

STRATEGIC ASSESSMENTS 2022

THE WORLD BETWEEN PANDEMIC AND WAR

Foreword ■ The evolution of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the possible major changes in the world order ■ The global economy in the third year of the pandemic and the first year of war ■ Democracy, cohesion and security in Europe. Has the war in Ukraine changed the trends? ■ Humanitarian “permacrisis”? The war in Ukraine, perceived insecurity, and the escalating humanitarian crisis ■ Russian propaganda and disinformation in the context of the war in Ukraine ■ Middle Eastern and African humanitarian crises in the global disorder ■ The US-China relationship: Cold Peace in a stormy environment

The world is changing. Not dramatically, but significantly. Challenges that seemed unlikely to arise have reborn, and others that had not been given enough attention have destabilized regions and international relations in general.

In the last two monographs dedicated to the international security environment, researchers from the Centre for Defense and Security Strategic Studies analyzed a problem that has transcended national borders and affected all areas of social life, namely the Covid-19 pandemic, highlighting the newly created divisions and identifying the specific coordinates of insecurity. Assessments have shown that the pandemic was a real shock whose consequences affect humanity even in 2022.

The outbreak of a pandemic at that time showed the unpreparedness of governments and communities to manage such phenomena, but the next global impact event was not a complete surprise: the Russian Federation’s intentions towards Ukraine’s territorial integrity have been revealed to the international community since 2014, when Crimea was illegally annexed. Therefore, if the pandemic could be considered a “black swan” (though not the first such event in human history), Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has become the

latest “grey rhino” of the contemporary security environment. Globally, the situation is becoming increasingly complicated: not only the number of crises of various kinds unfolding simultaneously is growing, but their effects are being felt in related areas closer or further away from those of origin. Moreover, their duration is increasing, and we are not only referring to the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, but also to climate change, the economic crisis and the humanitarian crisis, all of which are interrelated and amplify each other.

This monography captures the complexity of the issues facing humanity and how the events of the past year have led to the emergence or modification of trends in the international security environment. The entire work takes as its starting point the analysis of the Russo-Ukrainian war and, based on it, builds a multidimensional assessment of the main transformations and phenomena in various regions of the world, from Europe to remote Africa and East Asia.

But what connects all these regions? The answer is two words on everyone’s lips today: *war* and *crisis*. In Europe, war of such intensity and effect had not been seen as a possibility for a long time. Crisis, on the other hand, is a word that has long failed to capture the complexity of reality, so this paper discusses terms such as *polycrisis*, *permacrisis* and *global disorder*. Going through the entire study will enable the reader to understand the option of using terms without a Romanian equivalent and will provide a theoretical framework for understanding them.