

# THE LINK BETWEEN SYSTEMIC TRANSFORMATION AND SECURITY: GENERAL ASSESSMENTS OF REGIONAL COOPERATION IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

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## **Definition of Security**

Despite the fact that the notion of the security of a state is often used, it is rarely defined by its users. The need for such a definition is indisputable as it deals with relevant and sensitive subjects for each state. Generally speaking, the definition of security usually covers a state's lack of threat or the effectiveness of its guaranteed protection against such a threat.<sup>1</sup> Such an approach can be found in international relations dictionaries. There is no difference in defining this notion in individual countries, which means that there is a common denominator in understanding a state of security. Nevertheless, the same events in international relations are commented on in different ways and can cause, in certain conditions, an overreaction, which on its own can be considered as a threat to the security of the state, such as the conflict between US and Chinese planes in April 2001, the expulsion of Russian diplomats from the US in 2001, or indeed the Polish diplomats accused of espionage and ordered to leave Moscow in January 2000.

Looking closer at the above definition, one should try to define what is understood by threat or a state of threat. This notion has several dimensions, starting with psychological, then becoming real or potential, and finally indicating a subjective or objective element of the threat. This leads us to one important finding, i.e. that perception of a threat can reflect real threats or real potential of threat, either objective or subjective. The subjectivity of threat can be enlarged in specific conditions when people evoke from specific stage of international relations, which was long enough to route deeply in their minds certain behaviours or reactions. The end of the Cold War can be

considered as such a specific state in which subjectivity of perceptions of threats is strongly mixed with an objective approach, when real threats are neglected and unreal dangers are taking over.

Daniel Frei<sup>2</sup> offers a definition of specific conditions under which the size of a threat can be defined more precisely:

- lack of security in conditions which bring real external endangerment of security and when this endangerment is perceived in proper proportions to the real threat;
- state of obsession occurs in conditions when small endangerment is perceived as a big one;
- state of false security is in place when endangerment is big and the perception of it is much smaller and out of proportion;
- state of security occurs in conditions when external threat is not big and the perception of it is seen in accordance to that.

Security in international relations means that needs and interests of the participants in international relations are sufficiently covered and the process is fulfilled on the international stage, while its consequences touch not only interested group of countries but also the whole international system. This is one of the reasons why, for analytical purposes, there is a clear division between international and national security. This division is rather superficial as, generally, the security of states in international relations always has a national dimension as well.

National security defined as needs and interests of a nation are fulfilled by its political organisation, i.e. the state. As the requirement of security is not only defined by the internal structure of society but also results from the evolution of the international environment, it is conducted within the framework of foreign policy. National security is an ability of a nation to protect its internal values against external threats. This definition brings us to the problem of defining aims of such protection and values that should be protected. J. Kukulka defined three such aims: (1) existence, maximisation of chances to survive; (2) coexistence, leading to an improvement in the role in international relations; (3) functional, leading to the high effectiveness of conducted policy in reaching the two formerly mentioned goals.<sup>3</sup> The list of protected values covers: national interests; political

institutions, sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity. All of the mentioned values are still protected although their meaning changes as time passes.

International security is achieved in conjunction between individual security and the collective security of a group of states. This conjunction is effected by participation of the state in the system of international relations.

## **Old and New Dimensions of Security**

In the past, the security model was mainly based on a hard security dimension (military factors), while soft dimensions (non-military) played a secondary role in the system. In the current stage of international relations, the roles of both hard and soft dimensions have changed, which means that the "soft" are now taking the lead. This is happening on two levels - national and international.

The hard dimension of security has not disappeared totally, although its role has changed. The new security system is interdependent and cooperative, which means that states cooperate within a sphere of security. They also start to cooperate in arms production, which stimulates standardisation of arms or even globalisation of arms technology, which in turn follows the pattern of globalisation of civilian technology. This is evidenced by the following occurrences:

- Shrinking internal and external arms markets force international cooperation in arms production, which is accelerated additionally by increasing costs of R&D, asymmetry of sales between US and EU, as well as by the exclusion of competition regarding arms procurement in the EC, which means that the arms market is excluded from the single European market and still continues to work according to specific rules of the game;
- The end of the Cold War created new conditions in international relations, which foster departure from the concept of self-sufficiency in arms supplies and production;
- No longer is there any need to follow the neutrality path of politics by those who wanted to stay neutral in the bipolar world;

- The role of dual-use goods is increasing in international transfers, which is reflected in the organisation of the technology controls system, which now is open for all those who support market rules and democracy.

In the case of "soft" dimensions, the linkages are relatively more complicated because it is difficult to be more precise on the issue as to what exactly are the soft (non-military) dimensions of security.<sup>4</sup> In case of hard dimensions (military), a country is safe when it has enough arms to defend itself within a coalition, as self-defence is impossible in the contemporary world with its stocks of missiles possessed by individual countries and organised institutionally by coalitions of states. Even small coalitions will not possess enough power and potential to protect themselves, especially when this problem is studied in terms of cost-effectiveness. In other words, a country cannot be secure by building-up its military potential on its own or in coalitions formed from a small group of interested states.

This is based on two assumptions: high military expenditures compete with other expenditures within the state budget, if military production is chosen as a way of spending the state's money; and intensive armaments counteract with extensive development of international trade, an important factor which serves to build wealth and stability. There is a list of factors that matter in the context of stabilisation and security. These embrace the following: (1) size of the country; (2) stability of the economy; (3) stability of the political system; (4) relations with neighbours; (5) ability to adjust to changing conditions and their challenges; (6) the problem of national minorities; (7) institutionalisation of external relations; (8) opening up of the economy.

The links between economics, stability and security were defined differently at different stages of development of international relations. This can be exemplified by the period before the Cold War, during the Cold War and afterwards. These differences resulted in different security and economic models. In the past, the security model was based on balanced confrontation between the powers or superpowers and their allies. This was the case both in a multi-power and bipolar world. Currently, security is based on interdependence and cooperation between states and its enhanced by globalisation, liberalisation and established institutional structures, which are not directly linked with security goals.

Economics in the past was based on national, and to a large extent self-sufficient, model, which naturally excluded the possibilities of significant external cooperation. Protection against external competition was considered to be one of the tools of state economic policy. This in turn led to partial isolation and in turn increased susceptibility to economic depression imported from abroad. But with growing international interdependencies of states and their economies, all this has changed. The shape of the economic cycle in the form of sinusoid was replaced by that of a shaky slope, which, with differentiated rates of growth, climbs steadily up. Economists used to call this steady or sustainable growth, with sustainability being achieved by several factors, which include:

- internationalisation of the economy, causing deepened international interdependence;
- opening and liberalisation of the economy internally and externally (on both regional and global scales);
- institutionalisation of external relations, making certain commitments regarding liberalisation that are not reversible in periods of economic slow-down;
- globalisation;
- increasing economisation of the military sector (privatisation, deregulation, internationalisation (mergers), increased effectiveness, and the ending of state aid in supporting exports and arms fairs), which means treating it as a part of the economy that has to follow the same rules of the game as all other branches or sectors (i.e. a departure from Article 223 of the Treaty of Rome which excludes competition in procurement procedure). This process is a long endeavour and it is linked with a very sensitive sector, which additionally can be considered as a factor prolonging reform.

In sum, these findings can be put in a table, giving the parallel development of economic and security systems. The illustration given in **Table 1** below could be additionally enriched by showing the stages involved in the reshaping of global and national financial and monetary systems, which are more sensitive to sovereignty issues than the economic model. Generally, we can show the following three stages of development of financial/exchange rate systems, which go from: (1) multipolarity combining different groups of countries, which

try to cooperate in this field together by pegging their currencies to the one which operates in the so-called economic hub or financial centre; (2) through a period of exchange rate coordination and joint interventions; (3) towards the coordination of exchange rate policies; (4) ending with the convergence criteria and a common currency, as with the Euro. This stage could be also viewed as a transition phase in which three financial/currency centres are established around three hubs in New York, Frankfurt and Tokyo which, over the long term, will condense three currencies into one.

This process is stimulated on the one hand by globalisation and on the other by the creation of large free trade zones. The pattern used here follows the experience of the EC as well as of other less advanced forms of integration, such as the Pan-American free trade area from Alaska to Chile, which embraces 34 economies in North and South America and the Caribbean.<sup>5</sup> The EU also has institutionalised relations with organisations located outside Europe, such as ASEAN<sup>6</sup>, SAARC<sup>7</sup>, Mercosur<sup>8</sup>, GCC<sup>9</sup>, APEC, ASEM, NAFTA, the Barcelona Process (Countries of Near East), and ACP (the Lome convention, Cotonou Agreement).

Free trade is important for the stabilisation of the economy as well for development. It is a precondition for there to be profit from globalisation, because liberalization is fostered within newly formed or existing free trade organisations. This process also embraces post-communist economies. East-Central European countries in transition founded CEFTA in 1992 (Central European Free Trade Agreement), which initially included Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland and was enlarged gradually to 7 members. The number of members grew in two ways: by the division of Czechoslovakia into two separate states and by the enlargement of membership to Slovenia (1995), Romania (1996) and Bulgaria (2000). This formation creates an institutional background for free trade in the region and has resulted in an expansion of trade.

Post-communist countries also create institutional linkages with the EU. This is done by signing asymmetric trade agreements of different types, such as Europe Agreements (leading to membership) or Partnership Agreements introducing liberalisation in trade and leading to association. In the first case, agreements embrace two groups of countries, counting their distance towards membership and advancement in accession negotiations: (1) the Luxembourg Group: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia; and (2) the

Helsinki Group: Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia. Partnership Agreements are concluded between the EU and Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

Finally we have two proposals for free trade arrangements in the former Soviet Union; GUUAM (first letters of Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldavia), and EAEC (Euro-Asian Economic Union) which includes Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. Both were founded in autumn 2000, although neither has started to function.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, one should expect the launching of a new liberalisation round within the WTO, following failure in Seattle. This failure does not mean the total abandonment of trade liberalisation, which is stimulated on bilateral or regional levels and strongly supported by the EU.

**Table 1: The Dependence of the International Security System from Changes in Economic System**

SECURITY MODELS	ECONOMIC MODELS
<p><b>Multipolar model</b> - based on military component in which economy plays a secondary role. Defence doctrine is constructed upon self-sufficiency of defence, which is univocal with self-sufficiency in production. Attempts to create coalitions lead to conflicts, as their construction is based upon temporary common interests, which naturally deprive them of a stable component. Security model as well as model of international relations at this stage is based on power solutions.</p>	<p><b>National economy model</b> - based on the protection of producers and jobs. Developing mechanisms directly engaging the state in the production sphere. This model deviated from the competition mechanism and supported the use of protection measures in periods of recession, thus making the situation worse. It limited the possibilities of building long-term interests internationally. Its ability to stabilise was limited and incorporated a conflicting component.</p>

**Bipolar model** - shaped after WW2, was in force for over 45 years (1945-1989). It led to an increase of the economic component, which in consequence resulted in priority treatment of economics and, later, the take-over of the role formerly fulfilled by the military factor. Security model at this stage is based on deterrence.

**Model of slow and gradual departure from protection** as well as from (linked) concepts of economic growth stimulation. In practice, this was univocal with departure from protectionist measures by the slow and cautious opening of the economy on national, regional and global levels. This model was fostered by the Bretton Woods system (1944) which established the World Bank, IMF and later GATT. On a regional level, institutions such as the EC, EFTA, OECD and NAFTA were created. Liberalisation was also pushed ahead by bilateral agreements.

**Non-polar model** - created after the dissolution of the USSR and Warsaw Pact, when relations in the security sphere drifted towards unipolarity (NATO and US playing important role with support of EU, WEU and CSCE) in transition from bipolarity (two pillars : US and USSR) and moving towards non-polarity (cooperative system). This should be followed further by liberalisation of mutual relations. Stabilisation is further guaranteed by the evolution of international organisations, which should be followed by the creation of platforms helping to develop sustainable ties among states supported by common interests.

**Liberalised model of the global economy**, in which economies tend to be more interdependent, due on the one hand to natural and geographic differences, and on the other to relative differences in size, production factors and levels of development. This does not mean typical dependency relations, but interdependency. Occurring in parallel to this is the intensification of competition and liberalisation.

**Source:** Own setting.

The cooperative model per se indicates that external threats are diminishing whilst internal threats are increasing:

- systemic transformation is a process which is characterised by many different types of tensions (political, social, economic, etc);
- external threats, when they occur, are of a different nature to those familiar only from the pages of history books. External threats can be ascribed more to accidents or terrorism, and less to an external attack.

Looking closer at the differences between old and new security models, one can find that all elements of the so-called values, sovereignty, national interest, strategic goals and so on need to be redefined in the new conditions. They still exist and are still used, but they are far away from the definitions known before WW2 and during the Cold War. Despite the new realities, some still use old definitions and old meanings of those notions, which often results in misleading evaluations of the threat. This can be explained by the existence of two schools of thinking, one of which is in decline whilst the other expands. The former is called the neo-realistic approach; the latter the neo-liberal approach. The characteristic features of the two and the differences between them can be summarised in the following way (Table 2), although this table does not reflect all the differences or characteristics.

**Table 2 : Neo-realistic and Neo-liberal Approaches to International Relations and Security**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Neo-realists</b>	<b>Neo-liberals</b>
<i>Subjects in international relations</i>	State	State and institutions
<i>Character of international relations</i>	Anarchic (lack of state government)	Cooperative - Interdependencies
<i>Character of state</i>	Unitary	Pluralistic
<i>Priorities of state functioning</i>	Strength and Security	Economic growth and Social Security.
<i>Ways of conducting policy</i>	Power Politics (realpolitik) and Self-Reliance	Cooperation and Self-Limitation
<i>Attitude towards international cooperation</i>	Pessimistic - Relative Profit - Zero Sum Game	Optimistic - Absolute Profits - "Growing Wedding Cake"
<i>Role of international institutions</i>	Marginal - Arena for States' Self-Interest	Basic - Lowering Costs of Cooperation - Determining the Behaviour of States

**Source:** J. Czaputowicz, System czy nieład? Bezpieczeństwo europejskie u progu XXI wieku. WNPWN, Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych, 1998, s. 52.

Thus are the differences in approach of neo-realists and neo-liberals regarding international relations, character of the state, attitude towards international cooperation and the role of international institutions clearly indicated. Both approaches have been reflected in international relations at a specific stage of their development, the former during the cold war and the latter subsequently. Nevertheless, not all scientists treat 1989 as a turning point, in that some still support the views which reflect more the former stage of relations than the current one. Such an approach is characteristic of the transitional period, which embraces different four phases:

- majority approves neo-realistic approach;
- neo-realists are in the majority and decide the interpretation of international relations, but as the parallel neo-liberal vision gains ground;

- neo-liberals gain ascendancy and people adjust to their way of thinking and interpretation as, at the same time, neo-realists lose ground;

- neo-liberals are in the clear majority whilst neo-realists become a little exotic in their outdated way of thinking.

This evolution in four stages reflects any evolution of a scientific approach, when practice reflects existing theories. Then gradually reality departs from theory until finally we have a stage where theory starts to reflect reality again. Nevertheless, it should be added that the new setting does not happen per se accidentally. There are abstract theories which are used to formulate the new realities. Decisions on that - in the case of international relations - are undertaken at the highest level of so-called "high politics", while the implementation of those decisions take a longer period and require additional preparations, which is achieved by means of "low politics".

### **Security Models Against a Background of External and Internal Threats**

Generally we can distinguish at least four models of security when we look at the weight of internal and external threats, which change with the passing of time:

- The first shows the balance between external and internal threats. The causes of external threats are territorial expansion, territorial conquest subordinated to gain access to raw materials and other mineral resources, or a form of competition between states of similar power, levels of development and influence. The causes of internal threats are the struggle for power at local or state levels, various calamities (such as disease, hunger, flood, fire), animosity among ruling families, or the clash of interests between different social groups.

- The second model shows the superiority of external threats, when the internal security system works properly. The causes of external threats are the struggle for spheres of influence, the utilisation of weaknesses (economic, political or social) of neighbouring countries, the multipolarity of international relations where the strength of a state is defined by size of its territory and population (military potential), the transfer of conflicts between two states engaged openly against each other onto third countries (Antilles, Vietnam,

Afghanistan), and the progress of decolonisation and the creation of new relations between former dependent territories. The causes of internal threats are economic crises as in the 1930s, natural disasters, mistakes in economic policy, and the struggle for political power, although democracy gradually eliminates this latter factor.

- The third model reveals a relative superiority of internal threats over external threats in the security system. The causes of external threats are too large a dependence on one supply market, an international ecological or environmental crisis similar to the Chernobyl tragedy, or an overreaction to the breaking of a convention or other rules defining ways of co-existence in the international arena (such as the shooting down of a spy plane flying over the territory of another country). The causes of internal threats are related to the costs of restructuring, such as a slow deterioration in the standard of living which in turn leads to social tension. Such threats are concentrated in post-communist states and can lead to conflict when such states are multi-ethnic, multi-lingual or multi-religious as well.

- The fourth model envisages the creation of a cooperative security system. Internal threats are the impoverishment of some transition countries leading to fascist and totalitarian regimes, the inability to introduce successful transformation because of a lack of relevant expertise, and the sheer length and unexpected burdens of transition that can lead to the rejection of change and a renewal of the struggle between new and old political elites. External threats are, inter alia, the possibility that internal instability in one country or region will be transferred elsewhere.

The above described evolution shows that changes in the nature of threats do not eliminate tensions totally but change their weight as factors, which might undermine the existing balance or lack of endangerment. Despite the fact that threats do not disappear, the post war period has been the longest peace period in Europe. Even the Yugoslav conflict did not spread out of the Balkan pen. The most serious danger in the post-communist region can be ascribed to: (1) Externally, the mass exodus of people from one country to another one, which is not prepared to deal with mass emigration; (2) Internally, by mistakes made in transformation or lack of transformation, both bringing problems of a social, economic and political nature; (3) Internally, by increase of religious conflicts ascribed mainly to Muslim Fundamentalism.<sup>11</sup>

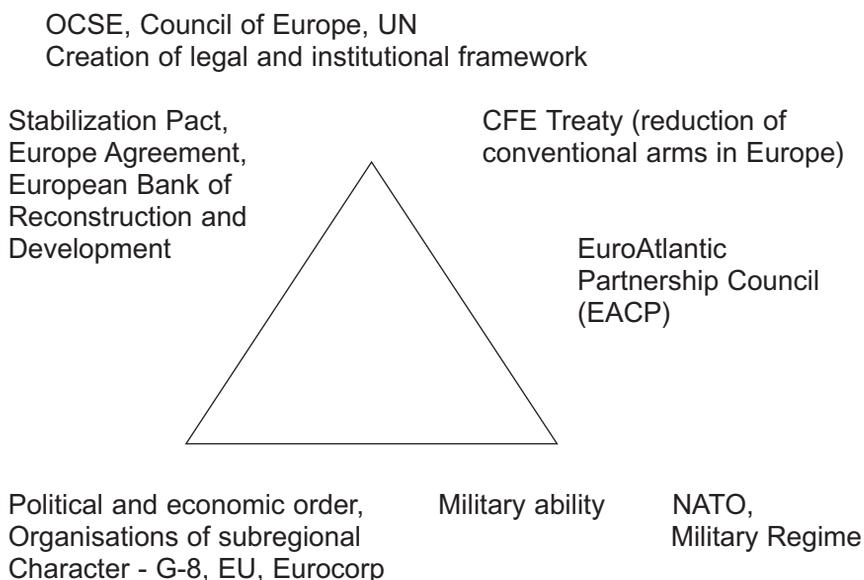
## **Conditions Enabling Systemic Transformation**

Systemic transformations were enabled by the end of the Cold War, but this was not the only reason and they could even be considered as a condition of departure from the old rhetoric brought about by over 45 years of mutual accusations as well as specific Cold War rhetoric and politics. The end of the Cold War and transformation was preconditioned by: (1) stabilisation of the pillars of western and democratic security structures; (2) a process of deepening international integration; (3) the process of enlargement in European integration; (4) building bridges of different types (political, economic, cultural) with third parties and external states; (5) political dialogue between East and West, leading to important moves in conventional armaments as well as a reduction in stocks of weapons; (6) confidence building measures and security guarantees; (7) a clear definition of responsibilities among engaged states.

Weaver's European security triangle clearly shows that security is built upon institutional structures, which are supported by some military regimes and organisations as well as by strong interdependencies among states and their economies. The deeper such ties or interlinkages are the stronger impact they have on stability and the irreversibility of the introduced changes. There are numerous new solutions which are being built on top of the emerging security system, these being the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI), common military troops, and the cooperative use of NATO's infrastructure by EU and NATO. These new solutions show that end of Cold War has strengthened in many ways the existing institutions, which form the core of the security structure in Europe: (1) by closing down non-democratic and non-market oriented organisations; (2) by increasing the number of members or candidates for membership in market democracies; (3) by silent approval of new members in existing organisations, which gathered together countries both further and less advanced in transition. Integration with EuroAtlantic structures are considered here to be the most important ones; (4) by pooling sovereignty in strengthened organisations and supplying them with new functions and powers; (5) by establishing new cooperative institutional solutions which continue to overlap, while other solutions enforce or deepen cooperation (Eurocorp); (6) by introducing solutions which enable cooperation among four groups of countries: NATO members, EU members, members of the two organisations and those which are outside those structures; (7) by establishing common military forces in Europe.

Graphically the existing security system can be shown as follows:

**Figure 1 : European Security Triangle**



**Source:** O. Weaver, The European Security triangle, Working papers, No.: 12, 1994, COPRI.

## **Models of Transformation and their Impact on Security**

Generally one can distinguish three models of transformation in the sphere of economics, which derive clearly from the practice of post-communist states in the 1990s. All of the models embrace similar or even the same elements but used with different strength and determination. Those differences are mirrored by different sequencing of utilized moves as well as by the degree of opening of the economy. These three models bring different results, measured by depth of transition depression and by the length of time from the starting point to a situation in which the economy starts to grow.

The first model is well known - "shock therapy". This model could be found in Poland and the GDR. In the case of Poland, it resulted in a quick departure from transformation depression and until now this economy has had one of the highest rates of growth. The second

model is the "gradual approach". This was applied in most East Central European states. The third model falls into the same category of gradual approach but changes were introduced here at an even slower rate and this group is less advanced. The main difference can be ascribed to the degree of opening of the economy, which in this third model starts after a delay and is pursued at a very slow pace. This model was used in the post-Soviet states. The results of each of the models were clear. With more drastic solutions, higher rates of growth were achieved, which resulted in an improvement in living standards. With lower incomes, there was more frustration, the period of systemic changes was prolonged and it now seems that it will last for a while longer yet.

It should be considered as a philosophical question to say when "shock" ends and "gradualism" starts, or indeed the other way round. There is no sharp partition between the two. Each change is a shock for those concerned as it requires adjustments.

The first model has shown that it is possible to go ahead fast, which is important in the context of a catching-up strategy. The two other models also bring the economy onto a growth path, although this is not sufficient and strong enough to continue in the future. Most of the prognosis speculates that the high rates of growth in 2000 in the post-Soviet Republics are not sustainable. Growth started in 1999 in Russia and spread into the other Republics, achieving a rate of growth averaging 7-8%. This rate of growth is badly needed, but at the same time, economists are starting to believe that shock is a more efficient strategy and also a more secure one as it means quick solutions in restructuring the economy, whilst ending unnecessary production and boosting output of competitive goods. Shock leads to a quick commencement of the transformation depression, a relatively deep fall in production and a short period of departure from depression. This is followed by relatively high rates of growth. Security here can be measured by the number living under the poverty line. Usually, high poverty rates appear in economies that attempt to protect their citizens from intensified competition and external shock.

**Table 3: Selected Macroeconomic Indicators  
in ECE Countries in 2000**

COUNTRY	Unemployment - end year (%)	CPI inflation - annual average (%)	Poverty - % of population below US\$2a day	Rate of GDP growth	Level of real GDP in 2000 (1989 = 100)
Azerbaijan	13.9*	1.6	68.1#	10.5	52
Bulgaria	17.9	9.9	7.8	5.0	70
Czech Republic	8.8	3.9	<2.0	3.1	98
Hungary	9.9*	9.8	4.0	5.2	105
Poland	15.0	10.1	10.5	4.1	127
Romania	10.5	45.7	27.5	1.6	77
Russia	9.7	20.8	25.1	7.7	62
Tajikistan	2.5	34.0	n.a.	8.3	47
Turkmenistan	n.a.	8.3	59.0	17.6	75
Ukraine	4.2	28.2	23.7	6.0	39
Uzbekistan	0.6	50.0	26.5	1.5	96

\* Data for 1999

# National figure, 1995.

Sources: Transition Report Update, April 2001, EBRD, London. Poverty Data - International poverty lines (except Azerbaijan) from World Development Report 2000/2001, World Bank. Table 4, pp.280 & 281.

One can clearly see that from the point of view of catching up, the Polish experience could be evaluated as the best among the group of indicated countries. From the social point of view in the medium term, the best results are recorded by the Czech Republic and Hungary. The slowest progress in both cases is seen in the former Soviet Republics, but also in Bulgaria and Romania, the rate of growth is not high. A catching-up strategy simply requires a rate of growth that is higher than in the countries one is aspiring to catch up. Nevertheless, in the case of former Soviet Republics, the first ten years of transformation were used to create a market environment institutionally and legally, which was followed by the specific education of the population. **Table 3** above is, however, limited as far as indicators for security are concerned.

Only countries with access to oil sources can feel safer with comparison to those who have access to other raw materials. There is a general and accelerating tendency in international trade that prices of raw materials fall in real terms relative to industrial goods prices. In other words, the gap between industrial and raw material prices of goods widens, which diminishes incomes from exports and increases trade deficits. Moreover, those countries often are engaged in a regional conflict, which limits their political and economic relations with other states in the region, thus increasing their autonomy. Countries rich in natural resources often experience a natural cushioning against change, which merely postpones their adjustment.

## Conclusions

Security in Europe is currently strongly linked with internal issues, mainly transformation strategies applied in post-communist countries and their respective effectiveness. Ten years of transformation helps us to draw certain conclusions as to what should be applied and how this compares with practice in the newly established market democracies. The main problem is to understand that some strategies are more effective than others and that those less effective can bring about instability and endanger security. This paper brings to light only some of the evidence, but empirical practice supports the simple findings presented here. The second important source of destabilisation can be ascribed to growing tensions among national minorities or religious groups, especially in regions where religion was for long periods considered as "forbidden fruit". Young fundamentalists can be stricter in their beliefs than their elders. Their fundamentalism can be reinforced by difficulties caused by lack of systemic transformation or

mistakes made by applying wrongly prepared strategies. These three factors combined (poverty caused by mistakes in transformation or lack of transformation; the heavy burden of systemic change; religious conflicts) form an explosive combination that could be considered as having the greatest potential to both cause and inflame internal and regional conflicts. This could be geographically ascribed to such countries as Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan.

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