

MILITARY CENTER FOR STRATEGICS STUDIES



QUARTERLY

ISSUE 2 - 2013

Q UARTERLY

YEAR XI NUMERO 2 2013



CeMiSS Quarterly is a review supervised by CeMiSS director, Major General Nicola Gelao. It provides a forum to promote the knowledge and understanding of international security affairs, military strategy and other topics of significant interest.

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An unripe power, a failing region

Paolo Quercia

The role of Turkey in an Eastern Mediterranean that is disengaging from Europe's Near Abroad

The events of the second quarter of 2013 have once more revealed the geopolitical instability nearby Turkey and across the Eastern Mediterranean region, an area that appears increasingly drawing away from South Eastern Europe and fundamentally sinking in Middle East's growing turmoil. The military coup in Egypt, with the removal of the AKP linked Muslim Brotherhood movement, and the permanence in power of Bashar al-Assad, with the degradation of the Syrian civil war towards a massacre without meaning, represent a worse ever scenario for Ankara. The destabilisation of Eastern Mediterranean has soared in the last three years, when the limits and failures of the Arab Spring anti-authoritarian revolutions contributed to the process of pulverisation of statehood and sovereignty, leaving Turkey the only substantial State actor capable to play a wide spectrum regional influence. In the absence of a European Eastern Mediterranean foreign policy and in the vacuum temporarily left by the United States regional disengagement, Turkey has adopted a very proactive and interventionist stance in Iraq, Egypt, Libya and Syria but it appears to be in great difficulty in handling the security hazards that are spilling over from its volatile neighbourhood. The growing antagonism with Shia Iran and the ambiguous competition/cooperation with Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Gulf States is dragging Ankara into a new neo-Ottoman great game for influence in the Near and Middle East, where the global mobilisation of masses and the weakening of States' power is increasing the centrifugal tendencies of numerous territories and populations. There are, anyway, several indicators that Ankara's international capacities and foreign policy assets are not ripe enough to play a lonely and leading role in the region and to confront such challenges. For decades Ankara's foreign policy has been mostly dominated by the Kemalist isolationism and than by the Cold War rigid schemes, mostly based on a policy of regional loneliness in its Turkishness and in the Atlantic membership, confronting a prevalently hostile or geopolitically detached neighbourhood.

Having abandoned the central Asian pan-Turanic ambitions of the 90's and suffered the regional geopolitical consequences of 9/11 attacks and the Iraq war for most of the last decade, Turkey has only recently, rediscovered a new pro-active and global approach to international relations. The first phase of this approach was inspired by the so-called neo-Ottomanism, an attempt to include the neighbouring regimes into a policy of reducing the political problems in the name of a regional cultural and pan-Islamic partnership strengthened by a robust economic cooperation. This policy



India

the system. We don't believe in empowering all the way to the bottom." In order to transform India from a problematic country to a powerful nation, meritocracy should replace mediocrity. According to Rahul Gandhi, bring change to India is possible only if those in power start respecting and empowering people for their knowledge and skills, and if all the public systems, administration, justice, education and political, stop being "designed to keep people with knowledge out." Using these words, he is also indirectly trying to link his political image to the one of his father. After all, Rajiv Gandhi promised to change the party and its ethos in a similarly stirring speech in 1985, before he went on to be prime minister and was later assassinated. He is still remembered as "a modernizer who shared neither his mother's imperiousness nor her attachment to party tradition," as a leader who wanted India "to plan for the construction of autobahns, airfields, speedy trains, shopping malls," but who lost power before he could realize his dream.

At the very beginning Rahul's strong words did not help him to stop being considered a mysterious and deeply private figure, a political leader used to give infrequent speeches, rarely rising in the lower house of Parliament (Lok Sabha), and with a deep mistrust for media. However, choosing to rail against the "gross" centralization of political power by the elite, and the lack of meritocracy in politics and public system, Rahul Gandhi should be at least praised for "choosing to walk the difficult path at a difficult time."

It took Rahul Gandhi a few months to prove that he was aware that, in order to give his party a few more chances to seek a third term in a row in the forthcoming elections, he had to work on two levels. First, introduce himself as the young man able to finally bring change to India. Second, support and energize Manmohan Singh's government in a way that can prove that the one led by the Congress Party is the only coalition strong, politically prepared, and with the practical acumen to help the country to overcome such a difficult juncture.

In today's India speeches are important, but Rahul Gandhi will be judged by what he does and how he face the scandals linked to his family and his party. Recommended not to focus on his rural constituents and his party faithful supporters only, Rahul Gandhi put a lot of emphasis in convincing the Indian business folk that despite a quarterly growth that just hit a decade low, the fall of investment and manufacturing, the rise of inflation, and the deficit widening, the current government still has some chances to succeed. In several occasions, the leader of the Congress Party proved his ability in mastering what is considered South Asian fine art, the use of metaphors. Beyond that, the fact that Manmohan Singh government eventually started approving some of the reforms that many analysts have more than once highlighted as crucial for the country to survive, further contributed to raise his credibility in the Indian society.

Among metaphors, the replacement of the popular metaphor symbol of India as a (lumbering) pachyderm with a powerful and active beehive was particularly effective, as well as the borrowing of John F. Kennedy's idea that "a rising tide lifts all boats", when Rahul Gandhi specified that "a rising tide doesn't raise people who don't have a boat. We have to help build the boat for them. It is not good enough to raise the tide. We have to give them the basic infrastructures to raise with the tide." When talking about women, he added "they told me they have no boats...they are not only building our boats, they are the waves." Finally, he stressed that "embracing the excluded is essential to the wealth of the nation," and that "we have to carry the poor and the weak with us." Rahul Gandhi's image in the country is neither negative nor positive, rather neutral. However,



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reached a standstill when the regimes engaged by Turkey's friendly abroad approach were shaken by the revolts of the Arab Spring, displaying all the weaknesses of their feeble legitimacy bases. Assuming the irreversibility of the regime change, the AKP government focused its actions to the Islamic masses, taking up the role that the United States have long asked Turkey to play: to be a catalyst for democratic change in the Muslim countries of the Greater Middle East region. Ankara progressively withdrew its support to the regimes and ruling parties that refused (or, more correctly, were unable) to push the reform processes up to the point of allowing free and democratic elections, switching its traditional *pro status quo* policy to one of promoter of regional *regime change*, backing the protesters against the governments and siding with the Islamic Ummah against the repressive State. The regional situation is still fluid and everything can happen - especially in the Syrian scenario - but, at beginning of September 2013, we cannot say that this policy has been successful. One of the reasons for this disillusion is that Turkey has confused being a (abstract) model for socio-political transformation with possessing the capacities to drive or even determine such changes, especially without the active support of the West. For Turkey, it proved to be difficult to be a regional power in a chaotic vacuum. Turkish soft power - hardened with its oblique commitment with the Syrian military opposition, that also includes diehard jihadists - appeared not to be enough to tear down the old authoritarian regimes of the Middle East. Furthermore, even the Turkish model appeared not to be immune from internal unrest, as it was confirmed by the emergence of new and unpredictable forms of mass dissent and crowd protests that challenged the monolithic consensus of the AKP power.

The risk for Turkey, in this situation, is to lose the positions achieved in the last years as rising regional power and its role in the Eastern Mediterranean: in the short-medium term the fall of the post-colonial Arab secular and socialist regimes could backfire Ankara's regional interests, if the spread of chaos and anarchy will transform a European neighbourhood area into a "non-region", characterised by the pulverisation of sovereignty and the absence of political order. An isolated Turkey will hardly be able to absorb, compose, or fill this post-statal vacuum. Surely, this *pars destruens* of the old *status quo* may be followed by a new era full of political and strategic opportunities. But this may happen in a not very close future, when the *regime change* and the post *regime change* processes will be advanced enough. At that point, the half-broken Eastern Mediterranean geopolitical table will attract also other old and new rising powers, creating new competition and clash of interests for the regional reshaping. It may be that Turkey has entered this game too early and the risk is that it will pay the price on the European table. The drift of Eastern Mediterranean will detach the region further from Europe, tear apart the existing links between Eastern Mediterranean and South Eastern Europe, one of the geopolitical pillars of Turkish European integration. For Ankara, the trade-off between being an active power in a Middle East that undergoes a process of reshaping its power distribution or advancing in a more post-modern and less Westphalian way toward the European integration process, has never been so wide and evident.

A new factor in Turkey's political dynamics:

the rise of a post-modern conflict line in the social fabric. Will it develop further?

Turkish society is traditionally an extremely divided one, with several radical contradictions and with a strong rule of laws apparatus. It has a wide spectrum of multiple realities and entrenched

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conflicts along ethnic, religious and political lines, the most evident cliffs being the secular/islamist divide, the military/civilian one, the Turkish nationalist vs. ethnic minority one (mostly Kurds and Alawi), the western modernists vs. the traditionalists, and the state-centric/national interest / vs. the individualist/human rights one. But the street protests that took place in Istanbul and spread to other towns of the country, cannot be framed in any of these old fractures of Turkish society, although several of them have been touched by the protests. Even if most of the experts, journalists and observers of the Turkish reality used the “old” categories to interpret the protests, this is mostly incorrect because what we experienced in Gezi Park was predominantly a new emerging form of juvenile revolt, post-modern in character and depoliticised in forms, animated prevalently by post-1980 and mainly post 1990 generations. The backbone of the protesters had less than 25 years (40%), the majority of them never joined a protest before nor felt close to any opposition party. Traditional actors of conflictuality within the Turkish state/society divide were mostly absent or irrelevant in the protest. Including the CHP, the Kurd, the Alawi minority and the far right. The military had no role, not even verbal, in the events. Basically, it is easier to say who was not mixed up with the protest than who was. The 1990 generation is the economic boom generation, the one that did not experience the straitened economics of the past, the greater limitations of the freedom of expression and the military coups. It is a generation partially dampened by post-modernity, who asks for more freedom, especially for their immaterial lifestyle, but is not able to benchmark their requests with the illiberalism of the past, that AKP has significantly contributed to soften. They don't benchmark their liberties with those of their parents in Turkey 20 years ago, but with those enjoyed today by their fellow teenagers in London or in Madrid. Blended in the protesting mob there were university students, members of LBGT associations, anarchists groups and hooligans from all the three football clubs of the city (the Besiktas supporters anarchic group of *Çarşı* played a leading role, inviting with a public *manifesto*, the rival ultras groups of Galatasaray and Fenerbahce to put aside their rivalries and join their forces to fight back the police from Gezi Park). The case of the joint hooligan front against the police is paramount of the destructured and depoliticised character of this protest, whose participants don't recognise any more clear-cut identities belonging to the “old” Turkish society. This character has prevented some of the more traditional anti AKP actors to take an active role in the protest. The protesters ascribed their discontent for the police violent reaction to the AKP leader, but this sort of violence could have erupted with any other political party being in power or against any other political leader. The toughness of the police and their determination in wiping out the barricades is a well known stance in Turkey, especially in the big metropolis like Istanbul (with more than 15 millions inhabitants), and it was not introduced by Erdogan. Those who have interpreted Gezi Park protests like a conflict between an authoritarian leader and the democratic masses or like a clash between two Turkeys, one secular and one islamist, have substantially missed the point of understanding the character of the protest, that displayed very innovative conflict lines in Turkish social fabric. Conflict lines that don't lie across modern Turkey but in-between modern and post-modern Turkey, wit the latter still being a minority. The violent emergence of a new transversal conflictuality inside Turkish society is of a certain interest for the future of the country political landscape, especially since it will make more difficult for the AKP to square the circle of matching economic liberal capitalism and political liberalism with mild conservative social behaviour, until now one of the keys of its success. Nevertheless, the apo-



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litical and dishomogeneous character of Gezi Park protesters and their supporters (united by the harsh response of the police and with a meta-identitarian agenda) will produce limited, if any, consequences on Turkish politics, and especially on the forthcoming 2015 elections. Polls confirm that both Erdogan and AKP remain significantly over 50% of consent, even if Erdogan lost several points of preferences compared to his own party that remained almost unaffected by the events.

Did Turkey went too far on Syria and Egypt issues?

If Gezi Park protests weakened the internal image of Erdogan, the latest developments in Syria and Egypt gave a strong blow to the Prime Minister's international positions. The military coup in Egypt and the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood government, with the arrest of Prime Minister Morsi and the movement's Supreme Guide Mohamed Badie, has been strongly rejected by Ankara, who considers the military government illegitimate. Naturally, the history of confrontation between Turkish islamist movements and the armed forces may have played a role in condemning the Egyptian military coup. But, of course, it is not an anti military parallelism that provoked Ankara's reaction. Turkish AKP had invested significantly in the last years in the rise to power of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, strengthening closer relations with Morsi after the formation of his government, as it was evident when he attended, in September 2012, the AKP congress in Ankara. Turkey hoped to include a weakened and islamist ruled Egypt into the new Middle East regional order supposed to arise from the Arab spring season. A new regional order where Ankara would benefit from a friendly and collaborative Egypt playing the role of the junior partner, tuning Cairo's foreign policy on Ankara's melody, especially on the Arab – Israeli issue, and with an increased involvement in the Syrian crisis. The turmoil produced in Egypt provoked a strong reaction in Turkey, where AKP government has labelled the military intervention in Egypt as an “unacceptable coup” while Erdogan accused the Egyptian authorities of committing “State terrorism”, producing the result of creating a new diplomatic row between Ankara and Cairo. Ankara, after trying unsuccessfully to convince other countries to freeze their relations with Egypt, has decided to react withdrawing its ambassador from Cairo. Egypt has accused Turkey of hostility and has recalled its ambassador from Ankara. Again Ankara seems heading toward isolation, as the political support received to the new Egyptian government by the Arab League seems to show.

As far as Syria is concerned, after two years and half of a bloody civil war, Al-Assad is still standing and the West appears to be losing in Syria. The eventual possibility of a limited dissuasive attack by the United States as punishment for the alleged use of chemical weapons against civilian population is still pending at the time of writing, but it seems that it won't be enough for Ankara. Especially, because it won't be a game changer, since it won't seriously damage Syria's conventional forces and give to the military opposition the chance to topple the regime. In Syria, again, it seems that Turkish position went too far from what is realistically possible, and Ankara appears to be alone, not only far from the enemies but also from its most committed allies. Interestingly, a relevant development has been the adoption of a new approach towards the PYD – the Syrian Kurdish party that controls militarily the Syrian Kurdistan and that has been close to PKK – whose leader, Salih Muslim, recently visited Ankara, invited by the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Davutoglu. This improvement in relations may be a sign that Ankara is losing hope on the possibility of the Syrian Sunni opposition to succeed in toppling Assad and has decided to rethink its approach



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on the Syrian Kurd issue.

From an international perspective, Turkey's positions vis-à-vis the recent developments in Egypt and Syria appears to be coherent with AKP principles, but seems to be marked by a lack of realism, frequently off balanced and characterised by a strong idealistic component, probably directed more to the hearts of the Turkish population than to the world and regional decision makers. It may be that, in an increasingly volatile regional environment, this attitude will augment and Turkish international posture will be more and more determined by the internal agenda, especially in the next year before the coming political elections. Without a realist, balanced and engaged Turkey, Eastern Mediterranean may become a failing region, a political vacuum with few connections with Europe's near abroad. It is in the interest of Italy and Brussels to avoid such scenario.



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TPP-Mercosul: trade pivot to Asia

Alessandro Politi

Beyond the well-known political and economic problems affecting Argentina and Brazil, a bigger grand strategy issue is emerging, namely that Mercosul (the once successful South commercial union) may have reached its peak usefulness and that it may be outflanked by the more dynamic Alianza del Pacifico (set up by Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru).

Probably part of the Brazilian elite debate is overestimating the capabilities of the Alianza del Pacifico, but the risk of being marginalised by new free trade networks is much more concrete. While the Alianza del Pacifico represents, as Mercosul, a small fraction of international trade, the projected TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) or the TAFTA (Trans-Atlantic Free Trade Area), both under possible US leadership, promise to involve between 4-16% of world trade.

Interesting simulations run by the Brazilian IEDI (Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento Industrial) hint that a Mercosul/USA FTA agreement may be the most advantageous option, whereas the same FTA signed with China and EU would be less interesting, especially the one with Brussels. The scenario is not just of regional competition between two South American commercial blocks, but a challenge to all countries to seriously reconsider their existing arrangements.

The phantom document

Brazil might surely be the first BRICS country in alphabetical order, but its ruling elite is unconvinced that Brazil's competitiveness in the international arena has a bright and rosy future. Already during 2011 every major Brazilian politician had openly complained about the damages inflicted to national interests by the Sino-American currency war. Moreover the Economy minister, Guido Mantega, adopted measures to control the influx of foreign capitals in order to dampen the economy after having neologized the concept of "currency war". The Japanese quantitative easing has only increased anxiety in Brasilia and the continuation of these policies in US, Japan and EU with the blessing of the IMF even more so.¹ Regarding international trade, the powerful CNI (Confederação Nacional da Indústria – National Industry Confederation) has rung the alarm bells through the publication of a document by major national media and wire services (4th of June).² The document advocated forcefully that the commercial block Mercosul/Mercosur and its partner countries risked to remain isolated if no new commercial agreements were signed, like other Latin American countries were doing. Worse, export markets could be lost by Mercosul countries if they were just partially involved in the new emerging commercial alliances.³



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Mercosul member states



Source: Wikimedia Commons; Description English: Mapa de Unasur; Date: November 2010; Source: Own work; Author: Camilo Sanchez; http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mapa_de_unasur.svg (25/6/2013).⁴

The document points out that the Alianza del Pacifico is much more dynamic and that its member states represent 35% of the Latin American GDP and 3% of the world trade.⁵

Looking beyond the region, the document underlines the US dynamism in striving at a positive conclusion for the TAFTA (Trans-Atlantic Free Trade Area or TTIP - Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) and the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership, i.e. almost 25% of global trade) negotiations. It draws also the attention on the Latin American countries that enjoy dozens of free trade agreements against just 22 FTA concluded by Brazil, often with less than relevant partners.⁶

The paper concludes recalling: the paralysis affecting Mercosul and Brazil, the lack of tangible results in South-South negotiations (despite the importance attached by Brazilian diplomats) and



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the unrealistic attitude of the government vis-à-vis international trade matters.

The real problem is that that the original document is impossible to find on internet, especially on the official site of the CNI.

The only similar CNI document dates back to the 11th of March 2013. Here we see the same worry of being isolated from the Alianza del Pacifico or the emerging TPP, an initiative seen by Washington as an alternative to the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas), that foundered against Latin American opposition in 2005. An additional argument is that Colombia and Peru benefit from better logistical lines with Mexico in comparison with Brazil and that the commercial balance of Brasilia with Mexico City is strongly negative (2:1 in 2012 in the import-export relationship). It appears reasonable to think that the June document is a quick re-edition of the one published three months before.⁷

The new economic blocks



Source: CNI, *ibidem*.⁸

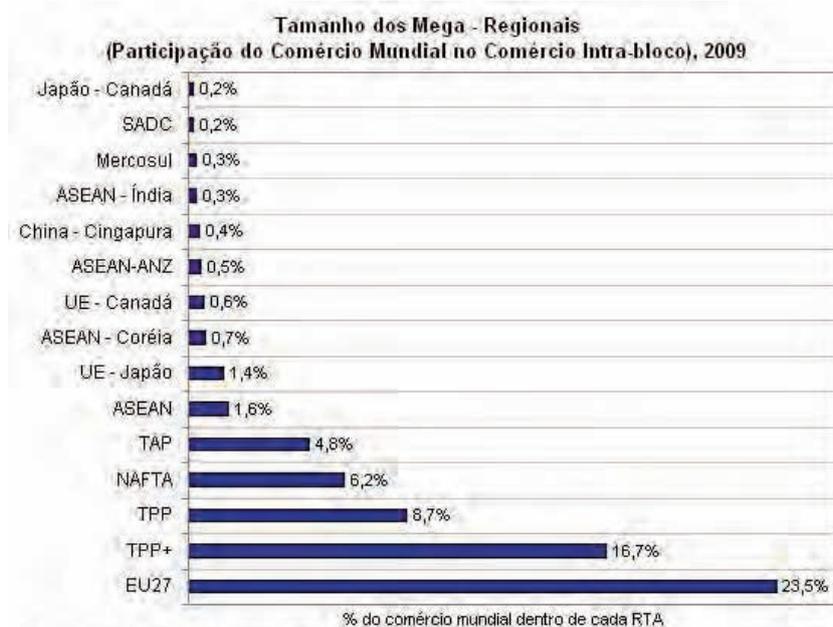
A battle of the Pacific?

Much less publicised and more interesting is a study of the IEDI (Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento Industrial) which was anticipated in May-June 2013 and published the 21st of June.⁹

The research shows a scenario of relative disintegration of the world trade after the failing of the Doha Round and the multiplication of PTA (Preferential Trade Agreement). But, despite the ensuing spaghetti bowl effect, there are emerging frameworks set by new and old regional agreements that could marginalise the Mercosur, as shown in the following chart.



World trade percentage included in specific Regional Trade Agreements



Fonte: BALDWIN, Richard, WTO 2.0: Global governance of supply chain trade, *CEPR, Policy Insight n. 64*, 2012

Source: IEDI, A Multiplicação dos Acordos Preferenciais de Comércio e o Isolamento do Brasil, p. 34.¹⁰

Furthermore, also within Latin America Mercosur risks to lose its acquired advantage for three reasons:

- the serious commercial disputes between Argentina and Brazil (the leading couple of the common market and of the UNASUR);
- the numerous customs duties exceptions among Mercosul members;
- the rise of the Alianza del Pacifico.¹¹

This commercial alliance may have the potential to bring about a real bipartition of Latin America, not only along the oceanic coasts, but especially along economic policy lines.

Along the Pacific shore there are free trade economies, with a smaller industrial base (Chile is the pivot of this commercial group and it is the first country in the region by ratified FTA), whereas along the Atlantic shore economies have a stronger manufacturing or extractive industrial basis, with a more visible public presence. In this group Argentina and Venezuela are experiencing noticeable economic difficulties. The situation is captured by the following map.



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Alianza del Pacífico versus Mercosul



Source: Alejandro Rebossio, La región mira al Pacífico: alianzas que dejan fuera al Mercosur, La Nación, 9/6/2013, <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1589843-la-region-mira-al-pacifico-alianzas-que-dejan-fuera-al-mercursosur> (26/6/2013).¹²

If one considers the geo-economic aspect of the Latin American framework, Mercosur has two Achilles heels: the first is the relative vulnerability of Uruguay and Paraguay compared to their bigger neighbours, making them more susceptible to be attracted by other spheres of influence (both EU and TPP); the second is the lack of any foothold in Central America, where the USA instead extend their influence beyond NAFTA (North American FTA, including Canada, USA and Mexico).

The commercial diplomacy of the Itamaraty (Brazilian MFA) tries since many years to fill these gaps through specific agreements with Mexico and Central American countries, but until August 2013 without results. And then Brazil lacks a new global trade strategy and particularly a national model of free trade agreement allowing the country to compete up to par with more open or expansive countries.

Sheer number however put both Latino competitors in the low end of world trade percentage (0,3-0,4%), while the real stakes are elsewhere. After having been taken by surprise by the Chinese trade expansion enveloping Africa and Latin America in the first decade of the century – a move that en passant devastated the Mexican economy that had placed all its bets on NAFTA – the United States are reacting on two fronts: the Pacific and the more recent trans-Atlantic one.



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In comparison with the commercial power of the EU, Washington does not have many cards and knows that only combining the benefits of NAFTA, TAFTA and TPP it can hope to fill the gap. The on-going private financial assault against the Eurozone is obviously one balancing factor, but it is managed by private entities with pure profit logics.

Brazil has to face, according to simulations run by the IEDI, rather difficult choices. Starting from the fact that the intra-Mercosur trade does not offer significant gains, other scenarios show that:

- a Mercosur/USA agreement offers more advantages across the board both for agribusiness and the industrial sector;
- a Mercosul/EU agreement shows more losses than gains, with the additional risk of a Dutch disease;
- a Mercosul/China agreement offers mixed results with gains in the agro-food business and significant losses in the industrial sectors

Also vis-à-vis the Chinese creditor an indebted America has few arrows in his quiver: the TPP was born just as a small regional accord and it will become important only if the USA accept to take the leadership. The TPP+ should be a more liberalised version of the agreement, but both have the natural geopolitical objective to achieve a peaceful containment the Chinese counterpart and to reorient regional integration processes

In the Pacific area there are in fact several existing or nascent trade agreements that could become much less relevant if the TPP succeeds, including:

- the negotiations for a free trade area between China, Japan and South Korea;
- the AFTA (ASEAN Free Trade Area) and the wider APEC (Asia-Pacific Co-operation Forum), that includes already Chile, China, Japan, Mexico, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and USA;
- the EAFTA (East Asian Free Trade Agreement), made up by the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) plus China, Japan and South Korea and
- the emerging Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The latter is seen as project that is frontally opposed to the TPP, because it puts together the EAFTA and the Comprehensive Economic Partnership for East Asia (CEPEA), but leaving out Washington.

Ultimately all Latin American countries, Brazil and Mexico in first line, should ask themselves if the old strategies are still viable or if, by starting new initiative, they can avoid a dangerous marginalisation.

¹ See Bank of Japan's August 8 Monetary Policy Statement: Full Text, Bloomberg News - Aug 8, 2013 5:23 AM GMT+0200 <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-08-08/bank-of-japan-s-august-8-monetary-policy-statement-full-text.html>; IBT, Japanese Monetary Policy Might Be Irking US Automakers, But American Consumers Are Seeing Lower Auto Parts Prices

By Angelo Young on August 21 2013 4:04 PM <http://www.ibtimes.com/japanese-monetary-policy-might-be-irking-us-automakers-american-consumers-are-seeing-lower-auto>; Reuters, Central banks don't need to rush ultra-easy money exit: IMF chief Christine Lagarde, 24 Aug, 2013, 12.05PM IST; <http://economic-times.indiatimes.com/news/international-business/central-banks-dont-need-to-rush-ultra-easy-money-exit-imf-chief-christine-lagarde/articleshow/22023102.cms> (24/8/2013).



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² CNI diz que Brasil e Mercosul se isolam do comércio mundial, EFE, 4/6/2013; <http://www.planobrazil.com/cni-diz-que-brasil-e-mercosul-se-isolam-do-comercio-mundial/> (25/6/2013). Another quasi-primary source is UOL Economia (<http://economia.uol.com.br/noticias/efe/2013/06/04/cni-diz-que-brasil-e-mercosul-se-isolam-do-comercio-mundial.htm>; 25/6/2013), but its contents is always deriving from EFE.

³ Mercosul/Mercosur is a common market whose member countries are: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela. Nevertheless Paraguay, after having come back to UNASUR (the fledgeling political South American union), still refuses to re-enter Mercosul until a solution will be found for the Venezuelan membership. In fact, during Paraguay's suspension from both institutions (June 2012-August 2013), Venezuela was admitted despite the evident lack of an unanimous decision by member states.

⁴ The Mercosul/Mercosur common market was reinforced in its political dimension with the creation of the UNASUL/UNASUR (23/5/2008).

⁵ The Alianza del Pacifico is a commercial agreement between Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru (28/4/2011). Costa Rica is a member country since May 2013, but within 2013 it should complete its adhesion. According to the World Trade Organization this group exported over 60% more than Mercosur. The other observing countries are: Australia, Canada, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Japan, Honduras, New Zealand, Panama, Portugal, Paraguay, Salvador, Spain, Uruguay (seven countries became observers in 2013). Significantly, also Uruguay wants to become full member, while Ecuador wants to be member in both block but with special conditions due to the fact that its currency is the US dollar.

⁶ TAFTA as a concept dates back the Nineties of the past century and was resurrected in 2013. The first round of negotiations took place in Washington (8-12/7/2013), while the second round will be in Brussels (October 2013). Some commentators believe that this agreement could revitalise the transatlantic relationship also at a political level. The TPP (2005) includes: Brunei, Chile, New Zealand and Singapore. Other eight countries (among which Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico and the USA as decisive partner) are also negotiating their accession.

⁷ CNI, Falta de acordos comerciais preocupa empresários brasileiros, Imprensa, Noticias, 11/03/2013, <http://www.portaldaindustria.com.br/cni/imprensa/2013/03/1,11226/falta-de-acordos-comerciais-preocupa-empresarios-brasileiros.html> (26/6/2013).

⁸ See note 7.

⁹ See IEDI, A Multiplicação dos Acordos Preferenciais de Comércio e o Isolamento do Brasil, 21/6/2013 (24/8/2013). The anticipations were in IEDI, Comércio Exterior Carta IEDI n. 574 – O Brasil e os Acordos Preferenciais de Comércio - Parte 1: A Urgência de Mudança, http://www.iedi.org.br/cartas/carta_iedi_n_574.html (26/6/2013). Carta IEDI n. 577 – O Brasil e os Acordos Preferenciais de Comércio – Parte 2: Recomendações para uma Nova Política http://www.iedi.org.br/cartas/carta_iedi_n_577.html (26/6/2013).

¹⁰ Curiously enough in the graphic the future TAFTA or TTIP is called TAP (Trans-Atlantic Partnership)

¹¹ The context has also significantly changed in two months after the publication of the IEDI study. Namely the Brazilian and the Argentinian presidents experienced a significant loss of consensus, the Brazilians hope to close the Mercosur/EU negotiations in a year but are thinking also about a direct bilateral agreement while Uruguay is increasingly dissatisfied with the common market. See BBC, 7/6/2013, Sem data para avançar, Mercosul convive com insatisfação e dúvidas http://www.bbc.co.uk/portuguese/noticias/2013/06/130607_mercosul_paralisadorg.shtml; <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1589379-el-mercosur-posterga-su-cumbre-en-medio-de-pujas> (26/6/2013); Veja, Rodrigo Constantino, Mercosul é um navio afundando, 03/08/2013 às 14:12 <http://veja.abril.com.br/blog/rodrigo-constantino/2013/08/03/mercosul-e-um-navio-afundando/>; Economist, This time it's not for real, Aug. 13th 2013, 23:06 by H.C.,



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<http://www.economist.com/blogs/americasview/2013/08/argentinas-primaries>; *Jornal do Comercio*, Releitura sobre o Mercosul e suas desvantagens Porto Alegre, sábado, 24 de agosto de 2013, <http://jcrs.uol.com.br/site/noticia.php?codn=131736>; *Negocios*, Canceledor Unuguaio diz que Mercosul como mercado unico é “Uma ficção”, 13/8/2013, <http://epocanegocios.globo.com/Informacao/Visao/noticia/2013/08/chanceler-uruguaio-diz-que-mercosul-como-mercado-unico-e-uma-ficcao.html> (24/8/2013).

¹² It is interesting to see that intra-block exports are minimal.



The Egyptian political crisis and the inclusion of Hezbollah's military wing in the European terrorism lists

Nicola Pedde

The Egyptian political crisis

The Egyptian President, Mohamed Morsi, has been deposed on June 3rd, after an unprecedented political crisis.

The Egyptian army, at the height of a protests that have paralyzed Egypt for months, resorted to action and deposed after a 48-hours ultimatum President elected, assuming power and announcing the suspension of the Constitution.

The crisis has increased its intensity during the first half of 2013, as a result of the inability to reconcile the political demands of the Government, dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood and with the participation of some smaller forces of religious inspiration, and the secular groups which have been defeated in the last parliamentary and presidential elections.

The role of the armed forces largely affected the process of crisis, remaining only ostensibly neutral, but rather laboriously committed to feed the process of crisis, and the divergences among the various and increasingly confrontational groups of the local political landscape.

The Muslim Brotherhood proved to be unable to handle the growing clashes between political groups, squeezed in the grip of an external opposition to the Government, which accused the party of having Islamized and radicalized the country, and an internal opposition, mainly fuelled by the Salafist, which accused the Government on the other side of having betrayed the instances of a greater spiritual and moral renewal, within the measures for a political and social reform of the country.

A process of crisis, thus, where the armed forces have played an highly destabilizing role, systematically feeding the impossibility of dialogue, pushing more and more in the direction of the “street clash” among the various components of the heterogeneous social fabric.

Tahrir square, then, assumed again its role and its meaning in the Egyptian protests, attracting crowds of increasing proportions, and pushing the executive led by Morsi to a constant research of mediation inside and outside the ruling coalition. That, however, degenerated during the month of June with violence across the entire country, and making impossible the continuation of the institutional activities.

With the intervention of the army and the deposition of the President, a difficult political crisis have been opened, centred on the need to find immediate credible solutions to be offered to the Egyptian society. That is certainly come to the limit of its patience for the un-governability emerged in the last phase of the Muslim Brotherhood’s government, but also aware that action of the army



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on June 3rd is essentially configurable as a *coup d'état*. Determining the conditions for a potentially unsolvable political fracture.

The Muslim Brotherhood, although not accepting the imposition of the armed forces, and the simultaneous arrest of a substantial part of its leadership, have shown firmness in curbing the interventionist thrusts of its most extreme fringes, significantly contributing to defuse – at least for the moment – the dangerous conflict which emerged following the events of June 3rd.

The Scaf (Supreme Council of the Armed Forces), after having assumed control have appointed a provisional Government composed by interim President Adli Mansour, by the economist Hazem Al Bealwi as Prime Minister, and by General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Commander of the armed forces, as acting Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. Clearly showing the intentions of the military establishment, and the existence of a line of mutual political support between the secular opposition groups and the armed forces.

General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi have then ordered in late July the custody for Morsi, already held in a secret location since June 3rd, and charged of collusion with Hamas, and of a plot for the organization of "hostile acts" on Egyptian territory.

The same fate seems to be pending for Mohamed Badie, guiding the Muslim Brotherhood, on whose head hangs an arrest warrant issued by the Attorney General, in an attempt to prevent the reorganization of a strong leadership within the religious party, and to avoid at the same time the capacity to coordinate street's protests against the new government.

In the escalation of the crisis among the parties, either the Muslim Brotherhood and the armed forces have called upon their supporters in an effort to organize public demonstrations of protest on July 26th. General el-Sisi, fearing a massive participation of supporters of the Islamic movements, called on the secular forces to support the government by organizing public activities in the same day, regardless of the fact that this would have necessarily resulted in clashes among different factions. Riots that punctually emerged, with violent clashes especially in the cities of Alexandria and Cairo, where about 80 deaths have been registered, according to the local press. Thus opening a new, dramatic chapter in the history of post-Mubarak Egypt, potentially capable of determining a longstanding political fracture, resulting in a spiral of violence.

The European Union includes Hezbollah on its list of terrorist organisations

On July 22nd, the Foreign Ministers of the European Union have positively voted on the motion to include the "military wing" of the Lebanese Hezbollah on its list of terrorist organisations officially recognised, opening a new chapter in the already unpredictable and complex relationship with the countries of the region.

The inclusion on the list was adopted despite initial qualms expressed by Italy, Malta, Ireland and Finland, which were considering the decision as potentially dangerous gesture for the balance of the political stability of Lebanon, and of dubious usefulness.

More in detail, the decision regards the inclusion of the so called "military wing" of Hezbollah in the list of organisations officially recognised as active in pursuing terrorist objectives, distinguishing it from the "political arm" of Hezbollah, which continues to be recognized as a legitimate Lebanese political party.

Economic and humanitarian aids to Lebanon, however, are not affected by the decision. This package will continue to be disbursed to the benefit of local political authorities, even through relations

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with Hezbollah's political arm.

Catherine Ashton, the EU High Representative for foreign policy, announced to be particularly pleased by the adoption of such a measure, and in commenting on the outcome of the vote she claimed that this constitutes "a political as well as a concrete signal" because "we have drawn a very clear distinction between the two souls of Hezbollah, by launching a clear message to the Lebanese people".

Less enthusiastic the comment made by Emma Bonino, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, saying that the decision was made to reaffirm the principle of European solidarity, although the measure has stirred up quite a few doubts in many countries of the Union.

Extremely negative reactions, as imaginable, had been made by Lebanese political leaders, who spoke of Israeli pressures on the European governments, and about the risk of instability especially in the southern area of the country, where the Shiite movement is the dominant political force.

The inclusion of the "military wing" of Hezbollah on the European list of terrorist organisations has been strongly desired by some EU countries, following the terrorist attack at the airport of Burgas – Bulgaria – on July 18th 2012, where five Israeli tourists and the Bulgarian driver of their bus perished.

Hezbollah was accused by Israel of having planned and organized the bombing, with the complicity of Iran.

At the same time, in July 2012, Hossam Taleb Yaacoub was arrested in Cyprus. With dual Lebanese and Swedish citizenship, he is suspected to be an Hezbollah's agent, and to be active in the search of places frequented by Israelis, in order to carry out attacks. Five of the eight charges moved against Yaacoub were confirmed in March 2013 by the Limassol Court, thus producing a useful legal precedent to support the inclusion of Hezbollah on the list of terrorist organizations recognized by the European Union.

The Bulgarian authorities' investigations on the attack of Burgas, on the other hand, determined a first charge against Hezbollah in February 2013, when the centre-right government was still in office in the country. Motivating the charge on the "evidence about Hezbollah's involvement in the organization and execution of the attack".

After political crisis of last May in Bulgaria, however, a new Socialist-led Government took office in Sofia, rejecting the decision of the court following the case of Burgas, adopting a rather more cautious approach, and barring the emergence of proved elements concerning the bombing.

The European decision for the inclusion of the "military wing" of Hezbollah in the list of terrorists, thus, have been requested and eventually approved on the basis of the findings of the Cypriot Court, and on the provisional judgement –then retracted – of a trial which is still active and not concluded in Bulgaria.

Although prevailing the general line of the principle of solidarity among the EU members, the objections raised by the more reluctant of them had not been light and generic. In particular, many had raised several doubts concerning the overall usefulness of the decision. Given the practical impossibility – or at least the extreme difficulty – to recognize and separate a "military wing" from a "political wing".

The decision taken in Brussels had been also linked with the desire of some European countries – France and Great Britain in particular – to prevent Hezbollah from the opportunity to significantly contribute in the Syrian conflict's dynamics, now decidedly unfavourable for the opposition forces



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fighting against the regime of Bashar al-Assad. Quite a few European Union countries have expressed concerns regarding the nature of the support to the Syrian opposition, stressing the risks connected to its heterogeneous nature. And the inclusion of the “military wing” of Hezbollah on the terrorist’s lists had been thus seen as a clear instrument of influence in the overall dynamics of the conflict.

Last but not least, some of the countries involved in the UN mission in southern Lebanon, manifested concerns regarding the possibility of tensions deriving from the recent EU decision, with local authorities and the population of much of the area, where the UN have its own bases, and where Hezbollah represents a significant political force.

What changes will bring the application of the new measure in a few weeks, when it will be fully implemented? Basically nothing, being null the relations with the so called “military wing” of Hezbollah on the European side, and being almost non-existent even that with the official political wing.

It will be extremely difficult to track illicit money transfers, as well as the presence on the European soil of members belonging to the banned component of the party.

There will be any significant damage to the logistical and financial capabilities of Hezbollah, which will react with predictable scaling of interest to cooperation in areas in which the UN contingent, with the risk of some dangerous provocation intended to demonstrate concrete inapplicability, or the political cost, the European decision.

To the overall picture, it must be added the variable related to the potential destabilization of the Lebanese political stability, and the general state of the country's relations with the European Union.

The President of the Lebanese Parliament, Nabih Berri, the Amal Shiite movement's head, has vigorously criticized the European measure following its approval, remembering how the effects of that decision will be disastrous on the stability and security of Lebanon. And in the wake of the same narrative must be inserted the comments of the outgoing Prime Minister, Najib Mikati, and its successor, Tamam Salam. Both have clearly talked about a danger for the "entire Lebanon", going as far as to say that Lebanon is not recognizing the European measure. Shortly after, also President Michel Soleiman made his own comments, although more moderate in tones but clear as well in considering the European decision a profound mistake.

Even the political groups traditionally hostile toward Hezbollah lined up against the European Union decision, recalling his role in the conflict against Israel and for national independence.

A unanimous chorus of condemnation, thus, has characterized the Lebanese political framework, which has indeed taken advantage of the event to manifest an unexpected expression of national solidarity toward Hezbollah. In a bid to use the event to foster dialogue in a difficult phase of transition.

On July 24th, Hezbollah’s Secretary General, Hassan Nasrallah, commented in Beirut the European decision, considering it an imposition of the United States and Israel through Britain's role. A decision which has not been agreed among members, according to Nasrallah, and indeed considered by many as unjust and unjustified. But accepted only under the political and economic pressure of the countries which have the capacity of imposing their role to the entire Union. Nasrallah spoke then of an “insult to Lebanon”, and of a serious threat to regional stability, through an interference clearly driven by the interests of Israel.



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Conclusions

It is difficult, at this time, to determine the overall scope of the European decision, so that it essentially remains a political exercise to emphasize the condemnation of facts on which not all member states seem to express a line of cohesion. It doesn't seem to be in any way possible, at least at this stage, to exercise any real coercive measure on financial and logistical capabilities of Hezbollah, both within and outside national boundaries. As it appears extremely difficult to link to specific schemes the identities and membership of Hezbollah's adherents.

And this difficulty has been clearly perceived by Hassan Nasrallah, who has defined it as "an European idea of a partition between a military and a political component" of the movement, clearly reaffirming a profound and indissoluble communion of these two components within the "resistance", as Hezbollah refers to itself.



Marco Massoni

Séléka and the peculiar coup d'état in the Central African Republic (CAR)

The 25th of May, there have been great celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of the naissance of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) dating back to the 25th of May 1963 in Addis Ababa. There are really good reasons for it, in that, despite the tense recorded over the last decade, the per capita income of Africans has increased by more than thirty percent, while foreign direct investment has tripled. Indeed, six among the ten fastest growing economies in the world are Africans. Furthermore, between 19 and 27 May the Ethiopian capital hosted the 'XXI Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU)'. Among the issues on the agenda a particular focus was given to the crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) and to the adoption of the 'AU Commission Strategic Plan 2014-2017'. Moreover, U.S. President, Barack Obama, has embarked together with his family on an African journey between June 26 and July 3, visiting Senegal, Tanzania and South Africa.

As per the crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR), a group of rebels has taken power in Bangui. On March 24, the President of the Republic, *François Bozizé*, was ousted by a coup and forced to flee initially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, then in Cameroon and later in Benin, where he allegedly sought for asylum. The coup was scored by a cartel of rebel movements originating from the Northeast of the country, under the name of *Séléka CPSK-CPJP-UFR*, which means 'coalition' in *Sango*, a local language. *Michel Djotodia*, who proclaimed himself Head of State, having therefore suspended the constitution and dissolved the Parliament, heads *Séléka*'s militias. *Djotodia*, who had been formed in the Soviet Union, is an ambitious civil servant, who had held a diplomatic post in 2006 as Consul in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur State of Sudan, where he had interwoven links with Chadian rebels. Exiled in Benin, there was he jailed at the behest of *Bozizé*. After the sudden, and somewhat unexpected, advanced in December last year of *Séléka* rebels toward the capital, Bangui, on January 13, cease-fire agreements were reached in Libreville (Gabon), in that facilitated by the *Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)*, which provided, among other things, for the replacement of the Premier, *Nicolas Tiangaye*, who however has so far been confirmed in office. Nevertheless, the rebels have unilaterally decided to attack Bangui, where there were some hundreds of South African military in defence of *Bozizé*, who were slaughtered, with the strong disappointment and the obvious embarrassment of Pretoria and its Quiet Diplomacy. *Séléka* was created last August, on the initiative of a number of dissidents of the *Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP)* of the *Patriotic Convention for Saving the Country (CPSK)*, the *Union of Republican Forces (UFR)* and *Union of Demo-*



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cratic Forces for Unity (UFDR). It also includes elements from the Sudan and Chad. In fact, in recent years, Chadian militias have also used the CAR as rearguard, in order to try to destabilize the President of Chad, *Idriss Déby Itno*. Among the poorest country in the world, the Central African Republic is a former French landlocked colony, situated in a very unstable region straddling the Sahel, the savannah and tropical forest of Central Africa, bounded in fact with Sudan (Darfur), Chad, the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa) and Cameroon. The CAR, rich in important mineral reserves – such as iron, gold, uranium (Bakouma), diamonds, oil (Bira) and copper – has known since independence (1960) until today a succession of coups, a serious social instability and, consequently, a failure of any economic development in terms of infrastructures, of the rule of law and of the empowerment of minorities and disadvantaged classes: it is otherwise known as a typical example of an *African Failed State*. With regard to the most recent political history, one can remember in 1976 the scandal of the enthronement as ‘Emperor’ of Marshal Jean-Bedel Bokassa, in power since 1966, then ousted with the help of France in 1979. The Nineties, as for the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, marked well for CAR the introduction of multiparty politics; with the very first free and fair elections of 1993 the *Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People (MLPC)* came to power. To tell the truth, already in 1997 a failed coup plot by the Central African Armed Forces led the United Nations to send a contingent that stationed in the country until 2000. Two years later, Libya helped militarily the CAR in fighting a rebellion, which was determined to provoke another takeover. The following year, in March, General François Bozizé, having occupied the capital, overthrew President Ange-Félix Patassé – who died on April 5, 2011 – and set a government of national unity. This was made possible thanks to the support of Déby Itno, the President of Chad, because interested in protecting the Chadian southern border, crossed by a strategic oil pipeline. Bozizé, heading the party’s National Convergence *Kwa Na Kwa* (i.e. *the work, only the work*), was officially elected President of the Republic in April 2005 with the consent of France only, but not of the African Union at all. Bozizé was then re-elected in January 2011 for a second term, in spite of the opposition fraudulent claims. Then, in 2007 the UFDR rebellion, concentrated in the Northeastern regions of the country, signed a peace agreement thanks to the Libyan mediation. All the same, the rebels began to become politically stronger and to demand more, until the events of 2012-2013. Always in 2007, the United Nations Security Council authorized the deployment of a peacekeeping force, to protect civilians along the Sudanese border of the Darfur. That year, under French proposal, the European Union send the *Mission EUFOR Tchad–RCA*, then replaced by the *UN Mission en République Centrafricaine et au Tchad (MINURCAT)*, which ended in late 2010. Between 2008 and 2009, Joseph Kony’s Ugandan rebel *Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)* moved into the CAR territories, where is now hunted by AU troops with the US support. In August 2012 another peace agreement with a rebel movement was signed; this was the case of the *Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP)*. It is worth realizing that in the fall of 2012 Bozizé got rid of the Chadian elite corps who used to take care of his personal safety, replacing them with some South Africans. This was a litmus test, showing the abandonment of French protection in favour of a greater diversification of partnerships. In truth, since 2011, Bangui has begun to enter into the sphere of influence of both China and South Africa, which had aroused the opposition of Paris, who gave up so to keep supporting CAR, considering it a hindrance in relation to her purposes. Particularly, Bangui opened very intense relationships with Pretoria and Beijing within the framework of mil-

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itary assistance. Getting out of French orbit, consequently Chad too had to abandon the CAR. One has to remember that N'Djamena wants to be seen as the strongest and most reliable French ally in the region, at whatever costs, as demonstrated for example by the massive participation of Chadian troops in *Operation Serval* in Mali, worth the demise of his regime. At the end of 2012, Séléka launched a military offensive, which led her to a hundred kilometres from Bangui, accusing the government of failing to implement the peace agreements of 2007 in regards of the actual demobilization, disarmament and re-engagement of former combatants. Interim President, Djotodia, announced that elections should be held in 2016. In the meantime solely and exclusively France shall be dealing with CAR Armed Forces training. Supposedly, ECCAS is meant to deploy a stabilization force within the next few weeks. At present, regarding the international community's involvement in the country, we have is the *United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA)*, led until June by *Margaret Vogt* of Nigeria, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for the Central African Republic, who responds to the Department of Political Affairs in New York. Mrs. Vogt has been replaced by General *Babakar Gaye* of Senegal. Besides, *Jean-Pierre Reymondet-Commoy* of France is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Bangui.

Northern Africa: Mauritania.

José Antonio Sabadell of Spain is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Nouakchott.

Western Africa: Benin, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo.

As per *Benin*, *Josep Coll* of Spain is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Porto Novo.

Regarding *Guinea Bissau*, the Admiral *José Americo Bubo Na Tchuto*, Navy former commander of Guinea-Bissau, was arrested during a joint U.S. and Cap Verde operation. Already responsible for an attempted coup in 2011, he would be a high rank representative of the Latin American drug mafias in West Africa. The complicity of the military with drug trafficking remains a major problem in the country. In fact, even the Armed Forces Chief of Staff, *Antonio Indjai*, was charged of narco-terrorism by a court in New York, as he would have hidden right in Guinea Bissau tons of cocaine coming from the *Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)*, in order to sell them out at a later time in the U.S. market. The transitional authorities of Guinea-Bissau have in turn pointed the finger at Washington, rejecting all accusations. At the same time, the former Captain of the Presidential Guard, *Pansau N'Tchama*, and two other former officers, Captain *Jorge Sambù* and Colonel *Braima Djédjo*, were sentenced to five years of prison on charges of having organized a failed coup in October 2012. In addition, there were some leaked rumours about the possible names of the heads of major departments of the new transitional government of national unity, always headed by the Premier, *Rui Duarte Barros*. The Cabinet will consist of thirty-four Ministers with the delicate Ministries of Defence and Interior, under the complete control of the Army, whereas *Fernando Delfim da Silva* shall be the new Foreign Minister. The aim of a government of national unity, supported by the two main political forces – the PAIGC and the PRS – is to bring about the country to elections as soon as possible, as advocated by the chief mediator of the *Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS-ECOWAS)*, *Manuel Serifos Nhamadjo*.

Concerning *Mali*, on 25 April, the UN Security Council has approved by means of the Resolution n° 2100, the creation of a peacekeeping force for Mali – the *United Nations Multidimensional In-*



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egrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) – equipped with 12,600 soldiers under the command of General *Jean-Bosco Kazura* of Rwanda. More in details, purpose of this mission is to support the ad interim Malian authorities in stabilizing the country and in implementing the internationally agreed roadmap, which shall be providing for humanitarian assistance, protection of civilians, the return of refugees and displaced persons as well as human rights monitoring. It is worth mentioning that MINUSMA will include six hundred Chinese peacekeepers too. Above and beyond, the May the 15th Brussels donors' conference for the development of Mali has allocated more than three billion Euros of funds. On 18 June in Ouagadougou, after a dozen days of strenuous negotiations, the '*Preliminary Agreement for the Presidential Elections and the Inclusive Peace Talks in Mali between the Malian Authorities and the Non-Terrorist Armed Northern Movements*' was ultimately reached. With the mediation of the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, the transitional authorities in Bamako on the one hand and on the other the *Tuareg National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA)* and those of the *High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA)* have agreed for the disarmament of Tuareg rebels and at the same time for the Malian army to be deployed in Kidal. The HCUA is a non-Tuareg separatist movement, willing to preserve the territorial integrity of Mali, to which also the *Islamic Movement of Azawad (MIA)* was merged. The African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU), which will be monitoring its implementation along the way, oversaw the signing of this agreement. In fact, MNLA unwillingness to legitimate the transitional Malian authorities had until then critically undermined the sealing of the whole electoral process. The *Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA)*, formerly known as the *National Liberation Front of Azawad (FLNA)*, consisting of Arab tribes – *Berabish* and *Kunta* – has begun to contend the control of the same territories to the MNLA. Therefore, the Presidential and Legislative elections are going to be held July the 28th over the entire Malian territory; the electoral campaign will take place between 7 and 26 July, whilst the most prominent presidential candidates there are Soumaila Cissé, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK) and Modibo Sidibé.

As far as *Niger* is concerned, *Mokhtar Belmokhtar*, one of the top leaders of *Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)*, has claimed responsibility for the terrorist attacks of May the 23rd against an Army base in *Agadez* and against an uranium mining site of France's *Areva* in *Arlit*, causing twenty-five dead and thirty wounded. Belmokhtar, also known as *Mr. Marlboro*, was mistakenly given up for dead in March from sources of Chad and of Niger itself. After having left AQMI, he has become the head of the '*Brigade of the Signers in Blood*' (*Katiba al Mulathamin*), responsible of the *In Amenas* massacre in Algeria of last January. Due to the Franco-African military intervention in Mali, Niger is the country most at risk in the region, as it is considered the new target of terrorist groups in the Sahel. The interventionist position of *Mahmadou Issoufou*, President of Niger, who has always urged the international community not to let fall into the hands of jihadist neither the Maghreb, nor the Sahara nor the Sahel, have somewhat contributed to that. Islamist terrorism for the time being has made southern Libya its new sanctuary. Besides, *Raul Mateus Paula* of Portugal is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Niamey.

In *Nigeria*, in order to stem the *Boko Haram* offensive, the Federal authorities have declared the state of emergency in three Northeastern States: *Borno*, *Yobe* and *Adamawa*. What is worst is the emergence of another wing within Boko Haram: the *Vanguard for the Protection of Muslims in Black Lands (Ansaru)*, headed by *Khalid al Barnawi*. The militarization of Northern Nigeria

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wanted by President Goodluck Jonathan has however this time not foreseen the dismissal of the pertinent Governors of the three States concerned. Furthermore, the candidacy of Jonathan to the Presidential Elections of 2015 is now given for granted. Also, the four main opposition parties in Nigeria (i.e. the *Action Congress of Nigeria*, the *Congress for Progressive Change*, the *All Nigeria Peoples Party* and the *All Progressives Grand Alliance*) have formed a new tactical alliance – *All Progressives Congress* – that will try to put and end to the hegemony of the ruling party, the *People's Democratic Party*, in power since the end of the military regime. Besides, *Michel Arrion* of Belgium is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Abuja.

As per *Sierra Leone*, *Peter Versteeg* of The Netherlands is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Freetown.

In *Togo*, there is a climate of detente between the majority and opposition ahead of parliamentary elections scheduled for July the 21st. Among the candidates worthy of note there are the incumbent, President *Faure Gnassingbé*, on behalf of the *Union for the Republic (UNIR)*, and *Dahoukou Péré* for the opposition. Meanwhile, *Nicolas Berlanga Martinez* of Spain is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Lomé.

Eastern Africa: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan

In *Djibouti*, *Abdoulkader Kamil Mohamed* is the new Prime Minister, appointed by the President *Ismael Omar Guelleh*, as to replace *Dileita Mohamed Dileita*, as the outcome of the legislative elections of February the 22nd that saw victorious the *Union for the Presidential Majority (UMP)*, whose was contested by the main opposition party, the *Union for National Salvation (USN)*.

As per *Eritrea*, May the 30th, Canada has expelled the Eritrean Consul in Toronto, *Semere Ghebremariam Micael*, considering him *persona non grata*. The alleged reason would refer to the so-called *Eritrean Diaspora's tax* over all financial transactions form abroad to Asmara, with the aim to create useful taxation revenues in favour of the Eritrean Government, by circumventing international sanctions, which instead require blocking of any taxes levied on remittances. Presumably, such practice imposed by the Eritrean consular authorities might be also widespread in other States, where Eritrean diplomatic missions are accredited.

In *Ethiopia*, one of the most influential politicians Ethiopian, the Minister of Justice, *Berhan Hailu Dagne*, was removed from office, ostensibly for not having brought to fruition in due time the reforms he was responsible for. On May 28, works began on the biggest hydroelectric power plant in Africa, the *Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)* – the dam on the Blue Nile – against which Egypt and Sudan are standing, above and beyond for their fear of depending on Addis Ababa's policies in the nearest future. The GERD will have a storage capacity of eighty-five million cubic meters of water and it shall be able to provide five thousand megawatts of power. Additionally, such growing tensions with Cairo and Khartoum, are due to Ethiopia's ratification of the *Nile Basin Treaty*, an act that implicitly call into question the right of veto of both Egypt and Sudan on the their exclusive use of the Nile waters. Yet, it is still too early to fear any *hydro-war* in the region. At last, some ten thousand protesters were able to take part in a rally on the streets of Addis Ababa without any incident.

The new President of *Kenya*, *Uhuru Kenyatta*, who was elected March the 4th, in his very first public speech has clearly stated that the national unity of the country if of the uttermost importance; Kenya, in fact, this time was smart enough to stay away from the bloodshed that had marked the



presidential elections of 2007. Out of the eighteen Ministers appointed in the new government, *Joseph Ole Lenku* is the Minister of the Interior, *Amina Mohamed* the Minister of Foreign Affairs and *Raychelle Omamo* the Minister of Defence.

Concerning *Somalia*, United Kingdom is the first Western nation to have re-opened its embassy in Mogadishu. On May 7, at the *Second London Conference on Somalia*, during which the international community has reaffirmed its commitment to a renewed federal structure for Somalia. Yet, *Somaliland* and *Puntland* were not present, since the invitation had been addressed only to the new Federal Government and the Somali President, *Sheikh Hassan Mohamud*, who was elected last September. In the semi-autonomous region of *Jubaland*, along the border with Kenya, the former warlord *Ahmed Mohamed Islam*, known as Ahmed Madobe, was elected as the new President. On May 29, the *Nairobi Regional Conference for Investment and Reconstruction in Somalia* took place in Kenya. With the UN Security Council Resolution n° 2102 on June 3, the *United Nations Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)*, led by the British *Nicholas Kay* became operational in Mogadishu, proving once again UK's leadership within the EU for reconstruction efforts and political presence in Somalia.

For *Sudan*, under the auspices of the African Union, direct negotiations between Khartoum and the rebellion of the *Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N)* were started in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, with the hope of pacifying the border areas of *Blue Nile* and *South Kordofan* along the boundaries of the two Sudan. Moreover, the main accused of the alleged failed coup of last fall were released. Alarm in Darfur, due to the alleged encroachment of troops from Chad, as reported by the Darfuri rebel *Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)*, whose spokesperson, *Gibreel Adam Bilal*, openly denounced the direct involvement of the President of Chad, *Déby Itno*, in war crimes and in crimes against humanity that occurred during the Darfurian conflict between 2003 and 2007 as well as in the killing of the head of JEM, *Khalil Ibrahim*, in December 2011.

Regarding *South Sudan*, the President of the Republic, *Salva Kiir*, has reduced by decree the powers of the Vice-President, *Riek Machar*, and subsequently cancelled the *Conference of National Reconciliation* scheduled in July; the move is likely to be related to the fear that Machar would win the presidential election of 2015.

Central Africa: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea and Uganda.

In regards of *Burundi*, the President of the Republic, *Pierre Nkurunziza*, has unreservedly passed a controversial press law, which is considered very restrictive with regard to the freedom of speech and opinion, inasmuch it forces journalists to reveal their own sources. Such measure tightens the never completely dormant social and political tensions in the country.

In *Cameroon*, the seven French hostages, kidnapped on February 19 at Dabanga, in the north of the country on the border with Nigeria, were released; kidnappers were likely affiliated to Boko Haram. The authorities have provided no detail, even though quite probably the kidnapping may have been a reprisal of qaedist matrix against the French intervention in Mali. *Françoise Collet* of France is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Yaoundé.

After the coup d'état carried out by *Séléka*, a rebellion alliance, in the *Central African Republic*

(CAR), which put an end to the regime of the President of the Republic, *François Bozizé*, now in exile, in April consultations for the formation of the *Supreme Council of Transition (CST)* began. The CST is an institutional body specifically requested by the *Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)*, as the sub-regional organization responsible for the political transition in the country. Yet, the situation remains very fluid and volatile. The Prosecutor of Bangui has issued an international arrest warrant against Bozizé, accusing him of crimes against humanity. June the 13th, the interim Prime Minister, *Michel Djotodia*, announced the formation of a new government, composed of thirty-four ministers, nine of which coming from the ranks of Séléka (including the crucial ministries of Mining, Security, Defence and Communication), seven from the old opposition, two pro-Bozizé, while the rest is of heterogeneous origin. In point of fact, essential task for the new government will be to pacify the former French colony and to start up again the economy, trying to convince the international community of its good faith, so as to unblock the legal exports of diamonds under the *Kimberley Process*. Yet, most likely it will not be the case. Anyhow, the priority as far as national security is concerned is to reintegrate as soon as possible the about two hundred thousand Séléka's militiamen into the ranks of the national armed forces. The growing insecurity in the country not only has pushed the *Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC)* to temporarily move its headquarters in Gabon or in Equatorial Guinea, but it has also been fueling a diplomatic tension with Cameroon, whose administration is said worried about any outcome from Séléka in power in CAR.

A failed coup d'état was confirmed in the capital of *Chad*, N'Djamena, in the night between April the 30th and May the 1st. *Saleh Makki*, a member of the *Coordination of Political Parties for the Defence of the Constitution (CPDC)*, two MPs from the majority, two generals of the Armed Forces and a journalist were arrested. It seems that some mercenaries from Libya could be involved, having been in touch with the rebel *Moussa Tao Mahmat* of the *Union of Forces for Democracy and Development (UFDD)*. In fact, the Chadian regime has been undergoing targeted attacks by rebel factions, because guilty of having sent two thousand soldiers alongside the French military intervention in Mali. The instability of the Chadian Government is also fostered by the political crisis in the neighbouring Central African Republic (CAR).

Soon after the visit in the *Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)* of the UN Secretary General, *Ban Ki-Moon*, an *ad hoc UN Rapid Reaction Brigade*, composed of three thousand soldiers is now operational in the country. From Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu, the UN force – with contingents from Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and South Africa – will provide offensive operations, aimed at countering the activities of the rebellion of the *March 23 Movement (M23)*, which has been raging the eastern region of DRC since last year.

In *Equatorial Guinea*, the ruling party, the *Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea (PDGE)*, won the legislative elections of 26 May, having gained an absolute majority. Besides, the Government has announced that since 2014 Equatorial Guinea will be part of the *Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)*. Portuguese is indeed the third official language of the country in addition to Spanish and French.

In *Uganda*, May the 23rd, the President, *Yoweri Museveni*, has appointed *General Katumba Wamala* as the new *Chief of the Armed Forces (CDF)*, so replacing *General Aronda Nyakairima*, who be-

came Minister of the Interior. There is a risk of instability in the country in the near future: there are rumours that, at the end of his term in 2016, Museveni intends to be followed on by his son, *Kainerugaba Muhoozi*; this is causing rifts within the ranks of the ruling party, the *National Resistance Movement (NRM)*. In the meantime, the intelligence chief, *General David Sejusa*, fled to London, because he claims to fear for his safety, after having leaked a supposed conspiracy against those politicians and those in the military who wish to oppose the aforesaid mode of succession to power.

Southern Africa: Angola, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

Regarding *Angola*, negotiated autonomy is the new buzzword of the *Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC)*. This former independence movement has officially turned down any armed struggle and decided to finally negotiate the terms of a new peace agreement with the government of Luanda. In doing so, they put an end to a long lasting conflict, despite the cease-fire of 2006 then broken in 2010. The *Cabinda* (i.e. the former *Portuguese Congo*) is a small territory under the sovereignty of Angola, but claimed by separatists. Being extremely rich oil and gas, it is geographically located between the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa). The Angolan Government has suffered from its very first reshuffle since in office, with the appointment of *Armando Manuel* as Minister of Finance, who had been the president of the first national sovereign wealth fund, namely the *Fundo Soberano de Angola (FSDEA)*. In addition, *Kricke Gordon* of Germany is the new Head of Delegation of the European Union (EU) in Luanda.

Concerning *Madagascar*, the UN, the AU, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the EU have called on the three controversial candidates for the presidential elections of August the 23rd – *Andry Rajoelina*, *Lao Ravalomanana* and *Didier Ratsiraka* – to desist from the competition, although they have been given the clearance to take part into it by the *Special Electoral Court (CES)*. Therefore, most probably, as long as such impasse is not formally sorted out, the elections schedule shall be put off accordingly.

Regarding the *Mauritius*, *Hans-Georg Gerstenlauer* of Germany is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Port Louis.

As per *Mozambique*, some analysts are worried about the sabotage and the violence allegedly conducted by the main opposition party, the *Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO)*. Actually, rather than a return to the civil war that no one really wants in the country, more plausibly they are nothing more than some skirmishes to feed the political tension ahead of local elections to be held this year and of the general ones of 2014.

In *Namibia*, after a decade of exploration a first offshore oil field has been identified.

Next legislative elections in *Swaziland* shall be held on August the 24th and September the 20th. *Nicola Bellomo* of Italy is the new Head of the EU Delegation in Mbabane.

The President of *Zimbabwe*, *Robert Mugabe* has promulgated the new *Constitution*, which, beginning from the next presidential elections to be held later by the end of this year, provides for a limit of two consecutive terms as well as the reduction of presidential powers.

Conclusions

From the *Second London Conference on Somalia* it became clear that in regards of the support to the national stabilization process the European Union believes in a renewed federal structure for Somalia. However, it is important to take into account the different speeds with which dissimilar regions of *Greater Somalia* have been developing over the last twenty years. Right now, the international community's watchword for Somalia is to maintain the momentum, so as to allow the entire *Horn of Africa* to curb the insecurity of Islamic Shebaab, though now almost completely defeated. The plan of economic and social reforms promoted by the international community in collaboration with the Somali authorities – the so-called *New Deal of Somalia* – is an ambitious and yet not unrealistic project, given the size of the investment it is going to be provided with. In the short term, international efforts through the new UN political mission in Somalia – the *United Nations Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)* – and the quest for a serious Nation Building on the part of the most important geopolitical players in the region will ensure that financial flows for reconstruction and development cooperation will be there.

The Central African Republic (CAR) political experience demonstrates how easy is for any newly formed Non-State Actor – rebel movements and armed fundamentalists – to settle in such no man's lands in failed states regions, becoming therefore able to fully control entire areas out of reach from central governments. At present, the geopolitical rearrangement of the African geo-network is shifting from West Africa to Central Africa. With the alleged complicity of Qatar and explicitly of Chad, France has decided to intervene in the Central African Republic (CAR), because she feared that President Bozizé's weaknesses would ease the infiltration of extremist groups from other failing States, especially Nigeria and Mali. To accelerate Bozizé's removal there were the too uninhibited approach of the CAR to two of the main competitors of France in Africa: South Africa and China. The New Scramble for Africa has claimed another of his victims, but the saga



Chinese reformists, the United States and Edward Snowden

Nunziante Mastrolia

This paper aims at evaluating if a correlation between the Sunnylands summit and the Datagate outbreak exists, taking into account what Edward Snowden, a former CIA agent and contractor of the National Security Agency (NSA), revealed to the *South China Morning Post* about the activities of electronic surveillance conducted on Hong Kong and mainland China by the NSA.

The White House has protected its actions, as necessary to conduct the global war on terrorism. Dick Cheney, the former U.S. vice-president, on his side, has defined Snowden a betrayer and has warned that the former National Security Agency contractor may be spying for the Chinese government. After a week of silence, the Chinese government has begun to use the revelations of former CIA operative to hit back at the Obama administration's allegations of Chinese cyber hacking. The Snowden's scandal is still in progress and is increasing more and more. Crimes will be prosecuted and shadows that surround the figure of Snowden will probably be clarified. Currently, no one can predict what will be the long-term consequences of those leaks.

A result, however, have been already achieved: all of a sudden, relations between the United States and China have frozen, right after the first summit (unique in its formula) between Xi Jinping and Barack Obama. Before starting to think about this rapid stiffening, its implications and consequences, it is worth making two preliminary remarks.

Snowden's claims are serious, but should be proved. At the same time, it would a great mistake if, on the altar of national security and its imperatives, democracies will begin to sacrifice those freedoms and rights, that represent their true strength with respect to autocracies. Notwithstanding these considerations, and without being accused of cynicism, it is useful to say that Snowden has revealed things that (at least with regard to cyber intelligence operations that haven't been done on American soil) were already known. As a matter of fact, it could be mentioned the famous Echelon's case or, with regard to more traditional instruments, the EP-3 spy plane case, which in April 2001 was forced to make an emergency landing on Hainan Island due to an air collision with a Chinese fighter aircraft. Besides, on the 5th of June (therefore, before the scandal exploded) Chinese government sources claimed to have "mountains of data" useful to demonstrate cyber attacks made by the United States, confirming the thesis that is repeated since several months: China is the real victim of cyber espionage.

The pieces of a puzzle

That said, it might be useful trying to link the two events (the Sunnylands summit and Snowden's



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statements) within the broader framework of the relations between Washington and Beijing and China's internal evolution, on the precarious basis (it is worth to specify) of few facts and many hypotheses and conjectures.

The first piece of the puzzle can be traced back to 1989, a dramatic year for the Chinese leadership. Not only because of the planetary bankruptcy of communism, but mostly because with the demonstrations in Tienanmen Square, in which Chinese citizens pushed for political reforms, ended Deng Xiaoping's experiment to establish, after Maoism, a new basis of political legitimacy for the Communist Party. That experiment failed because Deng did not realize that markets and democracy represent an inseparable pair, as proved by the events of the spring of 1989.

Since the early Nineties, therefore, the party is forced to try a new way to legitimate its leadership: "After the military crackdown on the student protests – writes- Zhang Wang – the CCP desperately needed to rebuilt its legitimacy as China's ruling party". Hence, the attempt to emphasize, through a giant cultural campaign, the griefs and humiliations suffered by China and produced by Western powers and Japan, in a century that goes from the first Opium War (1839-1842) to the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. A century that for the Chinese is now the "century of humiliations". The major goals of this campaign were to "educate Chinese people, especially the young people, about China's humiliating experience in the face of the Western and Japanese incursions and how the CCP-led revolution had changed China's fate and won national independence"

A past of griefs and humiliations from which - and here the new source of legitimation of the CCP can be understood - China has managed to redeem exclusively thanks to the unopposed leadership of the Communist Party: "if not for the CCP's successful revolution and sacrifices, China would still be a weak and divided country", sums up Zhang.

In this way, the party is the historical agent that produced the reunification of the country, regaining the independence of China and leading it along the path of an unprecedented economic development, thus earning the respect (or even the fears) of the whole world. "Since the CCP is non longer the vanguard of the Chinese working class but the party of the firmest and most thoroughgoing patriots, it is natural that the party now needs to dress itself as the guardian of the Chinese national interests. Also, the central myth and the legitimacy of the ruling party come from its historical «sacrifices and contribution» - putting an end to the history of humiliating diplomacy in modern China". That is to say that one of the Chinese Communist Party's most important tasks is to turn back the clock of history, before the arrival of Europeans, when the Empire was the only major regional power.

As a consequence, the party is responsible for, otherwise it would risk to lose its legitimacy, not only to safeguard the territorial integrity of the country, but also to bring under its sovereignty those territories that were ripped off from the Empire during the century of humiliations.

Hence the territorial tensions along the border with India, in the South China Sea and, moreover, in the East China Sea, with Japan. It must be added the Taiwan issue as well.

Now, it is true that those territories have (or may have) an economic value, are (or could be) of strategic importance, but above all, they have a symbolic value: they are an instrument of national redemption. This caused the confrontation that opposed Beijing to the other countries of the region and the U.S. and this is the source of the difficulty of reaching a compromise.

Second piece of the puzzle. This setting was a reaction necessary to cope with the loss of political legitimacy after the events of 1989. In doing so, the party has presented itself as the standard bearer and the only protagonist of national redemption and, at the same time, it has closed the way to all reformists that, from the inside, were pressing for political reforms in the Western sense. As an example that could be used to clear this concept, it should be taken into account the Zhao Ziyang's case, who died in 2005 under house arrest, where he had been placed since 1989.

The reformists, however, have in recent years, regained some room and began to work in order to start political reforms in the country. They are the neo-constitutionalists who are pushing for an actual application of the 1982 Constitution, where important elements of the Western institutional experience can be found: the separation of powers, rule of law, protection of individual rights, especially political pluralism and democracy. This would mean reduction of the powers and normalization of the CCP's role in Chinese politics. In other words, give full application to the Constitution implies resizing the hegemonic role of the party.

In opposition to the neo-constitutionalists there are those who consider the party as the bulwark of Chinese independence and its hegemony as the only way to preserve national cohesion and to aspire to the status of world power. For them, moreover, the tensions due to the contested territories with regional countries and the United States are functional to the maintenance of the hegemonic role of the party: weakening the CCP would imply to open the doors to the ghosts of the past when, under a weak imperial guide, the country was dismembered territorially and almost swallowed up by the great powers. As Jiang Zemin said in his political report at the Fifteenth Congress: "Only the Communist Party of China can lead the Chinese people in achieving victories of national independence, the people's liberation and socialism, pioneering the road of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, rejuvenating the nation, making the country prosperous and strong and improving the people's well-being"; that is to say that only the Communist Party can save China. Third piece of the puzzle. It can be assumed (or just hypothesize) that Xi Jinping and Li Kequing are reformists, who are pushing for a "return to the constitution " with a consequent reduction of the role and powers of the party.

Fourth piece. If this analysis is correct, it can be argued that the reformists are interested in softening the opposition of the conservatives, being able in this way to implement their program. To this end, it can be supposed that the reformists have an interest in easing tensions at both regional (territorial disputes and North Korea) and globally with the United States. Defuse those tensions would deprive those who are against reforms of the instrument of nationalism (and of this logic of permanent siege as well), useful to maintain the hegemonic role of the party.

Fifth piece. It is likely that, among other things, the Sunnylands summit had exactly this goal: the reformists were looking for Washington to ease regional tensions, in order to weaken the conservatives within the party and pave the way for reforms. Sunnylands could be the first step for: 1) beginning a new period of mutual understanding between the U.S. and China, avoiding in this way what Kissinger considers to be the biggest danger for the relations between the two countries, i.e. that defensive actions undertaken by one of the parties would be considered by the other country as an aggressive actions: "When the Chinese view of preemption encounters the Western concept of deterrence, a vicious circle can result: acts conceived as defensive in China may be treated as aggressive by the outside world; deterrent moves by the West may be interpreted in China as



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encirclement"; 2) giving a new image of China, in this sense, the informality of the meeting had a fundamental role, that is a sort of G-2, where the two countries agree together, without predetermined positions. A new image that would have made proud Chinese citizens: China as a *responsible stakeholder* in the international arena rather than a revisionist power that has to be monitored and contained.

It is possible to go further and argue that without the Datagate, Xi Jinping would have been able to turn off the nationalist hatred that undermines relations with regional countries and begin to foster a more healthy patriotism suitable with regional and international order.

An additional consequence could have been imagined. Pacifying the regional framework would allow United States and China to solve the current North Korean impasse and set the problem in a different way. Until now, the Pyongyang regime has represented for Beijing an insurance to avoid the establishment, around its borders, of a hostile regional order. The message was simple and effective: only Beijing, for its historical ties, can hold off Pyongyang preventing any distressing reactions in the whole area. Consequently, no one should challenge (or contain) China, otherwise it would cause an *escalation* in the Korean Peninsula.

However, over the years this approach deteriorated. The atomic tenacity of Kim has increased the presence of American troops in the region and brought up Japanese anxiety to have a more active role in the security of the region. At the same time, Beijing has to recognize that, especially during the previous March-April crisis, they are not been able to influence Pyongyang totally.

Consequently, if China and United States begin a new era of mutual trust, Beijing will not need the North Korean regime and will work with the United States for a gradual opening of the hermetic country and for a progressive denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Conclusion

It is now possible to match the pieces of the puzzle, which until now have been placed on the table. It is hard to know if Snowden's actions were moved by pure civic spirit, in defense of those American liberties threatened by the pushiness of the government, or whether he was manipulated by someone. However, revealing the cyber espionage operations conducted by the NSA, he showed to Chinese public opinion an image of the United States similar to those powers that during the century of humiliations attempted to control and dismember China, and, what's more, as a power using those same tools (computer espionage) that are described as detrimental to the freedoms of which the United States is the standard bearer.

Whether he was or wasn't manipulated by Chinese or someone else, Snowden in any case played the game of Chinese conservatives. How will then the reformists try to defuse, through dialogue, regional tensions, without being accused of being too soft (if not in collusion) with a power, whose ultimate aim is to prevent the rise of China? How will the reformists be able to start political reforms, which primarily consist of (it worth to repeat it) a reduction of the role and power of the party, without being accused of weakening the CCP and thus to weaken China itself?

Some reflections could be made even on the timing. The revelations about cyber attacks on China and Hong Kong occurred right after the end of the summit between Obama and Xi, as to show how wrong and illusory was the way, undertaken by the Chinese president, of reaching an agreement with the United States. If it was an orchestrated operation, then it can be argued that it meant



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to weaken Xi Jinping position, undermining his patriotic image and creating major obstacles on the brand-new and innovative path sketched by the new leadership.

If this is the case, then it is possible to suppose that this situation is not simply a confrontation between the U.S. and China, but rather a struggle among different factions within the Chinese power. The Snowden's case in other words, may represent a counterattack attempt of the conservatives. Consequences might be dramatic: losing the opportunity of regional reconciliation and, at the same time, accused of being "at the mercy of the enemy", the reformists could retreat. Thus, the opening towards political reforms, that the country needs so greatly, could be postponed sine die, while the leadership of Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang, after a bright beginning, may be hibernated or forced to a conservative turn.



India 2014 General Elections: Introducing new Prime Minister Candidates, Political Challenges and Vote Forecasts

Claudia Astarita

In mid-2014, India will face the most important general elections of the last two decades. Until a few months ago, it was almost impossible even to try to forecast the equilibrium that might come out after the vote. On the contrary, both the number and the names of Prime Minister candidates were unclear, and many rumours supported the idea that New Delhi might have anticipated elections as the current Government would have never been able to survive until the end of the year. Manmohan Singh coalition is indeed suffering because of legitimacy problems linked to serious corruption scandals, and because of a particularly negative economic outlook connected to Indian structural economic problems, which have worsened after the explosion, a few years ago, of the global financial crisis.

Today, the country has not only overcome the threat of anticipated elections, but it has been able to identify two main contenders for 2014 vote, name two candidates, and start defining two electoral programs that are trying to offer some solutions to the main problems of the country: poverty; economic development; political stability and transparency; social stability; and minorities' autonomy. Accordingly, it is now interesting to review how the main political parties, the conservative Party of Congress and the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have shaped their leaderships and ideas. These details will indeed prove useful to elaborate more realistic and reliable forecasts about 2014 general elections.

In late January Rahul Gandhi, the scion of India's Gandhi-Nehru political dynasty, the family that has ruled India for 37 of the 66 years since India gained independence, was appointed vice president of the Congress Party, a position behind his mother Sonia Gandhi, who is the president. With this nomination, Rahul Gandhi implicitly acknowledged that he is the party's future candidate for prime minister at a time when the world largest democracy seems rudderless.

Right after his nomination, Rahul Gandhi officially clarified his intention to "radically transform" India, pushing analysts to forecast that the forthcoming elections will be crucial for the Gandhi-Nehru family, as Sonia's 42-year-old son "may rejuvenate the longest-running dynasty in the democratic world – or he may terminate it."

During his acceptance speech, he made several strong declarations, such as "For me, the Congress Party is my life. The people of India are my life and I will fight for them"; he condemned elitism as "the tragedy of India", and vowed to work to expand access to power for ordinary people; he stressed that many Indian youths are angry because they have been excluded from the political class. This happens because one of the problems of India is that "we only empower at the top of

something is changing since the coalition government led by the Congress Party started showing that even though Sonia Gandhi's first son has not yet been confirmed as the new Indian Prime Minister, his positive influence on the Party is already strong. It cannot be a coincidence that, during the last few months, Manmohan Singh government has been more active than ever. A change helping Rahul Gandhi to be perceived as a man with smart, practical, and feasible ideas to fix Indian problems, not just another man of governing with empty metaphors. The procedures limiting the attractiveness for foreign investors have been eased, several technical and commercial barriers have been reduced, a broad programme to support poor people with subsidised food has been approved, Telangana was granted *in principle* autonomy, and a few more privileges have been either eliminated or reduced.

Although the country remains far behind solving all its problems, Rahul Gandhi's fresh image and his party commitment to finally do something for real is helping the Congress Party Prime Minister candidate to strengthen his credibility and popularity, consequently raising the chances for the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty to succeed in the forthcoming general elections. Finally, it should not be underestimated the fact that the fulfilment of Rahul Gandhi's political plan has also been favoured by the weakness of his opponents. Regional leaders, who once announced their intention to compete together in 2014 elections, have not been able to identify a common candidate and they will probably never be able to do so. The BJP, instead, has recently endorsed their most controversial politician, Narendra Modi, to compete for the Prime Minister position.

In June, his appointment as head of BJP 2014 election campaign was not so well received within the party, itself. Veteran party leader Lal Krishna Advani and many other senior BJP leaders stayed away from the conclave in which this decision was taken, and some of them resigned right after the official announcement. They fear that "with Mr. Modi in charge, the BJP could turn off voters and coalition allies, throwing away a prime chance to win control of the government from the economy and scandal-plagued Congress Party."

There are two reasons why the BJP choose Modi. First, no alternatives were proposed, as the party seems unable to identify a less controversial charismatic leader. Second, since the country believes that most of Indian problems can be solved only re-launching economic growth, Modi's success in transforming Gujarat, the state where he has been serving as Chief Ministers for more than twelve years and where he was re-elected in December for a fourth consecutive term, into an economic powerhouse seemed sufficient to strengthen the support for his candidature. Actually, leaving aside the violence of 2002, even many of his detractors would concede that he has an enviable administrative record and a strong reputation for running a clean government. Accordingly, some analysts believe that "if there is one person in the BJP who has the potential to take it to its 180-odd seat robustness of the late 1990s, it does appear to be Modi."

It goes beyond the scope of this paper to discuss what happened during the 2002 Gujarat massacre, the role Modi (accused of doing little to stop the anti-Muslim riots which left more than 1,000 dead) may have played in it, the reasons why he is still refusing to apologize for what happened in the state he was then ruling, and whether he is right or not in stressing that today's Gujarat testifies that ethnical integration is possible when the economy is growing. However, before discussing Modi's strategy in an election campaign based "on bread-and-butter issues, on corruption and weak governance, on high prices and economic drift", and on exploiting a strong anti-estab-



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ishment mood”, it is useful to remind that the aftermath of 2002 makes Narendra Modi’s candidature difficult to accept for some allies, and a “dual-edged sword” even within his own party. Indeed, although the party should carefully consider whether it is worth risking to back him, knowing that this might mean a setback on the national stage in the short term, it is also true that it cannot wait for too long before putting forward its most popular internal candidate.

It is important to stress that after his nomination in June, Narendra Modi has started actively working on the political reinvention of both himself and his party running one of the most modern and expensive p.r. campaigns in India’s political history. This is something Modi has been used to do all over his political life, creating an efficient p.r. machinery regularly distributing books on “Vibrant Gujarat” or written by Modi himself, as well as videos and CDs recording his poems, his blog posts, his public speeches, and people praising him during interviews and TV programmes. Modi also has a Facebook page, whose introduction reads “if awards, honours and grants are to be taken as accolades, the verdict is clear. The recognition is not just statewide, it’s national and international. And, it’s the same Modi-Magic that has worked here.”

The image Modi has chosen for 2014 elections is the one of *vikas purush*, that is development man, trying to sell himself on his reputation for having brought development to Gujarat. He never loses the opportunity to stress the misdeeds and misfortunes of the present government, in particular the scandals and the impression that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is paralyzed by indecision. His aim is convincing the electorate that “general elections are about national issues, and that the national leader needs to be able to make a difference to their lives.” A self-promoting strategy that is enormously different from Rahul Gandhi’s law profile.

Actually, during the last few months this sober attitude caused Sonia’s son more than one problem. “When India’s technocratic prime minister, Manmohan Singh, came to office in 2004, his obvious shyness was widely applauded as a virtue, a sign of the probity and quiet dignity of the accidental politician.” More recently, his diffidence and silence has taken a darker cast as he is more and more seen as a leader refusing to address “a growing number of controversies swirling around him”. Some magazines (India Today) nicknamed him “Mr. Dolittle”, while others (Tehelka) started arguing “how long can the prime minister evade scrutiny in a season of scams?”, stressing (The Hindustan Times) that “his silence is now construed as weakness, his limited communication seems evidence of a leader with much to hide, and the ‘privacy’ argument is now seen as a sign of political nonaccountability.” These negative images have inevitably put Rahul Gandhi’s sober line in a bad light. Moreover, the fact that Rahul Gandhi was not that convincing when asked to deal with both the legacy of his father’s scandals (the most recent was disclosed in April after the release of a WikiLeaks cable accusing the former Premier of acting as the middleman for a Swedish airplane manufacturer, Saab Scania, which was trying to persuade the Indian Air Force to buy its Viggen fighter aircraft), and the consequences of the Italian Marines as well as the Finmeccanica (the Italian key player in defence systems) scandals, further damaged his reliability.

As far as the Congress Party is concerned, despite these problems, the reforms the government recently approved and the national Food Security Bill should help in consolidating its position within the country among both peasants & poors and business people & middle class. This does not mean that Modi has no more chances to fill this gap and fight for the Indian Prime Minister positions on equal terms. However, it remains a matter of fact that the BJP is undeniably worse today than it



India

was in 2009. “Five years ago it was in power in seven states, including Karnataka, its first full government in south India. Today, the BJP rules only four, two of which are the politically irrelevant Goa and Modi’s own Gujarat.” Moreover, even though an official apology may help Modi to strengthen his reliability with something going beyond his economic records, it is not sure whether this will be enough to collect the votes he needs to build a solid majority for running the country in 2014.

Although the “new” Congress Part lead by Rahul Gandhi, thanks to the reforms it has recently been able to approve, seems stronger than its opponents, it is still early to anticipate which coalition has more chances to be successful. Both parties are not yet offering new ideas “on foreign policy or India’s place in the world, on security and the pan-Indian themes that distinguish a national party from regional peers,” neither they are giving “the impression of a vibrant, engaging and intellectually exciting party.” General elections are scheduled for mid-2014, and it remains to be seen which party will change faster.



The commission communication on european defence industry

Claudio Catalano

On 24 July 2013, the European Commission published the communication “Towards a more competitive and efficient defence and security sector” COM(2013) 542 final. The communication follows up the initiatives started by Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the Commission and Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry, in order to strengthen the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB), such as the Task Force on Defence Industry and Markets and the communication on industrial policy “A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery” COM (2012) 582 final published on 10 October 2013.

The Communication on Defence Industry was long awaited, and it actually builds on the report by the Task Force on Defence Industry and Markets (see CEMISS Quarterly 1, 2013). The Communication would serve as a basis for the European Council in December 2013, for what regards the discussion on EDTIB and European Defence market.

Lessons learned from recent operations

The rationale is that the global scenario is changing, the distinction between internal and external security is blurring. Moreover, security threats are not only constituted by human being but may also originate from emerging technologies or natural disasters.

In this complex scenario, the United States are refocusing their interests towards the Asia-Pacific area and the Middle East. Since the Second World War, the United States has provided a security umbrella to the European States, by means of NATO. Nowadays, the European Member States have to assume responsibility for their own security. This means not only territorial defence, which is no longer a credible security threat for most of the European Member States - with the exception of a few newly accessed States in North-Eastern Europe - but to provide security in the neighbourhood.

This means to project force, that implies credible and up-to-date military capabilities.

The communication states: “To punch its weight, the EU needs to develop a credible CSDP. This evolution must be fully compatible with NATO and its principles”.

The NATO ‘Unified Protector’ operation in Libya in 2011 has shown shortfalls in key military capabilities of the European States. The lack of strategic lift has always been cited as the major European capability gap, but Libya has shown gaps in intelligence and targeting acquisition capabilities, in accuracy in precision guided bombs in ground strike, and even the lack of stockpiles of ammunitions. A lack of interoperability and logistic with non-NATO European Member States

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complicated military cooperation. Sweden's SAAB JAS 39 Gripen data link equipment has been modified to match NATO standards. However, the eight Swedish Gripens taking part to 'Unified Protector' could not utilise propellant at Sigonella US Navy Air station in Sicily as the only fuel available was the kerosene JP5 which is used for US navy aircraft and therefore it has a higher flash point for safety reasons because it is approved for carriers operations, while Gripens utilizes 'Kerosene 75' a variant of the civil fuel Jet A1 approved for use on Gripen. Jet A1 is the most common fuel in the world of jet aircraft. Gripen first mission was to be postponed while fuel was taken from a Swedish KC-130 tanker aircraft, and then the Swedes procured off the base from civilian aviation fuel suppliers the right type of jet fuel with higher costs.

Also bad was the lack of interoperability between major NATO and European Member States: the British RAF Eurofighter Typhoons and Tornados and the French Dassault Rafale and Mirage 2000 fighters showed off the limits of the rhetoric of the Anglo-French defence cooperation and the Lancaster House Treaty. On the contrary, the British RAF Eurofighter Typhoons and Tornados enjoyed the logistic support of Italian Air Force at Gioia del Colle Air Force Base, as RAF and Italian Air Force both operate Eurofighter Typhoons and Tornados, and share most of the components, but not the avionics. About 2,050 operational sorties were undertaken by RAF from the Italian site, which based British 22 aircraft at its peak. However, the British spent on 'Operation Ellamy' some £2.7 M for equipping and running the ground support for RAF in Gioia del Colle. This did not include the element of the £5.6 M air transport costs incurred by forces operating from the base. The main costs were to procure and send Eurofighter Typhoon spare parts, as a National Account Office (NAO) report on Eurofighter Typhoon published in the middle of the air campaign had outlined that RAF had not enough spare parts to keep on operational fly status the Eurofighter fleet. Another £1.3 M per month was spent on hotels for RAF personnel based in Italy. British supporters of the Naval aviation claimed that a carrier operation in the Mediterranean would cost less than sustaining RAF squadrons in Italy. In December 2010, a few months before 'Operation Ellamy', the HMS Ark Royal had been decommissioned and the Harrier Joint Force disbanded. Cooperation has always been good between the European States who operate the Lockheed Martin F-16, and in particular for the European Participating Air Forces (EPAF), which are Belgium, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, which adopted the aircraft in the 1970s, and Portugal.

When Danish F-16 squadron lacked ammunitions, they procured these from the Netherlands and Poland. However, no NATO ally was in a position to supply precision bombs, and an acquisition was negotiated with Israel. RAF too procured from Israel additional Rafael Litening III designation pods – already utilised on Tornados - to equip Eurofighter Typhoon to obtain ground strike capabilities.

Mali intervention in 2013, again, needed intelligence and reconnaissance capabilities provided for by the United States, as since February 2013, two US Air Force Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) MQ-9 Reaper are stationed at Niamey Air Base, in Niger, together with a staff of 100 personnel to help the French military operation "Serval" with strategic aerial reconnaissance capabilities. Previously MQ-1 Predator UAVs have been stationed at Tamenrasset Air Base in Algeria for the same reason. French Air Force had to ask for help to other nations such as Germany and Belgium for strategic airlift. The French had a fleet of about 50 ageing C-160 Transall, while the first of 50 brand new Airbus A400M Grizzly has been delivered to the French only in early August

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2013. Handover of the first aircraft follows the July 31 receipt of Type Acceptance at the Initial Operating Clearance standard from the European Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR), which has been managing the A400M project on behalf of the seven-nation effort. Another two A400M are expected by the French Air Force before the end of the year. Actually A400M programme overcome serious technical problems, delivery delays and budget overruns that almost saw Airbus and the partners nations scrap the airlifter. Therefore, France had to overstretch its Transall fleet well beyond its extended operational life. Italy had exited the A400M programme in 2001, having bought Lockheed Martin C-130J and Alenia Aermacchi C-27J Spartan strategic and medium airlifters.

Italy too had promised UAVs, air transport and air refuelling capabilities to France, but had to drop its offer for political reasons, as the French request occurred during the “lame duck” time of the Monti government.

However, both UAVs, strategic Airlifters and Tankers for most European Air Forces, this is particularly true for Italy, which operates General Atomics MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper, Lockheed Martin C-130J and Boeing KC-767 tanker that are actually built by American aerospace companies.

European aerospace companies do not have a credible operational UAV, though there are many projects of reconnaissance UAVs and Combat UAVs, and only Airbus has in its catalogue strategic airlifters, such as the A400M, and tankers, such as the modified A330.

The impact of the crisis

The economic crisis shrinks the defence budget, and in particular the procurement and research and development funds, which focus on financing future programmes. Coordinated cuts being based on a common strategic plan could help in avoid duplications, and force armed forces to boost its efficiency, however, these cuts are decided on a national basis, and are not coordinated by Member States, so they just result into a loss of key capabilities. European Defence Market also has the problem of its persistent fragmentation, which leads to unnecessary duplication of capabilities, organisations and expenditures, more than 80% of investment in defence equipment being spent nationally.

According to the Commission:

“From 2001 to 2010 EU defence spending declined from €251 billion to €194 billion.... Between 2005 and 2010 there was a 14% decrease in European R&D budgets down to €9 billion; and the US alone spends today seven times more on defence R&D than all 27 EU Member States together.”

While the budgets are shrinking, the cost of up-to-date capability increases due to the long-term trend of growing technological complexity of defence equipment.

Defence budgets are falling, and the cost of modern capabilities is rising. These cost increases come from what it is known in the literature as the ‘Augustine law’. Norman Augustine’s most cited law is number 16, which shows that defence budgets grow linearly but the unit cost of a new

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military aircraft grows exponentially:

“In the year 2054, the entire defence budget will purchase just one aircraft. This aircraft will have to be shared by the Air Force and Navy 3½ days each per week except for leap year, when it will be made available to the Marines for the extra day.”

A part from Augustine law, the other bad news is that we have missed the Cold War ‘peace dividend’, which resulted from the drop in military personnel expenses. The peace dividend will not come back again, while the reduction of production volumes which are due to the reorganisation and downsizing of European armed forces since the end of the Cold War will continue to shape defence markets in Europe by raising costs, regardless of budget levels.

According to the commission:

“This situation has knock-on effects for an industry that plays a crucial role in the wider European economy. With a turnover of €96 billion in 2012 alone, it is a major industrial sector, generating innovation and centred on high-end engineering and technologies. Its cutting-edge research has created important indirect effects in other sectors, such as electronics, space and civil aviation and provides growth and thousands of highly skilled jobs. Defence industry in Europe directly employs about 400,000 people and generates up to another 960,000 indirect jobs. It is, therefore, a sector that is essential to retain if Europe is to remain a world-leading centre for manufacturing and innovation. This is why action to strengthen the competitiveness of the defence industry is a key part of the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.”

Moreover, defence industry is not only a matter of jobs and turnover, there are immaterial positive effects deriving from a function EDTIB, which affect the whole economic system, by means of technological spill over.

The commission also accepts what it has become a feature of French strategic doctrine, as the latest 2013 Defence and Security White Book shows, or the need of a certain degree of ‘strategic autonomy’ in technological and industrial terms:

“To be a credible and reliable partner, Europe must be able to decide and to act without depending on the capabilities of third parties. Security of supply, access to critical technologies and operational sovereignty are therefore crucial.”

The commission also incorporates ideas from the discussion paper termed “non-paper” of the Task Force on Defence Industry and Markets published on 6 June 2012.

The non-paper states that the current competitiveness is residual, because it is based on investments made several years ago and the lack of new investments and new programs represent a danger for the future:

“A major casualty in defence budgets has been spending on Research & Technology which is

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crucial for the development of the next generation of equipment. Cuts in current military programmes and the apparent lack of new ones are also contributing to the erosion of the EDTIB which was already suffering from structural underinvestment”.

The Task Force notes that the European defence industry is focusing on emerging markets and high growth potential, to try to address the decline in national defence budgets.

Therefore, the commission states that:

“Currently defence companies are surviving on the benefits of R&D investment of the past and have been able to successfully replace falling national orders with exports. However, this often comes at the price of transfers of technology, IPRs and production outside the EU. This in turn has serious implications for the long-term competitiveness of the EDTIB.”

The commission adopts the motto of the Task Force stated that *“if spending more is difficult, spending better is a necessity”.*

There is still hope, as according to SIPRI, in spite of cuts, in 2011 EU Member States together still spent more on defence than China, Russia and Japan together. The EU still has a considerable strategic military potential, Member States have around 1.6 M soldiers and annual defence budgets of €194 Bn, but there is no common strategy and not enough cooperation.

The commission states that:

“Budgetary constraints must therefore be compensated by greater cooperation and more efficient use of resources. This can be done via supporting clusters, role specialisation, joint research and procurement, a new, more dynamic approach to civil-military synergies and more market integration.”

However, international cooperation is an old solution for new problems, some kind of mantra; this may not be the right answer to the existing situation.

The Commission’ strategy

The commission has been trying for a reasonable time to get competence on Defence sector, which is an exclusive element of Member State’s sovereignty. The first attempt was the interpretation on art.296 of the Treaty on the EU (now art.346 of the Lisbon Treaty). Soon this was followed by the two Directives on defence and sensitive security procurement (2009/81/EC) and transfers of military goods (2009/43/EC). The two directives have recently entered into force, however they are not yet fully implemented and it is difficult to assess their contribution to the creation of a European defence single market. Other initiatives on security and space sectors, namely in the 7th Framework Programme (FP), or on maritime or border control, with the assistance of the new EU agencies, have been more successful, but defence is still lagging behind because of major Member States resistance to the commission initiatives.

With the communication on EDTIB, the Commission would like to:

“• Further deepen the internal market for defence and security. This means first of all to ensure

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the full application of the two existing Directives. Based on this acquis, the Commission will also tackle market distortions and contribute to improving security of supply between Member States;

- *Strengthen the competitiveness of the EDTIB. To this end, the Commission will develop a defence industrial policy based on two key strands:*

- *Support for competitiveness – including developing 'hybrid standards' to benefit security and defence markets and examining the ways to develop a European certification system for military airworthiness.*

- *Support for SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises)– including development of a European Strategic Cluster Partnership to provide links with other clusters and support defence-related SMEs in global competition.*

- *Exploit civilian military synergies to the maximum extent possible in order to ensure the most efficient use of European tax payers' resources. In particular by:*

- *concentrating its efforts on possible cross-fertilisation between civil and military research and the dual-use potential of space;*

- *helping armed forces reduce their energy consumption and thereby contribute to the Union's 20/20/20 targets”.*

Furthermore, the Commission suggests the European Council in December 2013, to discuss the above said initiatives, and to assess the possibility of building dual-use capabilities owned by the EU itself, to complement national capabilities, and to boost CSDP-related research in common areas of interest.

The communication proposes and Action Plan with a series of actions which are coherent and compatible with the relevant financial instruments established under the Multi-annual Financial Framework:

First by strengthening the internal market for defence by:

- **Ensure market efficiency**, by implementing directive 2009/81/EC and the Commission together with the EDA will monitor the openness of Member States' defence markets and regularly assess via the EU's Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) and other specialised sources how the new procurement rules are applied.

A central procurement process should be obtained, for those contracts not under cooperative scheme.

- **Tackle market distortions**, the Commission will tackle persisting unfair and discriminatory practices and market distortions, in particular will ensure the rapid phasing out of offsets. The Commission will control merger and acquisition and state aid, in compliance with art.346 TFEU.

- **Improve Security of Supply**, which is a national prerogative but it is crucial for the functioning of the defence market and common industrial supply chains. The directive 2009/43/EC is an instrument to develop a new licensing system to facilitate the movement of defence items within the internal market.

Security of supply depends also on the control and ownership of critical industrial and technological assets. Several Member States have national legislation for the control of foreign investment in defence industries, but a European approach may be needed to cope with this challenge, by means of a Commission Green Paper to consult stakeholders on possible shortfalls of the current

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system on the control of defence and sensitive security industrial capabilities.

Secondly by promoting a **more competitive defence industry** with more co-operation and regional specialisation around and between networks of excellence. European defence companies shall have a sound

business environment in Europe to enhance their competitiveness in the global market.

This would imply Standardisation by setting European civil-military 'Hybrid Standards', as most standards used in EU defence are civilian and specific defence standards are developed nationally, and not in duplication with the standards-related work of NATO and other relevant bodies. The Commission has already issued a standardization request for such a 'hybrid standard' in 2012 for Software Defined Radio. The next standards requests include Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear & Explosives (CBRNE) detection and sampling standards, emerging technologies, such as UAVs, data sharing standards, encryption and other critical information

communication technologies, and established areas, such as in camp protection.

The lack of a common system of certification of defence products, in particular airworthiness, acts as a major bottleneck delaying the placing of products on the market and adds substantially to costs throughout the life-cycle of the product. For military airworthiness this means adding 50% to the development time and 20% to the costs of development. This is true also for ammunition, where the lack of a common certification for ground launched ammunition is estimated to cost Europe €1,5 Bn each year (out of a total of €7,5 Bn spent on ammunition each year). The airworthiness may build on the experience of civil agency EASA.

A key element of the EU overall raw materials strategy consists of a list of raw materials, including rare earths that are considered to be of critical importance to the EU economy and subject to increased supply risks. The current list is expected to be revised by end 2013.

SMEs may be included into clusters thus creating networks of excellence bringing together prime contractors, SMEs, research institutes and other academic sectors.

The Commission will conceive with Industry a European Strategic Cluster Partnership.

A restructuring of EDTIB will also take account of centres of excellence and technology skills, as stated by the European Council in December 2008.

The Commission is also keen in exploiting dual-use technologies to boost spill over effects in civilian and military research and innovation. There have been initiatives in the security theme of the 7th FP, in CBRNE, cyber security, and SESAR Joint Undertaking has launched research activities on cyber security in the field of Air Traffic Management and in the insertion of RPAS in European aviation system. The future Horizon 2020 item "Leadership in Enabling and Industrial Technologies" shall include the "Key Enabling Technologies" (KETs) and "Secure Societies" (Societal Challenge) for dual-use research.

The Commission intends to support a pre-commercial procurement for prototypes in CBRNE detection, RPAS and communication equipment based on software defined radio technology. The Commission will support CSDP-related Research, such as through a Preparatory Action, in areas where EU defence capabilities would be most needed, in synergy with national research programmes.

The Commission is already working on non-military capability in internal and external security, civil protection, crisis management, cyber security, protection of external borders and maritime

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surveillance. The Commission will continue to enhance interoperability of information service sharing between civilian and defence users as piloted by the Common Information Sharing Environment for Maritime Surveillance. The Commission will explore together with Member States the establishment of a civil-military cooperation group in the areas of detection technologies, and methods to counter improvised explosive devices (C-IED), man-portable air defence systems (MANPADs) and other relevant threats, such as CBRNE threats.

The EU already has space programmes, like Galileo, Copernicus and GMES, but unlike other space-faring nations, in the EU there is no connection between civil and military space activities. A number of areas exist where dual-use technologies will reduce costs and improve efficiency:

- Protecting space infrastructures by identify and monitor satellites and space debris. This activity is known as space surveillance and tracking (SST), and is based on ground-based sensors such as telescopes and radars. European satellite and launch operators are dependent on US data for anti-collision alerts. Therefore a proposal for a European SST service built on a network of existing SST assets owned by Member States has been put forward by the Commission in 2013.

Most Satellite Communications (SATCOM), in particular military SATCOMs will come to the end of their operational life by 2020, the Commission would act to overcome the fragmentation of demand for security SATCOM, encourage the pooling of European military and security commercial SATCOM demand, and develop the next generation of government-owned MILSATCOM capability at European level.

The next generation of high resolution imagery satellites by 2025 is also needed for CSDP operations planning and early warning. These satellites may be developed both for civilian and military use with advanced technologies such as hyper-spectral, high resolution satellites in geostationary orbit or advanced ultra-high resolution satellites in combination with new sensor platforms such as UAVs.

An efficient energy policy is required for the military, as already stated in the Task Force non-paper, by applying EU policy and support instruments in the defence sector. The combined annual expenditures for electricity of armed forces of Member States sum up to an estimated total of more €1 Bn making them, the biggest public consumers of energy in the EU. Since fossil fuels is the main source to meet these energy needs, this expose defence budgets to risks of price increases. Therefore, to improve security of supply and reduce operational expenditures, armed forces shall look for energy efficiency.

With an estimated total of 200 million square meters of buildings and 1% of Europe's total land surface, the armed forces are also the largest public owner of free land and infrastructures in the EU. Armed forces could exploit this potential to reduce their energy needs and cover a considerable part of these needs from their own low-emission and autonomous sources.

The Commission has developed the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan to promote innovative and low-carbon energy technologies which have better efficiencies and are more sustainable than existing energy technologies. Armed forces may take advantage of SET emerging energy technologies.

By mid-2014, the Commission will set up a specific consultation mechanism with Member States defence experts to focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy and alternative fuels; and energy infrastructure, including the use of smart grid technologies.

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The Commission will focus on the application of Directive 2012/27/EU in the defence sector, and support the European armed forces GO GREEN demonstration project on photovoltaic energy, possibly expanding it to other renewable energy sources such as wind, biomass and hydro.

Europe has an economic interest to support the military exports of its defence industry to third countries, given the shrinking national defence budgets. Such exports should be authorised in accordance with the political principles laid down in Common Position 2008/944/CFSP, adopted on 8 December 2008, and in accordance with the Arms Trade Treaty adopted on 2 April 2013 by the General Assembly of the UN.

The dual-use export controls closely complement arms trade controls and are key for EU security as well as for the competitiveness of many companies in the aerospace, defence and security sectors. The Commission has initiated a review of the EU export control policy and has conducted a broad public consultation, which conclusions are presented in a Commission Staff Working Document issued in January 2013.

The Commission will present an impact assessment report on the implementation of Regulation 428/2009/EC and will follow up with a Communication on a long-term vision for EU strategic export controls and concrete policy initiatives to adapt export controls to rapidly changing technological, economic and political conditions. This may include proposals for legislative amendments to the EU export control system.

The Commission communication has touched many subjects with great expectations, and it has identified actions and initiatives. It now needs to put flesh on the bones. The Commission shall develop a detailed roadmap for the areas defined in this Communication with concrete actions and timelines. The Commission will set up a specific consultation mechanism with national authorities to implement the roadmap. The mechanism can take different forms, depending on the policy area under discussion. The EDA and the External Action Service will be associated to this consultation mechanism. This can be another administrative layer, which is not supposed to be the right solution. An old political saying tells that to solve an unsolvable problem you can just build up an ad hoc committee.



Australia's geostrategy and the last Defence White Paper

Stefano Felician Beccari

In May 2013 the Australian Government has presented a new Defence White Paper, which <<presents the Government's long-term strategic direction and commitments for Australia's national defence as well as future capability requirements>>. This document replaces the 2009 White Paper, and reflects the changes in Australia's geostrategy. The new Defence White Paper (DWP) also analyses the future developments of Australian defence, especially about naval, air and command and control technologies. It is an important document to understand the present and the future of Australia's defence and the reasons behind the new Australian approach in Asia. Canberra has decided to show its geostrategic vision despite the incoming national elections (Autumn 2013) and a serious crisis in the government. But it is unlikely that security and defence will have an important role in the next political competition.

The 2013 Defence White Paper: an overview

According to the official definition of the Australian Department of Defence (ADOD) <<Defence White Papers are Australia's principal public policy documents regarding Defence>>, and they are usually published every five years. The last Defence White Paper (DWP), has been published in May 2013, and follows the recent National Security Strategy, released on 23 January 2013 ("Strong and secure: a strategy for Australia's national security"). This DWP is a comprehensive publication of 130 pages structured on thirteen chapters. The document <<addresses the range of significant international and domestic developments since 2009, which influence Australia's national security and defence settings, including their impact on force posture, future force and the Defence budget>>, including some specific sections for personnel, defence industry, science and technology. The <<cornerstone of Australia's national security>> consists mainly in the Australian Defence Force or ADF (the Australian Armed Forces) but the DWP does not limit its analyses to military threats. Most of the references inside the document are more useful for diplomats and politicians than for military personnel: the role of the ADF should be mainly intended as a force multiplier to back the political agenda of the Australian government. According to DWP, Australia's security cannot be based on an introvert approach anymore, but it should be pursued according to the changes of the regional context around Australia. The difficulty to manage the current challenges requires a deeper commitment of Australia in Asia and beyond, and therefore a change in Canberra's foreign policy.



Pacific (Japan-Korea-ASEAN Countries-Australia)

A double-headed eagle: threats in the “Indo-Pacific” and Australia’s <<key strategic interests>>

When four years ago the 2009 DWP was released, the headline was clear: “Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific century: force 2030”. This DWP was focused on the Pacific side of Asia, and especially on China’s rise. A section named “The strategic implications of the rise of China” was one of the most controversial paragraph of the book, because it outlined the <<concern>> about the pace of China’s military modernization¹. But the edition of 2013 has introduced a new element in Australia’s geostrategy, the “Indo-Pacific (IP) arc”. This concept (<<strategic construct>>), already expressed in other official documents of the Government, cannot be considered as a simple modification of the “Asia-Pacific” approach. The new IP concept is a <<logical extension>> of the previous, which enlarges Australia’s attention also to the Indian Ocean and the developments of the area. In geographical terms the IP is intended as a <<system>> composed by two <<sub-regions>>, South Asia, or the Indian Ocean region, and Pacific Asia, comprising Far East Asia and South East Asia. These are very different, but both present some common features and interdependencies. Canberra’s geostrategy seems now a double-headed eagle, looking both on its East and on its West. In this new Indo-Pacific arc there are three elements that Australian geopolitics should take into consideration: threats, friends (allies) and foes. The first are quite easy to identify. The IP area is not only characterized by the rise of two global powers (India and China), but also by other threats, plus a fragmented series of regional tensions and rivalries. Aside from these, there are also some concerns related to regional economy, the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC), vital for Australia’s survival, and the impact of the economic crisis in Asia. Therefore, the security threats can be grouped in two categories: some are specific to geographical regions, some other are common to both the areas.

Threats	South Asia (Indian Ocean)	Pacific Asia (Pacific Ocean)
Emerging global power	India	China
Emerging regional power(s)	-	Vietnam, Indonesia, South Korea
Nuclear issues	India, Pakistan	DPRK and long-range missiles
Main bilateral tensions	India-Pakistan border	China-Japan, China-US
Regional/multilateral tensions	-	South China Sea, Korean peninsula
Unstable countries	Afghanistan	-

Common Threats in the Indo-Pacific arc
Terrorism
Cyber domain/Cyberspace
Current rearmament in many countries
Economy, commerce, energy, Sea Lines of Communication
Climate change and natural disasters

Pacific **(Japan-Korea-ASEAN Countries-Australia)**

In this context Australia's security and defence policy identifies four <<key strategic interests>>, starting from the national to the global level. The first is the defence of Australia's integrity and sovereignty against any possible aggression or attack, although unlikely. The other two interests reflect the regional approach of the country, and focus on <<a secure South Pacific and Timor Leste>> but especially on a <<Stable Indo-Pacific>>, the latter underpinned by the presence of the United States. The fourth is a general <<a stable, rules-based global order>>, involving the role of the United Nations. Besides the obvious defence of Australian borders and a general wish for a global "stable order", the introduction of the Indo-Pacific arc represents a major shift in Australia's foreign policy. South Asia and Pacific Asia are very diverse, but both are strategic for Canberra's security: the evolutions in these two "pillars" cannot be ignored anymore, and require coordinated actions with partners and allies against possible enemies and threats.

Many friends, no foes?

In this evolving scenario it is important to clearly identify Australia's allies and, maybe, enemies. The DWP constantly underlines the need of a deeper and more effective cooperation in the region to face the current difficulties. It is clear that Australia, a middle power, cannot face alone the future challenges and opportunities of the IP, but it <<needs to create and deepen defence partnerships and contribute to a regional security architecture, while maintaining and enhancing our Alliance with the United States>>. The United States plays a pivotal role in the definition of Australia's defence security. The US-Australia alliance is the <<most important defence relationship [...] a pillar of Australia's strategic and security arrangements>>. The proximity between Washington and Canberra is a traditional element in Australian foreign policy, but in the last years the relations between the countries have been deepened also in military terms. Since the famous "Canberra's address" pronounced by Barack Obama in the Australian Parliament (November 2011), the US military presence in the Pacific country has grown. In the future years Australia will host up to 2.500 US troops on a rotational base. They will take part in combined exercises and trainings with ADF and other US partners in the Pacific, while reinforcing US presence in the region. Regularly US troops and ADF units organize combined trainings, even on large-scale drills, such as the incoming edition of the bilateral exercise *Talisman Sabre*, scheduled for summer 2013. Military cooperation between US and Australia involves also other fields, such as procurement, space, communications and especially the Joint Defence Facility "Pine Gap" (near Alice Springs) which <<contributes to the intelligence collection capabilities of both countries>>. A leading presence of the US in the Pacific is crucial for Australia, and Canberra <<strongly supports the continued engagement and enhanced presence of the US in the region>>. After the US, New Zealand holds a special position in the WDP. Australia and New Zealand <<share a close defence relationship>>, and the island is the closest regional ally for Canberra. The relations between Australia and Indonesia are also interesting, and it is worth noting that Indonesia the first state which follows the US in the DWP. Canberra's Department of Foreign Affairs and trade define the relation as <<one of Australia's most important bilateral relationships. Our countries enjoy a highly productive partnership that encompasses political, security, commercial and people-to-people links>>. DWP in this regard uses the same words, adding that <<Australia's longstanding partnership with Indonesia remains our most important defence relationship in the region>>, and in recent years it



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<<has developed significantly>>. In 2012 the two countries signed a “Defence cooperation arrangement” to deepen the bilateral efforts in fields like counter terrorism, peace-keeping, bilateral exercises, exchanges of units and humanitarian assistance. One of the main security issues between Jakarta and Canberra is related to the increasing amount of illegal immigrants that reach Australia passing through Indonesian waters and borders. The number of migrants has increased in 2013, and it will probably be a hot topic for the incoming Australian elections. Australia has more allies in the Pacific region than in the Indian one. South Korea, Japan, Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore are important partners for Canberra, while relations are improving with Vietnam and they are normal with Brunei, Cambodia and Laos. In the South Asia, Pakistan is defined as <<an important partner>> but especially for the efforts related to Afghanistan’s stabilization, in which nearly 1,550 ADF soldiers are involved. The most striking contrast with the 2009 DWP is the vague words about the “enemies” of Australia, or, at least, China, the “concern” highlighted in 2009. The 2013 edition has considerably softened Canberra’s view about Beijing. While in the 2009 DWP China’s military developments were clearly identified as a “cause of concern”, in the new edition this paragraph has been deleted and replaced with a new reference to “US-China relations” and some more general considerations on the latest Chinese developments. The change of the Australian approach is radical. The new DWP says that <<Australia welcomes China’s rise>> and <<with China’s global interests expanding, it is becoming more active on a broader range of international issues>>, affirming that military modernization is a <<natural and legitimate outcome of China’s economic growth>>. In other words, it seems that Australia has no more “enemies” or rivals, but just allies and friends. Is this the real position of the government? Is Australia really living in a cooperative, safe and loyal neighborhood? There are some blatant contrasts between the polite words of this DWP and the reality of the IP arc. The first consideration is related to the enlarged range of Australian geostrategy. Why is Canberra so concerned about the evolution in the South Asia, instead of relying on the traditional “Pacific Asia” approach? It is quite evident that the instability of this area (especially the rise of India, the uncertain future of Afghanistan and the fragility of Pakistan) can seriously affect the real interests of Australia: the sea lines of communication which cross the Indian Ocean are vital for Canberra’s economy. A crisis or a conflict in South Asia would have a relevant impact on the economy of the whole country. The second consideration is about the role of the US. The DWP mentions it many times, as the cornerstone of Australia’s security, and wishes a deeper involvement of Washington in the region. Such request should sound unnecessary if the neighborhood were so stable or secure. The third is about the growing network of military-to-military contacts that ADOD is doing, from reinforcing the traditional Asian relations to even search for cooperation with new partners. These activities are necessary to exert power in both the regions, reinforcing the network of Australian allies. Fourth is the role of defence modernization, another key feature of this 2013 DWP, and one of the main driving forces of the whole IP arc.

Australia’s defence modernization

The positive words of the 2013 DWP hide some serious concerns about the “regional military modernization”, a polite sentence which refers to the new “arms race” in Asia. The economic growth of the whole region is stimulating a tough program of military modernization in many

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countries, eager to acquire state-of-the art technologies to counter the developments of the other competitors. Many analysts focus their attention on the recent rise of Chinese defence expenditure, but today nearly all the countries in Pacific Asia are re-equipping their own forces. As many other players, Australia needs to update its defence to counter future threats and to enable ADF cooperation with US defence, essential to maintain the region secure. This challenge is huge but the budget is limited. Therefore, ADOD is concentrating its procurement efforts in three fields: joint ADF capabilities, maritime and air technologies. Developing a new joint approach for ADF is a priority to guarantee the future superiority and interoperability in the region. Electronic warfare, Command, Control, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C2ISR) systems, situational awareness and the evolution of cyber capabilities are crucial assets to <<maximise the output of our current and future force>>, especially in the most likely scenario of confrontation, the amphibious domain. Amphibious operations require a full integration between ships, aircrafts, amphibious vehicles and land forces, with a robust C2ISR system. This field is one of the priorities for the ADF, and it will be enhanced by the acquisition of two new Landing Helicopter Dock amphibious ships (HMAS “Canberra” and HMAS “Adelaide”). These units will be delivered in the next years and, according to the DWP, they <<will be a significant milestone in the development of the ADF’s capacity to deploy and sustain military power across a range of contingencies>>. ADOD is also acquiring twelve new electronic attack aircrafts, the EA-18 G “Growler”, a state-of-the art technology and an essential asset to dominate the battlespace. Modernization of the naval forces is also a priority for the government. In addition to the amphibious ships, in the next years the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) will considerably increase the submarine fleet, which today relies on six Collins-class submarines commissioned in 1996. The DWP has confirmed ADOD’s interest in replacing the existing Collins-class with twelve future conventional submarines, under the programme named “Future Submarine program”. Instead of buying off-the-shelf technologies, the Government has decided to invest more resources in a national shipbuilding plan. The future submarines <<will be assembled in South Australia>> sharing the needed know-how with other state agencies, some Commonwealth nations and the USA. In this field China and Vietnam are leading the charge, and in the next years it is highly probable that many other states will follow. Submarines’ unique features are fundamental in the maritime environment of the Indo-Pacific arc. Eventually, other cutting-edge technology will be delivered to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), which is already equipped with F18 Hornet. The future aircraft chosen by the Government is the F35 Joint Strike Fighter. ADOD is one of the largest buyer of the Joint Strike Fighter (Australia has planned to buy 100 F35) and the ADF will equip three squadrons with the new airplanes. F 35 will provide tremendous superiority to RAAF against any other competitor in the region, but it will also allow more cooperation and interoperability with the US and, in the future, Japan. At the end of the day it is quite clear that DWP words seems to recall an old adage: *si vis pacem para bellum*. An approach based on cooperation is important, but is even more important to be ready to face the future conventional and unconventional threats: the vast procurement programme of Australia seems to reflect it.

Despite the clear vision highlighted in the 2013 DWP, the link with the US and a broader attention also towards the developments in the Indian Ocean, many analysts are quite sceptical about the



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real impact of this paper. A broader area of interests requires more funding for the ADF, stressing the limited budget of the ADOD. Other criticize the excessive “political correctness” of this DWP and his “soft” approach about the possible rival(s) of Australia; then there is the risk of the elections. Are we sure that the new government will follow the 2013 approach to national security and defence? It is possible to criticize the DWP in many ways, but it is evident that Australia is looking for a more proactive role in its surrounding region. The new IP approach and a tough ADF modernization programme are “hard” messages compared to the “soft” words of the “friends and foes” discussion. The only open question is the result of the political elections scheduled for September. Defence and security issues do not seem to be a priority in this electoral campaign, but future crisis in the region can open again this debate.

¹ <<China will also be the strongest Asian military power, by a considerable margin. Its military modernization will be increasingly characterized by the development of power projection capabilities. A major power of China's stature can be expected to develop a globally significant military capability befitting its size. But the pace, scope and structure of China's military modernization have the potential to give its neighbours cause for concern if not carefully explained, and if China does not reach out to others to build confidence regarding its military plans>>, *Australia White Defence Paper 2009*, §4.26, p. 34 .

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Central Asia is preparing to 2014: What role for regional leaders?

Lorena Di Placido

Security analysts believe that the withdrawal of the multinational forces from Afghanistan, scheduled for the end of 2014, could generate a situation of further instability in the Central Asian space: no longer engaged within Afghanistan and stronger due to the experience gained in recent years, groups of fighters could decide to reorganize in Central Asian countries and restart new extremist activity. Such was the result of the withdrawal of the Soviets from Afghanistan in 1988, which resulted in the repatriation of Islamic militants from Southeast Asia in their countries of origin where, thanks to financial networks and logistics expertise gained, they reorganized into extremist groups in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. In recent years, some episodes have shown that a deterioration of the overall security of the Central Asian region is already in place and that if there were added a coordinated activity of any religious extremists, the margins for a proper management of the area would be dangerously reduced. Thus, the ethnic clashes in Xinjiang (2009, 2013) and Osh (Kyrgyzstan, 2010), the violent protests and religious activism in Zhanaozen, terrorists in Kazakhstan (2011-2012), the instability in the Gorno Badakhshan (Tajikistan, 2012), are signs of the weaknesses already present in each of these countries, where threats contained so far are likely to generate exponential effects.

Although the withdrawal of the various components of ISAF will not result in a complete release of the multinational forces, the situation requires a rethinking of security management, both within each state and at a regional level in a multilateral framework.

Close, but not too close In June 2012, Uzbekistan has suspended its participation in CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization), and thus confirming its departure from the Organization in December. The decision would seem to be the final outcome of a fluctuating membership, influenced by the willingness of the national leadership to safeguard the country's independence with respect to Moscow's interference (engine and leader of the CSTO) and the prospects for deeper integration and interoperability between the members. In order to strengthen Uzbekistan's independence in terms of foreign military presence on its soil, in July 2012, the authorities in Tashkent declared that they would not grant bases to foreign forces on Uzbek territory. Seeing ISAF's imminent withdrawal from Afghanistan, Uzbekistan has started preparing for a potentially destabilizing scenario after 2014 working on two fronts, namely the strengthening of bilateral relations with Moscow and taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the transit of ISAF forces in retreat from Afghanistan thus improving its military equipment.



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Since the creation of a post-Soviet Uzbekistan required building a strong national identity, free from the constraints of the former motherland, traditional ties with Moscow have been delicate for the independence of the state. If at the multilateral level (CSTO) any conditioning suffered by Tashkent was incompatible with national interest, the formula of the bilateral relationship would seem instead easy to develop as a functional link with Moscow, especially with regards to the economic sphere. Among the issues discussed during a visit by President Islam Karimov to Moscow, on April 15th, Uzbek position towards Russia has been clearly defined. In fact, Karimov appreciated: the establishment of closer economic relations (through Uzbekistan's participation to the Free Trade Area of CIS), Russia's mediation in disputes over the exploitation of water resources of interest to Uzbekistan, the possible exchange of information between their respective departments, as well as recognition of Moscow's positive role for regional stability, but without foreign military presence on Uzbek ground. The need to strengthen the capacity of the security forces inside the country, however, remains and is made more urgent by incursions of Afghan armed civilians that have occurred since the beginning of the year along the border with Afghanistan. Particularly serious was the incident of March 14th, when 30 Afghans breached the border with Uzbekistan, engaging in a firefight with border guards, in which three of them died. To a certain extent, for Tashkent the withdrawal of ISAF itself may be an opportunity for transit agreements, which provide for payment in military vehicles and equipment. In the case of the agreement with the United Kingdom, in fact, in Uzbekistan were left vehicles and trucks of British forces valued at \$ 700,000.

Leadership and responsibilities Kazakhstan has promulgated, 4 January 2013, a new law to combat terrorism. This law comes after the 2011 law, and was passed because in 2012 radical religious groups' activities, with connections in the Afghanistan and Pakistan border, have emerged in the country. The secularism of the Kazakh population, the secular nature of the state structure and the rejection of extremism shown by large sectors of the population give the idea that Kazakhstan could stem radical preaching and recruitment by jihadist groups. Nonetheless, some groups took hold in the country and even though jihadist groups are not present on the territory, still they have been able to carry out attacks on Kazakh territory. Only in some cases, security forces were able to mount preventive operations and neutralize terrorist groups before acting, but failing to reach a satisfactory level of efficiency, often creating collateral damage and, in some cases, with human losses among the agents themselves. President Nursultan Nazarbaev has been very critical of the lack of professionalism shown by security forces and provided proper tools to security forces outlining a new legal tool to fight terrorism. Based on what has already been shared within SCO and CIS, the new law enacted on January 2013 strengthens preventive measures (through cooperation with religious authorities, anti-terrorism education in schools and public information campaigns) and introduces a qualitative leap in the training of personnel for minimize collateral damage in the course of operations. Beyond the reasonable need to adopt a more qualified staff employed in combating the phenomenon of terrorism, the law is motivated by a deep fear of the authorities of a drift extremist among the population. Kazakhstan also has been involved for several years in projects to assist the consolidation of Afghan institutions, education, reconstruction, aid to productive activities in order to integrate Afghanistan in the regional context. In the visit to Kabul on

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April 10, Kazakh Minister of Defense, Adilbek Dzhaksybekov, also discussed modernization of equipment and training of the Afghan armed forces of the same military institutions in Kazakhstan. In this way, Kazakh leadership tried to create in Afghanistan itself the abilities to stem extremism and strengthen national and regional security.

The Soviet legacy and the new dynamics of cooperation In the period of post-Soviet transition, the newly independent Central Asian republics have had to face three kinds of problems related to: constitutional development, pre-existing relationship with Russia; expanded relationships and relations with regional and extra-regional actors. With regard to the first point, each state created its own identity recovering the historical and, above all, traditional memory, looking for plausible roots in the past that might act as a bond of identity for the multi-ethnic population groups living in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. With ups and downs (first of all, the civil war that has affected Tajikistan in the years 1992-97) and heavily reliant on the figure of powerful charismatic leaders, each post-soviet republic found its own way to transition, while facing the legacy of the relationship with Russia and the new opportunities presented by cooperation with regional powers such as China Turkey, India and, to a lesser extent, Iran. In any economic, energy or commercial relations established by stronger countries in terms of identity and state of territorial control (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan) there is a substantial parity with foreign counterparts, while in the case of weaker entities (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) the relationship with third countries has often drawn in a neocolonial way. In this synthetic framework, Russia plays a role in some extent based on strong traditional relationships, privileged channels of communication and transportation networks, but nevertheless made complex due to difficulties related to the treatment of the Russian minority in the former soviet republics. Moreover, mutual relations between the Central Asian republics have long remained difficult and influenced by the re-emergence of issues which were frozen during Soviet rule, resulting in some critical situations, sometimes even coming into open conflict, which prevented the maturing of a complete regional cooperation (i.e.: the management of energy and water resources, and the treatment of minorities, the definition of national boundaries). In the face of contrasts still open (basically between Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) some Central Asian countries have, however, established fruitful bi-and trilateral relations, such as between Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan mainly concerning the export of gas to China. To strengthen the hypothesis of a possible cooperation between the Central Asian republics intervened the agreements recently signed between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, which are interesting for the possible definition of a better course of inter-state relations in the region. The strengthening of bilateral relations between the two regional pivot could initiate a further a strictly regional relations.

The common interests of Karimov and Nazarbayev

On June 14th, the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev has traveled to Uzbekistan, where he held talks with Islam Karimov. It was an occasion full of celebratory aspects, which marked a qualitative leap in relations between the two most active Central Asian republics, not only for the signing of a strategic partnership agreement and a number of other bilateral treaties, but also for the emerging common interest related to threats to regional security posed by cross-border traf-



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ficking and the plight of Afghanistan. In particular, the parties agreed to a mutual protection within international and regional organizations and institutions, such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The management of regional water resources has pledged part of the talks between the two leaders, determined to raise the issue of the exploitation of transboundary watercourses (Amu Darya and Syr Darya, but also Ily and Yrtysh that flow north from the Chinese Xinkiang in Kazakh territory) to the United Nations, in order to respect the needs of all users at the regional level. President Karimov said the need to verify the construction projects of new power plants (such as those of Rogun and Kambarata) by a careful examination by independent bodies and with the agreement of downstream countries. The matter is of considerable sensitivity to the region, to the point that, during a visit to Kazakhstan, in September, 2012, Karimov had warned that the water problems could even lead to armed confrontation.

Final considerations

On the threshold of 2014, Central Asia is unprepared to face the additional threats that are likely to spread in the region with the withdrawal of ISAF, adding to the problems remained unresolved since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The lack of security and trained and well-equipped armed forces, the porosity of the borders next to Afghanistan, the absence of a multilateral framework capable of addressing security issues represent some of the imitates that reduce the scope for effective security management in Central Asia. What emerges is a critical framework subject to further instability. It would be necessary a regional attempt to outline a reasonable containment of the threat. The above mentioned cases of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan show two different approaches, defensive and individualistic in the case of Uzbekistan, oriented towards bilateral cooperation with potentially positive implications for the entire regional space in the case of Kazakhstan. Although it is early to identify in these approaches a real new trend for regional cooperation, however the beginnings of structured cooperation could emerge thanking the regional pivot of Central Asia.



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Lucio Martino

Reasons for, and perspectives on, the cancellation of the Fourth Phase of the European Phased Adaptive Approach

This spring, the Department of Defense, in cancelling the fourth and last phase of the anti-missile defense system, removed one of the main obstacles to the launch of a new round of negotiations for the reduction in the number of nuclear weapon. NATO had announced the completion of the first phase last year at the Chicago summit. The fourth phase would have been characterized by the deployment of a quota of SM-3 Block IIB interceptor missiles in Poland, officially to protect the entire territory of the Atlantic Alliance from any future long range missile attack launched by Iran.

Hagel, the new Secretary of Defense, explained the decision to cancel the fourth phase of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) at a recent press conference simply as being necessary as part of a continuing re-assessment of a complete overhaul of the United States anti-missile defense system. The Obama Administration had decided to allocate part of the funds originally destined for the financing of the EPAA towards, instead, the acquisition of another fourteen Boeing Ground Based Interceptor (GBI) missiles. According to Secretary of Defense Hagel, the decision was driven by the need to respond as quickly as possible to a series of provocations from North Korea during the previous few months. Among these were the launch of a new satellite, the latest in a series of nuclear tests, and the start of what could be a new mobile intercontinental missile. The Obama Administration therefore intends to increase by fifty per cent the number of GBI deployed in Alaska, to confirm the construction of a second x-band radar station on the American continental platform, and to commence a multi-sectoral investigation into the impact, including environmental, of a third GBI launch base on the continental United States. The necessity of a third base has been suggested, for some time, by Congress.

Latest developments in the debate regarding missile defense

The Obama Administration plans to deploy two main strategic missile defense systems during the first few months of its second mandate. The first system is based on a relatively wide and fast ballistic carrier, the GBI, the second version of the smaller and slower naval-borne interceptor known as the Raytheon Standard Missile 3 (SM-3). While the first is deployed in Alaska and California to respond to a hypothetical North Korean missile attack, the second is planned to protect the interests and of the United States and their Allies in Europe from the, again hypothetical, threat from the, yet again hypothetical, Iranian long and medium range missile capacity.

The EPAA is based on a network of naval and land radar installations and a quota of missile inter-



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ceptors currently on board the U.S. Navy vessels Ticonderoga and Arleigh Burke. As much as the United States and NATO have repeatedly stated that the EPAA would never compromise the effectiveness of the Russian strategic deterrent, the preoccupations expressed by the authorities in Moscow do not seem to be without foundation, in that they are shared by several American experts in strategic questions.

Republicans in Congress have been in general supportive of the position taken by the Department of Defense, often overcoming the criticism of the manner in which the Obama Administration has transformed the strategic anti-missile program planned by the previous, Republican, Administration. Although they do not deny a certain preoccupation regarding the cancellation of the fourth phase of the EPAA, the Republicans have demonstrated just how interested they are in the installation of less costly missile defense installation along the Eastern seaboard, and how weak they perceive the threat from new proliferators' States to be. A factor negatively affecting the future of the EPAA was the conviction that a possible third launch station on national territory could more effectively protect the United States from any attack than a similar installation located in Poland, apart from making obsolete any up-grading of the effectiveness of the devices already stationed in Alaska and California. Verifying this point of view is the document recently signed by nineteen Republican Members of Congress which requests the current Administration to cancel two hundred and fifty million dollars allocated in the 2014 Defense budget for the planning of a new launch station on United States continental soil, capable of hosting at least another twenty missile interceptor devices.

The Russian position

The Russian Federation has always viewed the deployment of the SM-3 Block IIB interceptors on Polish soil, as foreseen by the fourth phase of the EPAA, as a direct threat. The Russian authorities are preoccupied by the possibility that this particular version of the SM-3 Block IIB could theoretically be fitted such that the interception of their own Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) would be possible. A further confirmation of the burden the entire EPAA has on the bilateral relationship was seen last February, after President Obama expressed the desire to intensify efforts to reach a new accord with the Russians regarding the reduction of arsenal of strategic weapons. The Russian authorities replied by re-asserting the need to confront existing differences in anti-missile defense systems before discussing any other weapon-related question.

It cannot be a coincidence that, only a few days after the cancellation of the EPAA, the Department of State publically revealed that the United States was attempting to come to an agreement with their Russian counter-parts as to what the framework of a new strategic disarmament accord might consist of. At least for the moment, the Russian authorities seem to have chosen an approach inspired by a wait-and-see policy. The Russian position is characterized by the request, rejected by the Obama Administration, of a formal obligation on the part of the United States to exclude the interception of the Federation's intercontinental strategic carriers. Despite this, the prospect of a constructive dialogue does not seem to be precluded. Secretary of Defense Hagel was expected in Moscow at the end of May, in order to discuss the line of development for strategic interaction between the two greatest nuclear powers. Given this state of the situation, it is more than obvious that the fourth phase of the EPAA would have resulted in creating a false sense of security, com-

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plicated the relations with the States of the Russian Federation and with China, and unnecessarily wasted a significant amount of money.

On the other hand, the cancellation of the fourth phase of the EPAA did not annul every other related Russian preoccupation. As far as has been revealed, there are five main objections that the Russian authorities continue to raise regarding their ally's anti-missile defense program. The first is exquisitely geopolitical. The Russian Federation has never been in favor of NATO's eastward expansion. There are many inside the Russian political system who considers any allied military installation on the soil of States such as Poland or Rumania, as foreseen in the remaining three phases of the EPAA, to be equivalent to a provocation. The second is connected to the possibility of a relatively quick repositioning of the missile interceptors to deployment positions on board U.S. Navy vessels, so as to also be able to intercept the trajectory paths of re-entry vehicles produced by an increasingly more improbable attack by Russian missiles. This move is seen as a violation, if not of the agreements, at least of the spirit on which the entire system of strategic arms reduction is based. The third reason is rooted in the conviction that, even in the event that credible ICBM capacities were attained, the Russian Federation would not really constitute a priority target for Iran. The fourth lies in the possibility that, as time passes, the EPAA will be capable of effectively reducing the Russian ICBM capacities, perhaps through the substitution of the current collision vehicles with new interception vehicles armed with nuclear charges, as was proposed around ten years ago by the then Secretary of Defense, Rumsfeld. The fifth reason can be traced to the SM-3 interceptors of the proposed, new, hypersonic attack system Arc-Light using the same launch tubes. This would permit the transformation of the entire EPAA defense architecture to one of attack within a very short period, at a very low cost. Whatever the reasons, sources close to the current Administration have not been slow in confirming that the decision to cancel the fourth EPAA phase was not taken in a move to comply with the Russian request, but due to a desire to confront the North Korean threat with the highest number of missiles in the shortest possible period.

The decreasing perception of the Iranian threat

Parallel to the intensifying preoccupation regarding the ambitions of North Korea, the concerns relating to the presumed intercontinental capacity of Iran seem, at least in the United States, to have diminished. While it is not proven that Iran still does not possess any ICBMs, according to the latest slant from the United States Intelligence Community, there is very little probability that Iran could produce even a low number during the next few years. In addition, the opinion of the majority lately seems to exclude the theory that Iran really does intend equipping itself with medium and long range ballistic missiles with a load capacity which would allow the transport of a warhead. Iran has for many years now been involved in an ambitious space technology development program, and it seems very improbable that they could reach ICBM capacity in the short or medium term. The reasons are numerous; important among them is the difficulty in attaining a series of materials and components under embargo, and in obtaining significant aid from States possessing more developed technological capacities, such as the Russian Federation and China. In addition, there are many who believe that the profile chosen until now for the trials of the carriers so far produced by the Iranian industrial sectors is not that absolutely required for the development of intercontinental ballistic carriers. Of particular relevance is the load capacity of the launch car-



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riers tested to date by the Iranians. It is much lower than that necessary for the transport of a nuclear warhead, and therefore not even sufficient for a conventional warhead. The weight of an Iranian nuclear warhead is believed to be approximately one thousand kilos, approximately sixty times the weight of the latest Iranian satellite. In addition, it is often forgotten that any ICBM Iran launches towards Europe or the United States must necessarily travel against the direction of the Earth's rotation. This would require thrust and autonomy values much greater than those generally required to travel the eleven thousand kilometers which normally classify a carrier either ballistic or intercontinental. If one also takes into account historical factors, it would not seem likely the Iran could succeed in deploying even a very small number of combustible solid fuel ICBMs within the next forty years.

New arms control negotiations?

Within this framework, the interest in a weapons system which would have enormous political and economic costs cannot avoid being seriously re-assessed. The strong doubts expressed in two official documents regarding the SM-3 and compiled by the National Academy and the Defense Sciences Board, the Department of Defense, have rendered the SM-3 Block IIB development program almost indefensible in the eyes of the public and, therefore, Congress. The first was released in September, 2012, and it recommends the cancellation of the program because of its inability to defend the United States from a future Iranian missile threat. The second, issued only a few weeks before the decision to annul the last phase of the EPAA, forces a re-assessment of the entire program, one inevitably destined to lead to a considerable increase in costs and program period. Other questions regard the architecture of the EPAA, a system which, due to its nature, is anything but immune from the environmental conditions affecting the transporting naval vessel, and to which a large part of the structure is fixed. Launching an interceptor missile from a pitching and rolling vessel can prove not only useless, for any purposes, but even dangerous.

At the same press conference, in recognizing that the GBI is a weapons system not without defects, Secretary of Defense Hagel announced that the Administration did not intend going ahead with the planned increase in GBI numbers before proving both its usefulness as well as its real effectiveness. It appears that the Obama Administration is one hand disposed to re-open the old debate, now silent for many years, regarding the relevance of any anti-missile defense system, as well as intending to begin a new cycle of testing, the results of which are anything but certain, accepting the risks of each option.

One particular point of concern is the second generation collision carrier designed in 2008 to be fitted to the entire range of GBI devices. The absolute ineffectiveness of the guidance system for the carriers, adequately demonstrated throughout 2010, resulted in the decision two years ago to withdraw it from any operability scenario. In consequence, a good third of the missile devices deployed for the protection of continental United States are, in fact, not reliable. It should therefore not come as a surprise that the Department of Defense is resolved to subject the first generation collision carrier to a new cycle of tests as soon as possible. This will in every probability lead to the testing of a radically modified version of the second generation by the end of the year, in the hope of finally re-equipping the entire GBI fleet.

In any case, there is a strong consensus for the fact that where the experimental programs are even



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in part successful, it will be very difficult to repeat those results operatively against a full payload of intercontinental carriers protected by a system which, apart from having a quite different flight envelope, are also protected by countermeasures which are at the same time more effective and more economical. It is particularly interesting, according to this point of view, that the interception of a target launched by an intercontinental missile has never been attempted. A first test of this nature is not planned for until 2015. Much will depend on the results of the new cycle of testing, but it seems in any case very probable that even the third phase of the EPAA will be questioned, in particular if the contact between the Russians and the Americans aiming to solidify the foundations of a new strategic accord is revealed to be fruitful.



The taliban approach: between battlefield and peace talks

Claudio Bertolotti

News about energy and infrastructures

Talks on the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project are in progress, even though Pakistan refused to participate to the quadrilateral held on 22 August as a result of the escalation of violence along the Line of Control. The meeting coincided with the visit to India by representatives of the US State Department and Chevron (interested in investing in the TAPI) to discuss issues regarding the TAPI project.

At the moment, Islamabad is left with two options:

1. either dropping the IP pipeline project or getting the support of large international stakeholder (as China);
2. starting to take shape as China is keen on linking the IP pipeline with the touted 2,000 km-long Kashgar-Gwadar transport corridor.

It is not excluded that China and Pakistan will sign a Memorandum of Understanding to develop the Kashgar-Gwadar corridor that some sources say will include the IP gas pipeline.

At the same time, the main Amu Darya basin oil extraction project (result of a joint venture between the China National Petroleum Corporation and Afghanistan's Watan Oil and Gas) has been halted in northern Afghanistan due to the lack of a transit agreement for the extracted product. The extraction of oil began last October without a transit agreement with the Uzbek government. Jalil Jumriany, Policy Director at the Ministry of Mines, affirmed that talks are underway for an agreement with the Uzbek government.

The Herat main airport would be reconstructed with financial support from Italy and Spain. The comprehensive renovation of Herat International Airport is expected to cost four/seven million dollars, but the contract is not yet solidified.

Governor Wahidi said that he already talked with officials from the Italian Embassy; Italian Prime Minister, Enrico Letta, confirmed that Italy would support the airport's reconstruction.

Spanish officials have also agreed to cooperate with Italy in the airport reconstruction.

The Herat International Airport, regardless of its name, does not support international flights. It is only a hub for daily flights to and from Kabul.

The electoral process is ongoing: real concerns about the Afghan ability to deliver on its election promises.

Following the examination reported on *CeMiSS Quarterly Summer n. 2/2013*, according to the



Afghan Independent Election Commission (IEC), the candidates interested to participate to the Afghan presidential election running (planned in April 2014) are required to register between 16 September and 06 October. Although (at 8th of September) no party has yet formally announced names of presidential nominees, several names of potential contenders have emerged. These include:

- Umer Daudzai, an ethnic Pashtun, currently Afghan ambassador to Pakistan.
- Abdullah Abdullah (who ran against President Karzai in the 2009 presidential election), former Afghan foreign minister and current chief of the National Coalition of Afghanistan party.
- Abdul Rasool Sayyaf, former *Mujahedeen* commander and at present chief of Islamic Dawah Organization of Afghanistan.

Several local sources reported President Karzai urged Afghan political parties to support Sayyaf. Karzai didn't confirm his support to Karzai.

Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA) would field a presidential candidate if their demands were endorsed. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the party, offered the Kabul government a two-point proposal for his group's participation in the 2014 presidential election:

- a complete pull out of foreign troops and
- vote transparency.

What is important to underline is that while HIA's participation is welcomed but, more important, it is the Taliban (Mullah Omar's group) that need to be co-opted. In April, President Karzai affirmed that Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar could officially run for the presidency next year on the condition that the group broke ties with al-Qaeda and renounced violence; but in August Mullah Omar himself stated he will not participate to electoral competition.

Finally, it is reported a limited participation of women in the election process, (*Pajhwok*). The main issues restraining women participation include lack of access to remote areas due to weather constraints, an insufficient number of mobile voter registration centers, and the presence of armed opposition groups discouraging residents from obtaining voter cards.

Security viewpoint

Afghan President Hamid Karzai met the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif over the stalled peace process. Karzai urged Pakistan to facilitate peace talks by providing opportunities for contacts between the Taliban and the Afghan High Peace Council. Sharif assured Karzai of Pakistan's support for peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan, a peace process that – according to Pakistan recommendations – has to be inclusive, Afghan-owned and Afghan-led. However it is uncertain whether Sharif wields sufficient influence to convince the Taliban to discuss with Afghan President Karzai. During the visit, President Karzai also requested the release of high-ranking Taliban detainees held in Pakistan who might act as interlocutors in the peace negotiations, as Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar (detained in Karachi in 2010).

In addition, Islamabad and Washington are weighing the option of shifting the Taliban's political office from Qatar to another country in a bid to revive the stalled reconciliation process in Afghanistan. The option came under discussion during US Secretary of State John Kerry's recent visit to Islamabad, where the two sides explored a variety of ways of breaking the deadlock in peace negotiations.

Furthermore, Afghanistan's second Vice President Mohammad Karim Khalili visited India with a high level ministerial delegation on 20 August in order to discuss security related issues as the NATO troop withdrawal draw near. The meeting was mainly focused on enhanced military cooperation. Afghan army and police officers are trained in Indian academies and India is planning to supply Afghanistan with vehicles and helicopters.

President Karzai has created a new team of high-profile negotiators in order to solve the stalled negotiations between Afghanistan and US. The new negotiation committee, consisting of the president's national security adviser Rangin Dadfar Spanta, former Finance Minister Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai and Foreign Minister Zalmay Rasul, is expected to facilitate the process toward an agreement. The new team of negotiators will discuss role, shape and legal status of US military forces and civilian trainers in post-2014 mission.

A recent increase in the activities of militants from Central Asia, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), in northern Afghanistan indicates that they intend to take advantage of the security vacuum that may ensue post-2014. The magnitude of recent insurgents attacks in northern Afghanistan shows an effort to gain a country-wide presence ahead of the drawdown of NATO forces. Central Asian militants fit into this setting as experienced and trusted allies for the Taliban who have some affinity to Tajik and Uzbek communities in the area.

Latest news (on August), in brief:

- Ghazni, Kandahar, Wardak and Zabul: provincial governors met to discuss improvements to one of the most volatile parts of Afghanistan's highway system, the Kabul-Kandahar highway.
- Herat province: local authorities reported that clashes between the security forces and Taliban militants on the Kandahar-Herat highway killed at least 83 people including eleven security forces and 72 militants.
- Farah province: a bomb exploded in near a vehicle carrying the provincial commander of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) Abdul Samada, killing and wounding civilian people and security personnel.

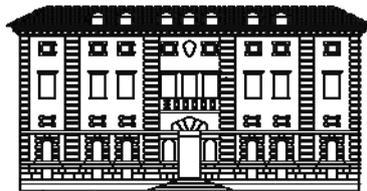
Brief analysis According to a recent United Nations Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) report, bombs and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are the main means of killing. Significant civilian deaths also occurred during the fighting between security forces (both foreign and local) and the Taliban. Furthermore, the total civilian casualties in the first half of 2013 increased 23 per cent compared to the same period in 2012. The number of children killed rose about 30 per cent in the same period. This increase in civilian casualties raises the question whether the Afghan forces will be able to contrast the Taliban insurgency in post-2014 Afghanistan. The stepped-up transition of security responsibilities from ISAF forces to Afghan forces and the closure of international forces' bases was met with augmented attacks by opposition armed groups adding mainly at checkpoints, on strategic highways, secondary lines of communication, in some areas that had been transitioned and in districts bordering neighboring countries. Furthermore we must consider, on one hand, the "green on blue" attacks' increasing (a direct threat to MAT, PAT and OCCAT advisers and trainers) and, on the other hand, the reduction of the ANSF's terrain control capability; the last one as consequence of an increased military and political capacity of the armed opposition groups – in par-



Focus

ticular in rural and peripheral areas.

The sum of all these factors shows the ANSF limits, underlining the risk of inability to contrast the armed opposition groups expansion and, consequentially, the peril of instability in post-2014 Afghanistan, when foreign combat troops will leave the battlefield “formally”.



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