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South Eastern Europe



Paolo Quercia

From Bosnia to Syria. the re-emerging thorns of South Eastern Europe.

Criticizing the inactivity of the United Nations Security Council on Syria, the Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan said that the international community was repeating the mistakes that led to the massacres in Bosnia Herzegovina in the 1990s, directly quoting the massacre of Srebrenica¹. To many in Europe, the parallel between Bosnia Herzegovina and Syria could appear inappropriate, at least for geographic reasons. On the contrary, the Turkish Prime Minister is geopolitically right to draw such an association, since Bosnia Herzegovina and Syria represent the main open security questions for South Eastern Europe, although the first one is an internal and frozen challenge and the second one is an external and active conflict.

The region of South Eastern Europe – whose maritime boundary is stretching from the Gulf of Fiume to the Gulf of Alessandretta, at the Syrian/Turkish border – has long been regarded as the most problematic area for European Union's foreign and security policy. For the European Union this region remains presents a dual and parallel set of security challenges. One is internal to its borders, and it is related to the future of the so called Western Balkans, an enclave of 6 States whose total population is slightly more than 20 million, half of them concentrated in Serbia.

The second one is related to the external border of the EU, eastern of the Bulgarian frontier, and is connected with the geopolitical future of Turkey and its post neo-ottoman² foreign policy, shaped by the turmoil caused by the Arab-spring. This process of reshaping the new role of Turkey in the post Arab-spring Mediterranean is taking place in a new dangerous and confrontational geopolitical context that is dragging Turkey in new potential conflicts.

¹ In a conference in Istanbul Erdogan said that "how sad is that the United Nations is as helpless today as it was 20 years ago when it watched the massacre of hundreds of thousands of people in the Balkans, Bosnia and Srebrenica".

² With the concept of "post neo-ottoman" foreign policy we want to describe the new changes produced by the arab spring on the so called Turkey's neo-ottoman foreign policy. In short, the neo-ottoman foreign policy was based on a strategy for the creation of an area of "zero problems with the neighbours" who were, in the majority of cases, represented by authoritarian arab regimes interested in the preservation of the internal elitarian power structure and of the regional status quo. The beginning and developments of the so called arab spring has started a grass root transformations of the balance of power in the region, opening a new uncertain age of changes, creating new leaderships and reshaping the regional political alliances. Turkey foreign policy has been, and will be more and more, radically affected by the "arab spring" factor.



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Turkey and Western Balkans remain, now since several years, the unsolved issues of the European Union's South Eastern geopolitical identity. They both present a different variety of challenges to the UE external action, widening from the political to the security point of view. From the Western Balkans rises the potential risk that the unsolved conflictuality on national and ethnic lines could bring an halt to the enlargement process, maintaining an enclave of unrest inside its borders that will require the adoption of security measures and continuous financial inputs in order to avoid the spill-over of instability to EU member states. Western Balkans are unquestionably an internal European security issue, so its security gaps can't be overlooked. On the other side Anatolia's security challenges are originating from extra-European regions and don't directly threat the security of the European Union, while they shape the security and political posture of Turkey, affecting therefore the EU – Turkish relations.

The open security issues arising from the Western Balkans are connected to its internal instability and enduring low level tensions among States who are, in Bruxelles view, all supposed to join the European Union; in addition, serious internal ethnic conflicts are still present inside several of the single would-be members of the Union, such as Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia.

The unsolved political issues of the Western Balkans are not related – as sometimes it is argued – to a lack of will from Europe to include these territories in the European Union³ - but is mostly connected to two endogenous dilemmas: the “unsolved” question of Serbia nationalism and the question of the statehood for Albanian speaking population. The first of these two dilemmas is mainly a political problem within the Western Balkans and it rests in the difficulties in dealing with the residues of Serbian nationalism and national idea, which are still key drivers of Serbian collective identity and political behaviour, as it was demonstrate by the election of Nikolic to the Serbian presidency. A problem that encourages an anti-European posture that is partially responsible for the delay in the integration of the Western Balkans in Europe. The Albanian statehood issue is associated with the future of the Albanian speaking population in the region living outside Albania. It includes the future sustainability of the independent Kosovo and future role of the Albanian speaking minorities in Macedonia and Montenegro.

The Serbian regional issue and the infra-state ethnic issue are the two main political and security European concerns related to the Western Balkan's half of today's South Eastern Europe. Anatolia, the other half of South Eastern Europe region, is also a source of concern for European regional interest. From this area, the main dimension of uncertainty is related to the negative outcomes that could spring from the extra Anatolian region, specifically from the unsecure geopolitical arch that encircles Anatolia, from the Caucasus, from the Middle East and from the Eastern Mediterranean. These security challenges, although external to South Eastern Europe region, profoundly affect

³ Even if there is a clear disillusion about the capacity of several applicant countries of the Western Balkans to join the European Union in the short term, no one doubts that in the medium – long term the future of the Western Balkans will be to become part of the European Union. The enlargement will, anyway, procede with a differentiated pace, with Albania and Montenegro being apparently part of the next wave of enlargement, while Serbia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo are not likely to join the Union in the medium term.

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the internal politics and the foreign policy attitude of Turkey, strategically the most relevant and influential state actor of South Eastern Europe.

In this context, the second half of 2012 has witnessed a deterioration of two specific scenarios, both in the Western Balkans and at Turkish borders: a worsening of Bosnia Herzegovina's political situation and the escalation of the Turkish – Syrian crisis into a possible conflict.

At the end of 2011, Bosnia Herzegovina had just exited a 500 days long political crisis without the formation of the new government. It was the longest political crisis since Dayton and it made clear that the complex and dysfunctional institutional architecture that was projected at the end of the war – and in order to put an end to the war – is not anymore appropriate to rule an ethnically multifaceted, basically poor and pre-political society, where none of the main national groups that made up the country represent a demographic absolute majority. But the compromise reached in January has already vanished, since it was achieved under the pressure of the extremely dire financial situation when all the State institutions were on the verge of stop functioning. The “forced” consensus reached for the creation of Bosnia Herzegovina new central government was instrumental for obtaining in 2012 the IMF loan, but it didn't resolve the fundamental dispute among the three conflicting different visions for a post Dayton State: unified and centralized, supported by the Bosniaks; unified as a federation of three national state-like entities or cantons, supported by the Croats; a loose confederated union of almost independent states with the right of secession, sustained by the Serbs. A new political crisis erupted in August 2012 when the president of the Republica srpska Dodik denounced the political agreement reached in December – the so called “ruling six agreement” – in opposition to the decision taken by Bosnia Herzegovina's Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija to instruct the Bosnia UN representative to support the resolution on Syria that condemned the Syrian government for the violence against civilian. Dodik accused Lagumdžija of not having consulted with the members of the tripartite presidency on this issue and decided to boycott the activities of the central government until the resignation of Lagumdžija. Acting in this way the president of Republica srpska intended on one side to stress the lack of capacity of the country's Minister of Foreign Affairs to take a political decision in the sovereignty-related domain of foreign politics and, on the other side, to demonstrate a political support to Russia, calling for an abstention of the UN Bosnian representative on Resolutions on Syria.

The political consensus that was “artificially” created in Bosnian political arena demonstrated to be short living, as it was also indicated by the failure to meet the 31st august deadline for changing the constitution in order to address the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in the Sejdic-Finci ruling⁴. The local elections that took place at the beginning of October confirmed the deterioration of the political situation, shown by the deadlock on the elections in Mostar – a town of more than 100.000 inhabitants and strategically crucial for the Bosniak/Croats ethno-political

⁴ In this case the Court accepted the petition of two Bosnia Erzegovina citizens, one of Roma and the other of Jewish origins, who accused the article of the Dayton constitution that granted the right to be elected in the country top institutional positions only to nationals of the three constituent nationality (serbs, croats and bosniaks) of violating their political rights, depriving the country ethnic minorities of an equal political opportunity.



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balance – were the vote was not held due to a controversy over the electoral legislation after a decision of the country Constitutional Court on the lack of compliance of Mostar's special statute with the constitutional principles. The good results achieved by the nationalist parties in the local elections – especially that of the Srpska Demokratska Stranka, the former party of Radovan Karadzic that, in the Republica srpska, overtook the Social Democratic party of president Dodik – is a clear sign of a further radicalisation of the political situation⁵. In the coming weeks it will be possible also to assess the effects of the local elections on the political impasse at central government level that seems hardly to be solved in 2013. The eventual risk of another year of political stalemate for the country, whose economic situation is also supposed to deteriorate further, will be a very negative message for foreign investors and for the EU integration process. According to the reports of the International Monetary Fund the country GDP in 2012 contracted to the level of five years ago, losing 10% compared to the value of Bosnia GDP at the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008.

As far as the Syrian crises, the second half of 2012 saw an escalation of the conflict towards a total civil war (with the month of August that registered the highest number of casualties), and a further increase in the number of Syrian refugees trying to enter Turkey. The military situation appeared to remain very uncertain with both parties incapable to achieve a determining victory over the other, and with the anti-Assad front that seems to be a conglomerate of different fighting groups with very diverse ideological and religious background, as well as antithetic political agendas and international backing. Turkey appeared to be unable to bring under its umbrella the anti Assad political and military forces and – apart from the political rhetoric – its action during the 19 months civil war didn't appear to be particularly determinant in shaping the course of the events and helping the anti-Assad opposition to achieve partial successes. This excess of rhetoric matched with basically unproductive results is mostly the consequence of the multiple constraints that tie Ankara's position on Syria, at least until now. Among these constraints, very important ones are the NATO membership (especially in the light of the negative attitude of several Atlantic members on a new war in the Mediterranean), the long common border with Syria, the trans-border Kurdish issue, the Syrian Alawite minority living in Turkish Iskenderum province and the complex balance of power and energy relations that Turkey has built with two States who are great supporter of Assad's regime: Iran and Russia. Considering the complex interactions of all these dimensions, it is not surprising that Turkey didn't play a more decisive role in the Syrian civil war and actually, it is astonishing how far Turkey dared to go. But the further deterioration of the situation at the beginning of October (with the Syrian mortar shelling in Turkey's territory and the retaliatory Turkish artillery fire and with the Russian cargo incident) brings some indication that Ankara is uncomfortable with the stalemate situation and is willing to risk more on the Syrian dossier. The

⁵ SDS was the main party in Republica srpska until 2006, when it was outstripped by Dodik's SNSD that became, since then, the first Serbian party in Bosnia Herzegovina. Dodik later ideologically "moved" his party from a social-democratic political platform to a more nationalist one, becoming a vocal promoter of independence for Republica srpska and adopting a political line aimed to boycott the functionality of the central State institutions.



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parliamentary vote that authorizes Turkish government for a period of one year to conduct military operations inside Syria and its reinforcement of the military apparatus at the border with Syria, may be a sign that Ankara is entering – or is expecting – a new phase of its involvement in the Syrian crisis. Whatever it may come, it seems that Turkey is expecting that the present political situation in its near abroad is predestined to change in the medium term and it is preparing to a potential reset of its regional relations. One risk for Turkey will be represented by the possibility that an internationalisation of the Syrian crisis could produce as a consequence the development of new political alignments in the Middle East on sectarian lines that could isolate Turkey. The mind goes to a further strengthening, with the backing of Russia, of the Shia regional influence, already increased in the last years. Russian president Vladimir Putin was supposed to visit Turkey in October, but the visit has been cancelled after the cargo incident with Moscow. Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan decided to enter personally the diplomatic quarrel with Russia, instead of leaving it to his Minister of Foreign Affairs. The handling of the cargo crisis with Moscow produced a de facto breaking of the gentlemen's agreement that was adopted with Moscow few months ago when the two countries "agreed to disagree" on Syria without affecting their bilateral relations. At this point, it is difficult that the new muscular stance adopted by Turkey towards Syria won't produce consequences on Russia's bilateral relations with Ankara. At the same time the diplomatic chronicles of the past weeks register also the important visit of Iraq prime minister Al-Maliki to Moscow, where an important military agreement was signed, and a forthcoming – historical – visit of Ahmadinejad to Baghdad. Considering the fact that Ankara nowadays is in very negative terms with Iraq (having chosen to have direct high level political relations with the Kurdish Regional Government, see the visit of the Turkish foreign minister Davutoglu to the Iraqi Kurdistan in August that angered Baghdad) and the strong relations developed between Iraq and Iran since US withdrawal, the risk for Ankara that its Syrian policy could activate a regional anti-Turkish sentiment is becoming higher. And if the West is not ready to follow Ankara in its Syrian strategy, the risk of isolation from both its Western allies and its Eastern neighbours becomes concrete. A potential, awkward, Russian – Iran – Iraq - Syria *entente* seems to find in the regional confused situation that could spring from the Syrian civil war a right momentum to test its practicability. And a decision from Ankara to militarily enter the conflict could be the detonator for such development. If a similar scenario should configure it would be a profoundly negative outcome for Turkey, since it will activate old and new conflicts in the region with severe consequences for Turkish economic and – maybe – internal security.



Afghan Theater



Tactical mistakes and strategic consequences: the example of the afghan local police

Claudio Bertolotti

July - The United States declared Afghanistan a major, non-NATO ally, with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton personally delivering the news of Afghanistan's entry into a club that includes Israel, Japan, Pakistan and other close Asian and Middle Eastern allies. The move was part of a strategic partnership agreement signed by the United States and Afghanistan in May. **The new status may help Afghanistan acquire U.S. defense supplies and have greater access to U.S. training** as the Afghan army takes more responsibility for the country's security ahead of the 2014 withdrawal of most NATO combat troops.

July - After a decade of ground wars in Iraq and Afghanistan Obama announced the new strategy in January that looks to counter the rising power of China. President Obama's new military strategy is taking shape here on the sun-seared grasslands of West Texas where B-1 bomber pilots train. **The strategy pivots from missions over the deserts and mountains of Afghanistan to targets on the sea and, though the military doesn't come out directly and say it, in China.** The changing role of the B-1 is a prime example of how the Air Force is responding.

July – Second Tokyo Conference took place. Ten years after the first Conference, more than 70 governments and international organizations re-convened in Tokyo to pledge assistance to Afghanistan for the remaining transition years and beyond. While past conferences have addressed the international community's sustained support to the Afghan National Security Forces, **the Tokyo Conference also highlighted the «non-security aspects» of the on-going transition process and the volumes of development assistance to be provided for socio-economic development. The donors have made \$16-billion available through 2015.**

July – Afghan president Karzai released a sweeping set of proposed reforms including a number aimed at stemming the government's endemic corruption; the proposals touched every ministry, the attorney general's office and the Supreme Court. The document, reported as a «decree on administrative reforms», is similar to an executive order and in theory must be complied with by all organs of government. However, Parliament can review it,

August - Insurgent attacks in Afghanistan rose by 11 percent in the past three months over the same period last year, according to data released by NATO's US-led coalition.

August – The Afghan parliament voted to dismiss the country's Defense Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak, one of the top Afghan officials most trusted by Washington, and Interior Minister Bismullah Khan Mohammadi. A move that threatens to throw the country's security apparatus into confusion as foreign forces withdraw.

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August – Civilian Deaths Drop in Afghanistan; still Triple 2008 Rate. *There were 3,099 civilians killed and wounded in the Afghan war between January and June 2012, the United Nations reports, a 15 percent decline from the same period in 2011. Casualties caused by air strikes are down by 25 percent (that's probably because of the recent overall decline in the air war).*

August – Motasim, a key member of the Taliban who was finance minister in the 1996 2001 Taliban regime, has called for an end to the 11-year war in Afghanistan and for peace talks, demanding prisoner releases and an end to sanctions on rebel leaders to quicken the process.

August – Green on blue: Afghan attacks on Allied soldiers prompt NATO to shift security policy for troops. *At the same time Afghanistan's government would re-examine the files of 350,000 soldiers and police to help curb rogue shootings of NATO personnel, but accused «foreign spies» of instigating the attacks that have angered major allies.*

August – Badruddin Haqqani is dead. *The son of the founder of the powerful Haqqani network has been killed in an airstrike in Pakistan, Afghanistan's intelligence agency said, providing the first public confirmation of rumors that have been swirling for days about the key member of a group reported by the U.S. as one of the most dangerous in the region.*

September – Afghan President Hamid Karzai condemned an anti-Islam film produced in the Unites States and shared on the web, *issuing a statement that said his office «strongly and resolutely denounces this desecrating act and declares its serious abhorrence in the face of such an insult».*

September – Over 600 Afghan soldiers killed during the past 2 months. *The statistics shows an increase in Afghan national army casualties as compared to the same period in 2011. According to Afghan defense ministry officials, majority of the Afghan army service members have been killed in roadside improvised explosive device explosions.*

September – Top Chinese security official Zhou Yongkang, a member of the Standing Committee of the nine member Political Bureau of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, has made a surprise visit to Afghanistan. In Kabul, Zhou held a meeting with Afghan President Hamid Karzai *where they talked about drugs, international crime, terrorism, and developing Afghanistan's huge natural resources. The result, a cluster of agreements, among them a statement that several hundreds of Afghan police officers will be sent to China for training over the next four years.*

The Afghan situation in brief.

Afghan opposition armed groups are growing stronger at the expense of the Afghan National Security forces and the United States is losing its momentum. The US interest was to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table from a position of weakness, but during the past twelve months, the equation has been reversed. The Taliban is now dictating the conditions and the pace of progress in the talks for a possible bilateral agreement on the war. United States and NATO are interested in expediting the withdrawal because domestic reasons and loosing of the legitimacy for the war.

Karzai's Government is perceived as corrupt political leadership, lacking the ability to govern and to control the situation. Furthermore, the Taliban leadership is not oriented to hold official talks with the Kabul «puppet» regime as long as the «occupiers» have not left Afghan territory. It is assessed that until the end of the «irreversible transition» declared by President Obama and

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the military withdrawal, no internal Afghan settlement will be possible.

The undefined problem of the Afghan Local Police

Several media reported that allegations of abuse mount against the Afghan Local Police created in 2010 under the initiative of the General David Petraeus, at that time ISAF Commander, in areas where the Afghan National Security Forces were not able to keep control and establish security. It was a crucial aspect of the counter-insurgency doctrine, which advocated the use of local militias as a way of winning «hearts and minds» (*leit motiv* of the counterinsurgency theory); in other words a security organization described as «community watch with AK-47s».

After two years the 20,000-person Afghan Local Police forces have repeatedly been accused of perpetrating abuses, including rapes and murders; furthermore Afghan Local Police members have periodically demanded bribes, skimmed money from contracts and committed atrocities. Many of the Afghan Local Police members, underpaid and underequipped, resort to extortion and thievery to help supplement their salaries. At the same time, several episodes of double-games and betrayal have been reported during the last 24 months; for example in RC-West (Badghis province) in June a number of local police officers joined Taliban militants group in Bala Murghab district. What is appearing is not a satisfactory situation for NATO medium-term goals.

The next goal is to have 30,000 local policemen who will eventually be disarmed or absorbed into the conventional security forces when security conditions allow. But there are clear signs that the program has begun to create more problems than solutions. Green on blue attacks, as well as bribes and violences are clear evidences of a failure. The suspension of the training of new Afghan Local Police recruits for at least a month (September/October) – planned by General Raymond Thomas III, the head of the American Special Operations command – represents the first signal on the brakes for what has been a headlong drive to fill out a local police organization.

American Special Operations forces, who are responsible to train and equip local police to contrast the opposition armed groups in peripheral areas, are having problems within the program. Additionally, during the last years Human rights observers have raised alarms about abuses by the Afghan force members, and President Hamid Karzai, as well as Afghan analysts and civil society, was wary about a program with the potential to set up a whole new system of unaccountable armed groups without real control.

The fact that crimes are being committed by individuals operating with the support of International security forces, could pose a big long-term threat to Afghanistan's stability/credibility and the Strategic long term partnership in the coming years. According to Human Rights «creation of the Afghan Local Police is a high-risk strategy to achieve short-term goals in which local groups are again being armed without adequate oversight or accountability».

But the Afghan Local Police program is also an enormous investment, seen as critical to extending the combat against the insurgency once NATO is leaving the battlefield. Officially there has not been any official debate about pulling back from the Afghan Local Police program but the temporary training halt suggests that mistrust is evident. Probably for this reason United States is increasing the number of counter-intelligence personnel, meanwhile Afghan officials reportedly are strengthening measures to reduce insurgents and criminals infiltration in the security forces, both national and local.



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As reported by Abbas Dayar (Afghan journalist and analyst) three years ago, the program to arm afghan local militias to fight the opposition armed groups is based on flawed comparisons with Iraqi experience (the US-sponsored Awakening Councils) where tribal groups were partially mobilized against Al Qaeda and the insurgency. The difference is that in Afghanistan this exercise didn't work properly. The result obtained is that prominent ethnic and tribal tensions flourished, entrenched instability and increased conflicts and insecurity. Till now, NATO commanders, several strategic analysts and planners believed that arming tribal groups or militias could help reduce insurgency attacks, just as arming Sunni militias did in Iraq. But Afghanistan, as evidenced by the facts, is not Iraq and the comparison between the insurgencies in the two battlefields is not a reason for adopting a similar strategic model. Societies, local conflicts and dynamics are very different because divisions and ethnic as well as tribal and clannish balance. Arming one group to turn it against another only made worse the situation. And the insurgency is not entirely based on fighters operating from the Pakistan's tribal areas; in particular, insurgency is vigorous and active in the south of the country, the Taliban stronghold, and consists of numerous Pashtun tribal groups involved in perpetual tribal divisions based on collaboration and competition: it is a never-ending antagonism between Durrani and Ghilzai groups (the main pashtun «tribes», *qaum* and *millat*) which are the original Taliban, and the ones that today represents the hardcore of the Afghan insurgency.

Arming Durrani local groups or factions would cause further resentment among the Ghilzai, and *vice versa*. The risk is a direct threat to the government, the international forces and civilians of the different ethnic groups.

Furthermore these local police groups – tribal militias with different name – are essentially autonomous, even if formally under Ministry of Interior control. This takes Afghanistan back to the pre-DDR (Disbandment, Demobilization and Reintegration program) and DIAG (Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups program) period, when numerous private armed militias accentuated the «warlordism», one of the reasons of the country's instability. Local Police is based on a recruitment process based on the recommendation of community elders – *i.e.* tribal leaders – which are free to establish their own militia forces. It is not clear how the Ministry of Interior could be able to put these groups under government control when NATO troops will leave.

Competition and conflicts between Northern not-pashtun warlords and southern pashtun tribal leaders could be accentuated as consequence of the rearmament of local militias which potentially could be more loyal to the insurgency than to the government.

Concluding, analyzing the evolution of the program and the troubles daily reported, can be assumed that the idea of an armed Local Police supported by International Security Forces – even if in theory positive and in appearance necessary – didn't work and represent a contribute to entrench current instability and revitalize a thirty-year civil war.

*Nicola Pedde*

The Iranian economic crisis and the increase of the sanctions

Short history of the sanctions against the Iranian nuclear program

The history of sanctions against the Iranian nuclear program starts with UN Resolution 1696 of 31st July 2006, requiring Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment activity, followed by UN Resolution 1737 of December 27th 2006 enacted by the UN Security Council, with which it was implemented a total embargo on the supply of technologies, and more in general materials, useful for the development of the controversial program.

The resolution also included a ban on any supply, any tool or technology designed to allow progress in the field of missile vectors potentially suitable for the transport of nuclear weapons, by requiring member States to adopt every useful action to prevent even the simple transfer of know-how, training, or generic training. For the first time, specific subjects and institutions were also vis-à-vis designated and it what required the most absolute prohibition of technological and financial support, thus paving the way for subsequent actions.

The European Union has receipt the text of Resolution 1737 through the Common Position 2007 /140/PESC of February 27, 2007, which not only closely followed the original text of the United Nations, but it also expand and extend it including the ban on the export of products included in the NSG and MTCR lists.

A new measure against Iran was then adopted by the UN Security Council on March 24th 2007, number 1747. In this new resolution the number of listed subjects interested by the restrictive measures was expanded, and decreed the total embargo on arms and war materials of any nature. It followed in Europe, therefore, the issuing of Common Position 2007 /246/PESC on April 23rd 2007, including additional restrictions and assimilating the content of the UN Resolution 1747.

With Resolution 1803 of March 3rd 2008, it was then extended the range of action of the two previous acts, including in the list of materials and technologies under embargo and a further list of products recognized as potentially useful to the development of weapons and missile vectors.

A new law at the European level was issued in 2008, with the adoption of the Council Decision 2008 /475/CE, which made some changes to the preceding provisions, increased the scope and transposed UN Resolution 1747. It followed Common Position 2008 /652/PESC of August 7th 2008, that further exacerbated the scope of sanctions, especially on the level of economic and financial cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. A new adjustment was then made by the Decision of the Council 2009 /840/PESC of November 17, 2009.

The United Nations Security Council subsequently adopted on 9th June 2009 the Resolution 1929,



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which included every form of investment in Iran and/or its citizens in any activities related to the extraction of uranium and the production of materials and technologies associated with the development of the nuclear program. In this act, companies are specifically identified, and as well embargoed institutions and individuals, by considerably widening the scope of the previous act and hitting in a direct manner the industrial and economic system of the country.

The European Union has adopted the content of Resolution 1929 with the Decision of the Council 2010 /413/PESC, which repealed the previous Common Position 2007 /140/PESC redefining the overall framework of sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran. It was implemented at the regulatory level the decision with the adoption of the regulation of the European Union n. 961/2010 issued on October 25th 2010, and later amended by Regulation 503 of 2011.

On 23rd March 2012 was then adopted the Regulation n.267 /2012, which repealed the n. 961/2010 by defining the new and more stringent sanctions regime against Iran, including the new stringent provisions relating to the economic and financial embargo.

The most recent increases of the sanction measures, established and implemented in 2012, have focused on an enlargement in the number of the interested subjects, with an enlargement in the context of the economic and financial sphere of the country, and with the inclusion of the Iranian Central Bank and the country's suspension from the international interbank circuit.

What the effect of the sanctions?

The sanctions adopted from 2006 up to today seem to have produced a modest result, at least in terms of its ability to deter Iran from pursuing the development of its nuclear program.

To an obvious increased difficulty in identifying and finding the necessary components for the development of the country's nuclear program and for the development of ballistic vectors, it followed an equally obvious capacity of Iran to increase on the one hand its indigenous capacity for the production of essential components, and on the other hand to identify third channels of supply, through the long time ample meshes of the international control and prevention system.

To this, it must be added an extraordinary negotiating capacity, which has allowed Iran to often advantageous carry out the long and complex negotiation with the United Nations and international agencies benefiting obvious under the time profile.

This general condition of advantage has radically changed over the last year, as a result of two specific factors. The first is the renewed fear of Israel for the progress of the Iranian nuclear program, with the consequent recourse to threat of a military intervention to prevent the achievement of a *point of no return* in the development of the project. The second, on the other hand, is represented by the manifest will of the United States to pursue a new and more effective sanctions policy against Iran, this time hitting the heart of the economic and financial system.

The first of the two factors responds to a more articulated logic than the mere fear of real progress in the development of the nuclear program of Tehran. The Iranian issue as a whole, in fact, is used as a rhetoric tool by the Israeli policy, serving the interests of a government in severe crisis and the search for consensus, and representing a useful trick to attract the attention of the local public opinion and of most western countries. Aware of the difficulty of being able to engage the United States in any hypothesis of attack on Iran, as well as the Israeli capacity to support a unilateral attack, Benjamin Netanyahu seems to have abandoned at least for the moment to insist on the need for a strike attack against Iran. This, at least, it seems the sense of the spectacular and unconvincing



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speech at the United Nations last September 27th.

Much more important and significant, on the contrary, is the second factor, dictated by a double order of reasons. The increase of the sanctionary policy of the US against Iran is in fact justified on the one hand by the need to demonstrate to Israel that, despite the lack of support for each hypothesis of military action, the United States does not intend to abandon the ally of the Jewish State, and on the other end by the desire to hit the Iranian political system through a much more targeted and accurate action, intended to cause for the first time a real practical consequence for the authorities of the Islamic Republic.

The increase in penalties decreed in the recent past has in fact been hard in hitting the Iranian economic system, both in the context of the selling of the hydrocarbons, and - above all - in determining an unprecedented isolation of the economic and financial system of Tehran.

The *rial* has undergone a rapid and profound devaluation during the first weeks of the month of September, going to combined the general negative trend of the local economy already registered since last month of May. The galloping inflation and the increase in prices has resulted in a climate of deep distrust of institutions, by supplying protests that are repeated on several occasions in Tehran *bazaar* and those of some other cities in Iran.

The objective of the United States seems to be that of obtaining a result in one of the three scenarios considered possible with the adoption of the new sanctions policy against Iran. The first scenario is that of a collapse of the Iranian economic system, eventually followed by a subsequent collapse of the political and administrative institutions, under the thrust of a public opinion no longer willing to tolerate the effects of such a clear and pronounced economic crisis.

The second scenario focus on the awareness of the political establishment of Iran not to be able to support anymore than the weight of sanctions, with the adoption of a policy of openness and concessions on the development of the country's nuclear program, and as well under the profile of the regional policy.

The third and last scenario is actually the most dramatic. In this hypothesis, an isolated Iran with no way out, would itself trigger a conflict on the regional scale, giving the United States and Israel a pretext to militarily engage Iran without bear the burden of declaring the war.

Three undoubtedly impressive assumptions, although not fully considering the possible evolution of events in Iran. A fourth scenario, in fact, could be that of a system that - as historically demonstrated by the episodes of the past - will be able to resist the isolation and the collapse due to the ability of resistance of the people and the simultaneous ability of the government to partially circumvent the isolation imposed by the sanctions. Hypothesis far from being peregrine.

Having said that, it is however necessary to note that the last round of sanctions is actually generating highly negative effects on the state of the Iranian economy, with a constant increase of the cost of each kind of goods, with a strong devaluation of the local currency and with the contextual soaring unemployment.

Repeated protests within the Tehran's Bazaar, especially, have alarmed the political system. Presidential elections will be held on next June 2013, and no one wants to burn his candidacy due to the effects of the crisis.

The political system, factional and as always sectarian, find it hard to define a point of synthesis, but merely to exchange accusations on the responsibility of the events. In particular, it has been attacked president Mahmood Ahmadinejad, accused of being the main responsible for the crisis



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as a consequence of its insane economic and fiscal policy, but also for having fed the international pressure on Iran with its aggressive and illogical foreign policy.

Very little space, on the other hand, devotes the Iranian press to escape of local wealth abroad, in an attempt to protect the fortune of not a few oligarchs of the Iranian economy. Frightened by the course of events, and above all of the possibility of a severe blow on the domestic economy, many of the Iranian entrepreneurs have moved their reserves in foreign currency out of the country in the last months, giving a clear signal to the economic system and further weakening the already weak Iranian economy.

If, therefore, the risk of a conflict with Israel seems at the time decreased, on the contrary, the sanctions policy strongly desired and defended by the United States, for the first time generates practical effects within the Iranian political and economic system.

Not a few, especially within the United States Department of Defence, are convinced of the fact that it is definitely preferable an economic destabilisation of Iran, rather than a genuine conflict unleashed by Israel or by the United States-Israel tandem.

Many, among the experts of Iran in the United States, argue - perhaps not entirely incorrectly - as Iran tends to react pragmatically when put to the narrow, precisely to avoid having to deal with the collapse of its own weak institutional and economic apparatus.

What is missing often the framework of the American analyses, however, is the lack of consideration of the traditional heterogeneity of the Iranian political system, composed of a set of political factions and alliances with a variable geometry, with a low capacity of synthesis in the definition of national interest and often conflictual to the point of compromising the overall achievement.

Another recurrent element, in the external analysis on the country, is the consideration of the political figure of the Leader as monolithic and absolutist. A vision that is wrong and far from reality, which instead sees the Leader engaged as moderator of a complex balance built on the constant management of political extended and deep-rooted factional conflicts.

The "case of the drone"

On October 6th, a drone of unknown origin has violated the Israeli airspace and was intercepted and shot down after about three hours of flying over some of the most secret local military installations. Among which, it seems, even the nuclear complex of Dimona in the Negev.

The drone, as reported by the Israeli authorities, and then officially confirmed also by Iranian the Minister of Defence Ahmad Vahidi on 13th October, is manufactured in Iran, and could have been operated by a cell of Hezbollah from southern Lebanon. According to leaks, moreover, before shooting down, the drone would have sent numerous images to the command unit operating it, presumably in Iran.

It would be, although the conditional is still imposed by the lack of factual evidence, of a new model called Shahed 129, officially presented in Tehran in last month of September and with superior performance to 24 hours of flight on a radius of about 1200 kilometres.

Secretary General of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah, has explicitly spoken about the drone in a television program, affirming that the drone was manufactured in Iran and operated by Lebanon, although several doubts about the whole dynamic of the events are still persistent.

It is unclear, in fact, how the drone has been delivered and operated, and who has physically led the flight management operations and the data transmission.



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Fully achieved, instead, the result desired by the Iranians. By demonstrating how the Islamic Republic is able to compete on the front of the asymmetrical warfare and technology, operating themselves the missions that Israel and the United States regularly conduct on Iran, potentially hitting in depth sensitive objectives.



Competition and Cooperation factors in the Sino-African relationships

Marco Massoni

Regarding the African Union (AU), its 19th Summit of Heads of State and Government (Addis Ababa, 9-16 July) has at last elected the new President of the African Union Commission (AUC), the former South African Minister for Home Affairs, Mrs. Nkosazana Clarise Dhlamini Zuma, replacing Jean Ping, who had been holding that position since 2008. After Colonel Qaddafi's fall, South Africa has been playing all his cards to stand as 'the' leading nation in and for Africa and, to do so, Pretoria principally needed to take control of the AUC, the most relevant institutional body at continental level. It will not be an easy task, due to the large group of African countries that are hostile to any further South African expansionism. However, South Africa is well fit to be able to play a leading role at continental and global levels, providing a fully-fledged Pan-African leadership to the AU in the next coming years.

Concerning the latest developments of US interests towards Africa, three years after President Obama's speech on the future of the African Continent, held July the 11th 2009 in Accra at the Parliament of Ghana, the White House announced the 'New Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa'. The document focuses on four pillars: supporting the democratic institutions; spurring economic growth, trade and investment; strengthening the instruments for Peace and Security; promoting opportunities and development. In August, these indications have informed the eleven days Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, trip to Africa, visiting Senegal, South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana and Benin.

Northern Africa: Algeria, Libya, Mauritania and Tunisia.

Four months after the Algerian parliamentary elections, held May the 10th, which confirmed in power the *National Liberation Front (FLN)*, Algeria has given rise to a new Government led by the Prime Minister, *Abdelmalek Sellal*, a political figure already known as loyal to the President Bouteflika.

In *Libya*, the *General National Congress (GNC)* elections of July 7 were won by the former interim Premier, *Mahmoud Jibril*, leader of the secular party of the *National Forces Alliance (NFA)*. In terms of any possible out-coming scenario, quite likely there will be a coalition government. The other major political parties having taken part in the election are the *Justice and Development Party*, also known under the name of *Justice and Construction Party*, belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood, the *National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL)* and *Al-Watan*, that is to say the *Homeland Party* or *Libyan National Party*. Nearly three million eligible voters were asked to



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choose the two hundred representatives of the GNC. Over two thousand five hundred independent candidates and one hundred and forty political parties run for the very first free and fair elections after Qaddafi's fall. Several international observers have considered the entire election process transparent and pluralistic. The same has happened in those six foreign countries, where Libyan Diaspora was given the possibility to cast its vote (i.e. *Out-of-Country Voting*), namely: Canada, Germany, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States. For unknown reasons, however, Egypt and Tunisia, where also important Libyan communities reside, were excluded from the process. The eve of the elections was disturbed by violent incidents occurred in Benghazi, Tobruk and in the districts of Ajdabiya, without however compromising the general result. Although these elections are to be seen only as the first step of the longer electoral process that in the coming months will entail the *Constituent Assembly* election by universal suffrage, they have undoubtedly contributed to strengthen the confidence among Libyan citizens themselves on the one hand and on the other with the administrative and political institutions, which the new Libya is being equipping itself with. Regardless of the upshot of this election, it is at any rate clear that the majority of Libyans aims above all at national unity and stability. As a matter of fact, safeguarding overall security and restoring political and social order are without any doubt the main problems of this delicate phase, which shall be concluded with the general elections (both Parliamentary and Presidential) by 2013. On August 8, the *National Transitional Council (TNC)* handed over to the newly elected legislative authority, the CNG, the President of which is *Mohamed Yousef el-Magariaf*. On September 12, the hitherto interim Deputy Prime Minister, *Mustafa Abushagur*, became new *Prime Minister*. Symbolically, as to coincide with the anniversary of September the 11th attacks, the American Ambassador, *Christopher Stevens*, was targeted and killed during a strike with heavy weapons against the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, most probably premeditated since long time by *Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)*, with the support of some Libyan Salafists, who infiltrated the crowd demonstrating beside the Consulate against the video insulting the Prophet Muhammad. The militias believed to have provided logistical support and cover to the attackers might be: *Ansar al-Sharia* (i.e. Partisans of Islamic Law), the *Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG)*, the *Brigades of the Imprisoned Omar Abdul Rahman*, the *17 February Tripoli Revolutionaries*.

In September, Nouakchott has granted Tripoli's authorities the extradition of former Libyan intelligence chief, *Abdallah Al Senoussi*, under arrest in *Mauritania* since March.

In August, in *Tunisia*, *Rachid Ghannouchi*, the historic and charismatic leader of the Islamic party *Ennahdha*, was re-elected at its headship. Out of October the 22nd 2011 elections, Ennahdha won the political majority in Tunisia. Besides, on July 29, the foreign Ministers of Egypt, Libya and Tunisia signed the "*Cairo Declaration*", in order to strengthen horizontal cooperation among them.

Western Africa: Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mano River Union, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

In *Burkina Faso*, the *Municipal and Legislative elections* will be held altogether December the 2nd. On this occasion, for the very first time, a *biometric system* will be used, so to allow more security about both voters' identification and voters' registration.

Concerning *Chad*, on August 23, the Agreement between Senegal and the AU was finally ratified,

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according to which the former President of Chad, *Hissène Habré* will be tried and judged by a special court in Dakar, where he is in exile. Habré is accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity, committed during his regime between 1982 and 1990. In September, unexpectedly, *Abdel Kader Baba Laddé*, leader of the Chadian rebel group, the *Popular Front for Recovery (FPR)*, would have spontaneously given himself up to the local *African Standby Force (ASF)* – *Multinational Force in Central Africa (FOMAC)* – which in turn passed him in the custody of the Central African authorities to extradite him to the Chadian authorities in N'djamena immediately after. At the same time, FPR's militia has started making arrangements for a speedy disarmament. Since July, *Mrs. Fatou Bensouda*, the former Minister of Justice of *Gambia*, has become the new *International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor* for the time being.

On 25 July, in *Ghana*, the Vice-President, *John Dramani Mahama*, has sworn in as the new interim President, following the death for natural causes at 68 of *President John Evans Atta Mills* the day before. The Vice-Presidency has been entrusted to the former Governor of the Bank of Ghana, *Paa Kwesi Amisshah Arthur*. Actually, *Dramani Mahama*, who will remain in office until the Presidential elections, scheduled December the 7th, is also the *National Democratic Congress (NDC)* ruling party's candidate, whereas the main opposition competitor will be the *New Patriotic Party (NPS)*.

Regarding *Guinea-Bissau*, there is still no way out of the political crisis caused by the coup of last April. On April the 20th, the 9th *Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)*, took place in Maputo, as Mozambique holds the rotating Presidency. On this occasion, it was reaffirmed the commitment of CPLP Member States to promote the effective pacification and the efficient stabilization of Guinea Bissau, under the auspices of the United Nations in close coordination with the AU, the EU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Moreover, CPLP has agreed to convene a high-level meeting, in order to develop an integrated strategy for the restoration of the constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau, overthrown by the coup.

No opportunity to open up for political dialogue and get out of the long-standing transition to democracy in *Guinea* so far. In fact, although due to be held in December 2011, legislative elections have been postponed once again. Prolonged disagreements between opposition and the Government are ahead of any decision to define an ultimate date for elections set once and for all. Particularly, the alleged independence, impartiality and neutrality of the *Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI)*'s members are at stake.

In *Ivory Coast*, in an effort to stem the still persisting spread of violence in the West of the country, a National Commission for the fight against small arms and light weapons has been established, as per trying to dismantle the existing arsenal along the border with Liberia, where the rear of some militias opposed to the Government of the Ivorian President, Ouattara, is hiding at leopard's spots. Ten years after the failed coup attempt against former President Gbagbo, believably led by *General Robert Guéi*, an inquiry into his murder (i.e. 19.09.2002) has at last been opened. In September, the new *President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim*, made his very first official visit abroad, purposely in the African Continent: Ivory Coast first and South Africa later.

As per *Mali*, the relationship between the Tuareg led *National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (MNLA)* on the one hand and the *AQ-Associated Movements (AQAM)*, such as *Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)*, *Ansar Dine*, *The Unity Movement for Jihad in West Africa*



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(*MUJAO*) and *Boko Haram* on the other hand are deteriorating, because of the heterogeneity of their political agendas and hidden purposes. In fact, clashes between the two formations have been reported in various locations, including Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal. Before approving any military intervention aimed at restoring the territorial integrity of Mali, the *United Nations Security Council (UNSC)* has specifically urged the AU and the ECOWAS to set a detailed roadmap regarding its modalities. The chief mediator on behalf of ECOWAS is the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, who is carrying out direct talks with all secessionist groups. Yet, the situation is at a stalemate: neither the Malian transitional Government nor Algeria would be in favour of an international stabilization force, while Guinea and Niger would. Given the proactive role of France, Bamako has started talks with Moscow and Beijing, so that, as permanent members of the Security Council, they could put a veto on any resolution to that effect. As for the EU, the Council of Foreign Affairs of the European Union approved the logistical support for any future African military mission in Northern Mali as well as targeted sanctions against anyone who threatens the democratic transition in the country. In September, at a meeting in Abidjan, the transitional Malian authorities and the ECOWAS have established that it will be the latter to ask the UNSC for the “*ECOWAS Mission in Mali*” (*MICEMA*) – not operational yet – to be deployed with a clear mandate. Late September, negotiations are still under way in New York, where on the occasion of *67th Session of the UN General Assembly*, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, has launched the idea to appoint *Romano Prodi*, a former EU President and Italian Premier, as *UN Special Envoy for the Sahel*. At this time one can say that the response to the Malian crisis will inevitably involve simultaneous levels: national, regional, and global. On the domestic side, an *elite force* composed of over a thousand men has been established, to respond only to the President of the Republic and not to the rest of the Malian Armed Forces. The *International Criminal Court (ICC)* in The Hague has granted the request of Bamako to investigate, whether there are conditions to proceed with an investigation into crimes committed during the conflict that led to the secession of the North. The transitional Malian Government has to be united against the secessionists. The return of the President of the Republic, *Dioncounda Traoré*, in the capital after a few months in France for medical treatment, was followed by the announcement of a new course of the transition that turned into a light Government reshuffle and, more importantly, into the establishment of a *High Council* for the management of the crisis chaired by Traoré himself.

During the *21st Summit of the Mano River Union (MRU)*, held in July in Conakry, a *Peace & Security Unit (P&S)* within the Organization was formed, in order to address the growing threat of regional insecurity. The P&S Unit will have three departments, of which the first truly dedicated to the structuring of the of peace and security architecture, the second aimed at the training of police forces and the third dedicated to the indiscriminate proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The MRU, which is based in Freetown, is a regional body established in 1973 and it composed by Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Within the framework of the *Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)*, the EU has formally declared the start of the Civil Mission “*EUCAP SAHEL Niger*”, aimed firstly at improving the Nigerien police, national police and national Guard’s level of interoperability and of repressive capacity. Later on, the mission might also be expanded to Mauritania and Mali. The real goal is to lay the foundation for the fight against terrorism in the region.

Actually, in *Nigeria*, the Islamist sect *Boko Haram* has been unabatedly carrying on terrorist attacks

across the country, widening its range of action. The sect is clearly aiming at striking from the regional to the central level, in order to destabilize the Federal Government. For that reason, the Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, has decided to dismiss the Minister of Defence, Belo Mohammed, and the National Security Adviser, General Andrew Owoye Azazi, replacing him with Samobo Dasuki, who is now in charge to re-engage in a dialogue with the leading exponents of Boko Haram, which so far have remained fence-sitters, likely to get a position to dictate the terms of any still difficult future negotiation.

In *Senegal*, although with a low participation rate (roughly 35 percent), the elections of July 1 for the renewal of the *National Assembly* were won by *Benno Bokk Yaakar (BBY)* – in Wolof meaning ‘united with the same hope’ – that is to say the majority coalition in power of the Senegalese President, Macky Sall. Former Prime Minister, *Moustapha Nasse*, has become the new President of the Parliament. In September, the abolition of the *Senate* and of the *Vice-Presidency* have both been approved, in order to save a dozen million Euros over the State budget, to be donated to a more urgent national development plan.

In *Sierra Leone* forthcoming Presidential and Legislative elections are scheduled November the 17th.

Kwesi Seilelagodji Ahoomey-Zunu is the new Premier of *Togo*, after the withdrawal in July of the entire Government led by Gilbert Fossoun Hounbo, mainly due to some significant incomprehension with the President of the Republic, Faure Gnassingbe.

Eastern Africa: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Tanzania.

On 19 July, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, appointed a new Head of the EU Delegation in *Djibouti*, the French diplomat *Joseph Silva*.

A document of the *UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* would confirm the nonexistent *Eritrea's* support to Somali Shebaabs. Yet, on 18 September, the European Union has formally accused Asmara of deliberately violating international law and therefore urged Eritrea to unconditionally release all political prisoners so far arbitrarily detained.

At 57 years, August the 20th, the Ethiopian leader, *Meles Zenawi*, died in a clinic near Brussels, due to an unspecified devastating infection. In September, the *Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)* has unanimously designated *Hailemariam Desalegn* President and *Demeke Mekonen* Vice-President of the ruling political coalition. According to the Constitution, September the 21st, the Ethiopian Federal Parliament has appointed Desalegn Premier and Mekonen Deputy. Together they will carry out the Zenawi's developmental programme, based on the three pillars of peace, democracy and development, until the 2015 elections. Desalegn, 47 years old, is a Protestant and belongs to the *Welayta* minority ethnic group, whereas Mekonen, former Minister of Education, belongs to the *Amharic* ethnic group. Such a mix may help balance the political power relations among the major Ethiopian ethnic groups, namely: *Tigrayans*, *Oromos* and *Amhara*. Actually, the new interim leadership have launched bilateral talks in Nairobi with the *Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF)*, in order to have the Somali inhabited region pacified as soon as possible. In truth, in twenty years under Zenawi, Ethiopia has registered an extraordinary economic growth. If the new leadership proves to be weak, against any destabilizing factor or actor, dangerous regional implications will occur. In the short term no flaking is expected within the ruling coalition, however new tension may arise over the medium-long term.



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In August, in *Somalia*, the *Constituent Assembly* has adopted the new *Constitution*. In particular, at a time when the *Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI)*'s mandate had finally expired, the new Somali Parliament elected its President, *Mohamed Osman Jawari*, while, September the 10th, *Sheikh Hassan Mohamud* has been elected new *President of Somalia* for the next five years. Born in 1955, President Mohamud, who is a University professor, is the leader of the *Peace and Development Party*, belonging to the *Muslim Brotherhood* in Somalia. Yet, he is internationally regarded as independent and reliable.

In July, in *Sudan*, some violent anti-governmental protests took place on several occasions not only in the capital, Khartoum, but also in other important cities, followed by thousands of arrests. The demonstrators, mostly university students, complained about the drastic deterioration of living conditions, mainly due to the austerity imposed by the Sudanese Government. Meanwhile, *Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)* Darfuri rebels have split into two factions, one of which, headed by *Bakheit Abdallah Abdel Karim*, would be available to begin talks with the Government in contrast to the dissenting side of the movement led by *Gibril Ibrahim* that is still against any negotiation. On the occasion of an official visit of the Sudanese President, Omar al-Bashir, to his Egyptian counterpart, Morsi, it was reaffirmed that the use of Nile waters remains a matter of national security.

August the 10th, the *EU Political and Security Committee* has designated the Danish, *Lasse Rosenkrands Christensen*, Head of Mission of the Aviation Safety *EUAVSEC South Sudan*.

In August, the old *dispute between Tanzania and Malawi about the sovereignty of a part of Lake Malawi* (or *Nyasa*, as Tanzania calls it) has reignited. As a matter of fact, Lilongwe has authorized oil exploration, but Dar es Salaam is against it. Predictably, the two Governments should be able to come to an agreement through diplomatic channels.

Central Africa: Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) & Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Republic of the Congo.

The Congolese *Pierre Moussa* was appointed *President of the Commission of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC)* during its twelfth Summit in Brazzaville. The CEMAC consists of Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea.

The *International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)* Member States *Security Services Coordination Mechanism* began its operations in Goma, capital of *North Kivu Province*, in the *Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*, which aims at meeting the challenges of both natural resources' illegal exploitation and regional insecurity, as a result of presence of myriad of armed rebel groups raging the entire area along the Eastern Congolese border. In particular, on July 15, the African Union has come to a decision of sending an international military contingent to establish a *buffer zone* along the frontier between DRC and Rwanda, where the *March 23 Movement (M23)* mutineers lurk. Besides, ICGLR stated that this peacekeeping force will be integrated, without any risk of overlapping, with the *United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)*. In the meantime, M23 seems to have give birth to its political wing, appointing *Jean-Marie Rugenera* as coordinator.

The Gabonese opposition in exile resentfully contested the official visit that the President of *Gabon*, Ali Bongo, made the first of July in France within the framework of the bilateral strategic partnership.

In August, the Paris Prosecutor's office has issued an arrest warrant against *Teodorin Nguema Obiang Mangue*, son of the *Equatorial-Guinean* President, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo. He is accused of money laundering and misappropriation of public funds.

In the *Republic of the Congo*, although with the lowest turnout possible, President Denis Sassou Nguesso's *Congolese Labour Party (PCT)* reported an absolute majority in the second round of the Legislative elections of July the 29th. Opposition parties have denounced both severe irregularities already in the first round of July 15th and the arrest of the opposition leader, *Mathias Dzone*, of the *Alliance for the Republic and Democracy (ADR)*, who was charged of accusations against public order.

Southern Africa: Angola, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Southern African Development Community (SADC), South Africa and Zambia.

In *Angola*, the 31st of August, *Parliamentary and Presidential elections* confirmed in power *José Eduardo dos Santos*, leader of the *People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola - Labour Party (MPLA)*, having reported 72 percent of preferences. However, the historical opposition party, the *National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)* has gained positions with 19 percent of votes.

In *Madagascar*, August the 2nd, the *Independent National Electoral Commission of the Transition (CENIT)* has announced the electoral timeframe, thus the first round of the *Presidential elections* will take place on *May 8*, while the second round on *July 3*, whilst on *October 23* it shall be the turn of both *Municipal and Communal* elections. Actually, thanks to the relentless pressure of SADC mediators, at the end of July a not easy first encounter between the President of the Transitional Government of Madagascar, *Andry Rajoelina*, and the former Madagascan President, *Marc Ravalomanana*, still exiled in South Africa, did take place in the Seychelles.

In September, after eighteen months, diplomatic relations between *Malawi* and the United Kingdom have officially resumed.

In August, Labour Party's *Rajkeshwur Purryag* became the fifth President of the *Republic of Mauritius*. The former President, *Anerood Jugnauth*, had resigned in March.

In September, the 10th Congress of the ruling party, the *Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO)*, confirmed the leadership of the President of the Republic of *Mozambique*, *Armando Guebuza*. The next elections are to be held in 2014.

August the 17th, the 32nd *Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)* took place in Maputo (Mozambique). Special focus was given to both the Malagasy crisis and the renewal of the Zimbabwean Constitution that is almost finalized. In addition, alleged Rwanda's support to Congolese militias in the Eastern territories of the Democratic Republic of Congo was condemned.

July the 24th, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, took part in the 11th *Summit EU-South Africa*.



In July, in *Zambia*, the judiciary cancelled the Government's attempt to dissolve the main opposition party, the *Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)*, as accused of tax fraud perpetrated when in power.

Conclusions

From 19 to 20 July the *5th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)* was held in Beijing. The theme of this fifth edition has sought to highlight the state of the art of the *Sino-African Strategic Partnership*, matured during these last twelve years, with the declared aim of opening a new phase, according to the guidelines of the *Beijing Plan of Action (2013-2015)* and its implementation through the *China-Africa Development Fund*, which has already been equipped with two billion dollars dedicated to a variety of projects in some thirty African countries over the next five years. Traditionally, the FOCAC is convened every three years, alternating a time in China and the next time in an always different African country: in Beijing in 2000 and in 2006, in Addis Ababa in 2003, in Sharm el-Sheikh in 2009. The next Ministerial Conference will take place in South Africa – a BRICS country – in 2015. At present, more than one million Chinese permanently reside in Africa; each year 40.000 African students obtain scholarships to study in Chinese universities; China-Africa volume of trade is by now of 166 billion dollars. Because of these great consequences figures, South Africa, having denounced the asymmetries of a still unbalanced relationship between the two sides, seems to be worried about the increase of dependence of every single African economy and China. Today China, partly because of its domestic economic difficulties, requires an even greater, when not sole, commitment from its African partners, which at this point cannot refrain from presenting to Beijing a clear, shared and all-embracing continental development programme, as to avoid the failure of the Sino-African model. From an economic and political point of view, China's approach is characterized by engaging – in parallel – both in *competition* and *cooperation* with other global partners, in order to provide a sense of balance in bilateral relationships so far. For instance, such pattern is applied with the USA and the EU. Yet, the same thing cannot be said for the model pursued with Africa, as surprisingly no specific *competition element* is being brought into play in the Sino-African Partnership. Why? The official reason is that, as long as a certain African development threshold is not reached, only *cooperation factor* will continue to be highlighted.

In reality, in order to evade the rise of labour-cost and production costs at home, China wishes to take the lead and keep control of an inevitable gradual shift in the long-run of the world industrial production from Asia to Africa. In this sense, special Chinese led economic districts, already operational in Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Nigeria and Zambia, have to be seen as the forerunners of such a global trend, inasmuch they have so far proved to be the performing channels for Chinese entrepreneurs' taking-roots and for the distribution of 'still' made-in-China products throughout Africa. The model of economic districts will prove to be useful to Africans, only if it turns into a stronger force for the future development of African owned small and medium companies, bearing in mind the necessary strategic view to seriously integrate African national and regional markets. China has now declared to be ready to open to cooperation in Africa with other key international actors, by means of a kind of 'simulated multilateralism', only to share the enormous costs of its whole economic rooting in the Continent, aiming instead to ensure its ultimate hegemony and monopolistic large-scale strategy over the entire Sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, during



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FOCAC latest edition, China has stated to be willing to engage in an innovative way to contribute to peace, stability and growth of the African continent. It is time to see whether all that is still nothing more than a wishful thinking, meanwhile African resources are being enormously exploited at African expenses. To what extent China will be able to keep on skipping global responsibility and engagement in the international arena in general and in Africa in particular? For how long will that be sustainable without any discontent from the other side and from other international actors? For sure, suitable answers to these questions cannot be put off too long by the Chinese leadership in its relationship with Africa and with the rest of the world.



Why is Asia not Europe?

Nunziante Mastrolia

Tension does not seem to diminish over the control of the fragments of islands (the Senkaku / Diaoyu and Dohko / Takeshima), public squares are inflamed by protestors and the economies of countries involved are likely to suffer serious setbacks. What is happening between the most important countries of the Asian region, some with stable and evolved democracies, appears quite incomprehensible to European observers. It is worth trying to understand why this is taking place. Why do two highly developed countries with mature democracies like Japan and South Korea are willing to unleash such a tension? Why do countries like China and Japan (and Taiwan), linked by a strong economic relationship are willing to take the risk of a dangerous escalation?

First of all one can say that Montesquieu was wrong: economic integration neither produces nor automatically guarantees peace. Without a strong desire for political integration, no matter how strong their commercial links are, remain precarious and can be easily be compromised by major political events. This is why, as Robert Cooper said, Asia is the arena where the Leviathans compete with the Westphalia monad state imprisoned in a security dilemma while haunted by territory obsession where the chancelleries compete in a zero-sum game.

This means that in Asia, or at least between Tokyo, Seoul and Beijing (and Taipei) the process of political integration, which gave birth to the European Union in the old continent, has not yet started; such process, despite many problems and bruises, remains the greatest political experiment in the history of international relations. However, this answer raises a further question. Why that process never started in Asia?

Two were the elements that nurtured the integration process in Europe: one of these elements was the Americans' will to put an end to the European wars, which had shocked the world twice. After the Second World War the policy Washington adopted towards the old continent was not limited in the creation, within the policy of containment, of a bulwark against communism in Europe. There was more to that: make all what is possible to prevent the fever of political power to once again take control over European chancelleries, an event that might lead into a new self- destructive war. Hence the American decision to establish the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, the organ with which European States would have to decide on the use of U.S. funds made available by the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction process. The main feature of this organization is that the decision to fund a project rather than another had to be unanimous. This has allowed the creation of integrated infrastructures and industrial plants between the various European coun-



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tries, so in fact, Europeans began to get involved “in discussion of joint economic management”¹, within a Continental framework which was no longer exclusively national. The OEEC “instituted one of the major innovations of postwar international cooperation, the systematic country review, in which the responsible national authorities are cross-examination by a group of their peers together with a high-quality international staff. In those, reviews, questions are raised which in pre-war days would have been considered a gross and unacceptable foreign interference in domestic affairs”². Additionally, the OEEC had also the task of reducing tariff barriers in trade relations between European countries. Thus, the economic complementarity and the reduction of tariff barriers were intended to prevent the return of the ancient rivalry between European countries. But it was necessary to re-integrate Germany in order to quickly recover the European continent from its post-war crisis. The European Union’s project provided the framework within which to carry out the integration of Germany and at the same time would allow Berlin to overcome the limitations of sovereignty that the defeat had imposed. It is no coincidence: “If NATO bound both Germany and the United States to Europe, it also reinforced British and French commitment to an open and united Europe. The United States was intent not only on the rehabilitation and reintegration of Germany; it also wanted to reorient Europe itself”³.

It was the task of NATO to allay the suspicions against German revanchism and form a barrier against the expansionist ambitions of Moscow, meaning the institutionalization of the U.S. peace in Europe and the prevention of the Soviet threat, or, to quote the old adage of Lord Ismay, NATO’s function was to “to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down”. Moreover, if we consider that a place was reserved for Paris among the great powers in the Security Council, one might add that yet another task of the new military alliance was also “to keep the French up”. In this context, the Marshall Plan and NATO were part of a larger institutional package: “Each formed part of a whole. Together they were designed to ‘mold the military character’ of the Atlantic nations, prevent balkanization of Europe defense systems, create an internal market large enough to sustain capitalism in Western Europe, and lock in Germany on the Western side of the Iron Curtain”⁴. Therefore, the pillars of post-war reconstruction foresaw a collective security efforts in order to protect Europeans from themselves (the return of European civil wars), and to defend the borders of Yalta from Moscow’s expansionist ambitions on one hand; on the other hand for the creation of an integrated economic and multilateral measures in order to prevent economic competition from deteriorating into an armed conflict: this is why “the emerging Cold War – and the perceived Soviet threat – did reinforce cooperation among the Western democracies, but it did not create it”⁵. In fact, the integration project would have been short-lived if it wasn’t powered by a second source: the will of Europeans to put an end to fratricidal wars: the will of those who saw in the horrors of

1 J. Ikenberry, *After the victory*, Princeton University Press, 2008, pag. 209

2 *Ivi*, pag. 209

3 *Ivi*, pag. 208

4 *Ivi*, pag. 209

5 *Ivi*, pag. 166



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destruction an opportunity to put an end to centuries of civil wars that had continuously ravaged the continent: a sort of an agreement between ex-combatants in the name of the too much blood spilled⁶. This allowed the Europeans to bury the hatred and the horrors of the past and reconcile. This was not the case in Asia, for a variety of reasons. First of all one has to consider that the closed universe of the Sino-centric order was not opened by the constant flux of commerce (think of the British attempts to open China into International trade in 1792 and 1812) but by the impact of weapons: a result of an infinite series of attacks beginning in 1839 and only ending with the victory of Mao in 1949. One hundred and ten years of humiliation, defeat and the horrors of the Japanese occupation of China's mainland and all those countries that were part of the Sino-centric system particularly Korea and Taiwan. Horrors that continue to tear the collective consciousness of the countries that were under occupation and still feed, even today, resentment and mistrust towards Japan. This means that among the countries, which fought in World War II in Asia, the process of forgiveness and removal of mourning has yet to take place, the opposite of what happened in Europe. That said one can't but wonder why such a process occurred in Europe and not in Asia? The answer is not simple and it can be useful to make an hypothesis of counterfactual history.

What would have happened in Europe if, for example, in France, during the fight against Nazi occupation, a party allied to Moscow could have risen to power? It is difficult, if not impossible, to make history with "ifs" and yet there is a good chance that without the process of reconciliation and forgiveness the foundation of Europe by De Gasperi, Adenauer and Schuman would not have taken place. At the same time it would have been unlikely to kick off the process of economic integration, which, without France, would have appeared to the countries that underwent the horrors of Nazi occupation, as a new hegemonic attempt by Berlin.

This means that the reconciliation between these former enemies was possible because the major countries of the continent were all on the other side of the Iron Curtain. This has allowed not only reconciliation, but also marked the beginning of the integration process between the major European powers and the normalization of their relationship with Germany.

Well, this is exactly what has happened in Asia. The victory of Mao and the loss of China to the Western Front prevented the United States from applying to the Eastern Rimland the same project of reconstruction and integration it applied in post-war Europe. Here, in fact, the beneficial interaction between global institutions (the United Nations and the France's right of veto), transatlantic (NATO) and regional (The European Coal and Steel Community and then the European Economic Community) provided an institutional framework and a strong strategic reassurance to the victims of Nazism, so to ensure that a progressive integration and rebirth of Germany would not have re-

⁶ G. Sacco, *Critica del XXI secolo*, Luiss University Press, Roma, 2005, pag. 70



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vived the hegemonic dreams of Berlin.

American and European policies have proved to be a huge success: a period of economic growth, prosperity and peace that is probably unprecedented in history. Yet it is very unlikely that something like this would have occurred if the red flag were raised above the Elysee palace in 1949.

Now, given that even Beijing has a seat reserved in the Security Council, it is likely that Washington intends to apply the recipe to the Eastern Rimland as it did to the Western one: with this it will start a process of integration between the major regional players in order to tackle the causes of the ever going conflict: protectionism / economic mercantilism and political nationalism, with the external support of the United States.

In Asia, the story has been different: the Maoist victory of 1949 turned these plans upside down and was welcomed in Washington with “dismay”, as Kissinger wrote, triggering the hoary debate on the reasons behind the “loss” of China to the American cause. Subsequently the Korean War and the Cold War came to thoroughly enhance the “unnatural” divisions among the regional countries.

Now: without China there wouldn't be a possibility of dialogue between the two former enemies; without China the possibility of initiating a process of integration with Japan on a wider regional basis wouldn't have occurred; without a project of political and economic integration there wouldn't have a possibility of normalizing Japan, in a manner that is mutually beneficial to all countries in the region. Hence the freezing for too long of the political and military status of Tokyo, something the Japanese Democratic Party has set itself the objective of overcoming.

In Europe, the consent of France – which could boast its status of nuclear power and a right of veto in the Security Council – was a guarantee of the peaceful nature of German Europeanism. This has made of Germany one of the engines of European integration. In Asia, on the contrary, the absence of a Chinese consent prevented Japan from becoming a promoter of regional integration even among the “free” countries, since a greater activism of Tokyo would have been automatically perceived as an attempt to revive Japan's old programs of Imperial conquest⁷

What was left to do was to tie countries that were still free - Taiwan, South Korea and Japan - through bilateral links directly to the United States, regardless of the possibility of regional integration, while China recloses itself into a dramatic isolation from which it briefly emerged in the eighties.

This means that it was only with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the “return” of China, that some of the historical debris, described earlier, have been removed and more possibilities appear to initiate a process of integration. Yet there is another element to be highlighted: the institutional one. European integration has taken place between countries that all had the same set of democratic institutions. On the contrary in Asia, one of the major players – China - is an undemocratic and not transparent regime, which by itself generates suspicions and apprehensions about the long-term intentions of China's foreign policy, which combined with the increasing economic and mil-

7J. Ikenberry, Chung-In Moon, *The United States and Northeast Asia*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2008



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itary power of Beijing, represents a serious obstacle to starting a successful integration process. In conclusion, the roots of what is occurring these days are to be found in the victory of Mao in 1949, which provoked a series of reactions that explain the persistence of the Eastern Rimland in live in a suspicious and insecure age of the chancelleries' games. This has deleterious effects on any active attempts of political cooperation: any integration project guided by Japan will arouse fear and suspicion in Beijing, which fears the Japanese pan-Asiatic ambitions built with the force of bayonets from 1910 to 1945; the same way any Chinese political integration project will be automatically opposed by Tokyo, which fears the resurgence of a Sino-centric order. Moreover, China's growth, within this context, creates political and strategic fear and fibrillation



Claudia Astarita

India's Economy: The Reasons of a Dangerous Slowdown

The performance of Indian economy has never been so critic. News discussing the economic slowdown of a country that was once perceived as one of the most promising emerging powers in and beyond Asia has captured the world's attention. The International Monetary Fund recently estimated a slowdown from the projected 8% to a much lower 6.9% for 2012. However, Indian growth expanded at an annual rate of 5.3% in 2012 first quarter, the slowest pace in nine years, and there are fears that it might slow further in the near term amid increased global volatility. Even though it is difficult to consider this rate a negative one by developed countries' standards, it must be recognized that from an Indian perspective a similar slowdown, that a group of analysts have further reduced to a scary 4%, might sign the decline of the second Asian rising giant.

Among the most recent and surprising news there is certainly the warning Standard & Poor's issued in June that India could be the first among the Brics nations to lose its BBB- investment grade rating. A few days later Fitch decided to cut its outlook for the Indian economy to negative, warning that India's growth potential "will gradually deteriorate if further structural reforms are not hastened".

Although Indian economic performance has not been particularly encouraging during the last few months, it is argued that S&P's criticism is dangerously overlooking the negative connotation of a "junk" downgrade. The junk status would mean that there would be an increase in the overseas borrowing costs for Indian companies and that the country's ability to attract foreign investment would be further diminished. This could have a major impact on overall fund flows. And while the overall international debt is not so alarming in terms of Indian GDP, the country needs a lot of capital flows to cover up its balance of payment deficit.

The other challenge is that after rating agencies' downgrade, any upgrade, although not impossible, usually takes a much longer time to be approved. To gain it, the country has to show an improvement in its overall outlook: current account deficit, macro-economic situation, decision-making and level of uncertainty.

Indian analysts have estimated that the impact of a rating downgrade will be contained thanks to India's limited exposure to foreign debt. However, they have stressed that the lack of foreign capitals and external funding might further hinder growth.

It would be reasonable and consistent for foreign analysts to argue why India seems so annoyed by the potential consequences of a junk downgrade in terms of foreign direct investments attrac-



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tiveness when, as this paper shows, New Delhi's government has already made several steps to discourage foreign businessmen from investing in India.

Which are the reasons behind S&P downgrade warning? Some scholars argue that this should be considered as a "wake-up call" for an inactive government that during the last few months has not succeeded in approving "significant reforms", even though the report quotes slowing gross domestic product growth, political roadblocks to economic policy making, and growing deficits as some of the factors that might confirm the downgrade. S&P analysts have clarified their intention to carefully monitor the way in which New Delhi will welcome its recommendation, as its reactions to potentially slower growth and greater vulnerability to economic shocks may determine, in large part, whether the country can maintain its investment-grade rating, or become the first "fallen angel" among Brics nations. Partially disproving that June warning was just a wake-up call.

According to Fitch, whose rating since June is the same of S&P, "India faces structural challenges surrounding its investment climate in the form of corruption and inadequate economic reforms. [...] There is an even greater onus on effective government policies and reforms that would ensure India can navigate the turbulent global economic and financial environment and underpin confidence in the long-run growth potential of the Indian economy". Implying that if nothing changes, they will follow S&P "junk path".

The continuous decrease in growth forecast is grounded on several indicators. The worst is certainly the 20 percent decline of the Indian rupee against the dollar over the past year. The weakness of Indian currency (and economy) depends on six main factors. First, the country is now importing more goods (in value terms) than it exports, a trend that is consolidating a huge imbalance in trade (in the financial year ending March 2012 the deficit reached \$185bn, while the original estimate was \$160bn). Second, the country's account deficit is also rising. Growing from \$46bn in 2010-11 to \$74bn in 2011-12. Causing a substantial fall in foreign exchange reserves (from \$320bn in 2011 to \$290bn in early 2012). Third, uncertainty about India's commitment to economic reforms, retrospective taxes, and policy paralysis within the government have forced foreigners to either postpone their investment decisions, or take money out of Indian stock markets. Forth, the huge demand-supply gap between the dollar and the rupee (lead by importers asking for dollars to buy goods abroad; exporters that cannot bring in enough foreign currency; foreign investors increasing the demand for dollars as they convert their rupee assets into dollars to take their money out; and normal people selling rupees to buy other foreign currencies to feel safe) hasten devaluation. Fifth, low growth (nearly 9% in 2009-10 and 2010-11, followed by an estimated 6.5% for 2011-12 that might be even further reduced) and high inflation (now between 7 and 8%, but estimated to rise this year to double digit if the government will not be able to curb its fiscal deficit) further complicate the scenario. Pushing foreigners and Indians to take their money abroad. Finally, a group of analyst argues that the Reserve Bank of India's bid to sell dollars in the open market to restrict the rupee slide already failed many times. Warning that once currency traders and speculators realize that India's central bank is unable to manage its exchange rate and reduce the adverse impact on its currency, they may enter the market in a big way to sell the rupee, causing a hyper-devaluation.

Even though it has been recommended for years that fiscal reform and an improvement in the country's investment climate could favor the return to high growth rates, there is unfortunately



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nothing new in stating that India has a less than optimal attitude toward foreign business and investment. During the last few months, the government approved and suddenly suspended several measures aimed at boosting national growth relying on foreign help. Alternatively, some “anti-Western” actions were implemented to indirectly damage their business in India. Among them, it is useful to quote the choice of opening Indian retail market to foreign groups. The one of assessing retroactive taxation on foreign businesses years after incomes are earned and reported to accumulate cash at a time in which the government is facing serious financial problems. Without thinking about its short and medium-term repercussions in terms of foreign direct investments attractiveness. It is not a coincidence that the World Bank includes India among the countries with the most unwieldy legal system. Within its “Doing Business Index” it is ranked 132 out of 183 listed countries and regions, behind Tanzania, Honduras, West Bank and Gaza, and just ahead of Nigeria, Syria, Sudan and Philippines. Pushing many analysts to warn against the return of the “license Raj” days, when economic performances were embedded by a regime of heavy government regulation.

Energy infrastructure bottleneck is another “chronic challenge” for Indian development. The coal mining sector is dominated by an inefficient state-owned company and the prices of coal and natural gas are controlled by a government that does not seem headed toward further liberalization and market-oriented reforms in this sector. Hampering it from meeting internal industrial demand. Other problems are linked to agriculture productivity. Its returns are slowing as crop yields are low. Transport and water infrastructures remain poor and the legal system hostile to foreign investment in both basic agriculture and modern agribusiness. While farm growth is at below 2%, services, usually a double-digit growth booster, are now “just” hovering around 8%.

Another worry is linked to the idea that India’s services-based growth spurt may have run much of its course. Call centers, for example, have succeeded by building their own infrastructure and they often function as “walled mini-cities”. The fact that these impressive achievements have been possible in what analysts have called “economically segregated islands of higher productivity” suggests that success can be achieved only by separating “virtuous experiments” from the broader Indian economy, not by integrating with it. Further, any time profits within these “islands of excellence” decline, the robustness of Indian services-led growth starts to be questioned.

S&P economists have not hidden Manmohan Singh’s responsibilities for this precarious situation. Their report mentions that he has often appeared “to have limited ability to influence his cabinet colleagues and proceed with the liberalization policy he favors”. Moreover, it reminds that Mr Singh is an “unelected” prime minister who “lacks a political base of his own”, and that political power is held by Mrs Gandhi who holds no cabinet position.

Manmohan Singh’s government is for sure a controversial one. Nobody has forgotten that, in 2008, he chose to take on his government key Communist allies in order to approve the civilian nuclear deal with the United States. His credibility and inaction are now widely questioned; he needs to be judged on Indian economic performance and on the consequences a crisis he seems unable to solve will have on the country, on its international status, as well as on poor people’s daily life.

It is extremely dangerous that, frustrated by what they label a “deep shortage of opportunities” in the Indian market, scared by “unclear but basically negative growth forecasts”, and more and more skeptical because of a “chronic lack of predictability and certainty”, a growing number of companies (from Europe to the U.S. and Middle East) are exiting Asia’s third economy. Many foreign



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companies lament that they have seen “their India plans thwarted by sluggish or inconsistent policymaking under the embattled government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh”. According to a recent report, multinationals pulled \$10.7 billion out of the country in 2011, up from \$7.2 in 2010 and \$3.1 in 2009. During the last twelve months foreign direct investment fell by 78%. Confirming one more time that unless the government is able to send a very strong and immediate signal to boost foreign investor confidence, it will soon have to face the threat of more foreign companies looking for an exit in the near future, as well as the one of indirectly warding off new entrants.

Some analysts often highlight that among the worst consequences of Indian decline there is certainly the fact that it is distributed unevenly, with the greatest burden inevitably falling on the poor. It has been estimated that if this slowdown will continue or even worsen, millions of Indians won't be able to rise above extreme penury. Leaving the government with more serious problems (and luckily protests) to handle with.

Last but not least, India has always played a crucial role in boosting the neighboring economies of Bangladesh, Nepal, and thanks to the most recent regional evolution even Pakistan and Myanmar. Accordingly, the losses linked to a weaker “South Asian engine” might go far beyond its borders. And even undermine the allure of democracy in the region, as India's chance to support it clearly depends on both its wealth and political strength.

Considering how critic is Indian equilibrium today, and aware that the Indian economy is much better prepared to face the current global uncertainty than it was during 1990s balance of payments crisis, to clear this hurdle New Delhi needs now to define a list of priorities. Putting within the top three the necessity of having a strong government, reforming the economy, and convincing foreign investors that the new reform path is credible and sustainable.

Unfortunately, the idea that a meltdown similar to the 1991 one, the one which sent India scurrying to the International Monetary Fund for a bailout, is “out of question” is not shared by all analysts. Whose opinions are summed up by catching newspaper headlines such as “prepare for worse” or “goodbye 2020, hello 1991!”.

Indian economy has deteriorated over the last couple of years, and people feel that this happened because there hasn't been enough conviction or definitive action on the part of the government. They believe that India is missing today a bipartisan, mature political consensus on the direction that the economy must take. Pushing more pessimist economists to ask whether India needs political reforms first, and before it can even dream about moving on significant economic reforms. *A few months after S&P warning, the situation in the country has not improved much. The government has announced some new plans to “revive investment and business sentiment”. Such as the approval of contracts to build 9.500km of roads; the commitment to build three new airports at Navi Mumbai, Goa and Kannur and upgrade to international standards the ones in Lucknow, Varanasi, Coimbatore, Trichy and Gaya; the building of two new aviation hubs to transform India in a major transit point and of two new ports in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. To reach his ambitious objectives Manmohan Singh had promised to allocate one trillion dollar funds during the next five years, but three months later nothing has changed. In late July it was United States President Barack Obama to criticize India of “restricting foreign investments in too many sectors”, a choice that has already “deteriorated the investment climate”. Concluding that even though*



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India “continues growing at an impressive rate, there appears to be a growing consensus that the time may be right for another wave of economic reforms to make India more competitive in the global economy”. These statements fuelled huge criticism in the Subcontinent as they were made right after a report published by the US-based Time magazine in which Manmohan Singh was labeled as “the underachiever”, with a title stating “India needs a reboot. Is Prime Minister Manmohan Singh up to the job?”. Indian answer has been harsh: while some officials stated that “FDIs won’t come just because Obama is demanding them”, or that “Americans are talking about future opening of our retail sector so that they can come and make profits”, the Indian magazine Outlook published a report in which Barack Obama was called “the underachiever”, arguing that “America needs a reboot”. The words on the cover of the magazine read: “He promised hope and change. Four years on, President Barack Obama’s sheen is gone. Can his lofty rhetoric carry him home again?”.

Beyond these nationalistic statements, what is interesting to state is that when the former Minister of Finance Pranab Mukherjee was elected as the new President of India in July, the Government thought that with his “support” Manmohan Singh would have eventually been able to approve some substantial reforms. However, even after the biggest-ever power outage that India experienced in late July-early August, which left more than half of India’s 1.2 billion population without power, disrupting public transportation systems and businesses across the affected northern and eastern regions, nothing significant has been done.

India is now expecting something huge from the former Home Minister now Minister of Finance Palaniappan Chidambaram, who promised in early August to overcome Indian challenges, from stubborn inflation to high interest rates and a spiralling fiscal deficit, with “sound policies, good governance and effective implementation”. Highlighting that the key would be restarting “the growth engine attracting more investment, both from domestic investors and foreign investors”. But again, nothing is changing, and India’s “junk nightmare” might become true sooner than expected.



Latin America



Quo vadis OAS?

Alessandro Politi

The future of the Organization of American States, beyond the current political debate and consensus, is conditioned by five structural factors: **I. conflicting continental visions** (Bolívar vs. Monroe); **II. the end of the Cold War**; **III. the interaction of globalization and financial deregulation**; **IV. the reduction of governmental budgets** due to the global economic crisis; **V. the multiplication of social and political actors** in the decision making process.

Leaving aside extreme solutions (dissolving the OAS) or partial ones, there are three possible scenarios:

- **Business As Usual approach**, that would let continue the organization to function by inertia, widening the divide between North and South America and spelling the irrelevance and death of the OAS;
- the Insulza solution, calling for a concentration of resources on four pillars: defence of democracy, defence of human rights, preserving peace and security in the continent and integral development for all countries. The solution proposed by the actual Secretary General aim at getting the maximum consensus while retaining the maximum of mandates. It could work, but it could also be stillborn like the reform of the UN Security Council advocated by secretary general Kofi Annan;
- the division of labour scenario, advocating for a synergy between different regional organizations, a concentration on two main missions and the overcoming of Cold War heritages. The two missions for this century would be: integral development (encompassing human rights) and public security (including narco-trafficking and organized crime). NAFTA, CELAC (Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños) and UNASUR (Unión de Naciones Suramericanas) could take up economic. A new, flexible forum would keep alive political dialogue, integrating civil society and parliamentary representatives. Traditional defence issues could be handled either by a self-standing organization or in partnership with UNASUR, via a new treaty.

The state of the art

If one would try to roughly summarise the nature of the Organization of American States, one



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could say that it is at the same time a hemispheric mini-UN and the NATO of the Americas. Surely it is one of the intergovernmental regional organizations with the oldest precedents in the world and it suffers similar problems as other IGOs (Intergovernmental Organizations) and international institutions.

The concept of an international union in America was ushered by the statesman Simon Bolivar “El Libertador”, who with visionary intuition spelled in the Congress of Panamá (1822) the idea of a league of Latin American republics with common military, mutual defence pacts and a supra-national parliamentary assembly, in parallel with the creation of the Gran Colombia state.¹

Interestingly enough, the project was restarted in 1890 by the new continental leading power convening in Washington the First International Conference of American States and setting up a permanent secretariat and an international commercial bureau. In the period between the two wars the idea of a regional group encompassing the American countries acquired more political content and was more focussed on the maintenance of peace.

The Cold War was the occasion to set up in 1947, under US initiative, the TIAR (Tratado Interamericano de Asistencia Recíproca - Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, colloquially known as Rio Treaty). The treaty, building upon the experiences of the International Conferences of American States and the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace (1936), and on the concepts of the Monroe and Truman doctrines, created a system of collective defence.²

The 30th of April 1948, with the signature of 21 states, was born the OAS, which from 1959 till 1979 evolved through the creation of further specialised bodies and specific conventions.

The structure of the OAS is rather complex, but the following two diagrams help to understand a number of fundamental political points. The Summits of the Americas are the expression at the highest level of the regional political dialogue. The General Assembly is the major decision making organ of the OAS.

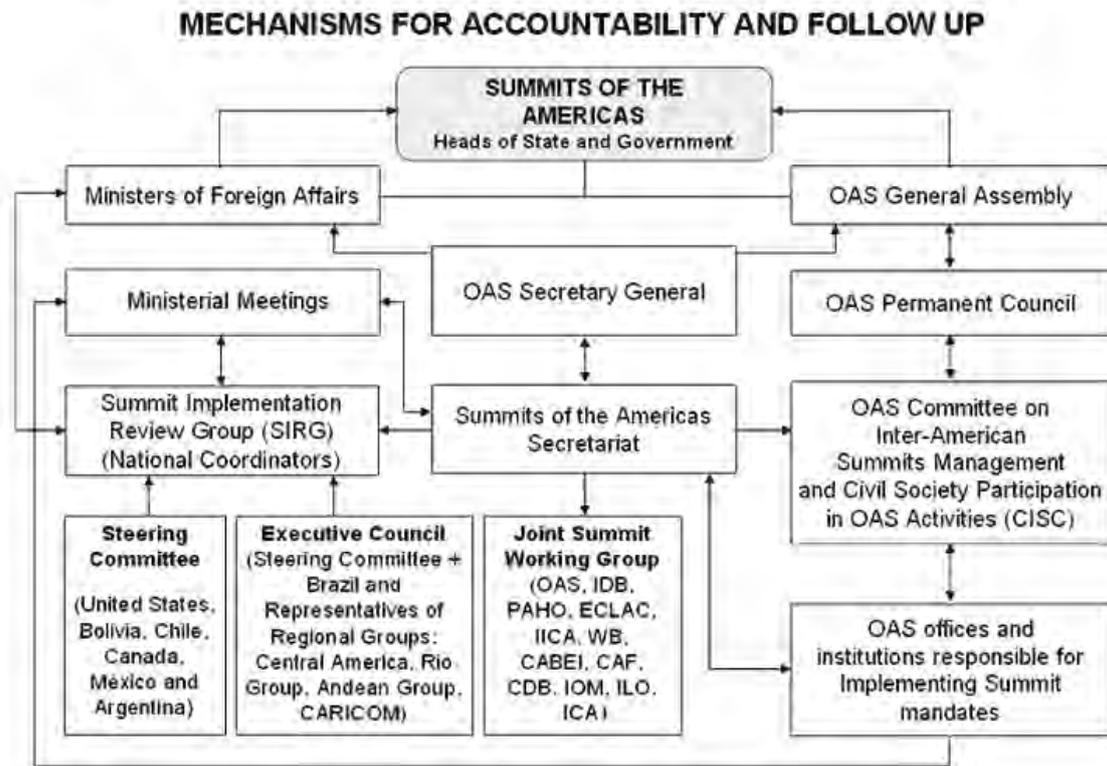
¹ The Gran Colombia project (that included Colombia, Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela) was based on national self-determination, but failed due to emerging national interests and the outbreak of the Colombian civil war.

² The Monroe doctrine (1823) states that European attempts to further colonise the Americas would be considered as an aggression against US interests, requiring an appropriate intervention. On the other hand the USA would refrain from interfering in European affairs and respected existing colonies. The Roosevelt corollary instead, taking stock of the lessons of the Venezuela crisis (1902-1903) declared the right of the USA to intervene if a Latin American country was in a condition of “flagrant and chronic wrongdoing” (1904). The Truman doctrine was spelled during the Greek civil war in March 1947 and declared that it was the policy of the USA to support free people against subjugation from armed minorities or outside pressure, i.e. Soviet orchestrated insurgencies and Communism tout court. Interestingly enough, the Truman doctrine anticipated the TIAR by six months.



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OAS Summits of the Americas follow up mechanisms

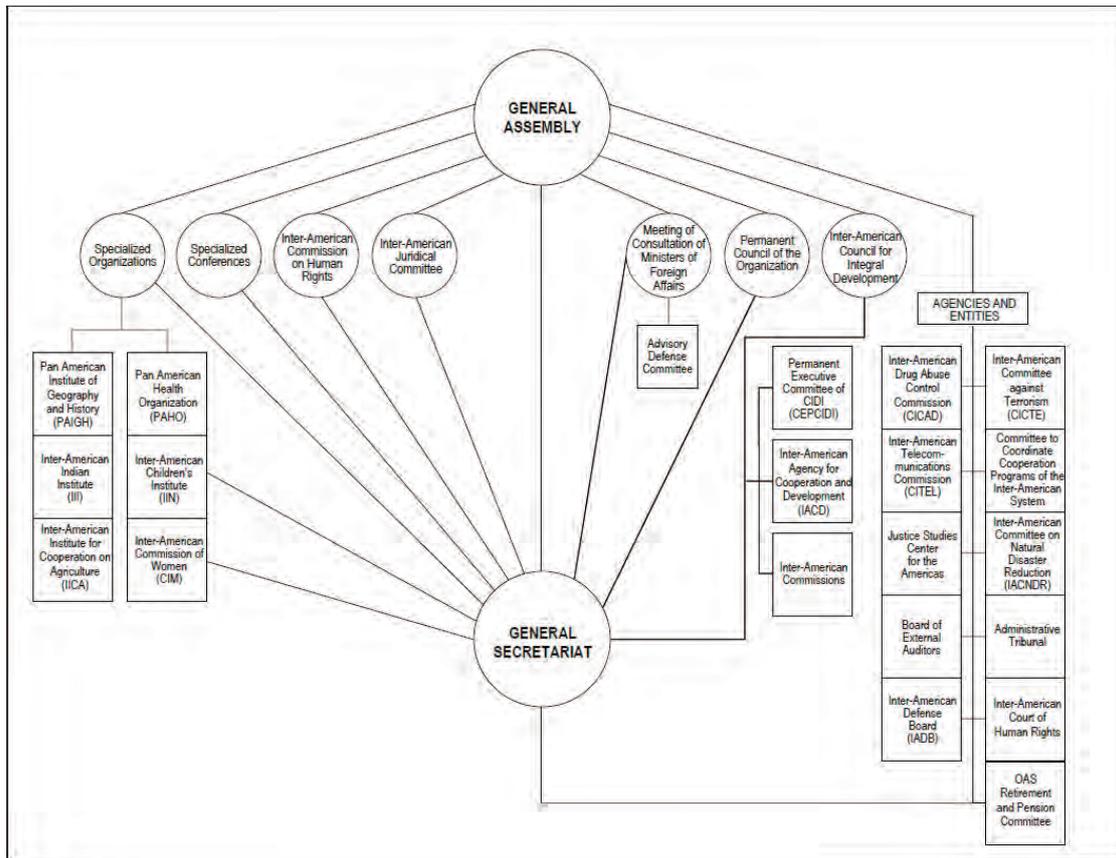


Source: <http://www.summit-americas.org/summit-process.htm> (1/10/2012).



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OSA Structure of the Organization



Source: <http://www.oas.org/legal/english/organigramaOEAeng.pdf> (1/10/2012).



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1. From these documents it appears that:
2. As many other international organizations, the OAS is based on two pillars that interact among themselves and with an array of specialised bodies and committees, i.e. the General Secretariat (GS) and the General Assembly, which they feed and from which they get feed back and support.
3. The Summits of the Americas see a political dynamic more limited between the SG and the MFAs;
4. It must be noted that, until 2000, there was no parliamentary body within or interacting with the OAS, since the General Assembly is an intergovernmental body. In fact by year 2000 the FIPA (Foro Interparlamentario de las Americas; Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas) was created and in 2011 it was renamed ParlAmericas (Parlamentarios por las Americas). Nevertheless it has not yet an organic relationship with the OAS, since parliamentary delegates must each time be granted a special observer status. Only by the 9th of February 2012 a first co-operation MoU has been signed. This means that until the end of the past century the OAS was a rather tight intergovernmental ship and that only a decade after the Americas start to see a dynamic that is standard in Europe and, mutatis mutandis, in NATO.
5. The OAS tries to work by consensus, but the General Assembly can vote by simple majority or two thirds majority, when required.
6. The Permanent Council works on the ordinary activities and as rapid reaction organ regarding disputes between states or critical situation affecting democracy in the hemisphere.
7. Themes like integral development, women children and indigenous populations, multi-dimensional and citizen security, hemispheric defence are a hallmark of the OAS.

Tensions, rifts and suspensions

The OAS during the Cold War has egregiously served the hemispheric security interests of the USA and of several governments through the repression of Communist insurgencies or possible Soviet infiltrations, but the dictatorial nature of some governments was against the principles of the organization and often blocked its action.

The first tension happened in 1962 when the OAS successfully mobilized during the missile crisis, but the suspension of Cuba itself, due to the Marxist-Leninist nature of its government and its alignment with the USSR, created divisions. Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico abstained in order to avoid a direct implication in the resolution of exclusion. Cuba answered that the exclusion was arbitrary and that the OAS had no jurisdiction over the country. The silence of the organization over proliferating dictatorships in Latin America during the coming years weakened its claim to defend democracy and the issue festered for the next decades.

By 2009, a group of Latin American countries, all of them in the ALBA (Bolivia, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Venezuela),³ lobbied for ending Cuba's suspension. The negotiation was rather complex because Washington insisted in attaching conditionalities, although in the end a compromise was achieved: Cuba's suspension was annulled, but the country had to conform with the "ac-

³ The Alianza Bolivariana para América Latina y el Caribe is a regional organization, promoted by Cuba and Venezuela in alternative to the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas), supported by the US government. Honduras went out of the alliance after the golpe of June 2009.



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quis” of the OAS. Raúl Castro’s regime refused, but expressed the interest in April 2012 to attend to the Summit of the Americas in Cartagena, Colombia. The request was supported by several countries but opposed by the USA, and Canada, for Cuba’s lack of strict respect of the democratic system. Nevertheless the issue is bound to resurface in the next summit (Panama, 2015) because all other hemispheric countries favour Cuba’s participation.

Exactly twenty years after, another rift was caused by the war of the Falkland/Malvinas. The Reagan administration was deeply split, prominent ambassadors of the State Department were against the UK, the OAS sided with Argentina, but in the end the USA left their neutral stance and supported London.⁴

Once again the rift was papered over for decades, only to become very visible in 2012 (June, Cochabamba General Assembly), when the Organization invited the parties to negotiate and to follow the relevant UN resolutions on the matter, but several governments read statements in favour of Buenos Aires in front of the UK observer.⁵ The US government had an unpleasant surprise when in 2005 it believed it had picked the right successor to the post of Secretary General in the person of the former Salvadoran president, Francisco Flores. Most Southern Cone countries decided instead to support their own candidate, the Chilean Interior minister José Miguel Insulza. The US switched candidate by selecting the Mexican Foreign minister, Luis Derbez, pitting NAFTA (North American Free Trade) loyalties against those among Southern American countries. It ended with a compromise whereby Washington convinced Mr. Derbez to withdraw his candidature, supported Mr. Insulza and was reassured that pressure would be kept against Cuba and Venezuela. On 4/7/2009 Honduras was suspended from the OAS, after a putsch had ousted president Manuel Zelaya, with 33 countries in favour and Honduras abstaining. The country was readmitted after Mr. Zelaya came back from exile due to a reconciliation agreement, under the auspices of Colombia and Venezuela (1st of June 2011). Behind the scenes, despite the successful action of the Organization, there was a lot of acrimony among countries about the handling of the contingency.⁶ Consensus was broken even in the Permanent Council, after 15 years of decisions by consensus (despite a requirement for a 2/3 majority on most decisions), when the council adopted a resolution in favour of Costa Rica (21 votes in favour, 1 against and 3 abstentions) regarding a border dispute with Nicaragua (12/11/2010). Nicaragua ignored the decisions of the OSA and threatened to withdraw from the international body.

⁴ Ironically the decision has been seen as a reversal of the Monroe doctrine, precisely in favour of one of the powers that were meant to be kept out of the hemisphere. In reality the Monroe doctrine has nothing to say over existing colonies (alias possessions or overseas territories) belonging to European countries, while the Roosevelt corollary could have been used against Argentina. That said, the US administration did not use this diplomatic interpretation, preferring to face the consequences of a political decision.

⁵ See <http://en.mercopress.com/2012/06/06/oas-calls-on-argentina-uk-to-find-peaceful-way-to-solve-malvinas-sovereignty-dispute> (2/19/2012).

⁶ Cfr. <http://www.cfr.org/venezuela/political-unrest-venezuela/p28936>; <http://www.cfr.org/americas/organization-american-states/p27945>.



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What future for OAS?

Despite being significant, these five episodes cannot justify by themselves the perceived crisis of this organization and they must be interpreted just as symptoms of a more complex situation. Existing analyses point out to the following circumstances:

- Rule by consensus and tendency to inaction if the situation is polarised;
- Perceived growth of an anti-US stance vis-à-vis the demand of Latin American countries just for a more horizontal relationship;
- Conflicting political judgments on the Organization that range from the classic “US puppet” to the newer “subservient to Venezuela and anti-democratic regimes” accusations;
- Increasing US lack of interest in the exercise;
- Proliferation of mandates and lack of focus;
- Serious budget crisis, lack of balance between the resources and numerous commitments (Mr. Insulza estimates a -20-30% deficit), and increasing US Congress conditionalities attached to the US budget share;⁷
- Excessive intergovernmentalism and therefore lack of involvement by civil society and the parliaments. In fact the OAS does not have flexible, yet binding, mechanisms to build consensus and safeguard citizens’ rights above the states’ interests;
- End of the post-Cold War revitalisation carried out by the Secretary General Cesar Gaviria through the Summits of the Americas;
- The practical subordination of the OAS under the summitry of the Americas in order to carry out its functions, while the IDB (Inter-american Development Bank) is following a parallel course, although its programmes are converging with OAS general policies;
- Diverging security priorities, with Mr. Insulza proposing to concentrate OAS resources on public security and narco-trafficking.⁸

⁷ <http://en.mercopress.com/2011/11/01/oas-faces-critical-financial-situation-difficulties-to-pay-salaries>.

⁸ Very interesting was the debate that took place at the Brookings Institution in March 2010 http://www.brookings.edu/~media/events/2010/3/15%20latin%20america/20100315_latin_america (5/10/2012).



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The different regional security perceptions in LatAm

Cuadro 1: Percepciones de amenazas priorizadas por subregión				OEA
MERCOSUR	PAÍSES ANDINOS	CENTROAMÉRICA	CARIBE	Seguridad Publica
Narcotráfico	Narcotráfico	Narcotráfico	Narcotráfico	Narcotráfico
Terrorismo	Terrorismo	Terrorismo	Terrorismo	Crimen organizado
Tráfico de armas	Pobreza y carencias	Medio ambiente y desastres naturales	Pobreza y carencias	
Crimen organizado	Guerrillas y grupos subversivos	Crimen organizado	Medio ambiente y desastres naturales	
Medio ambiente y desastres naturales	Tráfico de armas	Pobreza y carencias	Tráfico de armas	
Pobreza y carencias	Crimen organizado	Tráfico de armas	Crimen organizado	
Guerrillas y grupos subversivos	Medio ambiente y desastres naturales	Guerrillas y grupos subversivos		

Fuente: Rojas Aravena F. (2004). "Ingovernabilidad: Estados Colapsados Una Amenaza en Ciemes." *Nueva Sociedad*. Fundación Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. (198): 63.

Source: idem and speeches/interviews of Mr. Insulza for the added column.

This report would like to argue that, beyond these facts, structural factors come into play both at global and regional level:

I. Within the OAS, already in its antecedents, there were **two distinct visions** of the Americas' interests: one strain is politically represented by Bolivar and produced the Drago doctrine and the Calvo clause, while the other stems from Monroe. This means that in OAS coexist a drive towards a regional collective self-interest and a regional collective policy organized by a major partner. To sum up, we are assisting at the return of Bolivar with a vengeance.⁹

9 The Bolivarian Revolution of Mr. Chavez is another phenomenon. The Drago doctrine (1902, Argentinian minister of Foreign Affairs), was formulated precisely during the Venezuela crisis (see note 2) when three European powers carried out a naval blockade against Caracas to obtain sovereign debt repayment. It states that no foreign country can use military force to recover its debt from an American country. The Calvo clause (Carlos Calvo, Argentinian international jurist, 1868) states that foreign citizens must go to local courts in order to solve disputes, renouncing to ask diplomatic protection from their own country. The Calvo doctrine lays out that: every country has a right to non-interference in its internal affairs; that local and foreign citizens enjoy the same rights in court and that the competent court is national, without the mentioned diplomatic protection



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The **end of the Cold War** meant also the dissolution of a strict interpretation of security that concentrated exclusively on the Soviet and Communist threat. On one hand this approach helped in organizing and hierarchizing different national security interests and perceptions, on the other it chose to ignore more persistent threats like organized crime. Now IGOs are left with the choice to adapt in an opportunistic way to change, new challenges and new perceptions of security.

II. The **concurrent movement of globalization and financial deregulation** has changed US priorities from its “backyard” to the Pacific Ocean and China (Trans-Pacific Partnership), reducing its presence and interest in Latin America.

III. The **reduction** even for relatively rich countries of **governmental budgets** vis-à-vis the global economic and financial crisis.

IV. The **multiplication of social and political actors** in the decision making process.

If the OAS member countries choose a **BAU approach** (Business As Usual), increasing paralysis and ineffectiveness will be the main components of a rather predictable scenario. The distance between Washington-Ottawa and Latin America will increase, US Congress will jump on the opportunity to cut funds, if the administration will not be forced to do the same by the pressure to balance the budget, other countries will resist streamlining the organization and OAS will descend into a chaotic competition with other regional fora.

The **Insulza solution** (centring upon four pillars i.e. defence of democracy, defence of human rights, preserving peace and security in the continent and integral development for all countries) is designed to get the maximum consensus while retaining the maximum of mandates. It is difficult at this stage to evaluate it will be successful in stemming the crisis, building time or if it will be stillborn like the reform of the UN Security Council advocated by secretary general Kofi Annan¹⁰.

The **division of labour scenario** would acknowledge that even core missions of the OAS need to be rebalanced in a new century. It can be said OAS has been relatively more valuable in different missions during different times: security at the height of the Cold War, democratisation after the 'Eighties, human rights and political dialogue until today. The main political question is if the multiplicity of interests that are pursued by Latin American/Caribbean countries and North American ones (Canada/USA) is better represented and managed with a “one stop shop” solution or with a synergy of institutions and missions.

It is relatively easy to argue that the all-encompassing solution ends up in a rather incoherent stovepiping and piling up of interests, which are dysfunctional even for the old hegemonic power. So the question is what are the priorities that could be politically more binding for the whole continent. This report intends to propose two pillars that could ensure the best composition of interests between the different actors: **integral development**, which encompasses human rights, and **public security**, including narco-trafficking and organized crime.

Integral development was the concept supporting the rise of developing and underdeveloped coun-

¹⁰ See www.scm.oas.org/doc_public/SPANISH/HIST_11/CP27780S04.doc (3/10/2012).



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tries; today it should be considered as the new sustainable development agenda after the end of the global economic crisis (foreseeable by year 2018). This agenda unites all countries, irrespective of their degree of past development, because there is the need to rebuild a world devastated by the economic crisis and to take into account that finite resources can support only a sustainable growth. Public security will be the main security issue for the continent during the next two decades, much more than a decaying jihadist terrorism, precisely because organized crime and narco-trafficking are the major scourges of human rights and integral development. If one takes seriously into account the threat represented by the Mexican mafia war, the diffusion of maras in the continent and the steady infiltration of transnational organized crime in North America, this priority is crucial, unless the course of events and political choices will not incline towards another hot world war.¹¹

This scenario would overcome both simplified OAS definitions mentioned at the beginning of this report, because the organization would be less universal and not oriented towards military security, but it would acquire in political and strategic relevance/effectiveness.

More traditional economic, security and political agendas could be taken up and implemented by other arrangements that would build upon existing and stronger building blocks. Trade and economic agreements could try to create a network of shared and compatible regulations between NAFTA, CELAC (Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños) and UNASUR (Unión de Naciones Suramericanas).

Political dialogue can be better managed with a new, more flexible political forum established between North America and Latin American countries, leaving aside unnecessary Cold War heritages and integrating from the start civil society and parliamentary representatives.

The IAD (Inter-American Defense Board) instead could become either a self-standing regional organization, specialised in conventional security, civil-military reform etc.¹²

or seek an arrangement with UNASUR in order to provide military expertise and support in modular and separable ways, according to the interests of the parties. This would also imply a new treaty, overcoming the political obsolescence of the TIAR.

OAS can have not just some future, but experience a new season of success, provided that reforms are timely, deep and courageous and that national governments are farsighted enough.

¹¹ Contrary to conventional wisdom, the world has witnessed two hot and two cold wars: I and II WW, Cold War and the current Financial World War. See VVAA, *Nomos & Khaos* 2013, Alessandro Politi 2.2.4 FinWWI: the first financial world war, *Nomisma*, Bologna 2013; http://ilpoliti.ilcannocchiale.it/2011/12/09/su_limes_62011_alessandro_poli.html; Alessandro Politi and Claudia Bettiol, *Il gioco di Sid e Scrat*, in *Limes* 5/2011, *Alla guerra dell'Euro*, dicembre 2011. Maras are juvenile gangs, already operating in transnational networks (Mara Salvatrucha, Barrio 18) in transition towards organized crime, see <http://www.oas.org/dsp/documentos/pandillas/AnexoIV.El%20Salvador.pdf>,

¹² See NDU, John A. Cope, *Reforming the Inter-American Defense Board*, in *Strategic Forum*, n. 258, 08/2010, The author recommends to explore six areas where the IADB could contribute: regional standards for military preparedness, disaster response and cyber security; technical best practices-attention to climate



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change and the environment, strategic communication, human rights training; interoperability, peacekeeping, disaster response, education; transparency, defense budgets, enforcement of military justice; legal considerations, law of the sea, border demarcation, energy; unique professional expertise-demining, search and rescue. The IADB was self-standing, now it is nebulously integrated under the OAS, but without really interacting with the main organs of the OAS.



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Are German tanks rushing in the Middle East? The Leopard 2 and the Saudi Arabia-Qatar deal

Stefano Felician Beccari

After the end of the Second World War, it was widely thought that the tank was one of the definitive units to win a future conflict. Speed, power, protection and lethality changed radically the role of armoured forces during the conflict, as well as communication systems and coordination with other units. The following era, the Cold War, has been crucial for the development of the modern tank. The vast plains and fields of Germany and Central Europe were a perfect place for large-scale and wide armoured operations, supported by infantry, artillery and cavalry units. More recently the best performance of the armoured forces took place during the First Gulf War (1990-1991) when the land invasion, driven by the US M-1 Abrams tanks, crushed Iraq's forces in nearly one hundred hours. The changes following the end of the Cold War, the rise of terrorism and counter-terrorism doctrines, the asymmetric scenarios and the end of a "static" adversary in favor of a "mobile" one (guerrilla groups, irregular forces, insurgents) inflicted severe blow on further tank developments. Despite some local initiatives (like, for instance, the Israeli Merkava) many countries today are decreasing or scrapping their armoured forces, opting for wheeled armoured vehicles with less protection but more speed and mobility. In mostly of the Western world the large tank divisions and brigades of the Cold War were transformed in few tank regiments, rarely deployed in Peace Support Operations (PSO). Is it the end of the "tank era"? Some recent developments in the Middle East are opening new horizons for the tanks, especially in Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

If we consider the conflicts of the last twenty years, the tanks have seldom played a decisive role. Asymmetrical warfare, counter-guerrilla operations, peace-keeping missions and similar scenarios are fields in which the tanks' massive firepower and protection are not a crucial issue anymore. The decline of the "hard" armoured forces in favor of more light and mobile wheeled vehicles has limited tanks' further development and innovation. Today the most important world powers are still using tanks designed during the Cold War years, usually upgraded for the new unconventional threats. Despite the attention paid to mines, improvised explosive devices (IED) or urban warfare, the latest tank upgrades do not involve the units' structure, but only some aspects of it. Therefore, the armoured units still active in the world are usually refitted versions of already existing tanks.

The history of Leopard 2

After the success story of the Leopard 1 tank (developed in the fifties and entered in service in the

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sixties), during the seventies Germany decided to start the study of a successor. An initial deal with the United States led to the MBT-70 project, but soon it was abandoned. The German industry, alone, decided to create a new tank to replace the former Leopard 1 and to upgrade the armoured forces of the *Heer* (the German Army). After nearly ten years of efforts, the new Leopard 2 was ready for the tests and then entered in service between 1979 and 1980. Since its first appearance, the new tank was a success for the German industry, both in the domestic and foreign market. Many data could be quoted about the Leopard 2, but probably its unique combination of speed, flexibility, durability and firepower are the crucial elements which make this one of the most powerful and reliable tanks in the world. Soon after the Leopard 2 entered in service in the *Bundeswehr* (the German Armed Forces) other states became interested in it. Many tanks started to be exported in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Canada; but the real momentum for Leopard 2 and, in general, for the German tanks, came after the end of the Cold War. When this confrontation ended, the *Bundeswehr* had its arsenals plenty of tanks. In order to downsize the military, Germany decided to sell off many units, creating a successful secondhand market for its tank stocks. Chile, Poland, Finland, Greece, Spain, Singapore and other countries capitalize on this option, strengthening Leopard's position and consideration in many markets. Today Krauss-Maffei Wegmann (KMW, successor of Krauss-Maffei) affirms that <<Leopard 2 is synonymous for internationally leading battle tank technology>>, with <<over 3.000 units delivered>> in sixteen nations. Due to this relevant position in the global tank market, one of Leopard 2's nicknames is now "global Leopard". Another key asset of the Leopard 2 is the wide selection of models available for its customers. The production, begun with the Leopard 2 "A0" series, has now arrived to the "A6" and "A7/A7+" versions, but many intermediate levels (for instance "A4" and "A5") are still common and used by many countries. The latter versions ("A6" and "A7") are specifically improved for unconventional modern threats, such as urban warfare and PSO. Some of these features are particularly interesting for the defence requirements of Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Leopard 2 data

Weight	55.4 – 62.5 t
Length (gun at 12 o'clock)	9.67 m (A6: 10.97 m)
Width	3.77 m
Height (turret roof)	2.64 m
Engine power	1,100 kW (1,500 hp)
Maximum speed	72 km/h
Cruising range	450 km
Armament	120 mm (L44/L55) smoothbore cannon

Source: Krauss Maffei Wegmann official website (www.kmweg.de)



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Shadows in the Middle East

In the last years the geopolitical balance in the Middle East has been hit by some major shocks. The latter, the so-called “Arab Spring” and its legacy is an ongoing process which seems far from an end. These turbulences and the lack of a comprehensive feeling of security have fuelled new tensions. Turkey’s emerging role, Syrian civil war, Lebanon instability, the political transition in Egypt, the riots in Bahrain and a possible “nuclear” Iran are shaking a fragile context, and they are spreading in the region a feeling of insecurity. This uncertainty about the future is boosting the transformation of some armed forces in the Middle East. In the last months Saudi Arabia and Qatar have expressed their interest in a huge tank deal. Since 2011 Saudi Arabia has been looking for new tanks, and its original plan was to buy 200 or 300 Leopard 2. During the summer of 2012 the request has risen to 600-800 tanks, nearly (or more than) the double of the initial provisioning. Saudi Arabian Army already operates hundreds of M1 Abrams, M60 and AMX tanks, divided in some armour brigades. At the same time the Qatar Armed Forces declared their interest for other 200 Leopard 2. Currently Qatar’s defence relies only on 30 French AMX Main Battle Tanks (MBT). Both the countries are ready to buy a large bulk of new Leopard 2 “A7”, designed for urban warfare and similar operations. Many analysts question the reasons of this upgrade of Saudi and Qatar forces. There seem to be two main answers.

The first reason is the general weakness of regional security, and the fear of a possible conflict with Iran. The riots of 2011 smashed all the previous balance of powers and new political actors are rising in the Middle East. If Egypt and Syria are maybe less dangerous for Saudi Arabia, Iraq’s fragile government, Yemen instability and Iran’s role create a palpable sense of anxiety in the Saudi *élites*. The new posture of Tehran and its rhetoric against pro-Western Arab states, backed also by religious differences, represent a direct threat for Riyadh’s ruling dynasty. Relations between the two states have faced ups and downs, but in the last years the fear of Tehran’s nuclear program has cooled the bilateral dialogue. Saudi Arabia fully rejects Iranian behaviour, and, according to Wikileaks documents, it seems that Abdullah’s government had urged the US to stop (also by force) Tehran’s nuclear ambitions. A nuclear-armed Iran might be a dangerous rival for Saudi Arabia’s role as a regional power, igniting a perilous arms race. Furthermore, Riyadh does not like Tehran’s ambitions over Bahrain. The tiny island is a long-time ally of the Saudis but it has a relevant Shia population. Saudi units, in cooperation with Bahrain forces, crushed some street riots during the first months of the “Arab Spring” (2011) and they restored the role of the pro-Saudi Arabia monarch. Qatar also does not like the increasing role of Iran in the Gulf area. For centuries the little emirate was a dry and rocky land, scarcely populated and contested by Ottoman and British troops. But during the twentieth century, CIA World Factbook reports, the country has <<transformed itself from a poor British protectorate noted mainly for pearling into an independent state with significant oil and natural gas revenues>>. Despite its small size, Qatar is now a pivotal regional actor, sustained by its growing economy. A conflict in the Gulf would be a disaster for Doha’s interests, and this scenario has pushed Qatar’s military to reinforce the national defence. The upgrade of the tank fleet (passing from 30 old French models to 200 new Leopard 2) sounds like a robust “insurance policy” against any future invasion or threat.

The second reason is less evident, but very important as well. The 2011 uprisings in the Middle East took place mainly in urban areas. Streets and squares soon became battlefields, and most of



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the regular armed forces or police units were untrained to face this circumstance, nor they had any specific equipment. When there was Bahrain invasion carried out by Gulf troops (especially the Saudi Army) the units had to face a typical urban warfare scenario, in which the previous tanks and tracked vehicles were uncomfortable. They were not equipped with improved passive protections useful for close combats or hit-and-run tactics. The crush of Bahrain protest required the help of the military, and at least 40 people died during the clashes. The lesson for all the Gulf states was very clear: if riots and protests require tougher answers than standard police operations, also the governments need special weaponry, tactics and, last but not least, vehicles.

The new Leopard 2 fits both the roles (conventional and urban warfare), and the first reason seems enough to justify the new tank purchase. But many analysts and NGOs think that especially the Saudi interest for the Leopard's latter version ("A7") is related more to the second cause, providing the kingdom with a new set of weapons useful to crush any future opposition at home or in the Gulf states. The Leopard 2s that the Saudis are looking for should be flexible enough to face any kind of urban clash, and they will be also equipped with ploughs and blades to clear hindrance or debris. It is still unclear the version that Qatar's defence is going to buy, but the "A7 option" could be a likely choice.

If the initial expectations will be fulfilled, it is highly probable that Saudi and Qatar's defences will increase dramatically the efficiency of their armies, and therefore it could change the geostrategic balance of the region. It is soon to say if a new arms race is developing in the Middle East, but the "Leopard *affaire*" would surely have an impact on the regional context.

Export is the key

According to the reports, the value of the contracts should be 10 billion € for Saudi Arabia and 2 billion for Qatar. Beyond the sum, this deal could have a significant impact on German defence industry. After the successes with the frigates delivered to Algeria and the new series of "Dolphin" submarines for Israel, Germany confirms its solid export reputation in the Middle East's growing market. Berlin's export, despite some domestic criticism, is quickly developing, opening new opportunities for German companies. The Leopard 2 deal will boost the reputation of Krauss Maffei Wegmann and its partner Rheinmetall, which provides the Leopard 2 L55 or L44 cannon. If the deal will be successful, the companies will find two important customers, which are going to buy between 800 and 1.000 brand-new tanks, but also spare parts, ammunitions, maintenance and training. The general feeling of insecurity in the Middle East is forcing many states to buy modern systems and technologies and to renew the national strategies; the oil revenues can easily fund such expenses. Germany had understood quickly this new regional trend, and in few years some companies started to provide defence systems to many new customers. The Saudi Arabia-Qatar deal will open a new market for Germany, because until today the two countries have relied only on US or French technologies. The new Leopard 2s will probably succeed the older M60 and AMX-30 tanks, limiting the room for further US and French deals and adding important buyers to KMW's portfolio. For the two Gulf states buying tanks from Germany is useful both for the arsenal renewal but also for political reasons. Saudi Arabia and Qatar's establishments have a traditional pro-West approach, and both share very good relations with the US. Qatar also hosts an important US military base. This pro-US stance is very unpopular among the vast majority of Arab people, and it

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causes harsh criticism also in Saudi and Qatar public opinion. Both the countries are rich enough to buy first-class technologies, avoiding Russian or Chinese systems. German tanks represent an efficient compromise solution, because the countries are going to acquire high standard Western technologies but with a supplier different from the US.

The deal will be a big success for Germany. The European defence market is overcrowded and the security investments are plummeting. The key to survive is a tough export strategy, oriented towards new markets, especially Middle East and Asia. This 12 billion euro deal will boost German defence industries, keeping the know-how and the production at home and providing new strategic partners for Berlin. The Gulf states are a dynamic market sustained by a vibrant economy, and the tank deal will surely open new spaces for other German companies. KMW should adapt its tanks to the harsh climatic conditions of the Arabian deserts, but the “desert Leopard 2” version could be also useful to attract new buyers and to consolidate the role of German industries in this field. In the recent months, also Indonesia was looking for a new tank, and Jakarta’s government will probably opt for Leopard 2.

The German debate

In Germany the feelings about the deal are mixed, and they reflect a normal clash between *realpolitik* and other political positions. The German government and the ruling party CDU are quite in favor of the deal, knowing that such a contract could reverse dramatically the plight of German defence industry. A positive result would create strong bonds between Germany and the Gulf states, reinforcing Berlin’s role in an important region. At the same, this deal does not seem to worry Israel, another key partner for German exports. According to many sources, the German government refuses to give any detail about the two deals. But in Germany other parties and associations do not share the same feelings. The Socialists and the Greens are concerned about the future use of the Leopards by the Gulf governments. Many people fear that the first reason which backs the deal is the will to control and smash any possible domestic dissent. The new tanks, especially fitted for urban environments, would be a precious asset for Riyadh and Doha’s tight control over their societies, as already happened during the Bahrain uprising. Other analysts blame this deal because both the Gulf states are not very respectful of human rights. Now the decision is under scrutiny of the Federal Security Council (*Bundessicherheitsrat*), headed by Chancellor Angela Merkel, a cabinet-level body which has to approve the deal. The debate inside the Council is classified, and many analysts doubt that the approval would be an easy decision.

It’s hard to forecast the Council’s decision, but the importance of such a deal and the silence of Israel could switch the balance in favor of an approval. A green light given by the German government would open a new market for German defence industries and create new strategic relations in one of the richest and most important areas of the world. This deal would also reinforce KMW’s position as a global company, opening new markets for its production. The tanks’ era is not over.



Lucio Martino

The anti-missile defense from Bush to Obama

The theme “Anti-missile defense” has returned again and again over the last fifty years, and each time it rears its head, it complicates the dialogue between Washington and Moscow. Although the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABMT) of 1972 effectively placed the topic into the background for thirty years until the unilateral withdrawal of the United States in June 2002, the Americans and Russians again seem to be at a crossroads. During the coming years, the political leaderships of the two States must decide whether to confront the development of the Atlantic Alliance’s ABM capacities in a cooperative manner, or whether they will profit from it to compromise their entire relationship.

The United States has in the past twice launched a series of measures designed to assure a certain level of protection from any missile threat, and twice it has decided to renounce development of them. In 1967 the Johnson Administration announced its intention to deploy a first anti-missile defense system, the Sentinel, aimed at protecting the U.S. population from an emerging Chinese missile threat. The entire program was abandoned after only a year and a half under the Nixon Administration, in the favor of the development of an anti-missile system which was even more ambitious, the Safeguard. This other project, using the same interceptors and control systems as the Sentinel, was planned to protect only the U.S. strategic missiles from a Soviet attack. Notwithstanding the passing of time, the entire debate regarding anti-missile defense systems still continues to oscillate between the ambition to protect entire populations from a low number of missiles, and the intention to defend a much more limited number of strategic objectives from a much larger amount of missiles. Today, as then, various cost and benefit analyses appear to show how similar defense systems may be easily neutralized through the adoption of relatively economic counter-measures, apart from the simple deployment of a greater number of offensive weaponry. It is really due to the weight of this type of consideration that for almost thirty years the ABMT managed to significantly limit the number of anti-missile defense arrangements of the two signatories, and avoid a further deployment of such weapons in defense of the respective national territories.

The end of the ABMT was due to a great extent to the results of the Rumsfeld Commission of 1998, according to which Iran, Iraq, and North Korea would be able to have a significant inter-continental missile capacity with five years of the report. Afterwards, with the Missile Defense Act of 1999, Congress decided on the deployment, as soon as technically possible, of a new anti-missile defense system capable of replying to a limited missile attack. At this point, the Adminis-



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tration of the younger President Bush decided to withdraw the United States from the ABMT and to develop and deploy in a hurry a new anti-missile defense system known as the Ground Based Interceptor (GBI).

To date, all anti-ballistic missile defense systems seem to share the same history of enormous technical difficulties, considerable development and production delays, and ensuing cost increases. Nevertheless, Congress has never questioned the technical basis of these defense systems, and continues to assure further systems development with a budget allocation of over eight billion dollars annually.

An expensive and useless weapon

Despite this confidence and the flow of money, skepticism is growing stronger, voiced by some prestigious institution like the National Academy of Science (NAS). According to Making Sense of Ballistic Missile Defense, the report issued on 11 September 2012 by the National Research Council (NRC), the working arm of the NAS, the GBI missile system in place in Alaska and California to defend the U.S. territory against North Korean or Iranian missiles is as costly as it is ineffectual. The problems which plague the GBI are such that the best solution would be to move onto another weapons system, and to increase the overall capability of the system by constructing a new, third launch station, this time somewhere on the north-eastern coast of the United States. The best use of the GBI missiles, again according to the report, would be to transform them into targets to test the capacities of any new, substituting, interceptor.

In the face of such a drastic assessment, it is hard to understand why Congress should or would finance the premature substitution of a system which has cost over thirty billion dollars with another which is still relatively undefined, much more ambitious, and certainly not less open to the same vulnerabilities than the system it is meant to replace. As a consequence, the message of the NCR report cannot avoid reinforcing the arguments for the dismantling of a strategic weapon which has been always politically and technologically very controversial. As if this were not enough, the report explains that any boost-phase interception is simply not credible for technical and financial reasons. The NCR concludes that interception is only conceivable during the intermediate flight phase. However, mid-course interception implies a whole category of problems, the solutions of which are anything but consolidated, such as the real capacity of the interceptors to distinguish the warheads within a swarm of inevitable rocket debris and purpose-built decoys. In addition, it should be noted that in the event of construction of a third launch station for the defense of the U.S. population, the principal reasons for the existence of the other system of interception currently being set up, the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), must be reassessed. A new launch base in New England would make the deployment of any similar European asset redundant. However, the NCR does not recommend the deployment of the fourth phase of the EPAA in Poland in 2020 in any case, because envisioning the deployment of interceptors that would be no more than a slightly different version of the GBI that it has suggested should be replaced.

Since the sign of the ABMT, despite the almost obsessive rhetoric which describes the ballistic missile threat as continually increasing, the threat has in fact shrunk notably. The current ballistic arsenal of the Russian Federation is in no way comparable with that of the Soviet Union, while the threat once posed by the Warsaw Pact States has completely disappeared. The possibility that

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Iraq might one day manage to deploy intercontinental missiles is now extinct, while North Korea, thanks to the failures experienced over the last fourteen years, seems to have eloquently demonstrated just how difficult it is to accumulate the know-how and instruments necessary to directly threaten northern America and the European continent. Within this framework, the only State which might one day conceivably threaten Europe with a ballistic capacity is Iran. However, as far as is possible to know, Iran has not yet experimented with the launch of long-range ballistic missiles, and there is no reason to think that the Iranians might be able to do so in the next decade. In any case, the Iranian missile program appears principally orientated towards the development of short- and medium-range capacities, with the presumable intention of striking, rather than the European States, objectives such as Israel, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the American armed forces in the Middle East.

From the Bush to the Obama Administration

The Bush Administration began deployment of the GBI missiles in 2004. Produced by Boeing, the GBI is a three stage missile designed to intercept strategic warheads while traveling towards the territory of the United States. The GBI would intercept the warhead during the central flight phase above the atmosphere. Up to now, the GBI has been generally acknowledged as having a limited effective capacity against relatively primitive inter-continental missiles. The initial number of operative GBI missiles in Alaska was nine, today there are twenty-six, and the construction of the infrastructure necessary for another fourteen is currently underway.

The interceptors deployed in Alaska and California are well-placed for a defense of the north American continent from a possible attack by North Korean ICBM, but not to assure the same coverage from an equivalent threat from Iran, and, according to some sources, would not be able to attempt the interception of a Chinese ICBM launch using the equatorial route. For this reason, the Bush Administration first planned an additional base on the U.S. territory, and then began talks with Warsaw in 2004 to negotiate the construction of a third launch base to house ten installations of the two stage version of the GBI, and with Prague for the construction of a radar observation facility capable of covering the entire Euro-Asian continental mass as far as the Urals. The Russian reaction was not long in coming, and the result was a proposal of bilateral cooperation, within the scope of which Russia would share the data produced by two of their southern radar observation stations with the United States. The two parties continued discussions for all of 2008 without reaching an agreement. The Bush Administration wanted to simply add the Russian radar stations to the infrastructure of their own project, while the Medvedev Government meant their proposal to be read as a substitution of, not in complement to, the American project. The Russian suggestion was that the Americans should renounce their plans to set up a radar observation station in the Czech Republic, and to move the installation of the ten GBI missiles from Poland to Turkey, Iraq, or aboard U.S. naval vessels stationed in the Middle East.

The position taken by the Obama Administration regarding anti-missile defense is distinguished by a co-existence of a character of strong continuity and one of notable changes from the program followed by the previous Administration. The changes are in part explained by the progress registered in the Iranian missile program with the development of short- and mid-range ballistic missiles, such as the Shabab-3 and, in particular the Sejil-2, believed to have the potential to reach



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the lower Balkans. In contrast, the Iranian progress in developing analogue intercontinental capacities has been hampered by delays. In order to better confront the threat posed by the Iranian short- and mid-range missiles, the Obama Administration has decided a further development of the Aegis sea-based anti-missile defense system. The deployment of the ten GBIs in Poland was therefore abandoned, and in its place a multi-phase project took form, with the aim of assuring an immediate protection against short- and mid-range ballistic missiles and to guarantee an ever evolving capacity to counteract any future Iranian ICBM capacity.

On the other hand, again, President Obama has not in any way interfered with the realization of the components of the anti-missile defense systems initiated by his predecessor with the intention of protecting the nation from a small long range ballistic threat. The deployment in Alaska and California of the same GBI system which has been excluded for the European theatre has continued under Obama, including its interconnection with a complex radar early-warning network involving four giant plants in Alaska, California, Greenland and the United Kingdom, and another six mobile x-ray units stationed in the mid-Pacific. It should be noted that the principal difference between the Boeing GBI and the Raytheon SM-3 lies in their respective range of action. Both rely on direct impact to destroy their objectives, but the SM-3 does not appear able to effectively strike an objective more than one thousand kilometers from its own launch base, while the GBI can travel and strike over much greater distances.

The European missile defense

The EPAA has until now been divided into four phases. Phase 1 commenced in 2011 and it foresees the deployment in the eastern Mediterranean of several U.S. Navy Aegis ships equipped with SPY-1 radar and armed with SM-3 Block IA, a combination capable of defending Turkey and the eastern Balkans from a short-range missile threat. An improved early warning system capacity is assured by an x-ray radar installation in Turkey, capable of probing deep into Iranian air space.

Phase 2 is programmed for 2015, with the entry into service of the new SM-3 Block IB distinguished for its new guidance systems, and with the deployment of another twenty-four of them at a southern Rumanian airport. As a result, the second phase would mostly boost the interceptor components of the Aegis force.

Phase 3 is due for 2018, when both the ground based interceptors and those at sea will be substituted by the SM-3 Block IIA. This version is characterized by an increased autonomy and, above all, an improved flight velocity, fast enough to make the interception of intermediate-range ballistic missiles conceivable. Also included in the program for Phase 3 are the deployment of an additional land based radar SPY-1 and another twenty-four interceptor missiles, this time in to be based northern Poland.

Phase 4 is planned for 2020, when the missiles deployed in Poland will be substituted by the more advanced SM-3 Block IIB, according to some analysts fast enough to extend the killing capacity to include intercontinental ballistic missiles.

As was announced at the latest Atlantic Alliance Summit, NATO has recently declared a so called "interim missile defense capability", which means the ability to assume direct control of the sea-based interceptors during a crisis. An initial operational capability is foreseen for 2015, with the switch to a full operational capability expected for 2018. Then, by 2020, according to declarations

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by the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy should have doubled the number of ships assigned to operations foreseen by the EPAA, an increase from twenty-three to forty-six. At the end of the program, the total number of interceptors released would be 515, of which, however, only around fifty would be SM-3 Block IIBs.

The Russian Government immediately saw a lesser threat in the EPAA than that represented by the anti-missile defense system on which the Bush Administration had so tenaciously insisted on. However, within a few months, the Russian authorities asked their American counterparts for a legal guarantee which would exclude any use of the future anti-missile assets against their own intercontinental missiles. The Obama Administration offered a reply in the form of a political pledge, but a move to formulate a true and binding accord was not possible for the simple reason that the losses suffered by the Democrats in the 2010 mid-terms had made numerically unattainable the Senate approval necessary for the ratification of any treaty signed by the White House.

Many different factors appear to be at the root of the Russian request. First there is the preoccupation that the capacity developed by the EPAA could with the passing of time threaten their ICBMs. Then there is a deeply rooted reluctance of the Russian Ministry of Defense to be seriously involved in any program of bilateral strategic collaboration. An additional reason is a widespread strong opposition to the realization of any U.S. military infrastructure on the territory of those eastern European States which joined NATO in 1999.

Looking forward

Even if the current political balance in the United States is maintained after the up-coming Presidential and Congressional elections, there is no lack of space for future discussion and cooperation with the Russian Federation. Although still and only on an informal level, the Russians and the Americans seem to have come to a certain convergence of principles. The main points are a high level of transparency in the development of anti-ballistic capacities, the organization of a series of joint exercises, the founding of a centre for the analysis and elaboration of data which would share any alarm signals, and the development of a common operative framework. A Russian proposal to mutually and voluntarily respect the objective criteria, by limiting the number, the velocity and the position of the interceptor missiles, could make a significant contribution to alleviating preoccupation on both sides. As was recently suggested by the Missile Defense Agency, in the near future the Americans could consider allowing the Russians to monitor the test launches of the advanced versions of the SM-3 interceptor, so that the velocity and effectiveness range of the missiles may be assessed by Russian observers. The United States could then, at constant intervals, make public the number and the state of the elements comprising the entire anti-ballistic missile system. Finally, in agreement with NATO, the United States could choose to not install the SM-3 Block IIB interceptors if no progress were to be observed in the Iranian development of an intercontinental capacity. Obviously, any decision of this order and any adoption even in part of these or similar measures would be very political controversial. But the words last March of President Obama to President Medvedev, admittedly only overheard via a still-open microphone, seem to point in exactly this direction.

It is unlikely at this point that the upcoming U.S. general elections will drastically change the political balance in Washington. However, if either the November or, as is more probable, the fol-



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lowing mid-term elections do bring about a different political environment, one conducive to an accord, an agreement aimed at imposing a limit of maybe one hundred interceptor missiles with the fast enough to intercept even intercontinental missiles, would guarantee a credible level of defense in the face of any possible ICBM threat from Iran or North Korea (or the Chinese), without jeopardizing the survival of the Russian strategic missile arsenal.

Still more opportune would be the return to the old distinction between anti-missile defense and strategic anti-missile defense. The interception of strategic missiles is much more difficult, the consequences of a failure to intercept are enormously more damaging, and the impact on any new strategic arms agreement almost fatal. Both Washington and Moscow have wasted much negotiation time and energy in differentiating these two types of defense. On the other hand, the annulment of every distinction between the two has always been the ploy of those who try to hide that the ABMT allowed the development of the type of defense necessary to confront the threats predicted by the Rumsfeld Commission.

In the present international circumstances, a return to the differentiation might be more than ever useful in underlining how the tactical and theatre systems foreseen in the initial phases of the EPAA are of advantage to, and further the aims of, current European defense requirements, without necessarily condemning the hopes of future disarmament agreements to an early demise. The Russian Federation does not perceive the existence of the MIM-104 Patriot interceptors, THHAD and SM-3 to pose any particular threat, in contrast to how they view the SM-3B Block II B foreseen by the fourth and final phase of the EPA. The danger, if offers and cooperation are not respected, is that the EPAA fourth phase will generate more problems than it attempts to solve.



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Russia in Central Asia: new security requirements and old unresolved issues

Lorena Di Placido

The decision of Uzbekistan to suspend its participation in the CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization) coincides with an increase in Russian activism in the Central Asian space. With the increased presence in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and joint exercises planned for this year, Moscow confirms its willingness to resume control over the former Soviet space. It remains to see whether this is intended as a garrison presence or development of a greater capacity for an effective intervention for security reasons. Despite the gradual establishment of a rapid reaction force, the principle of non-intervention in state's internal affairs has so far prevailed over local emergencies in recent years on the Central Asian space. Think of the Kyrgyz revolution of 2010 and, much more recently, the management of the crisis erupted in Gorno Badakhshan on July 25, resolved during the month of August by the Tajik forces alone, without the intervention of the forces of the CSTO are just two examples of this. Given this previous experience, it remains to be seen whether there will be new operational activity in the will of the CSTO or if the current resistance in intervening in times of crisis will remain. The question is not trivial when one considers that the threshold of 2014 - the date of the withdrawal of the multinational coalition from Afghanistan - is getting closer. Russian activism in Central Asia is not, however, a recent phenomenon. In fact, since the dissolution of the USSR, Russia has constantly sought to keep alive, despite the new circumstances, the relationship with the newly independent republics, in order not to lose the inheritance of relations and interactions developed in seventy years of Soviet domination. Necessarily, Moscow's diplomatic effort had to deal with the will of the new states to build an identity and a capacity to act in the international context, without an umbilical cord which was likely to affect their independence. Over the years, in the case of critical security conditions, this attitude of self-defense has sometimes given way to more conciliatory position toward Moscow. In view of the withdrawal of the multinational forces from Afghanistan prepares regional scenario in favor of a further consolidation of the Russian presence in Central Asia: having to face new challenges coming from a neighborhood characterized by high instability, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are renewing terms of the Russian presence on their territory. During the month of September, bilateral visits, agreements for debt cancellation and those for permanent Russian military presence, represent a series of diplomatic efforts conducted by the Moscow authorities to strengthen their positions, taking advantage of the unstable regional context and capitalizing on weakness of the interlocutors. Moscow's ambition to consolidate both its military presence and its support of strategic development projects for the poorest republics of the area, conflicts with certain interests of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. In



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fact, the two largest countries in the area ask to influence the management of the waters that originate from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as they are of strategic importance for agricultural production in downstream countries. Supporting the construction of hydroelectric power plants in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Moscow is likely to increase the complexity of relationships with key allies for the stability of the region, with possible negative repercussions for the purpose of achieving a balance suitable for regional cooperation.

The exercises of the CSTO

From 6 to 11 August, the Collective Rapid Reaction Force (KSOR, according to the Russian acronym) of the CSTO conducted its annual exercise called Rubezh (frontier) 2012, at the training center in the Russian region of Cherbakul Cheliabinsk, not far from the Kazakh border. It was attended by more than a thousand soldiers and officers of Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, provided of 100 armored vehicles, airplanes, helicopters and fighter jets. Purpose of the exercise was to attack a well-protected area, organized by a criminal group, in a natural environment as similar as possible to that of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The exercise was followed by two weeks of launches of Tajik security forces in the south-east of the country, in Khorog, the capital of Gorno Badakhshan, Tajikistan mountainous area near the border with Afghanistan. While the security situation in that area remains critical and the men of the international coalition are organizing repatriation, Tajikistan had to face a difficult situation of internal instability, which is the result of the aftermath that still remain from the years of civil war (1992-1997). Following the killing of a regional head of the security forces, the central government identified as being responsible for a local leader and former warlord engaged in conducting illegal business. While actively participating in the CSTO, Tajikistan has not received any help in dealing with the security crisis in progress. The Secretary General, Nikolay Bordyuzha, said that the crisis concerned the internal affairs of the country and did not require the intervention of the strength of collective mobilization. Yet the presence of Russia's presence, leader of the CSTO, is deeply rooted in Tajikistan, having been decisive part of the conclusion of the Civil War, remaining on the Tajik ground since then with an armored division and confirming, these days, its desire to consolidate its presence for the next 49 years.

As for Kyrgyzstan, participation in Rubezh 2012 sanctioned to some extent a return to positions closer to Russia. On 31 July, President Atambaev has ratified the Kyoto Protocol (December 2010), which amended the Charter of the CSTO in 2002, which sets out areas of common interest between the members (essentially, military and technological cooperation), strengthens the common strategy of defining areas of responsibility to the CSTO and extends the CSTO authority in countering terrorism and extremist. When in 2010, Kyrgyzstan was the scene of violence that has affected both the principal and some southern regions, Russian President Medvedev dismissed the possibility of an intervention by the CSTO in the country saying that what happened was the result of the weakness of the authorities and their reluctance to meet the needs of the people. In the two most recent cases in the region - Kyrgyz revolution of 2010 and clashes between security forces and militants in Gorno Badakhshan in 2012 - the CSTO has chosen not to intervene for several reasons that, ultimately, have reduced the potential operating organization for regional security. In the face of growing military exercises that marks the stages of strengthening cooperation between the mem-

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bers - as an exercise in 2003 and 2004, we moved to two in 2005 and 2010, up to three in 2011 and 2012 - there remains a significant resistance to intervene effectively when they occur in critical conditions. On the one hand, Russian presence persists and is consolidated in the double form of single player and a regional leader invested of the latent leadership of an organization of collective security, while on the other hand in case of crisis Russia never intervenes under the aegis of the Organization or alone. The situation was such that even before Uzbekistan suspended its participation in August, doubts about CSTO's willingness to intervene remain even as the deadline of 2014 is approaching and the risk of local regional crises increases.

Russian diplomacy in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

On September 20, Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Kyrgyzstan to discuss a range of bilateral issues, one of which is the future of the Russian base in Kant. During the meetings there was an agreement for the rent of the base that should be of about \$ 4.5 million per year (the same as in 2003). Great emphasis has been placed on a document that confirms Russia's desire to wipe out, by March 2016, Kyrgyzstan's debt (in total, 489 million U.S. dollars) and to purchase shares of the Kyrgyz industries. A few days later, on September 23, Russian Defense Minister, Anatoly Serdyukov, also stated that the base in Kant is ready to host Russian bombers in six months' time to conclude the process of restructuring and modernization of the infrastructure.

In the press conference, Putin said that the military stay in Kyrgyzstan and neighboring Tajikistan is a factor of stability for both countries, while Atambaev reiterated that cooperation with Russia is of crucial importance. Attention has also been paid to the future of the Manas base, currently leased to the Americans for the transit of supplies to Afghanistan, which imminent closure was confirmed. In a joint statement, the two presidents announced that Manas will be transformed into a civilian structure free from any military component, as soon as the Americans leave in 2014.

On September 11, the Deputy Russian Defence Minister Anatoly Antonov, went on a visit to Dushanbe to discuss the permanence of 201st motor rifle division in Tajikistan. In the same day, a joint exercise to prepare Russian-Tajik rapid reaction forces was held. The question of the bases is now open for a long time and sees opposing interests. While Tajikistan is willing to accommodate even the Russian military to get a better guarantee for their security, asking for a fair remuneration in return, the Russians guarantee their presence only if free of charge. The outcome of the ongoing negotiations will depend on the contents of the final agreement that will be formalized in the first half of 2013.

The issue of water

The question of the exploitation of water resources in Central Asia has exploded in the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, exacerbating a drama that finds its reasons in its mode of use of water set by Moscow. The logic of almost absolute interdependence between the different components of the USSR imposed a criterion weights such that each republic of the Federation was specialized in providing a particular resource which abounded (eg water), in return for which another was lacking (eg gas, electricity or oil for industrial purposes or for heating). With independence, this compensation mechanism has ceased to exist, and each republic acquired control over national resources. The salient fact is that while gas and oil are commonly sold and converted



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into cash in the market, the same is not true for water. Moreover, it happens that in Central Asia republics rich in water (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) are also the poorest of other resources and the most backward economically, while those who lack water (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) are also those that have a great need for agricultural purposes, which abound in oil and gas and enjoy the best performance in the economic field, as well as the increased influence in the political sphere. Then, from 1991 to the present it has happened that they have outlined opposing sides driven by strongly conflicting interests able to create a state of deep and abiding border tension, sometimes to limit the outbreak of an armed conflict. With the approach of the critical threshold of 2014, the issue of water management, for decades a source of tension between the countries of the area, back to reemerge, risking the attempt by Moscow to gain positions in Central Asia, given that Russia is the main funder of projects challenged by Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

During the talks in September in Bishkek, Putin has also talked about the completion of the construction of a network of hydroelectric plants, started in the Soviet era. Then energy ministers signed agreements for the completion of the project of the cascade of Naryn and Kambar-Ata-1 station. Its hydroelectric plants are of fundamental importance for Kyrgyzstan, which could thus participate fully, along with Tajikistan, the ADB project "CASA 1000", which aims to promote the export of electricity to Pakistan and Afghanistan, in addition to ensuring energy self-sufficiency producing countries.

The issue of water resources is even more sensitive to Tajikistan, which suffered from retaliatory actions by Uzbek directed against the construction of the Rogun hydroelectric power station, which is also funded largely from Russia. Uzbekistan is concerned about the depletion of watercourses, down the valley, used for agricultural production (especially that of cotton, of which Uzbekistan is the sixth largest producer); during periods of increased bilateral tension, Uzbekistan put in place roadblocks which dramatically affect the trade of Tajikistan and interrupts the supply of power without notice. For Tajikistan, the completion of Rogun is of fundamental importance for the implementation of the plan to revive the economy and reducing unemployment. On the one hand, Tajikistan is having to endure the constant reprisals of Uzbekistan, on the other hand, the financing of Rogun is increasingly bind to Russia, from which come the remittances from its migrants, that is, at the moment, about one-third of Tajik GDP.

The rapprochement between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan

The prospect of a tightening of security for the region was the reason supporting the bilateral meeting between the presidents of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, the first since 2008. Even Karimov and Nazarbayev (who met on 6 and 7 September in Astana) discussed the improvement of bilateral economic relations and how to manage the consequences of the ongoing civil war in Afghanistan. Karimov has explicitly mentioned the NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan and the occasional clash of interests between the great powers in Central Asia as the main reasons for stimulus for the countries of the region to join forces and promote stability, prosperity and peace against the threats posed by terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking. Therefore, Karimov and Nazarbayev agreed to coordinate their activities in the context of regional and international organizations (Commonwealth of Independent States-CIS, SCO Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the United Nations) in order to protect mutual interests. Compared to the SCO, they have agreed to expand

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its capabilities to better address contemporary challenges and threats.

Presidents have expressed their support to support in every way the solution of the conflict and have confirmed their commitment to contribute to the socio-economic reconstruction of the country. Uzbekistan has a direct interest in cooperating with Afghanistan because they share a common border and many Uzbeks residing across the border. In recent years, the authorities in Tashkent have funded (also channeling funds Asian Development Bank-ADB) various infrastructure projects, including the construction of several railway lines and the development of the Internet. Astana, for its part, has already conducted several bilateral projects training for young Afghans, earning a leading role in the creation of the next local ruling class.

Much of the attention of the two leaders, however, has focused on the need to deter others in the region engaging in actions that could threaten the water supply common, especially for the negative consequences of the construction of Rogun.

Issues related to the previous use of the water thus returned to re-emerge and affect the overall security framework in the region. Contrasts in this area make it intractable relations between regional actors - water producing states (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), exploiting downstream countries (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan), a mediator (Russia) – making a further critical element the trend reliever role played by in the ongoing disputes by Moscow. Along with the return of Russia in the region, in terms of military and economic cooperation, emerge, also the long-standing contradictions linked to the difficult role of the Kremlin in the Central Asian context.



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Valerio Bosco

United Nations-League of Arab States: an emerging partnership?

On 24 September the German Presidency of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) organized a High-Level Meeting on peace and security in the Middle East Region. The meeting provided Member States with a precious opportunity to review and assess the role played by the League of Arab States (LAS) in supporting the political transitions undergoing in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). While many of the interventions focused on the Syrian crisis, the high-level meeting allowed Member States to reflect on how to further strengthen the cooperation between the League and the United Nations in promoting peace and security. The request made by the UNSC to Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon to prepare a report on “*further ways of strengthening institutional relations and cooperation between the two organizations*” is likely to open new doors for further consolidation of the UN-LAS emerging partnership.

The League of Arab States: focus, mandate and performance

Founded in 1945 the League of Arab States (or Arab League) gathers twenty-two Arab nations, including Palestine, whose broad mission was originally to improve coordination among its members on matters of common interest while strictly preserving the sovereignty of its individual states. Due to recent uprising in Syria and their government’s repression of political opponents and popular protest, the league suspended this member state. The League ranges a wide membership covering the Middle East and Arab peninsula, Northern Africa and also countries from Eastern Africa such as Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti and Comoros. As it might be recalled, the League was chartered in response to concerns about postwar colonial divisions of territory as well as strong opposition to the emergence of a Jewish state in Palestine. As it is indicated in Charter of Arab League, the organization’s main goal is “*to strengthen relations between the member-states*” ensure the coordination of their policies in order to achieve co-operation between them and to safeguard their independence and sovereignty. Social, cultural and health affairs, issues related to communication, transport were also included in the purview of the League. Members of the League renounced violence for the settlement of conflicts between members and also provided the organization with the mandate to mediate in such disputes, as well as in those with non-members. Despite the above-mentioned framework, the concrete performance of the League has been usually under heavy criticism specifically with regard to its poor record in mediation and conflict resolution, which has been often described as an abysmal failure. Recent researches suggested the need to ensure a more balanced and nuanced assessment of the performance of the League by pointing out the active role



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played by the League in reducing tensions and managing local crises with a view to preventing escalation into major conflicts. In particular, the role played by the League in brokering the cease-fire deal in the Lebanese Civil War and facilitating the 1989 Talif Agreement has been recalled¹. However, it is widely acknowledged that the unanimity rule – which paralyzed the Arab League decision making process – but first and foremost, the strong attachment to national sovereignty and non interference in Member States' internal affairs caused the organization's ineffectiveness and incapability to carry out conflict resolution or mediation initiatives, for which it also lacked any specific mandate or institutional instruments².

In particular, while civil conflicts became an area of focus of the organization, repressions carried out by authoritarian regimes were not considered a legitimate justification for intervention or interference. The 1992 crackdown on Islamists in Hama perpetrated by the Syrian regime of Hafez el-Assad, Saddam Hussein's atrocities against Kurds in 1988, the ethnic cleansing carried out by the Sudanese Government in Darfur can be considered as the main crises where the Arab League confirmed its tragic policy of non-engagement. In the past decade, despite the Arab League achieved notable consensus over the Saudi-sponsored in 2002 on the issue of Palestine, the League failed to coordinate its policy over both the 1990-1991 Gulf War and the , continued to be affected by disunity and dysfunction, as well as by new critics questioning whether the organization had any relevance in its traditional form and in light of its continuing failures in dispute resolutions activities³.

The Arab League and the challenge of the Arab Spring: Libya and Syria

There is no doubt that the Arab Spring opened a precious window of opportunity to revitalize the role and action of the Arab League. Disregard for massive human rights violations and blind attachment to state sovereignty have been gradually taken over by a new political willingness to end political repressions and crimes against civilian population such as those that were carried out by incumbent regimes in Syria and Libya. While the selective approach adopted by the League was clear – the crisis in Bahrain was not brought at the forefront of the organization's agenda – a new paradigm seemed to emerge with regard to the strong and proactive approach taken during the conflicts erupted in Libya and Syria. As it was noted by some analysts "*with respect to both crises the Arab League seemed to be responding to bottom up popular reactions to increased state repression and to organizational pressures brought to bear by influential member states on the basis of strategic interest*"⁴.

More specifically, in the case of Libya, the organization clearly aligned itself with the dominant

¹ Marco Pinfari, *Nothing but Failures? The Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council as Mediators in Middle Eastern Conflict*, Crisis States, Working Papers, n.2, March 2009.

² Marco Pinfari (2009)

³ Lindholm Schulz, Helena and Schulz, Michael, *The Middle East: Regional Instability and Fragmentation*, in M. Farrell, B. Hettne and L. van Langenhove (eds), *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice*. London & Ann Arbor: Pluto Press.

⁴ , *The Arab League: First Step Towards New Norms*, in World Politics Review, 22 May 2012.

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regional public perception over the cruel nature of the repression carried out by the Gadhafi regime. As it might be recalled, in February 2011, the Arab League officially expelled Libya from the organization – by preventing it from attending the organization’s meetings – and started advocating for the establishment of a no-fly-zone over the country, which was subsequently approved by the UNSC resolution 1973. Despite the disagreement emerged with SC permanent members over the military implementation of resolution 1973, the Arab League role in promoting international consensus on the need to intervene in Libya cannot be overemphasized. With regard to the Syrian crisis, the Arab League adopted a different approach which was based on the gradual and incremental use of diplomatic means in order to bring the crisis and the ongoing violence to an end and therefore open the way for an inclusive political transition. As it might be recalled, following the 4 October 2011 vetoes of Russia and China on a first draft resolution - - condemning Syria’s excessive use of force and expressing the Council’s intention to consider further non-military measures, in November 2011, the Arab League deployed monitors to Syria as an observer mission. The observers were entrusted with the mandate to verify compliance with a cease-fire and transition plan which was agreed with the Syrian regime. Following increasing pressure from emerging sectors of the Syrian opposition, the organization worked on a new transition plan that called for Assad to relinquish power to his vice president. This formula was quite similar to the Golf Cooperation Council’s initiative for Yemen. The League also planned to seek Security Council endorsement of the new initiative. Whilst acknowledging the failure experienced by its observer mission, the Arab League decided to present the new transition plan to the Security Council in a form of draft resolution which met again the vetoes of both Russia and China. It is worth noting that Morocco formally submitted the above-mentioned draft which was also co-sponsored by Turkey and ten other Arab states. Nevertheless, as the crisis continued, the appointment of Kofi Annan as joint UN-Arab League Joint Special Envoy seemed to open a new phase of unanimity on the Syrian issue. The Security Council presidential statement adopted on 21 March endorsed the so called Annan’s “six-point plan”, a “transition package”, which called for an inclusive political process, the cessation of all violence, humanitarian access, release of those arbitrarily detained, access for journalists and the right to peaceful demonstrations. In April 2012, once again, the Arab League activism was instrumental in persuading the Council to authorize the deployment of 30 UN military observers to Syria, a decision which was followed by the establishment of the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria for the duration of 90 days. Despite the above-mentioned progress, fundamental divisions remained within the UNSC on the crucial meaning of the proposed political transition, and more specifically Assad’s removal from power and his political destiny. Furthermore, Arab League pressures could not succeed in persuading the UNSC to agree on a resolution calling upon Syrian authorities to suspend use of heavy weapons in population centers and treating the adoption of art.41 measure in the case of non-compliance. Once again, while taking note of the new stalemate within the UNSC, the Arab League “did not give up” and launched a new diplomatic initiative based on the promotion of General Assembly resolution which deplored the Council’s failure to act in Syria and called again for an inclusive political transition. In the meanwhile, the decision of Kofi Annan to resign confirmed the very complicated nature of the crisis; it is now up to Lakhdar Brahimi to find creative solutions to end the crisis and overcome differences within the SC permanent members.



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While the initiatives described above have so far failed to stop the ongoing violence and repression, there is no doubt that Arab League has emerged as a new and more vigorous actor in the crisis management field by also displaying an interesting degree of persistence and flexibility. These initiatives clearly provided a platform for sequential diplomacy and the internationalization of conflict-resolution efforts.

The 26 September UNSC High Level Meeting

In light of the emerging role played by the Arab League, as well as the joint mediation initiative it undertook with the UN Secretariat, the proposal made by the Germany Permanent Mission to the United Nations to convene a high-level meeting on peace and security in the Middle East on 26 September, at the margins of the opening of the 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly, was extremely timely. According to the paper presented by the German delegation in early September, *“legitimate aspirations of the region’s peoples to greater democracy, economic freedom and human rights engendered new opportunities and responsibilities for both the Council and the Arab League”*. In this sense the situations in Libya, Yemen and Syria, in addition to the Israeli-Palestinian question represented *“crucial challenges faced by both the UNSC and the League of Arab States”*. The German paper also recognized that in meeting those challenges, the League has assumed a leading unifying role with regard to regional peace and security, and become the key interlocutor between the region and the world. Moreover, the meeting was expected to discuss ways to strengthen the existing League of Arab States-United Nations institutional ties and cooperation on political issues, and also consider the possibility of establishing a regular practice of annual meetings between the Security Council and the League of Arab States, as it has been done between the UNSC and the African Union Peace and Security Council⁵.

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon opened the meeting by welcoming the Council’s discussions and called upon the League and the Council to explore a range of areas for collaboration, reminding Council members that, at the present tumultuous time, *“people were looking to the two organizations to be on their side in the fight for justice and dignity”*. According to the UNSG the relationship between the UN and the League *“should not be limited to action on immediate crises”*; he also emphasized the need to increase joint efforts aimed at ensuring the success of the transitions that had been set in motion. Nabil Elaraby, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, said there was a clear need for dialogue between the League and the Council, but openly criticized the UNSC for its inaction over the Palestinian issue (*“Council resolutions on Palestine had been adopted for more than six decades without being implemented”*). With regard to Syria, he added that serious and tragic situation was causing increasing numbers of deaths; he also noted that there was an imminent risk of transforming the crisis into a catastrophe. Whilst blaming the Council for its failure in stopping the bloodshed, Elaraby encouraged SC members to overcome their differences and ensure strong support to Lakhdar Brahimi in his role as Joint Special Representative of the two organizations. The leader of the League concluded his intervention by noting that *“dealing with the region cannot be limited to conflicts and threats”*: according to him *“the challenges*

⁵ United Nations, *Letter dated 6 September 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General*, S/2012/686, 6 September 2012.

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in the region were not just military” and their complexity required “*greater cooperation and dialogue with the Council*” through the possible establishment of regular consultations between the League and the Council. The SC deadlock over the Syrian situation was at the fore front of many interventions. While Lauren Fabius, France Foreign Minister, noted that the crisis risked exploding thus preventing any possible solution to the situation, William Hague, the United Kingdom Secretary of State, recalled that “*it was long past time for the Council to use its collective weight to initiate an end to the violence*”. Nevertheless, Hague reiterated the importance of the Arab League role in pursuing of regional peace and stability, and further commended the organization for its decisive position on the no-fly zone in Libya, as well its leadership in working to resolve the Syrian crisis. He added that the decision to appoint a Joint Special Representative for Syria was a sign of the growing positive cooperation between the League and the United Nations. The intervention made by the German Foreign Minister, Guido Westerwille, underscored the window of opportunity disclosed by the Arab Spring and emphasized the need to revitalize the peace process in Middle East through more intensive negotiations aimed at achieving a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Westerwille noted the urgency to further strengthen the relations between the UN and the Arab League, especially in the filed of conflict prevention and resolution, and also welcomed the idea of establishing a United Nations office in Cairo to improve and further institutionalize the above-mentioned cooperation.

The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, focused his statement on the situation in Syria without making any reference to the emerging role played by the Arab League. While condemning all perpetrators of violations against human rights, he recalled that a significant share of responsibility for the continuing bloodshed “*rested on States that had encouraged President Assad’s opponents to reject a ceasefire and dialogue and demand the regime’s unconditional capitulation*”. The Russian delegation at the UN also confirmed Moscow’s attachment to Kofi Annan’s six-point plan and implicitly reiterated its strong opposition to any political solution based on the removal of President Assad.

Nevertheless, the statement delivered by Jang Yiechi, Foreign Minister of China, was quite outspoken and appreciative of the role played by the Arab League. While China keeps supporting Russian non-cooperative position on Syria – which clearly obstructed the initiative carried out by the Arab League - the Chinese delegation at the UN underscored that “*peace, stability and development in the Middle East could not be possible without regional organizations*” by adding that further efforts should be made in order to encourage the peaceful settlement of disputes by regional bodies. According to Yiechi, the League and the United Nations were required to step up their cooperation towards the common end of peace in the Middle East, and through the promotion of a holistic approach involving economic plans for future economic and social development of the region. The intervention made by the Secretary of State of the United States, Hillary Clinton, recalled the importance of the opportunity raised by the Arab Spring in terms of building and strengthening democratic institutions in the region; she rejected the “*false choice*” between democracy and stability, and added that “*democracies made the most capable partners*”. Her intervention gave a specific focus to the Egyptian transition: whilst recalling that “*the choices of the largest Arab nation would echo far beyond its borders*”, she noted that the country had “*responsibilities to its people, and its neighbors as well*”. The US Secretary of State also expressed deep appreci-



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ation for the role played by the Arab League in condemning the violence and preparing a plan for a peaceful political transition. She also noted the need to make the cooperation between the Security Council and the Arab League more sustainable. This final sentence seemed to indicate that the current US administration is still quite skeptic over the capacities and the institutional effectiveness of the organization.

The UNSC presidential statement and the way ahead

At end of the debate the Security Council approved a presidential statement which expressed appreciation over the intensifying cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in the wake of political transformations that occurred in the region. Whilst reaffirming its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council reiterated its strong commitment to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and to seeking a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Most importantly, the Security Council acknowledged the intention expressed by representatives of both organizations to cooperate across a broad agenda of mutual concern, formulating adequate joint responses, where appropriate, to humanitarian crises, promoting human rights, freedom of expression, food security, environment protection, and the fight against terrorism and the illicit trafficking of drugs and arms. Furthermore, whilst recognizing the importance of strengthening cooperation on capacity-building with the League of Arab States in the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council expressed its determination to take effective steps to further enhance cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter⁶. Nevertheless, the last paragraph of the presidential statement - "*The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to report, as appropriate, on further ways of strengthening institutional relations and cooperation between the two organizations* – clearly marks an additional milestone in strengthening relations between the United Nations and the Arab League. In other words, the publication of a specific SG report on the issue is likely to open doors for further cooperation between the two organizations. In particular, the SG report is expected to indicate a comprehensive support package aimed at institutionalizing and strengthening the conflict management mechanisms and mediation capacities of the Arab League. The creation of a Liaison Office of the UN to the Arab League – to be established in Cairo, Egypt – whose mandate could focus in ensuring regular contacts between the Secretariats of the two organizations will probably be one of the main recommendations of the report. Moreover, the Liaison Office might also be required to work on promoting the coordination of UN activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Arab League in the field of mediation, support to political transitions, electoral assistance, and post-conflict peacebuilding. Nevertheless, in the upcoming weeks, and until the issuance of the SG report, the outcome of the new mediation initiative undertaken by the Joint Envoy Brahimi will have specific impact on the current dialogue between the UNSC and LAS. Rumors in New York recently reported about Brahimi's apparent reluctance "*to be bound by initiatives that did not stem from his own making, in particular the six-point plan*"⁷. Moreover, the new Special Envoy seems very concern for the continuing stalemate

⁶ United Nations Security Council, *Presidential Statement*, 2012/20, 26 September 2012.



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within the SC over President Assad's possible role in the transition. His idea of asking the Council a new mandate to facilitate the transition without any preconditions might create additional tensions within the UN membership and further frustrate the diplomatic efforts being carried out by the Arab League.

In the longer term, it is now clear that high expectations are linked to the upcoming SG report – which is likely to be issued in early 2013. Hopefully, besides shaping the mandate of UN Liaison Office in Cairo, the report will elaborate on concrete ways to enhance synergies between UN agencies and office cooperating with the Arab League, while avoiding unnecessary duplication and overlaps. As SG reports prepared by the UN Secretariat in New York sometimes face the risks of not analyzing in-depth experiences and lessons learned from the field, it would be important to carefully assess the broader picture of the increased cooperation between the UN system and the Arab League. In particular, while the cooperation between the UN and the Arab League is now increasingly focusing on conflict prevention and mediation – and in the creation of adequate institutional mechanism and capacities for such purposes – new projects are currently being designed by UN offices and agencies in the field in order to support political transitions in the Middle East through good governance promotion activities. It would be extremely important, for the entire UN system, to move beyond the emergency dramatically raised by the Syrian crisis, which clearly focus the International Community attention on the need to support the consolidation of LAS technical capacities in the field of crisis management. Adequate political attention and financial resources should be therefore devoted to the strengthening of national and regional instruments in the Middle East and the Arab region which could create conditions for more structural prevention of conflicts. It goes without saying that good governance is a key ingredient of this more ambitious undertaking. In this sense, the policy implications linked to a very detailed study carried out by the *United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA)* have to be taken fully into account while advancing proposals on ways to strengthen cooperation between the UN and the Arab League. Moving from the assumption that the Arab region has been chronically affected by an “*endless agglomeration of conflict, fragile peace and high level of political and social tensions*”, ESCWA study on “*The Governance Deficit and the Conflict Relapse in the West Region*” effectively demonstrates that the lack of good governance practices or governance deficits is one of the most prominent root causes and drivers of conflict and its relapse in the Middle East and Western Asia. In particular, the analysis of seven governance variables (formal political institutions; political exclusion and repression; the rule of law; corruption; bureaucratic quality; role of military in politics; and economic policies) and the risk of conflict relapse showed that the risk of conflict recurrence in the region is considerably lower in countries with good governance performances. In light of the above-mentioned findings, the need to ensure increased UN support and encouragement to regional and national initiatives aimed at promoting good governance should be clearly indicated by the upcoming SG report. As it was confirmed by recent high-level meetings convened at regional level, there is no doubt that the Arab Spring created a space for public debate on the creation of more transparent and accountable public

⁷ Security Council Report, September Forecast, New York, 30 August, 2012



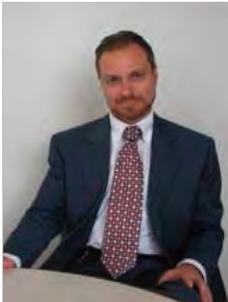
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administrations, based on good governance, anti-corruption policies, as well as the respect of the rule of law and civil and political freedoms⁸. A comprehensive UN support package to the Arab League should therefore assign the above-mentioned issues the urgency and importance they deserve. However, it is clear that Arab League's credibility and effectiveness as a regional organization will ultimately depend on the final outcome of the region's current political transitions and "*the emergence of a critical mass of countries that are keen to prioritize regional democratization and cooperation*"⁹.

It is only the political will of powerful Member States of the region that will enable the organization to embrace a path of internal reforms aimed at creating institutional structures and "peer pressures" mechanisms for the promotion of good governance and democratic practices, which are key ingredients for ensuring peace, development and stability in the region. In conclusion, appropriate amendments of the LAS Charter, eventually inspired by massive institutional reforms undertaken by other regional organizations (reference is made to the AU Peace and Security Architecture or the African Governance Architecture), could finally open the way for the establishment of a "New Arab League", which could be able to act as a more credible and effective partner of the United Nations in promoting peace and security.

⁸ International Conference on "*Good Governance and the Establishment of Institution-Based State in the Arab Region*", 8-10 September 2012, Cairo, Egypt.

⁹ Michael Wahid Hanna, 2012.



The importance of being Arctic

Angelantonio Rosato

The Arctic, Polar sea included, will come into focus of major State and non-State actors to an extent never seen before in history. The most important driver is climate change that could make the Arctic much more accessible. How much accessible? And why so much attention for an empty space?

The importance of the Arctic from the strategic point of view depends on the geographical position of the Polar Sea situated between the North American and the Eurasian continents, the presence of important natural/energy resources, as well as significant armed forces bases. “The shortest line between Russia and North America runs across the Arctic. From the northern point of Canada, which lies 4,000 kilometres north of Ottawa, the distance to Murmansk, Russia, is only a little over 2,500 km. With the development of long range bomber aircraft, and even more importantly, with the advent of intercontinental missiles during the Cold War, the direction of the threat of aerial attack, both in Russia and in North America, became north. During this period, consequently, a large number of radar stations for the early warning of attacks through the air, with aircraft or missiles, were placed along both the Russian and the North American coasts of the Polar Sea. Post Cold War, the American radar chain is being modernized in order to constitute an important part of the global US Missile Defence System”.¹ On the other side, the Polar Sea “constitutes Russia’s only unrestricted access to the Atlantic. This is why Moscow after World War Two decided to establish base-areas for its Northern Fleet on the Kola Peninsula, with the associated air and army units in support. After the Cold War and the loss of her Baltic and Black Sea base areas, the Northern Fleet base complex has become relatively more important to the Russians than before. It is not incidental that Russia’s Northern Fleet contains the majority of Russia’s strategic submarines”.² With the end of the Cold War, the military value of the Arctic is diminished, but in the same time is increased its salience as enormous recipient of energy and raw materials. It is believed that 25% of the world untapped energy reserves is based in the Arctic region. Nevertheless, many problems impede the exploitation of Arctic resources. Until now production costs in the region are high, the world markets are far away and very badly connected due to the ice-infested Polar sea. Environ-

¹ Jacob BØRRESEN, *The Great Arctic Game*, in “The Polar Game”, Heartland – Eurasian Review of Geopolitics, no. 2/2008, page 10.

² Jacob BØRRESEN, *The Great Arctic Game*, in “The Polar Game”, Heartland – Eurasian Review of Geopolitics, no. 2/2008, pages 10-11.

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mental concerns pose other main questions. A possible huge spilling of petroleum could destroy the very vulnerable Arctic fauna and flora, and the extensive fisheries in the Polar Sea. Therefore it could put in danger the living conditions of the Inuit and the other indigenous peoples in the region. Hard talking is taking place among governments, local administrators, energy companies, environmentalists and natives' representatives on controversial issues like energy pipelines proposed traces in North America and Russia; and whether to open or not especially vulnerable Arctic waters and land areas to hydrocarbons exploration and exploitation.

On the other hand, Arctic energy resources could become competitive and attractive thanks to rising energy world demand, especially driven by the western States, the BRICS and other developing countries. The Arctic region is, so far, conflict-free, and poses much less geopolitical problems compared to the instable, though oil-rich, Middle East. The sea routes to deliver the Polar hydrocarbons to the world markets are not infested by pirates as in the Red Sea, or crowded by oil tankers traffic jam, such as in Bosphorus, Hormuz and Malacca straits.

Technological improvement could make feasible and economically valuable to extract hydrocarbons in the Polar area and to deliver them to the world markets. What is more important, climate change will make the difference. At the beginning of this paper we mentioned the global warming as the most important driver to shifting the salience of the Arctic. In which sense? The global warming is making the planet bigger. Non in the physical sense but as geopolitical space. The Arctic is a huge area of almost 30 millions squares kilometres, one hundred times Italy, one sixth of planet earth. The Polar Sea has been covered by ice for nine months of the year, until now. This could soon become just history.

The majority of the Polar ice cap has traditionally consisted of thick multi-year ice that is extremely difficult to break. Not anymore. "In 2008, first-year ice covered 72% of the Arctic basin, including the region around the North Pole. In 2007, that number was 59%. Usually only 30% of first year ice formed during the winter survives the summer melt season. In 2007, only 13% survived. In other words, as the extent of first-year ice increases, so does the extent of ice free waters in the summer. Multi-year ice is now largely absent in the area around the North Pole and towards the Siberian coast and instead concentrated in the areas north of Canada and Greenland".³ Arctic ice melting is not a new phenomenon, but a continuous trend since many years. Indeed, now it is accelerating: this year the Arctic has lost more sea ice than at any time since satellite records began in 1979 by NASA. National Aeronautics and Space Administration's scientists involved in the monitoring say it is part of a fundamental change. According to their calculations, between the end of August and the beginning of September 2012 the extent of sea ice was 4,1 millions squared kilometres, an area smaller compared with a previous low of 4,17 millions squared kilometres recorded on 18 September 2007, i.e. 5 years ago. Interesting enough, sea ice melting normally

³ Jacob BØRRESEN, *The Arctic Highway*, in "The Polar Game", Heartland – Eurasian Review of Geopolitics, no. 2/2008, page 38.

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goes ahead in September, therefore this year's record may be even more.

The sea ice cap grows during the cold Arctic winters and shrinks when temperatures climb again. Nevertheless, since the '80 satellites have recorded a 13% decline per decade in the summertime minimum. What is more, the thickness of the sea ice is also declining. Therefore overall the ice volume has fallen far – though estimates vary about the actual figure.

What is unquestionable is Joey Comiso's analysis – senior research scientist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center – who said that “this year's ice retreat was caused by previous warm years reducing the amount of perennial ice – which is more resistant to melting. It's created a self-reinforcing trend”. According to the NASA scientist, “unlike 2007, temperatures were not unusually warm in the Arctic this summer”. Nevertheless, the real problem is that “we are losing the thick component of the ice cover” – Comiso says – and if you lose that, the ice in the summer becomes very vulnerable”.⁴ Another scientist from the National Snow and Ice Data Center that collaborates in the measurements, Walt Meier, stated: “in the context of what's happened in the last several years and throughout the satellite record, it's an indication that the Arctic sea ice cover is fundamentally changing”.⁵ According to Professor Peter Wadhams, from Cambridge University, “a number of scientists who have actually been working with sea ice measurement had predicted some years ago that the retreat would accelerate and that the summer Arctic would become ice-free by 2015 or 2016”. Prof. Wadhams was one of the above scientists, and now recognizes those predictions were wrong: “I was one of those scientists, and of course bore my share of ridicule for daring to make such an alarmistic prediction”. Nevertheless Prof. Wadhams is convinced that the prediction is now coming true, and the ice is becoming so thin that it will inevitably disappear: “Measurements from submarines have shown that it has lost at least 40% of its thickness since the 1980s, and if you consider the shrinkage as well it means that the summer ice volume is now only 30% of what it was in the 1980s”. According to Professor Peter Wadhams, “this means an inevitable death for the ice cover, because the summer retreat is now accelerated by the fact that the huge areas of open water already generated allow storms to generate big waves which break up the remaining ice and accelerate its melt”. Cambridge University's scientist thinks that “the implications are serious: the increased open water lowers the average albedo (reflectivity) of the planet, accelerating global warming; and we are also finding the open water causing seabed permafrost to melt, releasing large amounts of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, to the atmosphere”.⁶

There are many different opinions about Arctic ice melting and its causes. Anyway what is important to stress is that it is really happening and quite fast, indeed. The question is whether one day this could create the conditions for humans' massive Polar colonization, all year navigation and transportation of still untapped Arctic energy resources.

As the ice volume decreases and becomes easier to penetrate, the prospects for a permanent Arctic

⁴ See Roger HARRABIN, *Arctic sea ice reaches record low, Nasa says*, in “BBC News” (online), 27 August 2012

⁵ See Roger HARRABIN, *Arctic sea ice reaches record low, Nasa says*, in “BBC News” (online), 27 August 2012

⁶ See Roger HARRABIN, *Arctic sea ice reaches record low, Nasa says*, in “BBC News” (online), 27 August 2012



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Sea Lane connecting Asia, North America and Europe get realistic and attractive to oil and shipping companies. The Lane could result in a substantial reduction of time and costs for energy, people and goods transportation North–South, North–North and Atlantic–Pacific. All this could lead to an Arctic *golden age*: commercial and civilian shipping would increase, coastal infrastructures would improve, and thus boost the economic and social development of Arctic human communities.

Nevertheless this is a very optimistic picture. In reality, even in case of the most pessimistic global warming scenarios, Polar shipping will continue to be a challenge, both from a physical and an economic point of view. The true story is that the Arctic is scarcely suited for human settlement and activities and is a very fragile ecosystem. It is very hard to believe that the Polar Sea will ever be ice–free all year round. The perennial winter darkness at this latitudes multiplies the ice–related dangers for commercial, military and civilian ships. As a matter of fact, dramatic meltdown will make even more difficult to predict sea ice and iceberg formation. Hence Arctic shipping may stay tricky and costly for a long time. It will require icebreakers and ice–reinforced boats, twice more expensive than ordinary ships; insurance will be always more expensive for vessels operating at these latitudes. Last but not least, delays caused by navigation in ice-infested waters will contribute to make Polar shipping economically disadvantaged compared to regular routes' vessels.

Another major problem will be the greater environmental risks due to increased traffic jam in the Polar sea: oil spills and toxic materials losses will probably increase and therefore the Polar coastal authorities will have to improve the patrolling and the rapid reaction capability in case of these kind of accidents. These requirements represents relevant costs that will sum up to Polar shipping total costs.

Other important and controversial issues has to be fixed before Polar shipping could really become commercially competitive. First of all, the legal status of the Arctic, in particular of the Northern Sea Route (NSR) along the Siberian coast and the North West Passage (NWP) in North America. In accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, relevant shipping State actors like U.S.A. consider them as international straits, therefore not subject to any transit passage fee or national law. On the contrary, Moscow and Ottawa insist that these routes are in their internal waters, hence subject to full national sovereignty. Besides, it is necessary to create a regulatory regime in order to reduce accidents and pollution's hazards. It is true that the International Convention for the Prevention of the Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) already exists and applies to the Arctic region, but it is not enough. The region should be designed as a Special Area under MARPOL, following what was proposed by the Arctic Council's working group on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment years ago.

The best Arctic Sea Lane scenario would be the Polar Route *over the top*, the shortest route between the North Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, intersecting the Arctic Ocean and drawing a line from Iceland, over the North Pole to the Bering Strait. Unfortunately the Polar Route is not feasible today, with the rare exception of the most potent icebreakers. A more realist alternative is the route passing closer to the Siberian coast but not so close to be inside the 12 nautical miles Russian territorial limit. Longer – but not so much - than the Polar Route, it will have the strong advantage to be virtually ice free for three months during the summer, in a decade or two, given global warming and Arctic melting present trends. Considering that multi-year ice is now largely absent in the area to-

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wards the Siberian coast, it is reasonable to predict all year navigation in the near future around this Polar Route's Siberian variant, with a little help from icebreakers.

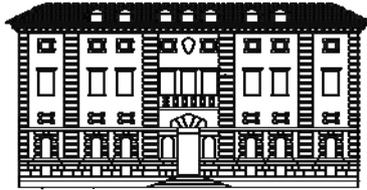
Avoiding the Russian territorial waters will permit to circumvent the Russian official and grey bureaucracy associated with the Northern Sea Route transit passage fee; last but not least, there will be no imposed limit to ship size, outside the shallow narrows of the Northern Sea Route.

On the other hand, the vessels will need special ice-protection and engine power that will make them not economically valuable on other routes. This will open up a market for transshipment ports at both ends of the Polar Route, multiplying the costs associated. Besides, were a Special Area under MARPOL to be declared for the Arctic region, it will increase regulations and controls on shipping by the coastal authorities.

To sum up, the opening of the Northern Sea Route and the North West Passage would just have a regional importance. On the contrary, the Polar Route – especially the *Siberian* variant - may represent a major shift in the global trade that today is passing through Panama, Suez, Hormuz, Malacca etc. Given that today 80% of international trade is on the sea, the consequences for the world economy could be enormous. Secure and shorter sea routes are particularly important for the energy industry with a strong appetite for safe and cheap sea transportation of oil and gas (LNG).

Regional economy would benefit, too: the Polar Route will require transshipment ports, rescue and repair services, extra surveillance and all the other services related. This could boost the Arctic economy to an extent never saw before.

A revolutionary Arctic Sea Lane, connecting three different continents in few days and passing through a geo-politically stable region without piracy and conflicts, will become a reality in the near future, or at least in the medium term? It will depend on the future trends of global warming and the related Arctic meltdown; on the solution of the issues concerning the legal status of the Northern Sea Route and the North West Passage, the status of the Arctic region under MARPOL. It will also be a function of technology improvements in energy exploration/drilling and in special ice-protected ships' construction. A constellation of conditions where shines the Polar Star.



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