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TRANSFORMING THE SECURITY DOCTRINES OF THE GREAT POWERS TO ADAPT TO THE NEW SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND PROMOTION OF NATIONAL INTERESTS

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National security doctrines have been fundamental tools for great powers, whether dominant or in the process of ascension, in responding to threats and challenges to national security, and in promoting their own interests. These doctrines have been used as pragmatic and visionary guides in the formulation of foreign policy and have influenced strategic decisions in the field of contemporary security.

Through a comparative analysis, the article provides an overview, from a historical perspective, on the evolution and implementation of the main security doctrines in the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China, highlighting their responses to changes in the international security environment. In addition, the study highlights the definition of the domestic and international interests of these states, as well as the global consequences generated by the application of these doctrines, with emphasis on the transformations in Russian doctrine as a result of the conflict in Ukraine, especially in the field of deterrence and potential use of weapons of mass destruction.

In this context, the article proposes a balanced analysis of how each of the leaders of the mentioned great powers approached the foreign policy, as well as a detailed presentation of the security doctrines, security concepts, related policies and strategies, and the interferences between them, in order to facilitate the understanding of the evolution and dynamics of the international power of the mentioned geopolitical actors.

Keywords: security doctrine; threats; objectives; distribution of power; nuclear weapons;

INTRODUCTION

The article is a comprehensive and balanced analysis of how each of the presidents of the mentioned great powers approached foreign policy. Moreover, the security doctrines, the concepts of *security, policy* and *strategy*, as well as their interference are presented so as to simplify the understanding of the evolution of the international power of these geopolitical actors. In general, some commitments and approaches from the past associate the authors of security doctrines with previous policies, in an attempt to establish new guidelines, in a constantly changing and most often dangerous world (Warren, Siracusa, 2022, pp. 1-3). The study of security doctrines is a tool that can also be used to understand the potential of a rising power to engage in interstate warfare. It can be concluded that managing *great power competition* is a *perpetual* theme in the doctrines of the past century (Chin, Skinner, Yoo, 2023, pp. 104-119).

The exacerbation of tensions between the great powers or the revitalization of the competition for the superpower status is reflected in new editions of the highest official documents (Arbatov, 2000, pp. 2, 3, 26). In the effort of political leaders to counter global or regional threats, they have consistently resorted to past experiences, at different moments in history, that were successful in order to generate effects of power and legitimacy. Thus, the lessons of the past, presented in the form of historical analogies, highly conventionalized, have influenced the doctrinal, political and strategic choices of decision-makers in order to generate retrospectives on the past and to influence public opinion. (Riani, 2022, pp. 1-3).

Among the main topics of great power politics throughout history have been: *the distribution of power* between them (the polarity of the international system); *the design model that guides the relations* of friendship and adversity between them; *the degree of involvement*

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and interference in the internal affairs of another state, and; *the way in which internal societal problems are prioritized* in relation to security levels. (Buzan, 2018, pp. 52-53).

For about 500 years, Eurasia was the centre of the world (especially the western part), dominating the other regions. Throughout almost the entire history of international politics, *territorial dominance* has been the impetus for political conflicts (Brzezinski, 1997, pp. 11, 49). Analysing the key presidential doctrines of the great powers in recent centuries, it is highlighted how their leaders adjusted the security doctrines to the realities and circumstances of the particular period, to promote national interests. Certain *events, threats, interests* and *the security environment* as a whole shaped the security doctrines of the main powers, in accordance with the perception of the presidential administrations. In this process, the essential role was played by the presidents who sometimes had the decisive contribution in the formulation of a coherent doctrine, while other times they had some limitations in the exercise of this role (Warren et al., 2022, p. 1).

The security doctrines and foreign policies of the great powers, in recent times, especially after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, are the subject of extensive debates, making national leaders aware of the key security approaches at their disposal, in peacetime but also in wartime. Analysing the internal and external factors that play a decisive role in their adoption, some analysts have come to the conclusion that *external* factors, rather than *internal* concerns are the most determining (Miller, Rubinovitz, 2020, p. 1). There are arguments, analyses and explanations that support the fact that *changes* in the distribution of international power have strong influences on the content and features of security doctrines and implicitly on the foreign policies and grand strategies of the great powers, representing responses to these changes. (Ib., p. 130). The debate about China's rise and international consequences is often framed in terms of *the balance of power* (Taylor&Francisc, 2014, pp. 171-173). For China and the Russian Federation, *regional dominance* and *possession of spheres of power* are an indication of the fact that they are great powers. (Lukin, 2018, pp. 1-5).

Analysing a wide range of conflicts in their various ideological, political, geographical and cultural contexts, from the Great Peloponnesian War to the Second World War, as well as the wars in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan and more recently Ukraine, it can be concluded that *doctrine*, *foreign policy* and *strategy* will continue to provide a vital a set of tools for survival and security, with the caveat that the global threat posed by nuclear weapons remains an underway challenge with no clear practical solutions. It can easily be seen that there is no unanimous and generally accepted answer to the questions: *What is security? What is doctrine? What is policy? What is strategy? What is the relationship between them?*. It can be said, regarding the understanding of the concept of *security*, that it is so generous and comprehensive that it has no *"borders"*, which makes it completely open to abuse by politicians and other potential opinion influencers (Gray, 2015, p. 1) The way security doctrines are developed and implemented, materialized through pragmatic policies and long-term strategies, influences the defence and promotion of national interests (Sempa, 2004, p. 1).

Change and continuity in security doctrines (presidential doctrines) over time are determined by *changes in the perceptions of the elites leading a given country* regarding the *country's interests* and *the security environment* (Dumitrescu, 2022, p. 18).

CONCEPTUAL DELIMITATIONS: SECURITY, DOCTRINE, POLICY, STRATEGY

The notions of *doctrine, policy, strategy and their derivatives* have been used – without full convergence in their definition – in various papers, articles, in the press, as well as in the mass media. Experienced politicians, analysts, commentators, historians and diplomats have used these words interchangeably for argumentation or to suit their needs. Although these concepts are *associated, related,* they *are not interchangeable*, having different meanings and fulfilling certain objectives differently. We believe that the study of these terms requires the performance of some *conceptual delimitations* and some adjacent comments. (Masood, 2018, p. 1).

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In the post-Cold War period, the concept of *security* was not defined in a uniform way, and some scholars have called it an *"essentially contested concept"* –, that is a concept so loaded with value that no amount of argument or evidence could lead to agreement on its meaning. The elements in question are *values* (physical security, political independence, economic welfare, state survival), *social units* (individuals, states, international institutions and state systems) to which the *environment* can be added – all of which need protection. In most studies the state is considered the major unit of analysis and *freedom – in the absence of coercion –* as the *major value to be defended* (Cohen, Mihalka, 2001, pp. 33-37). *Security* has also been defined as *the freedom to exercise certain values* or, security can be measured by *"the absence of threat to acquired values"*. As a result of synthesizing the numerous definitions, we can accept that the notion of *security* signifies *the situation in which a person (or a state), following specific measures adopted individually or in agreement with other persons (or states), gains the certainty that its existence, integrity and fundamental interests are not threatened* – a definition that corresponds to the current situation (Buzan, 2018, pp. 8-21).

A country's *national security policy* is determined by many *factors*, including: *external threats*, *geography, political culture, military capabilities, economic needs, elite opinion, popular opinion* (in democracies), and *the perceptions of its leaders regarding the country's interests*. This latter factor is frequently translated into what has been called a *national security "doctrine"* or foreign policy. *A national security doctrine* serves as *a guide* by which leaders conduct a country's foreign policy. Most effectively, *a national security doctrine* is *the organizing principle that helps statesmen identify and prioritize their country's geopolitical interests* (Sempa, ib.).

The origin of the concept of *doctrine* dates back to 325 AD when the Roman Emperor Constantine asked Christian bishops to strengthen the ideas and principles of Christianity. There are many definitions for doctrine, which will be presented below (Masood, 2018, p. 2). *Doctrine* is a set of established or agreed-upon principles that *guide actions* to shape the future. In the 19th century, the military defined

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doctrine as *prudent thinking, valid for a period of time, that contributes to the achievement of military objectives and goals*. Military doctrine and Christian doctrine have a *common denominator: principles* (Ib.). In NATO regulations, *doctrine* is defined as *"the fundamental principles by which the armed forces direct their actions, to achieve objectives. It is authoritative, but requires judgment in application"* (AAP-06, 2022, p. 141).

Doctrine has several *functions*. Its first function is *to provide a moderate analysis of experience* and *to determine beliefs*. Its second function is *to teach* these beliefs to each succeeding generation. Its third function is *to provide a common basis of knowledge* and understanding that can provide guidance for action. All three of these functions are embodied in the *relationship of doctrine to strategic decisions*. (Drew, 1988, p. 141).

Doctrine is not *arbitrarily* established, nor is it *static*. Doctrine is the result of decades and often centuries of *experience*. Field-specific procedures, best practices, and lessons learned from experience and training are often widely accepted because of their *applicability* over time in *different circumstances* (ADP-1-01, 2019, pp. 1-2). We consider that a definition that is sufficiently precise, explicit and laborious presents *doctrine* as: *"a relatively coherent set of principles, rules, concepts and notions, selected – based on a unifying option(s) – from the set of scientific theories, theoretical knowledge and practice-based generalizations, in order to guide specific activities in different areas of social life (political, economic, legal, religious, moral, military etc.) or scientific, in order to achieve certain objectives"*. Military doctrine is what we consider the best way to conduct military affairs (Drew, p. 164). *The central concept* of a military is known as *doctrine*, which to be solid must be based on *the principles of war* and which to be effective must be *elastic* enough to admit mutations according to changing circumstances (ADP-1-01, 2019, pp. 1-1).

Thus, doctrine is – and must be – both *theoretical* and *practical*, being *contextual*. Doctrine is not a *catalogue of answers* to specific problems. Rather, it is a *collection of fundamentals, tactics, techniques, and procedures* for addressing the problems of the field (ADP-1-01,

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2019, pp. 1-6). Doctrines are also the products of an *"internal"* and *"international"* context, the latter, most of the time, being decisive and defining, due to the fact that it generally affects the security of states, their vital interests (Dungaciu, Cristea, Dumitrescu, 2021, pp. 11-14). In countries with an advanced industrial and technological base, such as the United States of America, *doctrine* is believed to influence *technology*. For the Chinese military, most of the evidence pertaining to military phenomena supports the fact that *technology* determines *doctrine* (Blasko, 2011, p. 355).

Security doctrines represent the most relevant texts on international relations and global security to understand the security environment in its dynamics. (Dungaciu et al., p. 20). *Security doctrine*, in the specialized literature, represents the equivalent of the American concept of *"national security strategy"*. Therefore, the *Security Doctrine* can be defined as: *"a strategic vision that details the path to be followed by a state, in a certain period, to support and protect the interests of its citizens, promote global security and a favourable balance of power, capitalize on new strategic opportunities, implement and defend national and global interests, the independence and sovereignty of the nation, sovereign rights, national values, and democratic values – against external threats, internal vulnerabilities, in an integrated manner, ensuring a close connection between the strategic vision and resources – in collaboration with its allies"* (Trump, 2017, pp. 1-2, Biden 2022, pp. 1-1).

Doctrine is an *official document* that is *politically assumed*, a feature that ensures the action dimension and legitimacy. A doctrine without *political assumption*, *legitimacy* – the action and implementation dimension – remains a simple *theory*. The general aspects related to doctrines stated above are also valid for security doctrines (Dungaciu et al., pp. 11-14). *To understand security doctrines* – approached as a process characterized by change and continuity – one must analyse the *systemic* (*external*) factors, the so-called *"turning points"*, and the *sub systemic* (*internal*) factors – considered *independent variables* – that generate *public policies* and *strategic behaviours* and, respectively, *international events* and those related to *political leadership, strategic*

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(sub)culture and *institutional capacities*, which leave their mark on the strategic thinking and action of two or more states. *Presidential doctrines* are considered as *"encapsulations of presidential foreign policy strategy, strategic statements and objectives that are simple, concise, and lucid"* or a *"grand model, vision, idea, or major outline that guides and orders what a state does in interaction with other states"* (Dumitrescu, pp. 23-25).

In principle, a *security doctrine* includes: the explicit and detailed definition of the object to be secured; the security environment (definition of threats, risks, vulnerabilities, challenges, identification of adversaries, actors in the world arena, consequences of their actions, principles of action and main priorities in relation to them); the evolution of the military phenomenon, of the revolution in military affairs; actions to maintain a favourable balance of power and to promote an international order conducive to one's own security and prosperity and other elements relevant to national interests (Dungaciu et al., p. 13). Such a definition is sufficiently *comprehensive but also detailed* to include among *security doctrines any document with the same use value*, even if it does not bear the phrase *"doctrine"* in its name: security strategies, defence strategies, NATO concepts, EU Security Strategies, the United Nations Charter etc. Analysing certain relevant doctrines, which belonged to the USA, USSR/Russia, China or some great powers in Europe *in comparison* with NATO Strategic Concepts, EU Global Foreign Policy and Security Strategies, National Security and Defence Strategies of the great powers, National Defence Strategies, with an emphasis on their *characteristic*, *essential* aspects, we identify several elements, *common features*: they represent, constitute, visions of the world, of the region or of the continent; they are operating procedures – a set of instructions covering those aspects of activities, actions, operations, functions that are in accordance with an established or official, standardized way, without loss of effectiveness, to do something; they represent – *"regulations of action"*, ways, procedures, methods of doing and acting in relation to the allies and adversaries as they have previously identified and defined. In the specialized literature, these documents are generically called *security*

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doctrines (Dumitrescu, ib.). *Doctrine* means, synthetically expressed, *theory in action* to configure the future in a certain way. It represents *action procedures, a vision* based on the assessment of the security environment in the perspective of actions aimed at promoting national interests, being a *politically assumed document. It determines* the way to act and react in certain circumstances or situations, the conduct of the state and its institutions in adopting and implementing the country's internal and foreign policy over a certain period. It establishes the fundamental objective of the state.

In contrast to doctrine, *policy is guidance that is guiding, authoritative, or instructive; that is it is explicit in stating what is to be accomplished. It is a dynamic vision that describes the ultimate goal.* Therefore, policy is a conscious selection of *a course of action* to be followed from a multitude of options, so as *to fit within the provisions of the adopted doctrine. Policy* will also change depending on changing national priorities, geo-political realities, the effects of revolution in military affairs, and political, economic, and fiscal considerations. *While policy changes with changing circumstances, doctrine remains constant, firm, and relatively durable, which is the fundamental difference between policy and doctrine* (Masood, p. 2). To classify and understand the *causes* of political decisions, the three components of the *political triangle* must be analysed: *economics (trade), ideology (set of ideals), and national interests (the power and certainty that nations strive to satisfy their own interests)* (Brown, 2017, pp. 1-2). Subsequently, *the policy* is the attribute of the *management team* designated by the leader which, generally, includes him too. It is where *consensus* must be achieved by leveraging the vast experience of the team designated for decision-making. After completing this extensive process, the development of *the strategy* is the responsibility of the various *heads of departments* within the central structure. Here, *operational experience* is paramount and essential to design *strategies,* together with *projects and plans,* to meet the *final objectives,* officially adopted by the *policy* (Masood, p. 3).

Doctrine is above all, it is at the top of the pyramid, the hierarchy, and, evaluating the complete process of elaboration and to whom it belongs, it results that it *represents the only area* that is the exclusive

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responsibility of *the leader.* This is *the most important feature* of the doctrine. It must not overcome the bureaucratic obstacle of the consensus-building process. *The doctrine* has its origin and viability in the experience of the leader, the man at the top. From this it follows that it is paramount that the national leader who makes vital decisions is the appropriate person. The future of the doctrine is much brighter than critics would like us to believe. Normally, it precedes a strategy (Ib., p. 5). *Doctrine* influences (or should) strategy, and the results of strategy *become the experiences* that underpin doctrine (Drew, pp. 173-174).

Strategy is *"a set of ideas for using the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated manner to achieve objectives at the theatre of operations level, national and/or multinational"* (JP3-0, 2018, p. GL-16). It has a more particularized, individualized character. Strategy is *a plan* of action that emanates from doctrine. Normally, it is adopted after doctrine. With each update of doctrine, strategy must be revised. It is a *plan, course of action, procedure for action* at the organizational and governmental level; a *synchronization of ways, conduct, and means* for the fulfilment of national interests and objectives. It details *the course of action, process, and conduct* that are optimal for the implementation of overall objectives and goals. It is aligned with and directly supports the provisions of the doctrine (ADP 1-01, pp. 4-7).

The military has made a relevant leap, defining *strategy* as *"the ways and means employed to achieve a purpose". The purpose* represents the objectives established by *policy.* Overall, *strategy* is a *continuous process* in which ends, ways, and means are harmonized, aligned to meet the ultimate objectives of the policy, while maintaining risk at an acceptable level (Masood, p. 6). *"A grand strategy refers to a set of ideas (or a ‹theory›) regarding the course of action a state adopts to maximize its security and defend itself against actual or potential threats to its values".* It includes *prioritizing* foreign policy objectives, *identifying* existing and potential resources, and *selecting* the most appropriate *plan or course of action* that uses those *resources* to accomplish these *objectives* (Miller et al., p. 37). Regarding the fundamental abstract architecture of *strategic theory* applied in all fields and circumstances,

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it can be stated that only four words express the core of the problem – *goals* (political), *paths/course of action* (strategic), *means* (instruments of power) and *the hypotheses* that ensure information and the process of effective leadership of actions.

To develop *viable doctrines, policies and strategies*, and competent conduct, at least the following aspects *must be taken into account*: identifying the political stakes and their importance; the results, consequences at the strategic, regional and global levels of the procedures, means, methods used to achieve the goals, objectives; identifying the limits of the power to influence and control the will of the adversaries or the course of events; estimating the way to counter the adversaries; determining one's own alternatives, costs and benefits; determining the civilian population and the nation's activities to support their implementation; the consistency between the adopted strategic documents with the lessons learned from history; and whether anything has been omitted (Gray, 2015, pp. 1-10).

US SECURITY DOCTRINES VIEWED
FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In the 248 years since the *Declaration of Independence of the United States of America*, on 4 July 1776, US national security doctrines have evolved from a reserved and detached armed neutrality expressed in George Washington's (1789-1797) *"Washington's Farewell Address"* of 1796, to the national security doctrine, popularly called *"Preemption"* of George W. Bush (2001-2009), a doctrine that allows for *preventive and unilateral military action, anywhere in the world* (Sempa, p. 1). The traditional mission of the United States of America in the world since the end of the Second World War is clearly defined or identified depending on the period and is generally based on *four essential elements: global leadership; defending and promoting the liberal international order; defending and promoting freedom, democracy, and human rights; and preventing the emergence of regional hegemons in Eurasia* (O'Rourke, 2021, pp. 1-4, 9-14). Certain analysts, including Francis P. Sempa, believe that throughout its existence, the USA has had several major national *security doctrines*, including: *"Washington's Farewell Address"; "Monroe Doctrine"; "Manifest*

Destiny"; "Open Door"; "Off-shore Balancer"; "Containment"; "Liberation"; "Preemption"; "America First". Security doctrines designed the path that the United States of America had to take to become a world superpower. World domination began in *1898*, when the Americans won *the Spanish-American War* and made it possible to gain access to dominance in the Pacific, beyond the Hawaiian Islands to the Philippines (Brzezinski, pp. 13-14).

George Washington's (1789-1797) "Farewell Address to the Nation" in 1796 represented the President's contribution to the founding of the nation, the passage through *The War of Independence*, and the early years as a vulnerable republic. His security doctrine, his policy orientations, later influenced US security doctrines and foreign policy for more than a century, along with the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny – complementary doctrines that supported each other. At the time of *George Washington's "Farewell Address"*, the United States of America held *a strip of territory* on the east coast of the North American continent, *13 states*, and the continent was divided among the United States of America, Great Britain, Spain, and Indian tribes. He realized that the young nation *was not powerful enough* to influence disputes in Europe and that the United States of America was *safer* when *the great European powers were busy with their continental problems*. He believed that Europe *"has a set of primary interests, none of which coincide with ours, or have a very marginal relationship"* or that Europe would be engaged *"in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns"*. The national security goal expressed in the Farewell Address was *"to gain time (for) our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it (...) the command of its own fortunes"*, preventing the expansion of European territory on the continent, and ultimately *to remove Europeans from North America* altogether and *to limit their presence* throughout the Western Hemisphere (Sempa, p. 2).

"Monroe Doctrine". President James Monroe (1817-1825) announced the doctrine in 1823, at a time when Russia was seeking to consolidate its hold on the Pacific coast of North America. President Monroe declared that the United States of America would *"consider*

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any attempt" by the European powers *"to extend their (political) system over any part of the (Western) hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety".* Once the United States of America achieved *great power status*, it could and did exert its *power and influence throughout the Western Hemisphere.* In the 20th century, *the Caribbean Sea* became an *American lake.* US presidents *invoked the Monroe Doctrine during the Cuban Missile Crisis* (1960), *during the Cienfuegos submarine dispute* (1970–1971), and *during the conflicts in El Salvador and Nicaragua* in the 1980s. (Ib., p. 3). Today, 200 years after its announcement, the Monroe Doctrine *remains an important component of US foreign policy* (Berry, 2016, pp. 106-108, 112).

The term *"Manifest Destiny" (1839-1898)* was coined by John L. O'Sullivan in 1839 *to explain and justify the westward expansion* of the United States of America. However, *the policy of continental expansion* has been a *permanent feature* of United States national security doctrines *since the founding of the country. Diplomacy and war, both in North America and in Europe, combined to carry out the American policy of continental expansion*: Jay's Treaty (1794) and later the *Treaty of Ghent* (1814) limited British territorial possessions in *Canada*; the *Louisiana* purchase from *France* (1803); in 1819, they acquired *Florida* from *Spain*; the United States of America victory in *the Mexican-American War* of the *1840s* added a huge territory that became the states of *Texas, California, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Oregon*, and *Washington*; in *1867*, *Alaska* was purchased from *Russia*. By *1898*, the United States of America had largely fulfilled its geopolitical vision of *controlling the middle of the North American* continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean and from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico (Sempa, p. 4).

After the territorial expansion resulting from this doctrine, it was time for the United States of America to *"look outward"*, across the seas and oceans, and take its rightful place on the world stage. The US victory in *the Spanish-American War of 1898*, both in *Cuba* and, more importantly, in *the Far East*, led to the emergence of the *"Open Door" doctrine*, a *doctrine of overseas commercial and political expansion.* The immediate object of the *"Open Door"* was *to create a balance*

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of power in the Far East that would promote and protect US commercial and economic interests in Asia, particularly China (Bridges, 2001, pp. 1-3). Quite suddenly, in the late *1890s*, the United States of America became a power in the *Pacific* and the *Asiatic region*, annexing *Hawaii* and acquiring *Guam, Wake Island*, and the *Philippines.* In 1904 Roosevelt announced what became known as the *"Roosevelt Corollary"* to the *Monroe Doctrine,* which stipulated that the USA *would intervene in other nations in the Western Hemisphere to correct "chronic" and "flagrant" crimes committed by governments against their own citizens* (Brown, pp. 1-9).

The First World War was the last global conflict in which Britain acted as the principal – *"Offshore Balancer"* – to uphold or restore the European balance of power. The decision by President Wilson and the US Congress to go to war in Europe in 1917 *marked the beginning of a new US national security doctrine* that lasted until *the end of the Second World War*. Between 1917 and 1945, the United States of America became the *"Offshore Balancer"* of Europe and Asia, as America recognized the *potentially lethal threat* to US security posed by a *hostile power* or alliance *that gained control of the major centres of power in Eurasia*. The United States of America allied with Great Britain, France, and Russia to oppose German attempts at *continental hegemony*, *twice* (Sempa, p. 5).

After the war, the *Truman* administration, in response to *Soviet* threats to *Iran, Greece, Turkey, West Berlin*, and elsewhere, adopted the policy of *"Containment"* (1945), which remained the main US national security doctrine until the 1980s and had as its main objective the *denying of Soviet domination* of any centre of military and industrial power variously defined as Western Europe, Britain, Japan, and the Middle East. *"Containment"* materialized in resistance to Soviet interventions in northern *Iran and the Straits*, *the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine, the Berlin Airlift, and the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)* (Neves, 2021, pp. 431-435).

James Burnham, on the other hand, argued that *"containment"* did not go far enough and proposed adopting a doctrine with *more offensive* objectives that he labelled *"Liberation"*. *The goal* of the

Between 1917 and 1945, the United States of America became the "Offshore Balancer" of Europe and Asia, as America recognized the potentially lethal threat to US security posed by a hostile power or alliance that gained control of the major centres of power in Eurasia. The United States of America allied with Great Britain, France, and Russia to oppose German attempts at continental hegemony, twice.

United States foreign policy, Burnham argued, should *be to undermine Soviet dominance in Eastern and Central Europe and, ultimately, in Russia itself*. Reaction to events such as the stalemate in *the Korean War* (1950-1953) and the *Hungarian Uprising* in 1956 led Eisenhower to return to *"Containment"* (Sempa, p. 5).

In response to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and intelligence reports of *North Korean, Iraqi, and Iranian* efforts to obtain *weapons of mass destruction, George W. Bush* administration adopted a new national security doctrine, popularly called *"Preemption" (to prevent and hinder)*, presented a year after the 9/11 attacks. The doctrine envisions a *long and complex fight against global terrorists* and the states that support or harbour them. *"Failed-corrupt/ authoritarian"* states that *have or are attempting to acquire weapons of mass destruction* are considered *significant threats*. The rationale behind the *"Preemption"* doctrine is that the *United States of America can no longer afford to wait until such threats are imminent (...) and the United States will, if necessary, act pre-emptively"*. The US and Coalition attack on and invasion of Iraq in *2003* was *the first manifestation of the Preemption doctrine* (Sempa, p. 7).

"America First". *"Si vis pacem, para bellum"* is a Latin phrase that originated in the 4th century, meaning *"If you want peace, prepare for war"*. The concept's origins go back even further, to the 2nd-century Roman Emperor Hadrian, who is credited with the axiom, *"Peace through strength – or, failing that, peace by threat"*. US Presidents George Washington and Theodore Roosevelt understood this well. In 2017, President *Donald Trump* brought this ethos back to the White House. As he declared in the UN General Assembly in September 2020, the United States of America *"fulfils its destiny as a peacemaker, but it is peace by force"* (O'Brien, 2024, pp. 1-15). In the international security environment in which Donald Trump took office for the first time, he adopted the *"America First" vision* (*2017*), which became the foundation of a new paradigm in international relations and which had as its central part *"defending peace through force"* (*pillar 3*). (Trump, 2017, pp. 25-37).

In *"The Inaugural Address"*, 20 January 2025, Donald Trump reaffirms the *"America First"* vision. Trump emphasizes the characteristic

feature of many US doctrines – *territorial expansion*: *"The United States built the Panama Canal and now China is operating the Panama Canal, or (...) we didn't give it to China. We gave it to Panama, and we're taking it back"*. On other occasions he has explicitly stated that *the annexation of Greenland* is a *national security issue* for the USA, and the *transformation of Canada into the 51st state* is a desideratum. At the same time, he will act for peace: *"our power will stop all wars (...). The future is ours, and our golden age has just begun"* (Trump, 2025, pp. 1-15).

FEATURES OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Ronald Reagan stated that a determining role in the strategic competition between the United States of America and the Soviet Union was *"in the realm of ideas and values"* (Chin et al., 2023, p. 107). The main *security doctrines* that influenced the international security environment were: *the Stalin Doctrine/Stalinism* (regarding: the role of the USSR in the global victory of communism; the expansion of communism; the *"capitalist encirclement"*); *the Brezhnev Doctrine*; *the Gorbachev/Sinatra Doctrine*; *the Yeltsin Doctrine/Close Neighbourhood Doctrine* and *the Putin Doctrine*. The manifestation in the last decade, but also during the Cold War, of the intensification of US competition with the People's Republic of China (PRC or China) and the Russian Federation (Russia) – often referred to as great power competition or strategic competition – associated with the War in Ukraine and China's actions in the Indo-Pacific and globally, has profoundly changed the way we approach global defence issues. The Soviet Union was the only country with a nuclear arsenal that posed a real threat to the existence and security of the United States of America. The potential of this asset was harnessed in all Soviet/Russian security doctrines during and after the Cold War, starting on 5 March 1946 (O'Rourke, p. 1).

Among *the constants* of the doctrines of the Soviet Union/ Russian Federation can be mentioned: the expansion of communism and directed propaganda; the hybrid war waged by the USSR against the rest of the world (subversion and hostile acts of espionage, and even military actions on the territories of non-socialist countries);

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actions aimed at undermining the countries of the free world from within, fuelling with the help of agents of influence any dissension that affects national interests or inventing conflicts that would tear apart democratic societies. In *1943*, Joseph Stalin stated that *"a political system advances only as far as the army of that state goes".* The content of the telegram sent by George Kennan from Moscow on 22 February 1946 is still relevant today, over three years after the start of Russia's war in Ukraine (Kennan, 1946, p. 2). Russia pursued its regional and global role by: defending its national territory; exercising military, political, and economic dominance in the Soviet space; undermining the global order, disrupting Western political consensus, and fracturing global political and economic institutions; using geopolitical conflict to empower its supporters and defeat military adversaries, and seizing vital connecting territory (Chin et al., pp. 103-124).

Nuclear weapons were perceived as flexible tools that it could use to: coerce adversaries; control escalation in conflict and pre-conflict situations; deter external powers from intervening in any conflict that Russia considers critical to its interests; force adversaries to accept an end to the war on terms dictated by Russia; prevent the escalation of any conflict from the local to the theatre level (for example, in Europe through NATO intervention); and prevent the escalation of any conflict from the theatre level to the strategic level of war (i.e., escalation to direct strikes by the USA on its own territory) (Arberque, 2024, pp. 4-15; Kofman, 2024, pp. 1-5).

The National Security Concept issued in 1997 allowed the use of nuclear weapons *"in the event of a threat to the existence of the Russian Federation as an independent sovereign state"* or *"in critical situations for the national security of the Russian Federation".* In 2020, Russia adopted a new doctrine *"On the Basic Principles of the State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence"*, which mentions the threats and circumstances in which Russia resorts to nuclear weapons. Thus, Russia can threaten to escalate to the use of nuclear weapons as a lever to deter a conflict that would threaten the existence of the state (Woolf, 2022, p. 7). Russia is adopting a doctrine of *"escalation for de-escalation",* which suggests that it will use nuclear weapons

if there are grounds for believing that it would lose in a conflict with NATO (Ib., p. 1).

The Brezhnev Doctrine (*1964-1982*) defined as *a fight against the "evil empire"* had the effect of creating its own *"camp"* of states with communist regimes (especially in East-Central Europe), and a group of *"supporters"* on various continents (preferred in the Arab world, but also in Asia, Central Africa and Latin America). The basic content of the Brezhnev Doctrine was established at the Warsaw Treaty meeting of 3 August 1968 and was the basis of relations between the socialist states, as well as between the two political-military blocs. Under Brezhnev's leadership, the USSR resumed its expansionist policy and arms race. The Brezhnev Doctrine, expounded in 1968, had the following main features: it was *a response* to the Western *"containment"* policy; it was based on intervention and the export of revolution (the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979); it assumed that the USSR had the role of leader of the socialist world; it made efforts for *"détente"* between 1959 and 1979; it consolidated its dominance in Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa; it would not be the first nation to use nuclear weapons in a conflict; an internal or external threat to create a capitalist order in a socialist state would be considered an attack against all socialist states (the suppression of the Budapest uprising in 1956, the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968) (Ambrosă, 2014, p. 20).

The Putin Doctrine. Vladimir Putin came to power in *December 1999* as acting President of the Russian Federation, eight years after the collapse of *the Soviet Union*, an event that Putin considers *"the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century"* (Ziarul financiar, 2022) and marks the transition from a *bipolar to a unipolar* and later a *multipolar world order*. Vladimir Putin's *terms* as president of the country have been as follows: on *December 31, 1999*, he became acting president of Russia, after the resignation of Boris Yeltsin; *first term*: *2000-2004*; *second term*: *2004-2008*; *third term*: *2012-2018*, after serving as *prime minister* in 2008-2012; *fourth term*: *2018 -2024*; *fifth term*: *2024 – to the present* (with a term until 2030). The American, Russian and Chinese leaders since 1975, for the period during which they were presidents, are presented in *figure 1*. Since taking power
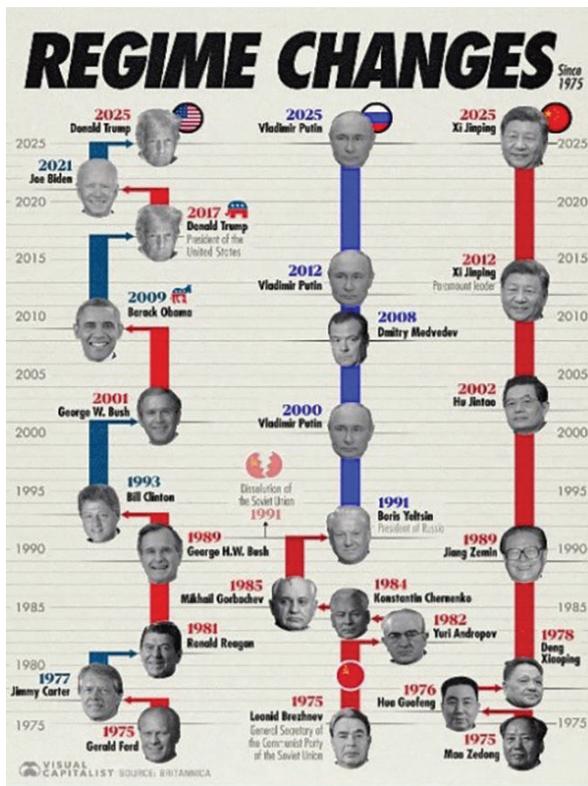
Figure 1: American, Russian, and Chinese leaders since 1975 (Lu, 2025, pp. 1-3).

in 2000, Vladimir Putin has had a new foreign policy doctrine with each new term (Lu, ib.).

The Putin Doctrine outlines *the ideology, priorities* and policies of the Russian Federation. *The pillars* of the Putin Doctrine are: 1. *Maintaining the country's position as a nuclear superpower* (*doctrine 2020, nuclear doctrine review: September 2024 – reducing*

the threshold for the use of the nuclear arsenal); 2. *Maintaining Russia's great power status* (*allies, support for Syria, Cuba, North Korea, blocking US/UN initiatives, BRICS, SCO*); 3. *Imposing regional hegemony* (*political, economic, military and cultural reintegration of the former Soviet bloc under Russian leadership – represents the central element of foreign policy*); and 4. *Regional and international military superiority* (*increasing the defence budget, intervention: Georgia – 2008, Chechnya – 1999, Ukraine –2014*). These geostrategic imperatives, crystallized since the early 1990s, symbolize a boundary beyond which Russia cannot retreat without losing its sense of national pride. The Putin Doctrine is a far-reaching project whose ultimate goal is *to restore Russia's status as a global great power*, a status previously held by the USSR. The strategy applied to achieve this goal has led to serious violations of fundamental principles of international law and to tense relations between various states of the world (Dungaciu et al., pp. 281- 301).

A constant in Russia's post-Cold War doctrines is the potential threat from NATO, which states that the main external dangers are represented by the growth of NATO's global footprint, including through the development of military infrastructure and the deployment of land and naval troops – in former Warsaw Pact member states – near Russia's borders (Woolf, 2022, p. 9). Henry Kissinger eloquently positioned Russia's historical expansion *"as following its own rhythm over the centuries, extending across territories (...) occasionally interrupted over time (...) only to return again, like a tide crossing a beach. From Peter the Great to Vladimir Putin, the circumstances have changed, but the rhythm has remained extraordinarily consistent (...)"* (Valenta, Valenta, 2016, pp. 2-3).

FEATURES OF THE DOCTRINES
OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

China is challenging American power, influence, and interests, a risk to eroding American security and prosperity, developing advanced weapons and capabilities that could threaten critical infrastructure and the US command and control architecture, and aspiring to project global power (Trump, 2017, pp. 2,8, 25, 28). China is growing

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stronger and disrupting the existing order, challenging the peace that generations have taken for granted. That much is undeniable. But is its rise likely to threaten US dominance? (Allison, 2022, p. 24).

Communist China has resorted, since the 1970s, to a geopolitical accommodation with the USA, which also precipitated the collapse of the USSR. (Ib., p. 14). China wants to shape a world incompatible with US values and interests, seeks to replace the USA in the Indo-Pacific region, expand the boundaries of its economic model, and reorder the region in its favour. China has expanded its power and influence regionally and globally at the expense of the sovereignty of other states (Trump, 2017, p. 25). The potential for conflict and the threat of war between the USA and the PRC over Taiwan have repeatedly surfaced, as has the assumption that conflict is inevitable. China has initiated a rapid and potentially destabilizing build-up of its military forces and has committed to resolving the Taiwan issue sooner rather than later, viewing it as a vital and prestigious issue. It is not certain that the United States of America would win a conventional war with China over Taiwan, and the USA appears to be postponing a confrontation as long as possible (McCormick, 2022, p. 2). The magnitude of forecast errors is not surprising, but it is relevant when it comes to war, *"which is fundamentally unpredictable"* (Taleb, 2018, p. 19).

Although the origin of the idea of *"one China"* can be traced back to the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), the first modern use of the term appears in *the Cairo Declaration* of 1943, followed by the *Potsdam Declaration* of 1945. Both documents stated that all Chinese territories then occupied by Japan, such as Taiwan and the nearby Pescadores Islands, were to be returned to the Republic of China (ROC) at the end of the war. In Beijing's view, of course, the ROC ceased to exist in *1949,* when communist forces drove away Chiang Kai-shek's mainland nationalists into exile on Taiwan, leaving the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the sole legitimate government of China (Jue, 2006, pp. 1-3).

The early republican period. In many treaties with China, starting in *1842*, as a result of several wars, foreign powers acquired a variety of privileges. They, collectively, are known as *the Unequal Treaties*, which resulted in the separation of regions such as *Hong Kong, Macau,*

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Taiwan, Tibet, and vast areas of Siberia and Central Asia from China. The Chinese Communist Party is the successor to the May Fourth Movement of 1919. The Washington Conference (1921–1922) – *Four Points*, established the post-war relationship of other states with China (Hucker, Rawski, 2006, ch. XV, p. 29). *The civil war* (*1945–1949*) between government and communist forces fostered the creation of a *powerful People's Liberation Army*, which dominated mainland China and, on *1 October 1949*, supported the establishment of *the People's Republic of China*, with its capital in Beijing. The communist victory in 1949 brought to power a peasant party that had adopted Marxist ideology and believed in class struggle and rapid industrial development. (Hucker et al., ch. XVI, pp. 65-86).

Mao Zedong Doctrine. A priority of the communist political system was to elevate China to great power status. President *Mao Zedong* (*1946 -1976*) to achieve this goal moved the *"centre of gravity"* of communist politics from the countryside to the cities. In 1949, President Mao declared that his goal was to create a socialist society and, ultimately, world communism. *Mao Zedong's doctrine* had several stages. *Reconstruction and Consolidation*, 1949–1952, *the first stage*, was marked by changes generated by Soviet influence in China and went through three critical transitions: from economic underdevelopment to economic growth, from political disintegration to political power, and from military rule to civilian rule. *The Transition to Socialism*, 1953–1957, *the second stage*, is associated with the First Five-Year Plan which marked the beginning of China's rapid industrialization (Dumitrescu, pp. 21-22, 25; Hucker, ch. XVI). Initially, the shaping of foreign policy was related to the pro-Soviet orientation, later they made some corrections, a consequence of the costs of *the Korean War*, the inconsistency of Soviet support and the danger of direct US retaliation. Chinese leaders – *Mao Zedong*, the most important of them, but not the only one – began to question the viability of the Soviet model. Between *1958–1961*, new directions were set in national policy regarding the general line of socialist construction, *The Great Leap Forward* in technical innovation and economic production. In the period *1961–1965*, *different from the previous one*, they declared the validity of the general line of socialist construction and increased

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the role of Chinese military and security personnel, as well as reduced the effects of the crisis. The most important set of measures taken by Mao targeted *the People's Liberation Army*, which he tried to transform into a *model organization* (Hucker, chs. XVII-XVIII).

The signing by the Soviet Union of *the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty* with the United States of America and Britain in 1963 was interpreted as an anti-Chinese conspiracy. As a result, Chinese doctrine prioritized support for an anti-foreign orientation and the promotion of *"self-reliance",* and the military assumed an even greater place in Chinese political life. *China's first atomic explosion* (16 October 1964) helped to support Mao's thesis that internal revolution did not in any way jeopardize China's aspirations for power and long-term defence capabilities. It is believed that some of China's major decisions were made during this period. Mao's doctrine emphasized *"people's war"*, which relied on numerically superior forces and the morale of its people to defeat any invader – during the transition to nuclear status, which would reduce its vulnerabilities (Hucker, ch. XV).

China after Mao's death. It is believed that the system Mao left behind activated massive forces against him, causing damage and occupying the agenda of subsequent leaders. The following presidents were: *Hua Guofeng* (1976-1978); *Deng Xiaoping* (1978-1989), *Jiang Zemin* (1989-2002), *Hu Jintao* (2002-2012) and *Xi Jinping* (2012 - present) (Dungaciu et al., 2021, pp. 485-508, 508-532). *A major unresolved issue in the region has been the status of Taiwan*. Since 1949, regimes on both the mainland and Taiwan have agreed that Taiwan is a province of China – *the main difference* being that each has claimed to be the *legitimate government of the country*. The PRC's true reintegration into the international community can be said to have occurred in 1971, when it replaced Taiwan (ROC) as China's representative at the United Nations. With this event, many countries that had previously recognized the ROC established relations with the PRC. Normalization of diplomatic relations with the United States of America took place between 1973 and 1979 (Hucker, ch. XIX). Analysing the evolution of the People's Liberation Army's doctrine between 1969 and 1989, there emerge many *similarities* with the Soviet one (Chen, 2017, ch. 18).

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Xi Jinping Doctrine. *"Xi Jinping Thought"* the continuation of *"Peaceful Development"* states that it is a necessary and obligatory condition of Chinese socialism (Dungaciu et al., p. 526). The main *pillars* on which Xi Jinping's security doctrine is based were mentioned in the document entitled *"China's Defence Strategy in the New Era"* – July 2019. It is a response to the growing hegemonism, power politics and unilateralism of the USA.

Among the main objectives of *Pillar 1 – The International Security Situation*, are: maintaining stability in the Asia-Pacific region through cooperation with alliances in the region (p. 4); increasing overall national power, global influence, and resilience to risks (p. 5); fighting separatists, *"Taiwan independence",* and implementing the one-China principle, as set forth in the 1992 Consensus. The forces and actions supporting *"Taiwan Independence"* remain the most serious immediate threat to peace and stability in the region and the biggest barrier to the peaceful reunification of the country; external separatist forces for *"Tibet independence"* and the creation of *"East Turkistan"* pose a danger to China's national security and social stability (p. 5); fully resolve territorial disputes (territorial sovereignty of some islands and reefs and maritime demarcation) in the region; boost the technological and industrial revolution, apply cutting-edge technologies (artificial intelligence, quantum information, big data, cloud computing and the Internet of Things) in the military field, and develop precision, intelligent, undetectable or unmanned weapons and equipment (p. 6); make progress in the Revolution in Military Affairs (PRC Government, 2019, pp. 3-7; Paterson, 2018, pp. 39-40).

Pillar 2 – China's National Defence Policy in the New Era (p. 6), states that *resolutely defending China's sovereignty, security and development interests – represents the fundamental mission of China's national defence in the new era – and is achieved through the following objectives*: deterring and repelling aggression and safeguarding national political security, people's security and social stability; preventing and suppressing *"Taiwan independence, achieving complete reunification – the fundamental interest of the Chinese nation"*. China believes in and follows the practices of *"peaceful reunification"* and *"one*

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country, two systems" (p. 7) and opposes any attempts or actions to split the country and any foreign intervention to this end; discourage supporters of separatist movements such as *"Tibet independence"* and the creation of *"East Turkistan"*; defend China's sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and national security; safeguard China's maritime rights and interests; safeguard China's security interests in outer space, electromagnetic space and cyberspace; safeguard China's external interests; consolidate the country's sustainable development. Regarding Taiwan, it states that *"we do not promise to renounce the use of force and reserve the right to take all necessary measures (...) This (...) targets the interference of external forces and (...) separatists (...)".* (PRC Government, pp. 6-8). In 1946, the military analyst Lee Yuri from China pointed out that *"(...) when a war does not end with a just peace for all, another war breaks out soon afterwards"* and considers that *"justice is the key achievement of War"*, that is, a *War of Justice* (Lee, 2014, p. 1). In *Pillar 3 – Fulfilling the Missions and Tasks of the Chinese Armed Forces in the New Era*, the Chinese Armed Forces resolutely *implement the missions and tasks entrusted by the Communist Party of China* and the people. *Pillars 4-6* aim to participate in the achievement of the fundamental goals of the PRC (PRC Government, pp. 11- 37).

The strategic concept entitled "a new model of relations between great powers" states that the USA should respect China's vital interests in the region.

The strategic concept entitled *"a new model of relations between great powers"* states that the USA should respect China's vital interests in the region (Dumitrescu, p. 44). In 2013, the implementation of a security doctrine objective, the *"One Belt, One Road"* project – a revival of the *"Silk Road"* of the distant past, began, an aspect that contributed to the resumption of debates regarding a *"major war"* between the dominant power and the rising power (Taleb, p. 16). From the analysis of these *security doctrines*, *certain non-negotiable interests* emerge: the survival of the communist party, its political system and party autocracy; the prohibition of the independence of Taiwan, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and the islands in the East China Sea. Affecting them would also lead to the use of military force. Other objectives are *"transforming the East China Sea into a Chinese lake"* and resolving the Malacca Dilemma in China's favour (Dumitrescu, pp. 21, 26).

CONCLUSIONS

Understanding the notions of *security, doctrine, security doctrine* and *strategy* is relevant to clarify, interpret, decipher the meaning of official documents – assimilated to security doctrines – and evaluate them. These can constitute references, verification methods and can become a tool that serves to analyse security doctrines with insight and discernment, in order to discover the real vision of the leaders regarding the interests of the country and the security environment. Security doctrines are documents in which visions of the existing reality at a given time are materialized, detailed radiographs of the global security environment but also of the internal situation are made, they are true operating procedures for the materialization of the interests and objectives of a state.

Trump's return to power will accelerate the shift of US defence attention and resources to the Asia Pacific and impose stronger obligations on Europe to address security and stability in its own neighbourhood.

The USA seeks to: reduce the main effort from unnecessarily prolonged actions against some conflicts, threats that make success difficult to define and that negatively affect national interests; adopt a doctrine and strategy to bring older conflicts and tensions to a point where the threat is manageable; focus on other priorities, such as the Asia-Pacific region, where China has an accelerated economic and military rise and a more assertive foreign policy.

Most Chinese leaders, including Xi Jinping, have constantly strengthened and reformed the People's Liberation Army – a *"hard power"* instrument – becoming a source of authority, influence or support in domestic policy, but also a strong, dominant, assertive foreign policy instrument, complementary to the economic one, with the potential to project power similar to other superpowers. A feature of China's doctrine – which has its origins in ancient traditions – is the use of non-military means (psychological warfare, cognitive warfare – influencing public opinion, legalized warfare – doing something that was previously illegal but then permitted by law), increasing hybridity between different military and non-military means and methods to achieve strategic goals, and ultimately a peaceful

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ascension – without escalating to open armed confrontation. China's lack of doubt about US intentions has been undermined by the USA's move away from the *"One China"* policy to a de facto *"One China, One Taiwan"* policy. China has become a revisionist power that deliberately challenges American hegemony. The danger of a USA-China war over Taiwan has become periodically visible. China's rapid rise could trigger a structural shock that, combined with converging interests in the Pacific Basin, has generated extensive analysis of the impossibility of avoiding a war between the USA and China. The message from both sides is quite radical and could lead to war if the two competitors do not adopt actions that can be controlled even if they do not correspond to the wishes of either party.

The dissolution of the USSR, combined with economic decline, has left Russia without the means to maintain large and effective conventional forces. Recent conflicts, including the one in Ukraine, have highlighted the shortcomings of Russia's conventional military forces. Russia sees NATO expansion as a vulnerability to its security.

Generally, there is a continuous fluctuation between previous and current doctrines trying to achieve synchronization with the new changes in the security environment. Nuclear risk and its control have become a constant challenge in the context in which there are more and more assessments that world politics is becoming more precarious and irrational.

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