



EDITOR'S NOTE

The latest issue of Strategic Impact, volume number 93, features a diverse collection of articles that address emerging challenges, and explore the frontiers of political-military topicality and information society. This volume also showcases two book reviews written by our esteemed colleagues researchers, and it presents the insights of the third Workshop on the impact of climate-change on national security, held on December, 2024, which closes the series of scientific events regarding this topic.

The first section, ***Political-Military Topicality***, opens the volume with an article written by Mr. Cristian Panait, PhD, in which he examines how volunteer military units develop and maintain group cohesion, using Ukraine conflict as a case study. The study identifies three key mechanisms that enable cohesive action in such units, respectively swift trust that allows fighters to form immediate functional relationships based on role expectations and urgent shared goals; leadership-driven cohesion, which emerges when strong leaders act as stabilizing figures, compensating for the lack of established peer bonds, and stress-induced bonding that fosters solidarity as shared combat hardships create deep interpersonal connections despite diverse backgrounds.

The second article, signed by Mr. Andrei-Vasile Rus, examines the legal and operational framework of PMCs, focusing on Russia, and compares their role in foreign policy to similar entities from the United States and China. Mali's natural resources and strategic location make it a significant player in global power struggles, while its reliance on PMCs raises concerns about sovereignty, security, and foreign exploitation. By analyzing these dynamics, the article highlights the broader implications of PMC involvement in fragile states and their role as instruments of geopolitical influence.

The second rubric, ***Geopolitics and Geostrategy: Trends and Perspectives***, features an article signed by Mr. Paul-Alexandru Sanda, PhD, which examines Russia's military strategic objectives during three years of operation in Ukraine. While many analysts view Russia as an irrational imperial power, the author argues that its military actions are driven by achievable strategic goals rather than irrational expansionism. Comparing these perspectives, the study suggests that a rational Russia is more dangerous than an irrational one. While irrational actions pose risks, they often backfire on the actor itself due to unforeseen costs. In contrast, a rational approach maximizes strategic gains for Russia while imposing severe, unintended burdens on other actors.



The Information Society rubric presents an article co-authored by Mrs. Diana-Cristiana Lupu and Mrs. Daniela Lică, which provides a narrative review of Large Language Models, particularly their potential use in generating propaganda within influence activities. The study examines security risks stemming from both inherent model vulnerabilities and malicious actors. The study also explores solutions to these risks, emphasizing EU strategies, policies, and regulations, with a focus on the AI act. It concludes that while LLMs should be integrated into daily life, they must remain tools that augment, rather than replace, human intelligence. The authors highlight the need for education, cultural awareness, audits, and accountability to ensure responsible AI usage. Additionally, trust in LLMs and the potential risks of relying on them for decision-making should be carefully evaluated.

In this edition, the **Book Review** rubric introduces two book reviews. The first, written by Mr. Vladimir-Mihai Zodian, PhD, talks about how a long-standing Romanian tradition holds that the nation's fate depends on its relationship with global powers. However, modern International Relations studies suggest that smaller powers play a more significant role than previously believed. Adrian-Eugen Preda's work bridges these views, arguing that this relationship is flexible and involves mutual influence between hegemonic and smaller states.

The second book review, written by the Director of the CDSSS, Colonel Florian Cîrciumaru, PhD, presents the book *Operational Design. Applying Operational Art into the Planning Process of Operations*, written by Brigadier General Crăişor-Constantin Ioniţă, PhD, Researcher, and Colonel Daniel Roman, PhD, Associated Professor who explore the role of operational art in military planning. The book highlights how key elements of operational design support decision-making and facilitate planning by defining problems clearly to find effective solutions.

Also, this edition includes the **Guide for authors**, a mandatory reading for those who wish to disseminate the research results in our journal.

For those discovering *Strategic Impact* for the first time, the publication is an open-access peer reviewed journal, edited by the Centre for Defence and Security Strategic Studies and published with the support of "Carol I" National Defence University Publishing House, and, also, a prestigious scientific journal in the field of military sciences, information and public order, according to the National Council for the Accreditation of University Titles, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU).

Strategic Impact is an academic publication in the field of strategic defence and security studies. The journal has been published since 2000 in Romanian, and since 2005 in English, print and online. The journal is currently published exclusively in English. The articles are checked for plagiarism and scientifically evaluated (double blind peer review method). The thematic areas include political science, international relations, geopolitics, the political-military sphere, international organizations – with a focus on NATO and the EU information society, cyber security, intelligence



studies, military history, and emerging technologies. Readers will find in the pages of the publication strategic-level analyses, syntheses and evaluations, views that explore the impact of national, regional and global dynamics.

In terms of international visibility the primary objective of the publication the recognition of the scientific quality of the journal is confirmed by its indexing in the international databases CEEOL (Central and Eastern European Online Library, Germany), EBSCO (USA), Index Copernicus (Poland), ProQuest (USA), and WorldCat and ROAD ISSN, as well as its presence in the virtual catalogues of the libraries of prestigious institutions abroad, such as NATO and military universities in Bulgaria, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, etc.

The journal is distributed free of charge in main institutions in the field of security and defence, in the academia and abroad in Europe, Asia and America.

In the end, we encourage those interested in publishing in our journal to rigorously survey and assess the dynamics of the security environment and, at the same time, we invite students, master students and doctoral candidates to submit articles for publication in the monthly supplement of the journal, *Strategic Colloquium*, available at URL: <http://cssas.unap.ro/ro/cs.htm>, indexed in the international database CEEOL, Crossref, ROAD ISSN, and Google scholar, ResearchBib and Open Journal Systems.

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