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SUMARIO/SUMMARY

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Book review

Recension

Brigadier General Francisco José DACOBA CERVIŃO
Director of the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies

Presentation of the IEEE Journal issue 19

Welcome to the latest, the 19th, issue of the Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies (IEEE) Journal. Once again, we offer you a varied content that addresses topics of the utmost relevance and topicality. Two such examples are "Kaliningrad: a Russian strategic enclave in the midst of tension with NATO and the EU" by José Ignacio VILLAR ROMERO, which highlights the indisputable geostrategic importance of the former Könisberg; and "A conflictive interdependence: the Gazprom-Europe relationship" by Guillermo ABIO VILLEGAS, on the use of gas as a means of pressure in the conflict unleashed in the heart of Europe following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022.

Three geographical regions are the focus of attention on this occasion. With "Afghanistan: Intrahistory and perspectives of a misunderstood conflict", Magí CASTELLTORT CLARAMUNT reminds us that although the pressing gravity of the war in Ukraine has faded the memory of the chaotic withdrawal of international forces in August 2021, the repercussions of this event will remain significant in the long term. Nor should the intervention in Libya a decade ago be forgotten. Joaquín GARRO DOMEŃO, in "The just war and the responsibility of protection on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the intervention in Libya", studies the international operation from the point of view of the morality and ethics of just war, leaving the legal aspects to international law specialists. And thirdly, it is the Asia-Pacific region that is emerging as the geopolitical centre of gravity of the global landscape. Once again, Magí-CASTELLTORT CLARAMUNT offers us a study of the interactions between the great and medium powers in this scenario in their article "Neo-cold war in Asia-Pacific and its impact on the Korean peninsula".

Focusing on Spain's National Security, the article "Spain's national security strategy 2021 and nuclear terrorism" by Carlos LLORENTE AGUILERA, introduces us to the always worrying issue of nuclear terrorism, offering a historical review of the different defence directives and other documents closely related to security that have contem-

plated the phenomenon of nuclear terrorism and the need to offer a timely response to this threat. In "Geopolitical position and defence of Spanish national interests: rethinking the Parsley Island incident 20 years on", Elena Carolina DÍAZ GALÁN proposes a definition of Spain's geopolitical position on the international chessboard, based on the now distant Parsley Island incident. Our national security is also closely linked to demographic trends in neighbouring Africa. "The difficult relationship between the European negative demographic curve, the African positive demographic curve and national security" by Francisco Javier CUENCA BUA, dissects the consequences for Spanish national security of the population decline in the Mediterranean region vis-à-vis the demographic boom in Africa.

The Anglo-Saxon concept of "readiness", equivalent to our "enlistment", is considered by Rodolfo ARROYO DE LA ROSA in "RAR Ready for what? Enlistment versus Readiness". And female leadership in the Spanish armed forces is the subject developed by Carlos GARCÍA DE PAREDES UCERO in "Introducing mentorship as a multiplying factor of female leadership in the Spanish armed forces: Lessons learned from the US model and the Spanish military's views on a possible voluntary programme".

The ever-present threat of jihadist terrorism is addressed by María Dolores CALVENTE MORENO in "The transformation of the global jihadist movement". Since their inception, the jihadist movements have continuously changed their tactics and methods, fluctuating through a series of stages whereby the movement asserted itself, consolidated itself, and ultimately denied itself by acknowledging its failures.

We end with two reviews. The first is the book "Has China won? The Chinese challenge to American primacy" by Kishore Mahbubani, which recasts the most traditional philosophical thought of Taoism, with the duality of "yin and yang" as diverse forces that seek their synthesis and which, once achieved, diverge again to re-integrate in an infinite cycle that seeks harmony and moral superiority. The two dichotomous forces would be represented by the People's Republic of China and the United States. The second review is of Luis de la Corte Ibáñez's book "History of jihad. From the origins to the end of the first Taliban emirate". The author painstakingly and aseptically produces a linear work in which he uses history as a leitmotiv, using bibliographical sources of the highest solvency. This is a rigorous account of the warlike jihad that begins with its origins and ends up focusing on its contemporary manifestations, and especially on the 9/11 attacks.

We hope you enjoy the content of this issue.

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Afghanistan: Intrahistory and Perspectives of a Misunderstood Conflict

At some point the Afghans will have to ride their bikes alone...

Mr. Secretary, there is no bike!

US Ambassador Khalilzad to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld[1].

Summary

The international mission in Afghanistan must be understood historically and prospectively. Support for the Northern Alliance altered the Afghan-Pakistani ecosystem, a key part of the Sino-Indian regional balance of powers. Besides, the reconstruction policy encouraged corruption and forgot the socio-economic function of opium, both discrediting the Afghan government. Finally, the US withdrawal must be considered under the strategic rivalry with China.

Keywords

Cite this article:

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1 Khalilzad, Z. (2016). The envoy. From Kabul to the White House. Macmillan.

Introduction

The withdrawal of US troops and the end of the last international intervention in Afghanistan has been the subject of considerable criticism, both journalistic and military, and has prompted numerous geostrategic analyses of its impact on the global chessboard. The majority of opinions assimilate the withdrawal to a defeat and the confirmation of the beginning of a new post-American era, in which China could consolidate itself as the new hegemon. These conclusions, however, seem to skip over some historical lessons since, for example, despite its defeat in Vietnam, the United States ended up as the victorious power from the Cold War. And Afghanistan was precisely one of the geographical enclaves in which this historical passage was written, with the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. Why did the withdrawal of troops from Vietnam not lead to a US military decline, while the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan led to the fall of the Iron Curtain? The answer to this question should allow us to interpret whether the US withdrawal from Afghanistan could be, this time, synonymous with its definitive military and economic decline, a scenario already sketched by Emmanuel Todd (2002) almost two decades ago[2]. At the same time, will the US withdrawal from Afghanistan mean China's continental consolidation? The Asian giant certainly has investments in neighbouring Pakistan through its "Belt and Road" initiative and could extend them to Afghanistan. But is there any guarantee that a single country, albeit the world's second-largest military and economic power, can achieve the success that has eluded a consortium of Western states for nearly two decades? Beyond the myth of Afghan invincibility, it is important to analyse the causes of the US withdrawal. For this, it is crucial to have a historical perspective, allowing for a comparison between the Soviet and US withdrawals, despite the time lag, and, above all, to understand the complex regional balance of power of which Afghanistan is only one component. For this reason, this article will analyse issues that complement the already abundant literature on the Afghan question: the impact of the vestiges of the Cold War on today's Afghanistan; the complex Afghan-Pakistani ecosystem and how it fits into the regional balance of power; the problems of corruption and drug trafficking in Afghanistan's accelerated modernisation; and the possible geopolitical impact of US withdrawal in the region and its strategic rivalry with China. The methodology to be used will be theoretical and descriptive, based on a review of specialised literature, especially the available official documentation, the autobiographies of political, military and diplomatic officials involved in the mission, and the literature of the experts who advised them. The aim is to avoid an ethnocentric assessment of the conflict, to incorporate indigenous views, and to provide an overview that allow lessons to be learned.

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2 Todd, E. (2002). Apres l'empire: Essai sur la decomposition du systeme americain. Gallimard.

Afghanistan. Tomb of empires?

Afghanistan has historically been *a country trapped by geography*[3]. Its borders were marked according to the interests of the British and Russian empires in the 19th century, regardless of local realities. The western provinces of Herat, Nimruz and Farah, for example, were once Iranian, but after the Anglo-Persian war they were attached to Afghanistan. This has not prevented strong cultural and religious ties from surviving, as 10 percent of the Afghan population is Shiite, the official Iranian religion. However, the biggest territorial dispute is the Afghan-Pakistan border, which also divides the territory of the Pashtun ethnic group, the country's political and military elite. The border runs along the 2,670 km Durand Line, which was established in 1893 to separate British India from Afghanistan. Although it was a formal agreement with then Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, no subsequent Afghan government has recognised its legitimacy, which has historically conditioned diplomatic relations between the two countries. Afghanistan thus appears to be a geographically artificial state, the *result of national insecurities and geostrategic interests*[4].

Image 1. The Durand Line, Afghan-Pakistani border (not recognised by Afghanistan) Source: Weaveravel

Afghanistan is not a state in the modern sense of the term, but rather a feudal space where ethno-provincial ties predominate and where the national government has hardly

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3 Tadjbakhsh, S. (2020). Appearance before the International Relations and Defence Committee. House of Lords. 28 October.

4 Paliwal, A. (2020). Appearance before the International Relations and Defence Committee. House of Lords. 28 October.

any resources to finance itself and defend its territorial sovereignty. In fact, the country has little in the way of a primary road network connecting Kabul, the capital, to the main provincial cities (*where the roads end, the Taliban begin*[5]). There is also no railway network, but only one railway with Uzbekistan. This serious historical shortfall has been partly compensated for by a well-established network of air hubs (Kabul, Jalalabad, Herat, Shindand and Mazar-i-Sharif), which, however, cannot make up for the serious deficiencies in ground infrastructure. This asymmetry can be explained by the country's culture of warfare: making it difficult for invaders to get supplies by taking advantage of the lack of river connections, which has traditionally facilitated ambushes.

However, it would be misleading to equate Afghan feudalism with medieval Europe, as it is a more modern version, incorporating capitalist functions alongside the traditional functions of the nobility. Warlords do not only provide security in a war-torn country, they also provide citizens with basic services and rulers with votes[6]; in other words, they occupy political space. The origin of Afghan neofeudalism is economic, as ethnic groups have historically controlled two of the country's main sources of income, drugs and mining, making the establishment of a strong central state impossible[7]. The opium trade is estimated to be equivalent to 6-11% of official GDP, almost twice as much as legal agricultural production, and is one of the main generators of employment for the population and income for groups such as the Taliban[8]. Mining, meanwhile, is largely illegal, marked by the unofficial extraction of the country's rich natural resources that are exported by smugglers across the unguarded borders with Pakistan. It is this regional financial autonomy that has made it difficult to establish a strong central power, which has historically been misinterpreted by great powers such as the UK, the USSR and the USA as weakness of the country as a whole.

Afghanistan, due to the traditional absence of a consolidated central power, is a country structured around the *nafuz* (*auctoritas*) of its leaders, which allows them to have social influence. Louis Dupree (1976), considered the first Western historian of Afghanistan, already pointed out that the unpopularity of the leaders imposed by the British Empire had been the main reason for their failure (they reinstated as emir an unpopular Shah Shuja, dethroned twice before, in 1809 and 1834)[9]. Surprisingly, this mistake has

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5 Attributed to Karl Eikenberry, General and former US Ambassador to Afghanistan.

6 Abbas, H. (2014). The Taliban revival: violence and extremism on the Pakistan-Afghanistan frontier. Yale University Press. "For Karzai, those warlords who controlled the terrain, especially customs revenues, were useful allies. In some cases, (...) they received prominent positions in the government in exchange for the fulfilment of US objectives". P. 86.

7 Gaston, E. (2020). Appearance before the International Relations and Defence Committee. House of Lords. 7 October.

8 De Lauri, A. (2020). Appearance before the International Relations and Defence Committee. House of Lords. 7 October. To put this in context, tourism in Spain accounts for 12 % of GDP.

9 Dupree, L. (1976). The first Anglo-Afghan war and the British Retrial 1842: the functions of history and folklore.

been repeated in the last two foreign occupations. Soviet rule thus relied on weak central institutions and a marked absence of charisma in its leaders. In the international occupation, the last president, Ghani, was a World Bank technocrat with no recognised *nafuz* and no political experience, and his predecessor, Karzai, was aligned with warlords and drug traffickers, and his brother was involved in several corruption cases[10].

It is Afghan neo-feudalism that also explains the absence of a professional army; the apparent lack of fighting spirit, so often commented on during the Taliban reconquest, is understandable because of the alternative social and family tasks that non-professional warriors have to undertake, as the CIA noted in a 1980 memo[11]: *The main loyalty of most Afghans is to their villages or extended families (...) men leave the battlefield because they have more important matters at home.* This attitude is what facilitated the Soviet defeat and the recent US withdrawal, but it also explains the rise and consolidation of Al Qaeda in the region: Osama bin Laden did not accept Afghan pragmatism, so he recruited Arab fighters for the *jihad* against the USSR, who, once it was over, settled in Pashtunistan for good[12].

However, it should also not be forgotten that pre-Soviet Afghanistan was beginning an indigenous process of modernisation led by the king, who controlled the army, the tribes, and the bureaucracy, and who sought to establish a parliamentary monarchy. The Communist coup d'état of 1978 installed a republic and undertook a failed agricultural reform, creating inefficient smallholdings that reinforced, rather than abolished, pre-existing vassalage and tribal relations, now converted into the ultimate support network[13]. This accelerated modernisation also seemed to ignore the fact that monarchies, because of their feudal origins, more readily admit a hierarchy of territorial sovereignties than a nation-state[14]. The insurrection against the new republic, perceived by the population as an intolerable self-colonisation, initiated a period of war that has lasted more than 40 years, in which nationalism has been linked to Islam but with a particularity: the Afghan Islamic parties, due to the war, operated more in rural areas than in the cities, so their structures have been strongly conditioned by clans and ethnicities[15]. Consequently, *all politics in Afghanistan is, in extremis, local*[16].

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10 Behzad, R. (2011). La estructura social en Afganistán [The social structure in Afghanistan]. IEEE Opinion Paper. "The main problem lies in the weakness of Hamid Karzai's government. In fact, there is no emblematic figure with enough power to run the country". P. 12.

11 Memorandum 309 of 8 August 1980. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v12/d309

12 Musharraf, P. (2006). Op. cit.

13 Grötzbach, E. (1985). The land reform of 1979 and its aftermath.

14 Bouthoul, G. (1971). La guerre. PUF.

15 Centlivres-Demont, M. (2015). Afghanistan: Identity, Society and Politics since 1980. DOI: 10.5040/9780755607433

16 Collins, J. J. (2011). Understanding War in Afghanistan. Washington, D.C., National Defense University Press. P. 13. A view that coincides with Ruiz, J. (2021). The role of regional actors in the

How could a quasi-feudal country with no consolidated central power defeat the Soviet empire, the leading military power of the time, and trigger its subsequent global collapse? Despite the myth enshrined by the British of Afghanistan as a tomb of empires, history confirms the importance of US support in creating a Soviet Vietnam. In a declassified memo, adviser Brzezinski suggested to President Carter that, in order to achieve this and prevent the USSR's advance into the Indian Ocean, the following steps should be taken[17]:

a) supporting the Afghan resistance;

b) reassuring Pakistan and encouraging it to help the rebels, which would require, in return, a reconsideration of the policy of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons;

c) encouraging China to help the rebels;

d) arranging with Islamic countries both a propaganda campaign and a covert action campaign to help the rebels;

e) denouncing Soviet actions in Afghanistan to the UN as a threat to peace.

The effectiveness of this combined strategy is borne out by the facts, as the USSR eventually left Afghanistan in 1989. However, the success of the Afghan campaign had three lasting effects: initiating the collapse of the Soviet empire, establishing Pakistan as the first (and so far only) Muslim nuclear power, and consolidating the Afghan-Pakistani terrorist ecosystem.

Certainly, the seeds of Soviet decline lay in its technological backwardness vis-à-vis the West, but the Afghan failure symbolised the failure of the Brezhnev doctrine, according to which every socialist country had to be kept, even by force, in the Soviet orbit. This imperialist vision, unbecoming of a self-styled Marxist power, had provoked the reticence of several socialist governments and the moral discredit of the USSR, especially after the occupation of Czechoslovakia (1968)[18]. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan made its renunciation of imperialism visible, so its satellite countries felt liberated and the Iron Curtain collapsed. However, what for Western democracies was a triumph of liberalism, for the Muslim world was a victory of Islam over communist atheism, bringing glamour to *jihad*, such as that in Kashmir against India and, in 2001, against the international occupation of Afghanistan.

Why did an originally moderate Islamic country like Pakistan generalise a restrictive interpretation of its religion? Because of the coincidence of General Zia's political inter-

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Afghan peace process. Revista del Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos. N.º 16, pp. 221–250: "... the Taliban insurgency is more about nationalism than global jihadism".

17 Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter. (26 December 1979). https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v12/d97

18 Valenta, J. (1980). From Prague to Kabul: The Soviet Style of Invasion. International Security. Vol. 5, 2 (Autumn).

ests, since Bhutto's detractors–a symbol of secular democracy–defended the implementation of *Sharia* (Islamic law), inspired by the Iranian Revolution (1979), as did the Saudi leaders, with whom the dictator collaborated in covert operations against the Soviet occupation, as recognised by Musharraf (2006)[19] and Bhutto herself (1988)[20].

A second, less talked-about effect of the anti-Soviet struggle was the rise of Pakistan as the first Islamic nuclear power as, in exchange for its cooperation, the US had to temporarily lower its non-proliferation demands[21]. With the Cold War and *jihad* over, subsequent sanctions on Pakistan for its first nuclear test plunged the country into a deep economic crisis and were seen as US disloyalty for not having sanctioned India's earlier tests.

Finally, the third effect of the anti-Soviet *jihad* was the consolidation of the terrorist ecosystem to fight the Afghan government. As Kasuri (2015), a former Pakistani foreign minister, summarises: *Zia turned a blind eye to mujahideen activities, such as selling arms on the Pakistani market and trafficking drugs to finance their jihad. By remaining unnecessarily involved in Afghanistan after the end of the Soviet withdrawal and subsequently jumping on the Taliban bandwagon, Pakistan lost the opportunity to provide important alternative routes for Central Asian trade and fossil fuel supplies to South Asia and the rest of the world.* Given its importance, this ecosystem will be analysed in the following section.

The Afghan-Pakistani ecosystem

As discussed above, Afghanistan is a geographically artificial state, geographically marked according to Western criteria that do not correspond to the indigenous reality. Its analysis must therefore dispense with political borders and pay attention to the anthropological spaces that are the *real actors of history*[22], the forces that explain the repetition of events in the same places. For this reason, it is important to analyse the region from a non-state-centric perspective, as *no two states in the modern world share a common fate as much as Afghanistan and Pakistan*[23].

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19 Musharraf, P. (2006). In the line of fire. Simon&Schuster. "The hardline mullahs and their seminaries received official sponsorship from Pakistan, the United States, Saudi Arabia and other allies during this period, and were accused of producing indoctrinated fighters against the Soviet Union. Therefore, no one complained when President General Zia ul-Haq introduced regressive Islamisation in the country, with Islamic laws and courts to operate in parallel with the normal judicial system". P. 162.

20 "Zia consistently used Islamic rhetoric to justify his repressive measures and terrorise some segments of society"; Bhutto, B. (1988). Autobiographie. Hachette. P. 428.

21 Telegram from Ambassador Hummel to the State Department. (18 May 1978) Islamabad.
"To continue to mortgage our entire relationship with Pakistan on the issue of non-proliferation, despite what has happened and may happen in the wake of the Kabul coup, will be to promote the erosion of our last remaining instruments of influence and prestige". Afghanistan (*Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1977-1980, Volume XII). Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State.

22 Todd, E. (1990). L'invention de l'Europe. Éditions Seuil.

23 Hasan, K. (1962). Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations. Asian Survey. Pp. 14-24.

There are two backbones that would constitute an Afghan-Pakistani ecosystem: the Kabul (or Kunan) river basin and the territory of Pashtunistan. The Kabul River and its tributaries flow through several Afghan provinces before entering Pakistan and eventually flowing into the Indus, Pakistan's only river basin. In addition to being the base for crops, it is a natural artery connecting the two countries, which was already used by Alexander the Great to invade India. Of the nine rivers shared between the two countries, the Kabul is the most significant; it irrigates 12 % of Afghanistan's land area and provides 26 % of the annual national flow, but including Pakistan, the river basin supports almost 25 million people. The two countries also have a very similar economic structure, with agriculture generating 25 percent of Afghan GDP and 19 percent of Pakistani GDP. For this reason, climate change, which has reduced rainfall in the region by 60%, and decades of war, which has left 80 % of Afghanistan's rural population without access to clean water, could be the source of hostilities[24]. Indeed, there is a thesis that the 1978 socialist *putsch* in Afghanistan was instigated by the tribes most affected by the severe droughts of the 1970s [25].

The second backbone of the ecosystem is the Pashtunistan region, the land of the Pashtun ethnic group, which straddles the Afghan-Pakistan border, divided by the Durand line mentioned above. The Pashtuns have historically been the leaders in both Afghanistan and Pakistan[26] because of their tribal rather than feudal organisation, based on a traditional Athenian-like direct democracy, which has given them greater autonomy from the authorities[27]. The pre-Soviet Afghan monarchy had the support of the Pashtun tribes in both countries (Pakistan did not exist at the time) because they were united, not only culturally, but also in their animosity towards the British[28]. With Pakistani independence, both governments engaged in a contest for full annexation of Pashtunistan, which weakened them and made possible the socialist *putsh* and subsequent Soviet occupation of Afghanistan[29]. Probably as a result of this experience, parts of the Pakistani military establishment have advocated a confederation with Afghani-

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24 Devasher, T. (2016). Pakistan: Courting the Abyss. HarperCollins.

25 Aziz, K. (2013). Need for a Pak-Afghan Treaty on Management of Joint Watercourses. Criterion Quarterly. 2, p. 4.

26 Karachi, the former capital, is the city with the largest Pashtun community.

27 Khan, I. (2011). Pakistan: A personal history. Bantam press. Khan is currently Pakistan's prime minister.

28 Nor has a common nationalist sentiment, in the Western sense of the term, prevailed among tribes on both sides of the border. Indeed, in 1960, a USSR-instigated invasion of Pakistan by Afghan tribesmen failed when the Pakistani Pashtuns did not go along. This failure reaffirmed US diplomacy in recognising the official status of the Durand line as the border. Memorandum 175 from the Secretary of State to the President. (15 October 1960). Office of the Historian. US State Department.

29 The possibility had already been hinted at by US diplomacy two decades in advance: "This dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan prevents the two countries from adopting a joint defence programme against possible Soviet aggression". Telegram from the Ambassador to Afghanistan to the Department of State. (1953). Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Africa and South Asia, Volume XI.

stan (sometimes referred to as "strategic depth"), rejected by the leadership because of its geopolitical implications[30].

Image 2. Major ethnic groups in Pakistan Source: University of Texas.
https://maps.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/pakistan_ethnic_80.jpg

The Afghan-Pakistani ecosystem is a centrepiece in a complex balance of power in the Indian subcontinent that involves not only Afghanistan but also three neighboring nuclear powers: Pakistan, India and China. The historical circumstance of Pakistan and India being born on the same day has made comparisons and rivalry inevitable. In its first decade of existence, for example, India had consolidated a democratic path with a constitution, two general elections (1952 and 1957) and an army guardian of the system, while Pakistan had neither a stable government nor capital[31] and had not been able to hold elections for lack of a constitution. This is partly explained by the fact that Pakistan's delimitation was very weak from the outset, as its founding was justified more in the idea of protection (an Israel for Muslims in Hindu-dominated British

30 For example, Bhutto (1988), after the Soviet withdrawal, proposed demanding Afghanistan's recognition of the Durand line as the official border in exchange for support for a smooth political transition; the Pakistani military establishment, however, advocated a confederation between Muslim brothers. Prime Minister Bhutto rejected the proposal because it "would give the Indians an excuse to intervene in Afghanistan". P. 548.

31 The initial capital of the new state was Karachi, the birthplace of Pakistan's founder. It was not until almost two decades later that a new capital, Islamabad, was built.

India) than self-determination for a colonised territory. The absence of common history, culture, language, or ethnicity in the territories that would eventually constitute the new Pakistani nation meant that ethnolinguistic impulses were more powerful than Islam[32]. As Wali Khan said, *I have been a Pashtun for 6,000 years, a Muslim for 1,300 years and a Pakistani for 25 years*[33]. The Indian-backed independence of East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, and Pashtunistan's dispute with Afghanistan created an identity crisis in a young nation[34]. The result has been, over the years, a Pakistani policy of suspicion of India, marked by belligerence, which has ended up weighing down both the country itself[35] and Afghanistan, as *Pakistan's persistent efforts to destabilise Afghanistan are deeply rooted in Islamabad's paranoia about India*[36].

	HDI position	Average annual growth HDI (1990-2019)	Life expectancy	Expected years of schooling	Average years of schooling	Gross national income (2017 ppp)
China	85	1.47	76.9	14.0	8.1	16,057
India	131	1.42	69.7	12.2	6.5	6,681
Bangladesh	133	1.64	72.6	11.6	6.2	4,976
Pakistan	154	1.13	67.3	8.3	5.2	5,005
Afghanistan	169	1.83	64.8	10.2	3.9	2,229

Table 1. Comparison of human and economic development. Source: Human Development Report (2020)

As can be seen in the comparative table, according to the UN Human Development Index, India (131) and Bangladesh (133) have reached a similar level of progress, clearly outstripping Pakistan (154) and Afghanistan (169). With India's growth path entrenched, Afghan and Pakistani leaders have often relapsed into their historic spiral of self-destructive rivalry. It was the US refusal to stop supporting Pakistan that prompted Afghanistan's socialist turn and its subsequent Soviet occupation (1979). The Afghan government at the time feared that an economically and politically stable Pakistan could undermine its strategy of linking Pashtunistan to Kabul. During the subsequent civil war, Pakistan supported the Taliban and India supported Kabul to prevent an Afghan government close to Islamabad. Pakistan currently fears that a stable Afghan government would invest in infrastructure, especially hydro-energy, which would affect a country traditionally subject to water shortages, blackouts and, recently, high energy prices; for Islamabad, as long as Afghanistan is a weak

32 Devasher, T. (2016). Op. cit.

33 Hilton, I. (2001). The Pashtun Code. The New Yorker. 3 December.

34 Haqqani, H. (2018). Reimagining Pakistan: transforming a dysfunctional nuclear state. HarperCollins. Haqqani, a former Pakistani ambassador to the US.

35 According to Haqqani: "Pakistan's recurrent economic crises are partly a product of the widespread disdain for economic activity in a culture that extols the virtues of the warrior rather than the trader". Haqqani, H. (2018). Op. cit.

36 Khalilzad, Z. (2016). Op. cit.

country, the Durand border will be maintained and Pakistan will have more water for its agriculture.

However, beyond the pure balance of power, the Afghan-Pakistani ecosystem that has sheltered the Taliban during the two decades of Western occupation has its origins in the US policy of supporting Pakistan in its fight against Soviet Afghanistan, discussed above. While undoubtedly successful in the primary objective of collapsing Soviet space, the specific policies caused two of the biggest problems in today's Afghanistan through the Pakistani communicating vessel: arms and drug trafficking[37]. The almost free access to weapons (the Kalashnikov culture) has allowed the maintenance of Afghan neo-feudalism; the sale of drugs, the financing of the Taliban[38]. As for Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, it was fear of a possible extremist uprising that for years prevented the US from intervening in Pakistan to capture Bin Laden and the other al-Qaeda leaders, and delayed military withdrawal for a decade[39]. Dictator Musharraf had warned President Bush about the violation of territorial sovereignty as a trigger for the possible fall of his government[40]. For this reason, the pursuit of terrorists was delegated to Pakistani forces, who were, admittedly, remarkably successful, with the capture of ringleaders such as Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Abu Zubaydah, Abu Faraj al Libbi and even the father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, A.Q. Khan, under suspicion of collaboration with North Korea[41]; however, the raid against Bin Laden had to be executed directly by the US in 2011, without official Pakistani support[42].

Pakistan's crucial role in the *jihad* against the godless Soviet empire has been little understood in Western media. Certainly the dictator Zia ul-Haq was its main instigator in order to perpetuate himself in power with Western help. Thanks to the support of the more radical *mullahs* in the provinces bordering Afghanistan, the Pashtuns adhered to their puritanical interpretation of Islam. History confirms that, unlike Napoleon or Hitler, Pakistan, with invaluable American help, succeeded in overthrowing

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37 Kasuri, former Pakistani foreign minister: "Zia turned a blind eye to mujahideen activities, such as selling arms on the Pakistani market and trafficking drugs to finance their jihad. By remaining unnecessarily involved in Afghanistan after the end of the Soviet withdrawal and subsequently jumping on the Taliban bandwagon, Pakistan lost the opportunity to provide important alternative routes for Central Asian trade and fossil fuel supplies to South Asia and the rest of the world". Kasuri, K. M. (2015). Neither a hawk nor a dove. An Insider's Account Of Pakistan's Foreign Policy. Penguin books.

38 It is estimated that 65 % of the Taliban's income comes from opium, even though its cultivation is against Islam.

39 Bolton, J. (2020). The room where it happened. Simon&Shuster.

40 Bush, G. W. (2010). Decision points. Crown Publishing Group.

41 According to Khan (2011), in contravention of Article 4 of the Constitution, which prohibits the extradition of untried residents.

42 Musharraf noted in his memoirs that Bin Laden could be in Konar (northern Afghanistan) where there were Saudi settlements, as he did not enjoy the support of Pakistani tribes. However, he was killed in Abbottabad (northern Pakistan), where Umar Patek, the perpetrator of the 2002 Bali bombings, had been arrested months earlier. Musharraf, P. (2006). In the line of fire. Simon&Schuster.

Russia and was one of the architects of the end of the Cold War. The Afghan *jihad* is therefore incomprehensible without incorporating the crucial Pakistani role. Afghanistan and Pakistan must therefore be seen as communicating vessels. It is precisely the neglect of this ecosystem by foreign powers that has made both the success of Afghanistan's modernisation policies and effective international counter-terrorism impossible. Indeed, several analysts have criticised Pakistan's double-dealing in the war on terror, forgetting the motivations that led the country to support it initially and reinterpret it later. When the Bush II administration demanded Musharraf's support for the international coalition, it forgot the issue of Pashtunistan and the fact that the Taliban are Pashtuns, the second-largest ethnic group in Pakistan. Their rivals were the Northern Alliance of Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras, supported by Russia, India, and Iran and, after 9/11, the US. Pakistan had been a Western ally during the Cold War not for ideological but for strategic reasons, to gain a geopolitical foothold in the face of a socialist India and a Soviet Afghanistan (*the last bastion of the free world*, according to Thatcher) and for support for its nuclear programme. In the case of 9/11, the reasons were economic and budgetary, not ideological: support for the fight against terrorism gave Pakistan access to international credit on very favourable terms, which allowed it to cut its annual foreign debt by half, sanctions were lifted, it was granted funds for counter-terrorism operations, it received billions of dollars in aid, and the US opened its domestic market to Pakistani products and services[43]. In addition, bank remittances from Pakistani migrants skyrocketed after 9/11 as the US pursued the traditional method of *hawala* transfers, also used by terrorist networks to fund themselves. In 2004, Pakistan recorded a surplus in its balance of payments for the first time when in 1999 it was a bankrupt state[44]. Thus, once the country was economically liberated from its external dependence, its leaders were able to adopt a policy closer to their strategic interests, namely to bring the tribes under state control, to secure a pro-Pakistan Afghanistan and a pro-China alliance to rival their Indian antagonist[45]. It was the year in which military operations were launched against the tribals, who voted against Musharraf in the 2002 elections, and against those Taliban who had declared *jihad* against Pakistan, sparking a revolt that had to be put down with US support[46]; it is also the year from which Taliban attacks against NATO forces are even supported[47].

43 Bush, G. W. (2011). Op. cit.

44 Musharraf, P. (2006). Op. cit.

45 Abbas, H. (2014). Op. cit.

46 President George W. Bush acknowledged: "Over time, it became clear that Musharraf would not or could not deliver on all his promises. Part of the problem was Pakistan's obsession with India. (…) Pakistani forces pursued the Taliban much less aggressively than they pursued al-Qaida. Some members of the Pakistani intelligence service maintained close links with the Taliban. Others wanted an insurance policy in case the US left Afghanistan and India tried to gain influence there. Whatever the reason, Taliban fighters fleeing Afghanistan took refuge in the tribal regions of Pakistan". Bush, G. W. (2010). Op. cit. P. 213.

47 Alexander, C. (2011). The Long Way Back: Afghanistan's Quest for Peace. HarperCollins. (former Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan).

It is important at this point to understand why Pakistan supports the Afghan Taliban without fearing its own Talibanisation. This is mainly for two reasons, according to Khan (2011), the current Pakistani Prime Minister: a) the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in Pakistan are already almost independent (e.g., they have their own judiciary and police, overwhelmingly Pashtun, and almost none of the federal laws apply)[48]; b) the Afghan Taliban *succeeded not because of their ideology, but because they promised the people the rule of law after years of war, atrocities, and corruption by warlords[49]*. Pakistan, unlike Afghanistan, is a de facto military republic, where the army is the guardian of the nation. Moreover, terrorist groups are seen by the military establishment as *a force multiplier and leverage for its influence[50]*. Thus, international counter-terrorism has been used by Pakistan's dictators not only to entrench themselves in power, but also to impose a state presence in the historically autonomous tribal territories. However, despite close geographical and cultural ties, it seems a Pakistani miscalculation to imagine a Taliban Afghanistan as a satellite of Islamabad. In fact, the previous Taliban government (1996-2001) never recognised the Durand Line as an official border. For this reason, the majority opinion among political leaders is that the strong common ecosystem will sooner or later force the two governments to normalise their relations and reach agreements on the basis of sovereign equality. As Afghan President Ghani said, *the problem is not peace with the Taliban; the problem is peace between Pakistan and Afghanistan[51]*.

Accelerated modernisation, corruption and illegal economy in Afghanistan

Initially designed to overthrow the Taliban government and destroy the al-Qaeda terrorist network, the military mission eventually evolved into a civilian national reconstruction project for which foreign armed forces were not prepared[52]. Designed to ensure the defence of their fellow citizens at home, international missions expose troops to unprecedented challenges, in which an understanding of local realities is crucial[53]. In the case of Afghanistan, it was not only about knowing the official languages (Dari, Pashto) and more than ten tribal languages, but also about capturing

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48 In fact, Pakistani police have to enter without weapons or uniform. Abbas, H. (2014).

49 Khan, I. (2011). Op. cit.

50 Haqqani, H. (2018). Op. cit.

51 Quoted in Mutual distrust: the Af-Pak story. (12 July 2015). Daily Times,

52 As Condoleezza Rice, for example, acknowledges in her memoirs: "The cultural, political and geographical weight was in the southern Pashtun belt (...). While the CIA had well-developed relations in the north, there was much less contact with opposition leaders in the Taliban's southern stronghold". Rice, C. (2011). No higher honor. A memoir of my years in Washington. Crown Publishers. P. 66.

53 Elliott, C. (2015). High Command: British Military Leadership in the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars. Oxford University Press.

moods. After almost four decades of armed conflict, the population suffered from a *learned helplessness* syndrome, assuming the inevitability of conflict and the impossibility of rebuilding the country by their own means. As Khalilzad (2016) acknowledges: [President] *Karzai wanted to restore that lost world* [pre-Soviet Afghanistan], *but was strangely passive. I knew what had to be done. The problem was that he wanted the United States and the rest of the world to do it. (...) was channelling a broader cultural problem: the Afghan people had lost their self-confidence.*[54] This sentiment initially led to less local reluctance than expected, which was also helped by the fact that few troops were sent to avoid a sense of occupation among the population (following Dupree's advice)[55]. The success of the purely military operation to dismantle the Taliban regime accelerated, in turn, the social transformation: schools accepted female students again, young people studied English and computers, there was no famine, no civil war and no Pakistani collapse, and the Afghan people defied Taliban threats by going to vote[56].

Over time, however, the proposed Western model collided with reality. One of the most representative cases was the creation of the Afghan army and its indigenous police force, projects not initially envisaged despite the scarcity of international troops deployed; only because of the deteriorating security situation were they considered the best alternative to further deployment of foreign troops. However, the provision of advanced Western weapons and management systems to a largely illiterate force without adequate learning capacity or institutional infrastructure created an unsustainable long-term budgetary dependency[57].

Another example of the failure of Western measures to adapt to Afghan tradition was the reform of the banking sector, inspired by the US model and in contravention of *Shariah* principles. The collapse of Kabul Bank in 2010, its bailout (equivalent to 6% of GDP) and the impunity of the elite involved (including President Karzai's brother), far from being a manageable banking crisis, became a symbol of the corruption of the Western system[58]. As Ruíz Arévalo (2015) points out, *Afghanistan has taught us that the effect that corruption can have on post-conflict stabilisation processes cannot be underestimated; the combined effect of delegitimisation of governments and parallel strengthening of*

54 Khalilzad, Z. (2016). Op. cit.

55 Dupree, L. (1976). Op. cit.

56 This was the main window of opportunity missed to stabilise the country, according to Calvo Albero, J. L. (2021). Three missed opportunities in Afghanistan. IEEE Opinion Paper.

57 Sigar. (2017). Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. P.V. September. https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/sigar-17-62-ll.pdf

58 According to the report of the Independent Anti-Corruption Committee: "The cost of the Kabul Bank crisis should not only be understood in monetary terms, as the abuse of trust in financial and governmental institutions also has a social cost. This cost undermines the efforts of the government and the international community to build viable institutions in Afghanistan".

https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2012/ijacmec-kabul-bank-inquiry.pdf

groups seeking to subvert the established order can render any stabilisation effort useless[59]; not in vain, in 2020 the country ranked 165 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2020 (173 in 2019) and has been repeatedly mentioned by the population as one of their greatest daily frustrations[60].
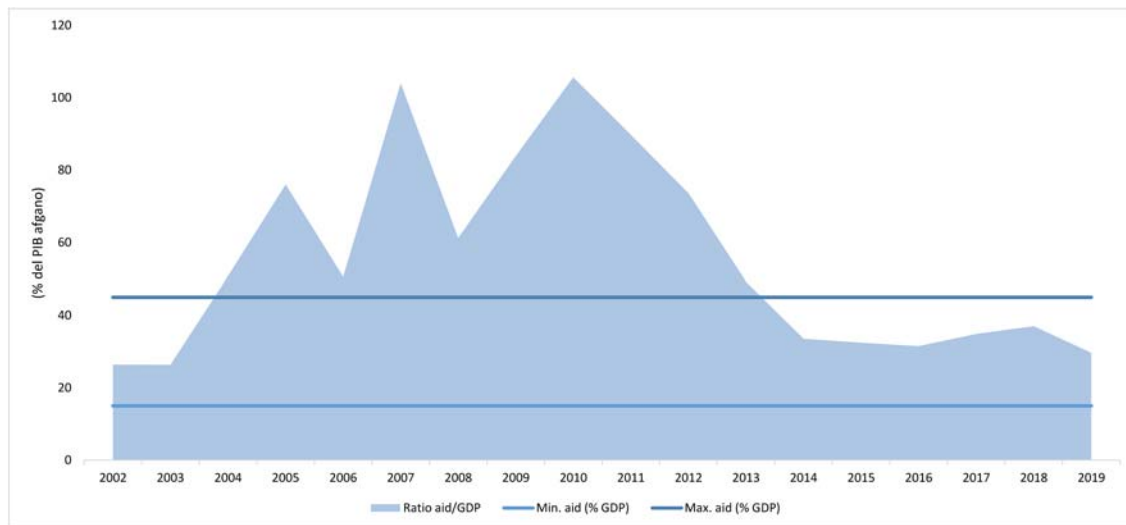
Graph 1. International aid to Afghanistan and recommended levels (2002-2019)
Source: SIGAR

There have been many causes of pervasive corruption; according to the UN, there is an underexplored link between violence and corruption as a driver of conflict. Also, the impunity caused by the state's inability to exercise its authority throughout the national territory. According to SIGAR (the Special Inspectorate General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, created by the US Congress), the inability to verify the veracity of invoices paid to companies on the ground due to insecurity perpetuated a climate of widespread corruption[61]. However, it would be wrong to attribute corruption to strictly indigenous issues. In fact, this debate would divert attention from the main cause, namely the structural incentives of society. The economic literature confirmed, more than two decades ago, that aid to ethnically diverse and decentralised states correlates with high corruption[62]. The explanation is simple: development aid agencies are accountable to the parliaments (and taxpayers) of their respective countries, so the local population, the beneficiaries of their activity, have little say. In a democratic state, citizens can influence the decisions that affect them; in a subsidised country, the elites isolate themselves and ignore the citizenry. *Politicians in Afghanistan do not*

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59 Ruiz Arévalo, J. M. (2015). Corruption as a threat to post-conflict stabilisation. Lessons learned in Afghanistan. IEEE Opinion Paper.

60 Unama. (2020). Afghanistan's fight against corruption: Crucial for Peace and Prosperity. June.

61 Sigar. (2020). Quarterly report. 30-01-2020. www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2020-01-30qr-section2.pdf

62 Among others, Svensson, J. (2000). Foreign Aid and Rent-Seeking. Journal of international Economics; Schleifer, A. and Vishny, R. (1993). Corruption. Quarterly Journal of Economics. 108.

represent the public (Clark, 2020); *corruption is "silent terrorism". It siphons off money that should be spent on services for Afghans and undermines their trust.* (Lyons, 2020) have been statements in testimony before the British parliament confirming that Afghanistan has been yet another case of exogenous corruption[63]. Indeed, former British ambassador to Afghanistan, Sir Richard Stagg, considered that *corruption may improve as Western involvement recedes*[64].

How can the bureaucratic system of development aid itself generate more corruption than local administration? The answer is *absorptive capacity*, the maximum amount of foreign aid that a state can manage, usually estimated at between 15% and 45% of the recipient country's GDP. It is a concept coined by the World Bank as early as 1949[65] which, however, has been complex to systematise due to the casuistry of each state. In this regard, it is worrying that there has been no practical progress in the development policy accompanying military stabilisation and reconstruction operations[66]. Unfortunately, the Afghan case has been paradigmatic: the total volume of foreign aid far exceeded the recommended ceilings, even exceeding the local GDP in some years (2007: 103.9%; 2010: 105%); however, no public administration is prepared to manage foreign aid equivalent to its annual GDP; as Easterly (2006) states, *the rich have markets, the poor have bureaucrats* because, with the arrival of foreign aid, the sector that grows the most is the public sector, which has to justify to a foreign taxpayer the destination of the funds received[67]. As Graph 1 shows, the US pumped enough money into the country to reform it completely. However, the principle of budget annuality seems to have created a counter-productive cycle of ambitious targets and short-term demands. The inability of Western societies to accept that there is no fast track to modernising a country was combined with the Afghan inability to digest massive foreign aid. Graph 1 also illustrates how much pressure the various US administrations have been under to deliver tangible mission results to the taxpayer, parliament, and journalists. Unfortunately, such an arduous task as the reconstruction

63 Kate Clark, Co-Director of the Afghanistan Analysts Network, and Deborah Lyons. Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in their testimonies to the International Relations and Defence Committee. House of Lords. 18 September 2020.

64 Stagg, R. (2020). Testimony before the International Relations and Defence Committee. House of Lords. 23 September.

65 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). (1949). Fourth Annual Report to the Board of Governors, 1948- 1949. Washington, D.C. P. 8.

66 "The main constraint on Bank financing in the development field has not been a lack of money but a lack of well-prepared and planned projects ready for immediate implementation", the World Bank concluded in 1949. In 2021, 72 years later, the General Inspectorate for Afghanistan (SIGAR) came to a similar conclusion: "Demands for rapid progress encouraged officials to identify and implement short-term projects with little regard for host government capacity and long-term sustainability. US agencies (...) were judged (...) by the number of projects completed and dollars spent". www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2021-07-30qr.pdf

67 Easterly, W. (2006). The White Man's Burden: why the west's efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good. The Penguin Press.

of a country is incompatible with the political urgencies and demands of Western budgetary rules. As Ghani recognised before he became president of Afghanistan, *rather than being a catalyst for institutional capacity building, quick impact projects can become an instrument of division, resentment, and corruption*[68]. Thus, rather than having a local origin, corruption was an imported phenomenon.

It is the absence of a strong administration that explains, in turn, the subsistence of an illegal economic stratum, based on the neo-feudalism of warlords and drug production. According to the *World Drug Report 2021*, Afghanistan produced 85% of the world's opium[69]; unfortunately, more than two decades of international occupation have failed to reduce the opium-dependence of the Afghan economy, as Graph 2 demonstrates[70].
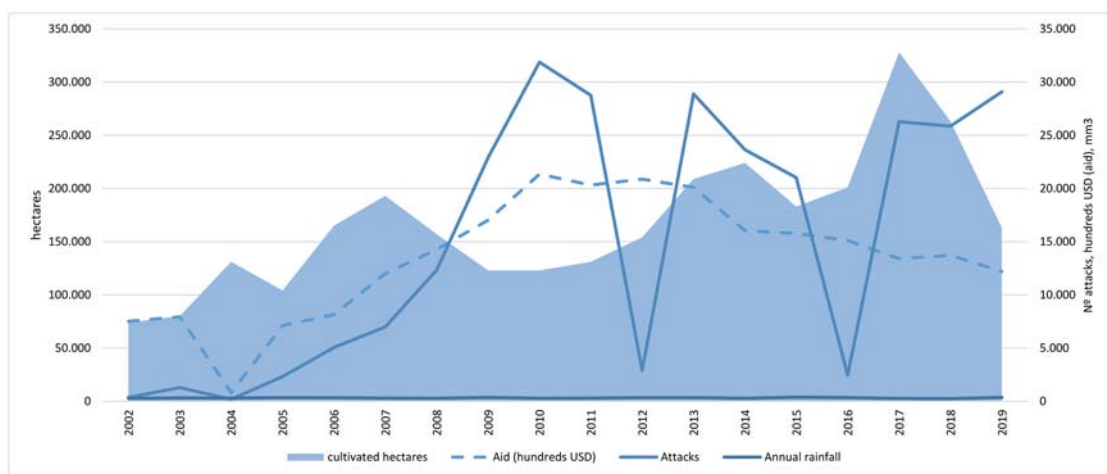
Graph 2: Opium cultivation, international aid, attacks and rainfall
(2002-2019). Sources: UN, SIGAR

If neither insecurity nor droughts seem to explain the explosion of Afghan opium cultivation, what then is the reason for the prevalence of the illegal opiate layer? Despite general economic theories, which assume that opium cultivation is more profitable than other crops[71], empirical analysis on the ground also refutes this thesis. In Afghanistan, apples or apricots can be more profitable even than opium, like onions in Pakistan or

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68 Ghani, A. (2009). Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World. Oxford University Press. P. 215.

69 https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/wdr2021.html

70 Interestingly, there does not seem to be a correlation with violence or annual rainfall, but there is a stronger correlation between foreign aid and conflict, especially in the first decade of occupation.

As for the low correlation between drought and cultivation, this could be explained by some policies. The 1999-2001 drought coincided with the Taliban government's ban on opium cultivation, which eradicated almost 90% of opium production. Also, during the 2008 drought, the governor of Nangarhar issued a ban on opium cultivation.

71 Opium and its derivative, heroin, being addictive substances, from a strictly economic point of view, would be profitable products as they have guaranteed consumers.

garlic in Lebanon[72]. The origin therefore appears to be systemic. Mansfield (2001a) already observed in Afghanistan a negative correlation between opium cultivation and better access to land, water and agricultural markets, i.e., the more economic progress, the less opium cultivation[73]. However, such a correlation does not imply, as reality has shown, that simply injecting money is enough to eradicate poverty and opiate cultivation. These are two parallel, non-intersecting strata: the legal, money-centred stratum and the illegal, opium-based stratum. In the illegal Afghan (and some Pakistani) stratum, opium is a store of value, replacing the function of money in the legal stratum, supported by a solvent state. As a low-weight, non-perishable product, cultivable year-round, with a stable consumer market, opium operates as a currency in the illegal stratum.

In addition to the fungibility of opium, a second impediment to its elimination is its role as credit collateral. In Afghanistan, a poor farmer wishing to borrow money must use the *salaam* system, whereby they sell their future harvest in advance for a price, usually half the present market value, to earn income to buy food, tools, and medicine during the winter[74]. This informal system, valid for any agricultural product, is better suited to opium, as it is an annual crop, than to other seasonal fruits. The early sale of crops also forces indebted families to continue growing opium until they are able to pay off their debts[75]. Consequently, the explosion of opiate cultivation in Afghanistan in recent decades could be a credit boom in which the collateral is not a real estate mortgage but the value of future harvests.

Breaking this vicious circle is not easy, not with huge injections of money, and certainly not with crop eradication. In an institutionally weak country like Afghanistan, barter is more valuable than buying and selling, which prevents permeability between the illegal and legal strata; in these circumstances, only the richest can monetise opium in dollars, hence the injection of astronomical sums of money into the economy not only did not eliminate the illegal economy, but enriched the landowners[76]. As for eradication, in the eyes of the poorest, it amounted to spoliation and their absolute marginalisation, as they were deprived of their only source of wealth. For landowners, it was a cartel war, as eradication was practised by warlords who used their institu-

72 Ward, C. and Byrd, W. (2004). Afghanistan's opium drug economy. https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/158651468767124612/pdf/311490PAPER0AF100SASPR0n0051Dec01071.pdf

73 Mansfield, D. (2001a). Alternative Development in Afghanistan: The Failure of Quid Pro Quo. http://scottshelmandvalleyarchives.org/docs/nar-01-03.pdf

74 Mansfield, D. (2001b). The Economic Superiority of Illicit Drug Production: Myth and Reality. http://scottshelmandvalleyarchives.org/docs/

75 De La Corte, L. and Hristova, H. (2012). Role of illicit trafficking in the AF-PAK scenario. IEEE Framework Document.

76 As Khalilzad (2016) criticises: "The UK was in charge of counter-narcotics, but its programme lacked the necessary capacity and resources, and was conceptually flawed. The British had initially decided to pay poppy farmers not to plant the illegal crop, which, of course, created perverse incentives to plant it in order to be paid to stop doing so".

tional legitimacy as members of the government to eliminate their competitors in the opium market; these were not really policies aimed at reducing drug consumption but at creating a shortage of supply to increase the price of drugs, which encouraged their cultivation[77]. The result was an unrelenting insurrection, as Elliott recalls: *As the eradication programme progressed, many of the out-of-work opium farmers would become a source of dollar-a-day foot soldiers for the Taliban. When these amateur soldiers died in battle, resentment against the British among the families of the dead warriors only increased*[78].

Rather than money or eradication, the most effective measures should have been irrigation and fertilisation of the arid Afghan soil[79]. Poorer farmers and labourers go into debt to buy fertiliser. Improving agricultural productivity would have been one of the most effective ways of emancipating the poorest strata of the country. Also the development of a less agricultural and more diversified economy, which would enable alternative sources of wealth; this is the strategy of alternative development. Unfortunately, despite massive aid investments over the past two decades, counternarcotics programmes have failed to address the root of the problem, namely the monetary function of opium in Afghanistan. *Devoid of a clear understanding of the multifunctional role of opium production and how to replace it, alternative development largely engaged in horse-trading, making offers of assistance to local authorities and elites within communities in exchange for poppy elimination.*[80]

The failures of anti-corruption and anti-narcotics policies illustrate, once again, the inefficiency of international development aid, designed to achieve impossible grandiloquent goals and based on a bureaucracy incapable of understanding local mentality and culture. As SIGAR rightly summarises: *The US government clumsily imposed Western technocratic models on Afghan economic institutions; trained security forces in advanced weapons systems they could not understand, let alone maintain; imposed formal rule of law in a country that deals with 80 to 90 percent of its disputes through informal means; and often struggled to understand or mitigate cultural and social barriers to supporting women and girls. Without this prior knowledge, US officials often empowered power brokers who took advantage of the population or diverted US aid from its intended recipients to enrich and legitimise themselves and their allies. Lack of local knowledge meant that projects intended to mitigate conflict often exacerbated it, and even inadvertently funded insur-*

77 Priego, A. (2010). Drugs, instability and underdevelopment in Afghanistan: solutions to the vicious circle. IEEE Opinion Paper.

78 Elliott, C. (2015). Op. cit.

79 "Opium is one of the hardiest plants but also one of the most devastating to the soil". Priego, A. (2010). Op. cit.

80 Mansfield, D. (2020). Trying to Be All Things to All People: Alternative Development in Afghanistan. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004440494_006

gents[81]. Under these circumstances, which made the mission's civilian success impossible, Presidents Trump and Biden were forced to terminate it.

US withdrawal from Afghanistan and its impact on Central Asia

Despite the impediments to the mission's civilian success, most analyses have interpreted the US withdrawal from Afghanistan as a military defeat and a loss of influence in Central Asia to China, ignoring the asymmetry of the two countries' regional interests. The second world power's interests in Afghanistan are threefold: economic (exploitation of Afghan natural resources), geostrategic (border protection) and domestic (containment of Islamic radicalism). On the other hand, the US has had only specific motivations in Afghanistan: drug trafficking[82], Soviet expansionism and terrorism. With the latter secured by the agreement with the Taliban, the US administration had no reason to justify an endless war that drained resources from domestic reconstruction projects. This section will therefore analyse what chances China has to succeed in a country where other military powers have previously failed, and how the withdrawal from Afghanistan fits into US foreign policy.

Afghanistan and the Sino-Pakistan alliance

To answer the first question, it seems appropriate to analyse the Sino-Pakistan alliance and its impact on Sino-Afghan relations. For Pakistan, China is the main ally, even more so than the US; in fact it was Pakistan that facilitated Nixon's famous visit to Beijing in 1972. This close relationship dates back to the very origins of the country, when China, unlike Afghanistan, immediately recognised the young nation at the UN, forging an anti-India alliance[83]. This in turn explains the close defence ties: they jointly developed the Al-Khalid tank, the JF-17 fighter jet (a replacement for the US F-16) and several submarines; Pakistan is also the only country with military access to China's BeiDou satellite navigation system[84]. However, this military pre-eminence is not without social contestation; although a security force was set up specifically to protect Chinese investments, it has not been able to prevent several terrorist attacks amidst a climate of strong criticism for the marked imbalance in economic relations

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81 Sigar. (2021). What we need to learn: lessons from twenty years of Afghanistan reconstruction. August. P. XI. https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf

82 Before the Soviet invasion, the US even considered sending an expert on drug trafficking as ambassador to Afghanistan.

83 "The Pakistanis saw no contradiction in seeking an alliance with the West against communism while courting communist China as an all-weather friend because of their shared interest in containing India". HAqqani, H. (2018). Op. cit.

84 Defense Of Japan. (2021). https://www.mod.go.jp/en/publ/w_paper/wp2021/DOJ2021_EN_Full.pdf

(Pakistan is the most indebted of the 52 countries that make up the Belt and Road Initiative)[85]. Nor has a recent scandal over high electricity tariffs charged to Islamabad by Chinese companies helped[86]. However, all these adversities have not prevented the development of strategic projects such as ML-1, the railway that is to connect Karachi with the industrial Punjab to Peshawar, near Afghanistan, and which is to be financed almost entirely by China. The fact that the Pakistani military supports better connectivity with the world's second-largest military power when it could be an open door to invasion illustrates the extent to which rapprochement with China, as with the US, is driven by an obsession with countering India's power[87].

This military pre-eminence in Sino-Pakistani bilateral relations could, however, condition Afghanistan's decision to join the Sino-Pakistani economic corridor project, where even the chairman of the responsible agency is a retired general. For the time being, considering that the main Chinese projects in Afghanistan are copper mining in Ainak and oil in the Amu Darya river valley, perhaps China's diplomatic policy at the UN will be limited to supporting the Taliban regime in decisions of energy impact (as it has already done with Sudan or Iran, for example). However, the great remaining challenge for China is regional stability and, more specifically, forcing the Pakistani military establishment to give up its chimerical goal of parity with India. As discussed above, Pakistan's human and economic development has lagged behind India's, making it impossible to sustain costly defence investments. One possible scenario would be an Afghan-Pakistani confederation based on water security, allowing Afghanistan to start building dams on the Kabul River. The key, however, will be who provides the funds to pay for such infrastructure—China or India. For New Delhi, *water scarcity is one of Pakistan's biggest security challenges, along with terrorism and religious extremism*[88], so it may adopt a pragmatic policy and allow China to take the lead. Nor should one rule out possible support from Saudi Arabia in exchange for nuclear cooperation, a more worrying scenario[89].

Another factor to consider is the possible collapse of the Afghan formal economy, critically dependent on Western aid[90]. As was the case with the first Taliban government, the countries that have formed the international coalition are unlikely to recognise the new Afghan government either. In addition to the diplomatic interlocution problems it may cause (as was evident after the 9/11 attacks, which reinforced Pakistan's mediating role), the immediate effect will be economic. The loss of aid

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85 It should be remembered that China finances the infrastructures it builds with credits, which increases the public debt of the participating countries and makes it difficult to transfer skills to local workers.

86 Haqqani, H. (2020). Pakistan Discovers the High Cost of Chinese Investment. The Diplomat. 18 May. The cost overrun is estimated at $3 billion.

87 Kasuri, K. M. (2015). Op. cit.

88 Devasher, T. (2016). Op. cit.

89 Khalilzad, Z. (2016). Op. cit.

90 Fitrat, A. Q. (2021). The Taliban Are About to Preside Over Economic Collapse. https://www.barrons.com/articles/afghanistan-economic-collapse-central-bank-governor-51630358426

revenues (60-70% of the budget) could bankrupt the Afghan central government. The US Treasury, true to protocol, could seize most of the Afghan assets deposited in its financial institutions, which could prompt similar actions by other states. Without access to money, the Afghan economy would be suffocated.

Far from being a problem for the Taliban, the collapse of the Afghan formal economy would allow the dismantling of the imposed Western order and a return to the traditional Muslim economic model, which rejects usury and economic bankarisation and advocates extreme *laissez-faire*, based on de-bureaucratisation. From an international perspective it would be the equivalent of an autarkic model, with little foreign trade and a strong deterioration of Kabul as a capital city, as was the case previously [91]. The problem could arise with the upsurge in the illegal economy, especially opium cultivation, the Taliban's main source of funding. In this context, China would cease to have economic influence in the country and would have to focus on geostrategic and security aspects. However, it should not be ruled out that, given its close alliance with Islamabad, Beijing would be more successful in the fight against terrorism than Washington. The outstanding issue would be the possible rescue of the formal Afghan economy [92].

US foreign policy towards China

Having analysed the Sino-Pakistani relationship and its influence on the Afghan-Pakistani ecosystem, it is necessary to analyse the US withdrawal in the context of its foreign policy. Far from accepting the cliché of supposed Chinese ascendancy in the face of apparent American decline, the narrative of withdrawal should be interpreted in continental strategic terms, especially in the context of Sino-US conflict in the Taiwan Strait, the region with the greatest likelihood of direct confrontation between the two major contemporary military powers. During the international occupation of Afghanistan, China has not been a major donor, nor has it contributed militarily, a clear example of free riding, since, as a neighbouring nation, it has benefited for free from the regional stability guaranteed by the international presence [93]. This circumstance has facilitated the concentration of pressure on the Taiwan Strait, where most of its troops reside, as it is considered the main vector of action. The international withdrawal from Afghanistan represents a change of scenery, requiring the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to deal

91 Marsden, P. (1999). The impact of the Taliban on the afghan economy. DOI: 10.5040/9780755607433.ch-034

92 Egeland, J. (2021). Afghanistan Is Facing a Total Economic Meltdown. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/opinion/afghanistan-taliban-g20-aid.html

93 Hass, R. (2021). How will China seek to profit from the Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan. https://www.brookings.edu/

with multiple fronts, a circumstance that, according to some analysts, could make it difficult for the PLA to react [94].

Image 3: Systemic collapse strategy. Source: Prepared internally based on Wuthnow (2020)

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan must therefore be interpreted in terms of geographical containment. China, unlike the US, has complex relations with its neighbors, most of them nuclear powers. The new scenario will require security arrangements with the Taliban, Pakistan, India, Russia and Iran, which could strain the Sino-Russian alliance. Although China is the main Pakistani ally, it is their common Indian antagonism that has forged a strong unnatural alliance between an Islamic republic and an atheistic communist state oppressing Muslim minorities; this ontological incompatibility will require China to keep a low diplomatic profile in its management of the Afghan-Pakistani ecosystem, which should divert attention (and tension) away from the Taiwan Strait[95]. In turn, from a Muslim perspective, withdrawal from Afghanistan should reduce the Islamic world's hatred of the US

94 Zhang, W. (2014). Silk Road and Security of China's West Border: On the Historical Conditions and Laws of the Rise of Forces in the Middle East and Suggested Responses. World Economics and Politics. 3.

95 Wuthnow, J. (2020). System Overload: Can China's Military Be Distracted in a War over Taiwan? National Defense University Press.

and the West, while allowing Pakistan to fight Islamic terrorism with legitimacy and greater autonomy[96].

US foreign policy, moreover, will be conditioned by budgetary expenditures. Neither society nor parliament will accept costly interventions without direct benefits for a declining middle class. The wastefulness of the Afghan and Iraqi interventions have cemented the "America First" maxim[97]. Consequently, the rivalry with China is likely to be settled by a dual strategy of geographic containment and economic protectionism, limiting both its territorial expansion (the annexation of Taiwan) and its commercial power[98]. In this new context, the United States will only have to limit itself to forging strategic alliances aimed at blocking Chinese regional expansionism through a possible systemic collapse that forces its military to consider multiple conflict scenarios with several of its neighbours, most of them nuclear powers. The withdrawal from Afghanistan, therefore, should not be equated with a US decline similar to the Soviet one, but with a change of strategy and priorities for Asia.

Conclusions

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan has been interpreted as the beginning of a post-American era and a possible Chinese consolidation, as was the case with the former USSR. However, the reality is more complex. Washington withdrew after achieving its main anti-terrorist objective (dismantling Al-Qaeda), while the USSR gave up on its geopolitical aspirations, unable to control a neo-feudal state like Afghanistan, a country with no army or central power, and with charismatic regional military leaders. This withdrawal did mark the beginning of US global hegemony, but it was mortgaged by the legacy of its anti-Soviet struggle: the emergence of Pakistan as an Islamic nuclear power in the most nuclearised region on the planet (along with China, Russia, and India); the legitimisation in the Islamic world of the *jihad* against infidels; the strengthening of Sino-Pakistani military cooperation, now converted into an anti-Indian alliance for control of Afghanistan; and the consolidation of the Afghan-Pakistani terrorist ecosystem, a key region for both countries' water security and their territorial integrity. US withdrawal from Afghanistan would thus symbolise not military decline, but the impossibility of nation-building on the basis of the anti-Soviet legacy.

To this legacy should be added the ethnocentrism of Western bureaucracy, which saw development as a mere question of money, leading to corruption, "silent terrorism"

96 According to the current Pakistani president, the moment the "US leaves Afghanistan, the anti-American sentiments that fuel radical Islamism will dissipate, allowing Pakistan to deal with terrorism on its own terms". Khan, I. (2011). Op. cit.

97 Bolton, J. (2020). Op. cit.

98 Castelltort, M. (2021). El posible conflicto bélico entre Estados Unidos y China: reconsiderando la «Trampa de Tucídides» [The possible war conflict between the United States and China: reconsidering the "Thucydides Trap"]. Revista del Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos.

because of local inability to absorb huge international donations, and drug trafficking because of ignoring the monetary function of opium in one of the world's poorest nations; the explosion of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan actually amounted to a credit boom whose eradication swelled the Taliban troops with desperate farmers.

The US withdrawal would therefore be a strategic retreat: to delegitimise Muslim anti-Americanism and bring about a systemic collapse in Beijing, by transferring to it the challenge of directly managing Islamic terrorism on its borders and forcing it to coordinate its Afghan policy with India and Pakistan, opposing nuclear powers, which could reduce tension in the Indo-Pacific and Taiwanese arenas.

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Kaliningrad: a Russian strategic enclave in the midst of tension with NATO and the EU

Abstract

On the southern shores of the Baltic Sea, and between the borders of Poland and Lithuania, lies a Russian Oblast of 15,100 square kilometres in area. Its distance from Pskov Oblast, the closest geographical point in Russia, is more than 400 kilometres. This region is a strategic enclave in the rear of the European Union and NATO's military dominance, which undoubtedly provides a presence as disturbing as provocative.

In this territory, Russia has deployed numerous units, vehicles and military equipment. The arms build-up on the borders with NATO in recent years has only further reinforced the martial and operational character of this «island» dependent on Moscow. The development and impact of this situation is of great interest for the defence and security dynamics of our environment, as well as the responses to it.

Keywords

Russia, European Union, NATO, Kaliningrad, Baltic Sea, Poland, Lithuania

Cite this article:

Vertebration and historical context of the enclave

Konigsberg–the historical name of the city of Kaliningrad until 1946–was founded in the 13th century after the Prussian crusades of the Teutonic Knights. Under Polish, Bohemian or Prussian rule–among others–until the 19th century, during the Second Reich (1871-1918) it was one of the main cities of the German Empire. After World War II and the Russian siege of the earlier Nazi advance in the aftermath of the war, the city came under USSR rule. With the death of Mikhail Kalinin in 1946, the Soviets changed the name of Königsberg to Kaliningrad (city of Kalinin), in honour of the late Bolshevik revolutionary.

This was only the first step in the profound Russification of the city that was to follow. The official language was changed from German to Russian, and the city was repopulated with citizens from other territories of the USSR, in addition to post-war reconstruction.

But what really reinforced this strategy on the part of the Kremlin, in Sukhankin's words, were the measures taken in terms of physical separation from adjacent territories–Poland and Lithuania, also under Soviet rule–and the prohibition of unauthorised access to the Oblast[1]. Kaliningrad was thus set up as a citadel on the fringes of the Soviet federal regions and under the direct orbit of Moscow. Two fundamental reasons justified this strategic articulation of what had just become an enclave: firstly, a symbol of the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in what had been historical Prussian territory; and secondly, the establishment of a military and naval base in one of the most sensitive points of the Baltic Sea—the beginning of the disturbing and provocative presence mentioned above.

Although little is known about the size and scope of the military deployment in Kaliningrad during its Soviet era, there is a prevailing view among those who have researched it, which assumes that it was sufficiently large and massive to be seen not only as a checkpoint against the Allies in the Baltic Sea and Eastern Europe, but also as a bastion to entrench the subjugation of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

When the USSR collapsed in 1991, both Poland and Lithuania had already disassociated themselves from Moscow's communist orbit. Kaliningrad, however, remained unchanged as Soviet territory, leaving several options open in the face of this historic *impasse*. Naturally, a continuist path whereby the enclave would continue with its military and strategic character in the new Russia; on the other hand, the possibility of structuring the area as a link between Eastern Europe and the rest of the continent; or even the formation of a "Baltic Hong Kong"[2].

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1 Sukhankin, S. (2018). Bridge to nowhere: Kaliningrado on geopolitical map between Russia and Europe. Doctoral thesis supervised by Francisco Veiga (thes. dir.) Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Pp. 59. [Date consulted: 1 October 2021]. Available at: https://www.educacion.gob.es/teseo/imprimirFicheroTesis.do?idFichero=6Iryn c5s9zE%3D

2 Lopata, R. (2008). Kaliningrado y las relaciones UE-Rusia: ¿obstáculo u oportunidad? [Kaliningrad and EU-Russia relations: obstacle or opportunity?]. Documentos CIDOB [CIDOB Documents]. Europa, N.º 3, pp. 6. Available at: https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/artic ulo?codigo=3049194. [Date

In the end, as is well known, the first option prospered: Kaliningrad has since become a Russian "island" in the middle of two countries that have recently separated from the USSR. The military presence was considerably reduced thereafter. The Cold War was over, and with it the border tension that had existed between the two blocs. However, in 1994 it was declared a special defence region under the direct command of the commander of the Baltic Navy. This decision was contextualised by NATO's near expansion in the region: in 1991 the Visegrad Group[3] was formed, which had as one of its objectives the entry of its member countries into NATO. This was followed by Poland in 1999 and Lithuania in 2004.

But the changes were not only at the military level. Under Boris Yeltsin, several key economic and political reforms were carried out that redefined the enclave's status. The significant reduction of the military presence brought with it the dismantling of much of the arms industry that had hitherto proliferated in Kaliningrad. This conversion was driven by the Kremlin towards the extraction of oil and amber in the area, as will be detailed below. However, the major economic reform was the creation of the Special Economic Zone, which, in order to correct trade imbalances with neighbouring countries and boost the territory's growth, established tax and tariff advantages. According to Saiz Álvarez, the aim was to combat the steady decline of the Oblast and reduce the flow of investment outwards, or even to other Russian economic centres such as St Petersburg.

Between 2000-2005, with Vladimir Putin as Russia's leader, a series of new reforms were adopted, generally aimed at greater understanding and cooperation with the EU—without this meaning the disappearance of the most fundamental reticence and the presence of such an extraordinary border. These were measures on transport, trade, air fares and social policies, among others, which were more open-minded and adapted to the profound changes that were to take place in Eastern Europe as a result of the incorporation of so many countries into the EU. In short, a turn of the rudder to avoid economic isolation in the face of the imminent removal of trade barriers in neighbouring countries.

At the time, according to Torrecuadrada, European concerns about the enclave were mainly based on border management, environmental pollution, the fight against AIDS, and relations in the field of justice and home affairs[4]. In his article on the implications of the Baltic Sea for Spain, Rodríguez de Espona emphasised the risk posed

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of consultation: 1/10/2021]. The Baltic Hong Kong option refers to a similar configuration to the Chinese city based on its port, resources and location.

3 Formed by Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia.

4 Torrecuadrada García-Lozano, S. (2005). Uno de los problemas derivados de las nuevas fronteras europeas: Kaliningrado. [One of the problems arising from the new European borders. Kaliningrad]. Agenda Internacional [International Agenda]. N.º 22, pp. 177. [Date consulted: 5 October 2021] .Available at: https://dialnet.unirioja.es/buscar/documentos?querysDismax.DOCUMENTAL_TODO=torrecuadrada+kaliningrado.

by the new naval routes of the mafias, as well as their spread from Kaliningrad or St Petersburg[5]. Similarly, Karpenko went so far as to claim that both Russia and the EU were then defining their strategies for achieving stability within the framework of the dynamic development of multilateral cooperation[6]. In short, notoriously less intense relationship factors than have been reached in recent years as discussed below.

However, the big stage on which this new relationship became apparent was the celebrations marking the 750th anniversary of the founding of the city of Kaliningrad. These included slogans referring to the city as an enclave "in the heart of Europe". In fact, Putin invited Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder to this meeting, which seemed to open a new period of EU relations with its giant neighbour, were it not for what happened with Poland and Lithuania. Both countries were not invited to the celebrations, a gesture that was perceived with considerable unease in the two new EU member States.

This event can be interpreted as a prologue to the change of attitude that would take place in the following five years (2005-2010). Russia relaxes the path of appeasement and begins to act more as a power oriented towards a set of strategic interests that will prevail over understanding with the West. López Mora blames this new attitude, among other reasons, on the EU's neighbourhood policies, which were seen by Moscow as a challenge to its geopolitical interests[7].

One of the most representative examples of this new dynamic of geostrategic action would be the start of tensions from 2007 onwards over missile and missile shield deployments. The international press noted at the time that this was the worst scenario in relations between the two countries since the end of the Cold War. The US and Russia were once again experiencing an escalation of tension in the border space between the European allies and Russian territory. This situation seems to have normalised and has continued up to the present day, even intensifying markedly at certain moments, although it has also experienced a few breaks that have not been fruitful in the long term. Thus, one of the first glimpses of this was the threatening–yet anoth-

5 Rodríguez de Espona, R. J. (2008). El mar Báltico como escenario estratégico: implicaciones para España [The Baltic Sea as a strategic scenario: implications for Spain]. Jorge Juan Chair, University of La Coruña. Pp. 180. [Date consulted: 5/10/2021]. Available at: https://ruc.udc.es/dspace/bitstream/handle/2183/9034/CC95art10.pdf?sequ ence=1&isAllowed=y

6 Karpenko, A. (2006). Regionalization and identity: the subjectivity of Kaliningrad. NISCI Discussion Papers, No. 10, pp. 280. [Date consulted: 5 October 2021]. Available at: https://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/UNIS/article/ view/UNIS0606130277A/28145

7 López Mora, F. (2015). La Unión Europea y la Federación de Rusia en sus dinámicas históricas contemporáneas: cooperación institucional y recelos de vecindad [The European Union and the Russian Federation in their contemporary historical dynamics: institutional cooperation and neighbourhood misgivings]. Cuadernos de Estrategia [Strategy Papers]. N.º 178, pp. 88. [Date consulted: 6 October 2021]. Available in: https://www.academia.edu/19305220/_La_Uni%C3%B3n_Europea_y_la_ Federaci%C3%B3n_de_Rusia_en_sus_din%C3%A1micas_hist%C3%B3ricas_contempor%C3%A1neas_cooperaci%C3%B3n_institucional_y_recelos_de_vecindad_en_Rusia_bajo_el_liderazgo_de_Putin_La_nueva_estrategia_rusa_a_la_b%C3%BAsqueda_de_su_liderazgo_regional_y_el_reforzamiento_como_actor_global.

er–deployment of tactical rockets in 2008 in Kaliningrad, an operation with which Dmitry Medvedev responded–once again–to the reinforcement of the US missile defence shield in the Eastern European-Baltic space[8]. This action had already been warned only a year earlier by Sergei Ivanov, Russia's deputy prime minister[9]. It is worth noting that this context is the same as that of the South Ossetia war, an equally contentious and disruptive focus of Russia's relations with NATO.

In 2010, Barack Obama and Medvedev signed the START III agreement in Prague; a truce in the midst of worsening relations between Russia and the US and its allies. The pact established a notable reduction in the deployment of missiles, ballistics and arsenals by the two blocs, which meant a new path of appeasement that, although it extended until February 2021–the treaty's deadline–, did not represent a change of trend in the medium term.

In 2013, the Ukraine crisis erupted, a new cause of deep rifts between the US and the European Union and Russia. The conflict would lead to the annexation of Crimea by the latter and a war in the east of the country that is still raging today. The new Russian manoeuvres did not only extend around Ukraine's neighbour: Kaliningrad, among other strategic points, was militarily reinforced with deployments that prompted Poland and Lithuania to call for greater protection from what they perceived as a compulsion[10]. The operation involved the installation of Iskander missiles, extremely powerful projectiles, as will be discussed in more detail in the section on Russian deployment.

In short, recent years have not only confirmed the strategic character of the Kaliningrad enclave, but have also re-launched it as such at the mercy of the political and military moves taken by influential actors in its context.

Characteristics of the territory and strategic location

Kaliningrad's geographic location and resources make it a strategic location that no state would want to get rid of. Russia has shown that it is fully aware of these features and their potential ramifications.

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8 El Periódico de Extremadura. (6 November 2008). Rusia redobla el desafío a la OTAN enviando misiles a Kaliningrado [Russia redoubles its defiance of NATO by sending missiles to Kaliningrad]. [Date consulted: 6 October 2021]. Available at: https://www.elperiodicoextremadura.com/internacional/2008/11 /06/rusia-redobla-desafio-otan-enviando-45223488.html

9 Thomson Financial. (4 July 2007). Rusia amenaza con instalar misiles en el enclave de Kaliningrado [Russia threatens to install missiles in the Kaliningrad enclave]. [Date consulted: 7/10/2021]. Available at: https://www.eleconomista.es/mercados-cotizaciones/noticias/240315/07/07/Rusia-amenaza-con-instalar-misiles-en-el-enclave-de-Kaliningrado.html

10 Gallego, J. (2014). Polonia llama a consultas a los aliados de la OTAN por sentirse amenazada por Rusia [Poland calls NATO allies for consultations because it feels threatened by Russia]. El Mundo, 3 March. [Date consulted: 7/10/2021]. Available at: https://www.elmundo.es/internacional/2014/03/03/5314dae1268e3ef1758b4580.html
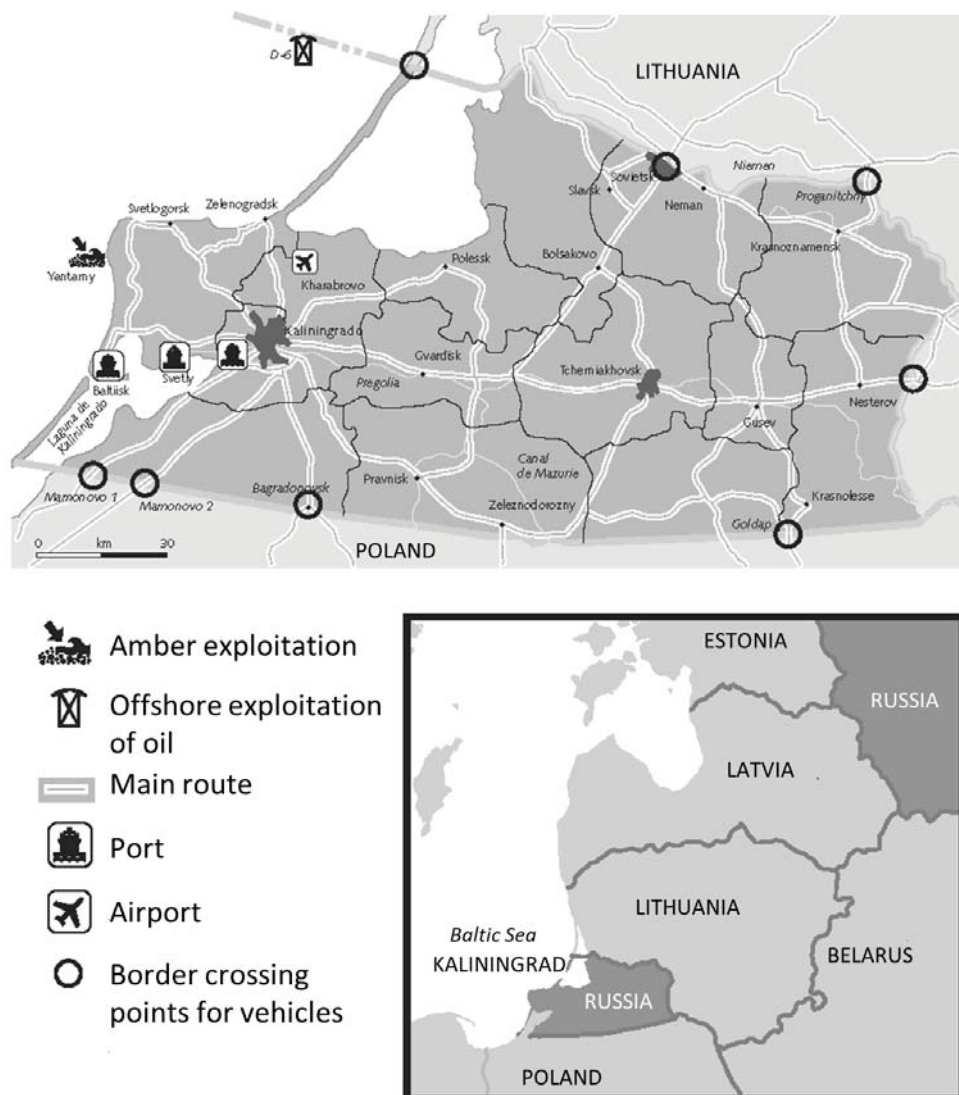
Figure 1. Map and location of Kaliningrad. Source. La Documentation française, 2004, in LOPATA, Raimundas: «Kaliningrado y las relaciones UE-Rusia: ¿obstáculo u oportunidad? [Kaliningrad and EU-Russia relations: obstacle or opportunity"?] Documentos CIDOB [CIDOB Documents]. Europa, 2008, No. 3. Available at: https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=3049194 Date consulted: 04/10/2021.

The Oblast, as noted above, borders politically with Lithuania and Poland almost equally in border area. The rest of the region's contours are the shores of the Baltic Sea, and in particular, the most prized shores of the Baltic Sea in Russia. This is because it is the only port in the country –together with Svetly[11]– in the whole of this Sea, which does not freeze at any time of the year thanks to its warm waters. And outside it, it only happens in the Black Sea port of Sevastopol—despite the countless kilometres of coastline of the Ural region. Thus, although the HQ of the Russian Baltic Fleet is in

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11 The port is also located on the Vistula Lagoon, on the north bank of the mouth of the Pregolia, about 15 kilometres from Kaliningrad.

Kronstadt[12], the majority of the naval deployment is stationed in Kaliningrad, specifically at the Baltiysk base[13].

This naval base is home to everything from large ship refuelling depots to numerous cranes and docks for ship repairs. It is also linked by rail to the port of Svetly; the town of Primorsk; and the Yantar shipyard. The importance and deployment of this base make it the starting point for numerous Russian Navy operations ranging from the fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean to logistical support in the Red Sea, such as deployments to South Africa[14] and Port Sudan. For his part, Villanueva López justifies the enormous importance of this dock with up to five fundamental reasons. The first of these was advance protection for St Petersburg and the Leningrad Oblast. Second, Russian projection capabilities that threaten foreign ports. Third, support for grey zone operations. Fourth, the strategic listening and radar systems so close to NATO. And lastly, the installation of anti-ship and anti-aircraft systems adjacent to it[15].

These conditions have also meant that one of Russia's largest shipyards is also located on the shores of the enclave. In this case, the Yantar is located at the mouth of the Pregolia River, through which ships are floated directly into the Vistula Lagoon. The volume of naval production and its strategic location make the shipyard particularly sensitive for the Russian fleet. In recent years, amphibious assault ships[16], guided missile frigates[17], and huge fishing trawlers[18], among others, have been built there—both for the national fleet and for foreign powers or even private companies.

12 Port located on the island of Kotlin, 30 kilometres from St Petersburg, and linked by road both north and south to the nearest mainland extremities.

13 Treviño, J. M.ª. La Marina rusa en el mar Negro [Russian Navy in the Black Sea]. Defence.com Magazine. [Date consulted: 8/10/2021]. Available at: https://www.defensa.com/ayer-noticia/la-marina-rusa-en-el-mar-negro

14 Noticiario de la Revista General de Marina [News from General de Marina Magazine]. News year 2020, June, volume 278, pp. 990. [Date consulted: 30/6/2021]. Available at: https://armada.defensa.gob.es/archivo/rgm/2020/06/rgmjunio20.pdf

15 Villanueva López, C. (2019). La geopolítica de las bases militares (XIII) [The geopolitics of military bases (IX)]. Documento de Investigación del Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos (IEEE) [Research Document from the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies]. [Date consulted: 8/10/2021]. Available at: https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_investig/2019/DIEEEINV06-2019GEOPOLITICABASESXIII.pdf

16 Industrias pesqueras. El astillero ruso Yantar ultima la entrega de su segundo arrastrero que operará en Kamchatka [Russian shipyard Yantar is finalising the delivery of its second trawler to operate in Kamchatka]. [Date consulted: 10/6/2021]. Available at: https://industriaspesqueras.com/noticia-59067-sec-Naval

17 Galaxia militar. (2020) Rusia entregará dos fragatas de misiles guiados a la India para 2024 [Russia to deliver two guided missile frigates to India by 2024]. [Date consulted: 8/10/2021]. Available at: http://galaxiamilitar.es/rusia-entregara-2-fragatas-de-misiles-guiados-a-la-india-para-2024/

18

One of the main natural resources of the Oblast is its amber deposits. While the Baltic Sea is the main source of this fossilised resin, Kaliningrad is the area with the most fossilised resin. Its main exports are for jewellery and ornamentation, with Poland being the most common destination for this type of work. The importance of these exports has led the Russian government to promote the creation of a cluster with the aim of boosting this industry and establishing conditions conducive to its growth, as stated in the cluster's public file[19].

Likewise, the enclave is equally rich and decisive due to its natural oil reserves under the depths of its Baltic coastline. With a large volume of crude oil (6.73×10^{-3} tcf of shale oil), offshore developments in its prospective areas produce more than what is extracted in Poland and Lithuania.

The creation of the aforementioned Special Economic Zone led to the enclave becoming a point of entry and/or manufacture for numerous products that are either already manufactured in Europe or are manufactured in Kaliningrad from products coming from there. This is the case of the powerful automobile industry –for example, the reconditioning of German BMW vehicles and the assembly of Chevrolet and KIA– or the production of a third of the televisions sold in Russia. Kaliningrad is, in a sense, one of the main trade gateways in western Russia. However, this special status has failed to correct the imbalances in wealth levels compared to the rest of the country. It remains a relatively poor region in Russia, where black market and illicit activities such as smuggling and the mafia are rampant. The illegal tobacco trade has repeatedly preoccupied European authorities and has even been the subject of debate in the European Parliament. The main reason for this concern on the EU side is the high volume that it has reached: the value of this activity has been estimated at USD 1 billion[20]. In this way, Herrero De La Fuente went so far as to describe the Special Economic Zone project as a failure[21]. In the author's opinion, tax and tariff advantages have not revitalised its economy, which is significantly inferior to that of its neighbouring countries.

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19 Government of Russia. Clúster de la industria del ámbar de la provincia de Kaliningrado [Cluster of amber industry of Kaliningrad oblast]. [Date consulted: 8/10/2021]. Available at: https://gisp. gov.ru/gisip/pdf/clusters_gen_info/193/es/Cl%C3%BAster%20de%20la%20industria%20del%20 %C3%A1mbar%20de%20la%20provincia%20de%20Kaliningrado.pdf. The document positions the cluster with a key specialisation in jewellery products, and extends additional specialisations to the production of furniture, construction materials and glass, among others.

20 Shleynov, R., et al. Made to be smuggled: Russian contraband cigarettes 'flooding EU'. The Center for Public Integrity. [Date consulted: 8 October 2021]. Available at: https://publicintegrity.org/health/ made-to-be-smuggled/. This article was referenced in an oral question in the European Parliament in October 2013. The questioner was German MEP Michael Theurer on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control. [Date consulted: 8 October 2021]. Available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/ doceo/document/O-7-2013-000105_ES.html?redirect

21 Herrero de la Fuente, M. (2003). El futuro de Kaliningrado ante la ampliación de la UE y la OTAN [The future of Kaliningrad in the face of EU and NATO enlargement]. Constitutional Notebooks of the Fadrique Furió Ceriol Chair. No. 43-44, pp.52. [Date consulted: 9/10/2021]. Available at: https:// dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=1129348

However, new investments are on the horizon that could give an economic boost to the region, which is comparatively poorer than the rest of Russia, let alone its adjacent EU neighbours. There are plans to build a huge battery factory that will have a major impact on the Oblast. Russia's state-owned nuclear energy company Rosatom will have completed a plant specialising in energy storage and lithium-ion cell production by 2026[22]. The development of tourism in the area could also become another engine of growth for the enclave. Re-establishing itself as a prominent holiday resort–as it was during the Soviet era thanks to its seaside resorts near the Baltic coast–the Vistula river ridge, or the former sites of old Napoleonic battles could revitalise Kaliningrad.

The Oblast is also home to two of the main radars of the Russian air traffic control and reconnaissance system on the Baltic coast: one at the Baltiysk naval base, the other at the town of Primorsk. Together with those at Donskoye and Yantarne, these stations are the cardinal points of Russia's western aviation security[23]. In addition, two other secondary radars are also located there: one at Kaliningrad airport and the other in the town of Chernyakhovsk, which is 90 km from the regional capital.

On the other hand, the Suwalki Corridor is another factor that not only reinforces the geostrategic character of the enclave, but also reinforces it in the event of contingencies. In the event of a conflict with Russia in the area, the likelihood of the Kremlin ordering the occupation of such a crucial thread would, according to experts, be very high[24]. At 96 kilometres long, it would not only link the enclave to the rest of Russia, but also isolate the Baltic republics from NATO by land, inhibiting Lithuania's border with Poland. Van Herpen, who compares the Suwalki runner to the Fulda runner[25], contextualises this fine line with the ease with which Russia could reach Tallinn and Riga: 60 hours in a space where it is very easy to be cornered[26].

22 Roca, J. A. (2021). Rosatom construirá una gigafábrica de baterías en Kaliningrado [Rosatom to build a giant battery factory in Kaliningrad]. El Periódico de la Energía, 17 September. [Date consulted: 8 October 2021]. Available at: https://elperiodicodelaenergia.com/rosatom-construira-una-gigafabrica-de-baterias-en-kaliningrado/

23 Zyla, M. (2014). Kaliningrad oblast in the military system of the Russian Federation. Security and Defence Quarterly. Vol. 25. No. 3, pp. 114. [Date consulted: 10/10/2021]. Available at: https://sin.akademia.mil.pl/people/details/marek.zyla

24 Iriarte, D. (2017). El «corredor de Suwalki» la franja de la que depende la seguridad de Europa [The "Suwalki Corridor" - the strip on which Europe's security depends]. The Confidential, 21 August. [Date consulted: 10/10/2021]. Available at: https://www.elconfidencial.com/mundo/2017-08-21/franja-suwalki-seguridad-europa-rusia_1429582/

25 Corridor between Hesse and Thuringia with Frankfurt, which in the Cold War separated the GDR and the FRG through two huge underground tunnels, through which a tank attack could have taken place.

26 Van Herpen, M. (2017). La respuesta al nuevo imperialismo ruso: el dispar destino de Ucrania, Belarús y las Repúblicas Bálticas [The response to the new Russian imperialism: the disparate fates of Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic Republics]. CIDOB Monographs Collection 2017. [Date consulted: 10 October 2021]. Available at: https://www.cidob.org/es/articulos/monografias/war_in_peacetime_

Escalation of tension

From 2013 to the present, Russia has extensively strengthened its military presence in Kaliningrad, adding to its growing importance for a Kremlin in growing rivalry with the EU and NATO. The hiatuses of understanding between the giant and its Western neighbours have been dissipating and stabilising into a new relationship of tension and distance.

Between 2015 and 2016, NATO installed a missile defence shield–also known as an anti-nuclear shield–to protect Europe from external threats from the East. It was equipped with eight SM-3 type ballistic missiles, disaggregated into three different batteries. While this dam had been put in place according to the Atlantic alliance in the face of hypothetical attacks from Iran or North Korea[27], Russia took it as a new border and military challenge. Putin made a move and gave an equally forceful response. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, while stressing that it was not a threat to Moscow, acknowledged that the new armour was capable of shooting down some Russian missiles as well[28].

Taken as a new affront, the Kremlin ordered the installation of the controversial Iskander missiles in response to the new missile shield. The remarkable and sophisticated qualities of this type of missile set alarm bells ringing in Allied defence structures. The Iskander can reach a speed of *match 5* (hypersonic), and can fly at an altitude of 40,000 metres, beyond the recognition of the vast majority of radars. However, its weakness is its electronic fragility, as it can be deflected or hindered by radio frequency signals[29]. Despite this drawback, its risk, speed and ability to evade radar poses a potential danger to EU and NATO borders. So far, this has been perhaps the greatest Russian threat to Europe since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR.

In response to this move, the US sought to strengthen its military presence in the Baltic states. In early 2017, in the final days of Barack Obama's presidency, a convoy of more than 3,500 troops was dispatched along with tanks and heavy vehicles.

russia_s_strategy_on_nato_s_eastern_and_southern_flanks/la_respuesta_al_nuevo_imperialismo_ruso_el_dispar_destino_de_ucrania_belarus_y_las_republicas_balticas

27 The range ratio of the Taepong-2 (North Korea) and Sejil-2 (Iran) missiles can reach up to 8,000 km or 2,000 km respectively, which is enough to reach the EU.

28 Abellán, L. (2016). EE. UU. y la OTAN activan el escudo antimisiles en plena tensión con Rusia [The US and NATO activate the missile defence shield in the midst of tensions with Russia]. El País, 12 May 2016. [Date consulted: 11/10/2021]. Available at: https://elpais.com/internacional/2016/05/12/actualidad/1463 044946_021885.html

29 Manrique Montojo, F. (2018). Iskander M. La última ratio del Zar [The Tsar's Last Ratio]. Revista del Ejército de Tierra Español. N.º 931. [Date consulted: 11 October 2021]. Available at: https://ejercito.defensa.gob.es/Galerias/multimedia/revista-ejercito/2018/931/accesible/Revista_Ejercito_Accesible.pdf

Figure 2. Map of the range perimeter of Iskander missiles deployed in Kaliningrad. Source. Military and Commercial Technology. Available at: https://thaimilitaryandasianregion.blogspot.com/2017/06/iskander-tactical-ballistic-missile.html. Date consulted: 12 October 2021.

NATO also took part in this replica, involving military units from several of its member states, including Spain. This was agreed at the NATO Defence Ministers' meeting in October 2016, under the framework of what was signed at the Warsaw Summit in July 2016. The Spanish mission consisted of the participation of a Tactical Sub-Group in Latvia, under Canadian leadership. The Spanish government's Department of National Security's own press release cited the deployment of Iskander missiles as one of the most worrying issues at the meeting of the counterparts of European defence executives[30].

However, it does not appear that this new deployment was a forceful action against the missiles. In fact, NATO did not officially respond to them until 2020, almost three years after the first installations. Stoltenberg's message was to strengthen air and missile defence, improve combat readiness, and increase missile warning time[31]. Specifically, these objectives will be realised through the installation of Patriot and SAMP/T batteries in some countries; the modernisation

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30 Department of National Security of the Government of Spain. *Los ministros de Defensa de la OTAN se reúnen para adaptar sus acciones a los retos de seguridad en los nuevos escenarios estratégicos* [NATO defence ministers meet to adapt their actions to the security challenges of new strategic scenarios]. [Date consulted: 11 October 2021]. Press release at: https://www.dsn.gob.es/es/actualidad/sala-prensa/ministros-defensa-otan-se-re%C3%BAnen-para-adaptar-sus-acciones-retos-seguridad

31 Topwar. *La OTAN prometió responder al despliegue de Iskander-M OTRK con nuevos misiles* [NATO promised to respond to the deployment of Iskander-M OTRK with new missiles]. [Date consulted: 11 October 2021]. Available at: https://es.topwar.ru/166691-v-nato-poobeschali-otvetit-na-razmeschenie-otrk-iskander-m-s-novymi-raketami.html

of intercontinental ballistic missiles; and the development of a nuclear-powered cruise missile[32].

In 2020 Donald Trump announced that the US would abandon the Open Skies Treaty, an international agreement signed in 2002 by several countries for aerial reconnaissance, with extensive military movement control and weapons-carrying capabilities. In May 2021, President Joe Biden confirmed the decision taken by his predecessor and implemented it. This march is contextualised by the aforementioned international tension with Russia, as its missile deployment breakthrough eventually became incompatible with that treaty. So much so that they took the same decision *ipso facto* after the American exit. In June, Putin announced that Russia would leave the pact on 18 December 2021, although he would reconsider his decision if the US decided to go back to it[33].

The summer of 2021 saw the last notable movements before the publication of this article. Russia has taken the decision to reinforce its western flank with the provision of 20 new battalions with 2,000 pieces of weapons equipment, some of which will be deployed in the Kaliningrad enclave, the size of which is unknown[34]. Moreover, this operation includes Belarus, where the Lukashenko regime is advancing its relations with the Kremlin at the behest of its international isolation from the West.

Conclusions

The Kaliningrad enclave has not only reaffirmed its geostrategic status and character in recent years, but also pronounced it in the context of escalating NATO-EU tensions with Russia.

Similarly, as discussed in the previous pages, it is not one factor, nor a limited set of factors, that determines this provocative situation at these borders. From the very configuration of the enclave itself, to a Baltic harbour where the waters never freeze, to an outstanding amber production, they form the backbone of a compendium of causes that make the enclave of enormous interest.

32 Las Provincias. (2020). La OTAN reforzará su escudo antimisiles ante el rearme ruso [NATO to strengthen its missile defence shield in the face of Russian rearmament]. Las Provincias, 17 June 2020. [Date consulted: 11 October 2021]. Available at: https://www.lasprovincias.es/internacional/otan-reforzara-escudo-20200617210459-ntrc.html

33 Europa Press. (2020). Putin promulga la ley sobre la retirada de Rusia del Tratado de Cielos Abiertos [Putin promulgates the law on Russia's withdrawal from the Open Skies Treaty]. June. [Date consulted: 11/10/2021]. Available at: https://www.europapress.es/internacional/noticia-putin-promulga-ley-retirada-rusia-tratado-cielos-abiertos-20210607100613.html

34 Sahuquillo, M.ª (2021). Rusia exhibe fuerza militar en plena escalada de tensión con la OTAN [Russia flexes military muscle amid escalating tensions with NATO]. El País. 2 June 2021. [Date consulted: 11 October 2021]. Available at: https://elpais.com/internacional/2021-06-02/rusia-exhibe-fuerza-militar-en-plena-escalada-de-tension-con-la-otan.html

Its growing significance stems from the EU and NATO's increasingly acrimonious relationship with Russia. Rearmaments, deployments and, above all, reported statements and announcements have made Kaliningrad a sharp thermometer of bilateral relations. We could thus say that, given the question Torres Cazorla posed in 2003[35] as to whether Kaliningrad–which he described at the time as a micro-problem–would be a gauge of this tension, it has indeed been, and with blatant justifications.

Moreover, given the development of the latest rifts, and the lack of any prospect of an end to them, Kaliningrad will almost certainly remain a hotspot for the EU and NATO. The steps and decisions taken in this dynamic of cold confrontation become increasingly risky in view of the next response that might be adopted from the Kremlin. The deployment of the Iskander and recent troop movements have shown that Russia is not afraid to challenge a NATO that is slower to respond to its eastern adversary. Thus, given the development of current conflicts such as Ukraine, if allies want to maintain their influence, interests, and of course, the guaranteed defence of Western values, an unequivocal common position must be defined–marking red lines for possible new risks–and diplomatic efforts further deepened.

In short, the Baltic area and its possible political and military implications are of particular importance for Spain and its allies. Any disputes that may continue to arise affect us as Europeans and members of the Atlantic Alliance. Kaliningrad, like the vast majority of enclaves around the world, and despite its relative isolation from the rest of the country, is a position, even a threat, on a strategic axis with a high potential for conflict.

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35 Torres Cazorla, M.ª I. (2003). Kaliningrado un microproblema enclavado en Europa [Kaliningrad a micro-problem embedded in Europe]. Constitutional Notebooks of the Fadrique Furió Ceriol Chair. N.º 43-44. [Date consulted: 11 October 2021]. Available at: https://dialnet.unirioja.es/buscar/documentos?querysDismax.DOCUMENTAL_TODO=torres+cazorla+kaliningrado

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Geopolitical position and defending Spain's national interests: rethinking the Perejil islet issue twenty years later[1]

Abstract

The definition of Spain's geopolitical position on the international order is one of the fields that still needs to be explored. The situation of dependence of our country in matters of security and defense by its membership in international organizations, such as NATO and the European Union, is not an obstacle to Spain in order to have singular postulates in its foreign policy. The determination and defence of Spain's national and vital interests would be at the base of the place that Spain should occupy in world geopolitics. It is possible to clarify this issue by analysing the decisions taken 20 years ago in the Perejil islet. This case embodies some of the components that must shape substantial aspects of the foreign policy of any State. This paper aims to clear of the main postulates that outline the defence of the most fundamental interests by Spain, reflecting on territorial sovereignty and the use of force in international relations.

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Introduction

Clarifying Spain's role in the global or regional geopolitical scene would require clarifying the current state of the world order. In any case, it has been a long time since Spain has played a leading role on the international stage despite its historical past. Even before the "colonial disaster" in 1898, our country lived in a prolonged period of decadence and lack of capacity to act in international relations. At the very least, "in more than two centuries Spain has not been exactly what you would call a player in the international arena"[2]. For this reason, we should go back to 1978, with the triumph of the democratic transition, and note Spain's insertion in the international order at that time, and note some interest on the part of Spanish foreign policy in achieving an essential place in international relations. But any decision that is or has been taken in this direction could never ignore the features giving shape to today's international society and, particularly, the geostrategic interests that inhabit such a complex and deeply variegated international reality.

The 2017 National Security Strategy indicates Spain's interests as a basic component of our country's external action, including in the field of security and defence. The notion of "interest" that is used acquires various connotations, meanings and interpretations in this document, coming with many different adjectives added to it. Thus, the aforementioned Strategy refers and remits simultaneously to: "global interest"; "general interests"; "immediate interest"; "shared interests"; "direct interest"; "values, interests and principles"; "geopolitical interests"; "strategic, political and economic interests" or simply refers to genuine "Spanish interests". The most common expression will be in particular: "national interests"[3], perhaps because it best encapsulates all of the above. Something that also happens, albeit to a lesser extent, in the 2021 Strategy.

However, in many cases, it is not easy to define with certainty the content of national interests, since this concept "is complex and is made up of a series of interests of different types (…)"[4]. However, it could be said that within the concept of national interest, everything that refers to the defence of sovereignty and, in particular, that which affects territorial sovereignty, would always occupy a privileged place. Moreover, territorial sovereignty interests could be qualified as "vital interests" of states. In our case, they would be those interests "that affect the survival of Spain as a nation", i.e., they would be interests that our country would be able and willing to "protect and, if necessary, (a) defend against any risk or threat affecting its survival as a nation"[5].

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2 Fojón Lagoa, E. (2019). El problema geopolítico de España: el caso de la defensa y Fuerzas Armadas [The case of Defence and Armed Forces]. Instituto de Política Internacional. Análisis 1/2019. Madrid, UFV. P. 1.

3 Presidencia del Gobierno. (2017). Estrategia de Seguridad Nacional 2017. Un proyecto compartido de todos y para todos. Boletín Oficial del Estado. December. Madrid.

4 Marsal Muntala, J. (2010). Introducción. Evolución del concepto de interés Nacional. CESEDEN monographs. 115. Madrid. P. 12.

5 Escrigas Rodríguez, J. (2010). Análisis comparativo del concepto del interés nacional [Comparative Analysis of the concept of National interest]. Evolución del concepto de interés Nacional. CESEDEN

Along these lines, there are two reasons that would explain the importance of territorial sovereignty in defining national interests: On the one hand, territory is one of the constituent elements of any state and, in other words, "territory is part of the national identity that deserves to be respected"[6]. On the other hand, the defence of territory and, above all, the state's capacity to do so defines its geopolitical position in the international order. In this sense, it could be accepted that Spain lacks a unique political position in the international space, although it would perhaps be necessary to exclude from this statement "the action on Perejil Island in 2002 in defence of national sovereignty"[7]. In this case, Spain's unique geopolitical and geostrategic position would have been formed. But the clarification of vital interests is also a function of the means the state is prepared to use to defend them. Thus, "traditionally, those interests in whose protection a state would be prepared to resort to the use of force, either by taking some form of military action or by threatening it, have been regarded as vital"[8].

This is precisely what happened in 2002 when a group of Moroccan gendarmes occupied the Perejil Islet[9] and Spain carried out the first and only military operation in defence of national sovereignty that has taken place since the adoption of the 1978 Constitution[10]. Moreover, this came about as a unilateral reaction on the part of Spain without the military or operational support of some of our country's partners in the field of security and defence. The Atlantic Alliance (NATO) and the European Union (EU) did not participate operationally on this occasion, limiting themselves at best to diplomatic efforts with the aim of participating in the resolution of the dispute[11].

The examination of the notions of national interest and territorial sovereignty in the context of the Perejil affair has the sole purpose of uncovering the most essential aspects that define Spain's geopolitical position in the new international order. From there, it is indeed possible to deny that Spain's geopolitical position could be described

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monographs. 115, p. 42.

6 Mangas Martín, A. (2015). Territorio, integridad territorial y fronteras del Estado en la Unión Europea. Revista Jurídica de la Universidad de León. 2, p. 222.

7 Fojón Lagoa, E. El problema geopolítico. Op. cit., p. 6.

8 Sanz Alisedo. G. (2010). Intereses que afectan a la soberanía nacional. Evolución del concepto de interés naciona. CESEDEN monographs. 115. Madrid. P. 77.

9 In general: Planet, A. and Hernando De Larramendi, M. (2005). Una piedra en el camino de las relaciones hispano-marroquíes: la crisis de Perejil. Relaciones hispano-marroquíes: una vecindad en construcción. Madrid, Ediciones de Oriente y del Mediterráneo. Pp. 102-135.

10 Pacheco Barrio, M. A. (2012). El contencioso del islote perejil en la prensa escrita. La presencia española en África: del "Fecho de allende" a la crisis de Perejil. Madrid. P.215.

11 This, at least, is what the Spanish Foreign Minister declared: "[...] the Spanish government has enjoyed the understanding and spontaneous solidarity of the international community [...] both the institutions of the European Union, [...] [and] the Secretary General of NATO have spoken out unequivocally". Cortes Generales. (2002). Journal of sessions of the Congress of Deputies, Committees. VII Legislature, 543, Joint Foreign Affairs and Defence, Sessions 32 and 28, respectively, held on Wednesday, 17 July 2002, 17349.

as "absent" in Spain's political and social narrative; and as "dependent" on the decisions approved by the international organisations in which our country is a member. Although the Perejil affair is usually attributed little geostrategic importance, everything indicates that it acquires a special value in the definition of Spanish foreign policy because it shows how an affair of this kind, often described as anecdotal, makes the expressions containing the guidelines of Spain's national defence a reality in practice.

In short, the main questions to be addressed in this work will essentially be the following: How are Spain's national interests defined? What are their basic components? And, consequently, whether what happened in Perejil twenty years ago would help to resolve these questions? In order to do so, one needs to look at the practice of the Spanish state and, from there, determine and specify the geopolitical position that our country occupies on the international scene.

The complex and uncertain international reality in which Spain must operate and the context of relations with Morocco

It is difficult to describe the features that shape the current international political reality, nor is it easy to determine and clarify the place of those who are considered to be the main actors in international relations[12]. In reality, we live in a space where the geopolitical situation is confusing, or at least permeated by a multitude of uncertainties[13]. The end of the Cold War opened a path for hope and was aimed at ensuring security, world order, and establishing permanent rules governing international relations, which was advised in particularly noticeable in Europe[14]. Of course, the nineties of the last century clearly pointed in this direction, but many of the hypotheses that were established in this period is now being questioned. Thus, one cannot speak of a secure planet in terms of the maintenance of international peace and security, nor should one proclaim the full enshrinement of democracy as the essential basis of the states that make up the international community[15].

Nor is it possible to be sure that free trade and the liberal economic order have taken root as the primary foundations of economic and trade relations between actors in

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12 Barbé, E. (2020). El invierno que no llegó: el orden internacional en tiempos de pandemia, Revista Española de Derecho Internacional [Spanish Journal of International Law]. 72, 2. Pp. 15-31.

13 Jordán, J. (2014). Gestión de la incertidumbre en las relaciones internacionales. Análisis Grupo de Estudios en Seguridad Internacional GESI. 9/2014. Granada. Pp. 1-17.

14 Fojón Lagoa, E. (2015). La evolución del orden internacional y la configuración del poder en Europa. Entre institucionalismo y geopolítica. PhD thesis. Universidad Complutense de Madrid. 97 ff.

15 Cf. López-Aranda, R. (2018). El orden mundial en el siglo XXI: una perspectiva de policy planning. Real Instituto Elcano. Documento de trabajo 9/2018. 25 April, p. 9.

an international context, which would have an enormous influence on international politics. Even more so, as has rightly been said,

> "For nearly three decades, a plethora of academic books and articles, conferences and media panels have heralded a future in which institutions will finally triumph over old cultural constraints. (…) Past ideas such as nations situated within defensible borders were supposed to give way to states that would voluntarily cede part of their sovereignty to transnational and supranational organisations"[16].

However, none of this has happened yet, or at least not completely.

On the contrary, the international environment today is even more complicated and uncertain than in the past. In essence, albeit in a latent form, there is a tension in the international order that is not only expressed in economic terms, as in the case of the so-called "trade war" , but that is also being felt, with some intensity, in the context of security, which is even more worrying. In other words, a contemporary view would lead to the conclusion that everything is conditioned "by the intensification of geopolitical and geoeconomic competition between the great powers, especially the US vis-à-vis China and, to a lesser extent, Russia"[17].

Therefore, the most urgent thing to do would be to accurately assess the current situation in the international order and thus calibrate Spain's geopolitical role accordingly. It should therefore be clear that "the international scenario (…) on a global scale (…) is in many cases worrying about our security" and that Spain must therefore be prepared to face a "high-risk scenario"[18]. In reality, a succession of events has been taking place in the international order, beyond the impact of the recent Covid-19 pandemic[19], and the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022, which foresee the emergence of other new realities and which, likewise, foretell transcendental changes in the rules of power in international relations. In this context, a country of average capacity such as Spain should be very attentive in defining its geopolitical position and its strategic interests. The primary aim would be to appreciate that which is unique to Spain, because "it has its own specific geopolitical problems"[20].

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16 Michta, A. A. (2018). The Revenge of Hard Power Politics. The American Interest. October. Available at: https://www.the-american-interest.com/2018/10/16/the-revenge-of-hard-power-politics/

17 Molina, I. (coord.). (2019). España en el mundo 2019: perspectivas y desafíos. Real Instituto Elcano, Elcano Policy Pape. February. Madrid. P. 19.

18 Molina, I. (coord.). (2017). España en el mundo 2017: perspectivas y desafíos. Real Instituto Elcano, Elcano Policy Paper. February. Madrid. P. 5.

19 See; Bosoer F. and Turzi, M. (2020). La pandemia del 2020 en el debate teórico de las relaciones internacionales. Geopolitics(s): Revista de Estudios sobre espacio y poder. 11, 0, pp. 153-163.

20 Fojón Lagoa, E. El problema geopolítico. Op. cit., p. 2.

In any case, the situation of unease and uncertainty in which the current international situation finds itself is the result of multiple factors, and it is therefore important to point out at least the following: First and foremost, it is becoming clear that the usually latent but sometimes quite explicit power struggle that can be seen in today's international society, depending on the actors involved, has been reflected in the positions held by the United States, especially during the period of the Trump Administration; but, above all, it is also interesting to note the positions and decisions of China, which is gradually advancing in the imposition of its rules in the international order; and, likewise, the role that Russia wants to play in the new international context[21].

All of these paints an insecure geopolitical picture that is fundamentally characterised by a wide and profound unpredictability that, in particular, was expressed most clearly at the time through the "strategic behaviour" of the former US president[22]. The expressions and embodiments of power witnessed in the behaviour of these three actors have specific repercussions in the field of security and defence. This makes it possible to conclude that

> "The shift in the distribution of power around the world and the challenge to the United States' position of dominance by the growing economic and military power of China and the geostrategic assertiveness of Russia as it attempts to regain its great power status are returning the world to the fundamentals of great power"[23].

Words that certainly sum up the state of the current international community.

Spain should define its geopolitical position according to this new and unstable reality that has been described and in being aware that it is living through a historical period that has been described as "the great global upheaval that is now looming on the horizon"[24]. This implies that Spain's geopolitical and geostrategic position should be defined according to the new actors with more power in the international order and that our country should not hesitate to configure new and renewed alliances in the economic field as well as in the security sector, in some of its dimensions. Thus, it should not be ruled out that our country will strengthen its relations with China and other actors such as Turkey. It cannot be otherwise since indeed "in recent years we have been facing the advent of a new world order and a hegemonic transition"[25]. Therefore, it will be the situation at the universal level that will determine Spain's geopolitical position, as long as our country has its sights set on the changes that may take place.

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21 On Russia: Sánchez Herráez, P. (2015). Marco geopolítico de Rusia: constantes históricas, dinámica y visión en el siglo XXI. Cuadernos de Estrategia. 178, pp. 15-78.

22 Molina, I. (coord.). España en el mundo en 2017. Op. cit., p. 19.

23 Michta, A. A. The Revenge of Hard Power Politics. Op. cit.

24 Ibid.

25 Sánchez Mugica, A. (2018). El orden mundial y la reconfiguración hegemónica en el siglo XXI. Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, Nueva Época. LXIII, 233, pp. 373.

It is in this general context that bilateral relations with Morocco should be analysed, and where the Perejil conflict specifically arose. Of course, this controversy must be placed in the more general framework of the long-standing relationship between the two states, which expresses both cooperative ties and areas of conflict. In the latter case, Spain's position in the disputes between Morocco and Algeria, the profound migration crises that have repercussions on Spain's stability, the traditional territorial confrontations, including maritime spaces, between the two countries, and, of course, the question of the Sahara, among others, should be included. These and other issues define the geopolitical struggle between Morocco and Spain. Thus, the Perejil conflict is yet another manifestation of the multiple situations with potential for collision that exist in the spaces that the two countries must share.

The series of disagreements in Spanish and Moroccan foreign policy culminated in the Perejil incident precisely when, for various reasons, but also because of Spain's position regarding the Sahara, given that the Spanish government "supported the elaboration of a census of Sahrawis carried out by MINURSO" and the conflicts over fishing, bad relations existed between the two states. The components that defined the conflict on both sides are detailed below. But, in any case, the consequences of the solution to this dispute include the consolidation of Spain's geopolitical position in relation to Morocco, and Morocco's awareness of its capacity to call into question Spain's essential interests.

Indications on the Perejil affair and Spain's geopolitical position

In all this context, the Perejil affair certainly represented a minor case in the international order and, in reality, lacked the necessary relevance to deduce essential lines from it that could outline the foreign policy of any state[26]. There are many reasons that could lead to this conclusion and with which we could argue that the Moroccan occupation of this small territory could not be interpreted as an attack or defence of a vital interest of the states that are interested in the matter, in our case, Spain and Morocco. The small size of the islet; its scarce or almost non-existent strategic value; the uncertainties regarding the states' titles to sovereignty; the absence of economic interests; and the limited means used in the occupation and also in the subsequent eviction by the Moroccan forces and the Spanish Armed Forces respectively, suggest that in no case are vital interests that would constitute the core of the national interests of the states involved.

However, this was not the case in the past. In this way, it has been possible to say that

> "During the 19th century, the islet had an important strategic importance mainly for Great Britain and Spain", so that "the possession of Perejil

26 García Flórez, D. (2002). Aspectos históricos del conflicto de la isla del Perejil. Real Instituto Elcano, ARI. 18, 14 July 2002.

was important not only for the positive benefits it could bring them, but also as a means to prevent another power from occupying it"[27].

But the situation and circumstances have certainly changed and what happened in 2002 was measured more in terms of information, communication and image than in terms of purely strategic and geopolitical criteria. So, it is true that this affair produced "a relevant media phenomenon for the media on both shores of the Mediterranean, even for the international press"[28], although it did not evoke analysis of the deep-seated components it might contain.

But the factual, political and legal context in which the affair took place could disprove the claim that the islet of Perejil is of no importance and, above all, any position that the behaviour of Morocco and Spain on the occasion of the conflict would be of little relevance. At times there have been attempts to portray it this way, and, with some insistence, to belittle Spain's behaviour in this matter. In this line, for example, J. Saura states from the beginning of his work that it is a "recent and tragicomic episode, with international mediation included, of occupation by Morocco (11 July) and *reconquest* by Spain (17 July) of the islet of Perejil or Leila"[29].

Spain's national interest and geopolitical position

Examination of the Perejil affair makes quite explicit the relationship that actually exists between the defence of national interests and the shaping of states' geopolitical positions. At least in the case of Spain, the fact of having assumed an active role meant defining and specifying part of what our country understands as its national interest and, above all, the Spanish government gave meaning to the need to define its position on the geopolitical chessboard in the region. In essence, a single issue could serve as a guideline for discovering what exactly states are hiding when it comes to identifying the content of their strictly national interests. Because, in the end, "national interest is the key concept of political realism"[30]. From there, some considerations could be made:

First, it is not easy to specify precisely all the elements that make up the notion of national interest. The 2017 Homeland Security Strategy does not go on to define what is meant by national interests. Nor does it provide sufficient evidence to determine the areas in which such interests are most directly affected and, from there, to be able

27 Gil Pérez, J. and Garrido Guijarro, O. (2014). La isla Perejil, la perla decimonónica del Mediterráneo. HAO, Historia Actual Online. 34, p. 36.

28 La Parra Casado, D., Penalva Verdú, C. and Mateo Pérez, M. Á. (2007). La imagen de España y Marruecos en la prensa marroquí y española durante el incidente del islote de Perejil (Leyla). La política árabe y mediterránea de España. Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals. 79-80, p. 153.

29 Saura Estapà, J. (2002). A propósito de la soberanía sobre el islote de Perejil. Revista Electrónica de Estudios Internacionales (REEI. 5, p. 1.

30 Bilbao Arrese, J. M. (2003). El interés nacional de España. ABC de Sevilla, 6 February 2003.

to shape their content. The most that can be deduced from this document is that national interests could be simultaneously recognised and detailed based on the state's particularities, of course, taking into account the main features that outline its foreign policy. Prior to the adoption of the 2017 Strategy, in line with the previous documents produced by the Spanish Government, it seemed appropriate to highlight that

> "The definition of the Spanish State's national interests, according to the objectives of National Defence, gives priority to the protection of Spanish society, the defence of the Constitution and of Spanish values and institutions, as well as contributing to international peace and security".[31]

To which should certainly be added the defence of territorial integrity, an expression that would also cover those lands and maritime areas that are the subject of disputes with other states.

For this reason, the 2017 Strategy clearly states that "protecting Spain's interests abroad is key to Homeland Security", which is why it would be appropriate to carry out a profound and astute strategic reflection on Spain's positioning in each of the international organisations of which it is a participating member. And, from there, determine

> "A commitment and proactive involvement to guarantee the best defence of national interests and security and prosperity of the Spanish state and society, as well as to promote greater international cooperation"[32].

In any case, the defence of territory or the reaction to cases in which a state decides unilaterally to resolve territorial sovereignty conflicts would form part of the notion of national interest, regardless of the greater or lesser geopolitical or geostrategic importance that one wishes to give to the territory in question. It is clear that establishing and numbering the cases in which national interests would be affected would be quite helpful in discovering the content of these interests. However, it must be agreed that "the definition of national interests is [...] a real challenge for the State, because it reflects its will to preserve tangible and intangible national resources"[33]. Precisely in the Perejil islet affair, the tangible and intangible aspects of Spain's national interest were combined quite well, and this would be another argument in favour of considering it relevant as a model in the examination of Spain's national interests.

It could even be said that we would be in the presence of true "vital interests", a notion that incorporates intangible components such as the case of the "imperative of identity, which brings together the intangible resources of the State that unite the population around funda-

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31 Algora Weber, M. D. (2011). Intereses nacionales de España en su entorno geopolítico. Los intereses geopolíticos de España: panorama de riesgos y amenazas. Centro Superior de Estudios de la Defensa Nacional, Ministerio de Defensa. P. 15.

32 Estrategia de Seguridad Nacional 2017. Op. cit., p. 85.

33 Sanz Alisedo, G. Intereses que afectan a la soberanía nacional. Op. cit., p. 105.

mental and shared values and conceptions"[34]. The Perejil affair was not only about protecting territorial integrity, or at least preventing Morocco's unilateral decision from determining the spaces in which neighbouring states exercise control and jurisdiction, but also affected fundamental values and principles that give cohesion to Spanish society. The Spanishness of certain territories in North Africa was called into question by the Moroccan military operation on the islet of Perejil. In this way, this behaviour was an advance on Moroccan policy aimed at measuring the Spanish state's capacity to deal with possible threats and proclaiming the effectiveness of "faits accomplis"[35]. Consequently, the occupation of the islet represented a direct attack on Spanish national interests since, on the one hand, it deprived Spain of its power of control over a certain territory and, on the other hand, it laid the groundwork for the eventual loss of further territories over which Spain exercises full sovereignty.

Moreover, one could welcome and accept the interpretation that the main "objective of the invasion was to trigger a conflict that would hide the internal crisis" but also "to gain pressure to improve positions in its external conflicts"[36]. Therefore, the defence of Perejil against an alleged unilateral use of force by Morocco falls squarely within the notion of Spain's national interest. What this affair did reveal, however, was the urgent need for each state, in this case Spain, to define more precisely what its national interests should be and also what instruments and tools it should have at its disposal to defend them. Thus, for states, "it is an essential matter to define what their national interests are, who is responsible for defending and achieving them, and the resources and means to do so"[37].

The Perejil islet affair placed the defence of a territory, even if one did not wish to exercise full sovereignty over it, within the framework of the most essential national interests in the Spanish state. Hence, it is possible to accept the interpretation that "the protection of territory is not limited to safeguarding the inviolability of its borders, but must be viewed from a broader point of view and with greater spatial depth"[38], which is precisely what happened in the case of the Perejil crisis, which in no way put the survival of the Spanish state at stake. Indeed, what happened on the islet activated military logic, but all especially because of the defence of the intangible interests that lie behind the rejection of the Moroccan occupation of the territory.

Secondly, what happened on the islet of Perejil is hardly comical and fortunately did not have tragic consequences either. But it did represent a special assumption

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34 Ibid, p. 82.

35 More recently, there was the massive attack of Moroccan civilians on the city of Ceuta in May 2021. In this case, it was said that "Spain, therefore, cannot cede in its territorial integrity and in the Spanish and European nature of Ceuta and Melilla". Pique, J. (2021). Morocco-Spain: ¿condenados a entendernos? Política Exterior. May 28.

36 Ruiz Miguel, C. (2002). Las nuevas relaciones internacionales después de la crisis de Perejil. Boletín de Información. 276, p. 23.

37 In the case of Spain, progress has been gradual in this area. Algora Weber, M.ª D. Intereses nacionales de España. Op. cit., p. 13.

38 Sanz Alisedo, G. Intereses que afectan a la soberanía nacional. Op. cit., p. 83.

that is important in terms of defining Spain's geopolitical position on the international scene and, above all, has the capacity to explain the presence of vital interests in the geopolitical context. Spain's forceful and proportionate response to a military occupation, however minor, revealed two other elements that make up the vital interests of states: "the territorial imperative, or the protection of the spaces over which the state exercises its sovereignty or jurisdiction", but also "the functional imperative, which entails the capacity of the state to exercise its government action autonomously and effectively"[39]. All of these highlights the fundamental aspects that crystallise the link with a state's foreign policy in defence matters, and also the will to preserve those interests that are essential, in our case for Spain. What made the Perejil islet affair unique lay precisely in the fact that, for the first time in a long time, with a pragmatic sense, Spain projected a concrete and unique geopolitical position on the international scene.

The Perejil affair in no way meant that Spain assumed a leading position on the international stage, but it did at least express that it was a state with the capacity to defend national interests from its own geopolitical position, which was not determined by its links with other states or with international organisations in which it participates. The lack of intervention by other actors, beyond occasional instances of mediation, in the crisis between Spain and Morocco over the Perejil affair clearly demonstrates its relevance in defining a particular foreign policy that is not entirely dependent on other actors and factors. Although there was a desire to highlight role of the United States in this dispute, or at least it was pointed out that "Secretary of State Colin Powell played an important role in the resolution of the conflict"[40].

For this reason, the Perejil crisis reveals, once again but in reverse, that Spain's true geopolitical position on the new world stage and, in particular, in the regional spaces in which our country intervenes, is determined by what has been defining Spanish foreign policy for a long time, including in the field of security and defence. In reality, the absence of a unique position for Spain that comes from a process of internalisation and leads to its own independent stance on the international stage. For this reason, it is accepted that Spain's position in current international geopolitics is largely determined by the alliances in which it participates, which deprives it of an approach with a unique focus, making it a policy that can be described as "dependent". In the case of Perejil, the opposite was found to be true. In other words, it was stated that the defence of the territory is a task that corresponds to the State and that; therefore, it is the State "that has the duty and the right to defend it and make it respected, internally and externally", in such a way that "territory and territorial integrity are two assets that fall within the exclusive competence of the State"[41].

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39 Ibid., p. 82.

40 Sapag, P. (2003). Cuando España llama a rebato. Militares y periodistas en Perejil. Historia y Comunicación Social. 8, p. 236.

41 Mangas Martín, A. Territorio, integridad territorial. Op. cit., pp. 234-235.

In short, it must be accepted that the Perejil affair was a media war for both countries with the aim, among others, of gaining international support, and "a fundamental symbolic action in their bilateral relations"[42]. However, this symbolic operation is endowed with certain components that make up the foreign policy of both states and, in particular, specifically in relation to Spain, it is found to outline, stimulate and determine the content of their national interests[43]. In this sense, defending territorial sovereignty acquired real meaning, especially in relations with those states with which there are territorial claims. Therefore, in the event that a so-called "minor incident" is not resolved in favour of the state that considers its most essential and vital interests to be at risk, it could cause that state to lose positions and advantages not only in bilateral relations, but also on the international stage.

It should be stressed, therefore, that the loss of the islet of Perejil would not put Spain's survival as a state at stake, but it would affect, beyond tangible resources, intangible interests that form part of national sovereignty. This islet, with its characteristics and in the context of the political and legal situation in which it permanently finds itself in Spanish-Moroccan relations, should be understood in geopolitical terms as a part of Spanish territorial integrity or, at least, it should be conceived within "the main risks against Spanish territorial integrity" that "derive from the Moroccan claim over the Spanish territories of North Africa" and also what happens in the maritime areas[44]. In this perspective, Perejil is part of a whole that must be defended jointly.

A conflict which has clear symbolic connotations and has the virtue of indicating the basic outlines of Spanish foreign policy and, also, of Moroccan foreign action. From this perspective, the Perejil affair delimits the content of national interests because the defence of territory determines the state's capacity to preserve its territorial integrity, but also its geopolitical position. Indeed, it should not be forgotten that

"In the new global context and due to its geographical situation (...) as an important determining factor of our Strategy, (...) Spain has a *geopolitical problem,* in which elements such as: being a border, having island territories and in North Africa (...)"[45].

The Perejil affair, even if only in part and only partially, contributed to solving Spain's geopolitical problem or, at the very least, demonstrated that Spain could enjoy a certain ability to sustain a unique and autonomous position in certain matters.

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42 García de Frutos, M. (2011). Perejil: un conflicto simbólico por la información. Revista Aequitas; Estudios sobre historia, derecho e instituciones. 1, p. 84. Regarding aspects of the discourse addressed to Moroccan public opinion. Vid. La Parra Casado, D., Penalva Verdú, C. and Mateo Pérez, M. Á. La imagen de España y Marruecos en la prensa marroquí y española. Op. cit.

43 Ibid.

44 Sanz Alisedo, G. Intereses que afectan a la soberanía nacional. Op, cit., p. 96.

45 Fojón Lagoa, E. El problema geopolítico. Op. cit. p. 9.

National interest and territorial sovereignty

The national interest is closely linked to the concept of territorial sovereignty. Moreover, when spaces that a state considers to be part of its territory are affected, even the concept of vital interests is activated, so that all the means at the state's disposal can be used to preserve and protect them. Consequently, the Perejil affair raised an issue that must first be resolved in order to address the definition of a state's national interests. At the very least, it should be clarified in particular whether this notion also encompasses those spaces in which there are disagreements over who holds sovereignty and to whom its control and jurisdiction should be attributed. Situations tend to be quite diverse and varied and, in the case of Spain, it is undeniable that in relations with Morocco both Ceuta and Melilla would form part of Spain's territorial integrity[46].

Any decision or behaviour that would take place in relation to these territories would be an integral part of Spain's national interests and would even affect those interests that should be qualified as "vital". So much so that, as was pointed out some time ago in relation to the Gibraltar area,

> "The nation in which the international community places its trust" in having control over the Strait will "greatly increase its specific weight in the international sphere by placing itself in a privileged position when it comes to asserting its national interests in different forums"[47].

For this reason, national interests must be previously and precisely defined, and this is the ultimate reason why Spain should clearly state that the islet of Perejil falls into the category of its territorial sovereignty, even if it is understood and practised in a broad sense. In this vein, many of the media outlets that covered the issue in 2002 described it as "a state affair, where national interests were at stake"[48].

However, an analysis of the situation in Perejil in 2002, and twenty years later, leaves a bittersweet taste regarding this issue. Spain at no time questioned that it had legitimate rights over the islet, but chose to take an excessively moderate position on territorial sovereignty. At most, as indicated by the Spanish Foreign Minister, "the Spanish presence on the island has never been the object of official protests by Morocco and in no case can it be affirmed that there has been a regular Moroccan presence on Perejil Island (...)"[49]. Spain's postulates would be to maintain the *status quo* on the islet without altering the balances that have been maintained in recent years in bilateral Spanish-Moroccan relations over the territory. It has therefore never been clear

46 Loureiro Souto, J. L. (2015). Los conflictos por Ceuta y Melilla: 600 años de controversias [doctoral thesis]. UNED. Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia.

47 Villalba Fernández, A. (1994). Zona del estrecho de Gibraltar. Cuadernos de Estrategia. 72, p. 261.

48 Pacheco Barrio, M. A. El contencioso del islote perejil. Op. cit., p. 215.

49 Cortes Generales, year 2002. Op. cit., 17348.

whether the islet of Perejil falls within the expression that "all necessary measures must be taken to ensure both the success of the operation and the safety of our forces and our compatriots in the cities of Ceuta and Melilla and on the islands and rocks under our sovereignty"[50].

The question is of great importance insofar as the territory under sovereignty would be included in the notion of national interest and also in the concept of Spain's vital interest. It remains to be seen whether this fully applies in the case of territories that do not, strictly speaking, form part of Spanish territorial sovereignty. In other words, the question of whether maintaining the *status quo* at Perejil was truly in Spain's national interest would be pertinent. An examination of practice leads to the conclusion that this could be deduced, for example, from the intervention of the then Deputy José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, who pointed out that the Moroccan military intervention had caused "the alteration of a *status quo and* (that) logically the government had the responsibility to work so that this *status quo* would go back to normal"[51].

Without going into a legal assessment and weighing up of the legal titles that correspond to Spain and Morocco in relation to sovereignty over the islet of Perejil, it should be clear that on the occasion of the 2002 event he only wished to stress the need to maintain the *status quo* on the islet and therefore not to give any validity to faits accomplis. Thus, it is worth recalling, for example, when the debate on the state of the nation was held in 2002, how the President of the Spanish Government emphasised that in the Perejil affair he "will not accept faits accomplis"[52]. However, Spain's decision not to underscore territorial sovereignty over Perejil should not be interpreted to mean that this issue is not in Spain's national interests. On the contrary.

Spain's behaviour throughout the crisis with Morocco revealed that the Alawite kingdom's action in occupying the islet and claiming its territorial sovereignty should be considered as an event that directly affected Spain's interests and, in particular, those that it must defend by resorting to the use of force if necessary. In other words, the islet of Perejil acquired a special value from the moment that acts intended to alter the *status quo* were carried out and, with it, national and even strategic interests reappeared. Because, at the end of the day, as has been said,

> "Perejil Island has a strategic value at the moment, but it lies neither in its 1,600 square metres of surface area nor in its location, close to Ceuta and right next to the Moroccan coast. Its importance lies, above all, in the mind of the one who has threatened *its status quo*: Morocco"[53].

50 Ibid., 17351.

51 Ibid., 17358.

52 Pacheco Barrio, M. A. El contencioso del islote Perejil. Op. cit., p. 222.

53 Bardají, R. (2002). El valor estratégico de la isla del Perejil. Real Instituto Elcano, ARI. 17.

The most accurate conclusion would be that the Perejil affair has an impact on the essential components that define Spain's national interests and, at the same time, raises an issue of constitutional importance insofar as it affects the national territory, even if this is not precisely defined in Spanish law and even if there are doubts as to whether Perejil is an integral part of Spanish national territory. The expressions contained in the Spanish Constitution, in this respect, should cover all cases, above all incorporating those areas in which they produce active or passive territorial claims.

As recalled,

> "The Constitution refers on several occasions to 'Spanish territory' (art. 138.1; 139.2; 158.1 and 161.1), on one occasion to the 'territory of Spain' (art. 68.5), on another to the 'national territory' (art. 19) and to the 'territory of the State' (art. 139.1)"[54].

For the Spanish state, all these allusions certainly cover both the territory that is fully established and recognised by third parties and also that which is the object of disputes of a territorial nature and with issues of sovereignty. In essence, territory and territorial sovereignty would be substantially within the notion of national interests and would be integrated into vital interests. Therefore, it must be admitted that for Spain "Spanish-Moroccan relations occupy a central place in the defence and achievement of its national interests, both vital and strategic"[55].

In short, there is a close link between national interest and territorial sovereignty. In the case at hand, the idea that the national interest "is incompatible with current economic and political dynamics that are oriented towards overcoming the concept of the frontier"[56]was fully accepted. The deeper controversy surrounding the Perejil affair concerns the defence of what is specifically understood as national territory on the basis of the existence of borders between states. Or, at least, this case has become a practical example that illustrates and argues how Spain opposes Morocco's decision to enforce a territorial claim by armed force, which extends far beyond the case of Perejil[57]. The relationship and reference to the national interest is proven by accepting that "territorial sovereignty is the set of competences that a state exercises over the activities that take place in its territory and has an exclusive character"[58] , which is precisely what was sought in the Perejil affair.

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54 Mangas Martín, A. Territorio, integridad territorial. Op. cit., p. 227.

55 Algora Weber, M.ª D. Intereses nacionales de España. Op. cit., pp. 23-24.

56 Herrero De Castro, R. (2011). Política exterior de España e intereses nacionales. UNISCI Discussion Papers. 27, p. 94. From the same author: (2010). El concepto de interés nacional. Evolución del concepto de interés nacional, CESEDEN monographs. 115, pp. 17-38.

57 Of course, the cases of Ceuta and Melilla, in particular, are behind all Moroccan territorial claims.

58 Rodrigo Hernández, A. J. (2004). Soberanía y administración de territorios. Anuario Español de Derecho Internacional. 20, p. 297.

National interest and use of force

From a complementary perspective, the issue of the islet of Perejil brings to the fore one of the components that always accompanies the defence of the state's vital interests of which, as can be clearly deduced, are an integral part of national interests. In such cases, it should be assumed that

> "The defence of Spanish territory against aggression (...) or its protection against an attempt at hostile infiltration (...) is undoubtedly a vital interest in which the State must be prepared to bring all its resources to bear"[59].

Thus, Spain's use of force to "recover" the Perejil islet was of greater significance than might initially have been expected and, in this context, represented a "lesser use of force" in international relations. This can be seen in two ways.

First, with a general scope, insofar as the Perejil case actually embodies one of the most typical and recent cases that allow for recognizing the possibility of states resorting to force in cases of countermeasures[60]. This implies that the defence of a state's vital interests may be carried out through the use of armed force, but there is not always an obligation to resort to the notion of self-defence. In other words, the protection of a state's vital interests may involve the use of force, but not necessarily that it takes the form of a state of self-defence. In the case of Perejil, it was precisely a minor use of force, as some authors of Spanish doctrine maintain[61] , and it was a suitable means for the defence of Spain's national interests. In any case, the case demonstrated that the use of force is a tool that can be used in cases where the state's territorial integrity is affected. It is clear that "Spain's most immediate strategic interests are oriented towards the territorial sphere", in such a way that certain spatial areas, such as the territories in dispute with Morocco, will be "areas of special importance when defining Spanish interests" and, therefore, "constitute elements of special sensitivity and consideration in the defence of vital interests (...)"[62].

Second, this case reveals an aspect that reinforces and strengthens the idea that this was a defence of national interests, using force as a deterrent. As stated above, "in the absence of certainty about Moroccan intentions, military deployment was intended to reinforce deterrence"[63]. The importance of the issue lies not so much in the defence of

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59 Sanz Alisedo, G. Intereses que afectan a la soberanía nacional. Op. cit., p. 83.

60 See: Leben C. (1982). Les contre-mesures inter-étatiques et les réactions à l'illicite dans la société internationale. Annuaire Français de Droit International. 128, pp. 9-77.

61 Díaz Barrado, C. M. (2017). El conflicto en Colombia: derechos humanos, beligerancia y uso de la fuerza. Anuario de los Cursos de Derechos Humanos de Donostia-San Sebastián. XVII, pp. 117-140

62 Algora Weber, M.ª D. Intereses nacionales de España. Op. cit., p. 17.

63 Jordán, J. (2018). Una reinterpretación de la crisis del islote Perejil desde la perspectiva de la amenaza híbrida. Revista General de Marina. 274, p. 943.

a tiny islet but rather in Morocco's attempt to impose a permanent unilateral solution to territorial claims and to establish a platform for future Moroccan territorial claims. In other words: "the material and strategic importance of the islet was negligible. What was indeed relevant (...) was the unilateral nature of the Moroccan action"[64]. It is clear from all this that the Rabat government's intentions in occupying the islet went beyond the specific possession of this small territorial portion and that, ultimately, a much deeper issue was at stake. The Moroccan action could be a testing operation aimed at checking the military and psychological capacity of the Spanish state and Spanish society in the territorial conflicts between the two States. What is important, however, is that the preservation of territory can be achieved through the lawful use of force.

Combined with the effect of surprise, however, what the Moroccan authorities really intended was to bring a broader political dispute between Spain and Morocco to the forefront of the discussion. As they say,

> "Beyond the islet, the object of the Moroccan action was the *status quo* on the delimitation, legality and legitimacy of the territorial borders between Spain and Morocco in North Africa, and specifically in the Strait of Gibraltar"[65].

This leads to questions that go deeper than the mere temporary occupation of the islet of Perejil, i.e. the aim was to spread a territorial conflict in all its dimensions. In terms of international law, the Spanish military action was a lawful response, in accordance with the basic rules of international law, to a prior act of unlawful use of force, albeit minor, by Morocco. This was recognised, for example, by the European Union in the Presidency Declaration of July 2002. It is desirable that international disputes be settled peacefully, but when the vital interests of states are attacked by unlawful means and through the use of armed force, the possibility of responding with countermeasures through the lawful use of force is sometimes triggered[66].

Conclusions

The value to be attached to the notion of national interest and its link to territorial sovereignty of states and the use of force in the case of Spain can be shown in the context of the event that took place in July 2002 in Spanish-Moroccan relations over the islet of Perejil. In any case, it is not easy for a state to define, decipher and delimit

64 Ibid.

65 Jordán, J. Una reinterpretación de la crisis del islote Perejil. Op. cit., p. 945.

66 The Moroccan government did not agree with this position. See Rodríguez Carrión, A. J. and Torres Cazorla, M.ª I. (2002). Una readaptación de los medios de arreglo pacífico de controversias: el caso de isla Perejil y los medios utilizados para la solución de este conflicto. Revista Española de Derecho Internacional. 54, 2, pp. 724 ff.

the content of what is national interest, since it is an evolving concept with all kinds of different components. In the case of Spain, and from a geopolitical perspective, the national interest must be conceived on the basis of our country's unique interests that would draw its own contours as a nation and state, and also taking into account that Spain participates in certain international organisations, especially the European Union and NATO.

The defence of Spain's territorial integrity is part of Spain's national interests and should even be qualified as an item of vital interest. Hence, there is an indelible link between national interest and territorial sovereignty. But the content of national interests also allows us to deduce the geopolitical position of a state and the substantial components of its foreign policy. Spain's response to Morocco's occupation of the islet of Perejil should be interpreted as a significant expression of the defence of national interests, thereby projecting Spain's unique geopolitical position on the international stage.

This conflict took place at a time when Spanish-Moroccan relations had deteriorated considerably, especially because of the disputes in the fishing sector and Spain's position on the Sahara issue, and in spite of the fact that they have kept silent on the matter, it has marked in part the decisions that the two states have made in their mutual relations. Since then, Spain has been acutely aware of the risks to its geopolitical position in the area, and Morocco has gauged the means and limits of the pressure it could exert on the Spanish authorities in relation to its traditional territorial claims.

But the protection of land and maritime areas, which are part of a state's territory, is a fundamental part of vital interests. This covers all those well-defined and established spaces that make up the territory of the state, as well as other spaces where there may be some kind of territorial dispute or where the sovereignty of the states in question is at stake. Any uncertainty as to whether it is incumbent upon a state to exercise full control and jurisdiction over a particular territory does not preclude it from falling within the notion of national interest. The Perejil affair demonstrated that the protection of the territory of the islet had to be conceived as an essential aspect of the defence of Spain's vital interests. This gives expression to the tangible dimension of these interests and, at the same time, reveals the focus on intangible resources. For this reason, the Perejil affair had and still has a symbolic nature that is linked to the cohesion of Spanish society and the protection of the values and principles on which it is based. In short, the notion of territory, which is linked to the defence of national interests, must be interpreted in a broad sense, in such a way that it also encompasses spaces subject to sovereignty claims. Spain's behaviour in this case was therefore an assertion of a national interest.

Finally, the defence of the vital interests of states allows the use of all means at the disposal of the state in question to protect and preserve them, within the framework of the basic rules of the international legal order. The use of armed force could be a useful and appropriate tool to respond to attacks on such interests. The only limits that the state must respect are those imposed by international law and, in particular, by peremptory norms. In the case of the islet of Perejil, Spain's response through the use of force can be understood as an appropriate expression of the protection of its

vital interests and would be, on the basis of opportunity and proportion, an appropriate mechanism to restore Spain's position in bilateral relations with Morocco. This is despite the fact that this mechanism is not the only one that can be used in these relations, especially in the context of the complex relations between the two states.

This is because the Spanish military action was a "lesser use of lesser force" in application of a countermeasure to a previous unlawful use of force by Morocco. Moreover, Perejil has become a relevant precedent in this area for a sector of doctrine. In conclusion, the state can defend its most basic national interests by this means and within the limits outlined above. But even without the survival of the state being in question, the military response, which was limited in time and space and aimed solely at restoring the *status quo* on the island, represented an interesting practical scenario for appreciating the contours of the concept of national interest. Of course, the limited geostrategic and, of course, economic importance of the Perejil islet was offset by its political significance and, in particular, by the contribution it has made to Spain's geopolitical position on the international scene.

Therefore, the main issues arising from the Perejil affair would be, for these purposes: Firstly, that Spain asserted a unique foreign policy position and that Morocco made clear its willingness to pursue its territorial claims. And secondly, that the variegated relations between Spain and Morocco have multiple aspects and components, but that they can also be channelled through the defence of national interests and that this could give rise, albeit in extreme situations, to the use of force between the two states.

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Ready for what? Enlistment versus Readiness

Abstract

The fundamental purpose of Armed Forces is to fight and win a Nation's conflicts. Therefore, it is critical that Ministers of Defence (MoD) continually assesses warfighting readiness and capabilities. Readiness is the ability of Armed Forces to conduct and successfully accomplish assigned missions as specified in the National Military Strategy (NMS) with sufficient and sustainable capabilities resulting from personnel, equipment, training, and supporting infrastructures.

The readiness system provides an overall assessment of the Ministry of Defence's (MoD) ability to execute the NMS and captures the overarching readiness for each level of warfighting. History holds numerous examples of the cost nations have paid when their Armed Forces were not prepared to respond.

Next, the concept of International Readiness is shown, its extrapolation to the Spanish environment and some examples of Readiness systems implemented in other countries are analyzed. This article concludes with the future challenges that are presented to these Readiness evaluation systems in the coming years.

Keywords

Readiness, Availability, Assessment, Capability Groupings, Defence Planning Process, Training.

Introduction to the concept of "readiness"[1]

The Armed Forces (FAS) are not only useful because of the uniqueness of their means, but especially because of their availability, their acquired capabilities maintained by permanent Instruction and training programmes, and above all because of the command-and-control systems that have been tested and pre-established since peacetime. In complex environments, and especially when security levels are degraded, a capable (and highly enlisted) SAF gives the state a decisive tool which, even without actually being used, provides deterrence power.

There are many different definitions of "readiness". One of those accepted by the International Community is the one provided by the US Department of Defence[2]: "the capability of a nation's Armed Forces to successfully carry out and accomplish the missions assigned by the National Military Strategy (NMS) with sufficient and sustainable capabilities over time, resulting from the assessment of the state of personnel, materiel, instruction and training (I/T) and supporting infrastructure".

History shows us numerous examples of the cost that many nations have paid when their armed forces were unprepared to respond to their assigned missions, and in particular to an unexpected attack. The 2,417 pages that make up the report drawn up by General Juan Picasso after investigating the events that took place in Annual[3], detailed the poor preparation of the units, the lack of basic materials, the poor state of the armaments, the shortage of ammunition, and the lack of foresight and leadership, starting with the person in charge, General Berenguer.

This lack of preparedness levelled at the Spanish Armed Forces in the early 1920s could clearly have been avoided with a system that would have assessed the state of the units to deal with the Rifian insurgency.

Back to the 21st century, we can say that this "readiness" concept applies to combat units, combat support structures, headquarters and even non-deployed auxiliary personnel. Many countries, with the United States (US) at the forefront, have established readiness assessment systems to measure the degree to which assigned missions have been accomplished with the capabilities that have been generated within the units.

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1 In this text, the equivalence of the Anglo-Saxon term "Readiness" to the Spanish term "Alistamiento" is made, although the author at some points uses the term "Preparation", so as not to repeat words in the same sentence, aware that the equivalence between Readiness/Alistamiento is not exact. It should be taken as the author's licence not to engage in poor drafting.

2 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Guide 3401D to the Chairman's Readiness System.

3 On 18 April 1922, the dossier was delivered to the Lower House of Parliament with a final report written by himself, which would eventually become known as the "Picasso Report".

The US System[4] establishes three different levels of readiness: strategic, operational and tactical. Three processes are implemented at these levels: evaluation, reporting (covering periodicity and formats), and management of the information extracted from the processes.

At each level, the result of the assessment of the state of readiness related to the degree of accomplishment of the missions assigned to the SAF is provided.

There are different trends in terms of readiness system. Some countries, such as the USA, have specialised offices to carry out the associated processes. In other countries, such as most NATO countries, the tendency is for there to be no ad hoc bodies, and instead the assessment and reporting of readiness is more a task for unit staffs.

Most NATO countries follow a capabilities-based defence planning process. These capabilities in NATO are agreed and standardised (NATO Capability Groupings). Dedicating allocated budgets to achieving the right capabilities is an essential part of knowing how to invest in defence.

Readiness reports support the defence planning process to provide and maintain the necessary capabilities within the available economic resources. They assess resource shortfalls against the capabilities required of a force to fulfil assigned missions. They are also a tool to support the review of the various Department of Defence (DoD) master plans (i.e., Personnel, Material, I/A and Infrastructure).

The international security context has shaped the readiness objectives of the SAFs of the major powers and NATO members. While after the fall of the Berlin Wall, force readiness was geared towards being prepared for Expeditionary Force projection, after the fall of the Twin Towers in 2001, the priority became readiness to deal with insurgency and international terrorism. The resurgence of the nuclear threat posed by North Korea, and the Kremlin's new foreign policy following the seizure of the Crimean Peninsula and especially since 24 February 2022, the date on which it began its invasion of Ukraine, have led to a new shift in the objectives to be achieved by readiness systems, which are once again oriented towards large-scale combat operations.

Spain and other neighbouring countries have developed their own readiness systems to orient their defence budgets towards generating the necessary capabilities for the military instrument (within the executive branch[5]) and thus contribute to the national security strategy. How the Spanish Ministry of Defence has faced this challenge in the defence planning environment, and how other countries have done so, will be discussed in the first sections of this article.

Last, new trends in the world will be addressed to incorporate into readiness systems the new missions being assigned to the SAF, beyond the traditional ones related

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4 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Guide 3401D to the Chairman's Readiness System (25 NOV 2013).

5 PDC-01(A). Doctrine for the employment of the Armed Forces. (2018).

to armed conflicts: crisis situations, competition for global/regional hegemony and the capacity to adapt to change.

Overview

As mentioned in the previous section, readiness systems execute three processes (assessment, reporting and information management) for each of the levels (strategic, operational and tactical). These processes are equally important, although the evaluation process is sometimes overemphasised, ignoring the fact that it is a cycle.

The concept of readiness is sometimes misunderstood and taken as an assessment of the Head of Unit. Other times it is taken as a guarantee of the success of the mission assigned to the evaluated unit. Neither is correct.

A good commander may have a unit with low readiness or limited combat capability due to the readiness cycle it is in. It may also be that a unit at the highest level of readiness can be defeated in combat by a bad Head of Unit.

Readiness reports complement each other at tactical, operational and strategic levels. At the strategic level, the reports compile relevant aspects of the operational level reports and should provide proposals for improvements in the operational structures. The same is true between operational level reports and their proposed changes/improvements in tactical level preparedness.

At each level, the readiness report must answer a specific question:

– Strategic level: Are the current armed forces sufficiently equipped and trained to collectively fulfil all current mission assignments and future challenges specified in the National Military Strategy?

– Operational level: Are the joint operational organisations assigned to the various Plans (activated[6] and/or contingency) sufficiently equipped and trained to fulfil their assigned missions?

– Tactical level: Are current units sufficiently equipped and trained to achieve the capabilities for which they are designed[7]?

If, for an assigned mission, a unit has the right number of people, the necessary training, the required individual instruction, verified collective training, the necessary equipment, and ready infrastructure, then that unit is ready. It has the optimum level of readiness.

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6 They include ongoing operations, including combat for countries engaged in conflict.

7 This refers to the so-called METL (Mission Essential Tasking List), which defines for each type of unit, battalion/brigade/division, the means it requires and the tasks it must be able to fulfil, which ultimately defines the Instruction and Training Plans.

If the answer is negative, then at each level the necessary actions should be proposed to mitigate the identified[8] deficiencies.

Readiness systems are not predictive systems. That is, they cannot anticipate exactly when a force is ready to fight. Although the authorities of the Ministries of Defence use the data provided by the readiness systems for decision-making, it must be assumed that even if the data are verified (not subjective information), they are not all-encompassing. There are other factors that influence the readiness equation, such as the ever necessary 'will to win'.

It should be clear that the implementation of a readiness system is not a guarantee of success. What is important is to be aware that readiness is a key element of the equation in the Defence Strategic Planning cycle.
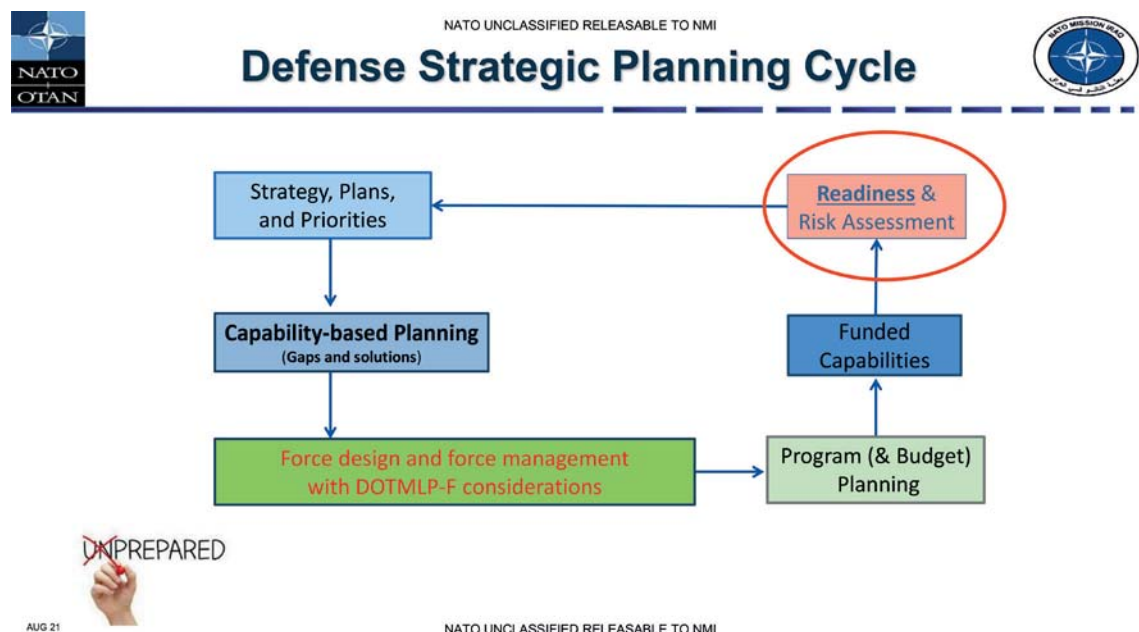
Figure 1: Strategic Defence Planning Cycle (Own elaboration)

Readiness in the Defence Planning Cycle

Following the arrows and concepts in the attached Figure 1, one can see the role of Defence Planning and the role that readiness plays in it all. The premise is to have a comprehensive regulatory skeleton for Defence Planning.

1. From a given nation's National Security Strategy, National Security Objectives will emanate. Many countries draft a document called a National Defence Strategy or Defence Policy that will describe how the relevant Ministry of Defence will work together to achieve the objectives set out in the National Security Strategy.

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8 These deficiencies are often identified by their English term shortfalls.

2. From this National Defence Strategy[9] or Defence Policy will derive a key document for the readiness system, the National Military Strategy[10], which will describe how the SAF will be sized and employed to achieve the objectives of the National Defence Policy[11].

KEY STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS ON SECURITY AND DEFENSE
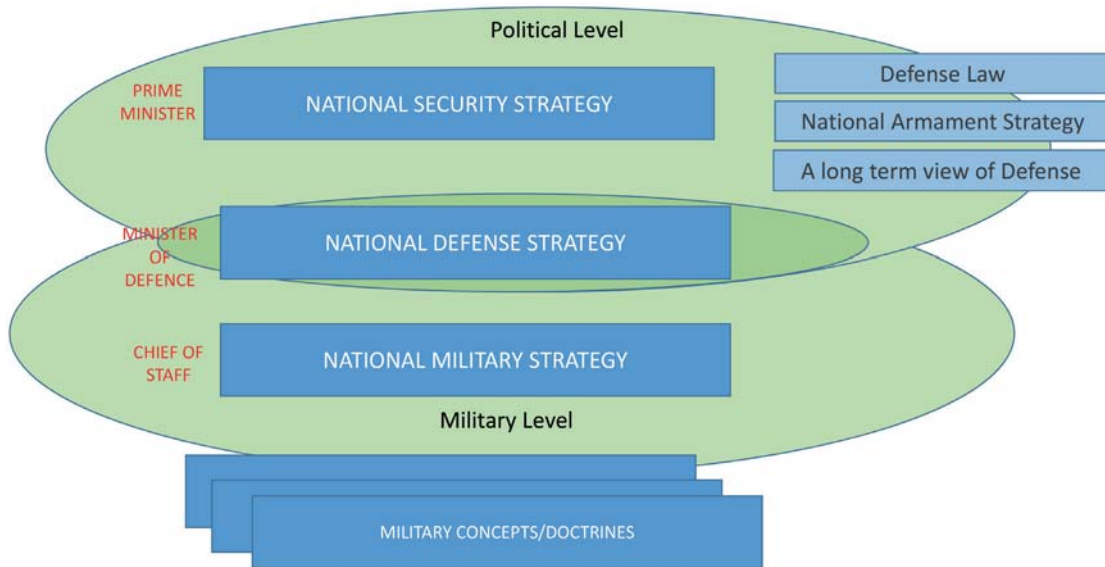
Figure 2: Key Security and Defence Strategy Documents. Source: NMI Induction Training Brief to Newcomers OCT2021

After conducting a thorough mission analysis on the basis of the above defence and national security strategic guidance documents, it will be possible to identify missions and tasks both within the defence sector and shared with other ministries; identify national security threats relevant to the defence sector; identify MOD responsibilities/roles; describe desired end states; build and size sets of required capabilities; and finally define scenarios.

3. The result will be the production of several documents: the Defence Planning Directive or Guidance[12] (DPD or DPG), and derived from these the Force Planning Directive and the Operational Planning Directive.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) will produce the Defence Planning Directive or Guidance. In the Spanish case, planning is divided into Military Planning and Resource Planning.

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9 Equivalent to the Spanish "National Defence Directive (DDN)".

10 Also known in certain nations as "Defence White Paper".

11 In the Spanish case, we are talking about the Defence Policy Directive.

12 In Spain, this is done through the DPM (Military Planning Directive), which emanates from the DDN.

DEFENSE PLANNING PROCESS WITHIN SPAIN
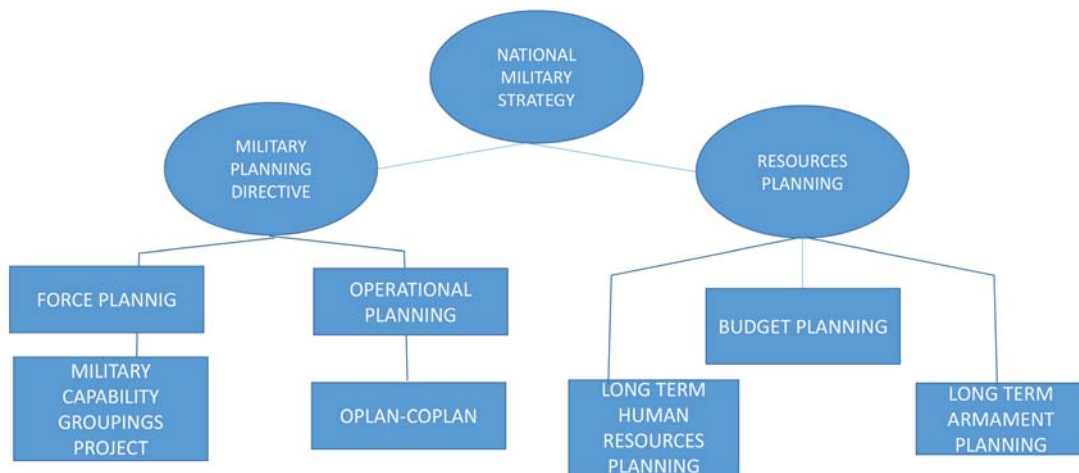
Figure 3: Articulation of Defence Planning in Spain: Source: Author's own elaboration

From the Military Planning Directive flows the Force Planning Directive and the Operational Planning Directive.

The Force Planning Directive will set out the structure of the SAF, its size and the capabilities to be maintained and achieved. In Spain, it would be the equivalent of Military Capabilities Planning.

The Operational Planning Directive will set out the possible scenarios for SAF action.

The last step is the approval of the so-called "Concept of Operations" (also called "joint operational concept"), which in Spain is the Concept of Employment of the Armed Forces (CEFAS).

4. Budget planning.

5. Once the funding obtained is known, it will be possible to know which needs can be financed.

6. "Readiness Assessment" where, at the strategic level, the degree to which the missions assigned by the National Military Strategy (NMS) can be fulfilled will be assessed by analysing the state of Personnel, Material, Education and Training and Support Infrastructures, and comparing these results with the capabilities achieved after the funding obtained.

Readiness in Spain

The equivalent in Spanish of the readiness is "alistamiento" (enlistment), which defines for a given unit the readiness and operational capability to carry out an assigned mission, for an established environment intensity.

The concepts of operational readiness, operational capability, and environment intensity are related, since the lower the operational capability of a unit the longer the period required for it to be ready to perform a mission, and the higher the intensity of the environment the longer it takes for it to be ready to perform a mission. In other words, the time for the unit to be "ready" is lengthened.

In Spain, the JEMAD, as the person responsible for the operational effectiveness of the SAF, issues guidelines to direct the readiness of the Force and assesses and monitors the operational readiness of the Force's units[13].

The readiness of a Spanish unit is a responsibility shared by the organisational and operational structure, and takes the form of levels of availability, coverage of personnel, material and resources, and a degree of I/A (Training).

Operational readiness is the amount of time[14] a unit has to be in a position to perform its assigned tasks in an operational environment of a given intensity, which in the case of overseas operations will be understood as the time to initiate projection[15].

In the case of Spain, no organisations have been created exclusively for the elaboration of readiness reports at any level.
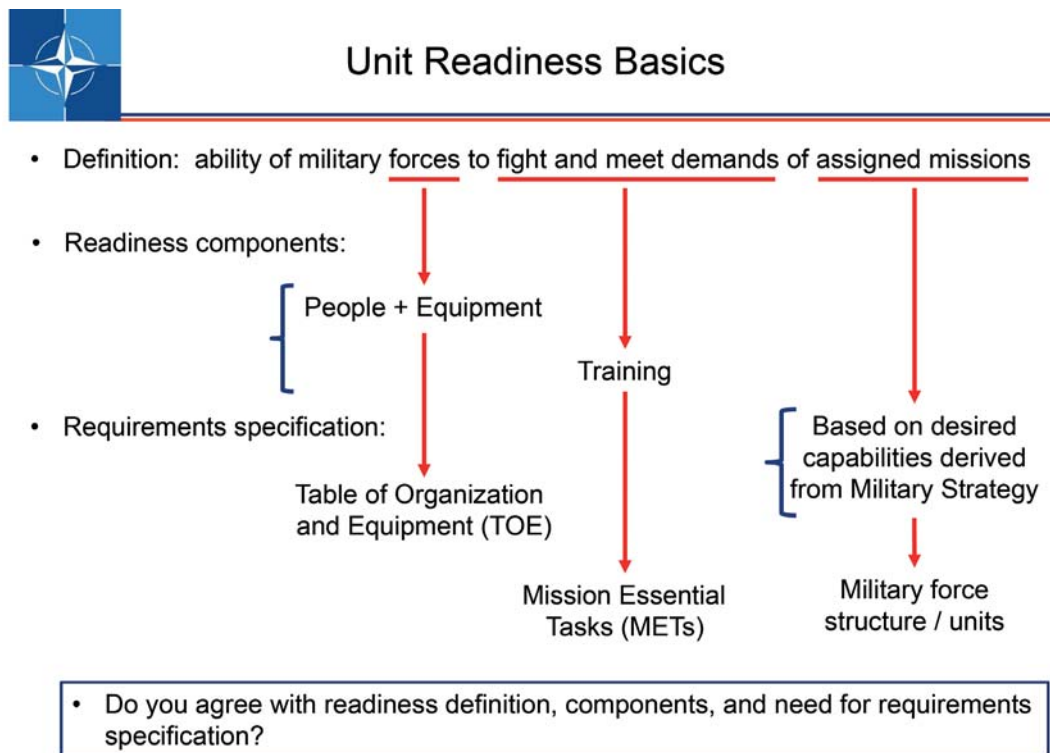
Figure 4: Simplification of the concept of Combat Unit Readiness. Source: Author's own elaboration

13 PDC-01(A). Doctrine for the employment of the Armed Forces. (2018).

14 This will lead to the existence of "Immediate Response Forces" (Notice to Move (NTM) between 2 and 20 days), "High Readiness Forces" (NTM between 30 and 90 days), "Low Readiness Forces" (NTM 180 days or more) and Unavailable Forces.

15 JEMAD Directive 05/12 on the evaluation of the operational capability and availability of armed forces units.

JEMAD Directive 05/12 states that, given the difficulty of measuring the availability of the Force's organic units, at the strategic-operational level only the readiness of the planned contributions of the Armies/Navy and organisations directly subordinate to the JEMAD (Military Emergency Unit, Joint Cyberspace Command and Operations Command) to the JSOR[16] (Joint Statement of Requirements) of the Joint Force Core (JFC[17]) should be analysed on the basis of certain requirements (operational availability, sustainment capability measured in days and intensity of the environment). In other words, at the strategic-operational level, only the forces attributed (transferred or enlisted) to the operational structure are considered.

Each of these capabilities is defined by its component elements: material (M), infrastructure (I), human resources (R), training (A), doctrine (D), organisation (O) and interoperability (I), which will facilitate its analysis according to the "MIRADO-I"[18].

The availability and need for a particular type of capacity and its use, the relevance of each activity to a given operation and its complexity vary from case to case. Consequently, the importance of each joint function in each type of operation is emphasised. This is therefore a key element at the military strategic and operational levels in determining force requirements.

Last, there is the intensity of the environment, the degree of military opposition, or organised violence, present in an area of operations. This can be High, Medium or Low.

Conventional combat operations predominate in the first, although these may be combined with asymmetric-type actions. In "Medium" there is a mix of limited conventional and non-conventional operations, with the latter usually predominating. And, in the absence of an organised military opposition, "Low" operations are mainly conducted to ensure freedom of action against non-conventional threats.

Readiness assessment in Spain

The missions of the Spanish Armed Forces are taken from the Constitution and Framework Law 05/2005 on National Defence. These missions are carried out through the execution of operations that are classified as either standing or reactive, depending on the degree of force readiness and the time of activation[19].

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16 Forces and assets assigned to a joint force for the accomplishment of a mission. It is defined by the assignment of so-called serials. Each serial defines the unit type and associated tactical capabilities.

17 NFC: understood as a set of units, headquarters/command elements assigned to the operational structure or prepared for rapid deployment and employment by the JEMAD.

18 PDC-01(A). Doctrine for the employment of the Armed Forces.

19 PDC-01(A). Doctrine for the employment of the Armed Forces. (2018).

To address these missions, "Force Development" is carried out to ensure that the military capabilities of the SAF respond to the operational needs identified in each military planning cycle. This process includes the assessment of their degree of readiness. In other words, it focuses on the assessment of the force transferred to the operational chain.

Within the Defence Staff, use is made of JEMAD Directive 13/15 for the preparation of the Joint Force (JF) Periodic Readiness Report[20] (FC). It is therefore the element that serves to assess the state of readiness focused on in the Joint Force Core (JFC). In other words, it includes both transferred units and those enlisted in the different Contingency Plans (COPs/COPLANs).

All units, headquarters/command elements and trainers of the FC not included in the NFC are integrated into the NFC through the rotation cycles[21] established by the Armies/Navy and joint bodies. This ensures readiness, i.e., the timely availability and operational capability to carry out an assigned mission, while guaranteeing the sustainability of operations over time.

The Military Planning Directive (MPD) sets out the criteria and instructions for building the Joint Force with the required readiness and capabilities to be able to cope with operational and contingency plans.

The Concept of Employment of the Armed Forces (CEFAS) identifies the operations that the Armed Forces must carry out, as well as the types and degrees of effort required of them.

The NFC's degree of readiness is obtained from the analysis of the information provided by the Army/Navy and agencies under the JEMAD and is used to:

- Report to senior departmental authorities on the Operational Capability of the Joint Force Organisational Units and its evolution, and on the readiness of the NFC.

- Provide a Force Planning estimate of the state of military capabilities, as defined in the Military Planning Directive.

- Identify gaps and areas for improvement in the organisational structure to achieve the level of readiness required by the operational structure.

The Spanish report[22] is grouped into three main blocks: Status of the Operational Capability by Capability Areas, status of the Joint Force Cores and status of the Specific Area.

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20 The FC is made up of all the members of the "Forces" of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, in addition to the determined components of the commands subordinate to the JEMAD. Armies/Navy are organised into Headquarters, Force and Force Support.

21 The units go through the states Stand-Up, Stand-by, Stand-Down.

22 Readiness report 2020. Defence Staff. Kingdom of Spain.

- Status of Operational Capacity by Capacity Areas[23]

- This is provided based on data made available by the organisational structure and will be measured by quantifying and analysing the MIRADO-I factors, i.e., for each Military Capability, with its associated priority according to the MBM, the status is reported in percentages.

- NFC status:

- The aim is to present a comparison of the NFC's JSOR serials, with limitations between the current and previous year. A short assessment is introduced, and capabilities are identified that need to be boosted to improve the degree of readiness.

- Status of the specific field:

- This indicates the contribution of each force structure to the joint capabilities in terms of the operational capacity of the units associated with each of them, the achievements attained and the lines to be promoted in the short term.

The report also includes:

- Analysis of existing ammunition.

- Proposed actions to improve operational capacity.

- Risk analysis: once the operational capability and availability of units for operational use has been analysed, the risks that could compromise the achievement of the Defence Objectives are identified.

- Conclusions, in which the JEMAD identifies specific lines of action, possible doctrinal developments and issues to be introduced in joint training.

Having completed the explanation of how readiness assessment is carried out in Spain at the strategic/operational level, to conclude this section we will clarify how the assessment of the readiness level of the units at the tactical level is carried out.

In the Army, in the so-called "ET Availability Plan", and to keep the degree of readiness of the units assigned to the NFC up to date, the commands subordinate to the JEME with units included in the NFC or assigned to other commitments must submit their corresponding reports on the operational status of units on an annual basis. The resulting operational status will reflect the ratio of a unit's combat power

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23 The following capability areas have been established: command and control; engagement capability; situational awareness; projection; sustainment; survival and protection; and contribution to state action.

to its total allocated combat power[24] , and an assessment of the unit's command and control and logistic support capabilities.

Last, it is worth mentioning that the units that are part of the different NFCs, i.e., identified in the "JSOR" serials, will have to pass the corresponding readiness level assessment to attest that they meet the requirements identified by the NFC. This is done through the so-called CREVALs (Combat Readiness Evaluation of Land HQs and Units). The relevant authority after CREVAL will certify whether it meets the availability and capability requirements.

For the rest of the units that are not transferred to the operational chain and that remain in the organic chain, the evaluation is carried out indirectly through the General Army/Navy Readiness Plans. The units produce what is known as the "Unit Readiness Report (INFALIST[25])", which is submitted every six months by the organic chain, and which in some way includes data similar to those included in the readiness reports of other countries.

Examples of readiness systems in other countries

Readiness in the USA

The National Defence Strategy[26] specifies that forces must be prepared to defeat (defeating) any aggression that may come from an external power; be prepared to deter (deterring) other aggression anywhere in the world; and be able to deal with (disrupting) terrorist and WMD threats, all while defending (defending) the national territory. For many years, the measurement of capabilities associated with the "Four C[27]" has been the basis for measuring military readiness.

"Military Readiness" and the concept of "Sustainability" have been the subject of intense debate in the United States. The Department of Defence defines Military Readiness and Sustainability as essential components of a military capability, given that having a capability initially that does not sustain the effort over the required period is not adequate.

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24 According to the combat powers reflected in the appendix to the publication Data for the Development and Confrontation of Action Lines. Appendix to the Operations Planning Method. Tactical Level. PMET OR5-014.

25 Until a few years ago, this INFALIST was known as the "Unit Availability Report (UAR)",

26 The US National Defence Strategy is the reference document for understanding US defence interests and threats. After a decade without an update, the Trump administration ordered the Secretary of Defence to update it. It was published in 2018 and is the complementary element of the 2017 National Security Strategy.

27 Four D's: defeating, deterring, disrupting and defending.

The US believes that an inadequate level of readiness could incite potential adversaries to attack its national interests. American leaders consider it key to be able to know at all times whether or not the SAF is prepared to deal with a situation that may arise. To this end, knowing the shortfalls and the costs associated with the attainment of resources, in combination with the available funding, will make it possible to know whether the objectives of military readiness, sustainability and therefore the desired capabilities can be achieved[28].

In the first decade of the 21st century the two concepts were considered separately, but from 2012 onwards, the concepts of Status of Resources and Training Systems (SORTS) and the days of supply (DOS) were merged to reflect the status of a unit. From then on, it was renamed GSORTS (Global Status of Resources and Training System).

The first reflects the staffing situation, the I/A and the equipment at its disposal, and the second indicates the number of days of supply (DOS) maintained at each level of command to sustain the force's capabilities over time.

In 1991, the Defence Advisory Group in the United States contracted the RAND Corporation[29] to review the processes for measuring and evaluating readiness. Large force projections in Eastern Europe, Iraq and Afghanistan, and expeditionary combat experience gained during these deployments, have contributed definitively to the development of metrics, level control and scientific readiness measurement mechanisms[30].

The conclusion was that readiness cannot rely exclusively on the immediate availability of resources and budget allocations to correct identified shortfalls. The consultant's study proposed that readiness should be examined from different points of view:

- L/R
- Equipment
- Support
- Supporting infrastructures
- Personal (from all perspectives)
- Mobilisation capacity
- Generation of joint operational organisations
- Efficient resource management

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28 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Guide 3401D to the Chairman's Readiness System.

29 This company is still present today in the DoD and is still very much present in the readiness analysis and evaluation processess. https://www.rand.org/

30 The term scientific should be understood as the opposite of imprecise or subjective measurements.

- And, should it be the case, the national capacity to increase arms production.

- The study argued the need to link readiness and sustainability by linking information at different levels:

    – Peacetime I/A with the associated availability cycle

    – Scenarios for action and projection capacity

    – Location of the warehouses from which materials are to be projected

    – Time and mobilisation capacity

    – Intensity of the combat environment

Consequently, the US SAF nowadays assesses readiness in three dimensions: Unit Readiness (tactical level), Joint Force Core Readiness (operational level), and Sustainability.

The focus on tactical unit readiness reports is gradually shifting away from the obsession with trying to fill in the gaps in unit templates. Instead, the focus has shifted towards trying to minimise the time needed to achieve the capabilities required of such a unit.

The readiness of the Joint Force Cores is fully focused on integrating the capabilities of the specific components but adding the capabilities of the units that provide the joint force projection capability.

Sustainability is seen in terms of maintaining levels of forces in combat at all times.

The feasibility of integrating readiness assessments and reports and understanding the interaction between these three dimensions is considered essential.

In the US, there is a specific structure dedicated to the evaluation of the readiness systems[31]. The Chairman's Readiness System (CRS), implemented in 1994, provides Combatant Command, Combat Support and Combat Logistics Support (COCOM), Service, and Combat Support Agency (CSA) (C/S/As) units with a common framework for conducting readiness assessment reports. As mentioned above, the focus is on the evaluation of joint groupings, i.e., on the forces transferred to the operational chain.

The CRS provides the means to assess the readiness of the entire Department of Defence (DoD) to meet the missions assigned by the Military Security Strategy (NMS) and captures the state of readiness at all three levels: strategic, operational and tactical.

The CRS allows the Secretary of Defence to advise on critical gaps and strengths in force capabilities identified during the preparation and review of contingency plans. This allows a risk analysis to be carried out and to see what effects such shortcomings have on the extent to which the assigned missions of the DoD can be accomplished. But it also outlines how to assess the preparedness of the C/S/As.

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31 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Guide 3401D to the Chairman's Readiness System.

Until the establishment of the CRS, the only existing system for measuring readiness was the aforementioned GSORTS "global state of resources and training system". The GSORTS served two key functions: 1) as the registry of all joint operations; and 2) it recorded the operability of units transferred to the operational level, containing accurate data (metrics) in terms of readiness.

US units currently report on their readiness level using the two complementary systems: GSORTS and DRRS-S (Defence Readiness Reporting System-Strategic).

GSORTS reports provide information on how the unit is equipped and trained to be part of a joint operational organisation that can be transferred up the operational chain. It also includes the subjective assessment made by the Head of Unit.

Furthermore, it conducts what is known as a unit resource level assessment, known as a "C-level evolution", which compares the resources the unit has with those needed to carry out wartime missions.
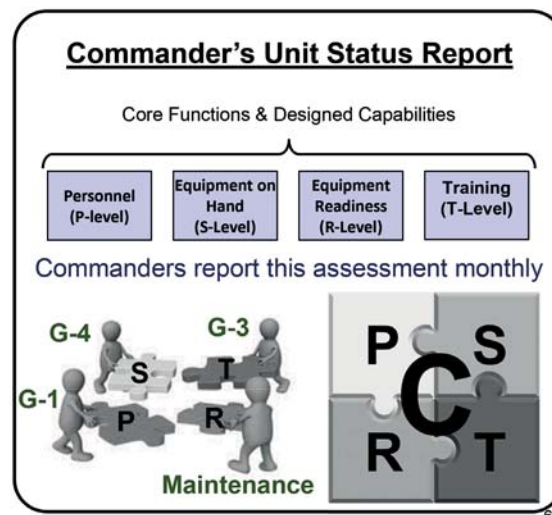
Figure 5[32]

Level C includes assessment of personnel status (level P), available equipment and supplies (including DOS) (level S), equipment status (level R), and training assess-

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32 The figures in this section are taken from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Guide 3401D to the Chairman's Readiness System.

ment (level T), including NBC environment. The level varies between 1 (unit ready) and 5 (not ready). See Figure 6.

Overall Readiness (C-Level) Determination

C-Level	The ability of the unit and its overall readiness to accomplish its core functions and to provide its designed capabilities
1	Unit possesses the required resources and is trained to undertake the mission for which it is designed. The unit does not require compensation for deficiencies.
2	The unit can undertake most of the mission for which it is designed. The unit would require little, if any, resource compensation for deficiencies.
3	The unit can undertake many, but not all, portions of the mission for which it is designed. The unit will require significant compensation for deficiencies.
4	The unit requires additional resources or training to undertake its designed mission, but it may be directed to undertake some portions of its mission with resources on hand.
5	The unit is undergoing a directed resource action and is not prepared, at this time, to undertake the mission for which it is designed. However, it may be capable of undertaking nontraditional or non standard missions.

• C-Levels reflect the commander's expert military judgment and assessment regarding the readiness of the unit.

• The C-Level is NOT an evaluation to grade a commander's performance.

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Figure 6: Aspects included in the Readiness Assessment at the Tactical level. Source Guide 3401D.

• The DRRS provides assessments of the degree of achievement of the so-called METL (*Mission Essential Tasking List)*. They define the means required and the tasks that a unit of a battalion/brigade/division must be able to accomplish.

The DRRS establishes the assessments of the degree of achievement of the METLs according to the speciality (type) of each unit, so that managers can measure their level of readiness.

The system evaluates the task considered "essential" within the framework of a set of conditions under which the task is expected to be performed, as well as the requirements deemed necessary by the Head of Unit for the successful accomplishment of the mission. Until 2018, many of the tasks had a high expeditionary component.

There are three categories of METL assessments used to reflect the unit's capabilities:

• Main tasks

• Assignment to a specific Operation

• And assignment to a top priority plan (Level 4).
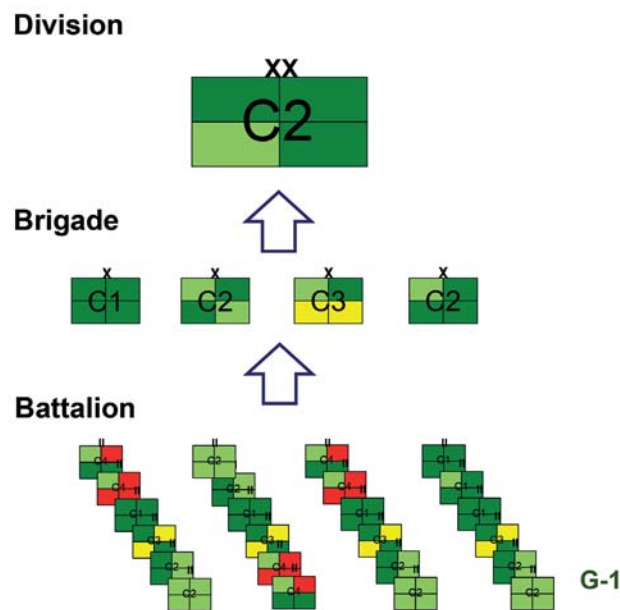
Figure 7: Tactical Level Report: Source Guide 3401D.

The assessment of the main tasks involves analysing the assigned missions according to the type of unit (tank battalion, mountain company, transmission regiment), while the categories "assignment to a specific operation" and "assignment to a plan" relate to the unit's "assigned" mission within an operational environment.

As reflected in Figure 7, the readiness reports of the lower levels (battalion) condition (logically) those of the higher units (brigade), and these in turn condition the Divisions of which they form part.

The units that must perform the DRRS are all those that are assigned in the document "Forces for Joint Commands", which can potentially be transferred, and which belong to an Operations Plan (OPLAN), Contingency Plan (CONPLAN) or support to Civil Authorities (DSCA).

North Korea's demonstrations in 2017 prompted a shift in focus in the readiness assessment process. Since the fall of the "Iron Curtain", preparations have been geared towards the projection of Expeditionary Forces. After 9/11, the emphasis shifted to counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism education and training. The resurgence of the nuclear threat posed by the supreme leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Kim Yong-nam, has prompted renewed consideration of readiness for large-scale combat operations.

United Kingdom

In the UK, the Department of Defence has also developed a sophisticated system for defining, measuring and reporting on the readiness levels of its SAF.

First, it should be made clear that there are no specific readiness offices.

As in Spain, there are no Tactical level Readiness reports (either for the Army/Navy or for the Division and lower type units).

The readiness assessment focuses on the units transferred to the operational chain. The assessment of units not transferred to the operational chain is entrusted to the Preparedness Systems.

When a unit is assigned to a joint formation, it is transferred to the Chief of Staff (CHOD) through the Permanent Joint HQ. This unit receives the so-called "Readiness Order", where the requirements associated with the force generated are marked. The readiness of individual units is therefore assessed and then extrapolated to define groupings for different operational scenarios outlined in the Defence White Paper.

The readiness assessment of a unit included in a transferred operational organisation includes three elements: personnel coverage, material coverage and I/A, the latter (training) having a very high specific weight.

There is only one annual readiness report that covers the strategic-operational level, like in Spain. The DoD regularly produces a confidential report to the High Council of Defence containing an analysis of the risks faced after analysing the balance of requirements in terms of capabilities and the levels achieved with the financial resources allocated.

The availability of the units varies between R0 and R11[33]. R0 means that a force is properly equipped, trained and ready to deploy within the operational chain cluster; while R11 means that a unit could require around 365 days to prepare and deploy.

The readiness report also defines the capability of a force to undertake future operations in three measures (from B1 to B3). The first measure (B1) reflects the readiness of a given unit in peacetime. The second measure (B2) provides an assessment of the capability of the elements that are ready to be deployed to operations in a given timeframe; and the final measure (B3) accounts for the capability to conduct and sustain large-scale military operations. The report itself is based on a traffic light system

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33 R0 - Immediate readiness - force elements ready to deploy, appropriately manned, equipped and supported. R1 - Extremely high readiness at two days' notice. R2 - Very high readiness at five days' notice. R3 - Very high readiness at 10 days' notice. R4 - High readiness at 20 days' notice. R5 - High readiness at 30 days' notice. R6 - Medium readiness at 40 days' notice. R7 - Medium readiness at 60 days' notice. R8 - Medium readiness at 90 days' notice. R9 - Low readiness at 180 days' notice. R10 - Very low readiness at 365 days' notice. R11 - Very low readiness with more than 365 days' notice.

showing the possible statuses: green (satisfactory), yellow (minor deficiencies), amber (serious deficiencies) and red (critical).

In recent years, the DoD has issued instructions to place more emphasis on improving B2 and B3 and has begun to better define these requirements in terms of the logistical support and combat power required, while also considering the required shift in recent decades towards expeditionary operations, but with a renewed emphasis on large-scale military operations.

Australia

Focusing on the Australian readiness assessment system, there are two levels: Tactical and Strategic. These levels are understood as "ready to be employed in the present", and "preparing to face challenges in the future".

The Australian Defence Forces (ADF) have historically focused on the tactical level. Its continued involvement in natural disasters (mainly floods and forest fires) and its role in the management of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020 testify to the effectiveness of tactical readiness. The objective is to obtain projectable, well-equipped and trained "units of action" based on a strict system of preparedness, leadership and effective C2[34].

Strategic readiness measures how "future-proof" the ADF is. Strategic preparedness is based on the institutional arrangements needed for future challenges including, among others, the capacity to modernise, mobilise, experiment, test and evaluate. The Army must be able to conduct Multi-Domain Operations in a joint environment. The Australian SAF has prioritised strategic over tactical readiness in the Defence White Paper. This document outlines the four pillars on which defence modernisation will be based: networking, protection, lethality and enablers.

Australia's Defence White Paper (LBDA) 2016 sets out a comprehensive and accountable plan for Australia's defence. It takes a comprehensive approach to bring together for the first time in a single document the key investment element needed to develop and sustain Australian Defence capabilities, by establishing a ten-year Integrated Investment Programme.

These key elements include equipment, infrastructure, information and communications technology, science and technology and personnel.

This document draws attention to the Australian government's concern to expedite defence investment processes if circumstances dictate.

The LBDA incorporates a comprehensive review of the force structure to make it capable of responding to the challenges of the future operating environment (2030),

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34 Outline at the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies. Defence of Australia White Paper 2020 (LBDA) 2016.

ensuring alignment between strategy, capabilities and allocated resources. In other words, the Defence Planning Cycle. The result is a credible and balanced plan for an agile and powerful ADF, with far more consistent capabilities than today.

The key objective of the force structure review was to ensure the achievement of the key "enablers": infrastructure (ports, airports, I/A fields), CIS, equipment (ships, aircraft, submarines and armoured assets), I/A of the personnel and the units, and assurance that the latest technologies are present in all fields.

Like in the US, in this LBDA the Australian Government recognises that an internationally competitive Australian defence industry is a fundamental element of National Defence development. Without the support of Australia's industrial base, defence cannot be effective, especially in an increasingly high-tech world.

In the LBDA, training and instruction of personnel and training of units are considered essential elements for the successful implementation of the capabilities and strategic objectives set out. The staff is the essential enabler to develop the other capacities.

Although the specific chapter dedicated to readiness has disappeared in this LBDA, as was the case in the previous version of 2009, maintaining readiness levels at high levels remains an obvious concern.

The focus continues to be on units with very high availability and others with a lower level of availability.

The ADF, like the US, has the concepts of readiness and sustainability at its heart. This sustainability includes aspects of troop rotation, availability of strategic transport assets, supply and spare parts, and civilian companies to rely on in case of need.

The Australian readiness system will be complemented by establishing regional partnerships, especially in Asia and across the South-West Pacific.

Russia

In line with Russian President Vladimir Putin's geopolitical vision, Russia's military leadership has established its strategic posture in the world order in a thinly veiled manner. In the 1990s, Russia's post-Soviet military faced a precipitous decline, combined with budgetary setbacks, and an absolute loss of readiness at all levels and affecting all aspects of the military. The First Chechen War in 1999 showed the serious shortcomings of the Russian army.

While the Russia-Georgia War of 2008 showed some sign of improvement, the readiness of the Russian military was at minimal levels. While Moscow successfully achieved its strategic objectives in that conflict, there were critical shortcomings in tactical engagement, logistics and operational art.

The Kremlin's "Mediterranean strategy" has shown that the level of readiness has increased substantially. Russia's forward presence in Syria is related to efforts to develop new military capabilities in a broader geopolitical context.

Moscow's recent massive exercises[35] (even during the Pandemic) should be interpreted as a direct response to the alleged build-up of NATO forces in the Eastern European, Baltic and Black Sea regions.

The modernisation and reform efforts of the Russian military are outlined in the latest Strategic Dossier of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) on Russia's Military Modernisation.

This document acknowledges that, while Russia's armed forces are much smaller today than they were in the Soviet era, conventional military capabilities are now at their highest point since the Russian armed forces were formed in 1992. Since 2010, sustained investment has supported an equipment modernisation programme.

Since 2012, the readiness plan has included the creation of well-manned, well-equipped, highly trained and highly available battalion-type units.

Structural reforms were also carried out as part of the "New Look" programme, launched at the end of 2008, to improve readiness. As a whole, conventional armed forces now enjoy a much higher level of readiness than previously but are primarily oriented towards force projection, as seen in Syria and Ukraine.

For the time being, high-intensity conflict-oriented readiness is more than doubtful, not least because it does not yet have the necessary economic power. Nonetheless, it cannot be ruled out that this goal is on the minds of the Russian leadership.

China

The opacity of the People's Republic of China on readiness (as in many other matters) is absolute. The modernisation and sustained increase in defence spending since the late 1980s is indicative of China's interest in occupying a position of supremacy in the international context.

As in the case of Russia, its preoccupation with modernising weapons systems is evident. The difference with President Putin's country is that the forces do not as yet have an expeditionary vocation. While Russia has shown its interest in the Mediterranean, the Asian giant has shown its interest in the South China Sea, with a constant military presence on its east coast and military exercises on the high seas.

Concern about having a high level of readiness in China has varied between an emphasis on "total war" preparedness and "local war" preparedness. After its opening to capitalism and its intention to become an economic power, there were a few years when its units were more oriented towards being prepared for local and small operations. Now again, with relative calm at home and no acknowledged desire to venture beyond its borders, China's vision seems to be focused on the long term. Technology is being given top

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35 Note that the invasion of Georgia in 2008 and Crimea in 2014 was covered up by military exercises.

priority and effort is being put into the evolution of Command and Control concepts and structures. During the Deng Xiaoping era, the focus of military reforms was on improving combat capability by creating a powerful army, equipped with modern weapons systems that could not be ignored by potential adversaries. During the Jiang Zemin era, the focus was on operational readiness, adopting concepts of process automation and above all the digitisation of the battlefield for information management superiority.

Iraq

The concept of readiness in Iraq and its associated system in the Iraqi Armed Forces (IAF) was introduced by the US in 2004. Attempts were made to transfer the US system outlined above, but with the Iraqi MoD's own stamp on it.

In close cooperation with the Institute for Security Governance (ISG)[36] and the Office of Security and Cooperation in Iraq (OSCI) at the US Embassy in Baghdad, Operation NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) has been working to establish and improve a comprehensive readiness system.

In Iraq, the lack of an approved National Military Strategy that clearly defines the IAF's missions is the first problem facing NMI Advisors.

Following the American model, the Iraqi MoD has specialised in readiness structures, covering the "classic" levels. Within the Military Inspector General (MIG) under the command of a Lieutenant General, the so-called Strategic Readiness Committee, headed by a Major General, was established at the end of 2019.

At the operational level, and subordinate to the Lieutenant General DCOS-OPS (equivalent to an Operations Division of a Joint Staff), a so-called Operational Readiness Office has been created within the Directorate of Movements (M3), headed by a Brigadier General with a few staff.

Last, Tactical Readiness Offices have been established in the individual armies[37] (Services Command) and in the Special Operations Division (ISF Division).

The assessment is based on a colour system similar to that used by the US.

Level 1: Units are capable of planning, executing and sustaining military operations without external support, relying on their own capabilities and resources.

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36 It is a US project. It is located within the International School of Education and Advising (ISEA) of the Defence Security Cooperation University (DSCU). It is a Centre of Excellence for Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) of the Ministries of Defence. As a component of the Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) and one of the largest international Security Cooperation institutions, ISG builds partner capabilities through tailored mentoring, education and professional development programmes based on US values.

37 The Iraqi Armed Forces are composed of 5 armies (Army, Navy, Air, Air Defence and Army Aviation) and a number of independent units, including the Special Operations Division (ISF Div) and the Special Division (Special Div) responsible for providing security in the so-called Green Zone.

Level One	From 85% to 100%
Level Two	From 70% to 84%
Level Three	From 50% to 69%
Level Four	From Zero to 49%

Figure 8: Colour Readiness Level Measurement System used in the Iraqi Armed Forces.
Source: Author's own elaboration.

Level 2: The units are capable of planning, executing and sustaining military operations with very limited external support on an ad hoc basis.

Level 3: Units are partially capable of planning, executing and sustaining military operations in collaboration with other units, requiring external support for an intermediate percentage.

Level 4: Units are severely constrained in planning, executing and sustaining military operations, requiring a very high percentage of external support from other units.

The evaluation of combat units at the tactical level is done monthly, and all Battalion, Brigade, Division and Operational Command (Regional Command Post) units must submit their reports periodically to the Tactical Readiness Office of their respective Army.
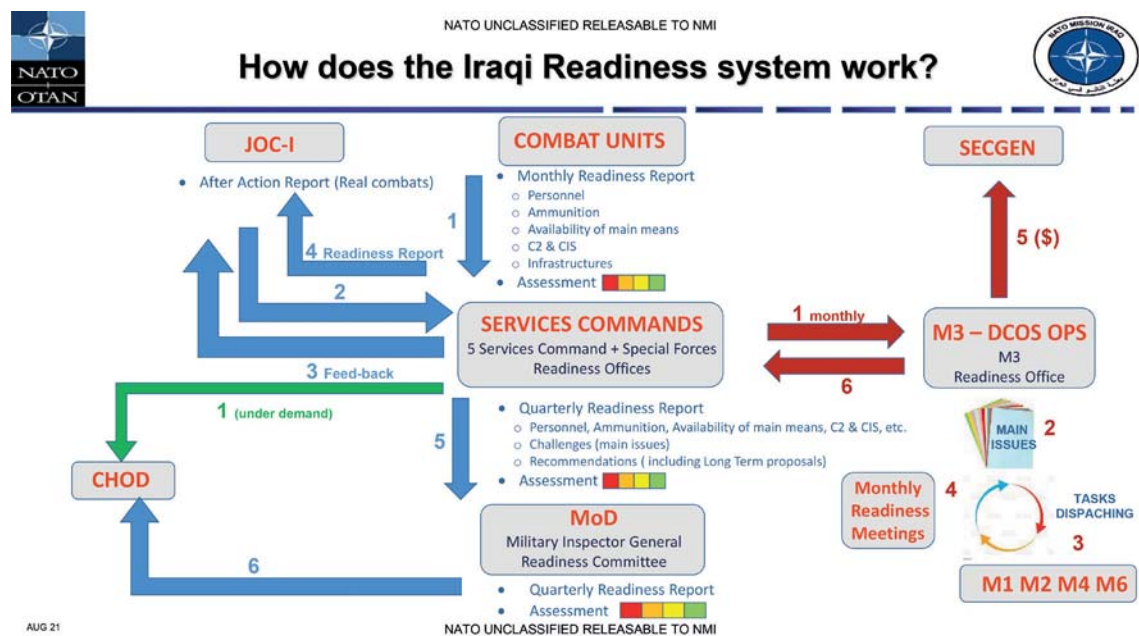

Figure 9: Iraqi Readiness System. Source: Author's own elaboration

This is where the first divergences from the American system become apparent.

In the Air Force, Air Defence, Army Aviation, Special Forces and Navy, combat units are hierarchical, i.e., battalions (or equivalent) report through the chain of com-

mand to the higher echelon (brigade (or equivalent). These brigades incorporate the battalion reports into their report and submit a single report to the division to which they belong. Last, the largest organisational unit (Wing in the Air Force, Brigade in Air Defence, Bases in Army Aviation and Naval Bases and Marine Brigades in the Navy) sends a single report to the Readiness Office of each Service Command.

However, the Army inexplicably breaks this rule, and each unit (battalion, brigade, division, Operational Command) independently sends its own readiness report to the Ground Forces Readiness Office, which means that this office receives some 530 reports.

The report consists of a "PowerPoint" file (see Figure 10).
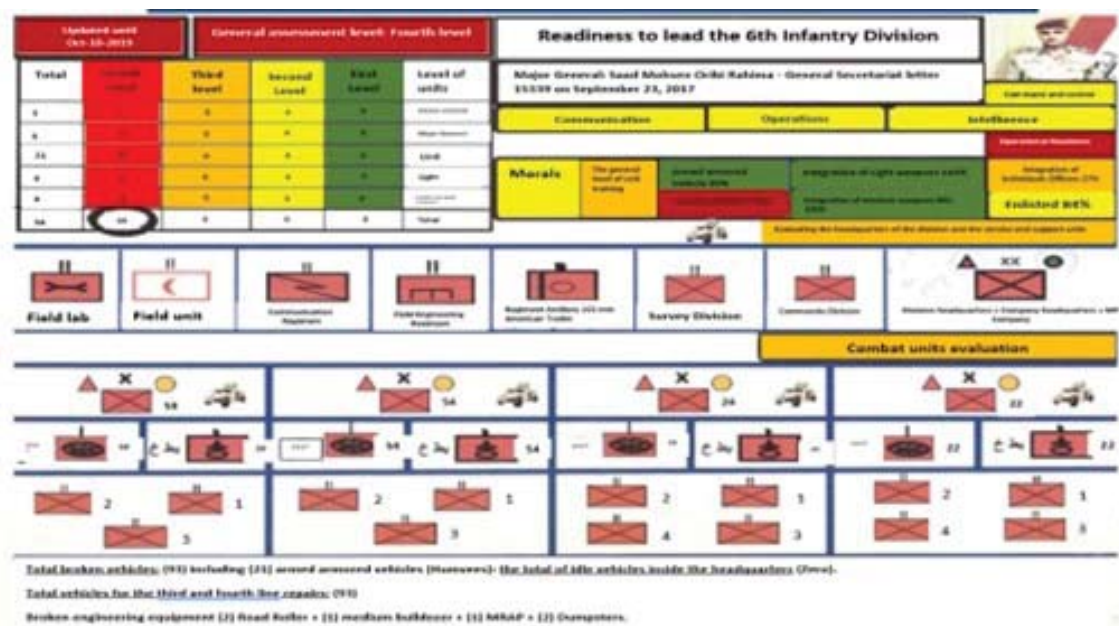
Figure 10: Example of an Iraqi Division Readiness Card. Source: Half-yearly Readiness Tactical Report 2017

In the Iraqi SAF there is only one chain of command, the organic chain. In other words, there is no operational chain and therefore no transfer of forces from the armies to the JEMAD. Therefore, the readiness report is only drafted on organisational units, making it impossible to assess joint entities or groupings as they do not exist as such.

These monthly reports are also submitted to the M3 Operational Readiness Office on a monthly basis. The role of this Operational Office is far from the mission that its name might suggest. It does not draft any kind of operational level readiness reports covering the analysis of the 5 Army/Navy forces in a joint environment in the current war against DAESH. Nor does it assess the readiness of the forces attributed to OPLAN or COPLAN, as they no longer exist.

This M3 Office is a compilation of developments reported by the armies (personnel coverage problems, logistical supply/maintenance needs, etc.). These developments are distributed by area and assigned for their resolution to the Directorates (M,s) of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Last, a monthly meeting (Monthly Readiness Meeting) is held, chaired by the Head of M3 (Division General), where the Armies/Navy are

informed of the results of the actions carried out by the different M3s to mitigate shortcomings and problems[38].

The closest it comes to considering aspects derived from lessons identified by a joint force in actual combat against ISIS (Operational Readiness) is as follows. The element directing operations against DAESH is the Joint Operations Centre-Iraq (JOC-I), under the direct authority of the Prime Minister. It is in this JOC-I that actions against terrorist cells are planned. Once planned, they are forwarded to the armies for implementation. In most cases, it is the Ground Forces that lead the operation. When the operation in question has been completed, the ET produces a "Post Mission Report", which is forwarded to the participating armies and JOC-I, outlining lessons learned and possible improvements in terms of materials and procedures.

Every three (3) months, the Tactical Readiness Offices submit to the Strategic Readiness Committee a specific report on each of the armies, incorporating the unit files and a kind of summary of needs and a series of proposals for actions to be taken to mitigate the shortcomings. This report is currently quite brief and in most of the armies incorporates little added value to the sum of all the units' shortages.

Last, and also on a quarterly basis, the Strategic Readiness Committee is supposed to submit the Strategic Readiness Report to the Chief of Defence Staff (CHOD) or the Minister of Defence. This has only happened once. On 4 July 2021, Inspector General Lieutenant General Emmad Al-Zuhayri presented the First Strategic Readiness Report to the Minister of Defence. Although its content clearly has room for improvement, it must be considered a success from an Iraqi perspective. In addition, this document has enabled NMI to produce an Advisory Report to improve both the strategic report and the corresponding tactical reports.

Following a detailed study of the First Strategic Readiness Report and the quarterly reports produced by the Army/Navy Readiness Offices, the most relevant elements identified were as follows:

- Instruction and training are barely considered in the reports. In fact, it is taken for granted that all units are perfectly trained, which is totally unrealistic.

- It is mainly oriented towards reporting on the availability of the media, which does not reflect the true readiness, providing only a very partial view.

- The requests and actions proposed by the Army/Navy are not linked to the missions coming from the National Military Strategy.

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38 This procedure is imposed by the excessive centralisation of the system. Ninety per cent of decisions must be taken by the Chief of Defence Staff (CHOD) himself. For example, a brigade commander may not make any changes of personnel, assets or even ammunition between subordinate units. A simple movement of boxes of mortar ammunition between battalions must be authorised in the handwriting of the CHOD. It is at this meeting, therefore, that the CHOD approves all the tasks necessary to mitigate the problems reported in the monthly reports.

- There are hardly any references to C4I capacity, nor are there any references to the Cyber Threat.

- Likewise, there are no impressions or assessments of their own, or of the Army Chiefs, or of the CHOD.

- There is no prioritisation in the proposal of elements to be corrected. Everything is at the same level.

New trends

In the last decade, most Western defence ministries have based their measures of SAF readiness compliance primarily on the "Four Rs" (defeating, deterring, disrupting, defending)[39]. These "Four Rs" are conflict oriented. However, they do not cover all the missions assigned to the SAF in recent years.

As a result, countries such as the US is moving towards a more holistic approach, and three new elements have been added to "conflict preparedness": crisis situations, competition for global/regional hegemony, and the ability to adapt to change.

In other words, there is a shift from a readiness assessment focused on the "Four Rs" to a new vision oriented towards the "Four Cs[40]". The SAF is now not only prepared for conflict; it must also be prepared to deal with crisis situations at home and abroad, maintaining competitiveness with potential regional adversaries, keeping an eye on new threats to adapt in the shortest possible time and deal with them in the best possible way.

To be ready for the first three Cs in the future, Defence Departments must balance current readiness with the challenges required to meet future challenges.

C for Change, or the ability to adapt to what the future may hold, will be essential.

The US has committed to the creation of a specific command (Army Futures Command-AFC) to focus on analysing what the SAF's Concept of Operational Posture (CONOP) will look like in a Multi-domain Operations (MDO) environment. The three elements they consider in this CONOP are: a well-defined and enlisted force, capable of working in different domains and with the ability to rapidly adapt (converge) its capabilities to the domains where the crisis situation leads it to execute its missions.

Extrapolating this thinking to the Spanish national environment, we can say that the approach to the "Four Cs" has already begun and is underway.

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39 Lt. Gen. Charles Flynn. (2020). Article: The Question at the Center of Army Readiness: Ready for What?

40 Four C's: conflict, crisis, competition, change.

C for Conflicts is perfectly covered by the assessment of the readiness of the units assigned to the Joint Force Core. As for C for Crisis, apart from the reaction forces included in the NFC that can be used, the creation of the Military Emergency Unit back in 2005 laid the foundations for emergency and disaster management. The participation of the Army and Navy in operations Baluarte and Balmis have demonstrated the SAF's level of preparedness, and have shown that their orientation towards C for Conflicts has not led to a loss of capabilities to deal with crisis situations.

In relation to C for Competition for regional hegemony, defence investments, although limited and always scarce, are making it possible to keep a balance with neighbouring countries that could pose a threat. Nonetheless, a presence in the areas of interest is guaranteed for the time being.

C for Change, in the Hispano-Spanish context, is the Joint Concept Development Centre[41] (CCDC) integrated in CESEDEN, which directs and coordinates the study of new operational concepts to support the enhancement of military capabilities.

Conclusions

Readiness has become the cornerstone guiding defence planning processes, providing policymakers with a measure of the degree of fulfilment of assigned missions and the shortfall (never surplus) in required capabilities in relation to available economic resources.

Readiness evaluation systems are not "per se" a guarantee of success. They are simply a way of obtaining data in a pseudo-scientific way, to know the state of readiness of a force. However, there are still other elements inherent to armies such as leadership and the will to win[42] that must be considered.

The readiness systems of most Western countries have many points of convergence, most of them covering the evaluation of personnel, materials provision, assessment of the state of the infrastructure and especially so-called "training", understood as the synthesis of the individual instruction of the combatant and collective training. Then, the particular circumstances of each nation and its National Security and Defence

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41 Order DEF/166/2015 creates the Joint Concept Development Centre, CCDC, and establishes that it will direct and coordinate the study of new operational concepts that support the enhancement of military capabilities, maintaining the necessary relations with counterpart bodies in allied countries and international organisations, and with the Directorate General of Armaments and Material, for collaboration and information exchange. It will also promote and coordinate the study and development of joint and combined doctrine, maintaining the necessary relations with the bodies of the Armed Forces and international organisations responsible in this area, through the analysis of the lessons identified and doctrinal shortcomings.

42 These elements are de facto incorporated into the different systems such as recruitment or I/A to facilitate their achievement.

Strategies introduce additional aspects linked to their levels of ambition and representativeness at the regional level or in the global context.

Assessment of readiness is a necessity for countries if their executive branch wants to know whether their armed forces are prepared at all times to deal with threats to national security.

This assessment cannot be based on "feelings" or "hunches". Readiness systems are moving away from subjective components and towards scientific data, applying increasingly accurate metrics and systems.

Readiness systems work at three levels: strategic, operational and tactical. All of them assess the state of the elements that define the capabilities needed to cope with the missions assigned to the SAF. These reports are communicating vessels. A tactical unit that does not meet the required readiness level, be it due to lack of resources, lack of training, lack of personnel or poor infrastructure, will affect the operational level, since the joint force into which it should be integrated will also be affected and may not reach the operational capability and readiness required by the strategic level.

The examples of readiness systems shown indicate different trends. While the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia have invested a great deal of intellect and effort in defining and articulating capability measurement and unit evaluation procedures, there are other countries such as Spain that have adhered to NATO's strict guidelines. Countries such as Iraq have had to adapt a truly ambitious readiness system (like the American one) to the reality of a SAF that continues to fight with DAESH and that can do little training and instruction as most of the forces are still immersed in providing security to the civilian population.

The collapse of the Soviet Union conditioned readiness systems, gearing them towards achieving capabilities aimed at having expeditionary forces that should project international stability. The prominence achieved by terrorist organisations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS led to the effort to train counterterrorism and counter-insurgency units to adapt to operational scenarios. In recent years, due to strategic moves by the major powers, or nuclear powers, and above all Russia's intervention in Ukraine in 2022, there has again been a change in trends in readiness objectives, with large-scale combat theatres of operations returning to the forefront.

Knowledge of China's and Russia's readiness systems is rather limited, but in both cases experts in the field say that both powers have prioritised modernising weapon systems and having battalion-type units with the highest readiness. In the Russian case, it is currently oriented towards expeditionary projection forces, but all hypotheses suggest that they are gradually shifting back to units ready to confront high-intensity conflicts. In China's case, its "noiseless" preparedness for possible high-intensity conflict seems more than evident.

In essence, the new trend in partner countries' readiness is to balance short-term preparedness with the need to have an adequate level of readiness to meet future (long-term) challenges, even at the cost of taking greater risks now.

Generally speaking, the new trends in readiness (in countries whose economies allow it) are to invest in improving their military capabilities in the coming years, based on new weapons systems, artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, state-of-the-art telecommunications and information systems (CIS), biotechnology and advanced energy management systems, including energy storage.

Disasters and emergencies of all kinds in recent years have demonstrated that the 21st century SAF must be prepared for all types of missions (not just conflicts). In short, in the words of Lieutenant General Flynn, today's readiness must be framed within the concept of the Four C's *(conflict, crisis, competition, change)*.

Included in the panorama are pandemics, earthquakes, the defence of national sovereignty, a position of strength in the regional environment and participation in expeditionary operations alongside our allies, without forgetting large and small-scale conflicts, although the latter are the privilege of the world powers involved in the struggle for hegemony.

Focusing on our own system for assessing the operational capability and readiness of Spanish armed forces units, we can affirm that it is fulfilling its role, and therefore the Joint Force is reaching its required readiness levels to date to face the missions assigned by successive DDN.

CEFAS-21 specifies the Military Strategy through Military Strategic Lines of Action to achieve the Military Strategic Objectives, which are developed through General Action Frameworks. This CEFAS is one of the main challenges, learning to manoeuvre along the fine line between peace, crisis and conflict within the so-called "Grey Zone".

To improve, metrics should be incorporated to achieve operational readiness not only at the operational level but especially at the tactical level, to deal with activities that the adversary might use (cyber-attacks, propaganda, sabotage, covert or clandestine operations, riots, and the like).

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Introduction of mentoring as a multiplying factor for female leadership in the Spanish Armed Forces: Lessons learned from the US model and views of female members of the Spanish armed forces on a possible voluntary programme

Abstract

Mentoring is a relationship between two people, in which one person with more experience and knowledge teaches and models another one who wishes to progress both personally and professionally. This study carries out an extensive bibliographic review of how this technique has been used by some organizations and armed forces to enhance the professional career and the exercise of leadership among their personnel, especially the female minority.

A first part of the study is aimed to the study of the characteristics and aptitudes of leadership and the possible gap between genders. The conclusions allow us to rule out any qualitative justification for the absence of women in relevant positions in the Spanish armed forces, so tools must be sought that reduce the gender gap and allow women to develop professionally and reach leadership positions.

One of these tools would be mentoring, taking the experience in the US armed forces as a model and adapting it to the particular Spanish case. The study contrasts the theoretical findings with the opinion of a group of Spanish military women, resulting in a mostly positive opi-

nion regarding the potential benefits of this technique and the possible success of its implementation. As a conclusion, the research proposes the adoption of an informal and voluntary programme that favours professional development and to achieve the most relevant positions for Spanish military women.

Keywords

Cite this article:

Introduction and hypothesis

It is now 30 years since women became a part of the Spanish Armed Forces, and female participation in our military institutions has stabilised and become normalised to the extent that there are now two women generals. Although the percentage of women is slightly higher than the average in our neighbouring countries[1], these women are heterogeneously distributed among the different corps and ranks, with the balance leaning towards rank and file soldiers and sailors and, within the command corps, towards the Common Corps, of which they account for one third[2]. This inequity means that women are clearly a minority group of officers in the general corps and the marines, from which the commanders of the most characteristic units of our armed forces[3] are promoted and where there is most potential for promotion to leadership at all operational levels[4].

After the first Spanish military woman was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in 2019, the editorial of a major national newspaper[5] lamented the low percentage of women in the world's armies and called for *"a greater incorporation of women and changes in the promotion system to make representation at the top fairer"* as outstanding issues for our armed forces. This statement should be viewed with caution. While the presence of more women would be desirable, it should be remembered that the opportunity for promotion to general only comes after some 32 years of service, and there is therefore no fast track to producing "female candidates for general" who would provide a "*fairer representation at the top*". After three decades of female presence and extensive policy adaptation to ensure effective equal opportunities for both sexes, it seems unlikely that "*a change in the promotion system*" would result in a higher percentage of female military personnel in senior positions. Indeed (CARREIRAS 2018) hypothesises that the shift towards greater equality within the military forces will not occur automatically as a consequence of time or an increase in the number of women, but of specific policies that must be applied cautiously so as not to produce the opposite effect, as could be the case of "positive discrimination" policies. This view is shared by (MAIDA and WEBER 2019), who concluded in their study that although it is desirable to increase female representation in management positions to increase the perception of equality, establishing a quota system alone would be ineffective in

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1 It is around 13%, compared to an average of 11% in NATO countries. Source: Spain is the ninth NATO country with the most women in the armed forces. (March 2019). Europa Press.

2 Annual report of the Military Observatory for Equality.-12-2020.

3 On 1 October 2021, it was significant that there were only seven female officers and 15 female NCOs in the Marine Corps. This represents less than 2% of the command cadres, while in the rank and file the percentage rises to 8.3%.

4 Neither of the female military officers who have been promoted to the rank of general officer belong to command corps: the first is a member of the polytechnic engineering corps and the second is serves in the military legal corps.

5 El País. (13/7/2019). General: women in the army.

reducing the gender gap in the rest of the organisation, especially in countries with a traditionally male-dominated culture. In the opinion of a US military officer, widely reported on social media, [6] *"racial, gender, (...) quotas are counterproductive to genuine integration into the organisation, because as a racial minority women, quotas stipulate that since I am incapable of earning a specific position on my own merits, I need the organisation to increase my chances of success because of my gender or race"*.

These opinions support the idea that positive discrimination towards women would not increase the percentage of women in our armed forces - or the number of women in positions of responsibility - as it would not solve the main cause, which is not only due to factors intrinsic to the military, such as military norms and traditions, but mainly to cultural, social and economic factors that are difficult to change in the short or medium term.

For all the above reasons, tools are needed to facilitate an immediate, efficient and fair way to leverage the talent of female personnel already in our Armed Forces and to increase their progression towards positions of greater responsibility and visibility.

To this end, this study proposes the inclusion of mentoring in the Spanish Armed Forces' career guidance systems, taking the lessons learned after several decades of applying this technique in the US Navy and the US Marine Corps as an example. It is hypothesised that providing personalised mentoring to female military personnel by more senior or employed women (or ultimately men) through the voluntary exchange of knowledge and experiences related to professional, family or personal life, could enhance their career development and leadership, thus increasing their chances of accessing relevant positions.

Importance of the study. The state of play

This is a completely new subject for the Spanish armed forces. Mentoring programmes have only been introduced in the Spanish business world in the last decade, and there is still not enough data or a solid track record to allow a quantitative or qualitative study of the impact on the participating staff. Another aspect that corroborates the novelty of this study is the scarcity of bibliographical references beyond those written in English and aimed at the study of mentoring programmes carried out in the USA.

The only study by the Spanish military was (NUŃEZ 2017), which served as the basis for a pilot programme for mentoring officers in the Spanish Marines. This study pointed to the possible incorporation of mentoring to combat lack of motivation related to *"(...) lack of career expectations, pay issues, results of selection or assessment processes, geographical mobility, retention in certain jobs and difficulty with the work-life*

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6 Diversity: At What Cost? A Minority Female Leader's Perspective. (7/12/2016). The Pendulum (online).

balance and reintegration into civilian life". Although this is an interesting study, its structure and length recommend a more in-depth and systematic approach to the subject, which I wanted to address specifically to the female sector of our Armed Forces.

For all the above reasons, I believe that a study conducted both in Spanish and aimed at women in our country of a specific group of military women is innovative and opens up a field of study that could be followed up by other researchers.

Methodology

This work follows a primarily qualitative methodology. The research begins with a bibliographic study of databases of the scientific community, aimed at finding the possible most recent sources on the subject, relating to military personnel and Spanish, if possible. At the national level, the Ministry of Defence/CESEDEN database was consulted. Internationally, the online repositories of Researchgate.com, Academia.edu, ProQuest and EBSCOHost, among others, have been used.

This is followed by an analysis from the general to the specific; in this case, starting from the study of leadership, the influence of gender and its possible future evolution. An analysis of mentoring as a professional development tool and its specific application towards or among women and/or in the military was then conducted. Where this was not possible, civil service or technical or public sector employees were considered.

To reinforce the partial conclusions regarding the hypotheses, an opinion survey was conducted among 163 military women, from which their perceptions of the possibilities put forward and their possible adaptation to the Spanish Armed Forces are extracted.

Finally, conclusions were drawn with the intention of opening the door to utilising this technique in our Armed Forces and allow other researchers to begin various ramifications derived from this study.

Leadership and gender

One of the first considerations to take into account to establish how best to facilitate the career path and support leadership among women in the military is to understand how gender affects both the military's performance of military command duties and how it is perceived by men. To do this, the following questions must be answered. What qualities are traditionally been associated with military leadership? What is the likely evolution, considering the current missions, the context in which they are carried out and the means available? Is there a female leadership style? If so, is it less effective than the masculine version?

Firstly, it is necessary to consider what is meant by gender, beyond the mere sexual distinction between males and females. (DCAF 2016) defines "gender" as "*the social attributes associated with being male and female that are learned through socialisation and that determine a person's position and value in a given context*". One of the attributes generally associated with men is that of leadership. It already appears in (SHIELDS 1985) and has been maintained over time. Research by (SCHEIN 2001) shows that, in general, people perceive the existence of certain characteristics of leadership positions that are only possessed by men ("*think of a leader = think of a man*"). This concept of leadership was corroborated by (DEPAULA 2005), whose study shows that rejection of female leaders is even more acute in the military environment. This stereotype seems to be one of the main stumbling blocks for female leaders.

In the military world, women perceive themselves as inferior to men. (BALRAJ 2017) conducted an opinion poll among female reserve officers in their country, the majority of whom said they felt undervalued by their male peers (92%), did not have the same opportunities as men to exercise leadership (77%) but who at the same time thought that a woman could be a good military leader (77%).

In the civilian realm, possible differences between male and female leadership styles have been studied in depth, often in an attempt to differentiate between a "feminine" leadership style that is less effective and satisfactory than that of men, and thus to justify the limited presence of female personnel in management positions (CUADRADO et al 2003). However, most studies have concluded that, albeit with minor nuances, there are no statistically significant differences between male and female leadership (PULIDO 2014).

(EAGLY and JOHNSON 1990) point out that the belief that men and women exercise leadership identically and theories based on gender stereotyping needs to be revisited. Their theoretical review suggests that there are gender differences in many aspects of social behaviour that could affect the way leadership is exercised. Similarly, (CUADRADO et al 2003) found that, although men and women do not perceive that they exercise leadership differently, different relationships are sometimes found between leadership styles depending on the sex of the leaders. In this regard, (MANKE 2018) argues that, more than gender, it is people's experiences, such as their parental role models, education and their professional and personal experiences that define their leadership style.

What seems clear is that there is no such thing as a "female leadership" that is less effective than male leadership, which makes it possible to rule out that there is an objective cause for the absence of women in leadership positions.

As regards the characteristics of military leadership for the future, (LOUGHLIN and ARNOLD 2007) point out that, although the traditional definition of military leadership is linked to physical strength and combat readiness, the changing nature of conflicts (e.g. peacekeeping operations) and the environment in which they take place (especially technological and information development) mean that today's leaders must have other skills such as negotiation, mediation and the controlled use of force, which women can perform as well as, or better than, men. That is why, they argue, it is necessary to redefine the nature of leadership is in the current context, discarding

gender stereotypes that condition the perception of leadership of men and women even though their objective performance is the same.

Similarly, (FALLESEN 2011) analysed the influence of the variety of contexts in which current operations are conducted and the technological and intellectual challenges posed by new systems and information management on the US military's definitions of leadership. The list of skills to be possessed by the new leader - which makes no mention of the person's gender - includes resilience, adaptability, critical thinking, multicultural skills, mentoring skills and self-development tools. Women are perfectly capable of displaying them all.

(GALLARDO 2015) was a pioneering research project by the Spanish Armed Forces to determine whether the leadership style exercised by Spanish Army personnel was compatible with the theoretical leadership established through its specific doctrine. The work revealed that the three dimensions of leadership most frequently used by military women (consideration, structure initiation and inspirational motivation) are also those that best characterise ET military leadership and are the most effective in international operations.[7]

All the above leads to three conclusions: that "female leadership" is just as effective as "male leadership"; that Spanish military women exercise leadership satisfactorily in relation to the doctrinal model; and that the exercise of leadership in future military operations will require competencies that have nothing to do with the physical strength and combat skills traditionally associated with male military leaders. These findings eliminate any qualitative justification for the absence of women in significant positions in the Spanish armed forces.

Mentoring processes

Mentoring is a relationship established between an experienced person (the mentor) and a person who wishes to be guided towards acquiring their experience or wisdom (the mentee). The "Professional Charter for Mentoring and Coaching"[8] defines this technique as "*a development process that may involve a transfer of skills or knowledge from a more experienced person to a less experienced person through dialogue for learning and role modelling, and may also be collaborative learning between peers*".

[9]The origin of the term "mentor" comes straight out of Greek mythology, Homer's Odyssey, to be precise. Mentor was the friend whom Ulysses asked, to take care and educate his son Telemachus before leaving for the Trojan War. Mentor and Telemachus forged a bond halfway between a parent/child relationship and a teacher/student relationship, which thrived on the trust and respect they forged in advising the child.

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7 (MADOC-DIDOM 2014).

8 (EMCC 2011)

9 This Greek word is an amalgamation of "Men" which means "he who thinks" and "tor" which is the masculine suffix. Mentor therefore means "the man who thinks".

There is a need to clear up the confusion that sometimes arises between mentoring and other terms such as "tutoring" and "coaching". The relationship between a mentor and mentee can be legal (guardianship) or academic (responsible for private tuition), while a mentor's ties with his or her mentee are more personal than formal and focus on guidance or advice to the less experienced. Coaching, on the other hand, is a process whereby an individual or group is helped to develop or refine skills through instruction or training, in which the short or medium term objectives are set within a specific field; mentoring processes, on the other hand, are long-term and usually focus on professional or personal development as a whole[10].

Mentoring in the US Marine Corps

In the military, channelling the positive influence that a superior exerts on a subordinate is often unconscious, and few armed forces have done it consciously and procedurally. In 2006, after several decades of informal mentoring, the US Marine Corps (USMC) introduced a programme to keep morale high and foster leadership and a sense of belonging to the Corps between deployments or operations. The plan[11] replaced the existing counselling programme on a mandatory, hierarchical and regular basis. On the one hand, it was intended to enable the superior to understand the concerns and desires of the subordinate and to practice leadership; on the other, for the subordinate to be positively influenced by his mentor to boost his performance, integration and motivation to serve. The idea was to achieve an overall improvement of the organisation, the only cost being the time invested by both.

Despite good intentions, it did not take long for criticism to start, which was subsequently confirmed by academic studies calling the programme's effectiveness into question. In 2010, a Naval War College study[12] analysed the usefulness of military mentoring programmes and concluded that, while it obviously useful, mandatory, formal programmes were less effective than voluntary, informal ones, where the level of involvement was greater, were sustained for longer, had a greater impact on the protégé's career and fostered mentees' willingness to become a mentor themselves. Beyond that, it was questionable which members of the armed forces were qualified to be mentors and whether everyone serves in the military (and not just those high achievers) could really benefit from a mentoring programme.

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10 (García de Paredes, 2020).

11 Marine Corps mentoring programme (MCMP) 2006.

12 (Johnson and Anderson, 2010).

Subsequent investigations[13] studied mentors' and mentees' perceptions of effectiveness against the programme's objectives to pinpoint failures and make recommendations, and found much evidence to cast doubt on the programme's efficacy.

In short, the USMC had established a tool that had become an end in itself. The organisation ran the programme in an inflexible and bureaucratic manner, but its participants did not seem to appreciate or understand it or even realise that they were a part of it, so it was eventually decided to scrap the programme. According to (GARCIA DE PAREDES 2020), the factors that may have had an impact on this failure can be summarised as follows:

- The mandatory nature of the tool, for both, for mentor and mentee. This clashes with definitions that define mentoring as a voluntary process[14].

- The automatic designation of the organic head as the mentor. On the one hand, it hinders having the same mentor involved for a sufficiently long period of time; and on the other, far from harnessing the bonds of trust and confidentiality, it could provoke suspicion on the part of the subordinate. Let's not forget that the organic command exercises disciplinary and administrative authority over the mentee.

- Compliance with strict deadlines. Given that this is a long-standing relationship, it would seem unwise to impose precise deadlines, let alone as frequent as monthly.

- Mandatory, tedious and excessive formats. This diminishes the flexibility and spontaneity of the mentors, who should be able to shape the monitoring according to their own criteria and procedures, without having to report on the basis of standardised documents.

Despite the above, the USMC has not completely given up on this technique and still considers it essential for leaders to pass on their experience to their subordinates, so it still has informal mentoring as one of its four training tools [15]: Teaching, Coaching, Counselling and Mentoring, the latter concept having been defined as:

> "(...) a voluntary relationship between two individuals and should not be forced or directed. One individual has experience and knowledge and wishes to pass it on to another, in whose development they are invested. The other individual seeks to learn, gain experience and shape their development according to the person guiding them"[16].

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13 (Rauschelbach, 2013)

14 Among others, those provided by the National Council For Voluntary Associations (UK) and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (Switzerland).

15 Marine Corps Order 1500.61. (27 July 2017).

16 Ibidem. Translated from English by the author.

Mentoring and minority Groups: the case of women

Several authors point to the particularly beneficial impact of mentoring on staff belonging to minority groups[17], whether on the basis of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Moreover, this benefit is multiplied in case of members of the "millennial generation", intimately connected to social networks as a source of power and as a way of finding references to guide them[18]. In addition, studies show that millennials appreciate mentoring and job satisfaction more than previous generations[19] and that they prefer to work in a collaborative environment[20]. This is particularly relevant, as a quarter of the Spanish Armed Forces' commanding officers already belong to this generation[21].

Mentoring can support the professional development of minorities through motivation and perceived equal opportunities. In this type of mentoring, not only the generic case of helping to integrate staff who might encounter implicit or explicit problems of adaptation or discrimination on ethnic, sexual, religious or other ground, but also the specific case of staff selected for their high potential, who in the medium term could become a reference and guide for others can be considered.

Within these specific groups, the largest group is female staff. Mentoring among women is considered a tool for female empowerment towards effective equality of opportunities in professional development[22][23]; for its implementation in the Armed Forces, in addition to how mentoring has been applied in other Armed Forces, it would be appropriate to take programmes that have been successfully implemented in the Spanish business environment into account[24]. In the ideal case, where both the mentor and the mentee are women, the female mentor can provide valuable insights into how to address some of the gender-specific challenges that women face during their years of service of which their male colleagues are unlikely to be aware. In the case of the Spanish Armed Forces, given that the most female commanders are concentrated in the lower ranks of each scale[25], it is important that women in the

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17 (Crapanzano, 2017).

18 www.insala.com

19 (Meister and Willyerd, 2010)

20 (Baird, 2015).

21 Data extracted from SIPERDEF (May 2021).

22 https://mujeresycia.com/mentoring-y-empoderamiento-femenino/

23 http://consultoria-consultores.es/articulos/articulo-consultoria-mentoring-para-la-igualdad-de-g-nero/

24 There are numerous initiatives that promote mentoring among women in business, such as those set up by Faconauto Woman, by the Association of Women Entrepreneurs and Executives of Navarre, and the "Yo, Jefa" programme. Others, such as the "Women in Engineering" programme, promote the participation of women in STEM careers to close the so-called "gender gap".

25 As of 1 September 2021, women account for barely 1% of jobs from lieutenant colonel to brigadier general, according to the Military Observatory for Equality.

lower ranks have access to senior male mentors to increase their career development prospects until, in a few years' time, they can become mentors to their subordinates. In the meantime, peer-to-peer mentoring should be used, which would facilitate the exchange of experiences[26].

The benefits of female mentoring

There is extensive literature on the benefits of mentoring female staff in male-dominated organisations. The advantages of this tool apply both to the mentor, the mentee and the organisation itself.

In the (MCPHAUL 2009) study of the aerospace sector, mentors indicated the four major benefits of mentoring women in the organisation: improving communication and networking among women, building effective relationships, improving women's skills and abilities, and helping to retain female talent. (CHAUHAN and MISHRA 2021) come to similar conclusions but add an important nuance: at a certain point in a woman's career, failure to provide mentoring may mean that her career will come to a halt because she does not know how to solve problems as they arise. In the medical field, (VASQUEZ 2020) states that successful mentoring results in personal and professional development, increased productivity and job satisfaction. In addition to reiterating that male mentors should be used when there are no women in senior positions, it envisages the possibility of using several mentors to meet different needs or concerns.

Also in the medical field, (VARKEY 2012) argues that, in the absence of female mentors, peer mentoring is highly beneficial for female staff. Within military medicine, (TAWNEY and NGUYEN 2019) note that mentoring female personnel promotes professional development, creates a culture that supports the importance of personal (including family) life, combats gender bias and promotes inclusion.

The case of women mentoring other women is referred to by (BLOCK and TIETIEN 2016) as *"women sending the lift down so that other women can go up"*. They argue that institutions need women who will stay with them in the long run, to serve as role models for others, and that embedding mentoring within the organisational culture will be key to supporting women's aspirations to achieve leadership positions, as well as facilitating their family life. These processes must be recognised and facilitated by the organisation itself. As a counterpoint to this idea, (FEENEY 2006) argues that what really matters is that women have a mentor, regardless of gender, and that satisfaction with this technique is higher when it is informal and not forced, an argument also reached by COBLE 2018 in its study of mentoring career female officers in the armed forces.

When such relationships in the military domain are analysed, the results are just as satisfactory as in the civilian world.

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26 (DCAF, 2016).

In one of the first works directed at the military, (ADAMS 1997) argues that mentoring can be used in both military and civilian worlds as an effective strategy to strengthen career development and organisational success, providing job satisfaction, improved career progression and the possibility of leadership positions. He argues that, since it is impossible to mentor all military personnel, disadvantaged minority groups can be targeted. (MCATEER 2016) points out that opening up fields traditionally closed to women must bring about organisational change in which it is not only worth welcoming the appointment of women to new senior positions, but also development tools, such as mentoring, that provide a culture of gender inclusiveness that will lead to appropriate leadership development for women and men, resulting in a "healthy organisational culture".

In addition to this, (JOHNSON 2012) states that many military women prefer to have a mentor of the opposite sex, which would lead us to conclude that it is important for women to engage in non-directed mentoring, which also includes a free choice of mentor.

Career guidance in the military domain

When considering the application of mentoring within the military, it is necessary to analyse current tools and ask how they might fit in. The Military Career Law and the regulations that develop it establish that the Army and Navy Personnel Headquarters will implement a system that facilitates the individualised professional guidance of all career military personnel in their respective fields. This process of information and specialised, technical, individual and systematic counselling is aimed at *"supporting career decisions, career paths and career opportunities".* There are tools common to both the army and the navy, such as annual personal evaluation reports (IPEC) or personal evaluation reports (IPEV), which are issued after the evaluation for promotion. Other tools, such as the Individual Career Profile (ICP) or the Personalised Orientation Report (POR) provide a comparison of the data available in the personnel file, without offering guidance related to career planning or talent management.

In general, it is observed that much numerical data is provided automatically, but little individualised attention or human interaction. There is no advice on issues such as the impact of work-life balance measures, second-career specialisations and the possibility of being kept in certain jobs. These circumstances exacerbate the need to provide new commanders with a mentoring system to advise them on their professional development from their first jobs.

To compare the usefulness of mentoring with other career guidance tools, we can assess the answers that thousands of US military commanders gave on the impact of 15 aspects of their military life on their development as leaders[27]: "*mentoring*", "*learning*

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27 (Rilet, 2014).

from a peer" and "*learning from a superior*" were ranked 4, 5 and 6 respectively, while "*coaching from organic command*" and "*360° reporting*" were ranked 13 and 14.

Therefore, mentoring should be viewed as a possible addition to the career guidance system, which would not only have a positive impact on the user level, but also on the organisation, for all that it could contribute to the future "talent management" system (particularly female talent).

The opinion of the Spanish military

Since most academic references consulted originate from the US military or labour sphere, a survey was carried out among Spanish military personnel to ratify or discard the main conclusions drawn from the bibliographical analysis. It was a voluntary, anonymous, online initiative, in which 160 responses were received from military personnel of all ranks. The survey consisted of seven questions, plus an additional three sociodemographic questions (corps, scale and seniority) to allow for a more in-depth analysis.

- Asked whether the implementation of mentoring in the Spanish Armed Forces would be beneficial for the personal and career progression and leadership of military women, 71% said yes, 17% said no, and 13% were unsure.

- A total of 81% responded affirmatively as to whether, during their military career, they were aware of having mentored other military women or men, either as a mentor or as a mentee.

- Regarding the possibility of participating in a future mentoring programme, 96% of the respondents indicated their willingness to participate, although 55% of the total indicated that they would prefer a voluntary programme to a compulsory one.

- Regarding the hierarchical relationship with the mentor, 61% stated that they would prefer it to be someone outside their chain of command.

- If a voluntary, non-chain-of-command programme were to be implemented, 6% of the volunteers said they intended to participate only as a mentor, 9% only as a mentor and 85% in both roles.

- Regarding the gender of the mentor, 85% responded that they had no preference for a male or female mentor, compared to 14% who would prefer a female and 1% who would prefer a male.

- In the absence of a senior female, 53% stated that they would prefer another female in the same job and more seniority as a mentor, compared to 27% who would prefer a senior male and 21% who would prefer a male in the same job and more seniority.

It is important to note that perceptions of mentoring are influenced by seniority. Female military personnel with 20 or more years of service have a higher opinion of mentoring, report having participated more (which is logical given that they have had more opportunity to do so) and would commit to a future programme in a higher percentage. Of those who have been using the technique for five years or less, only half think it is as effective, the same percentage say they have used it, they have a greater preference for a female mentor of the same sex (33%) and would refuse to participate in a greater extent.

In short, the idea that a mentoring programme for Spanish military personnel should be non-hierarchical, voluntary for both participants and enjoy the free choice of the mentor's gender is ratified.

On the other hand, many military personnel consulted in particular have expressed concern about the implementation of a programme aimed solely at female personnel, since it could have a negative impact on the perception of equality by focusing on the fact that "programmes are designed exclusively for female personnel". Although mentoring programmes are particularly useful for minorities and most male staff are unlikely to have issues with integration or career progression, participation should also be open to male staff to avoid this negative perception.

A similar discussion is taking place in the British Air Force (RAF) as to whether minority groups should be included in an overall programme or have a specific mentoring programme (DOHERTY 2019).

Conclusions and proposals

To increase the number of female leaders in our armed forces, the existing quantitative gap must be closed with tools that facilitate a qualitative improvement in the career projection of Spanish women in the military and enhance the exercise of leadership, introducing the subjective, affective and non-automated element provided by mentoring. Building on the experience of other military and civilian institutions, which have been exploiting the benefits of mentoring for years, there is no doubt that we can learn from their successes and shortcomings to introduce this tool successfully and make it a multiplier for the female personnel's professional development, a group from which leaders at the highest level are already beginning to emerge. It is up to us to seize this opportunity.

The following is an outline of what a mentoring programme for the Spanish military might look like, with generic guidelines that seek to benefit the organisation by increasing the mentor's leadership and the performance, integration and motivation of the mentored soldier.

- It would be a voluntary, non-organic, flexible and informal tool.

- Depending on circumstances and/or availability, there could be three modalities: peer-to-peer, female mentor to female mentee or male mentor to female mentee.

- It would be supported by training and development sessions for mentors, outside of the further education system.

- It would rely on the massive use of social media and internal communication channels.

- It would prioritise cases of high potential staff, as well as those belonging to ethnic, religious or sexual minorities with integration problems.

Constraints of the study and foresight

The main limitation lies in the absence of national studies on female military personnel vis-a-vis leadership and mentoring, except the one cited by GALLARDO. The vast majority refer to the US Armed Forces and society, where the integration of women in the Armed Forces is decades ahead of our country.

With regard to the limitations of the survey, it was limited to Navy personnel, as neither contact data nor the electronic ranks of other armies were available.

In relation to possible lines of research in the future, it would be interesting to update the GALLARDO study, to refer not only to the ET military but also to the Navy, the Air Force and the Common Corps.

Another aspect worth studying in depth would be the appropriateness of a programme aimed only at female staff and the possible negative perceptions that this could have, comparing those obtained between male and female staff. This would require an opinion poll targeting a significant size group.

Following this, the general outlines of a mentoring programme could be defined, either on a general basis for all the armed forces or on a specific basis for each army/navy. Points such as the selection of mentors and their training could be covered.

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The difficult relationship between the negative demographic curve in Europe, the positive demographic curve in Africa and National Security

Abstract

The aim of this article is to expose the consequences for the Spanish State and for its national security related to the decrease of population in the Mediterranean region and to answer the following questions:

What consequences will the demographic decline have in Spain and in the Mediterranean region for the national and the European security? How will a limited security system be able to contrast the growing demographic curve in Africa and its threats? What kind of solutions could be implemented?

It is unquestionable that the negative demographic curve in Mediterranean Europe, side effect of a lack of generational change and the aging of the population, will expose the national security to a high level of stress. Likewise, the decrease in the active population and the increase of elderly population will entail a change in the structure of the Welfare State, but, but even more so, in relation to the services that the state will be able to effectively provide, taking into account the factors described above, and the economic resources available.

On the other hand, Europe, in particular the Mediterranean region, will have to face the consequences of the positive African demographic

curve (+215%), and, therefore will face greater migratory flows; direct consequence of the structural fragility that the African continent continues to present and that prevents it from evolving towards human and industrial well-being and development.

Keywords

Cite this article:

Introduction

Over the last four decades, all successive governments have had to deal with the complex situation of pension reform, see the Moncloa Pacts of 1977 and their successor, the Toledo Pact of 1995.

Today, just like yesterday, all the pacts or reforms have reached a common conclusion: the unsustainability of the system.

In this sense, the contribution made by Alonso Olea[1] in relation to the Social Security financial crisis is illustrative when he points out that:

> "Since the middle of the period 1971-1980, this problem has been getting increasingly worse, its main contributing factors being the reduction of employment —most crudely the increase in forced unemployment— creating time increases expenditures and depletes available resources, and the gradual ageing of the population which increases the cost of pensions".

State administrators have seen and continue to see the problem of pensions from a single point of view: that of the disbursement that this entails; above all, according to the pressures and calls for cuts from Brussels, but the direct and collateral effects that the ageing population has on the country's defence and national security is not being assessed whatsoever.

Thus, if the issue of pensions were to be extrapolated to the fields of defence and national security, it could provide a crucial overview if we are to anticipate the challenges that security and defence will face in the coming decades.

The aim of this paper is not to address the issue of the national or European pension system and attempt to provide a solution, but to use the salient data to shine a light in an apparently secondary direction.

The pension system in history: A tool for analysis

History is a valuable tool for use in an intelligence analysis context, since knowledge of past events facilitates the understanding of a current situation, whether it be by chronology or by analogy. Knowing how a particular situation has arisen is fundamental to narrowing down the problem, and therefore, in this paper, we rely on historiographical and quantitative data to give a scope of the problem, and to provide both an overview and the most detailed global analysis possible.

History shows that pension systems have been known since the time of the Roman Empire.

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[1] Olea, M. A. (1983). Instituciones de Seguridad Social. Editorial Civitas. P. 27.

The Roman system foresaw the *condition sine qua non*, that in order for the legionary to be eligible for the benefit, he had to survive a twenty-five-year stay in the service of the army, after which the reward granted, for these twenty-five years, consisted of a piece of land situated by custom in the place of the legionary's last posting, and the equivalent of twelve years' pay.

It is easy to imagine the shout of joy that the legionary must have produced upon reaching this goal, in fact, the term retirement comes from the Latin *jubilare,* that is, to shout for joy.

The link between the present moment in history and the period of the Roman Empire, which is interesting to note for the purposes of this paper, is that, even during the splendour of Rome, there were periods in which the pension system had encountered difficulties in paying the pensions of its legionaries.

Undoubtedly, the Roman scenario is distant in time and the causes of non-payment have little to do with the current European scenario, but it serves to demonstrate that the pension system has always been the Achilles' heel of societies.

As has already been shown at the beginning of this paper, the literature on the pension system in Spain is extensive, and for the purpose of this paper, we will make use of the document published in 2017 by the Bank of Spain entitled: *The Spanish Public Pension System: Current Situation, Challenges and Reform Alternatives.*

By way of clarification, at no time does this article seek to undermine the content of the document published by the Bank of Spain, but rather to use the information, it contains to extrapolate it and facilitate an analysis or interpretation of the data in terms of national defence and national security.

In the summary of the Bank of Spain's paper, the authors of the paper argue that the deterioration of the pension system had its origin in:

> "The Spanish Social Security System's deficit reached 1.5% of GDP in 2015, which contrasts with the surplus observed before the economic crisis, of 2.2% of GDP in 2007. This deterioration is mainly due to an increase in contributory pension expenditure (as a % of GDP), as a result of an increase in the dependency ratio, an increase in the pension replacement rate and a fall in the employment rate. Beyond this short-term situation, the Spanish public pension system, like those of the rest of the developed countries, faces important challenges caused by the expectation of a significant increase in longevity and, consequently, in the proportion of the population of retirement age"[2].

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2 Hernandez de Cos, P., Jimeno, J. F. and Ramos, R. (2017). National Bank of Spain. Doc. 2017. The Spanish Public Pension System: Current Situation, Challenges and Reform Alternatives. Occasional Papers. No. 1701.

The authors of the document also point out that the Spanish system is mainly based on three factors: demographics, the labour market and the relationship between the average pension and the average productivity of the economy.

For the purposes of this article, we will treat all the factors as a single factor, but more emphasis will be given to the demographic and labour market factors, as the results of other research in these fields have yielded data that are relevant to the objective of this paper, namely the future of defence and national security.

The Bank of Spain document refers to the demographic factor only from the point of view of the ageing and longevity of society, but, unfortunately, at no point does it explicitly mention that, in the medium and long term, the lack of generational replacement could be the factor that makes meeting pension payments impossible.

Likewise, as will be shown later, the decline in the actual population will affect the number of the working population that will have to bear the cost of maintaining the national welfare system in terms of taxes.

The Spanish and European demographic curve

According to the results of research carried out by the scientific community of "*The Lancet*" in October 2020[3], and as can be seen in Table n°1[4], in Spain the peak population was reached in 2019 with a total of 46.43 million and it is estimated that in the 2040-2050 period, Spain will suffer a decrease in its population of 30-40%, while in the period 2060-2080, Spain will have 50% less of its current population, which leaves the Spanish population at around 22.91 million, of which 50% will be over 65 years of age. In other words, in less than eighty years, taking the scenario of 2100 as a reference, Spain will face a completely new social scenario.

The Spanish demographic problem is not an isolated phenomenon, far from it, as the trend is being replicated equally in all regions of Europe[5] as can be seen in Table I.

Population decline, but above all the ageing of the population will lead to changes in fiscal, social and health care structures, industrial processes, business models and

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3 Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. Global Health Metric. Vol. 396, October 2020.

4 Table 1- Global metrics. Vol.296, October 2020, p.1290.

5 Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. Global Health Metric. Vol. 396, October 2020.

http://ghdx.healthdata.org

of course in the area of national defence and national security, and of course also in European security.

Population (millions)					Total Fertility Rate		
	2017	2100 reference scenario	2100 SGD pace scenario	Peak population (year)	2017	2100 refence scenario	2100 SGD pace scenario
High-income							
North America	360.88 (324.44.398.6)	379.95(282.96-509.77)	322.69(244.94-432.12)	408.40(2064)	1,79 (1.65-1.95)	1.54(1.13-2.03)	1.40(1.03-1.86)
Canada	35.98(33.92-38.59)	44.09(36.09-53.16)	37.06(32.09-43.28)	45.17(2078)	1.66(1.42-1.94)	1.58(1.29-1.90)	1.37(1.12-1.64)
Greenland	0.06(0.06-0.06)	0.05(0.03-0.07)	0.03(0.02-0.05)	0.06(2039)	2.02(1.79-2.26)	1.52(1.08-2.06)	1.29(0.99-1.79)
USA	324.84(288.6-362.83)	335.81(247.53-456.32)	286.59(215.82-385.94)	362.75(2062)	1.81(1.68-1.95)	1.53(1.1-2.02)	1.40(1.02-1.86)
Sur America	65.61(60.27-70.62)	66.50(46.02-93.09)	55.32(38.37-78-46)	78.02(2057)	2.06(1.9-2.25)	1.58(1.14-2.06)	1.48(1.05-1.98)
Argentina	44.27(39.11-49.25)	48.27(31.99-70.54)	39.62(26.4-57.99)	54.59(2062)	2.17(2.02-2.33)	1.62(1.14-2.13)	1.51(1.04-2.06)
Chile	19.92(16.67-19.08)	15.52(11.73-20.64)	13.43(10.59-17.41)	20.29(2046)	1.81(1.59-2.06)	1.37(1.04-1.78)	1.29(1.01-1.68)
Uruguay	3.42(3.06-3.77)	2.71(2.07-3.51)	2.27(1.77-2.92)	3.60(2042)	1.97(1.72-2.27)	1.44(1.16-1.76)	1.37(1.08-1.70)
Western Europe	432.97(420.94-445.9)	374.39(303.66-465.27)	329.75(270.49-410.49)	447.92(2038)	1.59(1.43-1.78)	1.64(1.28-2.05)	1.50(1.16-1.88)
Andorra	0.08(0.08-0.08)	0.03(0.03-0.04)	0.03(0.03-0.04)	0.08(2021)	1.20(1.06-1.35)	1.23(1.02-1.50)	1.17(1.0-1.44)
Austria	8.79(8.73-8.86)	6.58(5.22-8.37)	6.01(4.83-7.60)	9.07(2033)	1.51(1.38-1.66)	1.37(1.02-1.76)	1.31(1.00-1.71)
Belgium	11.32(11.23-11.41)	13.48(10.41-17.46)	11.57(9.08-14.8)	13.63(2084)	1.69(1.52-1.87)	1.60(1.21-2.06)	1.46(1.05-1.9)
Cyprus	1.26(1.14-1.39)	0.79(0.66-1.00)	0.76(0.64-0.96)	1.37(2038)	1.01(0.87-1.17)	1.18(0.96-1.52)	1.16(0.95-1.49)
Denmark	5.73(5.68-5.78)	6.06(4.17-8.66)	4.88(3.66-6.96)	6.24(2071)	1.75(1.57-1.95)	1.66(1.08-2.31)	1.39(0.99-1.98)
Finland	5.52(5.47-5.56)	5.24(4.04-6.70)	4.59(3.61-5.83)	5.73(2038)	1.64(1.47-1.83)	1.60(1.22-2.01)	1.47(1.1-1.85)
France	65.71(59.68-71.56)	67.15(53.33-85.37)	60.13(47.63-76.53)	70.64(2046)	1.84(1.66-2.05)	1.78(1.42-2.20)	1.65(1.28-2.07)
Germany	83.29(74.7-92.02)	66.42(53.96.-80.86)	60.06(49.98-72.53)	85.08(2035)	1.39(1.24-1.57)	1.35(1.05-1.69)	1.26(1.0-1.58)
Greece	10.40(9.3-11.47)	5.48(4.07-7.64)	4.73(3.78-6.5)	10.40(2017)	1.42(1.27-1.6)	1.29(0.97-1.82)	1.19(0.97-1.68)
Iceland	0.34(0.33-0.34)	0.38(0.25-0.56)	0.32(0.21-0.49)	0.40(2063)	1.83(1.68-2.40)	1.72(1.16-2.40)	1.59(1.04-2.25)
Ireland	4.86(4.52-5.22)	5.44(3.76-8.27)	4.82(3.3-7.29)	5.77(2057)	1.84(1.64-2.07)	1.68(1.1-2.46)	1.57(1.01-2.32)
Israel	8.95(7.82-10.12)	24.07(13.89-41.49)	17.65(10.4-30.45)	24.07(2100)	2.90(2.64-3.19)	2.36(1.45-3.54)	2.05(1.19-3.19)
Italy	60.60(60.15-61.03)	30.54(24.61-39.44)	27.79(23.41-35-51)	60.60(2017)	1.33(1.18-1.5)	1.23(0.99-1.64)	1.17(0.98-1.58)
Luxembourg	0.59(0.59-0.60)	0.71(0.57-0.88)	0.64(0.52-0.79)	0.77(2063)	1.48(1.13-1.9)	1.50(1.13-1.9)	1.39(1.06-1.79)
Malta	0.43(0.39-0.48)	0.29(0.23-0.36)	0.26(0.22-0.33)	0.44(2027)	1.49(1.32-1.68)	1.27(1.0-1.64)	1.21(0.96-1.57)
Netherlands	17.03(16.89-17.18)	13.58(10.59-17.52)	11.15(8.92-13.76)	17.50(2033)	1.66(1.49-1.85)	1.59(1.24-2.01)	1.39(1.06-1.73)
Norway	5.26((5.22-5.31)	7.47(5.15-10.95)	6.47(4.65-9.82)	7.47(2099)	1.74(1.59-1.9)	1.67(1.09-2.35)	1.52(1.02-2.28)
Portugal	10.68(9.34-10.73)	4.50(3.43-6.1)	4.16(3.29-5.68)	10.68(2017)	1.29(1.14-1.48)	1.26(0.98-1.73)	1.21(0.97-1.7)
Spain	46.39(42.86-49.88)	22.91(17.89-32.95)	21.54(17.39-30.84)	46.43(2019)	1.35(1.23-1.49)	1.24(0.96-1.83)	1.21(0.96-1.78)
Sweden	10.04(9.34-10.73)	13.11(9.77-17.63)	10.72(8.2-14.34)	13.11(2100)	1.84(1.69-1.99)	1.72(1.24-2.31)	1.46(1.02-2.01)
Switzerland	8.59(7.91-9.21)	8.33(7.09-9.849	7.39(6.42-8.52)	9.82(2048)	1.50(1.34-1.67)	1.43(1.17-1.73)	1.28(1.04-1.54)
UK	66.64(60.8-72.58)	71.45(55.76-90.29)	63.74(50.26-82.78)	74.87(2063)	1.73(1.55-1.94)	1.61(1.21-2.04)	1.50(1.13-1.96)

The question of the causes of this population decline can and should be answered on the basis of the TFR or Total Fertility Ratio[6], which is understood as the level necessary to ensure generational replacement, and which indicates that Spain has an average which is below the level necessary to maintain generational replacement, stipulated at 2.1 children per woman[7].

As was anticipated above, Spain is not the only country with this negative demographic trend, other similar and symbolic cases due to the decline in its population are Italy, Greece and Portugal.

But how much demographic decline will Spain suffer in the next eighty years?

As can be seen in Table I, the worrying trend of a 50% reduction in population is echoed in all the countries mentioned.

This fact should send an alarm signal to the European authorities, since Spain, Italy and Greece are not only the southern borders of Europe[8], but also, as shown in map 1, the entry areas for clandestine immigration [illegal immigration].

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6 Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. Global Health Metric. Vol. 396, October 2020.

7 http://www.ipfe.org/España/Noticia/España_no_alcanza_el_reemplazo_generacional_desde_hace_35_años

8 Map 1 Source: FRONTEX.
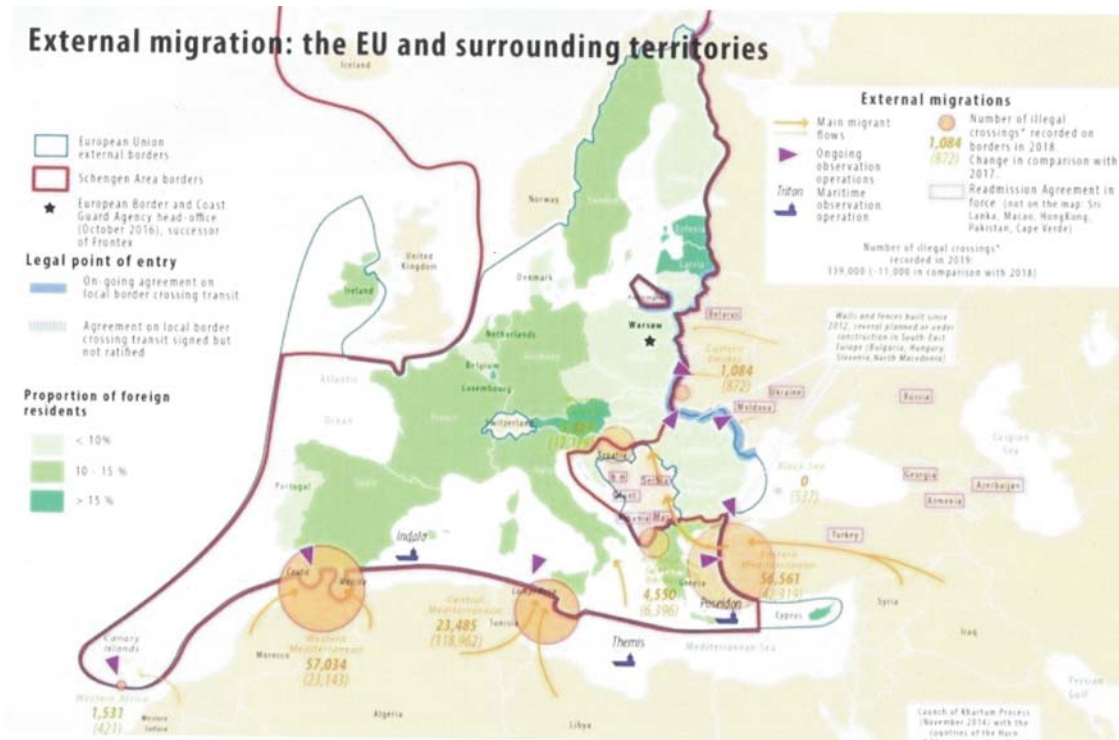
Map 1. Source Frontex

The situation takes on an even less happy outlook, because, at the same time as the European demographic decline, the African continent should reach a peak population estimated at 4.8 billion; expressed numerically, this is equivalent to +215% of the current population of 1.34 billion.[9] A very important fact, for the purpose of this article, since an increase of +215% represents a challenge for national and European security, and not only because the African continent is less than 15 kilometres away from the national continental borders.

Demographic decline, the longevity of Europe's population and economic consequences

The question we want to answer is the following:

- What effects will the demographic decline have on the national industrial and economic fabric?

- To answer this question, first, it is appropriate to admit that technological advances in robotics will undoubtedly be able to positively and substantially change the trajectory of GDP in the adult-over-65 age group (especially), in Western economies, meaning the economies of technologically developed countries. These technological advances should therefore reduce the "ripple effect" caused by population ageing on the structure of GDP growth, i.e. by making up for the lack of human capital.

9 https://www.statista.com/statistics/1224205/forescast-of-the-total-population-of -africa/

- However, it is undeniable, according to the results of the study of "The Lancet"[10] of October 2020, which reinforces the hypothesis that even with the evolution of technology, Spain will drop in the ranking of the twenty-five most industrialised countries. The origin of this decline is to be found in the decrease in the working population[11].

- This suggests that technological innovations will not be able to fully bridge gap in human capital.

It is interesting to note, see table II[12], how in the coming decades, in the period from 2017 to 2100, Spain will go from occupying thirteenth place in the ranking of the world's top twenty-five economies to occupying twenty-eighth place; in other words,

Ranking de las 25 economias más desarrolladas en el mundo
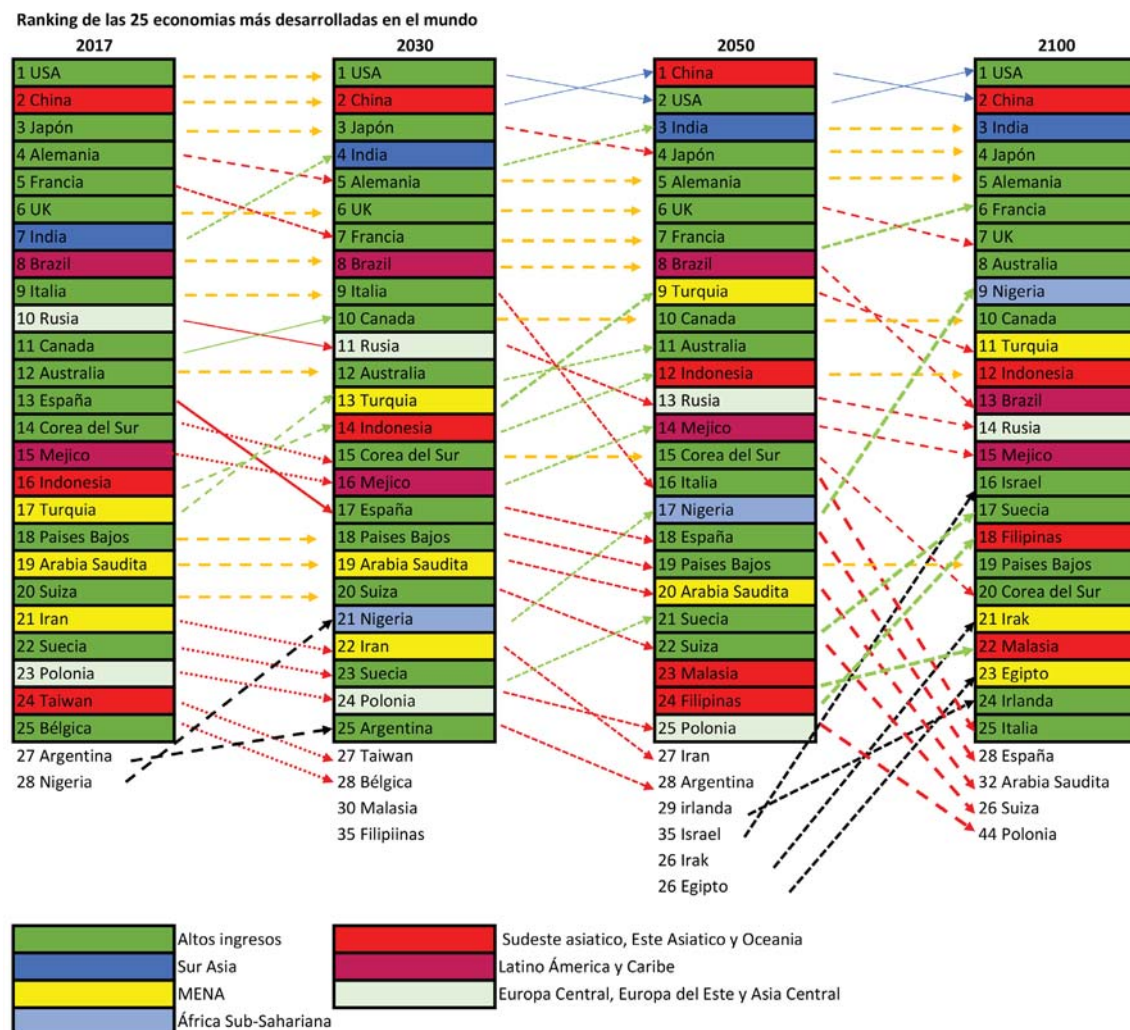
10 Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. Global Health Metric. Vol. 396, October 2020.

11 Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. Global Health Metric. Vol. 396, October 2020.

12 Table II (Ranking 25 Top Economies).

the lack of generational replacement and the ageing of society will be responsible for Spain's exit from the list of the world's top twenty-five economies.

The reduction of GDP by fifteen places in the ranking, gives a less simplistic overall scenario, since this will mean, unless appropriate measures are taken, a reduction in the real possibilities of the State to provide services and distribute economic resources for the country's operation and development.

It is these data together that allow for a different reading and interpretation of the difficulties that the national pension system will face in the medium and long term, since, as has been shown, the direct effect of the lack of generational replacement will lead to a drastic change in the existing national and European social and industrial system, and thus, it can be deduced that it will affect the capacity of the national security system in the same way.

If in the case of developed economies, technological advances have a positive effect, it is equally interesting to observe how the same technological advancement can have a diametrically opposite effect in societies that are technologically less developed.

In this type of society, technological advances tend to have a negative impact, since the growth trajectory depends on the supply of low-cost labour, which is why technological advances can be identified as one of the originating causes of clandestine migration flows and, consequently, a challenge to national security.

On the basis of these data, we can foresee that clandestine migration flows will increase, especially in those countries whose economies have not surpassed a certain level of social and industrial development.
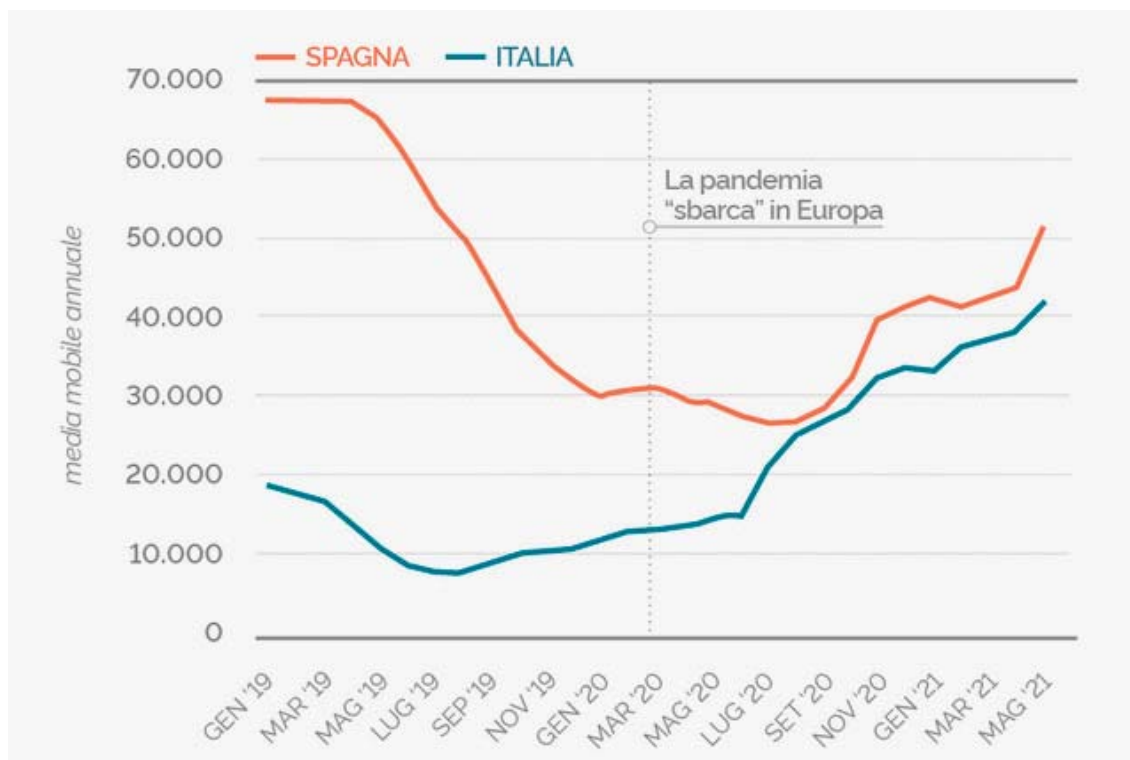
Graph 1

A clear example of the fragility of the African continent can be found in the current cause and effect relationship as a result of the pandemic caused by COVID-19, which has seen an increase in clandestine migrant arrivals by sea[13] in 2020 and 2021 as shown in graph 1[14].

It is also important to remember that demographic growth implies a reduced capacity of the state to make investments to change the economic trajectory, and likewise, a higher demographic rate is associated with a greater erosion of the social system. In fact, the lack of a professional perspective, the lack of an adequate social system, or both, are among the main causes of immigration, whether it be legal or clandestine.

The result of the initial analysis, based on the data presented so far, highlights the double challenge that not only the lack of human capital, but also the reduction of available and indispensable funds for the implementation of the security system will pose for national security, given that the shortage in the working population will have an impact on the overall State budget and will have a direct effect on the country.

In addition to the lack of human capital and the loss of economic competitiveness, it is necessary to add the ageing and longevity of the population, data that make it easier to read or understand the pension reforms, in terms of age requirements or years worked, which are being implemented in some European countries and which in Spain have recovered the CPI as the norm, driving delayed retirement, among other aspects[15].

For its part, the United Nations in the report "*World Population Ageing 2020 Highlights*"[16], informs us that in 2050 the world will experience a situation in which 1.5 billion people will be over 65 years of age[17], and although the figures may seem exorbitant, we must be aware that in 2020 there were already 727 million people aged 65 or over.

> "The world continues to experience a sustained change in the age structure of the population, driven by increasing life expectancy and decreasing levels of fertility. People are living longer lives, and both the share and the number of older people in the total population are increasing rapidly. Globally, there were 727 million persons aged 65 years or over in the world in 2020. Over the next three decades, the global number of older persons

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13 Annual National Security Report 2020. - Accesible.pdf. National Security Department. P.239.

14 Graph 1. Source ISPI- Istituto Studi Politica, Milan, Italy.

15 https://www.eleconomista.es/economia/noticias/11547047/12/21/La-primera-pata-de-la-reforma-de-pensiones-entra-en-vigor-el-1-de-enero.html

16 UNITED NATIONS, DESA. (2020).Report 2020_World_Population_Ageing_Highlights.pdf

17 UNITED NATIONS, DESA. (2020).Report 2020_World_Population_Ageing_Highlights.pdf

is projected to more than double, reaching over 1.5 billion in 2050. All regions will see an increase in the size of their older population between 2020 and 2050. The share of the global population aged 65 years or over is expected to increase from 9.3 percent in 2020 to 16.0 percent by 2050 (United Nations, 2019)".

The table pictured shows that Spain and Europe need an exit strategy to fill the gaps that the effects of demographic decline will have on our societies, since, as has already been demonstrated, technology alone will not be able to make up for the lack of human capital, especially on the board of geopolitics 4.0 which we see emerging.

As mentioned above, the national context is linked to a low birth rate, as shown in Table I, but the consequences in terms of National Security will represent a new challenge for Spanish society as a whole.

This is not to underestimate the potential and benefits that Cyber-security, Killer-drones or EDT (Emerging Disrupting Technologies) systems bring to European societies, but there are very human tasks for which no artificial intelligence has yet been created to take the place of a human operator.

On the other hand, as we have seen over the last decade, except for cyber-crime, the biggest challenges and threats at the European level are, and most likely will continue to be, human beings armed with knives, automatic assault weapons (AK47 or similar) or a simple stolen vehicle that runs over pedestrians on the Ramblas in Barcelona, not to mention the battalion of suicide bombers created by the neo-Taliban government[18].

In the interests of National Security

If the data shown so far were crossed with the factors that contribute to epidemics/pandemics (climate change and the diseases that result from it; demographic growth[19] and illegal immigration, which is the explicit expression of the state fragility of developing countries; trade; economic development and the overuse of medicines in the livestock farming; poverty or social inequality and the collapse of the health system), one would come to the conclusion that all the factors mentioned above lead to consider a timely broadening of the meaning and scope of the term National Security.

18   https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/afghanistan-suicide-bombers-given-key-role-in-new-taliban-army-8rglv020t

19 UN Human Developmente Ratio hdr2020_en.pdf

For more information, see contributing factors: climate change[20], demographic growth and flows of migration[21], economic development[22], the erosion of public health systems[23] and poverty and social inequality[24] [25].

In view of the historical moment we are going through, it could also be appropriate to elevate health structures to the category of critical structures, since, as has been shown, the evolution of society, meaning the ageing of society, will imply, according to these data, a change in society's priorities, in which hospitals and health centres will play an even more relevant role, and, consequently, could become a target for any terrorist group or criminal gang. Whether those are physical threats or attacks, or those carried out in the virtual sphere.

The thin red line of the State Security Forces and Agencies

In order to find a solution to maintain the necessary levels of public safety and national security, as well as to counteract the demographic decline, it would be essential for society to realize that the average age of members of the Armed Forces and Security Forces of member states is already high.

To demonstrate the scenario described above, the cases of Spain and Italy will be taken as examples, countries at the forefront of European security due to their proximity to the African continent.

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20 In the following links you can see - also through specific cases - how other factors that could be considered as secondary, are - in reality - the main cause.

Climate and weather; e.g diseases with zoonotic vectors such as West Nile Disease

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4342965/

Chickungunya (transmitted by mosquitoes) are moving further the tropics as the climate warms

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8226708/pdf/viruses-13-01024.pdf

21 Change in human demographics and trade: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics) e.g. rapid travel enabled SARS to rapidly spread around the globe. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK56579/

22 Economic development; e.g. use of antibiotics to increase meat yield of farmed cows least to antibiotic resistance (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6017557/pdf/molecules-23-00795.pdf)

23 Breakdown of public health; e.g. the current situations in Zimbabwe, Syria (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zimbabwe)

24 Poverty and social inequality; e.g. tuberculosis is primarily a problem in low-income areas. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6019811/

25 WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data Poverty and health. (DAC guidelines and reference series) Poverty 2. Health status 3. Delivery of health care - organisation and administration 4. Financing, Health 5.Public policy 6.Intersectoral cooperation 7.Guidelines.Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Development Assistance Committee. ISBN 92 4 156236 6 (WHO) (NLM classification: WA 30) 92 6 410018 0 (OECD)

Statistics published by the Spanish Ministry of Defence in 2019 reported that the average age of members of the armed forces is around 43.38 years[26], while in Italy, according to sources from the Italian Ministry of Defence[27], the average age is 42 years, but the trend tells us that it is increasing rapidly.

One case, not mentioned above, but even more significant of the situation we are experiencing in Europe, and which it is considered necessary to highlight, was published in the British newspaper *"The Mirror"*.

The article tells the story of the British special forces fighter, a member of the famous elite corps, SAS *(Special Air Service)*, who was reinstated to active duty in March 2021, at the age of 51[28].

The case has hit the world's headlines as it highlights a widespread situation: the armed forces cannot find recruits for the special forces and the average number of operators on active duty is over 40 years old.

The reinstatement of this "grandad", as he is presented in the news, is due to the need to have operatives in the special units, since the SAS unit has more retired personnel than replacements for future Green Berets.

The decline of the national population with all the implications that this will entail and the need for greater investment in defence, raises certain perplexities[29] about the real capacity to secure the national borders which, in turn, as has already been mentioned on several occasions, are also the last real borders of Europe.

> "Moreover, this huge reduction of resources, has been translated into an extreme situation in some parts of the Spanish Armed Forces. The situation has come to such an extent that the credibility of Spain as a reliable partner and ally is at stake. All the prestige painstakingly earned by our FAS (both on the outside and on our own floor) is about to be thrown overboard"[30].

So far, only the challenge posed by the flows of clandestine/uncontrolled migrants has been mentioned, but it would also be appropriate to expand the range of challenges and observe the changes in the geopolitics of the Mediterranean and the African continent, paying special attention to the Sahel, as well as the evolution of

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26 SPAIN-Ministry of Defence Spain. estad_stica_de_personal_militar_de_carrera_2019.pdf

27 ITALY-Ministry of Defence Italy. http://www.esercito.difesa.it/Rapporto-Esercito/Istantanea EI/Personale/Pagine/ETA.aspx

28 SOURCE: The Mirror newspaper. https://www.mirror.co.uk /news/uk-news/hero-grandad-rejoins-sas-becomes-23620880

29 Torres Sepedra, J. The Europe of Defence, 2020, ECR-Report Security And Defence 22.51.43.pdf

30 Torres Sepedra, Jorge. The Europe of Defence, 2020, ECR-Report Security And Defence 22.51.43.pdf. - Arteaga, F., Simón, L. (2020). Op. cit. Instituto El Cano. P. 20

organised crime, which even has submarines[31] to transport drugs from South America, mafias of various types, as well as transnational criminal gangs, proxy wars, and a long list of real threats in a world that is increasingly interconnected and apparently less governable.

At this point, therefore, on the basis of the data set out above, what we in European societies should be reflecting on should be: If the national population will decrease, human capital and economic resources will be reduced, and on the other hand, the poorest countries will increase their population by +215%: How will we manage to control the flows of clandestine migrants, the evolution of transnational crime and the potential threats of asymmetric warfare that will affect our territorial integrity?

It is important to highlight the fact that illegal immigration is not the result of a desire for adventure, but the direct effect of human and food insecurity, as well as fragile states incapable of guaranteeing minimum levels of well-being, which has a direct impact on the national security of European countries.

It is from a neutral perspective in terms of political philosophy that this work is developed, and therefore does not imply an opposition to the reception of other human beings with clear and proven needs, but rather to expose the scope of an uncertain future in which the conditions for this may not exist.

It all depends on whether it will bring about a change in *forma mentis* [mindset] and *modus operandi* [manner of working], i.e. whether Europe will reconsider how it will deal with the crises created by the flows of clandestine migrants, and whether it may be appropriate to move from crisis management to migration control.

Controlled and selective immigration is undoubtedly less costly than a crisis, both in human and economic terms.

Proof that the entire European community considers the Sahel to be a matter of concern[32], beyond the economic and geostrategic interests that some EU member states may have, is demonstrated by the fact that the Sahel is a region of great concern for the European Union, as shown by

the military training missions and the fight against jihadist terrorism (EUTMALI, Barkhane or Task Force Takuba), the fight against immigration carried out by FRONTEX or the security reforms that are being attempted -through the *Security Sector Reform in the Sahel* -without taking into account the border expansion towards the Sahel that Europe has carried out, giving the impression that the Sahel has become the European version of the famous Maginot

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31 https://channel16.dryadglobal.com/colombian-navy-seizes-7.41-tonnes-of-cocaine-in-4-maritime-operations

32 https://www.mei.edu/publications/eus-strategic-compass-preparing-navigate-mena-less-us

line[33], including from the point of view of the outcomes obtained, be it in Mali or in Côte d'Ivoire.

France's forced exit from Mali, as a former French colony, and the entry of other actors, such as Russia and its private paramilitary company (Wagner), should lead to a profound consideration and reinterpretation of Europe's position in the region.

Reorganising the European strategy in the Sahel should entail a change in the dialogue and *modus operandi* with central governments and local authorities, as the strategy followed so far has proven not to produce the desired outcomes.

In light of these data, the scenario that emerges shows this peculiar region at a time of great change and great challenges, as Mali's exit from Europe could be exploited by Tuareg pro-independence forces to gain even more ground and affiliates throughout the region. And we mustn't forget the role of the Tuaregs as substitutes for the state and for service providers in the regions located farthest from capital cities. Not to mention the fact that food shortages are increasing the ranks of Sahelian jihadists.

This should give further impetus and commitment to European military mission in the Sahel, Task Force Takuba.

Initially led by Sweden, it should be composed of all European member states, since European security is to some extent at stake in the Sahel.

The current situation in Africa, in the Sahel

As indicated in the previous paragraph, the demographic increase in Africa to 2.5 billion people by 2050 and 4.8 billion by 2100 is undoubtedly a source of concern for the European continent, especially if one takes into account the conditions of the African continent and the interests behind it.

Let us not forget that the potential damage caused by the interference of powers geographically more distant from Africa will have repercussions on European shores and societies.

An important aspect that should not be overlooked is the inaccurate data provided by African states on birth rates, since, as in the case of Nigeria, there is no civil registry that can provide accurate data; in fact, Nigeria is one of the countries that will experience the greatest population increase, from the current 280 million to 733 million[34] million citizens.

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33 Bussoni, M. (2008). La linea Maginot. I luoghi della "muraglia invalicabile". Mattioli-1885.

34 UNITED NATION DESA-Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division - "World Population Prospects 2019: Highlights" New York; United Nations (2019).

The chromatic-demographic map (map 2) below shows that Niger currently has 25 million citizens, but estimates predict that it could double or even triple its population in the coming years, in fact, it provides an even more accurate picture, as it crowns Niger[35] as the leader in births; this is because the Sahelian country registers annual births of more than 45,000 new inhabitants[36].

Average annual rate of population change (%), 2025-2030 (medium-variant projection)
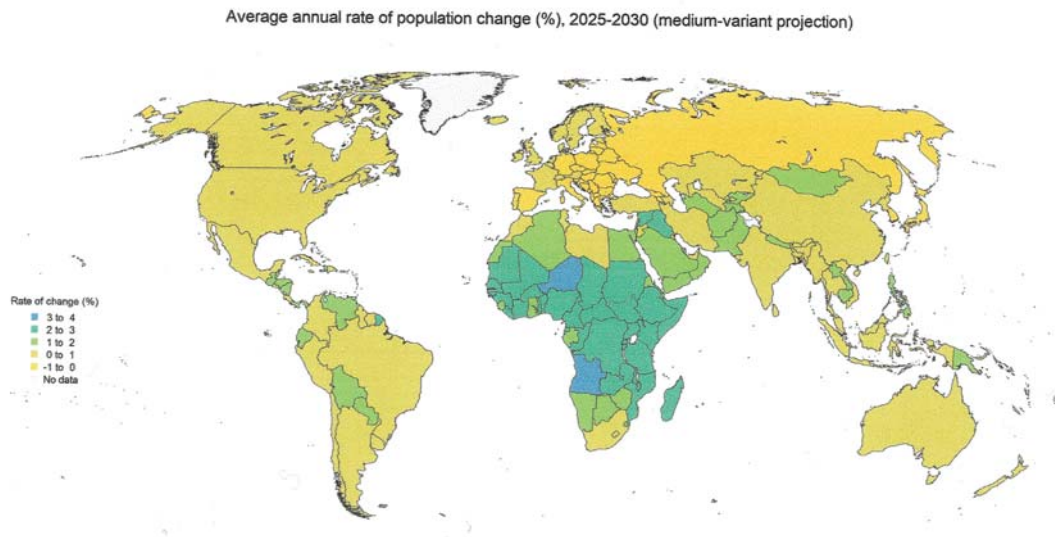
Map 2

Beyond Niger's record birth rate, one needs to understand Niger's role on the chessboard of European security, since in addition to being a member of the G5 and a recipient of the SSR programme, it also happens to be one of the poorest countries in the world and ranks last (189 of 189) in the human development index ranking[37].

Economic instability should make it easier to understand the most important aspect, for the purposes of this study, as it is currently the epicentre in the trafficking of clandestine migrants[38], of Tuareg independence[39] —of which its armed branch is

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35 UNITED NATIONS DESA-Population Division. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. "World population prospects: the 2010 revision, volume 1: comprehensive tables". New York: United Nations (2011).

36 Demographic map: the map highlights trends with colours. And, in colours, expresses that Niger's population will maintain a positive growth trend.

37 http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/latest-human-development-index-ranking

38 Siradji, S. (2015). Séminaire de formation sur le trafic illicite de migrants/EUCAP Sahel : Début d'un partenariat entre la mission Eucap Sahel Niger et l'Agence nigérienne pour la lutte contre la traite des personnes. www.lesahel.org [online]. [Cited December 2, 2015]. http://www.lesahel.org/index.php/component/ k2/item/9725-s%C3%A9minaire-de-formation-sur-le-trafic-illicite-de-migrants- eucap-sahel--d%C3%A9but-dun-partenariat-entre-la-mission-eucap-sahel-niger- et-lagence-nig%C3%A9rienne-pour-la-lutte-contre-la-traite-des-personnes.

39 Strazzari, F. (2015). Azawad and the rights of passage: the role of illicit trade in the logic of armed group formation in northern Mali. NOREF-Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre. The

Sahelian jihadism— and, of course, the operational base from which 75% of criminal organisations carry out their economic transactions: tobacco, narcotics[40], the white slave trade, slavery, child trafficking, blood and organ smuggling, arms, and a long list of other illicit methods, which could be understood as an economic instrument to finance the independence of the Sahel-Al Azawad corridor.

In 2017, two years after the entry into force of law 36/2015[41] in Niger, a law that punishes human trafficking, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', [42] in its 2017 report entitled: "Roadmap for sustainable migration management Agadez", condemned the collusion of central and local national authorities as well as neighbouring countries in human trafficking.

Diagram 1[43] below shows that the data presented so far have an approved scientific basis, but above all, in a scenario such as the one described above, it should be difficult to recognise in these countries a partner for national security and for European security.

Especially when State institutions are liable to be accused of receiving money from human smuggling[44] or other crimes.
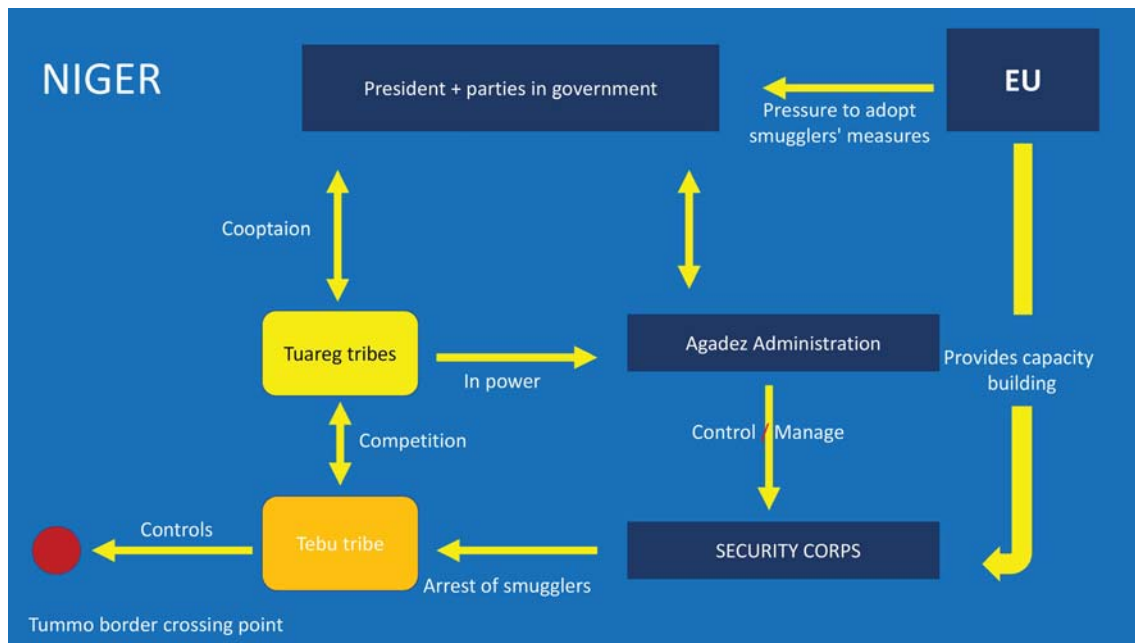
Tuareg- Azawad Movement. https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Strazzari_NOREF_Clingendael_Mali_Azawad_Dec2014.pdf

40 Crucially, it makes a dichotomy between drugs coming from Latin America and arriving on Western shores, and drugs manufactured in Africa, the latter being synthetic drugs. In both cases, the drugs follow several routes, with a stop in the Agadez region being obligatory for drugs destined for Europe, along the central Mediterranean route, and on to Egypt or Greece.

41 http://www.justice.gouv.ne/images/lois/pdfs/loi_relative_au_trafic_illicite_de_migrants.pdf

42 Roadmap_for_sustainable_migration_management_Agadez.pdf

43 Niger scheme for illegal immigration traffic.

44 Molenaar, F. (2017). Irregular migration and human smuggling networks in Niger, CRU report. Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'. The Hague, Clingendael.

The following graph (Graph 2) shows the birth curve in the SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa) region and thus the clear demographic superiority of a developing continent[45].
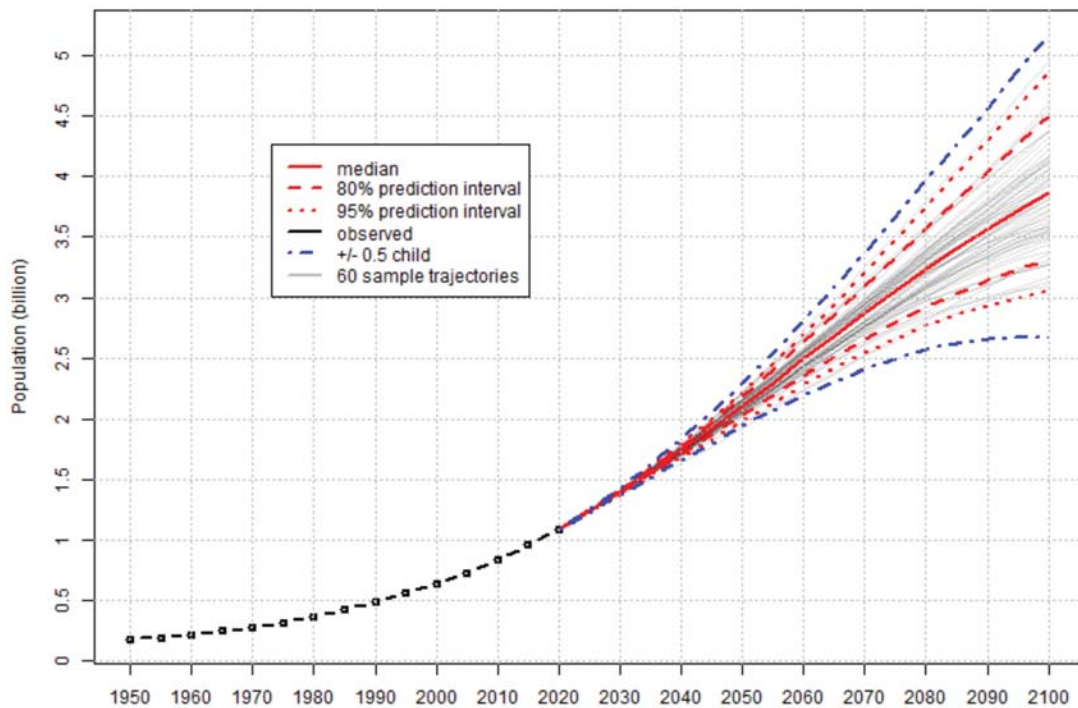
Graph 2

The data cited so far only focus on the different demographic trends between Africa and Europe, but it is the analysis of this data that provides a projection of the different scenarios to be faced at the national and regional level, with the countries of the European Mediterranean basin being the first ports of reception. Since, according to the European treaties, they are responsible for the management of illegal immigration[46].

The last five years have highlighted the inability to manage crises generated by migration or armed conflict, as has been and continues to be the case with the Syrian conflict, as well as the structural, operational and political weakness of the European Community.

It is in light of these structural gaps that the demographic data introduced above are even more worrying, as the demographic forecasts for Africa and its potential flow of human beings could catapult between 40 and 60 million people to Europe's shores in search of a better quality of life. According to Ji-Yeun Rim, Coordinator of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Youth Integration Project,

45 Figure 1. United Nations DESA- Population Division. World Population Prospect 2019. http://population.un.org/wpp/

46 EUROPEAN COMMISSION. (2020). New-pact-on-migration-and-asylum-package_1.pdf. Brussels, September 23.

by 2030, 440[47] million sub-Saharan Africans are expected to be looking for work, of whom 240 million will remain in the region and the rest will try to seek their fortune outside the continent, i.e. some 200 million young women and men.

The figures provided so far are pre-pandemic estimates, which opens space for another scenario: Post-pandemic times and the alarming worsening of climate change in Africa, in particular in SSA[48].

The economies of African countries, characterised by low income countries (LICs)[49] , have suffered further indebtedness due to the emergence of the virus, offering bleak prospects for food security and human safety that have deteriorated under the current circumstances. In security terms, this translates into increased flows of displaced persons and illegal migrants.

The scenes observed in the ports of the Canary Islands in 2020 alone have highlighted the need for new containment policies.

By containment policy, we do not mean a system such as the one implemented, not in its entirety, by former US President Donald Trump and his wall on the Tijuana border, but policies that provide more space for the study of long-range programmes for integration, since, one way or the other, it will not be possible to stop migration flows.

This should lead to further reflection, as discussed above, from a strategic and financial point of view, on whether it would be better to implement management programmes, by that, meaning having control of migration flows, rather than living in a continuous state of crisis.

Planning provides control, including at the financial level, while crisis management merely buffers a situation that will tend to recur over time.

Security sector reform in the Sub-Saharan region, better known as the SSR, corresponds more to a Western will to improve the unstable, and in some cases non-existent, security system in the region than to the will of the stakeholders, as discussed above.

It should be noted that the countries participating in this programme (Mauritania, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger) do not have a state security system in their peripheral areas, i.e. a police force, and that, despite ongoing reform, these tasks are carried out by the armed forces or by traditional (local) armed groups.

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47 https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/africa-sub-sahariana-440-milioni-giovani-cerca-un-impiego-entro-2030-- AEeSwGtE?refresh_ce=1

48 SSF/ SSA=Sub Saharan Africa/ África Sub-Saharan Africa

49 Low-Income Countries; the term "Low income countries" refers to those countries whose population has a per capita income of $1,026 or less per year.

https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/low-income-countries

Given the permanence and strength of the clan/tribal system, this is an arbitrary situation in terms of the law or the application of the law[50].

SRH foresees the implementation of actions that will clash head-on with the interests of central and local governments. Recall the report published by the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael.

We also need to understand that the origin and basis of the problems in the region lie in ancestral issues, such as disputes between herders and farmers or social exclusion on the basis of gender or religion, and are therefore difficult to solve and sometimes even difficult for the West to understand. A significant fact about the cultural complexity, and therefore the *forma mentis* we are facing, is that in the sub-Saharan region alone there are more than seven hundred forms of religion, i.e. as many religions as there are ethnic groups[51].

The picture becomes even more complex if one takes into account the accelerating process of climate change, the direct effect of which is a decrease in water and fertile land, which in turn is also the cause of armed clashes.

To the elements of conflict just listed we must add the independence process in the Sahel corridor mentioned above. [52]

Therefore, security reform in a country, as Bernando and Toure's report [53]states, cannot be reduced to military or technical aspects alone, but must also take into account all elements of society.

> "Security is not only a military and technical issue. It has to systematically take into account all elements of society[54]"

This concept, which should be possible to apply or implement in any region of the world, becomes a utopia when state fragility, group interests and culture are moving in the opposite direction, especially considering that in Africa the centre/periphery concept limits the state's capacity to control the territory.

The issue of state fragility, mentioned above, therefore takes on a dimension of priority, since the layered presence of the state, which in turn is synonymous with legal and financial strength, is the basis for problem-solving.

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50 Venturi, B., Toure, N. A. (2020). Out of the Security Deadlock: Challenges and Choices in the Sahel. IAI- Istituto Affari Internazionali.

51 Dammann, E. (1963). Die Religionen Afrikas. Stuttgart. (Trad. it L'Africa. Milano, 1985).

52 Venturi, B., Toure, N. A. (2020). Out of the Security Deadlock: Challenges and Choices in the Sahel. IAI- Istituto Affari Internazionali.

53 Venturi, B., Toure, N. A. (2020). Out of the Security Deadlock: Challenges and Choices in the Sahel. IAI- Istituto Affari Internazionali.

54 Venturi, B., Toure, N. A. (2020). Out of the Security Deadlock: Challenges and Choices in the Sahel. IAI- Istituto Affari Internazionali.

The dilemma of fragility

In order to understand the scope of state fragility and its consequences, it is appropriate to examine the issue in greater depth through a highly topical example, since the scenario that will be discussed below is the basis of today's problems and, if correctly internalised, could be a solution for the future.

The right understanding of the fragility dilemma could be interpreted as the totality of actions which increase fragility in an already fragile situation.

The case that concerns us can be explained as the vicious circle that is generated when a situation of prolonged aid or dependency is maintained over the long term.

A possible outline of the effects of the dilemma could be described in a sequence as follows: More aid leads to more fragility, which in turn leads to more poverty and stagnation in development, and thus to an incessant need for aid from third parties, which equals chronic dependency.

A process in which national and international interests are involved, without considering the civil or clan/tribe changes which, in turn, pursue their own interests and which do not allow the state-victim and executioner of itself to give life to an independent system that generates well-being and wealth.

Through the examples presented so far, it can be seen how cooperation programmes and the presence of NGOs have unintentionally contributed to the weakening of already fragile states.

The aim is not to belittle the work carried out by states, international organisations or NGOs themselves, but to show that the historical and political context of African countries should have led to the search for alternative solutions.

In 2003, the Burkinabe historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo[55], in an interview with René Holstein, pointed out that the solution for the African continent lies in the economic liberation of Africa or Pan-Africanism.

To understand the reflections of historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo, one must internalise post-colonial African thought in order to appreciate the evolution of the regional or continental context, given that the collective African imagination has interpreted decolonisation as a strategy of the developed world to maintain control over the continent, with the Bretton Woods agreements[56], the creation of the FCFA currency[57]

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55 Holenstein, R. (2003). À quand l'Afrique? Entretien avec René Holenstein: Éditions de l'Aube. La Tour d'Aigues. P. 33.

56 Cochi, M. (2020). Sahel e Africa Sub-Sahariana. Osservatori Strategico, Anno XXII n.º IV.

57 www.bceao.int/fr/content/histoire-du-franc-cfa

(Franc of the French Colonies in Africa) or the International Monetary Fund being the instruments used to perpetuate control.

Over the years Africa has tried to adjust to the standards of Western countries, but this has not come about through a process of internal evolution and maturation, but through a forced and premature implementation phase, as the continent did not have the necessary instruments to assimilate the political culture imposed on it by the countries colonising it, who in turn imposed coexistence with rival neighbours, all due to agreements between Europeans where Africans have had no say in the matter.

Quoting the Moroccan historian Abdallah- Laroui (Al'Arawi)[58]:

> "We were weak, disunited and delayed (technologically unevolved) and therefore Africa could be colonised.

> Considering the points presented above, the dilemma of fragility could therefore also be interpreted as an instrument for the perpetuation of a *status quo* of instability and fragility; a system that facilitates the *governance* of a supposedly independent continent, since the instability and fragility at the bottom of the pyramid allows third parties to decide on the future of a continent whose value in raw materials is fundamental for developed economies.

> The African continent as a whole represents 2-3% of the world's GDP in global terms, less than France's GDP, but in terms of raw materials it accounts for 30% of the planet's material resources: 15% of oil reserves, 40% of gold reserves and 80% of platinum, 17% of uranium, 11% of copper, 30% of iron ore, 7% of bauxite, 63% of cobalt, of which 58% comes from the Republic of Congo[59], 46% of manganese and it is undoubtedly the richest continent in diamonds.

> For the purpose of this paper and as a practical and theoretical demonstration of the concept that has been presented so far, an example of a manual can be taken: "China's interference in Djibouti".

Let's recall the rules necessary for the dilemma to be recognised as having been fulfilled: the totality of actions which increase fragility in an already fragile situation.

In this case, actions can cover a wide spectrum, ranging from cooperation and development aid to financial concessions such as subsidies or loans.

In the case that will be discussed below, it can be observed how a situation of fragility can be transformed, consciously or unconsciously, into greater State fragility and even a risk to the integrity of the State.

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58 Campanini, M. (2005). Il pensiero Arabo contemporaneo. IL Mulino. P. 126.

59 https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/79b2db81b98a42e69ef2a9390b2aab42

China's foreign policy in Africa over the last thirty years has been characterised by a large dose of aggressiveness that has led to the Asian tiger becoming one of the biggest financiers and investors on the African continent.

For an overview of the magnitude of the phenomenon see graph 3[60].

Over the last decade, China has invested more than $15 billion in Djibouti for the development of the strategic port of Doraleh, as well as in the infrastructure necessary for its proper functioning.
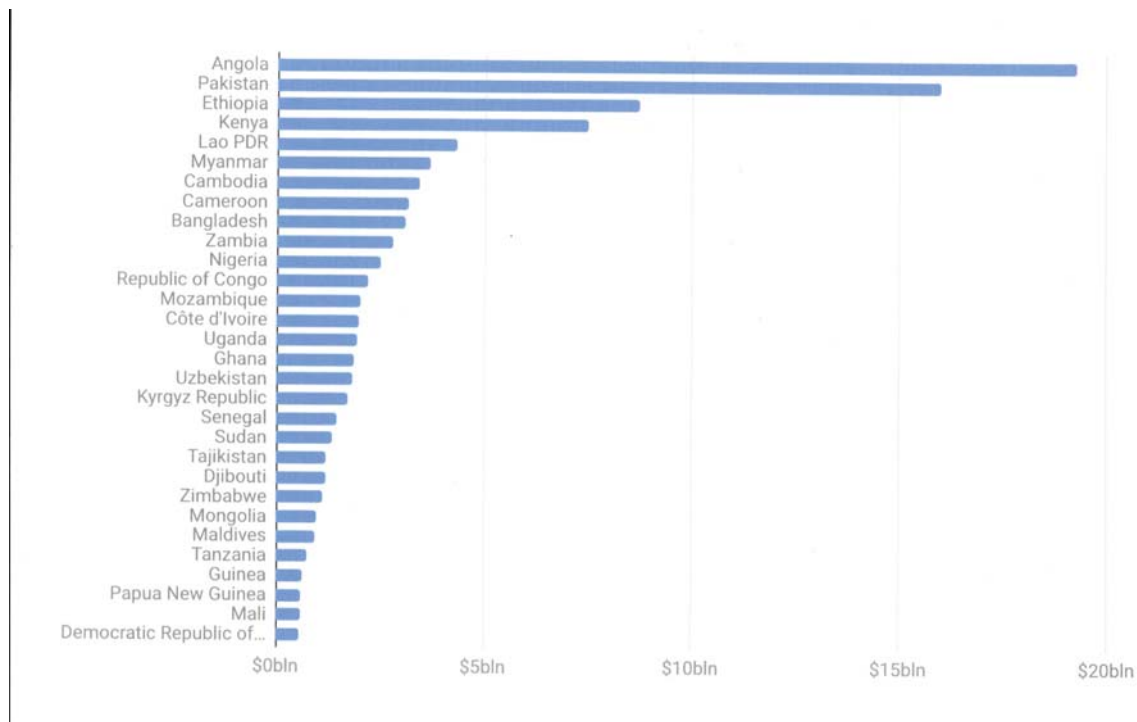
Graph 3

Which part of the scenario described above potentially makes Djibouti an even more fragile country?

The first point to consider relates to its foreign debt; 82% of Djibouti's foreign debt has been acquired by China. This fact undoubtedly facilitates a better understanding of the scenario that will be presented below.

Among the agreements between the People's Republic of China and the African continent, it has been revealed that the subsidies or loans that are granted conceal clauses that could well be qualified as illegal lending or abuse, especially if one takes into account that, in the case of economic subsidies, as a rule, there is no linkage or obligation to repay.

It is between these clauses that the "dilemma of fragility" component is hidden.

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60 Graph 2. Source John Hopkins University -China Africa research initiative.

In the present case, if Djibouti were to default on its debts, the port of Doraleh would become the property of Beijing.

In Japan in August 2019, during the African Development Conference, the president of the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority, Mr Aboubaker O. Hadi, expressed his concern and unease with the following words:

"We have had no choice, has the rest of the world offered us an alternative?

The Chinese "debt trap"[61], as it has been dubbed, turns African countries into slaves at home, expropriating them of the few strategic and value-added assets (*assets*) they have, leaving them in an even more fragile situation, and it can be deduced from this scenario that African states will have fewer options to lay the foundations for a way out of the current situation.

We also need to recognise that the geostrategic value of the port of Doraleh for China is well worth a diplomatic conflict at the international level.

The case of Djibouti is not an isolated case in Africa, see the case of the Ugandan airports[62], or the case of loans in Kenya or Sri Lanka[63], nor is it an isolated case in Europe, see the ports of Bari, Taranto, Naples or Trieste.

However, it is Beijing's praxis in a continent where state fragility, caused by a lack of economic development, social cohesion and corruption, allows for the interference of new colonising powers and the implementation of their aggressive foreign policies.

The case of Djibouti should awaken the reader's interest in this type of policy, since it concerns not only the connector between cause and effect, but also a direct impact on European society, since greater poverty equals higher rates of illegal migration flows.

Conclusions and proposals

The scenarios presented so far reveal that Europe:

1. needs to increase its population in order to maintain social systems and production levels;

2. needs to change its immigration policy;

3. needs to change its approach to defence and national security systems;

4. must reflect on its own and other people's actions outside, and the relationship with the cause-effect connector.

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61 China-Africa Research Initiative John Hopkins University. wwwthe-estafrican.co.ke

62 https://allafrica.com/stories/202111260118.html

63 https://formiche.net/2022/01/cina-kenya-debito-africa-sri-lanka-india/

In Spain's case, the reasons for current pension policies, such as the delay in retirement and incentives presented to date, such as compensation or the check for delaying retirement, are insufficient and even, considering the current economic situation after the second year of COVID-19, could lead to possible insolvency on the part of the State; let us remember the case of the Roman Empire.

Focusing on the Spanish case in defence and security matters, and with a view to the 2030-2040 horizon, only through a change in the current structure could the current security levels be maintained.

To this end, consideration should be given to the establishment of a hybrid military service that matches the Israeli military system[64] and the Swiss military system[65], since in both cases all citizens are actively involved in defence and national security on a permanent basis.

Giving preference to the Israeli model, since it is the only one of the two systems in which both sexes actively participate in state security.

This hybrid model should comprise a period of 2-3 years of active service for the entire population - women and men - from the age of 18, followed, as in the Swiss case, by an annual return to service of 1-2 weeks until the age of 55-65.

Taking the Swiss model as a reference point, regulation weapons and ammunition, excluding explosive weapons, could be kept in citizens' homes, as indicated in Article 5 of the By-law on military equipment[66].

We consider it indisputable that the active participation of citizens in the country's security, especially at the training stage, would lead to a reduction of the current internal divisions, both at the national and European level.

We understand that being an active part of an organisation and being aware of being needed by the community raises individual awareness and increases interest in the good of the community.

It therefore pushes away philosophies and actions that weaken the state and increases solidarity and a sense of rootedness.

Such a socio-military reform, which would require an increase in the defence budget, more than the 2% currently requested by NATO[67] , would increase job creation in the defence and security sectors; including in the security sector, private security companies.

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64 Israel-Ministry of Defence Israel. https://www.idf.il/en

65 Swiss Confederation-Ministry of Defence Swiss Confederation. https://www.vtg.admin.ch/it/mio-servizio-militare/informazioni-generali/obbligo-di-prestare-servizio-militare.html

66 https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/cc/2018/732/it

67 https://www.politicaexterior.com/defensa-europea-llego-la-hora-de-las-decisiones-dificiles/

Investment in the defence and security industry, beyond the economic benefits, would enhance national prestige internationally and attract new investors interested in the development of the defence and security industry.

It is therefore understood that the greater the evolution and experience in an industrial field, the greater the interest from outside the borders in participating in the process.

An example of the scenario just described can be found in Israel, whose military industry[68] and whose military operators are world-renowned.

As an example in the field of public safety, one could consider the reform carried out in the United States, Canada or the United Kingdom, whose origins date back to the 1970s[69], in which private police companies, in special cases or in towns and cities with budget problems, perform functions of low priority or importance (Low-priority)[70] of State security forces; acting, therefore, as law enforcement agents, even with all due distinctions[71].

In relation to Security Forces and Agencies, focused on avoiding enormous amounts of funds being wasted, it would be appropriate to consider creating a single police force, although due to the lack of human capital, it might be more appropriate to consider the formation of a multifunctional police-military corps.

Obviously, as discussed above, new technologies will facilitate some services that could be performed by more senior officers, including the acquisition of *unmanned* systems [72], but even in this case, operators are required.

As mentioned above, an increase in defence and security budgets, as well as high levels of personnel training is essential.

The intelligence services (CNI) require a separate chapter, as their role is fundamental to national security, especially in terms of external action, and even more so given that the information gathered in the field and its subsequent analysis are the

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68 Israel Military Industries ltd.national armaments and defence systems company. http://www.imisystems.com

69 Kakalik, S. J., Wildhorn, S. (1971). Private Police in the United States: Findings and Recommendations. Vol.1, December 1971. R-869/DOJ. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2006/R869.pdf

70 Kakalik, S. J., Wildhorn, S. (1971). Private Police in the United States: Findings and Recommendations. Vol.1, December 1971. R-869/DOJ. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2006/R869.pdf
California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

71 Sparrow, M. K., Ph. D. (2014). Managing the Boundary Between Public and Private Policing. New Perspectives in Policing Bulletin. Washington D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 247182.

72 Unmanned systems.

basis of prevention by national security in the face of external threats and, of course, internal sleeper cells.

The proposals theorised and presented here are not intended to encourage a move away from a democratic state towards a militarised state, but rather to invite reflection on the need to bring about a change in *forma mentis* toward a national awareness that will help to internalise the concept that national security is everyone's business.

Or as the Roman writer Flavius Vegetius Renatus put it:

"Si Vis Pacem Para Bellum".

(If you want peace, prepare for war)

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Change in human demographics and trade: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics e.g. rapid travel enabled SARS to rapidly spread around the globe. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK56579/

Chickungunya (transmitted by mosquitoes) are moving further the tropics as the climate warms.

China-Africa Research Initiative. Johns Hopkins University SAIS. http://www.sais-cari.org/chinese-investment-in-africa

Climate and weather; e.g diseases with zoonotic vectors such as West Nile Disease.

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Demographic map: the map highlights trends through colours. And expresses, through colours, that Niger's population will maintain a positive growth trend.

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Just war and the responsibility to protect on the 10th Anniversary of the Intervention in Libya

Abstract

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Libyan conflict, resulting in the overthrow of Muammar Al Gaddafi, this article analyses the actions carried out by the international coalition and NATO in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions' 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011). This analysis is conducted from a Just War theory and Responsibility to Protect point of view. The application of the aforementioned resolutions is reviewed. A certain ambiguity is glimpsed that leads to different interpretations, sowing doubt in the actions executed by the international coalition forces. All the above is studied considering the moral and the ethics of Just War, leaving the legal aspects aside for the experts in International Law.

Keywords

Just War, R2P, ius ad bellum, ius in bello, ius post bellum, Libya, military intervention, Gaddafi.

Introduction

The intervention in Libya 10 years ago has been the subject of debate on just war and the responsibility to protect (R2P), sparking serious controversy. In this article, we will try to analyse the question of whether the intervention in Libya was just or not, considering the just war doctrine and its latest developments in the R2P.

Based on this issue, we believe it is necessary to carry out an investigation into R2P in the Libyan conflict, which in 2011 led to the overthrow of the colonel's government and left Libya in chaos where, as the saying goes, the cure was worse than the disease.

Furthermore, we must ask ourselves whether the intervention respected the *jus in bello* during its course[1].

As far as the situation is concerned, it is now known that the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi's regime in March 2011 plunged Libya into anarchy and turned it into a hub for human trafficking to Europe, and that by destroying the embryonic Libyan state through war, the conditions were created for the establishment of a North African branch of Daesh[2].

Furthermore, we know that the United Nations (UN), in Resolution S/RES/1970 (2011) of 25 February decided to freeze financial assets and economic resources on Libyan territory owned or controlled directly or indirectly by the persons or entities listed in Annex II of the Resolution. On this basis, Resolution S/RES/1973 (2011) of 17 March would freeze, among other things, the interests of the National Oil Corporation and the Libyan Central Bank, which did not bear fruit as expected[3].

It is also worth remembering that in 1996, the security forces massacred 1,200 rioting prisoners in Abu Salim prison. Similarly, Gaddafi had been a suspected terrorist

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1 See, among others:

Gutiérrez Espada, C. and Cervell Hortal, M.ª J. (2014). *Birth, Rise and Decline of the Responsibility to Protect.* Granada, Comares.

Fernández Ruiz-Gálvez, E. (2013). *From Vitoria to Libya. Reflections on the responsibility to protect.* Granada, Comares.

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2 Djaziri, M. (2015). The UN and the conflict transition in Libya. AFKAR IDEAS. N.º 47, p. 16.

3 Security Council Resolution S/RES/1973 of 17 March 2011, Annex II, p. 8. Available at: https://bit.ly/3j4NChx

accused of involvement in the downing of the French UTA plane that was shot down over Nigeria's Ténéré desert in 1989, killing 470 people[4].

Earlier, on 21 December 1988, a Pan Am plane flying between Frankfurt and Detroit with a stopover in London was the victim of a terrorist attack, exploding in mid-air and falling on the town of Lockerbie (UK), killing 259 passengers and 11 others on the ground when the plane crashed.

The US and Britain reportedly accuses Libyan nationals Abdelbasset Al Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah of carrying out the attack. The Libyan government denies this and calls for an international investigation. On 21 January 1992, the UN Security Council (SC) asks Libya to hand over the suspects in Resolution 731 of 1992, for trial in the USA and Scotland.

On 31 March 1992, the Security Council adopts Resolution 748, which establishes the air and military embargo against Libya.

It is not until 5 April 1999 that Libya brings the two suspects accused of conspiracy, murder and violation of international aviation safety legislation to the Scottish justice system and into the custody of the Dutch authorities. The UN then suspends sanctions on Libya, pending their definitive lifting[5].

Furthermore, it was discovered that various quantities of uranium concentrate from Niger were found in Sabha and south of Sirte. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) acknowledged that Gaddafi still had some 9.5 tons of mustard gas hidden in caves in the Kufra oasis[6] which, if not grounds for triggering R2P, does reflect the idea that he misled the SC into lifting the arms embargo.

Nor should it be forgotten – and it has been emphasised by critics – that at no time did Resolution 1973 authorise regime change, as would eventually happen; this is something that should be clarified, since the UN's order was to protect the population[7].

As is well known, the intervention was supported by France, the UK and the US, as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Whilst the 1970 (2011) and

4 Echeverría, C. (2011). Revolts, tribal civil war and foreign military intervention in Libya. Spanish Annual of International Law. Vol. 27, pp. 185-201.

5 ABC International. (2009). Chronology of the Lockerbie case [online]. [Viewing date: 7 September 2021]. Available at: https://bit.ly/3FJADeV

6 Echeverría, C. Op. cit., pp. 185-201.

7 It is necessary to highlight the need to respect the jus post bellum in order to achieve a just peace. The jus post bellum must be taken into account in any humanitarian intervention, since the political situation post-intervention must be politically stable. See: Ortiz, L. (2012). Revolution and intervention in Libya. An interpretation from just war theory. Person and Law Journal. Vol. 6-7, pp. 387-410.

1973 (2011) SC Resolutions were adopted without a veto from any of the five eligible states, as Russia and China abstained from voting. Germany, Brazil, India and South Africa, to name but a few, also abstained.

It is also known that NATO took over military operations from 31 March, twelve days after they had first begun under US command, and then under international coalition command[8].

In this regard, it should also be noted that NATO cannot act unilaterally without the express authorisation of the SC[9], hence Resolution 1973 (2011) is a triumph of International Law (IL) over those wishing for a unilateral decentralisation of armed force in favour of the Alliance or any other State turned global vigilante[10].

The UN, in this case affecting international peace and security, tried to take responsibility by condemning human rights violations and the displacement of people by the Libyan regime.

Thus, from what was initially presented as an operation aimed at supporting Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which called for an end to violence and abuse against civilians[11], instead we have seen that the result was the fall of a regime and instability in the country ten years after the beginning of the conflict.

The structure of this article is developed through a theoretical framework of the most useful aspects of the case of just war theory with respect to its identification with R2P. These books have been very useful for this: "Just and Unjust Wars" *and* "Reflections on War" *by* Michael Walzer*; "Just War Theory" *by* Josep Baqués Quesada*; "Just War" by Alex Bellamy and the "Just War Doctrine" *by* José María Garrán Martínez; as well as numerous articles written in scientific journals by various prestigious internationalists.

The second part of this article provides an analysis of the conflict itself, setting out the main details of the situation in Libya in the period under review, as well as the subsequent international intervention in this context.

The outline, in summary, focuses on an analysis of the just war doctrine, with respect to its relationship and impact on R2P and that of both in the Libyan conflict

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8 Arteaga, F. (2011). NATO in Libya. Elcano Royal Institute, ARI. No. 54, 110/2011, pp. 1-6. Available at: https://bit.ly/2YLFsmY

9 Mangas, A. (2011). The authorisation of the use of armed force in Libya. Elcano Royal Institute. Section 57, pp. 1-7. Available at: https://bit.ly/3HgkbTg

10 Ibid.

11 Estébanez, F. J. (2015). The responsibility to protect: the effects of the Libyan intervention on the Syrian civil war. Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies. 47/2015, Available at: https://bit.ly/3z59SP5

during the intervention resulting from the implementation of Resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011)[12].

Just war theory

Evolution of the theory

Plato

The Greek philosopher already implies that in war a certain ethical conduct must be observed, a prelude to what we will later call *jus in bello*, the right to observe these ethics during war, far from the maxim that in war anything goes. Plato's recommendations are taken up in some form, and perhaps with a different design from that which would be set out in the Geneva Convention, as codes of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Plato denotes a broad common sense based on natural law, which in today's wars does not apply.

Aristotle

The Stagirite held that justice depended on human relations, but then went on to use the term "just war" as we have seen and pointed out five pretexts for declaring war legitimately: in self-defence, to take revenge on those who had wronged us, to help allies, and to maintain authority over those who were incapable of governing themselves[13].

Cicero

Around 45 BC, Cicero wrote the famous work "On Duties". In it, he mentioned that there were two ways of resolving a dispute: by discussion and debate, and by physical force. He concluded as follows:

> "For there are two means of ending a quarrel: negotiation and force. The former is proper to men and the latter to beasts; the latter must be resorted to when it is not possible to use the former. The reason for waging war is the desire to live in peace, for sure; but once a victory has been won, the lives of enemies who were neither cruel nor savage must be respected"[14].

St. Augustine

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12 In R2P terms, this means rebuilding after military intervention and providing full assistance for recovery, reconstruction and reconciliation, eliminating the causes of harm that the intervention addresses or prevents. See: López Jacoiste, E. (2011). The Libyan crisis from a Responsibility to Protect perspective. Spanish Annual of International Law. Vol. 27, p.148.

13 Bellamy, A. J. (2009). Just Wars. From Cicero to Iraq. Madrid, Spanish Economic Culture Fund. P. 54.

14 Cicero, M. T. (1989). On Duties. Madrid, TECNOS. P. 21.

All wars argued for Augustine, even unjust ones, were initiated by the desire for a just peace, and it was this desire that distinguished the legitimacy of war from the illegitimacy of killing for self-preservation or self-benefit.

The central difference between a just and an unjust war was that the former sought both to restore peace and to redress an injury received[15]. A war can be just in the *jus ad bellum and* then be unjust because of the way in which the *jus in bello* develops, and vice versa.

For a war to be just, it had to be either the response to a previous harm or ordered by God, from which it follows that for Augustine a war could only be just for one of the warring parties[16].

Theory Maturity

St. Thomas Aquinas

St. Thomas, as far as just war is concerned, speaks of three conditions: "Competent authority, just cause and right intention"[17]. We are told that he links the concept of just war to the idea of imputable fault, as well as to the moral and legal consequences of the fault committed by the transgressor of the law.

Francisco de Vitoria

Just war theory, as the treatises cited so far and the following ones will show, is based on the question of self-defence. It is clear that in the face of any aggression and as a response, it is possible to attack in legitimate self-defence. Francisco de Vitoria frequently points out that force can be rejected by force. And he points out:

> "In defence of the homeland and its individual rights, it is lawful to re-fuse force by force within the limits of legitimate self-defence, even at the risk of the aggressor's life.[18]

Vitoria, in his "Relectio de Indis", leaves us something written that over the years is reflected in the R2P, pointing out:

> "As a matter of principle, all peoples, both Indians and Spaniards, have the right to defend themselves by force of arms against unjust aggression by infidels or Christians against their own country, and have the right to

15 Bellamy, A. J. Op. cit., p. 58.

16 Ibid., p. 59.

17 De La Brière, I. (1944). Just War law. Mexico, Jus. P. 44.

18 Vitoria, F. (1989). Relectio de Indis. Magna Carta of the Indians. Madrid, Spanish National Research Council. P. 118.

resort to war to deter aggressors from further endangering their national integrity or security"[19].

Here Vitoria helps us to understand the first pillar of R2P since, as we shall see, he incorporates the possibility that the Spaniards contribute to defending the Indians against oppression by their overlords.

Vitoria again seems to lay the foundations of the idea that, in the face of injustice and in self-defence, it will be just to repel aggression from both Christians and infidels. Self-defence is reflected as the validation of defending oneself for a just cause.

In view of the development of the work that concerns us and, in the face of controversy as to whether a tyrant should be overthrown, Vitoria causes us to reflect when he says:

> "Just laws are binding in conscience and are valid, even if they have been dictated by a ruler or political leader who seized the kingdom by violence, as long as the tyrant is tolerated by the community"[20].

This raises the question of the international community's interest in overthrowing dictators under the guise of regime change. The Dominican poses a question that is difficult to answer since, in most cases where political systems are overthrown – and in the face of humanitarian interventions that are themselves highly questioned, and with the excuse of R2P – the population, far from improving its standard of living, is placed in complicated situations and a worse life.

Vitoria also, through "Relectio de Indis" and in application of natural law and the Law of Nations, justifies that Spaniards who, acting prudently and not wishing to harm the Indians, also had the right to defend themselves if they were attacked by the Indians. Vitoria, already sensing the *jus in bello,* would comment:

> "But recourse to these measures of war and security can never serve as a pretext for killing, plundering and occupying the cities of the Indians (…) and they have more than enough reason to distrust Spanish conquerors from outside, armed and much more powerful than themselves"[21].

Vitoria was ahead of his time and put forward ideas and advice that would later become the doctrine of the UN and the Geneva Conventions. We highlight one of his comments on this issue: "The state can no longer prolong its intervention under

19 Ibid., p. 119.

20 Ibid., p. 120.

21 Ibid,. p. 121.

the pretext of defending innocent people by prolonging the occupation of its territories"[22].

We must not end this section on Vitoria without quoting a final consideration of his in which he asks: could a war be just for both sides, or just for only one side? Subjectively, in good faith it is possible for of both disputants to believe that each is right[23].

Hugo Grotius

The Dutch jurist shuns war and constantly describes it as horrendous. Hence, a decision to go to war must be out of necessity or out of true charity[24], and only if an offence has been committed beforehand. Grotius already indicates R2P here, both out of true charity and out of a need for legitimate self-defence. It suggests that, in the case of self-defence and charity, the responsibility to protect is implied. Their task here will be to distinguish moral necessity from mere political utility[25].

In his work "De jure belli ac pacis" he states that on the one hand, the pursuit of an end is lawful as long as the end pursued is just, and on the other hand, that no act of war is just if it lacks a just cause. Importantly however, it makes clear, that not all acts performed by the combatant are always just because the cause is just, and in recognising this, there is a clear distinction between *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. This distinction was not evident in medieval scholastic thought. Saving the argument of Thomistic right intention[26].

We are not satisfied with this distinction made by García Caneiro and Vidarte. In our opinion, Grotius takes note of the just war theory of Vitoria's work in his "Relectio de Indis"; although he does not make a clear distinction between the two *jus*, he clearly reflects the *jus ad bellum* of just cause. No doubt it also involves the *jus in bello* in its many declarations that it is not lawful to proceed to the general slaughter of enemies, as well as declaring it unlawful for the victor to kill children, religious and innocent people.

The concept of just war today

The just war theory is still relevant today, from the Second World War, up to the wars in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc... Based on these wars and the application of just and unjust wars, many authors have devoted pages and books to the study of the aforementioned doctrine. Of all of them, we will focus on Michael Walzer as the main

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22 Ibid., p. 121.

23 Vitoria apud De la Brière, I. Op. cit., p. 53.

24 Grotius apud Baqués, J. (2007). Just War theory. A proposal for the systematisation of jus ad bellum. Pamplona, Aranzadi. P. 76.

25 Ibid., pp. 76-77.

26 García Caneiro, J. and Vidarte, F. J. (2002). War and philosophy. Valencia, Tirant lo Blanch. P. 49.

reference point for just war theory today, and we will analyse the most relevant points in his two books on the subject, "Just and Unjust Wars" and "Reflections on War".

Michael Walzer published a book in late 1977 that became a classic reference on just war theory entitled "Just and unjust wars".

In this work, Walzer confessed that the need to write down his reflections on the war was a gesture of intellectual honesty. In the introduction it states: "I would like to re-integrate the notion of just war into moral and political theory"[27].

Opposing realism, the American philosopher recovers from Josef Kunz[28] the notions *jus ad bellum and jus in bello, and* in his work "Reflections on War" in 2004 he even brings out the concept of *jus post bellum*, i.e. the law after the war: Refusing realism, his thesis is that the world of war is de facto radically separated from ethical categories[29].

When he introduces the concept of *jus post bellum* he says that it is clear to him that a just war can be fought, and fought justly, and yet, at the end of the war, a bleak and confused picture can still be left behind[30].

The moral reality of war is, for him, composed of two parts, which means that war is always judged twice: the first in relation to the reasons that states have for engaging in combat, and the second in relation to how it is carried out. Walzer, in the first judgement, imposes an adjective character, since it indicates that a war is just or, unjust, while the second judgement is adverbial, as with it, we will determine whether the war has been justly or unjustly carried out[31].

In other words, in this case he applies the adjective part to the *jus ad bellum and* the adverbial part to the *jus in bello*. Walzer focuses its argument and believes that a war is just, based on the theory of aggression and that it is any violation of the territorial integrity or sovereignty of a state.

It is important to note his development of what he calls the *legalist paradigm* in what he calls the domestic analogy, i.e. in an appreciation of the rights of states derived from the prior assumption of the rights of each individual. We are therefore faced with a translation of logics that is not foreign to just war. Walzer examines the six traditional rules or requirements that should be demanded of a state (legalist paradigm): just

27 Walzer, M. (2001). Just and unjust wars. Barcelona, Paidós Ibérica. P. 21.

28 Kunz, J. L. apud Kolben, R. Origin of the twin terms jus ad bellum/ jus in bello. International Review of the Red Cross. No. 143, pp. 589-598.

29 Migliore, J. (2005). Michael Walzer and the problem of just war. Collection.N.º16, pp.13-46.

30 Walzer, M. Op. cit., p. 170.

31 Arbeláez, Á. (2012). The notion of just war. Some current approaches. Analecta Política. Vol.1, n.º 2, pp. 273-290.

cause, right intention, public declaration of war by a legitimate authority, last resort, likelihood of success and proportionality[32].

We will conclude by saying that, in Walzer's view, it is not enough to wait until the fanatical and intolerant tyrants have finished their repugnant task (...). Whenever it is possible to put an end to these outrages, it must be done, and if we, the supposedly decent people of this world, don't do it, who will?[33]

The responsibility to protect

In 1999, in the wake of the Kosovo conflict, the UN began to believe that the primary responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights rested with states. Accordingly, R2P can be said to be the recognition of states' primary duty to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and the international community's subsidiary duty to prevent or deter their occurrence[34].

In his 2000 Millennium Report, then Secretary-General Kofi Annan, recalling that the SC had failed to act decisively in Rwanda and Kosovo, confronted member states with the following choice:

> "If humanitarian intervention is indeed an unacceptable attack on sovereignty, how should we respond to situations such as Rwanda or Srebrenica and to gross and systematic violations of human rights that transgress the principles of our common humanity?"[35]

The concept of R2P has its roots in the concept of humanitarian intervention, giving it, however, a more formal than precise concept.

In 2001, the R2P debate reached its peak with the ICISS (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty) report. The Commission was initiated by the Canadian government and led by Gareth Evans (former Australian Foreign Minister) and Mohamed Sahnoun (former Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and the Great Lakes).

Kofi Annan endorsed the rule that had just been raised, concerning R2P as an international collective responsibility exercised by the SC, authorising military intervention as a last resort in the event of genocide and other large-scale killing, ethnic

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32 Walzer, M. Op. cit., p. 97.

33 Walzer, M. (2004). Reflections on war. Barcelona, Paidós Ibérica. P. 97.

34 Añaños, M.ª C. (2019). The Responsibility to Protect in the United Nations and the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine. Discussion Papers. No. 21, p. 184.

35 Report by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, A/54/2000, 27 March 2000. We the people, the role of the United Nations in the 21st century. Available at: https://bit.ly/3BJ3qho

cleansing and major violations of humanitarian law, which sovereign governments have proved unable or unwilling to prevent[36].

In addition, the group proposed basic criteria that would legitimise the authorisation of the use of force by the SC, including the seriousness of the threat, the fact that it must be a last resort and the proportionality of the response.

The international community reacted to this and was divided between those who believed that national sovereignty was not being respected and those who favoured solidarity, i.e. humanitarian intervention.

In 2005, Kofi Annan strongly agreed with the High Level Panel Report and suggested that a list of proposed criteria for authorising the use of force in general, including the seriousness of the threat, proportionality and the likelihood of success, should be applied when authorising the use of force.

This led to the United Nations World Summit in 2005, where all Member States formally accepted the responsibility of each state to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This would be reflected in Resolution A/RES/60/1[37].

R2P encompasses three key dimensions:

1. Prevention: It is the most important and should always be the top priority. It includes many aspects such as tackling the causes of instability: poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, forced displacement. The competent authorities are urged to set up early warning mechanisms at national, regional and international level.

2. Reaction: It arises when prevention fails and is the one that provokes the most debate. This includes diplomatic, political, economic or judicial measures. Only in extreme cases, when all else has failed, would military action be included.

3. Reconstruction: It should also be a R2P objective, since half of all countries emerging from war relapse back into violence within five years.

From here, three pillars were established to address the issue:

1. The state has the primary responsibility to protect its inhabitants from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, including incitement.

2. The international community has a responsibility to encourage and assist states in exercising this responsibility.

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36 Bermejo, R. and López-Jacoiste, M.ª E. (2013). From humanitarian intervention to the responsibility to protect. Rationale, similarities and differences. *Strategy Papers*. N.º 160, pp. 18-76.

37 General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/1 of 24 October 2005. 2005 World Summit Outcome. Available at: https://bit.ly/3v9n57G

3. The international community has a responsibility to use humanitarian diplomacy and other appropriate means to protect populations from such crimes. If a state is clearly failing to protect its population, the international community must be prepared to take collective action to do so in accordance with the UN Charter.

Linking R2P to the matter at hand, namely the just war theory – that is, as above, by quoting St. Thomas Aquinas, who as early as the 11th century left us with his thought that three conditions are necessary for a war to be just: the authority of the prince under whose command the war is to be waged, that there is a just cause, and that the intention of the contenders is just.

For his part, Francisco de Vitoria invoked intervention on behalf of the innocent. It was already premised on the duty to intervene to defend innocent victims of tyrannies and inhuman laws that could be adopted.

Subsequently, the concept of just war was addressed and recognised by Francisco Suárez, although it would be Hugo Grotius who would formulate the concept of humanitarian intervention (or humanity) in a more complete way. It should be pointed out that it was indeed Grotius who began to proclaim one of the basic principles of international law, that of non-intervention, linking it explicitly to state sovereignty[38].

Hugo Grotius was defending and prioritising natural law, as it can legitimise interference and interventions in many internal affairs.

The application of Just War theory to the conflict in Libya.

On 15 February 2011, the civil uprising in Libya because of the so-called Arab Spring contagion broke out in Benghazi, the fiefdom of the former King Idris, deposed in 1969 by Muammar Gaddafi. Facing Gaddafi is a broad, heterodox and disorganised social front, backed by the majority of the population and with the support of many of the country's tribes[39].

Having analysed the evolution of just war theory, it is now time to analyse its practical application in the case of the conflict and subsequent intervention in Libya. To do so, we will begin with an analysis of the principles of just war in the Libyan conflict, in order to subsequently verify whether or not they have been complied with in the light of the development of the conflict and especially when applying SC Resolution 1973 (2011). Finally, we will conclude with some considerations on the *jus post bellum* in the Libyan conflict.

On 26 February 2011, the SC adopts Resolution 1970, which expresses its grave concern over the situation in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and condemns the violence

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38 Vlut apud Bermejo, R. and López-Jacoiste, M.ª E. Op. cit., pp. 18-76.

39 Rizzi, A. (2011). Main tribe backs fight against Libyan dictator [online]. El País Internacional. [Viewing date: 8 August 2021]. Available at: https://bit.ly/3FJADeV

and use of force against civilians and, among other *reminders,* instructs the Libyan authorities to respect the R2P of its population. Likewise, and in point 4, the Gaddafi government is told that in view of the situation prevailing in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya since 15 February 2011, the matter is referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC)[40]. In addition, an arms embargo, a freeze on assets and a travel ban are imposed on 16 senior Libyan government officials.

In view of the circumstances and the worsening situation in the conflict, on 17 March 2011 the Security Council again adopted Resolution 1973 (2011) reminding Libya of Resolution 1970 and deploring the Libyan authorities' failure to comply with it. *Considering* that the widespread and systematic attacks against the civilian population currently taking place in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya may constitute crimes against humanity , demands a series of obligations from the Libyan authorities and establishes a no-fly zone[41] over the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in order to be able to protect civilians. It further decides that the flight ban shall not apply to flights for humanitarian purposes.

Intervention in Libya from the Responsibility to Protect principle

R2P is directly related to just war; hence we will analyse it from the perspective of factors such as just cause, legitimate authority, right intention, last resort, proportionality and likelihood of success.

Following in Walzer's footsteps, is the conflict in Libya and the consequent fall of Muammar Gaddafi's regime a just war? This question is very specific. It is not about whether the war is legitimate under international law or whether it is politically or militarily prudent to wage it now or never. The question is whether it is morally defensible, whether it is just or unjust. Law and strategy are left to the opinion of others outside just war theory[42].

   a)   Just cause

Both the International Commission of Inquiry for Libya by the UN Human Rights Council (25 February 2011) and Amnesty International held that Gaddafi's forces had committed crimes against humanity and war crimes including abductions, torture, illegal detentions (…) The Commission also found that Thuwar rebel forces had com-

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40 Security Council Resolution S/RES/1970 of 26 February 2011. Available at: https://bit.ly/3j2rlAO

41 Security Council Resolution S/RES/1973 of 17 March 2011. Available at: https://bit.ly/3j4NChx

42 Migliore, J. Op. cit., pp. 13-46.

mitted war crimes and crimes against humanity during the conflict in Libya and that they remained unpunished at the time.[43]

In view of this, the SC was already beginning to consider adopting a resolution to stop the autocrat from his brutal and disproportionate repression. The following day, 26 February 2011, the SC, as mentioned above, adopted Resolution 1970 (2011).

With high-level intellectuals and diplomats such as Jeremy Kinsman in favour of taking action against the Libyan regime, others such as Noam Chomsky, Michael Walzer and Lawrence Modeme would speak out against intervention in Libya.

Walzer argued that the situation in Libya did not correspond to a crisis that warranted humanitarian intervention, as was justified in Rwanda and Darfur[44].

Lawrence Modeme, given his interest in just cause, stated that the situation in Libya did not constitute a threat to international peace and security. Likewise, the UN Charter states that at least some States should be involved in the conflict, which is why the SC had exceeded its powers by issuing Resolution 1973[45].

Walzer argues that it is not clear to him what the purpose of the intervention is, he wonders: Is the aim to rescue a failed rebellion, to turn the tide, to use Western armies to help the rebels, to overthrow Gaddafi?[46]

Nor, if you read the SC meetings carefully, will you see how in S/PV 6505 of 24 March 2011, pg. 3, i.e. the session held seven days later, the secretary general says, verbatim:

> "My Special Envoy's mission was too brief to reach definitive conclusions on the human rights situation, but he found many worrying signs, including threats and incitement against the armed opposition"[47].

The Special Envoy formally requested the cooperation of the Libyan government with the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights and the response was positive, although no concrete steps were discussed.

From this, it can be deduced that the situation was not clear, neither before the Resolutions were issued nor once they were implemented, on the causes that had determined the R2P. Ultimately, although the Resolutions claim to protect civilians, it seems that the following three points were not clear: the forcefulness of Gaddafi's

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43 Walzer apud Lobo, J. F. (2012). Humanitarian intervention in the Libyan and Syrian crises. Journal of the Institute of International Studies. N.º 973. Universidad de Chile. Pp. 37-76.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Walzer, M. (2011). The case against our attack on Libya [online]. The New Republic. [Viewing date: 8 August 2021]. Available at: https://bit.ly/3AEFBWx

47 6505th meeting of the Security Council S/PV 6505 of 24 March 2011. Available at: https://bit.ly/32TnscA

atrocity against the rebels; the possibility that the rebels did the same; and the possibility of other motivations or intentions.

b) Legitimate authority

The UN Charter distinguishes in this respect between two broad groups of measures: those not involving the use of force, referred to in Article 41, and those involving the use of armed force, referred to in Article 42 of the Charter. This Article 42 states:

"If the Security Council considers that the measures referred to in Article 41 may be inadequate or have proved inadequate, it may take such action by air, naval or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security"[48].

Although it was often echoed that the SC is not a competent authority in this respect, it should be noted that nothing could be further from the truth as discussed in the previous paragraph. Operation *Unified Protector* in its pursuit of R2P seemed legitimate, but the question remains, as Lawrence Modeme points out, whether international peace and security was at risk, which is highly doubtful. The Libyan crisis was part of an internal conflict that it is up to the General Assembly to decide, as the Human Rights Council is accountable to the General Assembly and seems to offer more transparency and legitimacy than the SC[49], although the issue would have been more complicated as it would have required a 2/3 vote of the General Assembly[50].

Unlike NATO's intervention in Yugoslavia, which was not authorised by the SC, the intervention in Libya was carried out under the umbrella of the UN, with opponents such as Brazil, China, Germany, India, Russia and China, which did not support the Resolutions and denounced the bombings. Nevertheless, based on these circumstances, we can say that the requirement of legitimate authority was satisfied, but we retain certain doubts regarding just cause, which will be taken up in the conclusions of this analysis.

c) Right intention

In both Resolutions 1970 and 1973 (2011), the spirit of righteous intent is made clear, but everything seems to indicate that other intentions than protecting the civilian population were hidden. The international coalition took sides by supporting the Transitional National Council (TNC), supplying them with weapons and overthrowing the Libyan government of Gaddafi. It is becoming increasingly clear that behind the supposed humanitarian intentions there were ulterior motives for the intervention.

d) Last resort

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48 Andrés, P. (2018). Basic legislation on public international law. Madrid, TECNOS. P. 39.

49 Modeme apud Lobo, J. F. Op. cit., p. 47.

50 In this regard, see S/RES/377 A (V) of 3 November 1950. Available at: https://bit.ly/3BL8sd7

While some voices such as Simon Adams, director of the New York-based Global Center for R2P, argue that peaceful measures would not have been effective as the Gaddafi regime was prepared to massacre its people, others such as Lawrence Modeme argue that intervention was not a last resort as not enough time was given for the measures envisaged in Resolution 1970 (2011) to be carried out[51].

We believe that there was a lack of interest not only on the part of the UN, but also on the part of other regional stakeholders in carrying out on-site inspections in order to assess the human rights situation. This gave the Libyan government a chance to position itself to determine the extent of the events. It has been said that the UN used double standards, reflected in Resolution 1973 *when it deplored* the Libyan authorities' "continued use of mercenaries". According to studies by the UN Working Group, between 30,000 and 50,000 mercenaries were allegedly hired by the US and other countries in the Iraq war. The Washington Post in 2007 even doubled the figure to 71,000 mercenary men belonging to the *Halliburton and Blackwater* companies in the Afghan war[52]. This suggests, at the very least, that the standards of fairness or otherwise of a war must go beyond such considerations of the role of mercenaries – and that perhaps this was merely a smokescreen used to hide more fundamental shortcomings concerning whether it was appropriate to intervene at the time, or whether it was more prudent to carry out the inspections mentioned above.

e) Proportionality

In order to protect the civilian population and protect human rights, the "no-fly zone" ordered in Resolution 1973 can be understood as securing airspace and facilitating humanitarian aid to civilians. And when it talks about civilians it is referring to both sides of civilians, but the UN could have foreseen that the mining of ports, the destruction of oil installations and bombing by NATO would produce considerable collateral damage and that the use of force does not seem to be the most appropriate method for protecting human rights.

On 31 March 2011, the Vatican, through its nuncio in Tripoli, denounced the killing of at least 40 civilians and the bombing of a hospital by NATO forces. It was protecting and killing civilians at the same time, which is unheard of[53]. Conversely, the aforementioned global director for R2P, Simon Adams, argued that NATO's intervention in Libya was the lesser of two evils, as its costs were less than allowing the crisis to unfold, which would have culminated in the use of massive and indiscriminate violence against civilians[54]. Contrary to this, Lawrence Modeme stated that the intervention escalated the conflict and that the violence brought more violence to Libya,

51 Corcoran and Maher, M., apud Lobo, J. F. Op. cit., pp. 37-66.

52 Zamora, A. (2011). Use of Force and Human Rights [online]. Le Monde Diplomatique. [Viewing date: 8 August 2021]. Available at: https://bit.ly/3DJTPqX

53 Ibid.

54 Adams apud Lobo, J. F. Op. cit., p. 47.

and that he believed the crisis could have ended with Gaddafi's seizure of Benghazi[55]. Other voices, such as that of Mehrdad Payandeh, professor of international law at the University of Düsseldorf, did not hesitate to criticise the SC for having delegated responsibilities to NATO and not having set a date for the end of the operation set out in Resolution 1973 (2011)[56].

f) Reasonable prospects for success

Where has success been? The evidence suggests that human rights are still not being respected and that a civil war is still going on after ten years of hostilities, with no end in sight. The then US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates had already warned that establishing a no-fly zone could lead to a direct, long and costly confrontation with the Libyan armed forces[57].

If Operation *Odyssey Dawn* averted a potential massacre in Benghazi, NATO operations were also protecting armed civilians and rebel military fighting in an internal conflict, which meant acting with bias, something that undermined R2P by protecting some civilians more than others[58].

It is true that the interveners were lacking sufficient knowledge of the local situation and therefore could not reasonably expect to be successful[59]. They did not foresee the dangers of humanitarian intervention in Libya.

Such an intervention should be a tool of last resort. And in Libya, not enough time was given for the measures in Resolution 1970 to take effect[60].

Finally, it should be noted that the best intervention in these cases is not the quickest, but the one that produces the desired effects, and that the military approach takes time. There is no guarantee that a military intervention such as that proposed for Libya would be swift, surgical and controlled[61].

The development of the conflict: Situation analysis for Resolution 1973 (2011)

Resolution 1973, *in a reaffirmation* of the Resolution, cites "the resolute commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of the Libyan

55 Modeme apud Lobo, J. F. Op. cit., pp. 45-46.

56 Payandeh apud Lobo, J. F. Op. cit., p. 46.

57 Arteaga, F. (2011). Reasons against military intervention in Libya. Elcano Royal Institute. Section 54/2011, pp. 1-7, Available at: https://bit.ly/3lHxUL3

58 Arteaga, F. Op. cit., pp. 1-6.

59 Beaumon, apud Lobo, J. F. Op. cit., p. 48.

60 Corcoran, M. and Modeme apud Lobo, J. F. Op. cit., p. 47.

61 Arteaga, F. Op. cit., pp. 1-6.

Arab Jamahiriya". It is a contradiction that on 10 March, seven days before Resolution 1973 came out, French President Nicolas Sarkozy had already recognised the NTC in Benghazi as the legitimate government. Moreover, on the same day that Resolution 1973 was published, the European Union recognised the NTC as a preferred representative.

It should be borne in mind that insofar as the rebels had an established power, a different reading of the conflict could be made: Is this really a humanitarian intervention at the beginning of a civil war? The question is relevant because the answer given by just war theory is different in each case.

Some press reported that Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom at the time, had provided a transcript of his telephone conversation with Gaddafi on 25 February – barely a month before the intervention – which made it clear that the objective pursued by the devotees of the human rights faith was none other than regime change in Libya, and that the initiative came from Paris[62].

On 19 March, an international coalition led by the US, France and the UK, with the participation of five Arab countries, launched the first air strikes against Gaddafi. A civil war was being unleashed and a fundamental principle in force, the sovereignty of a UN member state, was being violated.

Resolution 1973 of 17 March 2011 took into account Resolution 1970 of 26 February and was based on the duty to protect the civilian population, with the SC having no qualms about proclaiming its respect for Libya's sovereignty and independence. Both Resolutions are contradictory in nature, as they refer to sovereignty and non-interference but authorise UN member states to take all necessary measures for the protection of civilians, while excluding the use of foreign occupation forces of any kind in any part of Libyan territory and clarifying that the only flights authorised over the territory are those for humanitarian purposes[63].

Although endorsed by Resolution 1973, first Operation *Odyssey Dawn* and then Operation *Unified Protector* are suspected of Western interference in an oil-rich Arab and African country[64].

It should also be noted that the aforementioned Resolution does not give the international community free rein to support either side, and that in the Libyan case the international coalition had, as we shall see, sided with the rebels. Cites that Resolution 46/182[65], in the annexed guiding principles, emphases in particular that humanitarian

62 SWI. (2016). Blair advised Gaddafi to go into hiding because it was all going to end badly [online], [Viewing date: 15 May 2018]. Available at: https://bit.ly/3mR7qpW

63 Charvin, R. (2012). The intervention in Libya and the violation of international legality: a return to the false international morality of the 19th century [online]. Rural Press Agency. [Viewing date: 11 August 2021]. Available at: https://bit.ly/2YTJ6vi

64 Echeverría, C. Op. cit., pp. 183-199.

65 General Assembly Resolution A/46/182 of 19 December 1991. Available at: https://bit.ly/3eDfjLQ

assistance should be provided in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. Therefore, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of states must be fully respected, something that R2P has brought into crisis because R2P understands that responsibility does not lie solely with the state.

In the case of Libya, R2P also falls on the international community and all its members to protect the population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and other crimes against humanity.

The interpretation of SC Resolution 1973 has become controversial between those who supported the international coalition's intervention and those who thought that the SC had overstepped its mandate. In this Resolution, in the point *expressing its determination* , it speaks of ensuring the protection of civilians and areas populated by civilians (...)[66] In the face of the threats of attack, experts in international law such as Philippe Sands and Malcolm Saw agree that the bombing of Syrian troops lacks legal justification and contravenes IHL as a consequence of *collateral damage* that would affect civilians both loyal to Gaddafi and the rebels[67].

In addition, the *coalition* 's latest attacks have been questioned, as by Nicholas Grief, director of law studies at the University of Kent, who – although he sees it as difficult – believes that the matter could be taken to the ICC.

In Grief's view, the latest *coalition* attacks appear to have clearly sided with the rebels and may have overstepped the mark[68].

Elcano Royal Institute analyst Félix Arteaga points out that there is interference with Libya's internal affairs. He also believes that the difficulty of adopting a negotiated resolution under pressure has meant that its text may allow for different interpretations since, while some *coalition* members make a humanitarian reading of the operation, France, the UK and the US go further and are clearly supporting the rebels who are moving with air cover and ground attacks from these forces[69].

Analysing other contradictions in the implementation of Resolution 1973 (2011), US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asserted that while her country was not now considering arming the rebels, this would not be illegal under Resolution 1973 (2011). Russia, Italy, Norway, Denmark and Belgium have expressed their opposition, while the Spanish Foreign Minister, Trinidad Jiménez, warned that the UN Resolutions

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66 Security Council Resolution S/RES/1973 of 17 March 2011. Available at: https://bit.ly/3j4NChx

67 RTVE. (2011). Experts question whether UN resolution allows support for Libyan rebels [online] [Viewing date: 8 August 2021]. Available at: https://bit.ly/3AIfJsP

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid.

have established "an arms embargo" that applies to both parties[70]. It was becoming clear that the Libyan conflict was already a civil war.

In this regard, the international digital edition of the newspaper *El País* of 30 June 2011 published a report by *Le Figaro* in which the spokesman for the French General Staff, Thierry Burkhard, stated that the Libyan regime rebels were receiving arms from Qatar and other Persian Gulf countries. However, the British Secretary of State for Defence, Gerald Howarth, stated in Brussels that the UK had no plans to supply arms to the Libyan opposition[71], not agreeing with this form of supplying arms to the rebels, although his mission was not to criticise France.

It was made clear that the application of R2P can lead to the taking of sides in conflicts as some countries try to defend their particular interests.

The *jus post bellum* in the Libyan conflict

It seems clear that a just war can be fought, and fought justly, yet still result in a morally confused post-war period. Conversely, is it possible to fight an unjust war but then establish decent political order during the post-war period? All indications are that this possibility is even more difficult to imagine[72].

The idea that there are certain moral limits during the post-war period are implicit in Vitoria's and Grotius' development of just war. But it was Kant who first motivated this distinction by advocating a tripartite concept of the justice of war. Kant differentiated between *recht zum krieg* (right to war), *rech im krieg* (right in war) and *recht nach dem krieg* (right *after* war).

However, just war doctrine has not been unanimous about accepting *jus post bellum* as part of just war.

In this respect, it is not superfluous to quote Cicero on the theory of just war and the *jus post bellum* when he says:

> "The reason for waging war is the desire to live in secure peace; but once victory has been won, one must respect the lives of enemies who were neither cruel nor savage (...) I think that one must always seek secure peace, in which no kind of insidiousness is prepared"[73].

The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) has stated that successful reconciliation and reconstruction must be based on three

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70 News Daily of Álava. (2011). The possibility of arming Libyan rebels divides the international community [online]. [Viewing date: 8 August 2021]. Available at: https://bit.ly/3FF159d

71 El País. (2011). France arms Libya's rebels as they march towards Tripoli [online]. [Viewing date: 11 August 2021]. Available at: https://bit.ly/3p3yvIU

72 Migliore, J. Op. cit., pp.13-46.

73 Cicero, M. T. Op. cit., p. 21.

objectives and missions: ensuring security, so that violence is nipped in the bud, establishing conditions conducive to democratisation and good governance, and assisting socio-economic and societal recovery[74].

In its Resolution S/RES/2009 (2011,) the SC in a *reaffirming* statement says that the UN should lead the international community's effort to support the Libyan-led transition and reconstruction process aimed at establishing a democratic Libya (...). It also decides through the above-mentioned Resolution to establish a support mission in Libya (UNSMIL)[75].

As events have unfolded, we have seen how the various militias involved in the conflict have been accused of serious human rights violations and of engaging in fratricidal fighting either against army units or against foreign representations while putting pressure on the government in order to influence the political course. The UN Special Envoy to Libya after the fall of Gaddafi, the Spaniard Bernardino Leon, stated that conditions on the ground were worsening. The economy is in ruins, while the currency is sinking and oil production, the country's economic mainstay, is struggling. Respect for human rights and the rule of law is declining, and terrorists are being strengthened[76].

In Libya, it has become clear that there has been no *jus post bellum* policy that seeks to impose new authoritarian regimes for economic, political or military gain. Nor have the states involved in the conflict attempted cultural reconstruction in a country where the tribal component is so deeply rooted. The international coalition should have intervened after Gaddafi's overthrow in a reasonable way in the reconstruction of Libya and in accordance with the UN mandate.

Conclusions

The just war doctrine, after many years of compromise, is once again raised when analysing today's wars, questioning whether such a war is just or unjust, analysed from a moral point of view.

It should be noted that Francisco de Vitoria already echoes the defence of the Indians supported by the Spaniards against the oppression of their tyrants, laying the foundations for the future R2P, although just laws "are binding in conscience" even if they "have been dictated by the tyrant" if the tyrant is tolerated by the community.

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74 Ciise apud David, C. P. (2008). War and peace. Barcelona, Icaria-Antrazyt. P. 105.

75 Security Council Resolution S/RES/2009 of 16 September 2011. Available at: https://bit.ly/3AIJGcq

76 León, B. (2015). Only through agreement and negotiation can Libya be saved. AFKAR IDEAS. N.º47, p. 24.

In any "just war", the application of *jus ad bellum, jus in bello* and *jus post bellum* is evident, a concept that unfortunately is not applied and is not carried out, leaving situations of chaos, confusion and despair, even within a war described as just.

Natural law, through various classical ideas of just war theory, seems to support humanitarian interventions, even if they involve interference in the sovereignty of states.

Referring to the war in Libya (with the subsequent overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi's regime), problems have been detected in the substance and manner of applying the R2P principle, analysed from the point of view of the just war doctrine. Nevertheless, the good intentions of the SC to stop the fighting and civilian deaths in the conflict must be acknowledged.

The ambiguity in the texts of the Resolutions meant that the application of the Resolutions with different interpretations complicated the application of R2P.

While the SC acted swiftly in implementing the pillars of R2P, prestigious intellectuals, such as Noam Chomsky, Michael Walzer and Lawrence Modeme, were opposed to intervening in Libya from the perspective and analysis of the just cause.

There is no evidence, either before or during the conflict, of any regional, EU or Western media presence on the ground to prove human rights violations beyond the contingency situations typical of a conflict very similar to a civil war, which would not necessarily give rise to the implementation of R2P (or not individually). Moreover, the call by Gaddafi's son, Said al-Islam, for a review of the situation was ignored. Likewise, the UN Secretary-General, on 24 March 2011 in S/PU 6505, acknowledged that the mission of its Special Envoy had been too short to draw definitive conclusions on the situation in Libya in terms of respect for human rights.

It is more than doubtful that international peace and security would be endangered in accordance with Article 42 of the UN Charter if the means referred to in Article 41 of the Charter were used. On the contrary, there is no doubt that the SC is the legitimate authority to implement its Resolutions on the use of force.

It has been proven that, under the guise of righteous intentions, the international coalition's dark interests were concealed in supporting the rebels by supplying them with weapons, declaring recognition and support for the NTC with the hidden aim of overthrowing Gaddafi's government.

It is confusing to consider that the implementation of R2P was a last resort, as there was no time to implement the means proposed in Resolution 1970 (2011). The double standard that can be glimpsed through Resolution 1973 (2011) is clear when it deplores the use of mercenaries by the Libyan regime, when the SC is well aware of the use of mercenaries by the United States in various conflicts in which it has participated, such as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The bombing has been disproportionate and has caused collateral damage among the rebels. It also seems clear that the protection of airspace hindered humanitarian aid to one section of the civilian population and favoured another.

The arms embargo did not affect the rebels, but it did affect the Libyan army. The killing of civilians and the blatant assassination of the Libyan leader has been proven, when he should have been handed over for a fair trial under the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.

The SC did not weigh up the reasonable prospects of the operation's success, and the results are obvious. A change of regime, a civil conflict that is difficult to resolve and ensuing chaos whereby the UN, despite trying after the 2009 Resolution (2011) to reconstruct and implement a dignified *jus post bellum* , has not succeeded, leaving a country with a political, economic and social problem that is challenging to remedy. And, in fact, much more unstable than before the intervention, which may prove to be a greater danger to international peace in the future.

Once again, it has been proven that by not having a good knowledge of the country's reality in terms of its customs and political form strongly rooted in the tribal component maintained in the old regime, the problem of achieving peace could become entrenched. This will mean that the search for solutions will require a lot of effort, to the extent that the same countries that intervened have on several occasions considered options for re-intervention.

Before NATO began bombing, Gaddafi had warned that Muslim extremism would explode if he was overthrown and that Libya would be fragmented. The Libyan case has once again shown that such interventions always end up turning into wars. It is clear, as we have seen in the first part of this analysis, that just war theory accepts war in defence of human rights. But the whole content of just war theory should be taken on board, and the diagnosis should not be limited to the assumption of the final conclusion. In other words, as has been highlighted in the first part of this analysis, in order to understand whether a war is just, aspects such as right intention, *jus in bello and* the need to scrupulously check that the qualifying conditions are met must be taken into consideration.

To say that the UN's good intentions in implementing R2P cannot be doubted. What happened to states when it came to intervening in accordance with the Resolution is another matter, the outcome of which was not satisfactory and has left Libya in a crisis and in worse political, economic and social conditions than under the previous regime.

Libya was seen to be of interest because of its oil wealth and Gaddafi was in the way of the international coalition, when just a few years ago the same coalition that overthrew him was praising him internationally.

As to whether R2P required regime change, there are doubts that Gaddafi would have chosen to take the path of democracy and would have allowed his exile. In any case, as already mentioned in the first part of this paper, the majority doctrine of just war theory understands that overthrowing the tyrant is not part of just causes, unless it is shown to be a *sine qua non* condition for stopping the massacre. Just war theory, on the other hand, does not argue that it is permissible to wage just wars against authoritarian political systems just because they are authoritarian.

Finally, there are innumerable proofs that the *jus in bello* has not been respected at any time during the conflict, as demonstrated by the assassination of Gaddafi and civilians, as denounced by the Catholic Church and various countries and international organisations.

While the initial purpose of the intervention was to protect civilians, from the outset the intervention was aimed at supporting the rebels and overthrowing Gaddafi, which was not covered by Resolution 1973 (2011). Political and strategic interests, particularly those of France, played a decisive role, and this may explain why Libya was involved and why Syria or Yemen was not.

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Spain's National Security Strategy 2021 and Nuclear Terrorism

Abstract

The fundamental purpose of this article is to offer a perspective of the incidence of nuclear terrorism in the National Security Strategy of Spain. For this, it is intended to make a historical review of the different defence directives, and of other documents with an intimate relationship with security, which have contemplated the phenomenon of nuclear terrorism and the need to offer a timely response to this threat. Although there is little known background on this type of terrorism, its relevance cannot be denied in the context of the instruments with which Spain has provided itself to maintain a security situation. In this way, it is intended to analyse the way in which this threat has been treated in the aforementioned Strategy over time until reaching the latest version of 2021, and its annual update included in the last Annual National Security Report of 2020.

Cite this article:

Introduction

The phenomenon of terrorism is not a new one, as it has a long and rich history, intermingling organisations of different types and inspirations, individual actors or lone wolves, and varied actions encompassing threats to security and order, propaganda and attacks, which at various times have been significant enough to influence the course of historical events. This is particularly significant in the 20th century, when terrorism experienced a violent upsurge and came to be seen as a phenomenon with global dimensions. An example of this is the attacks carried out by the terrorist organisation Al Qaeda in various US cities on 11 September 2001, using the hijacking of commercial airliners. This was an event that had the peculiarity of having an impact in several areas, thanks to the multiple consequences it eventually had, one of them being the hitherto barely contemplated possibility of a terrorist attack that could cause massive destruction. Precisely one of the most notable consequences of this attack was to set off alarm bells among those responsible for security in states and international organisations so that the strategies in place at the time to deal with the terrorist threat would be updated or new ones would be drawn up to provide a coherent response to this added dimension of the problem.

Moreover, if there is one defining characteristic of terrorism, it is the use of any means at its disposal to achieve a multidimensional moral, physical, economic, political and media impact. There is precisely one element whose use in the course of an attack is endowed with this power of impact, and that is the nuclear element.

Since its emergence in the aftermath of World War II, the nuclear element has been a crucially important factor whose impact has transcended the military sphere in which it was initially confined to other aspects of contemporary reality, such as the political, strategic, scientific, environmental, energy production, cultural and, lastly, terrorist activity. Everything related to the nuclear factor is invested with a distinctive aura that makes it easily accommodated in a preferential place in terms of political and media attention, which has the particularity of being precisely what terrorist organisations crave as an effective means to achieve their ends.

Spain is no stranger to this situation, and this has obliged governments at every historical moment to implement the necessary measures to maintain security, taking into account the possible threats to it that could arise from terrorism and, specifically, from the threat posed by the use of nuclear and radioactive materials in terrorist attacks. Precisely one of the main tools available to the Spanish government for maintaining the country's security in the aforementioned area is the National Security Strategy, the latest version of which corresponds to the year 2021, and which has undergone a notable evolution over time. The analysis of these developments forms the core of this research, in which the 2017 and the current 2021 Strategies are of particular relevance.

Nuclear terrorism

If there is one circumstance that characterises nuclear weapons from the beginning of the Cold War to the present day, it is their use as a deterrent by states that have succeeded in acquiring a nuclear arsenal. This is relevant not only because of the power granted by the mere possession of a nuclear arsenal, but also because of the knowledge of the rest of humanity that these weapons exist and that they can be used if necessary, as envisaged in the doctrines of use of nuclear states. This deterrent character, coupled with the immense destructive power associated with nuclear power, has not escaped the attention of those individuals and organisations bent on imposing their ideals by force, and has been a cause for concern in addition to the threat of terrorism by conventional means. Nuclear terrorism exists and is seen as a threat by states and international organisations, as evidenced by the adoption on 28 April 2004 of Resolution 1540 by the United Nations Security Council, which specifically mentioned weapons of mass destruction. It contained and detailed specific decisions on nuclear terrorism, such as the mandate to States to refrain from providing support to non-State actors seeking to develop nuclear weapons or their means of delivery, as well as to adopt domestic control measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, including the observance of existing international treaties in this field, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. In addition, it was intended to strengthen international cooperation in all areas necessary in this regard. The resolution also established a Security Council committee, known as the 1540 Committee, which was to oversee the adoption of the resolution's measures by states.

Also on nuclear terrorism, mention should be made of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted on 13 April 2005 by the United Nations General Assembly and entered into force on 7 July 2007, whose preamble expresses concern that terrorist attacks in all their forms were increasing around the world at the time, noting that "Acts of nuclear terrorism can have the gravest consequences and threaten international peace and security". Precisely Article 2 of this Convention specifies that the offence of nuclear terrorism is committed when radioactive material or a nuclear explosive or radiation dispersal or radiation-emitting device is unlawfully and intentionally possessed or manufactured or used with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury or substantial damage to property or the environment. It also covers the use of or damage to a nuclear installation in the event of the release of radioactive material or the risk thereof. Finally, blackmail, threats and participation in any of the above-mentioned actions also fall into this category.

At this point, it is necessary to explain the difference between nuclear and radioactive materials, as defined in the Spanish Nuclear Energy Act 25/1964 of 29 April 1964. Article 2(8) defines nuclear substances as follows:

(i)   nuclear fuels, other than natural uranium and depleted uranium, which alone or in combination with other substances can produce energy by a self-maintained process of nuclear fission outside a nuclear reactor.

(ii) radioactive products or radioactive waste.

Paragraph 2 of the same Article also defines radioactive material as "containing substances which emit ionising radiation".

That said, and as set out in the Convention, all the possible ways in which nuclear terrorism can manifest itself are defined, namely the use of a conventional nuclear weapon, the construction of an improvised nuclear device, the manufacture of a radiological dispersal device, the use of a radiation exposure device and the attack on a nuclear or radioactive facility in such a way as to release radiation into the surrounding environment.

With regard to the first option, the use of a nuclear weapon, it should be noted that

that only eight countries have proven nuclear arsenals, which are guarded by a wide range of security measures to prevent misuse, sabotage or theft of the weapons. These countries are the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China, recognised as nuclear states by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), plus India, Pakistan and North Korea, which have nuclear arsenals outside the law. The likelihood of a terrorist organisation gaining access to one of these facilities and managing to extract a weapon is remote under current circumstances. Even so, there may be some conditions that make it easier for terrorists to operate, the most important being the weakening or destruction of the state with the nuclear arsenal, as happened at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, or as could happen in Pakistan if instability in that country increases.

The second option, the manufacture of an improvised nuclear device, is also unlikely. While it is possible that a group of people with no prior knowledge of nuclear weapons could build one if they had the appropriate materials and funding, as the US Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) outlined in a 1977 report, there is a difficult hurdle to overcome, and that is obtaining the properly enriched uranium or plutonium that is essential for a nuclear explosion to take place. These materials cannot be legally acquired by private individuals and, like nuclear weapons, are held in maximum security.

The manufacture of a radiological dispersal device is an inexpensive and very accessible option for a terrorist organisation, as the design of such devices requires only the radioactive material and a means to disperse it, which can be an explosive. The wide diffusion of radioactive sources and their use in areas as diverse as medicine, agriculture, industry, construction and mining means that radioactive sources sometimes go astray, which can lead to them falling into the hands of terrorist organisations. This can be verified by consulting the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Illicit Trafficking and Incident Database (ITDB), created in 1995 to provide States with information on reported trafficking activities involving nuclear and radioactive elements. These activities fall into three groups, with Group I covering incidents related to security, or very likely to be related to trafficking or illegal uses, Group II covering incidents whose purpose is unknown, and Group III covering events that are not related to trafficking or illegal uses. The 2020 report on the ITDB contains a number of

interesting data, including the reporting of 189 incidents in 2019 and the total number of events reported from 1993 to 2019, which was 3686, of which 290 are in Group I, 1023 in Group II and 2373 in Group III. There is some documented history of threats to use a radiological dispersal device, the most notable of which was in Izmailovsky Park in Moscow on 23 November 1995, when a group of Chechen separatists placed a container with explosives and a large quantity of the radioactive isotope caesium-137, but the explosion did not actually take place.

The fourth option, the fabrication of a radiation exposure device, is the easiest to carry out, as it is only necessary to obtain the radioactive material and place it in the vicinity of the chosen target. The dangerousness of the radioactive source will depend on the type of radiation emitted, the most dangerous being gamma radiation, as it has a long range and penetrating power. There is also documented history of the use of a radiation exposure device in an attack, most notably that of a Chinese scientist named Gu Tianming, who was convicted in 2003 for having placed several samples of the radioactive isotope iridium-192 in the workplace of another scientist at a hospital in the city of Guangzhou, affecting a large number of people who were at the site.

As for the last of the options, the attack on a nuclear or radioactive facility, there are various possibilities for carrying it out, since aircraft can be used for this purpose, as in the case of 9/11, explosives placed inside the facility or an attack from the outside using mortars or grenade launchers. Nuclear power plants can be the most desirable targets for a terrorist organisation, which makes them highly protected, in addition to the robustness of their structures, which must contain the nuclear reactor and provide shielding against the radiation emitted inside. There are several precedents of attacks against nuclear power plants, such as the one that occurred on 27 April 1979 at the Surry nuclear power plant in the United States, in which two individuals took advantage of the access card to the facilities of one of them to sabotage 62 nuclear fuel rods. In addition to the nuclear power plants, there are other facilities related to nuclear fuel and other radioactive elements, such as the fuel assembly factories, of which there is one in Spain, at Juzbado, in the province of Salamanca, and the radioactive waste disposal facilities, of which Spain also has one at El Cabril, in the province of Cordoba, although this is dedicated to housing very low, low and intermediate level waste.

Genesis of the National Security Strategy

The current National Security Strategy is largely an heir to defence directives issued from 1980 to 2008, as well as being influenced by a variety of security and defence-related documents. The purpose of the defence directives was to set out the main objectives that needed to be achieved in order to ensure national defence, including in detail the lines of action deemed necessary to achieve these objectives. The frame of reference in which these directives were framed was that offered by the strategic scenario, which evolved from a situation dominated by the confrontation of blocs led by the United States and the Soviet Union during the 1980s and early 1990s to a situation

throughout this second decade characterised by a climate of détente between the two superpowers in which, nevertheless, there were still more limited conflicts and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction had not been halted, as expressed in the preamble to the 1996 National Defence Directive.

An important milestone in 2000 was the publication for the first time in Spain of the Defence White Paper, which offered the basic lines of defence policy framed, as in the case of the directives, by the strategic context of the time, the roles played by the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in this context and, finally, the actions carried out by Spain to successfully adapt to this situation. Chapter I of this publication, on the strategic scenario, already considered the panorama of risks, in which the need to consider the problem of terrorism in its international dimension appeared, adding that in order to achieve a security situation that would effectively protect society, it was necessary to take into account a broader concept in which the coordination of the elements available in this sense would play an important role. The White Paper also highlighted the presence of nuclear weapons proliferation, which it described as a serious factor of instability, stating that the control of dual-use technologies, both civilian and military, was vital in the fight against it.

The next document of interest is the publication of the 2003 Strategic Defence Review. This already brought national defence capabilities into line with the changes in the international strategic landscape following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, and further stated that "The threat of terrorism is coming to the fore, and the fight against it is being considered as a key element of the strategy of security and defence organisations". It also indicated that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction could constitute a serious threat to stability and that collective means of defence needed to be put in place to deal with them. Finally, and as a further threat to be taken into account, attacks and aggressions on the environment were mentioned, which, in the case of nuclear installations or nuclear-powered ships or nuclear weapons systems being involved, can be of great relevance in the context of security. As for risks, Annex B (sic), Risks and scenarios for security and defence, indicated that, apart from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Mediterranean area, smuggling of nuclear material or accidents in industrial facilities or constructions, such as nuclear ones, also constituted risks.

The 2004 National Defence Directive in particular already makes an explicit link between terrorism and nuclear power. The analysis of the strategic scenario at the time indicates that terrorist attacks in several countries highlighted the inability of traditional military superiority to ensure security and deter terrorist organisations from operating wherever they have the opportunity. This is also evident in the case of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorist organisations, which at the time was judged to be the most serious threat to global security.

The National Defence Directive issued in 2008 also identified international terrorism as a serious threat. It stressed that terrorism, organised crime and the proliferation

of weapons of mass destruction should be considered as the most important transnational threats to society. In addition, it was further stated that the possible combination of these three elements could have catastrophic consequences.

Its objectives were, firstly, to detect threats to national security, then to carry out an analysis of the possible risks and finally to draw up a catalogue of responses that also took into account the coordination between all the actors involved. One of the most serious security threats identified was the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the possibility of them falling into the hands of terrorist organisations. It was further noted that Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups were known to be pursuing the acquisition of nuclear and radioactive materials at this time, and that it was therefore necessary to pay due attention to their areas of operation. The importance of maintaining the security of so-called critical infrastructures, including nuclear power plants, was also noted, as set out in the National Critical Infrastructure Plan approved in 2007.

A new, short National Defence Directive was adopted in 2012. Weapons of mass destruction reappear as a global threat, along with the spread of fanatical groups and movements of various kinds. The inclusion of the need to carry out a review of the aforementioned Spanish Security Strategy is relevant, and the fruits of this review can be seen the following year.

Spain's 2013 National Security Strategy emerged as a revision of the 2011 strategy, motivated by the need to contemplate and adapt to the transformations that have occurred. Of particular note is chapter 3, on risks and threats to national security, section 2 of which is devoted to terrorism. It states that terrorism constitutes a threat to the security of citizens, putting at risk, inter alia, critical infrastructures, supplies and services. Paragraph 7, which deals with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and which is labelled as a serious threat to international peace and security, notes that the risk of terrorist groups getting hold of these weapons adds a new dimension to an already serious threat. Chapter 4 of the Strategy set out twelve priority areas for action, defining in each of them an objective to be achieved and the lines of action required to achieve it. In the sphere of action of the fight against terrorism, the objective was to neutralise this threat and reduce the vulnerability of society to its attacks, highlighting among the lines of action those relating to protection, with an increase in the levels of protection of sensitive targets, and those relating to prosecution, with the adoption of measures to prevent access to the materials necessary to carry out the attacks. In the area of non-proliferation of WMD, the designated objective was to prevent proliferation by preventing access to WMD materials by terrorists. The main lines of action proposed to achieve this objective, apart from the now traditional promotion of multilateralism, were the development and updating of national plans to prevent proliferation and mitigate risks in the nuclear, chemical and biological fields; the reinforcement of policies and practices for controlling exports of dual-use materials; the strengthening of measures to combat transfers of knowledge, technology,

goods and equipment; and, finally, the deepening of capabilities to prevent the threat of terrorist attacks with these materials.

2017 National Security Strategy.

In 2017, the need arose to review and update the previous strategy in order to adapt it to the inexorable passage of time and changes in the strategic scenario. As on previous occasions, this new strategy analysed the threats and challenges that it was considered necessary to confront in order to guarantee national security, and also made explicit the general objectives that should guide the state's action and the areas in which they are developed, each with its specific objective and the corresponding lines of action to achieve them.

Threats

Chapter 4 thus identified these threats and challenges, with jihadist terrorism prominently identified as one of the main problems facing the international community. The exposure to threats to which critical infrastructures could be subjected, which could compromise the provision of essential services, was also covered. Initially, jihadist terrorism was fully identified as one of these threats, and attacks on critical infrastructure were identified as one of its targets. Another threat identified was the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, with the possibility that this proliferation could be exploited by non-state actors being of particular concern. The wide availability of radioactive materials, which, as mentioned above, are used in various fields such as health, industry, agriculture and the environment, which makes them more likely to be accessed by criminal organisations, can be highlighted in relation to this threat.

Other threats were also identified as taking place in the so-called global common spaces, including cyberspace, where the possibility of cyber-attacks against critical infrastructures was envisaged. Precisely the next type of threats identified were those related to critical infrastructures, which could include those related to the nuclear industry.

Areas and lines of action

Chapter 5 of the Strategy focused on identifying and describing the five general objectives that were intended to guide state action in the specific area of security. In order to achieve these objectives, fifteen areas were developed, each of which was assigned a specific objective and a number of lines of action to achieve it. Among the proposed areas, the following can be chosen for the purpose of this research.

The "Fight against terrorism" included four lines of action: prevention, protection, prosecution and response preparedness. In terms of prevention, it is worth highlighting the strengthening of the mechanisms established in the fight against the financing of terrorism, with Spain's participation in various international initiatives in this respect. It also includes the strengthening of Spain's international contribution to the fight against terrorism in the organisations to which it belongs, especially NATO and the European Union, and in those initiatives of which it is a member. With regard to the action line on protection, two proposals are included. The first of these aims to strengthen national counter-terrorism capabilities and the cooperation and coordination of counter-terrorism efforts between the various agencies involved at the national level. The second of the proposals in this line of action concerns cooperation with the partner countries most affected by terrorism and, particularly closely, with the European Union, and adopting measures to improve border control. One of the actions in which Spain collaborates is the European Union's network of CBRN Centres of Excellence, which emerged thanks to the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument in 2010, in which 62 countries from 8 regions around the world participate, and which aims to address CBRN threats of external origin by promoting cooperation with relevant actors and supporting countries that have more limited defence capabilities in this area. With regard to the line of action relating to prosecution, which envisaged strengthening the legal instruments in the fight against terrorism, mention can be made of the 2015 reform of the Criminal Code, which replaced the 1995 version, and in which the offences relating to the illicit use of nuclear and radioactive materials are clearly defined, both in Chapter V, On the possession, trafficking and storage of weapons, munitions or explosives, in Articles 566 and 567, and in Chapter VII, On terrorist organisations and groups and terrorist offences, in Article 574, paragraph 2 and paragraph 3. Finally, the response preparedness action line includes the formation of a comprehensive coping structure called the National Security System, with the National Security Council at its apex.

In the area of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the following lines of action can be highlighted. The first of these refers to the promotion of multilateralism and the fulfilment of international commitments in which Spain participates. These include the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Proliferation Security Initiative. With regard to the first of these, it can be said that it was formalised in 2006 and is currently made up of 89 countries and six international organisations, its purpose being to strengthen international capabilities focused on the prevention and detection of activities related to nuclear terrorism and the response in the event of terrorist actions using nuclear and radioactive means. The second initiative was established in 2003 as a multinational response to the challenge posed by the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and involves more than 100 nations. The second line of action was to secure nuclear and radioactive materials and facilities. In this respect, mention should be made of the approval of Royal Decree 1308/2011, of 26th September, on the physical protection of nuclear facilities and materials and radioactive sources, modified by Royal Decree 1086/2015, of 4th December, which includes the measures required for the security of nuclear power plants and other

related facilities and defines the competences of the different actors in the nuclear field, such as the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, the Ministry of the Interior and the Nuclear Safety Council. The Nuclear Safety Council's Security Guide 8.1 "Physical protection of nuclear material in nuclear and radioactive facilities" and Royal Decree 451/2020 of 10 March on the control and recovery of orphan radioactive sources can also be cited in this respect. As for the third line of action, it referred to the fight against illicit trafficking in WMD-related materials and technologies and their means of delivery. The main effort is to strengthen national and international policies and practices implemented for the control of international trade in dual-use materials, as well as those in place to oppose illicit transfers of knowledge, technology, goods and related equipment. Spain actively participates in various initiatives aimed at achieving these goals, such as the Zangger Committee, whose purpose is to prevent the transfer of materials that could be involved in acts related to nuclear proliferation. Other initiatives of a similar scope are the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which aims to prevent any type of material produced by partner countries from being transferred for purposes related to nuclear proliferation; the Missile Technology Control Regime, involved in the control of unmanned systems capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction; and the Wassenaar Arrangement, instituted with the aim of contributing to transparency in transactions involving conventional arms and dual-use materials and technologies, and with the objective of preventing their acquisition by terrorist organisations. With regard to the fourth line of action, its purpose was to promote international cooperation in the fight against trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials in order to improve the security of the international logistical chain and border control. One of the most noteworthy initiatives in this section is the protocol based on the Megaports Initiative, applied since 2010 in the event of the detection of an inadvertent movement or illicit trafficking of radioactive material in ports of general interest, which defines the functions and procedures for action of the organisations involved.

The next line of action was to strengthen national non-proliferation through compliance with existing regulations. In this respect, mention may be made of the functions of the Nuclear Safety Council, responsible for regulating the operation of the nuclear and radioactive facilities existing in Spain, which, as could not be otherwise, includes those aspects most closely related to nuclear security, and which must also adapt the national legislation to international standards, mainly those issued by the IAEA or the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM).

To conclude this analysis of the 2017 National Security Strategy, mention can be made of four more areas where the impact of nuclear terrorism was taken into account. These were the Protection of Critical Infrastructures, in which mention can be made of Royal Decree 704/2011, of 20 May, approving the Regulation on the protection of critical infrastructures and the National Commission for the Protection of Critical Infrastructures, responsible for the approval of sectoral strategic plans, one of which is precisely that corresponding to the nuclear industry, which was also one of the first to receive the corresponding approval; Energy Security, precisely in relation to nuclear facilities due to their attractiveness as targets for terrorist organisations and taking

into account the consequences that their service may have for other infrastructures and for the population; and finally the Protection against Emergencies and Disasters and Environmental Preservation, all motivated by the impact that the incidents in which they are involved could have on them; the Protection of the Environment and the Protection of the Environment, all of this motivated by the impact that incidents in which they are involved could have on the environment, and the protection of the environment.

Annual National Security Report 2020.

This report, the eighth since they began to be drafted in 2013 and the last one available, aims to describe the national security environment since the publication of the previous report, analysing the challenges that Spain must face to guarantee its security and the responses that have been implemented to achieve the desired security situation, always taking into account the framework offered by the Strategy. This report takes a look at the fifteen areas identified in the 2017 National Security Strategy and highlights the challenges to be taken up and the main achievements in each of them. It is to be expected that the publication of the Annual National Security Report 2021 will follow the structure defined in the new 2021 Strategy. It is worth noting, however, that nuclear terrorism appears in several areas of the latest report, as detailed below.

In the field of terrorism, the new developments in the report are presented in the two sections on challenges and achievements. The first section only mentions the challenge of increasing the level of security in relation to goods in transit through the territory of the European Union, in which it is necessary to take special account of dual-use goods and radioactive products, among others. In terms of achievements, the importance of the 2019 National Counter-Terrorism Strategy is cited, with the rest of this section focusing on achievements against the jihadist threat.

Interestingly, previous security reports did cover various facts relating to nuclear terrorism. Thus, the 2018 report indicated in the section on achievements and protection that the Armed Forces had developed the COTA MALLA contingency plan in support of the State Security Forces and Corps as responsible for the prevention and anti-terrorist protection of Critical Infrastructures. Also in the 2019 report, mention was made in the same concept of the review carried out by the Armed Forces of their Action Plan, the aim of which is to enable them to act as support in the protection of critical infrastructures. This last report adds in the same section that since 2011, European customs have been carrying out security risk analysis and protection of European Union citizens with regard to goods transported through European territory, with special attention to dual-use goods and radioactive products, among others. Also in the section on response preparedness, achievements are noted in the 2018 report, such as the collaboration of the State Security Forces and Corps in various national and international forums and working groups related to CBRN materials and in the preparation of a guide for first responders in incidents of the same nature, and in the

2019 report where this participation in forums and meetings on CBRN materials is highlighted.

In the area of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, a number of milestones can be noted, both in terms of challenges and achievements. Firstly, with regard to the challenges, they need to improve legislation to combat illicit trafficking in dual-use material more effectively and to improve mechanisms for the prevention, detection and control of financial flows related to proliferation. In addition, special mention is made of the need to ensure the security of nuclear, radioactive, chemical and biological materials and facilities by promoting a culture of security and awareness in the areas where these materials are used. Related to this aspect is the need to amend and update the aforementioned Royal Decree 1308/2011.

In terms of achievements, the section on effective multilateralism and strengthening the international non-proliferation regime highlights Spain's active participation in the international initiatives related to non-proliferation already described in the previous analysis of the Strategy. In the section on international cooperation in the fight against illicit trafficking, it is worth highlighting the participation of the Tax Agency's Customs and Excise Department in, among others, three meetings held within the European Union's Working Group on Detection Technologies for the exchange of information and the preparation of documents on the use of detection technologies. Mention is also made of the adoption of various regulations whose fundamental purpose is linked to non-proliferation. In the section on guaranteeing the security of nuclear facilities and materials and radioactive sources, compliance with the requirements contained in Royal Decree 1308/2011 is confirmed through the coordination of the Secretariat of State for Security and with the collaboration of the Nuclear Safety Council in the assessment of the Physical Protection Plans of the related facilities and transport. Strict compliance with all other national and international regulations in this regard should also be noted.

With regard to the area reserved for the protection of critical infrastructures, and in terms of the challenges, the existence of a threat with a double aspect, physical and logical, is highlighted. In this regard, it should be noted that during 2020, 13,023 cybersecurity incidents reported by the Essential Services Operators to the State Secretariat for Security were managed, of which only 0.17 related to the nuclear industry. In terms of achievements, work is well underway to amend Law 8/2011 and Royal Decree 704/2011, the Regulation on Critical Infrastructure Protection, with the future implementation of new supervision and coordination systems. Also noteworthy is the deployment of the Civil Guard Response Unit in various nuclear power plants which, between March and June 2020, was supported by units of the Armed Forces.

In the area of Emergency and Disaster Protection, the Civil Guard held an International Workshop on the development of a National Framework for Nuclear Security Event Response Management, with the participation of several countries, in March

2020, as well as the approval of Royal Decree 586/2020, of 23 June, on mandatory information in the event of a nuclear or radiological emergency.

2021 National Security Strategy.

The 2017 Strategy was a milestone in terms of contemplating the nuclear factor in Spain's national security, as its presence was notable, as described in the previous section. In December 2021, this strategy was repealed, following the adoption of the 2021 National Security Strategy. This new strategy emerges in a context strongly dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic that has been affecting Spain and the rest of the world since the beginning of 2020. This is reflected in the introduction to the document, which states that under normal conditions the new strategy would have been adopted by 2022. It also points to the increased use of hybrid strategies by both state and non-state actors "... as a tool to put pressure on democratic governments ...". Despite these root causes for redrafting, it is also possible to find several references to the influence of nuclear terrorism and its involvement in the maintenance of national security, which is a clear exponent of the relevance of this threat in the current context.

The new Strategy is divided into five chapters and includes some new features compared to the previous editions discussed in this article. The first chapter, entitled "Global Security and Vectors of Transformation", describes the international security context, while outlining the main dynamics of transformation, which are defined by the vectors of the geopolitical context, the socio-economic environment, the digital transformation and, finally, the ecological transition. Of these vectors, the one relating to the geopolitical context is of great interest to this research, in which it is worth noting the statement made regarding the generalised deterioration of international relations in all their facets, which is ultimately favouring the emergence of a new type of multilateralism, of a hybrid nature and in which emerging and non-state actors play an important role. It also mentions with particular emphasis the increased use of hybrid strategies employing conventional means and others related to disinformation campaigns, cyber-attacks, espionage, social subversion, sabotage, economic coercion or the asymmetric use of military means, all with the aim of destabilising or exerting political, social or economic coercion. Finally, mention is also made of the possibility that Afghanistan, once the withdrawal of multinational forces is completed, could become a haven for jihadist terrorist organisations.

Risks and threats

The analysis of risks and threats to national security can be found in chapter 3. This is a major departure from previous strategies, as these risks and threats are conceptualised as dynamic, interrelated and subject to change, with technology and the hybrid strategies mentioned above playing a decisive role.

Among these risks and threats, are the section on "Terrorism and violent radicalisation", which mentions the different means used by terrorist organisations, and is significantly relevant to this study. "Threats to critical infrastructures", in which both physical and digital aspects are also of increasing importance, as are "Emergencies and Disasters", a section which considers both natural causes and those deriving from human action – both accidental and intentional. Nuclear and radiological risks are mentioned in relation to "Aerospace vulnerability", with the possibility of using drones to interfere in operations or even to attack critical infrastructures, and that relating to "Organised crime and serious crime", since, as stated in this same section, "the convergence between terrorist groups and organised crime networks is on the rise. The increasingly decentralised organisational patterns of these criminal actors favour their cooperation and facilitate terrorist financing"; and finally the "Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction", where it is necessary to take into account the possible diversion and smuggling of dual-use materials that can be used in the commission of terrorist attacks.

Integrated strategic planning

This is found in chapter 4 and bases the maintenance of the desirable security situation on the establishment of three objectives: progress in the crisis management model, the promotion of the security dimension of technological capabilities and strategic sectors, and the development of Spain's capacity for prevention, deterrence, detection and response to hybrid strategies. In addition, integrated planning for National Security Policy is being developed, which includes three strategic axes: protect, promote and participate.

With regard to the first of these axes, dedicated to protection, various sections are defined in which it is possible to find references to nuclear terrorism. The first section, on deterrence and defence, refers to the maintenance of adequate, technologically advanced military capabilities, including CBRN defence. In this regard, the Ministry of Defence has a wide range of resources at its disposal, including the Military School of NBC Defence, the "VALENCIA" NBC Regiment No. 1, other NBC defence units in various brigades of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, the Military Emergency Unit and the National Institute of Aerospace Technology.

The second section of this axis deals with the fight against terrorism and violent radicalisation, in which the Security Forces and Corps, which also have capabilities to deal with the terrorist threat with nuclear and radioactive materials, such as the Explosive Ordnance Disposal and CBRN Defence Service and the Response Unit deployed in various nuclear power plants of the Guardia Civil, and the TEDAX-NRBQ Unit of the National Police Corps, to name but a few, play a prominent role. The fight against terrorism is structured in four pillars, which are to prevent, protect, prosecute and prepare the response, as set out in the 2019 National Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The purpose of this Strategy is to serve as "…a unified and updated reference framework

to prevent, combat and counter the threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism against Spanish citizens and interests, and in its development nuclear terrorism is prominently contemplated. Thus, in the pillar dedicated to protection and within the internal sphere, various strategic lines are proposed, two of which are related to nuclear terrorism. These are 3, which considers it necessary to have adequate knowledge of information on strategic infrastructures, and 5, which aims to harmonise and coordinate the way in which the National Critical Infrastructure Protection Plan is activated in the face of the terrorist threat. In the external sphere, strategic line 6 highlights the need to promote cooperation in security, control and non-proliferation of international trafficking of CBRN materials. Also in the pillar dedicated to prosecution is the internal area with strategic line 16 on the need to strengthen control measures and early warning systems in relation to CBRN materials, in the external area line 9 with the proposal to improve the exchange of information on CBRN materials and, in the area of global common spaces, the importance of strengthening the control of CBRN materials is highlighted. In the last of the pillars on response preparedness, one can cite, in the internal sphere, strategic line 6, which aims to promote contingency plans for terrorist attacks using CBRN means. It is also worth highlighting the importance given to the fight against the financing of terrorism, with Spain participating in various international initiatives in this respect. Mention may be made in this regard of the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, whose preamble notes that the financing of terrorism is a matter of concern to the international community, because the number and seriousness of acts related to international terrorism depend to a large extent on the funds available to terrorist organisations and because the legal instruments previously in force did not address this circumstance. There have also been initiatives in the European area in which Spain participates, such as Directive (EU) 2015/849, on the prevention of the use of the financial system for money laundering or terrorist financing, and the 2016 Action Plan to Enhance the Fight against Terrorist Financing, which states that "Terrorists and terrorist organisations need funding... Cutting off their sources of funding, making it more difficult for them to evade detection when using these funds and making the best possible use of any information from the funding process are measures that can ... contribute greatly to the fight against terrorism".

Finally, the third section within this axis is the one dealing with action in crisis situations, where the importance of protecting critical infrastructures should be highlighted.

The second axis, dedicated to the promotion of prosperity and well-being of citizens, is also divided into several sections. The first of these refers to the security of global common spaces, which include cyberspace, maritime space, airspace and outer space, and on which the various initiatives implemented to prevent attacks on critical infrastructure and to combat trafficking in dual-use or radioactive materials and technologies have already been described.

Another section of interest is the fight against organised crime and serious crime, where the promotion of prevention, research and analysis of the links between or-

ganised crime and terrorism is important. In this regard, mention can be made of the approval of the National Strategy against Organised Crime and Serious Crime 2019-2023, which, in the section corresponding to illicit arms trafficking, establishes various lines of action, one of which focuses on "Improving the development of intelligence for the assessment of the threat of illicit trafficking in firearms, their parts and ammunition, with special emphasis on links with other criminal areas, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, CBRN and diversion from legal trade".

The third of the axes refers to Spain's participation in the preservation of international peace and security and the defence of its strategic interests. The first section of this axis is called Enhanced Multilateralism, and in this area we can highlight various Spanish contributions and initiatives, such as support for the United Nations International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy of 8 September 2006, the IAEA Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, adopted on 26 October 1979 and initially entering into force on 8 February 1987, and the establishment of the Centre of Excellence against Improvised Explosive Devices in 2010 in the Madrid town of Hoyo de Manzanares, to name but a few.

The National Security System and crisis management

Chapter 5 discusses the importance of the National Security System, in which the leading role is taken by the National Security Council. The Council has a number of specialised committees as supporting bodies, including the Situation Committee, the Specialised Committee on Immigration, the National Maritime Security Council, the National Cybersecurity Council, the Energy Security Committee, the Non-Proliferation Committee, the National Aerospace Security Council and, finally, the Specialised Committee on Counter-Terrorism, created in 2020. Of particular importance to the fight against nuclear terrorism are, of course, the Non-Proliferation and Counter-Terrorism Committees.

Conclusions

Following this analysis of successive national security strategies and the 2020 Annual National Security Report, a number of observations can be made regarding the view of nuclear terrorism as a tangible threat to the maintenance of security. Firstly, there is no doubt that this element, which featured prominently throughout the 2017 Strategy, has been somewhat blurred in the current Strategy, being overshadowed by the prominence given to other types of risks and threats. Even so, its presence is mainly felt in the sections dedicated to terrorism, organised crime and critical infrastructure protection. In any case, the importance of this factor, which has led to the approval of the aforementioned International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, as well as its appearance in other relevant initiatives such as the

IAEA Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the Global Initiative against Nuclear Terrorism, the European Union Action Plan on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Security and the holding of the Nuclear Security Summits, has already been explained in the introduction to this research. Spain, as a major player on the international stage, consequently views nuclear terrorism as a credible threat to its security, and this is reflected in the current National Security Strategy, thus giving it the importance it deserves as a factor capable of causing great havoc should it succeed in carrying out its actions. The active involvement of the Department of Homeland Security, the State Security Forces, the Armed Forces and other public and private actors testifies to this importance and the credibility of the threat. It is also necessary to highlight the cross-cutting nature of this threat, as it appears in various sections of past and present strategies, which requires an additional effort of coordination between all parties involved in achieving and maintaining a safe and secure situation in which society can function free from danger.

With respect to the latest Annual National Security Report, it can be certified that it covers what was set out in the 2017 Strategy with respect to nuclear terrorism, although it lacks some emphasis on some issues, which are detailed below: With regard to the terrorist threat, the discussion in this area is almost exclusively limited to jihadist terrorism, with a brief mention of nuclear terrorism in the section on challenges and no reference to achievements. It seems that some activities developed in this sense should have had their place here so that, at least, the existence of an effort in the fight against this type of terrorism would be manifested. Nor is there any mention of possible challenges or achievements in the field of energy security, in which the nuclear industry is so important as a fundamental part of the current energy mix, especially at a time when a major effort is being made to limit the consumption of fossil fuels as a further element in the fight against climate change. Also missing is any reference to the nuclear industry in the area of Environmental Preservation, both in terms of its low carbon dioxide emissions and the problem of waste management, especially in view of the problems relating to the future Centralised Temporary Storage Facility for radioactive waste, the closure of the Santa María de Garoña nuclear power plant and the recent refusal to grant a concession for uranium mining in the province of Salamanca. These are, in short, issues that could have been better addressed in this report but have been inexplicably sidelined. It is to be hoped that the next Annual National Security Report to be published in the course of 2022 will be adapted to the new structure of the Strategy and that it will also address the threat posed by nuclear terrorism with the prominence it deserves.

As stated above, the threat posed by this particular type of terrorism is real and is considered to be so by countries and international organisations. Spain shares this position in a resolute manner and has consistently been obliged to take the appropriate measures to guarantee its security, as evidenced by the importance given to nuclear terrorism in the defence directives and the other documents analysed in this research. The current picture, set out in the current 2021 Strategy and in the latest annual report, highlights this issue, showing the importance of nuclear terrorism issues for the

maintenance of national security. To conclude, it should be pointed out that all the efforts made to combat this threat will be sterile if international cooperation and the involvement of all actors with a role to play in this area are not fostered, which is why multilateralism, on which Spain focuses a large part of its efforts, should continue to be the fundamental tool on which the work to be carried out is based.

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A Conflicting Interdependence: the Gazprom - Europe Relationship

Abstract

Since its emergence, the relationship between Gazprom and Europe has proved a remarkable resilience that is not usually highlighted. The geopolitical standoffs that Brussels and Moscow have starred in on many occasions have had a limited impact on the volume of shipments. These have maintained a steady upward trend until 2018. Western sanctions have not targeted Gazprom directly and the company has been considerably less affected than others have. Both parties have understood that their mutual dependence compels them to reach understandings despite traditional major disagreements regarding the duration, model or clauses of contracts. Nevertheless, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and, especially, the high gas prices that Europe has had to face this winter, have led to a mutual loss of confidence and a desire to initiate a process of decoupling. Russia begins to look to Asia as an alternative market given the probable loss of European clients, and Europe, in the midst of a crucial debate on its energy security, now considers a need to diversify its gas sources. Both will encounter limitations.

Keywords

Conflict, energy, Europe, gas, Gazprom, Russia.

The current situation in the context of mutual dependence

On 3 March 2022, European Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson told the European Parliament's Industry Committee that the invasion of Ukraine had made clear the need not allow any outside actors to have the power to destabilise European markets or influence our energy choices, a clear reference to Russia[1]. The same evening, the International Energy Agency (IEA) published a 10-point roadmap to reduce the EU's dependence on Russian gas[2]. Just a few weeks later, these objectives were reflected in press releases following meetings at the highest level, such as the informal Versailles summit or the European Council of 24-25 March.

Reducing dependence on Russian gas is a recurrent debate on the EU agenda, now accelerated by the invasion of Ukraine. It has been tackled for years with relatively little success: Russian gas imports grew from 141 US billion cubic metres (bcm) (1 billion cubic metres) in 2009 to 199 bcm in 2019, including a peak above 200 bcm in 2018[3]. Then came COVID-19, which has altered and continues to alter supply-demand relations in the energy market, and, in recent months, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which has highlighted the central role of energy in foreign and security policy and brought the issue back to the centre of EU policy.

Based on 2020 data, Europe consumes 541 bcm of gas, of which 218 bcm is produced domestically[4]. A further 114.8 bcm is imported in the form of liquefied natural gas (LNG), of which 17.2 bcm comes from Russia, and the remaining 211.3 bcm by pipeline. Of the latter, 167.7 bcm originated in Russia[5]. This means that around 34% of the gas consumed in Europe in 2020 (around 185 bcm) originated in the Russian Federation, with 90% of this being pipeline-chartered. The instrument through which Moscow channels its pipeline exports is the state-owned Gazprom, which has held a *de facto* monopoly over gas exports since its incorporation in 1993, when it emerged from the ashes of the former Soviet Ministry for the Gas Industry. Since 2006, it has

1 European Commission. (2022). Remarks of Kadri Simson as part of the Industry Committee of the European Parliament on the energy situation in Europe. 03/03/2022. Taken from European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_22_1525

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3 Aslund, A., Fisher, S. (2020). New challenges and dwindling returns for Russia's national champions, Gazprom and Rosneft. Atlantic Council. P. 4. Taken from: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/new-challenges-and-dwindling-returns-for-russias-national-champions-gazprom-and-rosneft/

4 BP. (2022). Statistical Review of World Energy 2021. Taken from BP, British Petroleum. Pp. 36-38. https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2021-full-report.pdf

5 Ibid., pp. 44-45.

done so under a federal law that protects its position as the only entity entitled to export through the Russian pipeline network. Gazprom, like Rosneft in the oil sector, represents a trend of state control over certain strategic raw materials (resource nationalism or energy nationalism), such as hydrocarbons, which spread globally in the 1990s. It is also observed in other geographies, such as Algeria and, above all, Latin America (Venezuela, Bolivia and Argentina).

This need for Russian gas has traditionally been one of the continent's Achilles' heels. However, a look at Gazprom's figures shows that the dependence is mutual: in 2020, over 90% of the company's total exports, which amounted to some 180 bcm[6], went to Europe. Moreover, Europe is the only profitable market for Gazprom: in Russia, Gazprom is forced by the government to sell its gas at very low prices (in return, it is guaranteed a monopoly on pipeline exports), and in Asia, shipment volumes are still very low and dividends will take years to compensate for the relatively recent high initial investment. Its presence in the former Soviet republics is also limited, with export volumes barely exceeding 30 bcm in 2020, almost all of which went to Belarus and Ukraine, also located in Europe[7]. In fact, the Centre for Strategic Studies in The Hague points out that Russia's dependence on Europe as a market for its gas is greater than Europe's dependence on Russia as a gas producer[8]. Gazprom, the largest contributor to Russia's public coffers, would be unviable today without its European customers.

The relationship between Gazprom and the European peninsula must be understood within this framework of mutual dependence that has made it one of the great stabilising forces in Eurasian politics in recent decades. It has been a close, relatively stable relationship and, with hindsight, oblivious to the diplomatic ups and downs between Moscow and the West: neither the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union, nor the two NATO interventions in the former Yugoslavia put a brake on the continued growth of Gazprom's presence in Europe. Between 1985 and 1995, exports increased from 69.4 bcm to 117.4 bcm, and in the five years up to the turn of the century, they grew to 129 bcm[9]. This has continued to the present day, with occasional episodes of disruption when Russia has sought to take advantage of this mutual dependence and put pressure on Europe in various domains, most notably on issues relating to Ukraine in 2014 and 2015. From these acts, and the delib-

6 GAZPROM. (2021). Growth at Scale: Gazprom Annual Review 2020. Taken from Gazprom. P. I. https://www.gazprom.com/f/posts/13/041777/gazprom-annual-report-2020-en.pdf.

Information Note: Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, links to documents from Gazprom or other Russian authorities may not be operational.

7 Ibid., p. 125.

8 Van den Beukel, J., Van Geuns, L. (January 2021). Russia's Unsustainable Business Model: Going All In on Oil and Gas. The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS). P. 18. Taken from: https://hcss.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Russias-Unsustainable-Business-Model.pdf

9 Stern, J. (n.d.). Natural Gas in Europe – The Importance of Russia. Centrex. P. 13. Taken from: http://www.centrex.at/en/files/study_stern_e.pdf

erate draining of European reserves in the months leading up to the winter of 2022, as mentioned below, stems the current European distrust of Gazprom. Disruptions by way of blackmail, as they are difficult to bear in any energy relationship, have been a tool of restricted use, limited to situations where Russia understood that vital interests were at stake and with a very limited impact on Europe as a whole. They have not interrupted the upward trend in shipments over the years. Fears that Russia would cut off gas supplies abruptly and on a large scale did not materialise in 2014. As of 1 June 2022, neither have they done so after this year's invasion, although interruptions of supply to individual countries (Poland or Finland) can be observed, illustrating the exceptional nature of the current tensions.

However, during these last decades of increasing estrangement between the West and Russia, the energy link has only grown to reach the highs of 2018. Over the decades, gas has remained an inescapable component of Europe's particular "ostpolitik", if it can be called such. The timing of the arrival of the first Russian gas shipments to Europe provides another illustration of the pragmatism that has dominated the relationship. They went to Austria back in 1968, only months after the Soviet tanks rolled into Prague. However, Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine seems to have accelerated Europe's desire to end a marriage in which it is not comfortable. Nikos Tsafos, one of Washington's leading analysts on energy issues, speaks of an inevitable divorce[10]. The other side of interdependence between actors is beginning to emerge, one that generates conflict and instability rather than an incentive to mitigate escalation.

Commissioner Simson's statements and the action points set out by the IEA represent Brussels' dissatisfaction. The proposed courses of action have been greeted with enthusiasm by leading analysts[11], who see Europe finally deciding to reduce its vulnerability to one of the Kremlin's most potentially effective geopolitical weapons. Others are more sceptical. Days after its publication, Energy Intelligence (a US group) published a document in which the following can be read: "Any move to cut off or severely restrict Russian gas supplies, or to push Russia to turn off the tap, should be considered only with a clear understanding that there is no natural gas alternative for Europe" (own translation)[12]. A similar line is taken by the investment bank Naxitis, which in a study on the economic impact of the invasion of Ukraine states that "Russia's natural gas exports to Europe cannot be replaced immediately" (own translation)[13].

10 Tsafos, N. (2022). A Europe-Russia Energy Divorce Begins. Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS). 1/3/2022. Taken from: https://www.csis.org/analysis/europe-russia-energy-divorce-begins

11 Gordon, N. (2022). Three Reasons The EU's Shift Away From Russian Gas Could Be Catalytic. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 10/3/2022. Taken from: https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/03/10/three-reasons-eu-s-shift-away-from-russian-gas-could-be-catalytic-pub-86602

12 Miller, S. (2022). LNG Can't Replace Russian Gas. Energy Intelligence. 7/3/2022. Taken from: https://www.energyintel.com/0000017f-637f-d86c-a3ff-6b7fd42b0000

13 Natixis. (2022). Ukraine Crisis Impact. 25/2/2022. Taken from Natixis. P. 9. https://home.cib.natixis.com/api-website-feature/files/download/12209/cross-expertise_research_ukraine_en_fevrier_2022_final_draft.pdf

This scenario is the starting point for this analysis, which, while not intended to settle the feasibility of energy alternatives to Russian gas, seeks to broaden the scope and provide context to the current debate around a likely energy decoupling between Europe and Gazprom.

The future of Natural Gas: conflicting views

The current situation is not the most appropriate time to analyse the future of natural gas. The world is still far from determining what role it will play both in the energy transition and in a future with decarbonised economies. It is also unclear how fast this metamorphosis will take place in different geographies across the globe. We can group the prevailing views on the future role of gas into two main blocs and, allowing ourselves a simplification, personify them in the positions of the IEA, an agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), on the one hand, and the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF), under Russian leadership, on the other.

The countries that make up the latter made their vision clear with a joint statement on 22 February, in which they commit to "promote natural gas as an abundant, affordable, clean and reliable energy source and fuel of choice to meet the world's growing energy needs, and to address climate change" (own translation)[14]. Gas is seen as a fuel with a space in the future energy matrix, given its potential to replace more polluting fuels (oil and coal), and its role as an indispensable complement to renewables in the electricity sector. For its part, the IEA emphases climate urgencies and the need to reduce the weight of hydrocarbons in future world energy matrices. In May 2021, it published a "Roadmap for the global energy sector", in which it states that there is no need to approve more hydrocarbon projects in the future[15].

For the IEA, the GEFC is a lobby with obvious interests in maintaining the privileged position of gas in energy markets. For the GECF, the IEA is an EU think tank with no political responsibilities to make realistic calculations. Neither of them is wrong, and this is likely to be the main "gas debate" in the coming decades, but not the only one.

The COVID-19 pandemic has re-launched a struggle that has been years in the making, the so-called gas-to-gas competition, in which LNG seeks to gain market

14 Gas Exporting Countries Forum. (2022). 6th GECF Summit: The Doha Declaration – Natural Gas: Shaping the Energy Future. 22/02/2022. Taken from Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF): https://www.gecf.org/events/6th-gecf-summit-the-doha-declaration--natural-gas-shaping-the-energy-future

15 IEA. (2021). Net Zero by 2050: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector. Taken from IEA, International Energy Agency. P. 21. https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/deebef5d-0c34-4539-9d0c-10b13d840027/NetZeroby2050-ARoadmapfortheGlobalEnergySector_CORR.pdf

share over pipelines. Europe will be where this competition takes place. Other markets, especially in Asia, still have room for growth in the consumption of both goods. This is not the case in Europe: gas demand is forecast to remain stable in the medium term[16], so an increase in LNG consumption should be to the detriment of pipeline shipments. This struggle has already passed a first milestone on the European continent. In January 2022, European imports of US gas (all LNG) exceeded the quantities imported from Russia via pipelines. This historic overtaking should be understood as temporary, far from being sustainable for long periods of time. It has been possible given the reduction of Russian shipments to the contractually stipulated minimum, and LNG infrastructure is far from being in place to move quantities of gas between the US and Europe similar to the amount Russia charters during "normal" periods.

The third major debate on gas models has been going on longer than the two previous ones. It dates back to the early days of the use of gas as a fuel and, to this day, still generates discord among its most important stakeholders. It deserves its own section.

Contractual design

The Groningen model versus the "Chicago school".

The development of the first gas fields in Europe in the 1960s, in Groningen, entailed a considerable investment that private stakeholders were only willing to take on after receiving guarantees from the Dutch government for the purchase of the gas produced during the following years. This quest to secure product placement and pricing in advance resulted in a medium- to long-term contractual model that has guided the development of the European gas market. It has made unmanageable factors, such as volatility in supply and demand, manageable, and has thus provided a cushion of stability for companies to undertake the massive investments required by the gas sector.

In addition, buyers began to introduce the idea of linking the price of gas to the price of oil products, especially fuel oil and diesel, in order to guarantee the competitiveness of gas against other hydrocarbons. When the gas trade relationship with the Soviet Union began years later, this was the model that was exported.

Different dynamics drove the growth of the sector in the United States. There, its development coincided with the expansion of the market ideals of the Chicago School, which advocated an exchange of goods based on supply and demand under which both consumer and seller could optimise their decisions thanks to the flexibility it provided. Long-term contracts, also in the hydrocarbon sector, were seen as a hindrance that distorted the optimal functioning of the market, especially when they

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16 IEA. (2021). World Energy Outlook 2021. Taken from IEA, International Energy Agency. P. 226. https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/4ed140c1-c3f3-4fd9-acae-789a4e14a23c/WorldEnergyOutlook2021.pdf

were dependent on the price of other commodities. This resulted in a model dominated by short-term or even "spot" contracts[17], which allowed for greater competitiveness at the cost of much less close and stable buyer-seller relationships.

In the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher's government was attracted by the dynamism generated by this framework and gradually began to replicate it in Europe. The UK's position as one of the continent's leading gas producers gave it considerable leverage and, over the years, it has managed to convince Brussels of the benefits of moving to a more liquid model. Today it is the Russians, led by Gazprom, who are the main proponents of the Groningen doctrine after decades of trading with their European neighbour under this umbrella of stability. Brussels is seeking to reduce the ties that this creates for it.

Current transition process: first manifestations of Europe's dissatisfaction with its gas relationship with Russia

Disagreements between Brussels and Moscow over the most appropriate contractual framework persist to this day. Gazprom says in its 2020 annual report that one of the group's priorities is to maintain long-term contracts as the basis for its exports[18]. On the contrary, the European Commission proposed in December 2021 to recommend to the Member States not to sign long-term contracts with a duration beyond 2049, demonstrating a change of position that it had already shown in previous years.

Due to the lack of transparency that usually surrounds these contracts, it is difficult to determine the exact point at which this transition to a more flexible market will take place. Estimates differ considerably. Reuters estimates that, in the LNG market, long-term contracts still account for over 70% globally, but around 50% in Europe[19]. For its part, Gazprom reports a similar proportion worldwide, but increases it to 70% on the European continent[20]. In addition, LNG, which accounts for all spot sales, still constitutes a minority share of the total gas market, so that the share of long-term contracts is even higher in the gas sector as a whole. The values in the range allow us to state that, despite the wishes of the European Commission, the reduction of long-

17 Spot market, where any asset is bought or sold with immediate delivery (or within a short period of time) and at the current market price.

18 GAZPROM. (2021). Growth at Scale: Gazprom Annual Review 2020. Taken from Gazprom. P. 123. https://www.gazprom.com/f/posts/13/041777/gazprom-annual-report-2020-en.pdf

19 Rashad, M. (2022). Explainer: Should Europe use more long-term LNG contracts? Reuters. 7/2/2022. Taken from: https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/should-europe-use-more-long-term-lng-contracts-2022-02-07/

20 Komlev, S. (2021). Evolution of Russian Gas Supply to Europe: Contracts and Prices. Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation (MINERGO). 23/4/2021. P. 6. Taken from MINERGO: https://minenergo.gov.ru/system/download/14646/158148

term contracts is still at an embryonic stage. In fact, Gazprom notes that the percentage of sales made under these contracts has grown in recent years[21].

In addition to this limited transition to spot purchases, the mechanism used by the EU to move towards a more flexible, supply- and demand-driven model for gas has been the reduction of contracts linked to oil derivatives. In 2005, three out of four existing contracts between Member States and Gazprom included such a link. In 2019, that proportion was less than one in four[22]. Now, the EU itself and many of its Member States prefer a link to the price set by different gas indices or hubs. This is another element imported from the US, made possible by the existence of a spot market, small though it still is, which constantly updates gas prices according to supply and demand, similar to stock exchanges. Europe's rationale for changing the link is simple: by not reflecting fundamental gas supply and demand dynamics, contracts linked to the price of oil derivatives prevent European consumers from taking advantage of periods of abundant supply. This problem became particularly apparent after the shale gas revolution during the first decade of the 20th century. The development in the US of new drilling techniques (fracking), as well as new extraction technology that allowed gas trapped in sedimentary formations to be extracted, significantly increased US production (from 489 bcm in 2005 to 740 bcm in 2015[23]) and, consequently, global production. US gas prices fell to their lowest level since the 1970s crisis. Europe was not able to take advantage of this injection of supply into the global market and, in the years leading up to 2010, saw natural gas prices rise by almost 50%, reaching values six times higher than those in the US, even though both started from very similar levels in 2008[24]. Moreover, unconventional shale gas extraction remains a process that generates considerable opposition due to its high environmental impact. Explorations were initially carried out in Europe, raising expectations that have never materialised. Nowadays, European governments remain reluctant to bear the environmental cost of using their shale gas reserves and many have banned fracking, including Spain.

On the contrary, in periods such as the current one of growing demand and relative shortage of gas supply, the link to oil derivatives acts as the main regulating element for upward gas price fluctuations. The IEA says that Member States will pay around 27 billion euros more in 2021 than if they had kept the old link model[25]. If the change had already taken place across all contracts, the cost overrun would have been even higher.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., p. 8.

23 BP. (2022). Statistical Review of World Energy 1965-2020. Taken from BP, British Petroleum: https://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/energy-economics/statistical-review-of-world-energy.html

24 European Parliament. The Shale gas 'revolution' in United States: Global implications, options for the EU. P. 7. Taken from European Parliament: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/briefing_note/join/2013/491498/EXPO-AFET_SP%282013%29491498_EN.pdf

25 IEA. (2021). Despite short-term pain, the EU's liberalised gas markets have brought long-term financial gains. 22/10/2021. Taken from IEA, International Energy Agency: https://www.iea.org/commentaries/despite-short-term-pain-the-eu-s-liberalised-gas-markets-have-brought-long-term-financial-gains

As noted, the lack of flexibility is the main reason why Europe is seeking to move away from the traditional contractual framework. This, together with the high costs of entry into the sector, has led to market concentration and made it difficult for competitors to enter the market. Companies with a market share, among which Gazprom stands out, have acquired too much weight. As a result, they have an overly strong bargaining position that has allowed them to impose favourable clauses in contracts. It is understood that a more liquid model helps to move towards a "buyer's" market, with greater bargaining power for buyers, which allows the impact of these clauses to be eliminated or mitigated. Here, too, the EU has made important progress, notably in two areas.

Firstly, in relation to the "take-or-pay" clauses that are very common in Gazprom's contracts in Europe, which oblige the buyer to pay penalties if its imports do not reach a minimum volume. In the most extreme cases, such as the contract with Ukraine's Naftogaz, the stipulated minimum volumes exceeded 40 bcm per year. Take-or-pay clauses, while not cancelled, suffered a severe setback with the precedent set by the Arbitration Court of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce in 2017, which considerably limited their scope. The second significant breakthrough came a year later, when the European Commission vetoed the gas resale ban clauses that Gazprom sought to add to its contracts in Europe to limit competition in the internal market. Both decisions have led to structural modifications of the contractual models.

In conclusion, the Gazprom-Europe relationship today is based on a hybrid contractual model, the result of the combination and updating of the two predominant schools of thought. The revision of the initial Groningen model was the first tangible manifestation of Europe's dissatisfaction with Gazprom. In the years ahead, it will seek to translate these changes into a reduction in the volumes imported from Russia, an objective for which it is now better positioned following the implementation of these changes. These are summarised in the following points:

– The search for shorter contract durations, which has led to the emergence of a thriving, but still limited, spot market;

– Phasing out of the oil derivative link in favour of a gas spot price link. This is determined by gas indices or hubs, that include the Dutch Title Transfer Facility (TTF), which dominates in Europe;

– Undermining of clauses that the Union has found to be unfair.

Added to this transformation of gas business models are the aforementioned discrepancies in the role gas can play in the energy transition, as well as the growth of the LNG sector, which threatens Gazprom's position in Europe. This dynamic context inevitably alters the energy strategies of both sides. We elaborate on them below with the aim of providing an interpretative framework for Europe's initial reactions to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The Russian vector

Russia holds around a quarter of the world's gas reserves. It is the world's second-largest producer after the United States and the leading gas power in Eurasia. As such, its government seeks to preserve the prominent role of gas vis-à-vis other energy sources and even increase production[26]. Gazprom, as it has done for the past few decades, will act as the main implementing arm of the Russian government in terms of its production, domestic consumption and export goals.

Gazprom and the Kremlin: protection, at what price?

Historically, Gazprom and its predecessor ministry have exploited almost all of Russia's gas reserves. However, in recent years, independent competitors, particularly Novatek, have increased their production volumes to the detriment of Gazprom. Rosneft (oil company) also has significant gas reserves. Thus, Gazprom has gone from producing almost 90% of Russian gas in 2000[27] to producing 68% in 2020, equivalent to around 455 bcm [28]. This loss of share can be explained by a variety of reasons, not least the Kremlin's quest for further liberalisation of the domestic market. The gas market in Russia functions artificially, with a very high degree of intervention: while independent producers, such as Novatek, are allowed to market gas at whatever price they wish, a low sale price is imposed on Gazprom, which generates massive losses for it, in order to ensure access to this basic commodity for the most vulnerable members of the population and access to cheap electricity for large Russian industries. In recent years, the government has initiated a policy of gradually increasing the price at which it allows Gazprom to sell. In the last five years, it has risen by 8.8%[29]. Now, the recent invasion of Ukraine and subsequent sanctions, which are likely to result in a loss of purchasing power for Russia's middle and lower classes, could lead the government to pause this gradual rise indefinitely.

For Gazprom's future, maintaining this gradual increase is crucial for two reasons: firstly, because the company has been forced to move its productive lungs to more expensive fields, given the progressive depletion of the Western Siberian reserves that had served as the company's core production. These fields are mostly located in the Arctic region, along the entire continental shelf of the Russian

26 Mitrova, T., Yermakov, V. (2019). Russia's Energy Strategy-2035: Struggling to Remain Relevant. Institut Français des Relationes Internationales (IFRI). Pp. 14-32. Taken from: https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/etudes-de-lifri/russieneireports/russias-energy-strategy-2035-struggling-remain

27 Ibid., p. 32.

28 GAZPROM. (2021). Growth at Scale: Gazprom Annual Review 2020. P. 96. Taken from Gazprom: https://www.gazprom.com/f/posts/13/041777/gazprom-annual-report-2020-en.pdf

29 Ibid., p. 64.

North Sea, from the Barents Sea to the Chukotka Sea. Because of their remoteness, they pose severe logistical and cost problems for the companies, exacerbated by the low temperatures and freezing waters almost all year round, which add to the technological difficulties of hydrocarbon extraction. Part of this increase in production costs would be mitigated by an increase in the prices at which it is allowed to sell. Secondly, because it would reduce the gap with the price at which other independent companies sell, and, by extension, could lead to a reduction in the number of customers in the loss-making Russian market. In this case, Gazprom could also release stock that it can place in foreign markets, where it does make a profit.

Today, Gazprom and the Kremlin have identified a need to review basic elements of their special relationship. The aforementioned domestic price is one of them, but there are other potential scenarios that would not be so beneficial for the company. The Kremlin is currently facing a difficult dilemma following the application of another state giant, Rosneft, to export gas to Europe through pipelines, and the oil company's new strategy to increase its presence in gas markets[30]. There is potential for conflict with Gazprom, especially if the two companies are unable to reach an agreement on the price of Rosneft's hypothetical exports and the fee that Rosneft will have to pay Gazprom for the use of its pipelines. The Energy Ministry's position remains to prevent competition between Russian companies abroad[31], so it is nevertheless difficult to imagine a resolution of the issue on terms that would be severely detrimental to Gazprom. However, the mere fact that this issue is being considered at the governmental level already represents a substantial alteration in Russian policy over the past six decades.

The geopolitical decisions that the Kremlin imposes on Gazprom's external action are less likely to change. The relationship between the two is possibly one of the most representative of so-called "gas diplomacy" in the world, and is one of the most obvious examples of the fact that the energy sector does not follow purely financial logic. Governments exert a high degree of influence over it. In the case of Gazprom, its design of pipelines to Europe has been heavily influenced by Moscow's desire to reduce its dependence on Ukraine as a transit country to Europe, another of the workhorses that have marked the Kremlin's gas relationship with the European continent. Only the expansion of this national interest explains the construction in recent decades of the BlueStream, NordStream, TurkStream and Nord Stream 2, which have left Gazprom with 60% more shipping capacity than

30 Dmitrieva, A. and Elliott, S. (2021). Rosneft bets on gas in energy transition, pushes for right to export to Europe: report. S&P Global, 13/12/2021. Taken from: https://www.spglobal.com/commodity-insights/es/market-insights/latest-news/natural-gas/121321-rosneft-bets-on-gas-in-energy-transition-pushes-for-right-to-export-to-europe-report

31 Sharushkina, N. and Sokolov, V. (2022). Russian Energy Minister Shulginov Outlines Gas Stance. Energy Intelligence. 22/2/2022. Taken from: https://www.energyintel.com/0000017f-1d0f-df96-a1ff-bf6f490e0000

it currently charters to Europe[32]. Unnecessary and damaging in commercial terms, given the pressure Gazprom's investment muscle has come under in recent decades, but with high geopolitical value. The organisation of the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games also entailed an investment by Gazprom of over 1.5 billion euros, with a dubious financial return[33]. Gazprom is also forced to apply significant discounts to countries that have a strategic partnership with Moscow. In countries like Armenia and Belarus, their profit margins are greatly reduced by having to conform to the Kremlin's regional agenda.

However, these efforts, both domestically and abroad, are rewarded in many ways, most notably by the preservation of the pipeline export monopoly, but not only this. Russia has made the maintenance of Gazprom's primacy in Europe a matter of national interest, which ensures the firm's political and diplomatic backing at the highest level. This is reflected in the National Energy Strategy for 2035. Gazprom has also benefited from significant tax breaks in its shift to more expensive production fields, which have allowed it to establish itself in these new regions. Nor can the record exports achieved in 2017 and 2018 be understood without the backing of the Kremlin's monetary policy. The devaluation of the rouble, the currency with which Gazprom covers a large percentage of its fixed costs, in the years following the annexation of Crimea created a favourable scenario, strengthening the company's and other Russian energy companies' competitiveness abroad.

The Kremlin has the ability to act as Gazprom's "bodyguard" in various domains, but only does so when the company's interests coincide with its own. When they diverge, it imposes the company's agenda. It is a clearly hierarchical relationship that has made Gazprom one of Russia's most valuable foreign policy assets.

Russia's unique "Pivot to Asia"

Simon Blakey, former Chief of Staff to the Head of the IEA, said in 2020 that the future of Russian gas was likely to be in Asia[34]. Diversifying markets must be the natural strategic choice for Russia, particularly in light of Europe's willingness to exploit alternatives to its gas. Currently, Russia's 185 bcm annual exports to Europe account

32 Aslund, A. and Fisher, S. (2020). New challenges and dwindling returns for Russia's national champions, Gazprom and Rosneft. Atlantic Council. P. 5. Taken from: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/new-challenges-and-dwindling-returns-for-russias-national-champions-gazprom-and-rosneft/

33 Long, M. (2009). Gazprom splashes billions on Russia's Olympic dream. Sports Pro. 7/4/2009. Taken from: https://www.sportspromedia.com/news/gazprom_splashes_billions_on_russias_olympic_dream/

34 Blakey, S. and Gustafson, T. (2020). The Bridge: Natural Gas in a Redivided Europe. Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies. 17/6/2020. Taken from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tj8fd1n39VA

for over 75% of its total gas exports[35]. As mentioned above, in the case of Gazprom, the percentage is even higher. These percentages, together with the fact that Gazprom makes hardly any profit in other markets, confirm the current mutual dependency that this paper has been arguing.

The energy transition in Europe, although it has not yet resulted in a considerable reduction in Russian gas imports, creates an uncertain environment to which the company cannot entrust its future. This coincides with the development of Asian markets, which will result in an increase in their energy and electricity needs. The Asian continent not only offers a more reliable long-term outlet for Russian gas, but also allows Moscow to gain influence in what is expected to be the main arena for great power struggles in the second half of the 21st century. XXI. Here, the interests of the Kremlin and Gazprom converge. For this reason, the company has been pursuing a stronger foothold in Asia for years. Like the United States, it has embarked on its own "Pivot to Asia", which is still at an early stage.

Together with maintaining the predominant position in Europe, this shift is the other major pillar on which the National Energy Strategy for 2035 is built. The current volume of shipments is low, just over 25 bcm in 2020, and the potential increase in shipments faces several major barriers, especially in the case of Gazprom. The first of these obstacles is the current dominance of LNG in Russian shipments to Asia, with Gazprom taking a back seat to Novatek, the main Russian LNG exporter. The location of Asia's main consumption centres on the Pacific and Indian coasts (Japan, Korea, India and China's major cities), geographically distant from the continent's most important gas reserves, paints a picture more likely to favour offshore LNG rather than the construction of extensive and costly onshore pipelines. Nor do the numerous scenarios of conflict and instability on the continent (North Korea, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Iraq and sanctioned Iran), which could threaten the security and viability of these networks, contribute to this task. In 2020, Asia-Pacific received 70% of global LNG shipments. This percentage is expected to grow to 80% by 2050[36]. Here, Gazprom is not only at a disadvantage vis-à-vis Novatek, but Russia as a whole is relegated to second place to two world powers, Qatar and Australia. Between them, they shipped over 50% of the LNG imported by Asia-Pacific in 2020[37].

35 BP. (2022). Statistical Review of World Energy 2021. Pp. 42-45. Taken from BP, British Petroleum: https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2021-full-report.pdf

36 gas exporting countries forum. (November 2021). Global Gas Outlook 2050. Synopsis. P. 16. Taken from Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF): https://www.gecf.org/_resources/files/pages/gecf-global-gas-outlook-2050/gecf-gas-outlook-2021.pdf

37 BP. (2022). Statistical Review of World Energy 2021. P. 44. Taken from BP, British Petroleum: https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2021-full-report.pdf

The development of an LNG infrastructure (liquefaction plants or LNG trains, storage tanks and LNG carriers) that will allow it to compete with these two powers and the United States will take years and substantial investment. The study, design, construction and commissioning of a liquefaction plant takes at least four to five years. A few more are needed to bring it up to full capacity. Currently, Russia's maximum liquefaction capacity is just over 24 bcm per year, while the US' liquefaction capacity exceeds 100 bcm, Qatar's 105 bcm, and Australia's 120 bcm[38]. Russia is also far behind in terms of LNG storage capacity (682,000 m³, compared to over 2.34 million m³ in Qatar, 2.78 million m³ in Australia and 3.5 million m³ in the US), and it will take several decades for it to catch up with its competitors. However, mention should be made of Russia's ambitious policy in this respect, with five additional plants approved (currently two), which will add another 30 bcm to its production capacity[39]; significant in percentage terms, as it will double current volumes, but will keep Russian LNG production with a relatively small market share compared to its competitors.

The second obstacle comes from the strong competition posed by Central Asian autocracies, particularly Turkmenistan, in the design of the already scarce pipelines to consumption centres in the Pacific. China has historically prioritised the construction of pipelines from these countries. Thus, in 2020, over three quarters of China's pipeline imports came from Central Asian countries. Around 60% of the total came from Turkmenistan. Other regional powers, such as Japan, India or South Korea, hardly import by pipeline. In Asia, Gazprom has only one operational pipeline: the Power of Siberia, which opened in December 2019 and connects to China.

It is in this context of such high hurdles that the Kremlin's protection is of unparalleled value to Gazprom. Putin has placed the company in a privileged position in his Asia strategy and has seen to it that it benefits from his strategic partnership with Xi Jinping. The invasion of Ukraine and the European response have accelerated this process. During his visit to Beijing in February 2022, he signed agreements that will improve interconnections with China and increase the prospects for volumes transported through the Power of Siberia pipeline to 48 bcm per year by 2026[40]. It will connect the Sakhalin field to the existing infrastructure. The contract has a duration of 30 years, which is difficult to match in relations with European partners, and is linked to the price of oil derivatives. Evidence that both China and Russia continue to favour a traditional contractual model, even though many analysts insist that Gazprom would benefit more from gas hub contracts: gas hub prices have reached record highs

38 International Group of Liquified Natural Gas Importers (GIIGNL). (2021). Annual Report 2021. P. 40. Taken from GIIGNL: https://giignl.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/GIIGNL_Annual_Report_November2021.pdf Conversion rate: 1 MT = 1.4 bcm.

39 International Gas Union (IGU). (2021). World LNG Report 2021. 3/6/2021. P. 110. Taken from IGU: https://www.igu.org/resources/world-lng-report-2021/

40 Aizhu, C. (2022). Russia, China agree 30-year gas deal via new pipeline, to settle in euros. Reuters. 4/2/2022. Taken from: https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/exclusive-russia-china-agree-30-year-gas-deal-using-new-pipeline-source-2022-02-04/

in recent months, with no prospect of drastic changes in the short to medium term. Gazprom's choice of contractual model demonstrates the priority it gives to long-term revenue stability over short-term financial gains. In parallel, and perhaps of greater significance, came Gazprom's announcement on 28 February of an agreement with the Mongolian government to move forward to the design phase of the Altai pipeline, also known as Power of Siberia 2. This will be the second overland route for Russian gas to China, and could increase shipments by a further 50 bcm per year when completed, expected in 2030[41].

These prospects for deployment in China would not be possible without the prospect of a steep growth in China's energy demand curve. Over the past five years, China's gas consumption has increased from 197 bcm in 2015[42] to 331 bcm in 2020. Forbes estimates that it will continue to grow at around 5.5% year-on-year until 2030 and could exceed 650 bcm by 2050[43]. For China, it is not enough to maintain current volumes and entry routes. Russia and Gazprom, for all their limitations, have been able to position themselves as part of the solution to Beijing's growing gas demands. Novatek will also play a key role in this growing relationship, although its line of action in Asia is not as limited to China as that of Gazprom. The nature of its exports (LNG) opens up other markets. In addition, the group's strategic priorities remain, for the time being, the consolidation and enhancement of its portfolio of assets and reserves in Russia[44]. Novatek understands the process for foreign expansion as a subsequent phase of its business development. It is not as urgent as Gazprom, partly because it is not burdened by losses on the Russian domestic market.

Russia's Eurasian status and vast territory enable Gazprom to play an important role in the pipeline architecture of two of the world's three largest economies: the European Union and China. Nevertheless, it will not be until at least 2030 that Asia will achieve a significant weight in the company's export matrix. Only at that point will it be possible to judge the degree of success of its diversification strategy. Until then, it will remain dependent on its exports to Europe to generate profits; however, much Sergei Lavrov claims that Russia has alternative markets for its gas if Europe stops buying it[45]. In the short and medium term, there are none: Central Asia is a

41 GAZPROM. (2022). Алексей Миллер: проект "Союз Восток" перешел в стадию проектирования. 28/2/2022. Taken from: https://telegra.ph/Gazprom-Mongolia-02-28

42 BP. (2022). Statistical Review of World Energy 1965-2020. Taken from BP, British Petroleum: https://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/energy-economics/statistical-review-of-world-energy.html

43 Huang, M. (2021). The Future Of China's Gas Demand. Forbes. 22/9/2021. Taken from: https://www.forbes.com/sites/woodmackenzie/2021/09/22/the-future-of-chinas-gas-demand/

44 Novatek. (2021). PAO Novatek Annual Report 2020. 2/3/2021. P. 2. Taken from Novatek: https://www.novatek.ru/common/upload/doc/NOVATEK_AR_2020_EN.pdf

45 TASS. (2022). Never again will we rely on the West: Lavrov says Russia will solve its economic issues. 10/3/2022. Taken from TASS, Russian News Agency: https://tass.com/politics/1420031?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com

relatively small and self-sufficient market, and China still does not cover even a fifth of the volumes Gazprom exports to Europe. The other economic powers in the region have hardly any pipeline network from abroad, and Russia is still far from having the necessary infrastructure to become an LNG power. Natixis rightly points out that Russia's ability to diversify its gas exports to Asia is very limited in the short term[46]. The situation is different with oil, where the room for manoeuvre is greater.

European energy context

The whole energy context in Europe is marked by the quest to reduce CO2 emissions to reach climate neutrality by 2050. On the other hand, in the particular case of gas, it is particularly important to reinforce energy security in order to avoid shocks such as those of this winter. This reinforcement is being developed through various lines of action, mainly in relation to storage capacities and internal interconnections, and is complemented by the quest to reduce dependence on Russia. These and other targets will be particularly difficult to achieve in the context of Europe's declining domestic production, which was just over 215 bcm in 2020 from over 300 bcm in 2010[47].

Gas in Europe's energy transition

On this issue, the European Commission has maintained an ambiguous rhetoric. It acknowledged as much in March 2022, when he pointed out that he still needed "further reflection on how to address the role of [natural] gas in the decarbonisation of the Union's economy"[48]. On the one hand, it remains firmly committed to the global leadership it has acquired on the path to emission reductions. On the other hand, the reality and the lack of development of potential alternative technologies have pushed it in recent months to recognise that economic activities in the natural gas sector can "facilitate the transition to a sustainable energy system"[49]. However, it added, "for a limited period of time", without specifying the duration. This recognition has also prompted it, after months of discussions, to award natural gas the "transition energy"

46 NATIXIS. (2022). Ukraine Crisis Impact. 25/2/2022. P. 21. Taken from NATIXIS: https://home. cib.natixis.com/api-website-feature/files/download/12209/cross-expertise_research_ukraine_en_ fevrier_2022_final_draft.pdf

47 BP. (2022). Statistical Review of World Energy 2021. P. 36. Taken from BP, British Petroleum: https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/ statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2021-full-report.pdf

48 European Commission. (2022). Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) ... / ... of 09/03/2022. P. 1. Taken from European Commission: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:8cee7f13-a162-11ec-83e1-01aa75ed71a1.0018.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

49 Ibid., p. 2.

label in its green taxonomy. Thus, it seems to tilt the debate between pragmatism and environmentalist convictions in favour of the former.

Also the trends in gas consumption, which has hardly decreased in recent years and has remained stable in the range of between 540 and 560 bcm, and the exponential growth in EU emission allowance prices (EU Emissions Trading System), which incentivises the transition from coal to gas, support the thesis that gas will maintain a key role in the European energy transition.

It is not the purpose of this paper to assess the viability, or lack thereof, of alternatives to natural gas, such as renewables, nuclear or other less polluting gases like hydrogen or biomethane. Only the scale of the technological advances needed for these sources to supply a substantial fraction of the natural gas on the market is apparent. This is pointed out by the European Commission itself, when it states that "technologically and economically viable low-carbon alternatives may not yet be available on a sufficient scale to meet energy demand on a continuous and reliable basis"[50]. Three years earlier, the Commission itself also admitted that "decarbonisation policies will not be sufficient to counteract declining domestic production"[51], and concluded in the same document that gas imports are likely to continue to increase.

Gas is therefore the fuel of choice for the energy transition, including for Europe, albeit by default. The EU has therefore started work on reducing the carbon footprint of its production process, with the aim of making the natural gas of the future "greener" than today. The Commission has proposed that emissions generated in the production of gas that is eventually sold on the European market should be measured and reported, with a view to a hypothetical revision of emission requirements for hydrocarbon imports. The EU commitment will thus influence the production processes of all those who want to place their products on the European market, including Russia, which is already working in this direction. This is another example of the sector's shift towards a "buyer's" market, as it will be the buyer who demands a low carbon footprint, and the seller who must adapt to these requirements if it wants to sell.

Strengthening energy security: storage and interconnections

In parallel, the Member States and the European Commission are considering various measures to strengthen security of supply and avoid a repetition of the very high prices that we have seen in the first months of 2022. The focus of action has been on these measures, possibly overshadowing those directly related to the search for alternative sources of gas.

50 Ibid., p. 10.

51 European Commission. (2017). Energy Union: Commission takes steps to extend common EU gas rules to import pipelines. 8/11/2017. Taken from European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_17_4401

Firstly, there is the need to create strategic reserves, as has been the case with oil since the 1970s, which would oblige the Member States to maintain a minimum level of storage. Currently, it is the Member States that manage their own reserves and many of them do not impose minimum quantities. They only commit their suppliers to a minimum year-round supply, which, as demonstrated in the first months of 2022, may not be sufficient to guarantee consumption at an affordable price, particularly in winter. The increased liquidity of the oil market led to the emergence of these reserves, but the gas market has always been considered sufficiently stable to ensure adequate supplies on an ongoing basis. There was no need to invest in a reserve, because there was always going to be supply. This year's situation has shown that going into the winter with unfilled stocks can come at a significant cost. This has been another point of contention with Gazprom and the main trigger for the current crisis between Brussels and the company, which the EU accuses of deliberately keeping reserves empty: at the beginning of the winter, Gazprom-operated reserves were 16% full, while the average for other operators was over 40%[52].

Control over strategic assets like storage reserves is, after exports, the second vector through which Gazprom coordinates its presence in Europe. Following dissatisfaction with Gazprom's adherence to contractual minimums without filling them, these reserves have been identified by the Commission as critical infrastructure for the first time[53]. This new label will oblige Member States to consider risks associated with ownership, both for future and current stocks. It allows for a new legal framework that, in principle, empowers Member States to force Gazprom to hand over the management of its reserves, reducing the leverage of what the Commission considers a hostile player, and strengthening the continent's energy security. This control over storage facilities is also behind the German government's decision to temporarily put Gazprom's subsidiary in the country under its control.

A further step has been taken with the provisional agreement between the Commission, Council and Parliament, which would require Member States to ensure that their stocks are at least 90% full on 1 October each year in order to be prepared for possible supply disruptions during the winter months. However, this can be a double-edged sword. The Belgian think-tank Bruegel poses the following scenario: if European companies are forced to store gas in summer and autumn to start the winter in a better position, what would happen if Gazprom (or another producer) suddenly decided to start pumping more gas into Europe in, say, November? The market would be flooded with supply and prices would fall, to Europe's benefit. However, it would leave all the companies that had helped the EU prepare for the winter with massive losses, as they would have been forced to fill their stocks at higher prices than they then have in winter. Companies are clearly not willing to take such risks, especially in

52 European Commission. (2022). REPowerEU: Joint European Action for more affordable, secure and sustainable energy. 8/3/2022. P. 5. Taken from European Commission: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:71767319-9f0a-11ec-83e1-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

53 Ibid., p. 4.

the current scenario of high prices. Filling reserves now, at these prices, would make little or no business sense. Therefore, and despite the EU working towards further market liberalisation, unprecedented political backing would be needed here to ensure that companies would be able to offer their gas at least at cost price in the future. Potentially, this would lead to a situation where commitments made to companies would force them to pay for gas at a higher price than the market price. This is to point out that stock holding obligations can sometimes become a burden, but it is the price that must be paid for the creation of a strategic reserve to help prevent situations such as the one that occurred this winter.

On the other hand, the crisis in Ukraine has revived another recurrent debate on the European energy agenda: that of interconnections between Member States, fundamentally in terms of gas and electricity. The first State of the Energy Union report in 2015 highlights the lack of interconnections as one of the main reasons behind inadequate market integration and price divergences between Member States[54]. Six years later, in 2021, the emphasis is on the improvements of recent years, particularly in Eastern Europe, and their positive effect on security of supply in the European Union[55]. Spain is particularly interested in the development of this axis, as connections with the rest of Europe are minimal. Only the VIP Pyrenees pipeline, with a capacity of around 7 bcm per year, connects Spain. The invasion of Ukraine seems to have awakened the interest of the Spanish and Portuguese governments in the construction of a second trans-Pyrenean gas pipeline, the MidCat, whose financial profitability had led to the project being rejected on several occasions.

Along these lines, and in order to take advantage of a hypothetical improvement in intra-European connections, in 2017, the Commission launched the proposal to sign solidarity agreements. These agreements are signed bilaterally between two Member States in order to ensure adequate gas supplies in case of external supply disruptions. The Commission describes them as "an historic step in building EU resilience to gas supply disruptions"[56]. Germany is leading the way in signing these agreements, having already signed them with Denmark and Austria, and is examining them with Italy and Poland.

The three lines of action proposed so far (storage, internal connections and solidarity agreements) focus on strengthening European energy security. While they are the main focus of EU action, the EU is beginning in parallel to seek a significant re-

54 European Commission. (2015). State of the Energy Union 2015. 18/11/2015. P. 10. Taken from European Commission: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:ebdf266c-8eab-11e5-983e-01aa75ed71a1.0008.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

55 European Commission. (2021). State of the Energy Union 2021 - Contributing to the European Green Deal and the Union's recovery. 26/10/2021. P. 14. Taken from European Commission: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-10/state_of_the_energy_union_report_2021.pdf

56 European Commission. (n.d.). Secure Gas Supplies. Taken from European Commission: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-security/secure-gas-supplies_en#solidarity-arrangements

duction in its dependence on Russian gas. The major breakthrough in this regard has come with the signing of an agreement with the United States for the joint purchase of an additional 15 bcm of LNG during 2022 and the coming years, which strengthens the position of LNG in the European import matrix. Qatar will also increase its shipments. For these volumes to grow and replace a significant share of imports from Russia, Europe must increase its LNG import capacities, with the construction of new regasification terminals. Some have already been announced.

Work has also been underway for years on strengthening external connections and developing alternative pipelines to the Russian ones, mainly on two: the Baltic pipeline, which will connect Norway to Poland via Denmark, with a capacity of 10 bcm and a planned entry into operation in October 2022; and the EastMed, which would connect the eastern Mediterranean fields with the Hellenic peninsula and Italy, and with a maximum capacity of another 10 bcm. A financial feasibility study is currently pending. In addition, in January 2022, the extension of the MedGaz, which connects Spain with Algeria, came into force.

All these initial lines of action have been reinforced with the publication on 18 May 2022 of a Commission proposal to its Member States to reduce dependence on Russian gas by 2027. If translated into concrete measures, the Commission's plans will alter the regional and global architecture for gas shipments to Europe, with the geopolitical consequences that this entails. If well managed, it can contribute to regional détente, as shown by the fact that Isaac Herzog's visit to Ankara, with energy cooperation at its core, was the first visit by a senior Israeli leader to Turkey since 2008. If not properly managed, it can exacerbate diplomatic tensions, such as those Algeria is currently experiencing with Morocco and Spain.

Elusive sanctions

The energy link with Russia has led Europe to oppose broad sanctions packages that include the hydrocarbon sector, with particular emphasis on gas. Firstly, this has led to disagreements between the Member States, with different degrees of exposure, and therefore different margins for action, which have hindered the development of a common foreign and security policy. It has also meant a weakening of the transatlantic axis with the US, Europe's main ally, under pressure to keep Gazprom and other energy companies out of its successive sanctions packages. Washington understands that the need to consider the interests of its European partners detracts from the effectiveness of its containment strategy towards Russia. Gazprom is currently on the list of entities sanctioned by the United States[57], but it has only been banned from accessing US funding, without affecting its commercial activities.

57 US Department of the Treasury. (2022). U.S. Treasury Announces Unprecedented & Expansive Sanctions Against Russia, Imposing Swift and Severe Economic Costs. 24/2/2022. Taken from US Department of the Treasury: https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0608

This is not to say that the sanctions have not had an impact on the company. Firstly, the 2022 sanctions deprive the Russian economy as a whole of access to "hard currency" financing, meaning the euro and the dollar, with the ensuing liquidity crisis. However, directly with regard to gas, this year's sanctions have accentuated the practices of previous packages. This could change in the coming months, but, unlike in other sectors, the aim is not to impose direct and global sanctions, but rather to limit the financing and technology acquisition capacity of Russian energy companies, reducing their room for manoeuvre, particularly with regard to the development of new fields. It is common for the limitation of funding to occur only for certain types of projects (e.g. those related to Arctic field development), giving the details of sanctions design a strong strategic aspect.

The exception to this rule was the US extra-territorial sanctions on Nord Stream 2 (i.e., extendable to foreign companies participating in the project), which were removed after two years (2019-2021) in order to seek better relations with Germany. During that brief period, there was a mass exodus of European companies from the project, and the developer, Nord Stream 2 AG, eventually went bankrupt following the new US package, which again sanctioned it, and the cancellation of the project's approval. Novatek and Alexei Miller, CEO of Gazprom, are also directly sanctioned by the US.

Another important element to measure the intensity of a sanctions package towards the Russian gas sector is GazpromBank, the bank through which transactions with Gazprom are handled. On this occasion, it has been one of the few large Russian banks to have circumvented them and, in fact, has also been excluded from the SWIFT mechanism's disconnection. It currently ensures the viability of transactions between Gazprom and Europe.

Despite its special status with regard to sanctions, Gazprom will be affected not only by the impact on the Russian economy in general, but also by the exodus of Western companies from Russia, particularly by the exit of Shell, with whom it shared several projects. Also, the exit of key technology partners for the development of Arctic LNG fields will undermine Russian production prospects.

Sanctions are one of the most tangible manifestations of geopolitical tensions. The fact that Gazprom has been treated more favourably than other Russian companies is evidence of at least some degree of resilience in the relationship when faced with diplomatic back-and-forth. This is often overlooked.

In conclusion

Gazprom is one of the most valuable assets of Russia's external expansion. Directly controlled by the state, it is the world's largest gas producer and the main supplier to Europe, the world's second-largest market after the United States. Its privileged position on the European continent, supported by a government monopoly on pipeline

exports, compensates for losses at home, where it sells at artificially low prices. Europe is the only market that brings it significant profits, accounting for nearly 90% of its exports, which amounted to over 30% of the gas consumed on the European continent. These figures are evidence of a mutual dependence that has contributed to an upward trend in shipments over the past decades, even during periods of estrangement between Europe and Russia: between 2009 and 2019, shipments increased from 141 bcm to 199 bcm despite Russian interventions in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014). To date, and with various exceptions, the energy link has served predominantly as an incentive for greater understanding with Russia.

In addition to the aforementioned increase, commercial relations between the two players have undergone a profound evolution in recent years in terms of the contractual model that covers them. The European Union has been the driving force behind these changes, which are based on a reduction in the duration of contracts, a reduction in the number of contracts with the price linked to oil derivatives, and an undermining of abusive clauses. This strengthens the position of the buyer (EU), which gains more flexibility, and creates a more liquid market which, on the other hand, also results in greater exposure to relatively tight supply situations such as the current one. This paper describes the contemporary contractual model as a "hybrid model" in which contracts with traditional elements (long duration or prices linked to oil derivatives) and a growing spot market coexist. The consolidation of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as an increasingly large-scale alternative to pipeline transport has particularly contributed to the latter point.

On the other hand, the relative stability in Gazprom-Europe relations noted throughout the paper is not intended to convey the image of an idyllic relationship. It has been far from that. Gazprom has made occasional supply cuts to European countries and plays a central role in Russia's so-called "gas diplomacy". It maintains a close relationship with the Kremlin that currently depends on the Kremlin's monopoly over Russian pipeline gas exports. In return, the company has been pushed to undertake projects and investments that are unnecessary in financial and logistical terms, but serve Russia's geopolitical agenda. These include the vast network of pipelines to Europe, and sales at very low prices in countries aligned with Moscow and especially in Russia itself. These constraints are currently under review and their evolution will shape the company's next decade. So will the process of tilting towards more expensive production fields in the Arctic and the search for a larger foothold in Asia. For these issues, government support will be crucial, although the nature of both transitions imposes significant obstacles, particularly with regard to placing gas in Asia, a continent more inclined towards LNG where Gazprom is relegated to second place in favour of Novatek, and Russia itself is still far from the market shares held by Qatar, Australia and the United States.

For its part, Europe has singled out Gazprom for the high prices it has faced in recent months. A direct relationship is established between these and the minimum filling level of the company's stocks in Europe during the previous months. This has led to a reflection, possibly more marked by apparent urgency than calm, on energy security on the continent. The initial priority was issues directly related to the latter,

particularly storage and internal interconnections, which pushed diversification towards alternative gas sources into the background. After the invasion of Ukraine, the two courses of action seem to converge and a misleading equation is made between energy security and diversification of sources. While progress must be made on both, it should not be forgotten that these are two distinct issues.

This quest for greater diversification, like that pursued by Russia, faces significant limitations in terms of its scope and, above all, its timeframe. The main constraint here is the lack of infrastructure and technology needed to exploit alternative routes on a larger scale. The existence of contracts that will remain in place for the next few years should also be considered. It is also worth adding the current energy transition process being promoted by the EU, with an ambiguous discourse towards hydrocarbons despite having finally accepted gas as a transition energy due to its capacity to replace more polluting fuels such as coal or oil, and its role as an indispensable complement to renewables in the electricity sector.

Sanctions are another element that marks the relationship. While these have affected the Russian energy sector less than other sectors of the economy, the blocking of access to technology and financing is a significant burden for Russian energy companies, with a particular impact on the development of Arctic fields. Moreover, the imposition of these sanctions has been the main reason why Russia has begun to demand gas payments in roubles and to stop shipments to countries that do not respect the established channels, which nevertheless end up receiving Russian gas through other Member States.

The current situation is extremely volatile, making any future prediction a chimera with little chance of success. What does seem clear is that there will at least be a limited separation between the two players. This is evidenced by the fact that Europe has already started to increase its commitment to LNG. The increase of LNG in Europe's energy mix will have global consequences and could exacerbate the competition between Europe and Asia to attract it, straining the market and generating punctuated upward price spirals. In any case, tilting such a massive sector with so much influence on the rest of the economy will entail high risks and most likely will not prevent Russia from remaining decisive for Europe's energy security, and Europe from remaining decisive for Russia's energy model both internally and externally.

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Neo-Cold War in Asia-Pacific and its impact on the Korean Peninsula

In US–China competition, technology matters, but alliances matter more

Joseph S. Nye

Abstract

The Chinese military and economic rise and the War in Ukraine seem to evoke a Neo Cold War scenario between autocracies and democracies that could forge alliances between non-rival Western economies centered on an Anglo-Saxon core (the USA, UK, Australia), complemented by Japan, India and Canada. The Korean peninsula, as a point of friction between ideological blocs, could be the scenario of renewed tensions. Nevertheless, the democratic-capitalist triangle (the US, South Korea and Japan) seems solidly integrated both militarily and economically. The autocratic triangle (China, North Korea and Russia), on the other hand, seems more united by common anti-hegemonic interests than by economic ties, with Russia and North Korea on the rise.

Keywords

Introduction

The increase in the Chinese military budget, which has reached figures equivalent to those of the extinct USSR, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine seem to evoke a Neo-Cold War scenario between an autocratic and a democratic-capitalist bloc that could create a post-pandemic "regionalisation" based on economic spheres self-sufficient in resources and technology led by China and the USA[1].

This partial return to the balance of power and the progressive abandonment of global liberalism could lead to a redefinition of current alliances and greater tension in the buffer states that act as buffer zones between antagonistic blocs since, as the first Cold War demonstrated, global balances do not prevent local conflicts[2].

The Korean peninsula seems the ideal scenario for this analysis for several reasons: it is a buffer region still anchored in the first Cold War (officially no Peace Treaty has been signed but merely an armistice that ended hostilities[3]), where the US and China clashed militarily, and where there are no formal multilateral alliances similar to NATO but triangular agreements between countries of the democratic-capitalist bloc (US, South Korea and Japan) and the autocratic one (China, North Korea and Russia). Moreover, North Korea's nuclearization has led to the creation of an unprecedented platform, the Six-Party Talks, which brings together, despite their ideological differences, the Six Countries directly concerned. Nor should it be forgotten that it was the apparent exclusion of the Korean peninsula from the U.S. defensive perimeter that led to its civil war[4]. It therefore seems useful to have a diagnosis that allows us to understand the impact of the U.S. alliance strategy in the Asia-Pacific at one of its most tense points. To this end, we will analyse the American associative logic, the underlying socioeconomic trends in the countries of the Dialogue at Six, the internal interrelations of each ideological triangle and, finally, the influence of Australia and Pakistan, apparently peripheral states but which can play a relevant role in the alliance policy.

1 The United States could even be an autonomous hegemon because of its energy self-sufficiency, low population ageing, robotisation and global dollarisation. Castelltort Claramunt, M. (2021). El posible conflicto bélico entre Estados Unidos y China: reconsiderando la «Trampa de Tucídides» [The possible war conflict between the United States and China: reconsidering the "Thucydides Trap"]. Revista del Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos. (17), 271 – 300 / 605.

2 Kang, D. C. (2003). International Relations Theory and the Second Korean War. International Studies Quarterly. 47.

3 Ivashentsov, G. (2021). Will There Be an End to the War in Korea? https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/analytics/will-there-be-an-end-to-the-war-in-korea/

4 The result of a misinterpretation of Secretary of State Acheson's speech on the Far East: "what we can see is that this new day in Asia, this new day that is dawning, may turn into a glorious noon or it may get dark and drizzle. But that decision is in the hands of the Asian countries and within the power of the Asian people". Acheson, D. (1950). Speech on the Far East. 12 January. https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/1950-01-12.pdf

Evolution of the alliance policy

Cold War alliances were characterized by the leadership of a world power (US or USSR), some of which developed into permanent multilateral organizations such as NATO. Depending on the leading superpower and its political model, each alliance followed a different strategy: the USSR created a communist bloc of militarily controlled satellite states (Brezhnev doctrine) while the USA forged a military alliance of integrated economies (Truman doctrine). Soviet communism, without capitalist banks with the capacity to create money, lacked the resources to cover the costs of "nationalist alliances"[5], which led to systemic implosion[6]. The democratic-capitalist bloc, endowed with greater financial muscle, created military allies, but also economic competitors[7]. However, common democratic values acted as coheirs, facilitating the continuity of the main alliance, NATO, even after the Soviet collapse[8].

The fall of the Iron Curtain and the democratic-capitalist victory seemed to usher in a period of single-mindedness marked by a liberal globalization in which countries seemed to seek the same goal: peaceful progress[9]. Upon this assumption, a process of global economic delocalisation began without considering its impact on national security issues, a trend that accelerated with the incorporation of China into the World Trade Organization (2001). The result, two decades later, has been a strong technological and productive transfer to a State that, instead of democratizing, has reinforced its authoritarianism[10]. The present Sino-US rivalry would thus epitomise the failure of liberal globalisation and a return to realist balance of power thesis where Russia aspires to be both the global and Eurasian balancer[11].

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5 "Let the Russians spend their money on defence, and in the meantime we will raise our standard of living." But that's the wrong approach. It is pure nationalism. Unfortunately, this also exists in relations between socialist countries". Khrushchev, S. (2006). Nikita Khrushchev. Reformer. 1945-1964. The Pennsylvania State University Press. P. 229.

6 Anticipated decades ago by Riker, W. H. (1967). The Theory of political coalitions. Yale University Press.

7 For example: The United States has been and is willing to accept limited economic disadvantages arising from preferential agreements among EC [European Community] member states because of the countervailing political advantages of European unity. U.S. Secretary of State. (1969). Memorandum From the Special Representative for Trade Negotiations (Gilbert) to Secretary of State Rogers. Preferential Trade Agreements. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v04/d221

8 "Democracies can and do disagree with each other, but they do not fear each other. They also need the approval of other democracies to carry out their foreign policies. These traits constitute built-in self-healing tendencies, which is why NATO endures". Thies, W. (2009). Why NATO Endures. Cambridge University Press. P. 3.

9 Fukuyama, F. (1992). The End of History and the Last Man. Penguin Books.

10 Coyne, J., Savage, G. and Shoebridge, M. (2021). New beginnings Rethinking business and trade in an era of strategic clarity and rolling disruption. The Australian Strategic Policy.

11 Karaganov, S. A. (2021). On a Third Cold War. Russia in Global Affairs. 19(3), pp.102-115. doi: 10.31278/1810-6374-2021-19-3-102-115.

Faced with this paradigm shift in international relations, what kind of alliances could emerge? The most evident has been the Sino-Russian alliance, as there is a geostrategic complementarity; the alliance allows China to protect its main continental flank and establish itself as a maritime power to control both the Taiwan Strait and the Malacca Strait, while Moscow covers its eastern flank, the weakest demographically and economically; on that basis an alliance has been forged in which China provides capital to Russia and Russia provides energy and weapons, in addition to carrying out both joint military exercises[12]. However, the autocratic nature of their regimes may hinder economic integration similar to that of the democratic-capitalist bloc. Chinese state capitalism presents a strong political interference in strategic business decisions that can cause national security problems in business partners, as revealed by the case of Huawei[13]; therefore, only democracies seem to be able to form stable military alliances since autocracies, even if they are capitalist, would work under the logic that today's ally may be tomorrow's enemy[14]. It is this realisation that seems to justify Russia's view of NATO as its main enemy[15].

On these premises, the US also seems to be redefining its global alliances, seeking countries that can simultaneously be military allies but not economic rivals, in stark contrast to its first Cold War strategy [16]. The result, for the time being, is an alliance triad with the Anglo-sphere as the central core and Australia as the preferred partner:

– AUKUS, the Indo-Pacific security agreement between the US, Australia and the UK.

– *Five Eyes*, the intelligence services alliance between AUKUS, New Zealand and Canada.

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12 Schoen, D. and Kaylan, M. (2015). Return to winter: Russia, China, and the new cold war against America. Encounter Books.

Institutional banks are those that report to the Chinese State Council: the Export-Import Bank of China (EXIM) and the *Agricultural Development Bank of China* (ADBC).

13 Ford, C. A. (2019). Huawei and Its Siblings, the Chinese Tech Giants: National Security and Foreign Policy Implications. 11 September. https://www.state.gov

Or also: "Huawei is not a company, but an arm of the Chinese intelligence services", in Bolton, J. (2020). *The Room where it happened*. Simon & Schuster.

14 Thies, W. (2009). Op. cit.

15 Stent, A. (2019). Putin's world: Russia against the West. Hachette.

16 "The United States, obsessed with the fight against communism, too sure of the permanent ontological character of its economic preeminence, then gave absolute priority to the political integration of its sphere of military domination. To do so, they opened their market to European products, and especially to Japanese products, sacrificing, at first without realizing it, then with some distress, a large part of their industry". Todd, E. (2004). Après l'empire. Essai sur la décomposition du système américain. Gallimard. P. 84

– *Quad*, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between the US, Australia, India and Japan, to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific, and which includes joint military exercises.

This alliance reformulation would, however, raise worrying questions of *déjà-vu* for the Korean peninsula as a buffer region: on the one hand, it resurrects axes of World War I, when London, Washington and Tokyo agreed on a territorial division of Asia-Pacific where Australia was the regional Anglo-Saxon enclave and Korea and Taiwan, Japanese colonies[17]; on the other hand, it reiterates historical errors such as apparently omitting Korea from the U.S. defensive perimeter (which precipitated the civil war and the subsequent peninsular division), or pitting Australia again against its main trading partner (this time China, as had already happened with Japan in World War II); moreover, Japan and Australia were major beneficiaries of the Korean civil war because it allowed the industrialisation of the former and the wool export boom of the latter. Therefore, the new alliance design would recover, for Asia, a model with imperialist reminiscences that would legitimize Chinese and North Korean national-communist discourses and, apparently, undervalue South Korea as a regional Western partner, which could alter the peninsular balance of power.

The particularities of the Korean conflict

Historically, Korea has been a region linked to China to protect itself from Manchu invasions from the north, but the rise of Japan and Russia turned it into a buffer state trapped between three regional powers, thus establishing a hitherto unheard-of balance of power in East Asia. Recent doctrinal currents postulate the propensity of the buffer states to disappear, victims of rivalry between opposing powers, with which they could not compete either militarily or economically to defend their diplomatic independence[18]. These would be the cases of the Japanese occupation of Korea (1910-1945) or the division of Poland between Austria, Prussia and Russia in the 18th century. However, the subsequent resurgence of both states, cases similar to those of Ecuador, Paraguay or Afghanistan, would seem to refute a geographical determinism and reaffirm the diplomatic and economic weakness of indigenous institutions as the main cause of the disappearance of the buffer states[19]. Consequently, in order to understand the impact of the new US alliance logic on the Korean peninsula, both its character as a divided buffer state and the socioeconomic and military strengths of the Dialogue Six states that condition indigenous diplomacy must be considered.

17 Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902-1923) and Taft-Katsura Agreement (1905).

18 Fazal, T. M. (2007). State death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation. Princeton University Press.

19 Acemoglu, D. and Robinson, J. A. (2012). Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty. Crown Business.

The Korean division, unlike the German division, was not an unintended consequence of world bloc politics but of irreconcilable ideological positions between leaders who, even today, consider themselves to be the legitimate authorities of the same nation, which hinders their reunification and perpetuates a state of war[20]. This entrenchment is explained by the fact that the U.S. liberation of the peninsula after World War II, unlike Manchuria and Taiwan, was not accompanied by a return to a native government prior to the Japanese occupation because Korea had never been formally independent. This lack of definition led to the founding of two states inspired by Western ideologies, the Republic of Korea (democratic-capitalist) and the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea (communist). This peculiar "self-colonisation"[21] permeated the idiosyncrasy of both states, which are still vying to preserve, even today, their authenticity, but above all, as buffer states, their diplomatic independence: Pyongyang with a policy of self-sufficiency (*Juche*), supported by its nuclear deterrent, and Seoul, with an economically emancipatory capitalism.

This peninsular irredentism led to global bloc politics, initiating the first Cold War, which, decades later, after the Soviet collapse and North Korean nuclearization, has shaped the Six-Party Talks as a referential framework[22]. However, pre-pandemic liberal globalization, with its transfer of technology and capital, has socioeconomically transformed the Six States, creating underlying synergies that do not necessarily coincide with their ideological identification and that should be systematized to better understand their respective national interests.

To compare the strength of heterogeneous socioeconomic systems, infant mortality and suicide rates are often used as demographic indicators that, because they are linked to real circumstances such as births and deaths, which must be recorded in administrative records, are less manipulable than economic estimates such as GDP, where the book value is more subjective[23]. As an ideologically aseptic indicator, the rise in infant mortality, a rare phenomenon in advanced societies, made it possible

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20 According to Kim Dae-Jung, the assassination by a South Korean military officer of Kim Koo (1949), president of the provisional government of Korea, buried all hope of unification. "While we buried one of the most trusted leaders in all of Korea, the Korean people also buried their desperate yearnings for unification". Kim, D-J. (2019). Conscience in Action. Palgrave Macmillan. P. 24. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-7623-7.

21 When the new mentality is imposed by national leaders and not by colonising foreign powers. Bouthoul, G. (1967) Sociologie de la politique. PUF. P. 46.

22 "Kim [Jong Un] had cheated the Agreed Framework. I made a decision: The United States would stop negotiating with North Korea on a bilateral basis. Instead, we would bring together China, South Korea, Russia and Japan to present a united front against the regime". Bush, J. W. (2010). Decision Points. Crown.

23 "Birth and death rates are powerful indicators, capable of revealing a society that is hiding. Unlike econometrics, whose quantitative analyses must be based on the fragile notions of price, quantity and quality, demography, a simple and brutal science, is insensitive to ideology". Todd, E. (1976). La Chute final. Essai sur la décomposition de la sphère soviétique. Robert Laffont. P. 6.

to predict, decades in advance, the Soviet collapse[24]. Currently, for example, it is the preferred indicator used to analyse Venezuela[25]. Applying the same criteria to the six Dialogue countries, the following conclusions could be drawn:

The leading triangle in overall social welfare would be made up of Japan, South Korea and Russia; the archipelago would be by far the nation with the highest level of health, having even improved during the supposed three "lost decades" of economic crisis, a case very similar to South Korea. Russia, after a post-Soviet stagnation, would have even surpassed the USA in terms of human development[26].

This would confirm the Russian thesis of an American social decline, whose infant mortality rate (6.3 deaths per 1,000 births) is slightly higher than the Russian rate (5.4) and equivalent to the Japanese rate in 1990 (6.4)[27], which would explain, in turn, Washington's recent problems in coordinating with its allies[28].

China, thanks to its openness, has substantially improved its welfare levels, although without reaching the top four (7.3 deaths per 1,000 births), which would call into question its capacity for world leadership[29].

North Korea, after the brutal impact of the famine at the end of the 20th century, would appear to be converging on well-being, which, despite sanctions and its nuclearization, would disrupt assumptions of its imminent collapse[30]. The huge differential in terms of human development between South Korea (3.03) and North Korea (16.5), however, would make eventual reunification an extremely complex and costly project[31].

Therefore, it could be initially concluded that the Sino-US Neo-Cold War would be overshadowing a Russian renaissance that could explain Moscow's current deferred

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24 Todd, E. (1976). Op. cit.

25 Beyrer, C. and Page, K. (2019). Preventable losses: infant mortality increases in Venezuela. The Lancet Global Health. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214109X19300130

26 "Vladimir Putin's turnaround is spectacular in several respects. Thanks in large part to the control of hydrocarbons, it can ensure a reactivation of the economy, substantial wage increases, and an unquestionable improvement in living conditions, which, of course, endears it to the majority of the population". Chaliand, G. (2013). Vers un nouvel ordre du monde. Seuil. P. 143.

27 Perhaps the result of the absence of universal healthcare: Chen, A., Oster, E. and Williams, H. (2014). Why is Infant Mortality Higher in the US than in Europe? http://www.nber.org/papers/w20525.pdf

28 Several governments described their internal political problems, as if we were to feel sorry for them or had no internal political problems at all. Bolton, J. (2020). Op. cit.

29 This conclusion is also reached by Todd's analysis of China's demographic decline. Todd, E. (2022). China will not be a great power. Nikkei (in Japanese). 23/1/2022.

30 "Recent satellite analysis also seems to confirm North Korea's economic dynamism since 2000, contradicting Bank of Korea estimates". Kim, K. (2022). The North Korean economy seen by satellite: Estimates of national performance, regional gaps based on nighttime light. Journal of Asian Economics. 78. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asieco.2021.101405

31 Abt, F. (2014). A Capitalist in North Korea. Tokyo, Tuttle Publishing.

revanchism vis-à-vis the West with the Ukrainian conflict[32]. However, as will be discussed in another section, the Korean peninsula does not seem to be, for the time being, a favourable scenario[33].
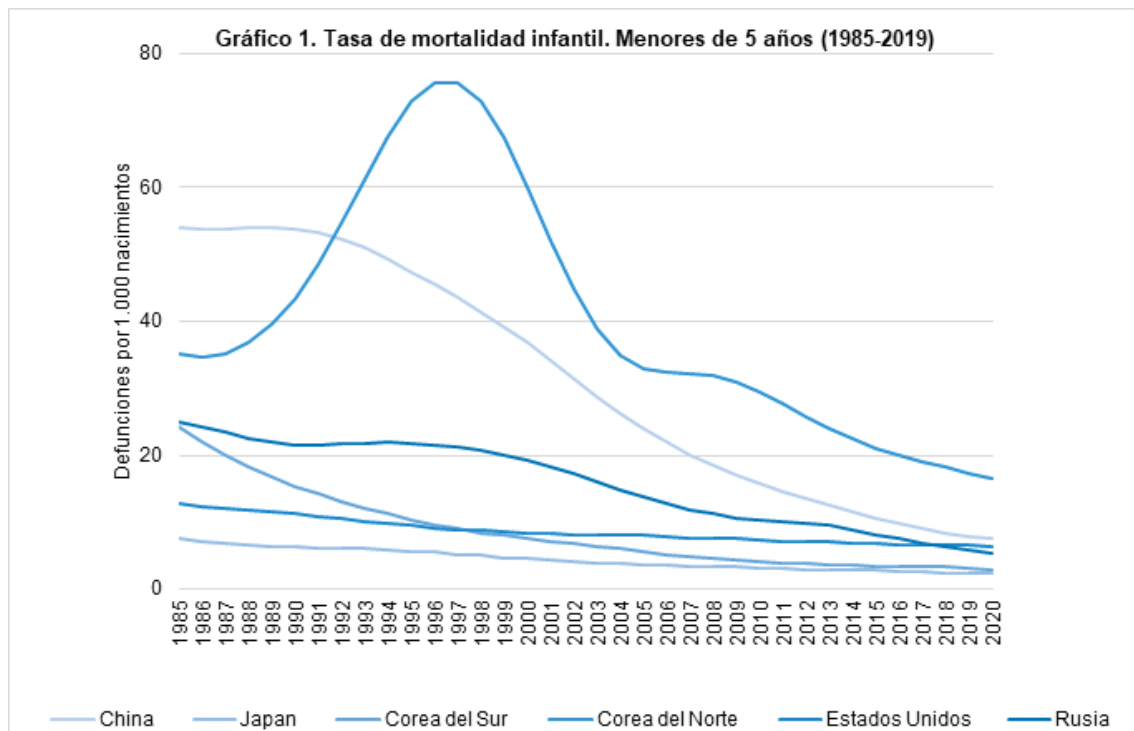
Graphic. Source: childmortality.org

The above analysis must be completed with the evolution of the suicide rate since its increase correlates with social dissatisfaction[34]. Examining GDP per capita and the suicide rate shows that Japan, China and Russia constitute a homogeneous triangle, where the suicide rate decreases as income increases, while, on the contrary, South Korea and the USA may be suffering a social crisis despite the improvement in GDP per capita[35]. Thus, South Korean animosity with Japan and U.S. animosity with China and Russia could have a domestic as well as an international origin, which would

32 "The desire to regain not the territories per se, but the position, power and status of the Russian-Soviet past, a vision typical of states that are heirs of a glorious past empire that they are trying to emulate". Toal, G. (2016). Near Abroad: Putin, the West, and the Contest over Ukraine and the Caucasus. Oxford University Press. P. 34.

33 In fact, the Far East and Siberia-East regions have worse health indices than European Russia. Shartova, N., Tikunov, V. and Chereshnya, O. (2021). Health disparities in Russia at the regional and global scales. International journal for equity in health, 20(1), 163. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-021-01502-6

34 Luo, F. et al. (2011). Impact of Business Cycles on US Suicide Rates, 1928-2007. American Journal of Public Health. 101 (6).

Kim, K. (2019). *Kankoku ikisugita shihon shugi `mugen kyōsō shakai' no kunō. The suffering of the infinitely competitive society: capitalism that has gone too far in Korea.* (In Japanese). PHP.

35 The absence of North Korean data is revealing, which could mean a trend similar to the South Korean one, as happened in the USSR when it concealed its rising mortality and suicide figures.

legitimize Russian claims that peninsular instability has its origin in the South Korean-U.S. axis[36].
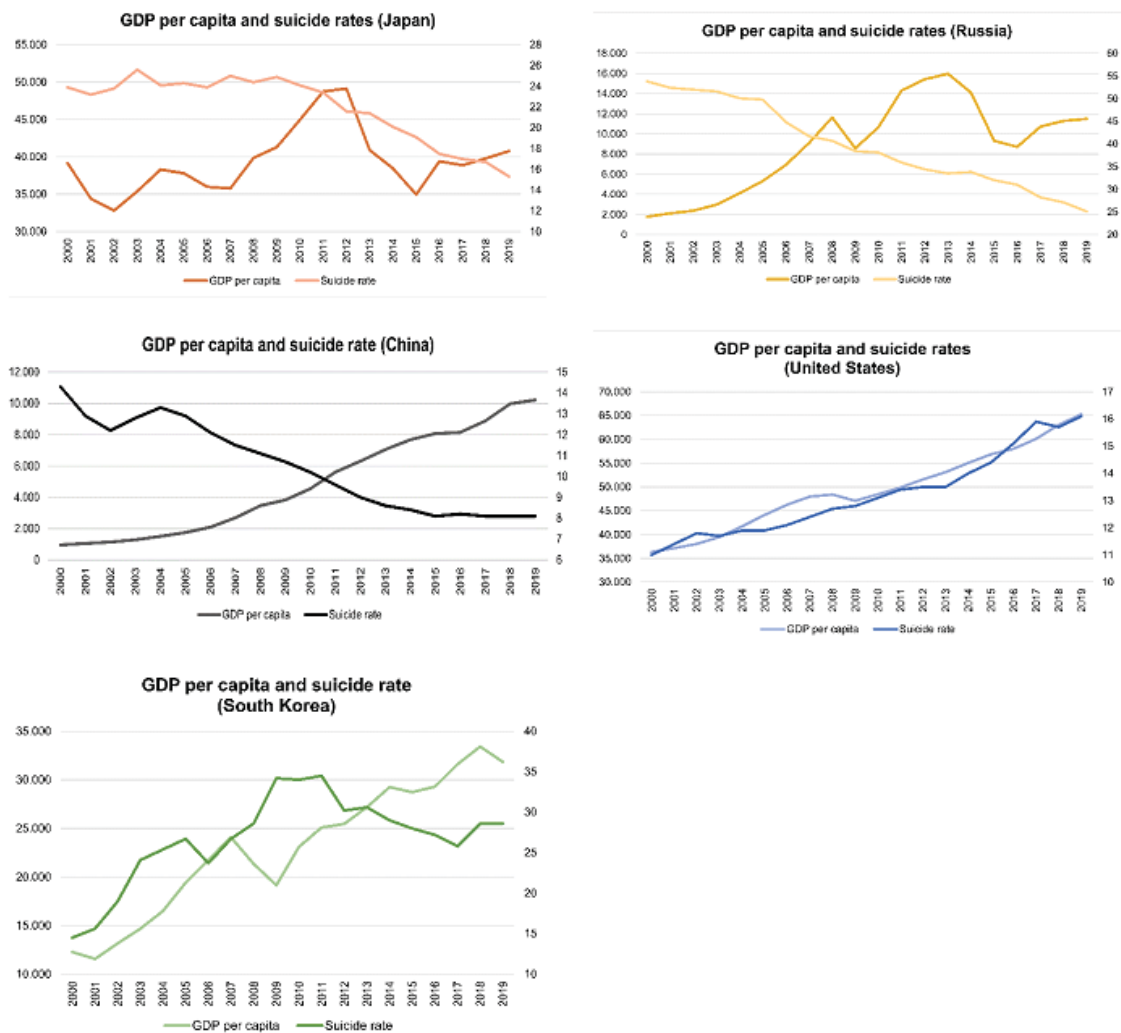
Therefore, under the visible ideological dichotomy between autocracy and democracy, there would be sociological affinities that could challenge military alliances, especially the Washington-Tokyo axis, and strengthen the Sino-Russian autocratic alliance, for its social stability, and the South Korean-US alliance, for its domestic instability, which could be channeled towards a common external enemy. In any case, demographic analysis points to the possibility of one of the scenarios most feared by US diplomacy: a Tokyo-Beijing-Mos-

36 Chung, C. (2021). Chinese, Russian diplomats accuse US of escalating tensions with North Korea. https://www.nknews.org/2021/08/chinese-russian-diplomats-accuse-us-of-escalating-tensions-with-north-korea/

cow axis[37]. It is therefore important to analyse the links between the states that make up each of the ideological triangles in order to verify the plausibility of these hypotheses.

The democratic-capitalist bloc

The triangle between the US, Japan and South Korea is characterised by strong military and economic integration thanks to the unquestionable *postbellum* US leadership, which was able to recast its Asian allies practically in its image and likeness, setting them up as continental democratic-capitalist enclaves. However, the triangular relationship is scalene due to a double asymmetry: the economic-military preeminence of the Washington-Tokyo axis and the already analysed U.S.-South Korean social tension. It was the need to preserve a demilitarised and democratic Japan that motivated the U.S. intervention in Korea, and it is now considered the best ally and *the cornerstone of peace in East Asia*[38]. This asymmetry is explained, in the military sphere, by two main reasons: the geostrategic location of the archipelago (which may limit China's and Russia's access to the Pacific) and its status as a U.S. protectorate, since Japan is a nation with Armed Forces only for Self-Defense by constitutional mandate. For this reason, the US has committed substantial amounts in recent years to cover Japan's defence expenditures, supplemented by a 60 percent contribution
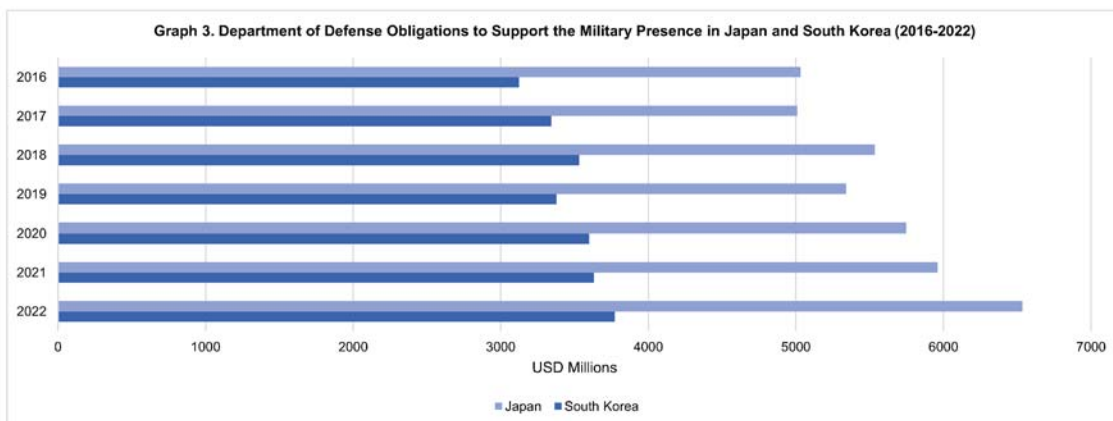

Graphic 3. Source: U.S. Department of Defense (2022).

37 A Beijing-Tokyo axis under an Asianist cloak, although geographically limited, was already considered more dangerous to the US than a Sino-Russian-Iranian anti-hegemonic bloc. Brzezinski, Z. (1997). The Grand Chessboard. American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives. Basic Books. P. 71.

38 According to the State Department, Japan is the cornerstone of continental peace and South Korea is a lynchpin of security and peace on the Korean peninsula. Gao. (2021). Benefits and Costs Associated with the U.S. Military Presence in Japan and South Korea. P. 4. https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-270

from the Japanese government[39]. In the case of Seoul, on the other hand, the numbers are lower in part because the U.S. troops stationed there are also lower (28,500 in South Korea compared to 55,000 in Japan).

This asymmetry also holds in the economic sphere, with Japanese investments in the US being much higher than those of South Korea. In fact, Japan has greater investments in the US than in China (as opposed to trade traffic, which is more even), which strengthens the economic link and aligns the foreign policy interests of both countries. South Korea, on the other hand, presents a more ambiguous picture; despite framing itself in the democratic-capitalist triangle, its investments in China, until the announcement in 2016 of the deployment on its territory of the THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile) system, had been higher than those of the United States, which
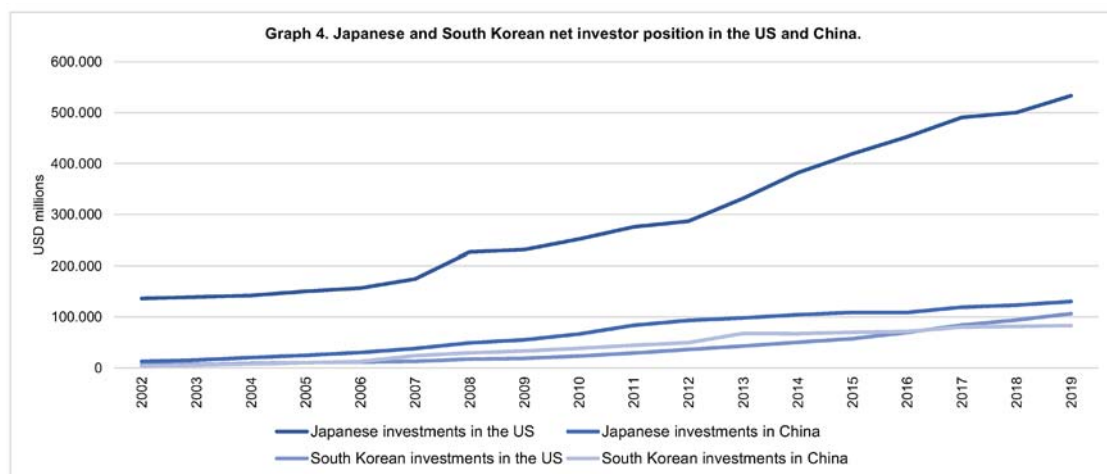

Graphic 4. Source: www.investmentmap.org

had led to misgivings in Washington about its reliability as an ally. With the deployment of THAAD, however, Seoul reaffirmed its Western commitment and seems to have initiated a process of disengagement with China, in line with the U.S. strategy.

However, to ensure triangular cohesion, it will be crucial to strengthen the Tokyo-Seoul axis, which has been badly damaged by historical grievances that the current model does not mitigate, but rather perpetuates. As stated by Kim Dae-Jung, South Korean president, *Japan has become a superpower without reflecting on its past mistakes; how can its neighbour Korea not worry? It is natural for Korea to be suspicious of Japan and to wonder about the true intentions of its former colonizer.* The origin of the problem lies in the fact that when the current triangular architecture was established, South Korea was a fledgling nation, whose economic viability was even questioned, which weakened Seoul in the normalisation of

39 "Suddenly imposing full base funding on host countries would cause a political earthquake, possibly ending the permanent military presence". González Martín, A. (2017). Los compromisos norteamericanos con Japón y Corea permanecen, los debates cambian [U.S. commitments to Japan and Korea remain, debates change]. https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_analisis/2017/DIEEEA21-2017_CompromisoEE. UU._Japon_AGM.pdf
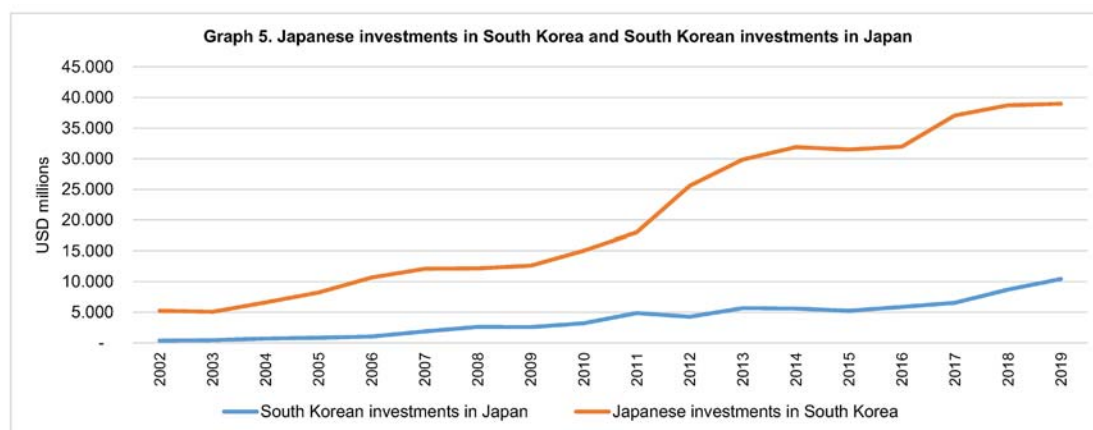
Graphic 5. Source: JETRO; Bank of Korea

diplomatic relations with Japan, its former coloniser, in critical aspects such as investments, war reparations or fishing[40], a situation that is now changing[41].

Indeed, although, despite their geographical proximity, they are still not major investment partners, as the US is for both, the evolution of the international investment position of both is clearly positive, since Korea has greatly reduced the differential while Japan has continued to invest in the peninsula, moving away from the initial quasi-colonial model. Therefore, despite recurrent diplomatic and media crises, investment flows, better than trade flows, would confirm that both countries are solid allies[42].

The favourable view of Japan held by South Korean youth is another indicator of the strength of the South Korean-Japanese alliance is South Korean youth [43], which has prompted a slight pro-Japanese attitudinal shift in society at large. Young people have been the group most exposed to globalisation and competition with China, which has led to a permanent dissatisfaction with the system,

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40 "They resentfully feel that the Korean government is adopting low-postured diplomacy toward Japan at the expense of excessive concessions in an attempt to overcome the current economic crisis stemming from inflation and foreign exchange shortages in Korea". Telegram A-553 from the U.S. Embassy to the Department of State (1964). https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v29p1/d3

41 Even Kim Dae-Jung himself, the opposition leader at the time, acknowledged the need for normalisation: "Surrounded by North Korea, China and the Soviet Union, South Korea did not have the option of antagonising Japan". Kim, D-J. (2019). Op. cit., p. 86.

42 "South Korean-Japanese cooperation should be analysed by the number of times the two governments avoid confrontation in historical grievances rather than by the number of confrontations". Cha, V. (2004). Japan-Korea Relations: Engagement from Strength. Center for Strategic & International Studies. http://csis.org/files/media/ csis/pubs/0402qjapan_korea.pdf

43 Kim, K. (2019). Kankoku ikisugita shihon shugi `mugen kyōsō shakai' no kunō. The suffering of the infinitely competitive society: capitalism that has gone too far in Korea. (In Japanese). PHP.

which they nicknamed *Hell Joseon* (the name of pre-modern Korea)[44]. On the other hand, Japanese youth, who have benefited from the ageing of the popula-

Graphic 6. Source: https://www.sisain.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=44821
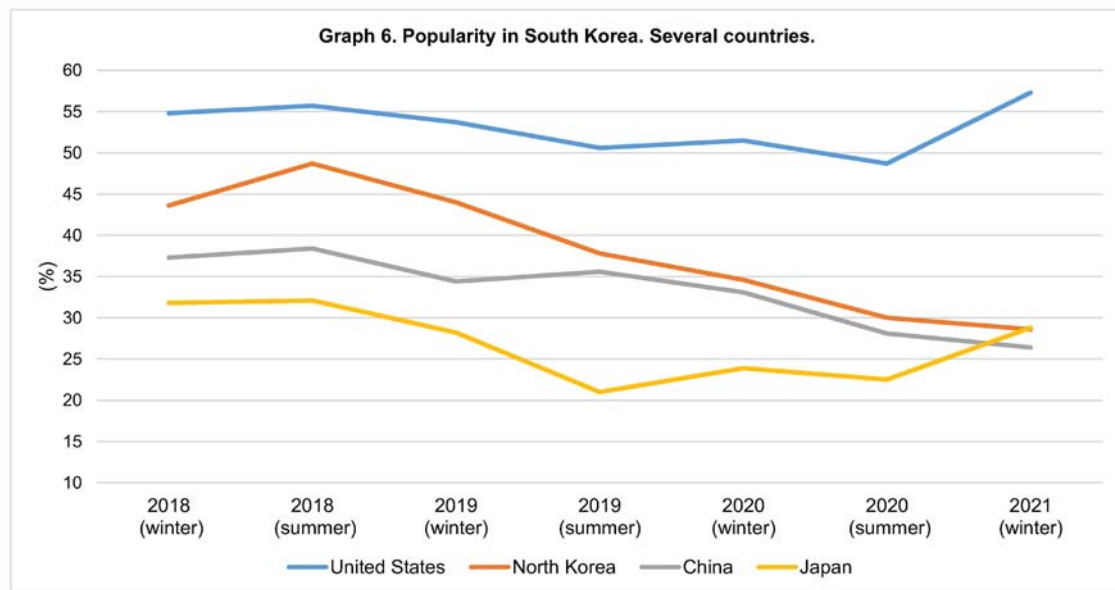
tion, which has provided them with new job opportunities, are less pessimistic about the future, which may partly explain their lower suicide rate [45]. In this regard, it is revealing that the new South Korean president, Yoon Suk-yeol, elected by the youth vote, has stated that *Seoul must recognise the strategic importance of Tokyo and that South Korea has succumbed to Chinese economic retaliation at the expense of its own security interests* [46].

Consequently, there appears to be a South Korean investment and social base that should complement the strong triangular military cooperation. To this end, the US should continue to play a mediating role, although it would have to be the Asian leaders who decided to overcome historical differences, as France and Germany did after World War II, or the US and Japan itself[47]. As the multilateral military exercises have been little affected by diplomatic problems it has been suggested to use them as an

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44 Park, K. (2021). South Korea Is No Country for Young People. Foreign Policy.

Yun, J.-W. (2010). The Myth of Confucian Capitalism in South Korea: Overworked Elderly and Underworked Youth. *Pacific Affairs*. 83(2), pp. 237–259.

45 Feigelman, W. et al. (2020). Examining whether South Korean and Japanese Views of Suicide and Death Help to Better Understand their Contrasting Suicide Patterns. Suicidology Online 2020. Vol11(1).

46 Yoon, S. (2022). South Korea Needs to Step Up. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/south-korea/2022-02-08/south-korea-needs-step

47 "The Japanese-South Korean historical recognition gap will never be filled; only leader-to-leader relations can bring about a turning point in diplomatic relations". Minegishi, H. (2019). Nikkan no dansō. (Japanese-South Korean discrepancies). (In Japanese). Nikkei. P. 229.

opportunity to foster South Korean-Japanese cooperation[48]. After all, South Korea is critically dependent on Japan for its security as its only regional ally, so its diplomacy should avoid a hypothetical Tokyo-Beijing-Moscow alliance based on latent Japanese anti-Americanism, which would regroup the states of the calm axis (with rising GDP per capita and falling suicide rate) and engulf Seoul[49]. Thus, over time, greater economic protectionism vis-à-vis China[50] and accelerated South Korean ageing could reduce social unrest and improve diplomatic relations with Japan almost naturally.

The autocratic triangle: North Korea, China and Russia

The autocratic triangle, unlike the democratic-capitalist one, is more of an agglomerate than a compact economic-military bloc due to mutual suspicions, which could detract from its collective defensive capacity[51]. The absence of powerful economic ties between the triad limits their alliance to conjunctural circumstances, with external hostility seeming to tighten ties, as after Tiananmen (1989) or Ukraine (2022). Instead, globalisation has favoured their integration into the democratic-capitalist sphere, their source of technology and foreign exchange to finance their development, which has made possible a clear convergence in levels of well-being but which could also increase the likelihood of conflict as *war is a luxury of the rich nations*[52]. Thus, despite recent analyses[53], a long-term Sino-Russian alliance seems unlikely for two reasons: it would isolate China from needed Western technology and capital, and it would tighten the Japanese-American alliance, which Beijing seeks to dilute[54]. Moreover, although economic analysis, based on GDP, seemed to draw a Sino-American "Thucydides Trap" scenario, anthropological analysis (declining infant mortality) shows a Russian-Amer-

Analysing a specific case of distension: Mayumi Yasunaga, M. E. (2016). *Japón y Corea del Sur, posible deshielo tras 50 años de tensiones [Japan and South Korea, possible thaw after possible thaw after 50 years of tensions].* https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_opinion/2016/DIEEEO57-2016_Japon_CoreaSur_Mayumi_Yasunaga.pdf

48 Aoki, N. (2021). Takeaways From a Time of Increased Friction: South Korea-Japan Security Cooperation From 2015 to Present. Korea Economic Institute of America.

49 Less hypothetical could be a Moscow-Tokyo axis of collaboration to jointly develop the Russian Far East and thus enhance Japanese energy security. Kazuhiko, F. (2017). Kokueki kara mita Roshia nyūmon (Introduction to Russia from the national interest) (in Japanese). PHP.

50 Todd, E. (2002). Op. cit. "China now weighs negatively on our welfare. We will have to have the courage to set up protectionist barriers against it and force it to adopt a more balanced mode of development".

51 "China continues to be an uncomfortable neighbour. Many Russian officials continue to believe that China represents at least a potential rival". Mankoff, J. (2009). Russian Foreign Policy. The Return of Great Power Politics. Rowman & Littlefield publishers. P. 195.

52 Bouthoul, G. (1967). Op. cit.

53 Schoen, D. and Kaylan, M. (2015). Op. it.

54 Brzezinski, Z. (1997). Op. cit.

ican Neo-Cold War, more European than Asian, which would reproduce a scenario similar to that of the Korean War, with Russian leadership mediated by China[55].

What would be the current impediments to explicit Russian leadership in Asia? Mainly two: the anti-imperialism of Asian communism and the underdevelopment of Eastern Russia. For historical reasons, Asian communism, unlike European communism, focused more on anti-colonialism than on social injustice as its *leitmotif*. This desire for continental emancipation still today generates paradoxical alliances: it unites the two Koreas and China against Japan, still perceived as a colonial power, but also against Russia, for its occupations of Czechoslovakia (1968), Afghanistan (1979) and the recent ones of Crimea (2014) and Ukraine (2022), which discredit it morally and hinder its Asian consolidation[56]. On the other hand, the US, although formally the common enemy, seems in reality to be the desired ally; it was so for opening-up China in the 1970s, and could be so now for North Korea, in its quest for survival[57]. China, formally anti-American, would actually seek greater U.S. involvement to avoid being the only great power threatened by Pyongyang[58], which in turn would seek to offer itself to Washington as a buffer state to curb Chinese expansionism[59].

The underdevelopment of Asian Russia has also limited its continental leadership due to two main causes: the effects of the Sino-Soviet communist schism and the Korean division. The rivalry between Stalin and Mao for revolutionary leadership resulted in a permanent diplomatic crisis that prevented economic integration between neighbouring states ideologically close[60]. China's distancing from the US meant a rap-

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55 La guerra de Corea la inició Pyongyang con el beneplácito de Stalin y el apoyo militar chino [The Korean War was initiated by Pyongyang with Stalin's approval and Chinese military support]. Shen, Z. and Xia, Y. (2018). A Misunderstood Friendship: Mao Zedong, Kim Il-sung, and Sino-North Korean relations, 1949-1976. Columbia University Press.

56 Anticolonialism that had its Russian reflection in an anti-Chinese sentiment due to migratory problems in the bordering regions. Lukin, A. (2018). China and Russia: The New Rapprochement. Polity. P. 76.

57 At bottom, the Korean dispute seems to be a fratricidal rivalry to achieve a privileged relationship with a world leader, the US, which does not consider the peninsula strategic, so that Sino-North Korean relations would be conditioned by the volatility of Sino-US relations. Tianjiao, J. (2020). Three Spikes and You Are Out? China-DPRK Relations after the Cold War and the US. https://theasanforum.org/three-spikes-and-you-are-out-china-dprk-relations-after-the-cold-war-and-the-us/

58 China would have been the country most hated by Kim Jong Il, who declared that the Sino-North Korean border was as ideological as the 38th parallel. Jang, J-S. (2014). Dear Leader: poet, spy, escapee: a look inside North Korea. Simon & Schuster. Pp. 260-261.

59 Bulychev, G. (2021). How to Put Korean Peace-Building Right: A View from Russia. https://www.globalasia.org/v14no2/feature/how-to-put-korean-peace-building-right-a-view-from-russia_georgy-bulychev

60 The Sino-Soviet partnerships were similar to the colonial ones, with Russian investments and Chinese operators. "This was a mistake; even an insult to the Chinese. Previously, the French, the British, and the Americans had settled in Chinese territory [and exploited it], and now the Soviets were also making their way into Chinese territory. It is unbelievable that Stalin would have done

prochement with Washington and its opening to the global market; currently China has more investments in the US than in Russia, its neighbour, an asymmetry that does not occur between the US and Canada, neighbouring democratic-capitalist nations. Although the crisis in Crimea (2014) and the War in Ukraine (2022) have brought Moscow closer to Beijing, the legacy of purely military and non-civilian investments in Asian Russia will hinder an economic integration that would strengthen their supposed alliance[61].

In turn, the Korean division also seems to have been an insurmountable barrier to Russia's Asian expansion, as it has prevented it from benefiting from South Korean dynamism. The recent failure of the trans-Korean gas pipeline, despite Russia's need to diversify its export markets and South Korea's policy of decarbonisation, seems illustrative in this regard. The North Korean transit had already been considered more risky than the Ukrainian transit on the Russian-European gas pipeline[62] and, in fact, Pyongyang, despite getting Russia to write off 90% of its debt in exchange for accepting the project[63], continued with its nuclearization, which also led to US and UN sanctions and the abandonment of a project pending since the 1980s[64]. The disagreement over North Korean fishing banks would be another example, as they could generate synergies between the Russian, Chinese and South Korean fishing fleets with North Korean labour and Japanese manufacturing. China is currently taking advantage of North Korea's inability to process its catches, which could lead to a regional conflict[65].

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this!". Khrushchev, S. (2007). Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev. Statesman. The Pennsylvania State University Press. P. 402.

61 "If Moscow ever had illusions about replacing the West with China, they have now all but dissipated. China may be a large market for Russia's natural resources, but it lacks the advanced equipment, technologies and expertise needed to tap the riches of the Russian Far East. These can often be found only in the West and its allies such as Japan and South Korea". Lukin, A. and Rozman, G. (2018). The Russian Far East: Positive Scenarios and Negative Scenarios. In Rozman, G. and Radchenko, S. (eds). International Relations and Asia's Northern Tier. Sino-Russia Relations, North Korea, and Mongolia. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-3144-1

62 Lee, Y. (2013). Potential risks of the Russia-North Korea-South Korea gas pipeline: Is there any lesson Seoul can learn from the Russia-Ukraine gas disputes? Asian Survey. 53 (3), pp. 584-606. https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2013.53.3.584

63 https://uk.reuters.com/article/russia-northkorea-debt/russia-writes-off-90-percent-of-north-koreadebt-eyes-gas-pipeline-idUKL6N0NB04L20140419

64 Lee, Y. (2019). Political Viability of the Russia-North Korea-South Korea Gas Pipeline Project: An Analysis of the Role of the U.S. Energies. doi:10.3390/en12101895

65 It has even been suggested that a supranational body similar to the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community) be created to foster cooperation. Fiori, A. and Passeri, A. (2015). Seventy Years after World War II: Comparing Europe and Northeast Asia's Security Architectures. The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis. 27 (2), pp. 233–245.

However, even if the peninsular division impedes Russian consolidation in Asia, Moscow (as well as Beijing) will continue to support Pyongyang by a sort of tacit Treaty of Tordesillas whereby *Moscow would cede to Beijing the affairs of East Asia while, in return, China would recognize Russia's leading role in the Middle East; the autocratic bloc would not be able to continue to support Pyongyang*[66]; the autocratic bloc should therefore be judged not by economic ties but by its geostrategic interests, which makes North Korea a voluntary buffer state thanks to its nuclearization and China the apparent regional leader. Pyongyang, aware of its strategic location, has consolidated a nuclear program that confers a privileged position on one of the poorest states in Asia, a phenomenon known as the *tyranny of the weak*[67]. Thanks to it, a structurally loss-making Stalinist system is perpetuated by obtaining unconditional donations that can be distributed by the regime itself without external interference, being preferred to generalised foreign investments, which would also mean a loss of political control over the distribution of national wealth[68]. Being a poor state, the meagre donations received are sufficient to preserve the regime; in fact, the greater the wealth, the greater the likelihood of revolution. A national capitalist transition *a la* China thus appears to be out of the question despite official announcements.

This tyranny of the weak would in turn limit China's real ability to influence Pyongyang[69]. *Caught between the sword (the CCP's political interests in resisting the US-Japan alliance) and the wall (China's national interests in opposing the North Korean nuclear program), Beijing has no choice but to continue its seemingly useful policy of milking the situation for as much political gain as possible that helps its rivalry with the US and Japan, while leaving the status quo of the Korean divide and the North Korean bomb adrift, waiting for a lucky break*[70]. Therefore, it is difficult to accept the hypothesis of imminent North Korean collapse, which has been unverified for more than three decades. Far from it, as its declining infant mortality rate seems to confirm, Pyongyang would be progressing thanks to advances in its light industry and agriculture, the latter with

66 Lukin, A. (2019). Why Russia is standing aloof on the Korean Peninsula. https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2019/02/16/why-russia-is-standing-aloof-on-the-korean-peninsula/

67 Armstrong, C. K. (2013). Tyranny of the weak: North Korea and the world, 1950-1992. Cornell University Press.

68 "Without nuclear, North Korea would be just another impoverished country that would have to compete for donations with Sudan or Zimbabwe". Lankov, A. (2013). The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia. Oxford University Press. P. 236.

69 Zhang, W. and Denton, G. L. (2019). The North Korean Nuclear Dilemma: Does China Have Leverage? Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs. 6(2), pp. 107-135. https://doi.org/10.1177/2347797019842437

70 Wang, F. L. (2017). Between the bomb and the United States: China Faces the Nuclear North Korea, in Kim, S. C. and Cohen, M. D. North Korea and nuclear weapons: Entering the New Era of Deterrence. Georgetown University Press.

better fertilizers, pesticides and seeds in recent years[71]. Moreover, *the new capitalist class seeks to join the existing elite, through marriage and commercial ties, rather than to undermine it*[72].

Therefore, a North Korean denuclearization, as the US has sought for decades, also seems inconceivable, although, due to the high cost, Pyongyang could agree to limit its arsenal in exchange for security guarantees[73]. And it is at this point that Washington should have sought an agreement with Moscow, rather than with Beijing, as their interests coincide: both depend little on Pyongyang's stability, as the northern border area matters less to them. Moscow also has less trade with North Korea and would suffer less geopolitically than China with a reunified pro-US peninsula[74]. The war in Ukraine is likely to make their understanding more difficult, leading to a de facto recognition of Pyongyang as a nuclear power, like Maoist China[75], reviving a scenario of "confrontational stability" with a rising Russia[76].

The regional outcome is likely to be a chain of strategic manipulations, in which, through interposed countries (China and North Korea), Russia will seek to gain a foothold in the East through shared anti-Americanism, while avoiding falling victim to Asian anti-imperialism[77]. The global impact could be widespread nuclear prolifer-

71 Kwon, T-J. (2017). Agriculture in North Korea in the Kim Jong-un Era: Evaluation and Prospect. Focus on Korean Peninsula. 41, pp. 9-19.

72 Tudor, D. and Pearson, J. (2015). North Korea confidential. Tuttle Publishing. P. 178.

73 Lankov, A. (2011). Why the United States will have to accept a nuclear North Korea. The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis. Vol. 21 (3), September, pp. 251-264. DOI: 10.1080/10163270903087147.
The U.S. threat to Pyongyang seems plausible: "I explained why and how a preemptive strike against North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs would work; how we could use massive conventional bombs against Pyongyang's artillery north of the DMZ, which was threatening Seoul, thus drastically reducing casualties". Bolton, J. (2020). *Op. cit.*

74 Bandow, D. (2021). Talk to Russia About North Korea. https://nationalinterest.org/blog/korea-watch/talk-russia-about-north-korea-193227

75 "After millions died in the famine that followed the catastrophic Great Leap Forward and amid the madness of the Cultural Revolution, incited by a zealous Mao, U.S. leaders wondered whether a regime as cruel, incompetent and capricious as Beijing's could be trusted with nuclear weapons". Ankit Panda, A. (2020). Kim Jong Un and the Bomb. Survival and Deterrence in North Korea. Oxford University Press. P. 25.

76 With no option to improve US-Russian relations and seeing South Korea unable to break its US dependence, Moscow sees Pyongyang as key to its great power positioning in the Asia-Pacific region, including as a signal to China that it is an independent force in regional geopolitics, as argued by Torkunov, A., Toloraya, G. and Diachkov, I. (2020). Современная Корея: метаморфозы турбулентных лет (2008-2020 гг.). (Modern Korea: Metamorphosis of Turbulent Years) Mgimo-University. Ch. 15, pp. 323-55.

77 Chinese expansionism in East Asia and the Pacific even benefits Russia because it diverts U.S. attention and resources away from confrontation with Moscow. (...) Moscow is preparing to enjoy the spectacle of China and the United States fighting in Asia Pacific. Lukin, A. (2019). Op. cit.

ation by those buffer states that feel threatened by a superpower, especially after the Libyan and Ukrainian experiences[78].

False exogenous states: Australia and Pakistan

Although most analyses of Korea have focused on the Six-Party Talks, there are two forgotten states, Australia and Pakistan, which, indirectly, can condition regional alliances by being, along with Japan, direct beneficiaries of the Korean War. In both cases, history and geography have forged a sui generis foreign policy, defending national interests that seem removed from their cultural context. Australia, as an Anglo-Saxon stronghold in Asia-Pacific; Pakistan, as the Asian Muslim Israel[79]. Both nations were created on decolonized British territories where there was no previous indigenous culture to restore sovereignty to and which, from their origins, were pro-Western, especially pro-American[80]. However, geography has made them partners of reference in the Asia-Pacific; Australia, as a supplier of energy and raw materials to China and Japan; Pakistan as a Chinese ally in its rivalry with India and as a necessary partner in North Korean nuclearization. Because of this destabilising capacity in the complex framework of the Six-Party Talks, it is important to analyse its role in a possible Neo-Cold War.

The Anglo-Saxon stronghold in the Pacific has been a key U.S. ally since World War II, when the conflict deeply industrialised its economy in order to meet the needs of MacArthur's troops sent from Brisbane[81]. The first world conflagration had already exposed the weaknesses of the country, excessively dependent on British trade, and had forced it to establish an indigenous productive base, such as the automo-

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78 This correlation is questioned in the case of Libya: "Trump failed to understand that the unforeseen Arab Spring, which swept dramatically through the region beginning in 2011, was the reason for Qaddafi's subsequent fall, not his 2003 renunciation of nuclear weapons". Bolton, J. (2020). Op. cit. In any case, the US has managed to ensure that neither its neighbours (Canada and Mexico) nor its main Asian allies (Japan and South Korea) have nuclear arsenals, while China is surrounded by nuclear nations (Russia, India, Pakistan and North Korea).

79 Pakistan and Israel share the unique heritage of having been created after World War II as religiously defined states. Kumaraswamy, P. R. (1997). The Strangely Parallel Careers of Israel and Pakistan. Middle East Quarterly. June. Pp. 31-39.

80 The Pakistani case is perhaps the most surprising, but the Muslim population's suspicion of "godless communism" led its first head of government, Liaquat Ali Khan, to prefer a military alliance with Washington rather than with Moscow. Kasuri, K. M. (2015). Neither a hawk nor a dove. An Insider's Account of Pakistan's Foreign Policy. Penguin books.

81 Mclean, I. W. (2013). Why Australia prospered: the shifting sources of economic growth. Princeton University Press. An estimated 750,000 troops were deployed in a country of 7.3 million inhabitants.

tive industry, which made possible the subsequent development of aeronautics[82]. In addition, to reduce vulnerability to possible Japanese bombing, industrial capacity

Graphic 7. Source: https://www.trademap.org
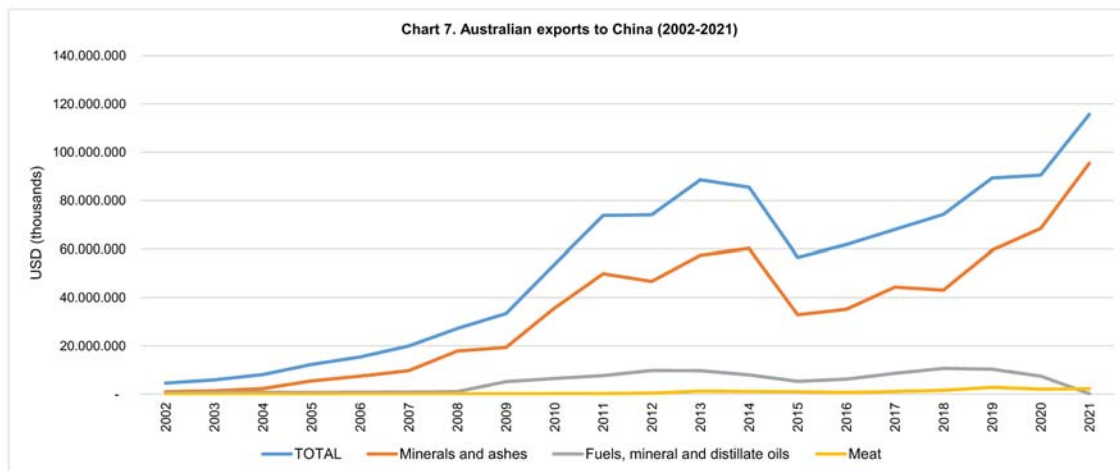
was spread throughout the country, especially benefiting the south (Adelaide), and access to soft U.S. credit was facilitated so that, after the end of hostilities, Australia improved its international financial position[83]. The subsequent Korean War also benefited the country with a wool export boom, followed by a mineral boom driven by Asian industrialization. Thus, Australia, in war or peace, has benefited from the continental vicissitudes of recent decades, consolidating an extremely resilient economy as a supplier of raw materials to major regional economies.

It is this strength that enables Australia to stand up to its main trading partners (Japan during World War II and China today). When, for example, Canberra called for an independent investigation into the origin of Covid-19, Beijing responded with a boycott, discouraging tourists and students from travelling to Australia, its industries from buying Australian coal and introducing neo-protectionist measures on food. Although painful for several sectors, total exports to China increased by 24% in 2021 because Australian iron ore is an irreplaceable input in the Chinese economy, dependent on construction and manufacturing exports[84].

Australia is also a critical energy supplier in the region. In 2018-19, Japan purchased 45 percent of the total value of Australian thermal coal exported, followed by China (16%) and South Korea (15%). Australia is the second-largest supplier of thermal coal

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82 "Without its automotive industry, Australia would not have been able to build aircraft on the scale achieved at the height of the war". Mellor, D. P. (1958). The Role of Science and Industry: Australia in the War of 1939–1945. Series Four, Civil. Vol. V. Australian War Memorial. P. 394.

83 Butlin, S. J. and C. Schedvin, B. (1977). War Economy 1942- 1945. Australian War Memorial.

84 Coyne, J., Savage, G. and Shoebridge, M. (2021). Op. cit., p. 15.

to China (26%), after Indonesia (46%)[85], but Indonesian coal is more polluting and of poorer quality[86], allowing it to be blended with Chinese coal, but at the cost of increasing air pollution (58% of Chinese primary energy is coal) and tariffs[87]. Therefore, the most realistic alternative to simultaneously decarbonise and improve Chinese energy security would be Russian natural gas[88]. As long as this profound structural change is not undertaken, Australia will continue to be able to condition Beijing's competitiveness and foreign policy. Moreover, the Chinese veto has allowed for increased exports of Australian coal to India, the largest market (26% share in 2020) which is also expected to overtake China as the world's largest consumer of met coal[89] which could further benefit Australia as India is a Western ally. Add to this economic strength the new nuclear naval capabilities agreed with Washington within the AUKUS alliance, and Australia will be a key U.S. partner in a Neo-Cold War context[90].

In strategic analyses of the Korean peninsula (and East Asia), the fundamental role played by Pakistan in the current balance of power situation is often forgotten, a surprising circumstance considering its close military collaboration with North Korea. Both countries have experienced a similar situation of international isolation and are the only nations that, despite the small size of their economies, have achieved nuclear status. Ideologically opposed in its origins, since Pakistan fought on the South Korean side (which brought it huge profits from cotton and jute exports)[91], it was Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's socialism that established the Pyongyang-Islamabad connection, which has persisted due to the importance of the Pakistani military establishment, the only stable institution in a country of fragile democracy[92]. Precisely the social militarisation of

85 BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2020.

86 Indonesian sub-bituminous coal generates higher CO2 levels than Australian bituminous coals. Campbell, M. (2008). Coal Quality Effects on CO2 Emissions. http://www.acps.com.au/assets/Uploads/ACPS-Coal-Quality-Effects-on-CO2-Emissions-Revised-130908.pdf

87 Chinese coal (Qinhuangdao FOB) trades on average 14% above the international average price; since the Australian coal import ban, the differential has increased to 38%.
International Energy Agency. (2020). *Coal 2021: Analysis and forecast to 2024*. P. 75.https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/f1d724d4-a753-4336-9f6e-64679fa23bbf/Coal2021.pdf

88 Rozman, G. and Radchenko, S. (eds). (2018). International Relations and Asia's Northern Tier. Sino-Russia Relations, North Korea, and Mongolia. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-3144-1

89 International Energy Agency. (2020). Op. cit.

90 Mackinlay, A. (2022). AUKUS: la perspectiva de Australia [AUKUS: Australia's perspective]. IEEE Opinion Paper 13/2022. https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_opinion/2022/DIEEEO13_2022_ALEMAC_Australia.pdf

91 Haqqani, H. (2018). Reimagining Pakistan: transforming a dysfunctional nuclear state. HarperCollins.

92 Military dominance over Pakistan's political leadership is structural, rooted in the circumstances of Pakistan's birth. The country had inherited almost a third of British India's army, but only 17% of its revenue sources. Haqqani, H. (2018). Op. cit.

both States has been key, and the importance given to nuclear weapons as guarantors of international respect in decolonised States. Also their strong historical parallelism has led a Muslim nation and an atheist communist one to collaborate closely against their respective contemporary enemies; North and South Korea, like Pakistan and India, were founded simultaneously, making comparisons and competitiveness inevitable. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that it was Islamabad that transferred military nuclear technology to Pyongyang in exchange for ballistic missiles for its defence in the era of international sanctions[93].

Another peculiarity of Pakistan has been its diplomatic ability to maintain good relations with the US and China simultaneously in tense times such as the Korean, Vietnam and Afghanistan wars. Its army also defends the doctrine of borrowed power of U.S. conventional and Chinese nuclear capabilities to neutralise Indian conventional and nuclear superiority[94]. For this reason, its authorities are optimistic about the current scenario in which there *are more Sino-US complementarities than in the past*[95]. In fact, Nixon's historic trip to Beijing was forged thanks to Pakistani mediation and the US even considered positive the Chinese support to the Afghan-Pakistani collaboration that would facilitate access to Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, which would turn Pakistan into a point of contention and Pyongyang into one of insecurity[96] in spite of the intense Sino-Pakistani military collaboration; Islamabad is the largest customer for Chinese arms (including several submarines) and they have jointly developed the Al-Khalid tank and the JF-17 fighter jet. However, China has repeatedly stated that it does not want problems in its relations with Washington because of Pakistan[97]. It is precisely this rejection that has strengthened North Korean-Pakistani military collaboration, to the detriment of China. Pyongyang was able to test its Nodong ballistic technology in Pakistan, whose orography allowed frequent testing, and Islamabad gained an alternative supplier to Beijing, which lost its monopoly and leverage not only against Pakistan but also against North Korea, with whom it ended up competing[98].

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93 Benazir Bhutto, during her visit to Pyongyang in 1993, allegedly provided Pakistani nuclear information in exchange for North Korean ballistic technology. Devasher, T. (2018). Pakistan: at the helm. HarperCollins.

Pakistán fue proveedor de tecnología nuclear militar también de Libia e Irán *[Pakistan was also a supplier of military nuclear technology to Libya and Iran]*. Elbaradei, M. (2011). *The Age of deception. Nuclear diplomacy in treacherous times.* Metropolitan Books. Chapter 7.

94 Devasher, T. (2016). Pakistan: Courting the Abyss. HarperCollins.

95 Kasuri, K. M. (2015). Op. cit.

96 Brzezinski, Z. (1997). Op. cit., p. 149.

97 Hooper, E. and Yusuf, M. (2014). Pakistán: escenarios futuros y contexto regional [Pakistan: future scenarios and regional context]. https://raco.cat/index.php/AnuarioCIDOB/article/download/257473/344564

98 Khan, F. H. (2012). Eating grass. The Making of the Pakistani Bomb. Stanford Security Studies.

In the nuclear field, in the face of international opposition, Pyongyang relied on Pakistan to develop its own project[99], acquiring not only its technology, but also adopting the same strategy. Thus, Islamabad would be an example of how Pyongyang might come to act once it consolidates its arsenal, since, *instead of seeing nuclear weapons as final guarantors against foreign invasion, Pakistan has seen them as weapons of pride that confer a higher international status and allow the country to demand resolution of disputes in its (own) terms*[100]. In other words, there would be a shift from a tyranny of the weak to a tyranny of the strong, which could call into question the current non-proliferation regime[101].

Conclusions

China's military and economic rise and the war in Ukraine seem to evoke a Neo-Cold War scenario between autocracies and democracies that could forge alliances between non-rival Western economies around an Anglo-Saxon core, the US, UK, Australia, complemented by Japan, India and Canada. The Korean peninsula, as a point of friction between the two ideological blocs , could be the theatre of renewed tensions.

The demographic analysis also reveals the existence of two blocks underlying the ideological ones: Tokyo-Beijing-Moscow, the one most feared by U.S. diplomacy, which brings together states where the increase in GDP is accompanied by a fall in the suicide rate (i.e. there would be a real improvement in social welfare), and a Washington-Seoul (possibly including Pyongyang[102]), where the increase in GDP does not prevent an increase in the suicide rate, which could be conditioning diplomatic policy in the region.

However, the democratic-capitalist triangle (US, South Korea and Japan) appears to be solidly integrated around Washington thanks to close investment ties with each other and US military deployment in the region, which perpetuates Japan's status as a protectorate of Washington and prevents a possible change of side by Tokyo. The diplomatic crises between the two Asian allies seem to reflect South Korean social tension, which will require political leadership in Seoul until the ageing population allows its pro-Japanese rather than pro-Chinese youth to gain a foothold in the workforce. The consolidation of Japan's pacifist policy would also help *postbellum*, which would avoid projecting an imperialist image.

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99 The non-proliferation regime was unable to control the transfer of uranium enrichment equipment to Pyongyang in the 1990s because the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) lacks the authority to track supplies from non-member states such as Pakistan.

100 Haqqani, H. (2018). Op. cit.

101 To avoid this, the principle of full multinationalisation of the nuclear fuel cycle was proposed so that no State can develop capabilities autonomously. Elbaradei, M. (2011). Op. cit., p. 317. Unfortunately, nuclearization as an identity sign of full sovereignty seems to be too strong.

102 The fact that North Korea does not publish its suicide figures could confirm this assumption.

The autocratic triangle (China, North Korea and Russia), on the other hand, should be judged more by their common anti-hegemonic interests than by their economic ties, since these are even closer with their capitalist partners than with each other. Also for its progress in welfare, since by considering only economic (GDP) and military (defence spending) indicators and not anthropological (infant mortality rate), analysts would have erred doubly: First, by drawing a "Thucydides trap" scenario between China and the US when in reality it would revive a Neo-Cold War scenario with Russia, as the war in Ukraine seems to corroborate. Second, assuming a North Korean collapse that seems more and more distant due to its nuclearization and Chinese aid. Indeed, Pyongyang's survival could serve as an example to other buffer states, which would break the existing nuclear non-proliferation policy, unless prevented by a global U.S.-Russian agreement.

Finally, the role of Australia, the main supplier of energy to Japan, China and South Korea, and Pakistan, a supplier of military nuclear technology to Pyongyang, must be taken into account, as both could upset the fragile regional balance.

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María DOLORES CALVENTE MORENO
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The transformation of the global jihadist movement

Abstract

The jihadist movement has undergone a transformation since its origin, which we can place in the late 1970s. During this time, the jihadist organizations have changed their tactics and methods, fluctuating through a series of stages in which the movement asserted, consolidated and even denied itself, acknowledging its failures. Their defeats have not ruined the jihadist organizations, which on the contrary have drawn very useful lessons to learn despite everything, given that thanks to them, they have been renewed. The threat of the jihadist dimension continues to worry today, due to its dynamism, its extraordinary capacity for adaptation and versatility, and its lethality.

Keywords

Global Terrorism, Islamic State, Al Qaeda, Caliphate, Arab Springs.

Cite this article:

Part One: Background

Introduction

From the Yom Kippur War in October 1973, the fourth Arab-Israeli war[1], to the uprisings of the so-called "Arab Springs", we have witnessed ongoing instability in the Middle East. It is scenario of conflict and tension that has been exploited by jihadist terrorism, which has always used situations of fragility and crisis for its expansionist ends. This 40-year-long spiral of jihadism has gradually invaded the planet.

The era of global jihadist terrorism would begin after the Arab-Israeli war of 1973, a crucial date when, parallel to the development of the war another conflict, the "oil war", would use oil as an economic weapon, demonstrating the possibility of using this natural resource as an instrument of international pressure. The oil embargo on countries supporting Israel, starting with the US (the "oil conflict" led to the classification of states into "friendly countries", "neutral countries" and "countries supporting the enemy"), and the use of oil as a weapon until the withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, consolidated the financial power of Saudi Arabia and the other exporting countries, demonstrating its strategic importance.

The oil crisis demonstrated both the possibility of using oil as a diplomatic weapon and the improvement of the international image of Arab countries, which managed to get Israel to return part of the territories occupied in 1967. However, it did not achieve all its objectives, given that the Israeli state did not abandon the territories of the West Bank and Gaza, or the Golan Heights, and nor did it recognise the rights of the Palestinian people, which would consolidate the Israeli occupation and the conflict between the two states. The Yom Kippur war not only entrenched Saudi financial power, but it also facilitated the expansion of the ultra-conservative Wahhabi current [2] originating in the state (the Saudi state would in the immediate future be blamed for the rise of the self-styled Islamic State)[3] , as well as the spread of "Islamist group-

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[1] In the context of the long-standing Arab-Israeli conflict, with UN General Assembly Resolution 181 of 29 November 1947 authorising the partition of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and the other Arab, the Yom Kippur War would be the fourth and was fought by Syria and Egypt against the State of Israel. It was preceded by the 1948 War, the Suez War (1956) and the Six-Day War (1967). The UN plan would result in a chain of confrontations between the two states that has continued to this day, affecting the entire international community and its own security. See González, J. L. (2016). The Arab-Israeli conflict and the influence of the terrorist groups from the first to the second Intifada. Final degree thesis. Universidad Empresarial Siglo XX.

[2] Islamic doctrine dominant in Saudi Arabia and named after its founder, Ibn abd el Wahhab (1703-1787). It takes a rigorist and conservative view of dogma and demands the strict application of Shari'a (Islamic law) by its adherents.

[3] [Consultado 15/05/2022]. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2015/12/151219_arabia_saudita_culpa_estado_islamico_wbm

ings" that soon emerged on the political and social scene, favoured by the petro-monarchies and conservative regimes that would "finance any Islamic initiative"[4]. In the following years, from these modern Islamist movements, terrorist groups, also known as "jihadists", would emerge.

The year 1979 marked the first phase of contemporary jihadism, beginning with the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which projected the universal dispute between Shia and Sunni for the power of Islam and demonstrated that the idea of the "Islamic state", albeit in this case Shia, was not a utopia but a politically achievable goal[5]. It coincided with the year of the "Afghan jihad" (the jihadist international), which would be of capital importance in the global evolution of the jihadist movement, becoming the cause par excellence with which all militants, be they moderate and radical,[6] would identify, and where "action and devotion" converged [7] according to its greatest propagandist, the Palestinian ideologist Abdullah Azzam (1941-1989), mentor of the leader of Al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, in the 1980s and one of its greatest exponents.

The 1980s culminated in the Soviet withdrawal from Kabul and the fall of the Soviets. A jihadist international had managed to defeat a superpower on the battlefield[8]. The successive phases of an already established international jihadism would include the dramatic blow to the US in the newly inaugurated 21st century, the fateful 11 September 2001; the ill-named "Arab Springs" in the winter of 2010-2011, a "virus of indignation" in the words of analyst Blanco Navarro[9] and a breeding ground for jihadism; and the proclamation of a pseudo-Islamic state in 2014 accompanied by the self-appointment of its pseudo-caliph. Three years later, the caliphate fell, and two years later, its caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, disappeared, leaving a "caliphate without territory or caliph"[10].

During these 40 years of terror expansion, the jihadist movement has undergone a major purge and transformation marked by events, which has not only demonstrated

4 Saborido, M. (March 2007). Radical Islamism. Centro de Estudios del Medio Oriente Contemporáneo.

5 Fuente, I. Jihadism in its historic context. The jihadist international. Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies. Strategy paper. N.º 173, p. 53. Available at: https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/cuadernos/CE_173.pdf.

6 Kepel, G. (2000). Jihad. Expansion and decline of Islamism. Barcelona, Editorial Península. P. 39-47.

7 López, R. (2014). The Afghan jihad and the Algerian jihad: global perplexities, in Fernández, M. *et al*. (coord.). *War and conflict as society-revitalising elements*. Valladolid. P. 254.

8 López. Op. cit., p. 256.

9 Blanco, J. M.ª. (2011). Arab Springs. Protests and Revolts. Factor analysis. *IEEE Opinion Paper, 52/2011*.

10 Title of the essay by Professor De La Corte, L. (2019). A caliphate without territory or caliph. Baghdadi's life and death and its Implications for the future of Daesh and the global Jihad. *Opinion Paper, IEEE, 13/2019*.

its incredible resilience and adaptability, but has also raised the question of where the movement is heading.

Background. Birth of the global jihadist movement

The 1980s saw a steady advance of the Islamisation of the political order in the Middle East and the exacerbation of antagonism between Sunnis and Shiites. The main battleground aside from the Afghan jihad would be the eight-year-long Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), initiated by Iraq, which sought a "Sunni channelling of Khomeini's Iranian revolution",[11] an Islamic revolution that had been taken by Islamist forces around the world as an encouragement and good model of the power of Islam to end tyrannies, helping prompt the emergence of a kind of Islamic awakening around the Muslim world[12].

For their part, with the "Afghan jihad", Saudi Arabia and its allies wanted to show that Islam would triumph against the Soviet invasion and that total hegemony vis-à-vis Shia defiance of Islam was universally Sunni.

Ayatollah Khomeini took advantage of the year 1989 to overshadow the victory, albeit only symbolic, of the Sunni jihad against the Soviet Union. To this effect, on the eve of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Khomeini would issue a fatwa against the Anglo-Indian writer Salman Rusdhie, accusing him of apostasy and condemning him to death for his work "The Satanic Verses" which, according to Khomeini, insulted the Prophet Muhammad and Islam. Thanks to convenient media publicity surrounding this event, the effects of the Sunni victory were overshadowed, once again exacerbating the conflict between the two factions and causing the issue to take on an international dimension. Europe would begin to perceive "the extent to which fundamentalism was moving beyond the boundaries of the Muslim world and into Western territory"[13].

The Soviet invasion was considered the first of the "holy wars"[14] (jihad) of the contemporary era, an invasion of dar-al-Islam (land of Islam)[15] by the kuffar (Western

11 Kepel, G. (2020). Emerging from Chaos. Crises in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Madrid, Alianza Editorial. P. 6.

12 Alkhalifa, W. (2007). The Radical Wing of Islam. Political Islam, reality and fiction. Madrid, Siglo XXI. Pp. 68-69.

13 Algora, M.ª D. (2001). Fundamentalist Islam in Europe in the last decades of the XX century. *Information Bulletin.* N.º 270. Madrid, Higher Centre for National Defence Studies.

14 The term "jihad" is generally translated as "holy war", but it should be understood that, strictly speaking, in Arabic "holy war" is al-harb al-muqaddas, an expression that does not exist in the Islamic tradition. De León Azcárate, J. L. (2018). The jihad and the how war is handled in the Koran. Human Rights Journal. N.º 3.

15 According to classical Islamic jurists, the world was composed of two kinds of territories: those dominated by Islam (dar al-Islam) and those outside Muslim control, i.e., the "territories of war" (dar al-harb).

infidels). A demonstration of the incompatibility between Islam's jihadist prism and the West would be observed by the Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahiri, the current leader of Al Qaeda (AQ), and embodied in his most influential work, "Knights under the Banner of the Prophet", which came out after the 9/11 attacks. An "incompatibility" that would replace the classic planetary antagonism of communist East and capitalist West, giving prominence to Professor Samuel Huntington's famous concept of the "clash of civilisations"[16].

The Afghan jihad thus served as an interpretative and formative framework for the 21st century jihad[17], a call to jihad that attracted thousands of "holy warriors", the Afghan Arab volunteers, eager to fight against unholy forces in defence of their Afghan brothers (mujahideen), and significantly influencing future jihadist mobilisations. Among them was a young Osama bin Laden and his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who would transplant to the region a part of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (Tanzim al-Jihad) responsible for the assassination of Israeli President Anwar al-Sadat in 1981, for which he would be arrested and imprisoned[18]. The "jihad against Sadat", which sought the total overthrow of the existing order, was coordinated by the Egyptian militant Abd al-Salam Faraj (1954-1982)[19], and proposed and executed by an Egyptian army lieutenant, Khalid El Islambouli, together with other members of the Tanzim al-Jihad cell. All of them would be executed by hanging for this assassination in 1982.

The year 1988 would be the year of the founding of al-Qaida, "a vanguard that constitutes the solid foundation [al-Qaida al-Sulba] of the hoped-for society", wrote Abdullah Azzam[20], not only its main ideologue and Osama bin Laden's mentor but also the creator of the first jihadist organisation, the Maktab al-Khidmat lil Mujahideen ("service bureau" for the financial support and recruitment of Arab jihadists), a revolutionary vanguard. "Every principle needs one"[21], Azzam would write. It would be the first organisation to transcend national borders to encompass militants from various Arab countries[22], defined as an "organised Islamic faction" with a mission:

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16 Huntington's book. (1996). The clash of civilisations and the reconfiguration of the world order. Barcelona, Paidós Ibérica.

17 Gómez, L. (2018). Between sharia and jihad, an intellectual history of Islamism. Madrid, Editorial Catarata. P. 145.

18 De La Corte, L. (2020). Afghanistan: from a troubled past to an uncertain future. *Global Strategy Reports.* 31/3/2020.

19 Marín, R. (2002). Islamic fundamentalism in Egypt (II). Neo-Fundamentalist Groups in Egypt. *Asian and African Studies.* 117.

20 Abdullah Azzam would use the term 'qaeda' in an article written in the magazine Al Jihad, entitled Al Qaeda al-Sulbah - the solid base.

21 Al Jihad. No. 41, April 1988. Quoted in Bergen, P. (2007). Osama Up Close: An Oral History of the Al Qaeda Leader. Barcelona, Debate. P. 132.

22 Avilés, J. (2011). Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda: the end of an era. Madrid, La Catarata. P. 43.

"spread the word of God and lead their religion to victory"[23]. Azzam's death in 1989 in strange circumstances that were never fully clarified would leave Osama Bin Laden as the undisputed leader of AQ.

The USSR pulled its last soldiers out of Afghanistan in 1989. The jihad fighters, triumphant vis-à-vis victory, gained extraordinary prestige on a global scale as an unpredictable military terrorist force to which Bin Laden put a face[24]. Meanwhile, a civil war broke out in Afghanistan. In 1994, the Taliban (Talib means "student" in Pashto) established themselves as an independent force until they conquered Kabul in 1996, dominating much of Afghanistan until the US withdrew. Their objectives, which were purely local,[25]moved away from Al Qaeda's international project of global jihad, focusing on a return to ancestral customs and away from the beginnings of modernity that were penetrating some Afghan cities[26].

When Bin Laden, followed by the other AQ members, decided to return to Afghanistan in the 1990s, he made a pact with Mullah Omar, who was elected Emir of All Believers (amir ul mominin) in 1996, receiving his protection and unconditional support. It was in Afghanistan that Bin Laden found the secure resources and infrastructure that would allow him to implement his ambitious future plan: "Afghan training camps would open the doors to anyone willing to join the global jihad against the distant enemy"[27]. All Muslim volunteers willing to sacrifice themselves would receive military training and instruction there.

Internationalist jihad fails

The goal of mobilising the masses failed on all three fronts, Algerian, Bosnian and Egyptian[28]. The jihadists' initial popularity with the masses waned as the population started to fear the indiscriminate violence of a jihadism that was becoming less and less selective, targeting the whole of society in attacks of great brutality that were rejected even by Bin Laden and Al-Zawahiri[29], who drew the relevant lessons.

In 1997, the last communiqué of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA)[30] justified its massacres and extreme cruelty on the grounds of the apostasy of the Algerian

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23 Avilés. (2011). Op. cit., p. 40.

24 Kepel. (2020). Op. cit., p. 44.

25 For more about the background, interests and formation of the Taliban group, see Burke, J. (2004). Al Qaeda. The real history of radical Islam. Barcelona, RBA Libros. Pp. 118-123.

26 Avilés, J. (2017). History of Jihad terrorism: from Al Qaeda to Daesh. Madrid, Síntesis. P. 78.

27 Avilés. (2017). Op. cit., p. 79.

28 Kepel, G. (2004). Fitna. War in the heart of Islam. Madrid, Paidós. P. 98.

29 Jordán, J. and De La Corte, L. (2017). La jihad terrorista. Madrid, Síntesis. Pp. 95-97.

30 The Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) was a Salafist organisation that fought in the Algerian civil war (known as the Black Decade), combining methods of urban terrorism with bloody massacres

population, which had not joined the jihad. Although indiscriminate killings continued the following year, the jihad against the Algerian regime proved a failure, and there was a return to normality[31]. The same would happen in Bosnia, where the Bosnian mujahideen (also called El Mudzahid) lost all hope of transforming that nation's ethnic war into a jihad after the Dayton peace accords[32].

This failed jihad, in the words of Islamologist Kepel,[33] was seized upon by the two hitherto leaders of the parent jihad, AQ, Bin Laden and Al-Zawahiri, who drew lessons from the failed processes of jihadist expansion, a "bloody lesson" in the words of Al-Zawahiri[34]. The Afghan arena became a practical example of jihad against "corrupt, and apostate regimes"[35] and renegade rulers who had allied themselves with the foreign enemies of Islam. For al-Zawahiri, Afghanistan was the example to follow, making it necessary to focus attention there because of all that had been achieved.

The mutation was in the making. According to Zawahiri, the focus had to be on more "distant" targets, a global offensive, a global jihad far removed from the international brigades that were engaged in the liberation of territories seized from Islam. AQ would have to confront the "far enemy", a call to the West as a whole, the territory of the "ungodly enemy" (kuffar), by offering a unique proposition that would overshadow any other news, mobilising the Muslim community. It was a challenge that the jihad movement should strive to meet. The message to the people could not be weak, but had to be clear, understood and accepted by them. It was necessary to connect with the masses in any way possible.

The objective

The aim now was to cause many deaths and to do so spectacularly. This strategy was first put into practice in 1998, with the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which showed that AQ was capable of organising highly sophisticated

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in various rural localities. Some of its members were combatants who had returned from the war in Afghanistan. Local support for the GIA declined drastically due to its indiscriminate violence against civilians, leading to its fracture and the subsequent formation of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC). On the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, al-Zawahiri would announce the integration of the GSPC into his ranks and shortly thereafter the GSPC would announce its new name, Al Qaeda, in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

31 Kepel. (2000). Op. cit., pp. 382-412; Avilés. (2017). Op. cit., p. 63.

32 Jordán, J. (2015). "Daesh", in The Jihadist International. Strategic Notebooks IEEE. N.º 173.

33 Kepel. (2020). Op. cit., p. 64.

34 Cited in Romero, A. J. (2006). The roots of Islamic terror in Algeria and Egypt. International Social Science and Humanities Journal, SOIOTAM. Vol. XVI, no. 2, July-December 2006.

35 Al-Zawahiri. (2001). Al-Sharq Al-Awsat publishes extracts from al-Jihad leader Al-Zawahiri´s new book. 2/12/2001.

operations thousands of miles away from its home base in Afghanistan, [36] employing suicide bombers, which undoubtedly increased the sense of threat, and demonstrating a stark reality to the enemy: the deep conviction of those who were willing to give their lives for the cause[37].

The love of martyrdom thus became a sublime aspiration for many. At the tactical level, AQ would use convincing its soldiers to die to instil fear in the enemy, making terrorism one of the most effective tactics for AQ, though not the only one. Despite the brutality of the embassy attacks, in which 224 people lost their lives, including Muslim victims, the audacity of the challenge to the US made Osama bin Laden a larger than life and admired figure for sections of the population throughout the Muslim world.

During the 1990s, several events were to culminate in the famous "Declaration of Jihad against the Americans occupying the land of the two Holy Places" (Medina and Mecca) in 1996. In this declaration of war, Osama bin Laden promulgated that his home country (Saudi Arabia) had deviated from the right path by embracing a pagan code that made it a country that was no longer Muslim but hypocritical and infidel, and so should be fought. For Bin Laden, this would be a jihad of resistance and therefore a defensive struggle and a duty of every Muslim[38].

The goal for AQ was to liberate Saudi Arabia, occupied by US military bases authorised by the Saudi monarchy itself after Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in the 1990s, and a sacrilege and humiliation for Islam according to the Saudi. Bin Laden offered the Saudi regime his contingent of "fighters of the faith" (mujahideen) to defend the country from possible Iraqi attacks, but the House of Saud declined his offer, allowing and preferring the protection of US troops to its exclusively Muslim and genuine army made up of former fighters from Afghanistan. This further radicalised the stance of an offended Bin Laden, who eventually lost his Saudi nationality and was subjected to incisive persecution until the end of his days.

The Saudi monarchy ceased to have legitimacy for Bin Laden and AQ, because in addition to allowing the occupation of US troops in dar-al-Islam, it had introduced the law of man outside that of Sharia[39]. Bin Laden therefore took up Abdullah Azzam's call for "defensive jihad" as an obligation of all Muslims to liberate the usurped land of Islam, something that has always stimulated and incited jihad, thus taking a further step in the transition to international ("far enemy") jihad two years later, in 1998, with the founding charter of the World Islamic Front against the Jews and the Crusaders. The ultimatum was clear: every Muslim capable of doing so would have an individual duty (fard ayn) to kill Americans and their allies, civilian and military, wherever they were found.

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36 Bergen. (2007). Op. cit., p. 295.

37 Avilés. (2017). Op. cit., p. 80.

38 Burke. Op. cit., p. 192.

39 Islamic law; in Arabic, literally, "way or path of Islam".

The fight against the "near enemy", i.e., the rulers of Muslim countries considered apostate, impious and corrupt, and the Muslims who had been established in the jahiliyah[40] and ignored the rules of Islam and turned away from God's law (takfir), would give way to the fight against the "far enemy", the US and the West, on their own territory.

In retrospect, the publication of the World Islamic Front's founding charter can be seen as a transitional moment between the first phase of jihadism, in which the jihadist awakening focused on the "near enemy" (from Sadat's assassination in 1981 to the Algerian jihad) and the challenge to Muslim governments, and the second phase, which focused on the "far enemy".

The announcement of the creation of the World Islamic Front would point to the birth of the global jihad.

The global jihad

The first attack on the distant enemy, a harbinger of the attacks of 11 September 2001, was on the World Trade Center in 1993. It was followed by the simultaneous 1998 attacks on the Tanzanian and Kenyan embassies, giving credibility to the threat made in the 1998 fatwa, which explicitly called for the death of Americans and their civilian and military allies [41]; and two years later by the attacks on the destroyer Cole in Aden (Yemen) on 12 October 2000, likewise a consequence of the new tactic that targeted the heart of the "infidels", the "globalisation of combat in the face of the future of the jihadist movement", as Al-Zahawiri would describe it[42]. We can say that this would be the turning point of what defined the AQ organisation in the following years, thus setting up the faithful commitment that AQ, the sole matrix of global jihadism up to that point, would acquire against the US superpower in the future.

Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri drew conclusions from this decade by initiating a long debate within the Islamist movement, asking themselves whether to "privilege the fight against the near enemy, or on the contrary against the far enemy"[43]. They concluded that they had neither managed to seize power following the unsuccessful jihad

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40 Jahiliyah, a term derived from the verbal root jahala "to be ignorant", representing a time prior to Muhammad's revelations. The term "modern jahiliya", first coined by the Pakistani theologian Abul Ala Maududi, was understood as the "new barbarism", incompatible with Islam. It would be popularised by the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb in his famous work Milestones of the Way (1964), where he emphasised the disobedience of Muslim societies which, partially secularised, had abandoned the obligatory submission to divine law.

41 Gunaratna, R. (2003). Journey into Islamist Terrorism. Barcelona, Servidoc, pp. 105-106.

42 Gómez. (2018). Op. cit., p. 164.

43 Kepel. (2020). Op. cit., p. 94.

in Algeria, Egypt and Bosnia, nor brought the masses closer to the movement so that they would perceive the jihadists as the true saviours of the Muslim world.

The first transformation of the organisation was to begin very soon, at the turn of the millennium. Spectacular attacks, staged and magnified by the media, would be the instrument of choice. The objective was clear: New York, Washington and Capitol Hill, "to strike a blow at the snake's head[44], at home, to shatter its arrogance". The date too: the action was to take place on 11 September 2001. The great superpower, the US, had to be weakened, to facilitate successive blows to "make it come out of its hole and make it make mistakes", to make the Muslim community believe in AQ[45].

The international notoriety that Bin Laden achieved with this attack as the leader of AQ thus followed the old principle of "propaganda by deed" enunciated in the late 19th century by the first promoters of anarchist terrorism (an attack would be much more effective and generate much greater repercussions than mere words).

The 9/11 attacks made this abundantly clear.

The transformation of the movement

The attacks of 11 September 2001 tore the great superpower in two, and it responded to the attack with a global, open-ended "war on terror". The AQ leader did not believe that 9/11 alone would destroy the US, but that it would both unleash a devastating process on the West and have a huge propaganda impact through which the jihadist message would become known throughout the world.

Two months after the attacks, Ayman al-Zawahiri's well-known manifesto "Knights under the Prophet's Banner" was published, a title that alluded to the victories achieved by the armies of the Prophet Muhammad and the first caliphs in spreading the "true faith" throughout the world until it was completely subdued. The deeds of the Prophet and his companions would, in fact, be repeatedly revived by jihadist groups over the years, as if they represented a new Qur'anic generation whose mission was to destroy barbarism (jahiliyah).

Jihadist terrorism had declared war on the West[46].

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44 In Arab-Muslim culture, the snake represents cunning, danger and evil. The US is known among Arab-Muslim peoples as "the head of the snake". To strike a blow to the head of the snake (figuratively occupied by the US), where the animal holds its venom, would be tantamount to eliminating all the danger posed by this country.

45 Bergen. Op. cit., pp. 398-399.

46 https://www.abc.es/internacional/abci-terrorismo-islamico-declara-guerra-occidente-200109120300-46394_noticia.html. Accessed on 01/05/2022

Jihad texts

Each stage of contemporary jihadism has left a prolific (and political) text for the movement, which has served as a reference and guide for acolytes and sympathisers.

Thus, a large part of the ideological essence of what would become the Al Qaeda organisation would have Abdullah Azzam, author of the book "Join the Caravan" (1987), as a point of reference and inspire of numerous Jihadist groups with his call, without pretext, to defend Islamic lands as the first obligation after faith. In this call, Azzam would introduce for the first time the notion of "qaeda" as a strategic element of jihad; a jihad that would be obligatory, according to Azzam, "when the enemy enters the land of the Muslims[47]. A year later, in 1988, he would insist on this concept, giving it a double meaning, psychological (mental preparation for jihad) and spatial (in that the 'base' was a liberated territory from which to "expand").

In issue 27 of February 1987 of the magazine 'al-Jihad', a monthly publication in Arabic that has become the main means of communication between Arab youth in different parts of the world and the jihad in Afghanistan, an article written by Abdullah Azzam and entitled 'Jihad, not terrorism', spoke of 'jihad as a religious duty for the Umma, to liberate the people, give them Islamic justice and protect the religion', stating moreover that jihad would be waged 'only if the infidel is fought with the sword until he submits to Islam'[48].

As a prelude to the naming of the parent organisation of the global jihad, "joining the caravan" was to lay the solid foundation for dar-al-Islam ("the house of Islam").

Not to be forgotten is another text, published a few years before Azzam's "Join the Caravan", the treatise by Abd al-Salam Faraj, leader of Tanzim al-Jihad, the group that killed Anwar al Sadat in 1981, entitled al-Farida al gaiba ("The Forgotten Duty"). The "forgotten duty", which was simply jihad, would be the cause of the humiliation and division to come among Muslims. Faraj held that jihad was another pillar of Islam, its sixth pillar, and as such an inescapable and personal duty of every Muslim when it came to defending themselves against the aggressor. Faraj gave priority to the struggle against the rulers of Muslim countries ("near enemy") over the struggle against Israel and Western imperialism, which he considered a "waste of time"[49].

A copy of his work was found during investigations into the death of Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat in 1981. Al-Sadat's signature, on 26 March 1979, of the peace treaty with Israel (Camp David Accords) was the justification for Khaled El Islambouly, a member of the Tanzim al-Jihad group, to carry out the assassination. Islambouly would be executed for the assassination, becoming a symbol of inspiration for jihadist

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47 Gunaratna. Op. cit., p. 155.

48 Bergen. Op. cit., p. 86.

49 Avilés. (2017). Op. cit., p. 201.

movements and considered one of the first modern martyrs (shahids). Faraj and several other conspirators were also executed in 1982.

Al-Zawahiri, for his part, would leave for posterity his famous "Knights under the banner of the Prophet", mentioned above. The great interest of this text, according to the Arabist Gilles Kepell,[50] lies in the objective assigned to the movement at the turn of the century, making a critical balance of the previous decade and a radical strategic mutation aimed at shifting the war to "the land of the enemy", hence its importance. Moreover, the establishment of a caliphate "in the manner of the Prophet", in the heart of the Islamic world, would be one of AQ's goals, to be achieved through jihad against the apostate rulers and their removal. This, however, would require popular support, which would be decisive.

However, the idea was that there would be no rush to achieve this because, although AQ's ultimate strategic goal remained the establishment of a global caliphate made up of local Islamic emirates acting as franchises, it was a very long-term one. For the short term, the objectives were much more pragmatic: to join or start insurgencies against local rulers considered corrupt, to spread dawa (propaganda) and to direct terrorist actions against the distant enemy (the US and its allies, Europe and Israel)[51].

But before that, the masses had to be mobilised, the undecided Muslims had to be convinced of the power of the forces of jihad and the arrogance of the enemy. This new paradigm shift appeared to be set in stone in "Knights under the Prophet's Banner", in which al-Zawahiri made a bleak diagnosis and critical assessment of the 1990s, a decade full of setbacks for jihadism and not at all prolific for the movement given that, from Egypt to Bosnia and from Saudi Arabia to Algeria, jihadist activists had failed to mobilise the Muslim masses to overthrow the near enemy[52].

The United States and 9/11: *There is no solution but jihad* [53]

The terrorist attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi (Kenya) and Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) in 1998, the attacks on the US destroyer USS Cole in Yemen in 2000, and the double holy raid (al ghazwatayn al Mubarakatayn)[54] in America on 11 September 2001, were the consequence of this new tactic that targeted the heart of the "infidels"

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50 Kepel. (2020). Op. cit., pp. 92-93.

51 Fuente Cobo, I. (2018). Al Qaeda versus Daesh: two antagonistic strategies and the same objective. IEEE Analysis Paper 21/2018.

52 De La Riverié, L. Anti-Westernism, Opium of the Islamic World. International Review of Political Thought. 3, pp. 45-74. Available at: https://www.upo.es/revistas/index.php/ripp/article/view/1540, Accessed on 01/05/2022.

53 Extract from Gentlemen under the standard of the prophet, apud Gómez, L. (2018). P. 165.

54 The name given to the operation by Al Qaeda in its subsequent documents.

rather than the "hypocrites" in what Al-Zawahiri would call "the globalisation of combat for the future of the jihadist movement"[55]. According to al-Zawahiri, in contrast to the "coalition to fight Islam", a "jihadist alliance" made up of jihadist movements from various Muslim countries had formed, and although it had just come into being it was growing "fast and robustly"[56].

This strike against the "distant enemy" demonstrated the presence of a new type of conflict waged by the AQ organisation, understood as "a new type of war", given that it employed organised force, on a large scale, and it aimed to achieve concrete objectives (establish the politico-religious unity of Islam and destroy its enemies: The West and "false Muslims"). It was also evidence of an "asymmetric strategy", a product of the nature of the actors involved (non-state actors, and therefore without conventional military capacity), which called for alternative paths to conventional warfare to exploit their vulnerabilities. This idea would be very present in the strategy of AQ leaders, including Bin Laden, who already in his 1996 "declaration of war" made clear the need to fight, considering the imbalance of power between his armed forces and those of the enemy, clearly alluding to "guerrilla warfare"[57].

The "Al Qaeda war" was also favoured by an extraordinary media impact ("we are in a battle, and more than half of it is taking place on the media battlefield", wrote Al-Zawahiri in his famous letter to the Jordanian jihadist militant Al-Zarqawi[58], founder of Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)), which would multiply to infinity the annulment of the enemy and the enthusiasm of its sympathisers. Likewise, the AQ terrorist nebula exemplified very well the complexity and multidimensionality of this new type of "war": an enemy without an army, hidden among the civilian population, offering no clear target to attack and using global television channels to magnify the spectacle of it and spread its propaganda, turning the entire planet into a combat zone[59].

The effect of such an attack on the West would be devastating.

The attacks of 11 September 2001, the most spectacular event of the early 21st century, imposed by the jihadism invented by Al-Zawahiri and Bin Laden, profoundly changed the geopolitics of the Middle East, giving rise to the "war on terror" in its first two settings: Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003).

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55 Gómez. Op. cit., p. 164.

56 Gómez. Op. cit., p. 165.

57 Jordán, J. (2004). Terrorism and the transformation of war. Considerations about Al Qaeda's global fight, in Spanish yearbook on International Law. Vol. 20.

58 Zawahiri´s Letter to Zarqawi. (2005). [Consultado 1/05/2022]. https://ctc.usma.edu/harmony-program/zawahiris-letter-to-zarqawi-original-language-2/

59 Jordán. (2004). Op. cit.

Part Two: The passage of time, the best mirror to show the face of reality

The war against the "distant enemy" had failed. The jihad that sought to rally the Muslim masses under the banner of Al Qaeda had failed, giving way to a new phase of jihadism that was taken by the movement itself as a window of opportunity for a change of strategy. The third phase of the global jihadist movement was beginning.

Jihadism mutates and reasserts itself

The key aspect of the mutation was the spectacular 11 September 2001, which introduced the "universal jihadist grand narrative" that would transform the new millennium from a Christian calendar into a jihadist one[60]. It was target that had been unsuccessfully attacked eight years earlier, and which now displayed the death cult characteristic of jihadist martyrdom operations, along with the praise of their fallen soldiers in the jihad (shahid). This attack showed the world a new type of conflict that consolidated terrorism as a true act of global warfare. The three ingredients needed for the big strike against the "head of the snake" came together: intent, attack capability and opportunity.

The following years would be marked by the third phase of jihadism, which went beyond the model theorised by Al-Zawahiri in "Knights under the Prophet's Banner".

Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, the US "war of errors" was unleashed[61]. With this "war", President Bush wanted, in effect, to use every means at his disposal to finish off AQ first, and then any terrorist group with global reach, using means only considered legitimate in an armed conflict[62].

The intervention in Afghanistan ("Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan"), launched on 7 October 2001 in response to the 9/11 attacks and leading to the fall of the first Taliban Islamic Emirate established in 1996, would show how terrorism could incite war; in this case, the one waged by the US and its NATO allies against the Taliban vis-à-vis the latter's refusal to hand over Osama Bin Laden for trial. The intervention also led to new pockets of terrorism in Pakistan's tribal areas with the arrival of the Taliban, who enjoyed local support in Pakistani border areas, and AQ. The

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60 Kepel. (2020). Op. cit., p. 349.

61 Analyst Peter Bergen, in an essay whose title included a play on words, wrote in 2005 that Bush had proclaimed a "war on terror", but that it had become a war of error. Bergen, P. (2007). The New Republic. 15/10/2007. [Accessed on 01/05/2022]. https://newrepublic.com/article/61770/war-error.

62 Avilés. (2017). Op. cit., p. 96.

two groups had forged a solid alliance over the last two decades, although not without their ups and downs and disagreements[63].

Two years later, on 20 March 2003, under the justification of the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and Saddam Hussein's figurative relationship with AQ, the US invasion of Iraq took place, considered by many analysts to be President Bush's biggest mistake. The outcome was that the country was plunged into a situation of total and permanent destabilisation that aroused the fury of the Muslim world, and which years later would give a new jihadist actor, the self-styled Islamic State (IS), its big break.

In search of an "Arab awakening"?

It has been concluded that the aim of the 9/11 attacks was to provoke a US military intervention that would reawaken the will of Muslims to fight, as had happened in 1979 with the Afghan mujahideen who defeated the Soviet Union[64]. And perhaps it was, because this veritable "act of global war" that terrorism became and that triggered the US war of error would facilitate the recruitment of volunteers for jihad throughout the Muslim world.

The US offensive, in its first phase against Afghanistan (in which AQ's "base", the largest it ever had, was lost, drastically reducing the organisation's size and operational capacity), and in its second phase against Iraq, did not manage to annihilate the jihadist nebula, although it did demonstrate once again the arrogance, power and arms might of the great superpower. Notwithstanding, while 9/11 may have been a tactical victory for AQ, it was also a strategic disaster for the organisation[65], because it led to the fall of the Taliban and the end of the legend of the God-protected hero Osama bin Laden, who had escaped to Pakistan with other Taliban leaders, while the Bush administration was already focusing its attention on neighbouring Iraq, invaded in 2003.

However, AQ had managed to consolidate itself as an organisation during its time in Afghanistan. The entire infrastructure created by Bin Laden since the 1980s, from the training of thousands of volunteers to the exploitation of other theatres of operation in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Caucasus, in addition to the expansion of the "AQ-network", would forge his future structure and alliances.

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63 When AQ decided to target the US and the West, the Taliban leadership, concerned about an international defensive response, advised Mullah Omar to sever all ties with the organisation, which he rejected outright despite the risk of an invasion by Western troops, which finally happened in autumn 2001.

64 Avilés. Op. cit., 67; 97.

65 Bergen. Op. cit., p. 401.

There can be little doubt that the reputation that the AQ organisation achieved after the attacks of 11 September 2001, with Bin Laden and Al-Zawahiri as hugely influential figures, would make it a pole of attraction for thousands of people across the globe,[66] strategically influenced by what had become an ideological vanguard and leader of the global jihadist movement.

With the conflict transferred to Iraq by the US, which claimed, in the words of Secretary of State Colin Powel, "a potentially sinister link between the AQ terrorist network headed by Abu Musab Al-Zarkawi and Iraq, which hosted the deadly organisation",[67] what was intended to be the beginning of a virtuous cycle that would democratise the Middle East after the fall of Hussein[68] only led to an alliance between local jihadism and former members of the Iraqi army. What is more, these alliances were forged in large part in prisons used by the US after the invasion, such as Camp Bucca and Abu Ghraib. And so, the Iraq war aroused the fundamentalist fervor of Sunnis and Shiites, provoking a defensive jihad that stimulated jihadist-leaning Muslims around the world.

AQ accepted the integration of an independent group (Jamaa al Tawhid wal jihad) led by the bloodthirsty Abu Musab Al-Zarkawi, a foreigner (not Iraqi but Jordanian) who took on the name of Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) after declaring his vow of loyalty to Bin Laden on the internet in October 2004, and who soon became known for his lethal use of terrorist attacks, especially against Shiite targets, who were always in the Jordanian's sights. These actions would be reproached by Al-Zahawiri in a letter,[69] in which he warned him that the Muslim people would never accept the targeting of Shi'ites, their mosques or hostages[70].

The Iraq war appeared to offer benefits and aggrandisement to AQ, mainly for the purposes of maintaining its media presence, shifting the US focus away from Afghanistan and gaining tactical experience by engaging in a popular struggle.[71] However, al-Zarkawi's bloodthirsty strategy of driving Iraq into a civil war pitting Sunni against Shia, opening up the sectarian divide to capitalise on Sunni support, alienated the organisation from popular support and led to its failure. In early 2004, US intelligence intercepted a letter from Al-Zarkawi to Osama bin Laden, in which the latter advised him on the situation in Iraq by suggesting that a civil war between Sunnis and Shiites be unleashed, something that Bin Laden had always rejected, as his desire was to restore a unified caliphate.

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66 Jordán, J. (2010). Terrorism without borders. Actors, scenarios and responses in a global world. Pamplona, Aranzadi, P. 20.

67 Collin Powell's address to the UN Security Council on 5 February 2003. Cited in Bergen. (2007). Op. cit., p. 459.

68 Kepel. (2020). Op. cit., p. 108.

69 Zawahiri's letter to Zarkawi. Op. cit.

70 Bergen. Op. cit., p. 468.

71 Avilés. Op. cit., p. 105.

This strategy was counterproductive and deviated entirely from the intended fight against the distant enemy desired by Bin Laden and Al-Zawahiri, and which was reflected on paper in two well-known letters. The first, already mentioned, was written by Al-Zawahiri, who recommended Al-Zarkawi that he abandon his bloody acts that had little popular support; and a second, written at the end of 2005 by a leader of Algerian origin, Atiya Al Libi, also highly critical of Al-Zarkawi's tactics and behaviour which, according to Al-Libi, were undermining AQ's ability to win the hearts of the people, and in which he asked him to consult on substantial matters with "Shaykh Osama and the Doctor"[72], reminding him of a lesson from history: the action of the Armed Islamic Group Algerian (GIA), who's excessive violence turned the population against it.

Al-Qaeda was quick to recover from the setbacks suffered, especially via the Internet, which proved to be a great ally of the movement, but also through new attacks. Bin Laden's rhetorical prowess crossed borders, again condemning American civilisation - "the worst civilisation in the history of mankind", according to the Saudi Arabian, for its eagerness to separate religion and state - and again calling for a resumption of attacks against the West[73].

Events such as the allegations of mistreatment, abuse and torture of terrorist suspects imprisoned at the Guantánamo Bay detention centre in Cuba and Camp Bucca in these years only served to further inflame jihadist groups, creating exceptional breeding grounds for jihadism, which once again invoked the Law of Talion symbolised by an orange jumpsuit, the one worn by Guantánamo detainees, which became the icon of injustice[74]. All these events contributed to the fierce hatred of the West (wala wa al baraa)[75] so characteristic of Salafist jihadist doctrine, and to the formation of a victimhood image that helped the jihadists to give the US back its grand narrative of the "war on terror". These internment camps strengthened the networks from which the Islamic State would emerge a few years later.

Camp Bucca would come to be known as the "university of jihad, the place where an ideology was built"[76]. It was here that numerous AQ members met with Iraqi Baathists linked to Saddam's regime (some of them former members of the special forces and military intelligence, and who would later join the ranks of the Islamic State), gathering under the entire disregard of the US military. Possibly at no other time could these leaders of the most radical fundamentalism have come to be together at the same time and in the same place.

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72 Al-Zawahiri would follow in his father's footsteps, studying medicine in Cairo. He worked as a surgeon for three years in the Egyptian army and as a doctor in a Cairo hospital. https://ctc.usma.edu/harmony-program/atiyahs-letter-to-zarqawi-original-language-2/.

73 Avilés. (2011). Op. cit., p. 103.

74 Kepel. (2020). Op. cit., p. 110.

75 Loyalty and Repudiation.

76 Chulov, M. (2019). ISIS: the inside story. The Guardian. 11/12/2019. [Accessed on 1/5/2022]. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/11/-sp-isis-the-inside-story

Third generation "jihadism": Mustafa Setmarian Nasser

The jihadist model changed and was transformed, marking a new phase in jihadism called "third generation" and led by Mustafa Setmarian Nasser (Abu Musab al Suri), born in Aleppo (Syria) and founder of the first AQ cell in Spain, the "Abu Dahdah cell", named after its founder and leader, the Syrian-Spanish Imad Eddin Barakat Yarkas.

The extensive document that brought him to prominence was "Call for Global Islamic Resistance", published in 2005, his major contribution to the history of jihadism. Considered one of the most distinguished jihadist strategy books, it includes military and organisational theories and training doctrines for recruiting the "future generation of jihadists"[77].

Setmarian, in an important work of introspection, would qualify AQ's previous strategy as a failure. According to the strategist, the pyramidal, top-down, global organisation, which gave orders to be obeyed, set up by Osama Bin Laden, and the strategy of fighting the distant enemy conceptualised by Al-Zawahiri, were responsible for the great failures of the jihad in Algeria and Egypt. Therefore, it was necessary to advocate a jihad "from below" and extended to the whole world. The counter-terrorism measures that were adopted by Western countries and by US military power in Afghanistan called for the introduction of a new system, that of the "individual jihad", that of isolated individuals and self-sustaining independent cells[78].

This model, as it was understood by the Syrian, who advocated achieving an esteemed movement not as an organisation but as a system, would spread in all directions, mainly in Europe (with a focus on France) and in the Levant (with polarisation in Syria and Iraq), culminating in the establishment of a caliphate in 2014 and the self-proclamation of its purported caliph (Abu Bakr al-Baghadi, who would remain so until his death in 2019). However, the uprisings in the Arab world in 2010-2013, which began with enthusiasm and hopes and dreams for democratisation, ended in the restoration of authoritarianism in Egypt and in civil wars, especially the one in Syria, from which AQ and the Islamic State would soon profit greatly.

It was in this new context that this "third-generation jihadism" was able to develop to its most monstrous culmination: the self-proclaimed caliphate, the greatest challenge of the second decade of the 21st century.

With Setmarian and his forecast, which augured new, much more virtual times for the movement, jihad's online uploads were available to anyone who wanted to heed its

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77 Brinjar, L. (2017). Al-Suri's doctrines for decentralized jihadi training- Part I. The Jamestown Foundation. 21/2/2017.

78 Lia, B. (2009). Architect of global jihad: the life of Al Qaeda strategist Abu Mus`ab Al-Suri. June 2009.

call, while simultaneously renewing the ways in which its supporters could mobilise and contribute. The shaping of the "virtual jihad" was a given. This doctrinarian of individual terrorism, an inspiration and reference for many lone wolves today, proposed the nizam la tanzim - system, not organisation. This motto sums up Setmarian's doctrine, based on the desirability of initiating a new kind of decentralised and global insurgency, capable of undermining the entire international political system in the decades to come[79].

To this effect, establishing an operational system available wherever there is a desire to participate in the global jihad, individually or as a small group of associates, would transform the jihadist cause into a mass phenomenon[80], accessible to anyone.

His reflections in "Call for Global Islamic Resistance" dealt with all the details: indoctrination, guerrilla technique, war strategy, provisioning, training, propaganda, security, etc., leading the struggle towards a popular global jihad tailored to the aspirations of any Muslim with the will to wage a warlike jihad. Once indoctrinated, individual mujahideen could take the initiative to attack as and where they saw fit, independently of organised cells.

In a videotaped course in Kabul in 2000, lasting some 20 hours[81], Setmarian called for turning all Muslims into terrorists. At a time when new communication technologies were still in their infancy and the term 'social networking' did not yet exist, Setmarian was already advocating the importance of the internet for the future of jihadism, not only as a channel for marketing and proselytising, what al-Zawahiri defined as "a media jihad to capture the hearts and minds of the Umma", but above all for its organisational possibilities. In his words, it would be a new strategy for "a time of discouragement after the failure of the jihadism of internationalist mobilisation"[82]. His proposal anticipated a very cutting-edge reality, that of self-training, self-radicalisation, self-recruitment and self-training.

Its appeal lay precisely in the fact that it allowed each proselyte to carry out his or her own jihad: "customised jihadism", as defined by the Arabist Luz Gómez (2018), exercising violence on a small scale and, depending on the place, in the name of global jihad. In other words, "glocalising" jihad to keep alive the idea of a common jihad.

The evolution of terrorism seemed to be moving closer to the idea of a "leaderless jihad", especially in terms of the threat to Europe and the US, which would come mainly from independent cells and self-reliant terrorists. Concepts such as "copycat

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79 Toboso, M. (2014). Wolves of the West. The individual terrorist as an emerging and evolving tactic of Al Qaeda. General Gutiérrez Mellado University Institute. Madrid. UNED. Pp. 22-59.

80 L. Op. cit.

81 El Mundo. (2006). This is how the Spaniard Setmarian, a member of Al Qaeda, taught how to carry out an attack in an intensive course. [Accessed on 31/5/2022]. Available at: https://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2006/02/01/espana/1138821369.html

82 Gómez. Op. cit., p. 188.

terrorists", "independent cells" and "autonomous terrorists" (better known as "lone wolves") would begin to surface not only among analysts and academics, but also in AQ's own propaganda. In its January 2011 issue, the magazine Inspire, published by Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQPA), AQ's franchise in the region, already outlined an essential element for understanding the strategic evolution of jihadist terrorism in the following years: the expansion and dissemination of the organisation's ideology in the image and likeness of the social movement or, to be more precise, and as advocated by Setmarian, in its "idea"[83].

Parallel to Setmarian's "Call for Global Islamic Resistance" (published online in 2004), a highly influential text on military doctrine and a reference for the global jihadist movement to this day, was the text "The Management of Savagery: the most critical phase through which the Ummah must pass" by Abu Bakr Naji, whose real name was Muhammad Hasan Khalil al-Hukaymah (killed in 2008 in a drone attack)[84], an influential figure in AQ's strategic apparatus. This book also transcended the rigorist thinking of the Islamic State organisation for its reflections on jihadism, becoming an operational guide for controlling territories and "administering savagery". The text describes how only the "chaos" generated through terror could allow a "minority group with limited operational capabilities" to generate a sense of strength powerful enough to impose Sharia on otherwise unwilling societies.

The strategy, according to Naji, incorporated important issues for the military leadership, such as the infiltration of spies among the enemy; the generation of a heightened sense of insecurity in entire regions of the West; the winning pf the hearts of the masses; the advisability of wearing down the opponent through "continued actions, although not of a great magnitude", which would weaken the enemy states; the undertaking of a policy of "paying the price", thus deterring governments from their crimes committed against Muslims; and what Naji would call the "phase of humiliation and exhaustion", undermining the confidence and moral security of democratic societies, essential for the constitution of the ultimate goal, the establishment of the "Islamic state". To this effect, the objective would be to create or take advantage of areas of the countryside or the city that had fallen into "chaos" to expel the armies of the local government by imposing a proto-state[85].

Jihadist terrorism in the West would thus begin a new journey where the virtual would replace the chain of command, and where online operational manuals would over time replace the classic training in training camps.

83 Toboso. Op. cit., p. 34.

84 Torres. Op. cit.

85 Torres, O. (2017). al-Harawi's advice on war stratagems: a 12th century Arab political military manual. Journal of Studies in International Security (RESI). 15/5/2017.

An unprecedented jihadist mobilisation

With the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, an unprecedented global jihadist mobilisation took place, affecting not only the Islamic world but also Western European countries. This mobilisation was led not only by young men, who became "foreign terrorist fighters", but also by a minority, albeit statistically significant, of women; a polymorphous and highly intense phenomenon that showed the harsh face of a terrorism that has not disappeared, but rather worsened, in the wake of the political instability and social confrontations that have plagued various Arab countries since 2011. A "growing challenge", in the words of the professor and scholar of the phenomenon, Fernando Reinares[86].

No Western society was exempt from the terrorist threat, although it was not evenly distributed. Let us recall, for example, the 2012 attacks in Toulouse and Mountabaun (France) by a young Mohamed Merah, who was soon labelled a "lone wolf" - with no links whatsoever to a jihadist organisation - but whose links to AQ later became known, even though he acted alone. This attack (perpetrated on the very day of the 50th anniversary of the ceasefire of the Algerian War, whether by coincidence or premeditation on Merah's part, we do not know) was followed by many others on European soil, serving to verify the transnationalisation of the movement.

In Europe, home to millions of young people of Muslim origin, many of them poorly integrated culturally and socially, fertile grounds for jihad would soon emerge, a context where Setmarian-sponsored "third generation" jihadism could develop productively. The reality would bear this assumption out. The most monstrous culmination of this jihadism was the proclamation of the caliphate in 2014 and the chain of attacks that, in turn, and in concatenation, would bloody Europe.

Self-proclamation and fall of the Caliphate. "The sun of jihad has risen"[87]

On 2 May 2011, almost a decade after the 9/11 attacks, a US Navy special forces commando (DEVGRU) killed Osama bin Laden in his safe house in Pakistan. AQ had already lost many of its original leaders and a large part of Muslim opinion had turned its back on the organisation,[88] despite its efforts to attract Muslim communities to the cause. Moreover, the misnamed "Arab Springs", wrongly associated with democracy and revitalisation, were in the throes of popular revolts and demonstrations spreading

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86 Reinares, F. (2015). A jihadist challenge on the rise. Real Instituto Elcano. 8/1/2015.

87 Phrase contained in the official document in several languages, "This is the promise of Allah", announced during the proclamation of the Caliphate by the spokesman of the self-styled Islamic State, Abu Mohammed al-Adnani. [Accessed on 15/4/2022]. https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/bitstream/handle/10066/14242/ADN20140629.pdf.

88 Avilés. (2017). Op. cit., p. 163.

from one country to another (Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Yemen and Libya), protests that far from achieving renewal ended in revolution, coups, civil wars and destabilisation, a great boon for radical militants linked to AQ who would soon become involved in terrorist activities. The civil war in Syria would attract jihadists from all over, thus revitalising the AQ affiliate for Iraq (AQI).

In October 2006, AQI, whose leader Al-Zarkawi had been killed in a US airstrike in June 2006, and other jihadist groups, jointly announced the creation of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), a decision that was not consulted the AQ leadership, who considered it premature[89]. Although the ISI went into decline as an insurgent force capable of mounting guerrilla operations and controlling territory, it retained a very lethal terrorist capability.

The ISI was to announce its new leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and its new military commander, Allah Abu Suleiman, on 16 May 2010. Al-Baghdadi sent one of his fighters, the Syrian Abu Muhammad al-Joulani, to Syria in 2011, where he made contact with other jihadist groups, leading to the formation of a new organisation called Jabhat al-Nusra as early as January 2012. Its members' military training and combat experience in Iraq favoured the group, whose growth was spectacular, becoming the main opposition force to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad by mid-2012. In April 2013, al-Baghdadi formally declared that Jabhat al-Nusra was incorporated into his organisation, which would be renamed the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - ISIS or ISIL by its English initials, or Daesh by its Arab initials - becoming the new vanguard of the global jihadist movement.

Joulani, however, publicly rejected this merger, proclaiming his allegiance to the central leadership of AQ, whose leader al-Zawahiri tried unsuccessfully to get the two organisations to cooperate, one operating in Iraq and the other in Syria, a dictum that al-Baghdadi nevertheless rejected. ISIS sought to prevail over Al Nusra and other jihadist groups by seizing the northwestern Syrian city of Raqqa in January 2014, which would soon become the capital of a renamed IS.

Although the final break with Al Qaeda would not take place until February 2014, the Islamic State (IS) and its predecessor, the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), always maintained a different pattern of behaviour and operational tempo than AQ. Its brutal actions in Iraq and Syria and the spread of terror among the population were based on the conviction that extreme violence was the only possible tool to generate "the strategy of chaos" (using media propaganda) of which Naji spoke, and which would include campaigns of ultra-violence and graphic displays of barbarism to shock and divide Western-led states and return Muslim communities to the purity of Islam.

In February 2014, the CIA estimated that the Islamic State had around 10,000 members; in June it raised that figure to 15,000, an estimate that was revised upwards again two months later. Irrespective of the numbers, on 6 June 2014, Al-Baghdadi's

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89 Avilés. (2017). Op. cit., p. 172.

followers penetrated Iraqi territory and reached the gates of Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul, conquering it and surprising the whole world with the self-proclamation of a new Caliphate, as announced by the organisation's spokesman, Muhamed Al-Adnani. Al-Bahgdadi would be recognised as "caliph of all Muslims" on 4 July 2014 at the Mosul Mosque, in a newly inaugurated Islamic State.

By mid-2014, the Islamic State had already secured a large territorial base in Syria and Iraq. Control of the north-eastern area of Syria, bordering Iraq, allowed the Islamic State to strengthen its position in Iraq, which soon expanded its presence in both Syria and Iraq to a vast territory of a similar size to the UK[90].

The Islamic State spread effective propaganda like no other, using the internet to describe a reborn caliphate where "true Islam" was practised, and to which Muslim men and women alike from all over the world would be called to undertake the obligatory hijra (emigration).

Between 2014 and 2015, the Islamic State internationalised, capitalising on the flow of foreign volunteers and creating a transnational network of jihadist groups and organisations from different African and Asian countries (Nigeria, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Philippines), whose leaders pledged allegiance to Caliph Al-Baghdadi. An unprecedented phenomenon unmatched by any previous conflict, it became a reference for the new generation of jihadists, offering them a new project that was much more accessible than that of AQ.

From this time onwards, the global jihadist movement would be divided into two factions, AQ and the self-styled Islamic State, an organisation that would acquire great strength thanks to its extraordinary financing capacity based on clandestine exports, extortion, illicit trafficking of all kinds and even black market sales of archaeological artefacts, highlighting the fine line that separates the activities of terrorist groups such as IS and organised crime, and even leading to models of hybridisation between the two violent non-state actors[91].

The organisation managed to run a real "state" (Dawla) administration in the occupied territories, building its own political project and giving effect to the group's famous motto "to remain and expand" by creating an administrative organisation with a central, provincial, sectoral and local structure that allowed it to exercise sovereignty in the controlled territory,[92] based on a treasury and the financing or provision of goods, aid and services, and a judicial system where the administrative department (diwan)

90 Igualada, C. (2019). The most immediate future of the global jihad movement. A prospective analysis. Study Group on International Security (GESI). 29/4/2019.

91 Marrero, I. (2017). New dynamics in the relationships between organised crime and terrorist groups. *Spanish Journal of International Law*. Madrid. [Accessed on 15/4/2022]. http://www.revista-redi.es/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/6_estudios_marrero_rocha_nuevas_dinamicas.pdf

92 Servitja, X. (2015). The Islamic State and the administrative organisation of the Caliphate at the provincial level. Study Group in International Security (GESI). September 2015.

of the Hisba would apply Islamic morality ("commanding the good and forbidding evil")[93]. IS ruled with ruthless authoritarianism. The conformity of its civilian population (the group would seek to engender a practically and ideologically "obedient" population) would be vital to its functioning and the legitimacy of its proto-state[94].

In late 2015, the military pressure exerted against IS by the armies of the official governments of Syria and Iraq, in addition to various local and international allies, led the organisation to a progressive loss of conquered territories, eventually including its two main strongholds, Mosul in Iraq and Raqqa in Syria, between the summer and autumn of 2017[95]. By November 2017, the caliphate had imploded, having lost 98% of its territory. In little more than two years, IS had lost all the territories over which it had dominated, defeated militarily and with its territorial structure destroyed, returning once again to its origins and towards an insurgent strategy which, from 2018 onwards, would be particularly relevant in Iraq.

Its military defeat fractured the organisation, perhaps making it less credible, but it failed to obliterate a robust ideology that has ably sustained the movement to this day, and which continues to pose a serious threat to the West and to Muslim countries alike. The deployment of its propaganda, which has shrewdly come to drive popular discourse, has complemented its military defeats, making the fight against this type of terrorism extraordinarily difficult to deny in terms of its communicative success[96].

The renewed Taliban rise

Jihadist violence did not stop its progress, both before and after 2014. As Professor De la Corte cites[97], and according to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, between 2001 and 2018 the number of existing jihadist organisations and groups in the world increased by 270%, noting that the overall number of jihadist fighters grew steadily between 1980 and 2018. There are therefore many more jihadist organisations today than in 2001[98].

93 Al-Tamini, A. J. (2018). The internal structure of the Islamic State`s Hisba Apparatus. Middle East Center. 1/6/2018. [Accessed on 2/4/2022]. http://www.aymennjawad.org/21246/the-internal-structure-of-the-islamic-state-hisba.

94 Vale, G. (2020). Piety is in the eye of the bureacrat: the Islamic state's strategy of civilian control. Combating Terrorism Center. SENTINEL. Vol. 13, Issue 1, June 2020.

95 De La Corte. (2021). Op. cit., p. 365.

96 Winter, C. and Haroro J., I. (2017). Why ISIS is so good at branding its failures as successes. 19/9/2017. [Accessed on 2/4/2022]. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/09/isis-propaganda/540240/

97 De La Corte, L. (2021). History of jihad. From its origins to the end of the first Taliban emirate. Madrid, Cataract.

98 Igualada, C. and Yagüe, J. (2021). The new paradigm of international terrorism after the Taliban's return to power. International Observatory for the Study of Terrorism (OIET). 25/8/2021.

It is worth noting that in 2018, the Taliban overtook IS in the list of the world's most lethal organisations, taking first place (fourth place was held by the Islamic State Korashan Province (IS-KP), an IS affiliate in Afghanistan since its establishment in 2015). Thereafter, and until mid-2021, the Taliban would maintain their top position in the world terrorism ranking, a resilience that can be explained by the fact that although they were defeated two decades ago after the US invasion, losing power and battles, their entity as a group was untouched, remaining holed up in a cosy Pakistan, which kept them in the rearguard.

The agreement reached in Doha (Qatar) between the Taliban and the US on 29 February 2020, which would put an end to two decades of military intervention (the US would accede to the Taliban's request to exclude the Afghan authorities from the agreement, thus depriving the government of any legitimacy), marked the beginning of the Taliban's meteoric rise to power and the proclamation of their second Islamic Emirate.

Despite their pledge not to harbour any terrorist organisations (AQ), and to fight any terrorist group that might pose a threat to the US and its allies, AQ and Taliban links remained intact,[99] reminding us that despite the passage of two decades, neither AQ has been defeated nor the partnership between AQ and the Taliban fractured, although this does not mean that the Taliban group is willing to make the same strategic mistake that led to their withdrawal with little resistance during the US invasion.

AQ may be patiently awaiting future guidance from the Taliban, who have given it more covert than overt support, but it will not tolerate being targeted again by the international community should AQ decide to revive its actions in the West, which is unlikely but not impossible.

This second rise to power of the Taliban has also meant a window of opportunity for IS - a staunch enemy of the Taliban, whom it considers khawarij or alien to Islam -[100] who is accustomed to taking advantage of areas of vulnerability, instability and chaos, and who has sought by all means to make the Afghan population wary of the new regime, threatening its survival and provoking attacks that have generated even more confusion and disarray. In this respect, its position is identical to the one it held years ago: total and absolute rejection of the Taliban group for negotiating and reaching agreements with the "Western infidels"[101].

Less than two weeks after the declaration of the second Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan with the seizure of Kabul, IS-KP claimed responsibility for the first terrorist attack under their regime, the double bombing of the Afghan capital's

99 Igualada and Yagüe. (2021). Op. cit.

100 Requeijo, A. (2021). What is ISIS-K? The Afghan Daesh affiliate that sees the Taliban as traitors to Islam. El confidencial. [Accessed 1/5/2022]. Available at: https://www.elconfidencial.com/mundo/2021-08-27/isiskhorasan-grupo-terrorista-atentado-kabul_3253330/

101 Igualada and Yagüe. (2021). Op. cit.

international airport, leaving at least 70 people dead, including 13 US troops[102]. IS-KP promised a 'new phase of jihad' in Afghanistan, claiming a wave of attacks. This has indeed been the case, as IS affiliate attacks on infrastructure and public spaces frequented by Afghans in Afghanistan have steadily increased in number since the Taliban's rise. On 2 November 2021, the Islamic State in Khorasan province again claimed responsibility for an attack on the country's main military hospital, Sardar Daoud Khan, located in Kabul. It left more than 20 confirmed victims and dozens more injured[103].

The main IS branch in Afghanistan has become a concern for the Taliban regime's leadership and its own stability, which is why the Taliban are struggling to eradicate this home-grown terrorism that plagues the population. This has had a direct impact on the regime's popularity vis-à-vis a population in desperate straits due to the economic crisis and high levels of famine, which have led to skyrocketing indicators of poverty, discontent and social unrest[104].

After two decades of war on terror, the year 2021 ended with the inauguration of the Second Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and a situation where both sides of the same perverse entity that is the jihadist movement were vividly celebrating the triumph of Muslims for what they consider a great conquest over the infidels.

And in parallel, the widely shared perception of a new failure of the West.

Final Considerations

Although it did not take long for the caliphate to run out of territory and caliph, another symptom of the evolution of the jihadist threat worldwide, this did not mean the disappearance of IS or AQ, which are vying with each other for the leadership of global jihadism, but rather a further challenge to the West and a further demonstration, seen from today's perspective, of the movement's extraordinary capacity for resilience and acclimatisation. The caliphate fell, but the retrograde ideology that inspired it did not, and is still very present in the minds of the jihadists, keeping this type of terrorism alive through groups or splinters that maintain the cause, along with others that have emerged over the years.

We have witnessed the mutation of the jihadist movement, which has gone through three successive phases of affirmation, denial and overcoming. In a struggle for Islamic power, the Afghan jihad, coinciding with the Iranian revolution, overwhelmed the Muslim world after the overthrow of the Soviet Union, a world it sought to absorb

102 Requeijo. Op. cit. Accessed on 1/5/2022.

103 Aguilera, A. (2021). ISKP, an open wound in the new Afghan agenda. International Observatory for the Study of Terrorism (OIET). 4/11/2021.

104 Aguilera. Op. cit.

into itself with 9/11, but from which AQ did not draw the popular support it sought, never achieving the single-minded goal of turning the Muslim masses in its favour. Nonetheless, this did not represent the end of the organisation, and much less the end of jihadist violence, which has been perpetuated thanks to the contribution of many actors aligned, at least partially, with the "global jihad" project championed by Osama[105].

We have also witnessed the new urban jihad that originated in Mumbai (India) in 2008, with 173 people killed in twelve coordinated attacks, carried out by trained, organised and highly motivated individuals. This new jihad is now Europeanised[106] and resides everywhere, with no need for sophistication since the attacks use much more accessible and rudimentary techniques, and is within the reach of anyone, because anyone, as Setmarian stated, can contribute to jihad if they set their mind to it. The aim is simply to destabilise the international political system; to make states, "pay the price".

For years, both AQ and IS have sought to self-replicate by adapting to circumstances, re-emerging stronger after setbacks. Since the fateful attacks of 9/11 in 2001, jihadism has continued to spread with an incredible recruitment capacity that has mobilised thousands of young people from the Sahel to Southeast Asia. There are many more jihadist organisations today than there were then, highlighting the destabilising potential of these groups and the serious threat they pose to global security.

The Taliban's rise, celebrated by the jihadist movement, has given a strong boost to both the regime and other jihadist fighters, and Afghanistan has once again become a safe haven for terrorist organisations. The relationship between AQ and the Taliban, close and co-dependent for years, is unlikely to break down anytime soon, especially since they share a common enemy, IS-KP, which in turn has sought Afghan territory to proliferate and regenerate.

Following this prospective line, AQ and the Taliban's confrontation with the third actor involved in the issue, IS-KP, will probably continue to hold firm, since IS's objective, faithful to the strategy advocated by Naji in his Manual of Barbarism, is and has always been that of territorial exclusivity and leadership of the global jihadist movement, attacking any group that is not akin to its ideology.

The revival of AQ, which has once again received support from the Taliban movement, retaining its link to the group as in the past, represents a future opportunity for the organisation's reputation and its consolidation. The new situation in Afghanistan, the territory that witnessed the "Afghan jihad" and the birth of AQ and other terrorist groups, once again, 20 years later, represents a scenario of possible re-launching of the global jihadist movement, especially that aligned with AQ. Volunteers to receive terrorist training could even be welcomed if the organisation so decides, as it did before,

105 De La Corte. (2021). Op. cit., p. 360.

106   Echeverría, C. La jihad urbana se europeiza. *El País*. 18/7/2016. [Accessed on 1/5/2022]. https://elpais.com/elpais/2016/07/15/opinion/1468590804_594110.html

given that it enjoys the support and protection of the Taliban and operates in a comfortable space between Afghanistan and Pakistan for the possible planning of attacks outside the region, something that could have a direct impact on Western Europe.

Local AQ franchises such as Al-Shabab, the Support Group for Islam and Muslims (JNIM), and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQPA), have praised the Taliban's rise as the victory of a local movement through "patience and determination", finally overcoming a broad international coalition. This will no doubt boost the morale of jihadist groups, who may find inspiration in the group's takeover[107].

For its part, IS, in relative decline after the fall of its caliphate, and whose local factions, unlike those of AQ, are silent on the Taliban's rise to power, has also taken advantage of the new Afghan situation, despite accusing the Taliban of being "traitors of Islam", to further its own global narrative (aimed primarily at young Muslims), extolling violent jihad as a means to "achieve the final victory of Islam"[108]. This could allow it to distinguish itself as a ruthless jihadist group, which will continue to degrade Taliban control (and recruit the disaffected among them) as promised, in an Afghanistan on the road to humanitarian disaster, economic collapse and universal poverty. Rebuild the group, re-empower it and regenerate, which has always characterised the Islamic State and the jihadist movement in general.

Today, after 40 years, the jihadist threat is ongoing and spreads "from below" around the world, connecting young people everywhere to the global jihad and inspired by the return to power of the Afghan Taliban - a great victory for their cause.

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108 [Accessed on 15/5/2022]. https://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/analisis/afganistan-razones-por-las-que-el-acceso-al-poder-de-los-taliban-incidira-sobre-la-amenaza-yihadista-en-europa-occidental/

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Book review
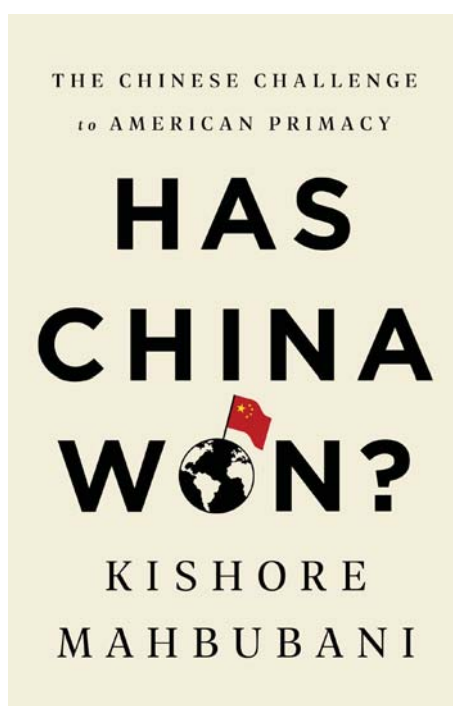
The geopolitical environment of the first half of this century is dominated by what John J. Mearsheimer (1947-) calls "offensive realism". According to Mearsheimer, the great powers are seeking to improve their relative power in relation to the rest, and most fundamentally in the regional sphere. Such behaviour in a multipolar environment is more prone to conventional warfare, especially when in the system there are countries that can be considered potential regional hegemonic powers. In this state of affairs, Mearsheimer contrasts realism with liberalism as the dominant theory. Furthermore, he tests his theory against the other two traditional theories of realism, the "defensive or structuralist" and the "classical" theories popularised by Kenneth Waltz (1924-2013) and Hans Morgenthau (1904-1980), respectively. To this effect, one of the main pillars of realism is the fundamental role that the international environment plays in the behaviour of states, much more than the internal characteristics of their governments and societies. In other words, it is the structure of the international system that shapes a state's policies, over and above domestic considerations. In this framework, "offensive realism" is proposed as a synthesis, such that, seeking the goal of mere survival, a state considers it necessary to gain political weight in the system by any means, even if it is detrimental, as long as the other states suffer greater attrition, and the "balance of power" is guaranteed. In this environment of "offensive realism", "political warfare", as defined by George F. Kennan (1904-2005) in the document on "the inauguration of the organisation of political warfare" of 30 April 1948, would be "the use of all means at the service of the state, without the declaration of war, to achieve national objectives", framing the international environment in which the author develops his novel.

The author of the book, Kishore Mahbubani, of Indian origin, born in 1948 in Singapore, has a PhD in philosophy and an extensive diplomatic career spanning 33 years, with stays in Cambodia, Malaysia, Washington and New York. In New York he was Singapore's permanent representative to the United Nations, and President of the Security Council from January 2001 to May 2002. He is currently the coordinator of the Asia for Peace programme at the Asia Research Institute (ARI) of the National University of Singapore.

The book recasts the more traditional philosophical thinking of Taoism, with the duality of "yin and yang" as diverse forces seeking synthesis and, once achieved, diverging again to re-integrate in an infinite cycle that seeks harmony and moral superiority. The two dichotomous forces are represented by China and the United States (US and China) who, in the author's words, assume a paradoxical geopolitical context dominated by an existential duality that must seek mutual understanding based on tolerance. In this state of constant tension, the author contrasts Western thinking on the dichotomy between good and evil with Eastern compromise and interdependence, developing the basic idea that one cannot exist without the other, and the need for a compromise of dialectical logic to continue progress. In this regard, he quotes Professor Hong Hai of Nyang University of Technology: "One of the basic principles is the notion that "yin and yang" are opposed to each other, but interdependent".

Another of the book's objectives is to dismantle the increasingly widespread theory of the new "cold war", an expression it mentions on 42 occasions. To do so, the author unpacks the differences that, in his opinion, invalidate this perception, which poisons the relationship between the two great powers. First, it refers to the absence of a comprehensive, long-term US strategy. The US is also seeking to address the growing geopolitical competition with China, which is seen as a strategic rival. He reinforces this view with the main message of Henry Kissinger's (1923-) book, *On China*, which is none other than the lack of such a strategy on the part of the US and China. This absence contrasts with the strategy designed by the great architect of containment, George F. Kennan, derived from his first exposure in the famous Long Telegram of 22 February 1946.

Other aspects that reinforce the differences between the two "cold war" geopolitical competition scenarios, the Soviet Union and China, are:

1. Gross Domestic Product (GDP). While at its peak the Soviet Union only reached 40% of the US GDP, the forecasts show that China may overtake the US by 2030. Furthermore, if we look at "purchasing power parity", already in 2018 China accounted for 18.6% of world GDP, while US GDP stood at 15.6%;

2. Defence spending. This was one of the fundamental vectors of the bankruptcy of the Soviet empire, but in this case, there appear not to be the same signs. According to the author, US spending has soared exponentially, while Chinese spending has remained more subdued.

3. He also explores the Alliances, contrasting the solidity of last century's alliances with today's more erratic politics, which had its most volatile moment during the presidency of Donald Trump (1946-); and

4. The change in the geopolitical scenario, which he considers even more critical, with an increasingly dangerous drift towards an increasingly complex scenario, and a growing balance which, as John J. Mearsheimer argued, is much more prone to conventional confrontation.

Regarding the most contentious points in the relations between the two geopolitical powers, he cites Taiwan 135 times, Tibet 8, Sinkiang 5, Hong Kong 39, China Seas 34 and Senkaku/Diaoyu 1. And on the most relevant countries in this geopolitical dispute, he cites India 200 times, Japan 144, Europe 117, Australia 71, Russia 43, Great Britain, 31, France 30, Germany 21, the two Koreas 21 and Pakistan 14.

He also considers Taiwan, Tibet and Sinkiang to be an integral part of China and that would be suicidal for any Chinese ruler to abandon them. As he quotes, "these are incontestable political realities that cannot be changed". Taiwan is thus the only exceptional case that could start a war. Whatever flexibility policy they may develop, its consideration as an integral part of China is the one thing that no Chinese leader can compromise on. This is because it is the only remaining vestige of what is considered the "century of humiliations". Any unilateral action by either side would lead to a war between two great powers, so the author considers the desirability of maintaining the

status quo that serves the interests of both sides: for mainland China, as a "political and social laboratory of how Chinese society functions in a different political system", and for the US as a pole of influence to allow for a gradual opening of the Chinese Communist Party. The image proposed by the author is that of "a healthy virus that could stimulate the body politic of Chinese society", to which end the US should encourage greater cross-strait contact so that exposure to an open, dynamic and free society can foster China's gradual transformation into a liberal-style democracy.

The second focal point of maximum contestation, which has generated military tension, is the South China Sea where, according to the author, the two geopolitical actors share the same interest, which is none other than maintaining freedom of navigation, since both are fundamentally dependent on maritime transport. There is no doubt that maritime spaces are a source of litigation between coastal countries, as can be seen in the UN table that refers to all these claims. Without going into the legal aspects of the disputes, the author does try to refute the US media's accusation that Xi Jinping has lied about the militarisation of the enclaves occupied by China, justifying it by the increased US naval presence in the area, despite repeated American promises to avoid provocations.

Another interesting aspect developed by the author is the geopolitical weight of the dollar, which he considers to be "the most powerful weapon the US has, and which it can use to bring allies and adversaries alike into line with its interests". The US currency is virtually indispensable for world trade and financial transactions as a global public good because of the interdependence of the world economy which, according to the author, has a basic foundation: trust in American institutions. This position is guided by the idea that the currency not only looks after the interests of more than 300 million Americans, but also the interests of the rest of the world's nearly 8 billion inhabitants. In this regard, he criticises its unilateral use by the US outside international law, which he sees as a threat to the currency's long-term role as the Achilles' heel of the US economy. Moreover, he believes that the emergence of blockchain technology with the rise of cryptocurrencies and the spread of digital currencies will encourage China to use this to avoid the dominance of the dollar. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the economic measures put in place by the West to weaken the Kremlin's economic power will undoubtedly encourage large regional economies to seek alternatives to the dollar's dominant role.

A recent Bloomberg New Economy study stated that the dollar had increased its dominance and that it was very difficult, though not impossible, to displace as the reference currency. To this effect, it gave the following figures: almost 90% of the foreign exchange market and 59% of world reserves, which is approximately three times more than the euro, which takes second place; while the yuan, according to the International Monetary Fund for the third quarter of 2021, accounted for 2.5% of world reserves. However, other reports indicate a growing popularity of the Yuan, which would reach 3.2% in January 2022, overtaking the yen at 2.79% and dropping to fourth place, also behind the pound sterling with 6.60% in third place.

The author looks at INSTEX (Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges) created by the United Kingdom, France and Germany as a payment system to avoid US federal sanctions on Iran. Although symbolic in its effects, he considers it to be an action that can mark a path for the future. In the same vein, the sanctions against Russia for its invasion of Ukraine, neutralising half of its foreign exchange reserves and international financial isolation by limiting its access to the SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications) messaging system, are further tests of the soundness of the financial system and the dominant position of the dollar.

To this effect, according to Bloomberg New Economy, China's strategy will follow two lines: first, maintaining the stability of the international system that allows it to achieve its growth objectives; and second, strengthening CIPS (China's Cross-Border Interbank Payments System) as a consolidated system, allowing it to continue transactions in crisis situations. Thus, while the People's Bank of China banned cryptocurrencies in September 2021 to reduce capital flight, it continues to strengthen the digitalisation of the yuan, which seems the most efficient way to counter the dominance of the dollar. There is no doubt that geopolitical competition in the environment of offensive realism, the economic factor, as the author reminds us, will be one of the fundamental vectors of the conflict. Meanwhile, one of its centres of gravity will be the financial environment and its dependence on the dollar, which is why the countries that are postulated as regional geopolitical powers will seek their monetary independence in the regional sphere.

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RECENSION
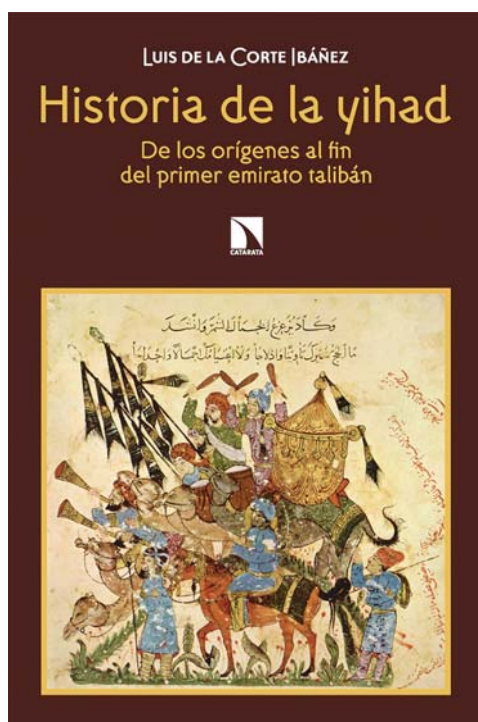
Throughout history, there has been national terrorism, confined to a specific territory; transnational terrorism, where the bases or sanctuary are in one territory and its field of action and objectives in another; and international terrorism, whose objectives are likewise in one territory, but its field of action is the whole world. However, since 9/11, global terrorism has appeared, where both the objectives and the field of action of the terrorists is the whole world.

These attacks brought in their wake in a sea of experts and dilettantes who struggled to explain a phenomenon imbued with a significant cultural distance that made it difficult to understand. Suicide terrorism was a media sensation and of great interest because of the images that recreated this explicit violence and challenged the world. To this effect, it could even be said that a kind of "terrorism industry" emerged to respond to this urgent demand for knowledge.

Al Qaeda's main achievement, it could likewise be said, has been to have popularised the word "jihadist", which serves as a surname and lowest common denominator for different local movements that have been given a certain framework, generating synergies at a global level. A new word is trying to describe an equally novel phenomenon, "al-Qaedism", a term for a set of jihadist groups integrated into a sort of semi-franchial nebula at the centre of which is al-Qaeda, which acts as a source of emulation and inspiration thanks to the legitimacy gained from 9/11.

However, jihadist movements have also parasitised conflicts of a different nature, transforming their key elements and nature into religious ones, without really resolving them and even ending up fighting the conflicts they had originally come to support.

China has claimed its place. China's peaceful rise arguably went unnoticed - though not by all - in the media noise generated by jihadism. Nonetheless, more than 20 years have passed since 9/11, long enough for a dispassionate analysis to draw useful lessons for other situations on how this all came to be.

Jihadism has currently fallen out of the media spotlight, depriving the phenomenon of many of the forms of emotionality it sparks or are associated with it, and making de facto analysis now more objective and thus of particular academic interest. In addition, there are numerous primary sources and multidisciplinary analyses that call for reflection on the path that led to 9/11 and a re-reading of what has been worked on so far.

This is precisely what is offered in the book *Historia de la Jihad: de los orígenes al fin del primer emirato talibán* (History of Jihad from its origins to the first Taliban emirate), published by Catarata. Far from being a response to the information effect provoked by the terrorist attacks and the subsequent dilettantism, it has been written conscientiously and aseptically by a renowned psychologist, Luis de la Corte Ibáñez, professor of social psychology at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, with a long curriculum in the study of terrorism. In addition and notably, Professor de la Corte directs the Strategic Studies and Intelligence area of the Institute of Forensic and Security Sciences of the Autonomous University of Madrid.

The development of the book work is linear, using history as its leitmotiv and bibliographical sources of the highest solvency. De la Corte is an inveterate realist and this process and means of proof is in line with that logic of thought. This is a rigorous overview of the warlike jihad, which starts from its origins and ends up focusing on its contemporary manifestations, with the main point of interest the 9/11 attacks. The book itself is a succession of historical events linked to each other, establishing various connections.

Because Islam is a traditionalism, history is fundamental to its understanding. The roots of jihadism lie in the interpretation of the Qur'an and the Hadith, with which the book begins. Significant are the role of the Hanbali legal school for its literalism in Qur'anic exegesis, thinkers such as Ibn Taymiyya and reform movements such as Wahhabism.

The word Salafism - an idea from the mid-era of Islam - comes from the term *Salaf al-Salifh,* the Pious Ancestors, referring to the four Perfect *Rashidun* Caliphs, successors of the Prophet, Abu Bakr, Omar, Uthman and Ali and, more broadly, to the three generations to which they belong and who, because of their proximity to the Prophet, are considered most perfect.

Citing Ernst Renan, the book begins with the origins of Jihad and an analysis of the role of its contribution to the spread of Islam as a religion, community and civilisation through a selection of events, situations and ideas that have decisively shaped the history of religion, community, civilisation and Islamic thought.

The Islamic world had developed of its own accord since the Crusades. In this context and after several centuries of isolation, Napoleon's invasion of Egypt demonstrated the weakness of North African societies vis-à-vis the West. Then came the trauma of a colonisation and the crimes and massacres that took place. Moreover, it did not deliver the promises of development that had served as its doctrinal foundation.

At the end of the 19th century, the awakening of Islam and its regenerationist attempts at reform were driven by leading intellectuals. The first Islamic organisations appeared in this context long before the Cold War, although they received little attention in the West. The Muslim Brotherhood Organisation emerged as early as 1928, four years after the end of the Caliphate and the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire by Hassan Al Banna, an Egyptian teacher. Then came the process of decolonisation that associated Islam with nationalist movements and took place in the context of the Cold War.

In this framework, which is linked to the oil crisis, the internationalisation of Palestinian terrorism, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Iranian revolution and the war in Lebanon would all take place. Other geographical areas joined this movement too, sometimes with different and superimposed overtones to the religious ones, such as the Kashmir conflict and the dynamics in the Philippines.

It was in the 1970s/80s that the phenomenon of Islamic associations was consolidated and definitively launched, coinciding with years of serious social, economic and political crises, and also cultural shock.

The proximate causes of the resurgence of Islam in political life that followed are to be found in such familiar issues as the Arab-Palestinian conflict, and the enduring sense of grievance it entailed for Arab nations. The success of the Iranian revolution which, despite being Shiite, demonstrated that the proposal to Islamise modernity was not in fact a utopia but a practicable reality. The ideological expansion of Wahhabism, financed by Saudi Arabia and materialised by school teachers, served to help spread ideas and thinkers, such as Qutb and Faraj and his work "The Forgotten Obligation", giving them doctrinal body and cohesion. The Russian invasion of Afghanistan provided military training for fanatical warriors and would help to coordinate the movement by creating common bonds. The failure of the Arab socialist path and of states to fulfil their role would delegitimise them and lead many organisations to brand secular-oriented governments as infidels. In short, by the late 1970s there were already ideas, doctrine, leadership, indoctrination, resources and trained personnel in place.

The political Islamism that is presented as a response to such dilemmas would be presented as a comprehensive solution based on the claim to be the meeting point between religion and politics. These movements have been transformed by their gradual insertion into the machinery of the state by introducing a possibilism affecting the application of the doctrine that would eventually lead to its trivialisation.

The politicisation of jihad occurred simultaneously alongside the Islamisation of conflicts such as the Palestinian one. The countries affected by this new jihadism were Lebanon - with the emergence of Shia jihadism - Israel and Palestine, Egypt and Algeria, which experienced a second war. However, it also shook other areas such as Indonesia, the Philippines and even Afghanistan. The end of communism reactivated the Islamic effervescence throughout Central Asia - particularly in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan - and in the Caucasus - Chechnya - reaching as far as the Balkans, where its activity was a failure.

Modern Salafism emerged in the 1960s in Saudi Arabia for geopolitical reasons, under the tutelage of its leaders and as an instrument of struggle against Nasserism and the socialist Arab way. The fusion of this thought with Wahhabism was a powerful reagent that resonated with and energised the group, later taking on a life of its own.

In this context and at this time, with the non-transparent support of US and Pakistani services, it would appear as a network of networks. This was Al Qaeda (AQ), which would not demobilise at the end of the Soviet conflict. AQ was an evolution of the *Maktab-al-Jidmat* (MAK) organisation of Abdullah Yusuff Azzam, promoter of the idea of global jihad, which Bin Laden would join. It is an Islamic fraternity which, despite being under the protection of Arab ethnicity, transcends national and cultural differences and immediate ideological goals. Under the cover of the Afghan safe haven, the network forged a cadre of highly motivated activists experienced in armed combat.

However, tactical differences between the leaders - Abdullan Yusuff Azzam favoured guerrilla warfare in the framework of a conventional conflict, while Bin Laden advocated global terrorism using the MAK's own channels - eventually led to the rift and

is probably one of the reasons for his assassination, which has never been clarified and which many attribute to the Saudi Arabian as the beneficiary.

The radicalisation of Sudan would also be important in the development of the jihadist movement. In this process, the role of the leader Hasan al-Turabi, who established relations with the great Islamic and world terrorist leaders of the time, stands out. The country was fractured as the Muslim north ruled over the animist and Christian African minorities in the south. Al-Turabi invited Bin Laden to the country, which led al-Qaeda also to Somalia, Eritrea and Yemen. The attacks against the World Trade Center in 1993, and against Egyptian President Mubarak in 1995 while he was in Addis Ababa, left the Sudan in an uncomfortable position, leading to the return of al-Qaeda troops to Afghanistan, where there were training camps that had been attended by Muslim groups from all over the world since the last decade of the 20th century, and from which two new figures would emerge: Setmarian and al-Zarqawi.

Al Qaeda consolidated a solid organisational structure in this territory, while taking care of the training and selection of its leadership, reinforcing old relationships that arose in the heat of the conflict with the Soviet Union, such as the one with the Haqqani network. At the same time, it accentuated its anti-Western narrative, focusing on the "distant enemy" strategy, which not only acted as a rallying point, but it also considered most of the regimes installed in Muslim countries as illegitimate and subsisting under Western protection. Using a media strategy and a strong anti-American dialectic, the aim was to provoke or force a disproportionate response - which he did not fear - from the US that would legitimise his cause and finally awaken the Muslim people.

Thus began the great campaign against the US that would lead to the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the USS Cole in 2001. For its part, al-Qaida was steadily building up the means and capabilities for its global operations, while the United States did not react or pay attention to the obvious challenge posed by both al-Qaida and the Taliban.

Al Qaeda's ambition to strike at the United States crystallised in the 9/11 attacks, the culmination of the campaign, which were inspired by an attempted attack on Paris conceived from Algeria. The attacks were the result of an intelligence failure on the part of the US, the root cause of which was an underestimation of the capabilities of these groups which, in turn, meant that the information available was under-exploited.

The 9/11 attacks brought Al Qaeda to the forefront of the world, giving it global visibility and turning the organisation into a rallying point for many of those dissatisfied with the current order and giving them hope of being able to change it, while imbuing the organisation with a relevance that was out of keeping with its real military capabilities. The attacks were an outlet that channelled the identity hatred and frustration of significant segments of the Muslim population. The network's actions meant that its political gamble was seen as viable and consequently as a danger to Western security.

Luis de la Corte's work, as announced, ends in Afghanistan with the fall of the first Taliban emirate, something that, in his opinion, surprised Bin Laden, who did not

consider that the Americans were going to carry out a ground deployment in response to 9/11. Furthermore, in the epilogue to the work, he analyses the reasons for the Taliban victory in 2021 and the strategic errors - or lack of strategy - that led to this situation.

This is a necessary work, a relevant and pertinent research paper that appropriately commemorates a date of the utmost geopolitical interest. This is done in an unemotional and rigorous way by someone who is a reference in terrorism studies in our country.

The criticism that can be made is related to the methodology followed and the author's realist reference. It provides an encyclopaedic exposé of facts and data but is sometimes lacking in strategic analysis and the drawing of consequences that go beyond the historical facts and are useful to us today. We would also have liked to have seen a more in-depth and detailed discussion of the ideological and religious transformations of the Salafist Islamist movement, and its differentiations and nuances in relation to the facts and in terms of their significance from a security perspective.

In any case, it is a brilliant piece of work. Analogies can be drawn with Gustavo de Arístegui's *La Jihad en España* or Gilles Kepel's work, even if their optics and ambitions are different. It is for this reason and for its academic timeliness that we can only congratulate the author for his compilation and analytical effort, which we take this opportunity to support from the Institute due to its relevance in our country.

Spain must produce its own and more research on security-relevant issues. We cannot simply rely on the research others produce for their own use and in bulk. Agriculture and thinking are strategic needs of nations.