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In preparing a new issue of the Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies Journal, we are particularly concerned that the articles should address issues of undoubted interest to Security, in its broadest sense, and at the same time provide novel approaches. And, on this occasion, it is so in an obvious way. Let us see.

The advent of new technologies, of a strongly disruptive nature, opens up a world of possibilities for the progress and well-being of all humanity. But as has always been the case, advances in this field can be used for both beneficial and perverse purposes. Widespread accessibility to mobile terminals and personal computers puts citizens in touch with all kinds of information sources, without geographical limitations. These devices are the gateway to our minds for an infinite amount of data and news, without any filter, which makes us a target for actors who intend to shape our opinions and our will. This has obvious security implications. Wars no longer necessarily have to be fought on a physical battlefield to achieve a material goal. In fact, this will be the exception. Now we are the battlefield. The traditional classification of military domains on land, at sea and in the air is now a long way off. Outer space and cyberspace had recently been added to these. The possibility of mind manipulation now adds a new domain, the cognitive one, in which the possibilities of spreading hoaxes (fake news) and “stories” for the benefit of a certain cause are multiplying.

The article entitled “*Cognitive manipulation in the 21st century*” is aimed at analysing this interesting and worrying issue. It seeks to establish a theoretical framework that will enable the phenomenon to be defined and explained in a comprehensive manner. To this end, it draws on contributions from fields as diverse as military strategy, sociology, psychology, communication and technology itself. This is an activity, cognitive manipulation, that is just taking its first steps, which augurs well for many future debates, some purely technical, others legal, ethical and moral. As the author himself points out, in ten years’ time society will be much more connected than it is today... and then there will be many more tools to manipulate it.

The European Union's role as a global player has been given a strong boost in recent years. The attitude of the previous Trump Administration towards the Union and NATO has made Europeans aware that the old days when the security umbrella provided by the great American ally could be relied upon carelessly are behind them. Although an improvement in transatlantic relations is expected with the arrival of President Biden, there is unanimity in considering that Europe needs to assume a greater role in its own defence and accept greater responsibilities by at least improving its presence in its immediate geographical environment. A very turbulent environment, by the way, in which most active armed conflicts are concentrated, or can lead to them.

The new European Commission wants to be more "geopolitical" and add some more hard power to the Union's traditional soft power. Initiatives such as the activation of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), with its own financing fund (EDF), are proof of this wish to articulate a genuine and credible Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). But the road will not be easy. Not all Member States share the same intentions, nor will third countries, including the United States, make it easy. The article entitled "*The principle of coherence in the European Union's defence industrial policy*" develops it in detail and emphasises precisely the coherence of this industrial policy. The construction of the Europe of Defence is progressing slowly as it ultimately affects the principle of state sovereignty. Starting with the aspects related to the industrial development of capacities and postponing for future times more important aspects is the chosen option, and it seems to be the most intelligent one.

Very close to the present, and in a geographical sense for Spain, is the topic addressed in the article "*The European Border and Coast Guard in the framework of the integrated management of external borders after the migration crisis of 2015: strengths and challenges*". The massive arrival in European territory in 2015 of people fleeing the fighting in Syria was not the first disaster of this kind in the 21st century; the so-called crisis of the cayuco boats in 2006 on the way to the Canary Islands was a precedent. Nor was it the last, as we subsequently saw with the flows from the coasts of North Africa to Italy and Spain and, by 2020, from the western face of that continent back to the Canary Islands. The challenges and strengths are mainly of a legal and political nature. But the impossibility of the Member States of being able, on their own, to manage these types of crisis comprehensively leaves no other option but to collaborate as closely as possible. That is why FRONTEX was born.

We also include two analyses of armed conflicts. All wars cause pain and irreparable damage to the populations that suffer them first-hand, and that is why it is urgent to put an end to them as soon as possible. But there are cases in which the usual perverse dynamic that hinders the end of hostilities is compounded by the curse of being a conflict that is overshadowed, or forgotten, as a result of the relevance of other more pressing scenarios for the international community. The civil war in Yemen has drifted into an entrenched conflict in a very turbulent regional setting, making it secondary to the serious tensions around it. The article "**The Huthi Insurgency in Yemen's Civil War**" describes it very well. There is also not a near or optimal end to the conflict in

Afghanistan in sight. Despite the agreement signed in 2020 between the Taliban and the US, without the Afghan government's signature, there is no prospect of stability in the near future. The conflicting interests of the main actors involved (India and Pakistan on the one hand, along with Iran, Russia, China and the US itself) only add to the uncertainty. The chapter "**The Role of Regional Actors in the Afghan Peace Process**" aims to elucidate these interactions.

The last two articles coincide in analysing the island phenomenon, although from different points of view. In "*Strategic Archipelagos and Tourist Destinations: The Canary Islands, Hawaii and Okinawa*" are analysed in terms of key aspects of security. Based on a geopolitical approach, strategic value is related to the no less important economic value of the tourism industry in these three archipelagos. The relevance, in this case, is provided by the growing tensions between China and the countries bordering the South and East China Seas. This ultimately also means tension with the United States. The second of these articles has the suggestive title of "*Small Island Developing States: between concept and application*". This definition, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), has been coined by the UN to refer to small island countries in need of special consideration in order to promote improvements in the indices that routinely measure the progress and well-being of their people. But this, which seems simple to put forward, entails difficulties when it comes to defining what a state of these characteristics is. Environmental issues, such as rising sea levels, hinder their sustainable development and in some cases jeopardise the very existence of some of these countries in the medium term. In this respect, there is no lack of analysis of the possible, but so far imprecise, geopolitical consequences of this hypothetical disappearance.

We complete this issue with a review of a very interesting book, "*The human factor. Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher, and the end of the Cold War*", whose author, Archie Brown, is a renowned kremlinologist. The strong personalities of the three leaders mentioned above were a determining factor in the end of the Cold War. Reading it today can help us understand a little better the evolution of relations between the Russian Federation and the West.

A compendium, in short, of analyses that are highly aligned with some of the factors on which the reconfiguration of the current international order is being based and with some specific actors in this new global scenario. I hope you enjoy it and I encourage you to wait for the next issue of this journal, by the Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies.