

IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION AND REGIONALISM ON THE GOOD NEIGHBORLY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STATES

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Good neighborhood, as a principle of the international relations, as well as an element of the theory and analysis of politico-diplomatic realities, at regional or global level, has been a permanent concern for statesmen, analysts or public opinion. The meaning of good neighborhood has been differently perceived and understood from epoch to epoch in the modern evolution of states¹.

After the collapse of the socialist system and the end of the Cold War, in Eastern and Central Europe, a process of reestablishment of the relations began between former actors of the bipolar world² or between the new actors appeared on the history scene as a result of the implosion of the former soviet empire³ and disintegration of former Yugoslavia. New states appeared on the political stage over the ruins of former soviet empire, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, or some other actors disappeared, if we take into account the German unification. Good neighborly relationship that should have appeared between these countries was hit especially by frontier litigation or ethnic and religious contradictions. Bloody wars took place on the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia territories. These conflicts undermined the illusion of a post Cold War world where to prevail good neighborly relationship.

The existence of important national minorities in several neighbor states, such as: Hungarians in Croatia, Slovenia, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine; Romanians in Hungary, Serbia, Ukraine; Slavs in Hungary, Romania, led to the revitalization of a nationalist extremist movement, without weight in the political

landscape of these countries, but with explosive outbursts that could hit the good neighborly relationship.

An example of right understanding of the evolution direction of post Cold War politico-diplomatic events in Europe, was the establishment of the Visegrad Group. Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia very quickly found a way to pass over what separated them and combine their efforts to integrate in the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. This resettlement process is influenced, in most specialists' view, by two complementary but also somehow antagonistic processes: globalization and regionalism!

For a better understanding of the impact of globalization and regionalism on the good neighborly relationship, we think it is necessary to add some conceptual and methodological specifications in order to discern its causes and forms in which today's mega-tendencies of the political world manifest themselves.

The globalization concept has a wide circulation⁴, but concerns about the accuracy of its meaning were not at the same extent. The causes of this situation are similar to those that produced much confusion in the field of concepts within the social and humanistic disciplines: the interests of those who used it. Let's see the extremes only: the globalization defenders emphasize the increase of profit and economic efficiency as a result of financial market globalization, border control abolition, or competition principle application at planetary level, and, on the other hand, the globalization opponents describe globalization as a new form

of imperialism, domination, or ignoring the fundamental human rights. We believe that in both positions there are also sufficient truth elements, but the fervor which they faced generated confusions and even contradictions.

We also cannot ignore a less considered aspect of globalization that could moderate many apologies. Globalization, which in fact is an older phenomenon, came back into reality the moment in which force projection became possible anywhere in the world. During the Cold War, such an action would have risked immediate global destabilizations. But we shouldn't cherish illusions. Force projection will generate, sooner or later, similar reactions, and, in such a case, who can tell how globalization will evolve?

F. Fukuyama, global liberalism partisan, believes that "the global economy did not generalized yet and globalization is still at money market level; most institutions, commerce especially, are still regional; most companies are predominantly national and governments remain very national etc."⁵.

Some specialists consider regionalism as a type of relations resulted from a simple reflection effect of the economic globalization⁶. Supporters of this model of international relations believe that regionalism, will be more important than globalization phenomenon. They affirm that, in the future, three large regions will be structured, each with an incontestable leader: the Asia-Pacific region with Japan as leader, the Western Hemisphere with the U.S.A. as leader, and the European Block with France-Germany axis.

Today it's difficult to say which of the models will be victorious, however one thing is sure: good neighborly relationship will become more and more important in the regional policy, but it will not evolve within its classic paradigm under the circumstances of the reconsideration of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity concepts. Economic, political integrity within a regional union, such as E.U., for example, or a NATO-type politico-military organization, implies giving up, at different degrees, some prerogatives of the political, economic and military sovereignty. On the other hand, the development of the politico-military events in Romania's immediate neighborhood demonstrates that when a political regime

flagrantly violates the fundamental human rights, the international community intervenes to restore these rights⁷.

Creating the community space in Europe through the extension of political, economic and security structures implies not only a "market without frontiers"⁸ but also the existence of a good neighborly relationship. Integration is a phenomenon that manifests itself in the world, and Romania cannot avoid it and therefore proceeds more and more in the direction of the integration within E.U. This is an awareness of the fact that Romania cannot solve its problems by itself because these problems acquire a more international characteristic, and their solving implies cooperation between states. Hence, essentially, cooperation and good neighborly relationship in a broad sense are the key to success.

Although the creation of a space without internal borders within EEC was planned, even before the fall of the "Iron Curtain", through the Unique Act signed on 28 February 1987 in Luxembourg, this became possible only about a decade later when the "Schengen Space" was created. Natural frontiers, though they have become more transparent, have not disappeared for political reasons (border control appears as a major prerogative of the state, the reflex of its sovereignty), fiscal reasons (each state has its own indirect taxes; keeping the borders allows the state to take the national value-added tax for entering its territory), and public security reasons (the products entering a territory are in accordance with the national health regulations). It is difficult to say today when and how frontiers could disappear in Europe⁹. Therefore, good neighborly relations will continue to exist as a basic principle of the relations between states and as a rule of conduct for the European actors.

Romania, after 1989, in spite of all vacillations and sometimes awkwardness made in the European and world diplomacy¹⁰, has consistently acted to strengthen the good neighborly relations with all states, excepting those in which an authoritative or dictatorial regime manifested at one time. It is the case of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia after the outbreak of the Kosovo crisis. Opinions regarding our position on the R.F. of Yugoslavia and Bosnian crisis are divided, especially in the public opinion,

however, at the political class level, there were especially nuances, not essential differences.

Our position on the Kosovo crisis led undoubtedly to a coolness of our neighborly relations with the regime of President Milosevic and created a dilemma for some analysts¹¹. The dilemma which NATO intervention in Kosovo and its consequences put to us is as old as the hills: we can unilaterally renounce cooperation and take advantages in the short-term, or we can continue to cooperate in order to take greater advantages in the long-term. From a theoretical point of view, it is recommendable to renounce cooperation if you have no intention to maintain the relationship with the other partners. In this case, Romania would get economic advantages from restoring the suspended relations with Yugoslav firms and benefit from the stability achieved by KFOR in the region and from the democratization of Yugoslavia in the eventuality that Milosevic regime would collapse. It would be, in other words, "a sly country"¹². On the contrary, maintaining cooperation would be beneficial in case there is the wish to continue the relationship with the other partners in the future, because there are much more advantages in the long-term than those in the short-term, the latter being diminished from the beginning by the disadvantages of being considered an unreliable partner.

Concretely, even if Romania was not being promised admittance to the Euro-Atlantic structures as a reward for cooperation, it proved, in this case, adherence to the standards and principles of these structures, and unity of interests with the western states. Thus, Romania has become a reliable partner for the West, considerably increasing its opportunities to get advantages in the long-term out of the economic, political and military cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic structures. For example, at political level, the clear option on NATO side during the war in Yugoslavia incontestably counted for Romania and this could be seen at Helsinki Summit on 10-11 December 1999.

Now we'll point out only some consequences of globalization on the good neighborly relations between Romania and its Balkan neighbors.

As it is known, in this area the dissolution of the former security architecture, the trends

towards globalization and regionalism, and the extension of the new security institutions were made in extremely difficult conditions, crises, wars, ethnic and religious conflicts that left their mark on these states, including Romania.

Romania, devoted to its traditional good neighbor policy and interested in the process of integration in European and Euro-Atlantic structures as well, has maintained and developed friendship relations and fruitful cooperation with all Balkan states. The Balkan cooperation was not a purpose in itself, but a way of economic and social development for each state, a sure and essential way to build a peace and security system in the region, the strengthening of cooperation in southeastern Europe meaning not a security regionalization, an isolation of Balkan area from the European security theater¹³.

Meanwhile, Romania has insistently acted for the establishment of a proper relationship framework to support a rapid integration process of the region within the Euro-Atlantic organisms, as a form to achieve the Europe's political and economic development unity and secure stability and cooperation prospects for the states involved.

Permanently maintaining the diplomatic relations with all Balkan states represented a secure way to make efficient an intense bi- and multilateral Balkan cooperation, combine efforts in order to arrive at a consensus on strengthening the mutual confidence and respect climate. Dialogue and cooperation, with multilateral implications, materialized in a thick network of political, economic and other nature documents, constituted the logic of Romania's cooperation policy. It permanently insisted upon the necessity that all Balkan countries participate in the actions to be taken, their solid preparing, in order to effectively contribute to clarify positions and differences, diminish tensions, stimulate and diversify bi- and multilateral relations. The President, Parliament, Government, other national institutions including the army, in a common effort, contributed to this ample activity.

As a result of the constructive, active and in the same time equidistant characteristic of the Romanian foreign policy towards all perturbing factors in the Balkan area, Romania has won a convincing position, of respect and esteem, among the states in the area. Through its direct involvement, Romania has offered, in lieu of

confrontation, an important key to improve the interbalkan climate.

In the relationship with ex-Yugoslav states, Romania has promoted an equal approach policy, which permitted to continue the traditional cooperation relations with ex-Yugoslavia and their translation to each new entity. This position favors our country's contribution to the process of political solving of the open crisis in the area. In this context it is also included Romania's participation in peacekeeping operations within IFOR, SFOR, and actions organized to normalize the social life in Albania, within "ALBA" mission.

In the effort to revive the Balkan cooperation, which represents an integration means of Balkan states into Euro-Atlantic organisms, a secure way for building a peace and security system in the region, Romania offered numerous services, materialized at political, economic, scientific and cultural level¹⁴.

These services aimed to eliminate mistrust, deformed perceptions, make mutual information exchanges, bilateral clarifications and consultations on various aspects of good neighborhood and peace consolidation. The principles of Paris Charter for a new Europe, the commitments under the aegis of OSCE for the promotion of a wider opening and transparency in the military activity, and the provisions of Vienna Agreement on the measures to increase confidence and security¹⁵. For example, the amplification of contacts between Balkan armed forces commands, participation in joint exercises, exchange of experience, documentation visits etc., and the activities within the Partnership for Peace contributed to the optimization of cooperation in the military field.

"Romania – Romania's President said – is acting to intensify military cooperation with neighbor countries, the latest action in this sense being Romania's participation in the Multinational Peace Force in Southeastern Europe"¹⁶.

The actions taken in the Balkan cooperation field opened a very positive perspective. Nevertheless, Yugoslav crisis, aggressive nationalism, religious, ethnic and territorial tensions slowed down the successful course of Balkan multilateral cooperation. Many initiatives, such as the convocation in August 1991 of a Balkan extraordinary ministerial conference on the enhancement of security and stability in the area,

an International Forum on the Balkans (January 1992), the establishment of the Balkan Economic Union (August 1992) etc., were not finalized¹⁷.

Therefore the question: Is it possible that cooperation in the Balkans have a larger dimension in the future? In the present geopolitical context, extremely fluid, that could generate dangerous situations for the subregional and even global security, it is not easy to give a clear answer. But we consider that there are still sufficient factors that can plead for an affirmative answer, such as:

- the Balkan cultural identity, conceived as an aggregate of material and spiritual values, the common patrimony of traditions and aspirations throughout the centuries;
- the necessity to secure the individual and collective security of the Balkan countries and to increase mutual confidence;
- belonging to the group of small and medium-sized states with similar economic potential and complementary interests;
- Balkan states' responsibility for the Balkans future and increasing stability in the region;
- the states' wish to ensure integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures;
- the will to capitalize the resources and materials existent in each country;
- increase living and civilization standards of each state in the area;
- role of the Balkans as a turn-table between northern, southern, eastern and western Europe on one side, and Middle East and Asia on the other side.

The embargo and economic blockade imposed by the UN Security Council against Serbia and Montenegro resulted in dysfunctions in the Balkan bi- and multilateral relations, strangled navigation on the Danube in a moment in which this river, through the Danube-Black Sea and Main-Rhine Canals, could become the most important navigation artery for both riverside and Balkan countries¹⁸.

There are also other disturbing factors, such as:

- Litigations regarding territorial, ethnic, and religious aspects between some Balkan states;
- Traditional confrontation between the great powers' interests in the Balkans;
- The appearance of new states, as a result of Yugoslavia's dismemberment, confronted with political and economic instability and with problems related to patrimony sharing, their

right to existence is contested not only by some neighbors but also by minorities from territories ethnically and religiously mosaicked.

In return, the appearance of the new multilateral cooperation structures – the Economic Cooperation at the Black Sea, Central European Free Trade Agreement, Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe which is of more and more interest for the Balkan states in the cooperation development in various fields, and Partnership for Peace, are elements that influence the future of the regional cooperation and the process of relaxation and understanding between the Balkan nations¹⁹.

In spite of all extant uncertainties, we consider that peacefully solving the problems in discussion, first of all the conflicts in Yugoslavia, will lead to the cooperation resuming and intensification. The Balkans can affirm their identity only under the circumstances of a focused action of the Balkan partnership and subregional nations' will.

The Balkan fluid and contradictory medium needs to readapt to the new realities excluding improvisations as much as possible. Cultural-spiritual, economic and political unity should be the Balkan states' strategy for the future. A unitary policy, within the general European context, can favor multilateral cooperation and efforts, and the identification of possible and necessary common strategies. Overcoming prejudices and cliches of history, prioritizing the common interests regarding some controversial problems that exist or may occur, the subregional countries can find right solutions to promote cooperation and good neighborly relationship and enhance stability and peace.

Solving peacefully the problems of ex-Yugoslav area, surpassing the transition period which is present in most Balkan states, imply passing from the exchange of views phase to concrete multilateral agreements.

Romania having had no conflicts of interest with other Balkan country, can and must actively contribute to designing and putting into practice solutions necessary to the Balkans "transition" toward peace and prosperity. In the same sense, our country has to reiterate a number of initiatives and proposals or initiate other actions²⁰.

It can actively contribute to combat potential sources of regional instability through permanently developing the relations with the

states in the region and through commonly managing, on this basis, the threats.

From this perspective, Romania considers of great interest the establishment of a mechanism to prevent conflicts and settle disputes, able to mediate and solve conflicts to which OSCE and other European politico-military organisms have not found optimal solutions yet. For example, a Balkan forum could act within an institutionalized framework, like the European Parliament or as a regional OSCE. Establishing and functioning of such a forum would represent an important step toward the Balkans integration in democratic Europe, accelerating the joining process of these countries to the extant European structures, with benefic effects on Balkan states and whole European community as well. The actions organized and developed at subregional level shall observe the principles and standards stipulated by the Paris Charter and OSCE.

We consider that developing cooperation and bi- and multilateral relations represent the unique solution to crisis situations, a benefic instrument, so that the whole Balkan area could have peace and nations could materialize the revived aspirations for a prosperous life.

Increasing confidence and transparence, and eliminating animosities imply the following conditions:

- willing to dialogue and mutual understanding;
- giving social and economic support in order to eradicate the causes of tension and conflict situations;
- identifying and diagnosing pre-conflict situations;
- generalizing and firmly applying the principles proposed by OSCE, such as: transparence of all military activities, application of confidence measures regarding the security of each state and European community;
- considerably reducing the conventional arms;
- controlling the interdiction of arms trade;
- providing identical rights to the minorities of these states.

In conclusion, we believe that only through the will and determination of the Balkan nations there is the possibility to eliminate the spirit of confrontation and sources of tension, and on this basis of multilateral cooperation development to face globalization and regionalism impact on good neighborly relationship.

Having has the same historical fate, the states in the area are linked and associated in the same time, speaking about future.

This is why Balkan cooperation constitutes a sine-qua-non condition of Balkan nations' security and welfare and their integration in the developed Europe.

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2. Kumiko Haba – *Globalism and Regionalism in East Central Europe: Nationality Problem and Regional Cooperation under the E.U. and NATO Enlargement*, Oslo, 2000, p. 2.
3. Helen Carere – *The Scattered Empire*, Humanitas, 1994, p. 12-70, d'Encause.
4. Andrew M. Dorman and Adrian Treacher – *European Security*, Dartmouth, 1995.
5. see at large – *Globalisation, Regionalisation and the History of International Relations*, 4th General Assembly, Oslo, 11-12 August 2000, The State, War, and the State of War, Cambridge, 2000 etc.
6. Hans-Peter Martin, Harold Schuman – *Traps of Globalization Attack on Democracy and Welfare*, Bucharest, 1999, p. 121.
7. Charles Oman – *Globalization and Regionalization: the challenge for developing countries*, OECD, Paris, 1994, p. 17.
8. see at large – *The E.U. and Human Rights*, Edited by Philip Alston, Oxford, 1999; *Classical Theories of International Relations*, Edited by Ian Clark and Iver B. Neuman, Oxford, 1999; Charles Zorgbibe, *The European Construction. Past, Present, Future*, Editura Trei, 1998, p. 208-236.
9. *The European Construction. Past, Present, Future*, Editura Trei, 1998, p. 309.
10. see at large – Valentin Stan, *Playing Foreign Policy*, in "Sfera Politicii", no. 76, year VII, 1999, p. 41-46.
11. Cătălin Crețu – *Kosovo: Politically Real Lesson*, in "Sfera Politicii", no. 76, year VII, 1999, p. 46-48.
12. *Ibidem*.
13. Minister of national defense of Romania at the 4th Southeastern Europe Ministers' Meeting, Bucharest, 2000.
14. Organization of several workgroups, a interbalkan conference on economic problems, similar with the Bonn Conference on the Economic Cooperation in Europe and with the Palma de Mallorca Conference on the Mediterranean Zone; meetings on the cooperation in mountain exploitation (Păltiniș, 17-19 September 1991), computer science (Bucharest, 10-12 September 1991), small and medium-sized companies (Bucharest, 26-28 November); taking initial measures in order to establish a Balkan Institute for Medical Studies in Bucharest (Rm. Vâlcea, 16-18 October 1991); establishment of the Regional Center for Fighting against Organized Crime.
Romania has been also engaged in preparing the workgroup for promoting cooperation in the production and selling of machine tools, auto hydraulic and pneumatic equipment.
Following the decision of the experts in cultural, humanitarian and mass media fields at the Ankara meeting (March 1991), Romania addressed to the OSCE Symposium on cultural traditions (Cracow, 25 May – 7 June 1991) a message from the Balkan countries on their experience in producing and developing cultural traditions.
In Romania were also organized the first meeting of the Balkan Chambers of Commerce Conference (Neptun, 20-22 September 1994), the first General Assembly of the Balkan Small and Medium-sized Companies Cooperation Centre (Bucharest, 9-10 January 1994), the Balkan Anthropology Congress (Bucharest, 4-7 September 1997), and the Balkan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Conference (Bucharest, 19 February 1998).
15. Through these treaties and agreements it has been stipulated a series of cooperation fields (military and security policy, defense and military legislation, military activity planning, military medicine, military history, arms control and disarmament, military publications and museums, military scientific research, cultural and sports activities) and forms (formal and working visits, sharing of experience at various levels, contacts between similar military institutions, exchanges of documentation and regulations, participating in joint exercises) to provide the improvement of military legislation and training, the use of the countries' scientific, technical and industrial resources to produce defense materials, the development of military scientific research, logistics, cultural and sports relations etc.
16. Emil Constantinescu – **European security: heritages of the past, challenges of the future, Speech at the 15th NATO Workshop, 20 June, Vienna**, in "Cronica Română" (The Romanian Chronicle), 22 June 1999.
17. The YearBook of the Institute for Political and Defense Studies and Military History, year 1998, p. 34.
18. *Ibidem*, p. 34.
19. After the end of the Kosovo conflict, in the countries of the area, including Romania, some extraordinary expectations have arisen, explained by the international community's interest in this region. "The West should attempt to do for Southeastern Europe what it did for Western Europe after the World War II and for Central Europe after the Cold War", U.S. President Bill Clinton said on 12 April 1999, and the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe adopted on 10 June in Koln aims to support Yugoslavia's neighboring countries "in their effort to secure peace, democracy, observance of human rights and economic prosperity".
20. The YearBook of the Institute for Political and Defense Studies and Military History, year 1998, p. 36.