

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONDITIONS OF THE EMERGENCE AND PROLIFERATION OF UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS

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Abstract: *In this article, the authors briefly present internal and external conditions of the emergence and proliferation of threats generated by the new challenges of the current international security environment to the security of states, conditions created by the economic, political, social and legislative factors.*

Keywords: *Security; terrorist organizations; threats; organized crime; prevention; combat.*

The evolution of the international security environment due to the change in the balance of power, international relations between the actors, the speed of integration into security treaties and the fragmentation of some States on separatist principles led to new forms of threats to the security of the States. The emergence of these threats is favored when the right conditions are created both internally and externally.

The threats posed by the new challenges of the current international security environment, which have transformed the institutions of the States in order to be able to cope with them, have various forms of international crime, such as: drug trafficking, robbery, violence, economic and financial fraud carried out by computer, corruption, theft of all kinds etc.

In the case of countries of the former communist bloc, and not only, which are in transition to democracy, the emergence of internal conflicts, social chaos or anarchy, represents a particular risk; developed in particular by the economic situation of these countries, the transition that requires these countries to go through stages through which democracy and the rule of law are strengthened, but in the period before this is achieved

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they are constantly under pressure from the risks and threats generated by instability in all areas.

These conditions are conducive to the emergence and proliferation of threats generated by the new challenges of the current international security environment to the security of States, conditions created by the economic, political, social and legislative factors.

At the same time, when the **internal conditions** favoring these threats are created, a number of **external conditions** arise that lead to actions that harm the interests of these States and favor their proliferation. Actions using various combat processes, from classical to unconventional, are aimed primarily at destroying vulnerable structures of the national security system and unprotected points of civil society.

To these conditions of the emergence of these threats we can add a multitude of cross-border risks, among which the most destructive are: manifestations of separatist or extremist groups, intervening in interethnic and religious disputes; illegal migration; violation of human rights; human, drugs, weapons and strategic materials trafficking.

The study of documents on the websites of institutions that have security as their field of activity shows that among the external factors, which harm the interests of States and favor the emergence of threats generated by the new challenges of the current international security environment, the most harmful are:

- the existence of military conflicts in the territorial proximity of states, increasing the level of military potential in the vicinity of their borders and maintaining frozen conflicts with limited prospects of resolution in areas adjacent to the national territory;

- offensive/aggressive actions of state actors or entities, carried out in the political-military environment, in order to include some countries in their sphere of influence, taking advantage of geo-strategic position and economic potential;

- the failure of the economic recovery in case of multinational strategies, given the inadequate approach to the economic and social situation, without taking into account the national specificity and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on social and economic areas;

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- the introduction of embargo measures by international organizations for some states with which a country has commercial relations or has to recover significant claims;
- the uncertain evolution of the democratic process in neighboring or other countries in the area;
- more and more revisionist tendencies towards the non-recognition of treaties that set the boundaries of states;
- creating artificial tensions by distorting the reality of the problem of cohabitating nationalities (minorities), in order to obtain privileges for the citizens of these minorities, to the detriment of the majority;
- international terrorist manifestations boosted by illegal migration and the process of radicalization;
- the development of information technology and its use in the development of information aggressions aimed at destabilizing society and fragmenting social cohesion;
- premeditated actions carried out in order to affect credibility and stability, in different forms and different circumstances;
- interruption of energy supply or energy products;
- the deliberate incitement of environmental disasters.

Analyzing the military conflicts that took place in the last three decades in Romania's territorial proximity, we notice that these negative phenomena, which have influenced the national security of our country, have surrounded the national territory.

The Balkan Peninsula, between 1991 and 2001, reconfirmed its reputation as "Europe's powder keg". The wars triggered by economic and ethnic factors are the ones that broke up the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as it was named in 1963, into seven States, namely: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia.

The first triad took place between 1991 and 1995, when the first three wars (the 10-day Slovenian War, the Croatian War of independence and the Bosnian War) were fought, followed by a series of three wars in areas with Albanian population.

The second triad took place between 1998 and 2001, and included: the Kosovo War which had Serb, Yugoslav and NATO-backed Albanian armies (1998-1999), the Bujanovac and Medveda War, between Yugoslav

groups and the Albanian group seeking territory from Southern Serbia to Kosovo (2000-2001) and the Macedonian War between Macedonians and the Albanian minority (2001).

The Albanian crisis¹, which broke out in early 1997, began as a protest against the scams carried out at the highest level with the help of the Caritas pyramid games, a popular movement, turned into rebellion against the democratic Albanian government, which seized the entire territory of the country and terrified the civilized world through robberies, crimes and destructions executed by protesters using weapons and ammunition taken by force from army warehouses. In order to calm down the situation, at European level, a peacekeeping group was established, the “Alba Mission”, Romania being present with troops. This mission stopped the violence and made things take a normal course.

The Turkish-Greek dispute over the division of Cyprus is an unresolved issue for the European Union. The division of this island took place definitively in 1983 (the Northern part of the island proclaimed by the Turks the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, not internationally recognized and the southern part of the island called the Republic of Cyprus by the Greeks, internationally recognized). The Republic of Cyprus joined on May 01, 2004 and is a Member of the European Union. Negotiations on reunification have started since early 2008, but a number of problems remain on both sides, such as the withdrawal of Turkish troops stationed in the North of the island and the type of state form adopted (federation or alliance of States).

In order to complete the area of dangers existing in Romania’s territorial proximity, we must add the latent (frozen) conflict States existing in the space of the former Soviet Union. After 1990 the Russian state intervened by force in the North Caucasus to reject the demands for independence of the former Soviet republics (with majority population) and Islamist insurrections. Also during this period, Russia provided support to pro-Russian separatists in some republics, such as: Republic of Moldova

¹ Marius Dobrescu, *Istorie recentă: Criza „jocurilor piramidale” în Albania (1997)*, available at <https://alar.ro/2019/10/01/istorie-recenta-criza-jocurilor-piramidale-in-albania-1997/>, accessed at 05.01.2022.

(Transnistria), Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh), Georgia (Abkhazia and Ossetia) and Ukraine.

The conflict in Transnistria² (known as the Moldovan-Russian War) has causes that are found at the end of the USSR's existence period, when the nature of the Chisinau-Moscow relations and the place of the language (Romanian or Russian) used in the public domain were established.

Analyzing the conflict in Transnistria, we noticed that separatism in the Eastern part of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova appeared at the indications of the Union Center in Moscow in order to preserve this country in the composition of the Soviet Union (Moscow did not allow the Union of this Republic with Romania) and was supported by the Russian Federation with money, weapons and combat equipment, as well as with troops (14th Army).

So far, no agreement has been reached on the settlement of this conflict, which remains frozen. The Republic of Moldova wishes the withdrawal of the 14th Army troops from its territory, and the Russian Federation continues to support the separatist regime in Tiraspol by allowing it to express itself autonomously toward the Republic of Moldova.

The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, a largely Armenian-populated region that, on September 2, 1991, declared independence, but it was not recognized by anyone. An action was begun to separate this area from the Soviet Union. The hostilities lasted until, on May 12, 1994, a ceasefire was signed. The crisis is not resolved by continuing to seek solutions. The OSCE shall keep an eye on compliance with the signed agreement and shall monitor all activities and actions carried out at the border (Armenia and Azerbaijan) and contact areas.

The crisis in Georgia (Abkhazia and Ossetia). During the Soviet regime, South Ossetia had a status of autonomy. In 1990, it came into conflict with Georgia when it declared its independence until the summer of 1992, when the ceasefire agreement was signed.

² Eric Victor, Conflictul înghețat Transnistrean în prezent și Uniunea Europeană, available at <https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/general/articol/conflictul-inghetat-transnistrian-in-prezent-si-uniunea-europeana>, accessed at 05.01.2022.

In 2008 the Russian-Georgian conflict broke out on August 8, and on August 12 the ceasefire agreement was signed.

The crisis in Ukraine³ in early 2014, which escalated into armed conflict between the then-self-declared separatists of the Donetsk and Luhansk republics and the Ukrainian government, took place as a result of pro-European manifestations carried out by a large part of the Ukrainian population and the coup, situation in which the Russian special forces, without any visible insignia, conquered and took control of the most important part of Crimea with the help of Russian paramilitary forces that were mobilized in the Donbas mining area (Russian-speaking area). As a result of this crisis, the pro-Russian separatists own the Donetsk and Luhansk regions that are in the Eastern part of Ukraine: a crisis that is still unsolved.

Since late 2021, the Russian Federation, wishing to keep NATO troops as far away from its borders as possible, assembled troops on the border with Ukraine in Crimea and in the East of this country, where the situation was worsening from day to day despite the fact that the Russian Federation claimed it was not ready for attack in Eastern Ukraine. There were several claims that NATO's military actions and intentions of the North Atlantic Treaty to expand Eastward in its geopolitical area were intensifying, and there were calls for security guarantees from NATO, the US and the European Union.

On February 21, 2022, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, recognized the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk areas, following the favorable vote obtained in the State Duma, and sent Russian army troops to these areas.

As of February 24, 2022, the Russian Army invaded Ukraine through a "special military operation" aimed at "demilitarization and denazification" of Ukraine. The ongoing conflict has, so far, caused a lot of human and material losses, has unbalanced the global economic and energy market, has created global food insecurity and inflation – primarily affecting European countries.

³ Günther Birkenstock, Medana Weident, *Criza din Ucraina: O cronologie a evenimentelor*, available at <https://www.dw.com/ro/criza-din-ucraina-o-cronologie-a-evenimentelor/a-17613460>, accesat la 10.12.2021

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These conflicts are part of the chain reaction from the Soviet Union of the new States established on the principles of ethnic, linguistic, religious or other minority groups, taking advantage of the favorable situation that emerged after 1990s.

The extent and number of atrocities committed by separatists and adverse parties in the case of the conflicts mentioned above and by terrorist groups in the case of attacks that took place in the early 21st century in the US, Western Europe and the Russian Federation, have given humanity an opportunity to realize how far these horrors can be perpetrated against humanity.

These events have also highlighted the fact that a firm and sustained struggle must be fought to avoid conflicts of any kind and to prevent and combat social chaos or anarchy and terrorism, and actors (state and non-state) contemporary leaders must stand together to face these threats.

Looking at the situation of emerging threats posed by the new challenges of the international security environment, we find that since the '90s, cross-border organized crime groups favored by fragile political, military and security conditions in Southeast European States in transition to democracy, activities on trafficking of any kind (drugs, human beings, weapons and strategic materials, cars, etc.), illegal migration and economic and financial crime (tax evasion, money laundering, document forgery) have intensified.

This part of Europe is characterized by the fragility of emerging democracies, threatened by the perpetuation of ethnic-separatist conflicts, including terrorist acts with ethnic motivation. The situation has affected the political and economic progress of the States in the region, leading to increased political instability and, implicitly, to the proliferation of organized crime and terrorism.

The unpredictable nature of the threats posed by the new challenges of the international security environment creates states of generalized insecurity along with fear and horror, at the level of part or all of the population of an area or country, an effect which, in our opinion, represents the achievement of the specific objectives of the state and non-

state actors who use these subversive, conventional and unconventional military, diplomatic, economic, technological activities etc.

Fear, horror and panic are feelings instilled in innocent citizens often through force or threat of force, through activities and actions intensively publicized on all channels, especially in print and audiovisual media, through which state and non-state actors wish to intensely cultivate these feelings among the targeted population.

The causes of the emergence of threats generated by the new challenges of the international security environment are usually of a different nature than the military one, to which are added a series of actions taken to achieve the proposed goals at political, diplomatic, economic, informational, psychological level, etc.

Among the objectives of the state and non-state actors that use these subversive activities in a coordinated way, in our opinion, the following could be included:

- the formation of new states by separating regions or states, taking into account the chain reaction of separation from the states of which they belonged, on the principles of ethnic, linguistic, religious or other minority groups, taking advantage of the favorable situation after the fall of the Berlin Wall;

- liberation from foreign domination, which is the process of the exit of an ethnic or nation from a state power.

- the modification of the political regime having the main criterion of power in some states, considering that at present there are three types of totalitarian, authoritarian and democratic political regimes. As a rule, the transition is made from the totalitarian or authoritarian political regime to the democratic one;

- the change of state presidents or governments they want to achieve in order to destabilize the state;

- the production of social events or problems leading to the emergence of disruption or the breaking of links between the administration and the population;

- the „execution” of personalities of a state who by their political, diplomatic, economic or other activities impede on or prevent the achievement of the objectives proposed;

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- the request to remove members who have been arrested or detained;
- obtaining privileges or redemption for illegal facts with which to develop and prepare for future actions;
- destroying, undermining or enslaving the economy of a state that has become *a target country*;
- intervention in civil society on the confessional level, on the one hand recognizing confessional equality and, on the other hand, agreeing to maintain confessional inequalities, depending on the purpose pursued;
- “*the penetration of political and social power centers through the media*”⁴;
- changing value systems in order to shape society according to its own desires.

We believe that the prevention and combating of threats generated by the new challenges of the international security environment must be based on the efficient management of all information resources within the framework of hypotheses, forecasts, projects of actions or systems, models and alternatives of action, strategies programs, directives and operational plans. The prevention of dangers, threats and risks, as well as other antisocial acts that affect the security of the state and national security, has been a systematic concern for all States, especially democratic ones, at the macro-social level since ancient times.

⁴ Mariș Antonia, *Rolul comunicării strategice în conflictul contemporan*, Conferința științifică internațională Gândirea Militară Românească, București, 21 decembrie 2020, available at <https://gmr.mapn.ro/app/webroot/fileslib/upload/files/conferinta%202020/-proceedings/maris.pdf>, accessed on 27.12.2021.



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