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THE POST COLD WAR ERA: ROMANIA AND THE STABILITY IN THE BALKANS

After the end of the Cold War, the most severe threats to the peace and security in Europe and also in the Balkans were instability and a lack of security generated by the new risks and challenges. Religious intolerance and nationalism – extremism, inter-ethnic conflicts, especially terrorist attacks as the ones on September 11, 2001, caused international community to become extremely fluid with imprevisible evolutions. The former director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), James Wollsey, characterised this reality in a suggestive way, saying that "we killed a giant dragon (communism), but now we live in a jungle full of poisonous snakes".[1]

Therefore, in the last ten years Europe witnessed lots of crises and conflicts that have burst in the area, such as those from Transnistria and Slovenia in 1991; Croatia between 1991 and 1995; Bosnia-Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995; Kosovo between 1998 and 1999 and the Macedonian conflict in 2001.[2]

It is easy to see that the centre of instability of South-Eastern Europe was Yugoslavia. The (in)stability ratio in the 20th century in the Balkans alternated in time, security being in a precarious state. Trying to hide these facts, communism deepened and actuated the causes that generated insecurity in the area.[3] The efforts made by both the countries from the region and the international community in the last ten years, have not solved the Balkan problem.

In this study I want to make a few suggestions that could generate some further arguments and possible directions in order to support the region to become a stable area for the European continent. This study has two objectives: on the one hand, it tries to demonstrate that for applying effective programmes and strategies in the Balkans a sustained effort in security level projection is necessary. This projection should take into consideration the necessity to have knowledge of the peculiarities of this area which is characterised by an ethnic, cultural and religious mosaic; numerous conflicts made this region the "powder barrel of Europe"; a lot of demarcation lines which cross over the Balkans (Catholicism/ Orthodoxy/ Islam; Western/Eastern civilisations; instable borders, etc[4]). Referring to this, Macedonia's President, Boris Trajkovski, at the opening of the "Crises Management in South–East Europe from PfP Consortium" working group, declared that the "history of our region, which today is called South–East Europe, was marked by many particularities that cannot be found to any other region of the world"[5].

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[1] **Stanley Hoffman**, Le monde nouveau et ses problems, Commentaire, Number 53 (1991).

[2] **Lyubica Jelusic**, **Vladimir Prebilic**, Between old ties and new challenges: Slovenian policy towards crises situations in South-Eastern Europe, in: **PfP Consortium, National Defence Academy, Vienna,**Ten years after: Democratisation and security challenges in South-East Europe (2001), p 69; **Wolfgang Biermann**, **Martin Vadset** (ed.), UN Peace-keeping in Trouble: Lessons Learned from the Former Yugoslavia (1999).

[3] **Jaffrey Simon**, Sources of Balkan Insecurity: The Meed for a Comprehensive Strategy, Strategic Forum, Number 150 (1998), at: http://www.rdn.edu/inss/s.

[4] **Gheorghe Ciascai**, The consequences of NATO enlargement for South– Eastern Europe regional security, X Romanian Military Thinking, new series, Number 1 (1999), p. 51.

[5] **Boris Trajkovski**, Address to Ohrid Conference, in: PfP Consortium, National Defence Academy, Vienna, *supra* fn 2, p. 6.

The discussion of an adequate security model for the Balkan states is situated not only in the searching process for better solutions for the efficient construction of a stable security environment, but it also subscribes to the scholars' efforts to find a new paradigm to overpass the actual models of security. Because the specialists, analysts and decision-makers neither had any profound research nor a projection basis to put effort on interdisciplinary studies (from the international relations theory to mentalities study and ethno-religious sociology/psychology phenomena, they could not always offer viable solutions for the problems of the area.

Unfortunately, many times inadequate strategies were adopted. These strategies did not take into consideration the particularities of the area. This could be a possible explanation for the pessimistic or disastrous visions launched by some analysts in theoretical disputes. For some analysts, Kosovo meant "the relope of Cold War in Europe"[6] for others Kosovo could become the hitch for a bigger conflict that could involve neighbouring countries like Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Russia.[7]   The American analyst Sean Kay from Wesleyan University, Ohio, highlighted that "yet in site of both the increased theoretical and policy attention to Europe's security institutions, the track record to date does not support the basic assumption that institutions necessarily increase security"[8].

To build up a durable stability in the Balkans implies, first of all, models and strategies to be applied in order to conduct to the elimination of the security dilemma[9] and to a new paradigm for regional security. Security dilemmas are not exclusively a characteristic of the Balkans; they also characterised the international relations during the Cold War period[10], when national security was based on military defence, the use of force and threats being enrooted in the international relations system. As Robert Osgood observed, there is a fundamental contradiction, in the sense that the main instrument for getting security (military force) became, automatically, the first threat to another state or region's security.[11]

After the end of the Cold War and after the disintegration of the Yugoslav Federation, the Balkan states fell into a similar dilemma when they used force instead of diplomacy as a solution to problems to be solved. The result was a bloody war and not peace in the Balkans.[12] There are some scholars who affirm that the Balkan states will not get rid of this security dilemma as long as there are forces in this area that are capable of offensive or defensive operations. I am of the opinion that if we build trust among the neighbouring countries

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[6]   **Lawrence Freedman**, The future of international polities in the wake of Kosovo, Jane's Defence Weekly Feature, at: /http/defence.james.com. wyswyg/home45.

[7]   **Narcis Zarnescu**, Quo Vadis, Kosovo, V Rumanian National Defence College Journal, Number 2, (1999), p. 63-64.

[8]   **Sean Kay**, Security Regionalisation in the new Europe. International Institution and Balkan Crises, in: Globalisation, Regionalisation and the History of International Relations, 4th General Assembly, Olso, 11-12 August, 2000 (2000), p. 209.

[9]   **Barry Buzan**, People, states and fear (trans. by Vivia Sandulescu) (2000), pp. 274-297; **Panayottis Tskonas**, Creating Conditions of Stability in the Balkans, II Romanian Journal of International Affairs (1996), p. 113.

[10] **Barry Buzan**, *supra* fn 9, pp. 286-287.

[11] **Robert Osgood**, **Robert W. Tucker**, Force, Order and Justice (1967).

[12] *ibidem.*

through a control of the military expenditures, through the civilian control of the army and the struggle against terrorism that generates insecurity, we will be able to increase security and stability in the region.

Stability in the Balkans can be established also through modification or even replacement of military doctrines or security strategies based on exclusive force, using a modern paradigm such as the cooperative security one.[13] In 1994, writing on Foreign Policy, the former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans described Cooperative Security as tending "(…) to consultation rather than confrontation, reassurance rather than deterrence, transparency rather than secrecy, prevention rather than correction, and interdependence rather than unilateralism"[14]. Michael Mihalka believes that through adopting a cooperative security model, states will not be any longer the prisoners of the security dilemma. "States in a pluralistic security community expect other states in the community not to use or threaten to use military force as means of resolving disputes. Such a community develops through extensive transactions and communication that aid and abet the consolidation of shared norms and values. This continued interaction is reinforced by cooperation, which further develops shared norms, which then create more interaction, in a positive feedback loop"[15].

The application of this security model in the Balkans presupposes first of all to create the proper conditions for the new elements that compose its substance. In the first place it should guarantee individual security by ensuring respect for human rights by the state[16]. "The essential basic value upon which a Cooperative Security system rests in unquestioned conviction by its members to uphold and maintain the Individual Security of its own citizens and those of their fellow members. This is the inner ring of the Cooperative Security system, which will ultimately hold it together over time under inevitable pressures and stresses, internal and external. Only the ideal and values of liberal democracy can keep this vital nucleus together"[17].

Barry Buzan discerns a major contradiction between individual and collective security assurance. Although states assure a certain security for their citizens, they do this using a high level of threats. This direct or indirect threats, having deliberate or involuntary co-lateral effects, are often severe enough to dominate the fragile universe of the individual security [18].

The American analyst is right, if we deal with states in which the fundamental liberties of the citizens are limited, and if the individual perceives the state and its institutions as constraint elements or strange to his aspirations. The Balkans events, from the last 10 years, are full of such examples in which individuals or national and religious communities did not trust the state, and which are actually fighting against the state. That is the reason for which I believe that NATO's intervention was necessary and that NATO's humanitarian presence in Kosovo represents an enforcement action of cooperative security. "NATO acted without a UN mandate. This occurred in part because the norm for action did not exist at the UN Security Council, while it did exist among NATO members"[19].

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[13] *ibidem.*

[14] **Gareth Evans**, Cooperative Security and Intra-States Conflict, 96 Foreign Policy (1994); **Richard Cohen**, Cooperative Security: New Horizons for International Order (2001), p. 4.

[15] **Richard Cohen**, **Michael Mihalca**, Cooperative Security: New Horizons for International Order, in: Cooperative Security: from Theory to Practice (2001), p. 37.

[16] *ibidem.*

[17] *ibidem.*

[18] **Barry Buzan**, *supra* fn 9, p. 61.

[19] **Richard Cohen**, **Michael Mihalca**, *supra* fn 15, p. 55.

A second objective of the present study is to present the political and the diplomatic actions taken by Romania in the framework of the diverse and sometimes contradictory actions taken by the political actors of South East Europe. Romanian diplomacy understood clearly ever since the collapse of communism that there is no East-European country that can stay aside while in the region conflicts, crises and other acts of terrorism take place.

After the collapse of communism in Romania, the Romanian government decided to join the efforts of the international community in the fields of security and peace. In this sense, Romania joined a lot of the UN and OSCE peace operations in the last years, 2001 representing a decade of full Romanian participation in these kinds of operations. Romania also contributed to missions of civilian police and it is determined to diversify its contribution in this field.

The creation of the Romanian military structures for peace-keeping missions and their participation in the neighbouring countries are both a direct consequence of the reforms that took place in the army and a proof for Romania's determination to continue with its contribution to peace keeping operations. The active participation of Romania in such operations underlines Romania's will to be integrated in Euro-Atlantic structures. The idea of joining the international community in such missions was strongly supported by the Romanian political class. Starting with 1991, more than 6000 members of the Romanian military have participated in diverse UN and NATO operations, or in the operations of the international community such as "Desert Storm", UNIKOM, UNAMIR II, UNSOM II, UNAVEM, MONUC, UNMEE, UNTAET, UNMIK, IFOR, SFOR, KFOR, and the "Alba"-operation. In the recent years, the Romanian participation in the international peace-keeping and conflict-preventing initiative concentrated on the region of South East Europe. Units of the Romanian army took part in IFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina (March -Dec. 1996) with a battalion of engineers formed of 200 people.[20]

The Romanian military participated in the 1996 engineer "Josef Kruzel". It was constituted and took action based on the decisions no. 23 and 45 from 1995 of the Romanian Parliament, on the decision no. 63 from February 7, 1996 of the Romanian Government and based on the decision of the Romanian Major State from December 27, 1995. The battalion was placed in Zenica and took action within the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), under the direct command of the British General Sir Michael Walker. It participated in actions of mine clearing, and in the building of bridges and roads. For example, the first bridge built with the participation of the battalion was opened on April 21st, 1996.

The Romanian engineers placed in Zenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina, were involved in several humanitarian projects. All the projects materialised in the Federation of Croats and Muslims and in the Serbian Republic, in all three areas of responsibility of the multi-national divisions: the North division (American), the South-west division (British) and the South-east one (French). Roads to isolated villages from mountainous regions such as Gladovic and Plahovic were built; the stadium of Sarajevo was renovated for the Athletic Games of Solidarity and books and other humanitarian aids were distributed in Zenica and in the neighbouring area. The Romanian engineers also contributed to the repairing of 150 km of the railway that connects Zenica with Doboj and Lukavac (in the centre of Bosnia-Herzegovina). In October 28, 1996 the Petrovo Selo railway bridge was opened.

By the Decision no. 25 from 1996 of the Romanian Parliament and by the Decision no. 73 of the Romanian Government from March 14 , 1996 Romania was part of the new military

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[20]   cf: Romanian Armed Forces in Peacekeeping Missions (1998).

structure SFOR for a period of 18 months (from Jan. 1997 – June 1998). The structure of the unity was changed, the number of soldiers decreasing to 180. For the first time, a connecting structure between the battalion and LANDCENT (NATO's land force that replaced the ARRC) was created.

From the beginning of the Romanian military presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina at the 1996 "Joseph Kruzel" Engineers Battalion 691 members of the military (84 officers, 250 military foremen, and 357 sub-officers) participated and more than 200 missions took place. The battalion's activities took place on more than 600 km square, in a risky mountain area with forests. Some of these missions were not accepted by the other participants of the mission. On average, in the two years of activity, the Romanian battalion served on 30, 000 working days, within 1, 800 million km with more than 30, 000 hours of functioning of engineers' machines. The participation of the Romanian Missions to IFOR and SFOR cost Romania as much as an expenditure for an Army Corps.

As a consequence of the appreciation of the Romanian soldiers for their participation in diverse missions, Romania obtained all the credit in the participation of other important peace-keeping missions and stabilisation in the Balkans. Since November 14, 1999 the Romanian army is present in NATO's mission in Kosovo. Starting with August 20, 2000, Romanian observers are part of the "UNMIK Mission" in Kosovo. Since the 1st of July, as a consequence of the Decision no. 22 from June 27, 2000 of the Romanian Parliament, the detachment "Bosnia" formed of 68 soldiers takes action in the mission of the SFOR II.

In the framework of these operations for the support of peace, the Romanian military collaborated with military belonging to other armies. Presently, Romania collaborates with the Netherlands within SFOR (The Netherlands Detachment) and with Greece within the KFOR mission. The Netherlands Detachment (formed of 49 soldiers) acts under a NATO mandate and as a consequence of the Decision no. 22 from June 27, 2000 of the Romanian parliament and the Decision no. 188 from October 19, 2000 of the Romanian Government. The Romanian collaboration with Greece is part of the MOVCON mission (one platoon of road traffic control).

On September 26, 1998 on the Third Meeting of the Ministers of Defence of the Southeast European Countries in Skopje an agreement - a "memorandum for the Creation of Multinational peace Forces in Southeast Europe" (MPFSEE) - was signed. This agreement provided the ground for the establishment of a multi-national brigade, which should be used for humanitarian assistance, conflict-prevention, peace-keeping and peace-enforcement under UN or OSCE mandate and under the leadership of NATO or WEU. The headquarters of the MPFSEE is in the Bulgarian town of Plovdiv and a Turkish General is chief of the brigade. Each participant's share in the common budget is proportional to the participating military units, i.e.: Albania 11, 76%, Bulgaria 23, 53%, Greece 17, 5%, Italy 2, 94% Macedonia 8, 82%, Romania 11, 76%, and Turkey 23, 53%.[21]

The peace-keeping and the humanitarian missions in which the Romanian Army participates highlighted the unanimous appreciation of all the NATO member states regarding Romania's constant effort to contribute to solving the major crises in different parts of the world. It also demonstrated that Romania has a lot of potential to participate in these missions. Those directly involved in such missions proved that they are able to apply the standard UN and NATO procedures.

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[21] **Jordan Baev**, Bulgaria's Experience in Peace Support Operations, in:**PfP Consortium, National Defence Academy, Vienna**, *supra* fn 2, p. 88.

In the last year of the last century, a wave of potential risks and dangers from the Balkans got to be identified and controlled. During the Kosovo crisis, through the joined efforts of the international community, a conflict that could endanger peace in Southeast Europe was limited and stopped. Although it was considered a great success, the international community went further, elaborating a policy based on realistic measures of integration of the region in the Euro-Atlantic structures. In the course of the European Union (EU) initiative, on June 10, 1999 in Köln, the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe was accepted.

In the founding document, more than 40 partner states and organisations decided to support the Southeast European states in their efforts to maintain "peace, democracy, the respect for human rights and the economic prosperity aiming to gain stability in the region"[22]. In this sense, Jack Seymour and Rick Rust are of the opinion that "the Stability Pact is a tremendous victory for advocates of peace-keeping and conflict-prevention. It represents a movement away from the traditional military-centric approach of reacting to crisis situations. The United States and the European Union have finally realized that allowing crisis to explode in the Balkans is much more costly - both in terms of life and money - than taking initiatives for the construction of long-term peace"[23]. In its turn, Bodo Hombach, the co-ordinator for the Stability Pact, underlined that "in so far the approaches on Balkans were directed to the resolution of crisis. The Stability Pact is the first attempt to eliminate the structural, political and the economical insufficiency of the countries from the region by a preventive diplomacy"[24].

In the first days after the Stability Pact was launched, on the initiative of the Romanian minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Andrei Plesu, the Romanian Government decided to create an inter-parliamentary group for collaboration on the national level in the course of the Romanian projects and priorities for the participation in the reconstruction and the economic development in the Balkans. This group established a national plan for rebuilding and regional economic reconstruction in South East Europe that was approved by the Romanian Government. In this way Romania participated actively in all three Working Tables[25].

In the realisation of the document, Romania started from the premises that "the Stability Pact is a prior exam of European integration that has as basis not only the accomplishment of political, economical and social criteria but also a prior for elementary behaviour before being accepted into European Union or NATO"[26]. A country can be a member of a Euro-Atlantic structure if it proves to have strong cooperation ties with its neighbours and to be able to harmonise its national interests with the international ones. The fact that a Romanian, Mihai Razvan Ungureanu, is the Special Emissary of the Coordinator for the Stability Pact may be considered as a proof of gratitude for Romania's role in this "Marshall Plan". In this way Romania has an important role in the mechanism which connects Brussels (where the Secretariat of the Stability Pact is located) to national co-ordinators of the Pact.

Holding the co-presidency of the Working Table 1 for democratisation and human rights in this period, Romania is determined to contribute wholly using its profound knowledge of the region, its experience in the area and its entire conception with regard to the cooperation in this region. Similar experiences have already been made within the activity of the regional cooperation mechanisms of which our country is part, such as the Black Sea Economic

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[22] Köln Document, 10 June 1999.

[23] **Jack Semour**, **Rick Rust**, Stabilizing Southeast Europe: When Action must follow Words, Basic Publications (2000), at: http://wwwbasicint.org/ Notesjuly12.htm.

[24] Mondorama, Number 102, (2000).

[25] See the appendix at the end of the paper.

[26] **Mihai Razvan Ungureanu**, O cheie pentru enigma balcanica, Bacalnii, Number 15 (2001), pp. 7-10.

Cooperation, the Southeast European Cooperation Process and the South East European Cooperation Initiative.

Romania also thinks that the specific aims the three Working Tables through which the Stability Pact functions want to achieve are equally important and intermingled. At the same time, I have to admit that the fulfilling of tasks of the other two working tables depends, in a crucial way, on the putting into practice of the objectives of the Economic Working Table and, hence, on the establishment of stability, cooperation, and security in South East Europe. The economic component of the Pact has registered an important progress during this year. This progress corresponds with Romania's goals and efforts which my country and the other Balkan states invested in this new structure meant to settle the regional cooperation. For example, at a meeting in Skopje (10-11 February, 2000), the European Investment Bank considered feasible and worth to finance 23 out of 40 infrastructure projects included in the Romanian National Action Plan. At the same time, the First Regional Conference of the Donors, held in Brussels by the end of March, approved 9 Romanian infrastructure projects amounting to 1,042 million Euro. Participating in the Economic Working Table, Romania - also an active member of the Memorandum of Understanding on Trade Liberalisation and Facilitation[27] - stressed again the necessity of immediate and concrete measures for the de-blocking of the Danube. In order to underline the necessity of political, diplomatic and economic measures aiming at free navigation on this important European waterway, I will make use of the words of Bodo Hombach who said that "we have institutions which can decide within two days which bridges over the Danube we should bomb, but we need two years to start repairing the damage and make the river navigable again, even though every day the blockage is costing Bulgaria and Romania more than the international help can provide. The politicians must grasp these terrible contradictions, not just for the sake of Southeast Europe but for the common European good"[28].

Coming back to the Working Groups, at the Third Working Table that approached lots of current issues, Romania presented three projects: the financing of the Centre for Fighting Organized Crime (SECI) and the supplementing of its prerogatives concerning the problems with small weapons, the establishing of a Regional Centre for Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management, the drawing-up of a joined document concerning the security risks for South Eastern Europe. The support of the Defence Reform and mitigating the human consequences of defence rightsizing is an example of the synergy created by the Stability Pact between specialized institutions such as NATO, the World Bank and the regional countries, in this case, Romania and Bulgaria. Romania and Bulgaria (with NATO's expertise) set up retraining programmes for officers whose jobs had been cut, to help reintegrate them into civilian activities. So far, around 2000 military personnel underwent such a training and the programme is now expanded to the other countries of Southeast Europe.

In conclusion, I want to underline in the first place the necessity to have scholarly research of the environment concerning security in order to have the possibility of drawing some security scenarios. I also wish to highlight the role of Romania within the framework of common efforts to establish an environment of stability and security in this part of Europe. For these reasons we consider the Stability Pact a solution for the speeding-up of the peace reconstruction process. At the same time, it is a way of building up partnerships which are

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[27] The Memorandum of Understanding on Trade Liberalisation and Facilitation (MoU) was signed on 27 June 2001 in Brussels. The major goal of the MoU is to complete the network of free trade agreements in the region by the end of 2002, creating a market of up to 55 million consumers. The agreements will be fully in line with the WTO rules and with relevant obligations of each signatory country vis-a-vis the EU.

[28] Mondorama, *supra* fn 24.

mutually profitable among the member states of the European Union and among the states of this region.

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