Journal of Liberty and International Affairs | Volume 9 · Number 3 · 2023 | eISSN 1857-9760
Published online by the Institute for Research and European Studies at www.e-jlia.com

Copyright © 2023 The author/s
This work is licensed under a CC-BY 4.0 license
(*) Corresponding author
Peer review method: Double-blind
Original scientific article
DOI: https://doi.org/10.47305/JLIA2393347g
Received: 01.06.2023 · Revised: 20.08.2023 · Accepted: 24.09.2023 · Published: 26.12.2023

GREECE AND TRIPARTITE PARTNERSHIPS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN: A RECOMMENDED POLICY FOR GREEK STRATEGIC INTERESTS

Dimitrios Grekos[1*]

[1]University of Piraeus, Greece https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3578-4071 jimgrek@gmail.com

Abstract: *The Eastern Mediterranean is an area of strategic importance not only in the peripheral but worldwide. In recent years, the field of the Eastern Mediterranean has entered a new dynamic since there are trends of Tripartite Partnerships between neighboring states. These partnerships are political, cultural, economic, energy (due to the hydrocarbon surveys), immigration, and especially at the level of dealing with common security threats. By conducting tripartite partnerships, Greece achieved balance while playing a major role in the region. The study examined this Greek initiative in the sectors above under the vacuum left by the great powers (Russia and the USA). Greek foreign policy, through Tripartite Partnerships, defended its strategic interests and shaped the region's good relationships. The analysis of this policy employed the theory of neoclassical realism in order to present the international and internal (state) system and their impact on the Greek initiative of tripartite cooperation with the states of the Eastern Mediterranean. According to said method, a recommended policy for Greek strategic interests was designed, which may be utilized by other regional states.*

Keywords: *International Relations; Law; Tripartite Partnership; Greece; Foreign Policy*

INTRODUCTION

The study focuses on the examination of Greek foreign policy, as it appears under the existing multilateral partnerships (a) Greece, Cyprus, Israel, (b) Greece, Cyprus, Egypt, (c) Greece, Cyprus, Jordan, as well as partnerships between Greece and Cyprus with Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority respectively. The USA and other great powers may take part in these partnerships. Under the factor of the more specific geostrategic and socio-political changes in the Eastern Mediterranean, a fluid and dynamic field can be seen in which, in addition to peace and security, the economic and energy interests of the states are at stake. Greece defends these interests through tripartite partnerships and shapes the region's developments. This perspective, promoted through Greek foreign policy, is particularly active today and aims to promote the value of the Eastern Mediterranean under the prevalence of a regime of peaceful resolution of disputes between states.

The analysis of the Greek foreign policy under the tripartite cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean employs the theory of neoclassical realism (Lobell et al. 2009) in order to investigate, on the one hand, the influence of the international and internal (state) system and the other hand the interaction of these two components in the Greek initiative of tripartite cooperation with the states of the Eastern Mediterranean (Baylis et al. 2023). The applied theoretical method is expected to demonstrate that the regional strategic stakes, particularly security, are based on international

systemic and internal (at the national level) effects. So, the international system will be checked first and then the internal one, while finally, their results will be combined (Sorensen et al. 2021). Modern developments in the Eastern Mediterranean have made Greece a major player in the region through the initiative of concluding tripartite partnerships. The size of these partnerships is to balance Turkey's expansionist policy, so Greece should closely monitor this field.

ANALYSIS

The present study analyzes Greek foreign policy in the form of tripartite partnerships with the neighboring states of the Eastern Mediterranean and the strategic stakes. The field of the Eastern Mediterranean should, as it is argued, favor the peaceful (diplomatic) resolution of disputes between the neighboring states, especially Greece. This trend includes tripartite collaborations between Greece, Cyprus, and neighboring states to strengthen ties, at least in security and economics. This initiative has to deal with several unstable geopolitical factors, such as the war in Syria, the issue between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the Cyprus issue, the confrontation between Turkey and Egypt, and the growing influence of Russia in the region. In this context, the Greek foreign policy, with the cooperation of the states as a vehicle, highlights the regional dynamics so that the states can overcome the confrontations and balance their interests peacefully.

Furthermore, it intends to clarify the factors that shaped Greek foreign policy to strengthen the geostrategic dynamics of the Eastern Mediterranean through the progress of the tripartite partnerships so far. It is being investigated whether Greece's policy in the region raised the interest of the neighboring states in cooperation. Also, the effectiveness of tripartite partnerships is examined, which allowed a clear assessment of the unfolding situation with the subsequent success of the specific project and the serving of Greek interests. It is assumed that (a) the structural object of the international systemic situation will not change, (b) the field of the Eastern Mediterranean remains fluid and somewhat unstable (c) the energy issue in the region still raises confrontations between states (d) tripartite partnershipsand the internal politics of the participating states will not change (e) the area of the Eastern Mediterranean is considered to be of high geostrategic value and (f) the Cyprus and Palestinian issues will not be resolved. It is pointed out that the evaluation of the Greek foreign policy and the strategic stakes in the region will be demonstrated through the application of the method of neoclassical realism (Baylis et al. 2023; Lobell et al. 2009). With this method, Greek foreign policy will be explained as a result of the complex relations between the states of the Eastern Mediterranean and the influences of internal politics. The analysis below highlights those mentioned above.

It is a fact that the interests of international and regional actors depend on the scope of the Eastern Mediterranean. These interests are influenced by controversies fueled by claims against sovereign rights and energy, immigration, terrorism, and environmental issues. The stake of the aforementioned interests depends on the specific period where the confrontations are activated. The Syrian and Libyan civil wars, the tense situation in Egypt, the Cyprus issue, the Palestinian issue, the threat of Turkey, and the energy issue in the region intensify the tendency for conflict. Therefore, the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean is considered variable. This is where Greek foreign policy bridges the gap through tripartite partnerships to resolve disputes peacefully. With this initiative, Greece is portrayed as an upgraded regional actor in the Eastern Mediterranean region and a serious

partner of the EU and NATO. Under these conditions, the prospect of promoting Greek interests and ensuring regional security is visible.

APPLICATION OF THE NEOCLASSICAL REALISM METHOD

In order to analyze the Greek foreign policy during tripartite partnerships in the Eastern Mediterranean and to clarify the strategic stakes, the method of neoclassical realism is introduced. According to the specific method, which is a combination of the analysis of the international and the internal state system, the distribution of power between the states in an anarchic, structurally international system is examined, and secondly, the factors that influence the state system so that ultimately and in combination it is produced the foreign policy. At the international level, the power distribution of states is classified based on economic, military, and geopolitical power (Kiczma and Sulek 2020). At the internal state level, the surrogate factors influencing foreign policy are distributed among the policies activated by the Greek side to conclude tripartite partnerships (Lobell et al. 2009). For this reason, the specific collaborations are analyzed in order to record the benefits that Greece seeks. So, at the international level, there are the independent actors, while at the state internal level, there are the surrogates (dependents) who interact to shape foreign policy.

International Field

Next, the factors of the international distribution of power between the states are reflected (Waltz 2010). At least, for the last fifteen years, it has been observed in the Eastern Mediterranean region that USA dominance is on the decline. The region's states tend to exploit this situation to promote their interests (Tsaltas et al. 2013). The war and the preservation of the ruling faction in Syria showed that Russia is playing an important role in the field of the Eastern Mediterranean, especially in seeking alliances with the Israeli and Egyptian sides (Wolff 2022). This tactic affects US interests and creates conditions of instability and liquidity. In this context, (i) the sides of Greece, Cyprus, Israel, Egypt, and Turkey operate between these two great powers, looking for benefits, (ii) Turkey finds free space to promote its interests dynamically, and (iii) common interests are presented between the states which are covered under the institution of multilateral cooperation. The table below shows the national power distribution of the states (Kiczma and Sulek 2020). They were chosen, *inter alia*, the nine states that operate in the Eastern Mediterranean. Also, they are shown and ranked according to the number they have received in the relevant study in economic, military, and geopolitical power. Turkey is the most powerful state in terms of economic and geopolitical power in the Eastern Mediterranean, while in military terms, it is one number behind Israel. The rest of the states follow, with Cyprus last in power.

Within the last fifteen years, a new environment has been formed in the Eastern Mediterranean due to natural gas and oil deposits. In this transitional stage, Greece has reassessed its position to assume an important geopolitical role by entering into tripartite partnerships with states that share common perspectives. The power imbalance in the region is typical for Greece, given that it is subject to uncertainty and security threats from Turkey. However, in recent years, Turkey has been in confrontation with Egypt, Israel, and Cyprus (Ertan 2022). These states accepted the Greek alliance in order to face Turkey. In this regard, the fertile hydrocarbon deposits in the Eastern Mediterranean

(cc) BY

distributed in the sea zones of Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and Egypt shaped the environment of tripartite partnerships. At the same time, Turkey pursued a threatening policy (Markind 2022). So, Turkey's state revisionism is evident; as a strong economic force in the region, it can carry out its eventual threats. Consequently, the initial tripartite partnerships in the energy sector evolved into joint actions and counterweights against Turkish threats. Greek foreign policy realized the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean in time and promoted tripartite partnerships to reshape the region's balance.

Table 1: Distribution of National Power in the Eastern Mediterranean for 2020 (Source: Kiczma and Sulek 2020)

No.	State	Economic Power No.	Military Power No.	Geopolitical Power No.
1.	USA	2	1	1
2.	Russia	7	4	4
3.	Turkey	17	23	20
4.	Israel	48	22	26
5.	Egypt	29	30	31
6.	Greece	56	34	43
7.	Jordan	95	61	66
8.	Libanon	98	65	70
9.	Cyprus	130	105	108

Domestic Field

Greek foreign policy is linked to EU policy. In the last fifteen years, Greece has been trying to approach neighboring states by concluding tripartite partnerships with the states of the Eastern Mediterranean (Grekos 2023). The Greek rulers of recent years are still in favor of maintaining these non-binding agreements to strengthen Greece's role in the region. The tension in Turkey's relations with the Israeli, Egyptian, and Cypriot sides pushed Greece to consolidate the tripartite partnerships project and become an essential interlocutor at the international and regional level. This policy is consistent with the EU's counterpart in the field of defense and security (European Security Strategy 2009) and with the US's interest in participating in tripartite partnerships focused on hydrocarbon deposits in the eastern Mediterranean. Greek foreign policy desires stability and the collective exploitation of the eastern Mediterranean under a peaceful dialogue to ensure security in the region from Turkey's machinations (Yegin 2022). With this reasoning, combined with the involvement of the USA, Russia, and the EU, Greece reached out to the states of the region to have more allies to counter the Turkish threats. The hydrocarbon deposits in the Eastern Mediterranean are now being added to the long process to resolve the Greek-Turkish issues. In these matters, the great powers, NATO and the EU, tend to take an objective stance. Thus, Greek foreign policy turned towards the conclusion of tripartite partnerships to serve its interests better, as presented below.

MULTILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The multilateral cooperation of the states seems to take place when there is an unstable and fluid climate in the field of interest which cannot be regulated by competent international actors such as the UN. In this case, multilateral cooperation balances the situation when strategic issues such as security, economy, and energy are at stake in a specific geographical area. Multilateral cooperation of

this type has a quick effect on resolving a regional issue before the UN or NATO. The main factor of these collaborations is the common interest with the ultimate goal of resolving any disputes.

Through multilateral cooperation, the national power of the states is intensified. However, on the strategic stakes, the convergence of opinions is a complex undertaking that requires the consent of the states or diplomatic mergers-alliances with the mighty powers USA and Russia. During diplomatic alliances with the great powers, the smaller states enjoy protection and participation in the acquisitions of the powerful. Regarding the defense of the security sector, the field of cooperation there is loose because the states do not quickly wish to assume binding roles on either side. However, at the regional level, multilateral security or defense cooperation becomes paramount in areas such as the Eastern Mediterranean when strategic stakes exist. Cultivating a climate of trust and a common culture and dealing with threats is considered a *sine qua non* within multilateral cooperation (Snyder 2007).

Accordingly, the fewer members that make up the multilateral cooperation, the better for its sustainable operation and effectiveness. In the field of the Eastern Mediterranean, there are usually tripartite partnerships with the presence of Greece and the participation of a fourth party, such as the USA. These are partnerships of small states in territory, population, economic, and military power which, under this scheme, wish not only to face common threats or resolve current issues of common interest but also to create a strong regional actor that will exert influence in the international system. The participation of the great power in the tripartite partnerships signals the promotion of the interests of the small states at the international level and probably the alignment with the politics of this power. For many years, Greece has been under the casus belli of Turkey, creating tripartite partnerships with the other states of the Eastern Mediterranean with the same problem balances. In a way, the situation, especially in the modern era of energy research on the Greek and Cypriot exclusive economic zone.

Furthermore, the EU promotes multilateral cooperation in defense, security, economy, energy, human rights-immigration, environment, and regional policy. The EU Security Strategy calls for creating security structures at the regional level to directly and collectively address specific strategic stakes through the theoretical security model of the regional cluster (European Security Strategy 2009). This perspective removes the resolution of disputes at the bilateral level and shields cooperation and convergences within the multilateral scheme. It also reduces the time required to resolve disputes in an international body and highlights the treatment of the situation by a regional and more flexible scheme. The structure of the Eastern Mediterranean complex is at an anarchic level because the states of the region have autonomy, a specific foreign policy, and a security doctrine. As described below, Greece developed an active foreign policy to create tripartite partnerships.

Greece-Cyprus-Israel

The tripartite partnership of the three states is based on political, military, and economic cooperation (Mizrahi 2020). Greek foreign policy approached the other two states to find common interests and face common threats in the Eastern Mediterranean area. This tripartite partnership is welcomed politically by the USA and is symbolized by 3+1. Through this scheme, the balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean changes, and thus, the interests and possible threats are balanced. Multilateral cooperation is carried out with tripartite conferences at a high level. Under

these conferences, the foundations were laid for cooperation in a joint action plan on maritime security (countering military threats, search and rescue) and military training. The evolution of these initiatives was the joint naval exercises called ARGONAUT (MOD 2022) - INIOCHOS (HAF 2023) - NOBLE DINA (Coats 2019), where the states practice in the fields of search and rescue, countering threats, and migration. Greece is leading in the Eastern Mediterranean through this tripartite exemplary agreement (US Department of State 2022).

Greece-Cyprus-Egypt

This tripartite partnership stems from common political, military, and energy visions. Recently (2021), during the joint Declaration at a high level, the three states consolidated the continuation of their work to strengthen security and peaceful resolution of disputes in the eastern Mediterranean. It should be noted that Egypt is a strong military power that can stand to help in any threats against Greece. In this context, the USA also participates at a civil-military level, characterizing the cooperation as 3+1. More specifically, the tripartite partnership deals with issues of defense, security, terrorism, energy, and maritime zones while opposing Turkey's provocative actions. In connection with their joint Statement, the tripartite partnership declared illegal the memorandum of understanding between Turkey and Libya and the one on military cooperation of November 2019 (SIS 2021). Military cooperation exercises, such as the annual established exercise MEDUSA (Financial Mirror 2022), are conducted between the three. On a political level, the tripartite supports the fair resolution of the Cyprus issue, adopts cooperation in the distribution of the hydrocarbon deposits of the Eastern Mediterranean, is in favor only of the political resolution of the crisis in Syria and the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (CAP 2022). Greek foreign policy within the tripartite group acquired a vital role in the field of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Greece-Cyprus-Lebanon

This tripartite partnership moves towards the common interest of the regional development and stability of the Eastern Mediterranean area. Its main objectives are the consolidation of security, peaceful resolution of regional disputes, and cooperation on educational, economic, and energy issues (Andreou 2021). Following the establishment of the maritime border between Israel and Lebanon, on 28.10.2022, an initial agreement was reached between Cyprus and Lebanon to delimit the exclusive economic zone of the two states (Mitchell, 2022). The tripartite is cultivating a suitable climate so that similar demarcations can be agreed with Syria. Greek foreign policy considers the common approach to defense and security issues with Lebanon necessary. Indeed, since the tripartite meeting took place on 11.05.2016, collaborations have followed in terrorism, migration, maritime transport, and energy. A particular area of cooperation is Greek assistance in upgrading the Lebanese military forces (Yiallourides et al. 2022). Also, Greece participates in the military peacekeeping force for the security and stability of Lebanon (UNIFIL 2023). In this tripartite partnership, Greece again plays a key role, promoting Greek interests and strengthening its role in the eastern Mediterranean.

Greece-Cyprus-Jordan

The tripartite partnership of the states in question has a common orientation towards creating stable conditions of security, stability, and prosperity in the eastern Mediterranean (PM 2021). During the third tripartite meeting on 28.07.2021, it was agreed to set up a committee that will settle cooperation issues, including military exercises and joint armed forces training. Military cooperation lies in the provision of logistical support and training. In this regard, special operations and joint training programs are organized by Greece. Also, in a joint statement, the improvement of cooperation on finance, trade, energy, and education was underlined, as well as Jordan's assistance in dealing with the Cyprus issue. The more than twenty years of cooperation with Jordan highlight the common goals in the region. Strengthening cooperation with Jordan consolidates Greece's regional role as its allies increase.

Greece-Cyprus-Palestinian Authority

Relations between the three states have always been cordial, given their support for creating an independent Palestinian state in peaceful coexistence with Israel. During the tripartite meetings, emphasis is placed on cooperation in the fields of defense, security, economy, trade, energy, and education (MFA 2023). The good relations with the Israeli side give Greece room to mediate for the peaceful resolution of the disputes with the Palestinian Authority. Although the Cyprus issue is similar to the Palestinian one, it differs (Shaath 2016). Despite this, the states are intensifying their joint actions to resolve the specific issues peacefully. Greece and Cyprus are helping the Palestinian Authority to participate in EU funding programs (Europa 2022). Military cooperation with the Palestinian Authority is impossible since its forces are acting anarchically, and this move would affect the tripartite relationship with Israel. Greek foreign policy should be strengthened through alliances within the Eastern Mediterranean, and the stabilization of the region also necessitates the involvement and contribution of the Palestinian Authority.

GREECE AND STRATEGIC STAKES UNDER TRIPARTITE PARTNERSHIPS

Greek foreign policy in the Eastern Mediterranean faces a fluid and unstable field. The strategic stakes are defense, security, immigration, terrorism, energy, the determination of maritime zones, and exclusive economic zones. Also, in the area of the Eastern Mediterranean, the presence of Russia is intensifying, and that of the USA is weakening. In particular, defense and security issues come first on the Greek diplomatic agenda. The level of military cooperation with the Israeli and Egyptian sides strengthened Greek foreign policy, and the addition of Cyprus increased the momentum. The exchange of military know-how with Israel and Egypt as states with recent war experience shield the Greek defense while Israel and Egypt gain allies at the EU level. Also, Egypt, through its position in Arab affairs, can counter Turkey. The delimitation of the exclusive economic zone between Greece and Egypt is also essential, contributing to the joint energy exploitation of the sea plots south of Crete (Greek Law No. 4717/2020 in Government Gazette A 164). Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority complete the alliance regime that Greek foreign policy has introduced to acquire a

regulatory role in the region. Turkey reduces the issue between Israel and the Palestinian Authority as equal to the Cyprus issue in order to recognize the Cyprus pseudo-state (Fathom 2016).

Consequently, Greek foreign policy should maintain the same distance from Israel and the Palestinian Authority. However, Greece's role in the Eastern Mediterranean environment is played out in front of the interests of the USA, Russia, the EU, and other actors. The specific tripartite partnerships do not oppose the ventures of the great powers but promote common regional concerns that can be more easily resolved on stage. This mild action of the Greek foreign policy balances the Turkish threat through tripartite partnerships.

COMBINATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC FIELD

From the analysis above, the dynamism of Greek foreign policy in response to Turkey's threats becomes evident, as it aims to balance forces in the Eastern Mediterranean (Schweller 2008). Greek foreign policy adopts the strategy of soft balancing (Paul 2018) through international diplomatic channels to bend the Turkish threats peacefully. Before the last fifteen years, Greek foreign policy presented the differences with Turkey at the level of the UN, EU, and great powers (USA and Russia) without substantial results. However, the discovery of hydrocarbon deposits in the sea zones of the Eastern Mediterranean states gave the impetus for drawing up a more active policy in the region.

The retreat of the US dynamics combined with the rise of Russia's interest and the rupture of Turkey's relations with Israel and Egypt (Aljazeera 2023) allowed Greece to play an essential role in the region through multilateral agreements. The Greek governments of recent years have supported this active policy, resulting in the fact that today, Greece is considered a vital actor in the Eastern Mediterranean. The oil and gas field exploitation companies were also supportive of this policy. Without ignoring the protection of the marine environment, Greece is instrumentalizing the geopolitical and economic benefits of hydrocarbon exploration as a counterweight to the Turkish revisionist policy. However, it is said that this venture is not producing stability as, recently, companies like TOTAL and RERSOL have abandoned the explorations (WWF 2022).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the goals pursued by the Greek foreign policy with the project of multilateral cooperation were the compensation of the Turkish threats and the establishment of a critical role in the field of the Eastern Mediterranean and internationally in order to produce a stable status in security and the development of the region. The strategic stakes mainly concern defense, security, economy, energy, immigration, and others such as the Cyprus and Palestinian issues. In recent years and after the discovery of hydrocarbon deposits in the region, energy and security have been at the top of the discussion. Through tripartite partnerships, Greek foreign policy promotes its interests while simultaneously maintaining the role of a worthy interlocutor of the great powers by sticking to the tactic of soft balancing. However, Greek foreign policy at the level of the Eastern Mediterranean is not institutionally permanently defined, and neither are its official long-term goals. So, each government acts as it pleases without high strategic planning. Indeed, the agenda introduced during the discussions within the tripartite partnerships is loose and non-binding.

Greek foreign policy keeps the Cyprus issue and the development of economic relations with the states of the Eastern Mediterranean in the foreground. Lately, he has been dealing with the delimitation of maritime zones due to the energy issue. The conclusion of a tripartite agreement with Israel and Egypt goes a long way in serving this situation and producing a counterweight to Turkey's claims. For this policy to bear fruit, it should be followed, without fluctuations, institutionally, long-term, and firmly so that Greece takes on the role of a strong regional power. Pursuing a defined and stable foreign policy within multilateral cooperation is an aid in this direction. While they are widely accepted, the non-binding role of tripartite partnerships can also bring negative results if mishandled.

Agreements with Israel and Egypt contribute to field security, followed by those with Lebanon and Jordan. On these, Greece's foreign policy should promote the common interests that arise to preserve the specific agreements. In the event of a dynamic conflict between two states in the eastern Mediterranean and despite tripartite agreements, military assistance from the partners of a multilateral agreement is questioned. It should be noted that a new approach to Israel from the Turkish side with favorable terms may be the end of multilateral agreements in the region. Great powers and international organizations such as NATO and the EU have historically been sure not to engage in a military confrontation between two states in the Eastern Mediterranean. Although costly, the strengthening of the Greek military forces seems to be necessary.

Recommendations

The continuation of further collaborations within multilateral schemes with binding actions, particularly with Israel and Egypt, will be constructive for the Greek side. The joint presence of Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and Egypt at the political and military level will bring about the balancing of forces in the field of the Eastern Mediterranean. It will create the counterweight that Greece needs against the Turkish threats. In this direction, collaborations with Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority should be intensified. Taking advantage of the experience that the states of the Eastern Mediterranean have in real military operations will contribute the most to the modernization of the Greek forces.

If the specific multilateral agreements are strengthened, then it would be in the public good to discuss the issues of the Eastern Mediterranean with Turkey to avoid threats and reduce investments in defense costs. Although the powerful armed forces contribute to the success of peaceful negotiation, Greece, as a state still bearing the brunt of the economic crisis, must be as frugal as it is in purchasing defense and other armaments. In a Greek-Turkish debate, the Cyprus issue may be brought up again, as well as the common treatment of migration flows. Under these circumstances and with the perspective of sustainable peace in the region, the complex network of values that Greek foreign policy advocates in the Eastern Mediterranean should possibly be redefined.

Epilogue

Within the last fifteen years, the research of international and internal factors has revealed that Greek foreign policy, through multilateral cooperation, seeks to highlight its interests, which are expressed through the strategic stakes in the field of the Eastern Mediterranean. The design of the specific policy should have a binding systemic institutional structure, which all governments must

(cc) BY

follow. At the same time, it will be adapted to the European acquis, international standards, and the protection of Greek economic interests. While the strategic stakes for this policy are still focused on defense, security, terrorism, economy-energy, migration, and environment, Greece, through multilateral agreements, serves the satisfaction of its interests in these areas while at the same time facing Turkish challenges and revisionist tendencies.

The more dynamic presence of Russia in the region and the relative retreat of the USA created a security vacuum in the Eastern Mediterranean, which Greece spread and tried to cover with political interventions mainly under the auspices of the USA. This is how multilateral schemes were created with Cyprus's basic cooperation. The appearance of the USA in tripartite partnerships has the role of guardian of decisions and transfer of regional issues on an international scale. However, Turkey maintains its tactics of provocations by insisting on the claims of some of the oil and natural gas fields, which are located within the Greek and Cypriot maritime zones. Here, Greek foreign policy is limping because the partners within tripartite partnerships do not seem to want a confrontation with Turkey. The binding nature of the partnerships in question would be a strengthening factor of security in the region. In this regard, the definition of a Greek national strategy at the political, defense, economic, and commercial levels, which will be followed by all Greek governments with the help of diplomacy within the multilateral partnerships in the Eastern Mediterranean in combination with undertaking commitments on behalf of the partners is the stake.

COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

Acknowledgments:
Not applicable.

Funding:
Not applicable.

Statement of Human Rights:
This article does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any authors.

Statement on the Welfare of Animals:
This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by any authors.

Informed Consent:
Not applicable.

Disclosure statement:
No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author/s.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Institute for Research and European Studies remains neutral concerning jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

(cc) BY

REFERENCES

1. Aljazeera. 2023. A look at two decades of ties as Egypt and Turkey move to end the rift. Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/13/a-century-of-ties-as-egypt-and-turkey-patch-up-decade-long-riff, (May 31, 2023).
2. Andreou, E. 2021. Cyprus, Greece, and Lebanon discuss the deepening of relations. Available at: https://cyprus-mail.com/2021/04/15/cyprus-greece-and-lebanon-discuss-deepening-of-relations, (May 31, 2023).
3. Baylis, J., Smith, S., and Owens, P. 2023. *The Globalization of World Politics*. 9th Edition. Oxford University Press.
4. CAP. 2022. Opportunities and Challenges in the Eastern Mediterranean. Available at: https://www.americanprogress.org/article/opportunities-and-challenges-in-the-eastern-mediterranean-examining-u-s-interests-and-regional-cooperation, (May 31, 2023).
5. Coats, B. 2019. Exercise Noble Dina. Available at: https://www.c6f.navy.mil/Press-Room/News/News-Display/Article/1853260/vp-9-participates-in-israeli-led-exercise-noble-dina/#:~:text=Noble%20Dina%20is%20a%20multilateral%20exercise%20involving%20armed%20forces%20from,States%2C%20Greece%2C%20and%20Israel, (May 31, 2023).
6. Europa. 2022. EU renews its support for the Palestinian people with a €224.8 million assistance package. Available at: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/ delegations/palestine-occupied-palestinian-territory-west-bank-and-gaza-strip/eu-renews-its-support_en?s=206, (May 31, 2023).
7. European Security Strategy. 2009. A Secure Europe in a Better World. Available at: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d0928657-af99-4552-ae84-1cbaaa864f96, (May 31, 2023).
8. Ertan, N. 2022. Turkey continues regional initiative with meetings with Israel and Egypt. Available at: https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/04/turkey-continues-regional-initiative-meetings-israel-egypt, (May 31, 2023).
9. Fathom. 2016. Lessons from Cyprus for Israel-Palestine. Available at: https://fathomjournal.org/lessons-from-cyprus-for-israel-palestine, (May 31, 2023).
10. Financial Mirror. 2022. National Guard in MEDUSA military exercise. Available at: https://www.financialmirror.com/2022/11/24/national-guard-in-medusa-military-exercise, (May 31, 2023).
11. Grekos, D. 2023. Greek Maritime Policy and Institutional Dimensions: A Strong Presence in the EU and IMO. *Russian Law Journal*, 11(3).
12. HAF. 2023. INIOCHOS Exercise. Available at: https://www.haf.gr/en/structure /htaf/air-tactics-center/iniohos, (May 31, 2023).
13. Hudson, M.V., and Day, SB. 2020. *Foreign Policy Analysis*. 3rd Edition. Rowman & Littlefield.
14. Kiczma, L, and Sulek, M. 2020. *National Power Rankings of Countries 2020*. Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR. Warszawa.
15. Lobell, S., Ripsman, N., and Taliaferro, J. 2009. *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*. Cambridge University Press.
16. Markind, D. 2022. Natural Gas Issues Provide Hope and Conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/danielmarkind/ 2022/10/12/natural-gas-issues-provide-hope-and-conflict-in-the-eastern-mediterranean/?sh=3d3853dd4a0c (May 31, 2023).

17. MFA. 2023. Relations Greece-Palestinian Authority. Available at: https://www.mfa.gr/blog/dimereis-sheseis-tis-ellados/palaistine (May 31, 2023).
18. Mizrahi, O. 2020. Israel's Policy in its Triangular Relations with Greece and Cyprus. Available at: https://strategicassessment.inss.org.il/en/articles/israels-policy-in-its-triangular-relations-with-greece-and-cyprus/ (May 31, 2023).
19. MOD. 2022. Multinational Exercise Argonaut. Available at: https://mod.gov.cy/ en/announcements/2022/05/20/address-by-the-minister-of-defence multinational-exercise-argonaut, (May 31, 2023).
20. Mitchell, G. 2022. Is the Israeli-Lebanese Maritime Boundary Agreement Replicable? Available at: https://warontherocks.com/2022/11/is-the-israel-lebanon-maritime-boundary-agreement-replicable, (May 31, 2023).
21. Paul, V.T. 2018. *Restraining Great Powers: Soft Balancing from Empires to the Global Era*. Yale University Press.
22. PM. 2021. Third Trilateral Summit Greece-Cyprus-Jordan in Athens. Available at: https://www.primeminister.gr/en/2021/07/28/27111, (May 31, 2023).
23. Shaath, N. 2016. Palestine, Cyprus, and Greece. Available at: https://euobserver.com/opinion/132004 (May 31, 2023).
24. SIS. 2021. The 9th Tripartite Summit between Egypt, Greece, and Cyprus in Athens. Available at: https://www.sis.gov.eg/Story/159635/The-9th-Tripartite-Summit-between-Egypt%2C-Greece%2C-and-Cyprus-in-Athens?lang=en-us, (May 31, 2023).
25. Schweller, L.R. 2008. *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power*. Princeton University Press.
26. Snyder, G. 2007. *Alliance Politics*. Cornell University Press.
27. Sorensen, G., Moller, J., and Jackson, R. 2021. *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*. 8th Edition. Oxford University Press.
28. Tsaltas, G., Cheila, E., and Koliopoulos, C. 2013. *Sécurité & Coopération en Méditerranée: Défis & Opportunités*. Poiotita.
29. UNIFIL. 2023. United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. Available at: https://unifil.unmissions.org (May 31, 2023).
30. US Department of State. 2022. Joint Statement on the 3+1 (Republic of Cyprus, Greece, Israel + United States) Foreign Ministerial. Available at: https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-the-31-republic-of-cyprus-greece-israel-united-states-foreign-ministerial, (May 31, 2023).
31. Waltz, N.K. 2010. *Theory of International Politics*. Waveland Press.
32. Wolff, S. 2022. The forgotten war: what Russia could win from the reignited conflict in Syria. Available at: https://theconversation.com/ the-forgotten-war-what-russia-could-win-from-the-reignited-conflict-in-syria-195869, (May 31, 2023).
33. WWF. 2022. Important victory against fossil fuels in Greece! Available at: https://www.wwf.gr/en/news/?uNewsID=6720766, (May 31, 2023).
34. Yegin, M. 2022. United States Policy in the Eastern Mediterranean. *Comparative Southeast European Studies* 70 (3):439-461, DOI: 10.1515/soeu-2022-0030
35. Yiallourides, C., Ioannides, N., and Partain, A.R. 2022. Some observations on the Agreement between Lebanon and Israel on the Delimitation of the EEZ. Available at: https://www.ejiltalk.org/some-observations-on-the-agreement-between-lebanon-and-israel-on-the-delimitation-of-the-exclusive-economic-zone, (May 31, 2023).