



EDITOR'S NOTE

The third issue of *Strategic Impact* journal, no. 96/2025, is dedicated to contemporary challenges and developments in the field of security and strategic studies. This edition brings together contributions addressing subjects of major relevance for the current international security environment, including regional security communities and NATO eastern flank dynamics, the role of civilian infrastructure and engineering governance in NATO military mobility and collective defence preparedness.

In addition, under the rubric *Strategic Dialogue*, we have the honour to publish an interview with Major-General Constantin Nicolaescu, the Chief of Staff of HQ Multinational Corps South-East, on leadership and resilience on NATO's Eastern Flank. This issue also introduces a new rubric, *Research Outputs*, presenting a summary of the Strategic Evaluation 2024, authored by CDSSS team of researches.

Under the rubric ***NATO and EU: Policies, Strategies, Actions***, the first article written by Mrs. Antonia-Laura Pup, analyses the development of regional security cooperation on NATO's Eastern Flank through a comparative assessment of the Baltic Sea and Black Sea regions, emphasising the role of shared threat perceptions, strategic identity, and institutional cooperation in shaping regional security communities. The second article, signed by Mr. Sorin Topor, PhD, analyses the transformation of deterrence in the context of the war in Ukraine and the evolving European security architecture. Focusing on Romania's strategic position on NATO's Eastern Flank, the study examines how credible deterrence can be strengthened through deterrence by denial, societal resilience, advanced technological capabilities, and the consolidation of NATO and EU political-military cooperation in response to regional security challenges and alliance uncertainties.

The third article, written by Mrs. Maria Niamh Bratcovici, examines the importance of civilian infrastructure, Host Nation Support, and civil-military engineering cooperation for NATO collective defence and military mobility, highlighting the need for integrated governance framework capable of supporting Allied operational readiness and resilience.

The second rubric, ***Security and Military Strategy***, comprises one article signed by Mrs. Marianna Charountaki, PhD, who examines the context of the Syrian conflict, highlighting the role of external engagement and foreign policy agency in the consolidation of its political, military, and administrative structures. The study analyses how Rojava developed a distinct governance model based on the separation



between religion and politics, while also exploring the implications of non-state governance, contested sovereignty, and post-conflict political transition in Syria.

In the rubric *The Terrorist Threat* we find an article written by Mr. Iancu-Marius Bufnea, who analyses the evolution of terrorist financing across the four waves of modern terrorism identified by David C. Rapoport. The paper examines how financial resources, funding mechanisms, and expenditure patterns have influenced the organisational structure, operational capacity, and strategic development of terrorist groups, highlighting the transition from decentralised and episodic violence toward increasingly institutionalised and structurally sustained forms of terrorist organisation.

The *Emerging technologies* rubric includes an article, belonging to Mr. Răzvan-Georgian Zmădu, which examines the impact of artificial intelligence and Big Data on intelligence analysis and the intelligence cycle from a socio-technical perspective. The study explores how emerging technologies are reshaping analytical processes through automation and pattern detection, while emphasising the continuing importance of human judgement and the growing role of hybrid human-machine teams in intelligence operations and decision-making.

Under the umbrella of the *Strategic Dialogue* rubric, Major-General Constantin Nicolaescu had the courtesy of offering valuable insights on leadership, deterrence, resilience, and multinational military cooperation on NATO's Eastern Flank. Drawing on his extensive operational and command experience, he highlights the challenges faced by the Headquarters Multinational Corps South-East in ensuring credible deterrence and operational readiness in the Black Sea region, emphasising the importance of interoperability, civil-military cooperation, resilience, and the adaptation of NATO structures to the evolving security environment generated by Russia's actions in the region.

Starting with this issue, we introduce a new rubric entitled *Research Outputs*, which provides an opportunity to share with the academic community significant research results developed by the researchers within the Centre. In this edition, the readers are provided with an overview of the *Strategic Evaluation 2024. Decline and Violence in the International Security Environment*, developed by the Centre's full research team.

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 prospective contributors to *Strategic Impact* journal to undertake rigorous analyses of the evolving dynamics of the international security environment. 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: <http://cssas.unap.ro/ro/cs.htm>. The supplement is indexed in the international database CEEOL, Crossref, ROAD ISSN, and Google scholar, ResearchBib, and Open Journal Systems.

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