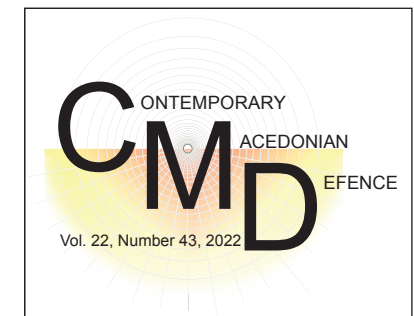МЕЃУНАРОДНО НАУЧНО СПИСАНИЕ

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CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CHANGING GEOPOLITICAL AND SECURITY LANDSCAPE: A CASE STUDY OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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Toni MILESKI[2]

Abstract: *The paper aims to analyse the preconditions for constructing a comprehensive critical infrastructure protection system in North Macedonia. Also, in the Republic of North Macedonia, in the last five years, significant progress has been made in moving the national engagement and approach to implement the critical infrastructure protection concept. The Republic of North Macedonia, perhaps the last in the Western Balkans region, has an urgent need for normative regulation of all aspects of the critical infrastructure sphere. The dynamic processes on the international stage rightly give signals in the direction of the essential need for critical infrastructure protection. Changing geopolitical and security landscapes, war, natural disasters, hybrid threats, health crises, energy crises, climate change, and many other adverse processes allude to the conclusion that the disruption of critical infrastructure is increasingly not a matter of escalation but a matter of time.*

Keywords: *Critical infrastructure, North Macedonia, Geopolitics, Protection, Hybrid war, Hybrid threats, Climate change.*

Introduction

There is a growing trend of building resilient societies and resilient critical infrastructure (systems) in NATO and the EU. The European Commission on 16 December 2020 proposed a revision of the existing directives from 2008. These preconditions and processes should be considered when building a Macedonian system to protect critical infrastructure. (European Commission, 2020). In this case, we refer to the review and analysis of relevant literature that shows resilience has no single definition, especially when viewed as an attribute-specific system. A previous study offered a number and different definitions of this concept. At the same time, many studies may find differences in the definition of resilience, as in the case of infrastructure systems.

In particular, when it comes to protecting critical infrastructure, it should be clear that optimal levels cannot be achieved for at least two reasons. The first is the financial nature, while other

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things are constantly evolving and transforming. However, specific processes, systems or individuals may cause incidents and accidents inadvertently, as well as intentional obstruction and attacks. Such knowledge alludes to the training of all entities involved in providing critical infrastructure protection. Although protection and "resilience" are critical infrastructure complementary concepts, different explanations should be elaborated on and accepted. In short, protection is a relation between the ability to prevent or reduce the effect of unpleasant and sudden effects. At the same time, resilience is manifested through the ability to reduce the magnitude, stiffness and duration of stagnation, and relationships rapidly access all components and processes, from physical components and the quality of human resources. Crucially, this paper would like to point out elasticity as the intention to develop and maintain a system and its ability to quickly prevent, absorb, adjust and recover from any possible attack. In security, resilience refers to various factors that indirectly contribute to and strengthen security. In the areas of critical infrastructure protection, "resilience" should be understood in terms of increased security, identification and application of measures that may be required at critical infrastructure levels, but especially at the organisation and process levels that provide access or use outputs. Such assumptions alert and require an urgent reaction from the called-upon national institutions to take concrete steps. This means defining and strengthening social resilience, protecting critical infrastructure through the construction of a system and the eventual implementation of the critical infrastructure resilience concept. In this paper, the authors will pay special attention to the analysis of contemporary challenges for the Republic of North Macedonia in terms of geopolitics, threats of terrorism, hacker attacks and other hybrid threats, new technologies, and climate change and security.

Changing the nature of the global geopolitical and security landscape

We can start with the statement that the World is experiencing a turning point in the second decade of the 21st century, marked by a geopolitical and economic shift of power from the West to the Eurasian powers. The current period brings various geopolitical and geostrategic challenges, which are certainly more specific to deal with than those in the 20th century. These challenges include political confrontation, internal and international political conflict, and conflict over natural resources in war-torn civil countries across sub-Saharian Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and the newly explored strategic regions, such as the Arctic. The rapidly expanding progressive population of the World is facing cyclical fluctuations in food prices due to climate change, economic conflicts, the rise of religious fundamentalism, and the fragmentation of the World's political map.

We are rightly faced with the dilemma of whether the 21st century will be defined by rivalries between national (super) powers and not by the supremacy of collective systems or overlapping sovereignty, replacing sovereign states as New Medieval theorists and conspirators expect. Which will be the dominant force in the multipolar World - the rapidly weakening United States, on the one hand, or the even more secure China, which is seeking to restore its status as the most robust economy in the World? (Riegl and Landovský, 2013).

These global trends create the World's geopolitical landscape. The World is redefining its geopolitical patterns and principles in the second decade of the 21st

century. The euphoria with the end of the Cold War, enshrined in Francis Fukuyama's concept of the end of history, was premature. The clash of 21st-century civilisations would not define the geopolitics of the 21st century. It is Europe that, unfortunately, reflects the geopolitical violations on the political map. The map of Europe defines the 21st century. From the fields of Flanders (World War I) to Omaha Beach (World War II) to the Berlin Wall to the burned villages on the territory of the former SFRY, from the lengthy European war of 1914 to 1989, to the current bloody war aftershocks in Ukraine, Europe is the centre of world geopolitics and history. (Riegl, 2013).

The geopolitical transition of power from the Euro-Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific region (especially from the United States to China) is continuing. It has been confirmed by geopolitical analysts such as Nye, Brzezinski, and Kaplan.

Joseph Nye identifies five significant global challenges (including possible reactions) in response to the most pessimistic projections of US decline and the inevitable rise of China's economic and geopolitical dominance.

He discusses the challenges in promoting the American strategy for smart power in his book "Future of Power". Describing the strengths and limitations of American power, Nye explains that the smart power strategy seeks to bridge the old gap between liberal and realistic needs, leaving room for a new synthesis called liberal realism. In the context of smart power it is not the creation of an empire or hegemony. The United States can influence, but cannot control, all parts of the World. Power depends on the specific context and the context of transnational relations (climate change, drug trafficking, pandemics and terrorism), and it is diffuse and chaotically distributed. Military power plays a small role in resolving and responding to emerging threats. Responding to these threats requires more cooperation with governmental and international institutions. Nay also emphasises that the liberal realist strategy emphasises the importance of developing an integrated "big" strategy that combines hard and soft power into smart power. In the fight against terrorism, the United States should use strong force against hardline terrorists, but no victory can be expected until it is won in the hearts and minds of Muslims. Furthermore, the liberal realist strategy aims to provide security for the United States and its allies, maintain a strong domestic and international economy, avoid environmental catastrophes, and strengthen liberal democracy and human rights at home and abroad.

Five major challenges provoke Nye's new strategy. The first challenge is to tackle terrorism with nuclear materials. This will require policies to counter-terrorism, create stability in the Middle East, give due attention to failed states, and so on. The second challenge is political Islam. According to Nye, the current struggle against radical Islam is not a "clash of civilisations", but a civil war within Islam. More open trade, economic growth, education, development of civil society institutions and gradual increase in political participation. The third challenge is the rise of hostile hegemony as Asia gradually regains its share of world economy. This challenge requires a policy that welcomes China as a responsible and vital entity, but protects against possible

hostility by maintaining close relations with Japan, India, and other Asian countries that welcome the US presence. The fourth challenge is economic depression. The strategic response to this challenge will require policies that will gradually reduce US oil dependence, especially in the Persian Gulf, where 2/3 of the World's oil reserves are located. The fifth challenge is environmental crises, such as pandemics or adverse climate change. This challenge requires prudent energy policies, leadership in the field of climate change and greater cooperation within international institutions. (Nye, J.S., 2011: 231-233).

In his book "Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power", Zbigniew Brzezinski tries to answer four significant dilemmas.

1) What are the implications of the changing distribution of global power from West to East,

2) Why is America's global appeal weakening, what are the symptoms of America's domestic and international decline, and what geopolitical reorientation is necessary to revitalise America's global role?

3) What would be the likely geopolitical consequences if America relinquished its globally prominent position, what would be the almost immediate geopolitical victims of such a decline, what effects would it have on the global problems in the 21st century, and could China take on America's central role in world affairs by 2025?

4) Looking after 2025, how should a resurrected America define its long-term geopolitical goals, and how can America, with its traditional European allies, try to engage Turkey and Russia to build an even bigger and more energetic West?

Brzezinski offered a strategic vision for the so-called Greater West, which stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and the cooperating east. The Greater West will include rapidly developing Turkey and Russia. The two countries will be integrated into the Euro-Atlantic institutional design, stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok in the Far East.

The ultimate goal of the more prominent and vital West in working closely with Europe must be accompanied by a strategy of a stable and cooperative East. The success of this strategy lies in the successful moderation of the Chinese geopolitical concerns, which are the following:

1) To reduce the dangers inherent in China's potential geographical environment due to: US security links with Japan, South Korea and the Philippines, vulnerability to China's naval access to the Indian Ocean via the Malacca Strait and beyond to the Middle East, Africa, Europe,

2) To establish for itself a favoured position in the emerging neo-linguistic community and also in the already existing ASEAN,

3) To consolidate Pakistan as a counterweight to India,

4) To gain a significant advantage over Russia in economic influence in Central Asia and Mongolia, thus partially meeting China's natural resource needs, also in areas

closer to China than Africa or Latin America, to resolve China's remaining unresolved legacy of the Taiwan Civil War,

5) To establish a favoured economic and indirect political presence in several countries in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. (Brzezinski, 2012).

However, the geopolitical battle for power will be fought in a political and geographical area different from the last century. Europe has ceased to focus on geopolitical and geostrategic considerations of key actors. Robert Kaplan predicts that the battle will shift from the European coast to the east.

According to Kaplan, the Great Indian Ocean, which stretches east from the Horn of Africa along the Arabian Peninsula, the Iranian highlands and the Indian subcontinent to the Indonesian archipelago and beyond, could be an iconic map for a new century like Europe to the last. We can locate the tense dialogue between Western and Islamic civilisations, the ganglia of global energy routes, and the quiet, seemingly unstoppable domination of India and China over land and sea. (Kaplan, 2010).

In such previously described world geopolitical constellation position of the Western Balkans and from the perspective of North Macedonia, one gets the impression that the region and the country have been turned into a geopolitical laboratory. In that laboratory, geopolitical experiments find applications in creating the geopolitical landscape in the Western Balkans region. Let us look only at the policies of the EU enlargement. The recent events allude to the fact that North Macedonia must accept everything, primarily to its detriment, to step on the European path. Something that is not provided in the basic guidelines and preconditions for EU membership. Hence, we will point out several possible scenarios to bring sound conclusions and forecasts for what awaits North Macedonia on its path of the enlargement process.

Scenario 1. The European Union is moving from the principle of unanimity to a qualified majority in decision-making on enlargement. In this way, if North Macedonia starts to reform with significant results, it will be a good argument for EU member states for the country's capacity to meet the requirements set out in the new enlargement methodology. The EU process for North Macedonia will be open with a qualified majority.

Scenario 2. For economic gain, membership in the European Economic Community (EEA), but without political unity. A long pause in the enlargement process until 2030, and in the meantime, the strengthening of the European Neighborhood Policy, which does not include accession, has offered privileged partnerships.

Scenario 3. Without serious EU efforts to integrate the Western Balkans, the region is moving towards Chinese hegemony and possibly Russian destabilisation. The pandemic and the crisis of American democracy have shown us that the West is not recovering democratically. Further analysis shows the possible transition to at least binary US-Chinese hegemony and Chinese hegemony in the long run.

Scenario 4. Stagnation of the enlargement process and putting the Balkan countries in uncertainty, with the option of a "mini-Schengen" zone.

Scenario 5. Return of US diplomacy to the Balkans, assisted by German diplomacy or return of so-called "bulldozer diplomacy" to close open disputes in the Balkans, but with possible adverse effects, in the long run, after the EU project. (Mileski and Klimoska, 2021).

Hybrid threats and hybrid warfare

In the 21st century, hybrid threats are becoming a dominant security challenge for Western nations and their critical infrastructures. Their appearance reflects a significant change in international relations. Due to the complexity and ambiguous nature of hybrid threats, such a change tends to increase feelings of insecurity and, historically, to increase dissent in societies. In such a situation, some people look for answers in the past, while others forget the past. Some trends advocate adaptation to emerging conditions and change, and some try to defend the so-called status quo. All these perceptions indicate that the image of the security environment is not just black or white. It is complex, multilayered and multidimensional. Hence, a proper analysis of what has changed, how it is changing and what it means for democracies is at the core of understanding the nature of the current security environment in Europe and the World.

Regarding Treverton, six significant changes bring hybrid threats to the forefront. The first is the changing nature of the world order. Modern developments indicate that relational power - the power to change other people's beliefs, attitudes, preferences, opinions, expectations, emotions and/or predispositions to action - is more critical today than material power. This change is used by the great and middle powers to increase their international status and gain certain benefits.

Second, the World sees a new type of network-based action or the dark side of globalisation. The internal and external dimensions of security are more closely interlinked than in recent decades. The role of the nation-state is questioned, as is the role of alliances with several norms and rules that limit responses to asymmetric and antagonistic actions.

Third, rapidly evolving technologies, their literal revolution, are challenging new domains such as cyberspace, where national and international game rules have yet to be created. Space is no longer a border, but an operational empire, which is also a challenge to traditional security thinking. In general, new technology provides new tools for influence.

In particular, the changing domain of information space and media landscape is the fourth significant change affecting today's security environment. Digitalisation and social media, as new creators of thought, have changed the speed at which information travels, how information is produced, and how people connect across national borders. This change has fueled the need to understand different political and strategic cultures because information produced in one country can be interpreted differently elsewhere. Information custodians are also changing. The Internet has become a new battleground where rules are still being formulated. False news, content confusion and "facts" based

on certain opinions agitate the public. Trust, one of the basic pillars of functional societies, is increasingly eroding.

The fifth change is the changing nature of conflict and war. In today's wars, soldiers should not die, and civilian casualties should be avoided. This finding has led to a debate about the blurred lines between war and peace. The situation with the blurred lines between war and peace is highlighted and poses a challenge to conventional military forces and internal law enforcement. It also fosters hybrid threats, which try to stay under open conflict. They are more and more like competitions between societies, not armies.

Finally, the sixth change refers to the change of generations. This means we have left behind the Cold War and even the post-Cold War era. The Cold War had two very different characteristics which maintained the world order: the relations of the superpowers and their ideological struggle between communism and capitalism dominated. At the same time, the fear of nuclear war guided many security policy decisions. During the post-Cold War era, globalisation, emphasising the ideas of integration and interdependence, became a modern way of describing the World. Today's new generation is a digital generation informed by two contradictory trends - cosmopolitanism and neo-nationalism. Historical memory also changes with the generations, which leaves room for political manipulation of historical events. (Treverton et al., 2018).

On another side, Frank Hoffman defines hybrid warfare as a series of different forms of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal activity. (Hoffman, 2007: 14). Supposing the critiques of the definitions of hybrid wars were mainly based on the reliance on non-state actors. In that case, Hoffman puts his definition by saying that hybrid wars can be conducted by both warring states and by different non-state actors.

One of the most comprehensive definitions of hybrid warfare is offered by Najžer. Namely, he emphasises that hybrid warfare is a unique form of low-level conflict that encompasses many capabilities. It is a deliberate covert fusion of conventional and unconventional warfare conducted under a single central government and led by a state or non-state actor. Hybrid warfare aims to achieve political goals that would not be achievable or would be too costly through any other form of warfare. The mix of the conventional and the unconventional allows the actor to exploit the strategic or doctrinal weakness of the opponent while maintaining the denial of involvement in the conflict and the strategic surprise. (Najžer, 2020: 29).

Terrorism as a hybrid threat

The changing nature of terrorism as a hybrid threat can be understood if we accept the conclusion that the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century is a critical period in the history of security when there is a rapid transition

from an analogue to a digitalised globalised world. In such an environment, there comes the transformation of terrorism, or as Antinori puts it, the "media morphology of terrorism". This process is a transformation in which the media are not only sources of information that generate terror, as provided by traditional propaganda strategies. The media generate terror as an asymmetric threat to the globalised contemporary reality through violent nexus: action-presentation.

Terrorism is taking on new methods and applying new environments. Theorists become e-theorists and apply "cyber terrorism", emphasising technology's role in the attack, digital terror and (cyber) social terrorism using social networks. (Antinori, 2019: 24).

Terrorism is one of the greatest threats that must be highlighted in all hybrid threats. Terrorists operate simultaneously in many countries, using deadly methods against European Union and NATO member states. In addition, all terrorist attacks hinder global cooperation in carrying out civilian and military missions to stabilise the host country's situation. The absence of timely action leads to the destabilisation of the situation in many countries.

It must be borne in mind that terrorist organisations, which are also perceived as "hybrid actors", can achieve real operational success by controlling large-scale territorial expansions in Syria and Iraq. In addition, the active presence of terrorists on social networks for propaganda is also an essential element of the hybrid activity. (Olech, A. 2021).

The changing nature of terrorist activity is becoming increasingly relevant in the efforts to build resilient societies and the need to build effective systems to protect critical infrastructure.

Hacker attacks and technologies that undermine the security

With its development, we live in a world where the Internet contributes to the online business making significant progress. The rapid development of the Internet has led to tremendous benefits such as e-commerce, email and easy access to vast amounts of data. This means that more and more computers are connecting to the Internet, wireless devices and networks. For these reasons, due to the innovative benefits of the Internet, the administration, the private industry and regular computer clients are increasingly concerned. And the fear of possible criminal hacking of their information or private data.

Hacking is the unauthorised use of computer systems. Hackers are programmers who bypass security systems, hack into someone else's computer or collect information without authorisation. (Kumar and Agarwal, 2018).

Critical infrastructure is not immune to this type of attack. Despite security systems, numerous examples of unauthorised outages and damage to critical infrastructure. The main features of hacking can be: unauthorised access to the information system, forced hacking or access to the security system, high professionalism and knowledge to achieve the intrusion of the system; usually, the place of attack is far from the place of the

attacker, the scope of a hacker attack can also be spying, fraud, embezzlement, theft of services, sabotage, spreading viruses, hackers usually act in groups or individually. As a result of such actions, especially in critical infrastructure, various consequences are possible, such as disruption of the protection system, blocking or slowing down the normal functioning of systems, unauthorised access, damage, modification or destruction of data, theft, illegal distribution of malware or the spread of viruses.

Analogous to the previous findings, the technological advancement provided by the 5G network has unique possibilities for practical use. The term 5G denotes the 5th generation of mobile telecommunications, the main feature being the speed of data transfer and the contents of the massively connected devices. Every global technical-technological innovation, in addition to the additional ones, also hides opportunities for abuse and use of technology that undermine security.

Critical infrastructure, defence, and security are not immune to the potential threats of 5G technology. The West's controversies and general attitude regarding the withdrawal or ban of Huawei, the technology giant from China, are known. The potential dangers of this technology, where the Chinese Government, through its control of the wireless and telecommunications pillar in the World, will use 5G technology such as a Trojan horse for commercial and military purposes or espionage and hybrid warfare. (Evans, 2020)

In technologies that undermine security, we can classify the increasing use of drones. Interestingly, these innovative technologies are associated with the term "grey zone" and the strategic landscape that will increasingly portray challenges in the grey zone that are neither total war nor complete peace. RAND Corporation defines the grey area as a functional space between peace and war, which includes coercive actions to change the status quo below the threshold that, in most cases, would prompt a conventional military response, often by blurring the line between military and non-military action. In the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) publications, the grey area strategy is defined as an effort or series of deterrents and assurances outside the steady state that seeks to achieve its security goals without resorting to direct and effective use of force. By engaging in the grey zone strategy, the actor tries to avoid crossing the threshold that results in war.

The changing nature of warfare, the strategy of hybrid wars, hybrid threats, proxy and cyber warfare allow more frequent use of drones. Military drones are actively used for operational use in two missions: reconnaissance and targeted killings. In doing so, their unique unmanned functions are helpful in such missions. In addition, drones are considered less expensive in terms of international reputation. (Hwang, 2021).

This development further increases the vulnerability of critical infrastructure. Particular targets for drone strikes may include fuel or water storage plants, pipelines, power distribution plants, and food supply sites with minimal or no staff. (Pledger, 2021). This means that even in that domain, the resilience and protection of critical infrastructure must be constantly upgraded and improved.

Climate change

Today, the World lives in a dynamic time where the intensity and catastrophic consequences of changes in the field of the environment impose the need for serious observation of natural events. They are more and more often manifested and more and more seriously endanger the security of the states and individuals, but they also affect the protection of critical infrastructure.

In a changing international constellation of conditions, relations and processes, climate change is a phenomenon that ranks high in political and academic debates. However, what is the nature of climate change? How do they affect and threaten critical infrastructure, and how do they generally model relations between countries, regions and the entire international community?

Unlike traditional strategic security concepts related to military action, climate change highlights how human security is at stake and how actors can take advantage of or force environmental change to undermine opponents. It has been written since the time of Sun Tzu that creating vulnerability in the opponent is too expensive, except for taking advantage of environmental factors. It is evident that, in the twenty-first century, we also see opportunities for asymmetric action against adversaries by opening up to environmental vulnerabilities. (Briggs, 2020).

For instance, the answer to the modern challenges of climate change in the energy sphere should be in the synergy between improving the resilience of the energy-critical infrastructure to extreme climate events and the transition to energy with less carbon. Paying for and restoring climate damage could jeopardise the financing of the transition to renewable energy and other low-carbon measures. Financing the transition to clean energy in the face of growing climate change will require creative options from policymakers and businesses. Innovative public-private structures will need to be considered when finding options for climate adaptation of energy systems. (Ogden et al., 2019)

A Case Study: North Macedonia

Macedonian society is not exempt from global political, security and economic currents. Macedonian society is in a starting position regarding the protection of critical infrastructure. It requires, before establishing the strategic and national framework for ensuring effective steps towards building an efficient system for the protection and resilience of critical infrastructure, to choose the approach to the optimal model and start its implementation. The optimal model based on the best practices of the "voluntary" and "mandated" approach in protecting critical infrastructure should be built on other countries' good practices and experiences. Considering that the beginning of the construction of the critical infrastructure protection system is already late, the comparative and analytical approach is set as a top priority in order to start decisively creating the preconditions for fulfilling the concept of protection and resilience of critical infrastructure and with that, greater resistance of the Macedonian society.

At the beginning of creating social resilience, protection and resilience of critical infrastructure, we must know what to achieve. The EU model (Directive 2008/114/EC) is more protection oriented, although, since 2012, social resilience (resilience of communities) and resilience of critical infrastructure have been increasingly mentioned. It should be noted that there are other models, such as the Nordic model, where resistance to vital social functions is the main priority. In the organisational and technological domains, this Nordic approach is more visible in social resilience, where the key players are the national and local authorities. Regarding critical infrastructure operators, the concept of resilience is still quite abstract and has no concrete operationalisation. The open dilemma remains that the interaction between authorities and critical infrastructure operators, whether discussed in terms of regulation, state support, public-private partnership or corporate social responsibility, persists as a weak link in achieving critical infrastructure resilience in practice. The big question is whether it can be achieved at all. A review of the Nordic countries' conceptual approaches to critical infrastructure crises nevertheless gives the impression that these countries are pretty "progressive" and have always had a broader and more holistic philosophy than the one initially offered by the European Commission, based on the priority of critical infrastructure protection. (Pursiainen, C. 2018)

Analysing numerous literature (Mottahedi et al. 2021) and placing it in correlation with the changing strategic environment, hybrid threats and new technologies that undermine security, we can offer a unique model for building a comprehensive system for the protection of critical infrastructure in North Macedonia. This means constantly upgrading social resilience, establishing a CI protection system and upgrading the existing models with what we have called the concept of critical infrastructure system elasticity. In doing so, we mean reducing the recovery time of the CI systems or returning to the pre-disrupted state. Hence, social resilience and protection should be a function of the CI system resilience.

Possible model of CI protection and resilience

Strategic framework. It analyses the approaches and models for protecting critical infrastructure and the knowledge that critical infrastructure is a platform for maintaining the development of every society and state. The state government should be included in the system of protection of critical infrastructure as a proposer of laws and bylaws and has the task of authorising certain ministries to be coordinators of the whole system. The Government provides a strategic framework that is essential for the successful functioning of the system, cooperation, communication and coordination of all actors involved. The Government also designates (by separate decision) the sectors of certain critical infrastructures to provide a holistic approach to the protection and mitigation of negative impacts in the event of a threat to critical infrastructure.

After the Government, the next most important factor is the coordinator (a specific ministry) of the entire system to protect critical infrastructure. There are various

examples and practices regarding which body is appropriate for this role. In many European countries, the post is assigned to the Ministries of the Interior. Hence, different solutions and practices exist, but each country should recognise the most appropriate model. From the comprehensive analysis, it can be suggested that the Ministry of Defense or the Ministry of Interior be the coordinator of the entire critical infrastructure protection system. If the MoD/MoI is the coordinator of the system, it will communicate directly with all system and international actors and submit reports to the Government. An organisational approach to the implementation of critical infrastructure protection in the European Union and countries aspiring to full membership (such as the Republic of North Macedonia) is given in Directive 2008/114 / EC on the identification and designation of critical European infrastructure and the assessment of the need to improve their protection - a vital document of the European Union for critical infrastructure. In order to be able to take a decisive step towards the implementation of the above, a few initial recommendations are useful for policymakers:

First. Proposal for preparation of a Strategy for the protection of critical infrastructure as a separate strategic document. This strategy should be a synthesis of decisive and binding views that are closely related to the protection of critical infrastructure. The commitments should address current and future security challenges and threats at the national, regional and broader levels, independently and in cooperation with allies and partners within the Collective Security Systems - NATO. However, the strategic solution should be a framework that determines the development component and the role of all entities in strengthening the protection of critical infrastructure and its resilience. A separate strategic solution would be a longer-term and more comprehensive option than updating certain strategic documents that would shorten the time to start specific activities.

Second. Under the assumption that a need has been identified to review the existing or develop a new national security strategy, it is necessary to devote space to the critical infrastructure in the strategy. It is undisputed that the National Security Strategy should include a section on critical infrastructure. The factual situation indicates that the critical infrastructure is mentioned in the 2020 Defense Strategy.

Namely, the Defence Strategy derives from the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia, the permanent provisions of the National Concept for Security and Defence, the Law on Defence and the strategic commitment of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia to integrate into the Euro-Atlantic structures. Critical infrastructure is mentioned as one of the greatest threats to national security.

Third. If a Cyber Security Strategy exists or is in the process of being developed, critical infrastructure may be mentioned. Such a strategy was prepared in 2018, and it has parts that are aimed at protecting the critical information infrastructure as part of the overall critical infrastructure. An Action Plan for protecting critical information infrastructure has also been adopted. (National Cyber Security Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia, 2018-2022). Protecting the critical infrastructure is

recognised and stated as a strategic goal within the National Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia for the fight against terrorism 2018-2022. (National Counter-Terrorism Strategy BPT, 2018).

Normative framework. Normatively, a law on the protection of critical infrastructure could be proposed. Until it passes all the envisaged stages for its adoption, the topic of critical infrastructure may be temporarily regulated by another law or bylaw. (it is assumed that the procedures for this are shorter, and the problem can be temporarily fixed faster).

When drafting the critical infrastructure regulations, the recommendation is to regulate the energy and transport areas primarily - the European Union requires these two segments from its member states and those who intend to join. If the other sectors of the critical infrastructure are involved, the experience of Croatia can be repeated at the very beginning to slow down and complicate the process. Therefore, it is recommended to start with the energy and transport sectors. The possibilities for regulating critical European infrastructure should be foreseen in the forthcoming normative solutions (law and bylaws).

It is especially important to state the security coordinator in the law or bylaws, who is a key figure in all bodies and organs which will be in charge of matters related to critical infrastructure. The Minister determines who will be the Security Coordinator for Critical Infrastructure in his/her ministry. In contrast, the Director General of the facility designated as Critical Infrastructure determines who will be the Security Coordinator. Experience shows that there are study programs that train staff for security coordinators. Such is the case in Romania, which allows individuals to be trained as security coordinators and seek employment in ministries or critical infrastructure facilities. If this example is followed, in addition to creating and accrediting such study programs, it is necessary to include a new work post of a security coordinator for critical infrastructure in the job classification in the country.

Furthermore, the place or role of public-private partnerships should be emphasised in the law or bylaws. This is extremely important as part of the critical infrastructure is operated by private companies. The 2020 Private Security Act does not contain any benchmarks related to critical infrastructure.

An essential segment in the law or bylaws should be the emphasis on schooling, education and training.

Organisational framework. The organisational aspects of implementing the measures and activities for protecting critical infrastructure should belong to the newly established Critical Infrastructure Protection Centre. For these reasons, the Ministry of Defence or the Ministry of Interior may be an excellent choice to be the state coordinating body for this process. This is because the Centre should collect data and coordinate activities. It is also important to state in the law or bylaws that the work on protecting critical infrastructure will take place through the Critical Infrastructure Protection Centre.

It is very important to avoid blocking the process from the beginning. The secrecy marks at the beginning should be the lowest possible. In creating strategic and legal solutions, an inter-ministerial group should be formed, including a wider circle of experts, from universities, ministries, chambers, and the private sector. After adopting the law, it is further necessary to regulate the individual processes with bylaws.

Following the adoption of the strategy and the law, it is necessary to start constructing the critical infrastructure protection system. It is important to note that the system is built with the help of education, workshops and learning all the factors in that process. Optimally, we would point out the need to create a five-year action plan. (Mitrevska et al. 2019).

Conclusion

The previous findings conclude that Macedonian society is late in creating an efficient critical infrastructure protection system. The intensity of adverse events, natural or anthropogenic, empirically shows that even more developed societies face problems in establishing effective critical infrastructure protection systems. The personal experience of other countries indicates that analytically and comparatively, we can draw solid benefits and timely prevent any shortcomings in the construction of the protection system.

From the very beginning, the complexity of the wide range of sectors within the critical infrastructure indicates the realisation that the process of building the system is long and laborious. If this is followed by the complexity of the policies for critical infrastructure protection and the latest trends in applying the concept of resilience, we may conclude that the newly established dynamics of risks and threats require new responses from the security systems. This means establishing new institutions within the security system that, as their integral part, with an interdisciplinary approach, will analyse the latest trends in risks and threats according to different criteria. Traditional elements of security systems would not be very effective in dealing with modern risks and threats, especially cyber threats and the like. Hence, space must be allowed for scientific institutions, the private sector and several other entities that directly or indirectly contribute to critical infrastructure work.

The Macedonian critical infrastructure protection system must be based on the model in development and, at the same time, integrate the concepts of social resilience, protection and elasticity of critical infrastructure. It may be too ambitious initially, but it is better to keep in mind the latest trends in developing critical infrastructure protection systems from the outset. Only in this way is a modern, resilient society amenable to development through the efficient functioning of critical infrastructure. This includes networks for the uninterrupted provision of public services, improving the quality of life, and maintaining private profits and economic growth.

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A CONTEMPORARY SECURITY THREAT TO NORTH MACEDONIA: SECURITIZATION OF EMIGRATION AND THE CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Mitko ARNAUDOV[1]

Abstract: *North Macedonia, as a permanent NATO member state, is facing contemporary security threats which do not bring into question its territorial integrity and political independence, but rather its long-term sustainability from an economic and political perspective. Although this state gained its independence in a period and in a region that was extremely unstable, from a security point of view, taking into account the armed clashes and the civil wars on the territories of former Yugoslav federation, its security threats, especially after 2001, have changed essentially. Although it attained its foreign policy goal for full-fledged NATO membership in 2020, North Macedonia was mainly a stable country from the perspective of foreign, so-called hard threats, but meanwhile it has become a vulnerable state as a consequence of its internal issues. The weak economic performances, unstable and corrupt public and political infrastructure, as well as the high rate of emigration of its citizens, as a consequence of internal instability, have brought the sustainability of North Macedonia into question. Analyzing the key contemporary security threats to North Macedonia represents the goal of this paper, as well as establishing how NATO membership contributes to overcoming these threats, and providing recommendations for the future authorities in resolving the afore-stated risks and threats.*

Key words: *North Macedonia, contemporary, internal threats, NATO membership, political and economic instability.*

Introduction

As Koser wrote in 2011, the securitization of migrants and migration itself is continuously utilized throughout the world. Germans were associated within the UK society during the WWII as the "5th columnists", while Kurdish and Algerian Diasporas were connected with terrorist attacks in Western Europe in the 1970s and 1980s. However, the perspective on migration as a threat to national security has definitely risen in the past few years, considering that security awareness has become more implemented and spread world-wide, across many aspects of society, mostly as a feedback to the rapid rise in the number of international migrants (214 million in 2010 according to the International Organization for Migration) and especially of 'irregular' or 'illegal' migrants (estimates vary from 30-50 million worldwide**)** (Koser, 2011). However, in this paper we will analyze the securitization of emigration, respectively, the way it contributes to the creation of economic problems in small countries, using the example of North Macedonia.

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In the West, between the two world wars, due to the deep economic crisis and the Great Depression, the concept of national interest referred primarily to the social and economic well-being of the state (Ejdus, 2012, 159). Already in 1952, Arnold Wolfers recorded this transformation as follows: «The change in the understanding of the national interest from welfare to security is understandable. Today we live under the influence of the Cold War and the threat of external aggression rather than economic depression and social reforms» (Wolfers, 1952, 482, op. cit). Until the seventies of the last century, as Ejdus stated, economic problems, although implicitly present in all security considerations, were not explicitly linked to national security issues. In the Western Balkans, that trend lasted longer than three decades. States in this part of Europe, and respectively the political authorities, did not interpret economic problems as security challenges, and moreover, did not present economic problems as real problems in society. On the other hand, taking the example of the USA, the National Security Strategy of the USA from 1991 clearly and unequivocally states for the first time that «national security and economic strength are inseparable» (National Security Strategy of the United States, 1991, op.cit.). This perception was accompanied by institutional adjustment. Thus, for example, in 1993, it was decided to create a position in the US National Security Council for the Minister of Finance, as well as for the President's Assistant for Economic Affairs (Ejdus, 2012, 160). In addition, the National Economic Council was established in the USA, modeled after the National Security Council (De Souza, 2000).

If we return again to the region of the Western Balkans, we can very easily, only on the basis of media articles, determine that national representatives of economic and financial institutions are once in a while involved in the activities of national security councils, which are mainly composed of the highest state leadership, the top of the army, as well as the ministers of defense, interior affairs and justice. The composition of state security councils is a testimony of how marginalized economic challenges are in the context of creating and implementing national security strategies. From today's perspective, the marginalization of economic challenges in the security context opens up new problems for a country that affect its sustainability in the long term, taking into account that they create a so-called internal invisible enemy.

In this paper, using the example of North Macedonia, as a NATO member state, we will try to analyze how economic issues determine the security flows in this country from the one side, while, from the other side, how much corruption in the public system brings into question the stability of the state, regardless of whether it is secure from so-called hard threats, as political sovereignty and political integrity. It is a state in the Western Balkans which, since it declared its independence, in 1991, for more than thirty years, it is facing with the phenomenon of huge emigration flow as a consequence of unsustainable economic system, low investment inflows, political instability, as well as high rates of corruption within political and public infrastructure. If we analyze the results of the census in North Macedonia held in September 2021, we can find out that it had lost above two hundred thousand citizens from 2001 to 2021, because in 2011, opposite to European practice, the census was stopped. Despite the declining birth rate, migration is regarded as the number one cause for this situation. In fact, the 2002 census registered 2,022,547 inhabitants, while in 2021 there were 1,836,713 (Samardjiev, 2022). From a strategic point of view, taking into account the fact that it is a small country, losing almost ten percent of its citizens represents essential internal issue that problematizes the ongoing economic flows, but also the potential future economic growth, as well as the state investment strategies. The significant emigration of the citizens capable for employment and qualified population of North Macedonia is becoming a contemporary internal security problem in this country and is leading to the securitization of the issue of emigration. In fact, it is a modern security challenge

faced by developing countries. Why is population emigration in North Macedonia a security challenge? On the one hand, in the short term it contributes to the reduction of unemployment rate (governments in developing countries usually abuse such data) analyzed from a statistical point of view. This creates an unreal image that the number of unemployed is decreasing, also in a statistical sense. But, in the long term, such a trend affects the sustainability of the system in North Macedonia. First, from the perspective of the sustainability of the pension system, there will be a lack of labor in North Macedonia that will be able to create surplus value for the purpose of the pension system sustainability. Second, the lack of qualified labor will contribute to the emergence of deficit professions, such as the medical profession (a large number of the medically educated population decides to look for work in Western European countries). Third, North Macedonia will automatically lose its attractiveness for foreign investments due to the lack of labor force. And all this will contribute to the unsustainability of the public system of this country, which will give rise to new security challenges and consequently will open the question: How to make the country sustainable in the long term without a stable and sustainable labor market?

Emigration as an invisible ongoing security issue in North Macedonia

The question of migration as a problem has attracted the focus of the European and the world public for many years. It came into the spotlight of world's and European politics during the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016 when large waves of population from Asia and then from North Africa started their movement to the developed countries in Europe causing administrative, financial, and political problems, both in the countries of transit, as well as in the countries of final destination (Lutovac, 2018, 9 op. cit.). In the case of North Macedonia, we have to point out that the security threats which this country faced at the beginning of the nineties, even during the conflict in its northwestern parts, were not the essential cause for increasing the rate of emigration among the population. In fact, the highest rate of migration of the Macedonian population was recorded in 2001, during the armed conflict in the north-western parts which we already mentioned, but in this case, it was primarily the internal migration of the population, on the territory of North Macedonia. According to official data, based on the dates provided by the Macedonian Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, during the eight months of conflict, there were over 140.000 displaced persons in North Macedonia (Popovski, Naumova, 17, op. cit.). But, the important thing in the context of armed conflict and migration, is that in the year after the conflict ended, 2002, approximately 90% of the population displaced during the conflict, gradually returned to their homes (Popovski, Naumova, 18 op. cit.).

On the other hand, the real problem of emigration of its population that North Macedonia is continuously facing during the last thirteen years is caused by the unwillingness of the national and public system to face with the modern security challenges that are not related to the so-called "traditional" or "hard" threats of sovereign states, such as threats to political sovereignty and territorial integrity. Low living standards, low income, lack of jobs for qualified labor, together with

political clientelism and corruption have greatly contributed to the encouragement of increasing emigration in Macedonian society. The Macedonian political elite has not found an appropriate strategy that, on the one hand, will attract foreign investors and thus dynamize the Macedonian economy, while, on the other hand, keep the young and qualified workforce in the country in order to have basic capacities and prerequisites for attracting foreign investments. In that context, as Gocevski and Gjurovski have stated, the theories of security and peace unequivocally indicate that one of the key factors for the promotion and preservation of world peace is precisely raising the level of economic development of countries (Gocevski, Gjurovski, 2017 pp.20. op.cit.). Today the Republic of North Macedonia, although it is NATO member state, is facing security threats such as economic underdevelopment, weak and dysfunctional institutions, as well as a health system that does not respond to the modern challenges in the field of public health. These challenges create intra-institutional security challenges, while the institutional infrastructure of North Macedonia causes contemporary security threats which directly threaten the security of citizens in the context of creating conditions for normal life. Based on it, numerous young citizens of North Macedonia are deciding to emigrate because they are not satisfied with the living conditions that the public system in this country provides. Thus, the emigration process creates additional security challenge for North Macedonia, bearing in mind the fact that this state loses its working age population, so it brings into question its sustainability on long term basis.

As one of the most actual examples, we can analyze the fight against Covid-19 pandemic in North Macedonia. Opposite the claims of political authorities in North Macedonia, NATO membership of North Macedonia did not enable better conditions for overcoming the contemporary security threats faced by North Macedonia's citizens. Although NATO allies, through the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), provided different and comprehensive types of assistance to North Macedonia in the fight during the Covid-19 pandemic, the internal institutional and systematic problems and issues in this country, including pervasive political corruption at all levels of governing, were a crucial reason for such negative trends during the pandemic. According to data from 1 September 2022, North Macedonia, from the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, has registered 340.510 cases, from which 329.434 recovered patients and 9.490 deaths, which position this country in the group of European countries with the highest rate of mortality due to the pandemic (Worldometers, 2022). In fact, during Covid-19, North Macedonia pandemic applied more or less the same measures as its neihboring countries. Basically, all of them, within the Western Balkans region, applied „copy-paste" measures in the fight against Covid-19, but North Macedonia fared the worst, because it had the largest number of new Covid-19 cases and deaths in relation to the number of citizens. The difference between North Macedonia and the other neighboring states was only in the measures for entering and leaving the

country, where state quarantine was obligatory for Macedonian citizens, as well as for foreigners (Mirilović, 2022). During the Covid-19 pandemic, the citizens of North Macedonia were faced with numerous systemic inconsistencies, which led to a sudden increase of the number of infected people, but also to a high mortality rate due to the inconsistency and inefficiency of the national health system. Poverty is closely related to other threats to human security, such as disease and hunger. A large number of infectious diseases that have spread throughout the world in the last few decades, such as SARS, AIDS, hepatitis C, the H5N1 virus or Ebola, originated precisely in the poorest countries of the world (Ejdus, 2012, 169). In the case of North Macedonia, the Covid-19 virus did not appear on its territory, as it is example in many poor countries on the African continent, but the consequences in the fight against this pandemic were a real indicator of the vulnerability of this country in a systemic sense, and therefore an indicator of the vulnerability of its population as a result of the systemic inefficiency and dysfunction.

From the other side, political flows are also one of the key determinators which bring about high rates of emigration, at the same time making this process as one of the crucial internal security issues, namely, securitazation of the emigration process in North Macedonia. In fact, the Republic of North Macedonia has always been considered a highly intensive migration area, characterized by both exhaustive inner movements of its citizens, as well as continuous emigration processes towards other countries (Sotiroski, Hristoski, 2014, 33 op. cit.) Almost 2/3 of the emigration flows are directed towards some of the European countries (Germany, Switzerland, Italy and other), out of which 12.1% towards America and almost 10% towards Australia and Oceania (Apostolovska-Toshevska, Madjevikj, Ljakoska, Gorin, Radevski, Dimitrovska, 2018, 61 op. cit). Based on the Eurostat data (2014), in the European countries alone, the number of Macedonian citizens increased from 135,000 in 2000 to 240,000 in 2014. "The largest increase is noticed in the receiving countries of the European Union, especially in 2011, after the stagnation during the economic and financial crisis (2008–2010) (Apostolovska-Toshevska, Madjevikj, Ljakoska, Gorin, Radevski, Dimitrovska, 2018, 63 op. cit.). Apart from this trend of permanent emigration, many young people, mainly students, go to work abroad for a limited period of time through employment agencies or students' "work and travel" and "internship" programs. Most of them work in Germany, Italy, Austria, Sweden, the USA, Canada and Australia (Apostolovska-Toshevska, Madjevikj, Ljakoska, Gorin, Radevski, Dimitrovska, 2018, 62 op. cit.). The major political influence based on narrow political and political party interests in the creation of economic policies contributes to the unfavorable economic situation in North Macedonia that directly threatens the inhabitants of this country who reject the so-called clientelistic model of ensuring economic sustainability. The great indifference and inferiority of the youth population in North Macedonia, especially students, who should be the generators and critical mass of society, is evident. The latest

research detects an increasing mass exodus of young people, especially intellectuals from North Macedonia, who are most often looking for a „better tomorrow" in the Western Europe countries. This trend of «brain drain» is becoming more and more worrying and is the topic of many formal and informal youth meetings (Fazlagić, 2013). In that context, the current President of the Republic of North Macedonia has said that „Young people in the region have the right to look for work around the world if politicians do not provide a proper perspective. They only have one life, we all have one life and no one is crazy to spend it while negotiations with the EU last for years, and the average salary in the country is 400 Euros. The chance to keep young people in the region is in the Western Balkans to start using their own resources" (Samardjiev, 2022).

According to World Bank statistics, half a million Macedonians already live abroad. That is about a quarter of the total population. One of the Macedonians who already lives and works abroad says that a good job in North Macedonia requires political connections (Dojče Vele, 2020 op. cit.). In fact, such tendencies bring into question the sustainability of North Macedonia as a state because of three key reasons: first, this country is continuously losing its working-age population and qualified workforce, second, the decreasing number of working-age population makes the national pension system unsustainable, third, the country is becoming less and less attractive for new investments as a consequence of the deficit of qualified workers on the labor market. Intensive variations in the official statistics data for 2012 and 2013 between the OSCE and the State Bureau of Statistics of North Macedonia testify to the fact that North Macedonia does not lead a strategic policy when it comes to migration flows. Thus, according to the data of the State Statistics of North Macedonia, in 2012, 1,330 inhabitants emigrated from that country, while in 2013, only 945. On the other hand, according to OSCE official data, 17,530 inhabitants emigrated from North Macedonia in 2012, while in 2013, as many as 20,562 (Vračić, 2018). In the countries of the region, there are no exact statistical data on the number of young people who have permanently emigrated since the beginning of the new millennium, and all estimates are based on the OSCE database for the period from 2012 to 2016. During that period, an average of slightly more than 9,500, mostly young people left North Macedonia annually (Radio Slobodna Evropa/CDM, 2022 op. cit.). According to the World Bank data, in the last ten years, half a million citizens have emigrated from North Macedonia, most of whom are young.

The research conducted by the German foundation «Friedrich Ebert», on 1200 respondents, shows that only eight percent of young population want to stay in North Macedonia, while two thirds of young people want to emigrate (Večer, 2020). North Macedonia does not have its own statistics on migration flows in the last few decades. UN figures show that at the end of 2019 the number of migrants was approximately 650,000, or almost a third of the population (Samardjiev, 2022).

Given the discrepancy between the national and international source estimates, it is likely that official figures do not capture the actual level of emigration from Macedonia. Emigration is largely economically driven, owing to poor business and employment opportunities in Macedonia (Economist Intelligence, 2017). Poor living conditions of young people in North Macedonia is evidenced also by the fact that an increasing number of them want to continue their lives abroad. According to the latest research, 58 percent of young people say that they would move out of the country, and 64.8 percent are dissatisfied with their place in the country. According to the research of the Foundation for Democracy in Westminster, there is a high degree of youth dissatisfaction in North Macedonia related the fact how state authorities take care of this category of people and we there is a huge discrepancy between the opportunities and needs of young people at the local level and central level (Dojče Vele, 2022 op. cit.).

When it comes concretely to the corruption in North Macedonia public sector, the European Commission Annual report from 2022 states that the most vulnerable sectors to corruption require targeted risk assessments and dedicated actions (European Commission/ North Macedonia 2022 Report, 2022). "Corruption remains prevalent in many areas and is an issue of concern", is stated in the European Commission Annual Report for North Macedonia in 2022 (European Commission/ North Macedonia 2022 Report, 2022). Bearing in mind the high rate of corruption in North Macedonia, the European Commission has suggested to the authorities in North Macedonia to continue the action to fight corruption by increasing support to the bodies responsible for implementing the national strategy for the prevention of corruption and conflict of interests and effectively enforce GRECO's recommendations, allocate sufficient resources to the Office of the Basic Public Prosecutor for Organized Crime and Corruption, including financial experts, in order to ensure effective accountability for high-level corruption cases, continue to increase the number of final convictions in high-level corruption cases, including the confiscation of criminal assets, value-based confiscation, extended confiscation and third-party confiscation (European Commission/ North Macedonia 2022 Report, 2022). The expectations related to the fight against corruption in North Macedonia from the European Commission perspective are very high, but the reality is quite different. The authorities in North Macedonia, as well as the political representatives from the political parties in the opposition, continue to lead the political, institutional and public flows in that state in a manner that does not contribute to efficient and effective fight against pervasive corruption which determines: weak economic system, vulnerable public sector, social instability and, as a consequence of all these – a huge rate of emigration.

Development of the corruption index in North Macedonia 2003 - 2021

Year	North Macedonia	Europe	Worldwide
2021	61	41.0	56.8
2020	65	41.2	56.7
2019	65	40.6	56.8
2018	63	40.3	56.9
2017	65	40.2	56.9
2016	63	40.8	57.1
2015	58	40.5	57.5
2014	55	41.6	56.8
2013	56	42.2	57.4
2012	57	42.4	56.8
2011	61	44.1	59.7
2010	59	44.0	59.9
2009	62	42.8	59.7
2008	64	42.3	59.8
2007	67	41.6	60.1
2006	73	41.4	59.1
2005	73	41.2	59.1
2004	73	41.6	58.3
2003	77	42.0	57.6

Source: The data is determined annually by Transparency International

In that context, as an explanation of the rate of corruption in North Macedonia, the causes of corruption lie in part in political and cultural reasons. Ineffective law enforcement may further promote it. It is striking that it is regularly lower in democratically governed countries (form of government in North Macedonia: Parliamentary republic). Similarly, higher corruption occurs predominantly in low-income countries. In North Macedonia, per capita income is 6,130 USD annually, which is relatively low by global standards. The comparatively low cost of living indicates low prosperity and socioeconomic problems (WorldData.info, 2021).

Therefore, the reasoning is that in these areas, the state (North Macedonia) should try to find solutions[2] that will attract young people to stay in their country. The

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[2] Aiming to stop the negative migration trends in North Macedonia, the authorities have adopted the Government Program 2022-2024, which provides support for each employed person up to the age of 29 who will be employed for the first time, for all those who have not yet developed employment skills to

most common emigrants are highly educated staff from the field of medical professions and engineering that have gone to EU member states in recent years in Scandinavia, Germany, Britain (Dojče Vele, 2022 op. cit.). Better work conditions and economic perspective are not the only reasons for young people to leave North Macedonia. Although North Macedonia has a National Strategy for cooperation and preventing the brain-drain of young and high-quality personnel 2013-2020, it is not yet implemented, according to the analysis of the Brain Drain Prevention Network - composed of seven civil society organizations working in various areas related to development of young people, youth policies and rights and youth information (Večer, 2020 op. cit.). The emigration of the population of North Macedonia, especially young and educated population, is a pervasive problem of this country, which in the medium and long term affects not only the overcoming of existing systemic problems, but also the creation of new challenges that permanently block all potentials for the development of this country. Although Macedonia benefits from the remittances of its citizens abroad, during the vacation and summer period, the high level of emigration has negative implications on population growth, public finances and the country's economic growth potential (Economist Intelligence, 2017).

Conclusion

Unlike the states in Western Europe which are facing migrant issues as external security threats, bearing in mind the huge waves of migrants during the last ten years intending to reach western European countries, North Macedonia is facing with emigration on the internal level. While European countries are focusing on migrant flows as potential security threats, bearing in mind the different types of persons who intend to get the status of asylum seekers, including different radical, extremist and potential terrorist groups, North Macedonia is facing with emigration of its domestic citizens. It is securitization of migration on two levels. Western European countries are dealing with migration as an outside security issue, trying to secure the national system and infrastructure from certain migrants with radical potentials. From the other side, migration, more concretely emigration in North Macedonia has become a security issue as a consequence of internal institutional problems which this state is facing. Emigration in North Macedonia during the last twenty years represents a consequence of internal problems, such as institutional corruption, unsustainable economic system, unefficient public institutions. On the next level, emigration as a consequence in North Macedonia has become a security issue by itself. It has produced additional security issues, bearing in mind that the huge flows of emigration of young, qualified and working-age population brings into question the sustainability of the national system at all levels. The labor market is facing a deficit of working-age and qualified workers, the pension system is becoming too extensive, so it cannot be covered by the actual economic dynamic in the state and the economic system becomes unsustainable because it is unable to produce new values without a work force, as a precondition for any economic

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do so through practice, a personal tax refund is provided for income of all newly employed young people under 30 years of age, support is foreseen in the opening of youth centers and local youth councils, with the aim of involving young people in decision-making processes and increasing the capacities of young people. op. cit.

operation. Such extensive emigration in North Macedonia, followed by a high rate of mortality brings into question the sustainability of the state in the long term. That is key *differentia specifica* between migration as a security issue in Western Europe, on the one side, and in North Macedonia, on the other side. For Western Europe, it is an external security issue which requires mechanisms for early detection and adjustment, while in the case of North Macedonia, it is an internal issue which requires comprehensive and profound systematic reform for dealing with it in the context of lowering the rates of emigration. Today, North Macedonia is facing an increasing employment rate, but at the same time with a high mortality rate, as well as a high rate of emigration of citizens capable for employment and of qualified population permanently leaving the country. Such a trend creates false statistical data and bypasses the factual situation that the increase in the employment rate is a consequence of the decline in the number of the population, instead of the significant creation of new job opportunities. Wrong and, at the same time, fake statistical data lead to wrong strategic policies, despite the existence of a government strategy on the policy for reducing the departure of the young and qualified population. In the long term, such trends, caused by the systemic dissatisfaction of young people, contribute to the unsustainability of North Macedonia, while the issue of emigration reaches the top of the agenda of security challenges for this country.

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THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL AND EU'S ENERGY TRANSITION IN THE WAKE OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE

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Abstract: *As part of the European Green Deal-aligned net-zero push by 2050, the EU was striving to transition its energy sector to using mostly renewables. Natural gas, however, remained a crucial transition fuel to replace high GHG emitting coal-fired power. But gas prices have been on the rise following the COVID 19 pandemic and have further been exacerbated following Russia's invasion of an EU gas transit country, Ukraine. Since EU's largest economies rely on Russian gas, some countries have already turned retired coal-fired power plants back online, used them in reserve, or delayed their scheduled decommissioning to meet increasing energy demands, which in itself has pushed the EU further away from its previously set climate friendly goals. On the other hand, if Russia were to cut off its gas supply to the EU completely, the EU might be seen massively installing renewables and heat pumps and go through the energy transition faster than it initially planned for. That is why the aim of this paper is to analyze and discuss both scenarios, their short and long-term implications, and the resulting effects on the EU's energy policies. The end result will consist of the pros and cons of each scenario and will trace out both the most beneficial as well as the most likely policy steps of the EU's energy community in response to the energy crisis brought by the War in Ukraine.*

Keywords: *energy crisis, carbon intensity, GHG emissions, coal, fossil fuels*

Introduction

In 2021, European shortage of gas due to the post-COVID recovery led to record-breaking prices. After a dip in January of 2022, gas prices have been on the rise again following Russia's invasion of a European Union (EU) gas transit country, Ukraine. The impact of the war in Ukraine is felt as the third asymmetric shock that the EU has experienced in the last two decades, following the 2008 financial and economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. The current crisis however is different from the previous instances mainly because it could obstruct the EU's path to decarbonization, due to the fact that the transition to a low-carbon economy has not been properly stress-tested against volatility and scarcity. (*Popkostova, 2022*)

Predating the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the EU adopted the European Green Deal (EGD) whose ambitious goals include achieving climate neutrality by 2050 and a 55% net reduction of emissions by 2030 compared to 1990. With natural gas seen as a crucial "transition fuel", the war in Ukraine has made Europe's energy dependence painfully clear and European net-zero plans, which include swapping coal for natural gas-fired power could be under threat.

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A report by consultancy Aurora Energy Research published in March of 2022 stated that in the extreme case that Russian gas imports cease, this would leave a large gap in EU supply to be met by other sources or demand reductions. This might even reverse progress towards the EU's net-zero goal as European nations may be forced to restart coal and oil power generation, which will potentially lead to increased emissions. (AURORA, 2022) In a sort of a worst-case scenario, if no effective energy crisis management is implemented, this could compromise the EU's pursuit of the EGD and undermine the EU's climate leadership. (*Popkostova, 2022*) With that said, a major question and at the same time the aim of this paper is to provide an analysis on what will be the immediate and long-term consequences of the War in Ukraine on EU's energy transition and its policies?

Materials & Methods

The European Green Deal

The EGD has been the major talking point of all EU climate-neutrality initiatives ever since its launch in December 2019, but especially following the presentation of the 'Fit for 55' legislative package in the summer of 2021 which aims to translate EGD ambitions into law. This legislation package covers the climate, the environment, energy, transport, industry, agriculture, and sustainable finance – all of which are strongly interlinked and set the EU on the path to a green transition, with an end-goal of reaching climate neutrality by 2050. On the topic of energy, the EGD builds on all legislative pieces that predate it and the 'Fit for 55' legislative package and best describes the EU's road to climate-neutrality, its current energy dilemmas and the policy challenges it faces in the wake of the war in Ukraine.

Considering that 75% of the EU's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions result from energy production and use, a transition towards clean energy has to be made in order for the EU to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. (EU COUNCILa, 2022) As a result, the EGD and the 'Fit for 55' package have set out the following EU goals and actions for the energy transition: overhaul the entire EU 2030 climate and energy framework to further accelerate the EU's efforts to promote energy efficiency and increase the share of renewable energy sources; ensure the stable supply of energy at affordable prices in the EU; and further develop an integrated and interconnected energy market. (EU COUNCILb, 2022)

The commitment of cutting EU GHG emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990, made binding by the European Climate Law, required the EU to revise its energy legislation and targets. According to the EGD, Europe needs to fundamentally transform its energy system into an integrated energy system with high shares of renewable energy and significant energy efficiency improvements. To that end, with the energy efficiency directive, the EU has introduced measures to improve energy savings by making more efficient use of energy supply, which includes an energy efficiency target of 36% for final energy consumption and 39% for primary energy consumption. At the same time, the renewable energy directive aims to increase the share of renewable energy to at least 40% in the EU's energy market by 2030.

EU's Dependence on Russian Gas

Being a signatory to a pledge to accelerate a transition away from coal power at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), it is clear that the EU is striving to power Europe using mostly renewables by 2050. Natural gas however is still seen as a crucial "transition fuel". (Brooks and Adler, 2022) At the moment, the EU imports 90% of its gas consumption (EC, 2022) and Russian energy imports in particular are key for European supply, accounting for 30-40% of total gas imports in Europe and over 75% in some countries in the east and south. (AURORA, 2022)

In the winters of 2006 and 2009, temporary disruptions of gas supplies strongly hit the EU and should have served as a stark "wake up call". Although a lot was done in order to strengthen the EU's energy security in terms of gas supplies in the following years, the EU still remains vulnerable to external energy shocks and the ongoing War in Ukraine has raised the threat of supply disruptions. In response, in March of 2022, the European Commission proposed an outline of a plan to make Europe independent from Russian fossil fuels well before 2030, a part of which is the REPowerEU initiative.

Share of Fossil Fuels Imported from Russia to the EU in 2019

Coal   46.7 %

Natural Gas   41.1 %

Oil   26.9 %
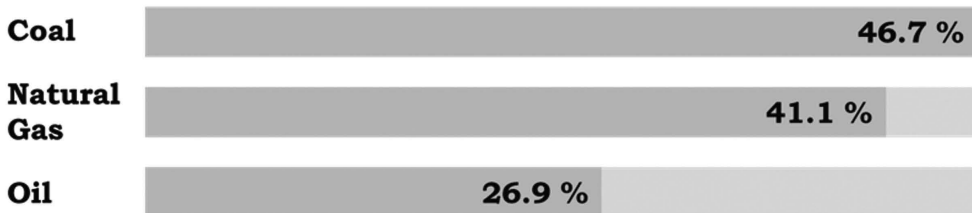
Fig. 1. Russian energy imports to the EU

Likely EU energy policy scenarios

In terms of the likely steps the EU takes following the War in Ukraine and its subsequent energy crisis management we can focus on two scenarios. It should be noted that both scenarios should be looked at as continuous to each other, rather than taking place in parallel, as the first takes account of more short-term measures and outcomes, while the second analyses long-term implications.

Short-term scenario

Regarding this first scenario, a halt to gas flows via Ukraine, or an extreme 'no Russian gas' scenario would require Europe to reduce gas demand through urgent measures or rely on its own resources and energy production capacities. As the energy crisis escalated in the autumn of 2021, high gas prices prompted utilities to fire up

coal power plants that were held in reserve, increasing pollution and GHG emissions. Now, after Russia invaded Ukraine, the EU rolled out the RePowerEU plan to cut demand for Russian gas by two thirds in 2022 alone and to become independent from fossil fuels from the country by 2030 at the latest. (EC, 2022) However, top officials in Brussels and EU member states have acknowledged this would require turning back to coal on a temporary basis since switching on underutilized coal power plants would take the pressure off Europe's demand for gas. Restarts for industrial generation using coal instead of gas could save 10 to 15 billion cubic meters of natural gas per year, the single most effective gas-saving measure. This means, that the EU's determination to eliminate domestic demand for Russian fossil fuels by 2030 will stop short of slowing down the coal phaseout process at least in the short term. (AURORA, 2022; Walker, 2022)

In last year's COP26 agreement, parties vowed to phase out coal by 2030, but in light of the War in Ukraine, they said it would work to decarbonize the energy industry altogether by 2035. At the moment, Germany leads the energy policy turnaround in the EU, as German energy companies are already considering the possibility to get retired coal-fired thermal power plants back online, use those in reserve more and delay the scheduled decommissioning of some facilities.

The scheduled closure of a coal plant in Germany and another in the United Kingdom has already been delayed and S&P Global's analyst Glenn Rickson noted and estimated that there would be more such decisions. (AURORA, 2022) Minister of Environment, Water and Forests of Romania Barna Tánczos has stated early in 2022 that his country would temporarily restart idle coal-fired power plants, citing plans to reduce dependence on gas and oil imports from Russia. Romania earlier said it would phase out coal by 2032. Even Italy does not rule out boosting coal power capacity utilization. Italy's Minister for Ecological Transition Roberto Cingolani said the country's two active coal-fired power plants in would temporarily be "brought up to full capacity" if there is "an absolute lack of energy." (Horton, et al., 2022)

The European Commission did say it would also accelerate the deployment of renewables and green hydrogen, but it is difficult to believe it can prioritize LNG and coal at the same time as green energy. Renewable energy industry groups and international organizations have been warning that the rate of green energy investment is much too slow for the EU to meet its 2050 decarbonization goal and for the world to avoid the worst effects of global warming. If the EU, its member states and the industry invest in fossil fuels to end their reliance on Russian energy even in the short-term, the decarbonization process and the energy transition will suffer.

Figure 2 The two likely energy scenarios the EU takes following the War in Ukraine

Long-term scenario

The second scenario would see the EU switching to renewables faster than originally planned. The policies proposed under the EGD would make the European economy less dependent on energy imports and therefore more resilient, and the RE-PowerEU plan will only accelerate this process. Analysts say that European countries can quickly reduce gas dependence with energy efficiency measures and ramping up renewable energy investments, which are already in line with Europe's ambition to stop pumping additional GHGs into the atmosphere. The EGD already supports the development of new climate-neutral technologies such as green hydrogen, biochemicals, or decarbonized materials. This would substantially reduce reliance on traditional fossil fuels, such as oil, coal or natural gas.
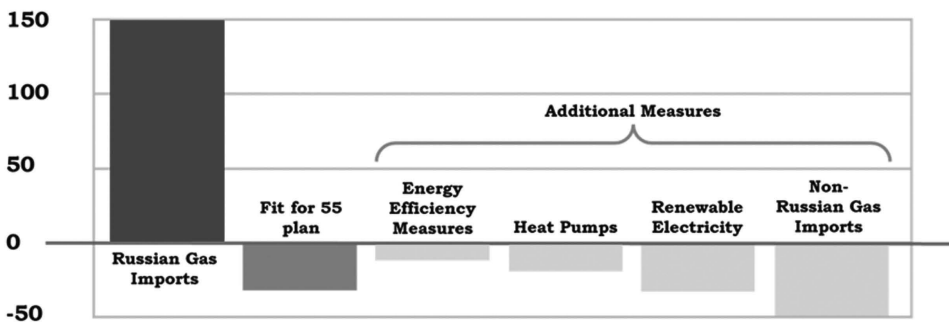
Figure 3 Russian gas imports to the EU cut by 2025

Furthermore, the EU might put forward a twin strategy for reducing its dependence on Russian gas by bringing forward green investments while swapping Russian gas for fuels from other countries. The bloc plans to ship 50 billion cubic meters of LNG each year from countries like Qatar, Egypt and the US. The EU wants to get another 10 billion cubic meters from pipes to countries like Azerbaijan, Algeria and Norway. But, unlike coal, which can be cheaply shipped around the world in its natural state, gas needs to be transported via pipelines or cooled down to extremely low temperatures that allow it to be carried in liquid form on special tankers. Moreover, LNG infrastructure is lacking in Central and especially in Eastern Europe. Building new terminals to receive LNG shipments risks locking in a dependence on fuels the EU will have to abandon to keep temperatures from rising.

Additionally, the first pilot installations of energy plants based around renewables are already being put in operation but a massive scaling up of these technologies is key. Within two weeks of the Russian invasion, the EU announced plans to install wind turbines, solar panels and heat pumps faster than ever before. The European Commission is also pushing for countries to support homes and companies to use less and produce more energy. Under that premise, the bloc could potentially reach 1 TW of solar capacity by 2030. Despite the European Commission having controversially added nuclear to its taxonomy of green energy investment, the RePowerEU initiative does not mention it at all. The Visegrad Group of countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) which are the most reliant on Russian gas, however, view this technology and in particular the new small modular reactors that are being developed as the main means of replacing coal and gas in all four countries.

Results

The war in Ukraine has made the EU's energy dependence on Russian gas, coal and oil painfully obvious, and the actions considered in the first scenario seem an inevitable and direct consequence of the EU's earlier unanswered questions regarding its energy policies. Even though the war demonstrates the urgency for accelerating the EU's clean energy transition this does not seem viable in the short-term considering that energy facilities that use renewables will require massive scaling up. Viewing things in a more geopolitical manner, in order for the EU to detach itself from any Russian influence as fast as possible (a period of one year) will require a step back from its decarbonization policies and switching to coal-fired power, as well as ramping up its LNG imports.

The benefits from returning to coal-fired power are fast and immediate action due to already existing power plants and interconnected electric grid with only minor adaptations and checkups required. This is favorable considering that most EU countries have their own coal deposits and do not depend on other country's resources, making the EU as a whole less vulnerable. The costs of operating existing coal plants across many European power systems were considerably cheaper than the operating costs

for gas-fired power plants for the majority of 2021. However, gas-to-coal switching pushed up global CO2 emissions by around 250 Mt. In the EU, the increase was 16%, but this was still significantly smaller than the 21% decline in 2020. Coal accounted for over 40% of the overall growth in global CO2 emissions in 2021. Coal emissions now stand at an all-time high of 15.3 Gt, surpassing their previous peak (seen in 2014) by almost 200 Mt. (IEA, 2022)

Research company BloombergNEF, calculated emissions from the power sector in France, Germany and Italy just before the start of the war in Ukraine. Their research showed that these emissions could be up to 14% higher from January to September 2022 if compared to the same period in 2021. However, despite the inevitable increase of emissions from coal power in the near-term, European policymakers think that the EU's climate agenda presents a vital part of the response to Russian aggression. This scenario is highly unfavorable regarding EU's long-term energy policies including the EGD considering that using coal-fired power plants might eliminate the possibility of reaching a net 55% reduction of emissions until 2030. Nevertheless, the larger benefits of reducing the EU's dependence on Russian gas will be felt in the long run, as it will indirectly facilitate the move to renewables.

This brings us to the second scenario, which is in correlation with the measures prescribed in the EGD increasing the renewable energy use, together with biofuels and green hydrogen leading to reduction of fossil fuels reliance, promoting energy efficiency, and increasing electrification. In addition, the increased use of renewables in electricity generation will contribute to the EU reaching its EGD goals, considering renewables are a cheap, clean, and potentially endless source of energy using free fuel with no emissions during operation. But, implementing actions and steps connected with the EGD goals are time consuming with results visible in a longer run, considering the demand for building new plants and infrastructure which will require great capital investments.

At the same time, the production process of renewable energy systems is highly dependent on fossil fuels, requires a lot of energy and is material intensive. In order for the EU to achieve 100% renewables by 2050 frontload investments have to be undertaken amounting to an average of about €25 billion annually until 2030, delivering 30 Mt of annual emission reductions. (Wolf et al., 2021) Moreover, plants based on renewable energy have relatively low energy return of investment (EROI) values compared to traditional conventional fossil fuel plants, meaning it will take many years to return the energy produced from these sources. Additionally, while renewable energy sources generate high quality electricity, they are less predictable and reliable, and the current energy needs do not always correlate with the disposability of the renewable energy that have to be balanced by fossil fueled plants.

Conclusion

As a result of the war in Ukraine, the EU now finds itself paying a heavy price for its excessive energy dependence on Russia. Natural gas is critical for the European industry and energy sectors, and Germany and Italy are particularly vulnerable. In the short-term, even without a ban on gas from Russia, the maximum use of all available indigenous energy resources is indispensable. Measures from suspending the phase-out of old nuclear power stations, to the ramping up of LNG purchases from a wider range of supplier countries, and even a heavier reliance on the use of coal and lignite in power generation are all part of the answer. The latter, risks reversing the decade long decline in GHG emissions from the power sector, but it should be temporary, allowing for Green Deal-aligned diversification to gather steam in the longer run. Climate concerns must remain focused on the medium- and long-term while there needs to be a readiness to be flexible in addressing short-term needs.

A geopolitical European Union can do nothing less than ensure its energy security in a manner compatible with its climate objectives. There are no easy answers, and a short-term and temporary deviation from purely climate considerations must be accepted in the interests of finding structural solution to Europe's energy security. Fortunately, in the medium- and longer-term, the goals of the EGD coincide with these related to the EU's energy security.

A climate-neutral Europe will however still not be fully energy independent. The EU should not add to nationalist pressures because of the aggression of one country, but rather uphold bilateral and multilateral cooperation on trade and development while reducing over-dependence on one country for any of its essential energy and materials imports. The EU will never be fully autonomous in energy and materials, because the supply chains of renewable and nuclear energy resources, as well as green hydrogen and associated products, will inevitably also involve non-EU countries. The EGD needs to be complemented by a trade strategy focused on diversification of essential imports, whether of green hydrogen from places where it can be produced cost-effectively, or rare earths and precious metals needed for an electrified economy.

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FEMINIST APPROACHES TO SECURITY

Ankica TOMIC[1]

Abstract: *The article primarily analyzes the contribution of feminist approaches to the placement of human beings, or in gender categories, not only men, but women into the focus of international relations research, strategic studies, and subsequently, security studies. The so-called 'neutral' or gender-blind perspective, which includes only the male perspective, i.e., excludes the female perspective, is being a dominant approach within the traditional studies of security, peace, war, conflicts, etc. In this paper, the common positions of different feminist trends are analyzed and presented, which have contributed to the change of focus from a militarily -political and state-centric to a human-gender centric approach. That approach necessarily involves the conduct of gender analysis which also encompasses the adoption of transformative measures to reduce the gender-specific forms of discrimination and inequality in all walks of life, including international security organizations, as well the national, such as the army and the police.*

 Keywords: *feminism, security, gender analysis, international relations, conflict*

Introduction

Feminism as an ideology took shape in the second half of the 20th century. However, the ideas about women's rights and their equality with men are much older. As early as 1405, Christine de Pisan published the book 'City of Women' in Italy. In that book, she advocates women's right to education and political activity. As an ideology, feminism is associated with the women's movement that arose in the middle of the 19th century. The birth of the movement dates back to 1848. That year, American abolitionists Elisabeth Candy Stanton and Lucretia Mott organized a debate on women's rights to which they invited a group of reformists in New York. Then they also adopted the Declaration on the Acquisition of Civil Rights for Women, the same rights enjoyed by men. In many European countries, as well as in the USA, various organizations are founded with the task of promoting women's right to vote.

The term feminism in the meaning of the representation of women's rights was introduced in 1880 by Hurbentine Aucert, the founder of the first French society for women's suffrage. At the beginning of 1830, in France, Charles Fourier 'coined' the term 'feminisme', which only

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[1] Dr. Ankica Tomic is the Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Special Advisor on Gender and Equality at the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI) Regional Centre based in Skopje. The content of this article does not reflect the official position of BiH or MARRI RC. The article contains the updated paragraphs of the author's PhD Dissertation defended on 23 January, 2019 at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Sarajevo with the title: "Gender Issues in the Policies of the Defense and Police Systems of the Euro-Atlantic countries".

came into more frequent use at the end of the 19th century. Fourier claimed: «The degree of women's liberation is the measure of society's liberation». (Ravlic, 2003:272)

Feminism as an ideology is associated with various «progressive ideas, policies and movements». It is not a monolith and it is impossible to define it unambiguously as feminism. It is much closer to the truth to «talk about feminisms». The term covers «a wide range from theoretical approaches, through political activities and social movements to personal determinations of a large number of women, often with opposing viewpoints, under the influence of other ideologies or specific socio-economic circumstances in which women live in certain parts of the world» (Jarić-Radović, 2011:66).

Feminism, along with other contemporary approaches, which some authors call alternative approaches to security (constructivism, postmodernism, critical theory, green politics), has played an important role in the evolutionary development of security as a complex and multidimensional social phenomenon.

The most significant contribution of these approaches is reflected in the change of focus from the military-political and state-centric level to the level of importance of the individual's contribution in achieving the overall security environment in the social community, in the relationship between the individual and the wider security community - the state, i.e., its overall security system. When we talk about an individual, we mean every member of society, i.e., men and women, and in the categories of the gender paradigm, we mean their different perceptions of security challenges and threats, as well as the different consequences that these challenges and threats can have on their individual security and safety.

Various feminist trends, orientations, and streams have significantly contributed to the development of scientific and professional approaches in the context of the emergence, understanding, and overcoming of contemporary challenges to national, regional and global security through the prism of gender. Feminism put the focus of analysis and research on the female perspective instead of the so-called neutral perspectives, pointing out the need for women's experiences, priorities, and concerns to be recognized, become visible, and integrated into all spheres of social and private life. Its contribution is reflected in the fact that it «imposed» gender as a category for analysis, which means gender analysis[2] became legitimate and relevant in the research of conflicts, peace and security, and development.

Research within the theory of international relations, strategic studies, and subsequently security studies was not focused on the study of security issues in correlation with gender. Only at the end of the last century, when many documents indicating the suffering of women and children in conflicts were adopted, security topics began to be viewed through a 'gender lens'. First of all, the United Nations, by adopting several resolutions that deal with violence against women and girls during conflicts, but also in post-conflict situations, 'pushed' international organizations such as the European Union, NATO, OSCE, and others, as well as individual states, to 'come to grips' with the prevention, detection, and prosecution of all forms of gender-based violence, which represents one of the biggest contemporary security challenges. Thus, gender

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[2] "Gender analysis is a critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situation or contexts. Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males and their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses to ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not exacerbated by interventions, and that where possible, greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted." (https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/concepts-and-definitions)

and the gender dimension of the conflict in the light of preventing and effectively eliminating the consequences of gender-based violence, as well as the necessity of including women in all phases of that process, came into the focus of political, professional, and scientific discussions.

On the one hand, many countries are in the process of adapting their institutions with the aim of effectively dealing with modern security challenges, and on the other hand, in order to implement the obligations and standards derived from international documents, undertake reform activities within the framework of their defense and police systems. In this process, the need to restructure defense and police organizations, as well as redefine their responsibilities and tasks, was necessarily imposed in order to be able to effectively confront unconventional security threats at the national, regional, and global levels. States, both those with a long democratic tradition and those that had to go through a transition phase from totalitarian to democratic systems, and were additionally affected by armed conflicts, tried to find a new concept of military and police organization that follows the building of the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights.

In this process, it was deemed necessary to create preconditions to integrate the principles of the gender concept into the policies of the defense and police systems. In an effort to respond to the needs of individuals and communities and to protect them, the police and military organizations around the world had to redefine their policies and operational practices. The activities within the framework of these reform processes are related to meeting the security needs of the female population, as well as their increased inclusion in the structures of the army and the police.

Individual states, as well as international organizations, have become more aware of how the integration of gender perspectives (gender mainstreaming) in security sector reform processes ensures more representative and non-discriminatory military and police organizations and increases the operational efficiency of the entire security sector.

Feminism in international relations

In the framework of the theory of international relations3, the causes of wars and conflicts were studied in a general sense, without analyzing their impact on human beings. All analyses used abstract terms such as state, system, structure, force, power, anarchy, etc. Terms such as the human or gender dimension in international relations, and in the sense of the contribution of women and men to the protection of the state, its sovereignty, integrity, as well as the consequences that are reflected on their lives in case of threats to the state, disruption of the security system, were not in the focus of the theory of international relations.

The systematic study of security at the international and national levels appeared in some universities between the First and Second World Wars. Most international relations theorists at the time focused on the study of «democracy, national determination, disarmament and arbitration as determining instruments for

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[3] Although historians, political philosophers and lawyers who dealt with international law wrote about the theories of international relations, the formal recognition of the discipline of International Relations happened at the end of the First World War , in 1919, with the establishment of the Chair of International Relations at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyt, and then at the chairs of international politics at Harvard, Columbia and Princeton.

the promotion of international peace and security». (Tatalović, 2006:15) After the end of the Second World War until the end of the 'Cold War' research and theories emphasized the «security approach through 4S: state, strategy, science and status» (Simić, 2002:55). This approach was considered successful in predicting events and in explaining security issues and threats through the prism of the 'collective-structural concept' of security. The end of the 'Cold War' changed the previous bipolar picture of the world and questioned the traditional understanding of security.

In the mid and late 80s of the 20th century, new theoretical approaches were 'booming'. A significant contribution to a different understanding of security was made by feminism with its different streams and orientations. When feminist theorists and activists began to express their views on politics and security at the international, regional and national levels, their opinions were met with harsh criticism and sarcastic comments. The idea that feminism can contribute to the advancement of international security is sometimes greeted «with hostility and derision». (Whitworth in Williams, 2012:1)

Similar comments can be read related to the recent trend of adopting feminist foreign policies by 7 governments, starting with Sweden in 2014.[4] There is a noticeable growing trend of the gathering of advocating countries for feminist foreign policies. Thus, "in January 2022, the Swedish Foreign Minister announced a Feminist Foreign Policy Plus Group that currently includes sixteen countries"[5].

However, critics believe that feminist foreign policy is "naive or not tough enough for times like these" referring to the war in Ukraine and many other conflicts and crisis situations that we are facing today.[6]

Over time, feminist viewpoints regarding the necessity of observing and analyzing global politics and security issues through the 'gender lens' began to be taken more seriously, especially after the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 in 2000 - Women, Peace and Security.

This resolution represents a turning point in the history of attitudes towards the female population in the context of security. Women are formally recognized for their contribution to conflict prevention, as well as the post-conflict building of societies and the preservation of peace and security. The United Nations Security Council confirms that armed conflicts mostly affect women and children, as well as that even after the end of the conflict, women and girls are victims of sexual and physical abuse and other types of violence, i.e., gender-based violence.

 For the first time, the terms of women, peace and security were «placed in a relationship of interdependence and in the same order of importance» (Dulić, 2011:25). Since then, the focus has shifted from a gender-neutral or gender-blind understanding

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[4] Canada (2017), France (2019), Mexico (2020), Spain (2021), Luxembourg (2021), Germany (2021) and Chile (2022)
[5] https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Brief-Feminist-foreign-policies-en_0.pdf
[6] https://www.kulturaustausch.de/en/archive/latest/review-the-future-of-foreign-policy-is-feminist

and defining of security to a gender-sensitive one. This became relevant in the context of identifying different perceptions of security threats and challenges by the community members, depending on whether they are members of a minority or majority group, whether they are younger or older, boys or girls, what political, ethnic or religious orientation they belong to, etc.

With this Resolution, as well as with the later adopted resolutions, the United Nations Security Council confirms feminist observations that «gender permeates all aspects of international peace and security» (Whitworth in Williams, 2012:162), and that women play a significant role in this context. Feminist theorists and activists note that international security has tended to be viewed as a «gender-neutral set of actions» (Ibid:175).

Authors Carol Cohn, Felicity Hill, and Sara Radik point out that gender is not only about individual identities or what society teaches us about what they should be like, meaning what roles men and women, boys and girls should play in society. Gender is also a «way of building power relations» both in the family, where the man is often considered the 'head' of the family, and in society, where men usually hold power in their hands, be it political, economic, or other types of power. «These two phenomena - individual identity and power structures - are very connected. Hence, the meanings and characteristics culturally associated with masculinity are what make it look like it is only 'natural' for men to have the power to 'govern' their families and societies"(Cohn et al, 2005 :1 in Williams, 2012:166).

Critics of feminist standpoints on the gender-sensitive approach to security pointed out their specific limitations. In other words, the objections were related to how feminist research focused mainly on empirical categories, dealt with concrete issues, and was less theoretically grounded. They were mostly focused on specific topics such as trafficking in women and children, sexual violence against women in conflicts, etc.

However, it cannot be disputed that the topics that feminist debates and analyses dealt with brought novel and different approaches from the traditional ones into the theory of international relations. Various orientations, such as feminist empiricism presented in the works of Lourdes Baneria and Rebecca Blank, to postmodernist approaches to war by J. Beth Elstein, Judith Stiehm's research on women in the American military, and many other studies dedicated to gender aspects in the research of war and peace, violence throughout history, etc., enriched the theory of international relations.

The common 'starting point' of these different feminist orientations is the neglect of various forms of inequality and discrimination on the level of global relations, but also within the framework of national policies and activities that are shaped only by male experience and attitudes. Based on these insights, feminist theoreticians derive a general attitude about gender, which is both something we need to notice and the 'glasses' through which we need to observe the world. Feminist theorists have investigated unequal gender relations within the state systems and the consequences of the male dominant role in public life within the state, as well as in international politics, including the security sector.

Many female scholars have left a deep mark, especially Synthia Enloy, Jean Bethke Elshtain, and AnnTickner, in the area of observing the content of security studies and international relations from a gender perspective. They apply «gender as an analytical category and follow the connection between international relations and multi-layered gender determinations» (Dulić, 2011:23), underlining that at the heart of the analysis of the international relations theory and security studies should be human beings, not states, the national interest or the balance of power. Their special focus was on the analysis of the role of women and their specific experiences in correlation with other social constructs, such as race, religion, age, different cultural and customary practices, etc.

Although feminist viewpoints on security issues have been subjected to harsh criticism, their contribution cannot be ignored, above all in the context of a broader and deeper research of the phenomenon of security, compared to the approaches that dominated until then. Likewise, all feminist trends pointed to the importance of understanding the different roles played by women and other marginalized groups in conflicts and peace processes. Feminism introduced a new approach to public discourse by advocating an alternative vision of the future without war and violence. With a critical review of the dominant theoretical postulations of the realist and liberal orientation within the discipline of international relations, especially issues of security and strategic studies, feminist theorists problematized the main concepts of the international relations theory, such as those related to war, peace, sovereignty, anarchy, national interest, the balance of power, etc.

Three conferences[7] (1988-1990) are «meritorious» that feminist ideas «reached» the theory of international relations. Feminist criticism was also focused on the marginalized role of women in state structures, on the established stereotypical division of jobs between men and women, the patriarchal matrix that serves to maintain power in the hands of men in all segments of public life, as well as a critique of social reality that supports relations of inequality. The international relations theory was particularly criticized for «ignoring gender as a socially constructed system of symbolic meaning that creates hierarchies based on associations of male and female characteristics» (L. Sjoberg, 2010:3).

Despite all the differences that characterize them, they agree that gender analysis is a prerequisite for any essential social change. Gender analysis contributes to moving away from focusing only on 'women's issues', and broadening and deepening research into «how 'masculinity' and 'femininity' produce gendered international relations» (Dulić, 2011:10-11). The application of gender analysis exposes hidden power relations in society and shows how power is distributed in social processes. The purpose of gender analysis is not only to determine differences «in decision-making or access to resources, but it aims to adopt effective measures to reduce all forms of discrimination

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[7] Conference at the London School of Economics in 1988, Conference at the University of Southern California, and Conference in 1990 in Wellesley, (Dulić, 2011:9).

and inequality.»[8] For the representatives of feminism, the world is completely shaped by gender and cannot be understood in any other way than through a gender perspective.

The first feminist analyses were focused on researching how women live, what they do, how they are perceived by their immediate surroundings, etc. Cynthia Enloe also emphasized the important role of women in public administration and the army, which was completely neglected. The denial that women can be rational actors has a long history. Even Aristotle believed that he could prove on the basis of biology that «women are physically and mentally inferior to men». According to Aristotle, women are «capable of discussion, but not capable of making valid decisions» (Dulić, 2011:13). And in the «Code of Hammurabi from 1780 B.C. it was written that a woman has no rights, let alone the right to hold a spear, bow and arrow, which was then considered a kind of military profession» (Arsenijević, Flessenkemper, 2013:25).

In their research, feminists also dealt with the question of «how male and female characteristics structure hierarchies and power relations». The results of their research showed «the connection of male characteristics with power and authority», in contrast to female characteristics, which were «identified with weakness and passivity». Some feminist theorists believed that it was possible to change gender relations with the help of state intervention. Others believed that policies and programs aimed at empowering women and deconstructing gender relations further strengthen «gender hierarchies and female subordination» (Dulić, 2011:14).

However, regardless of the differences in approaches, they contributed to the development of the international relations theory by introducing completely new and fresh ideas into the scientific discourse. They criticized the international relations theory because it was reserved for men. Men shaped and interpreted all state policies, including security. Issues of military and economic power, diplomacy, national interest, the sovereignty of war and peace were reserved for men in state systems, while the world of family relations was reserved for women. Christine Sylvester highlights in her analysis of the international relations theory that "men are directly identified with states and the policies states implement"(Gasztold, 2017).[9]

The traditional international relations theory emphasized states, the state system, and politically influential men who shaped national policies and participated in the creation of world politics while neglecting the 'human' contribution in the process of developing global and national policies. Whether we are talking about realists or liberals, their focus on rational state policy, military strategy, and technology did not take into account the security of individuals, except when analyzing the successes and strategies of 'male' statesmen, leaders, military strategists, generals, etc.

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[8] Pojmovnike rodne terminologije prema standardima Europske unije (2007:73)

[9] Aleksandra Gasztold , A feminist Approach to Security Studies, University of Warsaw https://depot.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/123456789/17173/A_Feminist_Approach_to_Security_Studies.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y#:~:text=Feminist%20theory%20can%20be%20used,individual%2C)

Gender- Sensitive Conflict Analysis

Feminist theorists paid special attention to conflict analysis from the perspective of gender because the traditional literature on conflict analysis neglected the gender perspective. In most of the literature on war and security, gender was exclusively associated with the different roles of men and women. Illustratively speaking, «toys» (weapons) are intended for boys, and «dolls» are for girls (Kenndy-Pippe, in Collins, 2010:111). Women were generally considered incapable of serving in war and leading military operations. Men were assigned an active role in the war, and women had a passive one. As a rule, the analyses of armed conflict did not contain a gender dimension, i.e., they were not focused on people, but on states and armed groups in conflict. The specific impact of armed conflicts on people has not been the subject of traditional research. At the center of the analysis lie «gained or lost territories and resources and the consequences of battles and wars in relation to winners and losers» (Whitworth in Williams, 2008:166).

In the cases that analyze the consequences of the conflict on people, such analyses focus on the experiences of men as the main actors in war conflicts, in the roles of fighters, generals, prisoners of war, war criminals, etc. Women are rarely mentioned in these analyses because their experiences are not considered significant in the context of studying the causes and consequences of war. Women just lose their lives in conflicts as a result of «collateral or indirect damage» (Ibid:167). However, one should not ignore the fact that thousands and thousands of women were soldiers, mothers, wives, cooks, caregivers, nurses, etc. They often played 'all these roles' at the same time. They performed 'invisible jobs' that served to support the fighting forces, but they also suffered during armed conflicts. This has always been the case, but in the post-Cold War period, in the new forms of conflict, it has become quite clear that civilians, primarily women, but also children, have become targets for confrontation with the opposing side.

Organizations for the protection of human rights, especially women's rights, warned about the brutal violations of women's rights. Women were exposed to mass rape and other forms of sexual violence such as forced prostitution, sexual slavery, genital mutilation, etc. The consequences of armed conflicts affect the lives of women and their families. They are left without means of livelihood, without a roof over their heads, become refugees and internally displaced persons, and take on all additional roles that they did not have before the conflict. They become breadwinners for other family members, especially children and the elderly. They are fighting for everyone to survive, to have minimal health care, and to be provided with food, water, and wood. If they survived rape, they are often put on the pole of shame, condemned by the social community and the closest family members, they experience and survive all the horrors themselves, and the perpetrators of the brutal crimes are often at large. These are undeniable facts, but it should not be ignored that rape, torture, and other

forms of torture are committed against men and boys in order to attack «their feelings of masculinity» (Whitworth, in Williams, 2012:169). Although sexual violence against men and boys has been reported in 25 armed conflicts out of a total of 59 armed conflicts across the world, which were identified in the 2022 Special Report on Human Security 10, it still remains largely undocumented.

Sexual violence against men and boys occurs also in the context of migration along the Central Mediterranean and the Balkans routes. However, not much research is done, i.e., little attention is paid to this issue, although it also occurs in all phases of the migration cycle. It is still a taboo topic and even men are not ready to talk about it, although they experience it in their country of origin, as well as during their journey to Europe, and upon arrival at the final destination. (Tomic: 2021)11

In the study entitled "More Than One Million Pains": Sexual Violence Against Men and Boys on the Central Mediterranean Route to Italy, it is stated: "Sexual violence, including conflict-related sexual violence and sexual abuse within families, is a push factor for some refugee and migrant men and boys to leave their home countries. During the journey to Europe, they experience sexual violence at borders and checkpoints, during random stops by armed groups, and while kidnapped and imprisoned". (Women's Refugee Commission (WRC), 2019: 2)12

However, men are not even asked if they have been sexually abused. Even in these situations, prejudices and stereotypes are very obvious, which automatically lead to the conclusion that women are sexually abused, and that men are 'liberated' from this type of violence. Zillah Eisenstein wrote about the ways in which men were humiliated «precisely because they were treated like women» (Whitworth, in Williams, 2012:169).

Regarding the social perception and the attitude towards war, conflict, and violence, there is a widely and deeply rooted stereotype that men are by nature warlike and violent, while women are peaceful and gentle. Jean Bethke Elshtain researched traditional 'myths' about male and female gender roles, and picked out two dominant myths - "man as warrior" and "woman as a beautiful soul", i.e., "woman who gives life" and "man who takes life" (Caroline Kennedy Pipe in Collins, 2010:101). She focuses on the analysis of male and female identities regarding war and emphasizes that the assigned gender roles that define our identities are deeply rooted in society, and that we cannot reconstruct the relationship between men and women until we reconstruct our thinking about war.

This is why modern feminists first of all began to 'dismantle' essentialist approaches to war, conflicts, and violence, according to which women are by nature non-violent and peaceful, and men violent and combative. The consequence of the essentialist approach is reflected in the fact that society treated violence in two ways.

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[10] https://hdr.undp.org/content/2022-special-report-human security

[11] https://marri-rc.org.mk/?s=Gender+mainstreaming

[12] https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Sexual-Violence-against-Men-Boys-Synthesis-Report.pdf

On the one hand, it had a negative sign, i.e., it was not allowed in the case of women, and on the other hand, it was allowed, i.e., it had a positive sign in the case of men. The stereotype of belligerent men participating in war and peaceful women dominated for centuries, thanks to biological determinism, which in history served to justify discriminatory attitudes towards women in all fields, including their elimination from political life. It is important to point out that early feminism criticized this prejudice as a 'historical untruth' because many women gave direct or indirect support to the warriors and glorified the war. The fact that they are women did not prevent them from doing so.

Conclusion

Feminist approaches have significantly expanded and deepened the perspectives which explore and analyze the problems of peace and security in the world. The feminist theory established new paradigms, challenged dominant theoretical perspectives, systematized a number of new approaches and insights from different disciplines, and thus created the conditions for an essential reorganization of international relations theory.

The feminist theory challenged the traditional, i.e. realistic and liberal interpretation of international relations and enriched research with topics that had not been of interest. The state-centric analysis of (in)security and conflict, especially the neglect of the importance of non-state actors and their daily lives, was called into question. Thanks to feminist efforts, gender analysis becomes relevant and legitimate in international relations theory and security studies. Human beings, i.e., men and women, have become subjects of analysis in security studies and the theory of international relations, and not only states, national interests, and balance of power, as was prevalent in the classical theories of international relations.

Feminist efforts have contributed to the fact that global problems, issues, and challenges related to human security have become the focus of security discussions at the national level. Key decision-makers began to take seriously into consideration the gender aspects of security. It means there is a political and strategical commitment and dedication to integrating the gender dimensions in the process of assessing, planning, adopting, implementing, monitoring and, evaluating measures and actions of national security systems, but also existing security and other organizations which operate on a global and regional level. International organizations, as well as individual states started to concentrate on the systematic and continuous inclusion of gender aspects in the legal and institutional framework of their defense and security sectors.

They strive to find a new concept of police and military organization which reflect the composition of the whole population and respect the diversity and gender equality as an integral part of human rights. This process took place within countries with a long democratic tradition as well as within those which had to meet the standards and criteria set in the processes of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

The term gender and other gender- related terminology (gender equality, gender perspective, gender aspects, gender-sensitive language, gender-responsive budget, gender-sensitive approach, etc.) began to be used in public and professional discourse, including the defense and security sectors, both in strategic and in operational documents, as well as in daily conversations of security and defense professionals.

On the contrary, the term 'feminism' still causes discomfort by associating the views of certain radical feminists who consider men 'guilty' for the subordinate position of women in both public and private life. Even women in political leadership and professional and academic

circles, demonstrate a need to "distance themselves" from feminism. It seems as if once they are associated with feminism, it will harm their reputation and diminish their professionalism, integrity, expertise, importance, and influence.

On the other hand, it is being increasingly discussed in diplomatic circles about feminist foreign policies adopted by the governments of several countries in the last decade. Kristina Lunz's book: "Die Zukunft der Aussenpolitik ist Feministisch" (in English "The Future of Foreign Policy is Feminist") aroused professional, academic, as well as wider public attention.[13]

She wrote about "the shift away from a foreign policy based on so-called realpolitik toward what she considers the integral elements of a feminist foreign policy: demilitarization, diplomacy and mediation rather than militarization, confrontation and violence". The key elements of the concept of human security are recognizable in her elaborations "on the humankind's deepest wish and need for peace which won't be achieved through deterrence or weaponry. She emphases that "it isn't just about security in case there's some kind of conflict. It's also about general human needs, such as food, shelter, energy and overall well-being".[14]

In addition, there is a need to pose a question: What will be the future of feminist foreign policy, in the circumstances of complex security threats and risks, including classic war operations on European territory for which neither the key security organizations, nor the powerful states of Europe and their partners were prepared? Will feminist foreign policies succeed to make a more human, inclusive, secure, and just world? Its protagonists are convinced that "foreign policy has the potential to be a mechanism for equality, justice, solidarity, and peace". [15] The future will show us if that will be the case.

What is for sure is the fact that the absence of feminist perspectives in international relations, economics, and social sciences would result in a superficial, partial, and one-sided understanding of the causes and consequences of war, the establishment of peace, as well as the understanding of the contemporary complex, multidimensional threats and risks to global and national security.

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[13] Kristina Lunz is a diplomat, consultant and co-founder of the Center for Feminist Foreign Policy in Berlin

[14] https://www.kulturaustausch.de/en/archive/latest/review-the-future-of-foreign-policy-is-feminist

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Scientific article

HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONTEMPORARY ARMED CONFLICTS

Biljana KAROVSKA ANDONOVSKA[1]

Abstract: *In the brutal armed conflicts which take place even in the 21st century, without a basic observance of the rules of war, serious violations of the basic human rights are almost always present. Some of the recent armed conflicts have been so cruel that they have violated everything that has been adopted so far as standards of human behavior in war conditions. In most contemporary armed conflicts, civilians are often deliberately targeted through the use of illegal means and methods of warfare. Almost all contemporary armed conflicts cause serious violations of children's rights, forced displacement, damage to civilian infrastructure, sexual assaults, even using the humanitarian aid as a weapon of war. On many occasions, violations constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes against international law. Unfortunately, the international community sometimes only witnesses these developments without significant results in their prevention. Human rights violations are often accompanied by impunity for the perpetrators, which in some ways undermines the basic idea of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. For these reasons, one of the conclusions in this paper is that the United Nations as a global international organization is most called upon to act effectively to prevent such crimes, as well as to locate responsibility if war crimes have taken place. Hence, the aim of this paper is to contribute to the debate on impermissible violation of international standards established with the International Human Rights Law and the International Humanitarian Law.*
The paper provides an overview of the treatment of basic human rights in contemporary armed conflicts, with a special focus on conflicts that have taken place in the past two decades and those that are currently ongoing.

Key words: *International human rights law, international humanitarian law, contemporary armed conflicts, violations of human rights.*

Introduction

After World War II, the idea of respecting human rights was developed as a value system, accepted by almost all, or most countries and cultures. The International Human Rights Law (IHRL) gives some basic human rights a special status as peremptory norms (jus cogens). It sets forth the standard for the absoluteness of certain personal rights, such as the right to life, the right to respect of personal integrity (prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment), legal certainty of criminal offenses and penalties, freedom of conscience, thought and beliefs. These rights and freedoms cannot be reduced and must be respected regardless of the circumstances, because they prevail as universal values. Derogation of these rights is

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not admissible even in wartime and in time of other emergencies. Although there is general agreement that the challenge lies in ensuring the conditions for respecting these rights, yet despite the indispensable step forward in the protection of the individuals, in reality there is still suffering of individuals in situations of armed conflicts (Gillard, 2003). The open wars between the armies of nation-states are not like in the previous centuries, however, thousands of lives are lost each year as a result of these wars. Although it was believed that in this century humanity would be a globalized post conflict society moving in deterministic concept toward collective peace and prosperity, instead, terrorism, ethnic conflict, civil wars, and hybrid and special operations warfare (techniques used by developed nations to harass or destabilize opponents through nontraditional means) accounted for the bulk of non-state, intrastate, and interstate violence (Ray, 2022). Not only the right to personal security, but also many other basic human rights and freedoms have been violated, whether in domestic or international conflicts. Summary execution without the possibility for a fair trial, arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance, torture, violations of children's rights, involvement of children in armed conflict, systematic imposition of sieges, forced displacement, damage to civilian infrastructure, gang rape, using women as human shields, often with their children, the use of chemical weapons, sexual assaults in refugee camps, even using the humanitarian aid as a weapon of warfare, are not presumed imaginary acts of violence. These violations have been noted in many contemporary and ongoing armed conflicts and are part of the official reports of a number of relevant international organizations, including the United Nations (UN). Some of the recent armed conflicts have been so cruel that they have violated everything that has been adopted so far as standards of human behavior in war conditions. The violations often constitute genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity. Considering the inhumane treatment of fundamental rights, some relevant questions arise in relation to modern armed conflicts, the most significant of which are the following - Why does the international community often have no significant results in preventing violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL)? Why does the international community sometimes remain only a witness to the terrible human suffering and tolerate impunity in many cases? Some of the other relevant questions are as follows: Is the United Nations protection system effective enough to ensure the respect for basic human rights in the context of an armed conflict? Does the International Human Rights Law hold the responsibility to protect human rights in times of armed conflicts as well?

The human rights treatment in recent armed conflicts

In the past several decades, complex armed conflicts have taken place on the territory of different countries, followed by war crimes, gross violations of the rules of war, and a massive migrant crisis. The entire world public has witnessed humanitarian catastrophes, particularly in internal conflicts which are fraught with widespread violations. For example, in the Second War in Congo (1998-2003), although estimates vary widely, the death toll reached nearly three million people. In long-running tensions in the Darfur region of Western Sudan, which began in 2003 and escalated into what the United States described as genocide, at least 300,000 people have been killed and nearly three million have been displaced (Sikainga, 2009). In the Iraqi War, which started in 2003, more than 4,700 coalition troops had been killed and at least 85,000 Iraqi civilians, but some estimates place that total much higher (Ray, 2022). In the Afghanistan war, between 2001 and 2016, an estimated 30,000 Afghan

troops and police and 31,000 Afghan civilians were killed. More than 3,500 troops from the NATO-led coalition were killed during that time, and 29 countries had their casualties (Ray, 2022). In Nigeria during the conflict of the Nigerian government and the militant group Boko Haram some 20,000 civilians, including an undetermined number of women and children, have been shot, beheaded, stoned, drowned, burned, and bombed by Boko Haram (UN Report, 2015). The war in Yemen, which is entering its eighth year, has killed tens of thousands of people, and displaced about 4 million civilians. In the Ukrainian conflict in 2014, through events in the town square Maidan, Crimea and the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, the majority of killed were also civilians. From today's perspective, it seems that each next war is crueler than the previous. For example, the recently ended war in Syria was followed by such a terrible inhuman suffering and human rights violations that is almost unprecedented in modern time. Various commissions, NGOs and news agencies have documented those violations since the start of the civil war in 2011 and throughout the years, the violations escalated dramatically and lasted for one decade in front of the eyes of the entire international community. The reports of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry established by the UN Human Rights Council Commission documented cases of summary execution, arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance, torture, including sexual violence, as well as violations of children's rights (HRC S-17 2 Add.1, 2011). In the following years, the Commission noted systematic imposition of sieges, the use of chemical agents, and cases of forced displacement (HRC 23 58, 2013), recruiting children in armed operations (HRC 24 46, 2013), more than 250,000 people besieged and subjected to relentless shelling and bombing, as well as unsuccessful attempts to deliver humanitarian aid in food and funds for other basic needs (HRC 25 65, 2014), suffering of groups and communities specifically targeted on the basis of their gender, age, ethnicity, religion and profession (HRC 30 48, 2015), civilians and wounded fighters taken hostage, tortured and subjected to sexual violence (HRC 33 55, 2016), hundreds of men and boys separated from their families and forcibly recruited by the Syrian army following the occupation of eastern Aleppo by pro-government forces (HRC 34 64, 2017), damage to civilian infrastructure such as medical facilities, schools, etc. (HRC 44 61, 2020).

Unfortunately, testimonies like those in Syria and other above-mentioned regions are also expected from the current war taking place on the territory of Ukraine. It is disappointing that even after the tragic experiences of the wars so far, now again in Ukraine, which is in the focus of the entire world public, there is still such terrible human suffering and flagrant violation of human rights. The casualties on both sides are already in the thousands, while millions of Ukrainians have been displaced and huge material damage has been caused on the territory of Ukraine.

Challenges in protecting human rights in contemporary armed conflicts

The changing nature of the armed conflicts in the 21st century poses a multitude of challenges in protecting human rights in wartime. A transformation of the traditional concept of war indicates that conflict is no longer predominately characterized by a classical, state-centered paradigm in which battle is fought between soldiers as agents of the State, but rather by the 'intermixing of other means' leading to complex and ambiguous situations of violence with less clear-cut distinctions (Morgan, 2013). In most of the contemporary armed conflicts, civilians were often deliberately targeted through the use of illegal means and methods of warfare. On the other hand, non-State actors which spectrum is broad, actively play an increasingly substantial role in contemporary violent conflicts. Various sorts of non-State actors include groups classified as: organized armed groups, transnational corporations, private military and security companies, paramilitary forces, urban gangs, militias and a huge variety of trans-national criminal entities-including so-called terrorist groups and pirates. These are certainly the greatest challenges in protecting human rights in contemporary armed conflicts. Here we can actually find one of the reasons why it seems that the international community in many cases had a lack of sufficient decisive action in resolving the difficult situations regarding human rights treatment in contemporary armed conflicts. The situation is probably aggravated by the fact that internal armed conflicts, especially those based on religious, ethnic or other grounds, are dominant in modern times. However, there is no justification or legal norm for treating perpetrators of crimes in internal conflicts more leniently than those who have acted in the same way in international armed conflicts. For example, the above-mentioned UN Commission of Inquiry for Syrian war, stressed on many occasions the urgent need for international action to end serious human rights violations and to end the unsolvable cycle of impunity. Two years after the start of the civil war, Ann Harrison, Amnesty International Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa, legitimately asked: How many more civilians must die before the UN Security Council refers the situation to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court so that there can be accountability for these horrendous crimes? (South China Morning Post, 2013). On the other hand, the recommendations contained in the Commission's reports - to the Syrian government, anti-government armed groups, the international community, the Human Rights Council, and the Security Council, also serve to emphasize the need to counter the growing culture of impunity by referring to justice nationally and internationally. However, the main paradox here is that Syria is not a state signatory of the Rome Statute, the document that established the International Criminal Court in Hague. Because of this, since the beginning of the civil war it was clear that the UN Security Council should refer to the International Criminal Court the war crime cases committed by both sides in Syria. This is important because unless the Syrian government ratifies the treaty or accepts the jurisdiction of the Court through a declaration, the Court could only obtain

jurisdiction if the Security Council refers the situation to the Court. The Security Council, with what is called an "International Criminal Court referral," could give the Court jurisdiction stretching back to the day the Rome Statute entered into force, on 1 July, 2002. However, some UN attempts to resolve this situation were not only delayed, but completely unsuccessful. Resolutions and other legal documents generally remain unclear or unimplemented. The flagrant violation of human rights and the rules of humanitarian law continued at an unabated pace. The reasons for this are complex. According to Morgan Kelley, non-compliance by parties to the actual armed conflict due to subsequent practices of negative reciprocity, are the most significant challenges for IHL and for the jus in bello doctrine in contemporary warfare which represent a vicious cycle that is most detrimental to its purpose of reducing human suffering. According to Kelly, IHL should be revised to better reflect the 21st century conflict and this challenge can only be overcome by: 1) an increased awareness for respecting the existing international humanitarian law on the part of non-State actors; 2) the realization of the benefits of positive reciprocity by both States and non-State actors; and 3) increased willingness of States to engage in nonexclusive dialogue on behalf of all parties involved (Kelly, 2013). However, the impression remains that in both recent and ongoing wars, the UN, and its bodies, most notably the International Criminal Court and the Security Council, have not achieved significant results in locating the responsibility for non-compliance with international rules and in many cases the entire international community has witnessed impunity for human rights violations. In those circumstances, according to the author of this paper, the principle of Universal Jurisdiction which provides for a state's jurisdiction over crimes against international law even when the crimes did not occur on that state's territory, and neither the victim nor the perpetrator is a national of that state, seems to be an effective and proportionate tool to pursue accountability for the worst international crimes. Namely, this principle allows national courts in third countries to deal with war crimes that occur outside their country, to bring the alleged perpetrators to justice and to prevent impunity. Relying on this principle, human rights organizations in Germany, France and Sweden have filed criminal charges, on behalf of and together with the survivors of Guta, where the largest chemical weapons (sarin) attacks took place during the Syrian war, which resulted in mass victims, including hundreds of children (South China Morning Post, 2013). It is encouraging that criminal investigations into these allegations have been opened in all three countries, as well as, the fact that the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, the Syrian Archive, the Open Society Justice Initiative, and Civil Rights Defenders are filing additional evidence to the investigative and prosecutorial authorities in these countries (Civil Rights Defenders, 2022). It is also encouraging that the first criminal case against a senior former Syrian official for torture during the Syrian war ended with a verdict handed down by a national court in Germany. Namely, Anwar Raslan has been found guilty of murder, torture, and sexual assault since he oversaw the notorious Damascus prison in 2011 and 2012. The verdict was

hailed as a revolutionary step towards justice for the heinous crimes committed in Syria and as a significant moment for civilians who have survived torture and sexual abuse in Syrian prisons (Human Rights Watch, Germany, 2022). However, on the other hand, it is discouraging that nowadays another bloody conflict is unfolding before the eyes of the whole world. This time it happens again in Ukraine, which is just another in a series of wars that the international community has failed to prevent. Neither the Russian Federation nor Ukraine is a signatory to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Ukraine has twice declared that it accepts the jurisdiction of the Court for crimes committed within its territory. The latest of the two declarations was registered in the Court in 2015 after Ukraine's Parliament adopted a resolution distinctly accepting the Court's jurisdiction indefinitely from 20 February 2014 onward. Having this in mind, we will see whether and how the individual allegedly war crimes cases will be prosecuted before the International Criminal Court, or the principle of Universal Jurisdiction will apply. In this context, law and justice are facing a new test, perhaps the most difficult in the past several decades.

Applicability of international human rights law in armed conflicts

In the context of challenges to the protection of human rights in military conflicts, the question of applicabilty of international human rights law against international humanitarian law necessarily arises. The applicability of the IHRL in armed conflict has been the subject of extensive discussion over the past few decades, focusing primarily on whether the IHRL continues to be applied once it enters the realm of armed conflict. In certain areas it is clear how and why humanitarian law and human rights law could complement and reinforce each other while in other spheres there are some challenges in application (Lubell, 2005). Personal human rights are inherent rights of all human beings, whatever their nationality, ethnic origin, gender, color, religion, language, or any other status. These rights are guaranteed by legal norms, in the form of treaties, customary international law, general principles and other sources of international law. IHRL is a legal branch focused on the individuals, on their innate personal rights and other fundamental human freedoms and rights. On the other hand, IHL is a set of rules which seek, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. IHL protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities. Both legal regimes, IHRL and IHL, strive to protect the lives, the health, and the dignity of individuals, although from different angles. For years, it was held that the difference was that the IHRL applied in times of peace and IHL in situations of an armed conflict. Nevertheless, we can see a growing trend in covering IHL issues within the framework of a joint IHL and IHRL perspective. This concept for human rights law applicable not only in peacetime, but also in situations of armed conflict or in times of occupation, is now widely accepted. Today, the support for continued applicability of IHRL during armed conflicts can be found in every direction, including the academia, while the opposite position finds very limited support (Siatitsa, Titberidze). Besides that, overlaps

between the two branches of law serve to reinforce and complement the protection for individuals or groups during a war. Although at the time when the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, there were probably no assumptions that the question of respecting human rights is also relevant in situations of armed conflicts, this question later became a topic that the UN referred to. A doctrine of non-derogable human rights, which remain applicable in cases of armed conflict and other situations of emergency, was developed (Kolb, 2012). This is important, inter alia, because violating IHL means violating human rights at the same time, while respecting IHL rules does not necessarily ensure the respect for all human rights. Hence, both regimes of law can be applied in armed conflicts to achieve the greatest possible protection. In addition, nothing in human rights treaties indicates that they would not be applicable in times of armed conflict (UN Human Rights High Commissioner, 2011). In addition, according to the General comment on Article 4 of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, regarding the derogations during a State of Emergency, the Human Rights Committee explains that during an armed conflict, whether international or non-international, the IHRL rules are applicable and help, in addition to the provisions in Article 4 and Article 5, paragraph 1 of the Covenant, to prevent the abuse of a State's emergency powers, as well as, that the Covenant applies also in situations of armed conflict to which the rules of IHL are applicable (General comment 29, 2001). In any event, the most important practical influence of this relationship is the possibility to enforce the International Human Rights Law as a legal regime in times of armed conflicts and there is an increasing trend towards applying international human rights principles more stringently to situations of war although stronger enforcement mechanisms are required (Democratic Progress Institute, 2014).

Conclusion

Since the purpose of this paper is not only to open some relevant questions, but also to offer appropriate conclusions, several concluding remarks regarding the treatment of human rights in contemporary armed conflicts are presented below. Unfortunately, armed conflicts are part of world history even after the establishment of the United Nations whose purpose was to prevent them. Civilians are almost always under attack, which is a prevalent problem in modern warfare. The UN efforts for building sustainable peace and protecting future generations have not always been successful. The impression is that delayed reactions, or sometimes inert actions, are the result of a discrepancy in which the organization is often set in dealing with challenges. On the one hand, the obligation to respect state sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the member states puts pressure. On the other hand, there is the need to take measures against a state or states where flagrant human rights violations are evident. In the context of armed conflicts, this dilemma is dominant whether it is about international or non-international conflicts. However, the normative framework of the international law provides the UN with a solid basis for resolving contentious issues between member states, which if left unresolved, could even lead to an armed conflict. At the same time, the protection of human rights not only shares a common philosophy with humanitarian law, but can also be used to compensate the gaps in its legal basis. International Human Rights Law

is applicable in all circumstances, albeit in a modified way, due to the specifics arising from different types of armed conflicts. Hence, both regimes of law should apply in armed conflicts to achieve the greatest possible protection, since the international community should no longer tolerate gaps in protection, especially in situations where civilians are under attack. Why then is the UN considered insufficiently effective in achieving its most important mission? There is probably no right or wrong answer to this question, but only facts and different views in the interpretation of those facts. The problem is complex and not only from a legal aspect. It seems that instead of law, politics, geopolitics, and state interests prevail in this context. Most will probably agree that the UN should act more effectively to prevent risk situations when the danger of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes against international law is expected. The UN should also act more effectively in situations where there is evidence that those crimes have taken place. However, the lack of sufficient decisive action and serious efforts to resolve difficult situations is just one side of the coin. The other is not locating responsibility, as well as the practice of impunity. This practice should be stopped immediately, because the UN has enough mechanisms to do so. It should only act indiscriminately, ignoring the interests of influential state actors and the wider geopolitical interests. The only interest must remain within the framework of humanity and established international standards. In situations where the International Criminal Court is still unable to act because the alleged perpetrators are nationals of countries that have not ratified the Rome Statute, then what can break the chain of impunity is the application of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction. The effectiveness of prosecuting and punishing inhumane treatment, especially when it comes to war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, should send a strong message that impunity will not be tolerated.

In this sense, a revolutionary step towards justice is the above-mentioned verdict passed by a court in Germany, by which a former Syrian officer was found guilty for committing crimes against humanity during the Syrian war.

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Scientific article

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ANALYSIS OF THE STRATEGIC PROVISIONS OF THE EU STRATEGIC COMPASS FOR SECURITY AND DEFENCE

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Abstract: *On 21 March 2022, the EU adopted the long-awaited Strategic Compass[2], which outlines the strategic vision for the EU's adaptation to the next decade and beyond and the mechanisms for responding to the growing security challenges and threats to the EU security. Over the past seven decades, the EU with its 27 members and over 450 million inhabitants has played a significant role in the protection and promotion of shared values on European soil. The Union is the largest market and investor and trading partner with many countries in the immediate neighborhood (A Strategic Compass, 2022). Although in the past period the EU has confirmed itself as an economic and political power, the EU intention is to have an adequate reflection in the construction of a consistent defence and security policy. It does not mean complete autonomy and independence of Europe in defence from transatlantic partners. The return of war to the soil of Europe with Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a serious challenge for the EU. It accelerated the adoption of the Strategic Compass. However, it should not be understood that the Compass is a legitimate response to the war in Ukraine. The Compass is an answer to the moment that has finally come when the EU must face a whole spectrum of threats to its survival. The provisions of the Compass are not only a guide for protection, preparation and capability, but also contain guidelines for the development of the EU's security and defence agenda in the next decade and beyond (A Strategic Compass, 2022).*

Key words: *EU, Strategic Compass, capability development, Ukraine, threats.*

Introduction

One of the conditions for the successful implementation of what was expressed in the Compass and in order for the EU to grow into a strong Transatlantic partner is the appropriate operationalization of cooperation with NATO. Among other things, it must be able to share the burden in creating international peace and security and invest in it both financially and in terms of developing military and civilian security and defence capabilities. Recent developments and the war in Ukraine have shown how important collective defence is in the EU or NATO context, especially when the war is fought on European soil. "Russia was a wake-up call for the EU" (Macron, 2022) and showed how important the role of the EU is in the modern security context.

The projections in the Compass and their implementation should strengthen the EU and make it a greater driver and provider of security. The EU goals and areas of defence and security

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[2] The analysis of the strategic provisions of the EU strategic compass for defence and security is based on the contents and provisions of the Strategic Compass, other associative and comparative documents issued by the EU and the official statements of the high representatives of the Union.

stated in the Compass, as well as the means and instruments for their achievement and the time limits for measuring the achievements are clearly identified. In fact, the EU through the Compass, establishes a high level of ambition for the security and defence agenda by providing shared assessments of the strategic environment, the threats and challenges faced by the members and the implications they would have on the EU. The intention is to enable greater coherence and a common "sense" for the current goals of action in security and defence, but also to establish new ways and means to improve the collective ability for defence and security of the citizens of the Union.

The Compass actually represents turning point for the European Union as a security provider and a platform for effecting the European security and defence policy. As Isabella Antinozzi stated in Euronews "For the very first time, and at the highest level, Europeans collectively released a joint threat assessment, a common vision and detailed objectives on EU security and defence" (Tidey, 2022).

The Compass provides political guidelines and specific goals for action in crisis management, ways to strengthen resilience, develop capabilities and strengthen partnerships. That is, the political directions and specific goals have been elaborated through four priority areas of action essential for the adaptation of the Union in the next decade as follows:

1. Action
2. Security
3. Investment
4. Partners.

Assessment of challenges and threats facing the EU

"The return of war in Europe, with Russia's unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, as well as major geopolitical shifts" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:10) has been challenging the EU ability to adapt and demonstrate its ability to promote its vision and defend values, and interests on which it is based on. It is believed that in an era of growing geostrategic competition and complex security threats followed by military aggression, the security of EU borders and citizens is in question. The range of threats is more unpredictable and complex than ever in the past. It is compounded by hybrid warfare, cyber threats, the struggle for control of outer space, contested access to sea lanes, challenges related to new opportunities in the Far North, increasing demand for resources, instability in the neighborhood, uncontrolled migration, pandemic events create new difficulties in dealing with them. The threats, together with the political instruments of coercion, contributed to the increase of dependence and weaponization of the "soft power" of the states. On the other hand, traditional threats and terrorism are still a serious "threat to the security and stability of many countries and continues to challenge national security systems worldwide" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:14). Threats, both traditional and contemporary, gain further significance with the effects of "climate change being treated as multipliers" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:10) and affecting everyone by playing the role of enablers and instigators of conflicts. European security is indivisible and any challenge to it affects the security of the EU and its members. "The return to power polictics on the scene leads some states to act

in terms of of historical rights and zones of influence" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:14) without adhering to internationally agreed norms and principles for the protection of international peace and security points to vigilance and readiness. All of this contributes states being subject to "a competition of governance systems accompanied by a real battle of narratives" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:15).

The overall range of threats and challenges contributed to the EU to act more united and more determined than ever, in restoring peace on European soil, in cooperation with partners, as well as in defence of democratic values and guaranteeing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. To achieve this, the EU needs to strengthen its defence component. Following NATO's example, the EU should strongly support the rules-based international order promoted by the UN, strengthen the transatlantic relationship and cooperation with strategic partners, deepen cooperation with states, border regions and other regional and international partners such as ASEAN, the African Union and the OSCE. It will help the EU grow into a global security provider (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

Today, in an order rife with confrontations, "the EU and its Member States must invest more in their security and defence "(A Strategic Compass, 2022:15) to be collectively relied upon as a strong political and security actor. This will allow the EU to strengthen its role in geopolitical posture. In order to achieve what was set out, the EU, above all, needs to strengthen its capacities, resilience, internal cohesion and ensure solidarity and mutual cooperation between the member states. The ability to act decisively must be supported by an increased presence and visibility not only in the neighborhood but also globally, above all, through increased investments.

The Compass clearly and unequivocally represents the level of EU ambitions in security and defence to be achieved through:

1. "Providing a shared assessment of the strategic environment, the threats and challenges it faces and their implications for the Union.
2. Greater ongoing coherence and common sense of purpose to actions for security and defence objectives.
3. Establishing new directions and means of action in order to improve the collective ability to defend citizens and the Union itself and to enable quick and decisive action when faced with a crisis, to secure interests and protect citizens by strengthening capacities for anticipating and mitigating threats, stimulating investments and innovations for the joint development of the necessary technologies and capabilities and deepening cooperation with partners, especially with NATO and the UN, to achieve common.
4. Specifies clear targets and milestones to measure progress." (A Strategic Compass, 2022:15)

The EU plans to achieve this level of ambition by urgently implementing the provisions of the Strategic Compass through an integrated approach to dealing with threats.

The World We Face

The Compass threat assessment is based on a comprehensive EU Threat Analysis from 2020. This Analysis is scheduled to be updated every three years in order to keep abreast with current changes. The Threat Analysis places the emphasis on four segments: the return of power politics in a contested multilateral world, on a strategic environment in which the Union exists, on new emerging and transnational threats and challenges and the strategic implications that these threats and challenges have towards the Union.

The general conclusion is that the overall security environment "has become more, violent, complex and fragmented than ever before, primarily due to multi-layered threats" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:17). Instability is present at the local and regional level, which is complemented by dysfunctional governance, inequalities on various grounds, such as ethnic and religious tensions that are often intertwined with unconventional and transatlantic threats and geopolitical power rivalry. All this can challenge stability and security at the global level and is not expected to bypass Europe.

The EU is hostage to the non-respect of the rules- based international order, based on rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, universal values and international law, established with the end of the Cold War. Today, multilateralism is challenged by forces promoting a sovereignty approach and a return to the use of power politics. The EU remains consistent with the provisions of the UN Charter that in the 21st century there is no place for changing the borders by means of force and coercion. The change of the borders is only possible with a mutual agreement of the states by respect international norms. The current developments on the Eastern Border of the Union confirm the opposite.

Russia is pointed out as the main challenger of effective multilateralism, but it is not the only one. With its actions, Moscow grossly violates the provisions of the UN Charter and acts contrary to the principles of International Law and undermines European and global security and stability. Russia's intention to return the world to pre- or Cold War period and reestablish spheres of influence is confirmed through the implementation of the Gerasimov Doctrine (Galeotti, 2020). The aggression against Georgia in 2008, the annexation of Crimea and the military intervention in Eastern Ukraine in 2014 and the continued presence of military forces in Moldova are proof that Russia has not stepped away from its policy of establishing spheres of influence over the years. For the first time since the end of World War II, the peace and security in Europe has been directly challenged by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In doing so, in pursuit of its goals, Russia uses multiple actors and tools interwoven with the use of conventional and asymmetric methods of hybrid warfare, including cyber and hacker attacks, media, fake news, disinformation, creating economic and energy dependence, as well as aggressive nuclear rhetoric. Special teams under the control of the state ruthlessly use both social media and the Internet to conduct Soviet-era psychological operations (psy-ops) in order to achieve their political goals (Mckew, 2017). Also, Russia in various

ways, tries to use the crises in Libya, Syria, Mali, the Central African Republic, in the most opportunistic way to achieve its goal of re-establishing spheres of influence and zones of interest. In the long term, such activities of Russia are evaluated as a direct threat to European security and wider for euro Atlantic area (A Strategic Compass, 2022:17). On the other hand, China, although it is seen as a partner for cooperation, economic competitor and systemic rival, may accept to help solve some issues of global nature (for example, climate change and arms control). However, the Compass points to vigilance when it comes to this country. The EU views with concern because of the open market and the difficulties in maintaining reciprocity, economic competition and the resilience of the Union. Namely, China's intention is to limit the EU's access to its market and promote globally its standards. China, like Russia, uses "hybrid warfare tactics and cyber tools to achieve its goals" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:17). The EU does not feel threatened by China as long as China's actions do not threaten the rules-based international order, the Union's interests and values. But it does not seem like it will stay that way in the long run. Therefore, the EU must adapt and be ready to deal with such a challenge from China.

In order to protect its values, interests and citizens, the EU needs to take a more active role and deepen cooperation with its neighbors and all partners. In this way, the EU will defend more easily its interests and values and key principles in the multipolar world in accordance with "the UN Charter and the founding documents of the OSCE, including the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:17).

One assessment is that тхе EU borders are surrounded by instability and conflict, followed by military aggression, illegal annexation, fragile states, revisionist forces and authoritarian regimes. This environment is the main generator of multiple threats to European security ranging from "terrorism, violent extremism and organized crime to hybrid conflicts and cyber attacks, instrumentalization of illegal migration, arms proliferation and the progressive weakening of the arms control architecture" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:18).

Regarding the Western Balkans, the EU's assessment is that the security and stability of the Western Balkans is still not at a satisfactory level. This is due primarily "to increasing foreign interferences, including information manipulation campaigns, as well as through potential spill over from the current deterioration of the European security situation. In this regard, it is of particular interest to support the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination of all citizens and constituent peoples as enshrined in the Bosnia and Herzegovina constitution… Tangible progress on the rule of law and reforms based on European values, rules and standards needs to continue and the European perspective is a strategic choice, essential for all partners aspiring to EU membership" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:19).

Regarding Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, it is necessary to give an additional

impetus at the highest level in order to overcome the existing "status quo" in the direction of finding a mutually acceptable solution for both parties.

The Compass also emphasizes the threats faced by Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and the countries of the South Caucasus caused by the aggressive and assertive behavior of Russia. These threats are treated as a direct threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of these states (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

In the Compass, the authoritarian regime in Belarus is assessed as violent and repressive towards its citizens who supported Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. Minsk is trying to change its non-nuclear status and further through hybrid tactics try to challenge the security of the Union.

The southern borders of the Union are challenged by instability of the states and the use of irregular migration as an instrument to threat the economic stability of the Union.

Although both NATO and the EU are primarily focused on dealing with threats from the east and south, according to EU's assessment the Arctic is gaining importance due to global warming and the opening of sea routes that pass through it and potential resources. That could cause sharpening of the geopolitical rivalry for Arctic control (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

Africa is the "soft underbelly" of Europe. In relation to it, the assessment is that this continent is of strategic importance for the EU. It is highlighted above all because of the danger of generating and spilling instability through the presence of the EU in Mali, the Sahel and the Central African Republic. The relevance and importance of trade routes in the Gulf of Guinea and around the Cape of Africa and the Mozambique Channel provide an additional security dimension. Overall, the new outlook towards Africa is an attempt by the EU to position itself within the growing geopolitical competition for Africa.

The Gulf region and the Middle East are treated as a zone where the economic interest of the Union is at risk, and less security. A central issue in this part of Asia is Iran's nuclear program and the global war against the terrorist groups of Al-Qaeda and Daesh. The stability and security of the Indo-Pacific region is also of geopolitical and economic interest primarily because of global supply lines and China's role in upholding the rules-based international order.

For the EU, terrorism and violent extremism in all their emerging forms is reflected in the focus of both existing and new threats. The EU considers that these threats are constantly evolving and manifesting in various forms and pose a serious threat to peace and security both within the Union and for the rest of the world. State and non-state actors which use hybrid warfare tactics, cyber attacks, disinformation and direct influence on electoral and political processes, economic dependence and the instrumentalization of illegal migration also cause a certain level of concern for the Union. Competitors do not hesitate to take advantage of emerging and disruptive technologies to gain a strategic advantage and increase the efficiency of hybrid

operations (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

The EU expresses particular concern regarding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, primarily through the development of Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programs, the development and fielding of new advanced cruise and hypersonic missiles, and proliferation of chemical weapons. Also present is the latent nuclear threat of Russia in the war with Ukraine (especially after the intention of Finland and Sweden to join NATO). "These trends are exacerbated by the erosion of the arms control architecture in Europe, from the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe to the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:22).

The mentioned trends, challenges and threats are mutually intertwined and connected and have their own implications for the security of the Union and its citizens. In order to deal with them in a timely manner, as well as to protect citizens, shared values and interests and to shape the future, the Union should redouble its efforts in building appropriate mechanisms for security, and for acting in crisis and conflict.

This means that the EU must increase its autonomy of action and be ready to assume greater responsibility for the security and defence of its neighbors and partners whenever possible and necessary. Only in this way and in close cooperation with NATO, the EU will grow into a desirable partner and provider of security in global level.

The ways of action of the EU in order to achieve an appropriate level of the projected level of ambition presented in the Compass, move in four directions: act, secure, invest and partnerships.

1. Act

In the segment named **"Act"** we recognize EU's crisis management capability and operations development policy for the next decade and beyond. The specific goals and objectives that are necessary for planning and development of the required capabilities to realize the EU Level of Ambitions are indicated. The EU's operational engagement through its missions and operations within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) aims at building peace and security in diferent countries and regions in the world affected by conflicts and instability, which in a certain way implies enhancing the security of the EU and of its citizens (A Strategic Compass, 2021). The EU should therefore strengthen its efforts and readiness to deal with crises and threats and project stability first in its neighborhood, but also beyond. The EU's strength in preventing and addressing external conflicts and crises lies in its ability to use both military and civilian means. EU have to be capable and ready to act effectively in time "by using all available EU policies and instruments and maximize synergies and complementarity between internal and external security regarding Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in all operational domains" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:25).The Union assesses that it is necessary to build capabilities for quick and robust action when the crisis escalates, if necessary in cooperation with partners if possible or independently when necessary.

In order to achieve more effective action and missions and operations, the EU needs to reinforce its civilian and military CSDP missions and operations by providing greater and more flexible mandates, by promoting a faster and more flexible decision-making process and providing greater financial solidarity, as well as promoting closer cooperation within EU-led missions and operations. This implies strengthening the civilian component of the CSDP in order to enable faster deployment in complex environments (A Strategic Compass, 2022). It means the EU has to "be ready to deploy 200 fully equipped CSDP mission experts within 30 days, including in complex environments" (Borell, 2022a). These experts will be able to respond quickly and effectively to existing and evolving threats and challenges which undermine executive, judicial and legislative power in crisis areas and to address critical deficiencies. Through the civilian missions, it is considered that the EU will make an essential contribution to the rule of law, to the civil administration and to the reform of the police and security sector in the crisis areas. In order to achieve this, the EU plans to adopt a new Civilian CSDP Compact document that will specify the guidelines for strengthening the capacities for deployment and maintenance of civilian crisis management operations. Through the implementation of 22 political commitments, this document aims to strengthen the civilian component of the CSDP and its missions to make them a) more capable; b) more efficient, flexible and responsible and c) more rational. Such missions will strengthen the role and deployment of police, rule of law and civil administration in fragile and conflict environments. (European Union, Council of the European Union 2018). The lessons learned from crises will contribute "to increase the effectiveness, flexibility and responsiveness of civilian missions, including through speeding up our decision-making, strengthening operational planning, improving selection and recruitment of personnel and improving responsiveness tools, including specialized teams" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:27). The further strengthening of civilian CSDP through a new Compact will provide more specific "objectives on the type, number and size of civilian missions, elements for a structured civilian capability development process, as well as synergies with other EU instruments" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:28). All this would be possible with enhanced financial support.

In support of the CSDP civilian component, the EU should enable the European Peace Facility for partners by providing adequate military equipment and training for CSDP missions, as well as to support partners in case of crisis with other military and non-military equipment. This Facility will enable an increase in defence capacity building efforts complementary to the CSDP crisis management efforts.

After all, this component is the basis for effective crisis management. In that essentiality, the EU should develop its own capacities that will enable it to "swiftly deploy a modular force of up to 5,000 troops, including land, air and maritime components, as well as the required strategic enablers" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:25) in environments with different types of crises. Starting from 2023, these forces will begin participating in live exercises, which in turn will contribute to increasing

interoperability and readiness. By 2025, these forces should be modularly deployable and sustainable in different phases of operations in a complex security environment as initial forces, reinforcement forces, or reserve for securing and extraction. For an effective deployment of these forces, it is essential to provide "associated assets and the necessary strategic enablers, in particular strategic transport, force protection, medical assets, cyber defence, satellite communication and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:25).

The next area where action is needed is to strengthen the command and control structure, particularly expressed as a Military Planning and Conduct Capability, as well as increasing readiness and cooperation through enhanced military mobility and regular live exercises, especially those involving the segment of rapid deployment capacities. Further incremental strengthening of the command and control structure will ensure that Military Planning and Conduct Capability are fully functional for planning, control and command of executive tasks and operations including live exercises. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to attract more personnel and provide adequate infrastructure with the necessary communication and information systems. This includes the strengthening of Civilian Planning and Conduct Capabilities in the implementation of planning, command and control in both existing and future civilian missions. Mutual "cooperation and coordination between the military and civilian structures will be strengthened through the Joint Support Coordination Cell" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:28).

Such ambitions require joint preparations and cooperation between all stakeholders in the EU. This implies additional investments within the framework of strengthening mutual cooperation and assistance in accordance with Article 42(7) of the EU Treaty as well as solidarity in accordance with Article 222 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, especially through more frequent joint exercises (A Strategic Compass, 2022:28). In order to raise the level of preparedness, it is necessary to ensure a more systematic approach and advanced scenario-based planning with appropriate operational scenarios of an early warning system adapted to the threats and challenges faced by the EU. It also includes an appropriate exchange of intelligence information between the members, which should result in adequate and realistic action plans. This implies support with appropriate fair share of resources that are in function of realizing the level of ambitions of the EU, as well as increased investments in strengthening of the military mobility.

2. Secure

The area Secure includes building resilience against newly emerging threats, and especially against hybrid and cyber threats. Namely, it is believed that strategic competitors target the EU with a wide set of tools through which they test its resilience. Their aim is to undermine the EU security and actively undermine the secure access in the maritime, air, land and outer space domains. Therefore, the EU recognizes the need to significantly strengthen resilience by better anticipating, detecting and responding to threats. This entails further strengthening the EU's role in security through the use

of various instruments at its disposal, including the recently established European Peace Facility. The objectives of the Facility are to improve the effectiveness and flexibility of the EU's operational engagement, as well as to strengthen the collective readiness to respond in a future crisis. The Union needs to improve its capabilities to detect threats, guarantee security access to strategic domains and protect citizens (A Strategic Compass, 2022:33).

Increasing the resilience and security of the Union in accordance with the provisions of the Compass is aimed at strengthening early warning, intelligence and secure communications. It implies the strengthening of intelligence capacities and "situational awareness and strategic foresight, building on our Early Warning System and horizon scanning mechanism" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:33). Moreover, the strengthening of intelligence based on situational awareness within the EU Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity and the EU Satellite Center are of particular importance in this context. Such an approach in the development of common strategic culture will promote the credibility of the EU as a strategic factor. Therefore, the EU intends to maintain an autonomous decision-making system based on the data and information gathered by the geospatial architecture. A key segment to achieve this is the strengthening of the role of the EU Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity as a single entry point for strategic intelligence contribution of all member states to the military and civilian intelligence and security services (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

The stated needs are due to the following. Namely, the past years have shown that EU institutions are subject to increasing cyber attacks or attempts to penetrate its systems. Therefore, "the EU needs to enhance the protection of its most critical processes, assets and information and ensure that it can rely on robust and trustworthy information and adequate European communication systems" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:33). A strengthened intelligence picture will require more secure communications. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to synchronize the information protection procedures, infrastructure and communication systems. It also implies the need to update existing cyber security documents such as the EU Cyber Security Strategy 2013 (EDA, 2013), but also the need to "adopt additional standards and rules on information and cyber security, as well as on the protection of EU classified information and sensitive unclassified information, thus facilitating the exchange of information with Member States" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:33). All these provisions that have been translated into the Compass are also in accordance with the EU Directive on the protection of critical infrastructure and network information from 2016 and 2022.

All this goes in the direction of improving resistance and the ability to deal with hybrid threats, cyber attacks and recognition of foreign information aimed at manipulation of citizens and interference in the internal affairs of the Union (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

Seen separately, improving resilience and the ability to deal with hybrid threats implies the need to create appropriate "EU Hybrid Toolbox that will bring together the various instruments for detecting and responding to the wide spectrum of hybrid

threats" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:12). These tools should provide a framework for a coordinated response to hybrid actions targeting the EU and its members and should include preventive, cooperative, stabilization, restrictive and recovery measures, as well as to strengthen solidarity and mutual assistance. On the other hand, it should contribute to strengthening the abilities for common understanding and assessment of threats, that is, to strengthening the ability to detect, identify and analyze those threats and their sources. Therefore, the EU Hybrid Toolbox should also include the EU's Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity and the Hybrid Fusion Cell, which has a fundamental role in creating resistance against hybrid threats. The ultimate benefit from the implementation of these tools is the strengthening of societal and economic resilience, protection of critical infrastructure, democracy and national and EU electoral processes. In order to realize these ambitious plans, close cooperation between the EU and NATO is needed (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

The following analytical body of resilience and security is related to the need for the EU to be ready to act quickly and vigorously against cyber attacks, especially those state-sponsored malicious cyber activities targeting critical infrastructure and virus attacks. This implies the further development and establishment of an EU cyber defence policy, as well as the creation of a Cyber Diplomatic Toolbox (Council of the European Union, 2017). The goal of the Cyber Diplomatic Toolbox is to better prepare for and respond to cyber-attacks, as well as to strengthen the EU's presence in the maritime, air and space domains of action through the development of an EU Space Security and Defence Strategy (A Strategic Compass, 2022). Strengthening the EU Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox implies the full use of its instruments, including preventive measures and sanctions against external actors for malicious cyber activities against EU members.

One of the areas for strengthening resilience requires the EU rapidly to develop appropriate tools to combat foreign disinformation, manipulation and influence (a Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Toolbox). These tools should be synchronized with the EU's internal policies by establishing a common understanding of threats as well as further developing a range of instruments to efficiently detect, analyze and solve them and imposing unacceptable costs on the perpetrators of such activities (A Strategic Compass, 2022). The strengthening of the Union's informational resilience can be achieved by facilitating access to credible information by citizens, as well as their dissemination through the Union's free media. In the near future (by the end of 2023) the Union plans to create an appropriate mechanism for the systematic collection of data on incidents and common understanding of foreign information, manipulations and interference. All those will strengthen the response option with the Union's resilience and cooperation capacities, strengthen support to partner countries and improve awareness of the Early Warning System. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to emphasize the cooperation between the EU and its partners, and especially with NATO, the G7 and the UN.

In addition to previous requirements for building resilience, the EU plans to undertake a series of actions aimed at securing its access to operational domains such as cyber, outer space, naval and air operations. Ensuring the EU free access to these domains of action also requires corresponding strategic approaches embodied through appropriate strategies and other mechanisms of action. In the area of cyber, this implies the development of a Cyber Defence Policy in order to protect, detect, defend and repel any cyber-attack. In the outer space domain, the EU plans to adopt the Space Strategy for security and defence by 2023, which will enable a strategic approach to outer space control. In the maritime domain, based on the existing Maritime Security Strategy, the EU plans to strengthen maritime security mechanisms such as "the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) and Maritime Surveillance (MARSUR)" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:40). In the air domain, it plans to ensure free, safe and reliable European access to airspace by the end of 2022" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:40).

In the Compass, adequate space is devoted to the planned activities that the EU plans to undertake in the fight against terrorism, which will strengthen the network of experts within the EU delegations for the fight against terrorism. It aims to strengthen the relationship with partners fighting terrorism. The EU supports the policy of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and advocates a new treaty on the control and reduction of nuclear weapons. The EU has its own predictions in the climate change area and environmental degradation, as well as in the impact of them on state security. In support of the fight against climate change, the EU plans to increase energy efficiency in line with the Union's goal of climate-neutrality by 2050 under the European Green Deal, without reducing operational effectiveness.

3. Invest

The area of investment is inextricably linked to measures for strengthening the Union's resilience, and dealing with threats and respond promptly to them. Therefore, both at the national and EU level, it is necessary to invest in the development of better defence capacities and innovative technologies, to fill the strategic gap and to reduce the technological and industrial dependence on third countries. The EU should strengthen its own defence capabilities and equip its forces so that they can adequately respond to the threats and challenges that the EU faces in the world. Investing in the development of collaborative capabilities ensures greater efficiency through increased economies of scale and greater operational efficiency (A Strategic Compass, 2022). Investing also means increasing defence spending by EU member states to achieve collective efforts and reduce the gap in the development of critical military and civilian capabilities, as

well as strengthening the technological and industrial base of European defence (Borrell, 2022a). Such an ambitious plan of the EU for investments in the development of defence capabilities also implies strong support for manufacturers of military equipment and innovators. Investments in this sector will enable the EU to achieve technological sovereignty in some critical technological areas and reduce strategic dependence and vulnerability on third countries. This will make the EU more resilient in every respect.

In order to realize this plan, the EU members should find mechanisms to increase defence spending at the national level and improve development and planning capacities to better detect the new reality, threats and security needs. One of those mechanisms is the EU Permanent Structural Cooperation – PESCO. PESCO should be strengthened and opened to partners. The increased funds would be primarily invested in areas where strategic shortfalls have been identified. It implies a coordinated and collaborative approach to spending, which will lead to increased production and utilization of the EU economic potential, in order to achieve the level of ambitions in defence. EU members should work together "to swiftly adapt military forces and civilian capacities so that they are capable to act rapidly, contribute to securing interests and values, enhancing resilience and protecting the Union and its citizens. The force will be agile, mobile, interoperable, technologically advanced, energy efficient and resilient" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:43).

Investment is closely related with planning process. One of the steps to achieve the EU's defence capability planning and development of interoperable forces is through adaptation, which also includes revising the capabilities planning scenarios. These scenarios also include elements of rapidly deploying forces in non-permissive environment, as well as responding to hybrid threats and securing access to strategic domains and providing military assistance to civilian authorities. To achieve this, it is necessary to ensure that the EU's defence initiatives and tools for defence planning and capability development are synchronized with the national defence planning process of the member states of the Union similar to NATO and are properly funded. This defence planning process needs to be synchronized with NATO's defence planning process in order to avoid duplication of capabilities. Regarding the development of capabilities to contribute to the civilian CSDP missions, it is necessary to develop, similar to the military, a civilian capability development process. It will provide a better structural and collective basis for responding to the needs of scenario-based civilian CSDP missions to respond to emerging threats. In order to successfully implement the civilian missions of CSDP, high-quality and well-trained personnel are needed, supported by appropriate equipment that will enable them to operate in non-permissive environment. The logistic support of these missions is provided through "the Strategic Warehouse and the Mission Support Platform" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:44).

The next thing that the EU should do in the field of investment is to find common solutions on a bilateral or multilateral level to further stimulate member states to get involved in development of key strategic capacity projects. Within the framework

of the EU, member states need to jointly invest in strategic enablers and in the next generation of capabilities in all operational domains in the development of modern platforms for sea, air, land, cyber and outer space. Investing in strategic enablers will facilitate the fundamental development of capabilities necessary to carry out a full range of operations as defined in the level of ambition. Also, there should be an increase in the efforts "to mitigate critical capability shortfalls such as strategic airlift, space - based connectivity and communication assets, amphibious capabilities, medical assets, cyber defence capabilities and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capabilities and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:45).

In terms of the development of modern military equipment, EU member states should reduce their technological and industrial dependence on third countries by making maximum use of the mechanisms of the Permanent Structural Cooperation and the European Defence Fund and jointly develop modern military capabilities and invest in technological innovations for defence and disruptive technologies, as well as to create a new Defence Innovation Hub in cooperation with the European Defence Agency (A Strategic Compass, 2022). On 17 May this year, the EU in cooperation with the European Defence Agency established the Hub for European Defence Innovation. The purpose of this Hub is to stimulate, accelerate and support cooperation in innovations in the military sphere of the member states. This is the first delivery of the Compass requests (EDA, 2022). "By 2025 one third of the 60 ongoing of the Permanent Structural Cooperation projects, are predicted to deliver expected capabilities and meet their goals" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:45) This should be an incentive to continue the development of new more ambitious projects within the framework of the EU Permanent Structural Cooperation. In this regard, the EU should ensure synergy between all EU defence initiatives, especially with the European Innovation Council and the European Defence Fund in the field of emerging and disruptive technologies. Innovative competition and a resilient European defence, technological and industrial base guaranteeing security of supply and modern technologies is more important than ever. It should ensure and long-term maintain the technological sovereignty of the EU in the development of modern defence technologies and systems. For this purpose, the funding of EU defence development projects must remain stable. To preserve the ability to develop capabilities in Europe, it is necessary for the EU to take measures to promote and facilitate the access of private funds to the defence industry through the European Investment Bank. The involvement of the private sector in the development and production of these technologies should be closely monitored both at the national and EU level in order to prevent possible abuse. In addition, "tools to counter foreign attempts at economic coercion impacting EU strategic interests and industry should be further strengthened" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:48).

EU members should spend together, more and better. Despite the mood to spend more, it would be much more beneficial if it is done systematically every year in accordance with the Capability Development Plan. First, the EU needs to renew

its stockpile of military materials, then increase existing capabilities, and finally strengthen and modernize capabilities. In the period 2009-2018, the EU spent less compared to 2008. From an economic aspect, less money for the army means more money for other purposes. However, the EU is now facing the consequences of this accumulated capability development gap. The EU must recover from these trends as soon as possible. The question is how to recover in the short term and rebuild reserves, and in the medium term to increase capabilities and in the long term to strengthen and modernize capabilities. It is a big challenge for the European economy, especially in the situation of war on European soil (Ukraine).

4. Partner

Through the development of partnerships, the EU should become a significant actor on the international stage and act together with partners whenever possible. Partnerships are the essential instrument to support the EU's ambitions at the global level. Partners will also benefit from a strong and more capable EU in security and defence. Partners can help the EU to strengthen effective multilateralism and cooperation with the rules-based order as well as increase the impact of its own actions (A Strategic Compass, 2022). In direction to achieve this, the EU should strengthen and expand cooperation with partners in order to jointly deal with threats and challenges to their security and increase cooperation instruments. The EU plans cooperation with its partners on three levels, on a strategic basis with NATO and the UN, on a regional basis with the OSCE, Australia, the countries of the Indo-Pacific region, with the countries of ASEAN and the African Union, and on a bilateral basis.

The strategic partnership with NATO is of exceptional importance for Euro-Atlantic security. Therefore, it is necessary for the EU to strengthen its strategic partnership through greater structural political dialogue and operational and concrete domain cooperation. It is necessary for the EU to take concrete steps to strengthen cooperation and find common solutions to deal with existing and new threats and common challenges for both the EU and NATO. The joint declarations of 2016 and 2018 are a solid basis for cooperation, and are based on the principles of inclusiveness, reciprocity, openness and transparency, as well as autonomy in decision-making on both sides. However, there is room for strengthening cooperation in political dialogue, information sharing, crisis management, military capability development and military mobility (A Strategic Compass, 2022:53).

The UN is the next strategic partner with which the EU should strengthen its cooperation. This cooperation is aimed at maintaining multilateralism based on rules and principles according to the UN Charter. The EU concrete cooperation with the UN is through the Union's contribution to the UN civilian and military missions and operations. The EU plans to strengthen its strategic partnership with the UN in the framework of peacekeeping operations and crisis management, including "the implementation of the new joint set of priorities on peace operations and crisis management for 2022-2024"

(A Strategic Compass, 2022:54). Cooperation with the UN can be deepened within the framework of the system for early warning of conflicts, as well as within the framework of the agenda for combating climate change and environmental degradation.

The EU plans to strengthen cooperation on a regional basis and with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the areas of confidence-building measures, information exchange for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, good governance, reforms and post-conflict stabilization. Cooperation will take place within the framework of increased presence in OSCE missions and establishment of closer cooperation with the OSCE Conflict Prevention Center (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

The Compass also envisages strengthening cooperation with regional partners such as in the Indo-Pacific region, Australia, the African Union and ASEAN countries. (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

The EU envisages the development of more tailored partnerships conducted on a bilateral basis with countries that share common values and interests, in particular with the USA, Norway, Canada and Japan, as well as with the Western Balkans, the United Kingdom, the Eastern and Southern neighbors, Africa, Asia and South America (A Strategic Compass, 2022). This cooperation should be based on strengthened dialogue and cooperation, promotion of contribution to missions and operations under the sponsorship of CSDP, as well as support in capacity building. These partnerships will be built on the basis of shared values and interests based on existing cooperation and specific characteristics of the states. This cooperation implies a more intensive involvement of defence and security issues and a more systematic approach in political dialogue and cooperation with partners. Cooperation is planned to take place through the establishment of a Forum for security and defence cooperation of the EU (A Strategic Compass, 2022:13) with partners in dealing with threats and challenges.

The partnership with the USA is one of the most significant for the EU and with the largest coverage of areas of cooperation that include consolidating the transatlantic partnership through dialogue, joint struggle and dealing with threats and challenges, as well as cooperation in the field of technological development. Bilateral cooperation with other European states is basically reduced to individual agreed areas of mutual interest in terms of contribution to CSDP missions (Turkie), in the common commitment to preserving peace and security (Norway, Canada), openness to security cooperation (UK) and strengthening the resilience of societies (Western Balkans). With the eastern partners (Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) cooperation in the security and defence of the states is foreseen with a focus on strengthening the resilience of the societies of these states (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

Enhancing the security of African partners is a key priority for the EU. This is understandable because the EU is represented in several military and civilian missions and operations and stabilization and reconstruction programs in African countries (Mali, Central African Republic and others). For the advancement of cooperation, the

EU plans to establish a better link between military support and structural reforms, including human resource management, as well as civilian capacity building and security sector reforms. The intent is to assist partners in "strengthen their resilience against conventional as well as hybrid threats, disinformation and cyberattacks, as well as climate change" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:57).

The EU's cooperation with the countries of the Indo-Pacific region is in line with the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy which aims to promote open and regionally based rules for security cooperation, which includes lines of communication, capacity building and enhanced naval presence in this region. Constructive cooperation with the countries of this region (Japan, South Korea, India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Vietnam) takes place through the participation in joint exercises, for which there is a consensus to continue in the future. The EU does not rule out dialogue and cooperation with China on issues of mutual interest, especially those related "to respect for the international law of the sea, peaceful settlement of disputes and a rules-based international order and human rights" (A Strategic Compass, 2022:57).

The EU's interest in security and defence cooperation also includes South American countries (Chile and Colombia) that contribute to CSDP missions and operations. The EU's support to these countries is aimed at building mechanisms to deal with hybrid and other threats, as well as a stronger involvement of these countries in CSDP missions and operations (A Strategic Compass, 2022).

Conclusion

The global security and geopolitical trends, within the framework of contemporary social life, bring with them appropriate challenges and threats to the security of countries that require the building of appropriate mechanisms to deal with them. The changing and evolving nature of threats requires more comprehensive action by security stakeholders in dealing with them. The security environment changes do not allow threats to be understood as usual and separately, but rather require capacity upgrades and determination to act. In this more hostile security environment, we cannot afford to treat our security as "business as usual" (Borrell, 2021). It requires to increase our capacity and willingness to act.

The war in Ukraine has prompted Europe to act swiftly and decisively to protect the peace, freedom and security of its citizens. It encouraged the EU to strengthen its security and defence capabilities, but at the same time establish mechanisms to deal with other complementary threats such as hybrid warfare and cyber threats, disinformation, terrorism and violent extremism, and other contemporary threats.

Geopolitical trends also require coordinated and joint action. European integrations are the key to EU values. They are a bit slower and additional stimulus from the EU to accelerate them is needed. Only the EU and no one else decides on the European integration of the Western Balkan countries. The EU must not allow bilateral disputes between countries to rise to EU level. It only hinders European integration and can seriously undermine security on European soil. The war in Ukraine should be a lesson that the protection of the security of European countries is possible only through joint and collective action. All those outside the collective defence mechanism may be a subject to aggression, as is the

case with Ukraine. The EU has to be able to accept the countries of the Western Balkans as full flagged members and strengthen security in Europe and close European integration once and for all on European soil.

The war in Ukraine, simultaneously with the conventional threat, has imposed the challenge of energy dependences with increased market prices, which further affects the development of countries and deepens the gap. China also sees an opportunity in this situation and wants to use it to its advantage. China's investments in the Western Balkans have made some of them dependent and unable to service their debts on time. Montenegro is currently facing such a challenge, but other countries are not far away. In order to reduce China's influence, the EU needs to increase investment in the new members, but also to lend a hand to the Western Balkan countries by opening up its development and investment funds to accelerate economic and other development.

To respond to such geostrategic trends and challenges and threats to the security of its members, the EU has initiated the process of preparing the Strategic Compass in 2021. The Compass is a counterpart to NATO's Strategic Concept. The symbolism says that the Compass was initiated under the presidency of Germany in 2020, and under the presidency of France it was adopted by the European Council on March 21, 2022. The basic idea of this Document is to provide a comprehensive impetus not only to the efforts of the Union but also to other European countries (21 EU member states are also members of NATO) to build European capacities that will be more independent and capable of the United States, and to promote the EU as a significant power and security provider on the world. Similar to the NATO reflection process and the Strategic Compass aims to outline the high expectations of European security and defence by 2030 and beyond. In the next decade, the EU needs to be more powerful globally, completely independent and free to choose and shape its own destiny. The Compass also includes areas of crisis management, resilience building, investment in key military industries, strengthening partnerships, protecting the union's values and interests on land, sea, air and in space. The implementation of the Strategic Compass will help the EU reduce its dependence on NATO. Also, it will ensure EU's security and defence, and enable the accelerated development of its military capabilities and make it a reliable security provider across the globe.

The visions, goals and directions given in the Compass for the development of crisis and conflict response capabilities, investments in the development of critical specialties and reducing the technology development gap, as well as strengthening the Union's resilience in dealing with changing and emerging threats of a hybrid nature requires a comprehensive and joint approach from all member states of the Union. All this must be implemented step by step and become a reality. The implementation of the Compass will enable the EU to become more independent from NATO and the USA, to independently decide on its future and to act more decisively as a provider of security in global frameworks. The compass is an operational document with 80 concrete actions and a time frame by which they must be delivered. From its content, 51 projects should be implemented by the end of 2022. The EU has no time to waste when the security of its citizens is at stake. The EU must act quickly if it is to be a reliable promoter of security.

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Scientific article

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ARMED CONFLICTS ON THE REFUGEE CRISES IN THE MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES

Nena NENOVSKA GJORGJIEVSKA[1]

Abstract: *The armed conflicts in the Middle East countries are lasting for decades. These conflicts might be the reason for many refugee crises induced throughout the years. However, the money racing and the search for better economic conditions in and out of many countries around the world give rise to the refugee processes, as well.*
The Middle East countries are in a state of war for more than 20 years. The conflicts which have arisen in these countries (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan) have provoked refugee processes emerge from them. While the states argue about limitation of polarization and ceasefire in these countries, there have been over 700,000 refugees since the spring in the year of 2015 to the beginning of the year of 2016 who have stepped through the European Union borders. Are these refugees encouraged to flee away from their homes, by the armed conflicts in the Middle East? The answer to this question is analyzed in this paper through the evaluation of the intensity of the conflicts and armed violence in the particular conflicted areas through the UPPSALA, UNHCR and World Bank data analysis mechanisms.

Key words: *conflicts, refugee processes, Middle East*

Introduction

International refuging has become part of our lives. In this research paper, the focus is directed towards the reasons for commencement of the armed conflicts and the intensity of the armed conflicts in the countries of the Middle East where the refugee crises emerge (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan).

According to the UNHCR[2], 55% of the refugees worldwide come from three countries: Syria, Afghanistan and South Sudan. Therefore, the focus of this paper is directed towards the Middle East countries. The research problem is related to the basic mutual elements of the refugees and the reasons for their fleeing. Generally speaking, the reason for fleeing away from a home country is an armed conflict in a certain state. In most cases, the people from the armed conflict affected areas are moving to the neighboring countries, where they search for asylum, protection and humane living conditions.

South Eastern Europe has become a crossroads of active migration processes with significant migration from, through and into the region.

"Suddenly in April 2015 something changed. Something happened that was so alarming that the world woke up. There had been no overnight escalation in the number of refugees in

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[2] http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html Approached on 20.04.2018

the world. What changed was that, for the first time, refugees moved spontaneously in large numbers from the poorer regions of the world to the richest.

For the first time in its history, Europe received a mass influx of refugees from outside of the European region. During the course of 2015, over a million asylum seekers would come to Europe. The majority came from Syria but many also came from other fragile states like Afghanistan and Iraq." (Betts, A., Collier P., 2017, p.2)

Since then, the final point of the refugees is the European Union, while the countries from South Eastern Europe represent the transit countries of the refugees. This is one of the main trends in the region, today, starting from the year of 2015. The large refugee flows which took the highest wave in the spring of 2015 are going to be analyzed as a consequence of the armed conflicts in the Middle East countries. For these purposes, the data from the UPPSALA, World Bank and UNHCR statistics are going to be used, hence producing the outcome of this paper whether the refugee processes are predicted by the armed conflicts.

I Armed conflicts in the Middle East countries

The Middle East armed conflicts are analyzed in this paper as the reason for the commencement of the refugee processes.

The fragileness of the states' political systems in the Middle East countries, usually includes the different ethnic groups and their religious character, hence allow for a start of a conflict.

The conflicted areas, more specifically Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan are analyzed in terms of beginning of the conflicts, conflict actors and conflict behavior. An analysis of possible attempts for ceasefire in these conflicts' affected regions is also made. As a consequence of these conflicts, the refugee crisis as an inevitable element of the conflict. The numbers of refugees and IDPs are analyzed in separate years in order to determine the influence of the armed conflicts.

Syria's conflict (2011- present)

The Syrian conflict started with demonstrations against the current president Bashar Al-Assad. They are targeted against the unilateral political party regime, and demand a multi political parties system. After a few months, these demonstrations rose into a civil war. The civil war involves the supporters of the Al-Assad's system and the opponents of this system. When the civil war began, there were four main factions of fighting groups throughout the country: the Kurdish forces, ISIS, other opposition and the Assad regime. The opponents of the regime, the s.c. jihadists comprise the IS (Islamic State). Their main goal is the president Al-Assad resignation. The presence of the great powers is obvious, and their influence is substantial in this region. Some call it a "proxy war", some call it a "civil war". "Proxy war" implies that local combatants are principally agents of external sponsors. (Harris, W. 2018, p.6)

The ongoing war in Syria has brought about dangerous results. There have been embassies closed, diplomats and ambassadors recalled, and Syrian ambassadors were expelled out of other countries, there is also a ban of import of the Syrian oil, there is a huge refugee crisis and the most frightening moment is the continual growing number of deaths.

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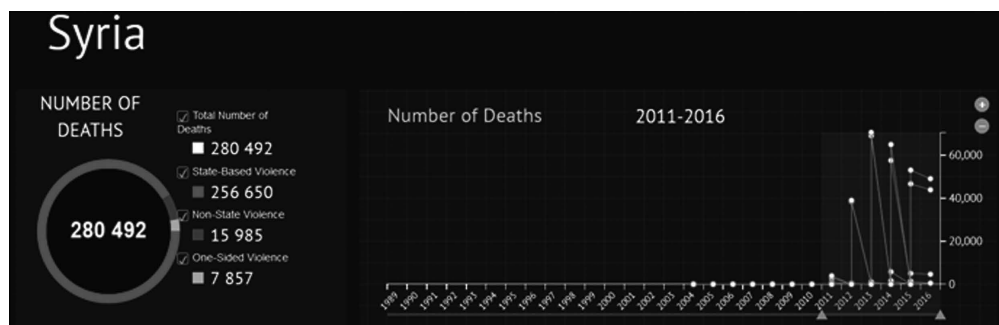
Number of deaths in Syria; Source: UCDP - Uppsala Conflict Data Program (uu.se)

This graph shows clearly the growing number of deaths caused by the armed conflict in Syria, starting from the year of 2011 till 2016. This violence has caused the refugees fleeing in huge numbers.

According to the UNHCR, the total number of refugees who fled the country as of 2016 is 17.5 million. And the number of people who are internally displaced is 29 million. According to the UNHCR, there were at least 280 000 deaths from violence between March 2011 and late 2016. In Syria, the direct war deaths are moving towards or even beyond 2% of the whole population, and the proportion is obviously much higher in young adult males. (Harris, W. 2018, p.7)

Having in mind the ethnicity of the majority of citizens and their religious background, it is easy to understand the reasons for their dissatisfaction and the hatred that the majority feels.

Namely, 70% of the whole population in Syria is Sunni Muslim Arabs. Sunni Arabs in Syria are the greatest supporters of the rebel forces, and in recent years they have developed increasingly hostile feelings towards Shia Muslim Assad government.[3]

President Al-Assad's religion is Shia Muslim/Alawites. This is the second largest religious group after the Sunni Islam in Syria. Only 12% of the population represents this ethnicity.[4] Syria has always been a country led by the minority. Probably this is the main reason for the feeling of hatred.

The peaceful situation in Syria till 2011 can be seen in the table below, where according to the UNHCR[5], there has not been an internally displaced person registered in the years from 2001 till 2012. The numbers of refugees in this period of time are very low, or few thousands of people who have flown away from their country. Since

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[3] https://syriancivilwarmap.com/ethnic-and-religious-groups-of-syria/ Approached on 18.04.2018
[4] Ibid.
[5] UNHCR - Refugee Statistics Approached on 10.11.2021

the start of the conflict in 2011, a drastic change of these numbers has been evident. Over 700 000 refugees were registered in 2012, while in the following years there are millions of refugees fleeing away. The number of refugees achieved its peak in 2015 when there were over 4 million refugees fleeing away from Syria.

2

Year	Country of origin	Refugees under UNHCR's mandate	IDPs of concern to UNHCR
2001	Syria	4 861	0
2002	Syria	18 908	0
2003	Syria	20 817	0
2004	Syria	21 431	0
2005	Syria	16 395	0
2006	Syria	12 328	0
2007	Syria	13 684	0
2008	Syria	15 206	0
2009	Syria	17 915	0
2010	Syria	18 451	0
2011	Syria	19 931	0
2012	Syria	729 012	2 016.500
2013	Syria	2 468.323	6 520.800
2014	Syria	3 887.490	7 632.500
2015	Syria	4 873.236	6 563.462

Number of refugees and IDPs in Syria; Source: UNHCR - Refugee Statistics

Despite all the negotiations, diplomacy talks and mediations among the interested parties and the international actors, the conflict in Syria kept on deteriorating instead of cooling down. After 10 years since its emergence, the international law experienced mass breakings in 2018. In an era when the nations agreed on respecting the international standards, the great powers (the USA, the UK and France) attacked Syria without the permission of the UN Security Council. This surely represents a break of Article 2 of the UN Charter.[6]

According to this Charter, the right to an armed intervention is recognized only when there is self-defense or authorization of the United Nations for such interventions. The states have no right to decide unilaterally upon the implementation of the international agreements and UN resolutions, even if they do so just because Syria is using chemical weapons and is breaching the

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[6] UN Charter, United Nations Charter (full text) | United Nations

conventions (1925 and 1993) and UNSC Resolution (2118), which strongly prohibits the use of chemical weapons.

The leaders of the three countries which intervened in Syria, offered as a suitable answer to the public, the argument that an intervention was necessary in order to implement the Chemical Weapons Convention from 1997 and to protect the citizens. However, this Convention firstly provides for an expert investigation from the Organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons and hence the Conference of the state-parties may raise the issue to the General Assembly and the UN Security Council. This Convention does not foresee unilateral use of power in response to the violation of the Convention.

There have been several attempts for ceasefire and peacebuilding since the start of the conflict in Syria in 2011. Besides UNSC Resolution 2118, which set forth a directive to put under international control and liquidate the Syrian chemical weapons program, other international attempts have been done regarding the ceasefire.

One of these attempts, and as part of the ceasefire process, the Arab League mission in Syria was established at the end of 2011. Sudanese diplomat Mustafa ad-Dabi was appointed as the Head of the Mission and on 24 December 2011 he held negotiations with the Syrian Foreign Affairs Minister Walid Muallem in Damascus, during which the Syrian government said it was willing to fully cooperate with the Mission and do everything in its power to ensure its successful operation. (Khodynskaya-Golenischeva, M. 2021, p.642) The Arab League Mission prepared an Arab Action Plan which covered the ceasefire activities. The document emphasized the de-escalation and, first of all, the need for all sides to cease hostilities in inhabited areas and to move military equipment out of cities and towns.[7] The Mission observed many conflicted areas in Syria. It received help by the Syrian government in order to perform their tasks and remove any obstacles. However, the mission report was not as expected by the US and their allies. It even clashed with their interest. The work of the Arab League Mission in Syria was cut short in early 2012: its mandate was not extended despite the fact its report said that if the mission's activities were terminated after such a short period all the progress it had made would have been reversed.[8]

The International Syria Support Group (ISSG) was formed in 2015, four years after the start of the conflict. The International Syria Support Group became such a new mechanism that took into account the positions of all the countries in the region during the preparation of collective solutions on Syria.[9] The ISSG approved all the UN Security Council resolutions related to the Syrian issue. Hence, the presence of key countries of the region, while maintaining the form of Russia-US chair, proved to be very effective. However, "the presence of certain players in ISSG, which were irrelevant from the point of view of Syrian crisis resolution, had shifted the focus of

[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid. Pg.645
[9] Ibid. Pg.647

the discussion to the issues that brought an element of politicization to the discussion. This negative trend made Russia and the US realize the need to transfer consultations on specific aspects of the crisis resolution to "narrow group" format, including Russia, USA, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey."[10]

To effectively support the truce, Russia and the United States developed a legal framework to establish and maintain the ceasefire, having agreed the Relevant documents within a bilateral format.[11] The Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the United States of America as Co-Chairs of the International Syrian Support Group on the Ceasefire in the Syrian Arab Republic of 22 February 2016 became a fundamental document, which defined the purposes and the content of Russia-US cooperation on the ceasefire in Syria. This statement contained a decision to enact a ceasefire in Syria, starting from 00:00 of 27 February, 2016.[12] This statement was proposed and accepted by all parties which expressed their commitment to the ceasefire. However, it was not extended to Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIL. Jabhat al-Nusra was perceived as a terrorist organization and front-line force under the guise of which numerous illegal armed groups were fighting. Jabhat al-Nusra was not part of the ceasefire agreement. Hence, it continued to fight even after the declaration of the ceasefire regime. [13]

Civil war in Iraq (2014-present)

The civil war in Iraq emerged as a consequence of the armed conflicts in Iraq from 2003 and of the Syrian crisis from 2011. It would be more of a pause between two wars. The relevant setting for the 2011 Syrian crisis that became a war across both Syria and Iraq was above all else the domestic environment in Syria, largely insulated from the post-2003 turmoil in Iraq. Yes, external events contributed to the chain reaction that began in the neglected southern Syrian town of Dera'a in March 2011, but the so-called Arab Spring revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt provided the relevant wider context – not an Iraq that was relatively pacified in early 2011. (Harris, W. 2018, p.14) The United States officially withdrew from Iraq in 2011, but came back on the head of a new coalition. The main aim of this new coalition led by the USA was to defeat ISIS. However, there have been other turmoil events in Iraq. The other aim of this war was to prompt the resignation of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. His regime had been showing greed to take control of the country's natural and capital resources, such as oil.

This second Iraqi war and the civil war resulted in a huge number of deaths. According to the following graph, the growing number of deaths is evident between the years 2003-2010. Then, the situation calmed between 2011 and 2013. In 2013
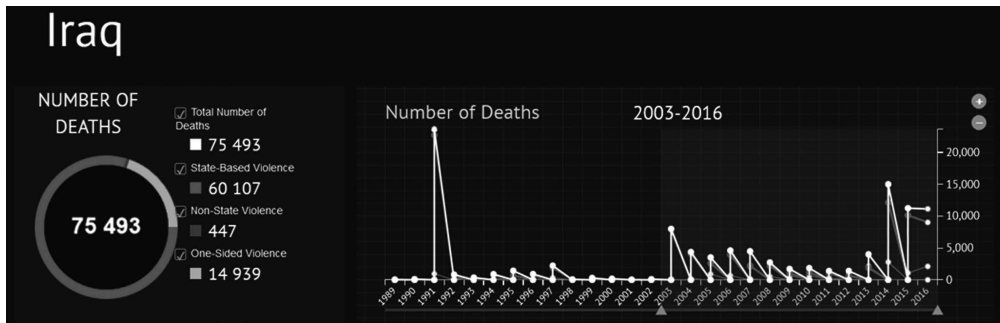
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[10] Ibid. Pg.663
[11] Ibid. Pg. 572
[12] Ibid. Pg. 573
[13] Ibid. Pg.578

there was a rapid growth in the number of deaths and between 2014 and 2015 it reached its peak.

3

Number of deaths in Iraq; Source: UCDP - Uppsala Conflict Data Program (uu.se)

This civil war and the number of deaths caused by violence influenced the refugee outflow from the country, and hence the refugee processes. According to the UNHCR[14] statistics, the numbers of refugees registered in the period between 2001 till 2005 were hundreds of thousands. Starting from the second Iraq war in 2003 till 2011, Iraq was faced with the highest numbers of refugees fleeing away. After a couple of years since the start of the Second Iraqi War, there were 1.4 million refugees registered. In 2007 there was the highest number of refugees registered in Iraq, or 2.3 million refugees. In the following years this number lowered, however it still stood high to more than a million refugees till the end of the Second Iraqi War in 2011.

With the emergence of the civil war in Iraq, the numbers of refugees have not been as high as in the previous years during the Second Iraqi war. The number of refugees was lower than a million. In 2014 369 960 refugees were registered, and this number lowered to 264 086 in 2015.

According to the UNHCR, starting from 2001 till 2004, just as in the case with Syria, there were no internally displaced persons (IDPs) registered. After a couple of years since the emergence of the second Iraqi War, the numbers of IDPs started plummeting. There were 1 200.000 registered IDPs. It lowered to less than a million in 2013, or after the second Iraqi War ended. However, with the emergence of the civil war in 2014, the numbers of IDPs grew to 3.5 million and it reached its peak to 4.4 million in 2015.

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[14] UNHCR - Refugee Statistics Approached on 10.11.2021

4

Year	Country of origin	Refugees under UN-HCR's mandate	IDPs of concern to UNHCR
2001	Iraq	530 508	0
2002	Iraq	422 504	0
2003	Iraq	368 578	0
2004	Iraq	311 890	0
2005	Iraq	262 302	1 200.000
2006	Iraq	1 450.909	1 834.368
2007	Iraq	2 309.247	2 385.865
2008	Iraq	1 903.517	2 647.251
2009	Iraq	1 785.215	1 552.003
2010	Iraq	1 683.576	1 343.568
2011	Iraq	1 428.306	1 332.382
2012	Iraq	746.204	1 131.810
2013	Iraq	401.461	954.128
2014	Iraq	369.960	3 596.356
2015	Iraq	264.086	4 403.287

Number of refugees and IDPs in Iraq; Source: UNHCR - Refugee Statistics

The population of Iraq is estimated at 38.146.025 citizens. 97% of these are Muslim by religion, out of whom 55-60% are Shi'a and the other 40% are Sunni. The rest 3% of the population are Christians, Yazidis and Mandeans by religion. The ethnicity in Iraq is mostly Arab 75-80%, Kurdish 15-20% and Turkoman, Assyrian or Other 5%.[15]

The religious group which is the majority in Iraq is marginalized by the minority which has been leading Iraq under Saddam Hussein's regime. Alternatively, the Sunni Muslims of Iraq have been politically dominating Iraq for centuries until the American invasion of 2003 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2016). The Sunnis are members primarily of Al-Qaeda, and hence members of ISIS. ISIS is a form of domination in the Arab society, strictly consisted of radical Sunni Muslims, united from the countries in the Middle East. Their goal is to protect the Sunni Muslims and create their own country. Therefore, it is assumed that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is the consequence of Al-Qaeda. However, the main difference between Al – Qaeda and ISIS is that Al-Qaeda is present with dramatic and direct attacks, while the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq represents a unification of the Islamic State, or a territorial conquest.

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[15] Iraqi Culture — Cultural Atlas (sbs.com.au), Approached at 23.4.2018

In the mid-2010s, the strategy question for the United States was how to react to the renewed chaos and the apparent successes of radical Islamists groups willing to use terror and to kill Westerns, including Americans. The difficult Iraq and Afghanistan experiences bred distaste for nation-building and counterinsurgency among US military and political leaders. (Sapolsky, H.M. et al, 2017, p.17) In general, this civil war represents the fight against Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). This, of course is in coordination and support with the great powers which undertake control of the region.

Afghanistan war (2001-2021)

The war in Afghanistan is again an international conflict, in which the parties are Afghanistan (Al-Qaeda and Taliban) and the Great Powers (USA with its alliances). The 20 years long war represents the longest war fought by the United States against the Afghan perpetrators of the 11 September attacks. It all started in the aftermath of the 11 September with the single goal of demolishing Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The United States have made an ultimatum to the Taliban. It was to hand over Al-Qaeda's leader, Osama Bin Laden. After they refused to hand Bin Laden over, the US started revenge towards the Taliban. The toppling of the Taliban by the US was an easy step. It lasted only two months.

After defeating them, the next step for the US and its allies was to beat Al-Qaeda's leader Bin Laden. This step was a little more difficult for the US forces than the toppling of the Taliban. It took almost 10 years after the 9/11 attacks. Allegedly, he was killed on the night of 2nd of May 2011 in Pakistan by the US Special Forces.

The following three years was a period when the conflicting parties started some sort of negotiations for structural peacebuilding and sustainable peace. The period of transition was seen as the last opportunity to create the necessary conditions for transforming international support in a way that reinforces a viable democratic state.

However, the Taliban regained their power again. The NATO forces, as allies to the United States, did not manage to eliminate the Taliban through military means and hence the United States and the Taliban signed a conditional peace deal in Doha which required that US troops withdraw by April 2021. Since this period expired and was not respected by the US, the Taliban started a broad offensive and finally took Kabul on 15th of August 2021. That is when the Taliban declared a victory and the war ended. All the violent factors have resulted in a huge number of deaths. According to Uppsala, the graph below shows the number of deaths, between the year of 2001 and 2016. Even though there is slight decrease of this number from 2002 to 2005, the number of deaths caused by an armed conflict is continuous. Starting from the year of 2006 onward, this number increased from year to year and reached its peak in 2015 and 2016.

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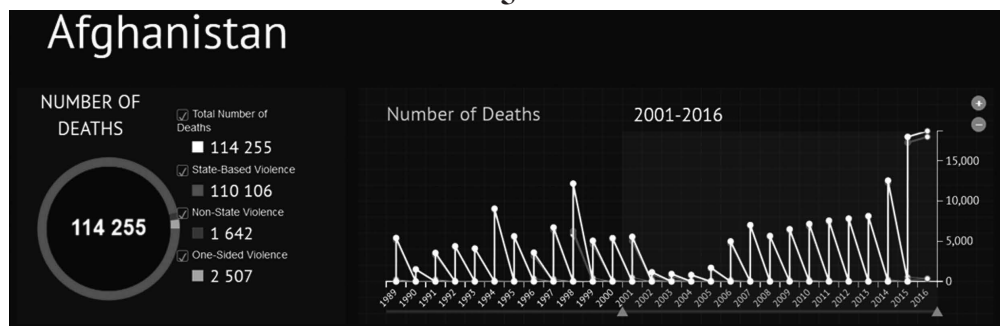
Number of deaths in Afghanistan; Source: UCDP - Uppsala Conflict Data Program (uu.se)

The population in Afghanistan is 33.332.025 citizens. The majority belong to the Islamic religion 9.7%, out of whom 85-90% are Sunni Islam, whereas 10-15% belong to the Shi'a Islam. The rest 0.3% are other religions.[16]

In the year of 2001, there were over 3 million refugees registered under the UNHCR[17] mandate, and there were 1.200.000 internally displaced people in Afghanistan. In the following years these numbers were falling. The numbers of refugees remained high in all years of concern, while the number of IDPs drastically fell since the year of 2001. From the year of 2010, the numbers of both refugees and IDPs started growing again. In the year of 2015, these numbers were a little lower than in 2001, however, higher than in all of the previous years.

6

Year	Country of origin	Refugees under UN-HCR's mandate	IDPs of concern to UNHCR
2001	Afghanistan	3 809.763	1 200.000
2002	Afghanistan	2 510.294	665 156
2003	Afghanistan	2 136.039	184 269
2004	Afghanistan	2 414.460	159 549
2005	Afghanistan	2 166.139	142 505
2006	Afghanistan	2 107.510	129 310
2007	Afghanistan	3 057.655	153 718
2008	Afghanistan	2 833.117	230 670
2009	Afghanistan	2 887.114	297129

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[16] https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/afghan-culture/religion-19e97e99-084a-4650-a714-d1ebd7d30e7f Approached on 23.4.2018

[17] UNHCR - Refugee Statistics Approached on 10.11.2021

2010	Afghanistan	3 054.699	351 907
2011	Afghanistan	2 664.423	447 547
2012	Afghanistan	2 586.132	486 298
2013	Afghanistan	2 556.483	631 286
2014	Afghanistan	2 596.259	805 409
2015	Afghanistan	2 666.294	1 174.306

Number of refugees and IDPs in Afghanistan; Source: UNHCR - Refugee Statistics

II Start of the refugee processes

Even though the Afghan and the Iraqi conflicts have had a deeper history and background than the Syrian conflict, the peak of the violence has been felt mostly in the years of 2014 and 2015 in all three countries of analysis. Hence, the refugee processes were more than expected in these years from all of the three countries.

Syria

The civil war in Syria started in 2011, as a peaceful civil protest searching for democratic reforms. Within few months, there was a repression which forced the protestors to take arms and set up the institutions. In just a few years, these protests turned in a full-scale civil war involving major regional and international interference. The Syrian civil war, sparked originally by a combination of a grassroots protest movement for socio-economic and political reform on the one hand, and President Assad's heavy-handed response to it on the other, thus far killed over 200 000 people and displaced half of Syria's pre-war population of 24 million. (ARK, 2016, p.14)

"Starting in the summer of 2011, the Syrian army's offensives forced tens of thousands to flee. From early 2012 on, with fighting flaring up throughout most of the country and the bombing of cities, displacement of the civilian population accelerated. The relatively unscathed Syrian coast became home to millions. Others fled to Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and Turkey. Starting in the winter of 2012-2013, nearly a half million Syrians registered with UNHCR in neighboring countries, a figure that rose to 4.8 million by the end of 2015. Seeing that the conflict would be of long duration, many refugees left Turkey for Europe in late 2015 to ask for asylum." (Baczko, A. et al, 2018, p.157, 158)

According to the World Bank statistics[18], in the year of 2013, there werre 2.468.323 Syrians registered who had left their homes. In 2014 this number got bigger. There were 3.887.490 Syrian refugees registered. In 2015 the number of refugees from Syria reached 4.873.236 and in 2016 this number was the highest - 5.524.511.

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[18] Refugee population by country or territory of origin - Syrian Arab Republic | Data (worldbank.org)

Observing the statistical refugee curve, until the year of 2011 it was flat, which differs from Afghanistan. Since 2011, there has been a drastic jump in these numbers. This is a natural phenomenon, having in mind the civil war which broke out in the year of 2011. However, the peak of the European refugee crisis in 2015, did not overlap with the peak of the Syrian refugees. In the following years, after 2016, the numbers of refugees were still on the rise. Hence, it cannot be concluded that the armed conflict in Syria escalated in 2015. It lasted in the following years, as well.

Iraq

"The 2003 invasion of Iraq left a legacy of violence and a political system which was increasingly used by political leaders for sectarian advantage. After a period of relative stability, violence has increased in Iraq during 2014. Since the beginning of 2014, an extreme jihadist group ISIL/Da'esh, who is also active in Syria, has gained control of territory in the mainly Sunni and contested areas of Iraq." (Rohwerder, B. 2014, p.1) The conflict spread north after the extremist group Islamic State, took over Mosul, Iraq's second largest city.

As of October 2014, the fighting has caused the internal displacement of 1.8 million people and there are 5.2 million who need urgent humanitarian assistance. [19]

Having in mind that there have been armed conflicts in Iraq constantly, the numbers of refugees fleeing away in the specific years of analysis, are not as high as in Syria and in Afghanistan. According to the World Bank statistics[20], the highest number of refugees was noted in 2013, or 401,461 Iraqi refugees. In 2014 this number fell to 369,960 refugees. In 2015 there were 264,086 refugees registered, while in 2016 316,056 refugees fled Iraq.

Afghanistan

In Afghanistan there have been ongoing wars in the past 20 years. Afghanistan is one of the most war-affected countries in the world. After the fall of the Taliban and the establishment of a new democratic government with the help of the international community, Afghanistan is still facing an immense challenge in the state building process, conflict transformation and peace building. (Rahman, B. 2008, p.3) The ethnic conflict remains one of the most important conflicts Afghanistan is facing today besides other issues such as terrorism, insurgency, political instability and weak governance.[21] However, in addition to the ethnic tensions there have been political instabilities, such as political maneuvers and alliances, which have also caused conflict tensions. The emergence of new conflicts in a conflicted area is easy. Different types of problems might arise, related to socio economic issues, national identity, ethnic differences etc.

All these instabilities, have caused huge fleeing away from the country. According

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[19] Ibid.
[20] Refugee population by country or territory of origin - Iraq | Data (worldbank.org)
[21] Ibid.

to the World Bank statistics[22], in 2013, there were registered 2.556.483 refugees who have left the country. In 2014, this number rose to 2.596.259 refugees. The year of 2015 was the peak of the fleeing trend. There were 2.666.294 displaced persons from Afghanistan. In 2016, this number decreased to 2.501.447 refugees.

According to this data, most of the Afghan citizens have left the country in the year of 2015.

Regarding the European refugee crisis, Afghanistan's conflict escalated in the year of 2015, when there were the highest numbers of refugees. In 2016, there was weak de-escalation of the conflict, so do the numbers of Afghan citizens who fled away also fell.

Conclusion

The armed conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan have led to a lot of consequences. With the exception of Afghanistan, the other two countries are still at war and no acceptable solution for ceasefire can be seen in near future.

The Middle East countries which are the subject of analysis have all been in a stage of war in the relevant years. Iraq and Afghanistan have been conflicted areas longer than Syria. However, the armed violence, measured according to the number of deaths has been noted mostly in the years of 2015 and 2016 in Iraq and Afghanistan and in 2014 in Syria. This data confirms the emergence of the refugee processes. Measured by this, violence has caused the refugee processes, mostly in the year of 2015, further continuing in 2016.

The peak of the refugee processes has not been the same in all three countries, however, the escalation of the conflicts has heralded the refugee processes. In Afghanistan, the highest number of refugees was noted in 2015, in Syria in 2016, while in Iraq the peak was in 2013.

The combination of all three countries, the intertwined armed conflicts in Syria and Iraq, the conflict actors, the escalation of the armed conflicts have led to the refugee processes, and hence to the European refugee crisis in 2015. Therefore, it can be concluded that the armed conflicts in the Middle East countries have sparked the refugee processes in the year of 2015.

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UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES USED FOR MILITARY OPERATIONS AND THEIR APPLICATION IN THE REGION

Mario AMPOV[1]
Drage PETRESKI[2]

Abstract*: This article discusses the use of unmanned aerial vehicles for military operations that provide better information and overall troop safety during the operation's execution phase. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) are used for intelligence gathering, recon missions, overwatch over combat operations, provide a bird's eye view at all times to troops on the ground. However, its most important use is recon operations or data collection from areas which puts the troops safety at a high risk. UAVs are a type of aircraft that can be fully autonomous or can be remotely piloted from an operational centre. These systems are real-time transmittors of events and provide valuable information to the military chain of command at crucial warfare periods. Dependent on the operation, the UAVs are equipped to be used for finding, fixing, tracking, targeting and assessing the target, as well as engaging the target lethally if it is necessary for the success of the mission.*

Keywords*: unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), reconnaissance, autonomous operations, modern intelligence*

Introduction

An unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) or unmanned aircraft system is a drone. It is essentially a flying robot that can be commanded remotely or fly autonomously using software-driven flight plans that work in tandem with sensors and a global positioning system (GPS). Accelerated development of weaponry and military equipment towards the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries resulted in the development of unmanned aircraft vehicles, whose employment began at the end of the twentieth century. Unmanned vehicles with intelligence capabilities are finding use in reconnaissance, surveillance, and rescue operations, mostly in military warfare. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) are being employed for a variety of reasons, despite their origins in a defense and security system. Drones have a wide range of capabilities, thus they can be used for both commercial and national defense and security applications. They have been classified as the most essential fighting means without which modern operations would be impossible, as well as a modern style of conducting combat operations, due to their flexible use.

Military intelligence has historically relied heavily on aerial reconnaissance. Subsequently, sophisticated and pricey satellite systems have been used to conduct surveillance in a more secure

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manner. The UAV has established itself as a valuable addition to the arsenal of many military authorities all over the world, thanks to recent technological breakthroughs. Unmanned assets, both old and new, have a set of inherent benefits that appeal to commanders and warriors alike. Removing the human aspect from the equation also opens up the possibility of higher degrees of operational risk. The smaller and stealthier characteristics of today's and tomorrow's UAVs could allow them to operate in restricted skies and carry out critical missions without endangering human life. Even if identified, higher-performance unmanned systems deployed in the next five to ten years will be able to carry out escape maneuvers that far outstrip human endurance and limitations. In order to properly satisfy the collect, modern needs typically influence the surveillance and reconnaissance asset used. The use of machine rather than man has resulted in a reduction in the number of military soldiers lost in actual conflict. The unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were created with the goal of completing mundane duties. Dirty missions, such as surveillance and detection of radioactive occurrences, are also a significant threat to piloted aircraft. In a polluted environment, unmanned aircraft minimize the risk to human aircrews and allow for continuous on-station collecting, putting the UAV in jeopardy. 2021 (Janik & Zawistowski) Unmanned assets would be considerably better adapted to monitor the situation if a nuclear or radiological device was actually used during a fight. Due to their proximity to the enemy, manned assets conducting reconnaissance and strike missions are likewise placed in a perilous situation. Unmanned aircraft are an excellent asset for extended operations in or near forbidden airspace, similar to dull and dirty missions. While a complete transition from manned to unmanned systems is not required, missions involving extended periods of vulnerability should be saved for UAVs.

Design and construction of UAVs

To further elaborate on the design and construction of unmanned aircrafts, we will look at a specific model of a UAV utilized in combat operations in this section. The model to be used is the USAF's Reaper MQ-9 drone.

Figure 1 The UAV - Reaper MQ-9 deployed by the USAF

Intelligence gathering, striking abilities, and recon missions are among its primary functions. This UAV is primarily used for intelligence gathering and hitting execution missions, sometimes known as "shoot-to-kill." It is equipped with long-range sensors, a multi-mode communications system, and precision weaponry, allowing for very effective striking, as well as stealthy recon of high-value and time-sensitive targets. Its design qualifies it to undertake irregular missions in addition to everything else on its menu, including troop assistance, search and rescue, route clearance, and close-air support during key phases of warfare.

The MQ-9 UAV has a turboprop engine, a wingspan of 20 meters, is 11 meters long and 3.8 meters tall. It weighs 2223 kilograms empty and its maximum takeoff weight is 4760 kilograms, while the maximum payload it can carry is 1701 kilograms. The fuel capacity on the Reaper ranges from 602-903 gallons and has a range of about 1000 nautical miles and a ceiling of up to 15240 meters. The MQ-9 can be armed with a combination of hellfire missiles AGM-114, GBU-12 Paveway II, GBU-38 Joint Direct Attack Munitions. (Atomics, n.d.)

The MQ-9 Reaper is equipped with a multi-spectral targeting system, consisted of cameras and sensors. It possesses a laser for munition guidance, as well as highly accurate anti-armor engagement capabilities. The MQ-9 also has a V-shaped tail for improved stability and has a nose camera at the front.

The MQ-9 being an unmanned aerial vehicles is remotely controlled by a crew of two, one pilot and one sensor operator.
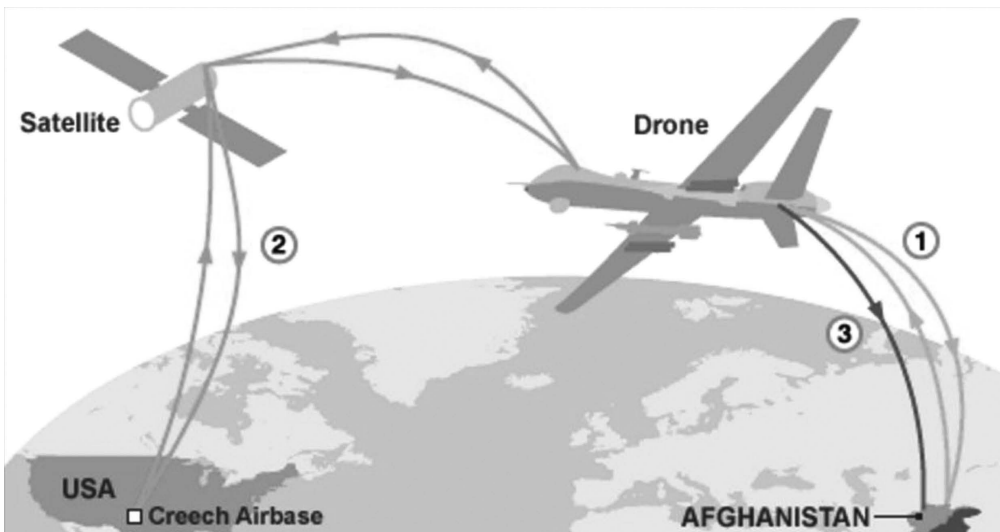
How does the UAV work

Figure 2 How a UAV is operated remotely

An MQ-9 UAV can adopt various mission kits and combinations of weapons and sensors payloads to meet combat requirements. Its Raytheon AN/AAS-52 multi-spectral targeting sensor suite includes a color/monochrome daylight TV, infrared, and image-intensified TV with laser rangefinder/laser designator to designate targets for laser guided munitions. The aircraft is also equipped with the Lynx Multi-mode Radar that contains synthetic aperture radar (SAR) that can operate in both spotlight and strip modes, and ground moving target indication (GMTI) with Dismount Moving Target Indicator (DMTI) and Maritime Wide-Area Search (MWAS) capabilities. The system has 368 cameras capable of capturing five million pixels each to create an image of about 1.8 billion pixels; video is collected at 12 frames per second, producing several terabytes of data per minute. Being a fully remote piloted aircraft system it has a ground control station, a primary satellite link and spare equipment as well as operational and maintenance crews ready for 24-hour missions. (Force, 2021)

The crew consists of a pilot that controls the aircraft and commands the mission, an aircrew member that operates the sensors and weapons. To meet the mission requirements, the Reaper uses the above mentioned combat mission kits.

The MQ-9 baseline system carries the Multi-Spectral Targeting System, which has a robust suite of visual sensors for targeting. The MTS-B integrates an infrared sensor, color, monochrome daylight TV camera, shortwave infrared camera, laser designator, and laser illuminator. The full-motion video from each of the imaging sensors can be viewed as separate video streams or fused.The MQ-9 aircraft operates from standard U.S. airfields with clear line-of-sight to the ground data terminal antenna, which provides line-of-sight communications for takeoff and landing. The PPSL provides over-the-horizon communications for the aircraft and sensors.

The primary concept of operations, remote split operations, uses a launch-and-recovery ground control station at the forward operating location for take-off and landing operations, while a crew based in the continental United States commands and controls the rest of the mission via beyond-line-of-sight links. Remote split operations result in fewer troops being sent to a forward site, condense management of several flights to stateside areas, and so simplify command and control functions as well as logistical supply issues for the weapons system.(Frank Sauer, Niklas Schörnig, 2012)

The UAVs are built from highly complex composites designed to absorb vibration, which decreases the sound it produces, thus making the UAVs very light weight.

Use of UAVs in the US armed forces

Unmanned assets have traditionally been used by US military services to perform five ISR roles: brigade/division asset for Reconnaissance, Surveillance, and Target Acquisition; ship-borne asset for reconnaissance and weapon support; small unit asset for over-the-hill reconnaissance; survivable asset for strategic penetrating reconnaissance; and high altitude endurance asset for standoff reconnaissance.

68 These five variations can be further classified as tactical and strategic service needs. The five historical reconnaissance missions, on the other hand, do not cover all aspects of the needs for unmanned combat support. The US Air Force's MQ-1 Predator was one of the first contemporary UAVs to continually and successfully complete every step of the military's "kill chain" – find, fix, track, target, engage, and assess. The US Air Force financed research and development for changes to the existing platform to execute growing requirements. It was originally developed as an asset to serve a reconnaissance and surveillance duty. The Army created the multi-purpose Improved-Gnat-Extended-Range "Warrior Alpha" based on the MQ-1's success, and the Air Force deployed the MQ-9 Reaper. The key is that these assets, the Warrior Alpha and Reaper, were built with an ISR architecture, allowing for a multi-purpose/dual-role asset to be constructed. These autonomous ISR aircraft may now perform standard fighter-bomber operations like armed reconnaissance and close air support (CAS) in addition to data collection. Despite the fact that the added weight of the UAV's ammunition limits asset on-station periods and overall endurance, the unmanned aircraft can still perform military reconnaissance and surveillance missions. UAVs have carved out a niche in global counterinsurgencies, providing unique support to combatant commanders and warfighters. Unmanned systems provide long-term coverage for ground operations, provide reconnaissance to aid planning, and occasionally fire weapons. In essence, both human and unmanned aircraft have separate roles to play in meeting collection needs, but they are most effective when used in tandem. The ability to stay on-station well beyond the capabilities of a manned system allows the system and the customer to become inextricably tied in mission performance. Removing the human aspect from the equation also opens up the possibility of higher degrees of operational risk. The smaller and stealthier characteristics of today's and tomorrow's UAVs could allow them to operate in restricted airspace while posing no threat to human life. Even if identified, higher-performance unmanned systems deployed in the next five to ten years will be able to carry out escape maneuvers that far outstrip human endurance and limitations. (Pike, 2002)

Possibilities for UAVs in Eastern Europe

A belligerent Russia is the primary external threat to these countries. The annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014, as well as the conflict with Ukraine, are outstanding examples of this danger. Internal instability and terrorism are also serious security problems in most Eastern European countries. Russia is a major military power that none of these countries can hope to equal, making UAVs, particularly armed (including loitering munitions) and ISR UAVs, more viable. For example, Ukraine's best strategy has been to detect any offensive Russian movement (such as a tank attack) early and neutralize the threat with offensive drones, while signaling for assistance from NATO and other foreign organizations.

For deployment and integration in the concept of operations, any weapon system requires organizational and technological changes. Armed forces with the necessary organizational structure and technical procedures are more likely to embrace the technology. Czechia, for example, has formed a UAV battalion, demonstrating that the country has the required infrastructure in place to include UAVs.

Figure 3 A UAV model in the airspace

However, the country may not recognise the need for a weapon system in the context of the threat landscape or the capability which the system can endow. (Beri, 2021)

The seller's ability to negotiate the defense procurement conditions and procedures has a significant impact on market attractiveness. Most east European countries have a low history of canceling defense purchases, and the procedure is generally simple; however, there are a few issues. Both Poland and Romania, for example, have a history of canceling UAV procurement initiatives due to policy changes or accusations of favoritism. In any market, the likelihood of success is determined by a combination of factors, including the broader competitive landscape and indigenous competence. Poland has substantial domestic light and medium UAV capacity, making the market unappealing to international OEMs. It does not have heavy-armed UAV capability, thus this could have been an opportunity, but it has already stated that it will only evaluate the General Atomics MQ 9 B or the Elbit Hermes 900 for the role, therefore ruling out any other contenders. Hungary, on the other hand, has no military capability of its own and would be willing to accept a foreign offer. In light of the failed attempts to build an indigenous military UAV program, the offering might take the shape of a sale or cooperative development.

Eastern European countries have a combination of mature and emerging markets for military unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The need for UAV solutions based on the threat landscape, a low overall defense budget that prevents the procurement of more expensive assets, and an increased readiness to invest on defense are all major growth factors.

Conclusion

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), also known as remotely piloted aerial systems (RPAS) or drones, are extremely important to the military. Drones are utilized in cases where manned flight is deemed too dangerous or problematic. They provide an "eye in the sky" for troops seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Each aircraft can stay in the air for up to 17 hours at a time, lingering over a region and transmitting real-time images of ground activity. Small intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance craft, some light enough to launch by hand, to medium-sized armed drones and big spy planes are among those deployed by the US Air Force and the Royal Air Force.

The ability to use such a light-weight, and depending on the task, nearly undetectable aircraft, provides a significant advantage in mission planning, organization, and execution. Not only does it provide a tactical advantage over the enemy by providing fast and real-time information, but it also ensures the safety of those who will later deploy on those missions or the troops who were pulled back because the drones can perform the same mission. On the plus side, there will be no planning for casualties or evacuation plans for troops killed or injured in action.

The fact that it improves security and reduces casualties justifies its widespread use and high cost to the US military.

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