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Welcome to the latest, the 19th, issue of the Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies (IEEE) Journal. Once again, we offer you a varied content that addresses topics of the utmost relevance and topicality. Two such examples are “Kaliningrad: a Russian strategic enclave in the midst of tension with NATO and the EU” by José Ignacio VILLAR ROMERO, which highlights the indisputable geostrategic importance of the former Königsberg; and “A conflictive interdependence: the Gazprom-Europe relationship” by Guillermo ABIO VILLEGAS, on the use of gas as a means of pressure in the conflict unleashed in the heart of Europe following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022.

Three geographical regions are the focus of attention on this occasion. With “Afghanistan: Intrahistory and perspectives of a misunderstood conflict”, Magí CASTELLTORT CLARAMUNT reminds us that although the pressing gravity of the war in Ukraine has faded the memory of the chaotic withdrawal of international forces in August 2021, the repercussions of this event will remain significant in the long term. Nor should the intervention in Libya a decade ago be forgotten. Joaquín GARRO DOMENÓ, in “The just war and the responsibility of protection on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the intervention in Libya”, studies the international operation from the point of view of the morality and ethics of just war, leaving the legal aspects to international law specialists. And thirdly, it is the Asia-Pacific region that is emerging as the geopolitical centre of gravity of the global landscape. Once again, Magí CASTELLTORT CLARAMUNT offers us a study of the interactions between the great and medium powers in this scenario in their article “Neo-cold war in Asia-Pacific and its impact on the Korean peninsula”.

Focusing on Spain’s National Security, the article “Spain’s national security strategy 2021 and nuclear terrorism” by Carlos LLORENTE AGUILERA, introduces us to the always worrying issue of nuclear terrorism, offering a historical review of the different defence directives and other documents closely related to security that have contem-

plated the phenomenon of nuclear terrorism and the need to offer a timely response to this threat. In “Geopolitical position and defence of Spanish national interests: rethinking the Parsley Island incident 20 years on”, Elena Carolina DÍAZ GALÁN proposes a definition of Spain’s geopolitical position on the international chessboard, based on the now distant Parsley Island incident. Our national security is also closely linked to demographic trends in neighbouring Africa. “The difficult relationship between the European negative demographic curve, the African positive demographic curve and national security” by Francisco Javier CUENCA BUA, dissects the consequences for Spanish national security of the population decline in the Mediterranean region vis-à-vis the demographic boom in Africa.

The Anglo-Saxon concept of “readiness”, equivalent to our “enlistment”, is considered by Rodolfo ARROYO DE LA ROSA in “RAR Ready for what? Enlistment versus Readiness”. And female leadership in the Spanish armed forces is the subject developed by Carlos GARCÍA DE PAREDES UCERO in “Introducing mentorship as a multiplying factor of female leadership in the Spanish armed forces: Lessons learned from the US model and the Spanish military’s views on a possible voluntary programme”.

The ever-present threat of jihadist terrorism is addressed by María Dolores CALVENTE MORENO in “The transformation of the global jihadist movement”. Since their inception, the jihadist movements have continuously changed their tactics and methods, fluctuating through a series of stages whereby the movement asserted itself, consolidated itself, and ultimately denied itself by acknowledging its failures.

We end with two reviews. The first is the book “Has China won? The Chinese challenge to American primacy” by Kishore Mahbubani, which recasts the most traditional philosophical thought of Taoism, with the duality of “yin and yang” as diverse forces that seek their synthesis and which, once achieved, diverge again to re-integrate in an infinite cycle that seeks harmony and moral superiority. The two dichotomous forces would be represented by the People’s Republic of China and the United States. The second review is of Luis de la Corte Ibáñez’s book “History of jihad. From the origins to the end of the first Taliban emirate”. The author painstakingly and aseptically produces a linear work in which he uses history as a leitmotiv, using bibliographical sources of the highest solvency. This is a rigorous account of the warlike jihad that begins with its origins and ends up focusing on its contemporary manifestations, and especially on the 9/11 attacks.

We hope you enjoy the content of this issue.