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## Political Security as one of the Main Conditions for Human Security in Moldova

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### Introduction

As the term and concept of Human Security is relatively new and appeared at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century's 1990s, i.e. when the Cold War ended, we'll start by highlighting that East European states adopted quickly and, often unconditionally, all international documents and instruments.

The new democracies – as they were often called – had a tougher task to adapt quickly and efficiently to the political and geopolitical changes on the European continent and to also ensure the classical security of the nations and territory under their administration.

Moldova, for instance – just like Georgia, Azerbaijan or Armenia – started state reconstruction in conditions of war. This has severely affected all democratic processes and the development of those countries' societies. These countries started off with a handicap of a determinant and decisive nature for the degree of democratization and development of the state, as a whole, and of the communities, in part.

While Central European countries (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary or the Baltic states), just liberated from dictatorship, launched the reform of the society, administrative systems and of their economies – the post-Soviet countries had to deal permanently with the fact that their interior affairs were barged in, with illegal external interventions, including military interventions. To keep its influence on the new states that just broke away from the soviet empire, the Kremlin authorities – having all the necessary tools left over from the USSR (diplomacy and experience in influencing and misinforming the civil society) – machinated various scenarios to destabilize from within, so as to get control over the new political elite. They won easily the information war from back then and

gained, in fact, a rich experience which later proved to be very useful in destabilising other states and misinforming other people. The international community and organizations did not want to condemn such behaviour outright. They might have believed that Russia too will grow democratic and modern before long. We can see thus that once a serious issue threatening regional security is tolerated, it can grow much worse in time, making the regime or government that flagrantly violate international law rules turn into a major risk for their own citizens and for the entire world.

Losing control over a part of its territory was a major challenge for the Republic of Moldova. We may conclude, after 25 years, that it was not able to deal with it. For this reason, not only the territory, but also the political elite and the society, in general, ended up on different sides, which undermined military, political and economic security. With nothing to guarantee military and political security, the risk of threats so strong as to seriously affect economic security, which in its turn reflects on human security, is huge.

Therefore, the concept of human security lies in changing the focus from state-security-related aspects to the security of the individual. State security turned slowly in a matter of secondary importance, with the security of the individual becoming a priority. In general, once the Cold War ended, individuals' perceptions about the types of threats they are exposed to changed gradually. Once the globalization phenomenon gained momentum, the security of the individual, i.e. human security, came to the fore.

It was starting from 1992 that the concept of human security saw the light, being initially elaborated on by UN institutions and following these objectives:

1. Security of the individual, not of the state;
2. Security of the community that the individual is part of;
3. Protecting individual's living environment against threats;

4. Ensuring minimum income;
5. Access to basic needs.

Given these circumstances, we may say that human security is about protecting all human beings against the worst and most widely spread threats, regardless of whether they are food-related, economic, ecologic, personal or political.

To ensure that human security is achieved more efficiently, two key courses of action were identified: a) development of protection strategies by the state, international agencies or non-governmental organizations defending different categories of persons against threats; b) development of empowerment strategies allowing people to strengthen their resistance in difficult conditions. The issue at hand is whether it is possible or not to guarantee a high, or even minimum, degree of human security, if state security is not guaranteed itself. A state that cannot guarantee neither military, nor political security is, probably, not able to guarantee efficiently human security. We want to highlight, in this context, that political security is very important to achieve a minimum degree of human security. This conclusion was arrived at because a society can respond to threats either by having the community itself take action or by attempting to transfer the issue to the political environment. Therefore, most of the times, the communities, society or the individuals need the politicians to get involved to legitimate and ensure a particular order in their activities, including by transferring or sharing responsibility.

### Legal framework

The Constitution of the Republic of Moldova,<sup>1</sup> adopted on July 29, 1994, is the foundational legal document of Moldova, including the security zone. According to the Law on the Intelligence and Security Service,<sup>2</sup> the Intelligence and Security Ser-

vice is a state organ specializing in ensuring state security, and the activity of this structure is under parliamentary control. It is important to emphasize here the basic principles of the Intelligence and Security Service, including legality, respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, humanism, and non-partisanship. According to Law 753 on the Service's activity from 23.12.1999, article 4, paragraph 1, it ensures respect for human rights and freedoms and does not allow the limitation of human rights and freedoms, excluding cases covered by the constitution or other legislative acts.

Another relevant law in this area is the Law on State Security, adopted 30.10.1995,<sup>3</sup> which stipulates that state security is an integral part of national security. By state security the Law means the protection of the country's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity; of its constitutional regime; of its economic, technical-scientific and defensive potential; and of the legitimate rights and freedoms of the people to be protected against subversive or intelligence activity by foreign special services and organizations and against criminal activities by groups or individuals.

Neither Law 112 from 22.05.2008 for the approval of the Concept of National Security for the Republic of Moldova<sup>4</sup> nor the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova<sup>5</sup> shifts the emphasis from state security to human security.

According to the relevant legal acts, emphasis is placed on state security. Although human security is not excluded, it is identified with general guarantees about respecting fundamental human rights and freedoms. However, due to the fact that a foreign military is present on national territory, a frozen conflict remains unresolved, and other factors deriving from these major problems, we are facing a vicious cycle. These factors do not contribute to economic and social development. Therefore, in the absence of these guarantees,

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1. <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=311496>.

2. <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=311721>.

3. <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=311700>.

4. <http://lex.justice.md/md/328010>.

5. <http://lex.justice.md/md/340510>.

Moldova remains vulnerable from an economic and social perspective – aspects that are priorities for human security.

The current situation of the country in the security field

Any society tries to ensure its security as this is one of the key-conditions for development. The society is, in fact, a human entity created out of people and groups of people who share a set of features (race, ethnicity, history) living together and associating with one another, and sharing feelings like those related to identity and symbols.

There is also the term of societal security, and a society, as a rule, feels threatened when it believes it is exposed to identity-related risks. Living in the ex-soviet space and having researched human security aspects, including the security of the individuals in a society, we cannot disregard the fact that the constant threats to new states were, for the most part, related to identity. Identity polemics in Moldova were underlain by socio-political destabilization, and they never stopped during the 25 years of independence. On the contrary, there are some political forces that, time and again, reawaken and exploit them quite thoroughly to draw attention away from the issues in the society, splitting and antagonizing it in this way. In such conditions, the individuals – members of the society – are dragged into these endless and useless arguments, and do not pay attention to identifying certain risks to the security of the state or to human security. However, the community in such states and societies has little room to develop security strategies, which makes them vulnerable to the threats coming not only from outside, but from inside too. This state of affairs is particularly typical of the states that are not in control of their entire territory. Moreover, the risks that Moldova is exposed to are not only of non-military nature as there is a foreign army staying on its territory – an illegal military entity and peacekeeping troops (that do not have an

international mandate either, as they consist of representatives of the belligerent parties).

Thus, we go back to the issue of a state's actual capacity to ensure and guarantee human security when state security itself is vulnerable. But this is virtually impossible, and the Republic of Moldova is an example that confirms it. Politics play a key role in settling this issue because political security is one of the main aspects that can contribute to ensuring a satisfactory level of human security.

Once independence was achieved, the Moldovan political class did not undergo any polishing and, therefore, most of the former soviet political elite kept, or recovered very quickly, the control on administrative institutions. Therefore, this political class was mostly concerned with keeping its control and influence in the society rather than with reforming state institutions and developing sustainable development strategies to ensure that the country and its citizens can enjoy a high degree of security.

Without such reforms, indispensable for sustainable development, and without long-term strategies – a number of phenomena developed, which made the active and educated population leave the Republic of Moldova. The massive population exodus phenomenon represented, in fact, for a period of time, a huge opportunity for the development of the country and of the society. The remittances played a major role in the survival of the national economy and accounted for a big and constant GDP share<sup>6</sup>. Thus, given that the citizens were providing for a big amount of financial resources and were willing to return to Moldova both with the money earned and the gained experience, the political class had a relatively easy or rather simplified task to ensure that the country develops. Unfortunately, however, the political elite was not able to create and provide a favourable environment to attract investments and ensure economic growth, which – in their turn

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6. <http://moldnova.eu/ro/infografic-evolutia-remitentelor-2000-2016-economia-pierde-un-pilon-important-12668.html>.

– would have established favourable conditions for human security.

As many as 25 years away since independence was achieved, the aforementioned issues, the territorial division and the split society, but also political instability – all of these, in their turn, affecting quickly and severely the standards of living – led to the fact that the Republic of Moldova is turning from one of the most populated countries in the region into a country where the massive out-migration phenomenon reached alarming proportions. For this reason, we will stay focused on human security aspects, addressing them via a detailed approach and analysis of political security. Without a firm and certain political security, talking about a minim level of human security would become irrelevant, as the politicians are the ones that can and must do something about the efficient prevention of any destabilisation that could become a serious threat to the security of individuals and about the creation of some conditions and efficient ways to protect and defend human rights. This was well noticed in our region, where political instability led to huge vulnerabilities not only in terms of non-military matters.

Political security relates to the organisational stability of states, government systems and ideologies that legitimate them. We could thus say that political security could mean protecting the already developed governing policy that is clearly oriented towards the development of the society. So, with regards to attacks on political security, we should clearly understand what we mean by it and what values are protected by such a type of security. According to some sources, political security means defence against any form of political repression<sup>7</sup>. There is another viewpoint according to which political security means stable decision-making and legal rules passed by political figures. The wide scope of political security covers governance activities, starting from voting and separation of powers in a state to the accountability of the electees and protection of

fundamental freedoms, and even to the stability of the government, including the sharing of advantages. According to the UN, one of the most important aspects of political security is that the population can live freely in a society that observes the fundamental human rights<sup>8</sup>. The report contained findings that the worst repressions and violations of human rights took place right during times of political instability and turmoil. However, looking at the experience of the countries in our region, we can see that political instability and turmoil are often caused, fed or encouraged from outside the country.

Way back in 1991, B. Buzan would say, referring strictly to political security, that 'Political threats target the organisational stability of a state. Their purpose can vary from making pressure on the government for it to adopt a particular policy – to overthrowing the government, inciting to secessionism and disorganisation of a country's political system so that it becomes weak in front of a military attack. The idea of a state, particularly when it comes to its national identity and ideology, as well as the institutions that illustrate it, are usually targeted by political threats. Since the state is essentially a political entity, the political threats are at least as frightful as the military ones. The weaker the state is, the more this is true.'<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the internal security of a state and, certainly, that of a society (community), is directly dependant on the state's ability to efficiently fulfil its role of guarantor of sovereignty and welfare and to prevent instability. National security cannot be supported in an impoverished and needy country<sup>10</sup>. Political security is thus in a tight relationship with economic security, while human security depends entirely on the extent to which political security and economic security are ensured, since an economically-weak state

7. See definition on: <http://definitions.uslegal.com/p/political-security%20>.

8. Human Development Report 1994, New York, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 44.

9. Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear. An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991.

10. D. Dolghin and others, „Riscuri și amenințări la adresa securității României, Actualitate și perspective” [Risks and Threats to the Security of Romania. Topicality and Outlooks], National Defence University publishing house, 2004.

cannot be politically stable and, therefore, there is no genuine human security.

The political dimension of security relates to 'both the relationship between the state and its citizens, and the international relations of that state' (Sarcinski 2005). So, the political dimension can be analysed in two levels: internally – as good or bad governance, and externally – in relation to international security and international law (Sarcinski 2005)<sup>11</sup>.

### Current Challenges to Human Security

Scientific researchers took on the trend of highlighting that focusing on the security of a state is, under the current conditions, out of place, because as long as the individuals and the communities of that state are insecure – the state itself is fragile. We can only agree with this conclusion, as these two concepts are interdependent. One cannot guarantee the security of the individuals as long as the security of the state is fragile and we also understand that ensuring a state's security is not possible without guaranteeing and respecting the human dignity, human rights and human security of all those living on the territory of a state. This interdependence is topical and very relevant particularly for countries like the Republic of Moldova, which was not able to build a viable security system or ensure the security of its citizens, particularly because of not having control over a part of its territory and because illegal foreign military forces stay there. The case of the Republic of Moldova turns out to be very relevant particularly when analysing the events and the situation in eastern Ukraine, which is characterised by many elements typical of the scenario that the east of Moldova was involved in about 20 years ago. For the Republic of Moldova the Transnistrian conflict and the stagnating solutions meant to settle it, represent a substantial impediment and barrier to development. Moldova continues to be among those countries where investments into the econ-

omy are exposed to serious risks because it does not have control over a piece of territory, it does not have any customs control on an important segment of the state border, it has international obligations to defend efficiently the rights of those living on that territory that is out of the control of constitutional authorities and particularly because of the threats of military nature. Considering these aspects, it is practically impossible not to tackle the issue of the rule of law, which is certainly vital for the development of the society and for guaranteeing human security.

Another major challenge for human security in Moldova, which might well be the greatest and worst one, is migration. One thing ends up depending on another and the problems become more difficult to solve, as though caught in a vicious circle. Because of the economic, political and social risks and threats, an increasing number of citizens prefer to leave Moldova, which over the past few years has been losing population, social and healthcare services and provided few jobs. These conclusions were drawn following a survey conducted by the National Population and Development Commission, which assessed the demographic security index. According to the draft Security Concept – a document that is almost ready but its approval and implementation are delayed – the demographic issue is one of the most important and relevant when it comes to vulnerability. The authors of this document realised the need to ensure that the Republic of Moldova will work efficiently in this field, it is vital to implement a population policy, the objectives of which would be to stop demographic decline and the general population ageing process typical of the Moldovan society, and to reach a positive population increase rate in the future. Regrettably, the authorities ignore or delay the adoption of concrete urgent strategies or plans to stop this phenomenon, which is gaining momentum dramatically, primarily because a big share of the active and educated citizens – young people, highly qualified professionals – migrated out of the country, which has its toll on the development potential of the country. Therefore, the issues of ensuring and guaranteeing human security will become much

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11. Nicoleta Lasan, *Public Administration and Social Policy Magazine*, No 4 (5 December 2010), p. 43.

more difficult to resolve. According to the World Bank report on poverty in the Republic of Moldova, Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe<sup>12</sup>, struggling to progress. One can certainly say that poverty is what made people migrate, but now, because of the exodus, dealing with the current condition of the economy becomes even more difficult.

Political corruption, which flourished over the last 10 years, has been a constant challenge and threat to human security in Moldova for the past 25 years. The Moldovan political class was not and is still not concerned with solving the issues that the state and the society are facing. The political elite is practically involved in settling personal scores, in scandals or activities meant to protect their interests. The political parties – blinded by their desire to stay in power at any cost – do not know or respect the declared political doctrines and ideologies and machinate all kinds of scenarios that draw the attention away from the real issues. The phenomena of political corruption and protectionism, put together with flawed management at state administration level, reduced the trust of the population in the political class, in the rule of law and in the self-governance capacity. Even in such conditions, the current government develops rapidly contradictory regulations – often by violating procedures or ignoring the public opinion – while the true issues of the society are left unattended or are only tackled perfunctorily. Corruption and lack of reforms in justice, education, healthcare or administrative systems deprive the citizens of any guarantees of security.

### Conclusions

Therefore, because of the dividing elements tackled in this piece of analysis, Moldova failed in

promoting a national idea that would consolidate the society and bring all the categories of citizens together around shared values, regardless of their ethnicity, language, social or religious status. A national idea would also mitigate the risks and threats to human security because it would both explain and involve the entire society in the democratic process and in the governing of the country. In current situation, half of the population is geopolitically oriented to the west, while the other half – to the east, with the authorities and political forces not having the support of the entire society.

These circumstances, findings and analyses, which sometimes look apocalyptic, are hard to accept or comprehend, but only by tackling or discussing these serious matters can we identify ways to both solve them and prevent such phenomena and situations from happening in other countries where the conditions are similar. Moldova is no role-model when it comes to ensuring or guaranteeing human security, but it certainly could be taken as an example so as to prevent or stop certain trends in other countries.

To ensure human security in the Republic of Moldova, it is necessary to implement structural reforms as soon as possible, thus creating conditions of development. In fact, such reforms started when the European Union-Republic of Moldova Association Agreement was signed, and they need to be finalized to reform democratic institutions and to align the legislation and practices with European standards. These reforms and changes would allow for an increase in the standard of living and for better economic indicators, which would provide for the guarantees necessary for human security.

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12. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/715861467989513808/Reducerea-s%C4%83r%C4%83ciei-%C5%9Fi-prosperitate-par-tajate-%C3%AEn-Moldova-progrese-%C5%9Fi-perspective>.



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