Security Challenges on the South–Eastern Flank of the Euro–Atlantic Border

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Rise of anti–European, nationalist and populist movements in the EU

- United Kingdom Independence Party and the British National Party in the UK, the National Front in France, the Danish People’s Party in Denmark, the Sweden Democrat in Sweden, the Finns Party in Finland, the Golden Dawn and the Coalition of the Radical Left in Greece, We Can in Spain, the National People’s Front in Cyprus, the Northern League and the Five Star Movement in Italy, the Left Party and the Alternative for Germany in Germany, the Freedom Party in Austria, the Flemish Interest in Belgium, the Freedom Party in Holland, Jobbik and the Hungarian Civic Alliance in Hungary, the Bulgaria Without Censorship and the Attack in Bulgaria, the Order and Justice in Lithuania, the Estonian Independence Party in Estonia, the Law and Justice in Poland, the Direction–Social Democracy in Slovakia, and the Croatian Party of Rights in Croatia.
Resurgence of separatist movements in the EU

- There are several separatist hotspots in Europe: Catalunya and the Basque Country in Spain, Scotland and possibly Northern Ireland in the UK, Flanders in Belgium, Occitania in the southern part of France, Monaco and smaller parts of Italy and Spain, Lombardy and in Italy, Székely Land/Szeckerland in Romania, Blagoevgrad Province in Bulgaria, or Istria in Croatia.

- The motives behind the separatist movements in Europe are diverse: the EU integration has diminished the importance of the national borders; the economic crisis has damaged the national governments’ authority; the feeling that governments are wasting resources from highly–developed regions to balance budgets in under–developed ones; the desire to preserve their own language and culture and the feeling that the national governments do not take their concerns seriously.
Nations and regions of EFA parties

- EU
- EFA party nationwide borders
- 1: 28,000,000

European Free Alliance - European Political Party
www.efa.org

[Map showing nations and regions of EFA parties]

The countries with the highest number of deaths as a result of terrorism also have some of the highest levels of IDPs. There were over 16 million refugees and IDPs from the four countries with the highest levels of terrorism in 2014: Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Syria.

Refugee camps and their associated conditions of poverty, insecurity and vulnerability can serve as breeding grounds for terrorism.

Risk of civil unrest in the host or transit societies.

Rise of populist, far-right extremist political parties in host societies.

Next generations of present Muslim refugees experiencing discrimination, marginalization and poverty could become potential recruits for Islamists.

Risk of homegrown terrorists: the radicalization of the Muslim youth.
Prospects for a two-speed Europe

- Old separation lines are getting ground and old ones are deepening: euro & non-euro; Schengen & non-Schengen; North & South; East & West; pro-federal & pro-renationalizing and strengthening the role of states
- The debate on “more” or “less” Europe: the meeting of the 6 founding members of the EEC; the French–German Declaration on more Europe, which would include a European Security Compact, and the different positions taken by EU MS
- A two-speed Europe with an elite core and an East European periphery is a plausible prospect
Security implications of the Ukrainian crisis

- Has put to an end the post–Cold War status in Europe
- Has opened a period of great–power rivalry and confrontation between the West/U.S. and Russia in the political, economic, and information spheres reminiscent of both the Great Game and Cold War; it differs from the former in that is asymmetrical and highly unequal, and from the latter in that human contact, trade, and information flows are not completely shut off, and there is a modicum of cooperation
- Has brought back in Europe the militarily settlement of disputes
- Has led to an increased militarization of NATO’s eastern flank
- Has led Russia to openly challenge the post–Cold War, post–Soviet settlement in Europe, to move restoring its dominance in the Black Sea and enhancing its capabilities to project power, including in the Eastern Mediterranean
Security implications of the Ukrainian crisis

- As far as Ukraine itself is concerned, three potential scenarios are to be taken into account: a unified country, without Crimea, leaning toward the West; a loose federal state with a neutral status between the West and Russia; a partition of the country into two or several units, each of which would lean toward the EU or Russia.

- Adopting the thesis of a divided Russian people and using hybrid war tactics, Russia sent a signal to East European countries with significant ethnic or Russophone populations. Arguments used for legitimizing the annexation of Crimea could be used in other cases as well (humanitarian, Kosovo precedent, special case, legality, history).
Reignition of some unresolved/frozen conflicts

Frozen Conflicts

- Regions with frozen conflicts in selected countries
- Member states of the European Union

- Ukraine
- Crimea
- Azerbaijan
- Nagorno-Karabakh
- South Ossetia
- Georgia

Moldova
- Transnistria
- Abkhazia
Reignition of some unresolved/frozen conflicts

**Nagorno-Karabakh**
- Partially already defrost
- The regional alignment tying Armenia to Iran and Russia, and Azerbaijan to Turkey and U.S.
- Having a more independent foreign policy and a GDP almost double than Armenia, in the summer of 2013, Azerbaijan bought Russian arms

**Abkhazia**
- Would like to keep its independence

**South Ossetia**
- Would like to join the Rep. of North Ossetia, part of Russia; possible scenario if Georgia continues its European path; if Georgia chooses the Eurasian Economic Union, Russia might propose a “confederacy” which would restore links between Tbilisi, Sukhumi and Tskhinvali

**Transnistria**
- Depends on Odessa for communications with Russia, and in May 2014 Kiev asserted its control over it. However, the repetition of the Crimean scenario cannot be ruled out
Turmoil in Russia

- The Carnegie Moscow Center scenarios start from the premise of the country’s economic disintegration due to a major banking crisis which would lead to a spike in inflation, and a sharp decline in hydrocarbons (especially oil) production.
- Given the fact that Russian governmental institutions are weak, elite infighting could erupt very easily, and a serious political crisis could erupt.
- Even if an economic and political crisis in Russia won’t probably lead to the disintegration of the state, serious disturbances in Russia would trigger an export of insecurity to Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia.
- The main concerns arise from nationalities inside Russia seeking territorial statehood; the most separatism-prone regions: North Caucasus, Chechnya, Ingushetia, Dagestan.
- The conflicts in North Caucasus have in common four interlinked factors: national–territorial issues (desire for independence), Islam and Islamism, governance issues (high levels of corruption) and socio–economic issues (poverty, high rates of unemployment).
- The most problematic of the four factors is Islam and Islamism: a possible setting up of an Islamic caliphate across the entire North Caucasus, possible pledging allegiance to ISIS – this would not only destabilize Russia, but would undermine the entire fight against Islamic terrorism in Europe and the Middle East.
Turmoil in Central Asia

- Main security threat: “active research reactors, uranium mines, and dozens of radioactive dumps in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan” – these could get in the hands of ‘rogue regimes’ or terrorist organizations
- Inter-ethnic conflicts in the Fergana Valley that can embroil Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan
- Growth of militant Islam due to the grave social, economic, and political problems in the region; the newly established states’ poor administration capacity, corrupt governments and persecutions only worsened the situation
- Risk of spillover of guerrilla and terrorist attacks from Afghanistan, Pakistan, or western China; it could take place through connections between Islamic groups (e.g. connections between Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, head of the Hizb–i Islami of Afghanistan with the Islamic Renaissance Party or IRP in Tajikistan)
- Competition over water and mineral resources, especially between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan over the latter’s plans to build the Rogun Dam
Although overall BiH has become the most improved country over the last decade or so among the former Yugoslav countries according to The Fund for Peace’s *The Fragile States Index 2014*, the country’s score for Factionalized Elites has remained unchanged, and the Human Rights and Rule of Law score has actually worsened.

The unresolved situation in Mitrovica, the divided northern part of Kosovo over which both Serbia and Kosovo, formally or informally, exercise their authority.

The predominantly ethnically Albanian Preševo Valley region in south-eastern Serbia expressed its resolve at least for more autonomy from Serbia.

Against the background of the Arab Spring, a key Bosnian leader advocating for Sandžak’s political autonomy has threatened Belgrade that uprisings similar to those in northern Africa could take place if Belgrade continues with its policies of neglect towards the southern region of the country.
The corruption-organized crime-terrorism nexus

- Corruption: a soft-security risk and chief enabler of organized crime in Southeastern and Eastern Europe.
- Grand corruption involving politics as opposed to petty corruption associated with revenue generation, employment and access to services.
- Organized crime, especially drug trafficking, represents the most important source of financing for terrorist groups, providing up to 30-40 per cent of their funds.
- The high level of organized criminal activity, especially in the Western Balkans and the post-Soviet states, attracted terrorist groups into developing connections with organized crime networks already existing in the region.
- Since the Western Balkans is considered “the gateway of organized crime to Europe,” the connections mentioned above gave birth to a kind of “silk road” of drug trafficking.
- Drugs originated from the Middle East and Central Asia reach Western Europe via the Balkan route: heroin and opium travel from Pakistan to FYROM, Kosovo, and Albania, and then to the Western European markets.
The 7 “criminal” pyramids

- Incomes from the organized crime by rank
- Use of corruption by the organized crime by rank
- Capacity of integration of the organized crime in the political structures
- Number of persons involved in the organized crime by rank
- Personal risks for people involved in the organized crime by rank
- Amounts of money dedicated by the authorities to put under control the organized crime
- Governance capacity to combat organized crime

Risks for the national security
The 7 “criminal” pyramids

The 7 “criminal” pyramids are based on the premise that the organized crime is structured with a larger basis at the bottom level, followed by a decrease in the number of people at the middle and top management levels. The income earned by criminals is according to their high or low position in the structure of the business.

The risk for people involved in criminal activities are mainly at the lower levels and less for the big bosses at the upper levels who use corruption at the highest levels of decision for their lucrative and intertwined legal and illegal businesses.
The corruption–organized crime-terrorism nexus: Kosovo

- Besides its problematic international status, Kosovo represents a major security challenge to the region due to the criminal activity within its borders.
- Illegal trafficking organizations in Kosovo are involved in the exploitation of women, children and men not only from their country, but also from neighboring countries like Albania, Serbia, or Romania.
- These criminal cartels force underage girls and women into prostitution, young children into begging and men into forced labour all over Western Europe.
- The government corruption boosts trafficking activities: government and police officials have been convicted of trafficking crimes. A report from the U.S. Department of State shows that “the Government of Kosovo does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.” Kosovo’s former PM Hashim Taci as former head of the Drenica group within the KLA was suspected by the Council of Europe to be the head of a criminal network responsible for “smuggling weapons, drugs and human organs through Eastern Europe”. KLA was also suspected as having links with Al-Qaeda.
The most recent Global Terrorism Index shows that:

- In 2014, the total number of deaths from terrorism increased by 80 per cent when compared to the prior year. This is the largest yearly increase in the last 15 years.
- Most of the terrorist activity occurs in just 5 countries: Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria, accounting for 78 per cent of the lives lost in 2014.
- Terrorism is spreading to more countries, with the number of countries experiencing more than 500 deaths increasing from 5 to 11.
- The 6 new countries with over 500 deaths are Somalia, Ukraine, Yemen, Central African Republic, South Sudan and Cameroon.
- Countries which suffered the most from terrorism in 2014 were Kosovo, Austria, France, Czech Republic and Albania.
The deadliest organizations: Boko Haram, ISIL and the Taliban – over 50 per cent of the terrorist deaths are attributed to them

**ISIL**

- Mainly targets private citizens using explosives and bombing
- Alongside its terrorist activities, it is also involved in the Syrian civil war where it engages in combat with forces loyal to Assad, the al-Nusra front, Kurdish forces and the international coalition against ISIL. In fact, it inflicts more deaths on the battlefield than through terrorism: 20,000 battlefield deaths vs. 6,000 terrorist related deaths
- It increased its number of kidnappings in 2014, claiming responsibility for 101 separate kidnappings, up from 13 in 2013. The targets of kidnapping by ISIL are private citizens 44 per cent of the time, followed by police 25 per cent and journalists 15 per cent.
- Due to its losing ground in Syria and Iraq, ISIL changed its tactics. It wants to externalize its attacks in Europe and it is possible that many of the refugees still located in Turkey (or already arrived in Europe) to be terrorists

In Western Europe:

- The greatest terrorist threat comes from the lone wolf attackers
- 70% of all deaths from terrorism in the West since 2006 were by lone wolf terrorists
- France is estimated to have 180 ISIL returnees
In Eastern Europe:

- The main challenge comes from the connections between local Islamist radicals and their counterparts in the Middle East.
- 2 factors brought back the Islamist identity to Eastern Europe: the conflicts in the former Yugoslav space (the Srebrenica massacre, terrorist instruction camps in BiH); the Arab, Iranian, Azeri and Turkish charities and proselytizing agencies which restored and built mosques in the region, provided for Mecca pilgrimages, distributed copies of Koran, offered scholarships in Muslim educational institutions in the Arab world.
- Terrorists from the Middle East easily purchased fake ID cards from Eastern European acquaintances. With these ID cards, the terrorists managed to engage in smuggling and criminal activities in Europe.
- Ukraine had the 4th biggest increase in deaths from terrorism: from 2000 to 2013 it had only 3 deaths from terrorism (in 2013, it had no deaths); in 2014, it experienced 665 deaths from terrorism.
- The vast majority of the terrorist attacks are undertaken by the Donetsk People's Republic.
- In Russia, the terrorist activity continues to be largely driven by the Caucasus Emirate, a militant jihadi separatist group, but deaths fell by over 50 per cent from 137 in 2013 to 57 in 2014.
Cyber terrorism

- This threat is particularly important because cyber crime and cyber terrorism in Eastern Europe are increasing in scale and sophistication: 6 of the top 10 countries that experienced the most Internet fraud were located in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.
- In Eastern Europe, legitimate high-tech jobs are underpaid, so university graduates are tempted to turn to organized crime networks, which reportedly pay them up to 10 times more than the IT corporations.
- Therefore, with so many IT specialists coming from Eastern Europe, it is a great concern that they could end up being recruited by terrorists and terrorist-affiliated organizations.
- Furthermore, law enforcement institutions in the region are ill-equipped and underpaid, so they can’t fight cyber crimes properly.
- On NATO’s eastern flank, Romania was entrusted with the task of taking care of Ukraine’s cyber protection.
Instead of conclusions: some prerequisites for combating terrorism

1. Proper empirical and theoretical understanding:
   - In societies with higher levels of terrorism, Global Terrorism Index underscored 3 common factors conducive to it:
     - social hostilities between different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups;
     - state sponsored violence (extrajudicial killings, political terror and gross human rights abuses);
     - other forms of violence (organised conflict, violent demonstrations, violent crime and perceptions of criminality)
   - Another findings:
     - since 2000, religion has become the most important driving ideology for terrorism
     - trade and foreign investments are negatively affected by acts of terrorism
     - terrorism leads to the destruction of human and physical capital, which results in changes in human behavior
2. Changed mindset

- “The two most successful strategies for ending terrorist groups since the late 1960s have been either policing or the initiation of a political process. These strategies were the main reason for the ending of over 80 per cent of terrorist organisations that ceased operation. Only ten per cent of terrorist groups could be said to have achieved their goals and only seven per cent were eliminated by full military engagement.”

- We need a different conceptual framing and approach: having an exclusive military mindset (us vs them) does not work anymore; we have to complement the military solutions with non-military ones geared towards achieving sustainable globalization

- We also need to understand the importance of the corruption–organized crime–terrorism nexus, especially in societies marked by failed or failing governance
3. Means/tools

- The use of military force is necessary, but not sufficient → we need to have a plan B and move beyond the vertical concept of dealing with the terrorist threats
- The crucial role of human intelligence and countering social media terrorist propaganda
- We should not wait for a common definition of terrorism; in the U.N. Security Council we have reached a consensus on 3 organizations as being terrorist: the Taliban, al-Qaeda and ISIS and their affiliates → we should fight terrorism based on the 4th pillar of counter-terrorism and educate good analysts in area studies, integrating relevant social sciences as to forge an informed counter-terrorism strategy
- Viable alternatives for combating terrorism: building new inclusive and just international, regional and national environments; enhancing the legitimacy of national governments through fair political dialogue, decision making, security and justice; reducing corruption and bribery in failed and failing terrorism-affected societies; creating new mechanisms and institutions to tackle terrorist propaganda on social media; engaging the population (especially the youth) in constructive dialogue and activities
Thank you for your attention!

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