

## THE UNITED NATIONS' PERSPECTIVE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM AND THE GLOBAL WORLD'S ASYMMETRIES

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**Abstract:** *The present study analyzes the geopolitical and geostrategic background of the international security environment as the world has registered a very important shift from bipolarity to a fragmented universe where all sorts of antagonisms come into being. The present-day international security context requires a unitary action initiated by the international society against the new asymmetric security threats. Today globalization plays an important part being perceived as the process through which the global connections are expanded and life is organized at a global scale. Thus, the global conscience is generated. It aims at creating and strengthening a global society. The security systems have reconfigured their dynamics due to the relations between the member states, organizations and international organisms. The United Nations' reform should be based upon a political system of liberal globalization. The United Nations' perspective stipulates that the essential features regarding the strengthening of security promote the human rights as well as the social and economic development. The impact of globalization on the states' security can be understood only if the actors' perspective on the international relations is repatterned and the political integration instruments of the present and future relations are redimensioned.*

**Key words:** *globalization, international security, global system, United Nations, asymmetries.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The geopolitical and geostrategic features have changed in the recent years.

Regarding the global geopolitical and geostrategic framework, it can be said that there is a great range of political actors, involved in the international geopolitical pattern. They are responsible for the peace or the insecurity of the entire world.

It is very important for the strong and powerful to know how to interweave the security interests of each state with those of the whole world in order to prevent the situation in which one of the actors, irrespective of the power possessed, could be affected when it comes to the issue of interests.

### 2. THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY FRAMEWORK

The international system needs an institutional architecture able to control the rhythm of global instability through efficient strategies.

When the communist regimes collapsed, the European security environment has been influenced by powerful seisms.

The political and administrative European map has suffered changes in certain regions.

This particular European remapping had major implications in the past and it also has at present.

When referring to security, wealth and political traditions, we can consider Europe as a continent divided into three distinct areas:

Western Europe standing for a stable political region, consisting of countries with old political traditions and representing economic and cultural powers;

Central Europe where the countries have more easily overcome the transition period, being economically assisted by the Western countries;

Eastern Europe, considered to be one of the most dynamic security environments.

NATO and the EU require several strategic objectives, which are to be implemented in order to assure the regional and areal security.

In this context, the main goal of Romania's and Bulgaria's integration in NATO (2004) and the European Union (2007) was the strengthening of both NATO and the European Union's south-eastern flank together with the inclusion of these two countries in the American anti-missile defense system as Octavian Manea considers in his article on the constitutionalization of the international political system published in the Romanian revue *Sfera politicii* (Sphere of Politics), no. 116-117 (2005). Under such circumstances, the United States of America and a strong Europe should combine their resources in order to handle the new global, continental and regional challenges. A common security design is highly recommended. This common pattern is the only one being able to incorporate NATO and the EU in order to create a global management of the post 9/11 security environment. In other words, we deal with a rethinking of co-operation according to common interests: international terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, failed states etc. Concerning the present-day security environment, it is worth to mention several specific features, such as: the dissolution of bipolarity, the emergence of a new era within the framework of which the United States of America is considered to be the only credible and viable political, economic, military and financial superpower (Petrescu, 2005:45-48), the European Union as a generator of stability and progress, the powerful economic and military development of China as well as the diplomatic offensive of Russia. All the previously mentioned major features prove that the future international security environment will be based on a multipolar structure. Among the main features of the security environment, we can also mention the emergence of several new tendencies regarding the functioning of institutions as well as political, economic and security organizations, which aim at repatterning and redimensioning the operative structures and strategies.

### 3. THE GEOPOLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE EUROPEAN SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Several dramatic changes have occurred in the security environment once the bipolarity period was over. It is important to mention some of these changes: the conflicts emerged within and between the states located near the border of the European Union, international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, illegal immigration, failed states, economic and social underdevelopment,

human rights violations, inefficient multilateral institutions, ecological problems.

Nowadays, it is more difficult to identify these factors than it was to identify the political and military threats, which existed throughout the Cold War. That is why, the states and the international security organizations have repatterned their security strategies in order to fight against the new types of risks and threats to security (Sarcinschi, 2007:63).

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the main objective of the European security environment is the reduction of the conventional risks and the elimination of the situations in which a continental or regional armed conflict could emerge.

The amplification of the asymmetric risks and threats has caused the dramatic revival of ethnic and religious nationalism as well as the widening of the economic and social gaps with negative effects on security (Petrescu, 2008:29).

The present-day risks and threats have acquired an international status, without taking into consideration the countries' borders. Therefore, there are not anymore major gaps between the internal security and the external one. This has led, in the field of defense and security, to the tendency, shared by the majority of actors, to act within the framework of regional or global organizations.

The main objective is to develop a common security and common defense strategies, which can be implemented in a regional or/and global context.

The enlargement of NATO and EU eastwards had a strategic impact on the international relations system, with a major influence on the international security environment.

Regarding the geopolitical context, in the present-day Europe, there are two major dimensions.

The two dimensions are the Euro-Atlantic dimension and the Euro-Asian dimension. The Euro-Atlantic dimension has been strengthened by the enlargement of NATO eastwards. This enlargement has also generated several difficulties regarding the management of the other dimensions.

On the one hand, there are no weaknesses in the geostrategic field and on the other hand, there are several disagreements within the Euro-Atlantic dimension.

Therefore, the so-called "New Europe" emerged.

This New Europe incorporates states, such as: Romania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic or Poland. All these countries have been recently integrated into the North-Atlantic Alliance.

All these facts could lead to a repatterning of the Euro-Atlantic relations, but not necessarily to a strengthening of these relations. According to certain specialists, these previously-mentioned states, through the process of integration, have turned into supporters of the American unilateral strategy. This could be underlined by the fact that these states can have the role of a gateway towards the former-Soviet space, especially through Poland and the Baltic countries, but also towards the Caspian space and the Middle East, through the Black Sea, with the support of Romania and Bulgaria. In this context, the security and stability of Europe are endangered by risks known as “residual risks”, which are mentioned in the European security strategy that was adopted by the Brussels European Council on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2003.

The so-called residual risks represent a heritage of the end of the Cold War and were generated by former Soviet states, or countries which were under the USSR’s influence. *A Secure Europe in a Better World*, the European security strategy, identifies the global challenges as major threats to the stability and security of the European Union.

Among the European strategic objectives, it is worth to mention the following ones: building security in the European Union’s neighbourhood and promoting an international order based on effective multilateralism. The *EU Security Strategy* mentions the major risks and threats to the European region: terrorism, the proliferation of mass destruction weapons and, of course, organized crime, which recently has turned into a global threat as well. These kinds of residual risks can generate the appearance of transnational risks and threats, which could affect the stability and security of some regions located at the edge of the European continent.

#### **4. GLOBALIZATION AND THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT**

The major changes, which occurred in the international security environment, have affected the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Globalization becomes more and more a necessary and irreversible process, with both positive and negative effects within the framework of society. Teodor Frunzeti and Alexandra Sarcinschi, the authors of an article, on international security highlighting its dimensions and strategies, published in the volume entitled *Lumea 2009* standing for the 2009 World, consider that throughout the Cold War, the major threat to security was considered to be a large, extensive and expansive nuclear conflict that could have been a total military and human disaster.

Subsequently, it was thought that the issues on security lost in their intensity. Nowadays, analysts focus their attention, again, on the military dimension of security, through the initiation and intensification of the *war on terror* and the multidimensional character of risks and threats has acquired recognition (Frunzeti & Zodian, 2009:33).

Recently, security, at a global level, has experienced a dramatic change. The former risks and threats have been replaced by new ones, modern ones, which are more terrifying, being generated by international terrorism and the proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction.

Therefore, the world has witnessed the development of international crime organizations, illegal drug and human trafficking as well as the policies implemented by the failed states.

The new risks and threats to international security have been generated against the background of the phenomenon of globalization and the process of fragmentation, but also in the context of traditional conflicts, religious tensions and ethnic disputes taking place in certain regions all over the world.

### **5. GLOBAL SECURITY SYSTEMS**

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the concept of security plays a central role. Therefore, it is necessary to repattern the world order. The beginning of the millennium has highlighted a wide range of risks and threats associated with the phenomenon of globalization. Among the most dangerous risks, it is worth to mention terrorism, international organized crime and religious extremism.

The states have to focus their attention and efforts on the prevention and control of these asymmetric threats in order to assure stability within the framework of the global security system.

#### **5.1. DYNAMICS OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISMS**

Each global security system is founded on the principles of democracy, efficient governing and compliance with laws.

The states have to co-operate at an international level in order to avoid major conflicts. In the case in which such conflicts have already started, states have to manage such crises and conflicts strengthening the framework of stability, security and peaceful coexistence.

According to the *European Security Strategy*, in a world in which threats, markets and means of communication have a global dimension, the people's security and prosperity depend more and more on the existence of an efficient multilateral system as Traian Liteanu mentions in his course on security theories and doctrines. We have to build a stronger global society by a good functioning of the international institutions and a world order based on a set of norms established by the international law.

The international relations are founded on the framework constituted by the United Nations Charter. Also, the main objectives of the United Nations Security Council are the protection of peace and the strengthening of security. Therefore, states and international organizations are preoccupied with the consolidation of the United Nations so that the UN should provide the necessary means to implement efficient actions. The relations between states and the European Union or NATO have been improved by the processes of European and Euro-Atlantic integration, actively influencing the international security environment and therefore strengthening the community, which represents the states that share principles, such as: democracy and market economy. Therefore, the global security and stability have been strengthened.

Thus, the united Europe turns into a global actor and a pole of power and stability. The European Union and NATO are the organizations that promote and strengthen the states' security relations as well as the Euro-Atlantic relations.

The security systems have the role of raising the awareness, among the member states, regarding the interdependence of their vital interests in a world, threatened by major risks and dangers, in which the international co-operation and a new solidarity process is required in all fields of activity as Mureşan, Pop & Bonciu consider (European Institute of Romania. Study nr. 4: 11), by repatterning the joint operative methods initiated by the states having similar interests.

## **5.2. THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE PROCESS OF GLOBALIZATION**

Nowadays, it could be noticed that the United Nations face a turning point. The activity of this organization is perceived as being not a very convincing one, being assessed by the weak as having the role of a recording device (Bădescu & Dungaciu, 1995:216), being coordinated by the Western powers.

In the contemporary society, a major necessity is represented by the development of an international system and political institutions, which aim at finding efficient solutions to the process of globalized economic transitions, to the consolidation of stability, the promotion of peace, the conflict management, geopolitical inequalities as well as to the entire world which relies, more than never, on the international co-operation.

A repatterning and reform of the United Nations is highly required today.

On the one hand, there is a group of institutions, such as: the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization, and, on the other hand, there is a military alliance similar to NATO.

According to Gustave Massiah, it is highly required to implement a strategy, which should take into consideration the challenges faced by the international institutions, globalization, wars, international law, the guiding lines of global democracy and the international social contract, the strategic role of the international law, the emergence of a strategic axis aiming at the democratization of the international system.

Peace represents the basic objective of the United Nations. During the Cold War, the United Nations played an important part: namely, decolonization and nuclear disarmament treaties.

There are cases in which the United Nations Organization lacks the necessary rights to impose the respect of the peoples' rights or it is viewed as being not strong enough to manage and stop certain conflicts.

It can be said that the United Nations Organization faces a crisis, felt against the background of unilateralism and crisis multiplication. Therefore, the perspective used for the enforcement of peace should be repatterned. According to the same Gustave Massiah, the world trade and money, the peoples' right to choose their form of development and the correlation of the levels of economic management are three major aspects regarding the development of an international system in accordance with the requirements of modern society.

It is worth to mention the fact that the world trade does not have the capacity to reduce poverty.

This problem can be solved in the case in which the process of national development is prior to global integration. It is also known that trade liberalization increased the structural problems of poor countries. But, every people has the right to choose its own development model.

There are two very important dimensions: the process of peacebuilding and the process of conflict regulation.

The United Nations has to take into consideration these dimensions.

The contemporary society should be repatterned in accordance with the conditions imposed by freedom and equality.

Michael Shooyans in *L'ONU et la globalisation* highlights the way in which the United Nations deals with globalization.

He criticized the United Nations' active contribution to the promotion of globalization: globalization means that the economic changes have multiplied at a global level; globalization promotes the interdependency of human societies; globalization affects the sovereignty of the states because their power is reduced and subjected to the control of a worldwide political power; the process of globalization has its foundation on the international labor division; globalization helps the wealthy countries; the UN is actively involved in the promotion of globalization as a rescuing solution for humanity, which otherwise is doomed to not have a future anymore.

The United Nations approaches globalization not only from an economic, political or legal point of view, but it also highlights the global soul.

The basic instruments used by the United Nations Organization for the promotion of globalization are the following ones: the world pact, which aims at joining the fundamental values concerning the human rights, the environment and the labor norms, the positive international law system.

The United Nations Organization uses the positive international law as an instrument for the development of a superstate, an international criminal court.

Overall, the tendency is to create a new political and legal world order.

The 1994 United Nations Development Program Report specified for the first time the need for a world government as the national governments could not find anymore viable solutions to the mankind's problems.

So far the UN agencies have had only a consulting role, but it is very important for these institutions to become executive agencies.

Thus, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization would become the World Ministry of Industry, the Food and Agriculture Organization would become the World Ministry of Agriculture and the International Labor Organization would become the World Ministry of Social Affairs.

There are fields of activity, which require new institutions of the type of the permanent International Police, which would summon the states that violated the norms, in front of the International Court of Justice or in front of other Special Courts. If the decisions implemented by the Courts are not complied with, either military or non-military penalties are applied according to the situations.

### 5.3. THE UNITED NATIONS' PERSPECTIVE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM AND THE GLOBAL WORLD'S ASYMMETRIES

It is worth to mention that globalization has not only specialized the organized crime groups, but it has also led to the increase of the illegal activities carried out by these groups, through violence, threats or blackmail, in order to gain huge profits.

The process of globalization helped these groups to spread at an international level because it made possible the consolidation of the relations between the criminal groups able to create more complex strategies.

Thus, the organized crime has got a global character. And this process has affected the activity of the political, economic and social state institutions, but also the states' stability and national security.

The phenomenon of organized crime has acquired a special status, being determined by its transnational features and its capacity of corrupting important components of the decisional structures.

The crimes made by the members of such groups had devastating effects, which differed from state to state, depending on the source and the dimensions of the consequences.

At an international level, the role of the state, regarding the implementation of norms, will become very important. Once the international economy expanded, the social governing will gain a global status, the international laws will automatically have a greater importance when dealing with preventing the organized crime.

At an international level, the global institutions and organizations are based on interstate agreements and treaties and the international civil associations will exert public functions in fields, such as: the human rights, environmental preservation, the implementation of international laws and the struggle against the global organized crime.

It is well known that the security environment is influenced by information, being exposed to multiple threats.

In this context, the informational aggression is the kind of danger which uses information as a weapon against the entities that process the information. Thus, the victims become dependent on their aggressors.

The fact that it became easier to have access to the modern communication and transportation means led to co-operation forms among several states, regions and civilizations from all around the world. But, it is important to mention that these forms and means could initiate dangers, risks and asymmetric threats to the citizens' stability and security.

Therefore, the state has to find, through its institutions, the most efficient solutions used to strengthen the citizen's safety and stability. Also, these strategies have to be adapted and correlated to the ones found at international level. The approach is very important as it should integrate both the national environment and the international one in the context of global co-operation.

The debates regarding the development center around two schools of thought. One school considers that the development or lack of development is a consequence of the actions initiated by national forces. The other school considers that the international factors are important when it comes to development, the inequalities being highlighted.

In this context, there have been identified three main asymmetries of the global world, playing an important role in the international security system. All these asymmetries are perceived according to the UN specialists' perspective.

The first asymmetry focuses on the technological developments concentrated in the developed states. The technological progress represents the main source of economic growth in these states being distributed from the center towards the periphery. But this transfer is not very efficient and its advantages are distributed unequally in the developing countries.

The second asymmetry focuses on the macro-economic vulnerability, which is specific to the developing countries. This internal vulnerability appears when the external shocks occur due to the currencies of the developed countries and the nature denoting rules that apply only in favor of the transformations of a whole cycle specific to the money flows from the developed states towards the developing countries.

The third asymmetry is based on the contrast between the high degree of capital mobility and the international labor mobility, especially the unskilled labor. This feature is specific to the third wave of globalization.

This asymmetry was specific neither to the first wave of globalization within the framework of which the production factor was very mobile, nor to the second one characterized by a reduced mobility.

Globalization has registered important advantages in the developed countries because this process led to an important increase in income due to a better usage of the resources. But, globalization has also registered negative effects, especially in the poor regions where the spread of epidemics occurs as fast as the population grows.

Globalization is the phenomenon which has contributed, on the one hand, to prosperity and the consolidation of stability and on the other hand, to the security problems, leading to the emergence of insecurity.

## **6. THREATS, RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES IN THE GLOBAL SECURITY SYSTEM**

Security represents a state in which the dangers that can cause physical, mental or material damages are controlled in order to protect the health and wealth of both the individual and the community. Therefore, security is a fundamental right of the human being.

Nowadays, the state of security is interpreted according to several non-military indicators, such as: economic security, political security, personal security, educational security, health security, community security, environmental security.

The idea of security is based on two main tendencies.

Every state tries to reduce its insecurity either by diminishing its internal vulnerabilities or by preventing and counterattacking the external threats, which are hard to manage, irrespective of the situation.

In the contemporary society, we are often confronted with the concept of risk and that of security.

The human activity is influenced by every economic, political, social and military decision.

Therefore, the decisions that have been taken have a greater or a smaller impact not only on the individual's security, but also on the national and global security.

Every decision has a certain degree of risk. When we assume a risk, we also assume, more or less consciously, the consequences of the choice we made, irrespective of the field of activity, and especially in that of homeland security.

Globalization and the liberalization of commercial or informational exchanges do not allow the separation of the evolutions registered at the internal and international levels within the framework of a globalized world. In this context, the internal and external risks can fuel each other.

But, it is important to mention that the background, against which the dynamics of the multiple interdependencies among states are built, is a positive one. This is possible through the generalization, at a European level, of the co-operation regarding the strengthening of stability and security.

Furthermore, this fact is possible through the active involvement of the United Nations, NATO, the European Union or the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in the management of the global security problems.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

In the contemporary society, the international relations coexist with the global ones. The international relations are defined in terms of sovereignty, and the global ones have passed beyond the state borders in the economic, social, political and cultural fields of activity.

Thus, globalization can be seen as a progress of the international organization, having new paradigms.

Globalization brings not only new opportunities, but also new risks and threats. This phenomenon highlights the interdependence between states, being a process guided by economic, political and technological forces.

Recently, the promotion of anti-globalization has taken an extremist emphasis. The specific means have imprinted a terrorist character to these actions. But, generally speaking, the aspects of globalization are controversial and favorable if we refer to development, integration and security.

There should also be mentioned the beneficial effects of globalization on the population, in the sense that this process can improve the standard of living and can bring stability.

Some social and state elements could be affected by globalization and this fact could lead further on to the strengthening of superstate and transnational factors.

Those who believe in globalization perceive it as having a beneficial impact on the security of states.

Those who view it with mistrust are those who see in it a global act, which is not able to assure a global security and this could lead to an uncontrollable situation, a global chaos.

The impact of globalization on the states' security can be understood only if the actors' perspective on the international relations is repatterned and the political integration instruments of the present and future relations are redimensioned.

A security strategy in globalization is highly required being based on the one hand, on a holistic thinking of the global players and on the other hand, on an interdisciplinary understanding of the phenomenon and processes animated by the other local, regional and transnational players. Thus, the common aspects of globalization and security can be easily harmonized and merged together in a single mechanism. These aspects have a historical, educational, psychological, religious and environmental nature.

Such a security strategy in globalization has as a main objective the mutual shaping and adjustment of globalization and international security. This type of shaping can be achieved being based on similar values and through a harmonization of the differences between globalization and security.

Thus, the phenomenon of globalization should help people reach a peaceful state and strengthen stability by means of its main instruments identified with integration, development and security.

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