and China and information systematization in this perspective will allow adjusting the foreign policy of the two countries.

Finally, the Russia-China interaction in preventing internal and external threats not only meets the strategic interests of the two states, but also sets up an example for other countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa. The study of the foreign policy effect from the interaction between the two states in resolving global problems provides the developing countries an alternative to choose the optimal algorithm in foreign policy activities.

**The object of the thesis** is the foreign policy of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China, which provides for broad cooperation between the parties in countering terrorism, ensuring international stability and shaping a more just world order.

**The subject of the study** is the content, platforms, forms and mechanisms of Russia-China interaction in taking measures to counter terrorism and ensure international stability, which have positive effect on the global security and shaping its multipolarity.

### **The purpose and tasks of this thesis research**

**The purpose** of this thesis is to clarify the reasons for the Russia-China strategic interaction, explain the importance of cooperation between the two countries in combating terrorism and strengthening international stability in bilateral and multilateral formats providing the basis for shaping a more just world order. It is also aimed to identify positive experience, successful practices, effective mechanisms and tools for bilateral cooperation in mitigating the severity of national and international problems. The experience of the Russia-China interaction is a positive example of countering international threats for other nation states, it also can serve as a proven practice for further scaling at the international level.

To achieve the purpose of the thesis research, the author has set and solved **the following tasks:**

- 1) to clarify the universal concept of international stability as a dynamic state of the international system with a set of properties and factors of the current situation and development trends;
- 2) to characterize terrorism, taking into account the transformation of terrorist activities, the nature of the damage caused and the subject of violent actions;
- 3) to compare the main concepts of interaction between the actors in world politics in ensuring international stability under the criteria of the nature,

motives and mechanisms of cooperation, as well as to identify the Russia-China relations within the theory of flexible realism;

4) to specify the socio-economic and political factors that necessitate cooperation between Russia and China in countering terrorism and ensuring international stability;

5) to find out the functional principles of the main world platforms, mechanisms and technologies for combating terrorism and ensuring world order, determine the levels of interaction between interested actors and the directions of such interaction at the global and regional levels;

6) to determine the content and chronological framework of the Russia-China bilateral cooperation in countering international terrorism, establish the levels of this interaction, its types and forms;

7) to clarify the motives that put the parties to share experience, identify prospects for bilateral cooperation in overcoming the destructive consequences of terrorism and determine the directions for improving interaction between the states;

8) to identify the causes and factors that stipulate the use of global and regional platforms by Russia and China, as well as determine joint measures to counter terrorism within the framework of international organizations;

9) to notice the circumstances and factors causing changes in the structure and content of Russia-China interaction.

**The field of thesis research** corresponds to paragraph 7 of the description list for the specialty 5.5.4. ‘International relations, global and regional studies’: **International security. Systems of global and regional security. Military power in international relations. International terrorism and fight against it. Disarmament and arms control. Challenges, risks, dangers and threats.**

### **Theory and methodology of the study**

The theoretical basis of the thesis research is based on the key scientific concepts of foreign and domestic authors in the theory of international relations, interstate cooperation, world order and geopolitics, the phenomena of terrorism

and international stability. The methodological foundation of the thesis research is an interdisciplinary approach based on the main provisions and methods of structural realism (neorealism), liberalism (neoliberalism), and constructivism. The methodology of the thesis is determined by a set of scientific research methods, including induction and deduction to clarify and define the concepts of international stability and terrorism, a comparative analysis of the main theories of international relations to interstate cooperation, statistical analysis to justify the advisability of Russia-China interaction on countering international terrorism, methods of generalization and synthesis of information on bilateral interaction between the two states at various levels.

As part of the thesis research, the author has applied an event analysis of the joint initiatives of Russia and China at the UN and SCO platforms, a SWOT analysis of the development of Russia-China cooperation in combating international terrorist organizations, a SWOT analysis of an epistemic community for developing bilateral cooperation aimed to maintain international stability, as well as game theory ('the stag hunt' for Russia and China in countering terrorism within the country and the 'prisoner's dilemma' for cooperation between the two countries in countering international terrorism).

**The scientific novelty of the study** is as follows:

1. The universal concept of international stability is clarified as a dynamic state of the international system with a set of properties and factors of the current situation and development trends that make it possible to determine the state of stability at different historical stages and identify problem areas for corrective action.
2. Reputational damage is singled out as a cost of terrorist actions by individuals, including terrorists sponsored by state, in order to get political benefits, it will allow taking into account the implicit and long-term consequences of this type of damage when determining responsibility for a specific act of terror.
3. The main concepts of interaction between the actors of world politics in ensuring international stability are compared under the criteria of the nature,

motives and mechanisms of cooperation, as well as it is identified that the Russia-China course of action corresponds with the certain aspects of the theory of flexible realism.

4. The socio-economic and political factors that necessitate cooperation between Russia and China in countering terrorism and ensuring international stability are specified.

5. The functional principles of the main world platforms, mechanisms and technologies for combating terrorism and ensuring world order are found out, the levels of interaction between interested actors and the directions of such interaction at the global and regional levels are determined.

6. The content and chronological framework of the Russia-China bilateral cooperation in countering international terrorism is determined, and the levels of this interaction, its types and forms are defined.

7. The motives that put the parties to share experience are clarified, prospects for bilateral cooperation in overcoming the destructive consequences of terrorism are identified, and the directions for improving interaction between the states are determined.

8. The causes and factors that stipulate the use of global and regional platforms by Russia and China are identified, as well as joint measures to counter terrorism within the framework of international organizations are determined.

9. The circumstances and factors causing changes in the structure and content of Russia-China interaction are noticed.

### **The main theses for defense**

1. It is logical to consider the scientific definition of international stability as a guideline in the activities of nation states, including Russia and China, in the international arena. International stability is actively influenced by both states, it is a dynamic state of the international system with a set of properties and factors of the current situation and development trends that make it possible to manage the system's variable parameters in a timely and effective manner. Some of the most important variable parameters of the international system's dynamics are

real and potential threats. In this case, threats act as destabilizing factors, their direct or indirect impact can bring the system out of a dynamic equilibrium state, i.e. disrupt international stability. Russia and China make serious efforts to improve the mechanisms for maintaining international stability. International institutions, primarily the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), are the higher priority mechanisms to ensure the maintenance of stability within the system and its subsystems at various levels.

2. Terrorism is considered as the use or threat of use of violence, infliction of material, moral, and reputational damage on the part of individuals, including with the support of a state, in order to get political benefits in ideological, organizational and legal aspects, destabilize national and public security systems, push public administrations or organizations responsible for international activities to make any decisions, perform any action or, on the contrary, refuse the latter. Discrediting of a state by diplomatic means, including aggressive statements by heads of state or representatives of international organizations, and creating an atmosphere of instability among the population of the attacked state and an atmosphere of fear and rejection on the part of other states, allows defining 'diplomatic' terrorism.

3. At the present stage the Russia-China interaction in ensuring stability and countering terrorism is carried out in cooperation format that corresponds with the certain aspects of the theory of flexible realism: compliance with foreign policy motives for ensuring security, obtaining benefits and maintaining the status of military powers, using economic mechanisms and strategic political partnership, including from the position of leadership in international regional organizations. A set of decisions and diplomatic actions of Russia and China leads to the further extension of interaction between the two states in the foreign policy and economic spheres, an increase in prospects for the bilateral cooperation, as well as a decrease in the severity of political destruction. In this case, diplomacy is seen as a tool of interstate relations aimed at creating favorable



conditions for a state in foreign policy, international trade, strategic security, including countering international terrorism.

4. The Russia-China interaction in countering terrorism and ensuring international stability is determined by a number of socio-economic and political factors, the main of which are:

- geographical neighborhood and mutually beneficial foreign trade relations;

- the two states' geopolitical and geo-economic position on the territories where interests, resources, opportunities and communications for many international actors are territorially concentrated;

- similar problems in the fight against international terrorist organizations of the Islamic (Muslim) persuasion;

- national experience, strategies and practices in countering political terrorism and separatism, as well as efforts to maintain international stability.

5. At the global and regional levels, the Russia-China interaction in countering terrorism and ensuring international stability takes place at the largest world platforms of the UN and the SCO. The governments of the two states interact using certain mechanisms and technologies to combat terrorism. As permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC), Russia and China, through the development and implementation of UNSC resolutions on combating terrorism, make a tangible contribution to managing global security and ensuring international stability. The two countries also take part in international peacekeeping operations, projects of the UN Counter-Terrorism Center (UNCCT) and international humanitarian assistance programs. Russia and China act as activity coordinators and funding sources, both countries are active participants in the work of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Counter-Terrorism Center (CTC), which implements a number of innovative anti-terrorist projects, specialized in combating terrorism financing, strengthening migration control, identifying the movement of terrorists, etc. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an important platform for countering

terrorism and ensuring international stability, where China and Russia actively perform. The main area of responsibility of the SCO member states is Central Asia and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China. Over the SCO's existence, Russia and China have contributed efforts in developing an extensive legal basis for cooperation, including more than 15 treaties, declarations and other documents related to the fight against terrorism and extremism.

6. The thesis research presents the author's periodization of the stages and levels of bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation between the Russian Federation and People's Republic of China. The joint anti-terrorist activities of the two states have four stages:

- 1) preparatory stage – 1991-2000;
- 2) fundamental stage – 2000-2003;
- 3) constructive stage– 2003-2008;
- 4) resulting stage – 2008-till present.

The levels of bilateral interaction between Russia and China include the interstate level (heads of states and national governments), the interagency level (heads of the departments in federal authorities: federal ministries, services, etc., for example, the FSB of Russia, the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Russia, Rosselkhoznadzor, China's General Administration of Customs, etc.) and the border level (heads of border regions, as well as regional ministries, committees, departments).

7. The development of Russia-China interaction in countering terrorist activities is motivated by a number of international threats and challenges, transformation of which reflects the world events. Both countries have similar capabilities in solving terrorism issues within the country independently, implementing individual strategies. However, the international aspects of terrorism require improving interstate cooperation and increasing the effectiveness of the exchange of positive and negative experience between the states in overcoming the destructive consequences of terrorism and stimulating the socio-economic development of struggling areas with ethno-religious

characteristics. The Russia-China interaction is based on the scientific approach that the proven joint practices of partner states are as effective as a unilateral approach in overcoming destruction. Thus, it is necessary to note the positive effect of studying individual strategies for the formation of a comprehensive strategy for interaction between the two states on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

8. The geographic expansion of the ITO, a wide range of transnational instruments, and the migration flows of global significance necessitate the need in collective actions for countering terrorism within the framework of a global organization (the UN), where Russia and China demonstrate similarity of attitudes to global issues. In order to achieve the ultimate key role of the UN in the world arena, it is advisable for states to promote the idea of reforming the organization, considering it as a mechanism of global governance for ensuring stability and justice for the population all around the world by building potential for early response to transnational threats, including international terrorism. Considering the growing geopolitical importance of Central Asia, an overlap between terrorism and internal conflicts in this region, as well as the geographic proximity to Russia and China and the mutual interests of the two countries in the region, the SCO has become a priority platform for Russian-Chinese regional cooperation, where counter-terrorism measures need a continuous improvement.

9. The political Russia-China interaction is determined by foreign policy factors, often of a negative nature, affecting the stability of the international system. The emergence of new factors causes substantive and structural changes in bilateral cooperation aimed at building cooperation with long-term forecasting of the development of the socio-economic and political systems of the two countries in relation to the terrorist threat. The main prospects for the development of various systems (economic, political, social, technical, etc.) in the aspect of counter-terrorism activities is to form a set of preventive measures with a high forecast horizon (20-50-100 years), which will serve as the basis for the system development of long-term preventative actions.

### **Theoretical and scientific-practical significance of the study**

The theoretical significance of the thesis results is based on the functional capabilities of the proposed concepts of ‘international stability’ and ‘terrorism’. The first concept emphasizes the international stability as a dynamic state of the international system and highlights the parameters of this state, which allows determining stability at different historical stages and identifying problem areas for corrective action. The definition of terrorism takes into account the expansion of tasks of terrorist activity, including its focus on causing damage to political reputation. It also singles out an individual acting with the support of a state (collective subject) as a subject of terrorist actions; it will allow considering the implicit and long-term consequences of this type of damage when determining responsibility for a specific act of terror.

The practical significance of the study lies in the development of conclusions and recommendations for improving the domestic and foreign policies of the two states, promoting cooperation between Russia and China in countering terrorism in territories with different ethno-religious specifics. It is advisable to use the key provisions of the thesis as lecture materials for disciplines related to the domestic and foreign policy of states, geopolitics, international security and diplomacy.

### **Approbation and implementation of the results**

The key conclusions and provisions of the thesis research were presented by the applicant at the scientific conferences (international, Russian, multi-regional): international research and practical conference ‘Constitutional reform and national development goals of Russia: socio-economic and political-legal priorities’ (Orel, 2020), II International conference ‘Modern Culture and Communications’ (section ‘Terrorism and Territory’) (St. Petersburg, 2020), National research and practical conference ‘Theory and practice of the effectiveness of state and municipal management’ (Kursk, 2019). The basic provisions of the thesis research are reflected in 12 scientific publications, including 6 research articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals of the

Higher Attestation Commission under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation:

1. Bukreeva, T.N. The destabilising interference by the US in China's internal affairs (the case of Taiwan and Xinjiang) [Text] / T.N. Bukreeva // Proceedings of the Southwest State University. Series: History and Law. – 2022. – 12(2). – Pp. 98-113. (1 p.s.).
2. Nechaev, D.N., Bukreeva, T.N. Russia and China against terrorism: stages and directions of cooperation [Text] / D.N. Nechaev, T.N. Bukreeva // Central Russian journal of social sciences. – 2021. – 16(1). – Pp. 208-225. (1,1 p.s., author's contribution – 0,6 p.s.).
3. Bukreeva, T.N. Analysis of China's efforts to promote international cooperation in the fight against terrorism [Text] / T.N. Bukreeva // Proceedings of the Southwest State University. Series: History and Law. – 2020. – 10(2). – Pp. 137–150. (1 p.s.).
4. Bukreeva, T.N. Basic priorities of expanding international cooperation during fight against terrorism and extremism [Text] / T.N. Bukreeva // Central Russian journal of social sciences. – 2020. – 15(2). – Pp. 57-72. (0,9 p.s.).
5. Bukreeva, T.N., Popova, A.V. Analysis of socio-economic and ethnopolitical reasons for the manifestation of international terrorism in China [Text] / T.N. Bukreeva, A.V. Popova // Journal of Altai academy of economics and law. – 2019. – №11-2. – Pp. 37-43. (0,4 p.s., author's contribution – 0,2 p.s.).
6. Minakova, I.V., Bukreeva, T.N. Current geopolitical state of Russia and ensuring it national security [Text] / I.V. Minakova, T.N. Bukreeva // Fundamental research. – 2018. – № 12-1. – Pp. 132-136. (0,3 p.s., author's contribution – 0,15 p.s.).

### **Thesis structure**

The topic proposed by the applicant, the purpose and the tasks of the research have determined the structural construction of the thesis containing an introduction; three chapters, conclusion; list of used literature and appendices.

MD / T.N. Bukreeva /