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## INTRODUCTION

Continuing to focus on international security, this, the fifth issue of the IEEE Journal, features ten research articles that address topics such as international relations, world politics, the environment and safety in the European Union and on our own streets.

Fernando de Lage looks at President Xi Jinping's strategy and the ambitious economic reforms and transformation of Chinese diplomacy. The various integration initiatives that Beijing is undertaking are aimed at the reorganisation of the regional order and the defence of China's sovereignty.

In the second article, Jose Díaz Toribio explores in depth the implications and challenges for Spanish defence in a European defence landscape of blurred outlines. The author suggests a number of ways in which Spain can meet the challenges of the Common Security and Defence Policy.

In the following article, Alejandra Álvarez Suárez looks at how the Syrian conflict has led to the collapse of an order that cannot be understood without first examining the country's recent history.

Javier del Valle Melendo looks at the difficulties of managing river basins when administrative and natural boundaries do not coincide. Conflicts over water have become a major issue and "geowater" may become a powerful mechanism for international collaboration and cooperation.

One tactical approach to terrorism and organised crime is video surveillance. This is the topic addressed by Samuel Nájera Bailón in chapter 5, who chose Madrid city centre as the laboratory in which to analyse the pros and cons of urban video surveillance systems.

In chapter 6, Casimiro Sanjuan Martínez looks at incidents on the Israeli-Lebanese border, south of the Litani River, and how the different setbacks in the region regularly set off international alarm bells. Stability in Lebanon has been strengthened following

the recent UN resolutions and the crucial role played by the UN peacekeeping troops at the border.

Chapter 7 of the issue features an article by Miguel Alía Plana, who conducts an interesting analysis of the rules of engagement (ROE) in circumstances in which the use of force is authorised. The rules provide ample scope for discussion, seeing that they not only encompass physical and psychological aspects, but also legal and ethical ones.

In his article, Jose María Santé Abal proposes ways of preventing a social conflict from escalating into an armed one. He explores the important role of the protagonists and their circumstances in managing crises effectively.

Chapter nine takes us to Afghanistan, courtesy of researcher Juan Ignacio Castián Maestro, who analyses how this Asian country alternates between modernisation and regression, and the weight of tribal and traditional organisation in the tortuous journey towards modernisation.

Finally, Georgina Higuera analyses the strategic partnership between Spain and China. She looks at ten years of relations between the two countries from an economic and political perspective before going on to analyse the reasons underlying the strategic partnership and the aspirations of the two nations.

We do hope that this issue of the journal, which is published punctual as ever and in two languages - Spanish and English - will be of growing interest to the scientific community.



