

DETERMINING THE CONTEXT OF REGIONAL SECURITY AND STABILITY (on example of Balkans, Caucasus and Ex-Soviet space)

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The instabilities and dangers in Europe, including periphery, affect the security of all European states, requiring intense regional cooperation and joint efforts. That is why regional security has an important role in discovering the optimal ways of society developing, this becoming a necessity and having an enormous interest in contemporary period, besides the theoretical value having also a great practical meaning. The scientific research analyses the effectiveness, cooperation and flexibility of the regional security policy of the regions as the Balkans, the Caucasus, the ex-Soviet countries, by this depends whether will they succeed in overcoming the period of instability towards national security and the consolidation of a genuine contemporary democracy in countries.

Keywords: regional security, security environment, international security, globalization, geopolitics, army, security problems, strategic interest.

DETERMINAREA CONTEXTULUI SECURITĂȚII ȘI STABILITĂȚII REGIONALE (exemplul Balcanilor, Caucazului și spațiului post-sovietic)

Instabilitatea și pericolele din Europa, inclusiv de la periferie, afectează securitatea tuturor statelor europene, fapt ce necesită promovarea unei cooperări regionale intense și întreprinderea eforturilor comune conjugate în acest sens. Din acest considerent, securitatea regională are un rol important în descoperirea modalităților optime de dezvoltare a societății. Aceasta devine o necesitate și are un interes enorm pentru perioada contemporană, pe lângă valoarea teoretică, având, de asemenea, și o mare semnificație practică. Prezentul articol științific analizează eficacitatea, dezvoltarea, cooperarea și flexibilitatea politicii de securitate regională promovată în regiuni precum sunt Balcanii, Caucazul, țările post-sovietice. De politicile întreprinse în acest sens depinde dacă se va reuși depășirea perioadei de instabilitate față de securitatea națională și consolidarea unei democrații moderne autentice în regiunile nominalizate.

Cuvinte-cheie: securitate regională, mediu de securitate, securitate internațională, globalizare, geopolitică, armată, probleme de securitate, interese strategice.

DÉTERMINATION DE CONTEXTE DE LA SÉCURITÉ ET LA STABILITÉ RÉGIONALES (l'exemple des Balkans, du Caucase et de l'espace post-soviétique)

L'instabilité et les dangers en Europe, y compris à partir de la périphérie, affectent la sécurité de tous les États Européens, ce qui nécessite la promotion d'une coopération régionale intense et d'efforts conjoints à cet égard. Pour cette raison, la sécurité régionale joue un rôle important dans la découverte des moyens optimaux de développer la société. Cela devient une nécessité et a un énorme intérêt dans la période contemporaine, en plus de la valeur théorique, ayant

également une grande signification pratique. Cet article scientifique analyse l'efficacité, le développement, la coopération et la flexibilité de la Politique de sécurité régionale promue dans des régions telles que les Balkans, le Caucase et les pays post-soviétiques. Les politiques entreprises à cet égard dépendent de la possibilité de surmonter la période d'instabilité sur le plan de la sécurité nationale et de renforcer une véritable démocratie moderne dans les régions désignées.

***Mots-clés:** sécurité régionale, environnement de sécurité, sécurité internationale, mondialisation, géopolitique,, militaire, problèmes de sécurité, intérêts stratégiques.*

ОПРЕДЕЛЕНИЕ КОНТЕКСТА РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ И СТАБИЛЬНОСТИ (на примере Балкан, Кавказа и постсоветского пространства)

Нестабильность и вызовы в Европе, в том числе на её периферии, влияют на безопасность всех государств континента, что требует содействия интенсивному региональному сотрудничеству в области безопасности и совместных усилий в этом направлении. В этом контексте, региональная безопасность играет важную роль в раскрытии оптимальных вариантов для развития общества, становясь необходимостью и имея огромный интерес на современном этапе развития мира, как с теоретической так и с практической точки зрения. В данной научной статье рассмотрены эффективность, развитие, сотрудничество и гибкость региональной политики безопасности в таких регионах, как Балканы, Кавказ, страны постсоветского пространства. От политики, проводимой в этой связи, зависит удастся ли им преодолеть период нестабильности в отношении национальной безопасности и укрепления подлинной современной демократии в этих странах.

***Ключевые слова:** региональная безопасность, среда безопасности, международная безопасность, глобализация, геополитика, армия, проблемы безопасности, стратегические интересы.*

Introduction

Regional security is a fundamental and distinct area of national security, which is in interdependence relationship with the processes of state development on political, social, economic, technological, military, diplomatic, informational and institutional dimensions. The research of regional security and stability at the border of Europe like Balkans, Caucasus and Ex-Soviet space is actual and important from scientific point of view because of its complexity, dynamics and multidimensionality. The fundamental objective of the regional security is to assure a continuous democratic development of state, fair and equal security for all, and channeling efforts aimed at people's prosperity towards preparing the integration of all the states of the region into Euro-Atlantic structures. In its turn, the objectives of the state in the region are to strengthen European perspectives, eliminate risks, organized crime and il-

legal actions, as well as to build sustainable stability based on standards of democracy, prosperity, respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms. Actually, solutions to regional problems come predominantly within the region. In this context, it is time when states, political forces, civic organizations take direct responsibility for solving the problems facing the region.

For the purposes of scientific research, the elements of the generally known scientific process were used: the methods of empirical research (observation, comparison, evaluation), as well as the methods used at the theoretical level (abstraction, analysis and synthesis, induction and inference, movement from abstract to concrete).

The main ideas of the research

Regional security is representing a different approach to the concept of security, with repercussions on the international order. In this respect, regional

security prevents changes to the internal and external environment in the vicinity of national interests or internal crises with effects on the immediate external plan. Also created situation impacts the overall degradation of the security environment of the general well-being of society and of national economies with influences on the international security.

The development of the current regional security environment is a fundamental element for understanding the order that is emerging. It takes different forms including international security (the role of bodies such as the UN, NATO, EU, OSCE, etc.), economic (trade regions) and even cultural. [1, p. 18]

Regional security is an appropriation of state, economic, ethnic and entities area, built on state involvement, on the basis of the concept of “common regional problems – that means solutions through regional cooperation”, in combating the current risks and threats arising from the process of globalization. Because of that regional security is a necessity imposed by various determinations like: the challenges of globalization, the great difficulties that the countries of the region are currently facing in political, economic, social and ethnic field. In this respect, the internal stability of the state is an essential factor for its ability to cooperate internationally and, moreover, internal security is a determining factor in the quality of regional security.

Security tends to become the responsibility of several power centers, even if they are not consistent with the classic security model. Regional security and stability, part of the international one, is a state of affairs to which states, international organizations and other actors contribute significantly, but in different ways. Ensuring regional security and stability is part of the process of achieving international security and stability. This shall be achieved through its own efforts and cooperation with allies and partners, in accordance with the provisions of

national programmes, the European Union’s security strategy and the Alliance’s strategic concepts. In this respect, states aim to harmonize national efforts with international commitments and to identify ways of capable working on preventing and countering threats in a timely manner. Efforts are also aimed at promoting democracy, peace and stability in the neighborhood and other areas of strategic interest, reducing vulnerabilities, developing national capabilities and profoundly transforming security institutions. [2, p. 4]

The unprecedented period of peace and stability that Europe is going through at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century is due to the existence of the European Union. It is the European Union that has generated not only a high level of economic development on the continent, but also a new approach to security, based on the peaceful settlement of disputes and multilateral international cooperation through common institutions. In contrast to these positive developments in the west of the continent, in other parts of Europe, and especially in the Balkans, there were a series of crises after 1990, which unfolded in the context of the geopolitical resettlements that followed the end of the Cold War. An essential feature was that crises took place most often within the states and less between them. As an actor in geopolitical area of strategic importance, the state seeks to play a substantial role in the process of defining and implementing stabilizing policies, cooperation and security assistance at both national and regional level.

The absence of forward-looking strategies of the international community for regions with major outbreaks of instability and conflict – strategies capable of preventing crimes against peace and humanity – has made violence in ex-communist area, for example, long-lasting and efforts to address suffered problems from inconsistency and perspective. Through the intervention of the Euro-Atlantic com-

munity enforcement and peacekeeping measures in recent years, the intensity of conflicts that have affected peace and security in the world has significantly diminished.

Given its geographical proximity, historical experience, common specific values and regional connections, the state's primary interest in the field lies in the democratization, economic development, stability and firm orientation of the region towards integration into international structures, while at the same time increasing its own contribution and taking more pronounced pro-active role as a regional security factor. In this context, the strategic efforts of the state are directed to solve security problems, so that the state enters an effective process of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Regional cooperation in the field of security, materialized in existence of a large number of organizations, provides an opportunity to improve common mechanisms for assessing the strategic environment, to identify a common risk agenda and appropriate tools for crisis management. The harmonization of their efforts, the orientation of their activities in full consonance with the efforts of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, above all, the increase of the responsibility of states, their leaders and national political forces for the security of the region, and their contribution to the resolution of states tension, crisis and conflict – are major imperatives of the new regional security paradigm. [3, p. 20-21]

In fact, solutions to regional problems come predominantly within the region. In this context, it is time for states, political forces, governmental, non-governmental or civic organizations, political leaders and representatives of various movements to take direct responsibility for solving the problems facing in the region. This requires – for the responsible political factors in the area – a modern and mature civic conscience, the firm promotion of democratic prin-

ciples, respect for human dignity, freedom and identity of all, concern for maintaining border stability and the cessation of propaganda in favor of political, ethnic or religious violence and separatism.

The fundamental objective of the action of all these factors is democratic, fair and equal security for all, and channeling efforts aimed at people's prosperity towards preparing the integration of all the states in the region into Euro-Atlantic structures. The objectives of the state in the region are to strengthen European perspectives, eliminate risks related to terrorism, organized crime and illegal trafficking, as well as to build sustainable stability based on standards of democracy, prosperity, respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms.

In achieving these objectives, the state must actively support, in accordance with the principles of international law, the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions, Council of Europe and OSCE relevant decisions and recommendations, and contribute effectively, together with the states of the region, to the implementation of political, economic and security measures and programmes within NATO, European Union. [4, p. 158] In this area, the priority is to remove bottlenecks to the resolution of differences and states of tension, crisis and conflict, so that these actions allow the development of democratic institutions, generate security and open the prospects of prosperity, by respecting fundamental human rights and freedoms, strengthening trust, developing regional cooperation and promoting multiculturalism. Such a modern frame also addresses society's legitimate concerns about improving the legal status, living conditions and treatment enjoyed by national communities in neighboring states, in accordance with international norms, European standards and commitments under bilateral and multilateral agreements.

Regarding Balkan region, it is worth noting that the Balkans provides links between Western, Central

and Middle and East Europe. At the same time, the Balkans displays various and persistent vulnerabilities that, for decades, have been characterized as Europe's "powder keg". A vulnerability of the Balkans lies in a whole history of territorial disputes and ethnic, cultural and religious conflicts, with a burdensome past, which seems to become a real handicap in the face of the initiative and instruments of economic, political and military progress. [5, p. 12] This adds the complex deficiency of the Balkan security and the inability to prevent and manage local crises and conflicts.

In particular, one of the regions with a significant impact on the geopolitics of regional security from a historical point of view, cultural and religious elements presents the Western Balkans area, which belongs to Europe. Together with Bulgaria, Greece and European Turkey it is, *strict senso*, the southern extension of Central Europe. Interethnic conflicts, national rivalries after the Cold War diverted the area from the trajectory that Central Europe followed.

For the economic development of the area there are two main risks: dependence on aid and the criminalization of the economy. National economies are dependent on external support and international presence. Some political and economic elites are not interested in the optimal transformation of the economy in order to benefit from the potential of the underground economy. These risks are added to another defiance: the modernization of the state, organization of society when the clan traditions of several ethnic-cultural communities in the area (especially the Albanian one) either do not foster respect for the institutions of the civic and multicultural state or lead to the disaggregation of states into true "city-states" (as is the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina). Such a process of state consolidation and modernization must take place simultaneously with sub-regional and continental integration process.

Another region important for regional security is Turkey and the Caucasian area. The Caucasus brings together all the conditions of a hectic region, harassed for centuries between three former empires: Russia, Turkey and Iran. Located between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus is usually presented as a strategic crossroad between Europe and Asia, composed of a mosaic of peoples, a true linguistic and cultural Babel tower. Peoples of the Western Caucasus, the Ossetians, the peoples of the Eastern Caucasus, the Georgians, the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis form a conglomerate of languages that explains in part the complexity of the geopolitical problems of this region, a highly fragmented field of action and the object of ancestral territorial rivalries. [6, p. 6]

Kemal Atatürk's secular Turkey has chosen to be governed by Islamic party. This led to the highlighting of dilemma for the modern Turkish state: the army modernized society and state organization, the military being the guardians of the state's laity, but by kemalism the Turks separated modernity from democracy, pluralism from freedom. Consequently, even though Kemalism modernized Turkish society it did not democratize it to the same extent; even though it gave it more pluralistic structures, it did not give the citizen the freedom to create and to opt for them at their own will. This has led to a vicious circle in which kemalism strengthens, in the name of modernity (based on military democracy and civil authoritarianism), religious exclusivity, and this, in the name of democracy (pluralism and tolerance that does not conform to the fundamentalism faith) fuels the power of the army over society.

The experience of the 20th century has shown that fundamentalism can only be combated by the force of democracy, so fundamentalist Islam must be combated by Islam open to modernity (capable of synthesizing faith with tolerance, principles with pragmatism and tradition with the modernity of the

global world). In conclusion, Turkey must internalize the fundamental principles of democratic political systems. The historical stake is to demonstrate that there is no incompatibility between Islam and democracy.

Turkey also has an important role to play in the management of the South Caucasus area, with its important energy resources, as well as in establishing specific bridge between the Euro-Atlantic world and the Turkish countries of Central Asia. With regard to the Caucasus (Transcaucasia or the South Caucasus, including Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) it is assumed that this area is one of meeting different cultural identities (some closer to Europe, others to Eurasia), as well as different strategic interests (European, Euro-Asian and Euro-Atlantic).

The integration of the whole Transcaucasia, for example into the EU or the CIS would be forced one (as it would also ignore the objective vocation of the countries concerned and their subjective options) and, on the other hand, will jeopardize certain geo-strategic balances. In addition, in particular genuine integration of Georgia and Azerbaijan into the CIS, involves building or rebuilding of trust between them and the Russian Federation, which is inevitable to require a very long time frame. On the other hand, the division of Transcaucasia between Europe (EU) and Eurasia (CIS), place countries in the area under different security shadows and geopolitical contexts (Georgia and possibly Armenia in the EU and Azerbaijan in the CIS, or in a Caspian Confederation - Georgia and Azerbaijan in NATO and Armenia in the CIS) could promote the exacerbation of conflicts between them. [7, p. 69-70] In view of all these aspects, it is possible and desirable that, despite the conflicts and crises that are currently dividing them, the states in the area will eventually come to the conclusion of formation of a Commonwealth of the Transcaucasia States, which would be the best solution. If successful, this Commonwealth could

play the role of a buffer zone of a piece of aggregation of the major European, Euro-Asian and Euro-Atlantic assemblies whose vital interests are met in the Caucasus. The establishment of such a Transcaucasia Commonwealth requires the prior resolution of conflicts of interest and the definition of strategic cooperation system in the region between Russia, the USA and Europe.

A final region analyzed in the context of regional security is the ex-Soviet space. [8, p. 984] Russia plays an important role in this region. Traditionally, in recent centuries, Russia has had two great problems: a) the permanent rift between society and power, between social and political; b) the mentality of the besieged fortress, the idea that its security is all the greater in time when the weaker and insecure are the neighbors. Overcoming these two problems is essential both for Russia's destiny itself and for its relationship with the world. To these two problems are added three other great defiance's, this time with a stage character, namely: a) the ability to build institutions capable of ensuring the coherent management of its entire current territory; b) the ability to identify new cohesion criteria (post-Soviet and post-pan-Slavic) capable of ensuring the loyalty of citizens to the Federation and thereby the viability of the Federation itself; (c) the ability to achieve conciliation between the oligarchy and the state, which implies the integration of the underground market into the state order and the social effort for national security as a whole, as well as the achievement of a fair balance between option, risk and liability.

Developments in recent years indicate that Russia has ceased to be the strategic enemy of the Euro-Atlantic free world. The security and prosperity of the country under the conditions of new opportunities and threats depend on cooperation with Euro-Atlantic democracies, as well as the restoration of the link between Russian society and the political power of the Russian state, the link broken since the

first centuries of the last millennium. In this respect, the Russian political elite are aware that Russia's main priority is its own modernization. [9, p. 5]

Russia's role in ensuring global security and stability is important from the perspective of: control of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical or bacteriological) and production of technology; organized crime, drug trafficking and human beings; the phenomenon of global migration, which has already reached tens of millions, poses the risk of transcontinental spread of ethnic and social conflicts; that Russia is not only a "filter area" for migration of Asian origin but also a distinct source of emigration; the desire that the global world is undoubtedly a polycentric world, those centers are not primarily centers of military power, but also of economic and cultural power; that Russia has a regulatory role in ensuring balance in the oil, gas and other strategic market products, as well as in guaranteeing the world's energy security (including by diversifying sources and transportation stakes). [10, p. 241]

Achieving the objectives of stability and security in Eurasia as well as transforming Eurasia into a centre of power capable of participating with a positive contribution to guaranteeing the global balance and the functioning of the new international order, depends both on the evolution of the Russian Federation and on the extent to which it mobilizes the energies and political will of some of the former Soviet republics to form a democratic Commonwealth of Independent States (CSI), effective and born from mutual trust and freely expressed option of the participants. Under the new reality, the danger to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova is to remain politically and economically "dangerous neighbors". These two states are currently potential propagators of asymmetric risks (organized crime, illicit emigration).

Another state representing the ex-Soviet area is Ukraine. Strengthening a sovereign Ukraine, which has defined itself as a central European state and en-

gages in close integration with the European Union, is also a necessity to ensure geopolitical pluralism in Eurasia. Ukraine is definitely, in terms of its vocation, a border country, a natural bridge located between the EU and the CIS. Ultimately an option is still necessary. If Ukraine met the criteria for EU membership, then its presence as a flank country of united Europe is extremely useful.

For its part, the Republic of Moldova taking into account its development, policy and national security as a priority has several objectives: strengthening state independence in relation to the Russian Federation; rediscovering and strengthening one's own cultural identity; development of market economy institutions and mechanisms; ensuring respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, so as to make the possibility of integration into the European Union a reality. [11, p. 14] Despite the passage of political and conscientious confusion, through the historical past, geographical position and the culture origin (Latin), the Republic of Moldova belongs indisputably to Europe and not to Eurasia.

Belarus is a special case for the ex-Soviet zone for at least two reasons: a) Lukashenko's authoritarian political regime and b) close relations with the Russian Federation. As a state, the minimum democratic standards of free elections and economic reforms are not ensured in Belarus. Human rights are systematically violated, and economic attractiveness is very low because of aggressive behavior towards Western firms and representatives.

The difficulty of the relationship with Belarus is not only caused by the dictatorial nature of the Lukashenko regime, but also by the fact that Belarus is completely ignored or isolated in international relations. Filling the strategic vacuum following this exclusion is a necessity to capitalize on the chances of Europeanization or the European vocation of the Belarusians, which is currently not valorized. Supporting the emerging democratic opposition and

strengthening civil society in Belarus are part of a necessary strategy in this regard. Also, the democratization of Belarus and the strengthening of real independence that would allow it to freely opt for Europe and EU integration, is seen as part of a coherent problem (along with the Transnistrian crisis, the secessionism of Crimea, the Abkhaz problem and the south Ossetia, as well as the frozen conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh) whose object is the status and management of the legacy of the Soviet empire.

Conclusions

Considering the discontinuity that emerged in the exchange rate, it is very important to mention the way in which regional security face changes: long periods of instability are followed by adaptations and upheavals generated by some regional situations. It is too early to draw a conclusion from the attempts that were made in order to establish a viable regional security from pragmatic point of view on the ruins of old system. The changing of regional security in Balkans, Caucasus and post soviet area is supposed to give a representation of an arriving point and a reality that is an empiric image of a starting point.

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