TÜRKİYE'S EVOLVING ROLE AS A EURASIAN NEXUS: A BALANCED PERSPECTIVE

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Türkiye's strategic position as a conduit between East and West has long been a cornerstone of its geopolitical identity. This role, however, is evolving in the 21st century as Türkiye navigates an increasingly complex international landscape. Recent developments highlight Türkiye's unique position and its efforts to leverage this status for diplomatic and economic gains.

Türkiye's geographic location naturally positions it as a crucial link between Europe and Asia. With three bridges ana a tunnel spanning the Bosporus in Istanbul, connecting the European and Anatolian parts of the country, Türkiye physically embodies this nexus role [1]. However, Türkiye's significance extends far beyond mere geography.

In recent years, Türkiye has actively participated in various international forums, demonstrating its commitment to engaging with both Eastern and Western powers. For instance, Türkiye recently attended the BRICS Foreign Ministers meeting in Russia, to enable Türkiye's constructive engagement in global discussions [2]. Meanwhile, Türkiyes participation in the G7 summit in Italy underscores international recognition of Türkiye's pivotal role, confirming its respected status on the world stage..

Türkiye's interest in joining BRICS, a group originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, further illustrates its multifaceted foreign policy approach. Türkiye has started considering BRICS membership bid, recognizing the potential economic benefits and the complementary relationship this aligns with Türkiye's existing Western partnerships, enhancing its global standing.[3]. However, it's important to note that Türkiye views this potential membership not as an alternative to its Western alliances, but as a complementary relationship[4].

Economically, Türkiye has been making significant strides. The country has become a major humanitarian aid donor, ranking as the largest donor worldwide with $8 billion in humanitarian assistance in 2017, accounting for 0.85% of its Gross National Income [5]. This commitment to international aid enhances Türkiye's soft power and global influence.

Türkiye's role in addressing regional challenges further cements its position as a key player in Eurasia. The country has been at the forefront of managing the refugee crisis,

hosting millions of refugees and playing a crucial role in EU-Türkiye agreements on migration management [6]. Additionally, Türkiye's involvement in combating terrorism and its efforts to maintain regional stability highlight its importance in addressing security concerns that affect both Europe and Asia.

While Türkiye's bridging role presents opportunities, it also comes with challenges. Balancing relationships with diverse international actors requires careful diplomacy. Türkiye's pursuit of a "peace at home peace in the world" policy and its efforts to position itself as a logistics and energy hub connecting Europe and Asia demonstrate its ambition to capitalize on its unique position [7].

In conclusion, Türkiye's evolving role as a Eurasian conduit reflects the changing dynamics of global politics and economics. By engaging with both Eastern and Western powers, participating in diverse international forums, and addressing regional challenges, Türkiye is reinforcing its position as a key player in the Eurasian landscape. As the country continues to navigate this complex geopolitical environment, its ability to balance diverse interests and relationships will be crucial in shaping its future role on the global stage.

*Image: A News

[1] "Türkiye's Strategic Importance: An Analysis," *University of Groningen*, accessed June 6, 2024, https://www.rug.nl/about-ug/latest-news/news/newsletters/international/2016/summer-15160-1d-turkije?lang=en

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[7] "Türkiye's Eurasian Ambitions at a Time of Geopolitical Uncertainty," *Centre for European Policy Studies*, accessed June 6, 2024, https://www.ceps.eu/ceps-publications/Türkiyes-eurasian-ambitions-at-a-time-of-geopolitical-uncertainty/

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