

NATURE OF THE NEW CHALLENGES TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

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Abstract: *In this article, the authors briefly present the cross-border specificities of unconventional threats to the security of States generated by the new challenges of the international security environment. In the new context of the international security environment, some cross-border threats are developing, such as illegal trafficking, transit of migrants from Asia and Africa, as well as migration from Eastern European States to Western Europe. At the heart of the development of cross-border threats we can find the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the easy crossing of borders, low-cost land and water transport, corruption and the underground economy, drug trafficking routes through this region and the continued outbreaks of conflict.*

Keywords: *threats; terrorist organizations; organized crime; security; economic crisis; cross-border.*

In Eastern Europe, tourism and transport of energy resources are developing as a positive aspect, but, on the other hand, the activity of elements of cross-border organized crime, in particular illegal trafficking, is developing as well.

Among the most significant cross-border threats generated by the new challenges of the international security environment, we could mention:

- *cross-border organized crime (trafficking of any kind – drugs, people, weapons and strategic materials, etc., crime, money laundering, tax evasion) – is regarded as a major threat with an upward trend;*

- *international terrorism – it remains the main type of such a threat, having unpredictable actions and effects;*

- *cybercrime – it is an emerging threat, produced by domestic or mixed groups that carry out illicit activities in cyberspace (unauthorized*

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access, card cloning, illegal interception, compromise of ATMs and POSs, infection of computer systems, etc.). On this date, when we have a modern supertechnological society, cyberspace is a universal asset. Alvin Toffler once said that knowledge is “the ultimate substitute for other resources.”¹ In this case, cyber attacks by state or non-state actors on the critical information and communication infrastructures of other actors constitute a consistent threat to their knowledge and national security respectively;

- *environmental degradation* – it is a cross-border ecological threat when it affects the security of several states.

- *the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic*² – which strongly affects the world economy and tests the cohesion of the Member States of the North Atlantic Alliance and of the European Union.

Extremely interesting is, in our view, the statement that Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO Secretary General, gave in May 2004, following his visit to Bucharest, according to which, “*the defining threats of this century are: terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and unstable states*”³, and to combat them “*we must rectify our traditional way of thinking about security*”⁴.

The study of Romania’s security and defense strategies, starting with the one in 2007, shows that the main threats to security are terrorism, cross-border organized crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and carrier vectors, regional conflicts and ineffective governance. We believe that these strategies address those presented as the main threats starting from the position of a Member state of the North Atlantic Alliance and of the European Union, or perhaps from the statement presented above by the Secretary General of NATO.

The national security of a state may be threatened by risks arising from serious natural phenomena, geo-physical, weather-climatic or structural, coming from the environment or reflecting environmental degradation. Of these risks we can list: natural disasters or other serious

¹ Alvin și Heidi Toffler, *Război și antirăzboi*, Editura Antet, București, 1995, p. 175.

² Strategia Națională de Apărare a Țării pentru perioada 2020-2024 „*Împreună, pentru o Românie sigură și prosperă într-o lume marcată de noi provocări*”, București, 2020, p.24.

³ Gheorghe Rădulescu, Bogdan Costache, Jjaap de Hoop Scheffer: *Suntem bucuroși să colaborăm cu România ca aliați*, în Curierul Național nr. 4017/14.05.2004.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

geo-climatic or weather-climatic phenomena; industrial or ecological disasters; depletion of energy resources and drinking water reserves; the production of pandemics; the emergence and uncontrollable evolution of viruses, microbes and bacteria.

Given that the offenses have already taken on an international character, the legislative bodies of the States have been obliged to specify that the offense of a transnational nature is considered to be any act which, where appropriate: „(A) committed both within the territory of a State and outside its territory; (B) committed in the territory of a State, but its preparation, planning, management and control taking place, in whole or in part, on the territory of another State; (c) committed on the territory of a State by an organized criminal group carrying out criminal activities in two or more States; d) committed on the territory of a state, but the result thereof occurs in the territory of another state”⁵.

Reported to the four benchmarks presented, crime is the criminal segment that integrates all illegal activities committed by individuals (individually or in groups associated by chance), using various methods and means, aiming at the achievement of the proposed goals.

Cross-border crime operates within mafia-type networks organized within several States, networks that circulate significant amounts of money and act to attract public officials with whom they can practice the illegal act.

Drug trafficking, illegal migration, arms and strategic products trafficking, stolen car trafficking, economic and financial crime and smuggling of highly taxable goods are manifested at transnational level and affect the security of States in their area of action.

The range of criminal activities carried out by organized crime groups representing cross-border threats is very wide and the order of importance can only be established for a short time, because these threats are rapidly improving their content (high speed of transformation and innovation), they are not related to other phenomena of the same kind, they are not well distinguished and cannot be predicted.

The spread of criminal activities carried out by organized crime groups representing cross-border threats is done in a similar way across the

⁵ Dictionar juridic online, available at <https://legeaz.net/dictionar-juridic/infractiune>, accessed on 18.02.2022.

range, as follows: the area/country of origin/production where they are favored/generated by domestic social conditions, develops in transit countries and produces negative/harmful consequences in the target/destination countries representing the market for sale and consumption.

In addition to the traditional areas of organized crime, after '90s, the area comprising the territory of Central and Eastern Europe and the territory of the republics of the former Soviet Union, became the scene of the activities of large-scale cross-border criminal organizations, where they built their own strategies and exploited to the maximum the economic dislocation, the cumbersome mechanisms of privatization, the decentralization of power, the weakened social control, the corruption in the economic system - financial and administration, and last but not least the opening of borders.

The analytical research method used in this scientific endeavor targets the main forms of organized crime in cross-border areas.

Drug trafficking is a complex criminal phenomenon carried out by cross-border organized crime networks and considered the financial backbone of organized crime. This is a predominant cross-border manifestation that starts in the area/country where the plants are grown and processed, develops in transit countries and produces negative/harmful consequences in the target/destination countries that represent the market for sale and consumption.

The highest demand for drugs comes from North America and Western Europe, but demand is also increasing in Central, Eastern and developing countries.

The traditional routes for drug trafficking are very well known and we believe that only a brief presentation is necessary.

The cocaine route, the road begins from the countries of South America through Panama and Mexico to the United States and Canada. In Europe it starts from the major port cities to the interior of the continent. Drug dealers in the Western Hemisphere are increasingly trafficking heroin, as the drug's popularity is decreasing in the United States.

The heroin route, the road starts from inside the Asian countries, where the poppy (Afghanistan) is grown and passes through several processing centers (Iran) and transit (Turkey being the most important of

these), from where the refined heroin is shipped to the main European markets.

Synthetic drugs, unlike those produced from natural ingredients, are a growing illegal industry, as they are difficult to control and easy to produce, and their production is often carried out near the market.

Initially known as transit countries, some of the States in the region gradually turned into drug users, which doubled both the quantities of drugs brought from production areas and the number of local structures and networks involved in such activities, aggravating the phenomenon of organized crime in the area. The important financial resources currently available to drug gangs and networks, as well as the region's potential for developing illicit drug businesses, have attracted sustained actions of penetration and corruption of all segments of political-economic and social life.

In Romania, the causes and conditions that have favored this criminal phenomenon are internal and external, among which we can mention the following: Romania is located on the main (commercial transport, tourist) routes connecting the East to the West; the large networks of traffickers aim to increase the market and drug use and for this they have to create new transport routes; there are group manifestations among young people such as curiosity, territorialism, building links between the criminal elements in Romania and those abroad; Romanian citizens do not have a culture regarding the danger of drug use, nor programs for raising awareness in this regard.

Analyzing the evolution of drug trafficking on the territory of our country, we concluded that Romania is considered a transit country, a market for sale and consumption with a continuous dynamics and an increase in availability for most types of drugs.

Illegal migration is a predominant cross-border manifestation of organized international crime, generated by the social, political and economic situation in the countries of origin of the migrants, which can develop in transit countries and have negative consequences in the target (destination) countries. This event is the preservation of cross-border organized crime structures, which take advantage of the transition to democracy of former communist States, which have poor border security,

legislative loopholes and corruption, for their use as a transit zone to Western Europe.

The causes of migration are given by a number of pressure or attraction factors of socio-political, demographic, economic and environmental nature.

Within **the socio-political factors** we encounter persecution (because the respective person belongs to an ethnicity, religion, race, politics or culture), war, conflicts, government persecution, or a major risk of their happening. Because of conflicts, terror and persecution in the country of origin, in recent years, many people have fled to Europe. Of the 295,800 asylum seekers granted protection in the EU in 2019, more than a quarter came from war-torn Syria, followed by Afghanistan and Iraq⁶.

Demographic and economic factors are significant, too. Demographic change has always caused the displacement and migration of the population. Increasing or decreasing population numbers, aging or the high share of young people have influenced over time economic growth, employment in the countries of origin and migration policies in the target (destination) countries. Migration based on demographic and economic factors is closely linked to labor standards, unemployment and the economy of the countries of origin. The destination country offers good employment opportunities, higher wages, high standard of living and much better conditions in the field of education. They are migrating from a country with a poor demographic and economic situation to countries much better situated in this respect.

The environment has always been a factor in migration, because people move when natural disasters occur (floods, hurricanes and earthquakes) and they persist, because these manifestations of the environment seriously affect their living conditions and sometimes even life and force them to leave their homes and places of birth.

⁶ Actualitate Parlamentul European, Cauzele migrației – de ce migrează oamenii?, 2020, available at <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/ro/headlines/world/20200624STO8190-6/cauzele-migratiei-de-ce-migreaza-oamenii>, accessed on 20.02.2022.

In our view, illegal migration is also caused by the following causes⁷: the state of war in some areas such as the Middle East; poverty caused by war, but also the mismanagement by governments of economic problems in some Asian or African countries; the demographic pressure that is in total contradiction with the standard of living in the countries of origin; the policy of Islamization of the West carried out by some fundamentalist-Islamic terrorist countries, groups or organizations. We believe that these causes have been speculated and exploited promptly by organized crime and terrorist groups operating on large routes (Asia-Europe and Africa-Europe), creating true corridors for the clandestine immigration flow. We must not forget that migrants often constitute material and human resources for terrorists.

From the analysis of the cases handled by the structures with abilities in this field, it appears that the territory of Romania is transited by the migrants on six routes, each of them being found, in addition to the generally valid principles of carrying out these activities and particular characteristics, determined by the specificity of each area covered, the means and methods used, the destination and the purpose pursued.

Each of these routes is defined by specific features, determined mainly by the routes traveled, the modes of operation used, the destination and motivation of the immigrants. The common feature of these routes is that migrants come from both India and neighboring countries (Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan) and the Middle East, with the same migratory flows also taking over African migrants, their destination being quasi common, and targeting the European Union area in particular.

On the short term, given the measures taken by EU Member countries to combat this phenomenon, it is expected that the illegal migration routes from Asia to Western Europe will undergo changes, by intensifying migration flows through the space of the former Soviet Union.

Romania, at this time, has an important role in ensuring border security in the Eastern part of the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance.

⁷ Soci Adrian, *Participarea grupărilor de forțe terestre multinaționale la operații de combatere a terorismului și a criminalității transfrontaliere*, Teză de doctorat, București, 2009, p. 105.

Human trafficking is an extremely dangerous phenomenon, organized and carried out by very well-structured criminal groups, where they get very large gains. This is an important part of illegal migration. This includes the trafficking of illegal immigrants for work, human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation of women and children and the use of children for organ harvesting. They all make a global phenomenon of large proportions in which organized crime groups make huge profits, considered a real billion-euro industry and second in profit after drug trafficking. „Worldwide, traffickers make an estimated €29,4 billion in profits in a single year”⁸.

Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transport, transfer and housing of the persons concerned, carried out by coercion in view of their vulnerability.

Trafficking in human beings is very well intertwined with illegal migration, it is a phenomenon that destroys lives with a negative impact on society, very well organized and very profitable, having as manifestation forms *pimping and prostitution*.

Organized crime syndicates, in the field of prostitution, operate independently or cooperate with pimps, authorities or other criminal groups dealing with this phenomenon. We find very often an association between organized crime groups and non-illegal persons (owners of establishments where prostitution is legally practiced), due to the fact that organized crime unions offer protection and have the possibility to operate cross-border to provide prostitutes continuously to authorized brothels.

Prostitution is becoming an alarming phenomenon, primarily due to poverty and lack of education, the diabolical modes of operation of ruthless traffickers, and the lack of adequate legal systems in countries of origin and transit, this scourge tending to contaminate a growing segment of the population.

⁸ European Commission, Communication From the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings 2021-2025, Brussels, 14.4.2021 COM(2021) 171 final, p.6, available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files_en?file=2021-04/14042021_eu_strategy_on_combatting_trafficking_in_human_beings_2021-2025_com-2021-171-1_en.pdf, accessed on 20.02.2022.

The human trafficking networks with recruitment in Romania are the strongest in the European Union, and the vast majority of victims are underage.

Child trafficking is a considerable component of human trafficking operating under the guise of charitable adoptions, which has grown worryingly in recent times.

Children are trafficked for sexual exploitation, commercial exploitation, begging, stealing, forced labor, agricultural work, domestic work, to be illegally adopted or *to become sources of organ trafficking*.

At the same time as migration, the feeling of xenophobia among the population of the target (destination) countries has intensified, with negative sociological consequences. There are some negative effects of migration, such as the *yellow danger* or „*yellow globalization*”, which have the possibility of substantially changing the demographic composition and the balance of the target (destination) countries, which can lose their original identity.

These migratory flows for the target (destination) country pose a risk due to the impact they cause at the socio-economic level (labor penetrates, which is not always absorbed), the implementation of “*endocultures*” not assimilated by society, the entry of people attracted by activities tangent to organized crime, increased health and education spending, benefits to terrorist groups through migration. All this leads to xenophobia, the activation of nationalism, anti-immigrant campaigns, the adoption of legislation that makes the free movement of people difficult.

We believe that migration represents a threat generated by the new challenges of the international security environment to a country, which seriously affects its cultural identity, at a time when this identity is sensitized by the creation of regional and inter-regional organizations.

We believe that in order to combat illegal migration, a meaningful, complex and integrated assessment of the main components that structure the phenomenon must be made, the causes of migratory flows must be found and all available means used in combination to limit and stop these flows. We notice that Romania, after becoming a Member of the European Union, has become from the source and transit country, a destination country (target), being subject to much more pressure than in the past.

Trafficking in arms and strategic products is a cross-border threat to the security and stability of countries and regions because this phenomenon, after the events that took place in South-East Europe in 1990, has been out of control, it has developed greatly under the patronage of criminal organizations specialized in the field of weapons and strategic products, which make considerable financial profits by procuring and marketing these technologies, strategic components and materials, as well as conventional armaments.

These weapons and strategic products (military and dual-use items) include weapons of mass destruction, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, radioactive materials, conventional weapons and ammunition, explosive materials, waste of substances hazardous to health and the environment, products affecting the ozone layer, etc.

This type of trafficking is part of the profitable concerns of cross-border organized crime networks and develops according to the typology of socio-political and military events, regional and area-based.

The procurement of weapons and strategic products on the black market is on the rise; this is happening, on the one hand, due to the fact that Soviet arsenals were out of control after the breakup of the Soviet Union becoming increasingly unsupervised, and on the other hand, the conflicts that have occurred and are taking place in Southeast Europe and the collapsing States have created favorable conditions for the trafficking of weapons and strategic products. After the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Southeast Europe, especially from the GDR, a large part of the Russian army's military, they faced difficult living conditions and from there came the temptation to provide, for money, weapons and strategic products for those dealing with arms trafficking. Arms dealers, in turn, sell this equipment to criminals, terrorist organizations or States suspected of supporting terrorism or promoting this scourge of the contemporary world.

Arms trafficking is practiced without too many constraints in countries where the state has no authority is collapsing. Armed conflicts (wars) and the weakening of state authority create favorable conditions for the conduct of all kinds of organized crime actions, in particular arms trafficking; an illustrative example in this regard is the Albanian state that collapsed, chaos was created in a period of time during which, Albanian gangs took possession of light weapons in the country by breaking the

army's arms and ammunition stockpiles, and from there it quickly came to supplying low-cost weapons to the illegal markets of Southeast Europe and elsewhere. Other examples are the States of the former Yugoslavia or Chechnya, where favorable conditions were created for the action of organized crime groups during wars and until the restoration of the rule of law.

Trafficking in nuclear materials is the most dangerous threat to the security of States and the greatest potential risk to international security that the world has today. The danger of illegal use of nuclear materials is manifested globally, as the effects of these means can spread and affect several States.

The origin of this area of organized crime activity lies after the fall of the Berlin Wall, at the beginning of the collapse of the Soviet Union when funding for nuclear energy and research was very small and decreasing, some employees in the nuclear energy field were no longer performing their duties and began to steal strategic materials for the purpose of complementing revenues, on the one hand, and on the other hand, to increase the amount of nuclear material (uranium and plutonium that can be used either to power a conventional nuclear warhead, Or the conversion of a conventional bomb) obtained by disassembling nuclear combat components from warehouses in Russia and Ukraine.

The level of development of the market for these materials is not well known, but on the black market there are indeed nuclear materials. The rift between the Russian Federation and the West makes it very cumbersome to follow the smugglers' routes to the black market and to follow the volume of strategically trafficked material from the large deposits of radioactive materials of the Russian Federation. An important role in the procurement and trafficking of radioactive materials is played by organized crime groups that have a thriving market for these materials in small and poor countries in Eastern Europe.

Maintaining the frozen conflict between Transnistria and the Republic of Moldova, as well as the refusal of the Russian Federation to withdraw weapons and combat equipment from the Transnistrian region (with the largest illegal ammunition warehouse in Eastern Europe) located in the locality of Cobasna under the jurisdiction of Tiraspol. The 14th Army

ammunition and part of the weaponry and ammunition evacuated from GDR and Czechoslovakia in 1990 by the Soviet army) make Transnistria a highly vulnerable area for criminal groups by transforming this self-proclaimed Dniester Republic into a highly productive black market for organized crime and terrorist groups, because they can procure weapons and ammunition of all kinds, of pistols, machine guns, machine guns to rockets with classical or radiological charges. Many times the purchase transactions take place in the Republic of Moldova in Chisinau, this demonstrates the inefficiency of the structures responsible for ensuring the national security of the Republic of Moldova.

After the freezing of the Transnistrian conflict, this area became attractive to some terrorist groups, especially fundamentalist-Islamic groups (Hezbollah, Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, Muslim Brothers), having as main reason that Transnistria and the Republic of Moldova are a breeding ground for organizing training and training camps in some camps, weapons and ammunition are easily procured, and the transport of islamist militants to the areas of interest is done with the involvement of local companies.

Trafficking in stolen cars is an illegal activity that manifests itself across borders, is an area that contains multiple elements of organized crime and brings huge financial benefits to specialized networks in this area.

The trafficking networks are very well organized at the level of European States, they operate on several teams in the territory of the States from the West to the East of Europe. Some networks specialize in the theft of luxury cars and others in the theft of middle class cars. These networks act in several groups as follows: *the recognition group* dealing with the identification of the machines that correspond to the demand; *the technical group* has as its task the manufacture of the false documents necessary for the use of the machine and the cosmetization of the machine; *the transport group* effectively executes the passage of the cars across the border or the borders of transit states to the destination; *the recovery group* sells the stolen cars; *the surveillance group* is the one that observes the progress of all phases of this illegal process.

Specialized groups are small because the arrest of some members does not cause the network to collapse.

Looking at the existing documentation in the online environment of the institutions that have as their object of responsibility this field, we found

that the routes used by stolen car traffickers are oriented, as we have previously presented, from West to East, the completion of this process taking place in the countries of Eastern Europe, Especially in the former Soviet Union.

It is noted that the Eastern European countries, for several years, have turned into a priority market for stolen cars, with huge demand and high absorption capacity. This is possible as long as there are States that promote protectionism policy and maintain high import duties on foreign vehicles, which are avoided by many car buyers, they order stolen cars at low prices compared to the legal market with appropriate fake documents. Illegal trafficking in luxury and middle-class cars in the West under these conditions will remain high.

Analyzing the situation of stolen car traffic, I concluded that there is a good collaboration between international trafficking networks, which consists in supporting the exploitation of these vehicles as far away as possible from the country from which they are stolen, falsifying documents (service books, registration plates, property documents) and the cosmetization of cars (changes identification series, registration plates, new keys), their transport by carts on established routes to the destination country and often exchange, depending on the requests, such vehicles.

Economic and financial crime is an illicit activity or a "traditional" way of committing crimes that manifest themselves across borders with other components of organized crime such as drug trafficking, people, cars, etc.

Known as *white collar crime*, a concept introduced first in 1939 by American sociologist Edwin H. Sutherland, consists of all crimes committed by persons of high social status, respectable, with management positions during the course of their professional activities, mainly financial, economic fraud, tax evasion, corruption offenses, counterfeiting of products, violation of anti-monopoly legislation, labor law, copyright law, etc.

The evolution of this phenomenon in recent years, along with the digitalization that is very widespread among companies, indicates that this form of crime is much more permeated by a marked "professionalism", characterized by the use of advanced computer and telecommunications

networks, the sophistication of the coatings, the organization of networks, increase the number and quality of the criminals involved.

These criminal entities called *white collars* are able to carry out complex associations, in which they have well established roles and strict obligations, create diabolical scenarios, to obtain fabulous revenues, committing crimes such as: fraud and abuse of trust; embezzlement and fraudulent management; abuse of office; trafficking in influence; taking and giving bribes; unfair competition; material forgery in official documents and intellectual forgery; falsification of official instruments and use of false official instruments; circulation of counterfeit products; deception of the quality of products by falsifying or substituting them; disclosure of economic secrecy; embezzlement of funds; non-compliance with the provisions on import-export operations; fraudulent bankruptcy, etc.

These crimes represent a major social danger, which is very serious and costly in view of the economic and social consequences they cause, unlike traditional crime.

The rapid development of computer technology and the easy operation of this technology by the vast majority of members of society have opened new opportunities to organized crime entities and is a particular challenge to law enforcement authorities. Among these criminal activities committed by criminal groups using computer technology, we may include credit card counterfeiting, money transfer across borders, money laundering (not long ago through the use of virtual currencies) and increasing the degree of difficulty in detecting the origin of transactions.

The study of documents on the websites of financial institutions, such as banks or credit card companies, shows that these institutions suffer substantial losses due to financial fraud. The use of the Internet for the purpose of financial transactions may carry some risks if no effective security systems are installed and there is no vigilant control of this instrument.

Computer code-breaking specialists called "*hackers*" are able to access the computer systems of financial institutions and credit card companies to obtain credit card numbers, to achieve financial fraud, and to conduct industrial espionage.

Coding technology is accessible to criminal groups who communicate via the Internet without having problems intercepting

computer messages, as in the case of wiretapping, which causes them to operate freely and commit a number of crimes in this environment.

Smuggling of highly taxable goods is a component of organized crime that affects the economies of States by inflicting significant financial damage on these States and fueling their underground economy. This phenomenon occurs from West to East, but also from East to West. From East to West they run with products that have high prices in the West (for example cigarettes and alcohol).

Analyzing this phenomenon we find that it remains at a high level, as those involved in the smuggling of consumer goods wish to circumvent the customs law, in order to obtain high profits from the sale of goods transported to markets where these products are sold.

Criminal groups smuggle trafficked goods that have two important characteristics, the first being smuggling goods that have a rapid and total rate of consumption (for example, cigarettes, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, liquid fuels, lubricants, raw materials for the production of goods). In other words, when they appear on the market and are sold, it is difficult to identify them in order to establish their illegal import. Second, there are those goods that have very high import and customs fees. Cigarettes and tobacco products combine both characteristics, smuggling them becoming one of the most profitable and common illegal activities in South-Eastern Europe.

Analyzing the situation after the collapse of communist systems in Eastern Europe and the transition of States to democracy, we found that opportunities were opened, from which organized crime structures and criminal networks were taken advantage of to organize organ trafficking (which is constantly growing), theft and trafficking of stolen cars and art objects, smuggling of products of all kinds from precious metals to cigarettes, people kidnapping, violation of intellectual property rights, blackmail, environmental crimes (storage of barrels of radioactive substances, dumping of industrial residues on land or in rivers near localities, export of toxic substances), etc.

We consider that all forms of organized crime groups in cross-border areas have a strong influence on the security of States and constitute threats and risks to it, which are often associated with potential threats to the

security of States, stability of democratic values and strongly affecting national interests in the medium or long term.

The existence of major conventional arsenals in a region affected by serious authority and social crises with difficulties in securing them represents a danger to regional security. This leads to theft and arms trafficking.

Frozen or dormant conflicts, maintained for a long time, multiply threats to States because they create conditions for the development of criminal networks and criminal structures.

Western Europe's restrictions on immigrants from regions where conflicts have erupted are putting pressure on countries in this area, which have relative stability, creating major economic and social risks, such as: imbalances on the domestic labor market, the development of organized crime networks, the increase in xenophobic sentiment among the population.



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