

THE CAUSES AND FACTORS OF THE CONFLICTS

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ABSTRACT:

ANALYZING THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS A FEW CAUSES THAT HAVE LED TO THE OUTBREAK ARE OBVIOUS, AND ALSO A FEW FACTORS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED THE DEVELOPMENT AND THE TRANSFORMATION METHOD, RESPECTIVELY THE MILITARY ACTIONS' CHARACTER.³

THE CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT STAGE ARRANGEMENTS HAVE INFLUENCED THE EVOLUTION OF MILITARY ART, BOTH THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL. IF THE LAWS AND PRINCIPLES OF MILITARY ACTIONS SUFFERED ONLY SOME ADAPTATIONS IN THE LIGHT OF TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC CONQUESTS, OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE MILITARY ART HAVE UNDERGONE ESSENTIAL TRANSFORMATIONS OR TEND TO EVOLVE IN THE FUTURE.⁴

THE PRESENT WORK INTENDS TO BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF MILITARY ART PRACTITIONERS SOME CONCLUSIONS RESULTING FROM THE ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS, WHICH WE WISH TO GIVE COMMANDERS THE KNOWLEDGE AND EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS FOR PREPARING AND DIRECTING MILITARY OPERATIONS, FOR THE EFFICIENT PREPARATION OF THE TROOPS.

KEYWORDS: CAUSES OF CONFLICT, POST COLD WAR, INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

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³ Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, *An agenda for peace: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping*, Report of the Secretary General pursuant to the statement adopted by the summit meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992, United Nations, New York, 1992. See, Meyerson, Roger (1991) *Game Theory: Analysis of Conflict*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).

⁴ Batchelor P, Kingma K & Lamb G. 2004. "The role of the military in state formation and nation building: An overview of historical and conceptual issues", in *Demilitarization and peace building in Southern Africa*, Ashgate Publishers.

One of the main causes of the outbreak of conflicts and, at the same time, a factor of their transformation, represents the diversity of ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic of the states' or regions' population where they have been manifested.

Caucasus area, for example, is compared by the analysts with a powder keg because of the many ethnicities of the area that have caused and are still causing many conflicts⁵. In the southern part of the region, three states have declared independence in 1991, after the breakup of the Soviet Union: Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and seven other republics in the Caucasus are part of Russia: Chechnya, Dagestan, North Ossetia, Ingushetia, Karăşaiëvo, Adighees-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkaria.⁶

From the linguistic point of view, the region has a comparable ethnic diversity. There are Indo-European and Turkish. Christianity has entered these lands since the first centuries of our era, and Islam, by the 7th century. The main Muslim ethnic groups from the Caucasus are the Adigjens, the Ingush, the Chechens and the Avars. In that regard, the Osetians are one of the few Christian peoples in the area.⁷

At the same time, the region is at the interference of "blocks" of culture and civilization, due to the actors who have mastered the area throughout the history and which today affects the political behavior in international relations of these actors.⁸ In the region, there has been an intensification of political propaganda and religious support, resulted in the risk of Islamic fundamentalism, generator of crisis and conflicts.

In the former Yugoslavia, ethnic nationalist riots in the 1980s and 1990s have led to a split between numerous ethnic groups, and later, to the initiation of wars with ethnic discrimination and numerous human rights violations. The collapse of Yugoslavia and the wars that followed have led to strained relations between the successor states and many degrees of xenophobia that were particularly between ethnic groups who fought in the

⁵ O'Neill, Barry, *Honor Symbols, and War*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press,2000).

⁶ Powell, Robert, *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press,1999).

⁷ Van Evera, Stephen, *Causes of War: Power and the roots of Conflict*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999)

⁸ Asmus, D. Ronald, Jackson, P. Bruce, Marea Neagră și frontierele libertății, Asmus, Ronald D., Dimitrov, Konstantin, Forbrig, Joerg, editori, *O nouă strategie euro-atlantică pentru regiunea Mării Negre*, „German Marshall Fund”, (S.U.A.: Washington D.C., 2004)

Yugoslav wars. During the conflicts, there were more ethnic purification actions, war crimes and massive civilian population exodus.⁹

Multiple conflicts in Africa were due to the existence of discriminatory actions directed by certain groups to other or social ethnic groups, because of the lack of a legal framework, necessary for a better management of cultural differences, ethnic and religious.¹⁰

The main conflicts in the Middle East are those between the Muslims and the Christians and between the Sunni and the Shiite Muslims, and as long as they live together, reasons for the conflict will appear.¹¹

One historian specialized in the Middle East and the Muslim world problems presented some of his conclusions and a number of relevant and provocative remarks about the specifics of the region¹²: Arabic nationalism generated internal conflicts that led to the radicalization and polarization of the political options (each internal faction sought to accuse the opponents that they would had been in the service of a foreign power);¹³ rival factions within the greater Middle East States have always sought out support for protection; Arabic nationalism has outlawed the idea of democracy and reduced the chances of progress in the Middle East (the civil war is associated with the fighting between the factions and the recourse to violence for the arbitration of disputes democracy). There is a dissonance between the nationalist aspirations of political actors in the region and the need for external support in order to obtain and maintain power.¹⁴

⁹ Hendrickson, Ryan C. *Diplomacy and War at NATO: The Secretary General and Military Action after the Cold War*. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006).

¹⁰ Brown S., "Diplomacy by other means—SWAPO's liberation war", in C Leys & J S Saul, *Namibia's liberation struggle*, (James Currey: London, 1995)

¹¹ Kriesberg, Louis, 'The Phases of Destructive Conflicts ', in David Carment and Patrick James (eds), *Peace in the Midst of Wars: Preventing and Managing International Ethnic Conflicts*. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 33-60.

¹² Vișan, George, *Henri Laurens and Types of Conflict in the Middle East*, June 22, 2010, 22.

¹³ Paul Duță, Eugen Bădălan, Ion Pâlșoiu, *Operațiunile de menținere a păcii ale Națiunilor Unite în Orientul Mijlociu*, (Bucuresti:Editura Militară, 2005).

¹⁴ Boettcher, William (1995) "Context, Methods, Numbers and Words: Prospect Theory in International Relations", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 39 (3): 561-84.

Lack of experience in the heavy heritage received statehood, and the new state established after the fall of communism, or after a long period of colonization is an important cause of contemporary conflicts and a factor in the management of the toilsome ascent.

The Caucasus area being first under the Dominion of the Turks and Persians, then under the Russian Empire, the region has been divided arbitrarily by Stalin, which has led to greater tensions. Under the pretext of local co-work with the Nazis, Stalin made the first deportations of the Chechen Republic and Ingushetia to Central Asia.¹⁵

After the self-proclamation of the Emirate of the Caucasus, recognized only by Georgia, led by Zviatsd Gamshurdia until he was toppled from power, Doku Umarov has acted in order to install sharia, the Islamic law.¹⁶ The disappearance of the Soviet hegemony made possible, after many centuries, the thing the population of the southern Caucasus and Central Asia wished: to have its own state, however, ideological and institutional modeling hard to define.

The big number of ethnic conflicts on the territory of the former USSR proves that there were and still are objective reasons for representing the inheritance received by the new independent states of the Communist regime, and the transition to a new society is strained by the fact that the states of the region lack a solid experience in terms of statehood.¹⁷

On the other hand, the breakup of Yugoslavia has its roots in a multitude of factors, both external and internal, whose action has been conjugated in the period 1989-1991, but actually occurred with the declarations of independence of Slovenia and Croatia announcement, made on 25 June 1991, and open the sad sight of secession and later at more strife.¹⁸

¹⁵ Bercovitch, Jacob, "Mediation in International Conflict: An Overview", in I. William Zartman and J.L. Rasmussen (eds), *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*. Washington, (DC: US Institute of Peace, 1997), 125-53.

¹⁶ Scott, J. W. (2005), 'The EU and Wider Europe: Toward an Alternative Geopolitics of Regional Co-operation?', *Geopolitics*, http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/WP-Texts/05_34.pdf;

¹⁷ Aydin Mustafa, "Europe's next shore: the Black Sea region after enlargement", *Occasional Paper No. 53*, (European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, June 2004)

¹⁸ Zartman, I. William (1999) 'Dynamics and Constrains in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts', in I. William Zartman (ed), *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*. (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.), 3-29.

To understand the current situation in Africa, We have taken into account the legacy of colonial people of this continent. The borders drawn by the settlers are artificial, depending on the access to the coastline and ports, as well as the position of the great European cities.¹⁹

Decolonization, due to national liberation movements, the great powers and the USA, but also to other actors in the Arabic world or Cuba, has achieved some independence in politics and has made from African States international actors, but has not succeeded in radically changing their economic systems. Also in the banking, commercial, industrial and transportation system, entrepreneurs and foreign managers continued to have a key role.²⁰

In terms of power and institutions, the weak state remains in the centre of the economic games. As geopolitical performer, Africa has been ignored and placed on a trend of stagnation for a long time, in terms of productivity, fact that will lead to marginalization in terms of trade and international financial flows.²¹

The African States in state of war represent about 20% of the population. As a common thing is that the armed forces are poorly equipped and not too well trained, often having mobilized very young people. They are called "soldier children" and having some areas becoming confrontation spaces between the "warlords of the war". The same thing happens in Somalia, Chad, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Liberia or in uncontrolled areas belonging to the state, as is the case in Côte d'Ivoire and R.D. Congo. Because of the disintegration and anarchy, some companies no longer have specific economic mechanisms of the state being under supervision and guardianship.²²

About the Middle East, a third category of conflicts are the constitutive ones of the modern states of the region. In the absence of a democratic political transition, the change

¹⁹ Zartman, I. William, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

²⁰ Reinhardt, Eric (2001). 'Adjudication without Enforcement in GATT Disputes', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45(1): 174-95.

²¹ Berkeley, Bill, *The graves are not yet full: Race, tribe and power in the heart of Africa*, (Basic Books:New York, 2001).

²² Batchelor P, Kingma K & Lamb G., "The role of the military in state formation and nation building: An overview of historical and conceptual issues", in *Demilitarization and peace building in Southern Africa*, (Ashgate Publishers, 2004).

of regime in the Middle East was generally, either violent, through coups or revolutions, or foreign interchange and intervention.²³

The mixture or the intervention of foreign actors with interests in some countries or regions have led to the outbreak of conflicts or to the influence of the course of progress.

Russia has not accepted and will not accept the loss of influence of the territories of the former Soviet Union who want to become independent, hope to regain global performer during the cold war and not to carry out the will of Peter the Great. Because of some political reasons, the Soviets have created the distinct ethnic identities, tracing boundaries that mostly exist today.²⁴

Analyzing the situation in these countries, Oliver Roy proposes an indicator of solidarity resulting from an ethno-cultural research of these communities-*qawms*, name borrowed from the name of an organization type at the local level. He says that these "Nations" seem to be manufactured in the soviet era without having much in common with the nation that has emerged and evolved in Western civilization.

Others have fed conflicting actions, in particular Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Ukraine. Some analysts say that the two wars in Chechnya and the implications of external fundamentalist Islamic matters (in particular from Iran and Saudi Arabia) have stimulated massive insurgency in the region. Foreign contribution was not limited to specific calls, but consisted also in the presence of some Arab or Muslim mercenaries, come in these territories, either organized or individually. The Islam boom has been compared to that of Bosnia, from the former Yugoslavia.²⁵

In Yugoslavia, NATO's military intervention made the war to become even more violent, at one point opposing the Croats to Muslims. The intervention was mainly determined by the risk of an expansion of the conflict into the Aegean Sea, which could affect NATO, involving Greece in the conflict. South-eastern European geopolitics was

²³ Rummel, R.J (1997) *Power Kills: Democracy as a Method of Non-Violence*. New Brunswick: Transaction.

²⁴ Mihkelson, M. *Russia's Policy Toward Belarus, Moldova and the Baltic States*, în Janusz Bugajski, (New York, Consiliul pentru Relații Externe, 2002).

²⁵ Socor, V. *Eurasian Military-Political Bloc Mooted at CSI's Summit*, în „Policy Briefing” nr. 1, Institutul pentru Studii Strategice și Politice Avansate, Washington D.C., 23 octombrie 2002.

about to alter balances through successive adjustments, that seemed to follow a route through the Aegean Sea, the Black Sea basin up to the Caucasus.²⁶

The USA had a particular contribution, although originally established a modest presence in Macedonia and Albania, it helped Croatia to modernize its military forces. Substituting the UN, USA, re-launched the “great powers’ concert” of the past century and the so-called “Contact group”, with France, Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom. Together they proposed a division of Bosnia giving the Serbs 49% of entrusted territories and letting 51% to Bosnian Croats, but it was an unacceptable proposal, because it mimed the ethnic Croatian supremacy. Therefore, the Bosnian Serbs, at the time, decided to step up military operations, convinced that the West is hostile, and only Russia manifested its solidarity vis-à-vis their actions, taking favorable attitudes to them.

Arbitration and foreign interference "in the internal affairs" of the States in the Middle East are a constant policy. This begins to unfold since the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century, when France and Russia were given the right to protect Orthodox Christians and Catholics who lived in the Ottoman Empire.²⁷

Geo-strategic importance of the region has evolved over the past 200 years. If in the nineteenth-century Middle East was important because of the route to India, since the 30's of the 20th century, became important because the access to vast oil resources.

The intervention of neutral security actors influenced more or less contemporary conflicts, depending on host nation support, the influence of other area performers and their own experience gained.

In the conflicts from the former Soviet Union territory, international organizations, the UN and the OSCE were involved very little in the region, limiting the actions on a declarative level, and the most important state actors, the USA, France or Germany were not involved too much not to "upset" the most important area actor – Russia.²⁸

The international community's reaction to the conflict broke out between the components of the former Yugoslav State was hesitant and contradictory. After months of calls to calm and to negotiations, the United Nations imposed the embargo on the import of

²⁶ Tom Gallagher, *Balkanii în noul mileniu*, (București: Editura Humanitas, 2006).

²⁷ Smith, Alastair (1996) ‘To Intervene or Not to Intervene: A Biased Decision’, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 40(1): 16-40.

²⁸ Regan, Patrick M. (1996) ‘Conditions of Successful Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflicts’, *Journal of Conflict Resolutions*, 40:336-59.

arms to the ex-Yugoslav States until September 1991. As a follow up, in November of the same year, was the imposition of sanctions by the UN and the EU against Serbia and Montenegro, regarded as aggressors in this conflict. Later, in March 1993, the United Nations authorized the use of force in enforcing air exclusion zones in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the area of peacekeeping forces. Next, an important role in the Yugoslav area played NATO, through its missions of disengagement and peacekeeping, IFOR and SFOR, KFOR, carried out on the former Yugoslavian territory. For the first time, the peace-enforcement operations have demonstrated the effectiveness of becoming the only solution for establishing peace in the region. If NATO was able to demonstrate the capabilities and to draw lessons for improving them, the UN has shown once again that it was not able to properly manage crises and internal and especially international conflicts.

After the end of the Cold War, the UN Security Council has made some changes in the peacekeeping missions, establishing more extensive and complex missions, sometimes having the mandate to implement the peace agreements between the conflict protagonists inside some countries.

In 1992, the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations was set up, to support the growing demand for more complex operations. However, the results were not the expected one because some of the missions have not received all the necessary political support in the mandate carrying out.²⁹

Beside the failures recorded in 1995 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the genocide from Rwanda in 1994 is enlightening. Former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, tried in 1999 to reform peacekeeping missions based on an assessment of the events that have led to clear failures like those listed above or half-failures as in the majority of the missions of the African territory. Peacekeeping missions needed new rules of engagement, new principles and rules for the troops planning and movement in the operations theater, as well as better cooperation with regional organizations and other actors.³⁰

The number of missions has grown from year to year, and the world economic crisis will lead to new conflicts, new missions to the United Nations. To be successful, the UN missions must meet several conditions that could not be taken into account in Africa: all parties involved in the conflict to wish to stop fighting and to accept the mediation of the United Nations; the mandate of the mission must be clear and realistic, noting and the

²⁹ Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, "Empowering the United Nations", *Foreign Affairs* 71, Winter 1992/93.

³⁰ Jett, Douglas, *Why Peacekeeping Fails*. (New York: St Martin 's Press, 2000).

desired outcome; troops should be deployed in a precise period of time and must fulfill the mandate with professionalism, competence and integrity; the staff must know foreign languages, be educated, qualified for the job that is recruited for, and to be familiar with the political and cultural situation of the country where operate; support is needed to be provide in areas like tactical air transport, hospitals, operations movement control; the first actions will be geared toward restoring basic services and governance; Police and legal capabilities must support and correct the ongoing activities; for the elections, it should be created propitious conditions first, including ensuring an acceptable level of security, a legal framework and a transparent process to register voters; for the UN staff, safety and security more effective measures must be taken.

The existence of states or regimes that have supported or that are supporting terrorism and of mass destruction weapons proliferation, drug trafficking, weapons and organized crime is a key factor for the burst of the main contemporary military conflicts.

In 1999, rebels from Chechnya tried to get independence in Dagestan. Their leader, Basaiev Şamil, was aided by Ibn Al-Khatib (Saudi terrorist who had taken actions in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Tajikistan before). In September, the attacks perpetrated by them, but unclaimed, caused 300 victims in Russia. Although islamist terrorist Ibn Al-Khatib was killed in Georgia by a commando of the Russian secret service FSB, and in July 2006, the killed one was Şamil Basaev, the Chechen insurgency has strengthened after they has as their leader Doku Umarov Xamatovici (Abu Ghazal), who on October 31st, 2007 proclaimed the Caucasus Emirate. After this, the Caucasus and Central Asia became the buffer zone and basic support to the fight against international terrorism and it must be also specified, not the least that the Caucasus region is also the theatre of harsh conflicts between mafia groups struggling for influence, and taking of hostages and attacks are very common.³¹

In the Middle East, Arabian nationalism as well as hatred towards the West and Israel has made possible the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. In 1979, Islamic fundamentalism gave a powerful blow to the West, especially to the United States through the overthrow of the Shah of Iran by the disciples of the extremist Khomeini. In the same year, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Its retirement in 1989, marked the

³¹ Cooper B., *New political religions, or, an analysis of modern terrorism*, (University of Missouri Press , 2004), 242, www.questia.com

beginning of the fundamentalist Sunni Taliban control on the land, and then the collapse of the Soviet Union marked the independence of several countries in Central Asia that became Islamic. Islamic fundamentalists have understood that power cannot be always gained through the process of democracy having the model of Algeria after the elections in 1992.

Grievances intensified in particular after 11 September 2001, which would change the fate of the region and even the whole world. Though initially everyone was jointly and severally liable with the United States, some voices said that terrorist actions were a justified response to their foreign policy.

These anti-American feelings became obvious in 2003 when the United States went into Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein. Other leaders in the region feared that they could be changed if the United States would, as well as deterioration of Palestinian conditions fueled hatred again fundamentalists.

Analysts say that the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 changed the map of the world and prompted a review of the overall policy by enhancing national security, strongly combating organized crime and vigorous cross-border, as well as the underground economy, strengthening regional and international stability, stepping up diplomatic requests and peaceful settlement of conflicts, declaring total war against terrorism and forming a coalition of States from all continents led by the Americans, and with the participation of the UN, NATO, EU, OSCE.

Combating terrorism is not only part of the national Governments' tasks or of international organizations, does not imply just that type of official responsibility, official political rhetoric, but it represents a general responsibility of everybody.

The main meaning, today, of international terrorism, the brutality with which it manifests, prones world, individuals, society, in a collective effort to equal contributions to a common cause.

The phrase used by President George w. Bush, meaning *war against terrorism*, is a confusing one, since the enemy has not been identified on the ground and has not been performed exactly a geographical delimitation of the terrorists. We are beyond the scope of conventional war. Not only Islamic States-Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran there are training bases and operations for international terrorism, but also the United States and Europe. They are developing here well-organized network of information and even of training for terrorist

fighters around the world, thus taking advantages of the new technologies. In fact, no country publicly endorses terrorism: we are not dealing with an interstate conflict, terrorist threat is invisible, unpredictable, inexplicable, and extremely fast, it is not known in which direction may come and in what place it will hit.

Terrorism takes responsibility for a monopoly of violence, crimes against humanity, staking on the cult of terror, which it causes, put it on the stage. Terrorism engages his fanatical, marginal and extremist forces in its support, feeding religious fundamentalism, ultra nationalism, anarchism, ethno-violence and racism, as well as organized crime and cross-border crime, and his actions cause, in particular, and collateral victims.

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