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### *Introduction to issue 13 of the IEEE journal*

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to introduce you all the Journal of the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies, 13th volume. To our satisfaction, the present volume includes a range of topics together with a distinguished international participation, as it contains articles coming from two nearby countries such as Portugal and Italy. But before I briefly present the content of the document let me share with you some new technical improvements concerning the digital edition of the journal.

In order to overcome certain problems when accessing the website, we have hosted our publication in a new server, thus providing both greater security and easier access, avoiding unsuitable and unpleasant denials to those trying to access our website. Likewise, we have updated the OJS system version and streamlined the interface. We have addressed these small improvements in response to your kind suggestions. I think very honestly that your comments, proposals and, why not, complaints; will be of great help to improve our journal, volume after volume; surely it will encourage us in our effort to become a knowledge and assessment forum for the scientist community as well as scholars interested in Security and Defence matters

Events in the international arena happen at breakneck speed. The Maghreb –a region of vital importance both for the stability and security of the countries of the area itself but also for the rest of the Mediterranean nations, for Europe and for the whole international community- is going through crucial times especially for two countries, Libya and Algeria. The partial defeat of the Daesh does not definitively ends with this threat that has caused us tragic moments to live. On the contrary, the uncertainty of its short-term evolution together with the possible return to the insurgency continues to attract the attention of governments and intelligence services. The relationship between terrorism and organized crime is known since the origins of the jihadist threat. All these concerns should move us to the broadest and most intense international

cooperation in all areas of the conflict, including defence, against such a polyhedric threat, especially between neighboring countries such as Portugal and Spain.

Colonel Fuente Cobo, former analyst at the IEEE and currently a senior professor at the NATO Defense College in Rome, offers us, as usual to him, a deep assesment about the struggle that for the leadership in the Maghreb region maintain their two largest countries, Morocco and Algeria. The tensions, always present between both neighbors, acquire a renewed relevance in the light of the evolution of the Algerian situation after the resignation of President Bouteflika and the popular protests against the regime. Although experience tells us that after all military conflict has always been avoided, regional competition is a permanent catalyst that increases the likelihood of conflict.

The threat of global terrorism, due to its multidimensional nature, must also be confronted in an equally comprehensive manner, resorting to all the tools and capacities available for democratic states to protect their citizens. Eisa Younes, researcher at the Autonomous University of Madrid, offers us an original and interesting view about the behavior of Daesh from the business management point of view and the comparison with conventional commercial organizations. Her daring approach deserves all our attention because, after all, we focus our interest in finding formulas that allow us to improve effectiveness in the fight against all kinds of terrorism.

Without leaving the global terrorist phenomenon, we move to another nearby region, therefore of vital importance for the security of Europe, the Sahel. The Italian Army Colonel Palmerino Cuneo addresses the close relationship standing out between the numerous criminal networks and the jihadist movements that operate in this region. There are many factors that contribute to foster a structural conflict in the Sahel, from demographic pressure to climate change to the institutional weakness of the states in the area. The close cooperation between organized crime and terrorism only completes an unfortunate cocktail of elements of discord that leave no room for optimism about the foreseeable future of the region.

The fourth chapter of this edition focuses on a recurring theme in the history of the European Union, such as cooperation on defense among its Member States, a discussion that has reached a renewed significance for the last two years. Since the takeover of the new US administration and its questioning of the defensive structure built around the Atlantic Alliance, and the no less important phenomenon of BREXIT, we Europeans see ourselves in the mirror of our own limitations in terms of Defense. Not in vain has the planned mechanism of Permanent Structured Cooperation been activated. Bernardo González-Lázaro Sueiras, Commander Liaison Officer at Portuguese Defence Staff-EMG, focuses on the much-needed construction of a cooperation policy between his country and Spain. A cooperation that is considered essential and desired by both partners, due to multiple historical and current reasons.

Two reviews complete this issue of the Journal of the Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies. One is written by the PhD in law Inma Garrós Font on a choral work: The limits to the Right of access to public information, published by the National Institute

of Public Administration. The other review is the one that colonel of the Army of Brazil Orlando Giuvenduto makes of the work of Maria do Rosário Penedos, *Diplomacy of Defense: the dialogue of the Force or the strength of the Dialogue*.

To sum up, I am convinced of the interest of the present volume because of the subjects it addressed, the high-level of the contributions and their very international character. I hope it is of your total satisfaction and usefulness, whatever the origin of your interest in Security and Defense may be. Thank you very much and until our next edition.