

UPF Moscow, Russia: Russia's changing relationship with Asia - Pivot to the East

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Moscow, Russia -- Russia's changing relationship with Asia was the focus of a UPF-Russia webinar.

The third online discussion of UPF's International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP), titled "Pivot to the East: Modern Challenges and Opportunities," was held on December 3, 2022.

The guest of the program was Dr. Vladimir Petrovsky, a PhD in political sciences at the "Russia, China, World" chief scientific center of the Institute of the Far East of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Maria Nazarova, the president of UPF-Russia, was the moderator of the webinar.

The program had 219 views on YouTube. In addition, it had 177,000 impressions, 53,000 views, and 54 interactions on OK.Ru, the largest post-Soviet Union area social network. Following this program, 31 new subscribers joined the Russian-language social networks of UPF Eastern Europe.

Russia has a unique geopolitical position. For this reason it is always important to determine the geographical priorities of its external relations. Over the past 10 years, one often has heard about the importance of strengthening the eastern direction in the development of Russia. However, the turn to the East remained an important task for quite a long time, rather at a rhetorical level, but a poorly implemented area of activity.

That is, the strategy of Russia's turn to the East, in concrete terms, did not go beyond establishing strong ties with China, with which Russia is now cooperating in solving important problems on the international level.

At the same time, of course, one cannot fail to notice that over the past 10 years, Russia has significantly expanded its presence in various Asian international formats, increased the level of participation in various interstate forums and, in general, has begun to think more about the East.

Perhaps Russia has done more in the last year on the issue of turning to the East than in the past ten years. This also will affect the development of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

At the beginning of the webinar, the host turned to the words of UPF co-founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, who, since the 1950s and 1960s, predicted that the center of civilization would shift to the east. At that time, few people thought about it.

Mrs. Nazarova read from one of Dr. Moon's 1991 talks:

The Asia-Pacific civilization is now emerging. In a situation where the United States, Japan, Korea, China and Russia are inexorably drawn into the struggle, countries that are not prepared for this

civilization and culture will remain at the very tail. That's why I, as a Korean, try to bring Japan, the U.S., China and Russia together. This will become a condition that allows the whole world to share a common destiny with Pacific civilization. ...

The approaching Asia-Pacific era will be a world in which people cannot but live in harmony, transcending skin color and cultural background. Heavenly luck leads people to an era of harmony when, in order to survive, people must reconcile even with their enemies.



After that, the conversation touched upon the following questions:

- Talk about shifting the center of civilization has been going on for a long time. Today's events seem to have not only accelerated this process for Russia but also, to a certain extent, contributed to the strengthening of the entire Asian region. Is it safe to say that the world today is entering the era of the Asia-Pacific region?
- The issue of values is often raised today. There are statements that Asian countries have a certain set of conservative values that are opposite to those of the West. You have studied the Asia-Pacific countries a lot. Can you somehow generalize what values, from your point of view, are typical for this region? And what does this mean for Russia?
- The APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) 2022 Summit in Thailand recently ended. This year the motto of the event was "Open. Connect. Balance." That is, the main goal can be called the opening of new trade and investment opportunities for the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, increasing the connectivity of countries and economies in all areas. In today's conditions, how realistic is this and how actively is Russia involved in this process?
- The trade turnover between Russia and China recently has grown very strongly. Will Russia become economically dependent on China, which may entail a certain political dependence?
- Recently at the Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, President Xi Jinping was re-elected and a new composition of the CPC Central Committee was adopted. What changes can be expected regarding the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China and its role in the Asia-Pacific region?
- Tensions around Taiwan are increasing today. At the same time, the latest local elections in Taiwan showed that people are choosing the path of peaceful relations with mainland China. To what extent is the scenario of military operations possible, and what could it lead to, in general, for the region and, probably, the world?
- Recently it has been increasingly heard that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is striving for closer cooperation with the Russian Federation. To what extent can this be realized? What are the current relations between Russia and North Korea in general?
- A question about the current state of affairs in relations between Russia and the Republic of Korea: South Korea now is trying to somehow balance and not destroy relations with Russia. How does the current geopolitical situation affect the issue of Korean unification? Can we say that the resolution of the peace issue on the Korean Peninsula has been thrown back or that some new prospects have appeared?

Despite the uncertainty, as well as some imbalance in today's world, the turn to the East today is no longer in doubt. In parallel, there is a value polarization in the world. Therefore, the role of the International Association of Academicians for Peace is growing, because today the moral compass is needed more than ever.

To watch the entire webinar with Dr. Vladimir Petrovsky with English interpretation, click here: 1drv.ms/v/s!AptJexfTet00hLRkXJY3pjV2IaC2rQ?e=AntwN1