

# THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES TO THE ROLE OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SECURITY ON ENSURING STABILITY IN EASTERN EUROPE

## ABORDĂRI TEORETICE ȘI CONCEPTUALE ALE ROLULUI SECURITĂȚII NAȚIONALE ȘI REGIONALE ÎN ASIGURAREA STABILITĂȚII DIN EUROPA DE EST

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### SUMMARY

*Events in Europe in the last decades of the twentieth century (the fall of the Berlin Wall, the unification of Germany, the abolition of the Warsaw Pact, the collapse of the communist bloc and the USSR) led to a reconsideration of Eastern European security. After the abolition of the Warsaw Pact, the „balance of power” strategy in achieving security no longer works and, as such, the Eastern European security system must be rebuilt in accordance with the new realities.*

*The tendencies regarding the reorganization of the European security system are diverse and contradictory, each actor (state, group of states, organization) wanting to occupy a more advantageous place in order to be able to promote and, if necessary, to defend its own interests.*

*This article aims to determine the main definitions and theories of national and regional security in the context of Eastern European stability. Also the authors are willing to identify some problems and trends in the region and to list the main actors who are responsible for dealing with challenging issues and how to avoid them.*

**Keywords:** *National security, regional security, Eastern Europe, stability, definitions, theories.*

## REZUMAT

*Evenimentele din Europa din ultimele decenii ale secolului XX (căderea Zidului Berlinului, unificarea Germaniei, abolirea Pactului de la Varșovia, prăbușirea blocului comunist și a URSS) au dus la o revizuire a problemei de securitate din Europa de Est. După abolirea Pactului de la Varșovia, strategia „echilibrului puterii” pentru realizarea securității nu mai funcționează și, prin urmare, sistemul de securitate din Europa de Est trebuie reconstruit în conformitate cu noile realități.*

*Tendențele în reorganizarea sistemului european de securitate sunt diverse și contradictorii, fiecare subiect (stat, grup de state, organizație) dorește să ocupe un loc cât mai avantajos pentru a putea promova și, dacă este necesar, a apăra propriile interese.*

*Acest articol vizează abordarea principalelor definiții și teorii ale securității naționale și regionale în contextul stabilității est-europene. De asemenea, autorii vor să identifice unele dintre problemele și tendințele din regiune și să enumere principalele actori care sunt responsabili de rezolvarea problemelor complexe și cum să le evite.*

**Cuvinte-cheie:** securitate națională, securitate regională, Europa de Est, stabilitate, definiții, teorii.

**Introduction.** Security is a term that has several meanings. In fact it is composed of a multidimensional classification. Security is the full right of both the human being and the state. Freedom, peace, well-being and identity must persist in full security. On the other side, „national security” and “regional security” are two basic components of security, which achieve the objectives of state policy in the world arena. The area of Eastern Europe was also hit by great challenges and trials, and security was often a major problem in an imbalance, especially in the late twentieth century, and the beginning of the twenty-first century. In particular, the great changes led to the disintegration of communism, revolutions, national movements, independent countries and some regional conflicts, political, economic and social issues.

**The role of national and regional security on ensuring stability in eastern europe.** Between 1982 and 1993,

the concept of security was given different meanings. Thus, P. Hartland-Thunberg defined security as „the ability of a nation to successfully promote its national interests”; On the other hand, W. Lippmann states that „a nation has security, insofar as it is not in danger of having to sacrifice important values; if it wants to avoid war, and is able, if provoked, to preserve them by gaining victory in - such a war”. For O. Waever, security is „the preservation, under acceptable conditions of evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture, association, and national, religious, and customary identity” [1, p. 171].

Next, we analyze the concept of „security”, which began to be widely used in the United States in the late 1940s, when the term referred to the civilian-military sphere of research strategy, technology, control of weapons during the Cold War, in which the issue of military confrontations, especially in the

new nuclear dimension, has emerged as a dominant area of international relations. Security as an object of independent study emerged after World War II (1939-1945), and was later absorbed as a subdomain of international relations in the 1950s. The establishment of a new world order favored the deeper implementation of the term and multidimensional concept in the practical and scientific circuit.

Thus, the formation of new international security organizations was intended to maintain lasting peace and to avoid the outbreak of new global conflagrations. International security is the totality of measures taken by several states or international organizations, in order to ensure mutual survival and security. These include some diplomatic actions and agreements, such as international treaties and conventions. The concept of national security were mentioned in international security, but also spread in new terms of democratic security, security of cooperation. There have been some successes within international organizations in the fields of zonal, regional and global security.

Romanian researcher G. Chirleşan is of the opinion that „in terms of its features, the post-Cold War international environment is characterized by several defining elements: the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the unilateral imposition of peace, the supremacy of capitalism, highlighting increased regional authorities (MERCOSUR, GATT, ASEAN, SAARC, etc.), maintaining NATO's position as an important power structure (especially in Europe), the fragmentation or disintegration of some states in

Europe and the Third World, having as catalyst exacerbated nationalism” [2, p. 61]. Global security is in a bilateral relationship with national security, therefore the character of contemporary states must be based on a national idea of their own security, reflected in the conception of foreign policy.

Security is the means by which each state defends itself from a real and potential attack, conflict or war, in response to some external threats: economic, political, social, military, information and environmental. A strong state has the ability to avoid disputes, by having considerable political, economic and military strength. In such a way security is indeed lasting, and threats from abroad are small and insignificant.

It is also taken into account that no weak state would come with an unfavorable criticism of the largest nuclear powers: USA, Russia, Great Britain, France, China, because it would find itself in a tense political situation. But it is not excluded a possible war. Instead, small states would seek to strengthen their capacity in global regional cooperation organizations. National security means that a nation is protected from any danger outside the borders of the state. Although there are various factors (economic, political, social) that try to destabilize national security, it remains the only fundamental component in the life of a sustainable nation.

In his paper „Policies between Nations” H. Morgenthau states that „national security represents the integrity of the national territory and its institutions” [3, p. 382], while in the opinion of the Romanian researcher T. Repciuc na-

tional security represents „the degree of satisfaction of the fundamental national interests of a country”, as well as the set of measures taken, in accordance with a unitary conception, to promote those interests and defend them against aggressions, dangers, threats and risks of any kind” [4, p. 38].

Summarizing the above definitions, it is observed that generally national security refers to the existence of a concept of national security, approved by the Constitution and in execution within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of a democratic and prosperous nation. States that have a well-formulated strategic concept are integrated into the international security environment, in other words, they have a status that does not allow abuse by others.

The national interest demonstrates and protects some objectives of society and the state, when it manifests its national security in relations with other countries of the world, these major elements such as sovereignty, the principle of non-intervention in domestic policy and territorial integrity are paramount. The possibility of ensuring autonomous decisions and actions, ensuring the well-being of citizens and the prestige of the state are nothing but primary objectives of national security. National interests can be classified into primary and secondary and the state acts to implement them through diplomatic, political, economic or military means.

According to the British specialist in international relations, B. Buzan: „In terms of security, „region” means that a distinct and significant subsystem of

security relations consists of a group of states that have been destined to be geographically close to each other” [5, p. 233]. Neighboring or adjacent countries that are characterized by almost the same geographical specificity are called regions, zones or areas. From a historical perspective, any region was formed to create a cordon in case of foreign invasions. This territorial boundary so far designates a region, a civilization, a whole. In the case of Eastern Europe, it would be an imaginary line that would include the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea. Over time, countries in the region tended to maintain security, which is why they began to unite in alliances and politico-military organizations, for example: Central European Initiative (CEI), The Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM), The South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), Regional Cooperation Council (RCC).

British scientists B. Buzan, O. Wæver consider that „regional power is an important player in determining the polarity structure of a regional security complex” [6, p.491]. However, the regional security complex manifests a considerable position in the international arena, in preserving and spreading the freedoms and identity of its regions as characteristics of nations, peoples, states. This regional security complex is seen as a regional power, because it includes several states, with real political, military, economic and social systems, capitalized by world actors, depending on the level of diplomatic relations. Whether or not the security of a regio-

nal complex is devastated by a regional actor, the whole hierarchy collapses, with a negative effect on international security.

The Russian researcher, I. K. Sovetov, emphasizes that „regional security is a state of individual defense, society and parts of the state from security threats, which ensures the implementation of the constitutional rights and freedoms of the citizens of the Russian Federation, the decent quality and their standard of living, sustainable social and economic development within a subject (group of subjects) of the Russian Federation” [7, p. 10].

As mentioned above we conclude that the regional security is ensured when the constitution of independent countries is adopted and provides national stability of state security, defense of fundamental human rights and interests, economic development and international cooperation.

Regional security is in fact an element of national security. Increasingly, Eastern European countries are making progress in the area of regional security cooperation (economic security, cyber security, environmental security, energy security, etc.) through regional organizations. As a result, there is a positive outcome in mitigating existing challenges and problems in the field of international security.

According to the Moldovan researcher, N. Albu, the issue of security is approached as follows: „With the consecration of nation-states, in the middle of the 19th century, the issue of national security was traditionally approached through the concepts of peace

and power. Peace became the central concept of idealists and dominated international relations, especially in the interval between the two world wars. And in the vision of the realistic current, security was becoming a consequence of power. The degree of security was determined by the accumulation of sufficient power to discourage or defeat an opponent in the event of a conflict, and the threat of war and the war itself was the quintessence of security”. Adherents of realism and idealism have introduced the study of the problem of security in the field of international relations, as a result of the former conflicts on the European continent.

In the twentieth century, security was approached through two dominant perspectives:

- the theory of realism, for which international relations is understood as a power that is distributed between states. International relations are an area of necessity (states must gain power in order to survive in a competitive environment) and continuity over time. In the realistic school, the emphasis is on the concept of power and its derivatives: the politics of power and the balance of power. The authors who represent the realistic current are: Raymond Aron, Edward Hallett Carr, Robert Gilpin, John Hertz, George Kennan, Henry Kissinger, Stephen Krasner, Hans Morgenthau, Kenneth Waltz.

- the theory of idealism, for which war is considered a major threat, derived from the problem of national security, the elimination of war and the establishment of peace that lead to the elimination of the problem from the

international agenda. The representatives of the idealistic school are: Norman Angell, Charles Beitz, Michael Doyle, Francis Fukuyama, David Held, John Hobson, Stanley Hoffmann, Richard Rosecrance, Woodrow Wilson, Alfred Zimmern [8, p. 171].

Both theories brought new visions in international relations, sometimes contradicted, but thanks to them, the concept of security evolved multidimensional, they were the theorists who brought the new order after the two world conflagrations, through theoretical and practical attempts. Realists have an amoral view of the world. For them, the balance of power is the basis of international relations; they support security through alliances and limited collective security through NATO. For them, war is a corrective behavior. The theories characteristic of the concepts of „national security” and „regional security” remain realism and idealism, theories that have historically developed the concept of security, through which new horizons of academic research have been opened in the field of „International Security”.

Idealism is a current that has been studied by great scholars such as J. Locke, I. Kant, J. J. Rousseau. It is believed that one of the first founders was the German philosopher I. Kant with his essay „Eternal Peace”. Idealism as a theory manifested itself after the First World War (1914-1918), having a view of the moral world, which believes that international relations are based on universal values. US President Woodrow Wilson laid the groundwork for idealism in „The 14 Points”. The normal state of in-

ternational relations is peace, because the laws of nature dictate harmony and cooperation between people and wars. The idealists claim that: „War is an artificial product of undemocratic states”. One of the causes of the war would be artificial trade barriers. Thus it is considered that only free trade and the existence of a free market will bring peace to the world. Among their suggestions for avoiding war are the formulation of international law and the creation of international institutions designed to ensure peace, ie their principle is to obtain peace by law (League of Nations (1919), UN (1945)). The theory of collective security appears to idealists, through the idea of creating a world security system [9].

Security has been widely covered by international relations researchers. In particular, it is a concept by which a state is free from any threat. Today, in the event of a new challenge, the state uses the most effective means of resolving conflicts - diplomacy, considered to be the one that brings peace and quiet. Through cooperation diplomats are empowered to maintain the national security of their countries. Also, its excellences represent the state in regional organizations. As a result, the states of Eastern Europe experienced various stages of security, from the lack of their own security during the communist regime, to the rooting of the term security like democracy. Although the former Soviet republics became independent after the disintegration of the USSR, some challenges of maintaining national security of the former states can still be seen. Eastern Europe is not

only a conglomeration of states but also a set of mentalities imprinted that of communism regime nostalgia.

In the light of stated above, we continue mentioning that the British scientists B. Buzan and O. Wæver believes that „regional power is an actor that matters in determining the polarity structure of a regional security complex”. Eastern Europe has undergone great historical changes in the international security system, but it is a well-known fact that it remains a valuable regional player. For a regional security to exist, it is necessary first of all good relations between states (dialogue) and then some common historical and cultural elements, similar interests. Fewer differences and more similarities, the golden rule of productive cooperation in the regional security system, because states with practically the same common ideas will be able to settle conflicts. Otherwise, regional security becomes the area where, with the help of all its members, the cultural heritage, religion and, of course, the national values and principles of its surface are preserved. Security is an example through which the policies of the state are determined.

The definitions and theories of the concepts of „national security” and „regional security” in the Eastern European area are determined and known in a multitude of ideas approached by political scientists, researchers, historians. National security is meant to protect the state from a possible attack, war or siege. Also, the approval in the legal framework of the country of a law on national security will be a benefit

for the state in question, because it will surely remain in the world arena. Thus, regional security is a power, through which a huge potential of political-diplomatic, commercial-economic, socio-cultural but also technical-scientific activity is exercised.

The theories reflect the attitude of large groups of intellectuals towards the field of international relations, who due to their conceptualizations have formed notions and critical thoughts about security, as a political process and international phenomenon. It is understood that avoiding a war is security. The peacekeeping process seems to be simple, but it is much more difficult, as it balances with political morals, diplomatic necessities and orientation towards a common denominator, aiming at the difference of both military and economic power. Consequently, global, collective or regional security aims to keep the international situation under control, to establish a favorable environment for multilateral cooperation and cooperation with peacekeeping directives.

**Conclusions.** Regional security is the security of several countries in the immediate vicinity, which can fully create a regional system designed to ensure and preserve the peace, integrity, history, culture and values of all states in the area. Also, according to the authors, national security is the defining element of the existence of a democratic state. When we say „national security”, we mean not only the importance of the approved legal act, but also the way of being of the state, freedom is the lack of dangers, so it is

the country's ability to have its own protective shield against external challenges. National security means nothing more than the defense of the country's territory, its citizens and cultural heritage.

The authors conclude that examining the definitions and theories of national and regional security helped us to identify new challenges and trends

in the process of ensuring stability in Eastern Europe. The idealists' theories mark collective security as a means of stopping world wars, while realists consider war to be natural. The realists claim that security is a result of power, which gives us to understand that eastern European countries are always in a tension of security challenges, because they do not have military power.

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