

POLITICAL REFLECTION MAGAZINE

April • May • June • 2021

ISSN: 2042-888X

Vol. VII No. II • Issue 27

Interview with Professor Luis Tome

Future of NATO:
Significant Insights
from 2021 Meeting of
NATO Ministries of
Foreign Affairs

by Dr Rahman Dag

A Discussion on the Regulation of Violence in
International Relations

*by Professor Vladimir Mikhaylovich Kapitsy &
Ebru Birinci*

Shifting the Clausewitzian Paradigm from
Battlefield to Political Arena

by Dr Marco Marsili

Beyond Formal Dinners: EU-India Security
Cooperation in an Age of Chinese Belligerence

by Archishman Goswami

European Union's Uncertain Future
The State of Romanian-Russian Relations and the
Importance of a Bilateral Dialogue

by Adrian Pogacian

The Primacy of EU Law over French Law:
EU Law Takes Precedence over National Law?

by Dr Sharifullah Dorani

International Think-tank www.cesran.org
Consultancy
Research Institute

CESRAN International is headquartered in the UK
CESRAN International is a member of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)

CESRAN International is a think-tank specialising on international relations in general, and global peace, conflict and development related issues and challenges.

The main business objective/function is that we provide expertise at an international level to a wide range of policy making actors such as national governments and international organisations. CESRAN with its provisions of academic and semi-academic publications, journals and a fully-functioning website has already become a focal point of expertise on strategic research and analysis with regards to global security and peace. The Centre is particularly unique in being able to bring together wide variety of expertise from different countries and academic disciplines.

The main activities that CESRAN undertakes are providing consultancy services and advice to public and private enterprises, organising international conferences and publishing academic material.

Some of CESRAN's current publications are:

- The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development (biannual, peer reviewed)
www.therestjournal.com
- Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (biannual, peer reviewed)
- Political Reflection Magazine (quarterly) www.politicalreflectionmagazine.com
- CESRAN Paper Series
- CESRAN Policy Brief
- Turkey Focus Policy Brief

CESRAN International also organises an annual international conference since 2014, called **International Conference on Eurasian Politics and Society (IEPAS)**
www.eurasianpoliticsandsociety.org

- **Ranked among the top 150 International think tanks**



Political Reflection Magazine

Established in 2010

Chairman: *Dr Ozgur Tufekci*
Executive Editor: *Dr Rahman Dag*

South Asian Studies | Editor: *Dr Sharifullah Dorani*
American Foreign Policy | Editor: *Dr Mark Meirowitz*
Applied Economics | Editor: *Dr Hakan Uslu*
Middle Eastern Studies | Editor: *Dr Rahman Dag*
Interview Editor: *Ebru Birinci*
Interview Editor: *Dr Emrah Atar*
Assistant Editor: *Ruhullah Afshar*
Assistant Editor: *Oguzhan Cakir*
Assistant Editor: *Rukiye Patan*

Submissions:

To submit articles or opinion, please email:

Rahman.dag@cesran.org

or

editors@cesran.org

Note:

The ideal **PR** article length is from **1000** to **2000** words.

©2021

by

the Centre for Strategic Research and Analysis

All rights reserved. Political Reflection and its logo are trademarks of the Centre for Strategic Research and Analysis, which bears no responsibility for the editorial content; the views expressed in the articles are those of the authors. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher.

VOL. 7 - NO. 2

APRIL
MAY
JUNE
2021

POLITICAL REFLECTION

e-ISSN: 2042-888X

“ADVANCING DIVERSITY”

Contents

- 05 - 09 **World News**
by Ebru Birinci
- A Discussion on the Regulation of Violence in International Relations** 12 - 16
by Professor Vladimir Mikhaylovich Kapitsy & Ebru Birinci
- Interview with Professor Luis Tome Future of NATO: Significant Insights from 2021 Meeting of NATO Ministries of Foreign Affairs** 28 - 34
by Dr Rahman Dag
- European Union's Uncertain Future The State of Romanian-Russian Relations and the Importance of a Bilateral Dialogue** 42 - 45
by Adrian Pogacian
- 19 - 25 **Shifting the Clausewitzian Paradigm from Battlefield to Political Arena**
by Dr Marco Marsili
- 36 - 40 **Beyond Formal Dinners: EU-India Security Cooperation in an Age of Chinese Belligerence**
by Archishman Goswami
- 48 - 56 **The Primacy of EU Law over French Law: EU Law Takes Precedence over National Law?**
by Dr Sharifullah Dorani

Interview with Professor Luis Tome

Future of NATO: Significant Insights from 2021 Meeting of NATO Ministries of Foreign Affairs

Dr Rahman Dag
rahman.dag@cesran.org

Question: Before asking questions, I would kindly like you to evaluate the last meeting of the NATO Ministries of Foreign Affairs and its statement. Is there anything that attracts your attention most?

Luis Tome: First of all, it is crucial to consider the context in which this meeting took place: the first visit to Europe by a senior official of the Biden Administration, Secretary of State A. Blinken; after the publication of the US "Interim National Security Strategic Guidance"; and after A. Blinken himself had visited Japan and South Korea and met the Chinese counterpart in Alaska. Therefore, since it's clear that the priority region for US foreign and security policy remains the Asia-Pacific, it was important for the Biden Administration to give a strong political signal to its European Allies of renewed American commitment to NATO and European security. This meeting also took place at a time of rising tensions in international politics, particularly between the US and the China-Russia axis, but also between the European Union and China. Another factor in marking this meeting are the wounds in transatlantic relations coming from the time of the Trump Administration as also other tensions between the European NATO countries.

In this context, it was crucial that this meeting of NATO Ministries of Foreign Affairs conveyed to the world that the Atlantic Alliance is Back, as President Biden had stated, and an image of NATO cohesion. And I think that is exactly what the final statement that came out of the meeting does. It underlines the relevance of Article 5 and, therefore, the unambiguous commitment of the US to NATO's central collective defence clause - a crucial guarantee for the European Allies. It is also relevant that the statement emphasises the sharing of democratic values, that NATO guarantees the protection of our values, and it is an essential pillar of the rules-based international order. The reference to Russia's aggressive actions, while there is no mention to China, is equally significant. Finally, I also highlight the fact that, according to the statement, NATO will continue to adapt, namely by strengthening its political dimension. Strangely, the statement says nothing about what was one of the main results of the meeting: the maintenance of American forces in Afghanistan beyond 1 May this year and the continuation of the NATO mission – remembering that

there are now a higher number of other Allied troops in Afghanistan than American.

Question: Current international politics have been emphasising the economic burden of NATO's expenditure. The main concern in this issue is that the US has been paying for European Security for a half-century, and within these years, the European countries economically and politically flourished but still want the US to cover a major share of the Alliance. First of all, do you think that this concern has a point?

Luis Tome: This is an old recurrent question, and every American administration since the end of the Cold War has insisted on burden-sharing. However, it is wrong to look at the issue from a purely economic perspective, or that only Europeans have economic benefits and while Americans pay for European and international security. What really matters is the strengthening of the European pillar for the benefit of the Transatlantic Alliance as a whole and a better balance with the American pillar. It is very important that the European Allies assume greater responsibilities and a greater share of costs in NATO. Otherwise, there may be excessive European dependence on the US and thus an undesirable transformation of the Alliance into a pure American protectorate over Europe, or into a mere instrument of US foreign and security policy. An excessive capabilities gap could also lead to interoperability problems among Allied forces. Or make NATO irrelevant to the United States. On the other hand, among the European Allies, namely among the countries which are also members of the EU, there are many redundancies and useless duplications. Just as there are in Europe-NATO, in general, excessive shares in personnel costs and the maintenance of certain physical and bureaucratic infrastructure, leaving less room in defence budgets for research and development compared to the US. So, there are several other problems and dilemmas to be solved in Europe beyond the simple increase of defence budgets and cost-sharing in NATO.

This is also why I have some reservations about blind targets set in terms of percentages, such as the commitment established in NATO of a minimum of 2% of GDP on total defence spending. The main objective must be that the European Allies develop and possess better military capabilities, not simply to spend more for the sake of spending. And this capacity-building should be done on the basis of an assessment of the threats and their capabilities, priority investment needs according to identified gaps, force packages, planning and programming of capabilities, missions and operations, etc., combining national circumstances and specificities with the priorities, doctrines, policies and strategies defined by NATO as a whole. Rather than spending more, what matters is to spend wisely.

I also add three other aspects. First, it is paradoxical that Washington insists on "burden-sharing" while opposing Europe's "strategic autonomy" - the reinforcement of European military capabilities can hardly be dissociated from an increase in European ambitions and responsibilities. Second, NATO's main problem is not military capabilities but cohesion and

political articulation. Finally, in the face of many risks and threats (from terrorism to organised crime, pandemics, fragile states, emerging and disruptive technologies or cyber threats), the military is not the exclusive or even the main security instrument. Therefore, Euro-Atlantic security and the security of all Allies is not promoted only by increasing military budgets and capabilities.

Question: In association with the previous question, what would you say if somebody argues that European countries are reluctant to increase their defence budget sparing for NATO because the European countries do not unanimously support American policies, especially in Afghanistan, and the US has been instrumentalising NATO for its world politics and dominance?

Luis Tome: That does not make any sense. The NATO Allies have different security perceptions, priorities and strategic cultures. Moreover, NATO members are democratic countries, and therefore governments have to be sensitive to their electorates and public opinions. States define their defence budgets for a variety of reasons, but primarily according to their view of the security context and national interest. No country fails to increase its defence budget because it disagrees with the policies and strategies of its Allies. On the contrary, it even tends to increase its military spending in situations where it loses confidence in its Allies and/or perceives that its security and defence depends more on itself. A cause-effect relationship cannot be established, but interestingly, defence budgets have been increasing in Europe-NATO for seven consecutive years - that is, including during the period of the Trump Administration when disagreements between the US and its European allies escalated.

Question: In recent years, the US has been militarily investing in Poland under the name of NATO, while the EU has been in doubt of American endowment to the European security against Russia. If these phrases or comments sound true to you, would you agree with the idea that American and European perceptions of security threat level are gradually differentiated?

Luis Tome: Yes, indeed. With the end of the Soviet Union, the "common enemy" that gave rise to NATO and the anti-USSR *containment* strategy disappeared. Therefore, since the end of the Cold War, it has been more problematic to justify NATO's *raison d'être* and to define priority threats assumed equally by all Allies and establish common and coherent policies and strategies. Transatlantic divergences have been building up not only over Russia but also over terrorism, the "rogue states" or the "axis of evil", Iraq, Iran, North Korea, etc. The problem is that different perceptions of security and priority threats also add up between European countries. East European Allies regard Russia as their biggest threat, while Southern NATO members are mainly worried about the spill-over effects from instability and conflict in the Middle East and Africa, such as terrorism, organised international crime or irregular migration. And as we have seen in recent years, differences between NATO Allies have widened from Syria to Libya,

from the Eastern Mediterranean to nuclear Iran, from the Sahel region to Afghanistan. China is also emerging as another potential focus of major transatlantic and intra-European controversy and disagreement. Hence, it is crucial to strengthen the political dimension of the Atlantic Alliance for cooperation and articulation among NATO countries and with external partners.

Question: Since the end of the cold war, NATO has operated outside of NATO territories despite being constituted as a defence alliance and started with Eastern Europe to Afghanistan and Libya. These interventions are legitimised with the concept of humanitarian intervention or preventive wars. It is argued that the world has been experiencing the same conditions in Syria as there is a humanitarian reason, and the Syrian regime causes mobilisation of armed terrorist groups from all ranges and source of irregular immigration that turning European borders upside down. Under these circumstances, why do you think that NATO is still not acting offensively to end the humanitarian crisis and make regime change? Is it just because of Russian military involvement in the Syrian crisis before the US or NATO?

Luis Tome: The question is understandable, but the cases are quite different in their circumstances. There is conflict, violent repression and humanitarian tragedy in Syria, just as there is unfortunately in many other places - and we may also ask why NATO does not intervene in Yemen, Venezuela or Myanmar. Well, neither NATO nor any country or international organisation can intervene militarily in all places or in the same way. Of course, when NATO intervenes militarily and invokes certain principles such as the "right of humanitarian intervention" or R2P in one place and not in others, one may question the reasons or interests behind this "selection". But there are many reasons and explanations. One obvious explanation is that NATO's decisions require consensus - which obviously does not exist with regard to Syria. In other cases, it is a question of power and common sense: for example, would it be reasonable for NATO to make an intervention against Russia over Chechnya or against China over Xinjiang, similar to the one it made against Serbia over Kosovo? Obviously not. Moreover, an intervention may be appropriate in one place and be totally unsuitable in another - so careful consideration is needed to avoid aggravating the security situation rather than helping to resolve it. The reality is that each case varies according to its specific circumstances. This is why, for example, even in Libya, NATO intervened in 2011 but has not intervened in the Libyan "second civil war" that broke out in 2014. Regarding Syria, there are many reasons why NATO does not intervene as it did in Afghanistan or Libya, but this difference is not related to Russia's military intervention. Moreover, it should be remembered that before the Russian intervention in Syria at the end of 2015, the US and several NATO countries were already bombing positions of jihadist groups in Syria and had special forces operating in Syrian territory as part of the international coalition against ISIS. And that even before that, in 2013, President Obama

wanted to bomb forces of the Bashar al-Assad regime and that the US Congress prevented him from doing so for fear that this would precisely favour jihadist groups. The point is that a NATO intervention in Syria similar to the one it carried out in Libya in 2011 would be completely counterproductive and inappropriate. Such a consensus in NATO would be impossible, primarily because of the very different the US and Turkey, and also several other European powers, view their interests and threats in Syria. The complex Syrian geopolitical chess explains that not even the UN has a peace enforcement mission nor a mandate for another international organisation to act, unlike what happened in Afghanistan (where NATO-led ISAF under a UN mandate) or in Libya (where NATO answered the United Nations' call to the international community to protect the Libyan people). Therefore, it is not Russia but the specific Syrian cocktail and the disagreements within the Atlantic Alliance that explain NATO's non-intervention in Syria.

Question: It is no secret anymore that there are several disagreements among NATO members. The US is against Germany's agreement to buy gas from Russia via a new pipeline. Turkey and Greece are in a tense disagreement in the Aegean Sea regarding East Mediterranean energy resources. Eastern European countries want the deployment of missiles, but western European countries are against it. Not to mention disagreement on the financial burden of NATO. Do you really think that NATO could survive from all these potentially conflictual issues?

Luis Tome: NATO was, is and always will be what its members make of it. NATO's long history shows an unusual capacity to overcome crises and disagreements. But past success is no guarantee of future success. The current divergences are many and quite deep, and NATO has in recent years entered a real existential crisis. It will survive if the major Allied countries are predisposed to overcome divergences and commit themselves to the transatlantic Alliance. At the end of the day, if certain tensions are not overcome or aggravated, NATO may survive the exit or expulsion of some of its current members, but it would never survive without the US. So if Donald Trump had been re-elected, it is likely that we would be discussing the end of NATO. With the Biden Administration, the transatlantic Alliance is in a much better position to repair damage and resolve certain differences. On the other hand, NATO's adaptive capacity is the reason for its success and longevity. And in the face of a geopolitical, geostrategic and security context that has changed rapidly and dramatically, it is vital to re-adapt NATO so that it remains effective and relevant for the security and defence of its members, above all, by strengthening its political dimension.

Question: As you know, most of the NATO members are also members of the European Union, and the EU has its own agenda of or at least thinking about European Army separate from the NATO as a part of its defence and security policy. What are your projections on this matter?

Luis Tome: In theory, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the EU's capabilities are complementary to NATO, strengthening the European pillar of the transatlantic alliance. For obvious reasons, starting with its current 21 common member states, the EU is NATO's main strategic partner and vice versa. But despite the NATO-EU agreements and mutual cooperation, there are several dilemmas that need to be acknowledged and addressed. The CSDP makes the EU a more complete international player, but also more autonomous - of course, autonomous from the US and NATO, which displeases Washington. At times, there seems to be more competition than complementarity, and certain dilemmas are likely to intensify as the range of missions both want to undertake widens: the EU aspiring to undertake higher-intensity missions and operations, and NATO launching certain types of lower-intensity operations. Another dilemma concerns the balance between NATO and the EU for the 21 common countries, including the provision of means (always scarce) for missions and operations of both organisations. Conversely, some problems are magnified by the non-coincidence of membership between NATO-Europe and the European Union, especially Turkey. Meanwhile, Brexit has created a new geopolitical framework in Europe, with huge repercussions on the EU, transatlantic relations and NATO. The EU no longer has one of the two Permanent Members of the UNSC and holder of nuclear weapons (alongside France), which implies new balances within the EU - the former European "G3" gave way to the "G2", with greater prominence of the Germany-France axis. With the UK out, the EU is left without the strongest defender of the "Atlantic" vision and NATO-EU complementarity, which favours the EU's tendency to "strategic autonomy". And there are now seven European countries that are members of NATO and not of the EU, with Turkey and now also the UK as two big powers in this situation - raising new issues in NATO-EU cooperation and EU access to NATO assets and capabilities for its "autonomous" missions. In addition, there are disputes and disagreements between the EU and the UK, as we have seen over trade issues, financial services, the Irish border or the export/import of anti-COVID-19 vaccines. The dilemmas are many, and NATO and the EU have to be skilful and pragmatic to overcome the disagreements. But I am relatively optimistic! NATO and the EU have been cooperating side by side in crisis management, capability development and political consultations, as well as in providing support to their common partners in the East and South. Concerted NATO-EU effort is needed to build trust and make fuller use of existing arrangements and identified areas of cooperation.

Question: Rising rightist or leftist populist political groups in Europe and the US indicate that they would be quite influential in their own national politics in the near future. Do you think that this could complicate NATO's stance regarding democracy and freedom?

Luis Tome: Of course it can. The spread of nationalism, populism, authoritarianism and extremisms threatens the liberal international order and the security environment. And if national egoisms, populisms,

autocratic tendencies and "illiberal democracies" flourish in NATO member countries, as is already happening, then it makes it very complicated for the transatlantic Alliance to be the bulwark for the defence and promotion of freedom, democracy and liberal order. Fortunately, there seems to be a sense of urgency within NATO today to put democratic values back at the heart of the transatlantic Alliance's action. But we must recognise that the virus of nationalism and populism is difficult to fight even within NATO countries.

Question: There are too many significant points to cover in an interview, but as a closing question, I would like to have your comments on an issue that is the most important one regarding NATO's future.

Luis Tome: The decisive factor for the evolution and future of NATO is the strengthening of its political dimension, namely dialogue, articulation, cooperation and political cohesion among Allied countries. Organisations are what their members make of them, and NATO is no exception. NATO is a military alliance, but it is also the main political forum of the transatlantic community of shared values and interests. Without political cohesion among Allies, powerful deterrent and defence capabilities have less value. Without constructive political dialogue, differences between member countries cannot be overcome or minimised. Without political cooperation, it is not possible to formulate common and coherent strategies. Without political articulation, the transatlantic Alliance will face many difficulties in projecting security and stability in its periphery, whether to the East or to the South; effectively confronting the many risks and threats; managing crises and conflicts; establishing fruitful partnerships with external partners; or dealing with major rivals such as Russia and China. Without political cohesion, it will not be possible for NATO to make the necessary re-adaptation to a geopolitical and security context in great transformation. Nor to be the pillar of democracy and liberal order that the Allies want and preach NATO to be. NATO's military dimension remains robust, but the Alliance's political dimension and political role are undervalued and underused. NATO's future success depends on the ability of the Allies to leverage the political dimension of the transatlantic alliance.



www.cesran.org

Tower Court, Oakdale Road, York YO30 4XL, UK