Scientific Bulletin of Naval Academy

The process of adapting the European Union to changes in the security environment

The process of adapting the European Union to changes in the security environment

Colonel PhD student Marian Iulian COJOCARU

"CAROL I" National Defense University, Panduri Street, Bucharest, Romania

iulicojocaru@yahoo.com

Abstract:The instability of the security environment is dangerous and can become devastating for a state, a region, a continent or even for the whole world if the necessary measures are not taken immediately. The main issues that have, over time, underpinned the European project were security and social welfare. These aspects are still important today and are very topical, representing at the same time the main objectives of the European Union, even if the changes are fast, and the security environment we live in is particularly fragile. For over half a century, the European Union has continuously contributed to maintaining peace, stability and prosperity, raised the standards of living, launched a single currency and has constantly evolved to create a single market in which people, goods, services and the capital can move freely, as if it were in the territory of a single country. Now, the European Union must face the existing challenges and adapt to the changes in the security environment. The adaptation to the new, to the changes, is the fundamental property of the European Union, and this must change and at the same time adapt the mode of action in relation to the alternatives that have occurred both from a quantitative and qualitative point of view.At present, the adaptability of the European Union in the new global security context is precisely its ability to understand the changes and make the necessary adjustments immediately to the current requirements, to react promptly with appropriate responses that will lead to the restoration of the status quo.

Keywords: *European Union, adaptation, challenges, stability, security, changes.*

1. The current European security environment.

The terrorist attacks from September 11, 2001, represented for the 21st century the moment when the paradigm of the security environment changed from the ground up: the uncertainty would become the basic feature, repeated and underlined on several occasions, on which the evolutions were to be built subsequent ones, including those of the global and European security environment.

In the recent years Europe has been marked by many terrorist attacks, and the security environment has been increasingly shaken, with unpredictable situations and threats, very difficult to be anticipated, and being characterized by a constant and a pressing state of uncertainty.

The permanent uncertainty that dominates the current European security environment dictates also the specificity of the security strategies and policies of the European Union,

which must take into account the forecasting of the unforeseen events, and to anticipate the most unpredictable actions. Or, as Herman Kahn said: "Strategic thinking means having the ability to think what is unthinkable." ("Thinking the unthinkable")"1. An effective security strategy must adapt to the uncertain circumstances that dominate the current European security environment. There is even talk, in terms of uncertainty, by an "important dimension of social life, of evolution"2.

A pragmatic solution, in the sense of security strategies, adapted to the uncertainty of the current European security environment, is what George Maior calls "the new diplomat-soldier"3, in a separate chapter of the paper entitled "Diplomats, soldiers and strategists in the 21st century". The idea that the 21st century strategy is not only strictly military but also needs to be supplemented with a diplomacy dimension is needed to be effective and to deal with uncertainties in the security environment. There is a long way to go in implementing defence diplomacy and strengthening a strategic dialogue. A military, adapted to the dynamism of the current security environment, must be both a strategist and a diplomat, just as the strategist, in his turn, must prove that he is a very good diplomat and a possessor of solid military knowledge. Maior also speaks in detail about the essential role of the cultural component, of "culturalism"4 in strategic issues: "What I would call culturalism in strategic affairs is a very attractive invitation to a new way of thinking about military intervention and beyond. […] The tactic thus becomes strategic […] Thus, the strategist is sometimes called upon to solve tactical problems that have political value in themselves […] "5.

The uncertainty of the European security environment, and beyond, has led to the adoption of a new, constantly dynamic, security policy at the European Union level, with the main purpose of setting objectives that respond to the new needs of common security. Thus, the European Union has built and developed a new Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).The challenges to the security of the European Union are primarily those related to the regional security, which is a precondition for the EU's ability to act globally, but also those related to climate change, slow economic growth, major flows of energy. migration and refugees, practically at the largest refugee crisis after the II World War. To all these are added developments in technology domain, space and cybernetics, proliferation of nuclear weapons and arms races, wars and hybrid and asymmetrical threats.

2. The European Union - a significant player on the world stage.

"In a complex world, connected and contested, the European Union fully maintains its commitment to multilateralism and the rules based on the world order, in the middle of which is the United Nations, promoting peace and security, developing stable partnerships and defending, at the same time, universal rights and freedom. This commitment makes the European Union a reliable and predictable partner for all countries and organizations around the world, whether it is the Paris Agreement on climate change, the UN Sustainable

---

[1] George Cristian Maior, "*Incertitudine. Gândire strategică şi relaţii internaţionale în secolul XXI*", Editura RAO – Bucureşti, 2014., p. 8.
[2] *Ibidem*, p. 24.
[3] *Ibidem*, p. 141.
[4] *Ibidem*, p. 143.
[5] *Ibidem*, pp. 143-144.

Development Goals (SDGs), the International   Criminal Court or by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and by the Comprehensive Joint Action Plan "6.

The European Union is an important player in the global scene, as it plays a consistent role as a security provider throughout the world. The Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, with its provisions on, inter alia, security and common defense, reinforces this role of the EU not only within the European Community, but also beyond it.

At the same time, the European Union has demonstrated that it is one of the main actors on the world stage and has been increasingly concerned about completing its own internal institutional reforms, especially in the context of enlargement, as well as finalizing debates on the political construction that will define the future of Europe.

Becoming a global economic player, the European Union was forced to participate and become more and more active and involved in the mechanisms of global security assurance, even though the concrete forms of this involvement were not very clearly specified until 2016.

Today, the state actors, with internationally recognized status, but also non-state actors, are actively, responsible and constantly involved in the prevention and resolution of crises and conflicts in different areas, all over the world. Of course, the intervention of any actor, a state or a regional/international organization has also a motivation regarding the satisfaction of the strategic interests at regional or national level.

The European Union is one of the most significant non-state actors active on the world stage in crisis and conflict management and has policies, programs and resources to achieve its proposed civil and military crisis management objectives in the world. The European Union is "a new type of political system, made up of the national and European institutions that are constituted in relation to each other"7, says Clémentine Bacri in her work, "*Le rôle de union Europea*" and the defense of the human rights in Europe ".

The Union "*is a project, not a territory"8, says French professor Gérard-François Dumont. In his argument, the author argues that "any project is applied on the territories and can only succeed if it is in accordance with the people and cultures that are the life of these territories*"9.

Therefore, the European Union should not be identified only from a geographical point of view and will succeed from all points of view only if it knows how to define its unity of territories in which it can lead a useful project to both its citizens, as well as to peace and prosperity. world. The diversity in which the European Union is identified is appreciated. However, it has been shown that there is no consensus among those who write or speak about this social, demographic, political and geographical reality. It can be stated without fear that the European Union represents an economic, social, cultural, demographic, political and

---

[6]UE - un actor global mai puternic, *Către o Uniune mai unită, mai puternică și mai democratică,* disponibil la https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/euco-sibiu-stronger-global-actor_ro.pdf, accessed on 18.03.2020

[7]Cf. Clémentine BACRI, *Le rôle de l'union européenne en tant qu'acteur international dans la promotion et la défense des droits de l'homme en Europe,*disponibil la http://www.memoireonline.com/11/07/719/m_role-ue-acteur-international-promotion-defense-droits-de-l-homme28.html, p. 4., accessed on 10.10.2018

[8] Gérard-François DUMONT, *Quelles frontières pour l'Union européenne ? L'Union européenne, la Russie et la Turquie*, http://www.diploweb.com/forum/dumont3.htm, p. 1.

[9] Gérard-François DUMONT, *Quelles frontières pour l'Union européenne ? L'Union européenne, la Russie et la Turquie*, http://www.diploweb.com/forum/dumont3.htm,, p.20

geographical entity that brings together within its European states on a voluntary basis and which are animated by the same values and common interests in order to ensure prosperity , sustainable development and security of member countries and their citizens.

The European Union represents a significant actor on the world stage and through the range of roles assumed, which is not limited to the effective territorial security of the European space, the other tasks assumed being diplomacy, economic development, trade, cooperation between states, all playing a role. role at least as important as the security dimension.

The European Union is also one of the main actors in the field of international cooperation and promotion of development. At the same time, the European Union is the main donor of humanitarian assistance worldwide. "*Together, the European Commission and the member states provide around 50% of the global funds for emergency assistance*"10.

In addition to all these assumed roles, the European Union seeks to apply a complex approach in solving major social problems that include, first and foremost, human rights, gender equality, environmental protection and the prevention of armed conflicts.

The European Union aims to find the most appropriate solutions to the problems of the present, and the term "global actor" to be a pole of power, but also a balancing factor at the international level.

"*In the context of the global situation which is becoming more unstable and the role of international institutions is still in the public eye, the European Union uses its diplomatic, political and economic power as a security provider, in order to promote the peace and security on the international plan.The Union is firmly convinced that multilateral diplomacy leads to peaceful solutions to urgent international problems. It has demonstrated its leadership, creativity and reliability by supporting the nuclear agreement with Iran, the Paris Agreement on climate change, the United Nations' sustainable development goals, new trade agreements with sound social guarantees and cooperation with The African Union, working with the United Nations. At the same time, the European Union has remained the largest provider of official development assistance. Neighborhood and enlargement policies have supported stability and focused on building closer relations between the European Union and its neighbors*".11

3. The export of the insecurity to the European territory.

There are different phenomena that cause concern and contribute to the export of insecurity to the European territory. One of the most important problems with serious consequences for the insecurity of the European space is the persistence of the prolonged conflict states, apparently without solutions or with less inspired solutions, conflict states dictated most often by political instability. These clashes of interests or conflict states deprive the inhabitants of some countries, most of them from the African continent, of living in a secure environment, of the possibility of being provided by decent and sufficient food, of the lack of minimum conditions to live so much needed for a normal society, lack of unity, even the right to dream for a better life. These prolonged conflict states cause illegal migration with increasingly consistent ramifications to Europe.

10www.fondromania.org - Site-ul Federaţiei Organizaţiilor Neguvernamentale pentru dezvoltare din România, *Asistenţă umanitară*, p. 1, accessed on 18.03.2020.

11https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/general-report-2018/ro/#chapter9, accessed on 18.03.2020.

*„The open character of modern democratic societies, as well as the demands of globalization, determine that both the international community as a whole and each state in particular remain vulnerable to terrorism, which is in fact one of the hallmarks of the international security environment"*12.

4. The process of adapting the European Union to the new changes of the security environment.

Today, the European Union is facing a unique international geo-political context, marked by a series of concerns and challenges: diminishing ties with the Russian Federation following the annexation of Crimea by it, the effect of Brexit, the crisis of migration and the intensification of terrorism on European territory . In this framework, it is obvious that a rethink of the instruments and directions of action of the European Union in the field of security and external relations is required. The European Union has the political will and the necessary capacities for the proper management of all changes in different areas of the world, has strong institutions and is able to quickly make decisions that are binding on the Member States. Challenges and threats, present and future, to the European Union are complex and interconnected and come from state and non-state actors, both inside and outside the common borders. In order to adapt to new changes, the European Union must be permanently connected to local, regional and global situations, and its member states must have a strong political will to respond actively, collectively and effectively to all these challenges and threats. In this way, the values and models of the European Union can be guaranteed, and the Union can be transformed into an effective actor who is able to contribute to security on the international stage.

The European Union must take immediate action to combat the degradation of the security environment and its long-term consequences. Due to the multiplication and simultaneity of crises with immediate consequences on EU territory, no Member State can act alone and Europeans must collectively exercise their responsibilities to ensure their security.In the context of deteriorating regional security, the European Union must give priority to stabilizing its immediate neighborhood, without giving up its global commitments. Security crises in the EU's neighborhood are exacerbated and shaped by global trends, and effective regional security management is a precondition for the EU's ability to act globally.

A rapid and effective EU response to new changes and especially to new threats requires strong solidarity between Member States, involves overcoming interinstitutional obstacles and eliminating the compartmentalized organizational culture from institutions and from overseas representations of the European External Action Service and Member States it also provides sufficient and flexible budgetary resources to be allocated to support EU interests. An effective security strategy requires, first of all, a strong political will and a sense of common good shared by all Member States in order to create and use truly European tools.

"The adaptation of the European Union to the changes of the security environment under the conditions of a volatile and uncertain environment consists in the strategic independence, which will allow them to ensure their security and at the same time to promote their interests and values. Human security must be at the center of the European Union's

---

12Mirela ATANASIU Lucian STĂNCILĂ, TERORISMUL — *Răul din umbră al începutului de secol,*Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare „Carol I" , București – 2014, p.52.

Global Strategy and fully take into account the gender perspective and the UN Resolution 1325 on security issues"13.

The different types of threats and changes in the security environment should be considered as threats to the whole of the Union, demanding a strong unity and solidarity between the Member States and a coherent common foreign and security policy. "*In May 2018, the European Commission presented the proposal for the future long-term budget of the European Union, covering the period 2021-2027. This proposal is the result of an open and inclusive process, which has received contributions from the European Parliament, Member States, beneficiaries of European funds and other stakeholders. The budget proposal focuses on the current and future challenges facing the Union and aims to provide resources for building a Europe that offers its citizens protection, helps them assert their rights and defend them. The proposed budget amounts to € 1,135 billion in commitment appropriations (at 2018 prices) over a 7-year period, equivalent to 1.11% of the gross national income of the EU-27*"14.

REFERENCES

1. ATANASIU, Mirela, STĂNCILĂ, Lucian *Terorismul - Răul din umbră al începutului de seco*l, Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare „Carol I" , București – 2014, p.52;
2. Cf. Clémentine, BACRI - *Le rôle de l'union européenne en tant qu'acteur international dans la promotion et la défense des droits de l'homme en Europe*, available at http://www.memoireonline.com/11/07/719/m_role-ue-acteur-international-promotion-defense-droits-de-l-homme28.html, accessed on 18.03.2020;
3. George Cristian MAIOR, Op. cit.;
4. Gérard-François DUMONT, *Quelles frontières pour l'Union européenne ? L'Union européenne, la Russie et la Turquie*, http://www.diploweb.com/forum/dumont3.html, p. 1;
5. Gérard-François DUMONT, *Quelles frontières pour l'Union européenne ? L'Union européenne, la Russie et la Turquie,* http://www.diploweb.com/forum/dumont3.html, p.20, accessed on 18.03.2020;
6. www.fondromania.org - Site-ul Federației Organizațiilor Neguvernamentale pentru dezvoltare din România, Asistență umanitară, p. 1, accessed on 18.03.2020;
7. https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/general-report-2018/ro/#chapter9, accessed on 18.03.2020;
8. Raport - Uniunea Europeană într-un mediu global în schimbare – *O lume mai conectată, mai contestată și mai complexă* – 29.03.2016, available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2016-0069_RO.html, accessed on 19.03.2020;
9. https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/general-report-2018/ro/, accessed on 19.03.2020.

---

[13]Raport referitor la UE într-un mediu global în schimbare – *O lume mai conectată, mai contestată și mai complexă* – 29.03.2016, disponibil pe https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2016-0069_RO.html, accessed on 18.03.2020

[14]https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/general-report-2018/ro/accessed on 18.03.2020.

10. UE - un actor global mai puternic, Către o Uniune mai unită, mai puternică şi mai democratică, available at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/euco-sibiu-stronger-global-actor_ro.pdf, accessed on 18.03.2020.