EURODEFENSA

Portada: mapa de los países que integran la red EURODEFENSE

EURODEFENSA

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ÍNDICE

Págs

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EDITORIAL

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Vice-president ED-ES

The EUROPEAN UNION and EURODEFENSE

The members of EuroDéfense-España are proud to belong to the family of associations that constitutes the EURODEFENSE network. We believe that one of our main objectives is to support our national Defence and to contribute to the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union (EU). To be able to accomplish that goal, our associations must know what the main guidelines and the priorities established by the European Council (EC) that determines the EU's general political direction and priorities - setting the policy agenda for the EU. The beginning of a new year is a good occasion to examine the main objectives for our associations in 2023 supporting the EC main goals.

Ukraine

The European Council 34/22, that took place on the 15 December 2022 reiterated its resolute condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and reaffirmed the Union's full support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. Furthermore, the EU remains committed to providing political and military support to Ukraine, notably through the *European Peace Facility (EPF)* and the *EU Military Assistance Mission (UMAM)* in support of Ukraine.

The systematic missile strikes against Ukrainian civilians, civilian targets, energy infrastructures and other utilities are inflicting even more suffering on the Ukrainian people, and it must stop. The Council also called on Russia to immediately cease actions endangering the safety and security of nuclear facilities. The European Union will urgently intensify the provision of humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. The European Council invited the Commission to intensify coordination with European industry and international partners to provide heating equipment, power generators,

power transformers, and lighting equipment to Ukraine. The European Union will also maintain its support for displaced persons, both within and outside Ukraine. The EU remains committed to providing financial relief to Ukraine and supporting its resilience and reconstruction and agreed to provide EUR 18 billion of assistance to Ukraine in 2023.

In the mentioned Council, the last in 2022, the Council reiterated that it was ready to support Ukraine's initiative for a just peace and its condemnation of the military support to Russia's war of aggression provided by the Iranian authorities, which must stop. In this regard, the European Council welcomes the EU sanctions adopted on 12 December 2022.

In the context of bolstering global food security, the Council also underlined the importance of the *United Nations Black Sea Grain Initiative and the Grain from Ukraine program.*

Energy

The European Council called for the swift finalization of discussions on the *Renewable Energy Directive*[i] and other directives related with energy. The Council also reiterated the importance of stepping up investment in innovation, infrastructure and interconnections and other related initiatives to phase out the Union's dependency on Russian fossil fuels and ensure security of supply. The EC of 15 of December 2022 underlined the importance of safeguarding Europe's economic, industrial, and technological base and recalled the need for a coordinated response to enhance Europe's economic resilience and its global competitiveness while preserving the integrity of the Single Market. To respond to the impact of high energy prices, the European Council invited the Commission to conduct an analysis and to make proposals by the end of January 2023, with a view to improving framework conditions for investment.

In December 2022, the European Council stressed the importance of coordination and of common European solutions. It also invited the Council and the Eurogroup to monitor economic developments, to be able to deliver a determined policy response. The EU must take measures on the long-term challenges, in particular the growth and innovation gap between Europe and its global competitors. In this respect, the European Council invites the Commission to present, in early 2023, *an EU strategy to boost*

competitiveness and productivity.

More Responsibility in Security and Defence

For the associations belonging to EURODEFENSE is truly relevant the fact that the *European Union is taking more responsibility for its own security and defence* and is pursuing its own strategic course of action and its capacity to act. Strengthening the industrial and technological base of the European defence sector will contribute to achieve this goal.

The European Council last December considered particularly important the transatlantic bond that reflected in the EU's Strategic Compass and in the NATO Strategic Concept. The Council took stock also of the decisions of previous meetings such as the guidance provided in Versailles on 10 and 11 March 2022, the Strategic Compass as well as the findings and recommendations of the joint communication on "*the Defence Investment Gaps Analysis and Way Forward*[ii]". In this context the European Council called on:

1. The European Parliament and the Council to adopt as soon as possible the *European Defence Industry Reinforcement through common Procurement Act (EDIRPA)*.[iii]

2. The Commission and the European Defence Agency to intensify ongoing efforts to identify needs and to *facilitate and coordinate joint procurement*, to replenish stocks.

3. The Commission to rapidly present a proposal for an *European Defence Investment Program* to reinforce the capacity and resilience of the European defence technology and industrial sector, including SMEs, and to fill strategic gaps and technological and industrial dependencies.

Furthermore, the Council:

4. Demands the implementation of *military mobility projects*, including dual use infrastructure projects.

5. Reiterates the commitment to invest in the capabilities necessary to conduct the full range of missions and operations, including a *rapid deployment capacity*.

6. Calls on the Member States to make *full use of collaborative instruments* and frameworks to this effect.

7. Calls for *investment in strategic enablers*, such as *cybersecurity* and *space-based connectivity*, as well as in the *resilience of critical infrastructure*.

8. Calls for a strong *EU Policy on Cyber Defence*, building on the recent joint communication of the Commission and the High Representative.

9. Calls for the swift implementation of the *EU Hybrid Toolbox*, thereby strengthening the Union's ability to counter hybrid threats effectively.

10. Calls for the EU to strengthen the *civilian CSDP*, with a view to the adoption of a new *Civilian CSDP Compact* by May 2023.

EU leaders reaffirmed the importance of the Union's commitment to support its partners in the field of security and defence, especially through instruments such as the *European Peace Facility* and *CSDP missions and operations*. Reiterating the *global dimension of the European Peace Facility*, the European Council welcomes the agreement in the Council ensuring its financial sustainability.

Other Conclusions

The European Council held last December 2022 a strategic discussion on relations with the *Southern Neighbourhood* and *on transatlantic relations*. The Council welcomed *Croatia's entry into the Schengen area* as from 1 January 2023 and hold a political debate on the accession to the Schengen zone of Bulgaria and Romania. The Council endorsed the Council Conclusions of 13 December 2022 *on Enlargement and Stabilization and Association Process* and agreed to grant the status of *candidate country to Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

Recalling the Council Conclusions on Iran of 12 December 2022[iv], the European Council strongly condemned the recent death penalty sentences pronounced and conducted in the context of the ongoing protests in Iran. The Council called on the Iranian authorities to immediately end this practice and to annul without delay the sentences. The EU always opposes the use of the death penalty and in all circumstances, as an unacceptable

denial of human dignity and integrity.

EU leaders recalled the determination to have both Pillars 1 and 2 of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) tax frameworks implemented, as agreed in October 2021. In this context, they called on the European Commission to monitor ongoing negotiations of the multilateral convention on Pillar 1 and put forward an appropriate solution by the end of 2023 if Member States do not reach an agreement.

Migration was not a main topic in the agenda of the European Council of December 2022. Nevertheless, the EU is facing an increase in numbers of migrants both via the Mediterranean routes and via the Western Balkans. The European Council will open again a debate on 9, 10 February on the question of migration.

Final remarks

The most significant guidelines and priorities that European Council of 15 December 2022 approved have been set out in the previous paragraphs. Given the importance of these guidelines, we could suggest that once a year in our Presidents Council we review the Conclusions of the European Council closest to our meeting. This will give the opportunity to comment on our governing body decisions and to take a close look at EU activity at the highest level.

Working groups and observatories are an especially important part of the activity of the EURODEFENSE network. The issues discussed are remarkably diverse and interesting, but sometimes they move away from topics related to the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). I dare to suggest that working groups and observatories be related to the CSDP and the activities supporting it. Sometimes our association successfully followed this line of action, as in the EWG 27B Recommendations for EU Defence and the Observatory 22 Migrations in EU.

NOTES

i   https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/renewable-energy/renewable-energy-directive-targets-and-rules/renewable-energy-directive_en

ii   https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/defence-investment-gapsanalysis- and-way-forward

iii   https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/12/01/eu-defence-industry-council-reachesgeneral- approach-on-boosting-common-procurement/

iv   https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/iran/2022/iran-221212-ec01.htm

About content

Juan A. Cuadrillero Pinilla
Member of the Board ED-ES

Following the Editorial by ED-ES Vicepresident Federico Yaniz in which he highlights the most significant guidelines and priorities adopted by the European Council at its meeting on December 22, 2022 and how these guidelines should influence the activity of the EURODEFENSE network, we present in this special edition of our newsletter the articles that our members have contributed to the general newsletter of the EURODEFENSE network.

Ambassador de la Cámara in his article states that Putin's imperial war has made the world more dangerous as rules are violated and formal commitments are broken. His threat of the use of nuclear weapons will accelerate the crumbling of the non-proliferation régime. The fundamental principle of international law that conquering territories by force was excluded from relations among nations, has fallen victim to the ambitions of an autocratic dictator. To allow Russia to conquer Ukrainian territory by force would be to open a Pandora's box.

Professor Natividad Carpintero reveals the evolution of nuclear Small Modular Reactors (SMR's) and the current state of their development. R&D programmes are underway in several nations that envisage the development of more than 70 small modular reactors manufacturing models. SMRs will arguably be the next generation of nuclear reactors, with designs that will allow them to operate for thirty years without refueling.

Admiral Fernando del Pozo focuses on the lack of EU Command & Control expeditionay capability wich could be solved by an ad-hoc naval unit at the permanent service of the EU. Such a ship should proudly fly the EU flag, which would be an example and reference of the community of purpose and solidarity that must guide the EU's external action.

Brigadier General Luis Feliu reflects on the challenges facing the EU in securing energy supplies in the context of the sanctions imposed on Russia following its war of aggression against Ukraine.

Finally, Colonel Juan A. Lopez provides his vision of a world scenario where the population in several regions embraces populist ideas and a multiculturalism that, in Europe and in certain groups, does not seem to be working well.

Thank you for visiting these pages, which we hope you will find interesting to read.

Putin's imperial war against Ucraine

Manuel de la Cámara
Member of the Board ED-ES

Summary

Putin's war against Ukraine is not a response to NATO expansion, but an attempt to reconstruct by force the historic Russian empire and a crucial step towards his goal of creating a new world order, in which the dwindling power of the US and its allies would be replaced by a Moscow-Beijing axis. The Russian President has based his adventure on nationalist myths, and it will be extremely difficult for him to change course.

Putin hoped that the war would be short and decisive, as it was in 2014 when he occupied Crimea, and that the West's reaction would be limited. But the fierce resistance from the Ukrainians, with substantial military assistance from the NATO allies, stopped the offensive and partially reversed it, compelling the Russian forces to move to defensive positions. So far, none of the parties in the war seems ready to give diplomacy a chance.

To Putin's surprise, the US and other Western countries responded strongly and decisively, supporting Ukraine militarily, establishing economic sanctions on Russia of an unprecedented dimension, maintaining a high degree of unity and coordination, and adopting military measures to strengthen NATO defenses. But the fact that Russia is a nuclear superpower creates doubts as to the extent of the military assistance that the West can provide to Ukraine without becoming directly involved in the conflict. The situation is very dangerous.

The war has been a wakeup call to Europeans as regards their perilous energy dependence from Russia and their military dependence from the United States. The conflict will have profound repercussions on European security, the global economy, and world peace.

 The war of aggression launched by Vladimir Putin on February 24, 2022, is a turning point on the international context. Large-scale war reappears in Europe (it is the largest conflict in our continent since WWII), and borders are violated to acquire territories from neighboring countries. The order defined in the Final Act of Helsinki in 1975, based on the inviolability of borders and respect for the territorial integrity of states, is put to an end. We return to the "Brezhnev Doctrine" of limited sovereignty and the establishment of zones of influence. Putin's threat to resort to the use of nuclear weapons (he ordered his Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chief of Staff Valery Gerashimov to put the nuclear forces "in special combat mode"), places the world in the most dangerous situation since the 1962 Cuba missile crisis[1]. The West finds itself in a difficult position: to respond strongly to the Russian invasion, but without escalating a conflict that could lead to a nuclear confrontation.

Russia wants a radical change on the international order

 Russia today is a dissatisfied power. Its leader, Vladimir Putin, intends to radically alter the existing international order. The Russian President declared in 2005 that the dissolution of the Soviet Union "was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century", a phrase he repeated in December 2021, on the 30th anniversary of the Treaty that ended the USSR and gave way to the constitution of fifteen independent republics. Putin argues that with the collapse of the USSR came the disintegration of historic Russia, a point which he reiterated in his speech on February 21, 2022, when he proceeded to recognize the independence of the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk", which were formally annexed by Russia on October 5, 2022, together with the "oblasts" of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. The war against Ukraine was supposed to be a crucial step towards reconstructing the historic Russian empire.

 With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia lost one third of its territory and millions of Russian-speaking citizens remained in the new

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1. In his speech to the Kremlin Human Rights Council on December 8, 2022, Putin played down the possibility of using nuclear weapons, despite his veiled threat in the past that they were an option in Ukraine. He said that even though the threat of a nuclear war was "growing," Russia was "not crazy", and the Kremlin was not going to "brandish these nuclear weapons like a razor." This was probably a response to concerns expressed by partners like China and India.

countries as minorities, sometimes with difficult integration in the new nations. Conversely, there was a rapid fall of the communist regimes loyal to Moscow in Central and Eastern Europe, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and, in parallel, the expansion of NATO with the entry into the Atlantic Alliance of the USSR's former "satellite" countries (the Visegrad three in 1999, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Baltic three in 2004, Albania and Croatia in 2009).

These shocking events were perceived by many Russian citizens as a catastrophe of epic proportions, which eliminated their superpower status with the stroke of a pen. It constituted, according to Kissinger, "a harsh affront to Russian identity". Putin blamed Lenin for giving the Soviet Republics the right of self-determination and, of course, Khrushchev, for transferring Crimea to Ukraine. A 2019 Pew Research Center poll revealed that, at least 55% of Russians, agreed that it was a "great misfortune" that the Soviet Union no longer existed. And 61% considered that "there were parts of neighboring countries that really belonged to Russia." A paradox was that, even though Russia intended to profoundly alter Europe's security framework, a 2008 Levada Center survey revealed that 71% of Russian citizens did not consider themselves to be European.

It seemed, therefore, that Putin enjoyed broad support from the Russian population to question the existing situation and act accordingly.

The West tried to establish a new relation with Russia, but failed

The West tried to reach out to Moscow after the end of the Cold War. Russia was incorporated into the G-7 (that became the G-8, but only to discuss political, not economic matters). As early as 1997 the Atlantic Alliance signed the "**Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and Russia**" (in which the parties declared that "they did not consider themselves as adversaries"). NATO formally stated that it would not station substantial combat forces in the new members and that it had "no intentions, plans, or reasons to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of such members". A NATO-Russia Council was established in May 2002 as a framework to discuss all relevant issues related to security and defense, in which Russia had an equal status[2]. Over the last two decades, the US had been significantly reducing its troops

stationed in Europe.

Before the invasion of Ukraine, the West maintained certain areas of cooperation with Russia, such as the nuclear negotiations with Iran, the extension of the new START Treaty, and the OSCE special mission to monitor Eastern Ukraine. Russia was a member of the Council of Europe and there was a dialogue on European security within the OSCE. These were insufficient mechanisms, but they kept the diplomatic dialogue alive. Some pundits even suggested the possibility of holding a new pan European conference in Helsinki. In 2010, the EU presented to the Russian government a proposal to support the modernization of its economy, but it was rejected. In 2012 Russia joined the WTO.

Moscow considered that the West had taken advantage of its good faith (demonstrated, for example, when it influenced countries like Kyrgyzstan after 9/11 to cede their bases to NATO forces in action in Afghanistan) and of its difficult political and economic transition in the 1990s, to obtain geopolitical advantages to the detriment of Russia's interests. NATO's military intervention in former Yugoslavia, bypassing the UN Security Council (and therefore avoiding the Russian veto), with the bombing of Serbia and the dismemberment of Kosovo (1999), the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq (2003) and of Muhammar el Gaddafi in Libya (2011), were actions that annoyed Moscow considerably. The United States withdrew from the ABM Treaty and announced the installation in Central Europe (Poland, Czechia) of a missile defense system that Moscow saw as an attempt to neutralize its short-range nuclear weapons. The NATO Allies refused to ratify the Adapted CFE Treaty (because Russia maintained substantial military forces stationed in "the Flanks", mainly in Transnistria -a secessionist region of Moldova- and in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, two territories that had broken off from Georgia). In 2019, US President Donald Trump denounced the INF treaty, which prohibited the deployment of land-based missiles with a range of between 500 and 5,500 kilometers.

All of this caused a deep feeling of humiliation in a large part of the Russian citizenry and a desire for revenge among the Russian political class,

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2. However, the Alliance never accepted to discuss with Russia its "open door" policy. The Council met for the last time on January 12, 2022. Since then, all dialogue between NATO and Russia has been suspended.

especially Putin himself. Moscow's confrontation with the West ceased to be ideological, as in Soviet times, and began to feed on strong nationalism. Putin became an increasingly authoritarian and repressive leader, trusting only a small group of "siloviki", such as Nikolai Pátruschev, the secretary of the Security Council, Alexander Bortnikov, head of the FSB, or Evgeniy Prighozin, head of the "Wagner Group". Shortly before the invasion of Ukraine, he ordered the closure of the few remaining independent media, such as Radio Ekho Moskvy and Dozhd TV channel (TV Rain). The "Memorial" center, founded by Andrei Sakharov, Nobel Peace Prize winner, which paid homage to the victims of the "gulag" during Soviet times, was shut down. Not even the slightest manifestation of opposition to the war is now admitted. Opposition politicians like Boris Nemtsov or Alaksei Navalny have been killed or poisoned and jailed. The current director of the CIA (and former ambassador to Moscow), William Burns, points out that "*Putin suffers from a mixture of grievances and ambition, which profoundly determines his way of acting*".

The Russian military action against Georgia in 2008, the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and the war of aggression against Ukraine in 2022 have shattered all cooperation with the West. Russia is regarded now as a hostile power, as an adversary, not as a partner. There is no dialogue with Russia on arms control, and cooperation in other instances like the Artic Council, has stopped. Some former Soviet Republics are trying to distance themselves from Moscow.

The post-Soviet space, Putin's obsession

The post-soviet space, with countries historically linked to the Russian empire, home to millions of Russian-speaking people, straddling Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, and with immense energy resources, is of vital importance to Russia. All efforts of Vladimir Putin and his regime have been aimed at recovering Russia's preponderant role in that immense territory and curbing the attempts of other powers (the US, China, Turkey, the EU) to expand their presence in that area.

The efforts of western countries to extend their influence on areas that Moscow considered its "domaine réservé", represented for the Kremlin the trespassing of a "red line". Moscow accused Washington of instigating the

so-called "Color Revolutions" in Ukraine and Georgia (which Putin feared could spread to Russia itself) and saw in the decision to open the doors to those two countries, adopted at the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit, confirmation that its vital security interests were seriously threatened.

Russia reacted by adopting a highly aggressive foreign policy and demanding a near-total overhaul of the European order: it withdrew from the CFE Treaty (on Conventional Forces in Europe) and other international arrangements establishing confidence-building measures (such as the OSCE "Open Skies Agreement"); launched cyberattacks against Estonia in 2007 because the monument to the Russian soldier in Tallinn was relocated; interrupted the supply of natural gas to Ukraine (and, as a result, to its European customers) due to late payments; launched a military campaign against Georgia and recognized the independence of the breakaway republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008, after the Tbilisi government requested its membership in NATO; introduced offensive and defensive measures in the Baltic, Northern Europe and the Arctic, with extensive deployments of dual-capacity missiles, large-scale military maneuvers, frequent violations of the airspace of neighboring countries (some of them NATO members), intelligence and disinformation operations, and hybrid warfare. In 2014, in response to demonstrations that led to the departure of pro-Russian President Yanukovych, Russia occupied and annexed Crimea and intervened militarily in support of separatist rebels in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. More recently, Putin extended Russia's presence on the southern flank of NATO with military support to the Bashar el Assad regime in Syria and intervention of Russian mercenaries ("Wagner Group") in Libya and the Sahel, and is trying to gain influence in the Western Balkans, the Middle East and Africa. The situation has culminated with the armed aggression against Ukraine that began last February, which is still ongoing.

The attempt to "recuperate" Ukraine

Zbigniew Brzezinski, in his book "*The grand chessboard*" pointed out that, without Ukraine, Russia was no longer an empire with one foot in Europe. Vladimir Putin has repeatedly claimed that Ukraine is not a real country and that the Ukrainians are not a people as such, but are part of a Russian nation

that also includes Belarus. In his televised speech on February 24, 2022, he stated that the objectives of the "special military operation" were the demilitarization and "denazification" of Ukraine, in fact the elimination of Ukrainian nationalist political forces and regime change in Kiev.

Orlando Figes, in his latest book "*The Story of Russia*", writes that "*Putin never really recognized the independence of Ukraine. As late as 2008, he told the US President that Ukraine was not a real country but a historic part of greater Russia, a borderland protecting Moscow's heartlands from the West. By the imperial logic, Russia was entitled to defend itself against encroachments into Ukraine. Russia's annexation of Crimea, the start of a long war against Ukraine, derived from this dubious reading of the country's history*"[3].

Relations between Russia and Ukraine were very important for both countries. It is estimated that, before the armed conflict, some eight million Russians resided in Ukraine and some three million Ukrainians lived in Russia. Many Ukrainians crossed the border to work in Russia. Every year there were many million trips between the two countries. Many Russian civil servants came from Ukraine. Both peoples largely share language, culture, religion and history and there was a strong social bond. Trade exchanges reached 30-35 billion dollars a year, covering many areas (industry, energy, agriculture). 80% of Russian gas sent to Europe (even after the entry into service of the "Nordstream I" gas pipeline) passed through Ukraine. During Soviet times, Ukraine was the main supplier of grain and of many minerals to the Union. Ukraine's dependence on Russia for oil supplies and electric power was very substantial. The two countries shared aircraft, space, and weapons manufacturing industries before 2014.

Putin and many members of his political regime have never accepted that Ukraine should have the sovereign right to decide its foreign policy. And this, despite the fact that in 1994 Russia, together with the United States and the United Kingdom, signed an agreement that gave Ukraine security guarantees (the "Budapest Agreement") and, in return, Ukraine gave up the nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles that remained in its territory since Soviet times. Vladimir Putin has sought to ensure that there were always

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3. Orlando Figes, "*The Story of Russia*". Bloomsbury Publishing. 2022. Page 4.

leaders in Kyiv who were politically sympathetic to Russia and has tried to boycott those who were not. During Victor Yushenko's presidency after the "Orange Revolution" of 2004, relations between Russia and Ukraine deteriorated significantly (Yushenko was poisoned, probably by Russian intelligence services), and Moscow even cut gas supplies twice (January 2006 and January 2009) due to disagreement over prices. Yushenko's efforts to integrate Ukraine into NATO was one of the main causes of irritation for Moscow.

Following the Euromaidan revolution in 2014 (triggered by President Yanukovych's annulment -under pressure from Moscow- of Ukraine's Association Agreement with the European Union), which led to the ouster of Yanukovych, Russia intervened militarily, seizing Crimea, and supporting separatist rebels in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In September 2014, the so-called "Minsk Protocol" was signed between Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the OSCE, together with the leaders of the former "Donetsk People's Republic" (DNR) and the "Luhansk People's Republic" (LNR). The so-called "Normandy Quartet", made up of Russia, Ukraine, Germany, and France, was nominally in charge of supervising compliance. The Minsk agreements established a ceasefire, the decentralization of power and holding of elections in both republics. Unfortunately, these agreements were not respected by any of the parties and armed actions continued by both sides in subsequent years. The sanctions applied to Russia for its flagrant aggression were limited and Putin thought that Europeans and Americans were losing interest on the issue.

Negotiations were held between Russia and the United States in December 2022, when Putin had mobilized 150,000 troops close to the Ukrainian border. Moscow presented a draft agreement containing "*measures to guarantee the security of the Russian Federation and of the member states of the Atlantic Alliance*". The document stated that NATO would undertake not to proceed with further enlargements, including Ukraine and other countries, and not to deploy combat forces in member states that were not members of NATO prior to 1997. But Washington refused to reverse NATO's "Open Door" policy even though there was no intention of bringing Ukraine into the Alliance in the foreseeable future and there were

no immediate plans for further enlargement. In fact, by the time this document was discussed, most probably Putin had already decided to invade Ukraine.[4]

On the Ukrainian side, having enshrined the objective of membership in NATO within the Constitution, it would have been difficult to reach a compromise that satisfied Moscow's demand as it would have required a nationwide referendum, which most likely would have given a negative result. Since the beginning of the war in February, Kyiv formally applied to join NATO and last November the Alliance restated its "Open Door" policy, no doubt adding to the Kremlin's indignation.

Consequences of the war of aggression against Ukraine

Many experts agree that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine constitutes the biggest challenge to Europe's security since World War II. They describe it as a "tectonic movement" that will have profound consequences for Europe, for Russia itself and for the whole world. The war has destabilized energy and food markets, fueled inflation, and jeopardized the frail economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic.

• **China**. Putin believed that the Chinese leader Xi Jinping was the partner he needed because both share the desire to alter the international order, and both have imperial ambitions in their respective regions. Both countries have increased their military spending exponentially over the last decade. At their meeting in Beijing in February 2022, they vowed to be "partners without limits". China has not condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but has criticized NATO's expansion. And most recently, Beijing and Moscow have deepened their energy and military cooperation and vowed to coordinate their policies in multilateral fora, such as the UN, the OCS, the BRICS, and the G-20. However, while China shares Russia's rivalry with the United States, it also values its commercial relationship with the West, and it defends the principles of territorial integrity of states (linked to its claim of sovereignty over Taiwan), and of non-interference in internal affairs. Beijing never recognized the Russian annexation of

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4. Putin probably thought that the West's reaction would be mild, as it had been after 2008 and 2014, and might have been encouraged by the shameful withdrawal of NATO from Afghanistan in August 2021.

Crimea nor, more recently, the annexation of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. Xi Jinping is carefully watching the evolution of the war in Ukraine to develop his own plans over Taiwan.

• **Military operations**. Moscow has not achieved most of the objectives that it set for itself with the aggression, centered on a rapid military campaign that would force the Ukrainians to lay down their arms and bring about a change of regime in Kyiv, plus the recognition of its annexation of Crimea and the "independence" of the breakaway regions of the Donbass (later formally annexed by Russia after holding fake referenda). On the contrary, Russian advances have stalled, its army is incurring in heavy casualties and losses of military equipment, troop morale is low, and the prestige of the Russian Armed Forces is suffering a severe blow. Russia intended to quickly control Kyiv, occupy the whole of Donbass, establish a land connection between Russia and Crimea, and deny Ukraine access to the Black Sea, thus hindering its exports of agricultural and metallurgical products. But Ukraine fought hard to prevent it because it would have made its economy unviable.

NATO countries are providing military and financial support to the Ukrainian government, in accordance with the right of self-defense under the UN Charter. The equipment furnished by Western countries -such as the artillery systems "Himars"- has shown its superiority over Russian weapons. Military intelligence provided by the US is extremely useful to Ukrainian forces. As Russia has increased its attacks on Ukrainian critical infrastructures, the US has announced that it will provide "Patriot" systems to Ukraine. Ukrainian units are being trained in the West.

The Ukrainian forces have proven to be better trained and with higher morale than their Russian invaders, and achieved great successes, sinking the "Moskva", the flagship of the Russian Black Sea fleet, defeating the Russians in their Kyiv assault in early March, taking back the important city of Kharkiv in the east (the second biggest after Kyiv and close to the Russian border) in September, recovering Kherson (the only provincial capital that had been occupied by Russia) in November, and further advancing in the East and South[5]. Russian forces were compelled to withdraw to defensive positions on the eastern side of Dnieper River, although they remain on the offensive in Bakhmut and Soledar, some

small towns in Donetsk, with brutal actions by "Wagner Group" mercenaries. Some radical leaders like the Chechen Ramzan Kadyrov and the head of the "Wagner Group" Evgeniy Prigozhin, have criticized the way the Russian Army conducted the operations.

Russian forces have resorted to massive bombardments of cities and critical infrastructures (tactics already used in Syria by Russian commander, General Sergei Surovkin, himself recently replaced by Chief of Defense Staff, General Gerasimov), causing thousands of deaths and injuries among the civilian population, and great suffering during winter as many cities remain without power and water supplies. Putin's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has justified the bombardments alleging that Ukraine poses "an existential threat" to Russia.

• NATO. Putin got on well with Donald Trump. The former US president, like Putin, detested NATO and despised the EU. French President Macron went so far as to say that the Alliance was "brain dead". With Biden the situation has changed and, with the war in Ukraine, the unity between the NATO allies has been greatly strengthened. The Alliance has drastically condemned the invasion of Ukraine and reinforced the military presence on the eastern flank ("Enhanced Forward Presence"), with the deployment of four new multinational battalions in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, that are joining the four already deployed in Poland and the Baltic States, and with the prepositioning of heavy military material in those countries. The naval and combat aircraft presence in the region (notably the Baltics and the Black Sea) have been notably increased.

At the Madrid Summit (June 2022), a new NATO "Strategic Concept" was approved. Whereas in the 2010 Strategic Concept the Alliance indicated its willingness to cooperate with Russia, in 2022 the allies stated that: "*The Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro Atlantic area (....) In light of its policies and actions, we cannot consider the Russian*

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5. The Ukrainians have even been able to attack two air bases -Engels (twice) and Dyagilevo, deep into Russian territory (Dyagilevo is 122 miles south of Moscow and Engels is 372 miles from the area controlled by Ukrainians). Moscow said that the TU-141 planes employed by Ukraine used guidance from US satellites. The Kerch Strait bridge has also been attacked by Ukrainian special forces. And in New Year's Day a deadly attack on a Russian barracks in Makiivka (occupied Donetsk) caused hundreds of deaths and injuries among Russian soldiers.

Federation to be our partner (....). Any change in our relationship depends on the Russian Federation halting its aggressive behaviour and fully complying with international law".

The reason why many countries geographically close to Russia rushed to join NATO has been proven: the fear of Russian aggression. Countries like Sweden and Finland, which had been militarily non-aligned for more than six decades, have formally applied for NATO membership, and Denmark has ended its "opt-out" from the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. Putin's argument that the "expansion" of NATO poses an existential threat to Russia is fallacious, as he himself has said that the entry of Sweden and Finland in the Alliance "is not an immediate threat", although Finland has a 1,300-kilometer border with Russia and the distance between Saint Petersburg and Helsinki is less than 300 kilometers by sea and 400 kilometers by land.

• **Sanctions**. The Western nations have also acted with unprecedented resolve and unity, adopting a series of major sanctions against Russia. Sanctions have been imposed by the EU and the US, the other G-7 countries, plus Australia, Singapore, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan.

For the first time, the European Union finances the supply of defense material to a non-member country, through the so-called "European Peace Support Fund". It is true that several EU countries, mainly Germany, maintain a huge energy dependence on Russia, especially gas and oil. But there are signs of change. Chancellor Olaf Scholz definitively canceled the certification of the "Nordstream 2" gas pipeline and announced an "energiewende", annulling the closure of nuclear power plants that was scheduled for 2022, and adopting a policy of progressive reduction of Russian oil and gas imports[6]. European countries will strive to gradually reduce their energy dependence on Russia, thereby depriving Russia of its largest market and source of income.

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6. Russia was able to establish close relations with some German politicians -like former Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder- to influence their policies, which led to the heavy dependence of Germany from Russia's oil and gas supplies. During Angela Merkel's time Germany wanted to keep strong economic links with Russia, arguing that it would moderate Russian behaviour ("Wandel durch Handel").

On December 2, 2022, the EU decided to set a ceiling of US$ 60 on imports of Russian Oil by sea, effective 06.12.2022[7]. And on December 20, a top to gas prices of 180 euros/MWh was established. The EU will act on freight and insurance prices to prevent third countries from profiting through oil resales. Coal imports from Russia have also been banned. Putin has reacted declaring that Russia will reduce its oil production and will not sell to countries that top prices.

Russia has exponentially increased its political and economic isolation because of the sanctions and the withdrawal of many western companies from the country (although many countries outside the West have not joined the sanctions and keep normal relations with Moscow). Russia has been suspended from participation in the United Nations Human Rights Council. A significant part of the foreign currency reserves of the Russian Central Bank have been blocked preventing the payment of debt maturities, which caused the Russian Federation to go into default last April. Some of the main Russian banks have been excluded from the international financial system and the West has established a ban on exporting high-tech components and many other products, such as steel, to Russia. Overflights by Russian airlines through the airspace of European countries are prohibited, and foreign investment in the country has been halted. Assets belonging to Russian oligarchs have been frozen and confiscated and the EU-Russia Visa Facilitation Agreement has been suspended. The Union has blocked the accounts of the Russian state on social networks, as well as the channels "Sputnik" and "Russia Today". On December 15, 2022, the European Council approved a sixth package of sanctions, including the enlargement of the list of Russian individuals banned from entering EU territory. It also approved financial assistance to Ukraine in the amount of 18 billion US $.

Although so far, the sanctions have not fundamentally damaged the Russian economy[8], nor succeeded in stopping Russia's aggression, over time their impact on Russia's economy should be felt, as the country needs imports from the West to be able to function. There are, however,

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7. A price correction mechanism was included, to make sure that the limit in price remains permanently a 5% below the market price. This price ceiling will soon be extended to all G7 countries. Imports by pipeline will be excluded as EU countries without access to sea, like Hungary, have no other way to get oil supplies.

signs that Russia is being able to circumvent some of the the sanctions by diverting imports through third countries.

It will not be easy to maintain Western unity, due to the high cost of sanctions for our economies (especially for Europe). The war has produced the largest number of refugees in Europe since the 1940s (approximately 14 million), of which at least 8 million are now in EU territory. Some countries, like Poland, are bearing the biggest burden, as Ukrainian refugees account for almost 8% of their total population. Germany hosts over 1 million. Caring for the millions of Ukrainian refugees in the EU will be difficult, especially if the conflict drags on and many are unable to return to their country.

It will be necessary to finance the reconstruction of Ukraine when the war ends, the cost of which cannot be calculated at this time. The World Bank estimates that the country's economy contracted in 2022 by almost 45%. The EU is setting up the Ukraine Solidarity Trust Fund.

- **World impact**. The war is having a strong impact on international commodity prices, such as oil, gas, wheat, fertilizers, copper, nickel, or titanium, since Russia and Ukraine are among the major producers and exporters of these products. This is adding to the inflationary tensions caused by the pandemic and the lax monetary policies followed by central banks over the last few years. Rising grain and fertilizer prices is having a severe impact on countries in Africa and Asia that are major grain importers. This will destabilize them politically and increase the migratory pressure on developed countries. The IMF has lowered its growth forecast for the world economy for 2023, due to inflation, the rise in interest rates, the war in Ukraine, and uncertainty about China's GDP growth.

Putin resorts to nationalist propaganda at home and hybrid warfare against the West

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8. Russian technocrats, such as Central Bank Governor Elvira Nabiullina, and Sberbank CEO, Herman Gref, skillfully acted to cushion the impact of sanctions. The Ruble has kept its pre-war value, thanks to the adoption of strict exchange controls and profiting from the high prices of energy products. It has also benefited from the complicity of Saudi Arabia and Iran (the latter has become a supplier of military drones to Moscow). The "OPEC+" has maintained its cut in oil production adopted last November, as the price of oil has dropped by 30% since June. The Russian economy has contracted only by 2.9% since the war began. However, the forecast for 2023 is a further GDP contraction of 3.1%.

In view of the many setbacks from its reckless venture, Putin is resorting to strong nationalist propaganda to try and motivate the Russian population and gain their acceptance of the sacrifices that the war effort is imposing on them. In this respect he is following the same path as many of his predecessors. When facing the German aggression in 1941, Josef Stalin called upon the Soviet citizens to unite "on this war on the entire Soviet nation"[9]. The war against the Germans became "The Great Patriotic War" and Stalin asked the soldiers to be inspired by "our great ancestors", naming heroes such as Alexander Nevsky, Dmitry Donskoi, Dmitry Pozharsky, Aleksandr Suvorov and Mikhail Kutuzov, the generals that fought against the Swedish invading armies in the 18th century and defeated Napoleon in 1812[10].

Based on a twisted interpretation of Russian history, Putin has called upon his people to restore their influence on what he called "The Russian world", to defend traditional Russian values within the territory of the former USSR against the corrupt "liberal" Western ideas and fashions, and become the leaders of the Slavs, concepts that find strong support from the Russian Church. Patriarch Kirill has likened the war in Ukraine to a "Crusade". The annexation of Crimea in 2014 after the "Maidan revolution" in Kyiv was highly appreciated by most Russians as a reversal of an unjust loss of Russian territory and the restoration of its great power status. Western sanctions that followed were viewed as the confirmation of the intention of hostile powers to put Russia down. Putin is using Western sanctions and their military support of Ukraine to gather the Russian citizens behind his leadership in another "patriotic war" against enemies who want to weaken Russia and break it up. The massive propaganda has had a strong impact on those citizens who have great nostalgia of the Soviet times[11], as the Soviet Union is still alive in the minds of some Russian citizens.

In parallel, Russian annexation of Crimea and its military support of separatists in the Donbass region fueled Ukrainian nationalism and

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9. At the Moscow metro station Kurskaya, there is a wall inscription saying: "The sun of freedom shone on us through storms, and the great Lenin illuminated our way. Stalin raised us to be loyal to the nation, he inspired us to work and be heroic". Words from the Soviet Union's national anthem.
10. See Orlando Figes, Op. Cit. Page 239.
11. A 2020 Levada Center poll showed that more than 70% of Russians believed that the Soviet era was a great period of their history and Stalin a great leader, finding justification of massive state violence during his long tenure.

strengthened the desire of many Ukrainians to join the European Union and NATO. Western military support and training of Ukrainian forces increased which in turn prompted Putin to accuse NATO of building an "advanced bridgehead" in Ukraine to attack Russia[12].

As he accumulates setbacks in the military field and the probability of a long war increases, Putin is concentrating efforts to try and break the West's unity and resolve in supporting Ukraine, as the costs of the war take a toll on Western economies, especially Europe's. He is using as many instruments of hybrid warfare as he can, including cyberattacks, energy blackmail and propaganda campaigns by all channels available to him.

This war seems "a return to the past", as Putin uses massive propaganda (and repression against those opposing the war) reminiscent of Stalin's times. Due to the repression, it is difficult to know what percentage of the population is against the war, especially after the Kremlin had to resort to a badly planned "partial mobilization", something that had not been done since WWII. The war has fundamentally altered the implicit social contract by which citizens do not contest the régime and, in turn, the system guarantees them a pacific and stable life. With the mobilization the middle class is directly affected. Many Russians, especially among the younger generations, are leaving the country, a brain drain that will have serious consequences on the future development of the nation.

CONCLUSIONS

Putin's imperial war against Ukraine (dubbed "Special Military Operation") will soon reach its first year and there is no clear end in sight. The Russian President has stated his readiness to hold diplomatic talks, but only if Ukraine and the West recognize his territorial gains, including the annexation of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson and, of course, Crimea. He also insists on the "de-Nazification" of Ukraine, which implies the change of government in Kyiv. And he requests a Western guarantee that Ukraine will not join neither NATO nor the EU, that there won't be any further expansion of the Alliance (including Georgia and Moldova), the recognition of Russia's "special interests" in the post-Soviet area, the return

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12. All these ideas were widely presented in Putin's historic Kremlin speech of February 21, 2022.

of Russia's frozen assets by the West, and the lifting of economic sanctions. This is tantamount to demand from the West a complete surrender.

The problem is that Putin has gone too far, especially when he formally annexed a large part of Ukrainian territory, and it would be suicidal for him to retreat, so he will likely continue destroying as much of Ukraine as he can, causing enormous pain to the Ukrainian population. On the economic side, he believes that Russia's Central Bank reserves and the high energy prices will cushion the impact of Western sanctions and hopes that the Europeans will force Washington to reach a compromise that he could sell to Russians as a victory.

On the Ukrainian side, the position is totally the opposite. The Ukrainian government demands the complete withdrawal of Russian forces to pre-2014 border limits, including Crimea, as well as war reparations by Russia, responsibilities for war crimes committed by Russian leaders and soldiers, and multinational guarantees of its security and territorial integrity. Kyiv does not trust Putin's words. If the international community accepted Moscow's annexation of Ukrainian territories, there would be no guarantee that Putin would not use them in the future as a staging ground to attack again, as he has done from Crimea. He has insisted on denying Ukrainians their nationhood and he is trying to destroy their country with heavy bombardments to force them to surrender. That is why Ukraine requests formal security guarantees from its Western partners.

For the moment, it seems that both sides believe that they can get more on the battlefield than on the negotiating table. Only smaller issues, such as the resumption of grain exports from Ukraine (brokered by Turkey), or the exchange of some prisoners have been addressed. And it is not clear what could prompt each side to give diplomacy a chance. Moscow's priority seems to keep as much of the conquered territory as possible, making any Ukrainian further advances very costly, and at the same time keep destroying Ukrainian infrastructures with the hope that this will eventually force them to negotiate under Russian terms. So, if none of the parties in the war seems capable of defeating the other and diplomacy does not stand a chance for the time being, most likely the war will continue, with no clear end in sight.

On the Western side, the United States has been instrumental in achieving and maintaining unity in the imposition of economic sanctions against Russia, and it is by far the main arms supplier to help Ukraine to withstand Moscow's aggression (President Biden has pledged immediate new aid of 1.8 billion $ and a further 22 billion $ at the end of February). Although the US Chief of Defense Staff, Mark Milley, declared in early December that Ukraine cannot win this war, the Biden Administration seems ready to continue supporting Kyiv indefinitely, and to deliver even more sophisticated weapons, such as the Patriot anti-missile systems or Bradley tanks. In fact, supporting Ukraine has become a crucial symbol of US commitment to European security and restored US leadership within the Western camp. NATO's Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, has declared that the Allies are ready to support Ukraine "for as long as it takes".

On the European side, French President Emmanuel Macron has tried to maintain a line of communication with Putin, both before and after the military campaign began, saying that "*Putin should not be humiliated*" and that "***We should offer guarantees to Russia***" (although France has kept its military support of Ukraine sending, among others, tanks AMX-100). Germany would also favour a deal. The capacity of the US and its allies to keep supplying military equipment to Ukraine is not unlimited and Washington is careful not to deliver offensive weapons that could strike deep into Russian territory and open the way to an escalation that nobody wants. But Central and Eastern European countries, like Poland and the Baltics, insist that Russia must be taught a lesson, and that it is not possible to go back to the situation before the aggression began. These fundamental differences have created tensions within the EU and the Alliance. Without the supply of more weapons (for instance, western-made tanks), Ukraine cannot successfully attack Russia's defensive positions in the Donbass nor withstand the probable massive Russian offensive in coming months. Poland and Finland have indicated their readiness to supply Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine and proposed to form a coalition of users of that German tank for this purpose.

¿What guarantees could be given, what concessions could be made to an aggressor that denies Ukrainians their right to choose their destiny and even their right to exist as a free nation? When the war began, some considered

that Putin's motives were defensive and that perhaps NATO had made a mistake by accepting new members that are geographically close to Russia. Perhaps it was a mistake stating at the Bucharest NATO Summit that Ukraine and other former Soviet Republics could join NATO, because there were no plans to take them in.

But, after almost a year of war, Putin's imperial ambitions have been confirmed. He has decided to punish the Ukrainians with blood and destruction for not bending to his will and fight for their independence and freedoms, and for their determination to be part of the Western world and not a colony of Russia.

Putin's imperial war has made the world more dangerous as rules are violated and formal commitments are broken. His threat of the use of nuclear weapons will accelerate the crumbling of the non-proliferation régime. The fundamental principle of international law that conquering territories by force was excluded from relations among nations, has fallen victim to the ambitions of an autocratic dictator. And he is trying to blackmail Europeans and Americans to accept his reckless behaviour. To allow Russia to conquer Ukrainian territory by force would be to open a Pandora's box. If he prevails, other dictators could follow the example (Taiwan could be the next one to be invaded by a big neighbour). The United States and its allies have reacted to prevent an authoritarian régime from dominating its neighbour, much as they did twice during the XXth century. And the heroic example of the Ukrainian people fighting for their freedom must be an inspiration to us.

Manuel de la Cámara is Ambassador of Spain and member of the Board of ED-ES. January 2023

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Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) for military use. State of the art

Natividad Carpintero Santamaría
Member of ED-ES

Introduction

Energy supply in the military, whether in facilities, ground and satellite communication and radar operations; conventional and remote theatres of operations; weapon systems and weapon development areas; land, sea and air transport, etc, is a survival factor.

The Cold War saw episodes of maximum tension when in 1973 the oil crisis disrupted world economies. In addition to political reasons, this oil crisis was also a consequence derived from the suspension of the Bretton Woods system, which caused stagflation that led to a deep depreciation of petrodollars in OPEC countries. The historic oil embargo of 1973 resulted in a devastating international economic situation that alerted countries to diversify their energy sources. It is from this period onwards that nuclear energy development programmes either matured or were launched in several countries.

Small Modular Reactors

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are advanced nuclear reactors that can be manufactured in parts and then transported by land, sea or air to their destination site, and be located far away from large electricity transmission grids. SMRs can develop a power output of up to 300 MWe, which would be about one third of the power of conventional nuclear reactors.

Compared to conventional nuclear reactors, SMRs are characterized by simplified design features and are equipped with intrinsic self-pressurization and safety systems. These new systems rely on physical phenomena, such as gravity circulation of the coolant, or convective heat transfer, which allows the cooling system to be independent of external power supply. Another advantage of SMRs is that some are designed to operate for almost

30 years without the need for refueling. Furthermore, these SMRs could be combined with renewable energies, which would make them more efficient in a hybrid energy system, providing greater security of electricity supply, as renewable energies, such as wind and solar, are stochastic sources that depend on the weather and the time of day.

From the point of view of supply, one of the advantages of using nuclear energy over oil, apart from not emitting CO_2 during operation and having some of the lowest emission values in the complete life cycle (between 5.1 and 6.4 grams of CO_2 per kilowatt hour), this means a significant reduction in the supply of liquid fuel. This reduction in the supply of the liquid fuel minimizes storage infrastructures and logistics and reduces the costs and risks associated with its transport across international land borders, seas, oceans, straits, etc. Another important consideration is that nuclear fuel has a life span between 10 and 20 years from a first initial charge, requiring minimal human interaction for refueling.

Initial development of SMR for military use

Early in 1960s, the United States and the Soviet Union began to develop in collaboration mobile uranium thermal power plants (commonly called Mobile Nuclear Reactor Power Plants, MNRPs) that were equipped with small modular reactors. The primary objective was to integrate them into the new nuclear power programmes as autono-mous electrical power systems, which would act

Figure 1.- Truck-mounted ML-1 reactor at the Idaho National Test Station. Digital Collection. US. Army Corps of Engineers Office of History.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ML-1 mobile nuclear power plant in Idaho, ca. 1961-1965.jpg

as emergency power supplies in disaster areas, hospitals and places that, due

to their remoteness, had no electricity supply.

The American ML-1 and the Soviet TES-3 were the beginning of small modular reactors to be included in future programmes. They could travel on all types of transporters: ships, planes, trains and trucks, over rough terrain that does not allow the use of conventional power supply systems. Once installed, the plant was fully operational after about twelve hours. ML-1, equipped with a gas-cooled reactor (GCRE), was included in the US Army Nuclear Power Program and could generate power equivalent to burning 1.5 million litres of gasoline. However, due to initial mechanical problems with cooling, faulty sensor readings and other problems, the programme was shut down in 1965.

Figure 2.- Mock-up of a mobile nuclear power plant at the Moscow State Polytechnic Museum.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/
File:Model_of_a_mobile_nuclear_power_plant.jpg

On the other hand, the Soviet Union needed millions of tons of fuel per year for its military bases in the Arctic Circle and the Russian Far East. In 1961, the SMR TES-3 was developed and built on a T-10 heavy tank with a modified design, adding three more wheels to its original seven.

The SMR TES-3 continued to operate until 1965, with the project being discontinued in 1969. TES-3 was followed by the VK-50 and others. In the 1970s the USSR developed the Sever-2 and Volnolom-3 and in the 1980s the Pamir-630D, mounted on the MAZ-79 tractor and capable of crossing tundras and swamps at extreme temperatures.

By the 1980s, the Soviet Union had developed advanced space technologies. The aeronautical engineers, pioneers in aviation and space technology, Sergei P. Korolev and Andrei N. Tupolev, during their forced labor

sentences in the Soviet GULAG, wrote universal pages in the history of engineering.
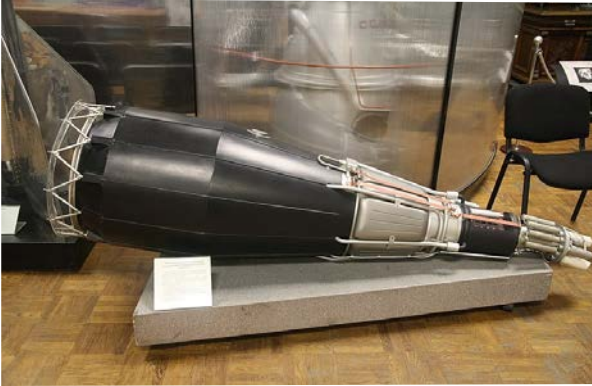

Figure 3.- Mock-up of the SMR TOPAZ. Moscow Museum of Technology.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Topaz_nuclear reactor.jpg

In 1987 and 1988, the USSR first launched the Thermionic Experiment with Conversion in Active Zone (TOPAZ), a 4.6-metre-long, 980 kg SMR that would supply electrical power to the Kosmos satellites launched into orbit in the 1970s. Each TOPAZ supplied an average of 5kWe.

Present programmes

In 2018, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in the US, in collaboration with NASA, developed the *Kilopower Reactor Using Stirling Technology* (KRUSTY), a fully automatic SMR designed to operate for decades in remote or hostile locations; on spacecraft; on the Moon or Mars. KRUSTY led to *Megapower*, with additional safety innovations in the event of reactor core failures. Each *Megapower* unit produces about 10 megawatts of electricity.
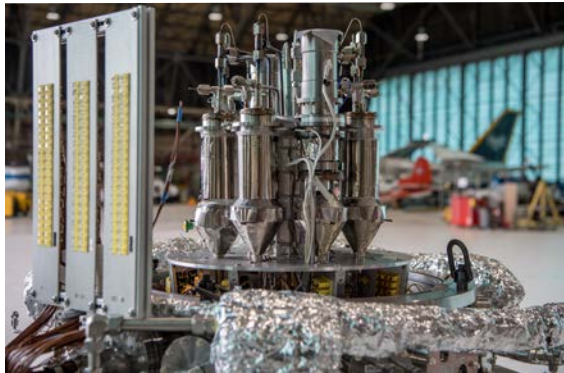

Figure 4.- Prototype 1 kW Kilopower nuclear reactor for use on space and planetary surfaces.
https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/thumbnails/image/ kilopower_experiment.jpg

In 2020, the US Department of Defence, through its Strategic Capabilities Office (SCO), announced *Project Pele*, which will enable the creation of a

1-5 MW SMR, with new scientific and technological advances, intrinsically safe and capable of withstanding external attacks while requiring a smaller exclusion zone. It is likely to be operational by the end of 2023 and tested in 2024. According to the SCO Director, the large-scale production of a Generation IV nuclear reactor will have significant geopolitical implications for the United States. "The Pele Project offers a unique opportunity to further advance energy resilience, reduce CO_2 emissions, while increasing nuclear safety and non-proliferation standards at advanced reactors around the world," he said.

Figure 5.- The floating nuclear power plant Akademik Lomonosov being towed to the Chukotka district in 2019.
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d1/
Akademik_Lomonosov_20190823%2C_cropped.jpg

In 2020, the Russian Federation's State Atomic Energy Corporation (ROSATOM) commissioned the world's first floating nuclear power plant, Akademik Lomonosov, equipped with KLT-40S reactors, which has been providing combined heat and power generation in the Far Eastern district of Chukotka province, one of the uses of which is seawater desalination. According to Russian authorities, new RITM-200 type SMRs are currently under development and would operate by 2028 in the Yakutia region of the Sakha Republic, one of the largest regions in Russia. The new SMRs would help new exploration systems and search for new sources of hydrocarbons in the Arctic Circle.

China began its development of SMR AC100 reactors at the Changjiang Nuclear Power Plant in Hainan province on the South Sea in 2010. In 2021,

it connected the first of these to the power grid in Shandong province, located on the Yellow Sea coast. China is probably the main investor in the manufacturing and commissioning of SMRs, targeting electricity distribution in densely populated areas; supply to distribution networks in remote areas and its military bases. Under commercial terms, China also hopes to be a global exporter of this technology.

Conclusions

By 2022, R&D programmes are underway in several nations that envisage the development of more than 70 small modular reactors manufacturing models. SMRs will arguably be the next generation of nuclear reactors, with designs that will allow them to operate for thirty years without refueling. They will also be adapted to different climatic zones, with different designs and different purposes to expand stand-alone sources of electricity supply that can be installed in existing grids, or in remote off-grid locations. All this within the framework of environmental policy compliance in terms of reducing CO_2 emissions.

In addition to the United States, the Russian Federation and China, other countries such as Canada, Argentina and South Korea have SMRs under development and licensed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The 21st century has seen the consolidation of new types of warfare (cyber, hybrid, electronic and information warfare) in which the energy security factor adds more needs to the military technological apparatus of states and where superiority over the adversary is based on high-tech attack strategies. This energy security factor must be based on a reliable, environmentally and technically sustainable supply.

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EU's Babel Ark

Fernando del Pozo
Member of ED-ES

And those that make it their business must keep four things in their minds: the first is that those that make war at sea must be knowledgeable of sea and winds; the second is to have as many ships, and of such class, and so provided in men and weapons and in everything that may be necessary as it is appropriate for the endeavour they want to undertake; the third is that they must be expeditious in everything, as the sea is not slow in its ways; and the fourth is that they must be ably commanded.

Alphonse X the Wise, Las Siete Partidas, TITLE XXIV. Concerning War Waged on the Sea. Law I. (1270)

The iniquitous invasion of Ukraine fell on Europe like a cluster bomb at a time when European citizens were growing in disaffection towards their common institution, the European Union, particularly in the defence aspects. The prevalent idea seems to be that the EU is just a benevolent but ineffectual organisation, bestowing on conflicts what is called soft power. If so much. For more serious matters NATO, of course, backed by the powerful US, is commonly considered the tool of choice, although everybody is confident it won't need to be used.

Although this disaffection is being somewhat alleviated by the contemplation of Ukraine's sufferings provoked precisely by their desires to join the EU, a certain estrangement is discernible, which is weird because objectively it can be argued that they have nothing much to reproach – beyond the pitiful complaint of too much bureaucracy, one of the UK´s main complaints at the time of Brexit – and much to be thankful for; at least if only the ungrateful would consider the benefits of about three-quarters of a century being deprived of the Europeans' favourite pastime, their internal

ideological, nationalistic or religious conflicts and resulting wars, in a continent whose bellicose history prompted Samuel P. Huntington's severe judgement: "*The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact, non-Westerners never do.*"

The fact that about three generations of Europeans, for the first time in our long and troubled history, have been free of the scourge of war within our midst, is a miracle that owes much of its merit to the European Union, to the organisations that preceded it and made its foundations, and to the few other international, mostly European, undertakings which uphold the same values, such as the now defunct Western European Union and of course the very much alive NATO.

But now, winds of national isolationism sweep the world, and unavoidably they bring back old or create new splits and confrontations. Europe is not by far the most affected, but an emphasis on the differences, national, linguistic, cultural or otherwise, and deliberate, mindless ignorance of the very much that we Europeans have in common, is pervading too many influential political discourses nowadays. Within the EU, Brexit has been the most dramatic so far, but not the only manifestation of this phenomenon, which makes itself felt more acutely when the debate touches on foreign policy, and even more so, on the armed branch of foreign policy, defence, because in this field, estrangement with the EU machinery in Brussels is reinforced with the recently acquired aversion of the average European citizen to military intervention, wherever and with any motive, born no doubt of deep awareness of the European fateful role in initiating both 20th century's catastrophes, the last and worst of the many that devastated our continent since we have historical memory.

It is precisely in the field of defence and security, our former core competence, where there is more and easier room for improvement in European cohesion and solidarity, and where improvement would make itself visible more quickly.

While persuading the national Parliaments to authorise raising defence budgets to 2% of the GDP, true to the repeated Governments' pledge (pledge actually made in NATO, hence affecting 21 EU Member States

– very soon 23 with Finland and Sweden – all party to the Permanent Structure Cooperation) is a task for politicians and not an easy one, measures could be taken in this crucial field that, at little expense, would contribute towards injecting in the EU citizens a sense of common purpose, a feeling of belonging, which given the symbolism that always accompanies the armed forces, would easily spread into other aspects of EU membership. Indeed, anything that can be done towards infusing European public opinion with awareness of the need for a better defence will result in better preparedness if we are forced to take to arms; but if we have to choose between measures that go directly to the practical aspects of preparedness, and those that, besides, show some degree of symbolism, these last are much more preferable in this political moment to reinforce the flagging attachment to the EU banner.

Warships are perfect candidates for this role. While they are few – and getting fewer with the current trend to replace relatively numerous old units with fewer numbers of more capable ones, always in search of savings – they are ubiquitous and more visible in peacetime than military aircraft

or army units. Those that have been part of, or have witnessed, a warship visit to a foreign port, with the attendant celebrations, visits to local authorities and formal returns, onboard receptions, and especially "open ship" for locals, know very well the positive impact in the relations between visited and visitors, as repeatedly attested by ambassadors and other diplomats. This is something impossible to duplicate with aircraft or – heaven forbid - an army battalion with its armament crossing a border for a visit intended to be friendly.

At the same time, "showing the flag", as these only apparently purposeless visits are called, is not just a generic instrument of positive influence, but also a precision tool for specific occasions. What is called "gunboat diplomacy" takes its name from a very modest German gunboat at anchor in Agadir in 1911 while serious matters of European "spheres of influence" (an outmoded and dangerous concept luckily abandoned… except in President Putin's mind) in Africa were being discussed. Her merely passive and apparently ineffectual presence counter-balanced the effect of an important French army contingent ashore, thus effectively furthering German interests. Mighty dreadnoughts were at the time being built, growing in size and power at every batch, in the most important European navies, but it fell on the humble 1,200 Tm Panther the honour of baptizing a way of making the national influence felt abroad and at very little cost.

However, the very strong association of warships with the state's foreign peacetime policy makes it very difficult to employ them instead for the benefit of multinational organisations. NATO knows this very well, and when sending naval forces abroad it is very careful to do it with a multinational force so that the cohesion and solidarity messages are clearly perceived beyond the exhibition of the Northern Star pennant and emblem by each ship.

The question for the EU in today's worrying circumstances is therefore how to cash on these advantages at little expense, to maximise the visibility of the EU's unity of purpose, while making a practical contribution to the forces' requirement for today's security challenges.

We believe that the answer is contained in one of *Wise Pens International's* (of which I am proud to have been one of the directors) strongest

recommendations contained in a study commissioned by the European Defence Agency in 2012 called "*Report to EDA on Future EU Maritime Operations Requirements and Planned Capabilities*". Our proposal was based on the experience of the EU's anti-piracy operation *Atalanta* and on the lessons learned during more than 50 years of operating NATO's Standing Naval Forces. The arguments used are, if anything, more appropriate today, ten years later, in geopolitical circumstances that were not foreseen at the time.

The proposal is, very simply, the procurement by the EU of a dedicated Command and Control (C&C) ship, internationally owned and manned, from which to direct EU operations wherever they are carried out, be they purely military, civilian, or Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (CBSD). The command and staff onboard the C&C ship would act at the operational level, something that so far has been the source of much discussion, since the means for it is not easily available.

This can be illustrated by the example of Operation *Atalanta*, of which the remoteness of the area of operations repeatedly claimed the presence of the operational headquarters (OHQ) in its vicinity, Djibouti being the preferred option, rather than the distant Northwood that finally prevailed, or its eventual replacement in Rota. The decision was taken in no small measure because of the consideration that establishing a European headquarters ashore away from Europe is a practically irrecoverable expenditure, which needs to be provided with security and support services-protection force, auxiliary personnel, accommodation, life support, energy, etc. - all dependent on the possibly fragile support of the local government. But by choosing a distant OHQ to avoid these insecurities, direct interaction with force is lost, so the OHQ tends to confuse its function with that of the higher level.

Instead, a ship acting in this role is intrinsically reusable, can remain at sea for extended periods, or berth at a convenient port in the area, thus gaining physical connectivity with land and air transport and communications. She does not depend on any support or permission from a local government, perhaps volatile or open to other influences; requires no more protection than the flexibility of an escort, and that only if there is a serious naval threat; carries her own auxiliary personnel, communications, logistics and

energy with it; and ultimately brings all the advantages of ashore HQ without any of its drawbacks.

Moreover, this flexibility means that its usefulness is not limited to the maritime environment. The embarked staff can be composed of army or air force personnel, or civilian experts in any field if that suits the type of task on hand, hence operations other than maritime can also be commanded from her.

The obvious lack of such a crucial asset has been tried to be alleviated by asking the nations to offer to NATO or EU the occasional use of an amphibious or replenishment ship temporarily fitted for the C&C function, which has several comparative drawbacks, mainly the loss of its original function, a particularly acute problem for amphibious ships, always short in numbers, whose temporary absence generates anxiety within the national planners; and in turn, this causes the owner nation to keep the right to withdraw the loaned ship from international service for whatever the reason and without warning.

Therefore, what is proposed is not just a ship dedicated to the purpose, but also that it should be wholly owned by the EU and internationally manned. In fact, given the single purpose, in such a ship the usually clear difference between the ship's crew and the command staff would be to some extent blurred. The ship's services, including from life support – accommodation, food, workspaces, etc. - to the necessary means of command, control, communications and intelligence (C3I) would be tailored for the C&C mission, with no need to allow for any hypothetical alternative mission, amphibious or otherwise, which permits a very efficient system design.

The idea is certainly not original. Ships devoted to this purpose do exist in the US Navy, currently the USS *Mount Whitney*, flagship of the 6th Fleet and Striking Force NATO, and USS *Blue Ridge*, flagship of the US 7th Fleet, both of about 20,000 Tm. Also, until 2005 the USN had USS *LaSalle*, of 13,000 TM displacement, preceding USS *Mount Whitney* as the 6th Fleet flagship. Of these ships, the first one is of special interest.

USS *Mount Whitney* list within its functions to act also as a NATO C&C ship, in a similar vein as other warships' command and control are transferred to NATO given the appropriate circumstances. But also, as

agreed in the Berlin Plus Agreements (2002), she could be made available to the EU, which maybe explains why neither NATO nor the EU ever considered the procurement of such an important asset. The Berlin Plus Agreements stated the "presumption of availability" to the EU of NATO's planning capabilities, other capabilities and common assets, an open list which certainly includes a C&C ship in NATO's service.

But this presumed availability is subject to two concatenated provisos: first, the condition that the US does not need USS *Mount Whitney* for national purposes; once this has been met, and control has been transferred to NATO, she could, in theory, be used for EU operations on EU request and subject to a NAC decision subsequent to the Berlin Plus Agreements (2002): "*We are now in a position to give the EU ready access to the collective assets and capabilities of the Alliance for operations in which the Alliance as a whole is not engaged militarily*". Finding a situation in which the EU would need the capabilities provided by a C&C ship is easy, but the simultaneous condition that NATO or the US are not concerned - or involved in a different situation needing it - makes it a very improbable occurrence.

Therefore, while theoretically the EU may plan under the assumption that a C&C ship will be available, the mere uncertainty generated by these chained conditions means that - at best - protracted negotiations will have to take place before the transfer of use is effected, or at worst - and more probable - that at the critical moment of launching an operation the crucial element of operational command and headquarters will not be available. This lack of certainty should be enough for the EU to procure its own.

Of course, a ship of the size and capabilities of USS *Mount Whitney*, capable of commanding a Combined Joint Task Force with a land component at Army Corps level, as has been demonstrated in exercises, would be highly desirable, but probably it would be an overkill for EU's needs. An operation at Army Corps level, with equivalent naval and air components, would probably go beyond the realm of the EU and would enter NATO's. To command an operation of the initial *Atalanta's* size (now somewhat reduced) or of the entity of an EU Battlegroup, it seems that a suitably transformed ferry of less than half the USS *Mount Whitney's* displacement would be able to provide enough life support and space for the

purpose. The necessary means of command, control, communications and intelligence (C3I) should be installed, which during an experimental phase could be fitted in containers affixed to the ship's deck and provided with the ship's electrical power. The experience thus acquired would eventually guide the permanent fitting of C3I elements.

A challenge would be installing a high-capacity communication suite on board, although this depends on the level of ambition for the C&C ship. For tactical command, systems based on laptops have been deployed in the past and can be improvised without difficulty, but a more comprehensive installation serving more complex and powerful communications would require more elaborate management and installation due to electromagnetic interference (EMI) constraints.

Structurally, it seems that a helicopter platform, and - if above deck design allows - a hangar, should be fitted. This is not an absolute requirement, but a convenient one that should be kept in mind at the time of selecting candidates, either because they already have it (not uncommon among ferries) or because it is not difficult to fit.

A different challenge, given the fact that there would be only one ship, would be its relief in long-duration operations, such as the repeated example of Atalanta. While crew and staff personnel can easily be relieved periodically with the ship staying in the area, the ship itself would have to go through periods of maintenance, which could be outsourced and carried out anywhere convenient, as the ship's technology – merchant standards – would be simple and the knowledge to maintain it ubiquitous. These maintenance requirements would anyway be a very small fraction of the total operational time, and the C&C function and core staff could be temporarily allocated to an escort or replenishment ship following the current practice.

One word must be said on the legal aspects of international ownership. In itself this is no problem, as witness NATO's full ownership of its *Airborne Early Warning & Control Force* (NAEW&CF), the only - and very successful - military international force in the world, and of two NATO scientific ships *Alliance* and *Leonardo*. But one element of our proposal is missing in these examples: the flag. To circumvent hypothetical legal

problems, NATO chose to flag the AEW&C aircraft in Luxemburg, and the two scientific ships in Germany (although based in Italy, and recently transferred to the Marina Militare).

We submit that the EU would have no such limitation. First, different from NATO, the EU (formerly the European Commission) is a full member of the United Nations (the only non-state one), and a signatory of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which in turn makes it a member of the International Maritime Organisation and other UN bodies. Also, the EU is a full member of other maritime organisations, such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), always the only non-state full member. We, therefore, believe that a request for the EU flag to be recognised alongside the state ones would be quite justifiable.

Moreover, UNCLOS after having stated in articles 90 through 92 the rights and conditions for states to own ships and for ships to fly a state's flag, in article 93 declares that "*The preceding articles do not prejudice the question of ships employed on the official service of the United Nations, its specialized agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency, flying the flag of the organization*". Hence, a precedent for the flag of an international organization is clearly set, and no other has better credentials to follow the example than the EU.

In summary, what is proposed here is the procurement by the EU of a ship, maybe a merchant, ferry or similar, fit it for the function of Command and Control, and put it in the permanent service of the EU, to be used in any EU operation, be it naval, land, air or joint, civilian or CBSD, and give her an international crew and staff, both commanded on a rotational basis or any other system that might satisfactorily be agreed. And we further propose that the ship should proudly fly the EU flag, which would be an example and reference of the community of purpose and solidarity that must guide the EU's external action.

Fernando del Pozo. Admiral (R) - Director, Wisepens International @European Defence Agency. Advisor to the President @GMV. Member of ED-ES.

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The energy and survival of EU nations in the current crisis

Luis Feliu Bernardez
Member of ED-ES

The EU imports in total almost 11 mbd (million barrels per day) of oil, so by reducing more than 4 mbd by sanctions on Russia, it has to turn to other oil producers in a limited and very stressed market, without surpluses.

Moreover, due to US sanctions, Iran has stopped producing almost 1.5 mbd. Therefore, out of a world market of almost 36 mbd, withdrawing some 6 mbd without having compensated for it yet is either foolhardy or a huge sacrifice at a high cost to EU nations for supporting Ukraine.

The effects of sanctions on oil and gas on Russia are adverse for both the EU and Russia, and not so much for the US which has an energy independence derived from the use of extraction by "fracking".

Russia is looking for new markets but with higher logistics costs while offering discounts of almost 30%. Europe, for its part, is facing extraordinary energy costs, as well as the urgent need to look for new suppliers of oil and gas in a global market where supply is limited and with a European energy strategy that can be greatly improved.

This competition for energy is changing the oil market in a way that will reinforce the energy confrontation between increasingly antagonistic nations and blocs, Russia-China on the one hand and the Euro-Atlantic bloc on the other, in which Europe will be more dependent on the US, both in terms of energy and security.

Despite the large increase in demand, oil-producing countries are not going to increase production because the extra revenue from higher prices allows them to clean up their economies. In fact, since the end of 2021, OPEC has rejected all calls from the US, EU and other major consumers to increase oil production.

Moreover, in the short term, there is no surplus oil available to replace Russia's 10 mbd production, nor is there enough gas to replace russian

supplies to Europe. There is simply not enough spare capacity on the market for a long period of time.

To try to alleviate the situation the US and Saudi Arabia, along with the United Arab Emirates, have increased their oil production, but it is now insufficient to replace Russian oil.

This scenario is further complicated by the fact that hydrocarbons remain irreplaceable to drive global economic growth in the short to medium term, as the transition to green energy still has a long way to go, as do strategic minerals and rare earths. To use green hydrogen from the most efficient resource, ammonia (NH_3), will require further development of industry as well as new infrastructure.

The same is true for gas: there is not enough liquefied natural gas (LNG) available to replace Russian gas supplies to Europe, which needs to increase its capacity and infrastructure to receive LNG cargoes, but this will require a lot of time and investment. At the moment, only Spain has sufficient capacity in Europe, with six facilities, and one in Portugal.

Meanwhile, the US has pledged to increase LNG supplies to Europe to 98 bcm (billion m^3) per year, doubling the 48 bcm planned for 2022. However, this would only account for 65% of the 153 bcm of gas per year that Russia supplies to Europe. In addition, US LNG is a 40% more expensive.

While the EU is struggling to diversify its energy supply due to the oil and gas embargo on Russia, relying on the US and the Persian Gulf monarchies, in the short to medium term there is not enough renewable energy capacity to replace hydrocarbons while sustaining the European economy. The dilemma is on the EU Commission's table.

The EU is therefore in a race against time to find new energy sources in the US, Middle East and Africa (mainly in Nigeria and Algeria) capable of replacing Russian supplies, in competition with other nations. This scenario is likely to be not only insufficient but much more expensive for EU nations. The EU remains heavily dependent on oil and gas, so if tensions and competition in energy markets continue to increase, the European economy will suffer more than others. In this sense, Europe will be among the losers once the armed conflict in Ukraine is over.

It is more than obvious than no country can run out of energy sources. Without this essential supply, loss of competitiveness and collapse of industries will be a matter of time and the recession will be historic. The energy dispute is therefore a question of the survival of nations, that is, a question of security for Europe.

For this reason, the short, medium and long-term implications of a stressed and fragmented international energy market should be one of the most important and urgent political, economic and security challenges that the EU must address as a core issue.

Luis Feliu Bernardez. Brigadier General (R). Member of ED-ES.

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Europe is fading: populism and multiculturalism

Juan A. López Díaz
Member of ED-ES

Summary

Europe disappears and Eurasia coalesces. The super continent is becoming a fluid and recognizable unit of trade and conflict as the Westphalian state system weakens, and certain country empires, Russia, Turkey, China, Iran, regain importance. All the current crises in the space stretching from Central Europe to China's territorial heartland are interconnected. It is a single battlefield. And on the other side of the ocean, the hitherto superpower, it is hardly credible to propose that, even if globalization accelerates growth among developing nations, a country with less than 5% of the world's population will run the show for another century. On the other hand, everywhere in the world, in the West, the Middle East, Russia, China, people desperately need something to believe in, if only to ease their state of mind. They are dangerously ready to accept a new catechism, populism, given the right circumstances, and the new religion, multiculturalism, needs to be revised, because at least in Europe and with certain groups it does not seem to be working, and may lead to serious conflicts.

Introduction

During the Cold War, and the so-called post-Cold War, Western civilization undoubtedly reached the height of its power. For more than 50 years, NATO was able to bring together a centuries-old tradition of political and moral values. Its ideas can be traced back to the philosophical and administrative legacies of Greece and Rome, to the era of Christianity during the early Middle Ages and to the Enlightenment ideas of the 17th and 18th centuries. The two world wars were a colossal disaster, but they created a desperate need for a coalition and a series of organisations to try to prevent a repeat of the disaster of the two world wars.

This was compounded by the creation of the European Union, which provided political support and ideological underpinning for the values espoused by NATO, summarised in the victory of the rule of law over the tyranny of rulers, the superiority of the rule of law over ethnicity and the social rights of the individual regardless of race and religion. Another important aspect that Europeans achieved in order to avoid reducing the impact of the individuality of nations in the economic sphere was the creation of a single currency. At the end of what can be called the great European war from 1914 to 1989, this accumulation of values which dated back to Greece and had a Christian basis, triumphed against a definitively defeated communism and finally in 1989, the West prevailed over the second of Europe's totalitarian systems, just as it had done over the first in 1945[1].

Of course, the changes following the collapse of the Soviet Union still created problems, as was the case with the war in the former Yugoslavia, where NATO once again proved its worth, and the EU expanded its space through the former Warsaw Pact countries. Generous welfare states were also created, which meant a highly regulated economy and which, among other things, was achieved by using so-called peace dividends to save defence costs. That in the long run, and especially in the light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, has proved to be a fallacy.

In short, and unfortunately, the post-World War II attempt at moral redemption has, over time, ended in a political and economic hell that is

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1. Robert D. Kaplan. *The return of Marco Polo's World*, Robert, 2018, Spanish Ed, pp.17-18

very difficult to solve. But in its relationship with other parts of the world, the EU's good times were in part due to its cultural and demographic separation from the Middle East and North Africa, not to mention SAHEL. In that zone of the world, supported and advised in part by the former Soviet Union, they turned countries like Iraq, Libya and Syria into what are considered prison states. Europe, not participating in the international grand strategy, was able to devote itself exclusively to defending the human rights of those millions of Muslims trapped by corrupt regimes and partly dependent on Soviet power. But all these Muslim prison states have almost completely collapsed and this has led to waves of migrants to European soil at a time of economic crisis and rising debt and economic stagnation.

The Change of tide: The populism

This has generated a backlash that populist movements and parties have seized upon to fracture the spirit of the European Union from within. But Europe is also dissolving from the outside, as its destiny joins that of Afro-Eurasia as a whole, what Mackinder called the Heartland or the island of the world. But this reality is merely the consequence of geography and history, since for centuries, in ancient times, Europe was linked to the lands washed by the Mediterranean to the North and South, so that Europe's southern frontier was neither Spain nor Greece nor Italy nor France, but the Sahara desert.

Europe, as we knew it, has begun to blur, and with it the West, at least as a distinct geopolitical force, is also losing much of its influence and identity, being assaulted by multiculturalism that include other religions, with the result that the paradigm of a Christian Europe with traditional and specific values is tending to disappear. But this is not new either. Rome only inherited some values and ideals from Greece, and little was saved from the Roman heritage beyond the law and some great engineering works. The Russian writer Alexandr Herzen said that Western thought will pass into history and become part of it as our body would become part of the composition of grass, sheep, chops and men. We do not like this kind of immortality, but what can we do?[2]

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2. Alexandr Herzen. *My past and thoughts*, 1973, p. 300

What is the greatest risk we can face, greater than any missile attack or cyber, biological, environmental or even nuclear threat? It is the fear of the threat posed by an ideology that offers to storm the sky, utopian, and at the service of a formidable power. Utopia is by definition the perfect political and spiritual system, so any action taken is morally justified. As with communism or nazism, some exterminated thousands of people in the gulags and others did so in extermination camps, and both systems offered utopias, nazism as ideological rejection of marxism, liberal democracy and the parliamentary system. Moreover, they espoused in their creed fervent antisemitism, scientific racism, and eugenics[3]. Communism is a doctrine that can be classified as collectivist and anti-individualist. Its proposals are based on the theory of class struggle, it seeks to centralize power completely, and its main objective the elimination of all private ownership of the means of production[4]. Everywhere in the world, the West, the Middle East, Russia, China, people desperately need something to believe in if only to alleviate their mental state. They are dangerously ready to accept a new catechism given the right circumstances, and what in the West is for the moment no more than a fad or a passing cult, can lead to extremism in less stable or more chaotic societies[5].

The multiculturalism

Despite the populisms, the football match between Belgium and Morocco at the last World Cup in Qatar brought to the table the existence of a failed multiculturalism. After the match, major riots broke out, not only in Belgium, but also in parts of France: Seine-et-Marne, Val-d'Oise, Lille, Rouen, Dijon and Marseille, and also in other European countries: Denmark, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands and Switzerland. In France, during a single night, more than 500 cars burned and fires broke out in different cities. The night of Saturday 5 November and the following Sunday marked the height of the riots with the burning of 1295 vehicles and the arrest of 312 people. The perpetrators of the riots, from October-November 2005 and now, have the same profile: very young boys, in many cases, already born or second and third generation citizens of the host

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3. Richard J. Evans. *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 2003, p. 229
4. Merriam-Webster Dictionary, definición 2.d
5. Robert D. Kaplan. *The return of Marco Polo's World*, 2018, Spanish Ed, p. 303

countries but living with their families isolated in "ghettos" and doomed to marginalisation.

These facts have continually demonstrated that there is no possibility of multiculturalism unless clear limits to tolerance are set in the West. Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared as early as 2010: "the attempt to create a multicultural society has completely failed". Shortly afterwards the liberal newspaper "The Independent" in the UK spoke of an issue of European dimensions: "Germany now joins France, Belgium, the Netherlands and, to a lesser extent, Britain, in questioning the multiculturalist approach adopted by governments for many years"[6].

Also the successive Islamist attacks: Madrid (2004), Paris (2015), Brussels (2016), Berlin (2016), London (2017), Barcelona (2017) and the growing threat of Islamist extremism have been making it difficult to regain sufficient confidence to assume a multicultural state. Being optimistic, it is possible to "set limits to tolerance", in the constructive sense of proposing a strong moral identity in Europe, recovering our fundamental goods and particularly all those that are deduced from absolute human dignity, articulating them and proposing them positively as the only possible space that allows us to recognize other identities.

Along the lines proposed by Angela Merkel: "Islam is welcome in Germany as long as it recognizes our fundamental values. The perception of Islam is characterized by the application of religious law, the absence of equality between men and women and in some cases, honor killings, things that are unacceptable for a country with Christian values like Germany"[7].

If we are not capable of this, it is not possible to build trust and enable a multicultural situation. Explosions of violence will continue, from time to time. We must consider that if we are not able to consolidate our own assets and identity, we will necessarily be heading for a major conflict in the long run.

Final remarks

The rise of the Islamic state and other jihadist movements, both Sunni and

6. German Chancellor Says Multiculturalism has Failed, Heather Horn, The Atlantic, October 18, 2010
7. *Merkel urges Muslims to be guided by German core values*, Diario de León, EFE, 04-X-2010

Shia, is nothing new. The rise of these radical movements, in many cases calling for a return to a lost golden age, has happened before. It happened twice in the mid and late 19th century in China with the Qing dynasty, the Taiping and Boer rebellions, or in the mid 19th century British India, the Sepoy Rebellion, and again in the late 19th century in the Mahdist revolt in British Sudan, which led to the death of General Gordon. The Boko-Harani revolt, naively labelled as a terrorist movement, is just another redemptive movement, born as a response to modernity and globalization. We must be vigilant and humble. Humble because we must not assume that progress has a linear path, it is not true, it can go backwards. And vigilant because we must stand firm in the defence of our values, individual and collective, which are what have brought us this far, and which have made Europe an oasis of peace and development in the last 70 years, not to mention the values accumulated over the previous millennia. Let us not get carried away by the siren songs of populism and multiculturalism. They can only lead to disaster.

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