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UTBLICK



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Utrikespolitiska
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Göteborg



Letter from the Editors



What is security? The field of Security Studies has various bids; some argue that it is a form of value that stands in proportion to an actor's material well-being. Others claim that it is impossible to formulate a definition that satisfies every country, every culture, every people and every religion – in this view, security is a subjective concept defined by circumstances.

The matter is complicated even further when the topic is *global security* – different countries, cultures, peoples and religions have different ideas of what security is. While Americans may perceive US military presence in the Middle East as a reassurance of national security, the people living in that region may regard the very same thing as a cause of *insecurity*. In the same way, the individual goal of radicalization among Muslims may be to achieve individual social security. However, the result of that pursuit will inevitably endanger the security of others. Evidently, global security is an eternally multi-faced concept for which a single definition will never be enough.

The final issue of the year deals with some of the issues on the contemporary global security agenda, with the goal of providing a detailed and enlightening view of the problems facing our world today, and with the objective of shedding light upon conflicts that have ended up outside the public spotlight.

This is our last issue as Editors in Chief, and we would like to thank all of you for your attention throughout the year. We hope that you've found it as rewarding as we have. We would also like to thank our amazing, knowledgeable editorial staff for all of their efforts during our term in charge of the magazine.

Finally, we wish you a pleasant read!

Editors-in-Chief

Mikael Hemlin & Sara Lindström

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Utblick intervjuar DN:s politiska redaktör

Johannes Åman

TEXT: Mikael Hemlin

DET BLODIGA inbördeskriget i Syrien och dess följder bland annat i form av flyktingkrisen, groende populism i västvärldens alla hörn, konflikten i Sydkinesiska havet och ett allt varmare klimat. Sällan har världens framtid varit så oförutsägbart. Aldrig förr har heller regionernas öden varit så nära sammanflätade som i samtidens

globaliserade värld – frågor som tidigare skulle ha betraktats som regionala angelägenheter är idag omöjliga för världens ledare att bortse från. Allt är globalt och alla påverkas. Utblick har träffat Johannes Åman, politisk redaktör på Dagens Nyheter, för att diskutera den internationella säkerhetssituationen.

Barack Obama har fått utstå kritik för USA:s passivitet i Syrien-konflikten. Hur tror du att Donald Trumps tillträde kommer att påverka landets ställning i frågan?

Den stora osäkerheten med Trump är att han är inkonsekvent. Han har byggt sin kampanj på budskapet *America first*; man ska inte ödsla pengar och energi på problem långt borta, utan istället fokusera på att ta hand om den egna befolkningen. Detta talar för att Trump kommer att vara mindre benägen än Clinton skulle ha varit att intervensera i Syrien. Sedan kan hans positiva kommentarer om Vladimir Putin, tolkas som att han inte vill bråka, utan snarare dela upp världen i något slags intressesfärer. Om så blir fallet, är det mycket möjligt att han skulle räkna bort Syrien, och se det som att Rysslands deltagande gör en amerikansk intervention överflödigt eller onödigt. Det som skapar osäkerhet är att han tydligt har manifesterat ett behov av att visa styrka, och det utgör förstås en risk i en situation där andra ledare agerar på ett sätt som kan provocera honom. Dessutom har han använt sig av ett drastiskt språk, vilket tyder på att han inte är en man som drar sig för att använda våld; han är inte särskilt engagerad av att skapa en god ordning i världen, men han kan känna ett behov av att markera sin makt, att visa att ingen kan "köra med honom". Detta leder till en risk för missförstånd i en situation där andra ledare tolkar det som att USA kommer att dra sig tillbaka, medan Trumps impuls i ett läge där han känner sig provocerad kan vara att slå tillbaka. Vad som händer efter ett sådant initialt slag är svårt att säga, men faktum är att det är så konflikter börjar. Detta gör Trump svårtolkad och oförutsägbart.

Tror du att Trumps tillträde kommer att påverka NATO:s utformning, och hur kommer det i så fall påverka NATO-debatten i Sverige?

Jag ser två möjliga tolkningar. På ett kyligt sätt skulle man kunna se Trumps isolatistiska retorik som destruktiv för värdet i den bilaterala relationen mellan Sverige och

USA; en relation som i grund och botten bygger på förtroende. Under Obama kunde svenskar känna tillit till USA:s utrikespolitiska kontinuitet. I och med den osäkerhet som Trump injagar, blir relationen en helt annan. Denna logik talar för NATO, eftersom NATO är en befintlig struktur med många andra demokratier. Naturligtvis är USA alliansens absolut viktigaste aktör, men det finns andra länder som vi potentiellt skulle kunna samarbeta med för att förbättra Sveriges säkerhetspolitiska situation. En mer känslomässig tolkning av situationen är att vilja ta avstånd från Trump genom att ta avstånd från NATO; Trump själv verkar inte tycka att NATO är särskilt viktig, varför ska vi gå med i en organisation som kanske håller på att bli överspelad? Personligen lutar jag mer åt att en skakig bilateral relation mellan Sverige och USA gör svenskt NATO-medlemskap mer aktuellt.

"Att Sverige i dagsläget skulle tillföra säkerhet genom att inte vara integrerat i en säkerhetsorganisation är helt enkelt felaktigt, eftersom att gränsen mellan NATO och Ryssland nu går vid Baltikum."

Med tanke på dagslägets mest aktuella säkerhetshot, vilka för- respektive nackdelar ser du med ett svenskt NATO-medlemskap?
Den säkerhetspolitiska miljön som Sverige befinner sig i har försämrats till följd av två faktorer: Den ena är naturligtvis Rysslands mer aggressiva hållning, den andra är en förändring som vi för tjugo år sedan såg som ►

positiv, nämligen att de baltiska staterna blev fria, och har integrerats i både EU och NATO. Under kalla kriget kunde svensk och finsk neutralitet ses som positiv i bemärkelsen att den bidrog till avspänning mellan Warszawapakten i Öst och NATO i Väst – man hade inte gränserna precis intill varandra. Det fanns en säkerhetspolitisk logik i detta tankesätt. Att Sverige i dagsläget skulle tillföra säkerhet genom att inte vara integrerat i en säkerhetsorganisation är helt enkelt felaktigt, eftersom att gränsen mellan NATO och Ryssland nu går vid Baltikum. Osäkerheten i vår region är om Ryssland skulle se en möjlighet att ta tillbaka Baltikum ostraftat. Gotland är helt avgörande för Baltikums säkerhet, och svenskt NATO-medlemskap skulle neutralisera den oklarhet som idag finns kring Sveriges ställning, och därmed fylla det glapp i NATO-blocket som svensk och finsk neutralitet utgör. Svensk militär svaghet i kombination med svensk alliansfrihet är idag en faktor som skapar osäkerhet i norra Europa.

"Det är ett sätt att visa styrka, ett sätt att få befolkningen att sluta upp bakom den nuvarande ledningen."

Med tanke på Rysslands hackerinterventioner i det amerikanska presidentvalet, deras avbrutna kärnvapensnedrustningsavtal med USA, och krigsbrott i Syrien (enligt Internationella brottmålsdomstolen), finns mycket som tyder på en allt mer spänd relation mellan Öst och Väst. Kan du kartlägga Rysslands utrikespolitik?

Jag tror att Putins regim har ett överordnat mål, nämligen att behålla makten. När Putin

var förhållandevis ny, det vill säga i början av 2000-talet, hade han inte någon tydligt anti-västlig retorik. Han såg det som positivt att Ryssland var integrerat i världsekonomin och hade goda relationer till Väst. Under resans gång har han alldeles uppenbart ändrat sin analys av värdet i dessa goda relationer; han har slagit sig in på det nationalistiska spåret och knutit an till gamla, konservativa föreställningar om Ryssland som en stormakt med en särskild mission som skiljer landet från Väst. Man kan säga att det i handling började med Georgien-kriget, för att sedan ta ny fart i och med aktionerna mot Ukraina. Det finns ett revisionistiskt drag i att Putin har omtalat Sovjetunionens fall som 1900-talets stora geopolitiska katastrof, och sådan retorik ger naturligtvis upphov till oro. Hur som helst är Putin väl medveten om att förutsättningarna för att återskapa det sovjetiska imperiet inte finns. Den aggressiva utrikespolitiken är, som jag uppfattar den, framför allt riktad mot hemmaopinionen. Det är ett sätt att visa styrka, ett sätt att få befolkningen att sluta upp bakom den nuvarande ledningen. Det här kan uppfattas både som lugnande och oroande. Det kan ses som positivt eftersom att Ryssland, enligt denna analys, inte är några imperiebyggare, vilket jag inte tror att de är. Men om det aggressiva utrikespolitiska spåret framför allt är till för inhemsk konsumtion kommer det fortsättningsvis att finnas ett behov av att visa styrka, och av att visa upp nya "troféer". Den stora säkerhetspolitiska risken vad gäller Ryssland är om Putin feltolkar Väst, och gör något som Väst verkligen inte kan acceptera. Ett sådant scenario skulle kunna leda till en direkt konflikt, och i värsta fall ett stort krig. Ett missförstånd mellan USA och Ryssland om att USA inte tänker försvara Baltikum vore fullständigt förödande, just eftersom Putin-regimen är av det slag som skulle lockas av en sådan möjlighet. Donald Trumps tvetydighet och impulsiva hållning förvärrar risken för ett sådant missförstånd avsevärt.

I september tillkännagav EU-kommissionens president, Jean-Claude Juncker, att

"Utfallet i de franska och tyska valen nästa år kommer att bli oerhört avgörande; Marine Le Pen och Frauke Petry är knappast särskilt sugna på en europeisk försvarsallians."

unionen ska etablera en samlad militär styrka. Hur kommer denna styrka att organiseras, och vilken roll kommer den att spela i relation till nationella arméer och NATO? Tidigare har det inte funnits särskilt brett stöd för det här, mycket eftersom man sett det som en dubblering av NATO, och det är fortfarande detta som är den huvudsakliga invändningen; vad ska denna styrka vara som NATO inte är? Samtidigt kan man naturligtvis tänka sig att det nu, i och med Trumps tillträde, kan uppstå en osäkerhet i Europa kring var man har USA, vilket gör ett europeiskt säkerhetssamarbete mer relevant. Det finns en logik i det sättet att tänka. Men knäckfrågan är fortfarande hur denna nya allians förhåller sig till NATO och vad den tillför. Dessutom kan man säga att det i Europa inte riktigt finns någon tradition av säkerhetssamarbeten, utan att det historiskt egentligen är genom USA som samarbetet har gått; i och med den roll som USA fick efter andra världskriget, fick de europeiska länderna en känsla av att det är viktigt att ha en relation till USA, vilket ledde dem in i en amerikansk-ledd gemenskap. Men inbördes har staterna egentligen väldigt olika intressen och olika synsätt på saker och ting. Man skulle kunna tänka sig att Storbritanniens uttag ur EU gör att "Juncker-spåret" väger tyngst; sedan Storbritannien anslöt till unionen år 1973 har de ständigt bromsat integrationen, ibland till förmån för NATO. Brexit i kombination med osäkerheten kring Trumps Amerika skulle kunna ge det här projektet

ny energi. Men jag känner fortfarande att jag vill se det innan jag tror på det. Medlemsländernas ovilja till samarbete under flyktingkrisen vittnar om att EU:s förmåga att säkerställa att medlemmarna håller sig till sina åtaganden, är bristfällig. Och här pratar vi nya åtaganden. Viktor Orbans Ungern och Jaroslaw Kaczynskis Polen är bara exempel på länder i Europa där nationalismen har vuxit sig stark. Utfallet i de franska och tyska valen nästa år kommer att bli oerhört avgörande; Marine Le Pen och Frauke Petry är knappast särskilt sugna på en europeisk försvarsallians.

Syd kinesiska havet har blivit ett konfliktområde för stormaktsintressen. Vad ser du för utveckling i konflikten?

Som jag ser det, finns en betydande skillnad mellan Ryssland och Kina. Ryssland är en stormakt på dekis, en ekonomi i uselt tillstånd med upprustningsambitioner som de inte kan finansiera. Ryssland är, som utrikespolitisk maktspelare, den som jobbar i det lilla, som testar vad som kan göras. Kina, å andra sidan, är ett mer klassiskt exempel på ett land som växer väldigt snabbt i styrka, och som, med sin nyvunna makt, kan göra nya anspråk. En historisk parallell är Tyskland i slutet av 1800-talet och början av 1900-talet. Tyskland fick, efter enandet 1871, en dynamisk ekonomisk utveckling, och tyckte följaktligen inte att deras internationella inflytande stod i proportion till den styrka de hade uppnått. Något liknande kan man säga om Kina, trots att de inte ►

har några imperialistiska ambitioner som sträcker sig långt bort. I sitt närområde kan de betrakta sina intressen som legitima, samtidigt som de har en styrka som, enligt dem själva både ger dem rätt till det här, och som gör att ingen i längden kan hindra dem från att ta det de uppfattar sig ha rätt till. Den enda aktören som egentligen kan stoppa detta är USA, och då är vi åter tillbaka till Trump. Obama har varit tydlig med att visa att USA inte accepterar de kinesiska anspråken. Detta har kineserna sett, och motvilligt godtagit. Med Trump blir frågan huruvida USA fortfarande bryr sig. Detta är ytterligare en risk för missförstånd, även om Kina och Ryssland är väldigt olika. Det som kan utlösa ett krig är en felkalkyl där Kina eller Ryssland tror sig kunna göra saker ostraffat, varpå USA faktiskt, mot förmodan, reagerar.

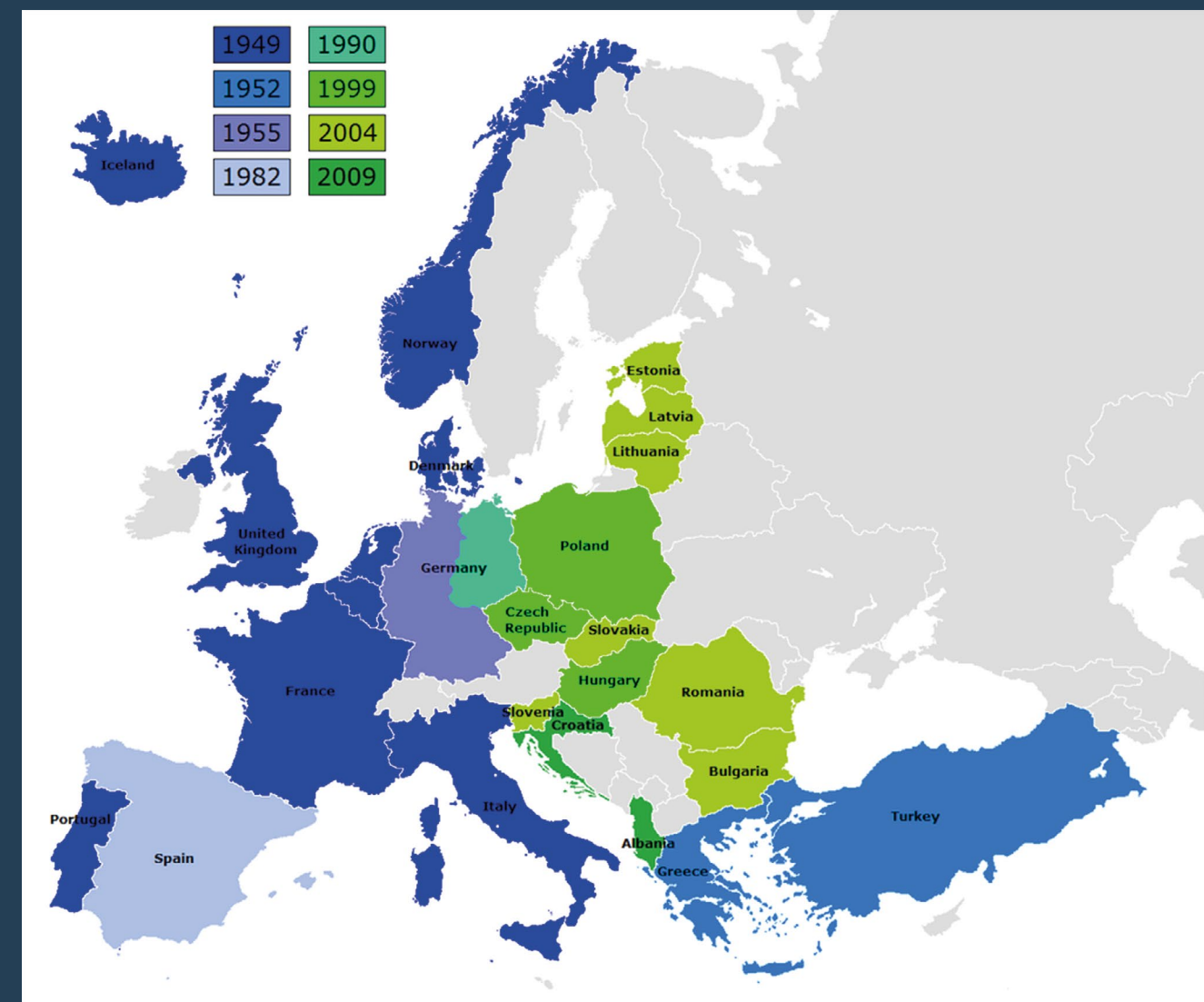
Under klimatkonferensen i Paris i december förra året tecknades ett avtal mellan 195 stater om att begränsa den globala temperaturökningen till två grader. Med de allt mer spända stormaktsrelationerna i åtanke (USA – Ryssland i Europa och Syrien, samt USA – Kina i Syd kinesiska havet), tror du att överenskommelsen kan hålla?

Det är svårt att tänka sig att avtalet förblir intakt, någonting kommer att hända med det. Isabella Lövin kan hävda att avtalet är rättsligt förbindande, och att USA inte kan bryta det, men faktum är att det inte finns någon som kan hindra Trump. Både USA och Kina har historiskt sett varit obenägna att ingå i bindande internationella avtal, eftersom att de båda har sett sig själva som för mäktiga och för betydelsefulla för att underordna sig. Därför kan man säga att det historiskt ovanliga är att USA under Obama ändå gjorde det, och att kineserna hoppade på vagnen. På hemmaplan kommer det vara enkelt för Trump att strunta i avtalet, och det finns ingen som kan hindra honom internationellt. Frågan är hur kineserna svarar på det. Troligtvis svarar de med att de inte heller känner sig bundna.

Samtidigt bör man komma ihåg att mycket av det som uppnåddes i Paris var en följd av att aktörerna, var och en för sig, har insett att uppostringarna som dessa mål förutsätter, inte är så stora. Sedan kan man läsa Paris-avtalet mer som en bekräftelse på en positiv utveckling, än som utvecklingens motor. I den meningen behöver detta kanske inte vara planetens undergång; det finns

"Samtidigt bör man komma ihåg att mycket av det som uppnåddes i Paris var en följd av att aktörerna, var och en för sig, har insett att uppostringarna som dessa mål förutsätter, inte är så stora."

krafter igång som gör att många nationer ändå kommer att stå fast vid sina åtaganden, eftersom att det inte är så kostsamt som har målats upp tidigare, och för att det finns starka skäl att ställa om, inte minst för Kina på hemmaplan. Miljöproblemen i exempelvis Beijing och Shanghai hotar helt enkelt landets politiska stabilitet. Jag kan absolut tänka mig att de svarar med att riva avtalet för att hävda sig, men det är inte alls detsamma som att göra en massiv omställning till kol. I USA, däremot, är det möjligt för att det blir ny fart på fossilindustrin. Risken är stor för att detta blir ett bakslag för klimatpolitiken, men konsekvenserna av det bakslaget behöver inte bli så förödande som man skulle kunna befara. ♦



NATO has expanded six times. The most recent enlargement took place in 2009, and saw Albania and Croatia joining the alliance.

The Russia vs. NATO debate

– *The "other" perspective*

TEXT: Anna Gavrilova

THERE ARE VERY few things that the Russian political elites and their staunchest opposition agree on. The animosity towards NATO is one of them and it is not hard to see why.

It all started during the negotiations about the future of Eastern Europe in general and East Germany in particular in 1990. NATO negotiators allegedly promised Mikhail Gorbachev that NATO would not enlarge eastward; one of the conditions under which German reunification was made possible. This alleged promise has become

a cornerstone of Russian attitude towards NATO and its continuous enlargement. Whether such a promise was actually made or not is still under dispute. Most agree that even if this happened, it was an understanding rather than an actual promise, let alone an agreement. Despite the fact that Mr. Gorbachev had been insisting on the existence of such a promise for many years he has recently recanted his statements. He explained that no direct promises about enlargement were made, considering that the Warsaw pact as well

as the Soviet Union, were still very much in place and hardly anyone thought that they would disappear so quickly.

However, what actually happened doesn't really matter. The seed of doubt was planted and for many it is convenient to believe that such a promise was made in order to remain in opposition to NATO's enlargement. Not that this phantom promise is the only

than with NATO's enlargement; failed privatization, deep economic crisis, widespread crime and chaos were on the minds of both the government and the people. Chechen separatism was added to the mix, leading to a long and bloody military campaign to hold the country together. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union still fresh in the memories of the Russian citizens, the government could not afford allowing disintegration



concern. The main reason why popular opinion in Russia is stacked against NATO is the bewilderment as to why it still exists after the end of the Cold War, let alone why it still grows. NATO was devised first and foremost to deter the Soviet Union. When it disappeared, so did the reason for NATO's existence. Russia became a different country and was working towards creating a stable democracy and market economy. Moreover, the Russian government was going out of its way to build a friendly relationship with the West. It even invited prominent Western economists to help build the new, capitalist Russia. Thus it was not clear why NATO continued to exist when both the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact were dissolved. And the goals that NATO has declared since, haven't really fooled anyone in Russia – NATO is still considered an anti-Russian organization.

In the 90s, though, Russia was weak and preoccupied with its own problems rather

of the country. A new blow to Russia's self-esteem was, however, not far away. The situation in Yugoslavia proved to be one of the turning points in Russia's perception of the West and the role it thought Russia should play. Russia's constant objections over potential interference in the conflict, which resulted in it vetoing the UN Security Council resolution that called for an intervention, were largely ignored. Subsequent unsanctioned military action by NATO and its consequences are still among the toughest geopolitical defeats of modern Russia.

After Vladimir Putin rose to power in 2000, many things have changed. The situation in Russia stabilized and the country enjoyed steady economic growth which, in turn, led the leadership to turn its attention outwards, attempting to reestablish Russia as a key player in the world arena. One of the main mottos of Putin's presidency is "raising Russia from its knees" and it is wildly ►

popular among the Russian population. Many felt that Russia wasn't occupying its rightful place in the modern international system and were craving more influence in the world. Weak Russia was no more.

This increasingly strong Russia was being viewed with rising suspicion and even fear in many neighboring countries, especially in the Baltics. Since becoming members of NATO in 2004 the Baltic countries have been increasingly vocal about the threats of an increasingly powerful Russia, which ensures that even if NATO hasn't been an anti-Russian bloc in the 90s and early 2000s it has

"One can imagine that in Russia such views are much more pervasive since they are being prompted by the government."

been increasingly becoming one from the mid-2000s onwards. The influence of the Baltic states in accelerating these processes may well be exaggerated by the Russian political establishment and the media, however this is the general perception among the Russian population. This, along with the enduring problems that Latvia and Estonia have with their ethnic Russian populations, has constituted grounds for the Baltic states to be hostile toward Russia's increasing strength. This, in turn, has supplied the Russian government with a basis for continuing to spread the fear of NATO among its own population.

Russia started its military modernization in the first years after Putin came to power; however the modernization has increased drastically after the conflicts in Abkhazia and

South Ossetia in 2008 where the inadequacy of the Russian military in an actual conflict situation was exposed. This remilitarization has been met with an increasing fear from the Western countries, whether they were part of NATO or not. This conflict also proved that Russia is not the same weak country as it was in the 90s and that it is ready to use its military capabilities to defend its interests. The efficiency of the modernization could be seen in 2014 when Russian military seamlessly and without any bloodshed seized control over Crimea, eventually making it part of Russia.

The Ukrainian conflict is only a case in point of Russian fear for NATO and its enlargement. Despite its rising strength, Russia has been feeling increasingly unsafe being surrounded by NATO countries, EU countries or countries that were increasingly more interested in becoming part of either organization, rather than remaining in the Russian "sphere of interest". The Russian government became especially paranoid when it came to such a "brotherly country" as Ukraine. The two countries have had a troubled relationship for a while, and the Orange revolution of 2004 has shown how dangerous an unfriendly Ukrainian government can be to Russian security. This is especially true since the Russian fleet is still dependent on the base in Crimea that the Ukrainian government was renting out to them. During the presidency of Viktor Yushchenko it was stated on many occasions that the agreement (that was due to expire in 2017) would not be prolonged, in which case Russia would lose its major defense post in the Black Sea. In addition to that, another fear was that the void left by the Russian fleet would be filled by NATO, although such plans may have only existed in the imagination of the government officials and the media. Thus, when another uprising happened in Ukraine in 2014 the Russian government decided not to wait for something like this to happen, but to act preemptively. Moreover, the rampaging far right nationalists

(mainly represented by the group called Right Sector) gave the Russians a pretext for this by attacking ethnic Russians throughout the country. Whether or not it was justified to fear that the peninsula would become a site of a modern genocide if Russia didn't act is up for debate. However, the question at hand that allows many Russians to rationalize the annexation is: "should we have waited for the genocide to happen to prove to everyone that we were right or were we right in preventing this from happening in the first place?" Moreover, NATO's own actions in Yugoslavia have also been used to justify Russia's actions in Crimea.

"The need for an external enemy that holds the country together and keeps public attention away from real problems might be too strong."

The current relationship between Russia and NATO is at its worst in recent history. In many instances the carefully crafted anti-Americanism serves as a catalyst for the negative public perception of NATO, which is considered an alliance that serves the sole purpose of furthering American interests in the world. Many, even in the West, are disillusioned with US interference in the affairs of other countries and the motives behind such interventions. One can imagine that in Russia such views are much more pervasive since they are being prompted by the government.

Despite this grim outlook there is still hope for improvement. First of all, even though

the events of the past two years have created a lot of tension between Russia and NATO, not many people in Russia actually believe in the possibility of a direct military conflict with NATO. Nor do they want to engage in one. So far the governmental rhetoric is more of weary dissatisfaction and annoyance rather than outright hostility. And the influence of this rhetoric on the opinions of the people should not be underestimated.

Another factor of cautious optimism is Donald Trump's election. Unlike the rest of the world, Russians were ecstatic after his victory. This was not by any means expected: some inside sources claim that Trump's loss was supposed to be nothing more than another attempt to prove that the US is not really that democratic. In the meantime the Kremlin was devising a strategy of dealing with Clinton's White House – at least she is the devil they know. Nevertheless, with Trump's victory everything changed. If he keeps his promise to mend relations with Russia, NATO-Russia relationship will also benefit. So far the selections that he has made for his future administration indicate that he might try to keep this promise.

However many things are stacked against Trump in this task. His own party might not let him become too friendly with Mr. Putin, since this perpetual confrontation helps to drive up military budgets. Putin, in turn, might decide not to use this opportunity to normalize relations with the US. The need for an external enemy that holds the country together and keeps public attention away from real problems might be too strong. Moreover, many of the US allies are dead set against both Russia and condoning (or even tolerating) its actions in Ukraine. Yet, it is still an opportunity. And despite all the resentment from all the actors involved, seizing this opportunity would benefit everyone. A safe world is impossible without Russian cooperation.♦

Sydkinesiska havet

Bakgrund och förutsättningar för konflikten

TEXT: Axel Christoffersson

I SYRIENKRIGETS medieskugga utspelar sig på andra sidan jorden en dragkamp om kontrollen över den industrialiserade världens goda; fisk och olja. Kina, Filippinerna och USA är några av spelarna i en dispyt där sista kortet är långt ifrån lagt.

Knappt 400 kilometer öster om Vietnams kust sticker en ögrupp vid namn Paracel upp ur Sydkinesiska havet. De allra flesta öarna är mycket små, så små att vissa försvinner vid flod och vid ebb åter dyker upp för ögats beskådan. Här finns ingen bofast befolkning och öarna har traditionellt bara använts av små fiskebåtar som tillfälliga ankringsplatser vid dåligt väder eller för vila vid längre turer. Trots dess minimala storlek utgör idag Paracelöarna, tillsammans med ett antal andra mindre atoller och ögrupper i Sydkinesiska havet, epicentrum för en maktkamp som potentiellt är en av världens mer potenta krutdurkar.

Sydkinesiska havet avgränsas mot annat vattnet av Taiwan i norr, Filippinerna i öster och Malaysia i söder och mot land av Kina i norr och Vietnam i väster. Genom denna del av Stilla Havet, som måste passeras för att sjövägen ta sig från Kina till Indien och Suezkanalen, passerar mellan 30 och 40 procent av allt fartygsburet gods som fraktas årligen. Förutom rollen som nav för världens handel är också Sydkinesiska havet högintressant till följd av de naturrikedomar som finns i området. Vattnen är rika på fisk och i bottensedimenten har stora reserver olja konstaterats.

I spåren av industrialisering och ekonomisk expansion kombinerat med ökande befolkning i Sydostasien har havet blivit allt viktigare för livsmedels- och energiförsörjning i regionen. Kontrollen över havet och dess öar är alltså av potentiellt stor vikt. De redan nämnda Paracelöarna annekterades av Kina år 1974, men även Vietnam och Taiwan gör

anspråk på denna lilla landyta som sticker upp ur havet. Spratlyöarna, belägna längre österut, något väster om Filippinerna, är också dem annekterade av Kina, medan Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia och Filippinerna anser sig ha antingen delvis eller total rätt till öarna. Samma mönster ser vi vad gäller mindre atoller och grupperingar av öar; det är sällan bara ett land som gör anspråk på territoriet.

Hur kommer det sig då att så många länder är intresserade av ett antal små, knappt brukbara öar mitt ute i havet? Svaret på den frågan kan spåras till FN:s sjölagstiftning (UN convention on the Law of the Sea), där länder ges specifika rättigheter till delar av det hav som gränsar till dess landmassa. Enligt denna lagstiftning har varje kust rätt till en ekonomisk zon, det vill säga till alla resurser inom en radie på 200 nautiska mil från landets kustlinje. Det förklarar i stor utsträckning varför öarna är så attraktiva – den som kontrollerar dem kontrollerar resurserna.

"Det klargjordes att de öar som berörs av tvisten mellan länderna i juridisk mening saknar ekonomisk zon"

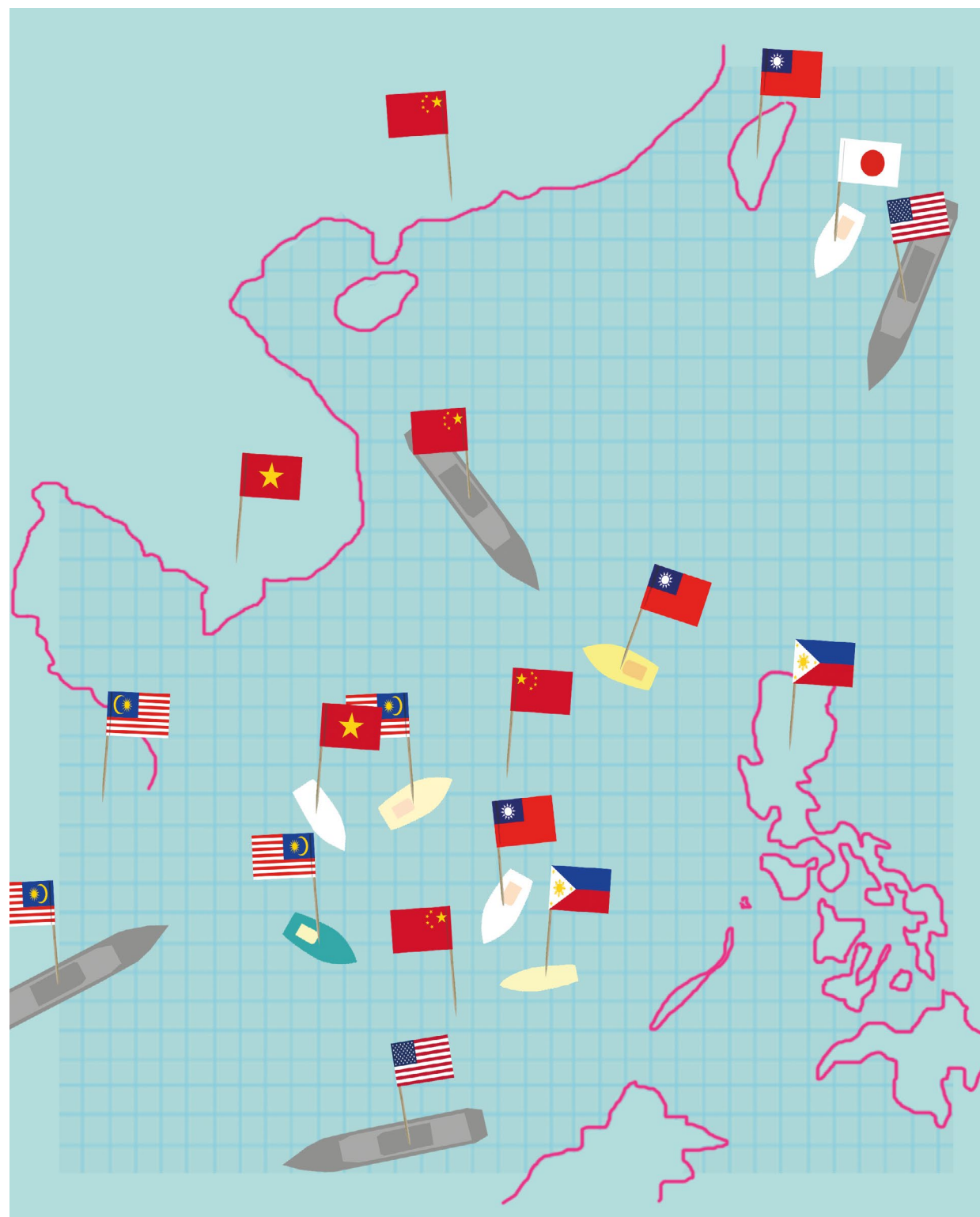
För att räknas som ekonomisk zon måste dock den mark som utgör kust ha hyst historisk någon form av ekonomisk aktivitet, något som drivit Kina till att bygga landningsbanor för flyg på öar långt mindre än själva landningsbanan, och bedriva turism på öar som annars inte vore aktuella för turistattraktioner. Huruvida dessa aktiviteter inverkar på rättigheterna till fiske och oljeutvinning är delvis avgjort i domstol i fallet Sydkinesiska havet. Den anmälan om brott

mot havsrätten som Filippinerna lämnade in mot Kina avgjordes av permanenta skiljedomstolen i Haag sommaren 2016, där det klargjordes att de öar som berörs av tvisten mellan länderna i juridisk mening saknar ekonomisk zon.



Kinas försök att på konstgjord väg bygga ut öar och deras strävanden att förlägga turistnäring till små diton i området tycks alltså vara utan juridisk verkan, men spänningarna finns kvar. Vilka faktorer är det då som styr hur konflikten ser ut, vilka är förutsättningarna för att undvika våld och hur har det kraftigt förändrade politiska landskapet på Filippinerna och i USA påverkat situationen? En faktor som i sammanhanget inte kan förbises är de inblandade ländernas utrikespolitik. Här är inte minst USA en viktig aktör, som länge agerat motvikt till Kinas allt mer dominerande ställning i området. USA:s närmsta allierade, Filippinerna, är som sagt djupt indragen i konflikten. Samtidigt har USA stort intresse av att bibehålla inflytande i området i och med dess kommersiella betydelse. Dessutom har Kina en ubåtsbas på den närbelägna ön Hainan, vilket gör Sydkinesiska havet än mer intressant för den amerikanska marinen.

Relationerna dessa tre länder emellan är snåriga, och har inte blivit mindre trassliga efter Donald Trumps och Rodrigo Dutertes valsegrar under året. Samtidigt som Duterte, med okonventionella uttalanden tydligt tagit avstånd från USA, har Trump på andra sidan Stilla havet dragit fokus från internationellt samarbete. America first, vad det nu innebär, kan förmodligen ►



tolkas som att USA fortsättningsvis i lägre grad bör lägga sig i förhållanden utanför landets direkta intressesfär, vilket i sin tur kan antas mynna ut i mindre närvaro i till exempel Sydkinesiska havet. Ett minskat samarbete mellan Filippinerna och USA skulle ge Kina ökat spelrum, vilket sedermera skulle göra Sydkinesiska havet till en

alltmer kinesisk intressesfär.

Parallellt med avståndstagandet från USA har Duterte närmast sig Kina. Genom att till exempel öppna dörren för att lösa tvisten om rätten till öar bilateralt istället för genom domstolsbeslut hoppas troligtvis Duterte få ta del av Kinas växande ekonomi.

Just de ekonomiska förhållandena i regionen är den andra viktiga faktorn som styr hur konflikten kan utveckla sig. I vårt eget när-område finner vi exempel på hur en livlig och tätt sammanflätad multinationell ekonomi skapar incitament för att undvika militärt våld och istället fokusera på förhandling och samtal. Europeiska Unionen skapades från början som fredsprojekt och 65 år efter att kol- och stålunionen upprättades kan vi konstatera att inga fler krig utkämpats inom EU:s gränser. Det beror dels på att EU skapat en naturlig plattform för överstatliga samtal och utbyten, dels på att de täta ekonomiska kontakterna mellan medlemsländerna på den inre marknaden helt enkelt skulle göra krig till en fruktansvärt dyr affär.

Hur skulle då dessa erfarenheter kunna tillämpas på Sydkinesiska havet med omnejd? En snabb titt i FN:s handelsstatistik säger oss att handeln i regionen är på väg upp. Detta hänger förstås delvis samman med att ekonomin i sig växer, men också med att kvoten mellan export och BNP stiger bland i princip alla länder. Detta ger oss det första och mest hoppfulla perspektivet – en ökad handel mellan länderna i Sydostasien bör generera ett större ömsesidigt beroende, vilket sedermera bör göra våld ofördelaktigt för samtliga parter. Fenomenet brukar på fackspråk benämnas interdependens och är ett viktigt begrepp i den liberala teoritraditionen inom internationella relationer.

Till detta kan fogas andra typer av samarbeten mellan länder. Den i regionen viktigaste arenan för samtal och samarbeten, ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations), omfattar alla länder i dispyten förutom Kina. Kina ingår dock (tillsammans med Japan och Sydkorea) i en vidare sammanslutning kallad ASEAN +3, som är tänkt som en framtida utvidgning av gruppen. ASEAN verkar för öppnare handel och mer samtal mellan länderna, ett slags "EU light" med mindre befogenheter och utan gemensamt parlament. Om projektet lyckas och länderna knyts

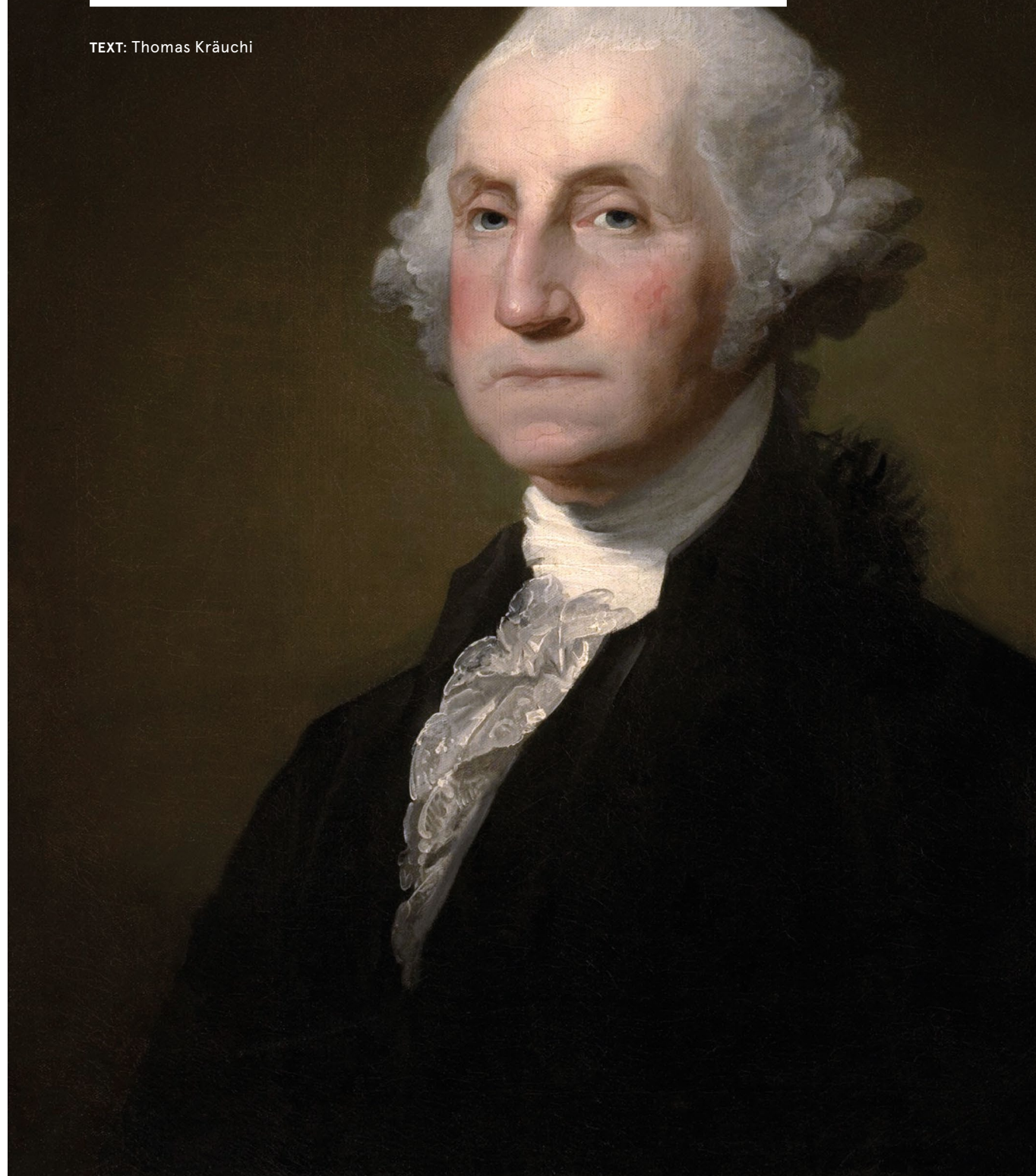
närmare samman, kan ASEAN mycket väl bli en viktig fredsbevarande faktor i regionen.

Ökande handel ger alltså större ömsesidigt beroende och fler incitament att undvika våld. Något som också är värt att notera i vidare studier av handelsmönstren är att handeln utvecklar sig lite olika för olika länder. Vad som är särskilt framträdande är en bild av Kina som tillväxtmotor i regionen, med konsekvensen att länderna runt omkring handlar mer och mer med den stora grannen i norr. Däremot är tillväxten i Kina mindre beroende av det direkta närområdet. Viktiga exportmarknader som Europa, USA och Japan ligger inte i direkt anslutning till Sydkinesiska havet (även om Japan ligger väldigt nära Kina), varför Kinas beroende av Vietnam, Filippinerna och Malaysia som handelspartners bara ökat marginellt. Detta skulle ett cyniskt Kina kunna dra nytta av. Om grannarnas ekonomier blir mer och mer beroende av Kina medan Kina fortfarande har sina viktigaste kontakter på annat håll blir ekonomin ett potentiellt påtryckningsmedel i dragkampen om öar och resurser i Sydkinesiska havet. Kina har helt enkelt relativt sett mindre att förlora på en konflikt än sina grannar, något de förstås också vet om.

Sammanfattningsvis kan alltså sägas att både de politiska och ekonomiska faktorer som rör konflikten pekar åt samma håll. Trumps och Dutertes utrikespolitik sopar mattan för ett mer utåtriktat Kina, som dessutom kan luta sig tillbaka mot regionala handelsmönster som gör omgivande länder mer beroende av Kina än vad Kina är beroende av dem. På längre sikt skulle däremot utvidgandet av handeln och förhoppningsvis tätare kontakter mellan länderna i ASEAN kunna medföra att våld blir mindre attraktivt. I samband med att USA nu ser ut att minska sin närvaro i området verkar det heller inte bli någon kraftmätning mellan Kina och Staterna, utan tipset är att vi ser ett någorlunda odramatiskt skifte i den regionala makten till Kinas fördel.♦

The True Face of Terrorism

TEXT: Thomas Kräuchi



WHEN THE American Revolution began, men such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin were seen as terrorists. Today, however, they are among the most revered American heroes. The famous quote that "history is written by the victors" makes it difficult to predict the "good guys" and "bad guys" – the definition of good and bad is very much contextual. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the United States actively supported the Mujahideen – "freedom fighters" back then – yet during the American invasion in 2001 they referred to the same group as terrorists.

From a social constructivist perspective, this originates from the relationship between language and power. According to the famous French philosopher Michel Foucault, power relationships are expressed through language, meaning that the powerful are the ones who create labels and enforce their use. By labelling particular actors as terrorists, they simultaneously give themselves the label of 'good guys' and the general public shape their preconceptions after these labels. Consequently, the terrorists are simply evil people, and their destruction is thereby justified.

From a wider perspective, the image of terrorism and terrorists has changed drastically in recent decades. In the Western world, terrorism was primarily rooted in political goals. ETA (Basque Country and Freedom in English), the Basque terrorist group in Spain, sought independence for their region as there was no room for political discussion under the Franco Regime. In Germany, the Red Army Faction opposed Western Imperialism and tried to incite a Communist revolution. These groups conducted bloody attacks on innocent civilian populations, but usually on smaller scales than those seen today, as well as usually targeting symbols of their oppression.

Since the attacks in New York City on September 11, 2001, the face of terrorism has radically changed. This unprecedented event was the largest and most deadly terrorist attack ever seen, and signalled a change in tactics. Groups such as Al-Qaeda or ISIS have since used terrorism primarily as a show of force to strike fear in the hearts of civilians – to induce the feeling that we are never safe no matter where we are. The Madrid, London, Paris, and Brussels attacks in particular have shown that these groups are capable of attacking the capitals of Western democracies on a large scale, while many smaller and less coordinated attacks have also taken place.

"The feeling that we are never safe no matter where we are"

In turn, this has created divisions in international law as to a comprehensive definition of terrorism. In 1996, the UN defined it as "Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public ... for political purposes", but less than 10 years later changed it to "criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury ... with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public".

"The media has taken on a racial or ethnic bias in reporting attacks"

This has had some unintended consequences; the media has taken on a racial or ethnic bias in reporting attacks. When the perpetrator is found to be Muslim, ►

"Following the Paris attacks, a so-called 'temporary' state of emergency has been put into force, which reduces civil rights by allowing house arrests and search and seizures without judicial oversight"

or is of Middle-Eastern or North African origin, the attacks are immediately associated to groups such as ISIS, yet when the terrorist is white, it is more often called a mass shooting, and the perpetrator is discussed as being mentally ill. The bias in these responses has negative impacts on stereotypes and immigrants, and may even help bolster the support for anti-immigration parties. Following the Paris and Brussels attacks, Donald Trump's polling numbers soared – yet the nearly daily mass shootings in the United States were hardly discussed by presidential candidates.

In countries which have witnessed particularly brutal attacks, measures to combat terrorism have been introduced. The popular American campaign to fight "a war on terror" can be primarily understood as a concerted effort to democratize countries through military means, while introducing new laws and reinforcing police and intelligence capacities. Following the Paris attacks, a so-called "temporary" state of emergency has been put into force, which reduces civil rights by allowing house arrests and search and seizures without judicial oversight. Although perhaps effective in the short term, it may backfire. Amnesty International has criticized this move as leading to a "crackdown far disproportionate to any terror threat" and particularly leading to police brutality and racial

discrimination, which may in turn create a vicious cycle leading to more support for terrorist groups.

These measures clearly have significant implications for the future of Western societies. Anti-immigrant sentiment, rhetoric, and legislation is on the rise throughout Europe, yet the troubles we face here are miniscule in comparison to the ongoing anarchy in places such as Libya and Syria. In Western countries, equal opportunities for all citizens is one of the primary long-term solutions to prevent youths from feeling alienated and seeking radical alternatives, and internationally coordinated efforts to create stable, egalitarian and just societies in war torn countries is necessary to prevent atrocities such as those occurring in Syria. With the guidance of these idealistic goals, we must remain optimistic of a better and more peaceful future.♦



The delegation of UF Gothenburg at the international Model United Nations conference in Leuven (Belgium) this March.

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The Security Threat of International Crime And The Need For International Cooperation

TEXT: Bo Dohmen



INTERNATIONAL CRIME is a fact of life. As we all know, crime is borderless, transnational crime poses a serious threat to international security. Tackling transnational crime therefore requires much more international cooperation than we currently have. The aim of this article is to argue why international cooperation is a prerequisite for efficient elimination of transnational crime. It also aims to provide information on the European Union's (EU) efforts on the matter.

It is clear that transnational crime, such as terrorism, poses a threat to international security. What is interesting though, is that states do not seem to cooperate much on the matter. As we have seen from the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels, both countries knew of the existence of the terror cells in the other country, but decided not to share the intelligence with one another. Naturally,

the issue is highly sensitive; sharing this kind of intelligence is a very committing diplomatic move. It requires a lot of strategic consideration and can easily backfire.

The rise of globalisation is one of the reasons why criminality has been able to expand in scope and intensity (Smith, 2013). It is also claimed that the creation of the EU has helped to facilitate their operations (ibid), because of the inexistence of border controls between EU Member States, which makes it a lot easier for criminals to move across borders within Europe.

In addition to being a security threat, international crime can also be framed as a policy problem. When it concerns the treatment of crime as an international security threat, the actions of global actors matter. This specifically concerns international cooperation,

but in order to facilitate international cooperation, one needs "a combination of hegemonic leadership and coalitions of the willing" (Smith, 2013: 195). Merging counter-crime policies with a number of countries is one way to go, an example is the US alliance with Colombia. However, there is often a lack of transnational cooperation. Why is it that countries don't cooperate more when it comes to tackling crime, especially terrorism?

One fruitful way of looking at it is through the lens of Game Theory, in its most basic form known as *the prisoner's dilemma*. Why would two completely rational countries not cooperate, even if cooperation is in the interest of both countries? For one thing, it would mean that one of the two countries in question would have to take the first step, putting its interests at risk. Throughout history, the rational choice model has been characterised by self-interest. Simply put, taking the first step in an exchange of intelligence would be the opposite of minimising potential loss, thus making it the *irrational choice*. In addition, it would be difficult for a country to determine which pieces of information to share, especially since neither country knows what they're getting in return. Also, who would decide who gets clearance to the traded information? This could cause a dispute about sovereignty if the original government wants a say who is allowed access.

Countries may also decide not to share information because it is "the safe move" in retaining popular support; if a government would trade vital intelligence, only to find their own security weakened by it, it is probable that their support would be dealt a huge blow.

On the EU's side, Guy Verhofstadt, leader of the ALDE party (the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe) in the European Parliament, has called multiple times for more international cooperation to fight international crime. Especially after the recent terrorist attacks in Europe, he reiterated the

importance of intelligence sharing between EU Member States to overcome the challenges that transnational crime poses. During the State of the European Union (SOTEU) speech by European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker on 14 September 2016, Juncker presented the Commission's proposal of putting forward a European Defence Union for internal and external security. On 1 December 2016 the European Commission formalised the proposal. The appointment of Security Commissioner Julian King is a sign that the EU is moving in the right direction when it comes to cooperation on security issues. This Security Union will also reinforce the role of Europol and Interpol, two organisations with the sole purpose of tackling international crime.

As Juncker said in the SOTEU speech regarding terrorism: "Just as we have stood shoulder to shoulder in grief, so must we stand united in our response." In brief, not only should we stand united in our response, we should also join forces and jointly tackle the huge security threat that transnational crime constitutes. Why is it so essential to foster more international cooperation in the field of crime, and in particular with regards to terrorism? As mentioned before, crime is borderless. Organised criminals have transnational networks spread out all over the world. To tackle the huge challenges that they pose, it is of utmost importance that countries collaborate. A single country cannot stand alone. Reinforced transnational cooperation is the essential way forward.♦

Further reading:

Giraldo, J. & Trinkunas, H. (2013). "Transnational Crime". In *Contemporary Security Studies*, Alan Collins. 3rd edition. pp. 346-361.

Smith, M. (2013). "International Security. Politics, policy, prospects." pp. 179-205.

Quote: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3042_en.htm

Civil Liberties and Security

– *Opposites or twins?*

TEXT: Heike Lehner

"Freedom is not a gift bestowed upon us by other men, but a right that belongs to us by the laws of God and nature."
– Benjamin Franklin

Since the beginning of the 21st century, our civil liberties have been challenged by many tragedies; acts of terrorism such as 9/11 and the recent events in France, Belgium and the United States shook the world. The frightening prospect of further attacks started to affect us all. It did not only happen far

away from home anymore, but it happened in our previously so secure neighboring countries. These tragic events have led to a number of different government programs, constructed to strengthen national security and prevent further attacks from happening. Especially in the United States, a number of

different programs have been launched, and bills such as the US Patriot Act have been passed. The roles of the NSA, the FBI, and the CIA have been defined more clearly, and already existing acts such as the "Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act" (FISA) from 1978 have become ever more important.

These programs and agencies opened up the debate about the importance of security in relation to our civil liberties, thereby implying a trade-off between those two. However, while Europeans seem to be willing to sacrifice a greater deal of civil liberties for higher security, it often doesn't seem like that in the United States. Many Americans are very fond of their Constitution and Bill of Rights. Three amendments of the Bill of Rights are specifically important in debates regarding civil liberties and security: the first amendment, which ensures freedom of speech and press, the fourth amendment, which prevents citizens and their property from unreasonable searches and seizures, and sometimes also the fifth amendment, which ensures fair trials.

Defending these amendments has been the aim of a number of court cases against the US government and its agencies. One of the first cases was "Olmsted v. United States" in 1928, which questioned the wiretapping of private telephone conversations by federal agents without judicial approval. Another was "New York Times Co v. United States" in 1971 about the freedom of press and the publication of Pentagon Papers. However, since the leakages of information by Edward Snowden, there were two very important cases: "Clapper v. American Civil Liberties Union" and "Klayman v. Obama" in 2013. Both concern the mass-collection of phone and internet metadata. Phone metadata shows with who you were talking, when and how often, among other things. However, it does not reveal what one was talking about. Even though the outcomes and rulings over these cases are mixed, it shows that there

is a massive distrust in major parts of the government. While civil liberties are important, former President of the United States Franklin D Roosevelt saw security and safety as a prerequisite for liberties. One of his famous Four Freedoms was freedom from fear, which indicates that there isn't necessarily a trade-off between civil liberties and security, but that they could go hand in hand.

"It is important to point out that being a civil libertarian doesn't imply being a libertarian in general"

When it comes to civil liberties, especially in the United States, "Civil Libertarianism" is often mentioned as well. It is important to point out that being a civil libertarian doesn't imply being a libertarian in general, even if they correlate with one another.

Libertarianism itself is a very broad concept. Quickly summarized, it is a political philosophy which's main concern is individual liberty. Libertarianism can be roughly divided into Anarcho-Capitalism and Minarchism. The former advocates no state intervention at all since, in their opinion, it violates the so-called "Non-Aggression Principle". The Non-Aggression Principle states that any kind of aggression is illegitimate and therefore must be avoided at all costs. Minarchists, on the other hand, support a so-called "night-watchman state" which is needed to actually enforce and preserve the non-aggression principle. However, civil libertarianism is common for both perspectives. ►

Civil libertarianism, as the name suggests, supports the protection of all kinds of civil liberties. In the United States, a lot of different organizations which defend these rights have formed over the last couple years. Some of them have already filed lawsuits, for example the "American Civil Liberties Union" which is mentioned above. Others have also gotten a lot of public attention, such as the "Electronic Frontier Foundation", for specializing on civil liberties in today's digitalized world.

"A lot of Americans are not particularly afraid that the government listens, but rather that the obtained information could be used against them"

Studies have shown that in the US, the typical civil libertarian (or at least someone who vigorously defends civil liberties) is young, educated, lives in an urban area, and is rather unpatriotic. The last characteristic is quite surprising, since urban areas have been the main targets for terrorist attacks, which have been a factor in igniting patriotic sentiments. This can be related to the fact that patriotic citizens tend to be more tolerant of national authority, at least for a limited amount of time.

But why are civil liberties so important? Why is there a problem in restricting our individual rights if that's a requirement in ensuring people's safety and security? It



sounds rather simple: let the government do their job, it's what they're paid to do. One of the main issues is that it is extremely hard to regain liberties once they are restricted. Government has a tendency to grow rather than shrink. It is rather easy to say that "if you don't have anything to hide, you do not have to be afraid". Is this true, though? A lot of Americans are not particularly afraid that the government listens, but rather that the obtained information could be used against them. If people knew that someone was reading their Facebook messages or listening to their calls, would they not automatically be more careful more about what they say? This is constraining for a lot of citizens, because they simply don't know anymore what they are actually allowed to say. There have been stories about US citizens who simply talked about a terrorist organization or attacks with a friend over the Internet and suddenly found their house invaded by US officials. Also, the protection of civil liberties goes hand in hand with the protection of democracy. Why should our civil liberties be limited with the argument that "if we don't have anything to hide, we don't have to be afraid" while the US government can withhold information branded as "state secrets" in lawsuits against it? Civil liberties help individuals to live their lives as they please, to ensure that they aren't censored in what they're saying.

After this elaboration on civil liberties, one question often raised about national security is whether the adjective "national" is actually necessary. While this is definitely an anarcho-capitalistic, not a minarchistic, view, it is worth entertaining. In 1849, the Belgian Gustave de Molinari, wrote an essay named "The Production of Security" in which he suggested that in order to satisfy all individual demands of security, the best solution is to simply let the individual decide. They decide what kind of security they need and the free market will provide it if the demand is high enough. It is understandable that some means of security cannot be provided as efficiently by the market as by a government. However, one must admit that he is doubtlessly right in saying that a free market is unique in allowing citizens to decide for themselves – an opportunity of choice which is impossible under the confinements of nation wide security measures. It is important to note that "privatization" of security does not mean that the government hands their monopoly on legitimate violence to a private company, but rather that the government does not have the right to claim this authority at all. For instance, if airport security would not be handled by the government officials anymore but by a private company, this would not be a free market solution since the government would still supervise the task. Also, when it comes to market provided security, there doesn't have to be a trade-off between liberty and security, since every individual has the liberty to purchase as much security as they like – Franklin D Roosevelt's forementioned 'freedom from fear' may be interpreted in a different way than he might originally have thought.

Conclusively, it seems obvious that civil liberties and security is a very sensitive subject. If citizens decide to depute the role of providing security to the government, it doesn't matter how hard the government in question tries, it will never please everyone. There will always be individuals who demand

more security and citizens who demand less. Hence, even though de Molinari's approach seems very extreme at first, especially if you're new to Libertarianism, not to mention Anarcho-Capitalism, it is the only way to please everyone. In this case, the debate

"There will always be individuals who demand more security and citizens who demand less"

of civil liberties and security might not be about trade-offs, they may go hand in hand, since the liberties actually give individualism the right to acquire as much security as they like and can afford. One counter-argument might be that some security measures are provided more efficiently by the government or that in general, some areas might get much more unsafe due to citizens not being able to afford enough security measures. Therefore, this approach might not be what the majority of people want, and there will always be a discussion about how limited civil liberties may be and how far the government should go in providing protection. Especially in the United States, the restriction of civil liberties has become a real thing. If compared to European standards, the US definitely implements more surveillance measures. In the light of developments in politics and international safety during the last few years, the United States has to find and realize measures which are actually wanted by its citizens. Withholding "state secrets" in court cases and risking further whistleblowing scandals will not help it in satisfying the needs of its citizens.♦

The 'War on Drugs' in Latin America

TEXT: Mikael Lassa

TRANSNATIONAL CRIME organizations have been a considerable international security issue in recent Latin American history. Among the several illegal industries that these organizations take part in, drug trafficking is the most well-known, and is often depicted in popular media representations. Fueled by consumption patterns in the USA and in Europe, the drug market is indeed a very lucrative business. The trail of death and violence that drugs leave on their path is an evidence of an important security issue; the organizations controlling and competing for the trade cause a great number of casualties in several countries while simultaneously posing a serious threat to state institutions.

The drug trade in this region follows a complex pattern, taking place in different countries and involving many different actors at different stages. Cocaine, for example, is usually produced on plantations in Colombia, Peru or Bolivia, often with the use of forced labor. Current trade routes tend to include

shipping the drugs to Honduras, which has a long Atlantic coast and a relatively weak government, making it a perfect node in the route. The path then continues further to Guatemala. The border between Honduras and Guatemala is indeed a very problematic area, and has among the highest murder rates in the world. Mexican cartels bring the drugs further through Mexico and finally to the United States. The whole route is filled with violence: apart from direct violence by armed traffickers on the drug routes, urban gangs struggle for control of drug distribution in major cities, which accounts for extremely high murder rates in some areas.

While in the 1980s and 1990s Colombian organizations controlled most of the trade, the power has gradually shifted to Mexican cartels. Their rule locally, and especially in border areas, is ambivalent and problematic in several ways. In countries such as Nicaragua, the organizations that control the transportation of drugs handle huge

amounts of capital (revenues can be up to a few hundred millions per year, in US dollars). This capital is often invested in various kinds of businesses and in corrupting political parties and public figures. In some cases, even police officers and judges are bought, greatly hindering the chances of investigations taking place. The money is furthermore often used to fund local clubs and activities, such as local sports teams. What all this means is that criminal organizations get to enjoy substantial political and social power, acting as de facto authorities (especially in rural areas), which makes their eradication extremely problematic.

There have been several attempts to mitigate the impact of the drug trade in Central America. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for example, supported a number of programs in different countries aimed at improving the cooperation between state and supranational authorities, while also organizing crime prosecutors in a more transnational way. Programs of treatment and rehabilitation aimed at drug addicted people have also been launched. The US has had an active role in fighting crime in Central America, although the outcome of the war on drugs is controversial.

A particularly interesting role is played by the legalization of recreational marijuana in some US states. As consumers shifted their preference to legal domestic producers, drug cartels have experienced a substantial loss in revenue. The number of violent crimes, including murders, has decreased accordingly in Mexico following recent American drug policies. This is comparable with the example of Portugal, which after the decriminalization of drug use and possession in 2001 has seen a substantial decline in drug addiction and drug-related deaths, improving overall safety and health. While this is surely a step in the right direction, long-term trends in Central America are hardly predictable. Drug cartels are still

extremely influential, and they dominate the market in several illegal businesses, including the trade of hard drugs.

By US estimates, about 90% of the drugs entering the country pass through the land border with Mexico. This poses the question of whether the logistical madness of a wall proposed by the newly elected president of the United States would stop, or at least diminish, the impact of drug trade and crime in the US. This, however, hardly seems to be the case. Without substantial decreases in demand, it is very unlikely that cartels would stop their trade; alternative trade routes would probably be found. It is known that traffickers have been using underground tunnels for years, and the only change that a wall might bring with it is concentrating violence to a few strategic entry points.



The effects of the war on drugs are well debated, and the impact of marijuana legalization may very well be insufficient in stopping drug cartels and other criminal organizations; a reliable strategy to combat crime and illegal drug trade in Central America is yet to be seen. The eradication of such organizations will take a long time in any case. But through legalization policies, and programs to fight drug addiction – instead of walls and violence – the future might look a little less bleak. ♦

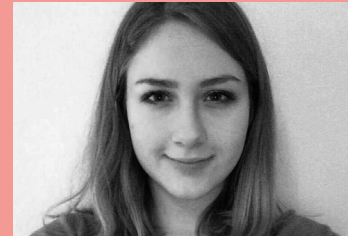
CONTRIBUTORS



Mikael Hemlin
Editor-in-chief,
Legally responsible publisher
mikaelhemlin@utblick.org



Sara Lindström
Editor-in-chief
sara.lindstrom@utblick.org



Heike Lehner
Writer
heikelehner@utblick.org



Thomas Kräuchi
Writer
thomaskrauchi@utblick.org



Axel Christoffersson
Writer
axelchristoffersson@utblick.org



Mikael Lassa
Writer
mikaellassa@utblick.org



Anna Gavrilova
Writer
annagavrilova@utblick.org



Bo Dohmen
Writer
bodohmen@utblick.org



Filippa Andersson
Illustrator
filippaandersson@utblick.org



Unni Toivola
Graphic Design
unnitoivola@utblick.org

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Mikael Hemlin

Editors-in-Chief

Mikael Hemlin

Sara Lindström

Writers

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Heike Lehner ●

Mina Ghassaban Kjellén

Samuel Horgby

Mikael Lassa ●

Egil Sturk

Arash Bolouri

Viktor Warg

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Oskar Simann

Bo Dohmen ●

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Anna Kuzmina

Sara Lindström

Mikael Hemlin ●

Proof reading

Mikael Hemlin

Sara Lindström

Graphic designer

Unni Toivola

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Filippa Andersson

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Letter from the President



Cambridge Dictionary defines global security as "Protection of the world against war and other threats." It sounds pretty straight forward, don't you think? However, this definition does not account for what 'protection' and 'other threats' might mean, nor does it provide any answers regarding the actual meaning of security. Conveniently put, what is perceived as a threat depends on who you ask. Is global security always about mutual survival and safety, or does security for the individual in some cases come at the expense of others?

In order to appreciate the complexity of the threats that the globe currently faces, it is imperative to take into account the effect that identity may have on people's definition of security. Our lives and wellness depends on how secure we feel, but what, in turn, determines how secure we feel?

It is impossible to talk about international security without talking about international politics, the subject at issue at the Society of International Affairs. Through organising lectures, movie screenings, trips, MUN simulations and publishing our magazine, we work to increase peoples' interest and engagement in international affairs in any way possible. Because security is a central matter on the individual, as well as on the societal and international level, international affairs are of importance to everyone, regardless of who or where you are, or what you're doing. Therefore, I hope to see as many of you as possible at our upcoming events!

Katinka Ernstsson

President, Society of International Affairs in Gothenburg