

RISKS, VULNERABILITIES AND POSSIBLE THREATS OF THE EUROPEAN SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Ovidiu MOȘOIU

“Henri Coanda” Air Force Academy, Brasov

***Abstract:** Security is perceived as a dynamic process with a variable geometry, which imposes a permanently reference to the new types of threats from the external environment: terrorism, proliferation of mass destruction weapons, illegal migration, ethnic and religious conflicts and beyond. The risks, threats and dangers to the security of the European countries, implicitly of Romania, can be amplified by the existence of some vulnerabilities and dysfunctions.*

***Keywords:** risks, vulnerabilities, threats, European security, EU.*

1. VULNERABILITIES AND RISKS TO THE EUROPEAN SECURITY

The unprecedented period of peace and stability which Europe passes at the end of the XXth century and the beginning of the XXIst century is due to the existence of the European Union. The Union is the one who generated not only a high level of economic development on the continent, but also a new approach to security, founded on the peaceful resolution of disputes and on the multilateral international cooperation between common institutions. Certainly, a crucial role in the European security assurance was played by The United States of America, by the support conferred to the European integration and also by the security engagements to Europe, taken in the framework of NATO.

The unprecedented proliferation of terrorism, the alarming growth of mortality caused by terrorist acts, on the fond of the diversification of means and methods used by the terrorists to accomplish their stated objectives, determined the unprecedented reaction of the international community, which for the first time in the human history, acted loyal in the defense actions of the great values of humanity and democracy.

The consistency of Romania's full engagement policy to the efforts of the

international community for the resolution of the major problems of the humanity, acting like a responsible member of the North Atlantic Treaty and the EU, has assumed responsibilities and risks in this universal campaign against terrorism.

The globalization process will determine a more obvious growth of the economic interaction and interdependence level in the world's states, in the context of the stressed material and spiritual civilization transfer between the big powers and the less developed countries. In these conditions, the two characteristic sides of globalization, the interdependence between the national economies and the economic domination of the great powers, turn into the interest and under the strict control of the last. Even the globalization process refers especially to the economic sphere its effects have a determined connotation on the socio-cultural, political-military and of the global and regional security domains.

In this frame, it is obvious that between the phenomenon of globalization and European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the group of states from the Center and East of Europe exists a strong connection. Because of the lack of performance of their national economies and their reduced capability of adaptation, not being yet integrated in the new system, these

countries, suffer, in the initial phase, the negative consequences of globalization. As an effect, the European and Euro-Atlantic integration represents a goal which leads to social and economic prosperity, with all its positive implications upon national, regional and global security.

The geopolitical transitional process of the last few years, within many states from Central and South East Europe passed into the occidental influence area, was accompanied by a movement to east of the ex-border which had divided Europe in the Cold War.

The transitional process to capitalism determined a deepening of the economical disparity existent in the area and, on this fond, the conflicted latent state from the Balkan area was activated. By the enlargement to east of NATO in 1999 and next levels 2004, 2009, the security aspect exceeded the economical one. The crisis in Kosovo and the evolution of the situation from the ex-Yugoslavian space questioned the international community if in order to resolve the Balkan crisis, the two components (the security and economical one) should be approached together or individually. In this context, the launch of The Stability Pact for the South-east Europe represents a realist and benefic project, having on its base the fact that without economical stability and prosperity there will be no peace in the Balkan area. On long term this way is cheaper than the military way.

The military and political situation in the third millennium Europe is characterized by the following vulnerabilities:

- The maintenance of some high risk areas for the European security;
- The existence of some unresolved crisis which represent the threat of restarting some bloody conflicts (Kosovo, Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, part of the Republic of Moldavia, Caucasus);
- Ethnical and religious internal disputes which may generate conflicts (Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina);
- The internationalization of the ethnical and social internal disputes (Kosovo, France);
- The territorial or other nature claims which stress the relations between the involved states (Greece and Turkey, Greece and Macedonia,

Greece and Albania);

- The autonomist tendencies of some ethnical communities, the attempts to elaborate incriminatory normative acts with trans-border values, of some states;
- The difficulties met by some states in the transitional process;
- The existence of some ethnical political active minorities which consider themselves oppressed by the majority in the state.
- The insight and enlargement of Islamic fundamentalism, especially the radical one (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and even in the south east of Bulgaria);
- The influence of some high risk of instability areas (The Middle Orient, the Caucasus republics);
- The tendency of some states to become regional leaders (Greece, Turkey);
- The tendencies of The Russian Federation to rebuild the lost areas of influence after the end of the Cold War and the caption of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldavia in the Russian-Belarus Union;
- The growth of the Black Sea's importance in the process of redefining the new influence areas;
- The intensification of the non-military threats to the national security of the neighborhood states (organized crime, terrorism, illegal drugs and weapons traffic, illegal immigration);
- The maintenance of some risks or the apparition of others to the Balkan security is also revealed by the fact that in the last years, in the region, there were started conflicts and crises, which the international community proved to be incapable to prevent or resolve by political means. With this occasion the positive indisputable role of The US in Europe, as a main leader of NATO, and its main contribution as a coagulation factor of the political and military capabilities in order to distress and manage crisis, reestablish the normal state, was highlighted.

After 1990 and especially after 1998, the European Union gave a new impulse to the efforts of strengthening the security and defining the defense dimension on European level. The development of an external and commune security policy also included the

idea of defining a common defense policy, mentioned clearly in the Amsterdam Treaty. In the same time, The European Union showed much more preoccupation for the finalization of his own institutional internal reforms and for the resolution of the political construction debate which will define Europe's future, especially in the context of enlargement.

Beginning with the 1st of January 2007, the European Union defines itself as a union of 27 states, bringing together around 450 millions of people and producing round 25% from the global IBP. Becoming a global economic actor, the EU will also have to substantially participate to the global security assurance mechanism. However, it is important to mention the EU's implication to constitute a rapid reaction force, modularly organized, in more battle groups, which would put the bases to a new European common defense. After 1990, the new threats included a large scale of tensions and risks, and also a varied scale of their manifestation, like the following:

- The ethnical tensions;
- Traffic of drugs, radioactive substances and humans;
- The trans-border organized crime;
- The political instability of an area;
- The redistribution of some influence areas;
- The proliferation of the weak country entities, the so called "failed states", characterized by the corrupted and inefficient administration, incapable to offer its proper citizens the benefices associated to the common management of the public affairs;
- A new category of risks contains the non-traditional, asymmetrical ones, which may include armed and non-armed deliberate actions, having as goal the influence upon the national security by provoking direct or indirect consequences on the economical and social life of a country. Between the risks of this type are to be enumerated [1]:
 - the trans-national and international political terrorism, including its biological and electronic forms;
 - actions that may attempt to the security of the internal and international transport systems;
 - individual or collective actions of illegal access to the electronic systems;

- actions which mean to affect the international image of a country;
- the economical and financial aggression;
- the deliberate challenge of ecological catastrophes;
- At the origin of many conflicts were the inefficient leadership, the corruption, the power abuse, the weak institutions and the lack of responsibility which all eroded the credibility of the states and led to regional insecurity. From this point of view, nowadays many countries and regions risk to be caught into a spiral of conflict, insecurity and poverty.

From the pragmatic point of view, at the beginning of the XXIst century, the actors with a global impact on in the security domain are The USA, Europe, Russia, China, and Japan. An interesting point of view has Zbigniew Brzezinski; he considers that the essence of the world's new security structure is in the relationship between The USA and Eurasia (which includes Europe and the countries mentioned upwards) [2]. In the frame of this relationship, there can be identified two triangles of Eurasian power:

- The USA, Europe, Russia;
- The USA, China, Japan.

The most pertinently observation related to the two triangles of power is that, in each of them, one of the powers (Europe, Japan) clearly rely on the idea of international stability and security, while one of the other powers (China, Russia) remain opened and interested in the eventual geopolitical movements. From another point of view, it is considered that at the origins of "the new global split" is the tension developed between two different power "fields", founded on opposed organizational principals: on one side The USA, a supporter of single polarity, and on the other side the other major actors of the international scene – The European Union, Russia, China, Japan – supporters of multi-polarity [3].

2. THE GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND THE MAIN THREATS TO THE EU

Form Europe's point of view, the following threats are to be especially remarked: proliferation of mass destruction weapons,

terrorism and organized crime, cybernetic and energetic security, the climate changes.

The proliferation of mass destruction weapons guided as much as by the terrorists, as by the countries, was identified as “probably the biggest threat to the security of the EU”. This risk has grown in the last five years, putting pressure on the multilateral frame. While Libya dissolved its program related to the weapons of mass destruction (WMD), Iran and North Korea still have to win the trust of the international community. A possible rebirth of the civilian nuclear energy in the next decades gives also birth to some challenges to the non-proliferation system, if it is not accompanied by proper safety measures.

Also, supplementary efforts are necessary regarding different specific stuff, including: the EU’s support for a multilateral approach of the nuclear fuel’s cycle, the struggle against proliferation funding, bio-safety and bio-security measures, the stop of proliferation systems delivery, especially of the ballistic missiles. There should be opened the negotiations for a multilateral treaty which forbids the production of explosive material used for the nuclear weapons.

In Europe and in the entire world, terrorism remains a big threat to the means of living. There were attacks in Madrid and London, while others were avoided, and the groups formed in the internal scheme play a more important role on our continent. The organized crime continues to threaten the European societies, with the traffic in drugs, persons and weapons, together with the international cheat and money laundering.

From 2003, the EU has made progresses in approaching the both problems, taking supplementary measures in the interior of the Union, in the frame of The Program from Hague in 2004 and adopting, in 2005, a new strategy for the external dimension of justice and of the internal affairs. These have facilitated the development of the investigations on the trans-border level and the coordination of the consequences in justice.

In the frame of the EU, there have been taken many measures to protect the member societies against terrorism. It is necessary to consolidate the measures of coordination in

order to act in case of a major terrorist incident, especially if there are used chemical, radiological, nuclear and bio-terrorism materials, on the base of the existent provisions, like the plans of crisis management and the civil protection mechanism. There are necessary supplementary efforts regarding the stop of terrorism funding, and also an efficient and far-reaching European policy regarding the informational exchange, taking in consideration the proper protection on personal data.

Regarding the organized criminality, the existent partnerships from the neighborhood with the key-partners, as also the ones in the frame on UNO, should be deepened in order to approach the circulation of persons, the police and judicial cooperation.

The EU has highlighted the piracy as a new dimension of organized criminality. This is, also, a result of the country failure. The worldwide economy is based on the maritime ruts for 90% of the commercial exchanges. The piracy in the Indian Ocean and in the Aden Golf has transformed this fact in a pressing problem in the last months and has also affected the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somalia. The EU reacted within ATLANTA, the first maritime mission PESA, in order to discourage the piracy in the area of the Somalia coasts, together with the affected countries and with other international actors, including NATO.

In 2005, The European Council implemented the EU Strategy in order to fight against the illegal accumulations and against the illegal traffic of small caliber and light weapons, as also against the proper ammunition.

In the context of its implementation, the EU supports an action program of UNO in this domain. The EU will continue to develop its fight against the threats of illegal SALW.

The EU supported the idea of elaborating an international treaty concerning the trade with weapons and decided to support the process which leads to its implementation. The EU is also an important donor in the anti-mine actions.

The modern economies rely very much on the critical infrastructure, including the

transport, the communications and the energy supply, but also on the internet. The EU strategy for a safe informational society, implemented in 2006, approaches the criminality based on the internet. However, the attacks against the private or governmental IT systems from the EU member states have conferred it a new dimension, the one of a possible economical, political and military weapon.

The concerns about energy dependence increased over the past five years. European production is declining which means that by 2030, up to 75% of its oil and gas necessary will have to be imported. They will be provided by a limited number of countries, many of which face threats to stability. Consequently the EU faces a number of challenges in security domain, which implies responsibility and solidarity of all Member States.

The answer must be a policy that combines internal and external dimensions, greater diversification of fuels, sources of supply, and transit routes is essential as they are and good governance, rule of law and investments in source countries. EU policy supports these goals through engagement with Central Asia, Caucasus and Africa, as well as Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean. Energy is a major factor in relations between the EU and Russia. EU must address transit routes, including Turkey and Ukraine.

Since 2003 by the European Security Strategy has identified the implications of climate change on security domain, five years later, they became a more urgent issue. High Representative and the Commission submitted a report to the European Council where climate changes were described as a factor which multiplies the threats. Natural disasters, environmental degradation and competition for resources exacerbates conflicts, especially in situations of poverty and population growth, with humanitarian, medical, political and security consequences, including an increased migration.

Climate changes may also lead to disputes over trade routes, maritime areas and resources previously inaccessible.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The EU capacity of approaching the challenges increased in the last five years and has to continue to grow. The coherence has to consolidate by a better institutional coordination and a process of taking strategic decisions. The provisions of the Lisbon Treaty offer a frame in order to accomplish this.

We are in a globalized world, which determines a series of positive, but also negative effects upon the human security, which cannot be individually analyzed, but in the frame of a worldwide system of relationships and interdependencies. The economical and financial crisis which the world passes nowadays is another proof which demonstrates that within the globalization the world has become more complex and interdependent. This destabilized the developed economies, but also the economies in progress.

One of the major effects of the actual crisis is the decreasing of economy growth in the majority of the affected states. The reduced economic increase will put pressure on the standards of living, especially in the EU poor states. The importance of the proper funding and of the amelioration's orientation to the social protection systems in these circumstances takes a bigger significance.

The worldwide financial crisis which affects us nowadays may turn into a big vulnerability to the European and world security. Europe will reply to this new challenges, like it has done by now.

Basing on a unique range of instruments, the EU contributes to a safer world. UE has worked to build security for people by reducing poverty and inequality, promoting good governance and human rights, supporting development and combating the causes of conflict and uncertainty. EU remains the largest donor to countries in need. Requires a long-term commitment to stabilization.

Lasting solutions to conflicts should gather all the regional actors that have that common stake peace. Sovereign governments must assume responsibility for the consequences of their actions and have a common responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war

crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Global Europe must lead the process of renewal of the multilateral order. UN is in the center of the international system. All the EU actions in security domain were related to UN goals. There is a unique opportunity to renew the multilateralism, working with USA and partners around the world.

Member is currently no single issue of security. Now happens frequently that individuals and institutions to feel unsure about many aspects. These individuals and these institutions were part of the enlarged security agenda and the process of internationalization of security characterized through a high interconnectivity between regions and sectors.

The analysis of risks and threats to the human security led to a new perception of the security state and to a new orientation in the defense domain.

The need of action integrated against these risks and threats has become a necessity. Romania, like other countries in Europe, understood that in the actual conditions of the international environment given by the complexity and the fluidity of the political and strategic environment, can assure itself the security "by the integration of the personal effort in the actions led by the European and Euro-Atlantic security organizations".

Nowadays, it persists with a series of important vulnerabilities which affect our security, over which overlaps the emphasis of some risk phenomenon, generated by the widening of terrorism, of traffic connections and organized crime, but also by the persistence of an interstate rivalry with direct influence upon the national interest.

REFERENCES

1. Adrian, P., *Puteri și influențe*, Editura Corint, București, 2001;
2. Bădălan, E., Zaharescu, L., *Sisteme globale de securitate*, Editura CIEA, București, 2006;
3. Bădălan, E., Frunzeti, T., *Forțe și tendințe în mediul de securitate european*, Editura Academiei Forțelor Terestre, Sibiu, 2005;
4. Dolghin, N., Sarcinschi, A., Dinu, Șt., *Riscuri și amenințări la adresa securității României. Actualitate și perspectivă*, Editura UNAp, București, 2004;
5. Frunzeti, T., Zodian, V., *Lumea 2007*, Editura CIEA, București 2007;
6. Frunzeti, T., Zodian, V., *Lumea 2005*, Editura CIEA, București 2005;
7. Gabor, G., *Mediul internațional de securitate din perspectivă europeană*, Sesiunea de comunicări științifice cu participare internațională „Strategii XXI”, UNAp, București, 2007;
8. Ispas, L., *Riscuri și vulnerabilități la adresa securității umane în contextual crizei economico-financiare*, Sesiunea de comunicări științifice „Stabilitate și Securitate Regională”, UNAp, București, 2009;
9. Neagoie, V., *Riscuri și vulnerabilități ale mediului de securitate în zonele de importanță strategică pentru România*, Sesiunea de comunicări științifice „Stabilitate și Securitate Regională”, UNAp, București, 2009;
10. Brzezinski, Z., *The Geostrategic Triad - Living with China, Europe and Russia*, The Center for Strategic and International Studies Press, The CSIS Press, Washington DC, 2001;
11. *** *Strategia de Securitate Națională a României*, București, 2006.