

A New War Against Russian Military Logistics and Economy, or a Policy to Sever Central Asia from Russian Influence?

(Translated)

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In July and August 2026, Ukrainian drones repeatedly targeted logistics warehouses belonging to the company Wildberries in Russia, inflicting severe damage on its massive logistics capabilities. Ukraine views these facilities as part of a network used to transport drone components and other dual-use products to the Russian military. The attacks have affected more than 400,000 sellers. According to "Data Insights" assessments, seller losses could reach 445–507.8 billion rubles, and infrastructure reconstruction costs could range from 147 to 223 billion rubles, while total losses might fall between 600 and 800 billion rubles (\$7–10 billion). These figures represent expert assessments rather than final official estimates.

Ukraine portrays Wildberries as an entity linked to the Russian military supply chain, whereas Russia regards it primarily as a civilian e-commerce company. Consequently, these strikes not only pressure military supplies but also strain hundreds of thousands of small businesses, logistics operations, and the Russian domestic market. The attacks are interpreted as a strategy to increase the cost of the war for Russia and weaken its economic infrastructure.

However, the more critical issue concerns Central Asia; Ukrainian strikes, rising logistical risks within Russia, Wildberries' search for alternative capacities, and the growing need for warehouses in Kazakhstan are reshaping regional trade and logistics chains.

Wildberries is reportedly seeking warehouse space in Kazakhstan starting at 100,000 square meters and is constructing massive logistics centers in Almaty and Astana. This implies that while the war is taking place in Russia, its economic and logistical repercussions could spill over into Central Asia as well.

This presents both a risk and an opportunity for Central Asia: will this process weaken Russia's economic influence in the region, or reinforce it through new infrastructure? Since Wildberries is a Russian company, its expansion into Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states might not eliminate Russian influence but instead alter its form.

On the other hand, the destabilization of trade chains linked to Russia is drawing Central Asia closer to routes involving the Caspian Sea, the South Caucasus, Turkey, and Europe. This aligns objectively with the Western strategy of weaning the region off its dependence on Russia.

In this sense, the strikes heighten risks to Russia's domestic logistics and may accelerate the reconfiguration of trade chains between Russia and Central Asia. This creates favorable conditions for the Western strategy aimed at diminishing Russia's economic influence in the region.

How will Russia respond? Russia is not watching this process passively. Putin has ordered the reconstruction of damaged warehouses and logistics infrastructure with state involvement, aiming to upgrade them to a new technological level. Russia's likely response involves shifting from massive, centralized warehouses to a network of

distributed and protected regional logistics hubs. Furthermore, Wildberries' expansion into Kazakhstan enables Moscow to maintain its logistical foothold in Central Asia. Yet, this process raises another question: to what extent can Central Asian nations shield their exporters from the risks associated with foreign markets?

In this context, Uzbekistan has neither announced public measures to compensate Uzbek merchants affected by attacks in Russia nor lodged any formal demands with Moscow; Russia, too, has remained silent on the matter. Absent mechanisms to distribute the risks of foreign markets, exporters are compelled to seek alternative markets and logistical routes.

This poses a pressing question for Uzbekistan: to what degree can local and foreign businesspeople trust the state to safeguard their goods, capital, and investments? From this perspective, Uzbekistan's intention to join the Singapore Convention—announced by the Ministry of Justice on August 10, 2026—is noteworthy. The Convention does not guarantee investments or profits; instead, it strengthens mechanisms for the recognition and enforcement of international commercial dispute settlements reached through mediation. This could serve as a form of additional "insurance," mitigating legal risks in commercial disputes for foreign investors. However, the question remains: while safeguards for foreign capital are being bolstered, are similar protections being strengthened to shield local businesspeople from external economic risks? While the immediate objective of the attack on Wildberries may be to strike at Russian logistics and the Russian economy, the indirect consequence could alter trade chains linked to Russia in Central Asia, drawing the region closer to alternative transport and trade routes.

Although it is not yet publicly acknowledged as a covert operation aimed at severing Central Asia from Russian influence, the operation objectively aligns with U.S. interests in diminishing Russia's economic sway in the region and bolstering alternative corridors.

The Russia-Ukraine war is no longer confined to the territories of the two states; its economic impact has extended to the business communities, logistics networks, and transport corridors of Central Asia. Consequently, the primary geopolitical struggle is not over warehouses, but over the economic hub to which Central Asia's goods, capital, and trade flows will be linked.

In conclusion: Amidst the geopolitical conflict between the forces of disbelief, thousands of Muslims in Central Asia are suffering economic and personal hardship. Had their rulers adopted an independent policy and relied upon the Shariah rulings of Allah (swt)—rather than leaning on Russia or the West—they would have been worthy of the *nasr* (support) of Allah (swt).

The consequences of relying on the forces of disbelief extend beyond mere political and economic subservience in this worldly life. In the Hereafter, individuals—and rulers in particular—will be held accountable for their choices and actions. Yet, there is still time; if they repent to their Lord, adhere to His law, and prioritize the interests of Muslims over those of foreign powers they will attain honor and strength, by the permission of Allah (swt)! Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ **“But honor belongs to Allah, and to His Messenger, and to the believers, but the hypocrites do not know.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Munafiqoon: 8].