



FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT 05/2011

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF SECURITY

(JUNE 2011)

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the language of social science "security" is a controversial concept, as there is not a broad consensus about its meaning. Depending on people's ideas, culture and perceptions of reality, the term security gets a different value.

This fact is supported by the important number of security definitions that have appeared, especially since the end of the Cold War. National Security, Common Security, Collective Security, Shared Security, Human Security or Cooperative Security make a description of what their ideologists consider must be understood by security and, what could even be more important, how to obtain it¹. In recent years, other terms have appeared apart from the ones already quoted like Sustainable Security, as well as other hybrid concepts like "hard power-soft power" or "smart power".

This document from the Institute for Strategic Studies (IEEE: *Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos*) aims at making a brief analysis on the evolution of the concept of security.

2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF SECURITY AND ITS SCOPE

2.1. Traditional concepts: between realism and liberalism

Traditionally, the State has been the model of security. The State assumes the responsibility to protect its citizens and demands their loyalty. This way, the security of the citizens from a country is guaranteed when the State own security also is. This traditional security model is

¹ Helga Haftendorn states that "there is no one concept of security; national security, international security and global security refer to different sets of issues and have their origins in different historical and philosophical contexts" Quoted by SHEEHAN, Michael. *International Security. An Analytical Survey*. Lynne Rienner Publishers. London. 2005.

reflected on the term National Security which according to G. Kennan (1948) is *"the continued ability of the country to pursue the development of its internal life without serious interference, or threat of interference, from foreign powers"*.

National security revolves around the realist paradigm, according to which global policies are always a struggle between States to reach power, under a situation of anarchy, where they compete for their own national interests. In this context, States rely on military power in order to guarantee those interests, counteracting the threats that arise from other States armed forces. This way, national sovereignty and balance of power, which is distributed between the different States, are related unmistakably to what it is understood by security. The aim is to protect, from an internal perspective, national interests.

Under this same model and during the 20th century, "alliances" were the main form of regional security and they originated Collective Defence with which a group of countries of similar ideology faced a common military threat.

After the failure of the League of Nations, the foundation of the United Nations is ready to overcome the notion of national security as it includes in its agenda non-military aspects. The article 55 from the UN Charter points out that: *"with a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote: a) higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development; [...]c) universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all [...]"*. Consequently, the UN creates specialized agencies in order to promote this purpose in which the individual seems to become the centre of interest.

This new view, claimed by the liberal political thinking, is materialized in the concept of Collective Security through which the use of violence is proscribed in order to protect national interests, except in case of self-defence. For Ballesteros² *"collective security results from a joint decision of certain countries and in which the commitment to agree with the respective security policies of other countries is reached by balancing, in solidarity, differences in interests, as well as by reducing uncertainty and discouraging aggressive behaviours"*. However, influenced by the bipolar confrontation during the second half of the 20th century, the UN collective security system shows its limitations.

2.2. Modifications in the traditional model

After the end of the Cold War and as a consequence of globalization, threats have no longer a purely military character, extending the concept of security. Global problems, the majority

² Ballesteros Martín, Miguel Ángel. "Las estrategias de seguridad y de defensa". Ballesteros Martín, Miguel Ángel (Coordinador). Fundamentos de la Estrategia para el siglo XXI. Monografía del CESEDEN nº 67. Madrid. 2004. p 53.

of which are cross-border, like organized crime, terrorism, deterioration of the environment, disputes over natural resources, uncontrolled refugee flows, illegal immigration, poverty and famine have become risks for humanity which seem as important as the traditional military defence. Therefore, some believe that it is necessary to extend the concept of security in multiple sectors and at different levels, and that territoriality and military defence are not the only main concepts. Moreover, in the last five years and under the impact of the current global economic crisis, the international environment, which is growing more complex, shows that the challenges of today security cannot be divided between those of "internal or external" character and between the "civilian and military" ones.

In order to keep going into the concept of security in depth, two well differentiated trends can be distinguished. The first one is supported by those believing that the State is the essential object of security, even if they accept the inclusion of new factors. The concepts of Common Security³, Integrated Security⁴ and Defensive Security⁵ are part of this first trend.

However, the concept of Cooperative Security has probably reached a greater recognition. It begins with the certainty that any State or group of States, isolated, cannot face the current problems. This concept promotes the idea that it is necessary to "build" trust not only between States, but also with other non-state actors through discussion, negotiation, cooperation and commitment. Moreover, military instruments should not be considered as the main tool. Cooperative Security encourages the inclusion of non-state actors, international organizations, as well as States with a different ideology, through non-official forums. It also develops the fundamental principle according to which any stable solution can be reached only if the actions and effects from the diplomatic, informative, military, economic, political and civilian field are coordinated.

The second trend is introduced by this generic idea: we have focused too much on States and, consequently, it is necessary to rethink about the real meaning of the term security by using an alternative speech in which individuals and/or social groups are the centre of attention. National sovereignty is not as important as it was in the traditional approaches. Now, there is a "global sovereignty" in which the respect of a person's individual dignity

³ The concept of Common Security which was first introduced by Olof Palme in the context of the Cold War, pointed out that "... countries cannot gain security at the expense of others, nor through only military power. Common security requires peoples to live in dignity and peace, to have the needed food, find a job and live in a world without poverty and destruction". In its postulates this concept is close to the one of Human Security.

⁴ The Integrated Security endorses a comprehensive approach to security, which recognizes a balance between its political, economic, social-cultural and environmental aspects. For example, the ASEAN Political-Security Community has adopted this concept.

⁵ This concept was made known by the UN in the framework of the "Study on Defensive Security Concepts and Policies" in 1993 which describes it as "*a condition of peace and security attained step-by-step and sustained through effective and concrete measures in the political and military field*".

must prevail over international law. Some believe the State is now an element generating insecurity.

At this point, the Human Security principle was gradually introduced, promoted by the UN since 1994. Criticized by some politicians and analysts due to its lack of precision, this concept includes within the questions to be considered: economy, food, sanity, politics, environment and people individual protection, as well as the communities in which this people live. Its implementation is related to the controversial principal of the Responsibility to Protect. This principle points out that each State is responsible to protect its population, but the international community, through the UN, is also responsible of that protection using, in case it was necessary, coercive⁶ instruments.

Other approaches called "critical" go even beyond Human Security. For critical theorists, individuals and societies must be the only focus of the analysis, because there are all sort of States and they are often part of the problem of insecurity of the international system.

2.3. New trends

A change in the model of security has an immediate impact on the way we can reach it. From the traditional perspective of National Security, if the State still represents this model, the army and the security forces are the dominant instruments.

Nevertheless, from the point of view of extended security, there are other models, like people, societies and the planet itself. For those who praise this last view, and taking into consideration the group of new threats, security can only be reached by balancing all the political instruments of the State.

At this level, the discussion is focused between those in favour of "Soft Power" and those supporting "Hard Power"⁷. Supporters of hard power still consider that the different coercive measures, together with strong and capable Armed Forces, are the only and last guarantee of security. In contrast, and with the EU leading, those in favour of soft power believe that it is necessary to use predominantly elements of a persuasive nature, in order to reach binding political aims.

In recent years, other points of view have appeared with success. They try to bring together these two apparently antagonistic views. In general terms, the model to be implemented is a combination of economic and diplomatic instruments, but where the use of military

⁶ Some leaders from non-developed countries argue that Responsibility to Protect is an occidental concept created as an instrument to control weak States.

⁷ Soft/hard power is a concept coined by Joseph Nye in his book "*Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*" (1990) and later developed in 2004 in another of his books "*Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*".

strength, far from being dismissed, is embodied as a tool in essential occasions. The so-called security's three "D" become clear: Defence, Diplomacy and Development⁸. Several concepts have been coined based on this idea. These concepts, with nuances, try to reflect that argument. Smart Power and Sustainable Security are some of these new concepts.

According to the Center for Strategic International Studies "Smart Power" must be understood as the ideal combination of soft and hard powers, through an strategy that integrates the resources and instruments of the three powers of external action: military power (Defence), Diplomacy and international help (Development), the three "D", with a common goal: global security.

With regard to Sustainable Security, it is necessary to indicate that there are different opinions about this term. This expression has been used by some thinkers in the already mentioned sense of harmonizing *hard power* and *soft power*, but it has also been used by others with exactly the same terminology to establish contrary criteria⁹.

Nevertheless, the concept of Sustainable Security, proposed by the Center for American Progress (CAP), is clearly the one having the greatest impact, as it is undoubtedly favoured by its relation with the current US administration. Given that China will early test the US supremacy, for the CAP the starting point is that the US security strategy is unsustainable due to two factors: firstly, the great expenses of US defence that are draining the Treasury; and secondly, the predominant use of military instruments which are the traditional base of the US security, are not the best means to deal with the current world. Consequently, security needs to adopt a new approach in which not only defence will be taken into consideration, but also all the instruments that the US as a nation has at its disposal.

This multidisciplinary approach, also called Sustainable Security, tries to overcome the traditional notion of National Security through a combination of three elements: one, National Security, understood as the ability to protect and defend the US; two, Human Security, focused on people's welfare and protection; and three, Collective Security, which focuses on the interests shared by the whole world. In order to put this project into practice, economic resources are clearly needed. To do so, CAP's recipe is simple: it is necessary to spend less money on arms and, with the money saved by this action, more on Sustainable

⁸ If you wish to have more information about this subject, see Garcia Sanchez, Ignacio "La Primera Revisión Estratégica Cuatrienal de la Diplomacia y el Desarrollo de los Estados Unidos de América: "Leading Through Civilian Power". Analysis Document from the IEEE 20/2010. 23 December 2010. Available at: http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_analisis/2010/DIEEEA20_2010LaQDDR_deEEUU.pdf

⁹ At least, three "Think Tanks" can be quoted. They use the same term of Sustainable Security, but with a different meaning in each case: The Oxford Research Group with a critical, ecologist and pacifist orientation; The Fund for Peace for the prevention and management of conflicts; and the Center for American Progress detailed in the text.

Security initiatives. In other words, the rebalancing of the "3D instruments" should also be reflected on the US budgets, without, however, putting the military supremacy at risk.

Finally, the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), a US organisation with a clear influence on the current American administration¹⁰, is also carrying out some programs of interest¹¹ related to the concept of "*defence, diplomacy and development*". For the CNAS, despite its status of great power, the American government is not effective when relating to the rest of the world. Therefore, this Center encourages to develop civilian capacities for the reconstruction and diplomacy, which will allow to turn the tide of this situation. In particular, the CNAS notes that the current conflicts have revealed the limits of the military power and the necessity of the "*three legs*" of the national security policy. It is then quoting specifically the "3D" of security. However, given that the Department of State is not properly equipped and organized for this function, the CNAS considers necessary to make reforms that support the creation of capacities to help development and diplomacy.

3. POSITIONS OVERVIEW

3.1. The United Nations

As it was previously mentioned, the Charter of the United Nations promotes a mechanism of balance of power between great powers and appears in the concept of Collective Security. Considering that the victorious powers from the II World War in 1945 were also the ones controlling (and they still control) the UN through the Security Council, this model actually supports the status quo. This is the main difficulty that the UN is facing for its reform and the main reason to doubt, despite its unquestionable legitimacy, its efficiency as an instrument to settle global security challenges.

Maybe that is the reason why, and despite the resistance of some States, the UN has oriented the execution of its "Peacekeeping Operations" to the application of the multidisciplinary concept of Human Security. This way, the UN "*integrated missions*" are embodied as the response to challenges having a human, political, military and economic character, going through the construction/consolidation of democracy. In this approach, the already described "3D" of security can be clearly identified.

¹⁰ It is of interest to note that the co-founders of the CNAS, Kurt Campbell and Michelle Flournoy, currently work for the Obama administration. Moreover, according to the Washington Post, "In the era of Obama [...] the Center for a New American Security may emerge as Washington's go-to think tank on military affairs".

¹¹ The CNAS has published several documents of opinion concerning this subject, among which the following are noteworthy: [Beyond Borders: Developing Comprehensive National Security Policies to Address Complex Regional Challenges](#); [Planning Diplomacy and Development: Force Planning Applications for the State Department and USAID](#); or [Engaging the Private Sector for the Public Good: The Power of Network Diplomacy](#),

3.2. NATO

After the approval of the new Strategic Concept from the Lisbon Summit (November 2010), the NATO has assumed that Cooperative Security is one of its major tasks. It is important to note that this concept of Cooperative Security has been extended to the crisis management and to the reform of the security sector as part of that management. This way, the full approach, adopted by the NATO, as well as by other international organizations, gathers the foundations of this security model: any stable solution can only be reached if the actions and effects of the diplomatic, military, economic, political or civilian field are combined.

3.3. The European Union (EU)

At the international level, the EU clearly represents the wide character of security. The EU system includes civil-military capacities when managing a crisis and technical and financial assistance, as well as the traditional diplomatic tools like political dialog and mediation (the 3D). However, the Member States should redefine the EU role in global security, due to: the lack of political will to develop the European security strategy, the lack of a single position concerning the EU role in the world and, finally, the lack of capacities, both civilian and military, which prevent this institution from acting efficiently in the scenarios where it is needed.

3.4. The United States

The ideas introduced by the CAP and the CSIC are reflected in the Official Documents published by the current American administration in 2010. Thus, the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Report from January, the first President Obama National Security Strategy from May, as well as the review of the Global Development Policy of September and the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) Strategy of December include some elements that can be clearly identified with the postulates of Sustainable Security and Smart Power. The main proposal is to balance defence, diplomacy and, as a tool of the latter, the help to development, so that they can act together. In other words, it is another way of reconciling "hard power" and "soft power", or "civilian power" according to the terminology used by the Secretary of State Clinton, but, this time, the strategic culture and the US interests are taken into account. Consequently, what really changes are the instruments they use, not the goals which remain the same. From this perspective, and in spite of the evident attraction of the expression, Sustainable Security must only be considered as a novelty for the US.

3.5. France

The EU postulates have a great influence on the French thinking about security. The French White Paper on Defence and National Security, published on 2008, points out that "*French Security, similarly to the one in Europe, must [...] be understood globally. The national*

security strategy embraces both external and internal security, as well as the military, civilian, economic and diplomatic means. It must consider all the events, risks and threats which could endanger the life of the Nation". Obviously, the position of the neighbour country is very close to the paradigm of the three dimensions of security.

3.6. The United Kingdom

The UK is possibly the one reflecting more accurately the postulates of an extended security. The new Strategic Defence and Security Review from the UK, published on October 2010, adopts, as well as the security strategy from the US, a "Wider Security". In a global context, which is practically the same as the one introduced by the US, the principles and basics of this security are also very similar, although there are obviously some British peculiarities. As the UK authorities point out, it must be emphasized that for the achievement, in an efficient and effective manner, of the priorities in security and defence, simpler and better coordinated structures and processes are necessary.

3.7. Spain

While we wait for the imminent publication of the first Spain's Security Strategy (EES: *Estrategia Española de Seguridad*), the National Defence Directive 1/2008 (DDN: *Directiva de Defensa Nacional*) provides the parameters for the security of Spain and its citizens. Firstly, the DDN points out that other risks and threats to security are added (apart from the traditional ones, which implied an almost exclusively military response) that, albeit less destructive, deteriorate and complicate the countries' social and economic development. Consequently, social and economic problems are also a cause for concern to our security.

On the other hand, the DDN is strict when declaring that *"security and defence are fields that the State guarantees through the incorporation of different instruments and policies. Thus, the Spanish Ministry of Defence is not the only one assuming this responsibility, there is also a multidisciplinary approach and an integral performance of all the competent public administrations, as well as the convergence of civilian, military, public and private instruments"*.

According to the observance of these principles and given that our country belongs to the NATO and the EU, we can declare that Spain has included to its national policy a wide concept of security.

4. CONCLUSION

The controversies concerning the notion of security have usually focused on the role that the State must play in its achievement. There are several initiatives stating that it is necessary to analyze alternative approaches to the traditional notion of national security in which the State is clearly the model. Some of these initiatives suggest that the best way of promoting

the interests of security abroad is to satisfy citizens' essential needs around the world, especially in poor or unstable areas. In this context, the famous sentence from Kofi Annan "there will be no development without security and no security without development" gets all its value.

Some international organizations, as well as some States, have already started to use the three instruments of security (Diplomacy, Defence and Development).

In Europe, to a greater or lesser extent, this wide approach of security, where the priority is to use civilian resources, has been the traditional doctrine. Spain has not been foreign to these paradigms.

Anyway, if we accept that "security" is essentially a controversial concept, the debates that this word originates cannot be resolved in an abstract way. In short, it is the political power that determines the orientation and meaning of security.

*Madrid, 1 June 2011
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