

THE MAIN GLOBAL THREATS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract: *The 21st century has started with an effervescence more or less predictable. In this regard the Islamist terrorism represents one of the major causes. However, the crises arising from the terrorist attacks are just one of the major global challenges, the crises are extremely complex, mainly politico-military, having economic support given the multiplication of disparities and asymmetric threats. All these crises affect both the developed world and the poor countries, faced with border wars, starvation, malnutrition, severe lack of jobs, etc. Other possible threats and global challenges are ethnic conflicts, climate change, organized crime, arms proliferation and migration issues. The paper focuses on these challenges, presenting a brief analysis of the top main global threats.*

Key words: *threats, terrorism, migration, ethnic conflicts, climate change.*

1. Introduction

There are some perceptions about the facts that the ghosts of the past haunt Europe. These ghosts are not just about it refers not just to the new threats (which became quickly not just regional threats but also as well global globally threats) - migration waves, internal terrorism, home theatre terrorist fighters, the separatism issues, but also about what we face today with the traditional nationalism, Euroscepticism, xenophobia, populism. All these currents challenge the European unity, along with Brexit, as well as, above all, a wave of return to the classical power politics, specific to realism doctrine.

The numerous international summits and conferences prove that many of theorists and practitioners realise that the actual international community must face with realism and an open mind, the numerous complex issues which arise daily at the global level.

This kind of joint cooperation/conferences aim to encourage young people, theorists, practitioners and, on the other hand, students to have an open mind regarding what means for our world an inclusive and tolerant person.

Ethnic and Religious persecution, forced migration, persistent inequality and environmental degradation are among the greatest challenges facing the world today. They are driven by a growing tide of hate speech and intolerance that divide societies in

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Africa, Asia and the Middle East – as well as in Europe and the USA. (Minority Rights, p. 3)

Unfortunately, the history offered many examples of injustice, intolerance, discrimination; in this regard, I just want to mention the Holocaust which is just one dramatic episode in the European history. We can mention also the apartheid, also known as the official policy of strict racial segregation and discrimination against non-whites practiced in South Africa and as we know in the USA and not only.

Generally, the present international context has undergone an extensive transformation and shaping characterized by the occurrence of antagonistic tendencies, such as expanding democratization, upholding human rights and market economy, simultaneous with the enlarging cooperation and integration in the European and Euro-Atlantic structures, the disintegration and fragmentation of multiethnic state entities. (Bolborici, 2013, p. 87)

For the past years, identity symbols have increased in numbers and are to be interpreted at various levels but even this is a reality, the nation states are still defined by geographic boundaries, cultural associations and religious establishments. (Borcoman, p. 176)

Threats to the international order of the last century – strong, sovereign states – became overshadowed as this century began with a reorientation in foreign policy toward weak and failing states and the terrorist groups that use them as safe havens. (Skuldt, 2017, p. 2)

For the entire international community, the 21st century began with more or less predictable effervescence, Islamic terrorism being one of the main causes. Other main global threats of this century remain the proliferation of weapons of mass terrorism and organized crime, the cybersecurity, the energy security, the consequences of the climate change, the regional conflicts and the states which are in a process of involution.

If we look back in the recent history, the end of the Cold War highlighted new tendencies as an effect of the radical transformations in the international system who was constrained and which also were reflected implicitly in the need to redefine and reinterpret the concept of security globally.

The obvious fear concerning the start of a nuclear conflict between the two great powers was gradually replaced by a series of concrete threats to national security and / or international bodies, such as for example: the ethnic clashes, the necessity of ex-communist states to undergo a long process of transition, increasing the number of immigrants and refugees, the increasing importance of cultural and religious affiliation in international relations, the environmental degradation, the integration in different regional structures etc.

The security policy is based, in a mandatory manner, on specific issues and threats that arise from the periphery of the EU and are generally of a non-military nature, with the most likely security threats in the southern EU of the Mediterranean area, such as terrorism, conflicts for national resources or demographic explosion that led to the present massive emigration.

In this case, the main instruments are non-military, for example, internal security, economic and social development and social commitment beyond political elite, which is

why the development of The Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) / European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) in the coming years must produce more using these tools". (Bănescu, 2010)

A deficit recorded at the European institutional level is the "unwillingness of the EU to use economic levers, such as coercion, sanctions and threats against the Gulf countries, Iran or Israel". (Hamntan, p. 42)

Certainly, the Middle East was, it is and will remain an important region for the European Union, which obliges it to engage responsibly in the pacification of the area, taking into account its own interests; this region is particularly valuable if we consider the EU's energy future, but also the trade relations developed with both Arab states and non-Arab states.

Promotion of neighbourhood policy shows that the European Union had understood that all those "painful problems of the region cannot be overlooked" and it must be addressed in order to be gradually resolved "if we do not want transferred all these problems into one way or another, within Europe". (Hamntan, p. 53)

In this respect, the euro-deputy Firello Provera warned (in February 2011) on the risks related to the current situation - a possible Islamization of these countries, as demonstrated by the example of Iran or Syria regarding the worsening economic situation which had led to higher unemployment and a wave of migration to Europe.

According to some commentators of foreign policy at present we are witnessing a siege of Europe which tends to shatter both the European structure, institutionally speaking, raising tensions in the everyday life of millions of Europeans who feel increasingly more affected by the massive wave of non-European immigrants.

The exodus of these non-European immigrants of Arab origin, both Muslims and non-Muslims, who come from countries of the Middle East or North Africa, generated at the same time a strong confused murmur in the European governments, especially among the citizens of the Communities complain that the situation is out of control and this is a direct result of exceptionally lax policies of the European Union regarding the freedom of movement and unmanned international borders. All of this has taken effect and can be observed with the slow collapse of the migration process. (Bolborici, 2016, p. 2)

Confronted with this major challenge the European diplomacy seems to be drifting, balancing between showing indulgence, compassion and supporting these multitudes of people who have chosen exile for economic reasons, security or personal reasons and the rejection of the tradition system of asylum seekers. (Bolborici, 2016, p. 2)

Given that Europe has become the homeland of approximately 15 million Muslims, every time when more or less hostile actions are decided hostilities in the Middle East or Near Europe are perceived as possible threats to the European Union, which is why they are being examined very carefully because they can have direct repercussions on the European level as well.

I am convinced that the European Union, will succeed in identifying its own foreign policy interests in the Middle East region and it will not remain only a passive observer or passive arbitrator or a docile supporter of US foreign policy in the eastern region, as some foreign policy commentators argue. Once these interests highlighted, the common

security strategy will be safer and the EU will have the courage so needed for sustained involvement in the region and not only.

In this regard, the EU has to face new challenges; we all know that at present the organisation is going through a hard period, as we have seen the economic crisis or the Brexit, a challenge for European “United in Diversity” even at linguistic level (Sorea, 2017); these are just two of the regional major issues.

Nowadays, this challenge is a premiere if we take into consideration the massive impact of the migrants' wave assault on Europe, both in institutional and human terms.

The EU has a moral duty as well as a legal responsibility for managing the flood of migrants and refugees which is the largest movement of people Europe has seen since World War II. (Bolborici, 2017, p. 47)

Since 2015, the EU has taken several measures to manage the migration crisis as well as to improve the asylum system. In this moment the European Union is obliged to manage the refugee crisis but also numerous other issues that arise, such as human trafficking, the problem of immigrants, the status of migrants (including the children's), setting up procedures concerning their assimilation or expulsion, the status of asylum seekers etc. (Bolborici, 2017, p. 48)

Today's leaders must promote inclusive development and counter discrimination; the leaders must also offer a vision based on defending rights and bringing communities together.

I believe that walls between different groups are not the solution. The well-known stereotype “Us and Them” is not the solution. Those who stereotype by faith, who demonize whole communities and foster division, need to be challenged.

Today, more than ever, we are obliged to be visionaries and accept the need to live harmoniously with other ethnic minorities groups. For this it is important the build links between people across barriers, borders and cultures.

We must believe in mutual respect between religions (even at this moment as we have all seen the Muslims are almost all labeled as a terrorist, given the terrorist attacks all over the world).

But that can only happen when minority and indigenous voices are empowered, supported and respected. It means actively listening to the voices of minorities groups and trying to manage their problems with respect and responsibility.

When we talk about non-discrimination of minorities it is important to understand the importance of intercultural thinking.

In the last decade it has become obvious that the development of international law governing terrorism is compulsory along with individual state responses, policy decisions regarding effective response, military actions. Questions whether deterrence is still possible in the age of decentralized terrorist groups still persist.

Other main threats that demand attention and global solutions are the effects of the evolving organizational structure of terrorist groups, the illegal immigration, the radicalization of European Muslims and the phenomenon recently identified as “swarming,” whereby fighters relocate from site to site in different configurations in order to fight or perpetrate attacks and then dissolve (Atran 2006). (Skuldt, 2017, p. 2)

Last years have been remarkably violent and many of the worst threats to human security have dogged people all over the globe. It is obvious that terrorism continues to make headlines and annual death tolls are rising; also the civil wars last many years longer on average than inter-state conflicts and have a much higher civilian death count. (The Conversation, 2016)

Is important to mention that the threats posed by nuclear and biological weapons are also present these years. However, in spite of the devastation that could be caused by non-conventional weapons, the chances of dissemination are still relatively low, even if these weapons could be acquired by nations such as Iran or groups such as Islamic State. (The Conversation, 2016)

Having seen that in the bipolar world the total war and the nuclear power were considered the great challenges, we can conclude that today, in a multipolar world and with new international players, the situation is totally different.

The numerous issues have gone global and they cross borders as for example the international crime, the narcotraffic, the modern slavery, the poverty, the terrorism, the refugee crises and so on.

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