Romania's National Security Paradigm in the Multipolar World

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Abstract

The concept of the multipolar world has attracted the attention of well-known personalities, politicians and renowned theoreticians of international relations since the Cold War period.

In the new multipolar world in the process of formation, yet incompletely crystallized, as a result of the latest crises that have emerged on the global stage, resulting from the expression of the balance of power among the current great powers, themselves poles in the making of the new global configuration, a pole of power is formed by an entity (a state, a configuration of several states, economic or military blocs) with significant global influence, which, in turn, balances other centres of power in the process of emergence.

A multipolar pole is defined as possessing significant military, economic, technological, political and cultural capacity, elements which, in turn, shape and enhance the two types of power known in the theory of international relations as hard power and soft power, having the capacity to shape the international order, its image at the global level being that of a principal actor, with a balancing or competing role within the global system, autonomous, possessing a broad strategic vision, without, however, having the quality of a hegemon, which is an element inappropriate to the multipolar world. Thus, the pole of power in the multipolar world is formed by a centre of influence comprising a state or a group of states that possess a broad capacity to influence political, economic and military events at the global level through diplomatic instruments resulting from the principal international conventions of the twentieth century, from the Cold War period.

However, day by day, as recent events of force at the international level demonstrate, the international conventions enacted in the twentieth century are becoming increasingly obsolete, losing their importance and calling into question their usefulness in maintaining the global geostrategic balance. In turn, the poles of power are connected to one another through a balance of power that contributes either to the maintenance of stability or to the creation of tensions, by the fact that at the level of the multipolar world there are several major actors, unlike the Cold War period, when there was a bipolarity balanced by the United States and the Soviet Union, or,

more recently, the period of unipolarity that emerged after the implosion of the Soviet Union, during which the United States manifested itself as the sole hegemon at the global level.

An important characteristic of the pole of power is its multidimensionality, and its scope is manifested through a whole series of complementary characteristics, such as its economic power, defined by the size of its GDP, the control of resources, innovation, or its military power, materialized in advanced defence capabilities, possessing a multilevel capability for the projection of force wherever its global interests require it.

To these is added its technological power, materialized in leadership in key fields such as AI, 5G, biotechnology, followed by its cultural power (the most evident type of soft power in today's world), which is manifested in the capacity of attraction of the cultural, ideological and value model, etc., and, last but not least, its diplomatic power, defined by its capacity to establish and to play an important role within international organizations.

In a multipolar world, the image of the pole of power is that of a key actor, capable of imposing its interests at the global level, but not in a hegemonic manner, there being constant competition for influence and a renegotiation of norms and structures of power, against the background of an increasing diversity of centres of decision.

Keywords: Multipolar world, pole of power, national security paradigm, Cold War, Soviet Union, United States of America, hegemon, soft power, hard power, AI, balance of power, Monroe Doctrine, American exceptionalism.

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We shall briefly exemplify the image of certain poles of power already existing or of others in the process of crystallization, as they are taking shape.

Thus, the principal superpower dominant at the global level today is the United States of America, one of the two poles of power during the Cold War, which became the sole pole of power for a period of time immediately after the events of 1989 that led to the collapse of communism, resulting in the dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty together with the transformation of the Soviet Union into Russia.

For a long period of time, the foreign policy of the White House was based on the doctrine of American exceptionalism, the essence of which consists in the firm belief that the values, political system, and historical development of the United States of America are unique in the history of mankind, thereby justifying its unique and distinct role from that of all other states on the world stage. Thus, once placed under the banner of exceptionalism, the two components of the American pole of power, soft power and hard power, have represented the principal elements of America's global expansion from the establishment of this doctrine up to the present day.

The term exceptionalism was coined by German Marxists during the second decade of the twentieth century. Thus, focusing on the abundant natural resources of the United States,

they provided an explanation for the reason why the United States did not experience the same level of class conflict that existed in Europe. However, the idea of American exceptionalism dates back much earlier, beginning with the observations and writings of the French political scientist and historian Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) concerning the United States, in which he analyzed American society by comparing it with France and Great Britain. Tocqueville described the United States as a unique nation, free, founded upon individual liberty and democratic ideals.

However, during the last year and a half, considering Washington's most recent actions at the global level, materialized both in public statements (the desire to annex Greenland, to transform Canada into the fifty-first state of the United States, to overthrow by military means the communist regime in Cuba, and to withdraw the United States from NATO), as well as in the military operation aimed at the "extraction" of the President of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, the United States appears to be increasingly attracted to replacing American exceptionalism with the Monroe Doctrine[1], according to the recent statements of President Donald Trump[2].

Russia, in turn, although possessing vast energy and mineral resources, is deficient with regard to the infrastructure necessary for their extraction, inherited from the Soviet regime, a sector in which investments have not been made for a very long time. Vladimir Putin's accession to power triggered, together with nostalgia for Russia's imperial period during the Cold War, when it represented a major pole of power at the global level, the beginning of

[1] The Monroe Doctrine, named after its architect, former President James Monroe, in 1823, is one of the most important foreign policy agendas of the United States in the nineteenth century. It began as a largely symbolic document declaring American opposition to any new or expanded European involvement in the Americas after centuries of colonial activity in the region. The Monroe Doctrine would become a significant element of U.S. foreign policy toward the region for decades, although it has increasingly been criticized by scholars and policymakers because it was used to justify interventions in Latin America. The Doctrine emphasized the manner in which the U.S. Government regarded South and Central America as a strategic "backyard," viewed as a region that should fall under American rather than European influence. Source: https://www.dcnews.ro/ce-este-doctrina-monroe-imbratisata-de-donald-trump-traditia-veche-de-doua-secole-care-a-modelat-politica-externa-americana_1027255.html

[2] In the press statements delivered immediately after the U.S. operation in Venezuela, President Donald Trump stated that the attack had been carried out in accordance with a two-hundred-year-old policy, the Monroe Doctrine. President Donald Trump justified the operation in Venezuela as being consistent with a foreign policy agenda more than two hundred years old, namely the Monroe Doctrine, according to USA Today. Recent administrations at the White House attempted to distance themselves from the Monroe Doctrine, but more than a decade after then U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, under former President Barack Obama, declared that "the era of the Monroe Doctrine is over," Trump has embraced it once again.

an effort to recover this status as the successor state of the former Soviet Union. This has materialized through a policy of recovering former territories that belonged to the Soviet Union and incorporating them into the territory of the Russian Federation, as illustrated by the annexation of Crimea and the war of aggression against Ukraine. At present, Russia is a power weakened from the economic, military and technological points of view as a consequence of the enormous financial effort generated by this war.



Figure 1. Escorting President Nicolás Maduro by D.E.A. agents to the place of detention following his arrest. Source: www.foxnews.com

As regards China, it is already a major military, economic and technological pole, with an exponential growth of its global influence, consisting of an unprecedented development of infrastructure, trade and investments at the global level, a fact which creates fierce competition among the great poles of power.

The European Union, as a bloc of states configuring a new multipolar pole, is a benchmark economic and normative hub, benefiting from the advantage of a strongly defined soft power, but with a cohesion increasingly eroded as a consequence of the new political orientation of the United States and of the intensification of the doctrinal divergences that have emerged among its member states, aspects manifested through an accentuated polarization between the two major political orientations, sovereigntist and progressive. The new security challenges arising as a consequence of the outbreak of the war of aggression in Ukraine, as well as Europe's pronounced dependence on Russian oil, constitute essential reasons for initiating a common European military force, an objective difficult to achieve as a consequence of the global financial crisis.

The other actors aspiring to the status of poles of the multipolar world, such as Brazil, India and Pakistan (the latter two being nuclear powers), South Africa, Japan, Australia, blocs of states such as ASEAN, or even continents such as Africa, although they are state entities with different economies, more or less developed, with medium-level military powers and different political regimes, nevertheless have a common denominator, materialized in the will to become voices in the chorus of the new powers of the world. This obliges the new actors to accept, share and respect the new principles and values for preserving a world balance created primarily on the principle of equality among the global poles of power, a fact that gives the necessary consistency to the new multipolar world.

The Multipolar World. Concept. Definition. Characteristics. Challenges for Romania. Forecasts.

a. CONCEPT

The multipolar world represents a geopolitical system with several centres of power (poles) of comparable importance, engaged in constant competition, unlike the unipolar system, which comprises a single hegemon, or bipolarity, a system in which the balance is provided by two poles of power.

The multipolar world, characterized by balance and complexity, is a place in which states and regional blocs play key roles, while the balance of power changes frequently, involving volatile alliances and economic, military and ideological competition.



Figure 2. A perspective on the multipolar world through the prism of the game of chess, where each chess piece has its own relevance. Source: https://images.search.yahoo.com

b. DEFINITION

Multipolarity represents a world in which several states or groups of states (poles) possess significant influence at the global level, without any one of them dominating completely, unlike the unipolar system (U.S. domination after the Cold War) or the bipolar system (United States versus the USSR during the Cold War).

c. CHARACTERISTICS

1. **Balance of power**: No pole is sufficiently powerful to impose the global order, creating a dynamic of balance and mutual control;
2. **Multiplicity of actors**: Besides the great powers, already established regional actors, the new poles of power also gain importance, diversifying the international scene;
3. **Competition and cooperation**: The poles of power compete for influence (economic, military, technological), but also cooperate in solving global problems (climate, terrorism, etc.);
4. **Instability and uncertainty**: Alliances are more fluid (they are not fixed as in bipolarity), and relations among the poles may be unpredictable, generating tensions;
5. **Cultural and ideological diversity**: Different civilizations and systems of values interact and compete, such as the Western vision versus alternative visions (Eastern, Islamic, etc.);
6. **Regional power**: The emergence of centres of power in different regions (Asia, Latin America, Africa), which assert their interests and influence.

In essence, a multipolar world is one that is complex, diversified and fluid, in which power is distributed among several poles that negotiate, compete and cooperate in order to shape the world order.

d. CHALLENGES FOR ROMANIA

1. The gradual return of America to the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, which presupposes Washington's abandonment of its sphere of influence in Europe and its return to consolidating its sphere of influence in South America, a fact which implies the abandonment of the security guarantees granted to Romania in order to support it in a military conflict with Russia;
2. The lack of a defense structure of the European Union, materialized in a common army capable, if necessary, of successfully replacing NATO, as well as of providing security guarantees to the Member States;
3. The war in Ukraine in the vicinity of the country's borders;
4. The erosion of the Euro-Atlantic relationship between the United States and the European Union as a consequence of the lack of interest of NATO Member States in

increasing their defense budgets. This may lead to America's disengagement from Europe and to the possibility of the outbreak of trade wars between the European allies and the United States;

5. The increasingly pronounced concern of the United States, as a consequence of the so-called tariff war, to regard China as a long-term global partner, to the detriment of its economic relations with the European Union, the EU appearing to be crushed by the magnitude of American-Chinese relations.

These challenges place Romania at the center of an unfavorable context, Romania's level of security diminishing to such an extent that it generates vulnerabilities, dangers and risks comparable to those of the unipolar moment, after Romania abandoned the security umbrella of the Warsaw Treaty, under circumstances in which the geopolitical moment did not yet permit the country's integration into NATO.

At the same time, part of the conflicts existing at the global level during the early period of the multipolar world continue with the same intensity, consuming human and economic-financial resources, generating massive population exoduses and human tragedies, thus constituting major security risks for humanity. Thus, apart from the major conflicts that broke out and ended in Afghanistan (2001–2021), Iraq (2003–2011), and Syria (2011–2024), there also remain the major conflict in Ukraine (which, in practice, began in 2014 with the occupation of Crimea and continues to the present day together with the so-called special operation launched in February 2022 against Kyiv), the war in Yemen, which began in 2015 and also continues, as well as the new conflict in the Middle East, initiated this year and resulting in the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, which is currently unfolding.



Figure 3. Map of Ukraine showing the nuclear power plants as sensitive military objectives, as well as the territories occupied by Russia. *Source: www.limesonline.com*

For Romania, the most dangerous challenge at present is that resulting from the war in Ukraine, with which we share a common border, following Russia's armed offensive resulting in the invasion of our northern neighbor, in the hope of militarily occupying it within only a few days.

e. FORECASTS

The possible developments of the conflict in Ukraine over an estimated period extending until the year 2050 could materialize in three scenarios/hypotheses of action, as follows:

Scenario 1 – Ukraine Wins (the most optimistic)

By 2030, Ukraine recovers the majority of its occupied territories and obtains Western security guarantees. During the following decade, it became a member of the European Union and a strategic ally of NATO, contributing to the stabilization of the region. By 2050, Ukraine is completely reconstructed and consolidated as the eastern pillar of the Euro-Atlantic order, while Russia's global influence erodes significantly, although it retains Crimea.

Scenario 2 – Russia Wins (possible)

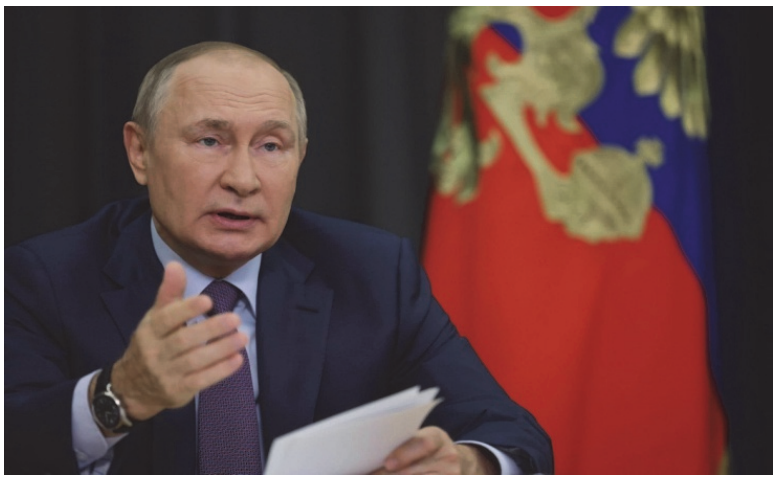


Figure 4. Regardless of the strategic power games of the multipolar world, Russia cannot be excluded from the major decisions that will govern the planet. Source: https://tg24.sky.it/mondo/2025/11/04

By 2030, Russia retains control over Crimea and south-eastern Ukraine, while Kyiv is forced to accept a status of neutrality as a consequence of replacing the current political

regime with another one more accommodating to Russian demands. Ukraine remains divided and under permanent pressure, while Moscow attempts to extend its influence in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. By 2050, a new balance of power dominated by Russia and China reconfigures the area between the Black Sea and Central Asia, with NATO occupying a defensive position.

Scenario 3 – Frozen Conflict, Without Victor or Vanquished (the most probable)

Thus, war stabilizes during the next two to three years without a clear political solution. The front lines become permanent, while the parties maintain a state of unofficial armistice accompanied by sporadic clashes. Ukraine remains partially occupied.

While developing its relations with the West. By 2050, the conflict becomes "a new Korea of Europe," and the stability of the region depends on the capacity of NATO and the European Union to support a partially stabilized Ukraine that nevertheless remains under constant pressure. In this context, it becomes increasingly evident that, taking into consideration the radical modification of the security glacis of the twenty-first century, the security paradigm will undergo a profound adaptation to present-day realities.

Thus, the classical military conflict (state versus state) has been replaced or complemented by new and more complex forms, such as:

- **Hybrid conflicts**, where the line between peace and war is blurred (e.g., Ukraine);
- **Proxy wars**, as an expression of global competition among the great powers (e.g., Syria, Yemen);
- **Information and cyber warfare**, playing a major role in influencing perceptions and destabilizing regimes;
- **Urbanized and media-driven conflict**, simultaneously targeting the morale of the population, the international image and the critical infrastructure;
- The revitalization of ideological and religious conflicts, waged in the name of identity rather than territory.
- Consequently, the modification of the security paradigm of the multipolar world may lead to the following consequences for the global security architecture, making it imperative for Romania to adapt itself to these realities:
- **Desynchronization** between international law and strategic reality;
- The erosion of non-proliferation and arms control regimes (nuclear, ballistic, AI);
- **The vulnerability of critical infrastructures** as a new battlefield (cyber, energy, communications);

- The politicization of humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction, with negative effects upon sustainable recovery;
- The generalization of the "conflict without victors," but with massive human and reputational losses.
- In conclusion, Romania finds itself in an extremely unpredictable security environment, as a consequence of its geostrategic position in the proximity of two major conflicts, the one in Ukraine and the one in the Middle East, developments that require the adaptation of its security paradigm to these realities of the multipolar world by initiating the following urgent measures:
- adaptation of the defense doctrine to hybrid conflicts and non-conventional operations;
- Romania must become an exporter of regional security through consolidated capabilities, interoperability, digitalization and enhanced civil protection;
- strengthening national resilience, including propaganda, cyberattacks and uncontrolled migration;
- strengthening strategic partnerships, especially with the United States, Poland, France and Türkiye, becomes essential in a multipolar environment.

II. Directions to Be Followed by Romania

The Pillars of Romania's National Security in the Multipolar World

a. DIRECTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY ROMANIA

It is more than evident that the international events taking place in the year 2026 are on the verge of radically changing the world, which tends to transform itself into a new balance-of-power system, this time a multipolar one, with poles of power already visible (the United States, China, Russia, India and the European Union), but also with a number of regional powers currently negotiating their status at the decision-making table. These are realities that completely change the rules of the game for Romania as well. In this case, a major rethinking of our country's national security becomes necessary by adapting it to the new changes.

Thus, a first step would materialize in "anchoring" Romania to NATO and the European Union, while nevertheless taking into account the new political and geopolitical realities that have emerged. Although NATO remains our "hard" security guarantee, and Article 5 of the Washington Treaty remains in force, in a multipolar world the "American umbrella" no longer provides Romania with the same guarantees, as a consequence of the modification of the global priorities of the United States, through the granting of increased attention to

the Middle East, the Pacific, and Latin America (through the return to the Monroe Doctrine), as well as because of the financial difficulties of the great ally.

As regards the European Union, it is currently being eroded by numerous divergences at both economic and political levels, losing, to a certain extent, its international relevance as a consequence of Washington's geopolitical actions. Moreover, the plan for establishing a common military force of the Member States has been dragging on for many years.

For Romania, this would mean allocating at least 2.5–3% of GDP to defense expenditures, this amount representing the minimum necessary (in order to be credible at the undesirable moment when we might be forced to request reinforcements in the event of a possible aggression against our state sovereignty). It would also mean significant investments in critical capabilities, such as long-range air defense, ammunition, logistics, mobility and, last but not least, genuine interoperability achieved not only through military exercises but also through high standards in troop training, the procurement of compatible ammunition and efficient supply chains.



Figure 5. The Romanian Army, an element of stability at the regional level, an element of confidence within the Euro-Atlantic security architecture.

Another direction of action for Romania would be the consolidation of its status as NATO's "Eastern Pivot," which would be reflected in the development of naval and air surveillance capabilities through the allocation of a sufficient number of drones, radars and

corvettes, as well as through the development of coastal defense. It is necessary to transform the Port of Constanța and the Danube ports into hubs of resilience and military and civilian logistics, together with close coordination with Turkey, Bulgaria, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova within the Black Sea area, in order to strengthen the Eastern Flank.

In the multipolar world, economic wars and energy dependencies are formidable weapons. Since economic security is one of the components of national security, Romania should accelerate its energy independence, because dependence (fortunately not in its entirety) on Russian gas has constituted a vulnerability for the country through the risks of economic blackmail to which Romania may at any time be subjected by the Kremlin.

In conclusion, the exploitation of the natural gas and oil resources of the Black Sea, the implementation of new-generation nuclear technologies at the Cernavodă Nuclear Power Plant, the new interconnections of the energy networks with the Republic of Moldova, as well as the diversification of the supply chains for microchips, ammunition and raw materials constitute priorities for Romania's governments, regardless of their political orientation.

Nor should the protection of critical infrastructures, submarine cables, electricity networks and ports against cyber-attacks be neglected, as the hybrid war in which Romania currently finds itself, together with cyber, economic and information warfare, are indisputable realities, constituting genuine threats to Romania's national security.

Since in multipolarity, small or regional powers survive through networks of interests rather than solely through solid treaties, an important role is assigned to proximity diplomacy, through the maintenance of relations based on trust, mutual respect, efficiency and pragmatism with all our neighbors, both with the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, as well as with the states of the Eastern Balkans and the Wider Black Sea Region.[3]

In modern warfare, combat is carried out less and less on the battlefield, as happened in the conflicts of the twentieth century, with the deployment of large masses of tanks along strategic attack axes or with devastating air strikes against objectives of major importance (hard power). Hybrid warfare, technological warfare, economic warfare, information

[3]The Wider Black Sea Region (WBSR) is a concept defining a complex geostrategic and economic space extending beyond the strict riparian borders, including the states of the Black Sea, Caspian Sea, and Baltic Sea basins. It represents a point of convergence between the interests of the European Union, NATO, the United States, and Russia. The Black Sea littoral states are Romania, Bulgaria, Türkiye, Russia, Ukraine, and Georgia. The wider perimeter of the region includes the South Caucasus (Armenia and Azerbaijan), the Republic of Moldova, as well as direct connections with Central Asia and the Middle East. Source: Marius-Sorin Miclea, La Roumanie et la Région Étendue de la Mer Noire dans le nouveau context de sécurité et défense d'après la Guerre Froide, Doctoral Thesis, Jean Moulin University, 27 June 2012.

warfare and cyber warfare represent new components of the category of soft power specific to confrontations between states. However, the soft power category of conflict acts predominantly upon minds through the component of psychological warfare, manifested through the corruption of minds, propaganda and disinformation, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, through instrumentalized migration and economic pressure. And finally, but not least, special attention should be paid to strategic autonomy to the detriment of Romania's isolation. The term "European strategic autonomy" may sound vague, but for Romania it has a special connotation, representing the personification of the necessity for the European Union to be able to act independently whenever required, excluding dependence upon the United States in medium-level crises arising in different parts of the world where Brussels has geopolitical and strategic interests. This phenomenon does not replace NATO but rather complements it.

Romania, in turn, must act in order to possess its own national defense industry, to gain independence in the production of military equipment, excluding any dependence, including upon European Union Member States, in the production of any type of military supplies. These activities should be complemented by the training of highly qualified technicians to work in this type of industry, which is so necessary for Romania.

The conclusion that imposes itself requires taking into consideration the following aspects:

- at the exogenous level, within the multipolar system there is no longer any "protector" upon whom Romania will be able to rely, with the exception of NATO, although it remains to be seen how this organization, created during the Cold War, will adapt to the new changes resulting from the change in global polarity. It is no less true that, at present, even the very existence of this organization is being called into question;
- at the endogenous level, Romania will have to become sufficiently strong from a military point of view so as not to be ignored, sufficiently useful economically and geographically in order to be attractive within the new alliances that will take shape, and, above all, sufficiently united so as to provide that stability at the level of the governing class which will have to take the most efficient decisions for Romania's security.

b. THE PILLARS OF ROMANIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE MULTIPOLAR WORLD

The pillars of Romania's national security in the multipolar world require a systemic reconfiguration, as a consequence of the fragmentation of the international system.

Thus, the new realities are becoming increasingly visible, such as the political and economic reconfiguration of the United States toward the Pacific region, the attention granted by Washington to China, in parallel with the current administration's intention to return to the Monroe Doctrine (it is not known what policies the future administration in Washington, following the 2028 elections, will adopt).

Constantly, the attention of all experts in international relations is focused upon the current decisions of the Trump Administration, elements that generate a series of assumptions and predictions concerning the future of the multipolar world. However, nobody takes into account whether these decisions will be continued by the future American administration, which will have to choose between returning to the foreign policy preceding the current administration or continuing the present strategic orientations.

As regards Russia, it is becoming increasingly active on NATO's Eastern Flank, while the European Union is currently undergoing an extensive process of redefinition. For Romania, this means that security must be built upon several pillars that support one another.

The main pillars of Romania's national security:

1. Resetting national security through the reconfiguration of the entire national defence system as a consequence of the decision of the United States to transfer its strategic effort toward other regions of the world.

This decision will undoubtedly also have consequences for NATO. Thus, Romania will have to rely first and foremost upon its own forces, taking Poland as an example, through the configuration of a new army with an increased personnel strength, equipped with ultra-modern equipment, representing a genuine deterrent force against any possible aggressive intentions on the part of Russia, an army adapted both to face a conventional war and, above all, a non-conventional war, taking into account the current developments in Ukraine.

2. Maintaining the current security alliances, with NATO as their backbone, through the activation, whenever necessary, of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty against any type of military aggression, as well as by maintaining a substantial presence of troops and military equipment under the NATO flag in Romania.

Special attention must be paid to the continuation and further development of the Strategic Partnership with the United States, particularly with regard to its military component.

3. Increasing the European dimension and Romania's visibility within the European Union through enhanced strategic autonomy.

Although the European Union pillar does not represent a military element in the classical sense, it is of vital importance for economic, energy and cyber resilience. European funds, the Single Market and the common defense projects (EDF, PESCO) reduce Romania's dependence upon other external markets.

The concept of "European strategic autonomy" will have a beneficial effect upon Romania through access to development funding by means of European mechanisms. This concept does not replace the role of the United States within Romania's security architecture but is complementary to it.

4. Regional Security. The Black Sea and the Immediate Neighborhood

The Wider Black Sea Region is a geographical region recognized as a strategic area in which, following the dissolution of the USSR, numerous regional "hot" interethnic conflicts broke out as a consequence of the "heating up" of the "frozen" conflicts that had emerged following the Treaty establishing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.[4]

The formation of this state conglomerate amalgamated and trampled upon the national sentiments of the state entities that, at that time, formed the USSR, and after the dissolution of the Soviet Union all the resentments of the peoples composing the USSR, which had been kept under strict ideological control by the Kremlin, overflowed, transforming themselves into independence movements or taking the form of local wars throughout the former Soviet space.

Following the outbreak of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, Romania became a front-line NATO state bordering the conflict area, assuming the inherent risks and being able at any time to become a "collateral victim" of the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation through violations of its airspace by drones, some of which have crashed on Romanian territory, this occurring increasingly frequently.

Thus, the entire infrastructure located on Romanian territory adjacent to the conflict zone, the natural features, the rivers, the Black Sea coastline, and the Danube Delta become critical elements of our national security, requiring the implementation of special surveillance and protection measures, both at present and in the future, because, regardless

[4]The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (Russian: *Союз Советских Социалистических Республик* (СССР), *Soyuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik* (SSSR)), also known as the Soviet Union (Russian: *Советский Союз*, *Sovetskiy Soyuz*), was a state extending over a large part of northern Eurasia and existed from 1922 until 1991. Its formation represented the culmination of the Russian Revolution of 1917, which removed Tsar Nicholas II from power. (For the official name of the Soviet Union in the languages of the other republics, see *Official Names of the USSR*.). The USSR consisted of several Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs). Their number varied over time; at the moment of the dissolution of the USSR there were 15 constituent republics. Russia was by far the largest republic within the Union, dominating in almost every respect: territory, population, economy and political influence. The territory of the USSR also underwent major changes; in 1990 it corresponded broadly to that of the Russian Empire, the most important exceptions being Poland, Finland and Alaska. With the exception of a short period immediately after the Revolution, the political organization of the country was defined by the only officially recognized political party, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Source: Romanian Wikipedia

of how the conflict ends, it will transform itself into a "frozen" conflict as a consequence of the dissatisfaction of both parties participating in the negotiations.

As regards the Republic of Moldova, the stability of Chișinău constitutes a direct extension of Romania's security. Energy interconnections, infrastructure projects, and the political and economic support granted by Romania to the Republic of Moldova are integrated measures complementary to Romania's national defense.

A particularly important role within our new security architecture must be assigned to the strengthening of NATO's Southern Flank, through efficient coordination with Bulgaria, Türkiye and Greece. A conflict-adjacent area or an unstable Balkan region means increased migratory pressure as well as increased hybrid vulnerabilities.

Since, in a multipolar world, sanctions, embargoes and dependencies constitute a category of formidable non-lethal weapons, economic and energy resilience become elements of the highest importance. The natural gas resources of the Black Sea, the Cernavodă Nuclear Power Plant, and the electricity generation facilities contribute significantly to Romania's energy independence, while these, together with the critical infrastructure, submarine cables, the Internet network, electricity grids, ports and the railway system, require the adoption of protection measures of the highest priority, because they constitute priority targets of hybrid attacks.

Cyber and information security shall be ensured through a national cyber defense system, placed, in the event of a conflict, under the authority of the specialized structures of the intelligence services, while the Armed Forces shall protect the state's networks and critical companies.

Social resilience shall integrate education, the mass media and the fight against fake news, a process of broad scope that will result in the strengthening of internal cohesion, because a divided society is vulnerable regardless of how many tanks and aircraft it possesses. The revitalization of the defense industry and the advance preparation of the reserve personnel necessary for national mobilization shall be achieved through the program for relaunching the Romanian defense industry for the production of ammunition and military equipment necessary for a twenty-first-century war, with particular emphasis on the priority production of drones and unmanned aircraft, together with the activation and training of the national reserve force and the rethinking of civil protection, as well as through the allocation of strategic stockpiles, the preparation of evacuation plans and the involvement of the population.

In a multipolar world, Romania's national security depends upon its capacity to balance its membership in NATO and the European Union with pragmatic relations with the other poles of power. Diplomatic flexibility and economic resilience have become just as

important as conventional military force. The priority remains the strengthening of the Eastern Flank and the protection of critical infrastructure against hybrid threats and against Russia. Romania cannot afford neutrality, but it can use its geographical position in order to become an actor of regional stability.

Thus, security is built through solid alliances, coherent internal decision-making and continuous adaptation to a regional and global balance that is in continuous change.