

ПОЛИТИКА НАЦИОНАЛНЕ БЕЗБЕДНОСТИ



ПОЛИТИКА НАЦИОНАЛНЕ БЕЗБЕДНОСТИ

The Policy of National Security

Издавач:

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ISSN 2334-959X UDK 351.862/.863(497.11)
DOI: 10.22182/pnb.2122021

Vol. 21 Број 2/2021.

Часопис излази два пута годишње.

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ПОЛИТИКА НАЦИОНАЛНЕ БЕЗБЕДНОСТИ

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У ВЕЧНОМ СЕЋАЊУ: РАДОСЛАВ ГАЋИНОВИЋ (1955-2021)

Недуго након прошлог издања часописа Политика националне безбедности, изненада нас је напустио проф. др Радослав Гаџиновић, идејни творац и покретач ове академске публикације, дугогодишњи главни и одговорни уредник часописа, председник Научног већа Института за политичке студије.

Прерани одлазак професора Гаџиновића огроман је губитак за наш часопис, који је он својом визијом и преданим радом за свега неколико година довео до нивоа угледне публикације запаженог домаћег, па и међународног домета. Научна заједница у Србији изгубила је значајног теоретичара и једног од првака научне мисли о безбедности, а јавност Србије бритког и елоквентног аналитичара актуелног политичког и историјског момента.

Свима нама на Институту за политичке студије вечно ће недостајати Радослав Гаџиновић, сјајан колега и велики пријатељ.



IN MEMORIAM: RADOSLAV GAĆINOVIĆ (1955-2021)

Radoslav Gaćinović, the creator and initiator of this journal, its longtime editor-in-chief, president of the Scientific Council of the Institute for Political Studies, suddenly passed away shortly after the publication of the journal's previous edition.

The premature departure of Professor Gaćinović is a huge loss for our journal, which he, with its vision and dedicated work, brought to the level of a respectable publication with a notable domestic and even international reach. The scientific community in Serbia has lost an important theorist and one of the founders of academic thought on security, while the Serbian public has lost a sharp and eloquent analyst of the current political and historical moment.

Institute for Political Studies will cherish the memory of Radoslav Gaćinović, a great colleague and a true friend.

УВОДНИК

Поштовани читаоци,

Часопис Политика националне безбедности у броју 2/2021 доноси тематско издање посвећено спољној и безбедносној политици администрације америчког председника Џозефа Бајдена. Имамо изузетну прилику да већ након годину дана нове администрације представимо налазе истраживања реномираних домаћих експерата за међународне односе, али и страних колега. Радује што су прилоге овом броју дали углавном припадници млађе академске генерације, што показује виталност и потенцијал домаће научне заједнице.

У броју су обрађени сви релевантни аспекти спољне политике САД – од унутрашњег функционисања, континуитета са претходном администрацијом, односа са другим силама, до актуелног питања Авганистана. Посебно је, што ће нашим читаоцима бити од интереса, анализиран приступ новог председника и његове администрације региону Западног Балкана. Овај број стога није намењен само публици из академске заједнице или опште јавности, већ и политичким одлучиоцима у нашој земљи, како би у турбулентним временима боље разумели свет и успешније позиционирали Србију на глобалној мапи.

Редакција часописа

Foreword

Dear readers,

The Policy of National Security edition of 2/2021 brings a thematic issue dedicated to the foreign and security policy of the US President Joseph Biden. After just one year of the new administration's term, we have an exceptional opportunity to present the research' findings of not just renowned domestic experts in the domain of international relations, but also of foreign colleagues. It is important to note that the contributions to this issue were provided mainly by the members of the younger generation of academia, which demonstrates the vitality and potential of the domestic scientific community.

The issue deals with all relevant aspects of US foreign policy – internal functioning, continuity with the previous administration, relations with other powers, the current problems in Afghanistan. The approach of the new president and his administration to the Western Balkans is also analyzed, which will be of interest to our readers. Therefore, this issue is not intended only for the academic community or the general public, but also for political decision-makers in our country, in order to better understand the world in turbulent times, and moreover position Serbia more successfully on the global map.

Editorial Board

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BIDEN ADMINISTRATION’S TRANSATLANTIC CHALLENGE**

Abstract

Joseph Biden’s electoral win in November 2020 was widely anticipated as American return to the global stage. In many academic and policy circles, the removal of “isolationist” Donald Trump and important triumph of liberal internationalist Biden was expected to bring about a new chapter in US relations with allies worldwide, leaving behind the awkwardness of previous administration’s reckless political style. However, once the global affairs started unfolding in 2021, Biden Administration’s key international slogan “America is back” also proved to be much more a thing of political style than well-developed substance. This article aims to examine the ways in which the Biden administration’s strategic posture during the first year of the presidency affected transatlantic relations. To that effect, key foreign policy speeches and documents have been analyzed and major international developments tracked. The key finding is that, despite the permissive context shaped by the Trump administration’s disparagement of European allies, the new administration has failed to move forward in terms of strengthening transatlantic ties. This goes to indicate that many of the issues have all along been more structural and had predated Trump’s policies, which means that they will be all the more difficult to overcome.

Keywords: *United States of America, Joseph Biden, European Union, transatlantic relations, foreign policy, strategy*

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** The article was developed within scientific research activities of the Institute for Political Studies, funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

INTRODUCTION

American presidential election of 2020 has easily been the most turbulent one in the country's modern history. Deeply divided between the transformed Republican Party of Donald J. Trump and disoriented Democratic Party which eventually decided to nominate centrist Joseph R. Biden as Trump's challenger, the country was also struggling to overcome the grave economic and public health consequences of the novel corona virus pandemic. Previous four years have brought about far reaching shifts in style and substance of many US policies, not least its relationship with longtime allies in Europe and beyond. One analyst observed that "President Trump has burned like a wildfire through the goodwill accrued by the United States in its seventy years of being the leader of the Free World" (Schake 2018, 3). The United States made a series of unilateral withdrawals from international treaties and regimes, most notably the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, regulating Iran's nuclear program – both of them major 2015 successes of the administration of Barack Obama. Arguably, Trump's scorn for NATO as a defense pact, as well as his ill-treatment of many a European ally, were the policy shifts that produced the largest global commotion. Transatlantic ties, conventionally considered one of key pillars of post-World War II global stability, have suddenly become an area of constant contention and strife.

Joseph Biden's 2020 electoral win was widely anticipated as American return to the global stage. In many academic and policy circles, the removal of "isolationist" Donald Trump and important triumph of liberal internationalist Biden was expected to bring about a new chapter in US relations with allies worldwide, leaving behind the awkwardness of previous administration's reckless political style. The most resonating slogan of Biden's June 2021 European tour was "America is back". However, once the global affairs started unfolding in 2021, culminating with Afghanistan withdrawal and the AUKUS arrangement in August and September, the phrase also proved to be much more a thing of political style than well-developed substance.

This article aims to examine the ways in which the Biden administration's strategic posture during the first year of the presidency affected transatlantic relations. To that effect, key foreign policy speeches and documents such as *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance* (Biden 2021c) have been analyzed and major international developments tracked. The key finding is that, despite the permissive context shaped by the Trump administration's disparagement of European allies, the new administration has failed to make a significant

move forward in terms of strengthening transatlantic ties. This goes to indicate that many of the issues have all along been more structural than personal and had predated Trump's policies, which in turn means that they will be all the more difficult to overcome.

THE CONTEXT: TRUMP'S LEGACY AND CAN IT BE TROUNCED

As noted by Stephen Walt, "Trump's foreign policy program promised a radical departure from the internationalist agenda that had informed U.S. foreign policy since the end of Second World War, and especially since the end of the Cold War. Instead of striving to expand and deepen a rules-based international order – one that actively sought to spread democracy, promote free trade, strengthen alliances and international institutions, and defend human rights – Trump was offering a self-centered, highly nationalist foreign policy that eschewed long-term efforts to spread American ideals and focused instead on securing short-term advantages." (Walt 2018, 11)

Although often portrayed as impulsive, erratic and irrational, Trump has demonstrated some consistent positions of foreign policy throughout his electoral run and presidency (Simic and Zivojinovic 2019, 17–19). At the very onset of his campaign, in the spring of 2016, Trump began announcing that, if elected, he might reconsider American relations with European allies and the country's overall status within NATO. In public appearances, he specified that NATO's problems are that it was designed in a radically different international context, and that it allows most of its members to have a security free ride. As of June 2016, the notion that NATO is outright obsolete became one of Trump's key campaign motifs, and he repeated such a qualification upon becoming President-elect. He revoked the formulation only in the spring of 2017, after the inauguration; nevertheless, the issue remained the source of serious transatlantic friction, especially in US relations with countries which did not meet the 2% GDP threshold for defense spending – which, in 2017, were all NATO members except Estonia, Greece, the United Kingdom and the US itself (NATO 2021b, 8). The crisis culminated in 2019-2020, with the announcements of relocation of US troops from Germany to Poland and possibility of constructing a permanent US base (provisionally called "Fort Trump") on Polish soil (Lišanin 2021, 148). These plans have been brought to a halt with Trump's electoral defeat.

Already in 2017, the US and Israel announced that they would be leaving the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO), stating the structures alleged anti-Israel bias as a reason for such a decision (which took effect on January 1, 2019). This was the second time that the US leaves UNESCO, having previously withdrawn under Reagan administration in 1984 and rejoined under George W. Bush in 2003. This is why the move was not necessarily viewed as one of the signature peculiarities of the Trump presidency. However, any possible doubts about the administration's adherence to international treaties and regimes were dispersed in May and June of 2018.

Trump first announced American intent to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, an international treaty regulating Iranian nuclear program negotiated in cooperation with the United Kingdom, Germany, France, China and Russia – a move which caused almost unequivocal condemnations among allies and rivals alike. Subsequently, the US delegation sabotaged the adoption of a communiqué at the G7 summit in Canada, objecting to the mention of the phrase 'rules-based international order', with Trump leaving early. Photograph of the US president and German Chancellor Angela Merkel looking at each other irately across the table subsequently became a symbol of transatlantic relations and American global posture under Trump. Referring to the G7 meeting that failed abysmally, European Council President Donald Tusk said that "the rules-based international order is being challenged, quite surprisingly, not by the usual suspects, but by its main architect and guarantor, the US." (Schake 2018, 2) Once Trump declared that America would also be withdrawing from the Paris Treaty on climate change, in November 2019, there could be no more surprises in this regard.

In the words of James Seroka, "to an unprecedented degree since the end of World War II, the American public has expressed a willingness to try something new in world affairs by reasserting the primacy of America's national interests separate and apart from its international obligations, responsibilities, and constraints" (Seroka 2016, 13). Indeed, the public in the US was increasingly prone to adopting Trump's unilateralist worldview – even in 2020, in the election which he lost, he managed to win over 74 million votes, which was, apart from Biden's victorious 81 million, more than any candidate has ever won. At the same time, the US image throughout the world, and especially in major Western European allied countries, kept declining steadily. As indicated by Figures 1 and 2, by the summer of 2020, three months before the election, data recorded by Pew Research Center show that public opinions in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain were over 80% negatively disposed towards Trump's competences in

handling world affairs, while the percentage of favorable views of the US in the United Kingdom, France and Germany reached near-historic lows.

Figure 1. Lack of confidence in Trump’s handling of world affairs (source: Ganesh 2020)

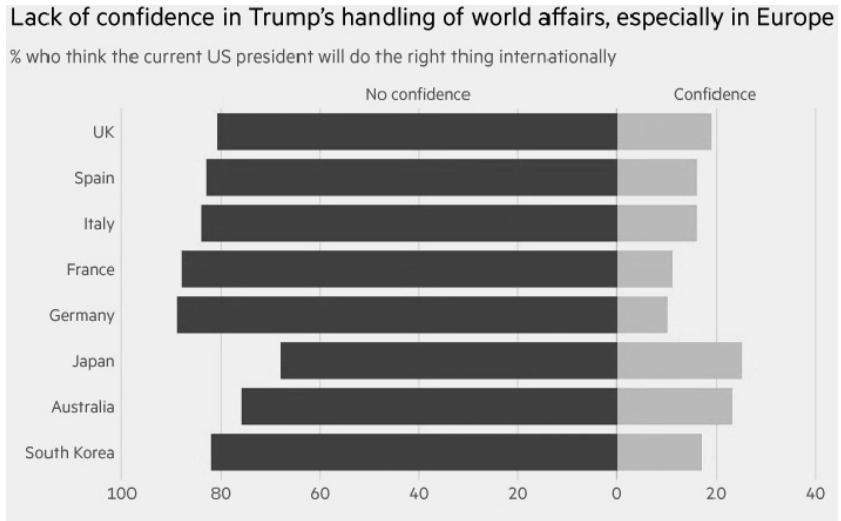
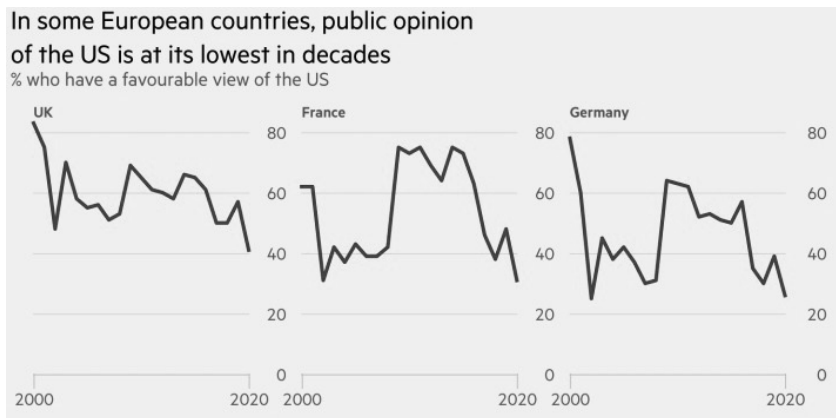


Figure 2. Public opinion of the US (source: Ganesh 2020)



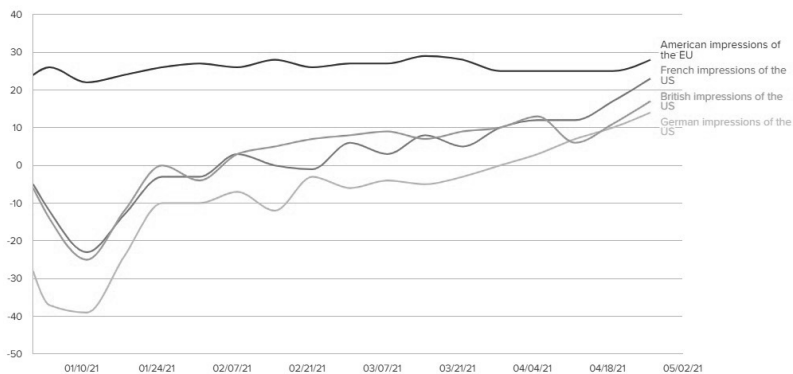
Despite inflammatory and undiplomatic rhetoric by Trump and some of his aides, the image of Europe in the US public opinion had not suffered significantly during the presidency – American views of Europe have been consistent and compellingly net positive. On the other hand, the end of Trump’s term saw American popularity in Europe completely

sunk, and according to an Atlantic Council survey, the digits kept rising consistently between Biden's inauguration in January 2021 and May (Figure 3). Arguably, this was mostly based on the public's expectations of what the new administration might do, and not specific policy moves, although Biden's signature on a decision to rejoin the Paris climate agreement on the first day in office was certainly a positive signal. The events which ensued during the summer and autumn of 2021, however, saw European enthusiasm about the US drastically curbed.

Figure 3. American views towards EU and vice versa (source: Walla, 2021)

American views towards the EU have been consistent, and positive, while European attitudes towards the US were net negative months ago and have since rebounded

Showing net favorability (totally favorable – total unfavorable)



RESTORING AMBITION

Upon winning the 2020 presidential election, Joseph R. Biden had a dual task. The easy one was to not be Donald Trump: this was bound to be enough for the US credibility with its European allies to soar up. A somewhat more difficult job before the new President was to develop policies which would plausibly demonstrate the differences between his handling of world affairs and that of his predecessor. Generally speaking, in spite of major global challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as more traditional power politics, Biden faced a permissive international environment, shaped by his predecessors plummeting reputation among most allies (Ganesh 2020; Krastev and Leonard 2021). The road he logically chose to take was to present the US under his administration as an ambitious, self-confident and competent global actor. In major foreign policy speeches as President, as well as key strategic document during the administration's first year, the *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance*, Joseph

Biden indicated, although not particularly thoroughly, what his main positions on transatlantic relations would be.

On February 4, two weeks after the inauguration and a day after the US and Russia had agreed to renew the New START Treaty for additional five years, President Biden gave remarks on America's place in the world at the State Department headquarters. Key idea of the address was that the US is "a country that does big things" and that it "cannot afford to be absent any longer at the world stage" (Biden 2021a). Among specific issues, transatlantic relations did not figure particularly prominently: the President informed the public that since the inauguration he had "spoken with the leaders of many of our closest friends — Canada, Mexico, the UK, Germany, France, NATO, Japan, South Korea, Australia — to begin reforming the habits of cooperation and rebuilding the muscle of democratic alliances that have atrophied over the past few years of neglect and, I would argue, abuse", reiterating that there would be no troop withdrawals from Germany.

Two weeks later, Biden took part at a virtual session of the Munich Security Conference, touching more extensively upon the issue of transatlantic relations. The key takeaway was that "the transatlantic alliance is a strong foundation — the strong foundation — on which our collective security and our shared prosperity are built. The partnership between Europe and the United States, in my view, is and must remain the cornerstone of all that we hope to accomplish in the 21st century, just as we did in the 20th century." (Biden 2021b) The President reasserted his firm intent to pursue comprehensive diplomatic engagement with the EU and its member states on a wide range of issues: climate change, trade, AI and cyber, curtailing Russian and Chinese influences, strengthening NATO or fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. However, apart from allocating 2+2 billion USD to the COVAX mechanism, and stepping up in the field of non-proliferation by renewing the New START agreement, most of the points remained at the level of principles or signaling intentions, without much detail on how specific goals would be achieved.

The next major foreign policy speech came within the address to the joint session of Congress in late April, on the occasion of the administration's first 100 days. The tone of the speech was once again one of optimism and self-confidence: "We are the United States of America. There is not a single thing — nothing — nothing beyond our capacity." (Biden 2021d) Competition with China was once again the central foreign policy issue, and the only time Europe was mentioned was in passing, also in reference to China: Biden revealed that he had "told President Xi that we'll maintain a strong military presence in

the Indo-Pacific, just as we do with NATO in Europe — not to start a conflict, but to prevent one.”

Until the administration’s National Security Strategy is written and published, the document shaping the country’s strategic posture will be the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, published in March 2021. It contains the most extensive review of US–European ties since the inauguration, although there is still significant room for elaboration. In the section about the need to “reinvigorate and modernize alliances and partnerships around the world” in order to advance vital national interests which “compel the deepest connection to the Indo-Pacific, Europe, and the Western Hemisphere”, Biden pledges to “reaffirm, invest in, and modernize the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)” and to “recommit ourselves to our transatlantic partnerships, forging a strong, common agenda with the European Union and the United Kingdom on the defining issues of our time” (Biden 2021c). It is once again explicitly signaled that diplomatic and military withdrawal from European affairs is out of the question: “as we position ourselves to deter our adversaries and defend our interests, working alongside our partners, our presence will be most robust in the Indo-Pacific and Europe” (Biden 2021c).

Although the document is more detailed when it comes to transatlantic relations than most other foreign policy declarations since the beginning of Biden’s mandate, its provisions largely remain a list of principles and broadly conceived goals, without much elaboration on specific policies and instruments to pursue them. By the end of the year, it would become obvious no such specific ideas were developed to begin with. As early as May, Brattberg (2021) observed that “the new, more positive tone is certainly a welcome change, but it has yet to deliver any tangible policy breakthroughs either in terms of resolving bilateral irritants inherited from the Trump administration, making progress on other thorny issues, or producing any new major policy initiatives.” From the inauguration onward, however, Biden kept demonstrating a revived diplomatic vigor, taking part in several ministerial level meetings of the EU, NATO and G7.

In June 2021, Biden took a big European tour, participating in a bilateral summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Geneva, the G7 Summit in Cornwall, and EU–US and NATO summits on Brussels. The stay in Europe set off with the summit of G7 nations (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States), wherein they adopted a six point common global agenda: ending the pandemic; reinvigorating the economies; securing future prosperity through freer trade; protecting the planet by

supporting a green revolution; strengthening worldwide partnerships; and embracing common values such as democracy, freedom, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights (G7 2021). In terms of substance, and particularly of atmosphere, the Summit was the exact opposite to the infamous 2018 meeting. Not only did the US delegation not sabotage the communiqué vocabulary, all the partners agreed to the inclusion of the Biden campaign slogan “Build Back Better” into the official title of the joint document. If, once again, the meeting produced little substance, it was a successful PR stunt and confidence boost. The tour was concluded with the Biden-Putin summit in Geneva, where the two leaders agreed to “embark together on an integrated bilateral Strategic Stability Dialogue in the near future that will be deliberate and robust. Through this Dialogue, we seek to lay the groundwork for future arms control and risk reduction measures” (CNN 2021).

Between the G7 meeting and the bilateral summit with Vladimir Putin, Joseph Biden took part in two events of particular importance for transatlantic relations. On June 14, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) Meeting of Heads of State and Government took place in Brussels. Summit Communiqué, by far the most extensive document covering global issues since Biden’s inauguration, proclaims opening of “a new chapter in transatlantic relations”, reaffirming NATO as “the unique, essential and indispensable transatlantic forum for consultations and joint action on all matters related to our individual and collective security” and “the organising framework for the collective defence of the Euro-Atlantic area, against all threats, from all directions” (NATO 2021a). It is worth noting that the issues covered at the NAC meeting and the subsequent EU-US summit correspond quite fittingly with the ideas of American public on key areas of US-European cooperation (Figure 4). It covers transatlantic issues quite extensively, although in a somewhat misbalanced manner: ten out of 79 points directly deal with the question of Russia, while several others cover Russia-related issues without mentioning the country explicitly (reiteration of 2008 membership support for Georgia and Ukraine, or assessment of Enhanced Forward Presence in Poland and the Baltic). China, arguably the crucial rival of the Alliance’s most powerful member, in comparison, figures in just two points, as a “systemic challenge”.

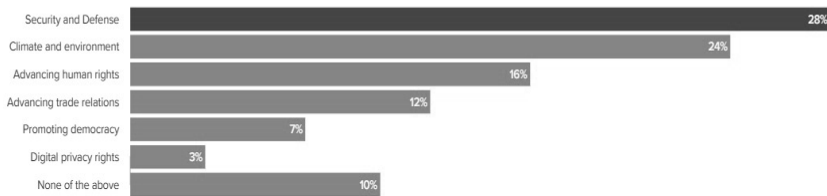
Stressing the importance of adhering to Article 5 of the Atlantic charter, the document stipulates that “the European Union remains a unique and essential partner for NATO” and that “NATO-EU strategic partnership is essential for the security and prosperity of our nations

and of the Euro-Atlantic area”. Stronger and more capable European defence should be based upon “coherent, complementary and interoperable defence capabilities, avoiding unnecessary duplication”. Summing up the section on the relations with the EU, NATO expresses intent to “further strengthen our strategic partnership in a spirit of full mutual openness, transparency, complementarity, and respect for the organisations’ different mandates, decision-making autonomy and institutional integrity, and as agreed by the two organizations” (NATO 2021a).

Figure 4. Opinion of Americans regarding cooperation with the EU (source: Walla, 2021)

A plurality of Americans say the US and EU should partner on security and defense, and nearly as many say climate and the environment

In your opinion, which of the following is the most important area for the United States and the European Union to partner on?



The European Union-United States summit, held in Brussels the next day, eluded the traditional hard security issues, focused much more on the questions of values, trade, environment and human security. The Joint Statement identified four major areas of cooperation: 1) ending the COVID-19 pandemic, preparing for future global health challenges, and driving forward a sustainable global recovery; 2) protecting the planet and fostering green growth; 3) strengthening trade, investment and technological cooperation; and 4) building a more democratic, peaceful and secure world (The White House 2021a). The transatlantic partners pledged to reinvigorate international institutions and pursue their goals within the United Nations system. This was to signal as many differences from the previous U.S. administration as possible. Indeed, after Biden’s European tour, a newfound spirit of optimism permeated the transatlantic relations. European leaders seemed to believe that America, indeed, was “back”, at least for the duration of this administration, and that the opportunity should be seized (Büthe 2021b). However, international events would start unfolding soon enough, demonstrating that it takes more than just nice words and warm atmosphere to actually rebuild broken ties.

REALITY HITS BACK

The possibility – indeed, necessity – to withdraw forces from Afghanistan has been a consistent motif in U.S. politics since at least the Obama administration. American allies have generally been supportive of the idea, but when the Biden administration decided to proceed with the calendar-driven decision to leave Afghanistan completely, many U.S. partners felt that they have been humiliated by the lack of consultations. Before the withdrawal was even over, voices of criticism rose within the EU and its member states, including key transatlantic partners like Italy, Germany, France, and the UK (Carafano 2021). The European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell took issue with President Biden’s remarks on state-building record in Afghanistan, calling them “arguable” (de La Baume 2021). Once all U.S. and allied forces were withdrawn, and full record of the chaotic events, including terrorist attacks, humanitarian catastrophe, and the Taliban taking over almost the entire country, could be made, voices of criticism turned even louder.

The Afghanistan episode was particularly unpleasant for American partners because it is seen as “simply a continuation of the long-standing American tendency to go it alone” (Lowen 2021). Per Ted Galen Carpenter, there were two key foundations of allied criticism of U.S. decision to withdraw, and the way it was conducted. “First, there is the perception that the withdrawal process was handled in an utterly incompetent manner—an amateurish operation that might have been expected from the Trump administration, but was utterly shocking coming from the experienced military and foreign policy professionals surrounding Biden. Second, NATO governments insisted that they were caught off guard both by the administration’s decision to adhere to the withdrawal agreement that President Trump had negotiated with the Taliban and by the speed of the withdrawal itself. Leaders in NATO members contended that Washington had not adequately consulted its allies, much less taken their concerns into account.” (Galen Carpenter 2021) Although NATO officials insisted that the policy had been discussed at meetings in the spring of 2021, they conceded that it was in essence a unilateral decision by the U.S.

Once the withdrawal was completed, however disorderly, after August 30, Afghanistan was swept by the Taliban fighters and was entering a new period of turmoil; in the meantime, the rhetoric had somewhat cooled off among the Atlantic allies. European countries realized that they would have to come to terms with the ongoing developments and that they can ill afford to spoil relations with the U.S.

over the damage that has already been made and could be left behind. Just as the dust was starting to settle, however, transatlantic relations suffered a new and unexpected blow.

On September 15, the AUKUS enhanced trilateral security partnership, consisting of Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States was announced. In addition to provisions on cooperation in information and technology sharing, the partnership comprised the commitment on the side of the UK and the US to assist Australia in acquiring nuclear powered submarines. This meant that the previous Australian 90 million USD nuclear submarine deal with France was instantly scrapped, and to add insult to injury, without France being informed beforehand. French officials were outraged, calling the move “a stab in the back”, and withdrawing ambassadors from Australia and the United States. It took over a month and a half for relations between France and the U.S. to move from the dead end: on the occasion of Biden’s newest European tour in October and November 2021, he met in Rome with the French President Emmanuel Macron, calling France “an extremely, extremely valued partner” and admitting the U.S. had been “clumsy” in the way it handled the announcement of a submarine deal with Australia (Collins 2021). Macron called the clarification important and the sides generally seemed to have turned a new leaf; however, the reconciliation seemed lukewarm and the episode certainly left a bitter taste on the French side. Other allies have, of course, been watching closely, and the way France was treated encouraged further skepticism with regard to American devotion to transatlantic ties in good faith. Recent Chicago Council for Global Affairs and European Council of Foreign Relations data showed that U.S. views of France are much more congenial than vice versa (Dennison and Smeltz 2021).

Some of the damage was repaired during Biden’s visit to Europe in late October and early November, on the occasions of G20 meeting in Rome and COP26 environmental summit in Glasgow, along with a series of bilateral meetings of the margins of two main events, most notably with leaders of Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, as well as Pope Francis. The G20 leaders reached an agreement to enhance cooperation on four main points: Global Minimum Tax; health security and fight against COVID-19; climate change; and fight against corruption, ransomware and other cyber-crimes (The White House 2021b). During autumn, some steps forward have been made, including some very important ones such as the pledge to remove the Trump-era retaliatory tariffs on aluminum and steel, a continuation of improving trade relations from March and June when the Boeing-Airbus dispute was put on hold, allowing for a number of other tariffs to be suspended

for five years. Still, despite willingness to cooperate on pressing issues such as trade, environment and global health, it seems that European participation in joint endeavors will be much more apprehensive than it seemed in the first half of the year.

CONCLUSION

Many, if not most, analyses do not ascribe much agency to European allies when it comes to managing transatlantic relations. Indeed, the power disproportion between the U.S. and the EU, let alone the US and individual EU member states, is such that the relationship will clearly depend mostly on American policy choices. As demonstrated by the Afghanistan and AUKUS episodes, even when they are dissatisfied, there is little European countries can do to alter American course of action, while breaking ties with the U.S. remains out of the question. Still, there are steps that can be made, regarding the strengthening internal EU cohesion or addressing the issue of trade imbalance (Büthe 2021a). Germany is particularly important in this regard, as a crucial economic power within the bloc and key driver of the integration process (Ohnesorge 2020). In addition to occupying the economic and financial commanding heights of the Union, it also holds an important key of potential continent-wide reset with Russia, which is an important and often neglected aspect of transatlantic relations (Lišaniin 2020, 12–13; Janes 2021, 70–71). Reassuring Germany about the status of American troops in the country might be a prudent way to start (Vandiver 2021), but it is a move that, in and of itself, will not induce major gains in the long run.

Starting from less controversial issues, as was the case at the US-EU and G20 summits of 2021 might also be a logical path to take. Climate and energy, trade, or global health will not necessarily find all the European Countries on the same page, let alone the whole EU and the United States. According to Gasparini (2021, 3), “the US-EU trade relations are likely to remain tense over topics such as corporate and tech giants’ taxation, despite possible agreements”. Nevertheless, those are the aspects of transatlantic relations wherein potential gains are more obvious, and potential failures less likely to produce as much discord as hard security matters, as was made obvious by the French-Australian nuclear submarine quarrel. Obviously, this does not mean that security and defense issues should be avoided – after all, this would be impossible as long as a structure like NATO is mainly responsible for security in the Atlantic area and beyond. Still, insisting on hard security issues under the circumstances in which neither the U.S. nor the EU

have a lot to worry about when it comes to their territorial defense, and the main systemic challenge comes from an actor (China) which is not viewed uniformly throughout the Western political bloc, might very well prove to be counterproductive.

The rush of relief and optimism in most European countries after Joseph Biden's inauguration may have very well represented a rational reaction; nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that many transatlantic rifts during the Trump presidency have been superficial issues of political style, while some others were issues of substance and will not necessarily be changing as quickly as anticipated. In other words, numerous challenges have all along been structural rather than personal, and predated Trump's administration just as surely as they will outlast Biden's.

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ТРАНСАТЛАНТСКИ ИЗАЗОВ БАЈДЕНОВЕ АДМИНИСТРАЦИЈЕ

Резиме

Изборна победа Џозефа Бајдена у новембру 2020. Године нашироко је очивана као амерички повратак на глобалну сцену. У бројним академским и политичким круговима очекивало се да уклањање „изолационисте“ Доналда Трампа и важна победа либералног интернационалисте Бајдена донесе ново поглавље у односима са савезницима широм света, остављајући за собом непријатности изазване безобзирним политичким стилем претходне администрације. Међутим, када су глобални послови почели да се одвијају својим током у 2021. години, кључни међународни слоган Бајденове администрације „Америка се вратила“, такође се показао као пре свега ствар политичког стила, пре него добро промишљене суштине. Овај чланак тежи да истражи начине на које је стратешко држање Бајденове администрације у првој години мандата обликовало трансатлантске односе. У том циљу, анализирани су најважнији спољнополитички говори и документи и идентификовани главни међународни догађаји. Кључни налаз је да, упркос пермисивном контексту који је обликовало омаловажавање европских савезника од стране Трампове администрације, нова администрација није успела да направи помак у погледу јачања трансатлантских веза. Та чињеница наговештава да су проблеми све време били претежно структурне природе и да су претходили Трамповим политикама, што значи да ће их бити утолико теже превазићи.

Кључне речи: *Сједињене Америчке Државе, Џозеф Бајден, Европска унија, трансатлантски односи, спољна политика, стратегија*

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Овај рад је примљен 10. новембра 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на телефонском састанку Редакције, 15. новембра 2021. године.

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EUROPEAN UNION'S QUEST FOR STRATEGIC AUTONOMY AND BIDEN'S FOREIGN POLICY

Abstract

Over the last decade the EU has faced challenges on numerous fronts: economic crisis and slow recovery, refugee crisis, terrorism, Brexit, lack of effectiveness of its foreign and security policy. In recent years, the EU has put new effort to define its purpose and standing in international relations, and it seeks to become strategically autonomous actor. That means an actor with the ability to set priorities and make decisions. As the role of the United States is still pre-eminent in the security of Europe, the EU-US relations have a special bearing on that EU's ambition. In this paper we provide an overview of the relations between these two actors with the focus on the first year of Joseph Biden presidency, and we argue that through a complex interaction the EU will seek to define its policies independently of the United States, wishing to expand its space for maneuver and action.

Keywords: *European Union, United States, strategic autonomy, foreign policy, Joseph Biden, Donald Trump*

INTRODUCTION

Over the last several years the standing of the EU as a global actor has been put under considerable strain. Geographically, it has been surrounded by the arc of instability: from the war turned frozen conflict in Ukraine and in a wider sense a conflictual nature of the relations with Russia; across Turkey, a NATO partner but increasingly a difficult and opportunistic neighbor; Syria, where the 10-year civil war is still ongoing and whose territory has served as a platform for the rise of Islamic State terrorist network; Libya,

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whose prolonged fragmentation bred the Mediterranean human trafficking for a decade; deeper south, countries of the Sahel region are both struck by poverty (and thus of mass emigration) and are under frequent attacks from the Islamic fundamentalist factions.

Ideologically, the EU has suffered from Brexit, that has shown that the union is not an eternal and unchallenged centripetal force in Europe. The long-term effects of the economic crisis early in the last decade have diversified the party politics in the EU and have, if nothing else, made any considerable reform more difficult. Even the Commission, a traditional driver of unification of authority and policymaking had to make way for different scenarios of institutional reform (European Commission 2017), some of which include devolution of Brussels competencies. The fact that the ongoing Conference on the Future of Europe is happening during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 is not particularly helpful for having broad and meaningful internal discussion.

The US role as a security underwriter for most of Europe, generally through NATO, has been put under question during the Donald J. Trump presidency (2017-2021) in particular. He was the first and only president of the USA that has repeatedly questioned the very logic of that alliance, calling it the “relic of the Cold War”, or “obsolete” (DW 2018). He also put a stronger emphasis on the existing American dissatisfaction with the lower level of defence spending among majority of European NATO members (the usual mark is 2% of GDP), and on sectoral trade imbalances such as in automotive industry imports. He has expanded that criticism to the core of the political economy of the alliance. His words that European allies must “pay their fair share” has found its way into the 2017 National Security Strategy (The White House 2017, 48), and public chastising of some European countries, notably Germany, for not spending enough on defence and freeriding on American expense had become a signature of his presidency.

Still, the US has strengthened its commitments towards the Eastern European countries that find themselves on the NATO’s eastern flank. Warsaw government did not let itself slip into ideological and public confrontation with Trump presidency, seeking instead to improve the bilateral ties. President Andrzej Duda officially proposed the setting up of a permanent US military base in Poland under the name “Fort Trump” (The White House 2018). Such ambition proved to be publicly too controversial

because of the naming issue, and eventually two sides did not agree on the financing of the project. Warsaw and Washington have signed the Enhanced Defence Co-operation Agreement in August 2020 that provides for the increase of American troops in Poland (up to around 5000) and the redeployment of an unmanned aerial vehicle squadron (BBC 2020).

Trump has withdrawn the USA from the 2015 international agreement on Iran's nuclear capability agreement (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – JCPOA) in May 2018 and has reintroduced the sanctions against Teheran. The EU views this deal as historic (EEAS 2015) since its diplomacy (in concert with three member states - UK, France, Germany) has played a key role in facilitating the direct US – Iran negotiations. Thus, the US move has undermined the EU's international credibility. Brussels had put its efforts into keeping the other signatories still engaged and in compliance with the agreement, and steered clear of the reintroduction of sanctions against Teheran.

On 1 December 2019 the current European Commission, led by German Christian-Democrat Ursula von der Leyen, took office. One of the self-definitions of the current Commission is that it is a “geopolitical Commission” (von der Leyen 2019). The moniker is used as a show of intent that the European Union takes its international position seriously, that it wants to project not only norms but power as well and furthermore, that while it prefers to build up its alliances, it still wants to be able to stand on its own in foreign and security policies. As High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Josep Borrell said, “Europeans must deal with the world as it is, not as they wish it to be. And that means relearning the language of power and combining the European Union's resources in a way that maximises their geopolitical impact” (Borrell 2020). European Council's Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 states that “In a world of increasing uncertainty, complexity and change, the EU needs to pursue a strategic course of action and increase its capacity to act autonomously to safeguard its interests, uphold its values and way of life, and help shape the global future.” (European Council 2019). Council's president, Charles Michel, stated the three goals of the EU's strategic autonomy: stability, disseminating EU's standards, and promoting EU values, and claimed that the “effective strategic autonomy is the credo that brings us together to define our destiny and to have a positive impact on the world” (Michel 2020). But, giving a meaning to such an autonomy,

especially in a time of pandemic, has shown how the foreign - domestic policy nexus works. For example, in March 2021, the Netherlands and Spain drafted a non-paper on strategic autonomy that stressed the importance of open economies, and Germany, Finland, Estonia and Denmark sent a joint letter to European Commission President with ideas on fostering the EU's digital sovereignty, with implications for its foreign relations as well as economy (Fiott 2021, 8). And in a practical term, the EU showed its capacity and willingness to act when it concluded the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment with China in December 2020, disregarding the pleas by the officials from the incoming Joseph Biden's administration officials (Alcaro and Tocci 2021, 2). In a challenging time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the strategic autonomy is spilled over many other social sectors (Ryon 2020); it has become central for political discussions and not merely a think-tankers' preserve (Pothier 2021, 95). And an unescapable issue for any concept of the EU's strategic autonomy is its relationship with the United States.

EUROPEAN UNION'S INTERNAL DIVISIONS AND THE ELUSIVE STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

Over the last decades, the EU stakeholders were frequently faced with issues of whether the EU was a "global actor", a "European pillar within NATO", or maybe a "normative power" or "risk-sharing community", or any of the other various buzzwords that tried to define the elusive nature, purpose and standing of the EU in international relations. Several waves of serious discussions and institutional arrangements can be observed throughout recent EU history. The short-lived push to create the European Security and Defence Identity within NATO in the mid-1990s was superseded by the European Security and Defence Identity and the newly established role of EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (June 1999). The 2002 Berlin Plus Agreement made specific arrangements between the EU and NATO in security and defence and came against the backdrop of the war against FR Yugoslavia (1999) and Washington's response to 9/11 and the early stages of the Global War on Terror, with full backing from the UK while dividing the newly enlarged EU (2004) into "old" (France and Germany) and "new" (Poland, Romania, Czechia, Lithuania, Estonia) over their (un)willingness to follow the US foreign policy. That big bang enlargement, coupled with

strong economic growth over previous years and the focus on terrorist threats by Al Qaeda network that, while deadly, was not a systemic challenge, could lead the EU to proclaim that “Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free” (Council of the European Union 2003, 3). The big bang enlargement was supposed to be followed by the new EU constitution, but the integrationist Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe was voted down in referenda in France and the Netherlands in spring of 2005. After that, the less ambitious approach was found in amending the Rome (1957) and Maastricht (1992) treaties, which resulted in the Lisbon treaty (2008) that is still governing the EU.

The Treaty has created a stronger role for the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy. It has established the European External Action Service, enabled the process of Permanent Structured Cooperation in defence matters and streamlined the roles of the European Defence Agency and the EU Military Staff. Yet, these changes did not amount to the effectiveness of the EU as a global actor, or as a problem solver in its own neighborhood. EU’s problems in this field still lie in the old Brussels vs the Member-state and NATO vs the EU dichotomies, the need for consensual decisions on vast majority of foreign policy actions which has been especially hard over the past few years (Maurer and Wright 2021, 386), and the diverging security interests of Member-states. EU’s expeditionary forces remain only a written word and not a reality, reliant upon few larger national armies and the political will to use them, and the EU Battlegroups¹, while functional, have never been called into action.

A short recap of the last decade can start with the effects of the Great Recession (2008-2009) that has caused economic contraction, hastily creation of new financial instruments (European Stability Mechanism), bitter political standoff regarding the very political economy of the Eurozone (Greek crisis of 2015) and has given rise to right wing politics to which many of the member states have not been accustomed to. During the so-called Arab Spring in 2011, a military intervention in Libya was put together mostly by the two EU Member states (UK and France, with Italy and Spain in the background but with Germany staying out of it), and while being sanctioned by the UN (UN Security Council Resolution 1973), it has failed to create sustainable

1) It should be noted that Serbia participates EU Battlegroups since 2016, and that the Balkan Battlegroup, led by Greece and with army units from Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus, Ukraine, and Serbia has been on rotation in the first half of 2020.

peace settlement, but it fueled the creation of long-lasting risk multipliers in Libya and the surge of human trafficking across the Mediterranean.

EU's Eastern Partnership policy was tested in 2013 when the Ukrainian government was in negotiation about the association agreement, on which the official Kiev reneged after strong pressure from Moscow. The protests in Kiev that started in November 2013 in support of the pro-EU policy drew strong response from the government and the support of array of politicians from the EU. Over next several months it all morphed into a conflagration that had toppled the government and the president, the establishment of a new cabinet and a rebellion in Donbass and Crimea with direct Russian support. That support included disguised military units that fought off the attempts of the Ukrainian army to establish the control over the rebel territory. In mid-March 2014 Russia has officially annexed Crimea while the EU and the USA have introduced new sanctions regime against Moscow. While the efforts of the Normandy format (four-way meetings between Paris, Berlin, Moscow, and Kiev) have resulted in armistice in early 2015, the front line has divided parts of Donbass from the rest of Ukraine, and low-level combat is still ongoing six years later and firm political settlement is absent. This crisis has directly hit the security interests of number of EU member states in Eastern Europe, and the military buildup to their aid came through NATO. Over the next three years new NATO multinational forces at a brigade level have been created in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (NATO Enhanced Forward Presence), that provide a trip-wire form of support, ensuring that any attack by Russia would necessarily be directly engaged by many other members of NATO and not just by local countries. Air force, naval, radar and air-defence capabilities have been ramped up in the Baltic and Black Sea by both sides, and in many ways that geographical line now seems to divide Europe. That division line has become a *raison d'être* of the new regional format - Three Seas Initiative – that since 2016 gathers 12 EU member states from the Baltic – Adriatic - Black Sea triangle, all of which except Austria are also NATO member states. Most of these countries are at the same time members of the China-led China-CEE (Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries) that was established in 2012 to promote China's links with these countries and to build on its strong export potential around the One Belt, One Road Initiative.

While still reeling from the adverse effects of the Great Recession, the 2015-2016 period brought several new issues to the EU. Over 1 million refugees from Africa and the Middle East came to Europe in 2015, overburdening the border control and asylum system. Mediterranean and Balkan routes that were primarily used by the refugees made additional political strains within the EU, marking the difference between border countries (Greece, Bulgaria, Hungary) and target countries such as Germany or Sweden. It also highlighted the difference between right-wing and broad center party politics within the EU. The rise of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria on the rump territories of these two states has boosted new Islamic fundamentalist terrorist network that was able to conduct several spectacular attacks on the European soil, such as in Paris in November 2015 and in Brussels in March 2016.

But the hardest hit came in June 2016 when the majority of UK voters voted to leave the European Union at the Brexit referendum. As the only such move in EU history it was the direct repudiation of the old “ever closer union” principle. EU’s new Global Strategy, unveiled the day after the Brexit referendum (24 June), stated at the very beginning that “we live in times of existential crisis, within and beyond the European Union. Our Union is under threat. Our European project, which has brought unprecedented peace, prosperity and democracy, is being questioned” (EEAS 2016, 7). Three arduous years of negotiations (2017-2019) about the terms of the UK’s exit from the EU have fueled sporadic crisis in relations (over the Irish border, fisheries) and have led to further drifting apart between the two parties. The relations have reached such a point that Charles Michel has publicly included the UK in the list of actors that comprise the arc of instability around the EU, along with Russia, Turkey, Syria, and Libya (Reuters 2020).

In the background of these events, some progress has been made in promoting internal cohesion in military affairs. Permanent Structured Cooperaton in defence has been fully set up in 2018 and by the end of 2020 47 joint projects on armaments development and procurement, training and tactical development have been in place (Fiot and Theodosopoulos 2020, 232-235). Together with the European Defence Fund, it drew criticism from American politicians along several lines: that it is pulling away the funding that could be used within NATO, that it is duplicating capabilities which NATO either already has in place or for which it would be a more suitable framework, or that it is too protectionist and

not inclusive for the US defence contractors (Novaky 2018). As a combined direct effect of Brexit and a long-term necessity, Military Planning and Conduct Capability – on operational headquarters of joint EU military assets – has been established in Brussels in 2017-2020. UK's facilities at Northwood Headquarters have often been used as a pragmatic solution for operational control for various EU and multilateral mission and the EU needed its own permanent military HQ instead, for Common Security and Defence Policy missions and ad hoc coalition missions. CSDP serves as an umbrella for six current military and 10 civilian missions, with around 5000 persons, roughly a single brigade (if we should count civilian advisors as soldiers) engagement with its wider neighborhood from Ukraine to Somalia and Mali. (Fiot and Theodosopoulos 2020, 218-229).

In several locations, such as Mali and Niger, EU Member states have more significant military presence than the EU itself. Since 2013, France has been running the Operation Barkhane in five Sahel countries (Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauritania and Burkina Faso), with the primary focus of combat against a number of local Islamic military factions and protecting its security and energy interest (uranium ore in Niger). Several EU countries and the UK have provided smaller military contribution, while the EU has expanded its development aid to the region. But France's most important partner in the area has been the United States, with special forces (up to 1000 men), intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance force (from UAVs stationed in French bases or in Greece) and air-to-air refueling and strategic airlift capacity (Delaporte 2020). The US have put in place military assets that are still lacking in meaningful quantity in Europe.

THE TRUMP-BIDEN TRANSITION

President Joseph Biden started his term in January 2021 by declaring that “America is back” (The White House 2021a), signaling the return of the United States to multilateralism and close cooperation with its allies in the broad range of issues, in a seeming difference to Trump's “America First” unilateralist approach. As Biden wrote in his opinion piece in *Foreign Affairs* in spring 2020 (Biden 2020, 71-73), that return means “at the head of the table” in order to “do more than just restore our historic partnerships; I will lead the effort to reimagine them for the world we face today”. The role of the European Union in

such an arrangement is to become an important partner in putting long-term pressure on China in terms of economic regulation and human rights and democracy issues, while maintaining the established stance against Russia (Foreign Policy 2021).

In the early months of the presidency, Biden was sending a message that two allies share many of the common concerns. At the G7 meeting in United Kingdom in June 2021, he reaffirmed the US role in fighting climate change (BBC 2021), a topic that was discarded by the Trump administration. Early talks regarding the tariffs on some European goods imposed by Trump have resulted in removal of many of them by October (Bown and Russ 2021). Biden's proposal of the global 15% corporate tax has received wide support at G7 and G20 meetings and has yet to be discussed at the OECD level (Alcaro and Tocci 2021, 3). But, "Buy America Act" as amended by Biden might be an early sign of difficult times ahead for transatlantic trade relations (Pothier 2021, 97).

The new administration does speak to its European allies with a softer language than the previous one. Instead of "paying their fair share", as was stated in the 2017 National Security Strategy, its 2021 revision says that "we will work with allies to share responsibilities equitably, while encouraging them to invest in their own comparative advantages against shared current and future threats". (The White House 2021b, 10). The pressure towards the Europeans to spend more on defence will still be there.

Washington was quick to make a tactical move with Germany regarding the Nord Stream 2 gas line project and the long-standing opposition to it in the USA. In June 2017 the US Senate adopted a bill on the establishment of sanctions on companies engaged with the Nord Stream 2 project. The rationale was to pressure Germany and several EU energy companies (Austrian OMV, German Uniper and Wintershall and French Engie) to stop the project and their cooperation with Russia and Gazprom. In the wider context of sour relations with Russia, it was expected of Germany to put aside its specific benefits of the project for the sake of more united front against Russia. In December 2019 Donald Trump approved the sanctions recommended by the Senate on any firm that participates in the gas line project (Ryon 2020, 241-243). German chancellor Merkel has remained steadfast in defending the project against the US pressure. The Biden administration sought a rapprochement with Germany over

this issue, as it has its focus on Russia and China. While the 2019 sanctions over the gas line remain in place, the administration has a room to maneuver with its application. Thus, the Biden administration has avoided targeting the major EU companies and has applied the sanctions against the Cyprus-based but Russia-linked shipping company *Transadria* (RFE/RL 2021). The agreement between two countries reached in July 2021 has relaxed the US position over Nord Stream 2, in exchange for stronger German commitments towards Ukraine's economic stability and against Russia "using energy as a weapon" actions (US Department of State 2021).

But, over the summer and early autumn, Biden made two moves that have caused considerable uproar in many quarters in Europe – he made a quick withdrawal of US military and security presence in Afghanistan, and made trilateral arrangement with the United Kingdom and Australia on Australia's future nuclear submarine fleet that has effectively ended the French submarine export deal with Australia. Biden did not hide his view that the military presence in Afghanistan was a burden to America's foreign policy, and before the elections he made a pledge that he will "bring the vast majority of our troops from the wars in Afghanistan and the Middle East and narrowly define our mission as defeating al Qaeda and the Islamic State" (Biden 2020, 72). So, the decision to withdraw US troops from Afghanistan in early August was not a surprise; the surprise was the swift collapse of the Kabul government's positions to the Taliban, who overrun them within days including the takeover of Kabul. Instead of the orderly withdrawal, the US decision pressed their European allies to act hastily and under duress. It was a time for strong-winded reactions from Europe. Norbert Röttgen, chairman of the German parliament's foreign relations committee, said that "the early withdrawal was a serious and far-reaching miscalculation by the current administration" and "does fundamental damage to the political and moral credibility of the West". Tom Tugendhat, Conservative chair of the Foreign Relations Committee of the UK House of Commons (who had served in Afghanistan) called it "the biggest foreign policy disaster since Suez"² (Karnitschnig 2021). The EU had no military capability, even if it had any will, to be an armed pillar to a tethered Afghan government. These are the underlying problems of that deployment. The more immediate

2) He referred to the Suez crisis in 1956 when the UK, France and Israel attacked Egypt after secretive preparations, and were met with strong American opposition to that move.

problem was that the involved governments were blindsided by the erroneous US intelligence and reassurances of the orderly withdrawal, and were left with a humiliating defeat.

Less than a month later, France was blindsided with the announcement of the trilateral US-UK-Australia deal (AUKUS) that is supposed to provide Australia with nuclear submarines sometime late in the next decade, as a part of arrangements of containing China north and east of the Malacca strait and Indonesian archipelago. The part of the deal is that Australia will abandon the 2016 submarine deal with France which included production and transfer of technology for 12 Barracuda class submarines (diesel-electric, converted from originally nuclear-powered submarines) from the French Naval Group, and was worth 56 billion Euros. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves le Drian called this move a “duplicity” and a “major breach of trust”, and France withdrew its ambassadors to the United States and Australia, which was an unprecedented move (Bouemar 2021). European Commission head von der Leyen reacted in response by calling for the creation of the European Defence Union and for the review of common defence policies and capabilities to be finished by spring 2022, in the period when the France will have the rotational chair of the EU and just before the French presidential elections (April 2022).

There are several salient points being made by this US-UK-Australia decision. It once again showed that the US prioritizes Pacific over Atlantic; that the UK is still ready to follow the US steps, even if it means going behind the back of France with which it already has established deep bilateral military ties (through Lancaster House agreements in 2010); while France has parts of its national soil in the Indo-Pacific, the US does not take it seriously; and the corollary it does not particularly value possible European military outreach into Indo-Pacific. To make matters worse for the EU, a day after the AUKUS announcement the EU made public its strategy for the cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, that is centered around economic, ecological, and human rights topics, but also includes rising ambitions of naval presence in the region (European Commission 2021). By shunning France, the AUKUS partners have also shunned the EU as the reduction of France’s role in the region will surely translate into the reduction of EU’s role. Small consolation for Paris and Brussels came a week later, after the discussion between Biden and Emmanuel Macron in which Biden recognized the need for previous and open

discussion about the issue. He also recognized “the importance of a stronger and more capable European defense” but one that should be “complementary to NATO” (Momtaz and Forgey 2021), which is an old US trope on the matter of EU-NATO relations.

In responding to these two events, Borrell argued at the European Council meeting in early October there were two attitudes possible for the EU: one was to bury a head in the sand and downplay the significance of these events or pretend that they are issues of only some of the Member states, or to be proactive, understand the ongoing changes and act “if we do not want to live in a world order that we cannot help shape” (Borrell 2021). He expects that the process of putting down on paper the modalities of strategic autonomy through the process of Strategic Compass (by March 2022) will “give a sense of direction” (Borrell 2021).

CONCLUSION

The United States under Trump regarded the European ambition towards the strategic autonomy in the realm of security with a mix of skepticism and rejection. The principle of “America First” and Trump’s personal unpredictability and impulsiveness have pushed EU to make practical steps in strengthening its security potentials within the limited internal possibilities and with the long-term focus. The maxim of strategic risk hedging against the unpredictable ally has been partially confirmed by Biden’s messy withdrawal from Afghanistan and pushing aside France in the AUKUS deal, even if most of the EU countries have not been directly hit by that move. Understanding that the locus of economic power has moved towards East Asia, Europeans have started to look towards a future in which America is less central to their strategic calculations, towards a post-transatlantic moment. The change of US administration has not really changed that, and it is yet a question whether Biden’s multilateralism is essentially unilateralism by another name (Grare 2021).

Under Biden, the United States have no clear and fixed view on the EU’s ambition for strategic autonomy and might remain open to the idea of greater European self-sufficiency in the area of security and defence. That view is a function of the premiere challenge – the relationship with China which is continuity between two rival administrations in Washington. While the European allies can offer just a symbolic military presence in the Pacific, they might be crucial in the attempts to shape future

commerce, ecology, and digital rules, which will take time longer than a single electoral cycle. The hard power of Europe is more important in its own neighborhood, where the issues of burden sharing and clear commitments still reign supreme.

The EU is not and never will be a superpower nation-state. It will not be able to harness in a coherent way the total military capabilities of its member states and bits and pieces of its own, and match them with its considerable economic and diplomatic capacity. Even with France, as a nuclear power, within its ranks, the EU lacks the ability to provide nuclear extended deterrence on its own continent, given the preeminence of Russia and the USA in that particular domain (Heisbourg 2021, 28-29). It will remain only one of the colors in a Rubik's cube of security interests of its member states, who will occasionally turn to NATO or pragmatic coalition building outside the EU to further their own goals. The first year of the Biden administration's foreign policy has pushed the EU deeper into soul-searching of its global role and the modes of strategic autonomy that it wants to define and pursue.

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ПОТРАГА ЕВРОПСКЕ УНИЈЕ ЗА СТРАТЕГИЈСКОМ АУТОНОМИЈОМ И БАЈДЕНОВА СПОЉНА ПОЛИТИКА

Резиме

Током претходне деценије ЕУ се сусрела са изазовима на више фронта: економска криза и спори опоравак, избегличка криза, тероризам, Брегзит, одсуство ефикасности своје спољне и безбедносне политике. Последњих година, ЕУ је уложила нови напор да дефинише своју сврху и положај у међународним односима, желећи да стратешку аутономију. То практично значи да постане чинилац са способношћу да поставља своје приоритете и доноси одлуке. Како је улога Сједињених Држава у безбедности Европе још увек преовлађујућа, односи ЕУ-САД имају посебан значај на ту амбицију ЕУ. У овом тексту пружамо преглед односа између ова два чиниоца са фокусом на првој години председничког мандата Џозефа Бајдена, и дајемо аргументе да кроз сложену интеракцију ЕУ тежи да дефинише своје политике независно од Сједињених Држава, желећи да прошири простор за маневар и акцију.

Кључне речи: *Европска унија, Сједињене Државе, стратегијска аутономија, спољна политика, Џозеф Бајден, Доналд Трамп*

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Овај рад је примљен 14. новембра 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на телефонском састанку Редакције, 15. новембра 2021. године.

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THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION AND ARMS CONTROL

Abstract

Did the Biden administration pick up at least some of the pieces of the broken liberal international order caused in some part by his predecessor Trump? Has he been acting according to his and his party's promises during the presidential-elections campaign or has he stood by his predecessor's decisions? And especially how much was done or "repaired" in the realm of arms control? These are the questions authors will try to answer in this paper. They will draw their conclusion by analyzing theoretical assumptions that lie behind the Trump's and Biden's approach toward the international institutions, including arms control, historical analysis of Trump's legacy regarding international institutions, content analysis of Biden's and Democratic Party's promises and their comparison with the Republican attitudes. In assessing how much was done in the first year of Biden's mandate in the realm of arms control, authors conclude that the results are mixed – in some cases Biden followed Trump's decisions and in some other he completely changed the approach.

Keywords: *Biden administration, US Democratic Party, international institutions, arms control, the US foreign policy*

INTRODUCTION

"Who will pick up the pieces?" was the title of the 2019 Munich Security Conference which referred to the ongoing crisis of multilateralism and the liberal international order, partly caused by the then US President Donald Trump. March of unilateralism, largely

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reflected in the unilateral US withdrawals from trade, climate, human rights and arms control international institutions, was motivated by Trump's desire to get better deals for the US or end the bad ones which constrained US freedom of action and contributed to other states' wellbeing at the expense of US. However, it caused severe rifts in the relationship with the allies (except Israel and some of the Eastern Europe "conservative democracies") and significantly eroded US credibility, finally leading to Trump's loss at the presidential elections in 2020. New President Biden came to the office under the flag of renewed US leadership which is to be conducted primarily through and not outside the international institutions. He was the one to "pick up the pieces" and consolidate US partnerships, leading them to the new great competition with the autocracies to win the 21st century. How much of this did he achieve in this first year of his mandate? Has he been acting according to his and his party's promises, or has he stood by his predecessor's decisions? And especially how much was done or "repaired" in the realm of arms control? These are the questions we will try to answer in this paper.

In order to understand the basic difference between Trump's and Biden's foreign policy approach, especially the one toward arms control, it is necessary first to distinguish between the underlying theoretical assumptions on the role and purpose of international institutions in relation to national interests. The first part of the paper is thus devoted to the discussion of the realist and liberal perspective of international institutions, including arms control. More faith in the "real promise" of international institutions is one of the features of Biden's, as well as, previous democratic administrations. This will be demonstrated through the historical analysis of Trump's legacy regarding multilateralism and content analysis of the 2020 Democratic Party Platform and various Biden's speeches during the campaign and after the elections. The basic attitudes of Democrats are compared to those of Republicans, showing the clear difference in the position toward the international institutions. The third part of the paper will then explore how much of the promised during the campaign was delivered until October 2021, especially regarding arms control. Although a lot was promised, not that much was actually done, if we exclude the extension of the 2010 Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START) which was a significant accomplishment for the preservation of strategic stability. Regarding other issues, including the nuclear weapons policy, missile defense, possible return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the policy toward North

Korea and the Open Skies Treaty, the Biden administration did conduct reviews, or is still conducting them with mixed results. In some cases, such as the Open Skies Treaty and, for now, modernization of the nuclear arsenal, Biden continued Trump's decisions, and in some other cases, such as the Iranian and North Korean nuclear issues, he changed the approaches from Trump's comprehensive to a step-by-step pragmatic approach but for now without any accomplishment.

INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTER OF ARMS CONTROL

As the only country with nuclear weapons in the 1940s, the US was from the beginning devoted to the development and support for the non-proliferation norm. The creation of the non-proliferation regime was essential for the maintenance of US dominance and national security. On the other side, other countries, non-nuclear weapons states tried to disarm the US and put nuclear weapons under international control. When these countries, such as the USSR developed their own nuclear weapons, non-proliferation was supplemented with arms control, both in the form of international institutions.

The arms control regime is a kind of an international institution created for a specific set of problems and an area of state activity, and thus depends on ones beliefs on the possibilities, purposes and effectiveness of states' cooperation and its institutionalization. International institutions can be defined in various ways but one common feature of all definitions is that they comprise set of principles and rules that regulate states' behavior, which is not always based on cooperation, but also coordination. In a wider sense they also include ideas, patterns of action and interaction (Holsti 2004, 18-22), as well as identities and interests (Wendt 1992, 401). This means that institutions constrain activities, shape expectations and prescribe actors' roles (Keohane 1988, 383). Not all international institutions have their organizational dimension, but when they do, they are labelled as international organizations. However, the basic question remains how the international institutions work under the condition of anarchy?

Unfortunately, there is no single answer to this question, but it depends on the prioritization of a specific theoretical set of assumptions, such as those of realism, liberalism, constructivism, neo-Marxism or some other. The same is true for the assessment of the purpose and role of arms control. The Chinese view on arms control, and generally international institutions, for example, cannot be understood without knowledge about Marxist theory of international relations and especially the concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony and the

role of international institution in them (Kostić 2017). For the purpose of this paper, two assumptions are particularly relevant. The first one is that of realism that the best way to ensure survival in the anarchical system is to be the most powerful state in the system and gain that power at the expense of others, since international relations are a zero-sum game. In that sense, critics of arms control agreements see them as dangerous and unnecessary constraints of a state's freedom of action in the competent world and doubt that arms control can reduce the likelihood of deliberately starting a war, which depends of political considerations (Brooks 2020, 85). The second one is liberal one that in the contemporary world no country, including the US, can solve global problems alone, and that international institutions do contribute to peace, stability and common interests, and instead of constraining actually serve as the multiplier of a state's power in the form of so called soft power (Park 2020, 326). Dunne, for example, mentions that according to Woodrow Wilson, "peace could only be secured with the creation of an international organization to regulate international anarchy. Security could not be left to secret bilateral diplomatic deals and a blind faith in the balance of power." (Dunne 2020, 7). In this way, belief in the „false promise of international institutions“ (Mearsheimer 1994, 7) would give poor chances for the rationale and purpose of arms control, since the main logic behind it is to create stability through predictability, confidence, coordination and consultation, constraint of military might, avoidance of arms race and reduction of risks of certain weapon use. But, as with other international institutions seen from the liberal lances, the main contribution of the international institutions to stability is that it forms the framework of network of reciprocity, which in turn creates what Robert Axelrod called "the long shadow of the future." (See Nye 2020).

One of the biggest obstacles of international institutions, including arms control remain the problems of cheating, relative-gains and sustainability. The Republican US administrations were, for example, more prone to amplify the problem of cheating and to undertake unilateral measures, such as withdrawals, to cope with it. The recent examples include the US withdrawal from the INF Treaty in 2019, allegedly because Russia had been "cheating for years" (Toms et al. 2019), as well as the Open Skies Treaty in 2020 because of the Russian flight restrictions and use of the treaty contrary to its purpose (to gather intelligence) (Reif and Bugos 2020). Regarding overstressing these issues, the Trump administration also believed that the reason for Russian cheating is their attempt to gain military advantage (Wolfsthal 2020, 103). Likewise, the 2016 Republican Party Platform, for example

stated, that “a New START, so weak in verification and definitions that it is virtually impossible to prove a violation, has allowed Russia to build up its nuclear arsenal while reducing ours.” (RP 2016, 41). Trump also withdrew US from several agreements for the reasons that they were “unfair” for the US in the way that they contributed more to the US competitors, such as China or the EU. Finally, regarding the sustainability of international institutions, one state’s the view of some international institution will depend on whether it is still good for the purpose, financial capacities, technological developments (if it is outdated) and political context. Trump administration, for example, complained about the prospects of sustainability of NATO and thus asked for more financial contributions from NATO allies (up to 2% of their GDP) in order to share a fair burden of collective defense (David 2018).

In the next section we will devote more attention to the positions and unilateral measures taken by the Trump administration regarding arms control, and Biden’s position regarding it before the presidential elections, when he was a Senator, and during the presidential-elections campaign.

THE REPUBLICAN LEGACY AND DEMOCRATS PROMISES

Dilemma of increasing power without losing it

The 2015 US National Security Strategy (NSS) states that “the question is never whether America should lead, but how we lead.” (WH 2015, 2-3). Essentially, it seem like the US strategy is influenced by a constant paradox of how to maintain and increase *power* without losing *it*? This paradox is actually referred to the different notions of power. The Republican belief that the US *hard* power can only be preserved and amplified by withdrawal from international institutions which drain US economy and human resources has always affected the US *soft* power or its ability to lead, which is, as believed by Democrats, most effectively done through international institutions. Today, this difference is best described in President Joe Biden’s first speech after winning the presidency in November 2020, in which he said that the US should “lead not by example of power, but power of our example.” (WRAL 2020).

While the previous Republican administrations, especially Trump’s, believed that international institutions constrained the US ability to act and preferred unilateral solutions and bilateral arrangements without much consultations with allies (as was the case

with Bush and Trump administrations), the others preferred multilateral solutions, although not excluding completely the possibility of unilateral measures if the vital US interest are endangered, and acting through the consultations with allies and institutions (such as Obama's and Biden's administrations). Trump saw institutions such as the World Health Organization (WTO) as Lilliputians' means to constrain the American giant from using the power it would have in any bilateral negotiation (Nye 2020). On the other side, Democrats perceive international institutions and alliances as power maximizers, not minimizers, since they enable and not constrain freedom of action. This logic can be seen in the words of the March 2021 US Interim National Security Strategic Guidance that because the "United Nations and other international organizations, however imperfect, remain essential for advancing our interests, we will re-engage as a full participant and work to meet our financial obligations, in full and on time." (WH 2021, 13). It also states that by restoring US credibility and reasserting forward-looking global leadership, the US will ensure that America, not China, sets the international agenda and that contemporary international institutions will reflect "universal values, aspirations, and norms" rather than an authoritarian agenda (*Ibid.* 13, 20). On the other side, Republicans tended to put more emphasis on hard power, and their 2016 Party Platform stated that it is committed to rebuilding the US military into "the strongest on earth, with vast superiority over any other nation or group of nations in the world." (RP 2016, 41).

The difference between Republicans and Democrats practice of policy also had great consequences on the US relationship with allies, and in the former case it significantly weakened it, while in the latter it was strengthened. The 2020 Democratic Platform, for example, mentioned that "President Trump promised he would put "America First", but that Trump's America stands alone" (DP 2020, 72). In their perspective, the alliances represent an "enormous strategic advantage" that US rivals cannot match. According to the Platform, alliances multiply US influence, spread its reach, lighten the burden, and advance US shared interests and priorities much further than the US could ever do alone (*Ibid.* 74). In the 2021 US Interim National Security Strategic Guidance it is written that "When we strengthen our alliances, we amplify our power and our ability to disrupt threats before they can reach our shores." (WH 2021, 4). This difference between Republicans and Democrats has also had consequences on the Russian preferences in the way that it usually supported those administrations that weakened NATO, such as Trump's, and campaigned against Democrats that sought to renew alliance confidence and strength,

although it made arrangements exactly with these administrations (New START was signed during the Obama's administration and extended at the beginning of Biden presidency).

Regarding arms control, as with other international institutions, there are those who underline the "false promise" of arms control and those who put more faith in the arms control capability to contribute to national security interests. Republicans often fall within the first category, while the Democrats show more faith in the "real promise" of international institutions, including arms control. In this domain, the basic tension in the US policy is between those who believe that deterrence and strategic stability based on mutual vulnerability still work, and those that put more emphasis on defense, and the need to overcome the Cold War model of strategic stability with Russia, due to new threats and the advancing proliferation. It also seems that highlighting deterrence meant more emphasizes on arms control with moderate modernization, something which was pursued by the Democrats, while putting spotlight on defense meant sidelining arms control and favoring a more robust arms modernization, including those technologies and systems that might disrupt strategic stability, such as national missile defense, mostly pursued by the Republicans. Wolfsthal, for example, notes that "(I)t is no longer a given that differing parts of the American national security establishment remain committed to the concept of mutual vulnerability or to the idea that the goal of U.S. strategic nuclear doctrine should be to create conditions in which neither the United States nor Russia (nor any other state) has an incentive to use nuclear weapons first or early in a crisis or conflict." (Wolfsthal 2020, 104-105). This tension is also visible in the strategic documents of Republican and Democratic presidents. The Trump administration remained committed to the funding, development, and deployment of a multi-layered missile defense system, modernization of nuclear weapons and their delivery platforms, end of the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction, and rebuilding of relationships with US allies, who understand that as long as they are under the US nuclear shield, they do not need to engage in nuclear proliferation (RP 2016, 42). This administration also emphasized the need to "abandon arms control treaties that benefit our adversaries without improving our national security." (*Ibid.*). Following this, the Biden administration announced a pledge to "head off costly arms races and re-establish [US] credibility as a leader in arms control." (WH 2021, 13). In this realm, Democrats believe that the sole purpose of US nuclear arsenal should be to deter—and, if necessary, retaliate against—a nuclear attack, and they campaigned for reducing the role of and expenditure

on nuclear weapons. They wanted to cut Trump's plans to build new kinds of nuclear weapons, especially low-yield non-strategic nuclear weapons and consider them "unnecessary, wasteful, and indefensible." (DP 2020, 81). Also, when it comes to arms control the difference exist regarding two important treaties: while the Republicans would not support signing/ratification of the UN Arms Trade Treaty and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, Democrats were mostly supportive of it, including during the 2020 presidential election campaign.¹

Trump's legacy regarding international institutions

One of the most highlighted legacy of the Trump administration is the contribution to the so called "crisis of multilateralism." This includes both formal and informal multilateralism i.e. international institutions, including organizations such as the UN, and group meetings such as G7 or G20. Nye writes that in the 2016 election, 'Trump campaigned on the argument that the post-1945 multilateral institutions had let other countries benefit at American expense' and that Trump casted the post-1945 liberal international order as a villain (Nye 2020). He also said that "it was not until Trump that an administration became broadly critical of multilateral institutions as a matter of policy." (*Ibid.*). But in doing so, Trump did act according to its pre-election promises and Republican Party election platform.

In the first year of his mandate Donald Trump announced withdrawal from several international organizations and treaties which were officially completed until the end of his mandate. In June 2017 Trump announced withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement, only seven months after it came into force, because it was "unfair to the US, leaving countries like India and China free to use fossil fuels while the US had to curb their carbon." (McGrath 2020). In October 2017 Trump administration filed its notice to withdraw from UNESCO, and officially did so in January 2019 due to the alleged anti-Israel policy of the organization (PBS 2019). It was again done against the great majority of states calling US not to withdraw, including the UK and the EU allies. Due to the "mismanagement" of its COVID 19 pandemics response and concerns over the independence of the organization from

1) The 2016 Republican Platform states the following: "We do not support the U.N. Convention on Women's Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty, as well as various declarations from the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development", (RP 2016, 51). On the other side the 2020 Democratic Platform stated that the "Democrats commit to strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, maintaining the moratorium on explosive nuclear weapons testing, pushing for the ratification of the UN Arms Trade Treaty and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and extending New START", (DP 2020, 81).

China, Trump first announced halting of the funding of the WHO, and in May 2020 he declared that the US would “terminate” its relationship with the organization (BBC 2020). In the area of trade, immediately after taking office Trump pulled the US out of Trans-Pacific Partnership, because it would take manufacturing and service jobs out of the US, and favored bilateral negotiations and deals with Pacific Countries and in 2018 replaced NAFTA with the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA), originally negotiated bilaterally between US and Mexico (Dudar and Shesgreen 2018). The Trump also withdrew from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) because of the anti-Israel policy and halted US contributions to the United Nations’ aid program for Palestinian refugees due to the “disproportionate share of the burden of UNRWA’s costs.” (*Ibid.*).

Regarding arms control, one of the Trump promises during the presidential election campaign was that he would abandon the JCPOA, describing it as “the worst deal ever.” (*Ibid.*). Trump unilaterally withdrew the US from the JCPOA in May 2018, because Iran continued to enrich uranium, develop ballistic missiles, and overall the agreement “failed to protect America’s national security interests.” (*Ibid.*). It was done despite allies concerns, objection and refusal to follow further US measures as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) assessment that Iran had been in compliance with the JCPOA. The only way in which the Trump administration would consider renegotiating the JCPOA was if Iran would completely renounce their intent to develop nuclear weapons (*Ibid.*). The only treaty the Trump pulled US out from with the support of its NATO allies was the INF Treaty, although, at first, allies tried to save the deal by pushing Russia to come into compliance (NATO 2019). Still aware of the so-called Euro-missile crisis, the Europeans were afraid that the Europe might again become a battlefield between the US and Russia and place of their renewed arms race and confrontation (Borger and Roth 2018). In February 2019 the Trump administration announced the suspension of the 1987 INF Treaty and the full withdrawal took place six months later, because of the alleged Russian non-compliance with the Treaty provisions. At the end, in 2020, Trump pulled the US out from the Open Skies Treaty, again contrary to the allies concerns, owing to alleged Russian non-compliance. All of this made extension of the New START Treaty important, but by the end of Trump’s mandate, this had not happened due to the various conditions he set beforehand.

One of the most prominent figures in ending US arms control agreements was John Bolton, Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security under President Bush and the National

Security Adviser under President Trump. Cirincione even labelled him as a “serial arms control killer.” (Cirincione 2019). He mentioned that Bolton was responsible for the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and the Agreed Framework with North Korea under the Bush administration, and later on from the JCPOA and the INF Treaty under Trump (he took office in April 2018) (*Ibid.*). Cirincione further reminded that in 1999, Bolton decried the liberal “fascination with arms-control agreements as a substitute for real non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction” because for “Bolton and others like him, these agreements are part of the effort by the global Lilliputians to tie down the American Gulliver” while the US must protect its nation “with military might, not pieces of paper.” (*Ibid.*). This shows the moving of the emphasis from non-proliferation to counter-proliferation, including pre-emptive attacks during Republican administrations. In 2014, Bolton wrote that the Moscow’s arms-control treaty violations “give America the opportunity to discard obsolete, Cold War-era limits on its own arsenal, and upgrade its military capabilities to match its global responsibilities.” (Bolton and Yoo 2014). On the INF Treaty, Bolton said to the Russian President Putin days after the announcement of the US withdrawal: “There’s a new strategic reality out there. This is a cold war bilateral ballistic-missile-related treaty — in a multipolar ballistic-missile world.” (Shesgreen 2018). Adding to the Russian cheating, Bolton actually said that the agreement was outdated or outmoded anyway, because of the “new strategic environment” which largely includes concern over China’s intermediate ballistic forces. Fortunately (or not), John Bolton was dismissed from his position before the last remaining nuclear arms control agreement between the USA and Russia was set to expire. Bolton regarded the New START as “flawed from the beginning” because it “did not cover short-range tactical nuclear weapons or new Russian delivery systems.” (Reif 2019). Bolton even wrote that he “planned to withdraw the US signature on the Comprehensive Test Ban treaty (CTBT), paving the way to nuclear testing, if he had stayed on at the White House” because it is necessary to be certain of the reliability of the US deterrent (Borger 2020).

If the greatest strength of international institutions is to endure and thus to create a framework of predictability, confidence and reciprocity, this is exactly where the Trump’s actions hit and blew the international order. Perceived as a framework of exercising US leadership his actions also damaged the US credibility and reliability, especially among the partners and allies, who in return started to develop their own strategies (for example strengthening strategic autonomy in the EU or replacement of the TPP with the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-

Pacific Partnership). It is why the Biden campaign was oriented toward the renewal of American leadership, especially through, not outside, the international institutions. But, what has actually been done in the first year of Biden's mandate and did he stand up to his and Democratic Party promises? It is the topic of the next section of this paper.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION AND ARMS CONTROL: BETWEEN PROMISES AND REALITY

The 2021 US Interim National Security Guidance announced that the US "will move swiftly to earn back our position of leadership in international institutions, joining with the international community to tackle the climate crisis and other shared challenges." (WH 2021, 11). And surely, on the first day of his presidency President Biden returned the US to the Paris Climate accord and announced it would return to the UN Human Rights Council because, as the Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said, the decision to withdraw in 2018 "did nothing to encourage meaningful change, but instead created a vacuum of US leadership, which countries with authoritarian agendas have used to their advantage." (Deutsche Welle 2021) Instead of withdrawal and abandoning international institutions, which was Trump's tool or a way to bring necessary changes to international institutions, the Biden administration had chosen to fight for the reforms that suit US through them.² Biden also announced and conducted a review of Trump's decisions to withdraw from the JCPOA and the Open Skies Treaty, as well as numerous decisions regarding the improvement of the US nuclear arsenal, nuclear weapons and missile defense policy. He also promised to address the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons, reduce the role of nuclear weapons in the US national security strategy, but on the other hand to preserve strong and credible extended deterrence commitments to the US allies, head off costly arms races and re-establish US credibility as a leader in arms control (WH 2021, 13). Indeed, only a few days after being sworn into office and two days before its expiration, Biden and Putin extended the New START unconditionally for another five years. But, now we will have a closer look at some elements of Biden's approach to arms control in order to assess its accomplishments compared to what was promised.

2) The 2020 Democratic Platform states that "Democrats believe that American security and prosperity are enhanced when the United States leads in shaping the rules, forging the agreements, and steering the institutions that guide international relations. We believe the system of international institutions we built and led over the past seven decades has generated an enormous return on our investment... We will work to modernize international institutions to make sure they are fit for purpose in the 21st century." (DP 2020, 74)

Arms Control Policy

In the middle of 2021, the Biden administration formally began a review of the US nuclear weapons policy and the work on the new Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) which will be finalized early in 2022, in conjunction with the National Defense Strategy (Reif 2021). According to Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense Dalton the new NPR will focus on “maintaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent, ensuring strategic stability, and reducing risks of mistake and miscalculation in crisis and conflict.” (*Ibid.*).

The Biden administration policy regarding arms control and nuclear weapons remained committed to strategic stability based on mutual assured destruction, second strike capabilities, moderate nuclear weapons modernization programs and arms control with Russia and, if possible, China. It is committed to the non-proliferation policy as well as measures leading to nuclear disarmament. In his speech at the 2021 Munich Security Conference, Biden referred to the risk of the global proliferation of nuclear weapons as one of the central issues of his administration, and stressed the need for diplomacy and cooperation on this subject at the international level (WH Biden speech 2021). However, his administration, still, does not accept the “no-first policy”. In contrast with Republicans, the Biden administration will also continue to be committed to the maintaining of the moratorium on explosive nuclear weapons testing and pushing for the ratification of the UN Arms Trade Treaty and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

After the extension of the New START with Russia in February 2021, Biden signed the US-Russian statement on strategic stability at the June 2021 Summit and committed the US to further strategic arms control. According to its promises, the Biden administration will be committed to multilateral non-proliferation policy, with respect of allies’ interests, instead of unilateral measures and counter-proliferation measures pursued by previous Republican administrations. Also, regarding nuclear modernization programs, the Biden administration promised to cut all unnecessary additions made by President Trump to the Obama-era program, which in the context of signing and gaining support for ratification in Congress of the New START committed itself to an overhaul of nearly the entire nuclear arsenal in 2010 and to the replacement of its long-range delivery systems for all three legs of the nuclear triad.³ The Biden administration will continue this process. No matter the promises, and although the review of Trump’s era requests is

3) The 2021 Democratic Platform states that The Trump Administration’s proposal to build new nuclear weapons is “unnecessary, wasteful, and indefensible.” (DP 2020, 81).

in progress, following its first budget request in May 2021, the Biden administration will continue with robust modernization of nuclear forces, but with the difference of preserving its link (and long-time bargain in US administration) with strategic arms control.

Strategic and non-strategic arms control

In February 2021, only two days before its expiration, the US and Russian Presidents Biden and Putin extended unconditionally the last bilateral nuclear arms control treaty for another five years. Also at the June 2021 Summit in Geneva the two Presidents signed the Joint U.S. Russia Statement on Strategic Stability and continuation of Strategic Stability Dialogue (previously, the last round of such a dialogue was held in August 2020 under the Trump administration in the lead up to the expiration of the 2010 New START). This document confirmed the commitment to nuclear arms control and the principle that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. It also expressed the intent of both parties to continue with the Strategic Stability Dialogue in an integrated, deliberate and robust way. This Dialogue would seek to establish the framework for future arms control and risk reduction measures (WH Joint Statement 2021). In the framework of this agreement, on 28 July 2021 the US and Russia deputy foreign ministers held “substantive and professional” talks on arms control and other strategic issues and agreed on another round of talks to be held in September 2021 (Al Jazeera 2021). This round took place on 30 September 2021 and two sides agreed to set up two working groups focused on principles and objectives for future arms control and capabilities and actions with strategic effects, which will convene ahead of a third plenary meeting (Reuters 2021).

Three points can be added here having in mind the Joint statement and points of contention in the previous 2019 and 2020 rounds of US-Russia strategic dialogue. First, is there going to be continuation of strategic arms control or only nuclear? By laying out in the Joint Statement their commitment to nuclear arms control, the question arose whether they intent to comprise all nuclear weapons, consisting both strategic and non-strategic weapons, into their future negotiation, or to maintain under control and subject to reduction only strategic weapons, including conventional and unconventional. The former comes to mind if we consider that at one point of time Trump’s special envoy for the extension of New START Bilingslea said that two parties reached agreement to freeze all nuclear arsenals, which the Russian side denied (Gould 2020). The issue of comprising all nuclear weapons under arms

control with Russia gained particular importance after the Ukraine crisis, when the US started to believe that Russia adopted, and is acting in accordance with the “escalate-to-deescalate” doctrine. As believed, this doctrine includes the lowering of threshold for the use of Russian nuclear weapons in regional conflicts, and served as the catalyst or excuse for the development of low-yield nuclear options for the US nuclear forces during the Trump administration. This point also opened the question of whether the US conventional Prompt Global Strike would be involved in some way in the negotiations and limitations, as it is a cause of worry for Russia. Some authors believe that in US-Russia discussions over non-strategic weapons, the removal of US nuclear weapons from European countries could be used as a US bargaining chip (Smetana, Onderko and Etienne 2021). Having in mind Trump’s legacy and even speculations that the US might deploy formerly banned intermediate-range missiles to Europe in order to make Russia negotiate on non-strategic weapons, NATO leaders reiterated that the alliance has “no intention to deploy land-based nuclear missiles in Europe.” (Reif and Bugos 2021). NATO also confirmed its position to reject Putin’s proposal of a moratorium on missiles formerly banned by the INF Treaty, because it is “not credible and not acceptable.” (*Ibid.*).

Second, what does the assertion contained in the Joint Statement, that the future Dialogue will be integrated, deliberate and robust mean exactly? Will it then include negotiations not only on strategic weapons, but also non-strategic, missile and space defense, cybersecurity, and various forms of delivery vehicles, such as hypersonic glide vehicles? The answer to this question is affirmative. During 2019 and 2020 the US expressed its desire to address Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons and bring China into the arms control process. In June 2020, in the framework of the strategic stability dialogue, the US and Russia agreed to form three working groups: on nuclear warheads and doctrine, verification, and space systems (Reif, and Bugos 2021b). In September 2021 they actually agreed to form two: on the principles and objectives for future arms control and on capabilities and actions with strategic effects (where we could expect discussion on missile defence, including space based elements, US Prompt Global Strike and other long-range conventional capabilities, as well as non-strategic weapons and artificial intelligence). This could be expected since for example, the Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov said on 9 June 2021 that “anything that affects strategic stability must be discussed during a dialogue,” including “nuclear and non-nuclear, and offensive and defensive weapons.” (*Ibid.*). A few days later Deputy Minister Ryabkov added that “The parties may decide to adopt a package of interrelated arrangements and/

or agreements that might have a different status if necessary. Moreover, it might be possible to design some elements in a way to make the room for others to join.” (*Ibid.*). Also, at a news conference after the June 2021 Summit, Biden said that the dialogue would “work on a mechanism that can lead to control of new and dangerous and sophisticated weapons that are coming on the scene now that reduce the times of response, that raise the prospects of accidental war.” (Reif, and Bugos 2021c). From the overall context of the June 2021 Biden-Putin meeting we can conclude that the future arms control dialogue would include once again all those factors (including weapons and actors) that might affect strategic stability and second strike capabilities of the two parties. In that way it may take the form of some new Nuclear and Space Talks that were conducted in 1985 and connected the START, INF negotiations and weaponization of space issues (see: Dietl 2018).

Thirdly, in the Joint Statement there is no mention of the multilateralization of strategic arms control, but only a note that the two parties will “lay the groundwork for future arms control”, which is the confirmation of the strategic stability model that favors parity-disparity relationship (parity among US and Russia and large disparity compared to other nuclear weapon states - NWS) and do not adopt the possibility for multilateralization of strategic arms control on an equal footing. But as we saw from previous statements and for various reasons both parties are interested in including China (USA) and the UK and France (Russia) into nuclear arms control talks (Kostić 2020).

Missile defense

At this moment strategic arms control talks continue to take place without a treaty on missile defense limitations. The balance between offensive and defensive weapons has always been a precondition for strategic arms control and the connection between the two is also contained in the preambles of the strategic arms limitation and reduction treaties, including the New START. Following Regan’s proposal on Strategic Defense Initiative in 1983, and rejection of the MAD concept, subsequent Republican administrations tended to deploy strategic missile defense. On the other side, Democratic administrations were keen to preserve the strategic stability between the USA and Russia based on MAD (which means that the deployed interceptors cannot hit Russian Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) or diminish Russian strategic deterrence), which is why President Obama in 2013 aborted the deployment of the fourth phase of the European Phased Adapted Approach (EPAA). Also, the administrations of Republicans

and Democrats were not equally sensitive to the question of alliances and multilateralism in general, which is also proven by the development of the US Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) in Europe, and bilateral agreements with Poland and Romania. It subsequently became the US contribution to the NATO BMD. The Europeans feared that the demise of strategic stability based on the concept of mutual vulnerability or assured destruction between the US and Russia would constrain and limit the ability and credibility of their nuclear deterrent (Tertrais 2009, 9). The end result was the deployment of the three phases of the EPPA which preserves the mutual assured destruction on the strategic level (between the USA and Russia and regarding the strategic offensive arms), but protects the US forces in Europe and its allies from a potential rogue nation's ballistic missile of short range attack. However, it is proved in November 2020 that the US does not need to develop the fourth phase of the EPAA since the SM 3 Block IIA interceptors that are already deployed can hit ballistic missiles of intercontinental range.

Since 2002 and the demise of ABM Treaty, Russia has tried on numerous occasions to bring the US into a new agreement on missile defense, but all attempts were unsuccessful. When Putin proposed a moratorium on previously banned INF missiles after the US withdrawal in 2019 and NATO rejected it, Moscow expanded it to include mutual verification measures focused on Aegis Ashore ballistic missile defense systems deployed at NATO bases in Europe and on Russian military facilities in Kaliningrad (Reif, and Bugos 2021a). Also, the Russian delegation brought up US missile defense during the strategic dialogue, but the US delegation responded by arguing that those defense systems are meant to counter threats from Iran and North Korea rather than Russia (Reif, and Bugos 2021c).

The Trump administration was led by the belief that all "missile defenses are stabilizing" and envisioned an "unrivaled and unmatched" missile defense system with a "simple goal" to defend against "every type of missile attack against any American target." (Barzashka 2021). Biden was never a proponent of protecting the US against long-range ballistic missiles, first of all because of his conviction that it would lead to a new arms race with Russia and China and disrupt strategic stability (Thompson 2021). He has always believed that deterrence worked and that arms control treaties, including the ABM, helped preserve peace (USS 2021). During the Regan administration he was against interpretation of the ABM Treaty so that a "strategic defense initiative" could be pursued, during George W. Bush, he opposed the administration's decision to withdraw from the same treaty and, as Vice President during the Obama administration he participated in a

wholesale dismantling of strategic defense programs inherited from the previous administration, including those aimed at intercepting ICBMs (Thompson 2021). However, having in mind the continuation of nuclear and missile programs of some other nations which the US consider hostile, such as Iran or North Korea, the US administration under Biden continues to seek protection against ballistic missiles, including intercontinental, that would not disturb the strategic stability equation with Russia. Having in mind Trump's administration robust plans for the development of layered missile defense and previously mentioned conviction of subsequent democratic administrations on the value of limited ballistic missile defense, in June 2021 the Biden administration has started the review process of missile defense policy and plans. The review will align with the National Defense Strategy, expected to be prepared by January 2022, and contribute to the Department of Defense approach to integrated deterrence (US DoD 2021). According to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for nuclear and missile defense policy Tomero, "the review will be guided by a handful of principles from defense against rogue states' intercontinental ballistic missiles to assure allies the U.S. continues to be committed to security partnerships." (*Ibid.*). On this issue, Barzashka argues that Biden "can neither fully embrace the Trump policy nor revert to preceding approaches." (Barzashka 2021).

For now, the Biden administration fiscal year 2022 budget request would continue the Trump administration's plans for missile defense, even the supplement to adapt the Aegis missile defense system and the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system, designed to defeat short- and intermediate-range missiles, and to intercept limited ICBM threats (Reif 2021b). It also allocated almost a billion dollars for the Next Generation Interceptors (NGI) missile defense programme in the fiscal 2022 budget (Hulsman 2021). But, it is believed that the NGI was accepted for reasons of nuclear and missile proliferation, primarily North Korea and Iran, and the June 2021 NATO Summit communique confirmed that its BMD system is not turned against Russia and does not have the capability to diminish Russian deterrence (NATO 2021). Also, the US Missile Defense Agency and Space Development Agency continue developing elements of a hypersonic missile defense system in order to defend against hypersonic weapons and other emerging missile threats (CRS 2021).

Non-proliferation *Iran*

In 2018 Trump decided to withdraw from the JCPOA, seeking a new broader deal that would encompass all US and Israeli concerns regarding Iran's military development and its nuclear program. At that time, as with the all previous cases of US withdrawal, Biden spoke against this decision. The basic distinction between Trump's and Biden's approach to the issue of Iran and North Korea nuclear programs can be described as comprehensive vs. step-by-step-approach.

The 2021 Democratic Party Platform stated that Democrats "will call off the Trump Administration's race to war with Iran and prioritize nuclear diplomacy, de-escalation, and regional dialogue." (DP 2020, 90). It rejected the regime change as the US goal in Iran and saw the JCPOA as the "best means to verifiably cut off all of Iran's pathways to a nuclear bomb" and only the beginning, not the end, of US diplomacy with Iran (*Ibid.*). The US withdrawal from this agreement, according to the Democrats, only isolated the US from allies and opened the door for Iran to resume its nuclear program that could lead it to obtaining nuclear weapons (*Ibid.*). It is why the Democrats saw the return to JCPOA as "urgent". However, this has not happened yet (October 2021).

The six rounds of talks to restore the JCPOA were held from April to June 2021 in Vienna. During these talks the USA and Iran negotiated only indirectly, with the mediation of the EU. The last round took place on 20 June, two days before the Iranian presidential elections. It is still unknown when the seventh round will take place, but both sides expressed willingness to continue with the process (Davenport 2021). However, after the USA withdrawal in 2018 Iran has conducted activities such as enrichment of uranium metal, which can be used in the core of nuclear weapons, in contradiction to the JCPOA and with the aim of forcing the USA to return to the Agreement and lift all sanctions imposed during the Trump administration. Additionally, the killing of a senior Iranian nuclear scientist in November 2020, allegedly by Israel, made the Iranian Parliament adopt new legislation which includes a requirement for uranium metal production—an action banned until 2031 under the JCPOA. Furthermore, the mid-April 2021 attack at the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant that knocked out some of the facility's centrifuges by blowing up the center's power supply, again with suspected Israeli involvement, led Iran to ramp up the rate of uranium enrichment to an unprecedented 60 percent, instead of previously intended 20 percent and well beyond the JCPOA's 3.67 percent cap (Rafati 2021). In this context, the US officials warned that if Iran nuclear program advances

“to the point where the non-proliferation benefits of the deal cannot be restored, the United States will change course” and restoration of the JCPOA would not be possible any more (Davenport 2021).

The Iranian request regarding the deal includes guarantees that what Trump did will never happen again and that the US will verifiably lift all sanctions imposed against Iran after the US withdrawal from the deal. However, the Biden administration noted that it cannot guarantee this (*Ibid.*). The USA under Biden wants to see build up on the JCPOA and to discuss not only the Iranian nuclear program, but the ballistic missile program and regional security in a step-by-step approach. For the US, robust IAEA verification and monitoring is essential for the conformation that Iran is not developing a nuclear arms program (Davenport and Masterson 2021). State Department spokesperson Ned Price said in a June 21 press briefing that the administration is confident that if the nuclear deal is restored, the United States will have “additional tools” to address issues outside of the nuclear deal, including ballistic missiles. He said Iran has “no doubt” about where the United States stands on follow-on diplomacy.” (*Ibid.*)

In June 2021, Iran elected a conservative cleric Ebrahim Raisi to be the country’s next president, but the Iranian position on the need to restore the JCPOA is not expected to change, since the supreme leader remained the same (*Ibid.*). However, the new Iranian president said that Iran’s ballistic missile program will not be a subject of negotiations and Raisi also asked why Iran should engage with the United States on a broader range of issues when Washington has not met its obligations under the nuclear deal (*Ibid.*). However, Biden said in his September 2021 speech in the UN that the US is “prepared to return to full compliance if Iran does the same” but that the US “remains committed to preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.” (Masterson 2021).

North Korea

Presidents of United States and North Korea Trump and Kim met three times, but failed to reach a comprehensive nuclear deal, although they signed a joint statement at the 2018 Singapore summit. In this Statement “President Trump committed to provide security guarantees to the DPRK, and Chairman Kim Jong Un reaffirmed his firm and unwavering commitment to complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” (NPR 2018). They also expressed their commitments to build new US-DPRK relationship, confidence-building measures and durable and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula (*Ibid.*).

As with previous arms control issues the new Biden administration made a review of the North Korea policy, in close consultation with allies Japan (which prefers deterrence) and South Korea (which prefers a diplomatic solution), as well as other states of interests such as Russia (Smith 2021). It decided to build on Trump's 2018 deal, but with a pragmatic step-by-step approach, thus abandoning the policy of comprehensive deal or grand bargain that Trump pursued. In April 2021, it was announced that the US policy toward North Korea will take a middle ground between former Presidents Barack Obama's "strategic patience" and Donald Trump's "grand bargain." (Snyder 2021). It will pursue a diplomatic solution, although with "stern deterrence", as said by President Biden (WH Address).

The Biden administration has also tried to pursue communication with North Korea, but unsuccessfully. During his visit to Seoul, US States Secretary Blinken accused North Korea of committing "systemic and widespread abuses" against its own people and said the United States and its allies were committed to the denuclearization of North Korea." (Smith 2021). In May 2021, President Biden also confirmed he wished to engage with North Korea diplomatically and by taking practical steps in order to reduce tensions and with the final goal of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula (*Ibid.*). The US position today is that it is interested in renewing nuclear arms talks "anytime, anywhere without preconditions." (D'Agostino 2021). However, in September 2021, after conducting the new weapons test, which involved allegedly a new hypersonic missile (although not without doubt), the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has dismissed these offers since he consider them to be the US "show" aimed to cover up US "hostile policy" toward North Korea, but says he is open to improving ties with South Korea (VOA 2021).

Conventional Arms Control

In the realm of conventional weapons a major blow that happened during the Trump administration was the withdrawal from the Open Skies Treaty in 2020 because of Russia's non-compliance with the treaty obligations. This was again done without consent of US Allies, parties to the treaty. Having in mind the priority of the trans-Atlantic partnership and the benefits that European allies have from the Open Skies Treaty, and generally opposing unilateral withdrawals from international institutions as a mean to enhance security, president Biden was at the time against this withdrawal.

However, when he took office, Biden commenced a review of "matters related to the treaty" and held consultations with US allies

and partners, but the decision was the official notification to Russia on 27 May 2021 that the United States will not seek to rejoin the 1992 Open Skies Treaty (Reif and Bugos 2021d). This decision was justified by Russian limitation of the distance for observation flights over the Kaliningrad region to no more than 500 km from the border and prohibition of missions over Russia from flying within 10 km of its border with the conflicted Georgian border regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which is seen as continuation of non-compliance with the Treaty provisions (*Ibid.*). Further, the Biden administration saw Russia's behavior with respect to Ukraine, as "not that of a partner committed to confidence-building." (Lee 2021). The Biden administration's notification of not returning to the Treaty, was soon followed by the Russian announcement of withdrawal from the Treaty, which is to be completed by the end of 2021.

Additionally, the Biden administration will continue with the plans that were begun under the Trump administration to develop and field conventional hypersonic weapons to compete with Russia and China. It will also continue with the development and procurement of formerly forbidden intermediate-range missiles (Bugos 2021).

CONCLUSION

Underlying assumption of the Biden administration is that international institutions, as well as alliances, contribute more to the US leadership and national interest. Working through, and not outside, them contribute more to US national interests and increases chances of the US shaping the rules of the world order. Leading "by the power of example, and not example of power" has been the highlight of Biden presidential-elections campaign and during the first months in office.

During this period Biden was committed to renew US partnerships, return to some of the international agreements, and conduct reviews of all of Trump's choices regarding arms control. He returned the US to the Paris Climate accord and announced it would return to the UN Human Rights Council. He, also, extended the New START unconditionally for another five years and committed the US to future arms control with Russia. Biden administration undertook the review of Trump's decisions to withdraw from the JCPOA and Open Skies Treaty, as well as numerous decisions regarding improvement of nuclear arsenal, nuclear weapons and missile defence policy. However, the result of these reviews was mixed, despite Biden's promises during the campaign. Although regretting for Trump's decisions to withdraw the US from the Open Skies Treaty it finally notified Russia that the

US is not going to return to it. Also, despite considering Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA as a big mistake and consider its restoring as urgent, the Biden administration has not yet done so, although several rounds of indirect talks were held in the first half of 2021. But, on this issue, as well as the issue of North Korea's nuclear program, the Biden administration did change the approach – from Trump's comprehensive path, which sought grand bargains, to a step-by-step approach which is seen as more pragmatic, leading to the goal through smaller steps. In the domain of nuclear arsenal modernization programs, missile defense and certain conventional weapons, the Biden administration did not yet reverse Trump's decisions. Instead, it remained committed to the robust modernization and significant budget requests in 2022.

The biggest undertaking that is under way for the Biden administration is the review of the US nuclear weapons and missile defense policies and the work on the new Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) which is expected to be finalized early in 2022, in conjunction with the National Defense Strategy. In this realm, Biden promised to address the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons, reduce the role of nuclear weapons in the US national security strategy, but to preserve strong and credible extended deterrence commitments to the US allies, head off costly arms races, and re-establish US credibility as a leader in arms control. The other great endeavor of Biden administration will be the conduction of Strategic Stability Dialog and prospects of involving China into the arms control talks. Strategic Stability Dialogue will be time-limited to five years, which is the period of New START extension and will probably consume most of US arms control efforts. However, in times described as great competition between democracies and autocracies to win the 21st century, the efforts to bring China into the arms control in order to curb its military, including nuclear, build up will also take a lot of efforts, but also primarily through the US-Russia talks, since without Russia's support US involve China alone. But, in order to do this something will have to be given – be it limitations on missile defense, inclusion of France and Britain as well into the strategic or nuclear arms control talks or involvement of conventional long-range capabilities into the arms control negotiations. However, what is clear for now is that the Biden administration will tend to preserve the gentle balance between gaining more military power and at the same time preserving its leadership role through international institutions and partnerships.

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БАЈДЕНОВА АДМИНИСТРАЦИЈА И КОНТРОЛА НАОРУЖАЊА

Резиме

Да ли је Бајденова администрација успела да поврати бар неки део либералног међународног поретка делом деградираног за време мандата Доналда Трампа? Да ли се Бајден понаша у складу са својим и обећањима своје странке за време изборне кампање, или се придржава политика зацртаних од стране свог претходника? И колико од тога је урађено у области контроле наоружања? То су питања на која ће аутори овог рада покушати да одговоре. Закључци ће бити донети на основу анализе теоријских претпоставки које се налазе у позадини Трамповог и Бајденовог приступа међународним институцијама, у шта спада и контрола наоружања; затим на основу историјске анализе Трамповог наслеђа у овом контексту, анализе садржаја Бајденових обећања и обећања Демократске партије за време кампање, у поређењу са ставовима Републиканаца. У процени резултата прве године мандата новог америчког председника у области контроле наоружања, аутори закључују да су резултати двозначни и разликују се од случаја до случаја: понегде, Бајден се придржавао политика које је усвојила Трампова администрација, док је у другим случајевима приступ потпуно промењен.

Кључне речи: *Бајденова администрација, Демократска партија САД, међународне институције, контрола наоружања, спољна политика САД*

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Овај рад је примљен 4. октобра 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на телефонском састанку Редакције, 15. новембра 2021. године.

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UNITED STATES AND WAR ON TERROR: COSTS OF THE PYRRHIC VICTORY

Abstract

The withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan during August 2021 puts an end to the longest war that America has ever fought and the first phase of the Global War on Terrorism. In this regard, two important questions arise, which we will try to answer in this paper. First, what are the main external and internal consequences that the United States has faced due to engaging in the “War on Terror”? Second, did the U.S. achieve its goals in that war? The external effects we have identified are the crisis of global leadership, the weakening of relations with the allies, the growth of China in the lee, and the rise of populism. Among the internal ones, we included the strengthening of the presidential function, the increase of state power, more profound social polarization, an increase in budget expenditures, and a growing deficit, as well as human casualties. In the end, we contributed to the debate on the nature of the U.S. “victory”. We are providing the argumentation in the direction that the final output of War on Terror should be named Pyrrhic victory.

Keywords: *the United States, 9/11, War on Terror, foreign policy, U.S. presidency, global leadership*

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INTRODUCTION

September 10, 2001, is described by many Americans as “the last normal day.” Everything was so ordinary. Congressmen argued over how to revive the U.S. economy and reduce unemployment. President Bush marked 50 years of alliance with the Australian counterpart and promoted educational reform, while Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld declared “war” on the Pentagon bureaucracy. Impressions and critiques of the romantic drama Pearl Harbor were still being summed up, and the premiere of Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone, scheduled for November 2001, was eagerly awaited. According to a survey conducted by Gallup from September 7 to 10, 2001, less than 1% of Americans mention terrorism as the most critical problem facing the country (Newport 2001). Terrorism has been a distant problem for them, happening in Turkey, Kenya, Yemen, Gaza, or the Philippines. However, on September 11, terrorists struck at the center of U.S. political and economic power. At the same time, they struck at American pride and a sense of security.

America felt wounded and acted like a “wounded beast.” Blessed with geography or, as John Mearsheimer puts it, the “stopping power of water” (Mearsheimer 2001, 41) and insufficiently powerful neighbors, Americans did not face a significant attack on its continental territory for almost two centuries. Now they were attacked by an unconventional enemy with unconventional weapons when they were at the peak of their power (Nedeljković 2020). The response of the United States was fierce and often unilateral. This reaction should come as no surprise because, as John Lewis Gaddis (2005) notes, in the circumstances such as the attacks on Pearl Harbor in 1941, faced with direct attacks on their territory, Americans generally respond unilaterally.

Bush’s maxim “either you are with us or with the terrorists” was more reminiscent of the imperial behavior of Rome or Napoleon’s France than the message of the leader of the beacon of world democracy. However, the War on Terror launch is not an example of George W. Bush’s arrogance. According to a survey conducted two days after the terrorist attacks, 93% of Americans supported a military solution against anyone responsible for the New York and Washington terrorist attacks (Washington Post/ABC News 2001). Moreover, 77% of respondents said they would support military action even if it meant killing innocent civilians (Washington Post/ABC News 2001). As early as September 14, in a joint U.S. resolution, the Congress voted (Senate 97-0, House of Representatives 420-1) to authorize the “use of the United States Armed Forces against those responsible for the recent attacks launched against the

United States “(J.R. 2001). International support was also unprecedented and included rivals such as Russia and China. With such support and wounded pride, a measured reaction could not have been expected.

Twenty years after one of the deadliest terrorist attacks in history, America and the world look significantly different than anyone could have predicted at the time. September 11 triggered a wave of events, actually a tsunami, which had devastating consequences. Some of them are measurable, such as the number of victims or the amount of money spent, while others, such as the lost development potential of societies and individuals, are not. The withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan during August 2021 puts an end to the longest war that America has ever fought and the first phase of the Global War on Terrorism. In this regard, two important questions arise, which we will try to answer in this paper. First, what are the main external and internal consequences that the United States has faced due to engaging in the “War on Terror “? Second, did the U.S. achieve its goals in that war?

CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR ON TERROR

“As we enter the new millennium, we are blessed to be citizens of a country enjoying record prosperity, with no deep divisions at home, no overriding external threats abroad, and history’s most powerful military ready to defend our interests around the world. Americans of earlier eras may have hoped one day to live in a nation that could claim just one of these blessings. Probably few expected to experience them all; fewer still all at once” (NSS 2000).

These words begin the preface of the U.S. National Security Strategy presented by the White House in December 2000. Even if we ignore the exaggerations regarding the absence of deep divisions in American society, it cannot be denied that the United States was at the peak of power at the end of the millennium. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, they became the only superpower and the only pole of power in the international system. US GDP was twice as large as Japan’s (closest companion) and grew at an annual rate of 4%. U.S. defense spending accounted for 37% of total world spending (SIPRI 2001). The U.S. had a decisive influence in almost all major international organizations, and the number of American allies continued to multiply. No matter how unusual such a situation was from a historical perspective, other countries did not strive to balance American power. Above all, Americans were optimistic about the future of their family and nation (Pew Research Center 1999), and globalization was increasingly reminiscent of Americanization.

Nevertheless, Nassim Nicholas Taleb (2007 10) is right when he claims that “history does not crawl, it jumps.” Occasionally, *black swans* appear on the horizon, events that come suddenly, carry a massive impact, and for which we devise *post factum* explanations, trying to present them as less sudden than they are (Taleb 2007). 9/11 is a typical example of an event that radically transformed U.S. foreign and security policy and the world. The world today is more anarchic and less stable and secure than 20 years ago. On the other hand, the United States does not look good either. The Global War on Terror has exhausted America, so it looks like a tired giant today. Truth be told, the day after the deadly attacks, President Bush warned that War on Terror would be “a monumental struggle of good versus evil,” that it would require “time and resolve,” and that America would use all available resources to defeat the enemy (Bush 2001). But hardly anyone, including the President himself, expected 20 years of fighting, almost a million civilian and military casualties, and spending of over 8 trillion U.S. dollars.

In this article, we will analyze the main consequences of the U.S. War on Terror. Although the list of challenges that the United States has faced is long and not yet final, we have singled out the key external and internal consequences. The external effects we have identified are the crisis of global leadership, the weakening of relations with the allies, the growth of China in the lee, and the rise of populism. Among the internal ones, we included the strengthening of the presidential function, the increase of state power, more profound social polarization, an increase in budget expenditures, and a growing deficit, as well as human casualties.

THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

The twentieth century ended with “an extraordinary imbalance in world power resources” (Nye 2014, 118). In terms of hard power, the U.S. was the only state capable of projecting a military force in any corner of the world. At the same time, its economy was vital, and the volume of GDP was as big as the next five largest world economies together. American universities were unrivaled when it came to soft power, while American culture and the entertainment industry flooded the globe. Given the colossal military budget and network of alliances worldwide, “the remaining countries could not create a classical balance to American power” (Nye 2014, 118). America was not only the leader of the free world but a global leader with terrifying power. For the first time since the Peace of Westphalia (1648), the international system had a unipolar structure, and one state was able to shape the game’s rules.

Moreover, other states were willing to accept American leadership voluntarily. It was a time of unipolar (Krauthammer 1990) and liberal moment (Ikenberry 2020, 255)

Twenty years later, many states no longer consider the United States “a leader worth following” (Bremmer 2015). The world today is facing a crisis of American leadership. Of course, the War on Terror is not the only cause of such a situation. Although the United States was seen as a benign hegemon, American power was intimidating to others. By the nature of things, unbalanced power is seen as a danger to others. As Timothy Garton Ash put it, “the main problem with American power is the power itself. It would be dangerous even for an archangel to wield so much power” (Garton Ash 2002). It is also expected that others tended to increase their power. However, American engagement in the War on Terror has significantly undermined the leadership potential of the United States.

One of the transformative moments and key causes of the weakening of the U.S. leadership role in the post-9/11 era was the Iraq War (2003). The aggressive unilateralism of the United States during the preparations for the Iraq War led to other states beginning to perceive the United States as a threat. While America had almost unanimous support for the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, it gathered a “coalition of the willing” against Iraq. In fact, “a coalition of the anonymous, the dependent, the half-hearted and the uninvolved, whose lukewarm support supposedly confers some moral authority” (Keller 2003). The former maxim of action “multilaterally, when possible, unilaterally when necessary” (Kagan 2004) gave way to the maxim “with us or against,” which is more appropriate for imperial powers than for democracies. Initiating an intervention without a Security Council decision provoked disapproval from even close allies like France and Germany. At the same time, Russia and China were concerned about U.S. “imperial temptations” (Snyder 2002).

Iraq has launched a chain of events that has resulted in a series of crises and weakened the U.S. leadership role. It’s hard to disagree with Ian Bremmer (2015), who argues that “there was never a golden age of American power when everyone followed America’s lead. Even at the height of the Cold War, U.S. allies often defied Washington’s wishes.” The example of French President Charles de Gaulle is perhaps the most illustrative. However, what is different today is that America is “less able to convene a coalition, forge trade agreements, build support for sanctions, broker compromise on an important multinational dispute, or persuade others to follow it into conflict than at any time in the past seven decades” (Bremmer 2015).

Finally, perhaps the most significant symbol of the absence of U.S. global leadership is that we are seeing signs of a hard balancing against the U.S. for the first time since the Cold War. The words of Christopher Layne (2004, 119) “the Iraq War may come to be seen as a pivotal geopolitical event that heralded the beginning of serious counter-hegemonic balancing against the United States” today sound almost prophetic. Russia, China, and other countries are now truly challenging the power of the United States. At the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century, the world enters a period where many notice the seeds of “Cold War-style global divisions” (Cooley and Nexon 2020, 190). Although the new U.S. president acknowledges that there are areas of cooperation where cooperation with Russia and China is necessary, such as climate change or combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, he also brings together allies and countries that the United States could use in future competition. America will continue to have the ability to gather a strong coalition in the future, but the War on Terror has exhausted the possibility of U.S. global leadership.

THE WEAKENING OF AMERICAN ALLIANCES

If the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington marked the beginning of the War on Terror, Iraq invasion (2003) could be seen as the beginning of American deviation in that war. At the same time, it was the beginning of aggressive U.S. unilateralism and the loss of international support. As early as December 2001, President Bush, in a meeting with Tommy Franks, a U.S. Army general who headed the United States Central Command from 2000 to 2003, discussed the military option for Iraq (Daalder and Lindsay 2003). The decision to invade Iraq was made in the summer of 2002, regardless of whether the intervention would be approved by the Security Council or not. In addition, the U.S. administration decided to use all resources to achieve its goal and gather as broad an international coalition as possible.

The United States viewed the invasion of Iraq as an extension of the War on Terror. If necessary, by deception and fabrication of facts, they tried to show that there is no peace and security if Saddam does not leave power and that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction. However, they did not expect resistance from other great powers, especially not the allies. France and Germany were in the lead among European countries in opposing any solution adopted outside the framework of the United Nations. Moreover, there was a possibility that France would veto and Germany would vote against the United States proposal in the Security Council.

America responded to such actions with the imperial strategy of *divide et impera*. While France and Germany have struggled to build European unity over the Iraq war so that, once again, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) does not prove ineffective, the United States has undermined that unity. They sought to divide Europe, “punish France and Germany” (Gordon 2007) and gather a “coalition of the willing.” They succeeded in that. Europe was divided into *old* and *new*, into *Europeans* and *Atlantists*. The E.U. consultative and consensus-based foreign policy-making process “proved to be either fictitious or irrevocably broken” (Lewis 2011, 70), and the seeds of mistrust among transatlantic allies were sown.

Until the invasion of Iraq in 2003, there was a belief among the allies about the benign character and liberal foundations of American power. However, Bush’s launch of intervention against Iraq turned things around. Iraq was a game-changer. After Iraq, the allies also realized that one word prevailed in the construct “liberal hegemony.” Of course, it is the word *hegemony* (Nedeljkovic 2020). It was increasingly questioned whether hegemony could be liberal or benign. In response to aggressive unilateralism, some European allies of the United States and France, and Germany as influential members of NATO and the E.U. applied a soft balancing strategy. Although France and Germany did not rely on a hard or traditional balancing strategy, such actions of European states were unusual. For the first time, transatlantic allies directly undermined each other’s interests and built opposing coalitions (Nedeljkovic 2020).

The war on terror has damaged U.S. relations with several non-European allies. Pakistan supported the invasion of Afghanistan and initially provided operational and logistical support. However, occasional unannounced U.S. airstrikes on Pakistani territory, military confrontations between Pakistani and U.S. troops on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, unannounced Operation Neptune Spear and the assassination of Osama Bin Laden, and many other examples have made the mistrust between Pakistan and the United States deepen. It was similar to Saudi Arabia, which rejected the request of the U.S. to invade Iraq from its territory, or Turkey, whose interests in the Middle East were often opposed to the American ones.

In addition, unilateralism and the occasional U.S. foreign policy adventurism, situations in which they undermined the interests of even the closest allies and doubts about whether to fulfill their allied obligations, damaged the U.S. Cold War reputation as a reliable ally (Yahri-Milo 2018). Does that mean the United States has been left without allies? Definitely not. The United States still has the most potent and widespread network of alliances globally, but allied potential and credibility were significantly destroyed during the War on Terror.

IN THE LEE OF WAR ON TERROR: HOW CHINA BECAME COMPETITOR?

It is not uncommon to assess the events of 9/11 in terms of their consequences for U.S. foreign policy that the turn towards the War on Terror was, at the same time, a “geopolitical gift” for China. “In terms of geopolitical influence, the CCP has been the biggest beneficiary of the War on Terror”, said former deputy national security advisor of Barack Obama, Ben Rhodes (2021). The same China that had been seen after the Cold war as “a weak and impoverished country that had been aligned with the United States against the Soviet Union for over a decade” (Mearsheimer 2021, 48). As Mearsheimer has noted, the rest of the world ignored China’s rising population and wealth as building blocks of a strong military. A direct consequence was that, instead of preventing China from becoming more robust and mightier initially, the U.S. and its allies allowed them to challenge the basics of the post-Cold War war international order. The long establishing multipolarity of the international system is threatened to turn into its antipode: “the new Cold war” with all its echoes of history (Brands, Gaddis 2021). China’s success and U.S.’s imprudence share the blame for this turn. “China has always had revisionist goals; the mistake was allowing it to become powerful enough to act on them” (Mearsheimer 2021, 51), but what was the relevance of the War on Terror for letting China become more powerful?

During the 80s and 90s, we can notice a kind of continuity in the U.S. economic approach towards China. The same was during the 2000s. Institutionalizing the status of a most favored nation and then allowing membership in World Trade Organization (WTO) were preconditions for the unhampered economic growth of China. One of the main arguments for justifying such liberal views on China’s economic development has its ground in the processes of democratization. The wealthier China was, the more democratic its society would be. But, nobody counts with unintended consequences.

Rarely the U.S. presidents were aware of possible policy failures. For example, when “Clinton admitted in 2000, ‘We don’t know where it’s going,’ and George W. Bush said the same year, ‘There are no guarantees’” (Mearsheimer 2021, 54), they weren’t even close to assessing future relations among the two powers. Nevertheless, the first decade of the XXI century didn’t show any progress in correcting that deficiency. A top priority of the U.S. foreign engagement became the War on Terror. It was a period of blindness to Chinese growth. As

Rhodes (2021) stated, “ironically, China’s ascent in global influence accelerated rapidly after 9/11,” and the main reason was the U.S. foreign and security policy focus on terrorism and the Middle East, leaving space for the development of China’s influence on numerous regions outside of Asia.

It was completely different a few months before a terrorist attack. On April 1, 2001, a Chinese fighter jet toppled a U.S. reconnaissance plane, detained crew, and inspected in detail the crashed aircraft. It was an announcement of hostility, in case 9/11 had never happened. The U.S. decided to turn attention to the War on Terror, allowing “China’s economic and military power grew exponentially” (De Luce 2021).

Interpreting U.S. policy towards China after 9/11 as ignorance, reactive policy, or the inertia of approach from the previous decade would be nothing more than destructive simplification. In that sense, we agree with the argument appraised by Nguyen (2017), which evaluates the first period after the 9/11 attacks in terms of U.S. policy towards Asia as “effectively cooperation with China, substantially enhancing the United States’ Asian alliances and extensively engaging with Asian multilateral institutions.” The Bush administration changed policy course and also political discourse towards China. While Clinton saw China as a strategic partner, Bush’s views strongly differed as he approached China as a strategic competitor. But still, during his two terms as a President, he did much in normalizing relations with China as a rising power. The economy of China was embedded in the international economic and trade system. Bush maintained good personal relations with political representatives of China and was perceived as “a true friend of China” (Demick 2009). There was a gap between discourse and actual actions. We see it mobilizing all efforts in the War on Terror and keeping potential conflicts with rising powers within the regional political and security dynamics and framework of multilateralism. Of course, all the moves of the Bush administration wouldn’t be possible without the fact that “The Chinese government quickly expressed sympathy for the human and material loss and took a strong position in support of U.S. efforts to combat international terrorism” (Qinggo 2003, 164).

The U.S. made a mistake with its policy towards China. It’s the attitude of many experts in the field of international relations and security theory and practice. We’ve already elaborated on realism’s view through the word of John Mearsheimer. But we can add Kishore Mahbubani, who stated that “It was a huge mistake for the United States to focus on the war on terror, because the real challenge was going to come from China” (cited in: De Luce 2021), or Evan Medeiros who

thought that the U.S. “gave them 20 years, and we retooled our military for a fight totally irrelevant to the principal security challenge of today” (cited in: De Luce 2021). The change has come with Donald Trump as a president because “he quickly abandoned the engagement strategy that the previous four administrations had embraced, pursuing containment instead” (Mearsheimer 2021, 55). Nevertheless, it seems that it was a late response.

THE WAVES OF POPULISM INSTEAD OF THE NEW WAVE OF DEMOCRACY

The consequences of the 9/11 terrorist attacks were not geographically limited only to U.S. territory, nor were political repercussions generated only on U.S. political and social systems. The far-reaching impact of this *black swan* at the beginning of the 21st century is measured by the strength of the processes previously attributed to globalization, democratization, or, for example, industrialization. The creation of the world safe for democracy, which became the purpose of U.S. external (military) action, soon showed its face and, in many cases, turned into a side effect of creating a breeding ground for the flourishing of populist regimes. Therefore, it is not surprising that many authors have noticed in a few cases that “where populist parties were indeed fast claiming legitimacy by pointing to their previous warnings against the evil of Islam” (Bergmann 2020, 105). That wasn’t the case only in the countries where U.S. and allies tried to implement regime change strategies. The spillover effect took place in western liberal democracy also. While in Northern Africa and the Middle East region post-9/11 wars “instead of democracy, produced the vacuum into which sectarian and tribal identities could flourish” (Held and McNally 2015), the rest of the world showed a tendency to populism based on the citizen’s anxiety, fear and firm rule based on the personalization of power. On the wings of the global War on Terror, leaders from all around the world acted unconstitutionally and, in some cases, took undemocratic measures by virtue of “the cumulative negative impact of the failed post-9/11 wars, the intensification of transnational terrorism, and a growing xenophobic discourse that places virtually all blame for every problem on some form of Other” (Held and McNally 2016).

Several illustrative examples support this view. In the presidential debates in 2002, Marin Le Pen strongly alluded to anti-Muslim sentiments, and she was very much in favor of the events in U.S. foreign policy. At the same time, in Italy, Prime minister Silvio Berlusconi leads in his statement that qualifies “Western civilization

as superior to Islamic culture” (Bergmann 2020, 116). In the far north of Europe, support for Danish Peoples Party was born in Denmark. Similar trends are observed in the actions and rhetorical performances of Norwegian Progress Party officials.

If we look at the development of the situation almost two decades later, a new wave of populism has swept Europe. Although it is difficult to prove the cause-and-effect logic of contemporary events with the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the consequent responses led by the United States, it is clear that this is a chain of events triggered by these events and political change. As David Held in his book on global politics after 9/11 speaks, we testify failed wars, political fragmentation, and the rise of authoritarianism (Held 2016). The U.S. is an exporter of not only good democratic practices but also ugly ones.

9/11 events contributed to the rise of populism and authoritarianism in many ways. First of all, we can notice a revival or born in some parts of the world the anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment in political discourse, mostly among European countries. Strengthening far-right political ideas and their respective election results were an alarm for democracy in those countries. Today, we have rapidly growing literature covering populist regimes and political forces from Italy, Poland, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Germany, and the U.S. The final result of those political processes based on extremist ideas, latent violence is that “extreme right-wing ideas were becoming mainstream and were normalized, with far-right political parties gaining representation in more than three dozen national parliaments and the European Parliament” (Miller-Idriss 2021, 54). The American response personalized in the War on Terror created a fertile environment for far-right political articulations. “The attacks were a gift to peddlers of xeno-phobia, white supremacism, and Christian nationalism”, as Miller-Idriss (2021) stated in her brilliant analysis of the connections between 9/11 events and today’s growing political relevance of far-right ideas. In other words, paying attention only to “hunting” terrorists all around the world, left enough space for extremists groups to act undisturbed.

The second populism driving force is the changed political governance style, especially in conduction foreign policy. By creating an atmosphere of fear from “outsiders”, individual insecurity, and the need for firm rule in combating threats from, for example, immigrants or terrorist sleeper cells, the leaders simply “opened a door for extremists, who marched right through it” (Miller-Idriss 2021, 63). In order to hold their positions, mainstream political parties are denounced to embrace some extremist ideas. Take Donald Trump as an example. It is generally known that he (mis)used 9/11 events for justifying his intent to shut

down all Muslim entries to the U.S. during his campaign, saying that “‘thousands of people were cheering on 9/11” (Hall 2021, 53). In other words, the essence of populist leaders’ operations lies in providing domestic support instead of effectively resolving issues and post-9/11 patterns of politics are the solid ground for that. We completely agree with Hall (2021) when he says that “‘Trump’s foreign policy rhetoric has been largely to appeal to his domestic base and to generate a necessary sense of crisis to mobilize his supporters”. Additionally, sown the seed of hatred to ‘Other’ enabled leaders “‘to influence public perceptions and to win votes by questioning the desirability of Muslims in both the USA and Europe, claiming that Muslims’ religious and cultural attributes make them unacceptable as neighbors” (Haynes 2020, 1).

THE GROWTH OF PRESIDENTIAL POWER

One of the most pronounced changes in the American political system after September 11, 2001, is reflected in the increasingly strong position that the executive takes in creating and implementing foreign and security policy. Although numerous lines have been written about changes in the balance between the legislature and the executive, the White House and the State Department, and even among individuals within the President’s office and the National Security Council, it is essential for us to here to determine how the President himself procured for its function a handful of powers, changing the normative framework and interpreting it in its favor.

At the very beginning, it is necessary to mention that changes in the balance of branches of government are not new. The aspiration of the executive to seize as wide a range of competencies as possible can be traced, to say the least, to the establishment of the National Security Council during the Harry Truman administration in 1947. Of course, we should not forget the views of the authors who believe that the “‘power of the Presidency has been expanding from the Founding” (Marshall 2008, 506) or those who have been following this trend since the beginning of the 20th century and “‘Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson and later with chief executives such as FDR, LBJ, and Reagan” (Oleszek and Oleszek 2009, 273). Numerous mental experiments on the perception of the power of the president lead, even a layman, to conclusions about the constant growth of the power of the executive and the aspiration of each subsequent President to further increase the extended competencies, or at least verify the current situation.

Our aspiration is not a re-reading of the Federalists Papers, an interpretation of the U.S. Constitution, or a chronicle of the legal

codification of the conduct of foreign affairs. Such an endeavor would require a new study that goes far beyond the scope of the work presented. Instead, we want to point out specific manifestations of the increase in the power of the executive power, with an emphasis on the presidential function, due to the events of 9/11. Discussions about whether terrorist attacks and the need to respond quickly were directly connected with governance changes within the political system continue until today. Framed by broader debates about presidential powers, there is a tendency to establish a direct connection between terror as a threat to national security and the competencies of the President. It is difficult to determine the cause-and-effect relationship. However, it is still possible to say that the declared War on Terror has tremendously changed the patterns of foreign policy decision-making and action in the United States.

Part of the explanation relies on the often criticized vagueness of the Constitution. Namely, Article 2, which determines the competencies of the executive, especially with regard “to take care that the laws are faithfully executed” (Marshal 2008, 509), ultimately leaves the open end in terms of how the President will take care of it. Crises, wars, the use of armed forces, and other cases that require overcoming massive bureaucracies and efficient action affect the growth of presidential powers without the danger of undermining the legitimacy of the President’s position, thanks to which many functions have been unnoticed.

The second line of the explanation relies on the detailed interpretation of the growth of the administrative apparatus and the process of bureaucratization of foreign policy. Of course, it is difficult to penetrate through just a few lines into the “the birth of the administrative state” (Pestritto 2007), determine the causes of its “rise and rise” (Lawson 1994), or summarize “milestones in the evolution” (Dudley 2021). It has already been said that the growth of the President’s power is partly due to his skill in finding shortcuts in decision-making procedures. However, even if we accept the growth of the administrative state as inevitable, it is clear that the President himself is still at its top. In other words, we agree entirely with the argument that “the expansion of the federal bureaucracy necessarily invests the Presidency with enormous power” (Marshal 2008, 514).

The enumeration could go on almost indefinitely. Access to confidential information, control through the appointment and appointment of administrative officials, a central place in media coverage, the ability to engage armed forces independently of congressional approval, combined with the need to act quickly and efficiently, are

only additional support to “justify” expanding presidential powers. All of these factors appear to have achieved a synergistic effect after the 9/11 terrorist attacks “with a rallying U.S. citizens, Congress, the world community behind President Bush” (Thuber 2009, 4), giving the then President immeasurable political capital that supports almost 90% of public support (Pfiffner 2009, 37).

Adverse circumstances created fertile ground for the growth of presidential power. By approving 40 billion dollars to strengthen domestic and international security and allowing the President to start a War on Terror, Congress (un)intentionally added weights to the executive branch and permanently upset the balance in its favor. The blurring of daily politics by the fight against terror was reflected in the fact that “of the 223 presidential statements and press releases, 40 photo ops, and 12 radio addresses that occurred between September 11, 2001, and December 31, 2002, more than half dealt with terrorism at home or abroad” (Wayne 2009, 74) and enabled the further strengthening of the presidential function to the detriment of other branches of government.

Manifestations in which this has become noticeable are numerous, and the most common are: “domestic wiretapping; blocking White House aides from testifying before congressional committees; the practice of rendition; the creation of secret prisons abroad; interpreting or not enforcing, certain provisions of laws as he sees fit” (Oleszek and Oleszek 2009, 273). In addition, the President has, in the throes of “internal” unilateralism. “issued a small avalanche of directives and executive orders: blocking property and prohibiting terrorist-related transactions (EO 13224), establishing an Office of Homeland Security and the Homeland Security Council in the White House (EO 13228), critical infrastructure protection (EO 13231), and designating Afghanistan and its airspace a combat zone (EO 13239)” (Owens 2009, 312).

It was a war against an enemy whose existence was defined by the President’s perception, geographically indeterminate, time-varying, and without a clear war goal, in the way that military doctrine proclaims. It was therefore clear that the absence of the traditional congressional declaration of war, which was last used in World War II, would change the previous practice of using force outside the United States and “blurred the line between a metaphor and a legal state (war), thereby providing him with foundational authority for other non-battlefield policies (e.g., military detention policies, suspension of *habeas corpus*, etc.) (Kassop 2007, cited in: Owens 2009, 315).

What was announced by the initial, necessary action should have been authorized through legal procedures. This was not particularly

difficult, especially since the Republican majority retained its majority in Congress until the 2006 election. We have already mentioned some decisions shaped by executive powers. Still, we should not forget the legal codification of the new reality made by Congress and particular departments of the executive branch. Enhanced interrogation techniques, military commissions, secret detains of Muslims, domestic surveillance (i.e., President's Surveillance Program (PSP)) (Carlisle 2021) were all products of Department of Justice decisions or President's executive orders authorized congressionally a few years later, during 2006 (i.e., 2006 Military Commissions Act) or at the very beginning in the field of surveillance through Patriot Act in 2001. Acting in such a way, Congress "collectively has acquiesced in its own marginalization" (Owens 2006, 258).

There is quiet consensus that Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) irreversibly expanded presidential powers. Broad, pretty unclear and unprecise for legal codification language such as the definition of potential targets as persons "planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons" (cited in: Carlisle 2021) was suitable terrain for current and all future presidents to launch military actions all around the world. Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Lybia, combating ISIS are just part of the whole list of AUMF in action.

Twenty years later, the situation hasn't changed dramatically. We could say that the public just got used to a new reality of presidential powers to act outside of the U.S. relying on post-9/11 laws. Invoking Arthur M. Schlesinger, famous historian words that the presidency "has come to see itself in messianic terms as the appointed savior of a world whose unpredictable dangers call for a rapid and incessant deployment of men, arms, and decisions behind a wall of secrecy" (Schlesinger 2004, cited in: Genovese 2017, 61) we may conclude that administration changes its presidents but still strive to expand its powers.

HUMAN CASUALTIES AND THE "CREDIT CARD WARS"

The War on Terror was a war of choice. Of course, it is hard to imagine that the only superpower does not react and does not tend to quickly punish the perpetrators when it is directly attacked on its territory. However, the United States could choose who to attack, when to attack, with which weapons, and how strongly. They could opt for attacks by special operations forces and airstrikes on terrorist strongholds, or for

invasions and searches of every hole in the world that terrorists were potentially hiding. The United States opted for option two, and that was not unexpected. Suppose we accept Thucydides' (2000 38) claim that the three most powerful motives for war and the initiator of human action, in general, are fear, prestige, and interests. In that case, we will conclude that after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the U.S. had all three motives. They feared new terrorist attacks, their prestige and pride were hurt, and numerous political and security interests induced a fierce response. The justification for such an aggressive response is and will be debated, but it is hard not to overlook human and economic costs.

In the War on Terror (2001-2021), 7052 American soldiers and 21 civilian officials lost their lives (Crawford and Lutz 2021). Additionally, "more than 50,000 were wounded in action, and more than 30,000 U.S. veterans of post-9/11 conflicts have taken their own lives" (Rhodes 2021, 26). The struggle for the soldiers' life was thus transferred to U.S. soil. The U.S. troops have been killed worldwide, in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Yemen, and other places where the United States and its allies have fought the battle against terrorists. Although the death of every person is a tragedy, in the two-decade war against terrorism, significantly fewer soldiers died than in World War II, World War I, the Vietnam War, or the Korean War, and even less than in the American Revolutionary War. However, the so-called *CNN effect*, social networks, and the ease of reaching the horrors of war to American citizens made Americans much more sensitive to every victim. This has contributed to the anti-war discourse and the call for America to turn to itself in the presidential campaigns since 2008.

When the trillions spent from Libya to Pakistan are added to the lost lives, it is not surprising that in recent years, the speech of the presidential candidate George McGovern's *Come home America* has been quoted more and more often. Although the Pentagon or the U.S. government have never given exact figures on how much money was spent in the War on Terror, based on research by the *Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs* (2021), we can conclude that the total cost exceeds \$ 8 trillion. Comparatively, it is slightly more than 533 annual budgets of the Republic of Serbia or almost 15 annual budgets of the United Kingdom. Of the 8,000 trillion, \$ 5.8 trillion includes "the estimated direct and indirect costs of spending in the United States post-9/11 war zones, homeland security efforts for counterterrorism, and interest payments on war borrowing" (Crawford 2021) while "future medical care and disability payments for veterans, over the next decades, will likely exceed \$ 2.2 trillion in federal spending" (Crawford 2021).

In addition to the enormous costs, the War on Terror carries one additional problem. Throughout history, the United States has had an economic model “to sustain it with sufficient bodies and cash” for every war, even the American Revolution (Ackerman 2021, 69). The Union fought the Civil War with “the first-ever draft and the first-ever income tax”, the Second World War “saw a national mobilization, including another draft, further taxation, and the sale of war bonds”. One of the hallmarks of the Vietnam War was “an extremely unpopular draft that spawned an anti-war movement and sped that conflict to its eventual end” (Ackerman 2021, 69). The War on Terror, like all other American wars, had its economic model. It is a model that is financed from the budget deficit.

In the last two decades, the budget deficit of the United States amounts to close to 18 trillion dollars. In addition to the War on Terror, the remediation of the consequences of the global economic and financial crisis and the coronavirus pandemic contributed to the enormous deficit. However, the lion’s share has been spent around the world in the fight against terrorism. The economic model according to which the war is financed from the budget deficit is already showing consequences. Although the ballooning national deficit has “anesthetized the American people to the fiscal cost of the War on Terror” (Ackerman 2021, 69), the indirect consequences could not be obscured. The status of the middle class in the United States has not been improved for decades. Health-care and infrastructure are in a rather bad condition, while about 15% of the foreign debt is owed to the main global challenger, China. Therefore, it is not surprising that both the government and American citizens have become less and less inclined to foreign policy adventurism in recent years.

CONCLUSION: DID UNITED STATES WIN WAR ON TERROR?

Under normal circumstances, the answer to the question we ask in the conclusion is relatively easy. The winner of a war is the state or group of states that defeat an enemy on the battlefield and dictate the conditions of peace. Conditions can be just or unjust, they can be the foundation of peace or the seed of new conflicts, but it is clear who is the winner and the loser. In the War on Terror, the answer to the question of who won is not apparent. But asking who lost, it is somewhat clearer. Looking at the goals and expectations before the terrorist attacks on September 11, it seems that Al Qaeda has been defeated. Analyzing bin Laden’s correspondence, Nelly Lahoud (2021 13) states that “bin

Laden never anticipated that the United States would go to war in response to the assault. Indeed, he predicted that in the wake of the attack, the American people would take to the streets, replicating the protests against the Vietnam War and calling on their government to withdraw from Muslim-majority countries ". 9/11 was just a Pyrrhic victory for al Qaeda, but they lost the war. The leadership of this terrorist organization was killed or fled and hid throughout the Middle East in the post-9/11 period, and Al Qaeda has never regained its former strength. Except in Kenya in 2002, al-Qaeda failed to launch a massive attack abroad. Most importantly, the United States did not withdraw from the Muslim world, which was the primary goal of this terrorist organization. Moreover, the United States appears to be more present in the Middle East than before 9/11. Bin Laden changed the world, "just not in the ways that he wanted" (Lahoud 2021, 13).

Given that al-Qaeda did not win, the question arises whether the United States won the War on Terror? In the early years of the War on Terror, the United States seemed to be winning. The Taliban regime fell quickly, as did Saddam Hussein's dictatorial regime. Al-Qaeda was retreating and hiding. However, over time, U.S. goals began to expand, the war turned into decades of agony, and the question of Can the War on Terror Be Won (Gordon 2007a, 53) became more relevant. When the Middle East ended up in flames after the Arab Spring and the rise of ISIS, views on American victory were less and less justified. In the end, the painful withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 made many Americans feel defeated.

For all these reasons, the question of America's victory in the Global War on Terror is not easy. The question of goals precedes the answer to the question of victory. What was the goal of the United States in the War on Terror? Assuming that the U.S. had maximalist goals — eliminating all terrorists, eliminating the terrorist threat, discrediting terrorist ideology, and democratizing the Middle East — we can certainly say that America did not win. On the other hand, if the U.S. had minimalist goals - eliminating those responsible for the 9/11 attacks, punishing al-Qaeda shelter states, preventing new major terrorist attacks, and strengthening U.S. security - then America won the War on Terror. Bin Laden and others responsible for the 9/11 attacks were punished, as were the regimes that provided refuge to al-Qaeda. After 9/11, a total of 107 Americans were killed in jihadist attacks on American soil, almost half of them in the attack of Omar Mateen, an American citizen who declared allegiance to ISIS (Byman 2021, 34).

Terrorism is a lesser threat to the United States today than it was

on the eve of 9/11, but the price paid by the Americans is enormous. Al-Qaeda was defeated in battles around the world, but given the price paid, it must be noted that the victory that the United States won in the War on Terror is nothing but Pyrrhic.

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СЈЕДИЊЕНЕ ДРЖАВЕ И РАТ ПРОТИВ ТЕРОРИЗМА: ЦЕНА ПИРОВЕ ПОБЕДЕ

Резиме

Повлачење америчких трупа из Авганистана током августа 2001. године ставило је тачку на најдужи рат који је САД икада водила, као и на прву фазу глобалног рата против тероризма. У том смислу, јављају се два важна питања, на која ћемо покушати да одговоримо у овом раду. Прво, које су кључне спољне и унутрашње последице са којима се САД суочавају због рата против тероризма? Друго, да ли су САД постигле своје циљеве у том рату. Спољни ефекти које смо идентификовали су криза глобалног лидерства, слабљење односа са савезницима, раст Кине и раст популизма. Међу унутрашњим, издвајају се јачање председничке функције, повећање моћи државе, друштвена поларизација, повећање буџетске потрошње и растући дефицит, као и људске жртве. На самом крају, допринели смо дебати о природи америчке „победе“ у рату против тероризма, аргументујући да финални исход треба да буде сматран „Пировом победом“.

Кључне речи: САД, 11. септембар, рат против тероризма, спољна политика, амерички председник, глобално лидерство

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Овај рад је примљен 12. новембра 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на телефонском састанку Редакције, 15. новембра 2021. године.

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WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN: EXIT STRATEGIES**

Abstract

After twenty long and frustrating years, America has finally withdrawn completely from Afghanistan. This paper gives an overview of American actions in Afghanistan, starting with the George W. Bush administration and the invasion of American troops, assassination of Osama bin Laden and suppression of Al-Qaeda's activities, through the Obama administration, during which the ISAF mission ended and throughout which the withdrawal of American troops was announced. After that, an overview of the activities during the mandate of Donald Trump is given, during which definite conditions for the withdrawal of troops were created, by signing the agreement in Doha between the United States of America and the Taliban, which was meant to bring the peace to the Afghanistan. At the end of the paper, an overview of the activities and the situation on the ground during the administration of Joe Biden is given, during which the complete withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan was finally completed, which the Taliban used it to reoccupy the country and declare the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

Keywords: *War in Afghanistan, U.S. withdrawal, Taliban, Doha Agreement, Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Afghanistan*

INTRODUCTION

US military intervention in Afghanistan has not been just the longest American war that lasted almost two decades, it has also been

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* The paper was created within the scientific research activities of the Institute of European Studies in Belgrade, funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of Republic of Serbia.

the most challenging mission for both U.S. army and NATO with the high cost in deaths of US soldiers and the expenditure of many billions of dollars¹ in a country that did not accidentally acquire the name “graveyard of empires” (Pillalamarri 2017).

Afghanistan became a significant US foreign policy objective in 2001, when the United States, in the response for the 9/11 terrorist attack committed by Al Qaeda operatives on US soil, conducted a military campaign against this terrorist organization and the Afghan Sunni Islamist Taliban government that harbored and supported it. Military operation (named “Operation Enduring Freedom”) that was considered as an act of USA self-defense under the UN Charter, was conducted by US led “coalition of the willing”, while NATO invoked its Article V collective defense clause on 12th September 2001 as legal basis for intervention. As the Taliban refused than-American President George W Bush demand to hand over Bin Laden (and other leaders of AQ) and to disband their camps with more than 10 000 AQ fighters that were trained in Afghanistan (BBC History 2018), military campaign followed.

US STRATEGIES IN AFGHANISTAN DURING THE GEORGE W: BUSH’S PRESIDENCY

US intervention in Afghanistan started on October 7, 2001, with airstrikes on Taliban targets throughout the country and close air support to anti-Taliban forces in northern Afghanistan. Two weeks later, small number of US Army Special Forces started their deployment on the ground helping other militant groups to fight the Taliban. At the beginning of November 2001, about 1,300 American troops were in the Afghanistan as commandos and ground troops, mostly Marines, begin to arrive. In just more than a month, the Taliban were forced to evacuate Kabul, which was soon retaken by US backed Taliban rivals (known as the Northern Alliance). When those forces approached Kandahar, birthplace of Taliban movement, the Taliban offered terms of surrender (that included amnesty for their fighters), but the US official rejected it. Therefore, the Taliban sought shelter in distant, rural parts of their country or escaped across the border to Pakistan where they tried to recover and regroup. In Kabul, Afghanistan capital,

1) Meanwhile U.S. troops lost 2,442 killed and 20,666 wounded troops in the war since 2001 (according to the Defense Department), while 1, 444 other NATO members troops died during the conflict. It’s estimated that over 3,800 U.S. private security contractors have been killed. U.S. has spent total of 2,26 trillions of dollars on all expenses in Afghanistan theater of conflict (Debre 2021)

the Americans installed new interim national government led by Hamid Karzai, that was previously (on December, 1, 2001) formed by Afghan delegates in Germany under the auspices of UN.

Overthrow of the Taliban and the formation of new Afghan government represented the beginning new phase of American involvement in Afghanistan: after the initial military objective were completed, a coalition of more than 40 countries (which included all NATO members) formed a UN led security mission (named "International Security Assistance Force" (ISAF)) to protect achieved peace and help defending new government and its nascent military.

The revival of the Taliban's resistance soon showed that the enthusiasm of American officials about "easy victory" was premature and that the work in Afghanistan was far from over. "Search and destroy" mission of the remaining terrorist groups were continued, so more than 2500 US troops participated in heavy battles in the mountainous region of Tora Bora looking for Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. The U.S. has ended the year with about 9,700 troops deployed in Afghanistan, mostly going after hidden Taliban insurgents.

At the beginning of 2002, two parallel and distinct operations were taking place in Afghanistan. First one was UN mandate (starting from the Bonn International Conference in December 2001) multilateral ("coalition of the willing") ISAF peacekeeping and country rebuilding mission, initially deployed in Kabul to defend government institutions. ISAF role was a defensive one and it was not oriented towards fighting against the Taliban or Al Qaeda militants. Second one was US unilateral counter-terrorism operation "Enduring Freedom", continuation of US military engagement against the Taliban and Al Qaeda (at the end of 2002 there were about 9,700 US troops still deployed in theatre of war, mostly going after Taliban insurgents). "Although in principle these two missions could have fulfilled their tasks operating in the same country in the light of a planned division of jobs, they ended up creating several problems of coordination and failing to counter the rising insurgency. Three specific aspects are underlined in this section: the problem of coordination between "Enduring Freedom" and ISAF; the illusion of 'keeping the peace' even if no real peace existed and the failure to recognize that the problem was neither terrorism nor traditional peacekeeping but the insurgency." (Carati 2015, 206) Some experts even believe that the "two tracks" actions produced serious strategic mistakes in terms of goals of operations, indistinguishability of enemies (the Taliban and Al Qaeda) and created additional chaos (for example, unilateral military actions of US Marines against the Taliban relied on other militant factions in Afghanistan that

did not recognize the new authorities in Kabul, which directly undermined ISAF's goals of strengthening the new government) (Carati 2015, 206).

During year 2002 The George W. Bush administration recognized the difficulties produced by "two track" approach and tried to correct them: Bush speech in January (State of Union address) emphasize at turning the White House and the Pentagon into new strategic goals and aligning with ISAF (United States and Afghanistan were "allies against terror" and that "we will be partners in rebuilding that country"). "By early September 2002, leading Bush administration officials were apparently ready to support the notion of expanding the ISAF mission beyond Kabul, even though they still did not want U.S. personnel involved. A few weeks later, however, the administration withdrew its support for broadening the scope of the operation—no matter who led it." (Marten 2002, 37) Thus, the Americans agreed not only to participate in the multilateral, UN-led mission (ISAF) (and, also, became dominant in it), but at the same time continued to lead their unilateral operation.

As the focus of their interest shifted more and more towards Iraq and the impending invasion in late 2002, Afghanistan fell into the background and the number of troops began to decline. Therefore, in late 2003 there were about 13,100 US troops in Afghanistan. This number rose to 20,300 in April 2004 as US started building up forces along the Afghan-Pakistani border and providing security for fledgling reconstruction projects. By 2005, the Taliban regrouped in Pashtun heartland and began stronger military resistance against both ISAF and US troops, but as insurgency in occupied Iraq escalated during that period, the present US force in Afghanistan remained just over 20,000. Their number rises in late 2007 to 25,000, but still, Iraq was the priority. As the Taliban resistance continued to grow, US gradually increased their forces to around 30,000 by the end of the George W. Bush Administration.

OBAMA'S PRESIDENCY: FIRST INCREASE OF THE NUMBER OF TROOPS - THEN GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL

With the arrival of Barack Obama in the White House, the strategic focus of the United States shifted back to Afghanistan. Less than three weeks after his inauguration, Obama ordered 17,000 extra US troops to be transferred to Afghanistan and thereby boosted troops already deployed by 50%. The assessment of the new administration

was that the deteriorating situation requires new strategic attention, additional resources and swift action.

This new strategy, publicly proclaimed on 27th March 2009 after the intense consultation of White House with the Pentagon, State Department and foreign allies, included not only Taliban's pockets of resistance inside Afghanistan and along Afghan-Pakistani border, but also "safe havens" of Taliban and AQ guerrillas inside Pakistan. Obama stated: "So I want the American people to understand that we have a clear and focused goal: to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat Al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future. That is the goal that must be achieved. That is a cause that could not be more just. And to the terrorists who oppose us, my message is the same: we will defeat you." (MacAskill 2009) For this plan to work, Obama announced to further bolster US troops in Afghanistan, increase aid to Pakistan, put the stronger pressure on Pakistan to tackle AQ and Taliban "safe havens" inside their country and intensify bombing campaign against AQ and Taliban strongholds on both sides of Afghan-Pakistani border. Also, this new policy insisted on trying to engage Afghanistan regional neighbors (even Iran) to help pacify situation in Afghanistan. "The first sharpest break from his predecessor was the idea of including Pakistan in the overall strategic approach to Afghanistan. His position towards Pakistan has been tougher compared with the Bush years and intended to exert a strong diplomatic pressure on Islamabad. That break was based on the realistic acknowledgment that the north-western part of the country was of key strategic value for the Taliban's insurgency (...) The second change was strictly related to the third one. The shift from a counter-terrorism to a counterinsurgency campaign indeed asked for more troops on the ground. That is to say that choosing for a counterinsurgency campaign meant also deploying fresh troops, since such type of operations requires huge military manpower, particularly in the infantry level" (Carati 2015, 211). Obama administration has also intensified programs for the Afghan Security forces, aiming to strengthen them by the time American troops begin their gradual withdrawal (ANSF grew significantly during next four years, from 224,000 in 2010 to 345,000 in 2014).

But before that, first of all, the presence of American troops on Afghan soil had to be increased and the counter-insurgency (COIN) campaign successfully carried out. In late 2009, President Obama announced that US will be sending 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan and for the first time set mid- 2011 as the date to begin reducing and pulling forces out of the country. With such forces deployed, Americans believed that all new main strategic goals can be achieved: that

Taliban gains in large parts of country could be reversed, AQ could be dismantled and defeated in both Afghanistan and Pakistan and that Afghan government and its military capacity can be built.

During Obama's first term in White House, US and their allies increased military presence in Afghanistan which peaked at over 130,00 (100,00 of them were US troops) in 2010, set a goal to start withdrawal by the end of 2011 and to end combat missions in late 2014. With such military capacities, allied troops led by a general Stanley Mc Crystal carried out a successful contra-insurgency campaign that weakened Taliban position in country. But overall results were mixed: "While security conditions improve in the urban areas, in the rural parts of the country they remained precarious or worsened. International troop casualties due to enemy attacks have constantly declined since 2011, however the decrease was not only an effect of the surge but it resulted also from the international progressive withdrawal and from the leading role that the ANSF are taking in combat operations. In fact, in the last three years ANSF casualties have regularly grown proving that the Transition is on track but also that the insurgency's strength remains considerable" (Carati 2015, 212). By the end of 2010, Obama Administration came to conclusion that conflict in Afghanistan had no military solution, so withdrawal accompanied with the strengthening of Afghan troops began.

On 22 June 2011 President Obama declared that 10,000 troops would be withdrawn by the end of 2011 and an additional 23,000 troops will leave the country by the summer of 2012. He pointed that the drawdown would continue "at a steady pace" until the United States handed over security to the Afghan authorities in 2014. As a part of realization of that process USA and Afghan government signed Strategic partnership Agreement officially named "Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United States of America". According to Agreement and other American plans, on 21, May NATO leaders endorsed exit strategy during NATO summit in Chicago which foresaw that NATO led ISAF Forces will hand over command of all of its mission to Afghan force by the mid – 2013, while shifting its mission from combat to support role (Spetalnick & Ryan 2012). USA started negotiations with the Taliban which led to unilateral suspension of the "Bilateral Security Agreement" by Afghan government in June, 2013, so new Security Agreement had to be reached and signed. In that period, US troops levels down from 77,00 (September, 2013) to 46,000 (December, 2013) and 34, 000 in March, 2014 (The Associated Press 2016) As ISAF forces were reduced in advance of the scheduled 2014 transition, NATO began gradually

transferring security duties to Afghan forces which assumed full responsibility for security nationwide. In late 2014 the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) ended and the noncombat “Resolute Support Mission” (RSM) started on January 1, 2015 that continued training and advising Afghan military. At that time troop levels were cut down to 16,100, while in the March, 2015 only 9,800 of them remained in Afghanistan.

But, in October 2015, Obama proclaimed that situation in Afghanistan is too fragile for US troops to complete their total withdrawal and announced that he plans to keep the current number of troops (9,800) in place during most of 2016 in order to continue counterterrorism missions and advise Afghans battling a resurgent Taliban. “The plan is for the number to decrease to about 5,500 troops by December 2016. Saying the security situation in Afghanistan “remains precarious,” Obama announces that instead of dropping the U.S. troop level to 5,500, he will keep it at about 8,400 through the end of his term on Jan. 20, 2017. He said his successor can determine the next move” (The Associated Press 2016).

TRUMP – DOHA AGREEMENT AND THE BEGINNING OF THE END

In a statement from May 27th, 2014, Barack Obama described the role of the USA as the weakening of Al-Qaeda and the elimination of Osama Bin Laden, which prevented Afghanistan from becoming a haven for members of the AQ and its associates. The ISAF mission has officially taken over the mission of training, advising and preparing the Afghan national security forces (ANSF) for the moment when they take over the role of maintaining order and peace in the country (Griffin 2014, 447). However, one of the problems in the task of handing over the role of security guarantor to the Afghan forces during the process of withdrawing a number of troops throughout Obama’s term was the fact that the Taliban, hiding in the mountains and shelters, have meanwhile regrouped and grew into a serious military-political group, and the fact that Afghan government hasn’t actually controlled the entire territory of the state. Some of these territories were in the hands of the Taliban, others in the hands of local warlords, who have no political loyalty or higher goal than their profits and power, and are willing to work one day with the government and next day with the Taliban. The US administration itself infamously acknowledged that Afghan forces, although numbering about 300,000 people, have only about 10%

combat ready (Kabulov 2013, 8).

Donald Trump, while he was a candidate for the president, has pointed out for a number of years that the American presence in Afghanistan is a terrible mistake that needs to be corrected (Diaz 2017). Moreover, part of his campaign was based on a promise to bring American troops home, that is, to withdraw from Afghanistan. Certainly, there is often a strong dichotomy between ideas and reality, which was also shown in this case, because the Taliban movement continued to strengthen, in parallel with the reduction of the number of troops in the country. In addition to this, a branch of the Islamic State, the so-called ISIS-K or ISKP, or the Islamic State of Korasan Province, has surfaced and became a new threat (Liptak 2021). Although he based his campaign on a promise to withdraw troops as soon as possible, he himself admitted in August 2017 that conditions on the ground proved to be a vicissitudes to that end, refusing to give a definite timeline for when he would withdraw, but that this is the course on which America definitely remains. Namely, Trump claimed that America has learned a lesson from Iraq, alluding to the fact that the rapid withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan would leave a power vacuum that would allow the ISIS-K faction to strengthen, which would further have strong negative implications for locals (Diamond 2017).

There were two streams of opinion in Trump's circle, one of which was isolationist and thought that the plan to withdraw the troops should continue with its course, while the other thought that due to the ISKP, the situation on the ground should be strengthened, troop-wise. A compromise solution prevailed, sending an additional 3,900 troops, raising the number from the official 8,400 to about 12,300, although later reports showed that despite the fact that those were official figures, there actually were not 8,400 members on the ground, but 11,000 which would make the total situation, in mid-August, about 15,000 people (The Trump's administration's Afghanistan policy 2017, 2).

However, a year later, Trump entrusted the task to Zalmay Khalilzad, an experienced Afghan American diplomat, to be the bearer of negotiations with the Taliban, which should lead the war to an end, that is, towards reaching a peace agreement. Interestingly, the Afghan government led by democratically elected President Ashraf Ghani was largely excluded from these talks (Pilster 2020, 121). Khalilzad participated in five rounds of negotiations with the Taliban during the Doha, Qatar negotiations, which lasted until March 2019 (Behuria, Ul Hassan & Saroha 2019, 127). In September 2019, Trump invited a Taliban delegation to Camp David to negotiate with the U.S. and Afghan government officials in the hopes of reaching some type of

agreement, but the meeting was soon canceled due to the killing of U. S. soldier (J Sullivan 2021, 275). Also, what's interesting is that even after this and over 2300 of other killed U.S. soldiers (Ben-Meir 2021, 3), the U. S. Department of State never designated the Taliban as a foreign terrorist organization, presumably because they wanted to broker a sort of settlement with them and complete their planned withdrawal (J. Sullivan 2021, 276).

Eventually, on February 29th, 2020, an agreement was reached to achieve peace in Afghanistan, better known as the Doha Agreement, between the US and the Taliban, which set a course for the complete withdrawal of US troops in exchange for guarantees from the Taliban, who committed to reduce violence and sever ties with terrorist groups (State Gov., Joint Declaration between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United States of America for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan). One of the main problems with this agreement lies in the fact that it does not contain a permanent ceasefire agreement, nor a way to resolve disagreements between the Afghan government, led by then-President Ashraf Ghani and the Taliban, and the agreement itself does not contain any measures to implement and enforce promises such as violence reduction and severing ties with terrorist groups (Boot 2020). It should also be noted that the number of troops was reduced to 8,600 American soldiers after the signing of the agreement (J. Sullivan 2021, 276), and that on January 15th, 2021, the number of troops was further reduced to 2,500, which was the record lowest since 2001. based on the order of Donald Trump from November 2020, which marked the end of Trump's mandate (Thomas 2021, 2).

BIDEN – KABUL 2021: SAIGON *DÉJÀ VU*

Long before he even became the candidate for the presidency of the USA, Joe Biden already thought about how to solve the problem called "Afghanistan". As Obama's deputy, he proposed to him a complete withdrawal from Afghanistan, however, his proposal was rejected. Eventually, in early 2021, by becoming POTUS, he was finally given the opportunity to put an end to an event that, in his eyes, represented a war without a purpose (Liptak 2021). Although there have been reports (and hope among the people of Afghanistan) that the Biden administration could reconsider and review the agreement signed between the US and the Taliban on February 29th of 2020 (Qazi 2020), their examination of the agreement has been reduced to establishing the actual state on the ground - whether the Taliban are keeping their promises. However,

in the tradition of American presidents and their habit of continuation of the foreign policy decisions of their predecessors, Biden and his administration reaffirmed the provisions of the agreement - to end this “endless” war, but with the desire to maintain a certain ability to resist a possible surge of terrorism (BBC 2021). In addition, Biden’s decision to remain true to the final withdrawal from Afghanistan has to do with extremely high accumulated costs (over 2 trillion, as well as over 2,000 soldiers killed), with frustrating successes on the ground, in terms of suppressing the Taliban and the process of state-building (Brands & O’Hanlon 2021, 48).

In the Doha Agreement, the Trump administration set May 1st, 2021, as the date for complete withdrawal from Afghanistan (Kiely & Farley 2021). However, on April 14th, 2021, US President Joe Biden announced that the United States would begin the final and complete withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan on May 1st, which is to be completed in full, symbolically, on September 11, 2021 (Thomas 2021, 2). The Biden administration justified the final decision to withdraw completely from Afghanistan by the fact that the initial US mission ended a decade ago, when Osama bin Laden was assassinated in Pakistan, and when AQ capabilities in Afghanistan were significantly reduced, again referring to how wars should not be “without end” (Miller 2021, 37).

The postponement of the deadline for full withdrawal of the troops, agreed in the agreement between the United States and the Taliban, met with negative reactions from Taliban leaders, who said that it represented a violation of the Doha Agreement, which, in principle, gives the Taliban the green light to take all necessary countermeasures, and that the American side will be responsible for everything that could potentially follow (Thomas 2021, 2). Speaking to the House Foreign Affairs Committee on May 18th, Special Afghan American Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad argued that Biden’s decision was correct for the time being and that the withdrawal was proceeding at the expected pace, without major incidents, expecting it to remain so (C-Span 2021). Shortly thereafter, on June 8th, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid tells Foreign Policy that after foreign forces leave Afghanistan the group’s goal is to create an “Islamic government,” and that they will be compelled to continue their war to achieve their goal (Kiely & Farley 2021).

Eventually, due to more frequent attacks by Taliban fighters, a decision was made to speed up the withdrawal deadline. On 2nd July, the US handed Bagram Airfield, that used to be known as a symbol of US military might, to Afghan forces (Liebermann, Sidhu & Coren

2021). A few days later, on July 8th, in his addressing to the American people, Biden moved the deadline for withdrawal even further back, to August 31st. At the same time, he pointed out that the Taliban would otherwise start attacking American troops if they did not adhere to the agreement reached during Trump's mandate. He has also mentioned how they have reorganized and how the Taliban, militarily speaking, are the strongest they have been since 2001. In addition, Biden tried to convince the Americans that the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan is not inevitable, and that the situation in Afghanistan does not resemble the one from Vietnam, claiming that there will be no scenario where people can be seen evacuating from the roof of the embassy from Afghanistan (Remarks by President Biden on the Drawdown of US Forces in Afghanistan, 08. 07. 2021).

The month of August started violently. The Taliban, despite a signed agreement with the United States in which they themselves committed to reducing violence and starting negotiations with the democratically elected Afghan government, occupied the province of Nimroz on August 6 (Da Silva, Yusufzai & Smith 2021). After that, the Taliban victories began to line up in their conquest for Kabul. The next day, the province of Sheberghan was occupied, then on August 8, Sar-e-Pul, Kunduz and Takhar. In the following days, the provinces of Samangan, Baghlan and Badakhshan were also occupied.

August 12th was of great importance, because very important provinces were occupied on that day. Namely, Ghazni was occupied, after which local government officials fled to Kabul. At the same time, Herat, the third largest city in Afghanistan, fell to the Taliban, as did Kandahar and Helmand. Along with several other conquered provinces in a row, on August 14th, the Taliban occupied the province of Mazar-i-Sharif, then the capital of Logar province, which is only 70km from Kabul. On 15th August, Jalalabad, the capital of Nangarhar province, was also occupied, effectively encircling Kabul by the Taliban, announcing the imminent takeover of Kabul (Al Jazeera 2021). On the same day, the former president of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, fled the country by helicopter and thus abdicated from his position.

General chaos broke out very quickly. Thousands and thousands of people, both local and foreigners and diplomats, flocked to Hamid Karzai International Airport in hopes of being able to safely evacuate the country and escape life under the Taliban regime (NPR 2021). Although, in his addressing to the public, Biden pointed out that the situation in Afghanistan is different from the one in Vietnam, it is difficult to get rid of the impression that they are very similar, with the exception of being 46 years apart. Due to the situation on the ground,

Biden sent 6,000 American troops to secure the airport in Kabul, as well as provide the safe evacuation of citizens and Afghan allies who helped during the war, due to the fear of possible retaliation by the Taliban. However, the evacuation deadline remained August 31st, as Biden already announced, which included the 6,000 troops sent on the day the Taliban took over Kabul (Carvajal & Vazquez 2021). And that was it. The last American plane to leave Afghanistan took off on August 31st at 7:29 pm, marking the 100% withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan (NDTV 2021) and starting a new-old era for Afghanistan, the one under the Taliban regime.

CONCLUSION

After twenty long years, America has finally, on August 31st, 2021, withdrew the last soldier from Afghanistan. The policy and manner of participation have changed over time, from the original intention to search for Osama bin Laden, overthrow the Taliban and suppress Al Qaeda, through the process of building a state based on democratic principles while gradually reducing the number of US and Allied troops operating on the ground, and eventually handing control over to the trained Afghan forces. In time, the direction that America decided to take, after the frustrating results on the ground, was to gradually, in the foreseeable future, withdraw completely from Afghanistan.

One of the steps towards that was the signing of the agreement in Doha, during the mandate of Donald Trump, between the USA and the Taliban, which aimed to “bring peace” to the country, and indeed, the agreement did bring peace, but only if interpreted from the position of the Taliban. Namely, despite the provisions in the agreement on how to reduce the level of violence (which, in itself, represented an empty wording, because it was a priori difficult to quantify how much violence there was before the agreement, while the additional problem was that the agreement did not contain mechanisms for implementing this provision) and how they would enter into talks with the Afghan government, the Taliban continued their campaign to reconquer the country. An event that further encouraged them to continue with their conquest of the country was the postponement of the deadline for the complete withdrawal of American troops, which, according to the agreement, was supposed to be May 1st, 2021, but Biden moved that date to, symbolically, September 11th, 2021, which was corrected shortly afterwards on 31st August. An escalation of violence followed, with an extremely successful campaign by the Taliban, who won over new provinces day after day, until they arrived at the front of Kabul, on

August 14th. The day after, Kabul itself was conquered, allowing the Taliban to *de facto* take control of the country; meanwhile, the then-President Ashraf Ghani abdicated and fled by helicopter to Tajikistan.

At the end, the results of the military intervention, in which over 2 trillion dollars were spent and in which almost 3,000 American soldiers were killed, are extremely debatable – even that is a stretch to say. Certainly, America has, at least declaratively, fulfilled its original goal for launching the military intervention, which was the elimination of Osama bin Laden and the suppression of AQ's actions, however, they have failed to build a functioning state, despite the enormous amount of money invested. In less than three months of the offensive, the Taliban, almost without breaking a sweat, took near complete control of the country, regained power and proclaimed the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. In the north, there is still the so-called The Northern Alliance, or National Resistance Front led by Ahmad Massoud, helped by other local warlords, however, Afghanistan and its people, until further notice, are left at the mercy of the Taliban regime.

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ПОВЛАЧЕЊЕ АМЕРИЧКИХ ТРУПА ИЗ АВГАНИСТАНА: ИЗЛАЗНЕ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ**

Резиме

Након двадесет дугих и фрустрирајућих година, Америка се најзад потпуно повукла из Авганистана. Овај рад даје преглед америчких акција у тој земљи, почевши са инвазијом за време администрације Џорџа Буша Млађег, преко ликвидације Осаме бин Ладе-на и сузбијања активности Ал Каиде, до Обаине администрације, током које је међународна ИСАФ мисија завршена и за време које је најављено повлачење трупа. Након тога следи преглед активности за време мандата Доналда Трампа, за време којег су се створили услови за дефинитивно повлачење, кроз потписивање споразума у Дохи између САД и Талибана. Последњи део рада посвећен је ситуацији на терену за време администрације Џоа Бајдена и током комплетирања повлачења, које су Талибани искористили да поново заузму целу земљу и прогласе исламски емират.

Кључне речи: *рат у Авганистану, америчко повлачење, Талибани, Споразум из Дохе, Исламски емират Авганистан, Авганистан*

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** Овај рад је настао у оквиру научно-истраживачке делатности Института за европске студије, уз подршку Министарства просвете, науке и технолошког развоја Републике Србије.

Овај рад је примљен 24. септембра 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на телефонском састанку Редакције, 15. новембра 2021. године.

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BIDEN’S APPROACH TOWARDS RUSSIA: A “RESET LIGHT”?*

Abstract

The topic of this paper is foreign policy course towards Russia employed by the incumbent United States president, Joseph Biden, during his first year in office. Motivated by the recent Biden-Putin bilateral summit and Biden’s remark on the U.S. and Russia as “two great powers”, the author presents a research question whether this event could be observed as the beginning of a “reset light” approach in Washington’s Russia policy. Unlike the previous “reset” of U.S.-Russian relations this time the goal would not be rapprochement, but structured confrontation between the two countries (such as the one which prevented escalation during the Cold War), with cooperation in areas where it is possible. Having considered Obama/Trump legacy, put Biden’s rhetoric and actions in current international and domestic context, and analyzed different issues over which Russia and the U.S. are in conflict/can cooperate, the author concludes that Biden’s approach can be considered a “reset light”, but that its success in the longer run is uncertain.

Keywords: *Joseph Biden, the United States, Russia, Vladimir Putin, foreign policy, “reset”*

INTRODUCTION

On June 16, 2021 at the picturesque Villa La Grange on the shore of Lake Geneva, U.S. President Joseph Biden met his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin for their first bilateral meeting since Biden was inaugurated back in January. At the opening of the talks, before

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** The paper presents findings of a study developed as a part of the research project “Serbia and challenges in international relations in 2021”, financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, and conducted by the Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade.

media was forced out due to inappropriate behaviour of some of them, Biden said "...it's always better to meet face to face. We will try to determine where we have mutual interests and we can cooperate. And where we don't, establish a predictable and rational way in which we disagree. Two great powers" (Russia Insight 2021). It was not the first time Biden used this expression. Already in April, while summarizing a phone conversation with Putin in which he proposed a bilateral summit in the middle of the crisis caused by Russia's military build-up on Ukrainian border, Biden said that the U.S. and Russia are "two great powers with significant responsibility for global stability" (The White House [TWH] 2021c). That calling Russia a great power on these occasions was not just an expression of courtesy, Biden proved at the airport, prior to his departure from Geneva. Answering journalists' questions, he said "Russia is in a very difficult spot. They are being squeezed by China. They desperately want to remain a major power... Biden already gave Putin what he wants, legitimacy, standing on the worlds' stage with the President of the United States... They don't want to be known as Upper Volta with nuclear weapons... It matters to them" (ABC News 2021). This was the first time in decades Russia was acknowledged to be a great power by the president of the most powerful country in the international system. One of the former presidents, Barack Obama – who had Biden serving as vice president – even needed to emphasize that Russia was only a "regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbours not out of strength but out of weakness" (Wilson 2014, cited in Tsygankov 2019, 13). After Biden's remark, influential U.S. media did not miss to point to this "great power" moment as a departure from usual U.S. view of Russia (see Dixon 2021; Troianovski 2021).

Biden was surely right about one thing – the great power status really matters to Russia. An idea of "greatpowerness" – which means viewing itself as an independent center of power capable of influencing international relations on equal basis with other great powers, while also being recognized by them as such – is at the heart of Russian national identity (Smith 2014, 1, 45; Trapara 2020, 33-48). Persistent denial of this status to Russia by Washington is probably the most important common cause behind all three failed attempts of rapprochement between the two states since the end of the Cold War. The last such attempt – a so called "reset" in Obama-Medvedev period (2009-2012) was officially announced by Biden himself at the Munich security conference in February 2009: "it's time to press the reset button and to revisit many areas where we can and should be working together with Russia" (TWH 2009). A new constructive spirit of U.S.-Russia relations

followed, together with some concrete results, such as cooperation over Afghanistan, joint approach to Iranian nuclear issue, and of course the New START Treaty on strategic nuclear arms reduction (Trapara 2017a). However, this “honeymoon” was short-lived – two years later it started to crumble with the “Arab spring” and Libyan and Syrian civil wars, impasse over missile defense agreement, Putin’s return to presidency, Snowden affair, culminating with Ukraine crisis and Russia’s Crimea annexation, after which Moscow-Washington relations reached the lowest point since the Cold War. During Trump administration, in spite of his benign rhetoric towards Russia and Putin, a new point of contention – Russia’s interference with U.S. elections – was added, further souring these relations. Biden inherited this situation and – as someone who was (alongside with his closest foreign policy associates) a part of administration in whose time U.S.-Russian relations hit the bottom, and a staunch critic of Trump’s rhetorical benevolence towards Russia and Putin – was hardly the one expected to change it for better by pressing a “reset” button once again.

Yet, did Biden’s recognition of Russia as a great power actually mark the beginning of something that could be termed a “reset light” – this time not a comprehensive attempt of Moscow-Washington rapprochement, but at least introducing some degree of order into their confrontation so to avoid escalation, while cooperating in the areas where it is possible? This is a central research question examined in this paper. To answer it, it won’t be enough only to run through important events in U.S.-Russian relations during the first several months of Biden’s administration. There is a rich legacy to be also considered, from the two Obama’s terms (which are also Biden’s terms as vice president), and of course from the Trump years. Objective factors – such as a changing international context in which U.S.-Russian relations develop – should be also taken into account. Finally, “the analysis” in science means breaking the whole which one wants to examine into its smaller elements – and those elements in Moscow-Washington relations are the issues over which the two countries are currently in conflict, or can cooperate. Biden’s approach towards Russia is the result of a delicate mixture of factors belonging to international politics, foreign policy and domestic politics.

OBAMA/TRUMP LEGACY

It would be a mistake to consider Biden’s foreign policy – including his Russian approach – a complete reversal of Trump’s course and return to Obama-era ways of engagement with outer world.

Although he and his closest foreign policy associates (Antony Blinken and Jake Sullivan) were parts of Obama administration, the world today is different from the one four years ago when Obama left the White House. It is also important to be precise which period of Obama's foreign policy we talk about, for during his second term, influenced by changes in international and domestic environment, it was much different from the one it lead during his first one – especially towards Russia. On the other hand, when talking about reversing Trump's foreign policy, it is important to take into account that it cannot be reduced only to words and deeds of the former U.S. president himself – again, especially when it comes to Russian approach. Angela Stent (2019, 330) is right when she claims that during Trump administration there were three separate Russia policies: “that of the White House, that of the rest of the executive branch, and that of the Congress”. Analysis of Biden's approach towards Russia therefore requires careful examination of the elements of Obama and Trump legacy which have significance for current relations, but put into context of the moment when these elements developed.

When Obama took presidency, international and domestic circumstances were not favourable to United States. It had been fighting two unwinnable and expensive wars in Afghanistan and Iraq for years, unsuccessfully engaging in “state building”. It was shaken by economic crisis which started on its soil and during 2008 spread to the whole world economy. On the other hand, Russia had several years of significant economic growth, mainly fuelled by the increase in world market oil and gas prices. Although also hit hard by crisis, in Georgia it successfully played its traditionally stronger card compared to the economy – the use of military force. Although (like his predecessors) an adherent to liberal hegemony – a grand strategy which aims to establish and defend a U.S.-lead global order in the name of liberal values (open economy, democracy and human rights) – Obama chose tactical pragmatism in foreign policy, realizing that neoconservatives' unilateralism and over-reliance on the use of force were counterproductive (Posen 2014, 5-7; Trapara 2017a, 136-138). He saw an increasingly assertive Russia as an actor with whom the United States can ease tensions, cooperating on issues of common interest which at that moment were Washington's priorities – such as stabilizing situation in Afghanistan, curbing Iranian nuclear program, and renewing strategic stability after START (U.S.-Russia treaty from 1991 on strategic nuclear armament reduction) would have expired. As a partner in Kremlin Obama had Dmitry Medvedev, who had just taken presidency from Vladimir Putin, and was seen as more liberal and suitable for cooperation compared to his predecessor.

When in 2012/13 it became obvious that the “reset” was crumbling in all areas, international situation was seen by Obama’s team as significantly more favourable. The U.S. recovered from economic crisis and relieved itself from a great burden by withdrawing its military from Iraq. In Libya, another regime change supported by American weapons was successful. Afghanistan campaign started to lose its importance after killing Bin Laden, firm sanctions against Iran gave effect with improved cooperative approach of its government, and the New START was set as a cornerstone of strategic stability for another 10 years. Rapprochement with Russia was not so high on the list of Washington’s priorities anymore, especially after Putin returned to presidency. After Snowden affair and resolution of the crisis over Syrian chemical weapons in the summer of 2013, it seemed that what Leon Aron (2013) called a “strategic pause” – stagnation in relations, without significant movement either to their improvement or to deterioration – was to commence between the two powers. Only a few months later, events in Ukraine interrupted this pause with a new cycle of confrontation not seen since the end of the Cold War.

Obama insisted on keeping adversarial approach towards Moscow for the rest of his second term, among else by unleashing the war of words which elevated Russia to one of three greatest threats against humanity, alongside with the infamous Islamic State and Ebola virus (TWH 2014). Pro-Russian insurgents’ failure to secure more territory save for a half of the Donbas region, as well as crippling effect of Western sanctions and drop in oil prices upon Russia’s economy in 2014/15 made him self-reliant that the United States would prevail in a struggle against this “regional power”, which was expected to be extended into the term of his preferred successor in the White House, Hilary Clinton. However, things did not develop the way Obama and his administration planned. Russia started military intervention in Syria in September 2015, preventing the fall of Assad regime and – by the end of 2016 – liberated strategically crucial city Aleppo, securing future victory in this war (Trapara 2020, 260-261). In 2016 Russia’s economy started to recover. On the other hand, deep disappointment in traditional establishment by significant parts of American society remained under the radar of U.S. administration, Clinton campaign team and public surveys. Russia did not miss an opportunity to exploit this U.S. vulnerability by its own newly acquired strength.

It would be an exaggeration to claim that Donald Trump was elected to the White House by the Russians, as he would most probably have won even if the hacking of Democratic National Committee members e-mails and bombing social media with pro-Trump ads – done

by Internet Research Agency owned by Yevgeny Prigozhin (also the owner of military contracting organization Wagner) had not occurred (Stent 2019, 320-324). What is paradoxical is that Russians did not actually believe Trump would win even with their help, as the most probable goal of their interference with U.S. election campaign was to demonstrate power ahead of expected tough negotiations with Clinton as the new president (Tsygankov 2019, 9). Trump's election was then both a blessing and a curse for Moscow: it got into White House a candidate it preferred to Clinton, but this candidate's hands were tied from the very start in making any improvement in relations with Russia, because of its alleged role in his election and his close associates' ties with it (Stent 2019, 324-330; Tsygankov 2019, 4-5). A "sword of Damocles" in the form of "Russiagate" – a constant threat of impeachment if Trump dared to make any concrete step towards rapprochement with Russia – followed him to the end of his term.

This "unprecedented attack on American democracy" as Angela Stent (2019, 321-322) called it, made Russia become a part of U.S. domestic political debate more than ever, which brought Russian-American confrontation to a new stage. During Trump administration, Russia was designated as an enemy even more than it was the case in the Obama era. For example, in Trump's National Security Strategy from 2017, Russia was mentioned 24 times with various negative connotations, compared to 14 negative portrayals in Obama's second NSS (2015) (TWH 2015, 2017). Further sanctions against Russian individuals and companies were introduced in several rounds, mostly related to the election interference, but also to the alleged poisoning of former Russian spy Sergei Skripal. Even if Trump had not been forced by the rest of establishment (pejoratively called a "deep state") to act tough against Russia, it is not probable he would have succeeded in rapprochement with it. Trump's foreign policy choices were often inconsistent and in many areas contradicted his declared desire to improve relations with Moscow. He did not have some coherent grand strategy which would replace liberal hegemony, such as the one of "restraint" as a defensive approach that would be more acceptable to Russia (Posen 2014, 69-71; Trapara 2017b). His belief in negotiating from the position of strength was certainly not something Russians could take benevolently (Tsygankov 2019, 43-44). His unilateralism and despise of international treaties concluded by his predecessors brought into question strategic stability between the two powers, which culminated with U.S. withdrawal from the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty from 1987) and the lack of enthusiasm for renewal of the New START, which was set to expire in February 2021.

His hatred against Iran and his Syrian protégé Assad (partly fuelled by Trump's family ties with Israeli lobby) led him to dismantle nuclear agreement with Tehran, so valued by Russia, and to get to the brink of direct military conflict with Russian forces in Syria when he twice (in 2017 and 2018) bombed Syrian forces because of their alleged chemical attacks against civilian population. His threats of military intervention against Russia's important Western Hemisphere ally Venezuela became another hot spot in relations with Russia during 2019.

In the end, Trump could not politically survive the coronavirus pandemic of 2020. But his mixed legacy of occasional positive rhetorical treatment of Russia and actual sharpened confrontation with it would. How these contradictory legacies influence Biden's foreign policy in general and his approach towards Russia in particular, in the context of international and domestic circumstances present at the moment of his arrival into the White House – is the question I now turn to.

REALITY VS. RHETORIC

Today's international situation is in some important ways alike to the one from 12 years ago when Obama (and Biden as vice president) first took office. There is an exhaustion of the United States due to some foreign policy choices of previous administrations (in Trump's case inconsistent foreign policy), as well as the economic setbacks (this time it is because of the pandemic). An additional negative factor is a deep divide in the American society unveiled by Trump's ascent and left after his departure. On the other hand, Russia looks consolidated once again, with an assertive stance and foreign policy successes. This context is quite different from the one during Obama's second term, which made the administration self-reliant enough to pursue a bitter confrontational stance against Russia that survived into Trump era. Thus, as far as objective factors are concerned, it would be natural to expect Washington's renewed wish to somehow improve relations with Russia in order to make a break from overstretch, such as the one demonstrated with "reset", but also rhetorically announced, though – for mentioned domestic limitations – never implemented by Trump.

In this context, it is an important observation that compared to his post-Cold War predecessors, Biden shows significantly greater consistency between the ideas about foreign policy he delivered through the election campaign and afterwards, as well as between his words and deeds – at least in his first year in office. When it comes to words, I shall focus on three documents. Ahead of the elections, Biden (2020) presented his foreign policy views in the article "Why

America Must Lead Again: Rescuing U.S. Foreign Policy after Trump”, published in *Foreign Affairs* in March 2020. In March 2021 he released “Interim National Security Strategic Guidance” to serve as a temporary document until the work on National Security Strategy is finished, with an obvious goal of making an urgent departure from Trump’s NSS which guided U.S. foreign policy since 2017 (TWH 2021a). And in September he gave a speech in front of the UN General Assembly (TWH 2021e). His main foreign policy ideas are consistently repeated and further developed throughout these documents.

Biden (2020) slams Trump for diminishing U.S. credibility and influence in international arena by abandoning allies and partners, launching “ill-advised trade wars”, abdicating American leadership and turning away from democratic values. According to Biden, Trump did it at the point when global challenges U.S. was facing – from climate change (Biden promised return to the Paris climate agreement) and infectious diseases (Biden’s article was published at the beginning of the pandemic), to the advance of authoritarianism and illiberalism – became “more complex and urgent”. Biden’s core idea is that “our world is at an inflection point in history”, “in the midst of a fundamental debate” about its future direction, which is centred on the question whether “democracy can still deliver for our people and for people around the world”, or “autocracy is the best way forward” in the times of “accelerating global challenges” (TWH 2021a, 3, 23). To “meet today’s challenges from a position of strength”, the United States must renew its “enduring advantages”, among which democracy and alliances and partnerships with like-minded states are central (6). Democracies all over the world (including the United States) are “increasingly under siege” both from within (by corruption, inequality, populism, etc.) and outside (by “antagonistic authoritarian powers”) (7). So, even before he was elected, Biden (2020) promised to “renew U.S. democracy and alliances, protect the United States’ economic future, and once more have America lead again”, for if the U.S. does not lead, either someone else would take its place, “but not in the way that advances our interests and values, or no one will and chaos will ensue”. “Repairing” democracy, which is globally “under more pressure than at any time since 1930s”, should start at home, because “democracy is not just the foundation of American society”, but also “the wellspring of our power”, and “the heart of who we are and how we see the world – and how the world sees us”. In Biden’s words, democracy “is stamped into our DNA as a nation” and “remains the best tool we have to unleash our full human potential” (TWH 2021e).

Biden’s (2020) foreign policy would be a “foreign policy for

the middle class”, because “economic security is national security”, and therefore he would have the United States lead again in research, development and innovations, and “make sure the rules of the international economy are not rigged against the United States”. Of course, China is here “a special challenge”, which is to be met by building “a united front of U.S. allies and partners to confront China’s abusive behaviours and human rights violations”, while it does not prevent cooperation in the areas of converging interests, “such as climate change, non-proliferation, and global health security”. The use of force “should be the last resort, not the first” in U.S. foreign policy and it should be used only “when the objective is clear and achievable, and with the informed consent of the American people”, and, “whenever possible, in partnership with our allies” (TWH 2021a, 14; TWH 2021e). This means “it is past time to end the forever wars, which have cost the United States untold blood and treasure”, so Biden promised bringing the majority of troops home from Afghanistan and the Middle East (TWH 2021a, 15). From now on, “diplomacy should be the first instrument of American power”, which means “building and tending relationships and working to identify areas of common interest while managing points of conflict” (Biden 2020). Biden promised to renew U.S. commitment to arms control, among else to rejoin nuclear agreement with Iran – if Tehran returned to “strict compliance with the deal”.

Regarding Russia, Biden (2020) named “Russian aggression” as a threat against which it is necessary to keep military capabilities of NATO – which is “the bulwark of the liberal democratic ideal” and “an alliance of values”, “the most effective political-military alliance in modern history” – and to expand them against non-traditional threats, such as “weaponized corruption, disinformation, and cybertheft”. “Real costs” should be imposed on Russia for its “violations of international norms” and ties should be strengthened with “Russian civil society” which opposes “Vladimir Putin’s kleptocratic authoritarian system. However, Biden also vowed to extend the New START, as “an anchor of strategic stability between the United States and Russia” and a foundation for new arms control agreements. It is obvious who (among others) Biden thinks of when he says that “we are facing adversaries, both externally and internally, hoping to exploit the fissures in our society, undermine our democracy, break up our alliances, and bring about the return of an international system where might determines right”, claiming that Putin thinks liberal idea is “obsolete” because “he is afraid of its power”. Unlike Trump’s and Obama’s second National Security Strategy, in Biden’s interim document Russia is mentioned

only three times in negative context (TWH 2021a). While China is the main threat, “the only competitor potentially capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to mount a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system”, Russia “remains determined to enhance its global influence and play a disruptive role on the world stage” (7-8). On another place China is called “increasingly assertive” and Russia “only” “destabilizing” (14).

When it comes to his foreign policy deeds, Biden mostly delivered as promised. He rejoined the Paris climate agreement and the New START, while opening new indirect negotiations with Iran on renewing nuclear deal. He invested in renewal of good spirit with transatlantic allies, strongly supporting NATO at the Brussels summit in June, and removing sanctions against German companies which worked on gas pipeline Nord Stream 2. He pulled troops out from Afghanistan in the summer, not thinking about reversing his decision even after the Taliban victory became inevitable. Subsequently, in his UNGA speech, Biden said: “I stand here today, for the first time in 20 years, with the United States not at war. We’ve turned the page” (TWH 2021e).

The conclusion about Biden’s foreign policy in general is that he is obviously an adherent to liberal hegemony grand strategy, although with deep understanding of huge challenges it faces in contemporary world, which gives him a note of tactical pragmatism, similar to Obama’s from his first term. However, his view that the rebirth of American international role should start at home, with empowerment of the middle class, makes him somewhat closer to Trump – the message that America should “lead again” sounds like some kind of amalgam between Obama’s “renewing American leadership” and Trump’s “making America great again”. Democracy as a central value and an antipode to authoritarianism is more pronounced than in both Trump and Obama’s vocabulary. This could be interpreted as the reflection on the observed anti-democratic international and domestic trends, but also as a new effort to justify the continuation of liberal hegemony grand strategy. In this Biden’s Manichean divide between democracy and authoritarianism, Russia is of course on the other side. However, apart from calling it an autocracy whose aggressive hybrid actions undermine democracy in other states, colourful qualifications such as the one that would put Russia as on par with COVID-19 (similar to how Obama’s ebola remarks), or crowding foreign policy documents by various threats from Russia (as in Trump’s NSS), are for now absent (in his UNGA speech, he did not even mention Russia by name). What is present, on the other hand, is emphasising the need for cooperation in areas of mutual interest, from arms control to climate change and

cybersecurity. Having in mind current international and domestic context – unfavourable to the U.S. – this is where the idea of “reset light” becomes possible.

THE RECORD

Biden had his first telephone conversation with Putin already a few days after the inauguration. The result was immediate – at the end of January, at the very last moment before its expiration, the New START was renewed for another 5 years (until 2026). However, this “sweet” start between the two leaders was soon soured because of the Navalny case. Alexei Navalny is Russian “anti-systemic” opposition leader who was allegedly poisoned last summer with a Novichok nerve agent, accusing personally Putin for this. In January, he was back to Russia from medical treatments in Germany, only to be immediately arrested and sentenced to two and a half years of prison due to breaching terms of parole. Soon after his arrest, the United States announced new sanctions against individuals suspected of involvement in his poisoning. Yet, the most unpleasant incident between the two countries happened in March. In the ABC interview, when asked by an anchor if he considered Putin a “killer”, Biden answered “Mmm-hmm, I do”, adding that he would pay the price for alleged interference in 2020 elections (Gittleston 2021). Of course, this remark was not received well in Moscow. Putin himself reacted by wishing Biden “a good health” and interpreting his remark as “mirror image” – what Americans say about Russians, actually speaks about them (Tickle 2021a). Foreign minister Sergei Lavrov concluded that U.S.-Russian relations reached the bottom (RT 2021b). Russia’s ambassador in Washington was recalled to Moscow, while his counterpart John Sullivan was “suggested” to return to Washington for “consultations”. Notable Russian international relations scholar, Fyodor Lukyanov (2021a) – similarly to Aron after Snowden affair back in 2013 – called for a “pause” in relations, for it is pointless to have them (apart from necessary technical minimum) if other side does not pay attention to its words. Putin’s press secretary Dmitry Peskov said that it is impossible to talk to Russia from a position of strength (RT 2021a). Yet, the events that followed showed Russia’s readiness to talk to Americans from similar position.

At the end of March, fighting escalated between Ukrainian army and the forces of self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics. In one of the heaviest artillery exchange over the line of contact, which lasted whole day, four Ukrainian soldiers were killed. Simultaneously, Russia started its biggest military build-up in years –

justified as an exercise – near Ukrainian border. For some time, there was confusion in Washington whether Putin was just sabre rattling, or was about to start a full-scale military offensive against Ukraine (Kramer 2021). The U.S. closely followed the situation and dispatched military vessels to the Black sea. In the midst of the crisis, Biden called Putin to a bilateral summit, where the two presidents would discuss wide range of issues, with an aim to establish “stable and predictable relations” (TWH 2021b). Only a week later, the Kremlin announced the withdrawal of troops from Ukrainian border and confirmed that there were talks about the summit, which could take place sometime during summer (Tickle 2021b). Did Putin’s gambit against Ukraine influence Biden’s decision to call for the summit so early in his term (Trump met Putin bilaterally only after a year and a half in office)? Had Putin really wanted to intervene in Ukraine, his military build-up would not have been so visible; absence of demands to Ukraine excluded possibility that he wanted to extort concessions from it by only threatening to use force. Thus, it was more likely that this build-up was a message addressed towards new U.S. administration that Russia’s military intervention in Ukraine is a real option if Washington continued with open anti-Russian moves. Biden’s call for the summit was an additional benefit which Putin opportunistically accepted (Lee 2021, 32).

Russians at first were not so enthusiastic about the summit, especially after Washington expelled dozen of Russian diplomats and introduced new sanctions because of the alleged interference in 2020 elections and recent cyber (ransomware) attack which they thought could be connected to Russia. Lukyanov (2021b) wrote that the summit would not change much, in an atmosphere where Biden divided countries to “democracies” and “tyrannies”. Anyway, after Lavrov-Blinken meeting in Reykjavik in May, the Biden-Putin summit was soon announced, and it was sooner than expected – Geneva was chosen as the place, and the date was set to June 16, just after the NATO summit in Brussels. After this, Russia pulled back more troops from the Ukrainian border, although retaining combat power sufficient for any possible escalation – at least until Zapad military exercise in September, when it expected Biden’s intentions towards Moscow would get clearer (Lee 2021, 34).

Ahead of the summit, Putin gave an interesting interview for the NBC – his first interview for American media after three years. He described Biden as an experienced, career politician, who was in politics for his whole adulthood, unlike Trump, who was more “colourful and impulsive”. He “justified” Biden’s “killer” remark as a “Hollywood machismo”. Putin commented on American officials’ wish to establish stable and predictable relations with Russia, agreeing that stability and

predictability are most important values in international relations, but adding that these values were undermined for years by U.S. unilateralism and interventionism, dismissing accusation that Russia's actions cause instability. At one moment, he lashed at the anchor after being repeatedly interrupted: "Is that a free expression American way?" (NBC News 2021). Russians were cautious in expectations from the summit. Peskov warned another "reset" should not be expected (RT 2021c). Lavrov said human rights issue could be the one to be discussed, but "starting with the right of those who broke into Capitol" last autumn (RT 2021d). Once a pessimist about overall U.S.-Russian relations and the summit itself, Lukyanov (2021c) looked forward to the summit with some positive expectations: for him, the summit could be a step towards peace and stability, more precisely to a "structured confrontation", but only if Washington left domestic politics aside. On the American side, Biden was a bit secretive: "I'll tell him what I want him to know" (Liptak 2021). Blinken repeated the need for stable and predictable relations. Having a bad experience with Trump-Putin summit in Helsinki, Biden's team decided not to hold joint press conference with Putin.

Although a major part of the talks was held behind closed doors, and we can only trust what the presidents said on their separate press conferences, it is beyond doubt that many issues were addressed, and progress achieved over some of them. Putin once again praised Biden as an experienced professional who "does not miss anything", saying that they had a long and constructive conversation (Reuters 2021). Two most important results were: a joint declaration on strategic stability, in which Biden and Putin agreed that nuclear war should never be fought; and the agreement that the ambassadors of both countries should return to their posts soon. It seemed as if most contentious issues were put aside. Putin did not comment on Biden's concern over Belarus, while pointing that there could be no discussion on Ukraine's NATO membership. Biden said he had to mention Navalny and the human rights issue, because "it's about who we are. How could I be the President of the United States of America and not speak out against the violation of human rights?" (U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Geneva 2021). According to Peskov, the summit was good, but improving relations would require months (Tickle 2021c). This time Lukyanov (2021d) had only positive conclusions – yes, he said, the U.S. and Russia are back in Cold War-like confrontation, but this could paradoxically be good news, with the introduction of clear rules of this confrontation, such as those which existed during the Cold War. And in the months that followed, the talks were continued on topics such as cybersecurity and climate change, but also on Iranian nuclear deal.

THE ANALYSIS

Having in mind the reality of U.S.-Russian relations in the first year of Biden's administration, how can we assess a new dynamic regarding the most important issues over which the two states are in conflict? Besides the interference of both countries in each other's domestic political process, two of the most pressing ones got closely connected in the recent months – Ukraine and Nord Stream 2. The second gas pipeline which would directly connect Russia with its customer Germany has been causing controversies for many years. It was seen by the U.S. and some other Western countries as Russia's tool for political subduing of Germany and Europe. Trump's administration even imposed sanctions against German companies which worked on the pipeline constructions. Yet, this did not stop the project, but only slowed it down – Russia has sent its own ships to finish the construction. For Ukraine, the pipeline was a direct threat, for its intention was to bypass its territory and deprive it of transition fees. Thus, it was not a surprise that Ukrainian President Zelensky got furious when in May – only a month after military tensions with Russia were relieved – Biden decided to remove sanctions against German companies, after he concluded that there was no point in retaining them and punishing U.S. ally when Nord Stream 2 was about to get finished anyway. The following two months brought a series of disagreements between Washington and Kiev. Zelensky criticized Biden for not meeting him before Putin, and wrongly interpreted that Ukraine was promised MAP (Membership Action Plan) at the NATO Brussels summit – which personally Biden had to deny, saying that Ukraine had to fulfil “criteria” first (RT 2021f). The crisis was partly handled in July, when Biden reached a deal with German Chancellor Angela Merkel that the U.S. would not prevent Nord Stream 2 construction, but that Germany would invest in Ukraine's energy sector and support it if Russia decided to abort gas transit through its territory (RT 2021g). Nord Stream 2 was finished in September, but this German-American deal, alongside with Biden's promise to Zelensky when they finally met that further sanctions would follow if Ukraine's energy security got undermined, is surely not something that could be welcomed in Russia and facilitate another “reset”, even in its “light” variant (Tickle 2021d).

Regarding domestic political process in both countries, on the American side Biden is certainly better positioned than Trump to offer Putin some kind of rapprochement. His anti-Russian credentials are big enough to give him room for this, unlike his predecessor who was under constant “surveillance” by the rest of foreign policy establishment,

which prevented him from making any step forward in relations with Moscow. Yet, his invoking of democracy as an essence of “who we are” in a perpetual struggle against autocracies like Russia puts a limit to any closer rapprochement in advance. On the Russian side, democracy is not even a topic for discussion after Putin removed constitutional obstacles for staying in power indefinitely. Rivalry with the Americans is one of the main sources of his domestic legitimacy, as is every Russia’s success and U.S. failure in it – and recently there were many.

When it comes to the issues over which U.S.-Russian cooperation is possible, let us recall that the three most important results of U.S.-Russian cooperation during Obama’s “reset” were achieved in the fields of strategic arms control (the New START), nuclear non-proliferation (sanctions against Iran and its later compliance), and conflict in Afghanistan (establishing the Northern Distribution Network). These results were not sufficient for the “reset” to succeed. If repeated by Biden administration, can they be enough at least for a “reset light”?

Unlike difficult and complicated process of its negotiation and conclusion back in 2009-2011, it proved quite easier to renew the New START in January 2021 – political will on both sides (which would have been uncertain had Trump won the elections) was sufficient. Joint Presidential Statement on Strategic Stability from June was a step further, with the two presidents strongly committing to nuclear arms control and avoiding nuclear war, and announcing future bilateral strategic stability dialogue which would serve as “the groundwork for future arms control and risk reduction measures” (TWH 2021d). This could mean that the two powers could conclude new arms control agreements in the future, that way strengthening the arms control regime which was put in jeopardy when Trump decided to withdraw from the INF Treaty. And given that strategic nuclear arms issue is one of the rare ones (if not the only one) in which Washington has been traditionally treating Moscow as equal, it should not be a surprise that they could reach a common language over it so soon.

Iranian nuclear issue is a bit more complicated, for it has a third party. Therefore, U.S.-Russian understanding that the deal should be renewed is not sufficient – Tehran should also be asked, after it was already betrayed once by Washington, when Trump decided to bury the deal. It is natural that Iranian leadership also chose not to obey the deal and restarted additional uranium enrichment. Biden’s offer is clear – return into compliance with the deal, and Washington will also return to it. But also is Iran’s – remove sanctions imposed by Trump administration, and reversing the enrichment could be possible. During the summer, Russian negotiator concluded that 90 percent of the work

in negotiations with Iran was concluded (RT 2021e). However, the issue of sanctions still remains an obstacle. Unlike during Obama's "reset", it is now quite improbable that Moscow would put additional pressure on its important regional partner and ally in Syrian civil war. And it is also not likely to try to influence Biden to accept Iran's demands, so this issue can hardly serve as a firm foundation of another U.S.-Russian rapprochement attempt.

So is with Afghanistan. For years since 2009 Washington used the Northern Distribution Network over Russia's territory to move and supply its troops in Afghanistan. This route won't be necessary anymore after Biden pulled out all the troops in July/August, finishing twenty-year-long war. An immediate consequence was the Taliban – who were once removed from power by Americans twenty years ago – offensive and seizure of the whole country. Russia, of course, does not have any reason to be happy for the victory of the Taliban, whom it still considers a terrorist organization, although it accepted the reality and legitimized them by hosting negotiations between them and former Afghanistan government in Moscow this year. Yet, it has all reasons to be satisfied with U.S. defeat, for there is a deeper meaning of it. For the first two post-Cold War decades, one of the most important feature of U.S. liberal hegemony grand strategy was a regime change policy, which was mostly successful – whenever Washington decided to remove some "rogue" leader from power, his destiny was most often sealed. However, recent three attempts of U.S.-supported regime change, which at first looked promising – in Syria, Venezuela and Belarus – failed, and all three times it was Russia who played an important role in regime salvation. On the other hand, when it was U.S. puppet regime in Kabul in the need of saving, it crumbled like a house of cards even before the last American soldier left the country.

In addition to strategic nuclear arms control, are there some other issues over which U.S.-Russian cooperation can lead to their more essential rapprochement? Climate change, or struggle against the COVID-19 pandemic are too "alternative" and "multilateral" issues to make such an effect. The realm of cybersecurity could possibly be the one, but is at the moment burdened by the accusations of the two powers' interfering in each other's political processes. If some agreements over this "virtual arms control" are to be concluded in the future and make some kind of international regime, it can hardly have deeper impact than the one that already exists in "real arms control". There are opinions that cybersecurity has even a potential of leading to military escalation in the U.S.-Russian relations (Sharikov 2021).

All this said, Biden's recognition of Russia as the great power is

a unique feature in his Russian approach, which breaks familiar pattern of Moscow-Washington rapprochement failures due to repeating disagreements over one the same issues and others being sufficient only for a “technical” cooperation. On one hand, it is too symbolic to be answered with real concessions from Russian side. But on the other, this symbolism is important enough to Russia so that it takes care not to waste it by crossing some “red lines”, such as direct military intervention in Ukraine would represent. And, as we have seen, it has all reasons to interpret this recognition as a concession from the U.S. won by military build-up on Ukrainian border back in March/April. We can almost imagine Biden telling Putin behind closed doors in Geneva: “Ok, you are a great power, I admitted it in front of everyone, but please don’t even think of escalating against Ukraine”. What is even more important is that this American recognition of Russia’s international status can really introduce some degree of structure and order into U.S.-Russian confrontation, resembling of the ones from during the Cold War, when the rivals did not deny each other as then superpowers. This is the very essence of this “spirit of Geneva”.

CONCLUSION

The answer to my research question – whether President Biden’s approach towards Russia could be called a “reset light” – is certainly positive. Its main difference from Obama’s “reset” was in that this time its goal is not rapprochement between the two powers, but introducing stable and predictable confrontation between them, while cooperating in areas where it is possible. Two contradictory factors contribute to such approach. The first one is an unfavourable international and domestic context for the United States, similar to the one which existed when Obama came to the office, which makes reducing tensions with Russia an imperative. The second one is Biden’s insisting on democracy/autocracy divide as a justification for the continuation of liberal hegemony grand strategy, as well as the reflection on both international and domestic anti-democratic trends – which makes any closer rapprochement between the U.S. and Russia hardly possible. However, this more modest goal compared to the previous “reset” (and two earlier attempts of rapprochement) does not guarantee the long-term success of “reset light”. For now, it rests on three main pillars, only one of which is more or less stable – strategic nuclear arms control. The second one is a rough balance of power over Ukraine, while the third one is Biden’s recognition of Russia as a great power. It should not be a surprise if in some future chain of events the second pillar gets shaken

by a new escalation of conflict between Kiev and Donbas, or in case of a new energy crisis between Ukraine and Russia. Or, if the third pillar crumbles in case those circles in the U.S. which put “great power” into quotation marks (with an intention to undermine it) deny support to Biden for recognition of Russia’s status. After all, the previous “spirit of Geneva” between Eisenhower and Khrushchev back in 1955, instead of détente, lead to the construction of the Berlin Wall and the Cuban missile crisis (see Kissinger 1994, 493-593).

For the end, confirming that the future is always hard to guess, let us not fall into traps such as was an expectation of a “strategic pause” in U.S.-Russian relations ahead of the Ukraine crisis, or of Trump’s rapprochement with Moscow based on his pre-election rhetoric. Instead, we can always do some painless counterfactual thinking about how these relations would look like now if some important things played out differently. Imagine there was no COVID-19 pandemic, and Trump won his second term in the elections. Would he at least partly relieve himself from “deep state” pressure and try to pursue some real rapprochement with Russia? Would Moscow accept it, knowing that this would be Trump’s last term, after which some new liberal president could reverse the course again? Or, if Trump lost the elections anyway – yet not to Biden, but Pete Buttigieg or Bernie Sanders? How would Putin get along with the first openly gay president in U.S. history, or – maybe even more non-traditional option – the first radical leftist in the White House? After all, maybe Biden’s “reset light” is the most realistic of all U.S.-Russian worlds.

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БАЈДЕНОВ ПРИСТУП РУСИЈИ: „ЛАКО РЕСЕТОВАЊЕ“?

Резиме

Тема овог рада јесте политика према Русији актуелног председника САД, Џозефа Бајдена, у току прве године његовог мандата. Аутора је на бављење овом темом мотивисао билатерални самит Бајдена и руског председника Владимира Путина од 16. јуна 2021. године, када је Бајден за Русију и САД употребио израз „две велике силе“. Ово је било прво признање Русије за велику силу од стране неког постхладноратовског америчког председника. Имајући у виду колико је Русији стало до статуса независне велике силе која равноправно са другим моћним играчима на светској сцени уређује међународне односе и призната је као таква, аутор поставља истраживачко питање: означава ли овај Бајденов поступак почетак „лаког ресетовања“ руско-америчких односа? За разлику од претходног „ресетовања“ – трећег неуспелог постхладноратовског покушаја приближавања Русије и САД, које је 2009. Бајден најавио а председник Обама спроводио – овога пута приближавање не би ни било циљ. Уместо тога, тежило би се „структурисаној конфронтацији“, односно уношењу правила и поретка у актуелну конфронтацију Русије и САД, како би она постала стабилнија и предвидљивија, односно садржала мању опасност од ескалације ка отвореном оружаном сукобу. Структурисана конфронтација постојала је и за време Хладног рата, када ни САД ни Совјетски Савез нису једно другом доводили у питање статус суперсиле. Паралелно са струк-

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турисаном конфронтацијом, две силе би сарађивале у областима где је то могуће. Аутор позитивно одговара на постављено питање – Бајденов приступ Русији заиста се може назвати „лаким ресетовањем“, али је његов успех неизвештан због лабавих темеља на којима почива. Једина област од суштинског значаја у којој Русија и САД могу стабилно да сарађују јесте контрола стратешког нуклеарног наоружања. Иако мотивисан да смањи тензије у односима с Русијом неповољним међународним и домаћим околностима по САД, Бајден уједно инсистира и на идеологизованом наративу о борби између сила демократије и аутократије, којим настоји да поништи Трампово недемократско наслеђе и ојача аргументацију у прилог наставка спровођења велике стратегије либералне хегемоније. Његов релативно рани позив Путину на билатерални самит и признање Русије за велику силу аутор види као резултат притиска који је Русија у априлу месецу извршила гомилањем трупа на украјинској граници, након чега су САД одустале и од супротстављања изградњи гасовода Северни ток 2. Лабаву равнотежу у Украјини, уз евентуални отпор делова америчке спољнополитичке елите третирању Русије као велике силе, аутор види као највећу претњу успеху „лаког ресетовања“ и извор потенцијалне ескалације руско-америчке конфронтације.

Кључне речи: *Дозеф Бајден, Сједињене Државе, Русија, Владимир Путин, спољна политика, „ресетовање“*

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THE US-RUSSIA RAPPROCHEMENT: THE (IM) POSSIBLE DIRECTION FOR A US FOREIGN POLICY**

Abstract

The authors of this paper examine the possible change of course in the United States foreign policy and strategic adjustment towards Russia in international relations. Although the United States were the sole super-power in the world after the end of the Cold War, the contemporary international system is marked by growing multipolarity. This change in the international arena is caused by the rise of two revisionist great powers – China and Russia. Although China represents the US' main geopolitical rival, Russia does not lack the ambition to influence current world affairs. Possible relative gain in Sino-American rivalry for the United States could be achieved through closer cooperation with Russia. Although this hypothetical appeasement could be beneficial for the US, the authors of this paper take the stance that rapprochement between the two countries is currently unlikely. Using neoclassical realism as a theoretical framework, the paper examines the possible US-Russian strategic cooperation, including both external and internal factors that influence state foreign policy and strategic adjustment. The paper also examines the US opening to China during the Cold War under the administration of President Richard Nixon and compares it to the contemporary state of world affairs.

Keywords: *US-Russia relations, US foreign policy, rapprochement, neoclassical realism, great power rivalry*

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** The paper presents findings of a study developed as a part of the research project “Serbia and challenges in international relations in 2021”, financed by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, and conducted by the Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade and as part of the 2021 Research Program of the Institute of Social Sciences with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

INTRODUCTION

After the absolute dominance of the United States of America in the post-Cold War period, the growing challenges for its hegemony are appearing more and more. The unipolar moment in international relations is over, and the main challenger for the US dominant position is the People's Republic of China. However, China is not the only actor on the international scene that could be described as a revisionist power. Russian Federation is another country that disputes the US dominance and confronts the vision of the modern world advocated by and promoted from Washington.

The rise of China as a major power and the United States' main rival is followed by Chinese ambition for its influence in the international system to be reflective of its growing economic, technological and military capacities. This makes it the natural and logical ally of Russia, whose decision making in the foreign policy sphere is primarily led by the goal of keeping its status as a great power and an indispensable player in the solving of key issues on the international level. However, Russia and China were natural allies against the US once before in the previous century, but it was temporary and fell apart because of the conflicted interests between Moscow and Beijing. Namely, the first decade of the Cold War on the Asian continent was marked by the Sino-Soviet alliance based on the shared communist ideology and convergent geopolitical interests. Nevertheless, the battle for the status of the leading country in the communist world, overlapping spheres of influence, and differing visions of leaders Joseph Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev, and Mao Zedong contributed to the split between these two powers in the late 50s and early 60s. This development enabled the rapprochement of Beijing and Washington during president Richard Nixon's administration. The culmination of the process was the acceptance of the Peoples' Republic of China as a United Nations country and the permanent member of the Security Council in 1971 and Nixon's visit to China the following year.

Today, when China is the main challenger of the United States, one of the possible strategies available to the decision-makers in Washington is to work on the weakening of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership. This approach would rely on building better relations with Russia, as the weaker of the two powers. The benefits stemming from the improved relations with the US would possibly drive Russia to distance itself from China. The foreign policy of President Donald Trump, particularly in the first couple of months of his administration contained some elements of this strategy, but they faded away later. The new Biden administration has at first not shown any signs it would

pursue this policy. However, presidents Biden and Putin met for a summit in June 2021 which could be interpreted as a possible first step in this direction.

The article will offer an answer to what the opening to Russia as a distinct direction of the US foreign policy for the Biden administration would mean for contemporary international relations, taking President Nixon's opening to China in the 70s as a blueprint. It will map various aspects in which a change of policy towards Russia would entice Moscow to explore a different course and distance itself from Beijing. Using neoclassical realism as a theoretical framework, the article will identify two main sets of challenges for the successful implementation of this approach. The first set stems from a hierarchy of interests of the US, Russia and China. Moscow's and Beijing's striving for a more multipolar world in which their international status is embodying the change in the balance of power that was happening in the last decade makes the two countries partnership sturdy. The second set comes from the influence of domestic factors. On the Russian side, anti-Americanism is an important part of Putin's domestic policy while his feeling of betrayed trust on account of previous American actions could additionally limit the effectiveness of such an approach. In the US, a continuation of a hard-line policy towards Russia has significant bipartisan support, as well as that of the general population, deriving from Russian interference in the 2016 presidential elections.

The article will consist of three parts and a conclusion. The structure is as follows. In the first part, the theoretical framework will be developed, relying on the key concepts of neoclassical realism. The second part will cover the case of the US opening to China, as the previous successful use of the rapprochement in order to weaken the main rival power. The third part will explain what the opening to Russia would contain and map key challenges for the efficiency of this strategy. In the end, a conclusion will be given.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: NEOCLASSICAL REALISM

The article relies on neoclassical realism as a theoretical approach to analyse hypothetical American-Russian rapprochement as a response to the rise of China. The use of main concepts of this school of thought offers a way to take into account both external factors, stemming from the structure of the international system, as well as key internal variables that influence the potential effects of the opening to Russia.

Like structural realism or neorealism, neoclassical realism sees

the structure of the international system as the main factor shaping relations between states and their foreign policy behaviour or strategic adjustment. In the conditions of anarchy, without the supreme authority that can guarantee adherence to a common set of rules, the security of each country is jeopardized. Those circumstances force countries to rely on themselves to ensure their own survival. Although cooperation is possible if certain prerequisite conditions are fulfilled, states generally see each other as rivals and potential threats (Meascheimer 2001, 30-31). As Waltz (1979, 106) claims, “structures encourage certain behaviors and penalize those who do not respond to the encouragement”. However, differing from neorealists, neoclassical realists argue that the structure of the international system, although most influential, is not the only and sufficient determinant that explains the behaviour of states in international arena. Their foreign policies and choice of different strategies in relation to other actors in the international system are shaped by numerous factors.

For neoclassical realists, the unit- and sub-unit-level intervening variables are acting as a “transmission belt” through which the signals from the international system are processed. Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro and Steven E. Lobell offer a systematisation of the diverse domestic variables used by various neoclassical realist authors in their research. They divide these variables in four groups: leader images, strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic institutions (Ripsman, Taliaferro and Lobell 2016, 59). The first group consists of beliefs, images, interests and available information of foreign policy decision-makers, defined by the authors as the foreign policy executive (FPE) – encompassing the president, prime minister, dictator, key cabinet members, ministers, and foreign policy advisors (61). The second concerns the characteristics of “the organizational culture, such as that of the military as a bureaucratic organization, and a broader notion of strategic culture such as entrenched beliefs, worldviews, and shared expectations of a society as a whole” (66). The third set of variables are the state-society relations, understood as the level of trust between the official decision-makers and various social and interest groups, political and social cohesion and public support for foreign policy moves (71). Finally, the fourth group of intervening variables includes the structure of political, economic and social institutions, their rules, routines and procedures, and presence of oversight and control. These elements determine the main creators of foreign policy and potential veto players (75).

Randall Schweller gives an explanation of how states select their strategies, primarily focusing on the choice between bandwagoning and balancing. Building on the works of neorealist Stephen Walt, he gives

a neoclassical update to Walt's theory of balancing of threats (see Walt 1985, 1987). Schweller talks about the balance of interests, arguing that "the most important determinant of alignment decisions is compatibility of political goals, not imbalances of power or threat" (Schweller 1994, 88). The state will choose to align with a certain power, notwithstanding whether it is more powerful or not, if their interests are compatible and the state assesses it will profit from that alliance. Security and survival are not primary goals of all countries. Revisionist states aim to acquire that which they do not possess and to improve their position in the system. Schweller differentiates between four groups of states, whether they prize more the things they have or the things they wish to gain: lions (status quo states that will pay high cost to protect what they possess but only a small price to increase what they value), lambs (states that would pay only low costs to defend or extend their values, on account of them possessing very few capabilities), wolves (predatory states that value what they covet far more than what they possess), and jackals (also revisionist states that will pay high cost to defend their possessions but even greater costs to extend their values) (Schweller 1994, 101-103).

THE US-CHINA RAPPROCHEMENT DURING THE COLD WAR

In the implementation of the rapprochement strategy in its relations with the Russian Federation, the White House could as a blueprint use the opening to China that occurred during the first term of President Richard Nixon. In order to better understand the prospects and potentials of the US-Russia détente, a brief outline of the US-China rapprochement will be offered in this section.³

The United States' relations with the People's Republic of China at the end of the 60s were formally non-existent. The American support of the Kuomintang-led Republic of China and its leader Chiang Kai-shek during the Chinese Civil War and recognition of Taiwan (Republic of China) as the legitimate representative of Chinese people at the international level, the US aid for and military protection of Taiwan, the ramifications of the conflict between the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the United Nations (UN) troops which principally consisted of American military personnel during the Korean War, and the position of US as the leading capitalist state in the world made this country the principal enemy for the Chinese communist regime. On the other hand, American policymakers saw China, together with the

3) For better understanding of using analogies in specific state foreign policy decision making or strategic adjustment see Дашић, Недељковић и Живојиновић, 2018.

USSR, as the key communist country committed to the revolutionary change of the international order. The USSR was the main challenger for the US. Still, the containment strategy used to hold back the spread of communist ideology and regime change in the US-backed countries, directed and promoted against Moscow, was in Asia also aimed against and useful in dealing with China. The alliance systems of SEATO, whose members included Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, United Kingdom, and the United States, and CENTO, whose members were Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey, and United Kingdom, fulfilled this role.⁴

However, the Sino-Soviet split of the late 50s – early 60s fundamentally altered the dynamics among the major world powers. The relationship between the USSR and China was long that of domination and subordination. The Communist Party of China relied on Soviet support during the Chinese Civil War and afterwards, mainly through extensive loans, transfers of military technology, and the assistance of Soviet advisors. Stalin was the undisputed leader of communism at the world stage and he made sure to remind Mao of that during the Chinese leader's visit to Moscow in late 1949 – early 1950 that resulted in the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance (Westad 1998, 12). After Stalin died in 1953, and Nikita Khrushchev emerged as his successor and victor of the ensuing power struggle for the leadership role in the USSR, the cooperation continued. Khrushchev, although reluctantly, agreed to aid China in nuclear program development. However, the relations between the two largest communist countries and their leaders gradually worsened and became openly antagonistic by the early 60s as a result of several interconnected factors.

Firstly, the destalinization process initiated by Khrushchev at the XX Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union led to ideological disagreements. Although Mao was not a particular admirer of Stalin, he saw the possibility for the criticism of a cult of personality to be applied in his case as well. Furthermore, Mao now saw himself as the senior figure among the communist leaders and expected due respect. He was thus personally offended he was not consulted or notified of Khrushchev's plans regarding destalinization (Lüthi 2016, 136). The responding Maoist critique of ideological leanings in the USSR was published in the 1960 article titled "Long live Leninism", which further contributed to the dissent (Westad 1998, 24). Secondly, Moscow, as a result of its weaker nuclear capabilities *vis*

4) In the case of CENTO, the US was not a member even if it participated in negotiations leading to its formation. However, the alliance had American support.

a vis Washington, worked on a détente with the US while building its nuclear arsenal. Soviet attempts to appease the US were not compatible with an aggressive Chinese policy against Taiwan, manifested in two Taiwan strait crises, and the development of Beijing's nuclear program (Athwal 2004, 283-284). This led to the cancellation of Soviet help for the Chinese nuclear program in 1959 and the withdrawal of Soviet advisors in 1960. Thirdly, their geopolitical interests on the Indian subcontinent were incompatible, as was demonstrated in the case of the Sino-Indian War in 1962, which was the final straw in the Sino-Soviet split. The USSR took a neutral stance in the conflict over the border territory between the Indian and Chinese armies. Additionally, it was increasing the economic and military cooperation with India, which was seen in Beijing as a direct move against its interests (Athwal 2004, 288-289). Consequently, when the USSR invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968 in accordance with the Brezhnev doctrine, the fear of a similar attack on China was present among the Chinese leaders. The border conflict with the Red Army troops on the Ussuri River in 1969 further cemented the position of the USSR as the primary threat to China.

Meanwhile, across the Pacific, the new president Richard Nixon found a like-minded ally and collaborator in Henry Kissinger, who was appointed as the National Security Advisor. They shared a disdain for established institutions such as the State Department and bureaucracy and a preference for direct and centralized decision making (Gaddis 2005, 299). Also, both men were proponents of a *Realpolitik* approach to international affairs, eschewing ideology and regime types as factors in building relations with other countries. They tried to move from a normative view and a battle against communism based on principle, rather opting to be led by the idea of the national interests of the US and building relations with countries in order to protect and promote those interests. As Kissinger said, "we will judge other countries, including Communist countries, and specifically countries like Communist China on the basis of their actions and not on the basis of their domestic ideology" (Kissinger 1979, 192). Furthermore, Nixon was supportive of developing relations with China and pulling this country from international isolation even before he became the President of the United States. In his famous Foreign Affairs article published in 1967, he said that "we cannot afford to leave China forever outside the family of nations, there to nurture its fantasies, cherish its hates and threaten its neighbours" (Nixon 1967, 121).

He started sending signals of his willingness to rekindle the relations between the two countries to Chinese leadership through several channels. There was an initiative to continue the Warsaw talks

between the US and Chinese ambassadors and the administration issued National Security Decision Memorandum 17 whose subject was the relaxation of economic controls against China. It enabled more balanced trade with China, export of agricultural equipment, food and pharmaceuticals, as well as an import into the US of Chinese goods purchased abroad for non-commercial use (National Security Council, 1969). However, the strongest contact was achieved through the Pakistani president Yahya Khan. He acted as the intermediary and was instrumental in the organization of Kissinger's secret visit to China in July 1971. This clandestine operation, unknown to most members of the Cabinet including the Secretary of State William Rogers, enabled the National Security Advisor to meet and negotiate in detail with Chinese premier Zhou Enlai. They spoke about Taiwan, Vietnam, USSR and agreed on Nixon's visit to China the following year (Tudda 2012, 90-92).

Nixon's trip was preceded by another made by Kissinger in October of 1971 whose purpose was to elaborate details about the President's visit. Kissinger's trip coincided with the vote in the UN on the Albanian resolution proposing the expulsion of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and its replacement with the People's Republic of China. Previously, the Secretary of State Rogers and the US Ambassador to the UN George H. W. Bush, with the President's support, put forward a two Chinas resolution which included the seat for China in the Security Council and a seat for Taiwan in the General Assembly, but it was defeated with a 59-55 vote and 15 abstentions (Tudda 2012, 140). This resolution was the maximum effort the Nixon administration was prepared to put in order to keep the Republic of China in the UN. Prior to the vote the president expressed his willingness to accept the People's Republic of China in the UN. He did not insist on stopping this process at all costs, seeing it, in a realist fashion, as a reflection of the existing state of affairs. However, through careful negotiations and skilled political manoeuvring, the made efforts was enough to pacify the wrath of the conservatives supporting Taiwan, such as the California governor Ronald Reagan (140-141).

The President's week-long visit to China in late February 1972, which Nixon dubbed "the week that changed the world", was a resounding success for both sides. The President met with Chairman Mao, visited historical sites, and discussed with premier Enlai at length about main issues, such as the stance of the USSR, the question of status of Taiwan, and American presence in Vietnam. Empowered by their membership in the UN, the Chinese saw the arrival of the American leader to their country as the next step in their emergence

from international isolation, and a way to make the USSR further second-guess Chinese abilities, options and ramifications of a potential conflict between the Red Army and the PLA. They gained assurances about the American withdrawal from Vietnam, the US commitment to a non-militaristic Japan, and acknowledgment of the administration's one China policy (Tudda 2012, 186, 189-190, 195). On the other hand, the pros of opening to China for the White House were numerous. It strengthened the security in East Asia from the American perspective, put pressure on North Vietnam from another angle, and they obtained guarantees from China for a peaceful solution to the Taiwan situation.

But primarily, this strategy was supposed to unsettle the Soviet decision-makers and make them more prone to compromises and concessions to the US (Gaddis 2005, 292-293; Lüthi 2016, 142-143). Washington felt threatened because the Soviets achieved strategic parity and the advantage Americans had in nuclear weapons disappeared. Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I) were meant to address this grave concern. The resulting agreements restrained the competition in nuclear armaments and imposed the limit on the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems. Through the rapprochement with China, the US put pressure on Moscow, since this unexpected and for the Soviets unwelcome turn of events could lead to a potential joint Sino-American balancing of the USSR. Thus, Soviet leaders had an incentive to commit to SALT I and accept the restrictions imposed on both sides, but from which at the time the US had more to gain than the USSR. In this way, the American decision to improve the relations with China proved beneficial, since the political will for the rapprochement existed on the Chinese side as well, and the alignment of interests was appropriately discerned. The centralization of all decision making in the White House, inclination towards secrecy and covert diplomacy, and the appropriate handling of key domestic policy players were additional factors that enabled the triumph of this endeavour, although precisely some of these tendencies led to Nixon's downfall in the Watergate scandal soon after. Nevertheless, the successful opening to a lesser threat and rival in the international system (China) contributed to relative gains in relations with the main adversary (the USSR).

THE OPENING TO RUSSIA – A POSSIBLE BIDEN STRATEGY?

The structure of contemporary international system is significantly different compared to the situation of the early 70s. The United States are despite growing multipolarity of international

relations still the most powerful country in the world. Its dominance is being contested by a number of revisionist states, of which the main threat comes from China. Chinese share in the world economy rose from 3,6% in 2000 to 16,1% in 2018, while the US' share fell from 30,4% in 2000 to 23,3% in 2018 (Tabachnik and Miller 2021, 283). Additionally, since Xi Jinping came to power, China is more assertive in its relations with its neighbours regarding the control of the South China Sea, while expanding its influence globally, primarily in the Middle East and Africa. The Biden administration has defined the rise of China as the principal challenge to the US and its main focus will be to address this issue adequately. President Biden said that "we'll also take on directly the challenges posed by our prosperity, security, and democratic values by our most serious competitor, China" (Biden 2021a). His focus on China is one of the few instances where the 46th President of the US is following the course set by his predecessor Donald Trump. On the other hand, although it possesses only a fraction of the military and economic power of the USSR, Russia is still a major power and actor whose actions have the capacity to shape and influence the state of affairs on the world stage, especially in its neighbouring regions, such as Eastern Europe and Central Asia. However, the US-Russian relations are worst since the end of the Cold War, with the watershed moment being the Ukraine crisis. In 2014, the ousting of the Ukrainian president Victor Yanukovych in the mass protests after his refusal to sign the EU Association Agreement prompted Russia to react decisively (Mearsheimer 2014, 80-81). The subsequent annexation of the Crimea peninsula and support for the rebels in the eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk provoked strong criticism from the West. The sanctions introduced by the US and the EU targeted at first only assets of selected individuals close to President Putin and held accountable for the Russian actions in Ukraine. Over time they evolved to sectoral sanctions aimed against the defence, energy and finance sectors (Dytrich 2014, 83-85).

This decline in relations with the West led Moscow to turn eastward to compensate for the losses inflicted by American and European sanctions. The resulting strengthening of the Sino-Russian partnership presents a serious problem for the United States, since the cooperation between the two countries is growing and they so far appear able to overcome the existing differences and focus on common interests. In order to decouple Moscow and Beijing, an opening to Russia, in the vein of Nixon's opening to China, is a potential direction. Many commentators and analysts warned that the US policy towards Russia is pushing it to further embrace its alliance

with China. For example, Joseph S. Nye (2019) warns that the two countries “have cooperated closely in the UN Security Council, taken similar positions on international control of the Internet, and have used various diplomatic frameworks such as the BRICS grouping and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to coordinate positions”. Charles A. Kupchan (2021) suggests Washington should demonstrate to Moscow “that more cooperation with the West can help Russia redress the mounting vulnerabilities arising from its close partnership with China”. Thomas Graham (2019) argues that “U.S. policymakers should help multiply Russia’s alternatives to China, thereby improving the Kremlin’s bargaining position”. Still, it is not clear of what a potential opening to Russia would consist.

This strategy would require Washington to offer to Moscow concessions significant enough for it to reconsider its partnership with Beijing. If Putin had different options available in order to realize some of his goals, than he would have greater leverage to distance Russia from China and pursue a foreign policy on a number of issues less aligned with that of its south-eastern neighbour. If some of the main grievances Russia has with the West would be addressed, the Kremlin’s turn to the east could be slowed down and it would be incited to reconsider its strategic alignment. From the Russian perspective, the two main factors that harm the relations with the US are NATO eastward enlargement, particularly the idea of Ukraine’s and Georgia’s membership in the alliance, and Washington’s insistence on democracy and human rights promotion in Russia (Rumer and Sokolsky 2019, 1). The first is perceived as a geopolitical and security threat driven by the elimination of Russia’s buffer zones to the West, on which it has historically relied to provide safety, and the removal of the neighbouring countries from its traditional sphere of influence. This leads to another problem – the refusal to acknowledge a particular Russian sphere of influence, which affects Russian standing and self-perception as a great power. This status and its recognition by other great powers is inherently tied to the stability and security of Russia, since the time of Peter the Great in the 17th and 18th century (Graham 2019). The second factor is seen as a continuation of a policy of support for the colour revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, in 2003 and 2004 respectively, and a deliberate intervention in the internal affairs of Russia in order to destabilize and weaken it from within.

To expect full accommodation of Russian interests and wishes for these issues by the Biden administration would be unreasonable. Looking at Nixon’s opening to China, through their actions the President and Kissinger enabled the incorporation of China in the international

community, which made the USSR, whom China saw as the greatest threat at the time, reluctant to escalate tensions with Beijing on the account of the new Sino-American rapprochement. They were also willing to make a compromise regarding Taiwan, whose status was and is still of primary concern to China. Today, regarding Russia, readiness to acknowledge Moscow's positions and the logic behind its actions would be a needed first step. This could lead to compromise on some of these matters which would signal Putin a willingness to improve relations. Although this policy would be hard to defend and looking in the short term, it could be understood as unnecessary appeasement of a comparably weaker power and its autocratic leader, in the long term it would be justified as the US could focus more on China, its main strategic challenger.

Regarding NATO enlargement, the prospects of Georgia or Ukraine becoming members are rather unrealistic. Thus, the Biden administration would have to openly accept that. The bilateral cooperation with the two countries could continue and should be promoted, as Russia was ready to tolerate this kind of arrangement before. But their membership is a red line for Putin (Graham 2019). To concede to that would be a major breakthrough in US-Russian relations. This leads to the topic of Ukraine. The White House cannot ever recognize Russian sovereignty over Crimea and accept the illegal seizure of the peninsula. It could nevertheless engage Russia in new negotiations over the status of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as the Minsk protocols proved ineffective (McFaul 2021). Additionally, gradual softening and removal of sanctions implemented in the aftermath of the Ukraine crisis would be an important development. The direct contact and talks with the Russian side and inclusion of the Kremlin in attempts to resolve major international issues, such as the Iran nuclear program or Syrian civil war, would curb Russian parallel solo efforts and play to Moscow's cravings for the great power status recognition. The isolation of the Kremlin is counterproductive if the goal is to encourage it to distance itself from Beijing. Accordingly, the US could consider the initiative to welcome Russia back in the G8. Finally, the promotion of fundamental values of democracy and human rights cannot be removed from the US foreign policy agenda entirely. But it also does not have to be its first priority. The criticism of Putin's treatment of political opposition, civil rights activists and critical media will surely remain on the table. But if it is less severe and less frequent, while at the same time constrained to verbal condemnation not followed by economic sanctions, it could become peripheral in the wider picture. Washington was more than willing to cooperate with autocratic regimes

throughout history, and its friendly relations with Saudi Arabia today are proof that has not changed. Consequently, dropping the framing of US relations with Russia as a battle of the democratic free world versus the authoritarian one would also be a significant gesture of goodwill.

Implementing some combination of previously mentioned actions could lead to a détente between Washington and Moscow, and would open an alternative path for Russian foreign policy course in the future that would not result in the strengthening of the Sino-Russian axis. The Biden administration would not concede to Russia on all the points and should rightfully expect a willingness for compromise from the other side. Presidents Biden and Putin met for a summit in a meeting on June 16, 2021 (The New York Times 2021). Preparedness to directly engage with the Russian side on the highest level and discuss differences and obstacles in their relationship face to face shows that the policy of the current president towards Russia will not be limited only to confrontation with the traditional adversary. The decision to renew the New START treaty on nuclear arms reduction, signed between the two countries during Obama's presidency and expiring in 2021, was negotiated successfully prior to the summit (Reif and Bugos 2021). President Biden lifted sanctions that affected the completion of Nord Stream 2, the pipeline transporting gas from Russia to Germany (BBC 2021). At the press conference after the meeting between the two leaders, Biden addressed Russia as a great power, which has an important symbolical weight, especially considering Obama's dismissive remark about Russia as a regional power in 2014 (Biden 2021b; Rumer and Sokolsky 25). It seems that the space for the opening to Russia policy exists and this direction is not unimaginable. However, if the current administration opts to pursue it, it will have to overcome two major set of challenges that affect its possible effectiveness.

The first set of challenges relates to the structure of the international system, positions and most importantly, interests of the major powers in question, namely the US, Russia, and China. In the early 70s, Nixon had the opportunity to capitalize on the existing rift between the USSR and China. Moscow and Beijing had conflicting interests. Their ideological clash over the dominance in the communist world and differing geopolitical aims in Asia world led them to the verge of direct military engagement. But Washington had the interest to promote a more tripolar configuration on the world stage, to check soviet power and to decrease China's unpredictability stemming from its isolationism (Caldwell 2009, 635). On the other hand, today the situation regarding Russia and China is rather different. Ideology as a main driver for foreign policy actions is not present anymore. Although

USA is regarded as a liberal and democratic state and on the other hand Russia and China are considered to be autocracies the ideological clash between these three powers is only subsidiary to their geopolitical rivalry. In the words of Hal Brands (2018, 62) “ideological competition is fuelling geopolitical competition”. Their interests in international arena are far more important than their ideological worldview. In Schweller’s terms, they are two wolves allied against the American lion. Both countries aim for a more multipolar world and insist on the understanding of international relations in which sovereignty, spheres of influence and non-intervention in internal affairs present a basis respected by all actors. To achieve this, Putin, for the time being, seems willing to put up with Russian increasing dependence on China’s imports of oil and gas, its rising influence in Central Asia, and the uncertainty over the Russian Far East, the underpopulated region bordering China.

The second set is based on the domestic variables that affect foreign policy decisions. Leader perceptions have an influence both on the American and the Russian side. President Biden served as Obama’s vice president for eight years and was an important decision-maker both in the period of the reset in the countries relations at the start of the Obama administration and the decline in the wake of Arab Spring and Ukraine crisis (Kuchins 2015; McFaul 2018). This previous experience impacts his stance towards Kremlin. Still, the silver lining could be his willingness to learn from that experience and shape the policy on Russia accordingly. On the other hand, Putin has deep reservations about the prospects for an improvement in relations with the White House. In his eyes, Russia’s cooperation with the Bush administration in the fight against terrorism after the 9/11 attacks was rewarded with NATO membership for Romania, Bulgaria, and the Baltic states. Agreement for the UN sanctions imposed on Iran on account of its nuclear program did not stop the US intervention in Libya despite clear Russian opposition to it (Goldgeier 2021). Furthermore, state-society relations in Russia play a role too. Putin’s foreign policy decisions are tied to dependence on anti-Americanism and perception of constant conflict with the West which functions as a rally round the flag moment in the area of domestic politics (Rumer and Sokolsky 2019, 2).

Another affecting variable is the resurgence of the Cold War outlooks and perception of Russia as the crucial adversary deriving from the allegations of its interference in the 2016 US presidential elections, subsequent investigation and the resulting Mueller report. In 2021, American attitude towards Russia is the worst since the final years of the Cold War, the joint survey by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and the Levada Analytical Center shows (Smeltz et al. 2021). The

domestic institutions in the US, namely the influence of the Congress in the foreign policy creation, will also present a great impediment for the opening to Russia. President Trump's rhetoric during his 2016 election campaign and first months of his presidency included plans for an improvement in relations with Putin (Rutland 2017, 41). But Trump faced major opposition from Congress, which was bipartisan in its hard-line stance on Russia, and imposed additional sanctions despite the President's reluctance (Stent 2020). While the Democrats acted to stop what they saw as unwelcomed closeness and sympathy for Putin, the Republicans wanted to put an end to ideas of any collusion between the President from their party and Kremlin by being strict and uncompromising (Trenin 2019). With the fragile majority Democrats have in the Senate, Biden will have to be very careful and tactical for such an atypical and uncommon strategy as the opening to Russia to have a chance.

CONCLUSION

The leading foreign policy creators in Washington are aware that China presents a major threat to the US dominance and have stated their plans to treat it accordingly. However, Russia cannot be disregarded, especially considering its growing partnership with China. Relying on the successful examples from history, President Biden and his team could opt to try an opening to Russia, in the vein of the move President Nixon made towards China during the Cold War. This approach would aim to present Kremlin with additional options and stimulate its distancing from Beijing. The 46th president of the US has not committed to such policy, although the administration's actions towards Russia contain some telling signs that such a policy is not off the table, despite the very critical rhetoric. Still, compared to the Nixon era, the state of affairs in international relations differs greatly. The interests of Moscow and Beijing align in the most important aspects. Furthermore, many domestic variables, on the Russian, but especially on the American side, make additional obstacles to the successful implementation of this strategy. Consequently, if Biden decides to pursue it, he would have to deal with a number of factors that threaten to hinder its progress, some of which are beyond his capacity to influence. Because of this, although opening to Russia is a possible foreign policy direction for the US, the eventual favourable results seem very questionable.

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АМЕРИЧКО-РУСКО ПРИБЛИЖАВАЊЕ: (НЕ) МОГУЋ ПРАВАЦ ЗА АМЕРИЧКУ СПОЉНУ ПОЛИТИКУ

Резиме

Аутори овог рада испитују могућу промену курса у спољној политици Сједињених Америчких Држава и њено стратешко прилагођавање у односима са Русијом. Сједињене Америчке Државе биле су једина суперсила у свету након завршетка Хладног рата, али савремени међународни систем обележава растућа мултиполарност. Ова промена на међународној сцени узрокована је успоном две велике силе са ревизионистичким тенденцијама – Кине и Русије. Иако Кина представља главног геополитичког супарника САД, Русији не недостаје амбиција да утиче на актуелна светска дешавања. Могући релативни добитак у кинеско-америчком ривалству за САД могао би се постићи ближом сарадњом са Русијом. Иако би ово хипотетичко побољшање односа могло бити од користи за САД, аутори овог рада заузимају став да је приближавање између две земље тренутно мало вероватно. Користећи неокласични реализам као теоријски оквир, рад испитује могућу америчко-руску стратешку сарадњу, укључујући у анализу спољне и унутрашње факторе који утичу на државну спољну политику и стратешко прилагођавање. Рад такође испитује отварање САД према Кини током Хладног рата за време председничке администрације Ричарда Никсона и упоређује га са савременим стањем у свету.

Кључне речи: *Односи САД и Русије, спољна политика САД, рапрошман, неокласични реализам, ривалство великих сила*

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Овај рад је примљен 10. октобра 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на телефонском састанку Редакције, 15. новембра 2021. године.

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CHALLENGES TO THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM THROUGH THE PRISM OF THE ACTIONS OF PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN AND PRIME MINISTER BORIS JOHNSON

Abstract

The United States and the United Kingdom have special political, economic, military and cultural relations. The new American administration is restoring priority to multilateralism and old alliances, and the British authorities have announced an expansion of international engagement. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fight against climate change, the growth of China's influence, and threats to cybersecurity are the biggest international challenges in the view of both states. The US and the UK urge other states to jointly take responsibility and work out solutions to the world's most crucial problems. The United Kingdom left the European Union in January 2020 and, in line with the rhetoric of the government, it regained a sovereign foreign policy. US-UK relations could deepen but new troubles appeared, for example the need to negotiate a new trade deal. However, the differences between Joe Biden and Boris Johnson are less important in the face of common interests, as evidenced by the signing of a new Atlantic Charter by both leaders in June 2021 or increasing joint engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.

Keywords: *United States, United Kingdom, special relationship, Joe Biden, Boris Johnson*

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INTRODUCTION

The author aims to identify the most important challenges to the *special relationship* between the United States and the United Kingdom during the presidency of Joe Biden, and to formulate conclusions on a possible path for these relations to develop under the current US administration. The topic seems important because of the shift of American foreign policy towards old alliances and multilateralism after the inauguration of the new presidency, and Joe Biden's negative perception of the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union, which determines the UK's current foreign policy. The British authorities announce the doctrine of Global Britain, and, as politicians and researchers emphasize, the United States and the United Kingdom, which are connected with special political, economic and military ties, need each other to better implement their foreign policy goals. The actions of President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Boris Johnson are an important context of the research, as they are the creators of their states' foreign policy and the personal contacts of US and UK leaders have always been one of the foundations of the strength of this *special relationship*.

The methodology of the work was based on the analysis of discourse: the author primarily analyzes the statements (speeches, statements in interviews) of President Biden and Prime Minister Johnson, which relate to the priorities in the relations of these states. The additional method was the analysis of primary sources (strategic documents, reports of government centers) and secondary sources (press articles).

The first part of the article invokes and explains the notion of the *special relationship* between the United States and the United Kingdom and the positions of President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Boris Johnson on the importance of British-American relations as well as each other as people and politicians. In the second part of the article, the author identifies the most important common interests and activities in the US-UK relations during the presidency of Joe Biden. The positions of leaders on issues important for cooperation between states are collected – these are: political and economic reconstruction of the world after the COVID-19 pandemic, combating the effects of climate change, the growing influence of the People's Republic of China, and the cooperation of intelligence and in the field of cybersecurity. The third part of the article is devoted to issues difficult for US-British relations during the presidency of Joe Biden. These are primarily the effects of the United Kingdom leaving the Euro-

pean Union, which is related to, inter alia, the issue of preparing a new trade agreement with the US. The reduction of foreign aid, as proposed by Boris Johnson, is also important, as Joe Biden increases its financing. The last part of the article is a synthesis of the points of contact and contradictions in the current US-UK relations and an attempt to forecast their development under Joe Biden presidency.

THE NOTION OF THE *SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP* AND THEIR PRIORITIZATION IN BOTH STATES

The United States and the United Kingdom have special political, economic, military and cultural relations. This term was popularized in 1946 by the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and it was intended to define the unique nature of the alliance of the former metropolis and its former colony which became a superpower. States are linked by linguistic and cultural ties, a similar understanding of many key political values and belonging to international structures that are decisive for the creation and maintenance of the international order. They are permanent members of the UN Security Council, the body responsible for international peace and security, belong to the G7 and G20, are the founding states and one of the most important members of the North Atlantic Alliance. They support each other's international activity very often and were allies during many conflicts in the 20th and 21st centuries. Importantly, their level of economic and technological exchange or intelligence cooperation can in many respects be described as preferential and even unprecedented in terms of relations between world powers. Essential elements of this *special relationship* are the personal, cordial contacts of American leaders with British prime ministers and with the head of state, the Queen, characterized by frequent visits, both public and private.

Boris Johnson prefers not to use the term *special relationship*. According to him, it weakens the importance of the United Kingdom and he prefers terms that more clearly suggest equality of the allies. It is even more important after the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union and the implementation of the rhetoric of regaining sovereignty and strengthening the global position of the UK. Johnson describes the relationship with the United States as “indestructible”, “deep” and “meaningful” (BBC News 2021, 1:07-1:12). Although Prime Minister Johnson made his remarks to the American President, the US leader and his associates continued to use the term *special relationship* in reports or at press conferences. As stated in “The Integrated Review of Security, Defense, Development and Foreign Policy” presented by

the British government in March 2021, “our influence will be amplified by stronger alliances and wider partnerships – none more valuable to British citizens than our relationship with the United States” (UK Cabinet Office 2021: 6). Joe Biden emphasized in The Interim National Security Strategic Guidance the crucial importance of the United Kingdom in building a common transatlantic agenda “on the defining issues of our time.” (The White House 2021).

The leaders have polarizing political backgrounds – Boris Johnson leads the Conservative Party cabinet, while Joe Biden comes from the liberal Democratic Party. The current US leader in 2019 called the British Prime Minister a “physical and emotional clone” of Donald Trump, emphasizing the bold tone of his statements and their populist messages (Frazin: 2019). However, it can be concluded that such words were needed for internal use and were not intended to discredit such an important partner as the United Kingdom is for the United States. Boris Johnson was one of the first world leaders to congratulate Joe Biden on winning the presidential election in November 2020, even though President Donald Trump did not recognize the election result. Following the G7 Summit in Cornwall, Johnson spoke enthusiastically about Biden being a “breath of fresh air”, and emphasized shared belief in a transatlantic alliance, strong democracy, human rights and a rules-based international order, and prioritization of the fight against climate change (BBC News 2021, 0: 36-1: 05). In February 2021, he stated that “America is unreservedly back as leader of the free world and that is a fantastic thing.” (Prime Minister’s Office 2021 [“Prime Minister’s speech...”]).

The new US leader has met Prime Minister Boris Johnson three times so far¹. Biden’s first foreign visit as president took place in Cornwall, UK, at the G7 summit that began on June 11, 2021. The talks focused on the international consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, financing infrastructure in developing states and the situation in Afghanistan. The US and UK leaders signed the new Atlantic Charter referring to a document signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill in 1941. As President Biden explained, the new document is “a statement of first principles, a promise that the United Kingdom and United States would meet the challenges of their age and would meet it together.” (Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr. 2021). The second meeting took place right after the G7 summit, on June 14 in Brussels at the NATO summit. For the third time, the leaders met at the White House following the opening of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly. The place

1) As of September 23, 2021.

itself emphasizes the importance of the meeting for the Americans. The leaders were enthusiastic, though when asked by a journalist about a new trade deal with the United Kingdom, Biden responded slightly less enthusiastically that “we’ll have to work that through.” (Fox News 2021, 6: 45-6: 52).

THE MOST IMPORTANT COMMON INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES IN US-UK RELATIONS

Consolidating efforts in the international fight against the COVID-19 pandemic

Boris Johnson assures that the US allies across the Atlantic can and are ready to share the burden of solving the world’s most difficult problems (Prime Minister’s Office 2021 [“Prime Minister’s speech...”]). The Prime Minister eagerly emphasizes the strategy of Global Britain, i.e. strengthening the visibility of the United Kingdom on the international arena and involvement in various parts of the world, in various areas of international relations. These kinds of superpower ambitions of the United Kingdom are not characterized by the will to compete with the United States, but rather to expand the ability to at least partially keep pace with the Americans, to be an even more attractive partner, but also to increase its strengths and self-worth.

Prime Minister Johnson considers the challenge of combating COVID-19 and the political and economic recovery of the world after the pandemic to be an important test of leadership. Similarly, Joe Biden, who took over the pandemic cases after President Trump, wants to show American solidarity with states around the world, regardless of daily differences and without business intentions. In the new Atlantic Charter, the US and the UK have securitized health. The states pledged to continue working together to strengthen health systems and help other states do the same (The White House 2021 [“The new...”]). At the end of May 2021, the President presented a budget proposal that included a significant increase in financing foreign aid. Adopted by Congress and taking into account the President’s proposal, the budget for 2022 includes \$10.1 billion for global health programs, including about \$1 billion for global health safety programs and support to contain the COVID-19 pandemic (The White House 2021 [“Budget...”]: 22). In turn, at last year’s (2020) UN General Assembly, the British Prime Minister proposed a five-point plan to protect the world against future epidemics. In February 2021 Johnson compared creating a system of protection against further pathogens with uniting against military threats (Prime Minister’s Office

2021 [“Prime Minister’s speech...”]). Importantly, the United Kingdom is one of the founders and one of the largest donors of COVAX, a global alliance to supply COVID-19 vaccines to developing states. Of course, the crucial matter for both states is to resolve the crisis at home, but both leaders are aware that, especially in the era of globalization and interdependence, the situation in the US and the UK is related to that of other states. In addition, showing generosity and selflessness can strengthen their image in the international arena.

International fight against the effects of climate change

Joe Biden and Boris Johnson have a similar understanding of security, as they deviate from its traditional understanding and see the expanding spectrum of threats. They prioritize the fight against climate change and underline the need for closer consolidation of international efforts on this issue. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the United States acceded to the Paris Agreement again, which was one of the first decisions of the new President. The UK, in turn, is implementing the Green Industrial Revolution, and Boris Johnson said he hoped other states would follow the British footsteps (Prime Minister’s Office 2021 [“PM speech...”]). The US and UK leaders collaborated on a virtual climate summit in April 2021, hosted by the US President, which was to be the prelude to the UN climate summit (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021, where Biden will be hosted by the British Prime Minister. Boris Johnson praised the US President at the spring summit for bringing the USA back to the front lines to fight climate change (Prime Minister’s Office 2021 [“PM statement...”]). In the new Atlantic Charter, the leaders agreed that tackling the climate crisis, protecting biodiversity, and sustaining nature would be prioritized in all their states’ activities in the international arena (The White House 2021 [“The new...”]). At the inauguration of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly, Biden and Johnson also listed cooperation in the fight against climate change as one of the key tasks for their states and the world. The American President recalled that in April 2021 the USA undertook to double its public international financing to help developing states tackle the climate crisis and announced that this number would be doubled again (The White House 2021 [“Remarks...”]). At Biden’s request, the US will allocate more than \$2.5 billion in 2022 to international climate programs (The White House 2021 [“Budget...”]: 22). The British Prime Minister also noted that the United Kingdom was ready to financially support states struggling with the effects of climate change and recalled that the government paid out £11.6 billion announced in 2019 (Prime Minister’s Office 2021 [“PM speech...”]).

It can be said that Boris Johnson is fortunate enough to find in the person of the new American President a worthy partner for cooperation on climate issues. Joe Biden prioritizes green energy and understands much more about global warming or protecting biodiversity than his predecessor. The US and UK leaders seem to be on track to lead the world, together with the European Union, towards reaffirming and strengthening the commitments made under the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The USA and the UK towards the growing influence of China

Joe Biden wants to strengthen the US position in the international arena, while Boris Johnson aims to present the United Kingdom as an important global actor, regaining a fully sovereign foreign policy after leaving the European Union and being able to make quick, independent decisions. At the Munich Security Conference on February 19, 2021, President Joe Biden called on US allies to unite against China. The United States sees China as not only an economic competitor, but also a threat to cybersecurity or at the level of values such as human rights. His intentions were not shared by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel or the French President Emmanuel Macron². The words of the American leader, however, were supported by the British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who opposed the repression of the Uighurs in the Chinese province of Xinjiang and supported the people of Hong Kong (Prime Minister's Office 2021). The US and the UK perceive China as the greatest state threat to their economic security. The British government sees the need to cooperate with a state that is becoming more and more powerful in many fields, including in the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss, but above all emphasizes the need to improve the ability to respond to challenges to the security and values of the United Kingdom and its allies (UK Cabinet Office 2021: 22).

Boris Johnson invited South Korea, Australia and India to attend the next G7 summit as guests, which clearly suggests a desire to further consolidate efforts to increase security in East Asia and the Indo-Pacific region, which is a natural zone for China to expand its influence. 15 września 2021 roku Joe Biden zapowiedział utworzenie nowego partnerstwa w dziedzinie bezpieczeństwa między Stanami Zjednoczonymi, Zjednoczonym Królestwem i Australią (AUKUS), które ma na celu wzmocnienie stabilności w regionie Indo-Pacyfiku

2) Similarly, in the case of the Russian Federation, while France and Germany prefer to ease the sanctions imposed, the United Kingdom shares the US position on maintaining sanctions against Russia (James and Lewis 2021).

(Madhani and Lemire 2021). On September 15, 2021, Joe Biden announced the creation of a new security partnership between the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia (AUKUS), which aims to strengthen stability in the Indo-Pacific region (Madhani and Lemire 2021). The US and the United Kingdom have pledged to assist Australia in acquiring nuclear powered submarines, which will help the Australian Navy to counter the actions of Chinese units. Boris Johnson said the alliance would allow the three English-speaking maritime democracies to strengthen their relations and sharpen their concentration in this increasingly complex part of the world.

The United States, the United Kingdom and Australia also plan to intensify cooperation in the areas of, among others, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and quantum technology. These three states, as well as Canada and New Zealand, are already sharing intelligence on this subject thanks to the Five Eyes alliance established in the 1940s. In the new Atlantic Charter, the United States and the United Kingdom announced that they would oppose interfering “through disinformation or other malign influences, including in elections.” (The White House 2021 [“The new...”]). No state has been identified as the source of the threat, but most likely these words refer to the activity of the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China.

DIFFICULTIES IN CURRENT US-UK RELATIONS

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union and a new trade agreement between the UK and the US

For decades, the European Communities/European Union has been a key American ally. The deepening integration in the Old Continent and the unification of the policies of the EU Member States made it easier for third states to cooperate with them. Nowadays, one agreement can set the terms of trade with about 30 actors, and not with each of them separately, including key states such as Germany, France or, until 2020, the United Kingdom. The UK’s withdrawal from the organization in January 2020 caused a number of difficulties not only in the UK’s foreign and trade policy, but also in the activities of EU partners. There was a risk that the United States would be torn between good, preferential relations and agreements with the European Union and a special, close relationship with the United Kingdom. As a supporter of multilateralism and international cooperation, Joe Biden views Brexit negatively and would prefer the United Kingdom to

remain part of a united Europe. In addition, the American President was observing with worry the situation around the emerging border on the island of Ireland, which hindered economic exchange and the free movement of people. He was concerned that the issue of the Northern Ireland Protocol to the Brexit Agreement would undermine the durability of the Good Friday Agreement, which ended the conflict in Northern Ireland in 1998. The President, who repeatedly emphasizes his Irish origin, shows a solicitude for peace in this state. According to CNN's White House correspondent, Joe Biden raised the issue with Boris Johnson in a phone call ahead of the G7 Summit in Cornwall, and US diplomats discussed it with their British counterparts in preparation for the leaders' bilateral talks (Vazquez 2021). While Biden was able to express his private opinion on the protocol in talks with Johnson, American officials assured that the United States was not involved in negotiations or disputes over the protocol, as it is a matter between the government in London and Northern Ireland, and the United Kingdom and European Union.

The renewed commitment of the United States to cooperate with the European Union is not a threat but an opportunity for the United Kingdom. There is a high probability that US-EU and US-British partnership in key areas will be more profitable as US-EU-British cooperation. Some of the planned projects are the restoration of the nuclear deal with Iran and the confirmation and extension of climate commitments at COP26 in November 2021. Combating climate change is a priority for the US, the UK and the EU, so the cooperation of these three important actors will be crucial to the success of the conference.

One of the more difficult aspects of the current US-British relationship is an agreement that is to regulate the terms of trade between the two states. Joe Biden gives it less priority than Donald Trump and is reluctant to comment on it. While five negotiating rounds were held in 2020, the new administration has not yet published the schedule for resuming the negotiation process. The most contentious issues are the provisions on investment, food safety, digital services and pharmaceutical products. The process seems arduous, but it can be assumed that the parties want the most accurate solution possible, given the importance of the agreement and the economic relationship between the states. In 2020, the US exports of goods and services to the UK were valued at \$118 billion, and the US imports of goods and services from the United Kingdom were approximately \$100.3 billion. In turn, American foreign direct investments in the UK amounted to \$851.4 billion in 2019, and British direct investments in the USA to \$505 billion (Office of the United States Trade Representative 2020).

Joe Biden's and Boris Johnson's approaches to development and humanitarian aid, and migration

Boris Johnson decided to limit the aid provided to other states by the United Kingdom. This does not mean, however, that the government advocating the Global Britain doctrine intends to limit the previously declared shared responsibility for the fate of developing states. The cuts are to be related to the economic consequences of the pandemic for the United Kingdom. Foreign Minister Dominic Raab announced in 2020 that the government would reduce foreign aid spending from 0.7% of national income to 0.5% – i.e. by over £4 billion. While this has led to funding cuts for some programs by up to 85%, Raab said in April 2021 that the UK would be the third largest donor within the G7 as a percentage of GNI (Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office 2021). In turn, Joe Biden announced during the opening of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly that the United States wants to be the largest donor of development and humanitarian aid in the world (The White House 2021 [“Remarks...”]). According to Biden's budget request, the US will allocate more than \$10 billion to humanitarian aid in 2022 (The White House 2021 [“Budget...”]: 23). These funds are to support, inter alia, refugees and victims of conflicts outside the US, and issues of migration to the US from Central America.

Biden expands asylum programs and aims to implement a friendly immigration system, including paving the way for undocumented immigrants to obtain the US citizenship. Boris Johnson is less enthusiastic about migration. The issue of immigrants was one of the hotspots in discussions around Brexit, and the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union imposed a visa regime in relations with many states. The British government pledges to fight illegal migration and is much less liberal on these issues than the current US administration. However, these are the internal affairs of each state, and it is unlikely that migration policy will constitute any obstacle to the partnership between the US and the UK. The same applies to humanitarian and development aid, especially while dealing with the internal economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The UK is likely to increase funding once the economy has stabilized and, along with the US, will help people in need abroad.

THE FUTURE OF THE *SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP* UNDER THE JOE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

The election of Joe Biden as President heralded a return to old alliances and the US readiness to lead and partner with the participants of the Western world. The personal differences between

the leaders of the United States and the United Kingdom are relegated to the background in the face of many common challenges and taking collective responsibility for key global activities. US-British relations have a tradition good and strong enough that the differing positions on minor issues will not influence the priorities of the partnership, and the new President understands and appreciates the historical reasons for being close to the United Kingdom. *Special relationship* is and will be held together by the presence of common threats and global problems. The end of the American presence in Afghanistan, according to the President's announcement, is to enable the US to focus even more on these problems. Both states will cooperate both bilaterally and within the framework of the United Nations, NATO and other international organizations and multilateral agreements. Particular attention should be paid to the recently announced strengthening of cooperation with Australia under AUKUS and other forms of joint engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.

Both leaders take the challenge of climate change very seriously and encourage other states to join the fight. The American administration's agenda in this regard is much closer to the British agenda than it was during the presidency of Donald Trump. The COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences are undoubtedly an important test for the new American administration and for the power ambitions of Johnson's United Kingdom. The two leaders of the West work together to show the world that they can overcome antagonisms and are ready to help any state that needs vaccines or other medical support. Joe Biden and Boris Johnson are aware of China's progressive growth, which will likely be the greatest geopolitical determinant in the 2020s. As close allies in almost every possible field of relationship, the United Kingdom and the United States, whoever will lead them, will need to unite their forces and resources to keep pace with China.

Both states value transatlantic relations, the fullest expression of which is the North Atlantic Alliance. In the new Atlantic Charter, they present themselves as NATO pillars that their allies can always count on. The UK defense spending will increase by £24 billion over the next four years, making the British defense budget the largest in Europe and the second largest in NATO after the US (Prime Minister's Office 2021). The seemingly fragmented relations (USA-UK, the USA as a part of NATO, USA-European Union) form a network of connections which are the guarantors of European security, based on, inter alia, involvement of the United States in the Old Continent. It is not only close military cooperation, but also in the field of combating non-traditional security threats.

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union is unlikely to have any major negative consequences for British-American relations. Boris Johnson still prioritizes multilateralism and international cooperation, and the UK authorities spoke negatively about the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement or the nuclear deal with Iran during the Trump presidency. The UK has left no European allies but is also opening up to other cooperation platforms that it can use to multiply its strength. The independence of political and economic decision-making of the bodies of the European Union is to facilitate and accelerate the activity of the state abroad, enabling it to act on its own, as well as alongside the overseas ally. As Boris Johnson points out, his state's hands are no longer tied in the fight against the world's greatest problems and threats. For example, the possibility of imposing sanctions independent of the EU may make objections to specific regimes real, and thus the readiness to defend the declared values, together with the Americans, such as: liberal democracy, the rule of law, and the free market. The UK government realizes that with the United States open to multilateralism under Biden's presidency, its efforts will find the backing of the greatest ally.

CONCLUSION

The *special relationship* between the United States and the United Kingdom has a chance to strengthen thanks to the return of the USA to multilateralism and faith in old alliances, greater UK involvement in the international arena and the presence of international threats in the fight against which the cooperation of the two states is consistent with their national interest. The discussion of both common interests and differences in this article made it possible to understand that common interests and similarities prevail, especially under the Joe Biden administration. In the new Atlantic Charter both leaders emphasized the will to strengthen partnership, recognized the key importance of basing the international order on international law and institutions, and promoting open and fair trade between states. President Biden's willingness that the USA will regain the position of a world leader could be possible thanks to the deepening of the partnership with its allies, especially the UK, which often went hand in hand with the United States in the most difficult moments. Joe Biden and Boris Johnson believe that only international cooperation is able to stop processes dangerous to the globe, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or the effects of climate change. Both states have taken on the burden of at least a partial solution to the world's problems that they want to share with their allies for the common good.

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ИЗАЗОВИ СПЕЦИЈАЛНИМ ВЕЗАМА САД И УЈЕДИЊЕНОГ КРАЉЕВСТВА КРОЗ ПРИЗМУ АКЦИЈА ПРЕДСЕДНИКА ЦОА БАЈДЕНА И ПРЕМИЈЕРА БОРИСА ЦОНСОНА

Резиме

Сједињене Америчке Државе и Уједињено Краљевство имају специјалне политичке, економске, војне и културне односе. Нова америчка администрација враћа мултилатерализам и старе савезе међу своје главне приоритете, док су са друге стране британске власти најавиле експанзију свог међународног ангажмана. Ефекти пандемије ковид-19, борба против климатских промена, раст утицаја Кина и претње сајбер безбедности су највећи међународни изазови према виђењу обе државе. САД и УК такође апелују и на друге државе да заједнички преузму одговорност и траже решења за најважније глобалне проблеме. Уједињено Краљевство је напустило Европску Унију у јануару 2020. године и, у складу са реториком владе, повратило суверенитет над својом спољном политиком. Односи две земље би могли да се продубе, али појавиле су се нове невоље, као на пример потреба да се преговара о новом трговинском уговору. Међутим, разлике између Цоа Бајдена и Бориса Цонсона су мање важне у смислу заједничког интереса, као што је видљиво из потписивања нове Атлантске повеље у јуну 2021. године, а такође и у заједничком повећању ангажмана у Индо-Пацифичком региону.

Кључне речи: САД, Уједињено Краљевство, специјалне везе, Цо Бајден, Борис Цонсон

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Овај рад је примљен 13. октобра 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на телефонском састанку Редакције, 15. новембра 2021. године.

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CONTINUITY AND CHANGES IN THE US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE WESTERN BALKANS DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF BIDEN’S PRESIDENCY: THIRD OBAMA’S OR SECOND TRUMP’S TERM?

Abstract

Many analysts expected a radical change in President Joseph Biden’s foreign policy compared to the foreign policy of previous President Donald Trump. A year after his electoral victory, opinions about how much Biden actually changed in the US foreign policy vary from those who see it as a revolutionary change to those who perceive it as a difference only in tone and continuity in the majority of crucial policy aspects. This paper aims to contribute to this debate by addressing the issues of continuity and changes in the new administration foreign policy towards the Western Balkans. Although many expected that Biden’s policy to the region would be much more similar to President Barrack Obama’s or even President Bill Clinton’s approach, this paper claims that the new administration has a lot in common with the course of the previous President Donald Trump. There are also some changes and modifications, but they seem to be less crucial than the elements of continuity that exist between Biden’s and Trump’s administrations’ foreign policy towards this region. The paper also addresses the causes of this continuity and claims that the main reason for that are structural factors on the level of the international system. However, some reasons for the continuity are also on the state (internal) and individual levels of analysis.

Keywords: *US foreign policy, Western Balkans, Biden, Trump, continuity, change, levels of analysis*

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INTRODUCTION

The United States of America (US) present one of the most important global actors. From the prism of the Western Balkans, America is still one of the most influential foreign powers which substantially influences regional affairs. Considering the election of Joseph Biden for the US President in November 2020, many expected “revolutionary change” (Andelman 2021) in comparison to the foreign policy of Donald Trump. “America First” unilateral approach was expected to be abandoned, with the US returning to multilateralism (with American leadership in solving the most critical global problems and protecting its interests) and focusing on the maintenance of its alliances and promotion of values such as democracy and human rights. Many expected the complete return to the pre-Trump period, or “Obama’s (or even Clinton’s) third term” (Abrams 2021). Consequentially, there were similar expectations regarding the US policy towards the Western Balkans, considering that many criticized Trump’s approach to the region as too soft towards some actors such as Serbia; non-coordinated with the EU; not focused enough on the issues such as democracy and human rights etc. However, certain analysts say that the radical change in the general US foreign policy did not occur and that the White House “changed tone, but not policies” (Labott 2021).

This paper aims to contribute to the discussion about the patterns of continuity and change in Biden’s foreign policy, focusing on the case of the Western Balkans. The paper claims that the approach of Biden’s administration to this region contains more elements of continuity than change compared to the course of its Republican predecessor. Substantial goals and instruments remained the same, with some modifications – mostly of tone (narrative) and not much of policy. Therefore, it seems that Biden’s policy so far looks more similar to the hypothetical “Trump’s second term” (although with some differences) than to the ideal type of the “Obama’s third term”. Paper also claims that structural factors are the most important reason for this continuity. However, some parts of the explanation for the patterns of continuity and change are visible on the state (internal) and individual levels of analysis. In the first section of the paper, we will present the main elements of continuity that exist in the new administration’s foreign policy to the Western Balkans. In the second section, we will show specific changes that are visible compared to the previous administration. Finally, the third section will analyze potential explanations for these patterns of continuity and change coming from the three levels of analysis in

International Relations: 1) Level of the international system (structural level); 2) State (internal) level; 3) Individual level.

CONTINUITY IN NEW ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARDS THE WESTERN BALKANS

There is a significant continuity with Trump's approach in many aspects of Biden's foreign policy towards the Western Balkans. This continuity could be summed up in the phrase: "more Carrots, less sticks". Considering the legacy of Clinton's and (to some extent) Obama's administrations in the Western Balkans, when the US was very willing to use "sticks" and to punish certain states, it was expected that Biden's administration would be more inclined to use coercive measures such as economic or diplomatic sanctions to enforce the implementation of its goals in the Western Balkans. The most explicit statement that the US will not follow the harsh approach from the past was delivered by Gabriel Escobar, who said that many of the people analysts and politicians "continue to see their leadership through the prism of 1990s, we don't – we see it through the prism of 21st century" (US Embassy Serbia 2021). There is also significant continuity in the main goals and principles of the US Western Balkan foreign policy. In the following paragraphs, we will present the essential aspects of continuity in the US foreign policy towards the Western Balkans.

Focus on economic integration of the region

One of the essential characteristics of Trump's administration Western Balkan policy was prioritizing economic integration. It was visible through at least two concrete examples. The first was that the US focused on the economic normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina instead of pressuring for a faster political settlement, as was mostly the case during the previous Obama administration (Nedeljkovic, Krstic 2021). The second was colossal support that the Trump administration gave to the "Mini-Schengen" plan of establishing a regional common market announced by Serbian, North Macedonian and Albanian leaders in fall 2019 (US Mission Germany 2019). Support was not only rhetorical, but the US even pressured authorities in Pristina to join this project, which Pristina formally accepted with the signing of the Washington Papers in September 2020 (CDDRI 2020, 9). For Trump's administration, regional economic integration was a bigger priority than the EU accession of the region or solving the remaining

open political issues in the Balkan. It was contrary to the reserved EU stance towards the Mini-Schengen initiative, which it never officially supported (Đukanović, Krstić 2021, 18-19). Instead of that, the EU tried in fall 2020 to promote its own form of regional economic integration labelled Common Regional Market, which would include all Western Balkan entities, and which would be under the umbrella of the Berlin Process and, therefore, the EU (Đukanović, Krstić 2021, 19-20).

Considering that Biden's administration announced that one of its goals is to rebuild a strong alliance with the EU (Atlantic Council 2021), it was expected that the new administration would completely align with the EU approach to the region, unlike its Republican predecessors. However, almost a year after Biden's victory, it seems that there is a clear continuity with the approach of Trump's administration. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia Gabriel Escobar announced at the Belgrade Security Forum that the US see economic integration of the region as one of the priorities and that the best road to the overall progress of the region (including the eventual solving of the open issues and the EU membership) is to focus on economic development and regional economic cooperation (Ranković 2021). He underlined the same attitude on the To Be Secured Forum in Montenegro (Milić 2021) and during the hearing organized in the House of Representatives' Subcommittee for Europe, Energy, the Environment and Cyber (House Foreign Affairs Committee 2021). Escobar emphasized that the US support both Open Balkan (the renamed Mini-Schengen) and Common Regional Market and that it is willing to help the region to implement these plans for economic integration (House Foreign Affairs Committee 2021). Obviously, the new administration did not change its support to the Mini-Schengen/Open Balkan despite the reluctance of the EU to support this initiative, nor did it change its central assumption that closer economic cooperation and development should precede any political settlement of the open political issues in the region. This was a significant pattern of continuity with Trump's administration.

A more balanced approach to the issue of Kosovo

The bottom line of all US governments since George W. Bush is the same: they treat Kosovo as an independent country and consider that Belgrade should eventually recognize it to achieve the final settlement of the Kosovo issue. Trump's administration was not an exception. In his letter to President Vucic in February 2019, President

Trump explicitly stated that the US “believe that the mutual recognition should be the central element of normalization” (EWB 2019). Even during the Washington talks in September 2020, the Serbian delegation claimed that Americans tried to negotiate mutual recognition between sides. Still, they allegedly shortly gave up this idea since it became evident that Belgrade would not accept it at that moment by any chance (Beta 2020). In this aspect, Biden’s administration has continuity with Trump’s, considering that President Biden has mentioned a similar formulation in his letter to Vucic in February 2021, while State Department also stated that the dialogue should be “centered on mutual recognition” (RSE 2021).

However, to some extent, Trump’s administration was different from Obama’s in this regard since it was comparatively a bit more flexible and balanced. First, there were no explicit pressures on Belgrade to make concessions, such as those the US made with the EU from 2011 to 2016 (Nedeljković, Krstić 2021). There was no use of threatening discourse or ultimatums towards Belgrade. Secondly, when Pristina introduced 100% tariffs on Serbian goods in late 2018, the US side was crucial for the eventual removal of these measures in 2020. It seems that Trump’s administration even played a role in the following change of government in Pristina, when the more compromising Avdulah Hoti on the position of prime minister, instead of Aljbin Kurti (Kakissis 2020). These were obvious signs that Pristina is not considered anymore to be “always right”. Thirdly, at some point in time, the US explicitly stated that there is room for “creative solutions”, which was considered by some actors to be informal support to delineation and territory swap as a model for a final solution. Such a solution was allegedly favored by then-National Security Advisor John Bolton (RFE/RL 2018). Finally, the decision to focus on economic issues (instead of focusing on complicated political problems) signaled that the main approach of the US is not anymore to convince Belgrade to “accept the reality” as soon as possible. Washington became aware that this process should be more balanced and gradual to achieve any further moves towards normalization.

Considering that many people in Biden’s administration in charge of foreign policy had a pro-Albanian attitude during the 1990s, it was expected by some analysts that the new administration would put substantial pressure on Belgrade to recognize Kosovo as soon as possible. It was also expected that the new administration would denounce Washington papers signed in September 2020 by representatives of Belgrade and Pristina since this was a symbol of a unilateral effort of Trump’s administration that was not coordinated

with the EU. It did not occur, and Biden's administration continued with a more balanced approach. Secretary of State Antony Blinken gave credits to Richard Grenell and Trump's administration for this achievement already on the hearing in Senate's Committee before he was formally vetted for this position (Kosovo online/Gazeta express 2021). The State Department also emphasized that they expect both sides "to implement their Washington Commitments in support of the goal of full normalization" (Price 2021).

It seems that dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina is important for the new administration but that it will not punish sides in the dialogue if the agreement is not reached. In the mentioned speeches, Gabriel Escobar underlined that a political solution for Kosovo is desirable but focused primarily on the region's economic development, which is very similar to the previous approach of Richard Grenell. Escobar mentioned that mutual recognition would be a preferable solution for the US but signaled that this is not ultimately the only acceptable solution, and that Washington might support other solutions which would be acceptable to both sides in the dialogue (House Foreign Affairs Committee 2021). The fact that Christopher Hill is nominated for the next US ambassador in Belgrade is also very interesting. Two years ago, while retired, he said he would leave territorial and status issues for the end of the process while navigating the dialogue towards solving practical questions (Savković 2021). This "flexibility" was very similar to some people's attitudes in Trump's administration at that time, such as John Bolton.

Pragmatic cooperation with all Western Balkan leaders

One of the characteristics of Trump's approach to the region (and more broadly) was that it did not emphasize the state of democracy and human rights in countries with which it cooperates (unless it helped criticize those defined as rivals or enemies). This was also the case with the previous administration's policy to the Western Balkans, where many states suffered from a significant decrease in the quality of democracy and civil rights, according to independent sources such as Freedom House.¹ It was expected that Biden's administration would make a more significant distance from leaders of countries with democratic deficits. Also, it was expected that they would be harsher towards actors such as Serbian member of Bosnian Presidency Milorad Dodik (who was sanctioned during Obama's administration), who many Americans perceive as responsible for the rise of tensions in the region, or towards

1) For example, Serbia is in a constant decrease since 2015, and it declined to the status of "Transitional or hybrid regime" in its democracy score in 2020 (Freedom House 2021).

the new government in Montenegro, since certain pro-Russian parties in Democratic Front support it.

However, the new administration continued with the approach of their Republican predecessors. Escobar explicitly stated that the US will support democracy, but not through distancing from cooperation with Western Balkan leaders (US Embassy Serbia 2021). Despite open critics and some modest threats for claims about the potential secession of Republika Srpska (Politika 2021), the US still did not put any substantial pressure on Milorad Dodik, and it is still trying to avoid additional escalation in relations with Banja Luka. Also, it has excellent cooperation with new authorities in Montenegro. A more pragmatic approach that emphasizes the benefit that the US might have from collaboration with confident leaders to fulfil its goals prevailed over the policy, which would be more rigid towards them because of certain shortcomings. Of course, that does not mean that the US is only for the status quo and that it would not support certain more pro-democratic changes in the region, but it will certainly not push for it on its own. In this regard, there is also a considerable similarity with Trump's approach, considering that in 2017 the US diplomats helped to solve the political crisis in Skopje and the change of government in Northern Macedonia when Zaev's government replaced the regime of Nikola Gruevski (Kuzmanovski 2017). Therefore, it seems that there is much more continuity than change in comparison to the previous US administration's policy.

Countering the rising influence of China and Russia

Trump's anti-Chinese policy was in massive contrast to Obama's "pivot to Asia" strategy and an attempt to build close cooperation ties with Beijing. Considering that Biden's administration was portrayed by many as "Third Obama's term" (Singh 2020), it was expected that the new administration would decrease tensions between Beijing and Washington. However, the new administration has more continuity than discontinuity with the previous in its approach to China (Bisley 2021). Therefore, it is not surprising that the new administration has a similar stance towards Chinese influence in the Western Balkan. American approach focuses on the challenges which might arise from the more significant Chinese impact on the economy and politics in the Balkans. The opening of the DFC office during Trump's administration in Belgrade was part of the broader approach to counter the rising financial influence of Chinese loans in the region. Also, the Washington Papers signed by president Vucic in September 2020 had an article in which

Serbia promised that it would not buy 5G technology from “untrusted vendors”, directed towards Chinese company Huawei (CDDRI 2020, 10-11). The new administration has not made any similar moves so far, and even the level of future activities of DFC seems unclear at the moment. However, it explicitly stated that reducing the Russian and Chinese influence in the region will be one of the goals of the US (House Foreign Affairs Committee. 2021), which means that they will follow the path regarding China set by the previous administration.

This will also be the case regarding the US stance towards the influence of Moscow in the region. Although some critics portrayed Trump as being too soft and sympathetic towards Vladimir Putin, in reality, his administration made a lot of effort to counter growing Russian influence in the Western Balkans. This was primarily visible in the energetics sector, where it tried to reduce the region’s dependence on the import of Russian gas. Significant projects of building terminals in Greece and Croatia to import Liquid Natural Gas from the USA were developed during the previous administration. Americans hoped this could be an alternative for Russian gas and help reduce the political influence of Moscow. These measures were especially focused on Serbia, which accepted the clause that it would diversify its energy sources in the mentioned Washington papers from September 2020 (CDDRI 2020, 10). Biden’s administration will probably rhetorically emphasize the importance of reducing Russian influence in the region compared to the previous administration. Still, in a nutshell, it will continue the path set by the last administration in this regard as well.

Expansion of NATO

Despite some controversial moments which questioned the firmness of NATO’s position in the Western Balkans², the previous Republican administration continued with the NATO enlargement process. During the mandate of Donald Trump, Montenegro and Northern Macedonia formally joined NATO. Northern Macedonia managed to do so because of the Prespa Agreement and the final solving of the name issue with Greece, whose achievement was substantially backed by the USA. Biden’s administration will follow this suit and support further enlargement of NATO to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering that Assistant Secretary for Europe and Eurasia Karen Donfried has a substantial background in promoting Euro-Atlantic integration and NATO enlargement through her engagement in the

2) One of the such examples was Trump’s comment that he would not start a World War III for Montenegro and send his son to fight for it (Macias, Higgins 2018)

German Marshall Fund of the US, this issue will probably be one of the most important for her. Regarding Serbia, it is expected that the new administration will stress out that it respects Serbian neutrality but that it hopes for deepening and widening of cooperation with Serbia through the Partnership for Peace program. Therefore, this aspect will also present the continuity with Trump's administration.

Besides the mentioned priorities, there will be undoubted continuity between the previous and the new administration in the common goals of US foreign policy, such as protection of the US citizens, protection of US companies and promotion of their commercial interest, fight against drug smuggling and organized crime, and fight against terrorism and violent radicalization. The US constantly cooperates with all countries in the region to pursue these vital goals for American interests and security. Considering everything mentioned, it seems that Biden's administration will make no "U-turns" in its policy towards the Western Balkans, but that it will follow the main goals of the previous administration's approach.

CHANGES IN THE APPROACH OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION TOWARDS THE WESTERN BALKANS

Despite a significant amount of continuity, some differences are also visible in the new administration's approach. The announced claim that the US will use tools for the 21st century does not mean that some targeted sanctions towards individuals won't be applied if necessary. Therefore, sticks (although less important than carrots) seem to be more visible today than they used to be during the previous administration. "Modernization" of the existing executive order for sanctions against Western Balkan individuals from 2001 by the inclusion of corruption as a potential reason for sanctioning proves that the US is calibrating these instruments as well (RFE/RL 2021). Also, the US military will remain in the region through its presence in the KFOR mission and various NATO activities, and the new administration definitely won't continue with Trump's sometimes NATO-sceptic rhetoric. Moreover, it is still not obvious how will Americans use the "positive" economic instruments (carrots) to coopt Western Balkan actors.³ These differences point out

3) For example, the level of activity of the DFC in Belgrade is questionable. The decision to remove John Jovanovic from the head office position raised doubts about Biden's administration plans. Still, it seems that the office in Belgrade will remain open. At the same time, the level of its activity will probably be determined by measuring how much Serbia and

that Biden's policy towards the region is not quite a "Trump's second term". However, these differences seem to be smaller and less critical than patterns of continuity. In the following paragraphs, we will present the most important differences in the US foreign policy towards the Western Balkans and point out that they are not radical and that they are limited.

Stronger support for the integration of the region to the EU

Although Trump's administration formally supported the accession of the Western Balkans to the EU, it did not put too much effort to support this process, neither did it emphasize it too much in its rhetoric. It seemed that Washington did not care too much about the fast integration of the region to the EU, as it cared about strengthening its own partnerships with Western Balkan states and countering the influence of Russia and China. Biden's administration has so far put a particular emphasis on the integration of the region to the EU as one of its goals. In State Department's document named "US Commitment to the Western Balkans" from April 2021, the first sentence stated that "The United States is committed to supporting the countries of the Western Balkans on their path to European integration and membership in key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions" (Price 2021). This statement was repeated in all the mentioned recent speeches of Gabriel Escobar (Milić 2021; Ranković 2021; House Foreign Affairs Committee 2021).

However, this change has so far remained primarily rhetorical in the sense of putting additional emphasis on the EU future of the region. Still, it seems that in the future other measures might build on this rhetorical change. The administration could devote more money to boost reforms in the region, combined with political demands to the leaders of the states in this part of the world to speed up their alignment with the EU regulations and standards to ensure better relations with the new American administration. Still, this scenario is uncertain. The most significant help the EU would probably get from the new US administration is the mentioned financial and political help for economic integration of the region (which is perceived many on the West as a pre-step for the EU accession) and a joint approach to the Kosovo issues.

Cancellation of the separate dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina with the US mediation

Instead of maintaining a separate track for negotiation between Belgrade and Pristina with the mediation of Washington, the new

other countries in the region align with the US request in the future.

administration switched back to full support for the Brussels dialogue led by the EU. Deputy vice Secretary Molly Montgomery announced this switch in February 2021 (VOA, N1 Belgrade 2021), and an official statement of the State Department later confirmed it (Price 2021). Grenell's position as the "Special Presidential Envoy for Serbia and Kosovo Peace Negotiations" does not exist in the new administration. A former State Department's "Special Representative for the Western Balkans" Matthew Palmer and his heir on the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Gabriel Escobar started acting in coordination with the EU emissary for dialogue Miroslav Lajcak and other EU representatives. This is one of the most significant changes compared to Trump's approach to the region, and Trump and Grenell criticized it as a symbol of disengagement of the USA from the Western Balkans (Isufi 2021).

Still, this change does not mean that the new administration will become utterly inactive in this regard. The nomination of the retired career diplomat, Christopher Hill, for the next US ambassador in Belgrade indicates that the US plans to take a more active role in the Belgrade – Pristina dialogue, but under the formal mediation of the EU (Savković 2021). Hill was the US envoy for Kosovo in 1998-99, and he has tremendous experience in the region. The decision to nominate him even though he is retired already for years, and although it has been only two years since the current US ambassador Godfrey took his duty, additionally strengthens the perception that Hill is nominated with some sort of special task regarding the Belgrade – Pristina dialogue and that this will be his primary field of interest. Therefore, although the new administration canceled the separate dialogue track, it won't go to hibernation regarding this issue, and it might follow certain paths of the more active approach introduced by Trump's administration.

Additional focus on issues of corruption, democracy, and human rights

In early June 2021, the White House formally announced its Memorandum on Establishing the Fight Against Corruption as a Core United States National Security Interest (Biden 2021). Biden's administration declared that it would fight corruption not only in its state but also around the world since it "corrodes public trust; hobbles effective governance; distorts markets and equitable access to services; undercuts development efforts; contributes to national fragility, extremism, and migration; and provides authoritarian leaders a means to undermine democracies worldwide" (Biden 2021). Also, the new

administration announced that it will focus on support for democracies worldwide and that human rights will be an essential topic in its international engagement. It was not an announcement of any kind of “crusader” campaign which would again “export” democracy by force. Still, this is a difference from the previous administration, which did not focus on these issues.

In its policy towards the Western Balkans, the USA will also focus comparatively more on these issues, considering that the quality of democracy and human rights is quite fragile in almost the whole region. At the same time, the level of corruption seems to be much higher than in the EU. The main instrument for such engagement might be targeted sanctions on individuals. In June, the new administration added the possibility to sanction corrupted individuals from the Western Balkans to the existing act on sanctioning from 2001 (RFL/RL 2021). This measure has not been used so far, so its first purpose is probably to deter and scare corrupted politicians that US sanctions might target them.⁴ Other instruments for the fight against corruption and support for democracy might be additional financial support for actors with better democratic performances and labelling of those who are backsliding in these fields. One form of implicit labelling could have been non-invitation to the global summit of democracies, which Biden will organize in early December 2021. According to the leaked preliminary list of invited, published by magazine Politico, the highest officials from Belgrade, Pristina and Sarajevo were initially not be invited to participate in this summit (Toosi 2021). Exclusion from this summit could have labelled these actors as non-democratic from Washington’s point of view and sent negative signals to some future investors about the stability of their market.

However, the US eventually decided to invite Serbia to the mentioned summit (Nešić 2021).⁵ It is also still reluctant about using any sanctions towards individuals from the region, and it still pragmatically cooperates with all the regional leaders, as explained in the previous section. Therefore, this change so far remains only in the field of political narrative and is not as radical as some people expected. In the future, this change might become more critical. Still, it seems that the focus on these issues will depend on how countries from the region accommodate the US

4) James O’Brien, ex-aide of Madlen Albright with significant experience in the Western Balkan region, is nominated for the position of sanctions coordinator, which might also indicate that certain sanctions could target Western Balkan individuals.

5) At the moment of submission of this text, it was not definitely known if Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo* were also invited to participate at the Summit.

requirements in other (more important) issues, such as economic integration of the region, emancipation from the Russian and Chinese influence, solving of the open problems (such as Kosovo issue), or military cooperation (Krstić et al. 2021, 58).

An active approach to Bosnia and Herzegovina

The administration of Donald Trump did not pay too much attention to the issue of Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the other hand, in announcing its commitments to the Western Balkans, the State Department emphasized the reforms in Bosnia, especially the electoral reform (Price 2021). Robert Palmer, a diplomat with colossal experience in the region, was named a US State Department's Special Envoy for Electoral Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Trkanjec 2021). This decision signaled how important progress in this regard is for the US interest in the region. Palmer announced that he would pressure all sides to make huge steps forward (Trkanjec 2021). Still, it seems that he is trying to reconcile the Bosniak and Croat approach firstly and negotiate with opposition parties from Republika Srpska in order to concentrate the pressure on Milorad Dodik in later phases (Slobodna Bosna 2021). He also mentioned that this issue is crucial for Secretary Blinken (Slobodna Bosna 2021).

However, this does not mean that the US will push for additional unitarization of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as some predicted, feared or hoped. In the leaked document, which presents an allegedly US document for the reform of the electoral system in BiH, one of the goals was to secure acknowledgement of the Bosniak parties that the reform is about "a narrow objective of ensuring the right of others⁶ to run for office", and "not a leap towards civic state – which is unrealistic" (Slobodna Bosna 2021a). Palmer has also used the example of successful electoral reform in Mostar as a model for the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina, emphasizing the words "limited and targeted" (Slobodna Bosna 2021). It means that the US will not push for a too ambitious plan and that it will try not to disturb relations with Croats and Serbs in Bosnia by demonstrating that the US is not planning to push for the civic state in BiH, which would deprive entities and cantons with Serbian and Croatian majority of their numerous rights.

6) Others in this case means members of non-constitutive nations, such as Roma or Jews, in accordance with the Sejdic-Finci verdict of the European Court of Human Rights.

WHY IS BIDEN'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE BALKANS SIMILAR TO TRUMPS?

In the following paragraphs, we will try to analyze potential factors that influence the continuity and some changes in the new administration's approach to the Western Balkans compared to the course of the previous administration. We will divide these factors into three levels of analysis.

Structural (global) level of analysis

Structural theories usually do not tend to explain foreign policy, both if they are realists (Waltz 1979), liberals (Keohane 1989) or social constructivists (Wendt 1999). These approaches are therefore labelled as theories of international politics (Rose, 1999). However, certain theories of foreign policy also consider the structural factor. The best example is neoclassical realism, which focuses on the global level of analysis and takes the international position of the state as the independent variable for its foreign policy while adding many factors on state and individual levels as intervening variables (Dašić 2021, 127-157). Certain realists who tried to adjust their methodology to Foreign Policy Analysis research claim that we should focus first on the international system level, and if these are not well enough, continue analyzing the influence of interstate or intrastate levels (Mouritzen and Wivel 2014).

In this case, the structural approach can explain a big part of the picture with continuity in foreign policy. Competition of the US with China and Russia is a typical structural issue that stems from the logic of power distribution. Balance of power logic directs the US towards balancing (confronting) any rising Chinese or Russian influence in this region. Also, the enlargement of NATO seems to be American interest, which derives from the distribution of power and geopolitical logic. America wants to enlarge its net of allies and its effective control over military affairs in the rimland region of the Western Balkans. Focus on the economic integration of the Balkans might also be the consequence of the tendency to prevent further economic penetration of other powers to the Balkans and an attempt to try to control the most critical economic and financial processes in the region through the US-backed common market. The fact that this integration might be without the substantial support of the EU might also be explained from the structural reasons – the US wants its leading role in the process and believes more in its capacities than in the capabilities of its allies.

Also, the decision to implement a more flexible approach towards the Kosovo issue has certain structural roots. Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina with the mediation of the EU entered the structural crisis since 2017. Decrease of normative and transformative power of the EU due to various crises reduced the capacity of Brussels to broker new agreements for further normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. The rise of populism in Belgrade and Pristina (a part of a more general trend of the rise of populism in democracies) also reduced the potential for additional compromises. Albin Kurti, a new leader in Pristina, openly denounced dialogue with Belgrade as a priority and emphasized that he would have a much less flexible approach than his predecessors. These factors induced the change in the US approach as well. Instead of expecting an express solution, Washington is now much more aware that the solution must be gradual. Therefore, even though the new administration canceled the separate track for negotiations in Washington, it seems that it will continue with a more balanced, flexible, and gradual approach to the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Due to these changes, followed by the rise of challengers for the US unilateral power such as China and Russia, Washington is aware that it is not anymore 2008 when they thought that the status of Kosovo could be quite fast finally settled unilaterally and that very soon all other actors will recognize its independence.

These are just some structural factors that can explain the continuity in foreign policy towards the Western Balkans of Trump's and Biden's administrations. However, structural factors cannot explain everything. First, they cannot explain changes which exist in the relations towards the EU – like the fact that the US supports the EU enlargement to the Western Balkans much more vocally in Biden's administration than they used to during Trump's period, and that they decided to hand over the leading role in the Belgrade – Pristina negotiations back to the EU. Second, they cannot explain a more active approach to Bosnia and Herzegovina, nor additional focus on corruption, democracy, and freedom of speech compared to the previous administration. Therefore, we must focus on other argumentations to explain different parts of this jigsaw while acknowledging that structural arguments have solid explanatory power.

State (internal) level of analysis

Incentives from the internal politics level are considered not central (independent) but intervening variables in neo-classical realism (Živojinović 2008). On the other hand, the so-called *Innenpolitik*

approaches consider internal politics the primary determinant of foreign policy (Rose 1998). Significant in this regard are bureaucratic models of Foreign Policy Analysis, which put special focus on the role of bureaucracy, their standard operative procedures, perceptions, particular interests, and internal bargaining in the foreign policymaking process (Hudson, Day 2020, 89-121). Somewhere in between are approaches which consider the foreign policy as a “two-level game”, played simultaneously on the international and domestic levels (Putnam 1988), as well as approaches that claim that internal factors can influence one important element (but not everything) in the foreign policy of the particular state, such as democratic peace and liberal peace theories (Russett et al. 1995) or social constructivist models of Foreign Policy Analysis (Kubalkova 2001).

There are plenty of internal factors which might influence US foreign policy. However, considering that the Western Balkans is not a region that is of the biggest priority for the US, many concrete decisions will be made on lower levels and not too many actors will be interested in it (Krstić et al. 2021, 7-8). From the institutional point of view, this means that State Department, despite the relative decline of its role in comparison to the rising importance of the White House since the mid-20th century (Rossati, Scott 2011, 129), still has a crucial role in the creation and implementation of the most significant part of the US foreign policy towards the region. At first sight, this might lead us to the conclusion that State Department bureaucracy is the biggest reason why there is no significant shift from the previous administration compared to Biden's. However, this factor cannot alone explain patterns of continuity and change. During the last two years of Trump's administration, the White House (especially Trump's emissary Richard Grenell) took over the leading role in the US policy towards Western Balkans from the State Department – which means that there is not complete institutional continuity in this regard. Despite this fact, State Department today follows many aspects of Trump's White House approach instead of ultimately coming back to the policy towards Western Balkans during Obama's administration when the State Department played the crucial role in its creation and implementation. Also, some people in the most critical positions for Western Balkan policy in this branch of bureaucracy are different than during Trump's period, such as Victoria Nuland or Moly Montgomery.

Other branches of bureaucracy, such as the military (Department of Defense), or agencies like USAID, also have a certain role in the US Western Balkan policy, but comparatively much smaller than State Department and circle around President (Jentleson 2013, 45-53).

Congress has a certain influence, especially in agenda-setting, but its impact is incomparable to the executive. Still, Congressional caucuses and lobbies are trying to put certain issues in the spotlight and pressure the executive regarding some directions of action. During the last months, there were two cases when different Congressmen wrote open letters to the President. Seven pro-Albanian oriented members of the House of Representatives called the administration to pressure Belgrade regarding the situation in Kosovo and its dialogue with Pristina (Tanjug 2021). Letter of the other seven members of the House advocated for pressure on the Serbian regime to fight corruption and ensure media freedom (Vijesti 2021). However, this has not influenced any substantial changes in the administration approach so far. Therefore, it could not be said that they affect the US policy towards the region in a significant manner.

All the mentioned institutional actors are, to a certain extent, influenced in their decision-making process by various factors, such as the impact of organized groups and lobbies, media, public opinion, epistemic communities, knowledge-based experts, etc. (Jackobs and Page, 2005, 107-109). Media and public opinion in the US during the 1990s generally had negative attitudes towards Serbs, mixed towards Croats, and positive towards Albanians and Bosniaks. However, since the Western Balkans is not anymore one of the most critical areas for the USA, as it was during the 1990s, the interest of media and public opinion for regional issues nowadays seems to be considerably low, as well as their influence on the US foreign policy towards the region. Epistemic communities and knowledge-based experts also have a certain impact, but the number of experts for the Western Balkans has been considerably reduced during the last decade. On the other hand, the influence of the lobbies is still considered necessary. However, considering that the Albanian lobby seems the strongest, its impact cannot explain the continuity in a somewhat more flexible position towards the Kosovo issue. To sum up, internal factors can also define one part of the US foreign policy towards the Western Balkans, but they seem to be less critical than structural factors.

Individual level of analysis

Many scholars in the field of Foreign Policy Analysis focus on the political psychology of leaders (Hudson and Day 2020, 39-74), with particular emphasis on the influence of socialization and personal biography on their operational code (Walker, 1990), mental schemas (Rosati 2000) and analogical reasoning (Houghton 1996). Starting assumption of such an approach is that leaders are crucial for decision

making and that their personal history shapes the way how they view the world. Neoclassical realism also considers the influence of leaders' characteristics, but only as an intervening variable, while FPA considers it the most important factor. Social-constructivist approaches in FPA as well consider the individual world view, its values and socialization as essential factors, although they tend to make a balance between the influence of personal agency and broader social structure.

Based on the logic of this approach, we should have expected substantial change of many aspects of US foreign policy towards the Western Balkans in the last year. The fact that Biden sees the world quite differently was one of the most critical factors for the expectation of change. Also, unlike Donald Trump, who had no previous experience in the region, Joseph Biden was a very active follower of Balkan affairs since his first visit to Yugoslavia in 1979, especially during the 1990s (Krstić et al. 2021, 5). Biden also advocated a harsher approach towards Serbia during the 1990s (Krstić et al. 2021, 5-7). These facts could have led us to conclude that we should expect a radical change compared to Trump's policy to Serbia, which some actors considered too mild. However, this did not happen. One of the explanations might be the fact that Biden's attitudes towards the Western Balkans were not so strong, but that they were more the consequence of his position and interests – when Biden was a vice-president, he was not hawkish against Serbia, as he was during his period in the Senate when he cooperated with many pro-Albanian senators and lobbyists (Krstić et al. 2021, 7).

Still, President does not make this decision alone, but after numerous advice and consultation with his advisors, especially National Security Council (NSC) members. Therefore, many consider that the White House or Presidency is actually “the center of foreign affairs government” (Wittkopf et al. 2006). Neither Vice President Kamala Harris nor National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan have significant experience dealing with this region. Phillip Gordon is the only person in the circle around President and Vice-President with considerable experience in dealing with this region. He was Hillary Clinton's Assistant Secretary for Europe and Eurasia. Although milder than Biden's, his attitudes towards the Western Balkans were more-less on the same track (Krstić et al. 2021, 24-26). Therefore, the personal beliefs of people in the Presidency cannot explain the continuity with Trump's foreign policy. It seems that their personal characteristics and views simply do not matter, because the Western Balkan policy is not essential at this moment.

Therefore, it seems even more important to focus on the level of the State Department and personal beliefs of the key people for

Western Balkan in this branch of government. State Secretary Blinken was director for European affairs in President Clinton's NSC during the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999 (Krstić et al. 2021, 10-12). The third person in the State Department, undersecretary Victoria Nuland, used to be John Kerry's assistant secretary for Europe and Eurasia from 2013 to 2017 (Krstić et al. 2021, 18-20). One of the new deputy assistant secretaries for Europe and Eurasia is Moly Montgomery, who previously worked for the Albright-Stonebridge group and who is close with former state secretary Madlen Albright (Krstić et al. 2021, 34-35). A close associate of Secretary Albright was also James O'Brien, nominated for the position of Coordinator for Sanctions, while Christopher Hill, recently nominated for the next US ambassador in Serbia, also closely cooperated with Albright and Richard Holbrook. The new assistant secretary for Europe and Eurasia is Karen Donfried, a person with good knowledge of current affairs in the Western Balkans, who heavily criticized Trump when she was President of the German Marshall Fund of the United States. According to these facts, it would be more logical to return to Obama's or Clinton's approach to the region instead of continuity with Trump in essential aspects. However, some of the mentioned changes (such as the bigger support to the EU integration of the region or cancelation of the separate track for Belgrade-Pristina negotiation) could be explained through the difference in perceptions and values which new decision-makers have in comparison to the previous.

In addition, it is important to emphasize that some of the people in important positions in the State Department were also influential during Trump's period. Matthew Palmer, the new emissary for electoral reform in Bosnia, used to be deputy assistant secretary for Europe and Eurasia and special emissary for the Western Balkans during the previous administration (Krstić et al. 2021, 30-33). Gabriel Escobar, who replaced Palmer in his positions, used to be the second person in the US embassy in Belgrade until 2021. Even Molly Montgomery had a role in Trump's administration – she used to be an advisor of vice-president Mike Pence until 2018. Therefore, the presence of these people in important positions in the new administration might explain a part of the reasons for continuity. However, since these people are not in the key positions, and since there are many new people, the explanation for continuity based on the individual level of analysis seems to be weaker than that coming from the structural and even from the state level of analysis.

CONCLUSION

The administration of Joseph Biden has substantial continuity in its Western Balkan policy with their Republican predecessors. Primary focus on economic integration; a more balanced approach to the Kosovo issue and dialogue of Belgrade and Pristina; pragmatic cooperation with all Western Balkan leaders regardless of their democratic performances; countering the rising influence of Russia and China and support for further expansion of NATO – these are all essential elements of continuity between two administrations. There are also certain peculiarities of the new administration in comparison to the previous: more vocal support to the EU integration of the Western Balkans; cancelation of the separate dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina in Washington and support to the dialogue in Brussels; more active approach to Bosnia and Herzegovina and additional (narrative) emphasis on the issues of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Still, these differences seem to be less crucial (and primarily focused on rhetoric) than the mentioned essential elements of policy continuity.

This article has also examined why is there more continuity than change. Structural factors play the most important role in determining such an outcome. However, their explanatory potential has limits. Therefore, it is necessary to add certain factors from the state and individual levels of analysis. Further studies of this topic should conduct more in-depth studies about the interaction of factors from different levels of analysis to more precisely theorize crucial variables that shape the US foreign policy towards the Western Balkans. Also, further studies should conduct a comparative analysis of the US foreign policy towards different regions in order to answer some of the following important questions: how much continuity exists between Biden's and Trump's foreign policy; in which regions are they similar and in which quite different; and finally which factors influence these patterns of continuity or differentiation.

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КОНТИНУИТЕТ И ПРОМЕНЕ СПОЉНЕ ПОЛИТИКЕ САД ПРЕМА ЗАПАДНОМ БАЛКАНУ ЗА ВРЕМЕ ПРВЕ ГОДИНЕ БАЈДЕНОВЕ АДМИНИСТРАЦИЈЕ: ТРЕЋИ ОБАМИН ИЛИ ДРУГИ ТРАМПОВ МАНДАТ?

Резиме

Многи аналитичари очекивали су радикалну промену у спољној политици председника Џозефа Бајдена, посебно у поређењу са претходним председником Доналдом Трампом. Годину дана након изборне победе, мишљења о томе колико је Бајден заиста променио спољну политику САД су подељена и варирају од оних који виде револуционарну промену до оних који виде само разлику у тону у већини кључних аспеката. Овај рад настоји да допринесе дебати кроз анализу континуитета и промене у спољној политици нове администрације према региону Западног Балкана. Иако су многи очекивали да Бајденова политика буде сличнија приступима председника Барака Обаме или чак Била Клинтона, овај рад аргументује да нова администрација задржава значајан део заједничког курса са Трамповом. Међутим, приметне су и одређене промене и модификације, али чини се да оне нису важније од елемената континуитета који постоје између односа две администрације према региону. Рад се такође обраћа узроцима оваквог континуитета и тврди да главни разлог за то лежи у структуралним факторима на нивоу међународног система. Остали разлози се могу наћи на државном (унутрашњем нивоу), као и на индивидуалном нивоу анализе.

***Кључне речи:** спољна политика САД, Западни Балкан, Бајден, Трамп, континуитет, промена, нивои анализе*

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Овај рад је примљен 14. новембра 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на телефонском састанку Редакције, 15. новембра 2021. године.

УПУТСТВО ЗА АУТОРЕ

У часопису *Политика националне безбедности* објављују се радови који представљају резултат најновијих теоријских и емпиријских научних истраживања у области политичких наука. Аутори би приликом писања радова требало да се позивају претежно на резултате научних истраживања који су објављени у научним часописима, првенствено у часописима политиколошке тематике.

Радови се објављују на српском језику и ћириличком писму или енглеском, руском и француском језику.

Часопис се објављује два пута годишње. Рокови за слање радова су: 1. април и 1. октобар.

Исти аутор не може да објави рад у два узастопна броја часописа, без обзира да ли је реч о самосталном или коауторском раду.

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Научни чланак може имати највише 40.000 карактера са размацима, укључујући фусноте. Приликом бројања карактера изоставити списак референци. Изузетно, монографска студија може бити већег обима у складу са одредбама *Правилника о поступку, начину вредновања и квантитативном исказивању научноистраживачких резултата истраживања*.

Осврт може имати највише 15.000 карактера са размацима.

Приказ књиге може имати највише 10.000 карактера са размацима.

Приликом провере броја карактера користити опцију *Review/Word Count/Character (with spaces)* уз активiranу опцију *Include textboxes, footnotes and endnotes*.

НАЧИН ЦИТИРАЊА

Часопис *Политика националне безбедности* користи делимично модификовани Чикаго стил цитирања (17. издање приручника *Chicago Manual of Style*), што подразумева навођење библиографске парентезе (заграде) по систему аутор–датум у

тексту, као и списак референци са пуним библиографским подацима након текста рада.

Податке у библиографској парентези и списку референци навести на језику и писму на коме је референца објављена.

У наставку се налазе правила и примери навођења библиографских података у списку референци и у тексту. За сваку врсту референце прво је дато правило навођења, а затим пример навођења у списку референци и библиографској парентези.

Библиографска парентеза се по правилу наводи на крају реченице, пре интерпункцијског знака, и садржи презиме аутора, годину објављивања и одговарајући број страна, према следећем примеру: (Суботић 2010, 15–17).

Монографија

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Уредник/приређивач/преводицац уместо аутора

Након навођења имена, ставити зарез, па након тога одговарајућу скраћеницу на језику и писму референце, нпр. „ур.“, „прев.“, „пріі.“, „ed.“, „eds.“

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(Ellwood 2018, 11)

Чланак у посебном броју

Презиме, име. Година издања. „Наслов чланка.” У „Наслов посебног броја”, ур. име презиме уредника, напомена о посебном издању, *Наслов часописа*: број страна на којима се налази чланак. DOI број.

Стојановић, Ђорђе. 2016. „Постмодернизам у друштвеним наукама: стање парадигме.” У „Постмодернизација српске науке: политика постмодерне / политика после постмодерне”, ур. Ђорђе Стојановић и Мишко Шуваковић, посебно издање, *Српска политичка мисао*: 5–35. doi: 10.22182/spm.specijal2016.1.

(Стојановић 2016, 27)

Енциклопедије и речници

Наведен је аутор/уредник

Презиме, име, име и презиме, ур. Година издања. *Наслов*. Том. Место издања: издавач.

Jerkov, Aleksandar, ur. 2010. *Velika opšta ilustrovana enciklopedija Larrouse: dopunjeno srpsko izdanje*. Том V (S–Ž). Beograd: Mono i Manjana.

(Jerkov 2010)

Није наведен аутор/уредник

Наслов. Година издања. Место издања: издавач.

Webster's Dictionary of English Usage. 1989. Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster Inc.

(*Webster's Dictionary of English Usage* 1989)

Докторска дисертација

Презиме, име. Година издања. „Наслов докторске дисертације.”
Докторска дисертација. Назив универзитета: назив факултета.

Бурсаћ, Дејан. 2019. „Утицај идеологије политичких партија на јавну потрошњу у бившим социјалистичким државама.” Докторска дисертација. Универзитет у Београду: Факултет политичких наука.

(Бурсаћ 2019, 145–147)

Wallace, Desmond D. 2019. “The diffusion of representation.” PhD diss. University of Iowa.

(Wallace 2019, 27, 81–83)

Чланак у дневним новинама или периодичним часописима

Наведен је аутор

Презиме, име. Година издања. „Наслов чланка.” *Назив новине или часописа* годиште: број стране на којој се налази чланак.

Авакумовић, Маријана. 2019. „Платни разреди – 2021. године.” *Политика*, 8. децембар: 9.

(Авакумовић 2019)

Није наведен аутор

Назив новине или часописа. Година издања. „Наслов чланка.”
Годиште: број стране на којој се налази чланак.

New York Times. 2002. “In Texas, Ad Heats Up Race for Governor.” July 30, 2002.

(*New York Times* 2002)

Референца са корпоративним аутором

Назив аутора [акроним, по потреби]. Година издања. *Наслов издања*. Место издања: издавач.

Министарство за европске интеграције Републике Србије [МЕИРС]. 2018. *Водич за коришћење ЕУ фондова у Србији*. Београд: Министарство за европске интеграције Републике Србије.

(Министарство за европске интеграције Републике Србије [МЕИРС] 2018) – *прво навођење*

(МЕИРС 2018) – *свако следеће навођење*

International Organization for Standardization [ISO]. 2019. *Moving from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015*. Geneva: International Organization for Standardization.

(International Organization for Standardization [ISO] 2019) – *прво навођење*

(ISO 2019) – *свако следеће навођење*

Репринт издања

Презиме, име. [Година првог издања] Година репринт издања. *Наслов*. Место првог издања: издавач првог издања. Напомена „Репринт“ на језику и писму референце, место издања репринт издања: издавач. Напомена одакле су цитати у тексту преузети.

Михалцић, Стеван. [1937] 1992. *Барања: од најстаријих времена до данас*, треће издање. Нови Сад: Фототипско издање. Репринт, Београд: Библиотека града Београда. Цитати се односе на фототипско издање.

(Михалцић [1937] 1992)

Посебни случајеви навођења референци

Навођење другог и сваког следећег издања

Презиме, име. Година издања. *Наслов*, напомена о издању. Место издања: издавач.

Гађиновић, Радослав. 2018. *Млада Босна*, друго допуњено и измењено издање. Београд: Evro Book.

Више референци истог аутора

1) *Исти аутор, различите године* – Ређати према години издања, почевши од најраније.

Степић, Миломир. 2012. „Србија као регионална држава: реинтеграциони геополитички приступ.” *Национални интерес* 14 (2): 9–39. doi: 10.22182/ni.1422012.1.

Степић, Миломир. 2015. „Позиција Србије пред почетак Великог рата са становишта Првог и Другог закона геополитике.” У *Србија и геополитичке прилике у Европи 1914. године*, ур. Миломир Степић и Љубодраг П. Ристић, 55–78. Лајковац: Градска библиотека; Београд: Институт за политичке студије.

2) *Исти аутор, иста година* – Ређати према азбучном или абecedном редоследу почетног слова назива референце. Поред године објављивања ставити почетна слова азбуке или абецедне која се користе и у библиографској парентези.

Гађиновић, Радослав. 2018а. „Војна неутралност и будућност Србије.” *Политика националне безбедности* 14 (1): 23–38. doi: 10.22182/pnb.1412018.2.

Гађиновић, Радослав. 2018б. *Млада Босна*, друго допуњено и измењено издање. Београд: Euro Book.

(Гађиновић 2018а, 25), (Гађиновић 2018б)

3) *Исти аутор као самостални аутор и као коаутор* – Прво навести референце у којима је самостални аутор, а затим оне у којима је коаутор.

Стојановић, Ђорђе. 2016. „Постмодернизам у друштвеним наукама: стање парадигме.” У „Постмодернизација српске науке: политика постмодерне / политика после постмодерне”, ур. Ђорђе Стојановић и Мишко Шуваковић, посебно издање, *Српска политичка мисао*: 5–35. doi: 10.22182/spm.specijal2016.1.

Стојановић, Ђорђе, и Живојин Ђурић. 2012. *Анатомија савремене државе*. Београд: Институт за политичке студије.

4) *Исти аутор као први коаутор у више различитих референци* – Ређати према азбучном или абecedном редоследу презимена другог коаутора.

Pollitt Christopher, Johnston Birchall, and Keith Putman. 1998. *Decentralising Public Service Management*. London: Macmillan Press.

Pollitt Christopher, Colin Talbot, Janice Caulfield, and Amanda Smullen. 2005. *Agencies: How Governments do Things Through Semi-Autonomous Organizations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Посебни случајеви навођења библиографске парентезе

Изузеци од навођења библиографске парентезе на крају реченице

1) *Навођење презимена аутора у оквиру реченице* – Годину издања ставити у заграду након навођења презимена, а број стране на крају реченице у заграду. За референцу на латиници или страном језику у загради навести и презиме аутора.

„Према мишљењу Суботића (2010), ...” (30).

„Бокслер (Bochsler 2018) у својој књизи тврди...”

2) *Навођење презимена аутора у оквиру реченице пре цитата из референце* – Након навођења презимена, у библиографској парентези навести годину и број стране, а затим навести цитат.

Као што Суботић (2010, 45) наводи: „ ... ”

Миршајмер (Mearsheimer 2001, 57) изричито тврди: „ ... ”

3) *Навођење исте референце више пута у једном пасусу* – Ако се наводи иста страна или опсег страна, унети библиографску парентезу приликом последњег навођења или на крају пасуса пре интерпункцијског знака. Ако се наводе различите стране, референцу навести приликом првог позивања на одређену страну, а затим до краја пасуса у заграду стављати само различите бројеве страна.

Не користити „исто”, „*ibid*”, или „*op. cit.*” за вишеструко навођење референце.

Навођење израза „видети”, „упоредити” и сл.

Изразе унети у библиографску парентезу.

(видети Кнежевић 2014, 153)

(Степић 2015; упоредити Кнежевић 2014)

Секундарна референца

У библиографској парентези прво навести презиме аутора, годину и број стране примарне референце, затим „цитирано у:”

и презиме аутора, годину и број стране секундарне референце. У списку референци навести само секундарну референцу.

„Том приликом неолиберализам се од стране највећег броја његових протагониста најчешће одређује као политика слободног тржишта која охрабрује приватне фирме и побољшава избор потрошачима, разарајући при том ’неспособну, бирократску и паразитску владу која никада не може урадити ништа добро, без обзира на њене добре намере’” (Chomsky 1999, 7 цитирано у: Ђурић и Стојадиновић 2018, 47).

Ђурић, Живојин, и Миша Стојадиновић. 2018. „Држава и неолиберални модели урушавања националних политичких институција.” *Српска политичка мисао* 62 (4): 41–57. doi:10.22182/spm.6242018.2.

Иста библиографска парентеза, више референци

1) *Различити аутори* – Референце одвојити тачком и зарезом.

(Степић 2015, 61; Кнежевић 2014, 158)

2) *Исти аутор, различите године* – Навести презиме аутора, а затим године издања различитих референци по редоследу од најраније до најновије и одвојити их зарезом, односно тачком и зарезом када се наводи број страна.

(Степић 2012, 2015) или (Степић 2012, 30; 2015, 69)

3) *Различити аутори, исто презиме* – Иницијал имена. Презиме аутора. Година издања.

(Д. Суботић 2010, 97), (М. Суботић 2010, 302)

Суботић, Драган. 2010. „Нови јавни менаџмент у политичком систему Србије.” *Политичка ревија* 23 (1): 91–114. doi: 10.22182/pr.2312010.5.

Суботић, Момчило. 2010. „Војводина у политичком систему Србије.” *Политичка ревија* 23 (1): 289–310. doi: 10.22182/pr.2312010.15.

Правни акти

У библиографској парентези навести члан, став и тачку или параграф коришћењем скраћеница „чл.”, „ст.”, „тач.”, „Art.” „para.” и сл.

Устави и закони

Назив акта [акроним, по потреби], „Назив службеног гласила” и број, или интернет адреса и датум последњег приступа.

Устав Републике Србије, „Службени гласник Републике Србије”, бр. 98/06.

(Устав Републике Србије 2006, чл. 33)

Закон о основама система образовања и васпитања [ЗОСОВ], „Службени гласник Републике Србије”, бр. 88/2017, 27/2018 – др. закон, 10/2019 и 27/2018 – др. закон.

(ЗОСОВ 2019, чл. 17, ст. 4)

Zakon o nasljeđivanju [ZN], „Narodne novine“, br. 48/03, 163/03, 35/05, 127/13, i 33/15 i 14/19.

(ZN 2019, čl. 3)

An Act to make provision for and in connection with offences relating to offensive weapons [Offensive Weapons Act], 16th May 2019, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/17/pdfs/ukpga_20190017_en.pdf, last accessed 20 December 2019.

(Offensive Weapons Act 2019)

Одлуке државних органа и институција

Назив органа [акроним или скраћени назив], Назив акта и број предмета, датум доношења акта, или интернет адреса и датум последњег приступа.

Заштитник грађана Републике Србије [Заштитник грађана], Мишљење бр. 15–3314/12, 22. октобар 2012, https://www.osobesainvaliditetom.rs/attachments/083_misljenje%20ZG%20DZ.pdf, последњи приступ 20. децембра 2019.

(Заштитник грађана, 15–3314/12)

U.S. Department of the Treasury [USDT], Treasury Directive No. 13–02, July 20, 1988, <https://www.treasury.gov/about/role-of-treasury/orders-directives/Pages/td13-02.aspx>, last accessed 20 December 2019.

(USDT, 13–02)

Законодавни акти Европске уније

Назив акта, подаци из службеног гласила у формату наведеном на сајту *EUR-lex*: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html>.

Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers, OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13–18.

(Regulation 182/2011, Art. 3)

Међународни уговори

Оснивачки уговори Европске уније

Назив уговора или консолидоване верзије [акроним], подаци о коришћеној верзији уговора из службеног гласила у формату наведеном на сајту *EUR-lex*: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html>.

Treaty on European Union [TEU], OJ C 191, 29.7.1992, p. 1–112.

(TEU 1992, Art. J.1)

Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union [TEU], OJ C 115, 9.5.2008, p. 13–45.

(TEU 2008, Art. 11)

Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union [TFEU], OJ C 202, 7.6.2016, p. 1–388.

(TFEU 2016, Art. 144)

Остали међународни уговори

Назив уговора [акроним или скраћени назив], датум закључивања, регистрација у Уједињеним нацијама – UNTS број, регистрациони број са сајта *United Nations Treaty Collection*: <https://treaties.un.org>.

Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization [Marrakesh Agreement], 15 April 1994, UNTS 1867, I-31874.

(Marrakesh Agreement 1994)

Convention on Cluster Munitions [CCM], 30 May 2008, UNTS 2688, I-47713.

(CCM 2008)

Treaty of Peace between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan [Israel Jordan Peace Treaty], 26 October 1994, UNTS 2042, I-35325.

(Israel Jordan Peace Treaty 1994)

Одлуке међународних организација

Назив међународне организације и надлежног органа [акроним], број одлуке, Назив одлуке, датум усвајања.

United Nations Security Council [UNSC], S/RES/1244 (1999), Resolution 1244 (1999) Adopted by the Security Council at its 4011th meeting, on 10 June 1999.

(UNSC, S/RES/1244)

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe [PACE], Doc. 14326, Observation of the presidential election in Serbia (2 April 2017), 29 May 2017.

(PACE, Doc. 14326, para. 12)

Судска пракса

Судска пракса у Републици Србији

Врста акта и назив суда [акроним суда], број предмета са датумом доношења, назив и број службеног гласника или друге публикације у коме је пресуда објављена – ако је доступно.

Одлука Уставног суда Републике Србије [УСРС], IУа-2/2009 од 13. јуна 2012. године, „Службени гласник РС”, бр. 68/2012.

(Одлука УСРС, IУа-2/2009)

Решење Апелационог суда у Новом Саду [АСНС], Ржр–1/16 од 27. априла 2016. године.

(Решење АСНС, Ржр–1/16)

Судска пракса Међународног суда правде

Назив суда [акроним суда], Назив случаја, врста одлуке са датумом доношења, назив и број гласила у коме је пресуда објављена, број стране.

International Court of Justice [ICJ], *Application of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995 (the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia v. Greece)*, Judgment of 5 December 2011, I.C.J. Reports 2011, p. 644.

(ICJ Judgment, 2011)

International Court of Justice [ICJ], *Accordance with the International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect of Kosovo*, Advisory Opinion of 22 July 2010, I.C.J. Reports, p. 403.

(ICJ Advisory Opinion, 2010)

Судска пракса Суда правде Европске уније

Назив случаја, број случаја, врста случаја са датумом доношења, Европска идентификациона ознака судске праксе (*ECLI*).

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland v. European Parliament and Council of the European Union, Case C-270/12, Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber) of 22 January 2014, ECLI:EU:C:2014:18.

(*United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland v. European Parliament and Council of the European Union*, C-270/12) или

(CJEU, C-270/12)

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland v. European Parliament and Council of the European Union, Case C-270/12, Opinion of Advocate General Jääskinen delivered on 12 September 2013, ECLI:EU:C:2013:562.

(Opinion of AG Jääskinen, C-270/12)

Судска пракса Европског суда за људска права

Назив случаја, број представке, врста случаја са датумом доношења, Европска идентификациона ознака судске праксе (*ECLI*).

Pronina v. Ukraine, No. 63566/00, Judgment of the Court (Second Section) on Merits and Just Satisfaction of 18 July 2006, ECLI:CE:ECHR:2006:-0718JUD006356600.

(*Pronina v. Ukraine*, 63566/00, par. 20) или

(ECHR, 63566/00, par. 20)

Судска пракса других међународних судова и трибунала

Назив суда [акроним суда], *Назив случаја*, број случаја, врста случаја са датумом доношења.

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 [ICTY], *Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-1-A-AR77, Appeal Judgement on Allegations of Contempt Against Prior Counsel, Milan Vujin, Judgment of 27 February 2001.

(*Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic*, IT-94-1-A-AR77) или

(ICTY, IT-94-1-A-AR77)

Архивски извори

Назив установе [акроним или скраћени назив], назив или број фонда [акроним или скраћени назив], кутија, фасцикла (уколико постоји), сигнатура, „Назив документа” (ако нема назива, дати кратак опис одговарањем на питања: ко? коме? шта?), место и датум документа или н.д. ако није наведен датум.

Архив Србије [АС], МИД, К-Т, ф. 2, r93/1894, „Извештај Министарства иностраних дела о постављању конзула”, Београд, 19. април 1888.

(АС, МИД, К-Т, ф. 2)

(АС, МИД, ф. 2) – ако је позната само фасцикла, а не и кутија

Dalhousie University Archives [DUA, Philip Girard fonds [PG], B-11, f. 3, MS-2-757.2006-024, “List of written judgements by Laskin,” n.d.

(DUA, PG, B-11, f. 3)

Извори са интернета

Презиме, име или назив корпоративног аутора [акроним]. Година објављивања или н.д. – ако не може да се утврди година објављивања. „Наслов секције или стране унутар сајта.” *Назив сајта*. Датум креирања, модификовања или последњег приступа страници, ако не може да се утврди на основу извора. Интернет адреса.

Bilefsky, Dan, and Ian Austen. 2019. “Trudeau Re-election Reveals Intensified Divisions in Canada.” *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/22/world/canada/trudeau-re-elected.html>.

(Bilefsky and Austen 2019)

Институт за политичке студије [ИПС]. н.д. „Предавање др Фридриха Ромига.” *Институт за политичке студије*. Последњи приступ 10. октобар 2018. <http://www.ips.ac.rs/rs/news/predavanje-dr-fridriha-romiga/>.

(Институт за политичке студије [ИПС], н.д.) – *прво навођење*

(ИПС, н.д.) – *свако следеће навођење*

Танјуг. 2019. „Европска свемирска агенција повећава фондове.” 28. новембар 2019. <http://www.tanjug.rs/full-view1.aspx?izb=522182>.

(Танјуг 2019)

ФОРМАТИРАЊЕ ТЕКСТА

Опште смернице о обради текста

Текст рада обрадити у програму *Word*, на следећи начин:

- величина странице: А4;
- маргине: *Normal* 2,54 cm;
- текст писати курентом (обичним словима), осим ако није другачије предвиђено;
- проред између редова у тексту: 1,5;
- проред између редова у фуснотама: 1;
- величина слова у наслову: 14 pt;
- величина слова у поднасловима: 12 pt;
- величина слова у тексту: 12 pt;
- величина слова у фуснотама: 10 pt;
- величина слова за табеле, графиконе и слике: 10 pt;
- увлачење првог реда пасуса: 1,27cm (опција: *Paragraph/Special/First line*);
- поравнање текста: *Justify*;
- боја текста: *Automatic*;
- нумерација страна: арапски бројеви у доњем десном углу;
- не преламати речи ручно уношењем цртица за наставак речи у наредном реду;
- сачувати рад у формату .doc.

Примена правописних правила

Радове ускладити са *Правописом српског језика* у издању Матице српске из 2010. године или из каснијих издања.

Посебну пажњу обратити на следеће:

- Приликом првог навођења **транскрибованих страних имена и израза** у облој загради поред навести и њихове облике на изворном језику у курзиву (*italic*), нпр: Франкфуртер алгемајне цајтунг (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*), Џон Ролс (*John Rawls*), Алексеј Тупољев (*Алексеј Туполев*).

- Поједине **општепознате стране изразе** писати само на изворном језику у курзиву, нпр. *de iure, de facto, a priori, a posteriori, sui generis* итд.

- **Реченицу не почињати** акронимом, скраћеницом или бројем.

- **Текст у фуснотама** увек завршавати тачком.

- За навођење израза или **цитирања на српском језику** користити наводнике који су својствени српском језику према важећем правопису („ ”), а за навођење или **цитирање на енглеском или другом страном језику** користити наводнике који су својствени том језику (“ ”, « »).

- **Угластом заградом []** означавати: 1) сопствени текст који се умеће у туђи текст; или 2) текст који се умеће у текст који је већ омеђен облом заградом.

- **Црту** писати са размаком пре и после или без размака, никако са размаком само пре или само после. Између бројева, укључујући бројеве страна, користити примакнуту црту (–), а не цртицу (-).

- За **наглашавање појединих речи** не користити подебљана слова (**bold**), нити подвучена слова (underline) већ искључиво курзив (*italic*) или наводнике и полунаводнике (’ ’ на српском језику или ‘ ’ на енглеском језику).

Форматирање научног чланка

Научни чланак форматирати на следећи начин:

Име и презиме првог аутора *

* Фуснота: Имејл-адреса аутора: Препоручује се навођење институционалне имејл-адресе аутора.

Установа запослења

Име и презиме другог аутора

Установа запослења

НАСЛОВ РАДА **

** Фуснота: по потреби, навести један од следећих (или сличних) података: 1) назив и број пројекта у оквиру кога је чланак написан; 2) да је рад претходно изложен на научном скупу у виду усменог саопштења под истим или сличним називом; или 3) да је истраживање које је представљено у раду спроведено за потребе израде докторске дисертације аутора.

Сажетак

Сажетак, обима од 100 до 250 речи, садржи предмет, циљ, коришћени теоријско-методолошки приступ, резултате и закључке рада.

Кључне речи: Испод текста сажетка навести од пет до десет **кључних речи**. Кључне речи писати курентом и једну од друге одвојити зарезом.

У тексту је могуће користити највише три нивоа поднаслова. **Поднаслов** навести без нумерације, на следећи начин:

ПОДНАСЛОВ ПРВОГ НИВОА

Поднаслов другог нивоа

Поднаслов трећег нивоа

Табеле, графиконе и слике уносити на следећи начин:

- изнад табеле/графикана/слике центрирано написати: Табела/Графикон/Слика, редни број и назив;

- испод табеле/графикана/слике навести извор на следећи начин: 1) уколико су табела/графикон/слика преузети, написати *Извор:* и навести референцу на исти начин као што се наводи у библиографској парентези; 2) уколико нису преузети, написати *Извор:* Обрада аутора.

Референце наводити у тексту према Начину цитирања.

Фусноте користити искључиво за давање напомена или ширих објашњења.

РЕФЕРЕНЦЕ

Списак референци навести након текста рада, а пре резимеа, на следећи начин:

- прво навести референце на ћирилици по азбучном реду;
- затим навести референце на латиници и страним језицима по абecedном реду;
- прву линију сваке референце поравнати на левој маргини, а остале увући за 1,27 cm, користећи опцију *Paragraph/Special/Hanging*;
- све референце наводити заједно, без издвојених делова за правне акте или архивску грађу;
- референце не нумерисати;
- наводити искључиво оне референце које су коришћене у тексту.

Након списка референци навести име и презиме аутора, наслов рада и резиме на енглеском језику на следећи начин:

First Author*

* In the footnote: E-mail address: The institutional e-mail address is strongly recommended.

Affiliation

Second Author

Affiliation

TITLE

Resume

Резиме, обима до 1/10 дужине чланка, садржи резултате и закључке рада који су образложени опширније него у сажетку.

Keywords: Кључне речи писати курентом и једну од друге одвојити зарезом.

Уколико је рад написан на страном језику, након списка референци, име и презиме аутора, наслов, резиме и кључне речи навести на српском језику.

Форматирање осврта

Осврт форматирати на исти начин као научни чланак, без навођења сажетка, кључних речи и резимеа.

Форматирање приказа

Приказ књиге форматирати на следећи начин:

Текст поделити у две колоне.

*Име и презиме аутора**

* Фуснота: Имејл-адреса аутора:
Препоручује се навођење институционалне
имејл-адресе аутора.

Установа запослења

НАСЛОВ ПРИКАЗА

Испод наслова поставити
слику предње корице

Испод слике предње корице
навести податке о књизи према
следећем правилу:

Име и презиме. Година
издања. *Наслов*. Место
издања: издавач, број
страна.

Текст приказа обрадити у
складу са општим смерницама
о обради текста.

УПУТСТВО РЕЦЕНЗЕНТИМА

Улога рецензента је да допринесе очувању високог квалитета нашег часописа. Рецензије су анонимне у оба смера. Рок за рецензирање је седам дана од пријема рада. Садржај рецензије је поверљив, те се не сме откривати особама које нису у уредништву часописа. Уколико рецензент у било ком тренутку схвати да постоји било који вид конфликта интереса у вези са радом који треба да рецензира потребно је да о томе што пре обавести редакцију. **Приликом рецензије рукописа, рецензент треба да попуни рецензентски лист у прилогу.**

Име, презиме и звање аутора текста:

Назив рада:

Актуелност, друштвени и научни значај разматране теме:

У којој мери је аутор јасно назначио теоријски, методолошки приступ у раду:

Да ли је рад заснован на савременој и релевантној литератури, посебно у којој мери је аутор користио најновије резултате објављене у научним часописима и зборницима (посебно часописи и зборници из политикологије).

Научни и друштвени допринос рада. Општи коментар о квалитету рада:

Ваша сугестија аутору за побољшање квалитета рада, ако је потребно:

Молимо Вас да одаберете једну од препорука за категоризацију рада:

1. Оригинални научни рад
2. Прегледни рад
3. Научна критика, полемика и осврти

Молимо Вас да одаберете једну од препорука о публикавању овог рада:

1. Објавити без измена
2. Објавити уз мале измене
3. Након корекције, рад послати на нови круг рецензије
4. Одбити

Додатни коментари за уредника који се тичу етичких (плагијаризам, превара, итд.) или неких других аспеката рада, а који ће уреднику помоћи у доношењу коначне одлуке о даљем статусу рада.

Датум оцене рада

Име, презиме и научно звање рецензента:

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CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

351.862/.863(497.11)

ПОЛИТИКА националне безбедности = The Policy of National Security / главни и одговорни уредник Радослав Гаћиновић. - Год. 5, бр. 5 (2013) - . - Београд : Институт за политичке студије, 2013- (Земун : Бирограф комп). - 24 cm

Полугодишње. - Преузима нумерацију зборника “Србија”.

ISSN 2334-959X = Политика националне безбедности
COBISS.SR-ID 203583500