



THE 18TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
**EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES**

**International Relations in the Contemporary World, Geopolitics and
Diplomacy**

Violeta Gheba¹

1. Introduction

At this moment, the history of international relations means more than the history between nation-states. It deals with not only the affairs between governments but also with all cross-border interactions (trade, emigration, the movement of capital and ideas), with individual actions and non-state organizations (international companies, the Red Cross, the International Monetary Fund, etc.). At the same time, the history of international relations also means investigating how the foreign policy of an actor of this type is carried out.

The way of conceiving the history of international relations has changed, just as the substance of the worldwide environment has converted. In fact, the latter became more and more complex, supranational political entities were added to nation-states, universal organizations assumed an expanding important role, economic globalization imposed new realities and democratization allowed increasingly substantial access to public opinion, in the development of foreign policy.

With all the certainties we have today regarding the role of the European Union and the institutions that preceded it in maintaining a climate conducive to development on the European continent, the path of integration was more than tortuous. If the war -and its effects- represents the main cause for the adoption of the integrative solution at the European level, as the only solution for maintaining peace on the continent, a causal association that can be traced throughout the last millennium. The first post-war years provided, for the first time, the conditions necessary and sufficient for its imposition, once the first steps are taken in this direction.

On the other hand, if the maintenance of peace represents the main motivation for the adoption of the integrative solution, the defining role that the European Union was to acquire for today's societies could not be predicted at that time, remaining at most an ideal, a hope to be pursued. In the 1950s and 1960s, there were only signals for the significance potential of the European Communities, which later began to coagulate. So that, with the dissolution of the communist bloc and the détente registered between East and West, the European Union would acquire the monopoly for cooperation in Europe that it owns today. Paradoxically, if the beginning of the integrative process coincides with the beginning of the Cold War, its end marks a remarkable focus of energy. Both in the West and in the East, in the sense of

¹ Faculty of Economic Sciences, Specialization: Accounting and Management Informatics "Danubius" University of Galati, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd., 800654 Galati, Romania, Tel.: +40372361102, Fax: +40372361290, Corresponding author: violetagheba@gmail.com.

transforming the European project into the common ideal of all European nations. However, with the increase in the number of member states, consensus becomes even more difficult to obtain, and this implies additional vulnerabilities.

In 2012, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the European Union, the decision being motivated by the fact that “The Union and its predecessor institutions have contributed, for over six decades, to the development of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe”. Of course, even if this motivation is perfectly true, it surprises only fragmentarily the significance of the implementation of the ideal pursued for centuries on the continent - peace finally installed at the end of the Second World War.

2. Political, Military, and Economic Relations and Their Role in the Foundation Contemporary Society

The beginning of the 21st century is marked by a high level of strategic fluidity and the reconfiguration of power relations within the international system.

According to the opinions of political-military analysts, the main characteristics of the international security environment at the beginning of the 21st century are uncertainty and discontinuity. These features are generated by a series of processes and phenomena, such as: the complexity of new types of risks and threats in the conditions of the coexistence of those with an asymmetric character (transnational terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, fragile or failed states, organized crime, etc.) With conventional risks and threats; the multiplication of state and non-state actors and the increase of their freedom of action. The diffusion of power (vertically and horizontally) at the level of the international system in parallel with affecting the direct relationship between power and influence; reducing the relevance of alliances and increasing the role of coalitions, relations between states are becoming increasingly selective and are increasingly influenced by temporary situations and interests; the difficulty of organizing collective responses at the international level in order to counter global and regional challenges; increasing strategic competition at the global level for access to energy resources; the loss of the West’s monopoly over the globalization process and the affirmation in world politics of different “value systems and development models”. The interdependence relationship between the internal and external aspects of the security of states in the post-Cold War period.

At the same time, the processes of globalization and “competitive interdependence” facilitate the reduction of power differences between developed and emerging states. In this sense, the idea that we are witnessing a transfer of economic power from the Western states to those in Asia (China and India, in particular), a fact that will cause the geopolitical center of the world to move to the East. Thus, a specialist of Kissinger’s stature wanted to specify that, the center of gravity of world politics has left the Atlantic and moved to the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Therefore, the world would become „more southern and more Asian”. This fact creates the prerequisites for the transition from the unipolar moment”, characterized by the status of the sole superpower of the USA. In the last twenty years, towards a multipolar system in which there would be several great powers and numerous regional centers of power. For that reason, although it would remain (for the next 20-30 years) the most important actor in international relations (the strongest single power in the world, Kissinger). At the same time, an indispensable component of any collective security system, the USA is in a relative decline in power and will have to practice the art of leadership by sharing responsibility with other important actors for ensuring global order. That the emergence of a multipolar power system implies the need to revive the transatlantic relationship, and Europe can and must play an important role in defining a multipolar world.

From this point of view, in a “post-American world” (Fareed Zakaria), Europe and the USA must respond to these changes by strengthening transatlantic partnership and cooperation and by overcoming existing differences in perceptions (the relevance of the US-Europe partnership has turned into a source of controversy, on both sides of the Atlantic, especially on the occasion of the US intervention in Iraq since 2003) regarding the efforts needed to improve the transatlantic relationship.

A strong transatlantic relationship is essential for the achievement of US political and economic objectives and for maintaining the strategic relevance of European allies, especially since the transatlantic community has several unique features (e.g: shared historical heritage and a common political culture). That individualizes it compared to the alliances that the USA has with other states from different regions of the world. In this context, the forms of cooperation at the transatlantic level, NATO, the US-European Union partnership and NATO-European Union, the special bilateral relations of some of the European states with the US, should ensure both greater predictability and political coordination and higher economic within the transatlantic community.

In the field of security and defense policy at the transatlantic level, increasing cohesion at the level of NATO member states could maintain the central role of Europe in the US alliance policy. For this purpose, it is necessary that the allies have a common perspective on the goals and missions of the Alliance. A decisive role in such an approach will be played by the new Strategic Concept of the Alliance (Lisbon, 2010). Most likely, this document will achieve a balance between the requirements of collective security and the national interests of the member states. Consequently, the main guidelines contained in this document will emphasize, above all, the fundamental nature of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, strengthening solidarity and consensus within the Alliance, increasing the role of Art. 4 of the Treaty, achieving a balance between collective defense and out-of-area operations”. The efficiency and flexibility of partnerships. Also, addressing new types of threats leads to the conclusion that it is necessary for NATO to assume a series of new responsibilities, imposed by the recent developments recorded in the security environment, such as those related to missile defense, cyber defense, combating maritime piracy and energy security.

Considering the US foreign policy objective of resetting the relationship with the Russian Federation and the increased energy dependence of some important European states on the resources provided by the Russian Federation. It can be considered that Moscow can play an important role in influencing developments in the Euro-Atlantic security environment. In this sense, the report of the group of experts regarding NATO’s Strategic Concept claims that a policy of constructive and active engagement on the part of NATO and Russia is necessary, without. However, giving Moscow the opportunity to affect the decisions of the member states in matters of strategic interest (the report believes that the new Strategic Concept must be also a useful tool for unifying the allies’ perspectives on relations with Russia and for clarifying NATO’s intentions towards Moscow). At the same time, NATO-Russian Federation cooperation could also be used as a tool for the West to influence the transformation process in Russia.

As far as the cooperation between NATO and the EU is concerned, it is based on the so-called “Berlin Plus agreements”, but these have proven to be of limited practical utility, as opinions regarding the need to revise them are increasingly common. It is relevant that the promotion of the interests of the Euro-Atlantic community. As well as the management of civil and military crises in different areas of interest presuppose a complex approach and the involvement of several actors. Thus, the relationship between NATO and the EU can be a complementary one in conditions where NATO does not have the full range of necessary instruments for crisis management According to American officials, the Alliance benefits

from the military tools necessary to solve crises, while the EU has a set of tools better adapted to post-conflict situations (*soft power*).

An effective partnership between NATO and the EU presupposes the existence of a strong relationship between the US and the EU. Until now, this relationship has focused mainly on economic cooperation. Europe is the most important partner in terms of foreign direct investments in the USA, with a percentage of 70% of their total, compared to 14% from the states of the Asia-Pacific area. On the other hand, between 2000 and 2008 the investments of American companies in China were lower than those made in Belgium, and approximately 2/3 of the research and development expenses of American companies are made in European countries (Great Britain, Germany, France, and Switzerland absorbed half of these expenses). By comparison, the total American investments in the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) were equivalent to those made by the US in the same period in Germany (investments in the European countries were 16 times higher than in the BRIC countries).

If the Europeans view the US-EU relationship mainly through the lens of economic developments, of the US (including the Obama Administration) appreciates that a development of this relationship also implies a strengthening of "Defense Europe". The creation of a common US-Europe perspective on transatlantic security requires the harmonization of perceptions on the main risks and threats, identifying and prioritizing common interests and coordinating the political, economic, and military resources necessary to ensure collective security and manage relations with the new great powers. Only in this way will the transatlantic community succeed in achieving the strategic cohesion necessary to hold an important role in the power configuration of the 21st century.

The international security environment has radically degraded since the terrorist attacks on the United States of America on September 11, 2001, attacks that practically shocked the international community, generating unprecedented measures in recent human history. This isolated event, more than any other happened in the following years, highlighted the complexity and nature of the dangers of the security environment specific to the 21st century, marking at the same time the point of reference for the review of the classic criteria for analyzing international security. As well as its management mechanisms.

At this moment, the strategic security environment is characterized as being equally complex and dynamic, maintaining the significant challenge to peace stability, challenges coming from the entire spectrum of the conflict. In a world with sovereign states, at different stages of development, tensions and conflicts will continue being at the same time a characteristic of human nature. Factors that can generate conflict situations including globalization, regional tensions, international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, environmental degradation and natural disasters, pandemics, „failed states” characterized by ineffective and corrupt administrations. That's unable to provide for their citizens the minimum elements specific to human security, religious fanaticism, global competition for resources, ethnic tensions and the desire for power, demographic growth, etc. The scope and implications of these factors highlight the impossibility of managing the effects in isolation by state entities and lead to their orientation towards common systems of action within various international organizations and treaties.

Globalization will continue to positively affect world prosperity, but it will also facilitate the expansion of illegal activities and the spread of violence in various forms. Economic development has led to an increase in living standards, but the benefits of this well-being are unevenly distributed worldwide, a fact that can lead to conflicts. Globalization has already determined gaps in the development of states and more and more nations will lose the pace imposed by the globalization phenomenon.

Technological development will also represent a double-edged sword. Often, technological innovations that improved living standards, produced on a large scale and at relatively low prices small, become accessible to unstable states and extremist organizations that can use them precisely to threaten the safety of citizens.

The increasing demand for energy, water and food will increase the competition for these resources and will increase the conditions for the emergence of conflicts. Resources, especially water, natural gas, and oil, are unevenly distributed across the globe, for example 60% of known natural gas reserves are concentrated in Russia, Iran and Qatar. By 2030, energy consumption will exceed production capacity. Current sources, investments and the development of alternative solutions will not be able to fill these deficits.

Climate change and natural disasters will be difficult to manage and will have a strong impact on developing countries and may cause humanitarian crises associated with regional migrations and increased risks of pandemics, leading to the destabilization of certain areas.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction represents a threat as dangerous as it is real, for example, of the more than 1100 identified terrorist organizations, many act to procure such means. Many chemical and biological agents can be produced easily and cheaply. The Internet facilitates access to information on the development process of such weapons.

National governments face increasingly difficult challenges to ensure security, economic prosperity, basic services, access to resources, and adversaries, which may be criminal organizations, extremist networks, or even some private corporations. Will seek to win the support of the local populations aiming at the failure of the government. Obviously, the states will act with priority to protect their own national interests, but, in any other situation where there are common interests, they will act for the development of political, economic and/or military partnerships using the full range of available means, to promote common interests or to ensure common security to counter identified or anticipated threats.

However, in an era of persistent conflict, the rapid and hard-to-predict evolution of threats will at the same time determine a complication of international relations. A fact that contributes to maintaining a certain level of instability at the regional or global level. It is impossible to predict precisely what challenges will arise and what form they will take, but it is vital to determine the strategic and operational framework of the future to be able to analyze the possible areas in which political and military leaders must act together and where they would employ multinational forces. As the world moves forward into this uncertain future, political leaders will increasingly turn to the military tool to reduce the conditions for conflict and ensure stability. Peace, security, and development are currently connected in an unprecedented way. This fact highlights the importance of the cooperation and coordination of all national actors and international institutions with attributions in crisis prevention and management.

Recent military operations have highlighted the complexity of contemporary crises. Today's challenges require an integrated approach by the international community, which includes coordinated actions of the most appropriate civil and military actors, to effectively apply the instruments of power.

In this context, *multinational operations* have become the most used tool worldwide for the employment of military power. This being the central solution to counter both crises current and future ones. The concept of multinational operations is not new, most of the major military engagements of the 20th century being essentially multinational. The two world wars, the Korean War, the Gulf Wars, the theater of operations in Afghanistan as well as most of the operations carried out under the UN mandate. The

novelty lies precisely in their complexity, accentuated by the large number of nations participating in operations for the cause of world peace and stability.

In general, military cooperation provides a diversity of directly influencing benefits the transformation process from which I want to mention the following:

- it can ensure the increase of the level of interoperability between allies/partners through identifying common solutions specific to this field with positive effects in insurance the effectiveness of military operations;
- the efficient and joint use of military capabilities, a fact that determines savings in budgets while obtaining maximum effects in the exploitation of these capabilities;
- reducing the tendency to approach the field of defense strictly from a national point of view. Nations operating together tend not to duplicate capabilities of other allies or partners and will act with priority to identify complementary solutions to national problems;
- contributes to the identification of solutions to fill the deficit of capabilities and ensure the operational requirements;
- ensures greater transparency - multinational cooperation provides the framework through which they can gain respect and trust among allies and partners;
- allows nations to contribute to common capabilities that they cannot support individually. This situation is relevant for the defense system within NATO and the EU, where efforts must be evenly distributed among the contributing nations;
- allows increasing the capacity of some nations to participate in operations through exchanges of experience, joint training or counselling;
- opens up opportunities for nations to promote viewpoints for initiation multinational projects that contribute to the development of military capabilities;
- ensures access to capabilities that for some nations do not represent a national priority and that they would not develop independently; -ensures the conditions for nations to act in an integrated manner.

Obviously, the fields of military cooperation must be determined carefully and in accordance with the needs of each nation, considering the factors specific to the correct orientation of military cooperation to really support the adaptation of military systems to the new realities.

It is increasingly evident that the economy is becoming one of the essential sources of military power, as it produces the means necessary for its materialization. Technological-informational power will prevail in the armed conflict of the future and will become a real multiplier of military power. The new threats and the physiognomy of the new conflicts determined the remodeling of the military power of the world's armies. Both from the point of view of the organization and structure of the forces, as well as the changes in the mode of action, technique, and combat means.

The US will continue to be the dominant political-economic-military power of this century, relying on the permanent development of its armaments industry and an ever-accelerating increase in its military budget, to deter potential rivals. US dominance remains a condition of stability and security in today's world.

The NATO modernization process continues, in the direction of transformation into an Alliance with a global vocation, even if it is still burdened by the gap in terms of capabilities, as well as by the misunderstandings between the two poles: American-British and Franco-German. The EU continues the

process of developing its military component, but the European defense project has not evolved towards a credible alternative to the security provided by NATO, but rather demonstrates its complementary character. Although significant efforts are being made to strengthen peace and security and cooperation between security organizations, the number of conflicts is not decreasing, but, on the contrary, is increasing, underlining once again the need for a credible military power, capable of dealing with the multitude of risks, dangers and security threats. Russia, although it no longer has the economic power to support a large-scale military power, still has significant military capabilities; China has not effectively manifested itself as a military power, but its economic development can always support the effort of a major armed confrontation; India and Japan are trying to develop modern military capabilities to deal with regional problems; Great Britain, Germany and France continue the process of reconfiguring their armies, both within NATO and within the EU; The Romanian army is still in a deep process of transformation and connection to the requirements of a professional army, compatible with NATO standards and high technology requirements.

In the conflicts of the future, the emphasis will be on the informational supremacy, resulting from the war based on the network, and the geo-economic problems of the contemporary world (management of strategic resources, access routes and their outlets, restrictive access to advanced technologies) will play a role predominant role in the configuration of military power.

The contemporary world economy is in a process of extensive transformations, increasingly influencing international life, as well as the national economies of the world's states. This process is determined by various complex economic, technical, social, and political factors.

The world economy is one of the concepts with the widest use in international economic thought and practice. It designates, on the one hand, the fundamental objective reality of the contemporary world, represented by the set of national economies of all countries and other economic entities, seen in the complexity of the connections and interdependencies between them. On the other hand, it designates the science and, respectively, the discipline that studies this economic-social reality from multiple perspectives: emergence and development components, forms and mechanisms, traits, and trends, etc.

One of the defining features of international economic relations is *multilateralism*, the set of simultaneous and coordinated relations on a sub-regional, regional or world scale, between independent and sovereign states.

In economic terms, the need for multilateral relations is determined by the accentuation of the interdependencies between national economies, because of the intensification of international specialization, under the influence of the technical-scientific revolution. The multilateralization of international economic relations stems, at the same time, from the need to solve the global problems facing humanity. Global problems, such as currency, external debts, food, the environment, but, above all, underdevelopment, require global solutions, the implementation of which requires the engagement and cooperation of all the states of the world, the coordination of efforts to take effective action.

Compared to classical bilateral international relations, multilateralism offers new possibilities for mutually beneficial cooperation, introduces more stability in interstate relations and, above all, considerably reduces the risk of confrontations.

In general, international economic relations have a positive role in the world economy, contributing to the economic and social development of various areas of the world. Undoubtedly, in its economic policy, each country reflects, well, the problems of international economic relations, and this fact certainly has repercussions on the economic-social state of the respective nation. It is certain that, currently and

certainly in the future, in the equation of a country's development, the variables related to external economic and political ties will be more and more important. And creating the best equation, harmoniously using internal and external factors, and avoiding major conflicts of interest, is a difficult but inherent task for any democratic government.

Reality has shown that, in the current period, it is impossible to support the development or, simply, the normal existence of a state, without it being connected to international economic exchanges.

Next, some arguments are presented, which demonstrate why each state must (or should) give maximum importance to participation in international economic relations:

- Economic resources are very unevenly distributed across the planet (Especially, natural resources)
- The specialization of the states allows the production of goods and services with minimal expenses and with maximum efficiency.
- Respecting the criterion of economic rationality, no state can produce on its territory the full range, or not even the majority, of goods that are produced in the world at a given moment (criticism of autarky, isolationism).
- Through exchanges, the necessary elements (goods, services, ideas) are obtained for the country's body to develop. Of course, everything depends on how each state participates in these exchanges, what it gives and what it receives.
- International economic relations have greatly expanded and diversified the market for the entire world production, made economic relations much more stable and have a significant contribution to maintaining world peace for such a long period (55 years).
- Employment in economic units with mixed capital, because of the expansion of international economic relations, especially in the post-war period.

The importance and role of international economic relations, in the contemporary world, are illustrated by their scope, diversity and extraordinary consequences. From this perspective, we can affirm, with all certainty, that humanity would have been less developed without these economic ties, would have been more engaged in various military conflicts, would have exploited much more rationally from the universe that surrounds us, would have been much more fragile in the face of unexpected and imminent natural catastrophes.

Globalization represents the dynamic process of the intensification of interdependencies between national states, because of the development of cross-border relations of an economic, political, socio-cultural, etc. nature and outlining some problems that require a global solution. The effects of globalization are diverse and difficult to anticipate, covering all fields of activity of a country.

The most important *advantages of globalization* are: liberalization and increase in world economic transparency, increase in the volume of direct investments and the role of transnational corporations worldwide; broad and free access to foreign markets for companies and countries. The intensification of international competition, the deepening of specialization and the international division of labor; driving the development of technological progress and innovations; the considerable diversification of the fields of activity of the companies, the increase in the volume and the increase in the speed of information transmission, the creation of the world network, the Internet, the significant reduction of costs, as a result of increasing production volumes and optimizing the use of factors production, which determines stable economic growth, etc.

Currently, global economic activity is concentrated in three large geographical regions: Asia, North America, and Western Europe, centered around three poles of economic power, Japan, the USA and the EU. They constitute the central economies in each region and represent the main sources of technology, capital, and trade flows for the other economies in the area, and developing countries are concentrated around them. In 2014, the triad countries accounted for 55% of world GDP, 69% of world trade and 83% of world financial operations.

3. Geopolitics and Diplomacy

Geopolitics, born and reborn from the need to explain certain problems imposed by the general evolution of human society and from the growing influence of permanent political-economic changes, full of contradictions, anticipations, and abandoned hypotheses, generated numerous discussions. Geopolitics followed a path of accumulating data and specifying working methods, defining the object of study, and establishing the position within the system of sciences.

Geopolitics, like many other sciences and disciplines, was and is the subject of different interpretations, in terms of defining the object of study. Today, the term “geopolitics” denotes the relationship between politics and geography, demography, and economy, referring to the incidences of these fields on the international relations of a state. In consequence, geopolitics becomes a field of study of the combinations between the geographical and political factors in determining the positioning of a country in relation to its neighbors, to the region or to other international actors. If the first part of the term “geo” refers to a concrete coordinate (space, place, position, zonal, regional, climatic, evolution, historical), the second constituent, “politics”, includes the equivocation, since the field of politics is undefined in a unitary way. By common agreement, the academic community uses this part of the term, in the sense of power relations (causes and effects, influences and reactions, power games, spheres of influence, hegemony, etc.) of an international actor, in relation to other actors. The science of international relations studies the totality of the real existing or potential interactions and interdependencies between international actors in all their diversity both horizontally and vertically, as well as the flows, processes, and trends in the world arena, approached in their complexity or in part.

From a historiographical perspective, geopolitics knows three important periods in its evolution, from a field of knowledge with a limited sphere of interest, to a scientific discipline with a wide opening. The first period, which includes the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, until 1945, represents the stage of the appearance of the first ideas, concepts, theories, and the formation of the first schools of geopolitical thought, the crystallization of the later scientific discipline, in a word, a period of clarifications and accumulations. Under another formula, this stage can be considered as the classical period of geopolitics. After 1945 and until the beginning of the 80s, geopolitics experienced a period of decline, due to the negative evolution of geopolitical thinking in the period leading up to the Second World War, within the German geopolitical school. A third period of the evolution of geopolitics, that of the renaissance”, begins at the beginning of the 80s, in the form of the resumption of ideas in political discourses, to know after 1990 a revival and a wide acceptance, including academic.

Therefore, geopolitics is a method of study used to understand, as well as to explain and analyze how political behavior develops at the international level, considering a few geographical variables. Thus, it is a science that has gained great relevance over time. This science focuses on the study of political events, as well as on the effects that these events generate. To do this, it alternates with a series of other

disciplines such as international relations, economics, sociology, history, as well as geography and political science.

4. Tradition and Innovation in Contemporary Geopolitical Thinking

a. Arguments for and Against the Concept of Contemporary International Relations

Any community presupposes, to exist, a special loyalty on the part of its members and a preference on the part of them to cooperate with each other, and not with those outside the group. Seen through a prism of traditional facts, world politics can be defined in this way by the contact, in an anarchic environment, between groups that intend to preserve their individuality and self-govern.

The era of modernity is characterized by the imposition of the nation-state model, an expression of a conception according to which the world is divided into territories inhabited by nations that govern themselves sovereignly and differentiate themselves from other similar political entities. Regardless of how it is defined, ethnically, linguistically, culturally, religiously, ideologically, etc. The nation presupposes the will of a group of people to live together and the state is the institutional construction that allows the nation to exercise its sovereignty and represents, in principle, a national political community that wants to govern itself and differentiate itself from other similar groups. This conscious choice of nations would be the foundation of the sovereignty of modern political entities, a fact justified by the emergence of nations and their imposition as the most relevant political communities in modern world politics.

The sources of the history of international relations are extremely varied, a considerable advantage over the history of older times. But precisely in the abundance of contemporary sources lies the danger of interpretation errors. The discovery, classification, systematization, and investigation of the sources of the history of international relations is an ongoing process even if we address some “older” topics the Holy Alliance. Investigation of primary sources and judicious use of secondary sources, however, remains the first and most important of historians.

Primary sources abound in our field no doubt. We have access, increasingly with the passage of time, to official diplomatic documents, international treaties, telegrams, reports, memoranda, transcripts of official or private conversations, etc., official statements, political speeches, and other public interventions of decision-makers. Opinion polls and statistics of various kinds also provide valuable clues about a state’s foreign policy, and personal diaries and private or official correspondence are equally important sources for the historian.

Another type of primary sources is that of photo images and documentary films, made by contemporaries of the respective events. Today we have access to video recordings and electronic correspondence coming from behind the scenes of the segments authorized for the construction of foreign policy. Even if many of these sources are still under the control of governments, classified and only partially disclosed, in most democratic states. There are clear laws that provide for the storage of this data for later declassification. Other sources come from the media and popular culture. Newspapers, magazines, films, radio, and TV shows can be essential for studying the values, objectives and instruments that influence both decisions and events in international politics.

Like any other field of knowledge of the socio-human field, knowledge in the field of international relations implicitly needs theoretical formulations contained within some theories or paradigms.

b. The evolution of international relations from the League of Nations to the UN

The founding of the League of Nations was established within the Treaty of Versailles. At the peak institution, it had 58 members. The objectives were clear: disarmament, prevention of wars, collective security, resolving disputes through negotiation and diplomacy, improving quality of life.

The League of Nations or League of Nations was an international institution. Its main purpose was to preserve peace and prevent armed conflicts. The ideas that promoted peace between states are much older. Many thinkers campaigned for peace on the European continent. They were true forerunners of the League of Nations and human rights. These are: Dante Alighieri, Emeric Cruce, Charles-Irenee Castel de Saint-Pierre, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, Immanuel Kant, Saint-Simon, W. Penn, Bellers and Victor Hugo.

Apart from the ideas that preceded the League of Nations, there were contemporary projects with the institution created by the Treaty of Versailles. The most coherent proposal belonged to Count Kalergi, through the Pan-Europe manifesto. Written at the beginning of the interwar period, the book promotes collaboration between European states. In the opinion of the author, if this collaboration will not take place, a new world conflagration would break out. His views received the support of many political and cultural figures of the time. Europe must become a confederation of states that negotiate based on intergovernmental arbitration.

Although the United Nations Organization (UN) is an organization established in 1945, under certain historical circumstances of an international character, I appreciate that it has not diminished its role at the international level, being the only form of cooperation that ensures the participation of all states and their involvement in establishing guidelines in all fields of activity. Because of this, we can emphasize that the United Nations Organization plays a fundamental role in consolidating an international political environment characterized by peace, common security, prosperity, and inclusion. The United Nations actively contributes to the development of economically and socially marginalized countries, by implementing sustainable development projects and by consolidating long-term partnerships. The system of the United Nations Organization is an extremely complex one, with each body and agency having a well-defined role and a strategically outlined work agenda, to increase the efficiency of the implemented programs and projects. Another argument that can be invoked to motivate the research of this international organization with a universal and multifunctional character is represented by the role of the UN to ensure compliance with the norms of international law and to promote the common peace and security of the member states, an essential fact for social development and economic of any nation.

Throughout its history, the United Nations has contributed substantially to the promotion of human rights and to the avoidance of armed conflicts through its policies and actions based on the concept of common peace and security. Another reason that contributed to the choice of this theme is represented by the capacity of UN bodies to stimulate economic development by implementing programs and projects based on the concepts of sustainable and resilient development. As a result, we can affirm the fact that the United Nations Organization represents a multidimensional entity, whose activity influences both international politics, diplomacy, and military security, as well as the global economy, justice, and contemporary society. International law is in a continuous process of adaptation and improvement, the United Nations representing a true pillar of international relations. The topic is challenging due to the multitude of international implications. It is important to research the institutional structure of the organization and the mechanisms that ensure the interaction between the UN bodies, between the UN bodies, between them and the specialized UN institutions.

5. Conclusions

The world economy represents a complex, dynamic system that incorporates all national economies, but also the relationships, the economic interdependencies between them, generated and developed since the international division of labor in the context of globalization, as well as by the mechanisms, legal norms, and national and world institutions, according to which these links are made.

The world economy is a complex, heterogeneous system, whose fundamental components are national economies, transnational companies, international economic organizations. Along with these fundamental elements, the system of the world economy also includes derived, connecting elements, such as the world market, international economic relations, the international division of labor, the world economic order.

The history of the XX-XXI centuries is marked by many economic crises, which are becoming more and more expensive and dangerous. After the 2008 crisis, the world economy managed to recover to a certain extent. However, the difficulties and risks have not disappeared, and the danger of a new collapse of the world economy persists in the event of a strong shock. Anyway, it will take quite a long time until national economies will fully recover from the crisis that disrupted the entire world financial and economic system.

NATO's essential purpose is to ensure the freedom and security of all its members through political and military means, in accordance with the North Atlantic Treaty and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Internationally, we note that states act at the political, diplomatic, legal, economic, social, informational, and military levels to promote and defend democratic values and the general interests of the international community, both individually and in cooperation with other states, as well as in within international organizations with a vocation in the field of security. According to usage, political action is paramount in the regulation of various aspects of international security, the use of armed force being an option of last resort, but which must be considered in case of necessity. For this reason, states develop their own political and military capacities for action, necessary for participating in joint actions within international security and collective defense bodies, as well as for the observance of various external commitments.

Geopolitics has become a discipline that, in the field of business, contributes to analysis strategic with tools that can be of great help in relational decision-making international, macroeconomic, as well as other series of disciplines used in this field.

The European Union has made a decisive contribution throughout its history.

First, the establishment and maintenance of peace on the continent are, without a doubt, central arguments for the integration process started at the end of the Second World War and one of the definite successes that can be attributed to it. Along the way, somewhat naturally, this essential dimension, the foundation for all the other benefits of integration, came to be seen as a problem solved, which has lost its value for newer generations. However, today's tensions, uncle in the immediate vicinity of the borders of the European Union, had constantly reminded us how precious peace is and how easily it can be lost.

Secondly, the conditions established with the achievement of peace led to an unprecedented level of prosperity for the societies involved in the integration process. As another objective assumed in the post-war context, the restoration of the states, involved sustained efforts on their part, it is not surprising that the integration initially had an economic motivation, and the results recorded in the first post-war

decades exceeded expectations. Over time, this prosperity has come to be one of the best indicators for the success of the integrative project. On the other hand, one of the biggest topics of concern today, at the level of European citizens, is the economic situation: according to Euro barometer 93, published in August 2020, concern about the economic situation registered a 10% increase compared to the autumn of 2019.

Thirdly, the European Union assumed a set of common values considered essential for the integrative project, but with ramifications for everyone: the promotion of democracy, respect for rights of man and the rule of law, inclusion, decision-making transparency, etc. However, for an actor with influence on the world stage, it is obvious the need to make compromises or concessions to state actors not aligned with the same values, an ambivalence that, although dictated by a necessary *realpolitik*, in certain instances, contributes to the way the Union is perceived at the level of each citizen. European integration has always meant more than cooperation, however close, between member states. National interests have, over time, shaped the history of the European Union, but they are only partially responsible for how the integration process has evolved. Rather, the states themselves have transformed, through the links that have been created between them, becoming a kind of post-national state, willing to give up part of their sovereignty in favor of integration. This does not mean that all states have acted in the same way or that the results are the same everywhere - as there are major differences between individual state structures and, above all, in the mindsets of societies.

References

- Bădescu, I. & Mihailescu, I. (2003). *Geopolitics, globalization, integration*. Bucharest: Ed. Mica Valahie.
- Badescu, I. (2004). *Treatise on geopolitics*. Bucharest: Ed. Mica Valahie.
- Baptiste Duroselle, Jean (2006). *History of international relations, vol I-II*. Bucharest: Publishing House of Social Sciences and Politics.
- Bari, Ioan (2003). *Contemporary Global Problems*. Bucharest: Ed. Economica.
- Biro, Daniel (2013). *Contemporary international relations. Central themes in world politics*. Iasi: Ed. Polirom.
- Chauprade, A. & Thual, F. (2003). *Dictionary of geopolitics*. Bucharest: Ed. Corint (complete, as far as what concerns the concepts of geopolitics!).
- Dumitrescu, Sterian. (2006). *Global economy*. Pitesti: Economic Independence, p. 193.
- Gilpin, R., (2004). *The world economy in the XXI century*. Iasi: Polirom Publishing House, pp. 249-253.
- Goldstein S. Joshua & Prevehouse Jon, C. (2008). *International relations*. Iasi: Ed. Polirom.
- Jing Ion (2008). *The European Union in search of the future. European Studies*. Bucharest: C.H. Beck Publishing House.