

GLOBAL (NON-)GOVERNANCE, REGIONAL (DIS-)ORDER? SECURITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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Abstract

The international reality, as initiated by the collapse of the "Cold War" division of the world, now faces new challenges in the area of security. Increasingly often the necessity is pronounced to shape the international security based on the problems occurring on the global and regional levels. In both cases, related challenges should be emphasised and best efforts made to minimize and eliminate potential threats. The difference may only lie in the (geographical) scale of action. Indeed, global and regional securities are closely linked together. This article is an attempt to draw attention to selected aspects of contemporary problems of international security. The analysis will focus on the identification of several areas.

Keywords

International security, human rights, globalization, regionalization.

1 INTRODUCTION

A modern approach to security should be characterized by integration of the dimensions, challenges and risks (Gizicki 2008). Security is an indivisible realm. This applies both to the global and regional, internal and external dimensions, as actioned within the framework of sovereign states and international organizations, as well as the military, social, economic, cultural, environmental dimensions. Today, complex international reality requires that actions are not only the domain of individual states or international organizations (Hurrell, 2007). This article is an attempt to draw attention to selected aspects of contemporary problems of international security. The analysis will focus on the identification of several areas.

2 THE NATURE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

While speaking of security, one should always remember that this is a category closely related to a threat. At the same time it is a process during which, at its various stages, emphases have been put differently in various approaches.

The emphasis should be put simultaneously on the three aspects of security: subject, object and variability (Zięba, 2004).

It is the basic need of every human being to ensure security of their own and their relatives. Therefore, man should be the focus of both theory and practical solutions. While pointing out that the main subject of interest in the security matters is an individual, it is definitely essential to promote and ensure the observance of human rights. They are given the highest priority in the international dimension. Europe has a particularly important role to play in this respect. One should remember that human rights are a reality inscribed in human nature from the very beginning of this life on earth, not an achievement, a product of the state. The source of these rights is human dignity. For believers, it is based on God, for unbelievers on rationality, freedom and ability to shape the world, only inherent in man. The international community, aware of the need for a peaceful and secure coexistence, pays particular attention to the presence of provisions on human rights in many documents, both at national and transnational levels. The basis of these regulations is the content of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN in 1948. The guidelines it contains make up an important contribution to contemporary practical action for human rights, stressing that this should be *a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms*¹. Of course, not always have these noble ideas a chance for a real, effective fulfilment. Still, in many places in the world human rights are not respected, security and peace are weak, almost non-existent. However, we should all make efforts to change this dangerous reality.

However, people live in specific state environments and realities. Hence, they are vitally interested in the security of their country. It is the state that is still the primary actor in international relations. Each time, a threat to state security is therefore a threat to the security of its citizens. On the other hand, a threat to the public security could result in decline of law and order of the state. This can be observed today, among others in the field of economic security. Lack of life necessities causes a marked decrease in the sense of security. In extreme cases, it may translate even into terrorist activity. International organizations are important actors in contemporary international relations. This is due mainly to the progress of globalization and institutionalization of international reality. The two phenomena certainly stabilize international relations, including their support to combat terrorist and nationalist threats (Jabri, 2007). However, it is difficult to defend a thesis these are the only antidote to such threats. An example of this is the marginalization of the role of the UN, or today's economic crises, which often enforce a search for solutions within specific states.

In today's international reality, the object of security must be defined broadly. The reason for this is primarily a growing role of the so-called "soft" aspects of security. The focus must encompass all the conditions present, on the part of both the state and international organizations. Taking this into account, at least four elements can be identified. First, there are basic values that constitute

primarily state relations. These include in particular the sovereignty, independence, survival, territorial autonomy, lack of political subordination and non-military factors associated with freedom and personal satisfaction. Second, there are unilateral or multilateral security measures. In this case, we can identify, among others, an increase in military force, the conclusion of military alliances, arms reduction, international activity. The third dimension falling within this scope is the development of new horizons of security. In this regard, the key seems to be addressing the needs of other countries and recognizing a number of conditions of security. The fourth dimension, an important though undervalued one, is security research. A particularly important task is to point to the multidimensional, i.e. military, political, economic, social, cultural, ecological, nature of the research object (Czaputowicz, 2003).

Security is not given once and for all. It is neither constant nor uniform. It is a dynamic process influencing the contemporary international relations. A strong example of this variability is the already mentioned, differentiated approach to security during the Cold War period and now (Buzan, Hansen 2007). A similar evolution was true for the conceptualization of security in state (national) and interstate (international) categories. Nowadays, it is difficult to question the fact that security is indivisible.

3 GLOBAL SECURITY

The processes of globalization have also an influence on international security issues. There is a specific, very significant range of objective priority challenges facing the entire international community. This applies to the various dimensions of human, community and state life. Zygmunt Bauman notes that “globalization equally divides and unites, and the reasons for division of the world are the same as the factors stimulating its uniformization” (Bauman, 2000: 5-6). Finding a solution to what divides and affects security lies in the interest of the whole world and is only possible with the full involvement of various actors: states and international organizations. These matters should not, or rather must not be subject to internal vested interests of any of the participants in international relations. They are in fact the phenomena associated with the worldwide, global interest. In the case of global security, “we mean the phenomena and processes of security affecting all mankind, encompassing in various ways the entire globe, involving decisive players on the world stage and most of the other international actors (including organizations). Global security has its own objective context, natural, independent of the will and efforts of humanity. (...). But the global security has also a teleological context, as a security system built on purpose by humanity to confront different threats on a global scale” (Koziej, 2003).

The essence of the contemporary global security model is that the fundamental pursuit is after non-military aspects, i.e. the elimination of disparities in economic development, greater access to natural resources, technological achievements, concern for the environment, preventing illegal migration,

combating terrorism and others (Krishna-Hansel, 2006). The occurrence of global threats was confirmed especially in the twentieth century. The outbreak and course of the two world wars, terrorism, overpopulation and poverty, environmental hazards, made emphatically clear the seriousness and extent of those risks.

An important role in global security system should be played by the United Nations. The United Nations more than 50 years ago committed "to maintain international peace and security"². A chance of doing so can be seen especially in that the UN system is a universal system. Almost every state in the world today belongs to the United Nations. The most important security issues are discussed on a general forum. These relate primarily to the maintenance and restoration of peace and the application of sanctions against countries violating established rules and international standards. For any action to be effective and legitimate in this area, it requires a UN mandate. Important powers in the field of security vest in the UN Security Council.

Last several years, however, have shown also some weakness in the UN system. The constancy of the composition of the permanent Security Council members and a decreasing effectiveness of actions and organizational structures pose a serious challenge for the United Nations. In view of a specific qualitative crisis of the UN, more important for global security become actions taken by individual member states. The United States plays a dominant role among them. The only, as it seems now, world's superpower has taken on its shoulders the burden of solving today's global problems. This applies in particular to the military issues, the fight against terrorism and armed conflicts. That is why we witness rising voices about the dominance of the U.S. in this regard and the development of subordination trends (Bieleń, 2003).

It is difficult to overestimate the importance and significance of the political determinants of the United States in the world. The achievements of democracy, human rights, opening up to the civilization and technological challenges make the international community feel the need for the U.S. to be proactive in combating global threats. However, although this dominance is undeniable, it is hard to imagine that the United States alone will be able to maintain the global security system in the long term. "The great challenge for the United States will be to learn how to work with other countries to better control the non-state actors that will increasingly share the stage with nations states"(Ney, 2008: 48.). It is not possible to pursue efficient, simultaneous action in several areas of global threats. The activity and commitment raise legitimate concerns about U.S. national interest and American society. At the same time it must be made clear that the other significant countries (especially in Europe), with power ambitions, are not sufficiently interested in getting involved in solving global problems. In the vast majority of cases the United States have no choice but to rely primarily on itself. Unfortunately, the role of "world policeman" entails a serious problem. An obvious example is the loss of American troops in subsequent conflicts outside the U.S., in Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq. The death of American soldiers is an important argument of part of American society against the presence in the flash-point regions of the world. The same is

true for other countries whose soldiers die in military operations, including Poland and Spain.

Therefore, so important become the initiatives to reform and expand global security structures based on international organizations (UN, NATO, EU) and the activity of the remaining global powers. The sense of effective actions in the field of global security lies not only in the activity for a direct elimination of existing and ongoing threats. The key challenge is certainly to eliminate the root causes leading to the threats, especially hunger and poverty.

4 REGIONAL SECURITY

The security situation in a region of the world is also subject to different circumstances. Fundamental is the attitude of the states themselves, as the major participants in international relations. The sense of security, peace and sovereignty of each country is a result of many factors. Among the core ones is the geopolitical situation and the associated relations with neighbours.

The factors that condition regional cooperation ventures, including the security area, vary. The geographical location is among the primary ones. Neighbourhood and proximity determine, and sometimes force, the taking of mutual initiatives. In this light, several activities of this nature can be seen in Europe. Particularly important for the Euro-Atlantic security are the regions of the Mediterranean, Black, North and Baltic Seas. An important factor in initiating regional cooperation is the common economic, political, cultural and social interest. The essence of this collaboration is a measurable benefit. Certainly, the primary benefits of such cooperation may include security. This cooperation is not taken against the but together with other states, "it is not directed against other states but involves extensive cooperation, open to others, based on common interests arising from the geographic neighbourhood and accepted common democratic values" (Gołembski, Kupich, 1992)³.

Although the motives for regional cooperation may be and actually are different, the most important thing is that they are undertaken with a view to uniform development and mutual benefits. It is unacceptable, especially in the context of security and stability in Europe, to undertake cooperation in the opposition and against the various players in international relations, nations or states.

The possibility of activity of individual countries in the area of regional security is given also in the United Nations Charter. The signatories acknowledged the possibility of regional initiatives and organizations for the sake of respect of the principles of peace and security. A skilful shaping of regional security is inseparably connected with the global security. The multiplicity of local threats determines the effort spent on limiting and eliminating them. This necessity is also clear from the prevention of the possible transformation of local conflicts into much more serious, global threats.

A serious challenge for regional security in Europe proved to be the political and social transformation in Central and Eastern Europe. The collapse of

communism and the democratization of the former socialist countries started in 1989 brought major geopolitical changes. As a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, a dozen new democratic states emerged or regained sovereignty. Simultaneously, nationalist conflicts proliferated, those that had been effectively suppressed by totalitarian regimes. Given these risks, resulting from the political ambitions of nationalist leaders of the new, young democracies, the importance of regional cooperation is increasing. This applies in particular to the ways of curbing the conflicts, peaceful settlement of disputes, peacekeeping missions.

These challenges can only be effectively managed by the skilful and evenly distributed cooperation between states in the framework of international organizations. In the case of European security, the activity of the countries within NATO, the OSCE and the European Union becomes particularly important. This activity can and should evolve in the direction of cooperation (coordination). The essence of this security system is multilateral balancing and reduction of military forces and interest in a potential confrontation. More important is the openness and moving away from confrontation in favour of harmonious cooperation.

Security in Europe is inherently linked to security in the Euro-Atlantic dimension. Given the extensive share of the United States and NATO, it is impossible to shape the contemporary European security model devoid of cooperation in this field. It is essential that the security measures taken within the European Union and the United States are focused on cooperation. Coordination of the activities only can give an effect in the form of strengthened Euro-Atlantic security. The problems in this regard were associated in particular with the conflict in Iraq. Some countries (UK, Poland, Spain, Denmark, Czech Republic) supported the United States in the military operation, despite the explicit objections of other EU members, notably Germany and France. Similar doubts emerged on the background of the anti-missile shield project that the Americans were going to establish with the participation of Poland and the Czech Republic. These examples indicate the actual and necessary debate over the shape of transatlantic cooperation in the area of security.

Worth mentioning is the cooperation undertaken through the Central and Eastern Europe. Countries in the region are largely able to take advantage of regional cooperation. An example of this is cooperation within the Visegrad Group (V4). In many cases it is effective, but needs to be clarified. Since 1991, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary have entered into cooperation to promote common interests. The two main ones related to national and regional security, i.e. the membership in NATO and the EU, have been accomplished. Even if cooperation continues, some questions, relating among others to security, require a much greater prudence and better arrangements. It is clearly seen the interests of the V4 members of the V4 do differ over certain matters. An example of this is energy security, or the role of Russia in the regional security system.

5 NON-GOVERNANCE AND DISORDER – THE GHOSTS OF THE PAST?

In the history of international relations a number of traditional security models have been developed. The vast majority of them have taken into account the context and the socio-political conditions of their era. Security has been recognized through the prism of both different and similar views. Among the most important traditional models of international security there are *the balance of power*, *a concert of powers*, *deterrence*. A question should be asked whether the contemporary international situation can be attributed at least some elements of each of these models?

The *balance of power* model was based on sovereign nation-states. It assumed a factually relative ability to achieve the inter-state stability in terms of security, which consisted of a lack of a decisive military advantage of any country. At the same time it assumed an effective counteraction against any possible attempts to increase the power of a state or a group of states (Kukułka, 1987). The problem with practical application and maintenance of the *balance of power* model was associated with the use by the largest states of their international position.

Today, a specifically conceived *balance of power* can be found in the Russian approach to international security. How else could one define the willingness and practical steps taken by Russia in the post-Soviet area and in Central and Eastern Europe? This applies to dominance in the Caucasus, especially the military action against Georgia in August 2008. Similar elements can be identified in the attempt to contest NATO enlargement and the location of the U.S. missile shield in the Czech Republic and Poland. It seems that these may be examples of the pursuit of this peculiar-sense *balance of power* between Russia and the United States.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, international policy decisions were taken by *the concert of powers*: Britain, Austria-Hungary, France, Russia and Germany. The powers made a specific inter-state agreement for, among others, the maintenance of territorial stability, withdrawal from military practices, or solving the problem of state leadership based on the principle of legitimacy of power (Cziomer, Zyblikiewicz, 2006). These states benefited extensively from their superpower position and made significant conquests at the expense of smaller, weaker European nations and states and colonial countries. Due to that many European nations for a considerable time could not enjoy full sovereignty, moreover, they were forced to burn a few generations on the stake of numerous bloody uprisings and liberation upheavals⁴. In the longer term the only outcome had to be a conflict between the powers themselves and the outbreak of World War I.

Today, a classical *concert of powers* is not practicable. However, there still are areas where the importance and the privileged position of the largest states in the world influences, not necessarily always in a positive manner, the solving of the problems of international security. A common example of the lack of broad perspective, taking into account the interests of smaller countries, can be seen in the decisions of the permanent members of UN Security Council, where too often

the right to veto is exercised unilaterally. A kind of *concert of powers* is the G-8 group. A problem that also contributes to instability and global protests is the lack of international responsibility, the lack of formal basis of action, the concentration on strengthening the economies of Member States without any concrete steps towards the eradication of hunger and poverty in Third World countries.

The model based on *bipolarity* and *deterrence* dominated the world since the end of World War II until 1989. The international reality was based on the political and military leadership of the United States on the one side and the Soviet Union on the other. An additional element that reinforced this division and contributed to the rise of importance of the two superpowers was the ever more frequent decline of the international importance attributed to the UN. The international situation went into climax with the "arms race" based on building nuclear arsenals. The maintained threat of possible use of weapons, and retaliation at the time of an attack by the enemy shaped the fate of the world for several decades. The world today is moving towards multipolarity. At the same time there appear concerns about the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The international community faces the necessity of taking definitive decisions in this regard, as necessary for the development of future security policies free from a "policy of fear". Certainly, the situation in unstable states, particularly in Asia, is not particularly helpful. Increasingly clear voices about the nuclear threat from North Korea, India, Iran, Pakistan, unpredictable and unstable countries, are not conducive to the stabilization of international policy.

6 CONCLUSION

The international reality, as initiated by the collapse of the "Cold War" division of the world, now faces new challenges in the area of security. Increasingly often the necessity is pronounced to shape the international security based on the problems occurring on the global and regional levels. In both cases, related challenges should be emphasised and best efforts made to minimize and eliminate potential threats. The difference may only lie in the (geographical) scale of action. Indeed, global and regional securities are closely linked together.

The modern world certainly makes great efforts in shaping international security. However, these are still not enough. The number of challenges and conditions is growing. Also, new threats emerge. A major problem is the lack of a single, universal method of action. It is hard to imagine that we could ever find one. This does not mean, however, that action is futile. What can certainly be used effectively is international law, with the option to use force only conceived as the last resort.

NOTES:

- ¹ From the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- ² Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations, after www.un.org.
- ³ The authors also provide practical ways and examples of regional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, such as: The Visegrad Group, Central European Initiative, the Baltic States Cooperation.
- ⁴ One of these nations was also Poland, which from 1795 had remained under occupation of three countries forming this concert of powers: Austria-Hungary, Russia and Germany. Frequent armed uprisings made clear the need to change the then international order and confirmed the weakness of the concert of powers model.

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