STRATEGIC TRENDS OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS TO ACHIEVE/CONSOLIDATE REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SECURITY

Alexandru EPARU

"Carol I" National Defence University, Bucharest
DOI: 10.55535/RMT.2022.4.14

This article is an overview of the international strategic context in the next 20 years, designed to guide the work of international security organizations in achieving/consolidating regional and global security. The analysis is based on the work of international organizations as sound judgments on different alternative strategies that focus on the challenges of the most likely future themes.

According to the assessment, the period up to 2040 will be a period of transition, characterized by instability, both in the relations between states and in the relations between groups within states. The world is likely to continue to face the reality of a changing climate, rapid population growth, resource scarcity, resurgence of ideologies, and above all, shifts in global power from West to East.

No state, group or individual can face these challenges in isolation, only collective responses will be adequate. Therefore, the struggle to establish an effective system of global governance capable of meeting these challenges will continue to be a central theme of the age.

Globalization, global inequality, climate change and technological innovation will affect the lives of everyone on the planet. There will be a constant tension between greater interdependence between states, groups and individuals, and increased competition between them. Dependence on complex global systems, such as global supply chains for resources, is likely to increase the risk of systemic problems.

Keywords: strategic trends; climate change; globalization; global power; inequality; innovation;

INTRODUCTION

Strategic trends determine how the likely changes that may occur in the next 20 years are perceived, especially taking into account trends in the following fields: social, resources and environment, economic, geopolitical, scientific-technological and military. I specify from the beginning that this analysis does not develop the newer problems of the pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war because these challenges are the subject of substantial analyses, having been allocated articles with a specific destination.

Lack of reaction or slow reaction to change always leads to additional costs or even irretrievable losses. In the context of security, where such costs are identified through interests, values and international (national) security, efforts are needed to be prepared for change, such as an effort to focus on the challenges we will face in the future, so that these trends can be used in the development of medium and long-term strategies needed by international security organizations to support the planning process of achieving/strengthening regional and global security.

The approach to strategic trends at the level of international security organizations required documentary research and content analysis of some concepts regarding security and international cooperation, studies on the structural development and policies of security organizations, comparative analyses of approaches in the field of security implementation, implemented by different member countries of the organizations, in order to identify the significant aspects that are the basis of the optimization of the cooperation activity. Structural correlation was another method approached in order to express the analysed information.

For example, under the UN mandate, international security organizations are required to act to guarantee peace, resolve disputes and ensure international security. Although the UN mandate has universal applicability and any conflict that threatens international peace and security can be placed on its agenda, the manner in which the crises were addressed often depended on the interests of the great powers, namely the five permanent members of the Security Council[1] (Almăşan, 2012, pp. 138-149).

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[1] Permanent members – China, Russian Federation, France, Great Britain, USA – have veto power in the Security Council.

In the next 20 years, all aspects of human life will change at an unprecedented pace, bringing new characteristics, challenges and opportunities for societies. During the mentioned period of time, the world will face increasingly acute climate changes, rapid population growth, diminishing resources, the rebirth of some ideologies and the change in the balance of power between the West and the East. In our view, at least three areas of change will affect the lives of everyone on the planet: *climate change, distribution of power* and *globalization*.

Climate change will shape *the physical environment* in which the population will live, influencing access to habitable areas, food and water. The volume *of the global economy* will probably grow faster than at any other stage in human history, and in socio-economic terms it will become more integrated, it will create global interdependencies. States and groups will not be able to face the challenges in isolation, but only through a collective approach to them. The centre of gravity of this period will be the identification and application of a functional system of global governance, capable of responding to the challenges, a process that will create a constant tension to achieve greater interdependence between states, groups or individuals, under the circumstances of increasing competitiveness between them. Dependence on complex global systems could affect states in the event of their collapse.

The *distribution of global power* will change, moving from the Euro-Atlantic space to Asia, as the multipolar world consolidates. This major change, coupled with other global challenges, such as climate change, dwindling resources and population growth, is likely to produce instability in international relations and fierce competition between great powers. The rise of states such as China should not be taken for granted given the nature and magnitude of the problems they face, or their overestimated influence. There will likely be several states and organizations competing for regional and global influence, but which will have to cooperate.

The *phenomenon of globalization* will probably continue, supported by the rapid development of global telecommunications, combined with the universal informational environment in which the majority of the population will be permanently online. From a political perspective, globalization will raise the level of interdependence between states and individuals within the economy, becoming an engine of development, but it will also be a source of risk, because of the exposure of local markets to the destabilizing fluctuations of the world economy. Due to the fact that globalization will generate winners and losers, especially in the labour market, life will become more competitive, dynamic and fluid, leading

to the possibility of political decisions to limit this phenomenon, to protect the refractory population from negative effects. While many people will likely improve their material situation, a significant portion will continue to face difficulties and uncertainties generated by the unevenness and fluctuations of the global market.

The analysis carried out involved identifying major trends in each of the established areas and understanding how these trends will evolve and interact over the next 20 years. The assessment of the period will be dominated by those universal issues – *the phenomenon of globalization, climate change, global inequalities and innovation* – although, in recent years, the Covid-19 pandemic has become an issue that continues to have serious economic and social consequences worldwide, and the Russian-Ukrainian war seems to be increasing in intensity and as a result increasingly affecting global security systems.

In order to provide a coherent framework and to obtain a systemic understanding of the possible human responses to these vectors of change, strategic trends can be synthesized on three major global themes: *the human environment, global power dynamics, the evolution of security and defence challenges*. This approach will allow understanding the interactions between trends and factors, distinguishing between significant long-term changes and short-term turbulence, and identifying the major challenges and opportunities of the future international strategic context.

Of course, there are no certainties about the future, with likely strategic trends varying depending on the depth of analysis from which alternative products emerge.

The strategic trends of international organizations to achieve/consolidate regional and global security will need to take a comprehensive approach and exploit a diverse range of national and international sources and expertise, both from Western and non-Western perspectives, in the business environment, government, academia, media, non-governmental organizations.

UNIVERSAL ISSUES IN THE ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS

The UN cannot guarantee collective security, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, nor the elimination of all forms of violence in the world, but it can contribute to the achievement of these goals through state actors and other *international security organizations*, inaugurating a world in which the renunciation of any act of violence seems the right and appropriate option. At the UN level, several actions have been carried out or are being carried out, with clear, targeted objectives for the implementation of *the 2040 Agenda*. For this stage of the approach we will highlight the four universal problems.

The Phenomenon of Globalization

In the next 20 years, the volume of transactions will expand regardless of the physical distance between those employed, transforming and improving the standard of living of the population. One of the key elements of globalization will be the continued internationalization of the market for goods, services and labour, which will integrate customers and distributors regardless of geographic location. This will be one of the engines that will accelerate economic development, but it will also be a source of risk in terms of strengthening regional and global security, as local markets become more exposed to the destabilizing fluctuations of the global economy. These developments will be facilitated by the rapid development of global telecommunications, which will create a permissive information environment in which most of the population will be continuously online.

The global economy will continue to be run on market principles where some will gain and others lose, especially in the field of labour, which will become subject to legal regulation of supply and demand. Life will be more competitive, more dynamic and more fluid. From a social perspective, those who will lose will form political, cultural, economic associations and lead a virtual life, through which they will connect with members located at a distance, but who share common interests and who want to get an advantage from the association. From a political perspective, globalization will increase the level of interdependence between states, which will be increasingly integrated by the global economy.

The physical manifestation of globalization will materialize more in the globalized core, which comprises the most economically interdependent and successful regions of the world. Instability within the globalized core is likely to adversely affect the national interests of the great powers. Resources, trade, capital and intellectual property will flow through this core, through complex networks of physical and virtual infrastructure, which will likely be vulnerable to disruption or cyber attack by multiple actors.

For all challenges in this field and related to the achievement/consolidation of security, it will be necessary, on the part of international security organizations, to apply concepts, strategies, plans, decisions or instructions to *"repair"* the deterioration of the international scene in order to achieve the desired effects, respectively security guarantees and commitments subordinated to the common interest of maintaining peace and defending freedoms.

Climate Change

It is increasingly clear that we are witnessing climate change and that the atmosphere will continue to warm on an unprecedented scale in the current century. Scientific studies show that we owe a large part of global warming to human activities, primarily through the concentration of CO_2 and other gases. The change will be accelerated by diminishing natural carbon processing and shrinking ice sheets. Current studies in the field indicate that the atmosphere will continue to warm at an unprecedented level during the analysed period. Even though the rate and magnitude of change is difficult to determine, over the next 20 years, the global temperature is projected to increase by about two degrees Celsius, regardless of the agreements on gas emissions that are vital to limiting the magnitude of change over the time horizon under consideration. These agreements will be highly politicized, especially due to the relationship between developed and developing countries.

Climate science is complex, with determined causes and related effects that do not appear immediately, so the consequences of climate change will vary in terms of impact over time, incidence and geographic extent. It will likely be an unstable and unpredictable process, involving both gradual evolution and sudden instabilities. Global emergencies will involve melting ice sheets, thermal expansion of the oceans and changing direction of ocean currents, with seawater becoming more acidic as it processes some of the CO_2 in the atmosphere. Gas emissions will generate global temperature increases, unevenly distributed at the planetary level, which will likely lead to important environmental changes (Ullman, 2021, p. 51).

On land, some regions will be in a process of desertification, others will face permanent flooding, and the *"melting"* of tundra near the arctic polar zone will produce methane, possibly in large quantities. Climate change will reduce habitable areas and alter agriculture and fertility, while tropical diseases will migrate north into the temperate zone. The risk of extreme weather phenomena will continue to increase, threatening densely populated coastal, urban and agricultural areas, with floods and storms that will no longer respect the classic characteristics of the seasons. The effects of climate change will continue to be politicized as they become apparent and the link between causes and effects is better understood, and responses are contested and influenced by vested interests.

Global Inequalities

In the next 20 years, material conditions will improve for most people, but the gap between rich and poor will widen and absolute poverty will become a global challenge. Despite rapid economic growth, there will continue to be important differences in countries such as China, India, but also in smaller Western economies. In some regions, especially sub-Saharan Africa, the current state of poverty could be ameliorated. Material differences in well-being will be accentuated by the phenomenon of globalization and increased access to telecommunications. Disparities in health care will become more apparent and will be associated with a sense of injustice and resentment, even among those who will become more prosperous than their parents and ancestors. Absolute poverty and comparative disparity will fuel perceptions of injustice to those who do not meet the expectations, increasing tension and instability within and between societies, expressed through violence such as disorder, crime, terrorism and insurgency. All these problems can lead to anti-capitalist ideologies, linked with possible religious, anarchist or nihilist movements, but also to populism and the revitalization of Marxism, disruptive actions on regional and global security.

Most states will be forced to cooperate due to growing interdependencies, intensifying competition, and the need to sustain their vital economic interests and political advantages. Individual well-being will depend on access, exploitation and opportunities of the global economy, but people will ignore the process of globalization, mostly through threats. This can be one of the results of some local measures to lessen the negative effects of globalization and market operations in some countries or communities, in the interest of socio-economic stability or competitive advantage.

These tensions will fuel risks, from the individual level to the international level, making it possible to identify different approaches or pragmatic solutions to risk management, on which the attitude of individuals and communities to fruition the change or to resist or reject it will depend. These strategies can be cooperative, obstructive, competitive or various combinations of them. For example, high representatives of the UN and the OSCE meet annually in meetings to inform themselves and coordinate activities provided in the action plans in the field (Cîrciumaru, 2010).

Innovation

Innovation will create new opportunities and generate value through the successful exploitation of new or improved technologies, removing cultural and process barriers. It will occur when the low cost of inventions will generate an explosive economic growth cycle or create a new market. Scientific breakthroughs or inventions are likely to produce a *"breakthrough"* in some disciplines, particularly in information and communication technology, biotechnology *(which will be driven by the aging population)* and energy management *(which will be driven by the need to reduce the use of carbon and fossil fuel)*.

Technological development will continue to be predominantly commercial, directing inventors and entrepreneurs to identify and produce as many applications of new technologies as possible. Sensitive, niche technologies and programs with significant cost and impact will continue to be led by military or government agencies. Access to technologies and expertise will proliferate due to a wide range of audiences and users, and maintaining secrecy over sensitive technologies and systems will become difficult. Innovations will develop at an unprecedented level, and the sources of their production will multiply. No one ventures to make predictions about new or emerging technologies. The rate of change, the pace and unpredictability of innovation and development will pose challenges for decision-makers, who will have to anticipate and position themselves against direct or indirect products (Ullman, 2021).

Current assessments indicate that the fastest technological advance will occur in IT, energy, biotechnology, cognitive sciences, sensors, networks and smart materials. Nanotechnology will enable development. Technological development will serve many people, but the application and integration of technologies will continue to be unevenly distributed, deepening the gaps in understanding, advantage, and opportunity between the haves and the have-nots.

MAJOR GLOBAL THEMES FOR THE ATTENTION OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS FOR ACHIEVING/CONSOLIDATING REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SECURITY

People are and will remain the most important vector of change, surpassing societal, geopolitical and security developments. It is important to understand trends in society by analysing how physical challenges combined with societal changes and technological advancement will shape the human environment.

Demographic growth, diminishing resources and the need to address climate change will require innovative technological and organizational solutions with a profound social effect. Demographic, physical, and economic vectors will interact intensely, shaping behaviour, development, and the need for adaptation over the next 20 years.

Human Environment

This major theme examines the following factors: physical environment, societal changes and technological challenges, alongside radicalization and global health.

The physical environment

The global population is likely to grow from more than 7 billion today to around 8.8 billion in 2040, with many enjoying prosperity *(UN Population Division of the Department of Economics and Social Affairs).* Rapid population growth is likely to moderate toward the end of the 21st century, with economic development producing a progressive decline in the global fertility rate. Population resource requirements are likely to increase towards the 2040s, followed by a downward trend as technological and organizational innovations take effect and population growth declines *(Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, World Population in 2030-2040)*.

The most important pressures are likely to be from competition for energy, food and drinking water, as well as global goods[2].

The reserves of energy, food and water will be sufficient for the growing population, but problems are likely to be related to their geographical distribution, access, cost and transport. Despite population growth, per capita consumption and gross domestic product are likely to increase, with this economic growth leading to continued reductions in absolute poverty. Economic development will be directly linked to resource consumption, and producer and consumer economies will seek political and economic partnerships to guarantee supply. The fight for energy, minerals and fertile land will intensify, as states will compete for long-term access to them (Ghiba, Chivu, 2014).

The combined effects of climate change and increasing demands for food production will diminish productivity and distribution and accelerate soil degradation in traditionally fertile areas. The inequalities between areas that possess natural

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[2] *"Global commons"* are those regions shared by community members. They include those parts of the earth's surface that do not fall under the jurisdiction of nations, such as the ocean and its resources, the atmosphere, and orbital space. The only land that can be regarded as *"global commons"* is Antarctica.

resources or allow access to them and those without resources will become a source of claim, an ethical challenge for the economic system of the global market. Climate change and the progressive impact of rising temperatures will intensify the struggle for resources due to changing precipitation regimes, which will affect agricultural production capacity and worsen the distribution and access to resources.

Environmental changes are likely to lead to a significant increase in migration locally and regionally, and, to a lesser extent, internationally. Most of it will run unchecked and will have a significant social and economic impact.

Changes in society

On the horizon of 2040, it is estimated that the demographic profile of society will change, with the demographic growth taking place predominantly in developing countries. Limited economic development and cultural norms will result in high fertility levels in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, parts of the Middle East and Asia, especially in countries such as Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Pakistan. The continuous increase in the number of the population, the aggressive economic competition and the increase in consumption, in parallel with the modernization and urbanization will lead to the intensive exploitation of all kinds of resources. These trends will be exacerbated by the consequences of climate change and the footprint of human activities.

One of the key issues will be the availability and distribution of energy, food and water, the fluctuation and imbalances in their production and distribution at global, regional and local levels. High resource challenges will intensify in already hard-hit areas, particularly in low- and middle-income regions, where population growth has a major impact on local resources and economic growth. The expansion of global media and information and communication technology will increase the sense of frustration and marginalization related to the *"to have or not to have"* resources, both nationally and internationally. This will lead to populism, crises and human confrontations characteristic of inter-confessional and inter-ethnic conflicts, at the local level, and when the issue of access to strategic resources necessary to support developed or developing economies is raised, the risks of international confrontations may increase (Biddle, Macdonald, Baker, 2017).

Communicable diseases will continue to affect human life, given that the usual ones will be eradicated or their effects reduced through prophylaxis and cure, and others may appear and affect the population with variable intensity and impact, having a constantly reduced frequency but great impact, potentially pandemic.

Global communications will provide groups and individuals with much greater visibility into the advantages and disadvantages of others and the additional measures by which they can exploit opportunities and gain advantages. Physical separation will diminish in importance in supporting interests, but personal and collective physical safety will remain critical in any major, successful initiative, except in those areas where long-term opportunities may balance immediate, moderate risks. The identity of persons will take a new approach, due to the increase in human complexity, as freedom of movement and association will create opportunities and fulfilments. People will continue to hold on to their personal and cultural origins, but will accept customs from their adopted cultures in order to build an identity of their own. Collective identities will evolve by accepting greater diversity of origin and culture, only if it brings an advantage to the community. Nationality and ethnicity within homogeneous ethnic groups or ideologically nationalistic states and communities will continue to exert a strong emotional influence. Cross-border migration and movement will result in the growth of diaspora and expatriate communities, which will be able to create enclaves with strong ties to countries of origin. These differences may generate tension between societies, but it will not have the effect of a *"clash of civilizations"* (Huntington, n.d., p. 164).

Technological challenges

Technology will provide partial solutions in the future, both for adapting to and for mitigating the effects of climate change. On the horizon of the 2040s, the production of energy sources with reduced emissions, able to satisfy the demands, is not estimated. Research into carbon capture technologies is likely to advance and enable the use of fossil fuels in a limited emission regime, particularly coal. Despite competition for resources, the price of carbon raised by energy demand and constrained by climate change will drive up the price of fossil fuels, spurring the development of green energy and nuclear power solutions. In general, energy supply will meet demand, but the market will remain volatile.

Supply problems will likely be exacerbated by a lack of investment in the field, and instability and deliberate state actions will drive the implementation of broader policy goals that make energy security a constant issue. If ignored, these problems could cause major energy crises that will severely affect global economic growth, having the potential to force the development of new energy sources that were previously not considered viable, but which will be necessary from an economic and political perspective (Ionescu, 2010).

The future global environment will be defined by physical, social and virtual networks. Physical systems will involve complex interconnections that include extensive pipelines, communication cables, satellites and communication routes. Virtual networks will consist of interconnected communication servers, most through the individual Internet address protocol. Widespread access to networking will enable large-scale identity change through the use of online profiles. Remote working is likely to become the norm under controlled networks, with virtual space effectively becoming the new work environment. New ideas, beliefs, grievances will be transmitted almost instantly across the globe.

Cyberspace will provide a way to protest, but also opportunities for new and old forms of crime that can allow hostile groups to quickly create effects. Almost unlimited access to information resources will expand the opportunities for research and knowledge through virtual interfaces, diminishing the effect of geographical separation between those who want to collaborate. The ease and importance of using computers in most aspects of life will lead to dependence on them and create critical vulnerabilities for attack by potential adversaries. These vulnerabilities will be reduced through reversal options, and long-term resilience will be achieved through the development of self-healing smart grids. Institutions based on hierarchical, orderly structures will be overtaken by competitors and potential adversaries who will be able to capitalize on the rapidity of communications and the formation of groups through social networks.

The development of social media technology will continue to facilitate the emergence of *"grassroots journalism"* and make it difficult for even the most autocratic states to control access to information, especially as globalized connectivity allows local news to be broadcast instantly anywhere. Under these circumstances, the tensions and instability generated by autocratic states' tendency to quickly change public opinion by force would be brought to everyone's attention.

Radicalization

Radicalization is defined as a process that supports political, ideological or societal reform, which can lead, in certain situations, to the generation of extremism and terrorist activities (Moskalenko, McCauley, 2009, pp. 239-260).

Extremists, violent and non-violent, are those radicalized groups or individuals who seek to cross ethical or legal boundaries. Terrorists are the most fanatical examples of extremists who use *"weaponized"* propaganda to achieve their goals.

After 2040, radicalization will continue to exist, driven by a complex range

of factors such as gradually changing political orientations, demands of groups or individuals, and social inequalities. The characteristics of fragile states, such as high levels of inequality, lack of respect for human rights, minimal social support, health and welfare systems will favour the development of radicalization (Ib.). The developed states of the liberal world will face the phenomenon of radicalization due to globalization, migration and the support of social inequalities. States' actions are likely to have a significant impact on the radicalization process. For example, during stability operations, the decisive application of military power to eliminate radical groups may attract public support for them, cause them to ally with other extremist groups, or force them to form terrorist cells. Many of the current conflicts and disputes exploited by terrorist organizations do not reveal the possibility of radical behaviour change, which enables us to say that international terrorism will continue for the next 20 years. New forms of extremism or terrorist violence are expected to emerge, both locally and internationally. In China, as a result of the polarization of societal structures and inequities between elites, urban workers and rural peasants are likely to become a permanent source of grievances (The Radicalisation of a New Chinese Working Class, 2009, pp. 551-565).

Global health

By 2040 health will be recognized as a fundamental global issue. The realization that health insurance will contribute to local, national and global stability will lead to increased international investment in this area to reduce inequalities and provide opportunities for education and training. These developments are unlikely to be rapid, but will be accelerated by high-impact events such as pandemics and mass migration.

Global average life expectancy is likely to increase, thanks to continued advances in the quality and coverage of medical services. Access to these services will remain unequal between the developed and the developing world, but also at the national level, between different socio-economic groups. The inequality of medical services will be amplified by genetic, cultural and behavioural vectors, the most important being the lack of medical materials and the socio-economic environment (Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde, 2011).

The dependence on the international market, the freedom of movement of people and the high level of legal and clandestine migration will reduce the possibilities of isolating the outbreak of epidemics and will ensure the channels through which viral pandemics can spread (e.g., the Covid-19 pandemic). Diseases

such as cholera, malaria, waterborne infections, tuberculosis and hepatitis will remain significant. The geographic extent of certain diseases will be altered by climatic variations, with regions that were not susceptible to such diseases, such as Dengue fever and Lyme disease, becoming increasingly affected. In developing regions, global health inequalities will persist due to their poor coordination and reactive posture. Many states will not have access to the global pharmaceutical industry, depending on counterfeit sources of drugs and vaccines. The level of HIV infection will continue to be significant in the developing world and in Russia, but preventive measures, the availability of antiretroviral drugs and the possible discovery of a vaccine may make this disease less of an international concern.

The diagnosis and treatment of genetic diseases will improve, with lifestyle choices becoming the main vector of poor health in the developed world. Treatment of chronic lifestyle diseases will increase in importance and become a priority.

The pharmaceutical industry will know a significant development, new solutions will appear through the application of advanced genetics and nanotechnology. Stem cell technology will lead to the growth of specific tissues and organs. Research in the field will remain controversial from an ethical perspective, but its application will prove useful, especially as mature cell reprogramming develops.

Embedding mobile communications and computers into human bodies could become a practice with important military applications, despite ethical and legal discussions.

Global Power Dynamics

The analysis of power relations over the analysed time horizon indicates a shift of the global centre of power from the Atlantic to Asia and the Pacific, as the multipolar distribution of power will move and the hegemonic dominance of the USA will diminish. These developments will increase pressure on the rules-based international system and generate opportunities for both cooperation and confrontation between great powers.

Changing distribution of global power

The distribution of elements of global power is complex[3]. For a long time, at the end of the 20th century, power was concentrated by two superpowers, but

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[3] British research has identified several complementary definitions of power, including those of Nye, Waltz, Mearsheimer, Buzan and Weaver. Essentially, power status can be defined as the amalgam of military strength, access to resources, size of the economy, educational opportunities, demographics, geo-political position and political stability, among others.

the fall of the Soviet Union gave birth to the current global hegemon: the USA. If the military power is concentrated in a few important states, the economic power is much more spread at the level of some states or global organizations, in reality the power is already multipolar.

The shift in power from the USA and Europe to Asia, along with climate change, global resource scarcity and population growth, will generate a period of instability in international relations and intense competition between the great powers. The USA will remain the dominant military power, but in political, economic and military terms it will become increasingly constrained and its role as global leader will diminish. It will be increasingly difficult for the USA and its allies to capitalize on the *soft elements* of their power as emerging powers grow in influence and confidence. The economic model of the West, along with their relative social openness, could remain an attractive influence for many individuals, but also for states. The rise in power of states such as China should not be taken for granted given the nature and magnitude of the problems they face, and their influence should not be overestimated.

If currently the USA, the European Union and Japan add up to 40% of the world's gross domestic product, in 2040 they will add up to 50% and will have sufficient military power and influence in the international system, without taking into account the growing influence of China, India, Brazil and other actors (Ullman, 2021). Changing the distribution of power will not be simple, linear, or applicable to all levels of power simultaneously, with many actors likely to seek to adapt. The realignment process will generate a period of repolarization, as the states will position themselves against the change of the strategic environment under the circumstances in which they will continue to fight for the fulfilment of their objectives through traditional mechanisms.

The process of global governance, which will bring stakeholders into dialogue on global issues, will likely continue to evolve, particularly on collective challenges such as climate change. The strength of the collective response will depend on the perception of national interests and will be influenced by the scope, scale and costs involved. The perception of equity is likely to become important. The global governance process will support moderating the effects of instability by facilitating political cooperation over confrontation. The development of effective global governance capable of achieving strong collective action is likely to generate opposition, less so in exceptional situations of international crisis.

These crisis-induced changes will likely become the norm and create the impression of a permanent global governance crisis.

International organizations such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the G8, the G20, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund will remain influential, especially in addressing global issues. The emergence of a global government is unlikely. Current powers will remain reluctant to share power, and rising powers will demand an appropriate level of recognition, particularly within the UN Security Council. Despite some concessions, without significant reform, less developed states will continue to perceive global organizations as unrepresentative of their interests and as placing more value on the service they provide.

Globalization will continue, both as an idea and as a process related to the transactions of capital, goods, services, labour, intellectual property, information and resources, conducted through physical and virtual networks. The influence of globalization will manifest itself everywhere, due to the economic success of states dependent on accessing and exploiting the opportunities of the global economy, but there will also be individuals or even political elites who will see this phenomenon as a threat to social interests and stability and who will plead for protectionist measures in some industries or sensitive sectors of society. If in the long run globalization is inevitable, it can be temporarily slowed down, stopped or reversed as a process.

Competition between communities and states

One of the most important features of the next 20 years will be the constant tension between growing interdependence and intensifying competition among individuals, communities, and states. This aspect will stimulate competition between the strategies by which these groups wish to exploit, resist or change. The difficulty of meeting global resource requirements will probably become a constant, generating states' orientation towards individual rather than multilateral solutions[4].

Maintaining and expanding geopolitical influence will be considered by all powers, especially those with global or regional aspirations. Informal spheres of influence will coagulate especially around China, India, USA, Russia. Similarly, medium and small powers will unite in regional blocs, often based on trade and

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[4] Despite the benefits of globalization, bilateral agreements between resource producers and consumers are likely to become common, threatening global market fragmentation.

economic ties, with the intention of maximizing collective prosperity and influence, these tendencies, along with regionalization, being compatible with globalization. Spheres of influence and blocs are most likely to be created in geographic proximity, common security challenges, cultural ties, language, economic ties, political and religious ideologies, and possibly coercion.

The boundaries of spheres of influence will be fluid, reflecting the competition for influence. The intervention of a great power in another's area of interest will not create the risk of conflict, especially if they have the ability to use weapons of mass destruction or a considerable conventional force. An eventual confrontation between two great powers could only occur in geostrategic locations with significant resource potential or in areas where spheres of influence overlap or adjoin, such as parts of Africa, the Indian Ocean region, Asia, and the Arctic regions.

THE CHALLENGES FOR ACHIEVING/CONSOLIDATING REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SECURITY

The likelihood of a major conflict between states was not long ago perceived as unlikely, while instability, societal conflicts and terrorism repeatedly led to the emergence of crises. Now the sources of potential global conflict have increased and the forms of deployment have diversified.

The global system has become interdependent and interconnected and has given conflict, wherever it has arisen, a global dimension. Some states or non-state actors, such as terrorist groups, have gained global notoriety. Today, great power disagreements over borders, influence, and resources are possible, which could lead to confrontations, including limited wars, in which adversaries show deliberate restraint in the use of force. Western military forces could be engaged in coalition military actions against adversaries with significant military capabilities, at parity with them, or even at a slight disadvantage.

All these trends will probably continue, but on the horizon of the 2040s they will interfere with others, a change in the character of the conflict being expected. Powerful states like China will continue to evolve and develop military equipment that will rival that of Western powers and which they will export to partners and neighbours.

Even if prevention efforts continue, weapons of mass destruction are likely to proliferate and their use will increase. In the era of permanent challenges, adaptation and evolution, complex problems will not be solved by military power alone, a multinational approach is needed.

It is impossible to assess trends in future military confrontations without the contemporary military context, both global and national. Military power is and will remain an agent of politics, but once started, a conflict will have its own dynamics that can drive politics. Military power cannot be separated from the other instruments of power: diplomatic, economic and informational. Additional military power cannot be accounted for in the chaos of isolation and the complex strategic environment. These instruments of power, amplified by the growing power of information, form the *"armour"* of the state, ensure the rationales that combine *hard* and *soft power* in the pursuit of national interests, but can also destabilize if misused or adventurist.

The future security situation in the world will be characterized by reactions to global processes, by Russia's concerns to gain a more important role in the decision of international problems or by the increasingly strong assertion of Asian countries – mainly China – in world politics.

The *strategy* remains an application tool of the state, which aligns the objectives, concepts and resources to increase the success rate of the policy. It is effective when it anticipates and drives change. If in the last decade the benefits of regional cooperation have been measured especially in political terms by rebuilding mutual trust between the states in the region, the challenge of the future will consist in the identification and promotion of concrete projects that lead to the modernization and development of the region as a whole and of each state in part, so that the living standards of the population are improved.

The interrelated challenges represented by state reconstruction, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, border delimitation, democratization, security of energy resources, combating the widespread trafficking in people, drugs and weapons, as well as the possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, far exceed the resources of any single government or organization. Hence the need for a concerted effort on the part of international security organizations to accelerate the process of maturing democratic institutions and promoting a new culture of cooperation in certain regions and in the world. On the horizon of the 2040s, there will probably be more numerous, rapid and complex changes that will require forward-looking and *agile strategies*.

During the analysed period, defence and security will remain vital, both for the physical and the virtual domain. Defence is likely to become much more important in the face of population growth, climate change, resource scarcity and instability. These factors can be extended to the defence of access to physical necessities and

survival. Many of these needs will be international and linked to globalization, articulating the need for great powers operating globally and for alliances and partnerships to defend common interests. It must be understood that defence is no longer an activity that is carried out only by military forces, just as achieving security is not the exclusive domain of international security organizations.

CONCLUSIONS

The role of international security organizations in configuring the security environment will increase more and more. Organizations will not limit themselves to *"defending"* their own values, but must, to the same extent, face threats *"far from home"*. The management of these situations, through specific means, which do not lack the UN's partnerships or special relations with different countries and power centres in potentially conflict areas, become important elements of the organizations' strategy.

Cooperation is an important component of international security organizations, as it contributes to the consolidation of political dialogue and the development of regional projects. A series of political, economic, security and cultural problems can be much better and faster addressed and solved through joint and directed efforts. In this regard, the regions provide the right framework for the establishment of cooperation mechanisms, which contribute to ensuring a regional and international security climate and favour the improvement of the population's life.

"Stronger collaboration, better security", we call it that for a very good reason, arguing that *"...although collaboration is the way, impact is the destination. Launching this concept is the beginning, not the end, of that path".* An African proverb says that *"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, let's go together"* (Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of WHO, in Ullman, 2021, p. 46).

In the 2040s, hopefully, there will be compelling reasons to argue that the world will become more peaceful. Pressure on resources, climate change, population growth and changing distribution of power are likely to increase instability that may lead to armed conflict, but an all-out war between the great Western powers, between the liberal democracies, in which the full power of the industrial states is engaged, is not likely.

However, there will be possible disagreements among the great powers over borders, influence, and resources, which could lead to confrontations, including limited wars, in which adversaries show deliberate restraint in the use of force.

The involvement, in the last period of time, at the global level, of the international security organizations in solving some political-military crises, which have arisen at the global, zonal and regional level, has required a concerted effort on the part of the international community, materialized in considerable efforts, from the human, material and financial perspective, to limit the effects generated by these situations and to complete them with appropriate results, in terms of individual and collective security and stability. From this perspective, along with other instruments of an economic, diplomatic or informational nature, those of a military nature will develop their capabilities, materialized through the organization, planning and carrying out of multinational operations that will represent an option, even if at the last moment, used to solve this type of crisis.

If in the past decade the benefits of regional cooperation were measured especially in political terms by rebuilding mutual trust between the states in the region, the challenge of the present consists in identifying and promoting concrete projects that lead to strengthening the security of the regions as a whole and of each state in particular, so that the living standards of the population are defended.

The latest developments in the European space confirm the fact that the time has come to revive cooperation actions and to direct attention to the Black Sea region, an area of particular importance, due to its location on the oil and gas transport routes to Europe and near unstable areas from the Middle East and the Caucasus. Through these actions, the EU and NATO contribute to the efficiency of strategies to prevent and fight against new risks, dangers and threats to the region.

Romania manifests an active participation in regional cooperation initiatives, processes and structures, with a complex and extremely diverse issue, both from South-Eastern Europe, as well as from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Our country will also be interested in regions that are not in the immediate vicinity, from the perspective of developing transversal ties of cooperation.

In complementarity with the focus of the interest of the international community on a vital area of the continent and the globe, I believe that the foundations will be laid for a more active, more comprehensive, unitary and coherent strategy towards the Black Sea region, which will guarantee international cooperation in the region, integrated action, the achievement of regional crisis management capabilities, regional and global stability and security.

It is obvious that, as international, zonal, regional and global actors will become aware of the real importance of the Black Sea area, its strategic value will continue to grow.

The United Nations Charter gives the Security Council the power and responsibility to initiate collective action to maintain international peace and security. Most of these operations are established and implemented by the UN itself, with troops serving under the organization's operational command. In other cases where the direct involvement of the UN is not feasible, the Council authorizes the interventions of international security organizations, as the main institutions that watch over the stability of the regional and global space, including the Wider Black Sea Region, and that can capitalize through cooperation on the experience and the capabilities.

The North Atlantic Alliance, doubled by the European Union, will remain the international security organization that offers perhaps the most effective framework for consultations, dialogue and cooperation on security issues, and their potential can be exploited further, by strengthening the determining role in the security equation.

Through this analysis on the strategic trends of the international security environment, I have intended to highlight the need for conceptual cooperation or joint actions of security organizations in order to have a better world, with a developed security culture, in general, and to achieve/consolidate regional and global security, in particular.

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