



NATO Foundation  
*Defense College*

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# GAME CHANGERS 2022

NEW STRATEGIC ISSUES

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The NDCF is a unique think-tank: international by design and based in Rome, due to its association with the NATO Defense College. Its added value lies in the objectives stated by its charter and in its international network.

The charter specifies that the NDCF works with the Member States of the Atlantic Alliance, its partners and the countries that have some form of co-operation with NATO. Through the Foundation the involvement of USA and Canada is more fluid than in other settings.

The Foundation was born eleven years ago and is rapidly expanding its highly specific and customer-tailored activities, achieving an increasingly higher profile, also through activities dedicated to decision makers and their staffs. Actually the Foundation is active in three areas: high-level events, strategic trends research and specialised decision makers' training and education. Since it is a body with considerable freedom of action, transnational reach and cultural openness, the Foundation is developing a wider scientific and events programme.



**GAME CHANGERS 2022****New strategic issues**

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NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE FOUNDATION

Edito da AGRA EDITRICE srl – Roma

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fax +39 0644254239

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Finito di stampare

nel mese di giugno 2022

Realizzazione editoriale: Agra Editrice srl

Progetto grafico: Rosa Schiavello

Copertina: Shutterstock

Stampa: Sec1 Roma

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*Special Thanks to Philip Morris International*

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# GAME CHANGERS 2022

NEW STRATEGIC ISSUES

*Conference organised by*  
THE NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE FOUNDATION

*in co-operation with*  
NATO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DIVISION  
FONDAZIONE COMPAGNIA DI SAN PAOLO  
MBDA AND THE NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE

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PHILIP MORRIS INTERNATIONAL



Game Changers 2022. New Strategic Issues, Rome, March 10, 2022









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ALESSANDRO MINUTO-RIZZO  
*President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome*

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## FOREWORD

We have chosen the title “Game Changers 2022. New strategic issues”, because we believe that we live in special times, presenting special challenges as well as opportunities. Our hope is that these changes can be of help towards new formulas of stability and wellbeing. We are not happy with the present state of affairs where we are witnessing fragmentation, an increasing number of violent actors and a general state of disorder. Progress and modernity are great game changers, but nothing is written in advance. This is a good reason for understanding as much as possible the issues at stake in order to prepare ourselves to manage them to our advantage.

The Foundation has been working since long time on those issues, trying to focus on emerging realities. Our objective is to make sense of their importance for our future; both the immediate one and in the longer term. This is not the first time we promote an open discussion on what we perceive to be drivers of change. Since its birth in 2011, the Foundation has wished to promote strategic issues of common interest in a spirit of respect and in-depth analysis. I am proud to say that this is the 30th public high-level event we organise. Also, the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2022 marks the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our founding act.

Last year we focused on the nexus between health and security because the presence of the pandemic introduced another degree of complexity to international relations. Climate change was the second topic. Besides its relevance for human life in itself, it may modify the planet with unforeseen disputes and even conflicts. Artificial intelligence is certainly not new as a concept, but it is witnessing a fast pace of development in various areas from economy to military affairs, as well as involving serious ethical issues.

Structured into three panels, this conference focuses on another roster of emerging issues. The first discussion addresses the nexus between illicit trade, criminality and terrorism. We discussed several times the relevance of illegal trafficking and how it has an impact on other areas including terrorism. We have to understand

completely the emergence of non-state actors, including in the international arena. And facts are laying in front of us.

For what concerns new strategic spaces, the Indo-Pacific region has been increasingly coming at the centre of attention in international politics: it may become the centre of gravity after Europe and North America. We have to analyse with the general public the complexity, the internal issues, the multi-faceted reality of such an important part of the world.

The last panel will discuss Space in some of its practical aspects. No area of human activity has developed as fast as space affairs. Starting with the scientific dimension, to communications, and today even security. Ever more actors, including the private sector, are showing a strong interest. Our dedicated discussion will look at space activities with a specific focus on the tools of direct interest for the civil society.

We are honoured to have put together an impressive number of high-level specialists coming from different corners and different specialties. The NATO Foundation has an established methodology along these lines. We aim at an international and diverse audience and we wish to connect with a larger public, not only with specialists.

I wish to thank speakers and moderators, the public in presence and those connected with us. Special thanks go to those who are supporting us. First of all, PMI, Compagnia di San Paolo, MBDA, and the NATO Defense College. The same goes for our media partners: Formiche, Airpress, Babilon, Decode39, and Paesi Edizioni. Finally, I thank the staff of the Foundation for their very special quality and excellent work.



ANDREA GILLI

*Senior Researcher, NATO Defense College, Rome*

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## WELCOME REMARKS

It is really an honour to be here with you and I just want to say a couple of words about the great cooperation we have with the NATO Defense College Foundation with which we have been cooperating since the very beginning. This has revealed to be an extremely fruitful and productive cooperation, because we can work together to understand issues and, as the times we are living in remind us, basically also the challenges and the difficulties we are facing.

I would like to say a few remarks because in 2022, NATO is supposed to deliver its new *Strategic Concept* and some ideas are circulating and interestingly enough there are some of the ideas on which the NATO Defense College Foundation has been working in the past.

Climate change was one of the topics of last year game changers conference, and in fact it is going to take definitely some role and indeed NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has been talking about climate security. Moreover, technology and innovation are topics in which NATO has been working actively over the past couple of years or even longer. But what we are seeing every day now, especially over the past two weeks, are some topics and some issues on which NATO has been working for in all its history and in a way either they are coming back or are acquiring new salience. So probably in future conversations there is room for the following game changers in view of the challenges we are experiencing.

I guess the deterrence and defence or collective security that are NATO's primary core tasks are probably going to acquire definitely new attention. One of the panels of today deals with space, an important part of our collective defence and is also a key enabler for the other core tasks; nowadays we experience how space is playing a key role in the current conflict in Ukraine.

So, 2022 was supposed to be a quiet year for the European Union and its Strategic Compass, and also for NATO and its Strategic Concept, but things changed abruptly, entailing disruptive game changers. In this case it is important to keep the conversation going, trying to have a rich, open and broad audience and as well



as speakers to discuss what is happening today, what are the causes of yesterday's deeds but also in order to try to look into the future.



NICOLA DE SANTIS

*Head, Engagements Section, Public Diplomacy  
Division, NATO HQ, Brussels*

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## OPENING REMARKS

**I**t is a great opportunity for me to be with you and to talk about game changers. Of course, I want to thank the Foundation for all the work that it has done in Italy and internationally in order to promote a better understanding of NATO's policies and goals.

Game changers are something which has accompanied the last three decades of NATO: in November 1991 in Rome the new Strategic Concept of NATO was approved. Until that moment the Strategic Concept had been a classified secret document, but in November 1991, taking advantage of the great opportunity that under the cold war was presented to us, this concept was revised and made public.

In 2022 the Strategic Concept, for the fourth time since the end of the cold war, is being revised. Why we are doing that? Because many things have changed, I think the first game changer for NATO with the Rome Strategic Concept was to accompany the return into the family of democratic nations of the countries that in the eastern part of Europe had been for too long under totalitarian regimes.

That is the greatest achievement because democracy cannot be taken for granted, what is happening in Ukraine these days shows that we have today a competition, which is a value system competition, between those who believe in democracy, individual liberty, rule of law and values, which have been written in 1949 in the NATO preamble as something which characterises us and characterises all of the countries that in the Strategic Concept starting with the Strategic Concept of 1999 decided to become members of the Alliance.

I do not like the term expansion of NATO and I do not like the term enlargement: it does not give the idea. It looks like NATO went to this country, but the truth is the opposite: these countries have chosen to ask for membership in NATO, like Ukraine, Georgia and other countries. NATO is an Alliance that started with 12 countries together with Italy in 1949, then 14, 15, 16 countries, so the progressive inclusion of new members which is part of the treaty (Article

10 of the Washington Treaty) has participated to an evolutionary process with the partnership for peace with the North Atlantic Operation Council in 1991.

We included Russia in this security equation: Russia was part of the North Atlantic Operation Council, again established in Rome, of the partnership for peace in January 1994 and then in 1997 of the Permanent Joint Council between NATO and Russia, the founding act where a number of principles were laid down. Among these principles: Russia was committing to respect the sovereignty of countries, their independence and the right to choose to which international organisations they would one day wish to become a member, because of course these are free and democratic countries and they can choose their own path independently.

All of this is being shattered today. Therefore, we must talk again about game changers; in a moment in which NATO was reviewing its Strategic Concept, the Secretary General began a far-reaching consultation process about three main avenues:

- a) strengthening the political dimension of NATO,
- b) strengthening its ability to deter and defend its members,
- c) strengthening the military component and its capabilities.

Indeed, NATO's credibility is in its core capabilities, in its deterrence and defence, in a cooperative approach through partnerships, with the ability to bring in countries as diverse as those in the Middle East up to those in the Indo-Pacific.

So, this is the way the Allies' heads of state and government have decided to undertake this revision of the Strategic Concept. This is a strategic answer that they will approve at the summit in Madrid on 29 and 30 June. Of course, many things have to be taken into account due to new challenges: they go from space to cyberspace, from pandemic to infodemic.

But again, deterrence and defence remain crucial. As we see now the darkest period in the history of Europe and of European security since the end of the Cold War unfolding with the military aggression from Russia towards a sovereign state, it is evident that the defensive dimension of NATO remains important: why do we need NATO? We need it primarily to defend the members of the Alliance.

Let me say one final word: what NATO wants to do is to ensure a credible defence, so that this conflict does not expand beyond what it is, hoping that it can be solved by true diplomatic means because there cannot be other than a diplomatic solution to this military crisis. Of course, NATO does not want to be part of this crisis.

We continue to be a defensive Alliance, hoping a diplomatic solution will restore peace. Then we will see how, in this discussion concerning the updating of the Strategic Concept, the approach towards Russia will be further defined.



ALESSANDRO POLITI

*Director, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome*

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## POLITICAL SUMMARY

The conference has broached three very relevant subjects (evolution of trafficking/crime/terrorism; Indo-Pacific instabilities; space and civil-military security convergence) under the shadow of two landmarks for the security of the Alliance: the long-standing tensions surrounding NATO's enlargement, erupting in a fierce war in East Europe and the breakdown of security in vast areas of the Levant, North Africa and Sahel.

While ending the current war after 100 days depends from very fragile political and diplomatic conditions, there is much that can be done in the Near South of the Alliance (what Italy calls the Enlarged Mediterranean).

The widespread instability of the Sahel is funnelled into the Libyan crisis in a context of government, governance and rule of law, favouring not only other long-term wars but the spread of Russian influence and of other external powers. NATO can tackle these serious security problems affecting Allies and Partners alike with a more cohesive and better-structured synergy with the EU institutions.

This apparently chaotic instability in the South reveals another important game changer in international security. While it is widely held that non-state terrorist groups are a bigger challenge to state power than organized crime groups, this view is quite probably mistaken. Terrorists make a lot of noise and get a lot of attention, but have achieved very little. Organised crime groups avoid the limelight, but have made greater gains. In many cases they have managed to corrupt representatives of government and, in a number of cases, they have actually been able to capture state structures.

The decline of the number of democracies in the world since 2008 is directly linked to such state capture and this, in turn, has eroded the stability of the international system created after the Second World War. Instead of simplistic contrapositions between democracies and autocracies, it is instead vital to understand the difference between captured states and free states: without an effective state or

a free government there is just the sham of democracy and the latter cannot survive without state, while the contrary is true.

This awareness puts in a very different context the “terror-crime nexus” because repeated researches show a weak to non-existent connection between the two ambits, while the more usual link is between terrorist coming from a common, petty crime environment. A more problematic case is given by hybrid organisation who employ at the same time terrorist tactics and organised criminal methods to affirm their power and illicit wealth.

Within this context of captured states, widespread illegal trafficking, organised crime and hybrid groups or militias, sanction avoidance acquires a particular importance in the overall security equation. Three are the possible and coexisting scenarios: cash smuggling in strong currencies and a black currency market; trade-based and false invoicing triangular schemes through neutral or allied countries; countries becoming illegal clearance hubs. The list of the potential candidate is unfortunately substantial and could include even non-usual suspects because trafficking networks existed before the war and will be used again, sometimes for different purposes.

On the other hand, sanction enforcement and compliance need to have a clear appreciation of medium-and long-term risks, such as: a big failed state, an isolated state, an unknown geographic and cultural enclave, in any case a nuclear power, fostering illicit markets at international level and looking only East.

This brought the conference debate to concentrate on the Indo-Pacific region; here, apart the ongoing US-Chinese naval confrontation, the situation appears rather unsettled. Piracy is the most important issue in the vital choke point of the Strait of Malacca, and indeed there is nearly as much piracy in Southeast Asia as in the rest of the world combined, particularly in Somalia, in the Gulf of Aden, in the Strait of Hormuz and in the Suez Canal.

But even ashore the situation is far from reassuring: Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Central Asia form a cluster of unsolved internal, transborder and international conflicts that the end of the international intervention in Kabul has changed, but not transformed. Predictably, the Taliban have not respected the Doha agreements of 2020 and this implies that the country, besides being a global opium producer, will continue to be a dangerous breeding ground of terrorist groups (as it happened between 1989 and 2001 amidst the full neglect of intelligence services).

Burma is another important forgotten conflict, generally out of the media attention, but the degradation of the political situation has engendered a serious economic setback, entailing an increased growth in illicit economy and an increased reliance on China, while Western influence is reduced by the flight of investors.

Bottom line: can international cooperation assist in mitigating such internal conflicts? No, because governance issues must be primarily be solved internally. Yes, if capacity building can improve the operations of existing and functioning governmental bodies.



Finally, the governance of space requires the adaptation to new paradigms. The first is efficient data fusion and sense-making of huge image quantities now provided by private companies and not exclusively by governmental agencies. This means moving from a pipeline approach to a much more interactive, continuous, and sometimes proactive approach by flagging specific trends that could prevent or timely mitigate emergencies.

This is one of the objectives of the ESA's "Rapid and Resilience Crisis Response" (R3) technological accelerator. The problem to be solved is the following: Europe is facing expanding and evolving and interconnected security challenges and there is clearly a need to enhance the means to act for European citizens' security. This can be achieved by more effective crisis responses, moving from just reacting to a threat towards a real-time management and automated proactive risk mitigation in a context where the rigid division between civil and military space is increasingly blurred.

The second paradigm regards the scientific and information support to global grand strategy choices. If governments want to reach carbon neutrality by 2050, they need a much better understanding of climate change and one of the main instruments is the DT1 (Digital Twin of Earth) accelerator, where different technologies are combined in order to have an efficient model of the planet to simulate and predict climate dynamics.

Game changers show that challenges are increasingly complex and non-linear, requiring a deep change in political culture and training in order to adequately harness and exploit sophisticated technologies, instead of being driven by fickle perceptions and prejudices supported by some algorithm.

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1 [https://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing\\_the\\_Earth/Working\\_towards\\_a\\_Digital\\_Twin\\_of\\_Earth](https://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing_the_Earth/Working_towards_a_Digital_Twin_of_Earth)



# Special Intervention



European Council President Charles Michel during a special plenary session of the EU Parliament, Brussels, March 1, 2022

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BENEDETTO DELLA VEDOVA

*Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
and International Cooperation, Rome*

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## SPECIAL INTERVENTION

I find it particularly appropriate to hold such debate at this critical juncture. The events of the last two weeks will have a profound and lasting impact on our security environment, and it is worthwhile to see it and assess the unfolding events and their implications for the European security architecture. It is also appropriate to reflect on NATO's role and possible actions, now that negotiations for new *Strategic Concept* are due to begin in Brussels and among allied capitals.

Undoubtedly a major shift has occurred across the Alliance since the night of February 24<sup>th</sup>. Russia's aggression has not just given NATO renewed focus after decades of seeking a purpose in the past cold war, it has revitalised the Alliance centrality to Western democracies' political and economic freedom prompting member states to rally around an often-criticised institution. It is unfortunate, that this unity comes at the price of warfare and death in Ukraine, and the economic damages for the West are currently beyond calculation.

Today marks exactly two weeks since the start of what Moscow called and still call – we have listened to the press conference of Foreign Minister Lavrov in Turkey's Antalya – a “special military operation”. After a fortnight, this unprovoked, unjustified and unjustifiable horrific war of aggression (that blatantly goes against basic values and rules of the international order and of humanitarian principles) is continuing to fuel one of the most serious humanitarian catastrophes in Europe since the Second World War, if not the worst.

To this day, 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2022, the UN confirms that at least 600 innocent and unarmed Ukraine people of all ages and even infants have lost their lives mostly in cowardly and senseless missile air or artillery attacks that have targeted key cities and densely populated areas of Ukraine. Whatever the final outcome these despicable actions, tantamount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, perpetrators will be held accountable.

The shelling went on and unabated even as civilians fled their homes under so-called “humanitarian corridors”, cynically used as tools of coercion and that

turned out to be trapped, in which entire families ended up being under the fire of Russian artillery.

Unfortunately, I believe that we have not yet reached the bottom of this abyss: the Russian offensive drags on and is being matched with an increasingly determined Ukraine resistance. This appears to be pushing Russians to take an even more aggressive approach, increasingly targeting civilian and critical infrastructures and, by doing so, honing tactics already deployed in Syria.

We must not allow that “the war of misinformation” Russia won in Syria is repeated in Ukraine. In this context, the news concerning the alleged use of cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines (both are weapons that are banned by several nations because of their indiscriminate impact on the population) are a source of further specific concern.

Faced with this intolerable situation, Italy and the entire Euro-Atlantic community are showing to be more united and determined than ever in supporting Ukraine, its population and its resistance to the Russian aggressors imposing those massive costs on Moscow that, by the way, it knew it would suffer in case of an aggression.

Within the EU and in close coordination with Partners and Allies, we were very quick in drawing up a wide set of sanctions ranging from: individual measures to sectoral ones, targeting the financial and energy sector, introducing heavy export restrictions, closing our airspaces, cutting off the Russian Central Bank from its foreign reserves, disconnecting key private banks from the SWIFT circuit. For the first time, the EU acted together, not in the military field but in the very important field of economic sanctions.

This time the EU is playing a key role alongside the US, and we have to be sort of proud of it. We have to become conscious of our strength and so of our role in every field.

Moreover, we have taken the necessary steps, many of them unprecedented, in order to isolate Russia politically by suspending its membership in a number of key international organizations. Belarus, given its close ties to Putin’s regime, has been targeted too. When Lavrov said that there is the risk that Ukraine could have a nuclear bomb in the upcoming future, it is not true. However, it is true that, for ten days now, Belarus has become a nuclear country. They indeed changed their constitution by deleting the closing part stating that Belarus was a neutral and non-nuclear country. This is the reality. And the Russians were there with their troops when, President Lukashenko set up the so-called “referendum” to approve the change in the constitution.

At the same time, we are increasing our financial assistance to Ukraine: Italy approved a resolution ordering the immediate disbursement of 110 million euros to Kiev’s government, as humanitarian and relief package and in order to strengthen the country’s resilience and its defence efforts.

On the other end, we need to be careful and united in assessing how to further

assist Ukraine, especially when it comes to the role of NATO and the risks of full involvement of the Alliance in this very delicate context.

With our NATO Allies, we have acted promptly and with resolve. We have made it clear that Alliance unity is rock solid and so is our determination to restore deterrence and uphold our collective defence. Italy is doing its share to contribute to the deterrence measures approved by the Alliance by increasing our already significant contribution across the Eastern flank in the air, land and maritime domains. We are currently committed to preventing a further escalation of the conflict, while avoiding any ambiguity that can leave room for Russian miscalculations.

While we adapt our military tools to the new security environment created by Moscow, we suggest that NATO keeps its channels of communication with Moscow open at both diplomatic and military levels. We, indeed, to keep in place all the instruments that can prove useful to create the condition for deescalating the conflict and avoid any possible miscommunication or misunderstanding.

On a positive tone, it is worth underlying, once again, the high degree of political cohesion that Western allies have shown in difficult circumstances.

We can say that today the Alliance has consolidated: Germany has pledged to double its military spending, Finland and Sweden are thinking of abandoning neutrality and joining NATO, and following the Ukrainian invasion, the notion that the former Warsaw Pact<sup>1</sup> countries were out of bounds for NATO troops has been repealed. Italy, for its part, has worked hard to ensure coherence and coordination among the EU, the G7 and NATO.

The net result has been a very credible and unified response to the Russian aggression. In particular, the NATO-EU teamwork has been very successful in going beyond the well-known mutual reservations and obstacles. We believe that this is the right approach on which to build in the weeks to come.

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<sup>1</sup> The Warsaw Pact, [https://www.nato.int/cps/us/natohq/declassified\\_138294.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/us/natohq/declassified_138294.htm)





# Session 1

## THE EVOLVING THREAT OF NON-STATE ACTORS AND TRAFFICKING



Container in a controlled port area







ALEX P. SCHMID  
*Research Fellow, International Centre  
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# THE EVOLVING THREAT OF TERRORIST NON-STATE ACTORS AND TRAFFICKING<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Few people will question that the attacks of the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2001 on the World Trade Center in New York and on the Pentagon in Washington DC were game changers. It has led to what one observer called the 9/11 wars.<sup>2</sup> The president of the United States declared a Global War on Terror and US military and CIA subsequently conducted counterterrorism activities in 85 countries. These operations and those of its allies and the violent responses of the terrorists led to the death of over 387.000 civilians. In total, 929.000 people have died in the post-9/11 wars due to direct violence, and several times as many died due to the indirect effects of war while 38 million people became war refugees and displaced persons.<sup>3</sup>

Where do we stand after twenty years of the Global War on Terror? Every year the Australian Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) issues an overview, based on multiple sources.<sup>4</sup> In the following I will – before turning to the issue of trafficking – present to some of the IEP findings as well as some of the most recent data from the US State Department. In addition, I will refer to data collected by Europol and by the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), both located in The Hague.

<sup>1</sup> This text is an edited version of a brief presentation on *The Evolving Threat of Terrorist Non-state Actors and Trafficking* made in Rome on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at the conference *Game Changers 2022 New Strategic Issues*, an event organized by the NATO Defense College Foundation in co-operation with NATO's Public Policy Division.

<sup>2</sup> Jason Burke. *The 9/11 Wars*. Harmondsworth: Penguin 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Figures from Brown University, Providence, R.I./ URL: <https://watson.brown.edu>, see Costs of War Project.

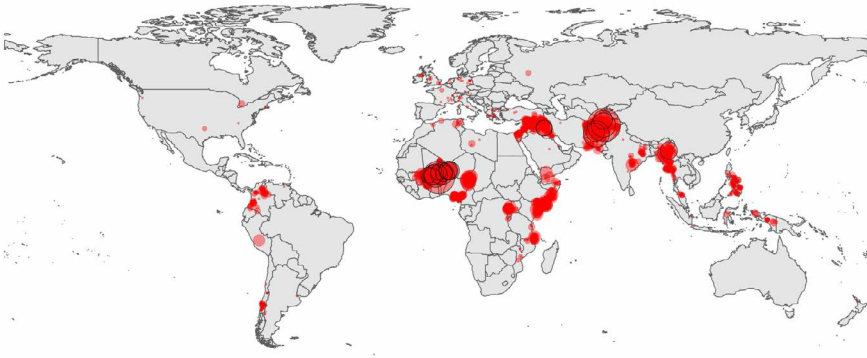
<sup>4</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP). Global Terrorism Index. Released 2 March 2021 URL: [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&crct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjDv\\_zGzc32AhXB\\_KQKHd3PCGcQFnoECAgQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.visionofhumanity.org%2Fmaps%2Fglobal-terrorism-index%2F&usg=AOvVaw10CwdnFsMO6uesSpjSfLSs](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&crct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjDv_zGzc32AhXB_KQKHd3PCGcQFnoECAgQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.visionofhumanity.org%2Fmaps%2Fglobal-terrorism-index%2F&usg=AOvVaw10CwdnFsMO6uesSpjSfLSs).



## TRENDS IN NON-STATE TERRORISM

In 2001 Al-Qaeda promised to carry its attacks to what it called “the far enemy”. However, in this it was not particularly successful. As can be seen from this IEP map, the so-called Global North is not the main zone where terrorism is wide-spread. Rather it is sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and South East Asia.

**Figure 1 Terrorist attacks 2021, IEP**

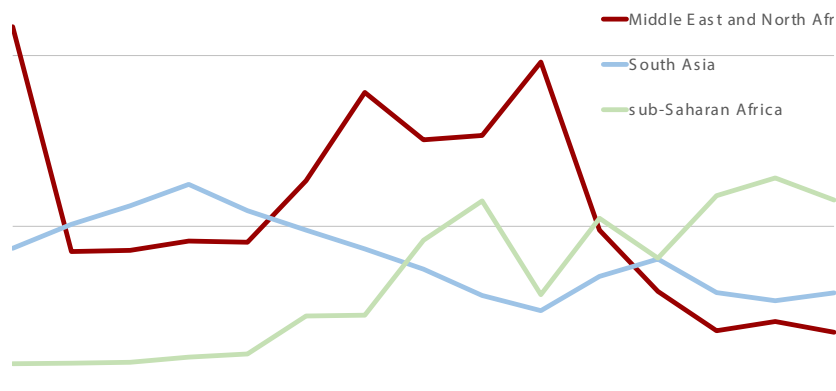


Source: Institute for Economics & Peace

While this map sketches the situation in 2021, the next graph shows the developments over the last fifteen years, focusing on the three regions just mentioned. After the defeat of the so-called Islamic States as a territorial entity, there has been a sharp decline of terrorist attacks in the Middle East and North Africa. However, there has also been a rise in sub-Saharan Africa and continued terrorist activity in South Asia. If we look at the ideologies inspiring non-state terrorists, it is clear that religion – or rather its Islamist extremist manifestation – has a bigger share than all other forms of terrorism combined in motivating terrorist attacks.

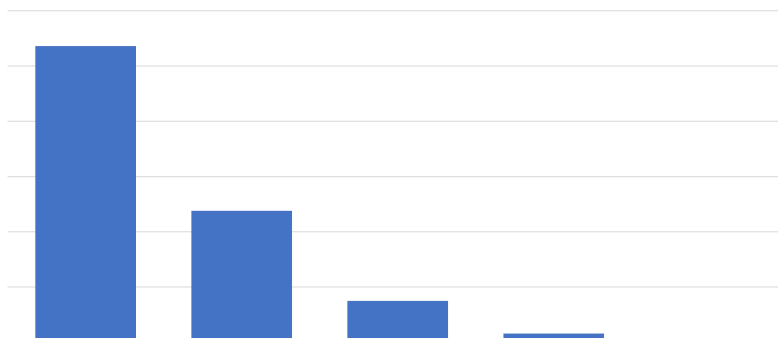
Some might wonder about the third category “Unclear” in this diagram. These days some 40% of all terrorist attacks go unclaimed. The background of this is that some attacks are not very popular with sympathisers and supporters of terrorists and therefore remain unclaimed by those responsible. In other cases, there are multiple, conflicting claims. There are also false flag operations. I remember that when I was heading a UN technical assistance mission to a country in Africa, the local UN Representative warned me: “Not all bombs that explode here are the work of the terrorists”. Unfortunately for him, the host government had secretly placed a microphone in his office and he was declared *persona non grata* and had to leave the country within three days. In many cases it is unclear who is behind an attack as there are no claims of responsibility.

**Figure 2 Trend in terrorism deaths by region, 2007-2021, IEP**  
**South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa suffer from more terrorism than MENA**



Source: Institute for Economics & Peace

**Figure 3 Fatalities by ideology, 2007-2021, IEP**  
**Religious attacks have caused the most fatalities followed by the far right**



Source: IEP Calculations, terroris Traker, Institute for Economics & Peace

From the graph above one can see that terrorism from the far-right has become the second most important ideological source of terrorism, partly in reaction to Islamist terrorism.

Here are some key findings from the latest report of the Institute for Economics and Peace which was released on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022:<sup>5</sup>

- In 2021, deaths from terrorism fell by 1,2% to 7.142 killed (= 1/3 of 2015);
- The number of attacks globally increased by 17% to 5.226;
- Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 48% of total global deaths from terrorism;

<sup>5</sup> IEP. Global Terrorism Index, 2 March 2022, various pages.

- 105 countries had no terrorist deaths; 44 countries had at least one death;
- 86 countries recorded an improvement; 19 a deterioration of the terrorist situation;
- Violent conflict remains a primary driver of terrorism, with over 97% of terrorist attacks in 2021 taking place in countries in conflict;
- Terrorist attacks in the West have fallen in every year since 2018 and decreased by 68%. In 2021 there were only 59 attacks.

Let me now turn to another source of information, the US State Department that issues a Congress-mandated annual report. For the last three years that data are available, these have been prepared by a team of researchers at George Mason University.<sup>6</sup> The unit of analysis in the list below are not fatalities as in the IEP report just cited, but incidents.

**Figure 4 Top 10 Known Perpetrator Groups with the Most Incidents, US State Dept. Report**

	2018	2019	2020
1. Taliban	1,083	1,466	1,325
2. ISIS-Core	656	590	507
3. Al-Shabaab	537	484	477
4. CPI-Maoist	178	292	298
5. ISIS-DRC	60	97	275
6. Bolo Haram	220	294	249
7. CPP/NPA	195	220	231
8. Haftar Militia	10	145	143
9. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham	126	140	139
10. CODECO	-	7	121
11. UNKNOWN	2,673	2,953	3,786

The table shows that in recent years the Afghan Taliban, which has between 25.000 and 75.000 members, has been the most active terrorist organization, followed by the Islamic State (IS, Daesh) and the al-Qaeda affiliated Al-Shabaab in Somalia. While there are also some secular groups on the list – the Maoist Communist Party of India (a.k.a. Naxalites) and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPI – a Marxist-Leninist organisation, parent of the New People's Army – NPA), religious groups dominate. Remarkably, there are two new ones active in the Democratic Republic of Congo, one linked to the Islamic State and the other being the Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO), the name given to an array of militias operating in eastern Congo, fighting for the control of land and natural resources.

<sup>6</sup> Annex of Statistical Information, Country Reports on Terrorism 2020, p. 10. October 29, 2021. Prepared for U.S. Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism by the Development Services Group, Inc. Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center 7315 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 800 East Bethesda, MD 20814.



While there are several hundred active terrorist groups in the world, these top ten terrorist groups on this list accounted for 75% of terrorist incidents worldwide in 2020 as well as 90% of all terrorist fatalities in 2020.<sup>7</sup>

Here are some more data for the year 2020, released in October 2021 by the US State Department<sup>8</sup>:

In 2020 terrorist incidents occurred in 98 countries and territories. In total there were:

- 10.172 terrorist incidents,
- resulting in 29.389 fatalities,
- 19.413 wounded, and
- 4.471 kidnappings.

The year 2020 had, compared to 2019:

- 1.300 more terrorism incidents,
- 3.116 more fatalities,
- 1.189 fewer wounded, and
- 1.262 more kidnappings than in 2019.

Of these, 87% were concentrated in three geographic regions: Western Asia, Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

#### SITUATION IN EUROPE AND NATO MEMBER STATES

What is the terrorist situation in European and in NATO countries? Here we have some facts and figures for continental Europe and the United Kingdom prepared by Europol for 2020<sup>9</sup>:

- EU Member States reported a total of 57 completed, failed and foiled terrorist attacks in 2020. The UK reported 62 terrorist incidents and Switzerland reported two probable jihadist terrorist attacks;
- The number of terrorist attacks in EU Member States in 2020 is comparable to 2019 (119 – of which 64 in the UK) but decreased compared to 2018 (129 – of which 60 in the UK).

In 2020, six EU member states suffered 14 jihadist attacks as the following table makes clear.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Annex of Statistical Information, Country Reports on Terrorism 2020, p. 10. October 29, 2021. Prepared for U.S. Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism by the Development Services Group, Inc. Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center 7315 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 800 East Bethesda, MD 20814, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Europol (2021), European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EU 2021, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> Europol (2021), European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EU 2021, p.6.

Country	Jihadist T.	Right-w. T.	Left-w. & anarchist T.	Ethno-nat. T.	TOTAL
Austria	1				1
Belgium	1	1			2
France	8	1	1	5	15
Germany	4	2			6
Italy			24		24
Spain				9	9
TOTAL	14	4	25	14	57

Most of the perpetrators were lone actors but some of them were found to have connections to like-minded individuals in jihadist or right-wing groups. In a number of cases the terrorists appeared to have what one could call *a la carte* ideologies. In a recent analysis of “The Evolving Terrorism Threat in Europe”, Raffaello Pantucci explained:

“Perpetrators no longer seemed to have a coherent motivation based on only one ideology (or any external direction), but often related highly idiosyncratic ideologies that pulled in ideas from a wide range of sources (...) In the UK...the Home Office created an entirely new category, labelling a growing number of cases as originating in ‘mixed, unstable, or unclear’ ideology, as distinct from the more classical left-wing, right-wing, and violent Islamist ideologies”.<sup>11</sup>

Some of this is also echoed in the Terrorism Situation (Te-Sat) report of Europol where there is a reference to “lone attackers...displaying a combination of extremist ideology and mental health issues”.<sup>12</sup>

In 2020, ten completed jihadist terrorist attacks in the EU killed 12 people and injured more than 47. Four jihadist attacks were foiled.

The number of arrests related to jihadist terrorism (254) in EU Member States decreased significantly in 2020, compared to 2019.

Some lone attackers in 2020 again displayed a combination of extremist ideology and mental health issues.

The family background or place of birth of perpetrators varied significantly. Four of the ten completed jihadist attacks were perpetrated by individuals holding EU citizenship.

The perpetrators of five attacks had entered the EU as asylum seekers or irregular migrants; four of them had entered the EU several years before carrying out an attack.

At least five jihadist incidents in Europe (Austria, Germany and the UK) in 2020 involved attackers who were either released convicts or prisoners at the time they committed the attack. At the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism

<sup>11</sup> Raffaello Pantucci. “The Evolving Terrorism Threat in Europe”. *Current History*, March 2022, pp.102 and p.106.

<sup>12</sup> Europol. Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, (Te-SaT) Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2021, p. 42.

(ICCT) in The Hague, Teun van Dongen and his colleagues maintain a database monitoring the situation in the countries of the Madrid Group – a consortium of 31 fusion centres of NATO countries plus a few other European countries.<sup>13</sup> The last ICCT report covers a two years period (1 September 2019 – 31 August 2021). It identified 99 terrorist attacks, killing 93 persons and injuring 149 more human beings. The report also identified the ideological backgrounds of the perpetrators – mostly lone actors not even linked directly to terrorist organizations except in terms of sharing their ideology. The report noted this distribution:<sup>14</sup>

**Terrorist Attacks per Ideology:**

- Jihadist: 27 percent
- Right-wing extremist: 14 percent
- Left-wing extremist 51 percent
- Single Issue: 5 percent
- Ethno-nationalist: 3 percent

**TERRORISM AND TRAFFICKING**

Let me now turn to the issue of “trafficking” which has been associated with terrorism since the 1980s when the term “narco-terrorism” was coined by the Peruvian president Fernando Belaunde Terry.<sup>15</sup> It has always remained a vague term. In the last 40 years, the use of “trafficking” in connection with terrorism has widened to other merchandise than narcotic drugs as can be seen in the following quote from a recent UN Security Council resolution.<sup>16</sup>

*Types of trafficking by terrorists, according to UN Security Council Res. 2482 of 19 July 2019: “Acknowledging, in this regard, that terrorists can benefit from organized crime, whether domestic or transnational, such as the trafficking in **arms, drugs, artefacts, cultural property and trafficking in persons**, as well as the illicit trade in **natural resources including gold and other precious metals and stones, minerals, charcoal and oil**, illicit trafficking in **wildlife and other crimes that affect the environment**, as well as from the abuse of legitimate commercial enterprise, non-profit organizations, donations, crowdfunding and proceeds of criminal activity, including but not limited to kidnapping for ransom, extortion and bank robbery, as well as from transnational organized crime at sea....”*

Trafficking is another word for “smuggling” – though there is not total overlap –

<sup>13</sup> Teun van Dongen, Matthew Wentworth, Hanna Rigault Arkhis. Terrorist Threat Assessment 2019-2021. The Hague: ICCT, 3 February 2022. URL: [www.icct.nl](http://www.icct.nl).

<sup>14</sup> Idem, pp. 5-7.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Alex P. Schmid, “Links between Terrorism and Drug Trafficking: A Case of ‘Narco- terrorism?’” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, (Summer 2004), pp. 43-56.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 2482, 19 July 2019. URL [www.un.org](http://www.un.org). [Emphasis added by A.P. Schmid].

and is usually associated with organized crime groups rather than terrorist groups.

Both “organized crime group” and “terrorist group” have no accepted international legal definition. The General Assembly of the United Nations has, in more than fifty years of trying, not managed to reach a consensus on what terrorism is. With regard to organized crime the Palermo Convention against Transnational Organized Crime only came up with a definition of an “organized criminal group”. It defined it in 2000 as

*“...A structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established in accordance with this Convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit”.*<sup>17</sup>

Strange enough, two classical features of organized crime groups – their family or clan-based structure and their extortion of protection money – do not feature in this UN definition.

In my own work on organized crime and terrorism, I have tried to be a bit more precise and suggested these ideal-type definitions:<sup>18</sup>

#### A ‘TERRORIST GROUP’

“is a militant, usually non-state, clandestine organisation with political goals which – by definition – engages, in whole or in part of its activities, in terrorism, that is, a violent communication strategy for psychological (mass) manipulation whereby mainly unarmed civilians (and non-combatants such as prisoners of war) are deliberately victimised in order to impress third parties (e.g. intimidate, coerce or otherwise influence a government or a section of society, or public opinion in general), with the help of portrayals of demonstrative violence in front of witnessing audiences and/or by means of induced coverage in mass and social media.”

#### AN ‘ORGANISED CRIME GROUP’

“is, a violence-prone, profit-oriented clandestine organisation that provides, on a black market, illegal services or illegally obtained licit or illicit products for which there is a substantial demand – but one that governments or regular free market operators do not or cannot meet. The group’s structure might be family- or clan-based and hierarchical, or consist of networks shaped more by the organisation’s type of activities (drug trafficking, prostitution, racketeering, fraud, arms

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17 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Art. 2; Annex I of General Assembly resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000. URL: [https://treaties.un.org/pages/viewdetails.aspx?src=ind&cmdtsg\\_no=xviii-12&chapter=18&lang=en](https://treaties.un.org/pages/viewdetails.aspx?src=ind&cmdtsg_no=xviii-12&chapter=18&lang=en).

18 Alex. P. Schmid, “Revisiting the Relationship between International Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime 22 Years Later.” The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague 9 (2018), pp. 7-8. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.19165/2018.1.06>

trafficking, migrant smuggling, counterfeiting, money-laundering, gambling, internet-based extortion, contract killing, etc.).”

In various reports I wrote for the UN in the 1990s and beyond, I have also tried to conceptualize the relationship between these two types of underground organizations. In 2018, when I compared the situation of organized crime in the early 1990s with the more recent situation, I identified these types of linkages between these two clandestine armed groups, one more profit-oriented, the other more politically motivated:<sup>19</sup>

#### Levels of Intensity of Interactions between Organised Crime and Terrorism Group

- (i) Type/Level 1: a **weak nexus** of ad hoc, opportunistic collaboration (e.g., terrorist buying firearm on the black market from organised crime arms dealers).
- (ii) Type/Level 2: a **regular association**, tactical, pragmatic collaboration, based on common interest constellation (e.g., maintaining ‘order’/discipline and illegal trade flows in lawless, no-go areas outside government control).
- (iii) Type/Level 3: **alliance formation**, that is, a pact-based, strategic relationship involving a mutually advantageous symbiosis.
- (iv) Type/Level 4: **convergence** whereby both sides merge in terms of personnel, resources, logistical and/or operational activities.

In other words, four levels of links can be distinguished. However, there are, ideally, two additional special cases:

- (v) Type 5: when organised crime groups **engage in terrorist tactics as violent hybrid organisations (VHO-1)**; developing these in-house, without linking up with an external terrorist group, and
- (vi) Type 6: when terrorist groups **use organised crime methods as violent hybrid organisations (VHO-2)** developing these in-house to generate funds for their political struggle, without linking up with an external organised crime group.

While there are some real-life examples of close collaboration between terrorist groups and drug traffickers in Colombia (e.g., drug cartels with FARC) and in Afghanistan (e.g., Taliban with the Haqqani group), in general there is far less collaboration than is widely assumed. Recently, a group of scholars from the University of Leuven, Letizia Paoli, Cyrille Fijnaut and Jan Wouters, edited a volume titled *The Nexus Between Organized Crime and Terrorism, Types and Responses*<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> Alex. P. Schmid, “Revisiting the Relationship between International Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime 22 Years Later.” The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague 9 (2018), pp. 14-15. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.19165/2018.1.06>.

<sup>20</sup> Letizia Paoli, Cyrille Fijnaut and Jan Wouters (Eds.). *The Nexus Between Organized Crime and Terrorism. Types and Responses*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2022.

They arrived at some rather surprising findings:

- “We know of no example of fusion between organized crime and terrorist organizations or groups” (p.63);
- “Jihadists and ordinary criminals have similar and problematic backgrounds. (...) We could not establish a connection between jihadist and criminal *organizations*” (p.234);
- “...there is typically no nexus between organized crime and terrorism. This is true whether organized crime is understood as a set of organizations, groups or networks that are criminalized in themselves or routinely engage in profit-making criminalized activities, or as the actual activities in and of themselves: such activities usually include drug trafficking, the supply of other criminalized procedure, and predatory crimes, such as extortion and fraud” (p.490).

Of course, one can always question whether the authors of the case studies and comparative studies in this volume have managed to get to the bottom of things and close to the truth. Both terrorism and organized crime are difficult to study, although we now know far more about terrorism than we know about organized crime thanks to the lavish funding of terrorism research since 9/11.

However, there is one simple fact that explains the paucity of linkages between terrorist groups and organized crime groups: in 2021 in more than 100 countries there was no terrorism worth speaking of.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, there can by definition be no linkage, interaction, collaboration, convergence or nexus between terrorist and organized crime groups. What occurs, however, is what in the typology above I called “in-house” development of organised crime skills in terrorist organizations and, on the other hand, the use of typical terrorist tactics by organized crime groups. These methods and techniques can, however, in most cases be learned without having to interact with the other type of underground organisation.

A recent report by Europol also found scant evidence of a solid nexus between terrorism and organized crime. Here are some of its findings<sup>22</sup>:

*“In the EU, there is little evidence of systematic cooperation between criminals and terrorists. Criminal groups and terrorists employ illegal means to reach their goals and, as a result, share similar spaces in their activities. Both, for example, depend on similar sources for weapons, forged documents, funding and recruits. While criminal groups mainly aim to maximise profit and, therefore, prefer to avoid attention, terrorists intend to perpetrate violent acts publicly to send a message to those whom they wish to intimidate. Profit-oriented criminals may be reluctant to cooperate with terrorists, to avoid drawing the attention of the authorities to their activities. By contrast, individuals belonging to jihadist and right-wing extremist networks have been noted to have personal*

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<sup>21</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, op. cit., p.4.

<sup>22</sup> Europol. European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EU 2021, p. 31.

*connections to non-organised crime. Cooperation seems to be mostly transaction-based. Links to larger criminal networks appear to be less common. Nevertheless, an overlap between organised crime groups and right-wing extremists, in particular with regard to weapons procurement and drug trafficking, has been observed”.*

What we do see, also in Europe, is that some of those who become lone actor terrorists and some of those who become habitual criminals come from the same pool of young people – something which Rajan Basra and Peter Neumann called the “new crime-terror nexus”.<sup>23</sup> This finding has also been confirmed by others.<sup>24</sup> However, these young people – often with problematic family- and migration backgrounds and poor chances of upward social mobility – are not so much linked to organized crime than to common crime – something that is also reflected in the cited Europol findings.

## CONCLUSION

The game of international politics used to have only states as actors. In recent years, we have seen a proliferation of armed non-state actors challenging the monopoly of violence of the state. While it is widely held that non-state terrorist groups are the bigger challenge to state power than organized crime groups, this view is probably mistaken. Non-state terrorists make a lot of noise and get a lot of attention but have achieved very little. Organised crime groups avoid the limelight but have made greater gains. In many cases they have managed to corrupt representatives of government and in a number of cases they have actually been able to capture state structures – something not discussed here but which I have addressed elsewhere.<sup>25</sup> The decline of the number of democracies in the world since 2008 is directly linked to such state capture and this, in turn, has eroded the stability of the international system created after the Second World War. This – rather than non-state terrorism and trafficking in themselves – is the real Game Changer.

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23 Rajan Basra and Peter R. Neumann. 2016. “Criminal Pasts, Terrorist Futures: European Jihadists and the New Crime-Terror Nexus.” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 10 (December).URL: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/554>

24 Cf. Elanie Rodermond and Fabienne Thijs, “From Crime to Terrorism Life Circumstances and Criminal Careers of Terrorist Suspect.” *Crime and Delinquency*, 3 March 2022.

25 For a brief discussion, see: Alex. P. Schmid, “Revisiting the Relationship between International Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime 22 Years Later.” *The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague* 9 (2018), pp. 7-8. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.19165/2018.1.06>







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## ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS AND TRAFFICKING: THE GLOBAL EVOLUTION

**T**he university that is doing the terrorism database for the US State Department is my university and my research centre. I could talk a significant length about why our data are different from the University of Maryland but let me say that our university has one of the most diverse student bodies in the United States and so we have about 15 languages represented in the people carrying out our data analysis.

With regard to this, the definitions of what we are studying “under terrorism” are not different from other studies on this same topic, but our team has the incredible capacity to do multi-language analysis in different newspaper sources and to verify them. Our centre also does a lot of work on not just the numbers of terrorism and its intersections and activities, but also on qualitative understandings and large-scale data analytics to mine and understand phenomena.

I was originally asked to talk here about Syria and Iraq and we had just finished a massive study, followed by a book published last month<sup>1</sup>, on illicit antiquities trade out of Iraq and Syria, in which we used all kinds of advanced data analytics to trace the illicit trade of antiquities, from the region into Europe and into global markets and to see some of the connections to terrorism even when they are not readily apparent, but there are ways that analysis of social media and other types of data analytics help you understand these cases.

But then today I was asked to switch to an understanding of what is going on in Ukraine and its border regions. There are certain important lessons from the framework that we have used to understand and address the conflict and the relationship to transnational crime and terrorism that operated in Iraq and Syria, which are very useful in understanding our current crisis.

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<sup>1</sup> *Antiquities Smuggling in the Real and Virtual World*, Layla Hashemi, Louise Shelley, Routledge, January 2022

There is a point that Mr Radu made that is absolutely essential: we are not looking at patterns that evolved yesterday or even in the last five years. Some of these networks that we are looking at smuggling out of Iraq and Syria, especially out of Iraq, emerged under Saddam Hussein when Kurds were threatened and there were well-developed smuggling networks to help move individuals to safety. In the scorched earth tactics that we have seen in the war in Syria, we have seen people willing to do anything to survive. Therefore, we need to think about why people engage in smuggling and sometimes it is their absolute survival that is at stake when the state provides no protection.

With the rise of ISIS in the Syrian Iraq, we saw the control of territory and the licensing of looting movements across borders where there is corruption: oil smuggling to neighbouring states and cigarette smuggling as Mr Radu alluded to. Many of these things other than antiquities trade have been seen in the last few years in Ukraine. A few years ago, a study tracked the illicit trade in Ukraine in regards to cigarettes and its convergence with other commodities and of course it was found the key role of Odessa, which is unfortunately under attack, and the key changes that occurred after the attacks on Donbass and the takeover of the Crimea.

All these conflicts before helped exacerbate the illicit trade that was going on, and among the things that have to be loudly mentioned are the enormous challenges that President Zelensky and his team faced in trying to combat the endemic corruption that was going on in Ukraine.

When we think about why it is so difficult to do anything about this, we must consider that these are not just local networks, but global networks. One of the things that that OCCRP (Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting), which Mr Radu do heads, has investigated is how one of the major organised crime figures in Odessa moved large amounts of money into London real estate. Therefore, we are looking at a problem that is not just regional and we need to understand the role of global facilitators and enablers that allow corruption and crime to thrive in one region and then have an impact throughout the international community.

About two weeks ago we started a project on illicit trade and one of the key hubs we are going to look at is the Ukraine-Transnistria border area, in which there has been a long-time problem of cross-border smuggling. Unfortunately, our researcher who had to start this project is now hiding due to the acute problems and threats to life that face so many Ukrainians.

One of the things that we need to think about and that Mr Radu touched on in his introduction is the presence of smugglers on the border and the enormous vulnerability of refugees as they are leaving Ukraine.

One of the things that Europol has focused on in the last few years, and the press releases of the Europol website are filled with references to Balkan smugglers, on which we need to reflect is how we can ensure that people are not doubly victimised, i.e., they are victimised at the source where they are subject to bombings, to acute misery, to scarcity of water and food and then they escape to another

situation in which they are vulnerable to the threats of organised crime.

This is a very important problem that I do not think we are focussing enough on; I am certainly hearing a huge amount about economic sanctions and our research centre had an event two days ago on how to implement economic sanctions but how do you protect refugees from the problem represented by organised crime?





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## FINANCIAL CRIMES: FINANCING NON-STATE ACTORS AND A SANCTION ENVIRONMENT

The title I have been provided with it is “financing non-state actors and a sanction environment”, so two key concepts: unknown state actors and sanctions. If we speak about sanctions of course our mind goes immediately to the sanctions adopted by US, EU and other countries toward Russia.

The question is how these sanctions and the isolation of Russia from the legitimate international financial assistance system may influence non-state actors and final illicit financial flows. It is a difficult question of course; this situation changes continuously so it is difficult to make forecasts. What I will mention now are hypothesis based on previous historical events, similar to what is happening today.

The first impact is that it is on the illicit market of goods, already mentioned by Professor Shelley, we may expect an increasing involvement of actors in the Russian area into illicit markets of goods which become an alternative source of funding, given that Russia is cut off from the legitimate funding of the financial system, but also as an alternative destination of goods which are produced internally and cannot be exported legally.

The second impact is at the core of the presentation, on the illicit financial markets: based on the assumption that cross-border payments between Russia and other jurisdictions, including western jurisdictions, will continue to be carried out, both to clear legal transactions and transactions on the illicit markets.

What are the implications of these continuous payments? I see three scenarios which could coexist: the first, is an increasing use of cash and cash smuggling, and those actors, including first of all criminal organisations, which dispose of huge amounts of illicit cash in strong currencies such as US Dollars and Euros, may intervene in the Russian area as parallel lenders to both society and state and may provide services to the population, first of all, a parallel currency exchange market: this has happened in every war and humanitarian crisis in the last century.

The second implication or scenario: the increasing use of trade-based schemes and false invoicing schemes to conceal payments between Russia and western

counterparts. These schemes will exploit false or overestimated invoices, in the same way of what already successfully employed in trade-based money laundering. These transactions, these trade-based schemes will be likely triangulated through firms registered in neutral or friendly countries.

The third scenario: an increasing role of these third countries which act as a sort of giant clearance houses of these illicit transactions and as seats of these clearance firms, mostly shell companies. It is difficult to detect a priori which these countries will be. Until last year in Europe most of the ownership links with Russia and with Russian actors were intermediated by Cyprus, Germany, United Kingdom, Latvia and Czech Republic. We have just completed a mapping of ownership links with Russian individuals of European firms. Probably more non-EU countries or surely more non-new countries may emerge in the near future as these big clearance houses: Turkey, Kazakhstan, Israel, Middle Eastern countries and China itself.

In all these scenarios a key role will be played by firms, firms as a *trait d'union*, as a bridge, between illicit and legal economy and there is an instrument to cover and conceal these transactions and this brings us to the topic of an increasingly need to improve the tracing of the firm's ownership, to improve the transparency of firms' beneficial ownership.

At Transcrime we have set up a working group which it is called TOM (The Ownership Monitor), that collects a lot of projects and studies exactly on this topic concerning the owners of firms in order to detect financial crime. The knowledge about the firms and the owners of firms is also a crucial geopolitical instrument and we are seeing it exactly in the current situation. Therefore, we have started to look better at the data on corporate ownership with Russia.

To conclude: the isolation and sanctions toward Russia hopefully will have an effect in the short term, but for sure they may have an effect also in the long term. We need to be aware and ask ourselves if we want to run the risk of having a big failed state, an isolated state, an unknown state closed geographically, culturally and with nuclear weapons, fostering illicit markets at international level and looking only at east. So, this is the point: we have to wait in order to understand how the sanctions could work in a positive way, and how and what these sanctions may produce in the medium and longer term.

# Session 2

## THE TWIN SIDES OF INDO-PACIFIC INSTABILITIES



The Khunjerab Pass at the border of China and Pakistan on the Karakoram Highway









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## INDIA: WHAT AND HOW TO STRENGTHEN NATO PARTNERSHIP AGAINST HYBRID LAND WARFARE?

India is not a formal NATO partner at the present time and this does not seem to be in prospect. The reasons have to do primarily with Russia. India relies on Russia for many of its arms and the spare parts associated with them. This has been a pattern for many years. Accordingly, at the March 2022 Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with the U.S., Australia and Japan, India insisted that the Summit Communicate would not hold Russia accountable despite the horrific scenes witnessed in Ukraine. On February 25th, at the UN Security Council General Assembly, India abstained from condemning Russia for invading Ukraine.

The West should not have been surprised. Indeed, as The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) recently reported: “India rhetorically perceives Russia as a ‘special and privileged strategic partner’, which provides it critical defence technology denied to it by the West and accounting for approximately 55% of its total procurement of arms and spares. India has begun to acquire Russian S-400 missile-defence systems, despite the continued threat of US sanctions, with the first of five units with 8 launchers arriving at the end of last year. India held its 21st annual summit with Russia on 6 December 2021, leading to a 99-point joint statement.

The Indian leadership is also cognisant of Russia’s use of its veto in the UN Security Council in favour of India during its 1971 war with Pakistan. India also, did not condemn Putin’s annexation of Crimea in early 2014”.<sup>1</sup>

We will see if the Ukrainian crisis can alter the India-Russia relationship. However, it has deep roots, has existed for many years and withstood many shocks. So far Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s administration has not shown signs of moderating this stance.<sup>2</sup> India has a very long history and reputation as a leader

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iiss.org/blogs/analysis/2022/03/understanding-india-and-the-uas-abstentions-over-ukraine>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-russian-challenge-to-india-us-ties-ukraine-un-resolution-abstain-putin-invasion-china-xi-quad-meeting-11646339315>

of the “Non-Aligned” world, and aspirations, given the size of its population and economy, to become a “Third Pole” in geopolitics. Of course, there is a “values gap” that exists between NATO and India when referring to democracy and democracy promotion inside India itself. Last year, Freedom House<sup>3</sup> downgraded India from “free” to “partly free” in view of the erosion of minority rights, press freedom, civil society, and equality before the law.<sup>4</sup> Certainly, NATO contends with similar issues inside the Alliance, as various forms of democratic backsliding can be observed in Eastern Europe and Turkey.

While NATO has global interests and concerns, its primary focus is and must be on the North Atlantic region. This is all the truer, of course, given the current crisis in Ukraine. How to strengthen then the relationship between NATO and India with respect to hybrid warfare? A good place to start is to note that NATO and India have common interests – above all, shared concerns about China. The Russian invasion of Ukraine presents a paradox: China and Russia are engaged in a strategic partnership at the same time that India and Russia are. In times of crisis and tension, India cannot be sure which way Russia will tilt. But the odds are that Moscow sees Beijing as the more important ally right now. One scholar has described this by saying that India wants to eat the Chinese cake and keep the Russian one.<sup>5</sup>

As Russia becomes an international pariah, this conundrum can only worsen for the Indian government. It is possible that the fallout from Ukraine will cause New Delhi to re-evaluate its close ties with Moscow and tilt more closely to the West but that remains far from certain at the present time. A recent article<sup>6</sup> by former US Assistant Secretary of State A. Wess Mitchell called on NATO to offer full official status as a NATO partner to India and argued that the current policy of “equi-distancing” is “not viable”. The April 2021 visit of the Secretary General to New Delhi underscores this interest. Nevertheless, experts generally agree that as long as Pakistan enjoys formal partnership status, India’s acceptance will remain problematic, at least for now.

Nevertheless, it can be tangible in the form of meaningful cooperation as joint military exercises, defence planning for maritime contingencies, technology sharing, sharing of best practices in related fields like space, cyber, nuclear policy, the information domain, and hybrid war.

India has a very long and unique strategic culture, and the use of information is always figured prominently. The classic “Arthashastra” addresses in great detail the multiple dimensions of what today we call “information” or “hybrid warfare”.

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3 <https://freedomhouse.org/country/india/freedom-world/2021>

4 <https://freedomhouse.org/country/india/freedom-world/2021>

5 <https://thediplomat.com/2021/06/how-can-india-cooperate-with-nato/>

6 <https://www.hindustantimes.com/opinion/nato-india-s-next-geopolitical-destination%20101616423938974-amp.html>

Indian strategists, centuries ago, wrote about “concealed warfare” and “silent warfare” as approaches lying below the threshold of conventional confrontation.<sup>7</sup>

Pakistani counterparts have complained for many years that India has used hybrid approaches with great effect in the many clashes that have taken place since independence. In terms of both confrontation and defence against hybrid approaches, India’s experiences offer a different, fascinating, and fresh perspective that can inform and improve NATO’s understanding of this potentially decisive domain. While formal relationships may lie in the future, there should be no objection to what Indian scholars have referred to as “a pragmatic engagement” between India and NATO to “explore common ground”.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-03013546/document>

<sup>8</sup> <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/why-india-must-not-say-no-to-nato-7260435/>





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## THE CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIA INSTABILITY COMPLEX: SCENARIOS AND COURSES OF ACTION

There are innumerable internal conflicts across the South Asian and indeed the Central Asian regions. Some of these are not known at all such as the decades-long insurgency in Baluchistan, in Western Pakistan, bordering Afghanistan. Some are instead known such as militancy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan, on the border with Afghanistan, and a dispute on which there is less attention nowadays and that is the insurgency in the Indian Kashmir.

If we look at what is driving these conflicts, we can single out primarily internal factors: governance, or rather the failure of governance, very often the indiscriminate use of force as a counterterrorism and counter-insurgency tactic and the absence of the rule of law. Illegal arms trade, drug and human trafficking play a prominent role in fuelling these and other internal conflicts.

If we are going to be looking at what is driving instability in the region, we cannot get away from that game changer that is Afghanistan today. There are three main reasons for this: the Taliban refusal to abide by counter-terrorism obligations in the Doha Agreement and this matters simply because many of the conflict actors in South Asia have had very close relations and have fought alongside the Taliban – this includes: the Pakistani Taliban, the anti-India jihadist groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and the transnational groups such as Al-Qaeda and its associates and affiliates. This refusal, on the Taliban part, to give up those ties has another dimension as well.

The Taliban military takeover has led other insurgent groups, jihadist and terrorist groups, in the wider South Asia region, to believe that Sharia Islamic law can be imposed through the gun. Therefore, we witness the resurgence of many of these groups and they are coming together.

There is another reason why the Taliban takeover has an impact on insurgencies and non-state actors in the wider South Asian region and across Central Asia and that is the Taliban's reliance on the opium production and cultivation. It is indeed a source of income that has fuelled many of these insurgent groups as well. And it

will continue to do so. After the Taliban take over, sophisticated arms left behind by NATO and the US forces have fallen in the hands of insurgent groups.

The Pakistani Taliban are now running around the country with night vision goggles and even more sophisticated equipment than they never had before. The weaponry that was left behind is now available for militants in Kashmir.

Talking about refugees and refugees' crisis, the worst humanitarian catastrophe in the world right now is in Afghanistan. There, people want to leave that country while human smugglers and traffickers are benefiting from this kind of situation. Drug cartels, gun runners, human traffickers are coming together in finding opportunities. And then there are the transnational jihadist groups have also found an open space. On March 5<sup>th</sup>, there was the worst sectarian attack in Pakistan's history: 63 people killed and more than 100 injured. The attack was claimed by the Islamic State. The attacker was a young Afghan refugee living in Pakistan but trained in Afghanistan. The plot was carried out of Afghanistan and within Pakistan. This is just one example of how there has been a coming together of militants across borders in the region. Indians are very concerned that they are going to see an uptake of conflict in Indian Kashmir and especially because of Pakistani-based Jihadist groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed.

India and Pakistan are both nuclear powers and the jihadist attacks in Indian Kashmir and in several locations of the Indian heartland almost brought India and Pakistan to the verge of war. The dangers are acute, and the game-changing event unfortunately is something that NATO is very familiar with. That is the battlegrounds of Afghanistan and the implications from that war-torn country to the entire South Asian region.

Can international cooperation assist in mitigating such internal conflicts? No, because if there are governance issues, international actors can only play so much of a role but can the international community help in assisting South Asian government states to deal with other factors that fuel internal conflicts such as illegal trade and terrorist organised crime? Yes, that is where capacity building efforts of law enforcement agencies can certainly assist.





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## TERRORIST AND INSURGENT DESTABILISATION IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

What I want to do is to talk concisely about two current conflicts in Asia because they often get forgotten and they deserve more attention. First, I want to briefly touch on the big picture and then put the spotlight on those two conflicts: first, the conflict in Afghanistan and secondly the “emerging conflict” or “ongoing conflict”, depending on how you see it, in Myanmar.

The big picture is not quite as bad as you think. If you look at the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), you will see that, at the end of 2019, before the Taliban take over and before the COVID-19 pandemic, there was one country which by far was the most violent country on the planet and that was Afghanistan – recording nearly 30.000 battle-related deaths globally. But then for a long time after that, all of the other countries that produced large numbers of fatalities were not based in Asia or at least, if you exclude the Middle East, Syria, Somalia, Libya, Yemen, Nigeria, Cameroon, all basically based in Africa – which it has seen a huge expansion of conflicts. And if you look at the distribution within Asia, you can see again the same sort of picture reflected of the people who died in battles in 2018-2019 and until the end of 2019. By far, the vast majority of them died in the conflict in Afghanistan and then only after a long time came other conflicts.

That shows you how important that conflict in Afghanistan has been. It also shows you that, by and large, despite very serious instabilities, Asia, which hosts half of the world's population, is still compared to other regions of the world especially the Middle East and Africa, comparatively peaceful. However, there are exceptions. If you look at the map across the region, again based on the same data from the end of 2019, you will see that within that region there are three hotspots: Afghanistan, Philippines and Myanmar.

The reason I am talking about Myanmar and Afghanistan is because if you had a map of today (that does not exist yet), you would see a lot fewer conflict-related

events and conflict-related deaths in Afghanistan and a lot more in Myanmar with about the same number in the Philippines. Clearly, in those two countries, Afghanistan and Myanmar, the situation has changed over the past two years, and I would like to investigate that a little bit further. In Afghanistan, ironically and paradoxically perhaps, as a result of the takeover of the Taliban, you have had a reduction in violent conflict. In most provinces in Afghanistan, there is not the same level of fighting, or almost barely any fighting, compared to what happened even a year or two years ago.

However, this does not necessarily mean that the situation is good. Just because there is no violent conflict, it does not necessarily mean that people are happy or that the situation is resolved. In fact, the UN is saying that Afghanistan is now the country in the world that is most at risk of a severe humanitarian crisis. There are multiple reasons for that. There have been droughts in Afghanistan last year and they are ongoing. Moreover, there is the COVID-19 pandemic but also, of course, the Taliban have not proven to be particularly skilled at managing the country and the economy which is not news to people who followed the Taliban for some time. It was exactly the same sort of situation the first time they were in power from 1996 to 2001. But importantly, of course, the withdrawal of the international community has been a significant blow also financially.

The international community provided up to 75% of the public spending in Afghanistan and all of that disappeared almost overnight when the Taliban took over. On top of that, you have 10 billion dollars of Afghan government assets that are abroad and have been frozen, to which the Taliban government does not have access to. And there is ongoing civil strife and conflict. If you add all these factors together, you can see how this is a very bad situation.

The UN estimates that by mid-2022<sup>1</sup>, 97% of the Afghan people – almost the entire population – will be below the poverty line and 90% of health clinics will have been shut down. This is a very severe humanitarian crisis that is often not properly reported. In fact, most of the reporters have gone after the Taliban takeover became a “boring” story in the Western media. The likely consequences are very serious: not only hunger, death and disease, migration (a million Afghans are reported to be in the process of fleeing to neighbouring countries), the growth in illicit economy but there is an intensification of poppy production because there is very little else that generates money at the moment. And, of course, there is the risk of renewed conflict.

We do have a conflict between the Taliban and ISIS to some extent, but this could escalate into a wider conflict. For the Western communities, this is very difficult because, there are talks going on with the Taliban. They are currently taking place in Oslo, Norway. Some of the thorny issues that prevent the international community from giving money to the Afghan government is the relationship of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.undp.org/press-releases/97-percent-afghans-could-plunge-poverty-mid-2022-says-undp>

the Taliban with international terrorism and their willingness/capability of beating ISIS. This continues to be complicated for the simple reason is that the successful faction within Taliban – the people that are on the top – are not necessarily the people that we are talking to either in Doha or in Oslo; they are the people like the Haqqanis, for example, who believe that they actually achieved the military victory and they are also the ones that have traditionally close historical relationships with transnational terrorist organisations like for example Al Qaeda.

Another challenge is the following: the West would like for the Taliban to have a more broad-based government – that would include representatives of other political factions but also minorities and ideally even women – and the Taliban have not been prepared to seek ground on that at all. Right now, then, we have a situation where very little international aid goes into Afghanistan, despite the humanitarian crisis. The UN has in fact agreed to allow the Taliban to access some small amounts of the money that has been frozen in order to buy, for example, electricity. However, it is not enough by any measure to solve the disaster that is likely to continue to unfold in that country. It is a very dark picture.

As for the situation in Myanmar, which is another conflict in the region it does not look very good at the moment. There was a military coup in February 2021, following an election in which the party associated with the military had lost very badly so they decided to take over the government again. This has led to renewed conflict between the military junta and the opposition which formed a national unity government and also has a sort of armed wing – the People's Defence Force. Over the past 12 months, we have seen conflict erupting across the country and this is important because the International Crisis Group believes that violence is all but certain to escalate in 2022.

On the one hand, this is not news because there has been a long-running civil conflict in Myanmar ever since 1962 and the first military takeover but this is kind of different because, in the past, a lot of conflicts in Myanmar have been with so-called “separatist groups” – minority groups – that were basically on the margins of the country and were asking for more autonomy. The central government denied that and repressed them brutally but now the conflict that we increasingly see all over the country. Also, the big cities and all the provinces of the country are affected in addition to those minority areas.

In Myanmar, in the past a lot of the conflicts have been between the central government, the military government – various military governments that have been in power – and minority ethnic groups which represent about one-third of Myanmar's population. Most of the provinces that have, until recently, been affected by conflict were in fact the provinces bordering other countries like India in the West and Thailand in the East.

There have been groups like the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) fighting in Kayin province, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in the North of the country, the Shan State Army fighting in Shan province and then of course,

in the Rakhine State which is in the Southeast of the country bordering Bangladesh, the Rohingya Muslims which had been brutally repressed for decades by the government but which were murdered in great numbers in 2016 and 2017. The difference to now again is that, not only there are those ongoing conflicts but also those in the core of the country where you have the big cities like Mandalay or Yangon which used to be known as Rangoon. What are the likely consequences? Among them, there are: increased conflict now in all regions of the country; the economic gains that have been made in a decade of opening are basically being erased; already in 2021, we had a shrinking GDP, -18%, – the biggest fall in the entire region –; poverty, which had nearly been halved between 2005 and 2017 – during the opening of the country – from 48 to 25% –, is now likely again estimated to double and go back to where it used to be; refugee flows; growth in illicit economy; paradoxically also an increased reliance on China. In fact, Myanmar was weaning itself away from its reliance on China during the years of the economic opening but, now that there is increased conflict, a lot of Western investors are withdrawing from the country again and making the leadership – the military junta – even more reliant on China. The picture in Myanmar is not very good at all.

In conclusion, whilst it is true that Asia has been less affected by violent conflicts than other continents especially Africa – where they have been increasing rapidly – nevertheless, there continued to be a number of crises which are likely to escalate in 2022. I talked about two of the crises that most people are citing as particularly pertinent conflicts in Afghanistan and Myanmar currently receive little attention but could be major sources of escalating conflicts. These conflicts could affect regional stability and lead to negative outcomes elsewhere, not only in the region but, via the growth in enlisted economies, for example even in the West. And despite major crises elsewhere, most prominently of course in Ukraine, I think that resolving these conflicts, or at least giving them a little bit of attention, should be a priority for the international community.



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## UNHINGING THE MALACCA STRAIT: THE THREAT OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

I would like to discuss the role in international relations and in a contested in Indo-Pacific of the Strait of Malacca and the Strait of Singapore which are links each other. The Straits of Malacca and Singapore are the main seaways connecting the Indian Ocean with the South China Sea and together they are the shortest routes for vessel trading between the Middle East and North-eastern Asian countries. The Strait of Malacca is an important oil trade chokepoint as well as the Strait of Singapore. Economically, as one of the world's two busiest trades, the Malacca Strait in 2018-2020 has hosted about 50 percent of the world's oil tanker traffic – five million barrels per day – and about 40 percent of the world's seabound commerce annually.

There are four important safety and security challenges associated with these trades: safety of navigation, maritime security – particularly piracy, armed robbery, and the threat of terrorism in this part of the Southeast Asia – strategic interest and finally environmental protection of the Strait of Malacca. The interested parties that play in that dangerous environment are two. On one hand, littoral states like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore – the Bataan Statement of 2005 reaffirmed the sovereign rights of these States and the primary responsibility for attaining safety and security in the Strait of Malacca and in the Strait of Singapore. On the other hand, there are the so-called “user entities”, that is actors that rely on the straits for transit and whose interests tend to be transnational and global – this category includes private entities like the shipping industry.

Piracy is the most important issue in the Strait of Malacca. Non-traditional security challenges such as piracy and maritime crime comprise the primary issue affecting user and littoral states as well as shipping companies. Today, Southeast Asia continues to have a prominent place in global maritime piracy. There is nearly as much piracy in Southeast Asia as in the rest of the world combined, particularly in Somalia, in the Gulf of Aden, in the Strait of Hormuz and in the Suez Canal. Why? Because geography compels ships to move more slowly which contributes

to congestion that make them also easier targets for terrorists, criminal attacks, armed robberies, and a range of other criminal activities such as illicit drug flows from Southeast Asia to the rest of the world.

There are efforts to address pirates in the straits: internal efforts, cooperation with international and regional communities working with like-minded organisations, and the industry engagement of private-public partnership. For the first internal effort, the Malacca Strait is bound jointly by Indonesia and Malaysia with the wider Malacca Strait's area also including Singaporean waters.

Many governments have responded to regional and international issues or threats about piracy, particularly from the beginning of the 21st century. These states have increased the military and strategic capabilities of their maritime agency, the frequency of maritime patrols in their own water. They have also implemented several multilateral and bilateral agreements with each other to halt piracy including the 2004 trilateral MALSINDO Agreement – the acronym stands for Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia – to conduct coordinated patrols in the Malacca Strait. The second diplomatic tool is the Eyes in the Sky Programme (EiS) and the last tool is the Malacca Strait patrols.

Regarding the cooperation with the international and the regional community, it is important to underline the cooperation within three important regional talking shops such as ASEAN Regional Forum, Maritime Forum and ASEAN Defence Minister Plus.

About terrorism, ever since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Straits of Malacca and of Singapore have been identified as potential targets for maritime terrorist attacks. Therefore, maritime terrorism can be considered as a transnational issue affecting not only Southeast nation states but also the rest of Asia – for example China. A truly effective defence against it would require a high level of cooperation between states and less intransigence on the concept of sovereignty.

Lastly, I would like to talk about environmental protection. Littoral states should back cooperation with the NGOs and the international shipping industry over environmental protection but there are some problems that impede cooperation in Southeast Asia. The three littoral states consider that peace on the waters must be respected, and that financial burden should be shared between the three littoral states. As for NGOs perspective, the marine environment should be preserved at all times.

# Session 3

## THE ROLE OF SPACE: NEW TOOLS AND CAPABILITIES



Galileo Satellite encapsulated for launch. Source: [www.esa.int](http://www.esa.int)









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## CIVIL-MILITARY SPACE CONVERGENCE ON EMERGING THREATS

I would like to give you an easier perspective concerning the role of space, in particular new tools and capabilities, and a key idea to accelerate the use of space in Europe, in other words to focus on collective energy and on unifying programs. These programs are called “accelerators” considering space as an essential enabler to face multiple global challenges. The European Space Agency (ESA) defined the three accelerators and two inspirators.

The first question is: what is an accelerator? It is a new concept of action for Europe, which means concretely to focus on responding to urgent social needs but also to upscale existing space investments to the next level. This is a user-driven approach, and it is also useful to strengthen European leadership on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

STEM is an ESA education program for the younger generation and the growth at large. It is also important to attract new funding sources and private funding. Usually, we have funding from research ministers, from different ESA member states. It is also important to see if all domestic ministries can also contribute to this funding if there is any interest in them. There is an ongoing work and discussion among the member states on how to combine the strengths of ESA, EU and the member states. For the Lisbon Treaty, article 189, the three main major space actors in Europe are: EU, its Member States and ESA. But also, the international organisations and the private sector are involved.

Concerning the first accelerator – this is, by the way, the priority defined by the ESA member states – it is a space for a green future, and this means that the main purpose of this accelerator is to get the carbon neutrality by 2050 – that is a net zero carbon emissions in 2050. This accelerator resorts to different instruments: one is called the DTE<sup>1</sup> (Digital Twin of Earth) for simulation and prediction but also to rely on breakthrough technologies – for instance quantum gravimetry,

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing\\_the\\_Earth/Working\\_towards\\_a\\_Digital\\_Twin\\_of\\_Earth](https://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing_the_Earth/Working_towards_a_Digital_Twin_of_Earth)

artificial intelligence of course – and to develop what we call “green information factories”. What is important as well, it is a strong partnership with the industry. The general purpose is of course for a better understanding of climate change.

The second accelerator – there is not a priority order except for the first green future – is called “Rapid and Resilience Crisis Response” (R3)<sup>2</sup>. The problem to be solved is the following: Europe is facing expanding and evolving security challenges and also interconnection between the different crises and there is clearly a need to enhance the means to act for European citizens’ security.

On the geopolitical instabilities, we have a terrible example at the moment. as well as security issues as cybercrime for instance and others.

What is needed? What is important is to act urgently, that is to accelerate the use of space, to provide faster crisis responses, moving from reacting towards the real-time management and automated proactive risk mitigation. We are considering, at the moment, the possible synergies but also the gaps to be filled.

In terms of synergies, we have some examples concerning artificial intelligence, network to connect existing, planned and future systems and to complement Copernicus<sup>3</sup> and Galileo<sup>4</sup> capacities, using the upcoming Secure Connectivity<sup>5</sup> flagship in order to not see these flagship programs in a separated way but to interconnect their data and to have a bigger effect at the end for the users.

A couple of months ago, EU Commissioner Thierry Breton announced this new flagship for the European Union. As gap fillers, we have a list of cognitive cloud computing, fast programming commercial Earth Observation constellation (VHR)<sup>6</sup> and, of course, Internet of Things.

What is the solution proposed by ESA? It is to interconnect systems and objects to get the most of these different data sources using Earth Observation but also other capacities such as High-Altitude Platform System<sup>7</sup> (HAPS). We need to secure the connection to guarantee integrity, availability and confidentiality of data. This is a clearly user driven. The end users are the key target of this ongoing process.

Concerning Protection of Space Assets, it is obvious that we need to protect our systems. We are focusing on two main threats in outer space. The first one is the debris issue. At the moment, we have an estimate of objects in orbit: for instance, as for the objects between one and ten centimetres, we have around one million of such objects orbiting.

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2 <https://vision.esa.int/rapid-and-resilient-crisis-response/>

3 <https://www.copernicus.eu/en/about-copernicus>

4 <https://www.esa.int/Applications/Navigation/Galileo>

5 [https://www.esa.int/ESA\\_Multimedia/Images/2021/06/Secure\\_connectivity](https://www.esa.int/ESA_Multimedia/Images/2021/06/Secure_connectivity)

6 <https://earth.esa.int/eogateway/activities/edap/vhr-hr-mr-optical-missions>

7 <https://business.esa.int/funding/invitation-to-tender/services-enabled-high-altitude-pseudo-satellites-haps-complemented-satellites>

The protection of space assets is important also to find, to design and develop solutions to remove debris and clean the space. ESA is currently working on these capacities, in particular with a Swiss company ClearSpace, with whom we have already signed a contract. Space weather is also another issue we are taking into consideration.

We also have two inspirators, poetic name: the European Human Space Exploration and the Icy Moon Sample Return Mission<sup>8</sup>. The first one is currently discussed at the European level within the member states, in particular with the scope to get an autonomy in this context for human space exploration. It is a way to position Europe for the next space exploration frontiers but also a key issue of freedom of action in space and, in commercial terms, it is a way to unlock the commercial potential in Europe.

Finally, the second inspirator is the Icy Moon Sample Return Mission (from Jupiter and Saturn). There is also in this context the outstanding science return as this is a big way to develop science, the breakthrough technology development, a source of inspiration and a way to accelerate what we call “Voyage 2050” to implement this big objective.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://vision.esa.int/category/ambition/prepare-the-future-of-space/>





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## THE ROLE OF SPACE: NEW TOOLS AND CAPABILITIES SURVEILLANCE OF ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING: INSTRUMENTS AND TRENDS

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has five main strategic priorities, one of them being surveillance. EMSA has a wide portfolio of surveillance capabilities, including RPAS (drones) and satellite-based services, which are the focus of this intervention. The Agency provides support to European Member States National Administrations, EU Commission and other EU agencies in a wide range of functional areas, including: Maritime Safety, Law enforcement, Fisheries Control, Customs, Environment crime monitoring, and maritime security.

Maritime surveillance presents a particularly wide set challenges when trying to address a broad range of functional domains and needs. Focusing on the surveillance of illegal trafficking, there is a need to monitor large areas of interest, look for moving targets actively trying to avoid detection and providing swiftly and precisely the results to users.

This type of monitoring is technically complex and expensive, and usually requires a combination of different assets to be successful. Monitoring wide areas with conventional assets (ships or aircrafts) is incredible costly, and even impossible in some cases (limitations of air space / territorial waters of third countries). Space based capabilities offer wide area monitoring globally, enable near real time surveillance and are used not only to enhance and complement surveillance capabilities of conventional assets and but also to provide unique information in areas where surveillance would otherwise not be possible. In the short term, the primary use of satellite-based surveillance is to detect and support the interdiction of illegal activities. In the long term the perspective is to reduce the levels of illegal activities by creating a real deterrent effect.

EMSA's space-based surveillance focuses mainly on quasi real-time operations, meaning whenever satellites pass over an area, the analysis is done in a matter of minutes – this is critical because in the maritime domain targets are constantly moving and thus it is fundamental to know on what is going on now and not what

happened several hours (or days) ago. Satellites acquire data, transmit it to ground stations where it is analysed and the features or activities of interest are identified. Subsequently this information is further enriched and validated, and finally distributed to the end user. The whole process usually takes less than 20 minutes. The need to have quasi real time, high precision information creates challenges in terms of supply chain (very low tolerance to delays and issues), but our experience shows that it is doable, even for large volume and frequency of activities.

In terms of earth observation, EMSA relies on synthetic aperture radar and very high-resolution optical satellites, to deliver its services. The Agency uses commercially available data, establishing the necessary contracts with satellite owners and service providers, to ensure the delivery with the timeliness and quality required.

An important part of the service delivery process is the need to merge space data with non-space data. We need to be able to understand exactly what the relevant maritime information is – for instance, from vessel information systems – that we can then merge with the space data, towards fulfilling the needs from the users.

EMSA's focuses its product delivery in tailoring the products to the different needs and users; it is not one-size-fits-all. Therefore, it is fundamental to clearly understand the underlying requirements by talking with the users and understanding exactly what their needs are, so that the product is tailored to the requirement. Besides providing tailor made services, EMSA relies on automatic behaviour monitoring algorithms to issue alerts according to the rules defined by the users. This enables users to focus their attention on the relevant information and mitigates a common issue linked with surveillance: too much information, leading the user to “drown” in excessive data.

All stakeholders involved in maritime surveillance usually express their interest in having more space-based data: new space radar constellations, additional very high-resolution optical satellites, radio-frequency detection capabilities, etc. But not only there is need to have more datasets, but also the ability to extract more and better information. Investments are also need artificial intelligence to analyse features and activities in space-based data, towards extracting more added value and insights, in order to create a higher level of information focused exactly on what the user needs.

On the technical side, when you are looking at all the different space-based assets (synthetic aperture radar, very high optical resolution, radio frequency detection, thermal infrared, etc.) there is still somewhat a “silo” approach – they are still mostly used in isolation, or with limited levels of complementarity. The challenge is to orchestrate all these assets; to use them in tandem in order to optimise their value and the way they are deployed to address the different operational needs. I think, for the future, the more we increase the number of assets that we have, the more interoperability is needed in the automatic orchestration of what we are doing with the different satellites, in order to increase overall efficiency and ability to tackle existing needs. In the end most organizations dealing with space based



maritime surveillance are operating with limited budgets and thus there is need to be very precise in the way we select the different tools in our toolbox towards fulfilling the needs of our users in the most efficient way possible.





SORIN DUCARU

*Director, European Union Satellite Centre, Torrejón*

## EUROPEAN SPACE CAPABILITIES AFTER THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS

I want to start by highlighting that the Satellite Centre of the European Union (SatCen) is a good example of an autonomous entity of the European Union and of its Member States, as it is an intergovernmental agency, which was created 30 years ago in order to provide strategic situational awareness to decision makers and to support foreign policy decisions and also security related evaluations.

Initially, it was an agency of the Western European Union and, for the last 20 years, it has been an Agency within the European Union with the main aim of supporting common foreign and security policy. This is just its main aim because SatCen is also mandated to maximise the relationship and the synergies with other EU activities in the field of space and security. While its core mission is providing security from space to earth through geospatial analysis, it also has a supporting mission: providing security for space since it has the role of the front desk for the interface with users of the European Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST). It is an operational crossover.

What we are doing in terms of productivity is of course the analysis. But we are also investing a lot in specific capabilities aimed to support our core mission, like modern IT tools and algorithms, embedded in artificial intelligence products dedicated to geospatial analysis. We are also very much invested in training and in the cooperation with other EU bodies, EU Member States and other key partners.

SatCen is involved in supporting crisis management through geospatial analysis for humanitarian missions, EU civilian or military missions, support to FRONTEX the EU agency for border security, and also support to other organisations, such as the UN, OSCE, or the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). I really want to highlight that the cooperation with other key players: European Space Agency (ESA), European Commission, through its many programs – Copernicus, FRONTEX, EMSA and Horizon Europe – and European Defence Agency. Nowadays cooperation is a key ingredient for the advancements

of our activities and for pushing the technology development for space and data management related to space data.

We are now in a new paradigm. While years ago, the main focus was to get the images needed with the right resolutions and frequency, today, with the development of increasingly sophisticated satellite sensors and mega constellations, the big challenge is actually to be able to manage the ocean of data and to make the best sense of these data in a fast and efficient manner. This is indeed at the core of SatCen's current development trends.

Providers are offering the "Earth Observation gold rush", tech driven by cost reduction, proliferation of new sensors, massive constellations, increased spatial resolution in terms of quality of images but also in terms of revisiting frequency, the possibility to use algorithms to distinguish shapes from aerial or space images and make the activity of the analyst much more efficient. All this is pushing the user demand towards much more complex needs at a much higher speed and also with the need to be able to merge together more multi-sources of information and apply analytics in order to be efficient.

There are significant trends in user demand that are driven by space technology and IT technologies. The idea is to change the business model for something that was focused on sequential analysis of available images and collateral data to a more holistic, integrated, multi-dimensional and interactive approach. It implies multi-source automatised analytics and interactive access of users to a secure data processing IT platform allowing for continuous monitoring and analysing. It is like moving from a pipeline and sequential approach to a much more interactive, continuous and proactive approach by flagging specific trends that could lead to mitigating difficult situations. The innovation is at the core of the response of what the users need. I would just highlight that all the interlinkages between the possibility to use a better resolution, a better revising time, better use of IT technologies and also an advanced quality control approach, all leading to a completely new ballgame in this field of earth observation based by satellite sensors.

# Concluding Remarks



Official portrait of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs - Extraordinary meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs with Finland, Sweden and the EU, 4 March, 2022, NATO HQ, Brussels. Source: nato.int











PIERO FASSINO

*President, Foreign Affairs Committee,  
Chamber of Deputies, Rome*

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## CONCLUDING REMARKS

I would like to express my sincere thanks for this invitation which confirmed the friendship and the esteem that bind me to the NATO Defense College Foundation, to Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo and to all the researchers who are carrying out such an invaluable and irreplaceable work, not only in research and in-depth analysis but also in the organisation of what we might call “security culture”.

This conference is part of series that began some time ago to gather analytic input and practical suggestion for defining a new strategic concept to be adopted in Madrid next June.

Before addressing the substance of the issues dealt with the various panel, I cannot fail to mention the extraordinary nature of what is happening around us and at this very moment, with a new war in Europe, a war of conquest, a war of breach of international law, a war against freedom, justice and peace among nations.

An old saying tell us that we only know who our friends are in times of difficulty. It has been precisely in a time of difficulty like the present one that we have witnessed the friendship, unity, solidarity, shared methods, objectives and attitudes of the members of the Atlantic Alliance. NATO is present and it is a responsive organisation that has demonstrated how uniquely invaluable it is, dispelling any suggestion of its being “brain dead”.

NATO is present into the Ukraine crisis, with its prudence, but also with its organisational and logistical reliability. It is a force for detente, for security, at the service of dialogue and multilateralism. NATO is present as a force for deterrence and ultimately as a force for peace. These are important merits that must be preserved, upheld and above all, made clear to the world outside.

World and European public opinion must clearly see that NATO has not worked and is not working to destabilise Europe but for the exact opposite. The enlargement of NATO, which is always a matter of free choice and never an imposition, is a guarantee for everyone and never a threat to anyone.

As I have said on other occasions, quoting President Biden: “*We lead not by the example of our power, but by the power of our example*”. And the prudence that NATO has demonstrated in these days – shown by the choices made by Biden’s administration – shows that NATO is not at the service of an imperialist plan but of a project of a multilateral collective security. And of this we must be mindful and proud.

After these introductory remarks about the present extraordinary environment, I will now address today’s agenda item which is by no means totally unrelated to the crisis in Europe as we shall be seeing.

Previous panellists have drawn a detailed and well-documented picture of the threats to global security and stability related to illegal traffic of non-state actors, the particular conditions of instability in the Indo-Pacific area, and the possibilities offered by space technologies to control and fight against criminal networks. These are complex topics, which involve geopolitical issues and legal issues, foreign policies and criminal law, as well as – from a governmental viewpoint, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice – precisely the two departments in which I have served in my political life. I therefore approach this speech of mine with a particular sense of personal participation and commitment.

As it has been rightly pointed out by previous speakers, we are witnessing rising instability in the world today – instability caused by new and renewed assertiveness on the part of various regional powers but also by non-state actors and especially by terrorists and criminal organisations.

It is in the area lying between three seas: the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Aden and the Gulf of Guinea (namely, the area that some geopolitical analysts call “the Enlarged Mediterranean”), that we find the greatest concentration of global crises. In 2021 alone, five countries in the Sahel – Guinea, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso and Sudan – experienced *coups d’état*, in N’Djamena the president was killed; Somalia remains a failed state and Ethiopia has once again been plunged into a brutal civil war. In the same region, jihadist terrorist organisations are flourishing and contributing to widespread insecurity.

All this instability is being funnelled into Libya, contested by warring factions that are unable, and perhaps unwilling to stem the flow of illegal migration and human smuggling. Where statehood, or the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force – to quote Max Weber’s well-known definition – is weakened, security, freedom and the rule of law fall by the wayside. When the monopoly of the legitimate use of force is lost, criminal violence and illegal trafficking flourish.

Should an organisation like NATO address the problem of the threat to stability and security posed by criminal organisations and all the commercial and financial ramifications? The answer that we have heard emerging from this meeting is undoubtedly in the affirmative. And as such, it must be part of the new *Strategic Concept* now being drafted and defined.

Geopolitical and financial analyses must go hand-in-hand. There exists a two-way relationship between political security and financial security: one can threaten the other and vice versa. We can see this in action today with the trade and financial sanctions imposed in response to the grave threat to European and international stability brought about by the invasion of Ukraine.

I am reminded of the third core mission mentioned in 2010 Strategic Document – namely the concept of “cooperative security”. In that case, we were talking about partnership and cooperation policies developed and still to be developed with dozens of countries and international organisations around the world. But in view of the data and the analyses we have heard so far, we must conclude that this cooperative security has so far been insufficient, and has to be strengthened and enhanced in a number of ways.

Crime knows no boundaries, trafficking has no respect for borders, but thrives when state authority does not exist in failed states. States are no guarantee that crime does not exist, but failed states do guarantee that crime and trafficking in drugs, counterfeit goods, arms and human beings are expanding and greatly contributing to insecurity and instability.

In the past, after the end of the Cold War, we questioned the role of NATO as an “international police force”. Then, faced with the threat of jihadism, we experienced the period of exporting democracy. This phase has seen partial successes but also setbacks and real defeats, as in Afghanistan for example, and it is precisely a country like Afghanistan that once again is becoming both an authoritarian country, opposed to the rule of law, and an exporter of illegal trafficking such as the drugs trade and consequently an exporter of instability in the final analysis.

We are witnessing a paradoxical situation, both authoritarian states, with a despotic regime or with a monopoly of the arbitrary use of force and failed states, with no monopoly on the use of force are ideal environments for criminal organisations to flourish for commercial purposes. In the past 10-12 years, we have looked helplessly at the growth of failed states and authoritarian states and with them the implicit growth of trafficking.

It is therefore urgently necessary to re-establish an international rule of law. This concerns the personal security of citizens but also their social and economic security. This link must be made clear and obvious. We must make the world's public aware of the vast resources being stolen every year from state, and therefore from citizens in the form of lost tax revenues that could be usefully allocated elsewhere.

Taking resources away from crime and returning them to the healthy economy for social inclusion, for combating climate change and for innovation and research, would be a new way of interpreting NATO's strategic mission and the service of global security and multilateralism.

Such a mission could give rise to a great alliance between NATO and world public opinion, between NATO and civil society committed to protecting and defending the rights of citizens and workers throughout the world.

Then there is yet another front of illegal trafficking: human organs, one of the worst legacies of the age-old split between the rich and the poor countries, where healthy people in the poor countries supply body organs to sick people in the rich countries. This illegal trade also deserves to be tackled by NATO.

And I would therefore like to briefly mention a region that is all too often forgotten: Latin America, where criminal gangs still run rife and the illegal drug trade is thriving. We would also do well to develop a strategy to join forces with this region too and fight against organised crime.

I would like to raise one more point about the European Union. When approaching an issue whose geopolitical and geostrategic potential is very clear to us, such as the matter of non-state actors in international trafficking, we cannot fail to acknowledge the progress made by the European Union. With the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor Office (EPPO) in June 2021 at the end of a process that began in 2017, the Union has equipped itself with a very high-level coordination body to combat fraud and money laundering, one of the preferred financial systems of international crime organisations.

The new *Strategic Concept* must certainly include a more cohesive and better-structured synergy between NATO and the EU institutions. We are in a different phase compared to 2010, when the actual concept was written: the European Union had common policies and a totally different self-awareness from what it has now. The COVID-19 crisis and now the crisis in Ukraine have created a different perception of the possibilities and effectiveness of European cohesion and unity. The coordination of trade policies experienced as a result of Brexit, of health policies experienced as a result of the pandemic, and now of defence and energy policies, are stages of an irreversible process of maturation.

This makes it urgent to adapt the coordination and cooperation between NATO and the European Union. If we want to be effective in the fight against global organised crime, our intelligence services also need to talk to each other, and this will become possible precisely with a greater, more integrated, more structured involvement of NATO.

I would like to conclude by briefly mentioning the Indo-Pacific question. Twelve years ago, there was no AUKUS (Australia, United Kingdom, United States of America), that is to say no military defence alliance for that region of the world. NATO must initiate a constant and structured coordination with AUKUS, overcoming earlier misunderstandings because, as has been amply illustrated, the growth of authoritarian states in the region, in addition to Afghanistan and Myanmar, the problems of internal stability in Indonesia and the Philippines, and the persistence of an assertive and aggressive attitude on the part of China, requires countries that believe in freedom, democracy and the rule of law not to let things slide, but to exercise a role in steering, fostering and effectively safeguarding these principles.

# BIOGRAPHIES

## FOREWORD

### **Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo**

*President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome*

After having served at the Italian Embassy in Washington D.C. and as Commercial Counsellor at the Embassy of Italy in Prague, Ambassador Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo worked as Head of the External Relations Office of the EEC. In the following years, his career focused on Europe and Space Policy. In 1997 he was appointed Diplomatic Counsellor of the Minister of Defence Beniamino Andreatta, then of his successors Carlo Scognamiglio and Sergio Mattarella. In 2000, Minuto-Rizzo held the position of Italian Ambassador to the Western European Union and to the Political and Security Committee of the EU, of which he was among the founding members. He was Deputy Secretary General of the Atlantic Alliance between 2001 and 2007. His mandate was mostly carried out in the strategic-political industrial area and in the relations with sensitive countries such as those in the Gulf and the Southern Mediterranean. His most recent book is *NATO and the Middle East: The Making of a Partnership* (New Academia Publishing, 2018).

## WELCOME REMARKS

### **Andrea Gilli**

*Senior Researcher, NATO Defense College, Rome*

Andrea Gilli is a Senior Researcher at the NATO Defense College where he works on issues related to technological change and military innovation. In the past, Dr Gilli has been Visiting and Post-Doctoral Fellow at Johns Hopkins University and Columbia University as well as at the Stanford University and Harvard University. Dr Gilli has conducted research for the U.S. Department of Defense;

the Italian Air Force; the Italian Government; the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Preparatory Commission for the Strainer Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization; the Royal United Services Institute; the European Union Institute for Security Studies and the Metropolitan University Prague, among others. His research has been published in the most important academic journals on security issues, such as *21 International Security*, *Security Studies*, and the *Journal of Strategic Studies*. Furthermore, he has been featured in *The Washington Post*, *Foreign Policy* and the *Economist*, receiving multiple awards: the 2015 European Defence Agency and Egmont Institute's bi-annual prize for the best dissertation on European defence, security and strategy, and the 2020 best research article award on U.S. foreign policy and grand strategy as part of the America in the World Consortium.

#### OPENING REMARKS

##### **Nicola de Santis**

*Head, Engagements Section, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO HQ, Brussels*

Head of the Engagements Section of NATO Public Diplomacy Division since 2019, Nicola de Santis was previously Head of the Middle East and North Africa Section of the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division at NATO HQ. In this capacity, he was responsible for developing and promoting NATO's policy, political relations, individual practical cooperation programmes and better public understanding in Middle Eastern and North African countries - especially those participating in NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). He also ensured the coordination with all the other Divisions of NATO's International Staff, International Military Staff and relevant NATO Military Authorities for all aspects of the Alliance's cooperation with countries in the Middle East and in North Africa. Prior to that, he was the Head of the MD and ICI Countries Section within the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division.

#### POLITICAL SUMMARY

##### **Alessandro Politi**

*Director, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome*

Alessandro Politi is Director of the NATO Defense College Foundation. A specialist in political and strategic affairs, he has worked with different top decision makers in Italy and abroad both in public institutions and private companies. He teaches geopolitics, geo-economics and intelligence at the Italian MFA-affiliated SIOI School.

## SPECIAL INTERVENTION

### **Benedetto Della Vedova**

*Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome*

Benedetto Della Vedova has been a Member of the Radical Party for thirty years. From January 2019 to March 2021, he was Secretary of +Europa, the movement he helped to build together with Emma Bonino. Undersecretary Della Vedova was President of the Italian Radicals from 2001 to 2003, and leader of the Liberal Reformers movement from 2005 to 2009. Prior to that, he was Member of the European Parliament from 1999 to 2004; Member of the Italian Parliament from 2006 to 2013; Senator from 2013 to 2018, and Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Renzi and Gentiloni governments. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2021, he is Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in the current Draghi Government.

## SESSION 1

### THE EVOLVING THREAT OF NON-STATE ACTORS AND TRAFFICKING

### **Alex P. Schmid**

*Research Fellow, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, The Hague*

Alex P. Schmid is Research Fellow at the International Centre for Counter Terrorism (ICCT) in The Hague, and one of the three Directors of the Vienna-based Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), a consortium of institutes and individual scholars engaged in collaborative efforts to study terrorism. From 2014 to March 2018, he was an Associate Professor at the Institute of Security and Global Affairs at Leiden University. Also, Dr Schmid held a chair in International Relations at the University of St. Andrews (Scotland) where he was, until 2009, also Director of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV). Member of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) of the European Union, he has carried out OSCE missions to the Balkans and Central Asia as well, and has been involved in NATO-linked activities, (e.g., as member of the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Directors of Research Institutes in the field of Security Studies). Dr Schmid has acted repeatedly as an Expert Evaluator for the European Commission and as a regular keynote speaker at the annual World Summit on Counter-Terrorism held in Herzliya, Israel. He is on the Editorial Board of the academic journal *Terrorism and Political Violence*.

### **Louise Shelley**

*Director, Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center, Arlington, USA*

Louise Shelley is Omer L. and Nancy Hirst Endowed Chair and Professor at Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, where she

founded and currently directs the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC). Among other publications, she is the author of *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective* (Cambridge, 2010) as well as of the more recent *Dark Commerce: How a New Illicit Economy is Threatening our Future* (Princeton University Press, November 2018), which was written while being an inaugural Andrew Carnegie Fellow and a Rockefeller Foundation awardee at Bellagio. Professor Shelley served for six years on Global Agenda Councils on Illicit Trade and Organised Crime of the World Economic Forum. She appears frequently in the media, lectures widely at universities and multinational bodies and has testified repeatedly before Congress on human trafficking and financial crime. She is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

### **Michele Riccardi**

*Deputy Director, Transcrime, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan*

Michele Riccardi is Deputy Director at Transcrime, as well as Adjunct Professor of Financial and Business Information Analysis at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, and of Risk Assessment Methods at University of Palermo. He also teaches Money Laundering and Developing Countries at ASERI (Alta Scuola di Economia e Relazioni Internazionali). His research focuses mainly on organised crime, money laundering and financial crime. In this domain, he has coordinated and contributed to numerous research projects, at national and international level, and has authored various publications. He is a member of the ARO (Asset Recovery Office of the European Commission); of the Experts group of the European Commission Supranational Risk Assessment (SNRA); and of the Italian National Money Laundering Risk Assessment (NRA). Professor Riccardi is a member of the United Nations Working Group on the measurement of illicit financial flows, and has been also consulted by FATF/GAFI as well as the World Bank on money laundering and risk assessment initiatives. He is co-founder of Crime&tech, spin-off of Transcrime-Università Cattolica.

## **SESSION 2**

### **THE TWIN SIDES OF INDO-PACIFIC INSTABILITIES**

### **Richard D. Hooker**

*Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council, Washington D.C.*

Richard D. Hooker Jr. is a Non-Resident Senior Fellow with the Atlantic Council, following service as a Theodore Roosevelt Chair in National Security Affairs and Director of the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University in Washington D.C. A former Dean of the NATO Defense College, he is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a Senior Research Associate with the Changing Character of War Program at the University of Oxford and a Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Jamestown Foundation. Dr Hooker also



served on the National Security Council during the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations, and as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Europe and Russia with the NSC from April 2017 to July 2018. A career Army officer, he served in combat in Grenada, Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan, including command of a parachute brigade in Baghdad from 2005-2006.

### **Samina Ahmed**

*Project Director South Asia, International Crisis Group, Islamabad*

Samina Ahmed is Project Director South Asia and Senior Adviser Asia at the International Crisis Group, where she has been working since the end of 2001. Prior to joining Crisis Group, Dr Ahmed was a Research Fellow at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; Senior Research Analyst at the Institute of Regional Studies (Islamabad); Visiting Researcher at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Washington D.C.); the Stockholm Peace Research Institute; and Oxford University. Her areas of expertise include security sector and criminal justice reform; domestic insurgencies, militancy and jihadism; and the risks of regional conflict in South Asia.

### **Peter Neumann**

*Director, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, King's College, London*

Peter Neumann is Professor of Security Studies at the Department of War Studies of the King's College of London, and founded the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR), which he directed between 2008 and 2018. He served as the OSCE Chairman's Special Representative on Countering Violent Radicalisation. He is currently working on a research monograph on the ideas and ideologues of the contemporary Far Right. Dr Neumann has authored more than a dozen peer-reviewed articles, dealing with different aspects of terrorism and radicalisation, especially 'homegrown' radicalisation in Western countries, and serves on the editorial boards of *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, the *Journal of Strategic Studies*, and *Democracy and Security*. Shorter articles and opinion pieces have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Der Spiegel*, the *London Review of Books*, and the *New Scientist*. He taught courses on terrorism, counterterrorism, intelligence, radicalisation and counter-radicalisation at the King's College and at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington.

### **Raimondo Neironi**

*Research Fellow, T.wai, Turin*

Raimondo Neironi is Adjunct Professor in History of Japan at the Department of Humanities of the University of Turin. He is also Research Fellow at T.wai - Torino World Affairs Institute ("Asia Prospects" programme) - and Managing Editor at RISE - Relazioni internazionali e International Political Economy del Sud-Est asiatico -, the only Italian four-month journal focusing on Southeast Asia

studies, ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) and the Pacific. His research interests revolve around Cold War history in Southeast Asia, Philippines' domestic politics and Australia's foreign relations with Southeast Asia and its allies in the Indo-Pacific.

### SESSION 3

#### THE ROLE OF SPACE: NEW TOOLS AND CAPABILITIES

##### **Pascal Legai**

*Senior Adviser to the Director General, European Space Agency, Paris*

Major General (Ret) Pascal Legai was an intelligence officer in the French Air Force. He served as geographer in the French Air Force staff in Paris for five years (1994-1999), and, later on, as Head of the French Imagery Intelligence Centre (2004-2006), Human Resources Adviser (2006-2008), and Commanding Officer of the French Air Force Base in Grenoble (2008-2010). In July 2010, Major General Legai joined as Deputy Director the European Union Satellite Centre (SatCen), an imagery analysis centre, based near Madrid, Spain, providing Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) and Imagery Intelligence (IMINT) products and services to support the EU external action. On the 1st January 2015, he was elected by the Member States as Director of the Centre. He left this position in April 2019 and in May he has been appointed to the European Space Agency (ESA), first as a Senior Security Adviser to the ESA/Earth Observation Director, in Frascati (Rome), and currently as a Senior Security Coordinator to ESA DG in Paris.

##### **Pedro Lourenço**

*Head of Unit – Surveillance. Department Safety, Security and Surveillance.*

*European Maritime Safety Agency, Lisbon*

Pedro Lourenço is responsible for the Surveillance Unit of the European Maritime Safety Agency, which includes the management of a wide range of services: Earth Observations services, Satellite AIS, and Satellite Communications through Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS). These services are delivered to a wide range of user communities, including maritime safety, fisheries control, maritime security, law enforcement, border control, customs and pollution monitoring. Mr Lourenço has twenty years of experience in areas linked with surveillance, space technologies, maritime digital services and innovation.

##### **Sorin Ducaru**

*Director, European Union Satellite Centre, Torrejon*

Ambassador Ducaru is the Director of the European Union Satellite Centre (SatCen) since June 2019. He has previously served as NATO Assistant Secretary-General as well as Head of the NATO Emerging Security Challenges Division,

and was Romania's Ambassador to NATO, USA, and to the UN in New York. Besides, he held various positions in the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, such as: Spokesperson of the MFA, Director of the Minister's Office, and Head of the Directorate for NATO and Strategic Issues. Ambassador Ducaru has been also engaged in academic and scientific activity, as Associate or Guest Lecturer at the National University for Political Studies (Bucharest, Romania); NATO Defence College (Rome, Italy); Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (Cambridge, USA); Leiden University (Netherlands). He is the Honorary Chairman of the Scientific Board of the New Strategy Center (Bucharest); Member of the European Council of Foreign Relations; Advisory Board Member of the Digital Society Institute (Berlin); Member of the NATO Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (Tallin); Special Advisor to the Global Commission on the Stability of Cyberspace (The Hague); and former Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute (Washington D.C.).

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

##### **Piero Fassino**

*President, Foreign Affairs Committee, Chamber of Deputies, Rome*

Piero Fassino is the President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Italian Chamber of Deputies. Elected for the first time in 1994, he was re-elected in all the following legislatures until 2011- when he became mayor of Turin (2011-2016) - and elected again to Parliament in 2018. He is currently also a Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; Vice President of the Political Commission; and President of the Italy-France friendship section of the Inter Parliamentary Union. Honourable Fassino served as Undersecretary of State for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Prodi government (1996-1998) and, in the same period, as Undersecretary for European Union Policies to the Prime Minister. He then was Minister of Foreign Trade with the D'Alema government (1998- 2000), and Minister of Justice for the Amato government (2000-2001). From 1991 to 1996, he held the post of International Secretary of the Democratic Party of the Left. From 2016 to March 2020, he was President of the Socialist Group and spokesman for the Mediterranean at the Congress of Local Authorities of the Council of Europe.





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## GAME CHANGERS 2022 NEW STRATEGIC ISSUES

HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE

*Organised by the NATO Defense College Foundation*

*In co-operation with the NATO Public Diplomacy Division,  
Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, MBDA and the NATO Defense College*

ROME, THE 10<sup>TH</sup> OF MARCH 2022

Venue: Rome Cavalieri, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel - Via Alberto Cadlolo 101, 00136 Roma

- 14,30 – 14,40 WELCOME REMARKS
- Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo, President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome
  - Andrea Gilli, Senior Researcher, NATO Defense College, Rome
- 14,40 – 14,50 OPENING REMARKS
- Nicola de Santis, Head, Engagements Section, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO HQ, Brussels
- 14,50 – 15,00 SPECIAL INTERVENTION
- Benedetto Della Vedova, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome

## Session 1 - THE EVOLVING THREAT OF NON-STATE ACTORS AND TRAFFICKING

*The recent developments in Afghanistan, Syria, Libya and the Sahel region have shown that criminal violence has become much more relevant than in the past because it is a very important component of local conflicts that have often wider global repercussions. These groups are supported by several illegal trades that finance irregular forces and the development of additional criminal markets. How have these phenomena changed? What geopolitical impact do they have in crisis areas?*

- 15,00 – 16,00 Chair: Paul Radu, Co-founder, Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, Sarajevo
- Alex P. Schmid, Research Fellow, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, The Hague
  - Louise Shelley, Director, Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center, Arlington, USA (Virtual)
  - Michele Riccardi, Deputy Director, Transcrime, Università Cattolica, Milan

## Q&A

## Session 2 - THE TWIN SIDES OF INDO-PACIFIC INSTABILITIES

*The region features two sides of instabilities: one more visible, especially in the maritime sphere, revolved around the security implications of the rise of China (risks, opportunities, technologies, deterrence and next NATO Strategic Concept), and the other more diffused among different countries. The Indo-Pacific region is characterised by a host of long-standing and ongoing internal conflicts that are less visible but risk to jeopardize the rule of law and the stability of all major actors in the region. What is the overall stability of the area? How can international cooperation assist in mitigating internecine conflicts, illegal trade, terrorism and organised crime?*

16,30 – 17,45    Chair: Giulia Pompili, Journalist, Il Foglio Quotidiano, Rome

- Richard D. Hooker, Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council, Washington D.C.
- Samina Ahmed, Project Director South Asia, International Crisis Group, Islamabad
- Peter Neumann, Director, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, King's College, London (Virtual)
- Raimondo Neironi, Research Fellow, T.wai, Turin

## Q&A

Session 3 - THE ROLE OF SPACE: NEW TOOLS  
AND CAPABILITIES

*Space is today a much more diverse and changing environment for reasons pertaining technology, new business models and applications overlapping between civil and military spheres, also in the fight against non-state actors. What are the concrete means to enhance the surveillance on criminal networks and trafficking?*

18,00 -19,00     Chair: Niccolò Petrelli, Professor, Strategic Studies, Roma Tre University, Rome

- Pascal Legai, Senior Adviser to the Director General, European Space Agency, Paris
- Pedro Lourenço, Head, Unit Surveillance, Department Safety, Security and Surveillance, European Maritime Safety Agency, Lisbon
- Sorin Ducaru, Director, European Union Satellite Centre, Torrejon (Virtual)

Q&A

CONCLUDING REMARKS

19,00 – 19,10     Piero Fassino, President, Foreign Affairs Committee, Chamber of Deputies, Rome



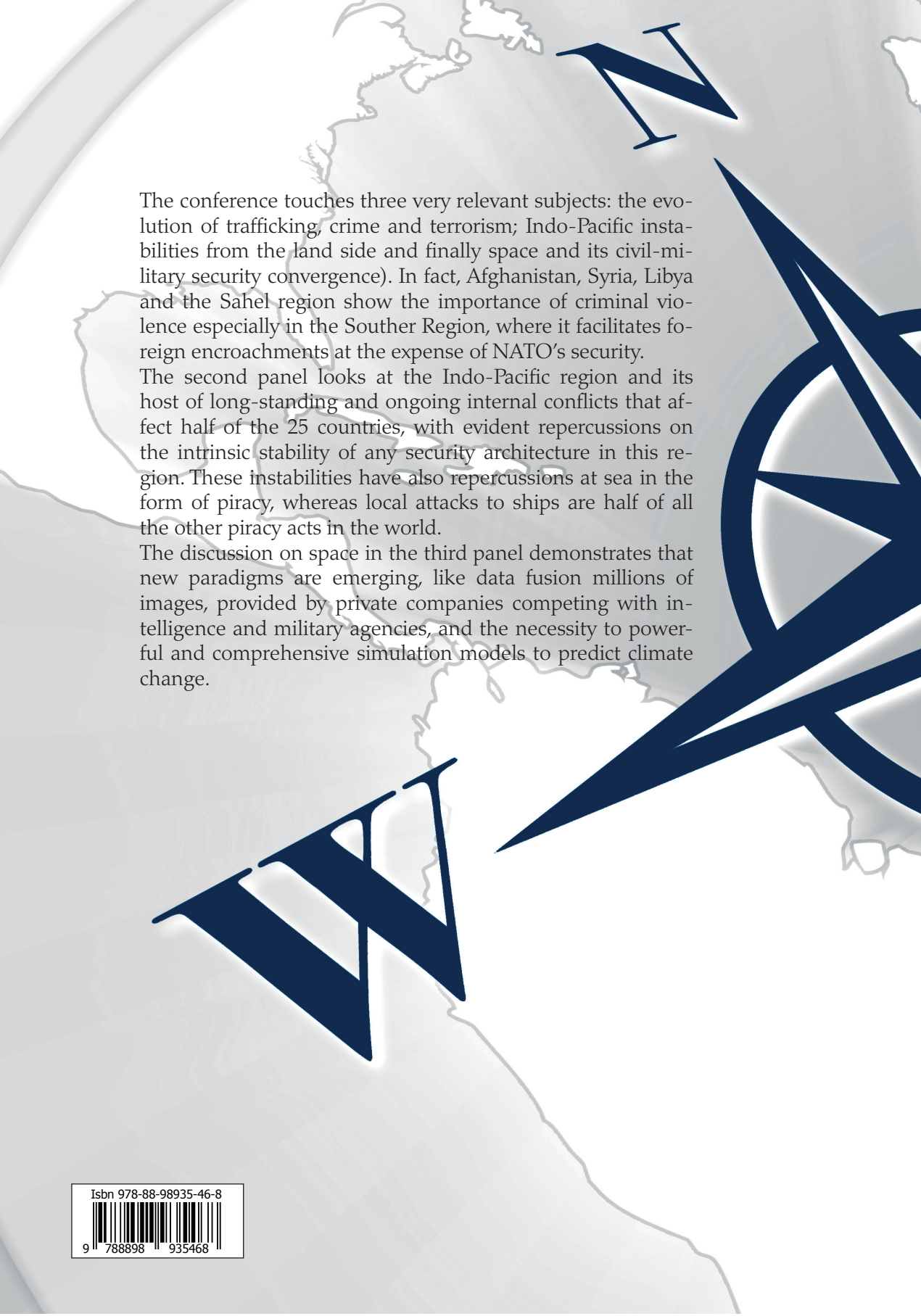












The conference touches three very relevant subjects: the evolution of trafficking, crime and terrorism; Indo-Pacific instabilities from the land side and finally space and its civil-military security convergence). In fact, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya and the Sahel region show the importance of criminal violence especially in the Southern Region, where it facilitates foreign encroachments at the expense of NATO's security.

The second panel looks at the Indo-Pacific region and its host of long-standing and ongoing internal conflicts that affect half of the 25 countries, with evident repercussions on the intrinsic stability of any security architecture in this region. These instabilities have also repercussions at sea in the form of piracy, whereas local attacks to ships are half of all the other piracy acts in the world.

The discussion on space in the third panel demonstrates that new paradigms are emerging, like data fusion millions of images, provided by private companies competing with intelligence and military agencies, and the necessity to powerful and comprehensive simulation models to predict climate change.

Isbn 978-88-98935-46-8



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