

MEDZINÁRODNÉ
VZŤAHY
SLOVAK
JOURNAL OF
INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS



Vedecký časopis pre medzinárodné
politické, ekonomické, kultúrne a
právne vzťahy

Scientific journal of international
political, economic, cultural and
legal relations

Ročník XXI | Volume XXI

2/2023

Medzinárodné vzťahy

Vedecký časopis
pre medzinárodné politické, ekonomické, kultúrne a právne vzťahy
Fakulty medzinárodných vzťahov
Ekonomickej univerzity v Bratislave

Slovak Journal of International Relations

Scientific journal
of international political, economic, cultural and legal relations
published by the Faculty of International Relations
at the University of Economics in Bratislava

Indexovaný v / Indexed in:



EBSCO



INDEX
COPERNICUS



IDEAS



ECONBIZ



Medzinárodné vzťahy 2/2023, ročník XXI.
Slovak Journal of International Relations 2/2023, Volume XXI.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53465/SJIR.1339-2751.2023.2>

Medzinárodné vzťahy

Slovak Journal of International Relations

Redakcia / Editorial office:

Fakulta medzinárodných vzťahov Ekonomickej univerzity v Bratislave
Dolnozemska cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava, Slovak Republic
Tel.: 00421 2 6729 5471
E-mail: mv.fmv@euba.sk

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Evidenčné číslo / Country registration number: EV 4785/13

ISSN 1336-1562 (tlačené vydanie / print edition)

ISSN 1339-2751 (online)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53465/SJIR.1339-2751>

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GREEN EXTRACTIVISM IN LITHIUM TRIANGLE

*Barbora Janubová*¹

The aim of this paper is to investigate the relationship between lithium mining and the environmental-social aspects of mining in the countries of the lithium triangle by analysing scientific research works and available statistical data, and applying economic theory to green extractivism. We investigate whether the countries of the lithium triangle meet the criteria of the theory of green extractivism. In the context of the theory of green extractivism, we include Bolivian and Argentine regions as sacrifice zones while Chile is relatively successfully building renewable energy sources. In all three countries, we detected the socio-environmental impacts of lithium mining, the most serious problem being the right to water and the threat to the poorest regions.

Key words: lithium, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, environment, social inequalities
JEL: D63, L72, N56

1 INTRODUCTION

Lithium is the lightest known metal, which was discovered by the Swedish scientist Johan August Arfwedson at the beginning of the 19th century, but it was not possible to completely isolate it. It was already named lithium by its discoverer, which means stone in Greek (CAEM, 2023). The new metal was completely isolated a few years later, in 1821 it was isolated by scientists Brande and Davy (Reddy et al., 2020). This led to the belief in commercial lithium metal in Germany at the beginning of the 20th century, which was gradually produced in various industries (glass production, ceramics, metallurgy, chemical industry, medicine). A century later, continued research revealed electrochemical properties that could serve as lithium batteries. The 1950s are considered the beginning of lithium-ion battery research (Reddy et al., 2020). From the 1950s to the 1980s, the USA and Zimbabwe began to dominate lithium production (Bos and Forget, 2021). Today, lithium-ion batteries are part of electrical equipment (mobile phones, tablets, etc.), but their importance is also growing in connection with the transition to

¹ Ing. Barbora Janubová, PhD, Department of International Economic Relations and Economic Diplomacy, Faculty of International Relations, University of Economics in Bratislava, Dolnozemska cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava, e-mail: barbora.janubova@euba.sk.
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2523-7947>

a low-carbon economy and the concept of electromobility. According to a World Bank report, lithium production is expected to increase by 500% by 2050 precisely in connection with the production of clean energy technologies (World Bank, 2020).

On the other hand, lithium extraction brings certain environmental and social risks to the countries where it is mined. The question arises whether, in order to save the planet, it is right to sacrifice certain fragile regions (Ahmad, 2020), which are threatened by lithium mining. Although lithium extraction in the lithium triangle, which is the subject of our research, does not have such serious environmental impacts as in other countries, certain changes can already be observed today. Water resources are most at risk, air pollution and disruption of ecosystems and biodiversity may occur. Last but not least, mining directly affects the life of local communities and comes into conflict with them.

When researching lithium production capacity, a distinction must be made between lithium as metal and lithium carbonate equivalent (LCE). It is true that 5.3 times more LCE can be produced from lithium metal. In addition to LCE, i.e. Li_2CO_3 , lithium can also be produced from lithium hydroxide (LiOH) and lithium oxide (Li_2O) (European Metal Holdings, 2015).

The countries of the lithium triangle are located at the beginning of the global supply chain. A traditional global network consisting of lithium-mining countries (so-called hubs, Latin America and Australasia), producers of lithium derivatives (East Asia, South America and North America), manufacturers of electric batteries, electric smart devices and electric cars (East Asia, in the USA and in EU) (Bos and Forget, 2021), consumers of these products (Global North and China) and battery recycling (China, South Korea, USA) (Statista, 2023a). In this context, we are talking about the so-called lithium geopolitics (Galbo, 2023).

When researching the potential of lithium production, in addition to geographical and geological characteristics, political, social and environmental aspects must also be considered. In each country, the mining of mineral raw materials is legislated differently. The position of key stakeholders, public and private companies, governments and their mandated agencies, changes depending on the set rules.

When examining the potential of countries to produce lithium (or any mineral), it is necessary to distinguish between the capacity of resources and reserves. The term resources refers to all estimated amounts of mineral that can be extracted in the present and the future (if the appropriate conditions are met: price, technology). By reserves, we mean the amount of mineral that can be proven to be extracted at present with the help of available technology and at current prices.

In the paper, we work with the theory of green extractivism, which is defined as extractivism (extraction, use of natural resources) based on the same principles as classical extractivism, but at the same time, emphasis is placed on obtaining such resources that should contribute to a sustainable, emission-neutral economy in order to

prevent climate changes, or mitigate them. For some commodities, doubts arise from the point of view of environmental and social approach. The aim of this paper is to investigate the relationship between lithium mining and the environmental-social aspects of mining in the countries of the lithium triangle by analyzing scientific research works and available statistical data, and applying economic theory to green extractivism. We investigate whether the countries of the lithium triangle meet the criteria of the theory of green extractivism. We are aware of the scope of the problem and the significant limitations of the research, we focus on assessing the situation through available information published in the databases of professional journals as well as online reports of journals and agencies and from the census. Information from the census is also considerably limited due to the survey intervals (2010 for Argentina in some parameters and 2012 for Bolivia). At the same time, we describe in detail the lithium industry in the studied countries.

The relationship between lithium mining and socio-environmental impact has received little attention in scientific research. In the Scopus database, we detected 49 articles on Argentina, 29 on Bolivia and 70 on Chile and the impacts of lithium mining. Above all, this and the definition of green extractivism in the lithium triangle are addressed by authors from South America. Most of the information is available in online journals and agencies (Reuters, The Guardian, La Nación, Mongabay, Opinión etc.), we also drew information from the official websites of government agencies. In general, we based ourselves on as many contributions as possible, but we took into account their relevance and the possibility of verifying information in official and professional sources. In fact, there are several times more reports, especially about the impacts of lithium mining on local communities and the environment, but evaluating their relevance is complicated.

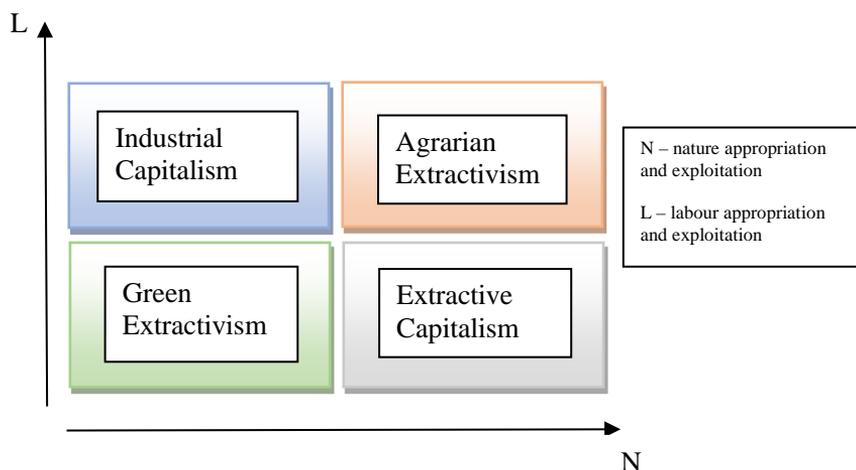
2 GREEN EXTRACTIVISM

Green extractivism (mining, use of natural resources) is based on the same principles as classical extractivism, which dates back to the 15th century in the context of Latin America. At the same time, emphasis is placed on acquiring such resources that should contribute to a sustainable, emission-neutral economy with the aim of preventing climate change, or mitigate them. However, the way in which the resources are obtained and also where they are obtained can be controversial. According to Bruno (2022), "it focuses not only on labor exploitation, but also on the appropriation of nature". Petras and Veltmeyer (2014) define extractivism as *"the appropriation of large volumes of natural resources" in order to "export raw materials to global markets"*. Acosta (2013) considers green extractivism as a *"mode of accumulation"* based on the removal of natural resources for export, Gudynas (2021) defines it as *"various ways of organizing the appropriation of natural resources (such as matter, energy or ecological processes) to serve human purposes in their social and environmental context"*.

According to several experts (Tornel, 2023), the differences between the global North and South are deepening. Some talk about the exploitation of the global south, which has not actually ended, and doubt the "greenness" of renewable resources, while "greening" creates the impression of fairer results, thus creating new frontiers of mining (Tornel, 2023). According to Batel (2022), "the acceptance of so-called "renewables" tends to ignore and render invisible the extraction, labor and fossil energy required to build, install, operate and dismantle this infrastructure".

Green extractivism can also be understood as a concept that justifies the destruction of the environment and social structures in order to achieve sustainable development. Isla (2021) talks about the so-called sacrifice zones. Green extractivism is structural, i.e. systematic, intensive and continuous (Tornel, 2023). The greening of total extractivism can be understood as the highest form of total extractivism. Bruna (2022) distinguishes several forms of total extractivism: mining, energy and agrarian extractivism. The following figure illustrates the individual concepts of extractivism in relation to nature and labor.

Fig. 1: Variation of extractivism and its relation with nature



Source: own processing according to Bruna, 2023.

Each form requires a different degree of involvement of human labor (L) and appropriation of the environment (N): the classic form, extractive capitalism, uses a high degree of N and a low degree of L, industrial capitalism a high degree of L and a low degree of N, agrarian extractivism requires a high rate of both N and L, and on the contrary green extractivism a low rate of both quantities. Extractive capitalism was typical especially at the time of the colonization of the world for colonized economies (the extraction of minerals and their subsequent export to the economy of the colonizer),

an example of industrial capitalism is the period of the industrial revolution in England in the 18th century, we historically consider colonized economies in the 17th and 18th centuries after the depletion of minerals to be agrarian extractivism, but we also know the forms of contemporary agrarian extractivism, e.g. soybean cultivation in Argentina (also called as soyization of the economy). Green extractivism is relatively least demanding on production factors N and L, therefore we understand it as the highest form of total extractivism.

Dorn et al. (2022) speak of green extractivism as a smooth continuation of neo-extractivism, which followed the wave of neoliberalism in Latin America. He assesses the situation as urgent in the context of social and environmental inequalities that arise primarily in the global south. He recommends further research into the relationship between man, technology and the environment.

3 LITHIUM TRIANGLE IN THE WORLD ECONOMY

The three countries (Argentina, Bolivia and Chile) with the largest lithium resources in South America form the so-called lithium triangle (Fig. 2). According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), identified lithium resources worldwide are distributed as follows: Bolivia, 21 million tons; Argentina, 20 million tons; United States, 12 million tons; Chile, 11 million tons; Australia, 7.9 million tons; China, 6.8 million tons; Germany, 3.2 million tons; Congo (Kinshasa), 3 million tons; Canada, 2.9 million tons; Mexico, 1.7 million tons; Czechia, 1.3 million tons; Serbia, 1.2 million tons; Russia, 1 million tons; Peru, 880,000 tons; Mali, 840,000 tons; Brazil, 730,000 tons; Zimbabwe, 690,000 tons; Spain, 320,000 tons; Portugal, 270,000 tons; Namibia, 230,000 tons; Ghana, 180,000 tons; Finland, 68,000 tons; Austria, 60,000 tons; and Kazakhstan, 50,000 tons. In total, the identified lithium resources amount to about 98 million tons (USGS, 2023), of which the countries of the lithium triangle own at least more than half, according to Ministerio de Desarrollo Productivo de Argentina (2022) even up to 65%.

The largest lithium reserves in the world are located in Chile, 9.3 million tons; Australia, 6.2 million tons; Argentina, 2.7 million tons; China, 2 million tons; United States, 1 million ton; Canada, 930,000 tons; Zimbabwe, 310,000 tons; and Brazil, 250,000 tons (Statista, 2023b).

The sources of lithium that are found in the lithium triangle are in the form of brines. In addition, lithium occurs in nature in other forms: hard-rock reserves, and sediment-hosted deposits (clays), lithium from the oil-fields, geothermal brines, and lithium zeolites. The world's largest sources of lithium (approximately 58% of all sources) are in brines on the salt flats. The largest of them is *Salar de Uyuni*, in the province of *Potosí* in the southwest of Bolivia. Other important brine sources include the *Salar de Atacama* and the *Salar de Maricunga* in *Antofagasta* and *Atacama* provinces in northern Chile, the *Salar del Hombre Muerto* in *Catamarca* province in northern

Argentina, the *Salar de Olaroz* in *Jujuy* province in northwest Argentina; and the *Coipasa* salt flats in western Bolivia.

Fig. 2: Map of lithium triangle



Source: The Economist, 2017.

Hard rock lithium resources are found in Australia, zinwaldite resources in Germany and the Czech Republic, and clay resources in the USA, Mexico, Peru and Serbia. Deposit exploration is underway in most countries, therefore, they contribute only to a small extent to global production. The most important producers of lithium (Australia, Chile, China and Argentina) today ensure the majority of global production (Statista, 2023c).

The countries of the lithium triangle currently have a comparative advantage in lithium production, namely low operating costs (Yang et al., 2021) and the extraction of lithium from brines represents a smaller environmental burden. Similar to oil, there is also talk about the creation of a cartel (so-called OPPROLI) in the case of lithium, which would strengthen the countries of the lithium triangle on the global market.

3.1 Argentina

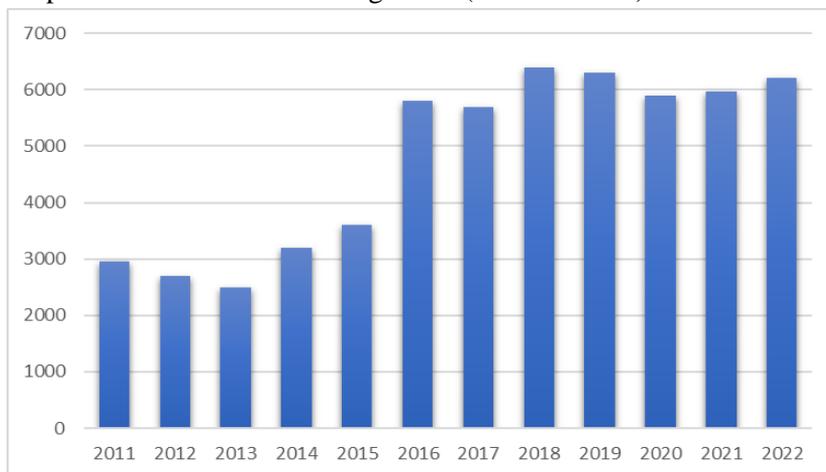
It is estimated that Argentina's lithium resources represent 20% of the world's reserves. The largest reserves are located in the north and northeast of the country: in the

Salar del Hombre Muerto, the *Salar de Olaroz*, the *Salar de Ratones*, the *Salar de Centenario*; and the *Salar de Pozuelos* (Desautly 2023, p. 3) in the provinces of *Jujuy*, *Salta* and *Catamarca*. The resources in Argentina are in the brines as well as in Chile and Bolivia. However, the nature of lithium resources also differs between them: for example, when compared to Chile, the concentration of lithium in Argentine brines is lower and rains occur more often in the territory (Vásquez, 2023). The rain factor is essential in mining, because during the rainy season the solar plains will be flooded, and mining is not possible.

Currently, Argentina is the fourth largest producer of lithium in the world (Statista, 2023d). Lithium production in Argentina in 2022 was 6,200 metric tons. The highest production of lithium was recorded in 2018, when mining reached its peak. In recent years, we have recorded a stable level of lithium production (Figure 3). According to data from CAEM (Argentine Chamber of Mining Entrepreneurs), 40,000 tons of LCE are mined in Argentina.

Argentina exported lithium carbonates worth \$ 247 million in 2021, becoming the second largest exporter of this commodity in the world. The largest target markets include China, the USA, Japan, South Korea and France. The fastest growing export markets between 2020 and 2021 were China (\$91.1 million), South Korea (\$13 million) and Japan (\$12.7 million). Lithium carbonates were Argentina’s 36th most exported product (OEC, 2023), meaning lithium is not one of the country’s most important exports.

Fig 3: Mine production of lithium in Argentina (in metric tons)



Source: own processing according to Statista, 2023d.

In 2022, Argentina’s lithium exports grew by 235% compared to the previous year. Over the last year, the share of lithium exports in the total export of minerals in Argentina has also increased, from 6.42% in 2021 to 18% in 2022 (*Dirección de Transparencia e Información Minera*, 2023).

Currently, there are three active lithium mining mines on the territory of Argentina:

- In the *Salar de Olaraz, Jujuy* – the mine is operated by *Sales de Jujuy*, a subsidiary of Allkem based in Australia;
- In the *Salar de Hombre Muerto, Catamarca* – the mine is operated by Livent, based in the USA;
- the *Cauchari and Olaroz Salars, Jujuy* – the mine is operated by Exar, Lithium Americas and China's Ganfeng Lithium, they only started mining in June 2023 (Lithium Americas, 2023).

It is these provinces together with the national government that form the so-called *la mesa del litio* (the lithium table), which negotiates the lithium business, agreed that companies in the lithium mining sector would set aside a percentage of their production for industrialization in Argentina (EconoJournal, 2023).

There are up to 38 lithium mining projects in progress in Argentina (Jones, 2023), according to Dorn et al. (2022), the number of projects even varies between 40 and 60. The amount of investment in the mining and processing of lithium since 2020 has reached a value of over \$ 4 billion, which ranks lithium in 2nd place after copper in the amount of investment to natural resources. In Argentina operate the other foreign companies such as Argentinian Minera Exar and YPF, Argentinian branch of French Eramet – Eramine, South Korean Posco, Chinese Ganfeng Lithium, Gotion High Tech, and Zijin Mining Group, Anglo-Australian Río Tinto, Río Tinto – Rincon Ltd., American-Canadian Lithium Americas – Millennial Lithium, Canadian-Russian Alpha Lithium – Uranium One (Vásquez, 2023; Dorn et al., 2022).

Foreign companies are primarily interested in mining and refining lithium for export, but Gotion High Tech, for example, plans to build capacities for the production of electric batteries. According to the memorandum of understanding between Gotion High-tech and JEMSE (the private-public company *Jujuy Energy and Mining State Society*), they will jointly build a lithium carbonate battery refinery in the free trade zone of *Jujuy* province. JEMSE has committed *"to grant exploration and production rights for potential lithium mineral resources with an exploration area of approximately 17,000 hectares to secure resource supply. The two companies will also carry out follow-up business cooperation in the lithium battery industry, including cathode materials and battery manufacturing, and jointly penetrate the European and American markets"* (Gotion, 2022).

Lithium mining itself brings many challenges, but mining technology is constantly advancing. An example is the company Eramine, which, together with China's Tsingshan, is developing a project in the *Salar Centenario Ratonés* in the province of Salta, developing a process that promises higher speed, higher yields and lower water consumption compared to traditional evaporation ponds (Vásquez, 2023). Some

companies are also involved in building solar energy capacities. JEMSE, financed by China's Exim Bank, contracted with Chinese firms PowerChina and Shanghai Electric Power Construction to build approximately 1.18 million solar panels. It is the largest solar park in South America, JEMSE also participated in building the so-called solar villages (Dorn et al., 2022).

Despite the fact that the Argentine economy has long been one of the more regulated, Argentina has taken a liberal approach to developing its lithium industry. In general, the mining energy is considered one of the key areas of the Argentine economy. Foreign investments are welcome, Argentine legislation allows 100% foreign ownership to a single shareholder (Doussoulin and Mougenot, 2022). Argentina can be described as the most liberal in the entire lithium triangle in the granting of concessions for lithium mining. The Argentine government receives revenue from lithium mining through a 3% mining fee (Marmolejo Cervantes, Garduño-Rivera, 2022).

Since the 1990s, the Argentine economy has been liberalized under the auspices of the International Monetary Fund and the so-called Washington Consensus. The national mining policy approved during the Menem administration was also maintained by subsequent governments. The government has managed to attract a lot of investment in the mining industry. Many laws and regulations from the 1990s are still valid today. The steps of successive governments led to various economic problems and even bankruptcies. However, the lithium sector is immune to crises (Vásquez, 2023). The expansion of the mining industry continued until 2004, when Argentina was the ninth most attractive destination for mining investment (Dorn et al., 2022). The development of mining (and agriculture) continued even during the administration of Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007) and Cristina Kirchner (2007-2015), despite the higher degree of regulation of the Argentine economy. The Mauricio Macri administration (2015-2019) brought an even more favorable environment for investments. We call this period the period of neo-extractivism in Argentina. Argentina remains an economy strongly oriented to the development of the mining and agricultural sectors even during the period of the current president Alberto Fernández, who continues the policies of President C. Kirchner. At the same time, the leadership of Argentina refers to the connection of mining with the so-called green and bioeconomy (Dorn et al., 2022). As for the attitude towards the mining industry, specifically lithium, it seems to be consistent across the political spectrum.

It should be clarified that within the framework of Argentine legislation, decision-making on lithium mining is in the hands of the provinces. The decentralization of the rules leads to different attitudes of the provinces: the province of Salta is an example of the most market friendly attitude towards lithium. The provincial government in Salta managed to attract not only lithium mining companies, but also electronic and automotive companies (Toyota and Mitsubishi) (Barandián, 2018). It is industries with a higher added value that could help the Argentine economy turn around reprimarization and start the transformation.

The province where lithium mining is currently taking place is *Jujuy*, where lithium is considered a strategic raw material (as in Chile) and a driving force of socio-economic development (as in Bolivia) (Barandián, 2018; Dorn et al., 2022). The local government of *Jujuy* created JEMSE, whose mission is to support the sustainable productive transformation of the province of *Jujuy*, promoting public-private alliances through the development of mining, renewable energies and their complementary activities. The vision is the right energy transformation of Argentina. It should be noted, however, that JEMSE's participation in mining decisions is considerably limited, as it only owns minority shares in mining companies. New research centers are being created in *Jujuy*, foreign experts are guests for the purpose of developing research in industries related to lithium mining, and conferences on lithium battery research are held regularly. An already announced project is the planned lithium-ion battery factory in the Perico industrial park (GlobalData, 2023). The project is implemented by the locally operating company *Jujuy Lito* (JEMSE 40%, *Seri* 60%) and will include a pilot plant for the assembly of lithium batteries and the production of cells. In the final phase, it will also include the production of electrodes (Dorn et al., 2022).

In 2021, the Argentine government announced the intention of YPF, in collaboration with the University of *La Plata*, several Argentine ministries, to build a factory for the production of lithium batteries in the city of *La Plata*. In April 2023, this factory, called *UniLab*, was opened (Bloomberg, 2023). The equipment was supplied mainly from China and it is the first ever factory for the production of electric batteries in South America.

3.2 Bolivia

Salar de Uyuni is located in Bolivia, a salt flat with the largest lithium resources in the world. *Salar de Uyuni*, in the department of *Potosí* in the southeast of the country, covers an area of 10,582 km² at an altitude of 3,653 m. In addition to lithium, the brine contains boron, sodium chloride, magnesium, potassium and sulfate (Haferburga et al., 2017). Another potential source of lithium is the *Salar de Coipasa*, which extends in the department of *Oruro* in Bolivia and *Colchan* in Chile (Lopez et al., 2023).

Despite the largest resources in the world, lithium production in Bolivia is only in a pilot program. In addition, Bolivian resources contain a small concentration of lithium compared to other countries of the lithium triangle (Vásquez, 2023), the brine contains a lot of magnesium salts, which, together with the long rainy season and flooding of salt lakes, makes lithium mining difficult. Production of lithium carbonate peaked in 2019 (421 metric tons), then production slowed down due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Statista, 2023e). The production of lithium carbonate as well as the mining of lithium itself is carried out by the state-owned company *Yacimientos de Litio Boliviano*.

Research on *Salar de Uyuni* began already in the 1970s under the auspices of the French scientist Francois Risacher (YLB, 2023a). The interest of foreign companies in

lithium mining has been thwarted several times. For example in 1991, the American company FMC started mining lithium in Argentina after a failure in Bolivia (Bos and Forget, 2021).

The case of Bolivia is more specific than the other countries of the lithium triangle. The biggest obstacle to lithium mining is legislative and political reasons. In 2006, Evo Morales, a critic of private companies and neoliberalism, who introduced a series of nationalizations, took office. In 2008, President Morales announced a strategic plan for the development of Bolivian lithium (Hancock, Ralph and Ali, 2018) and nationalized lithium production. In relation to natural resources, there have been significant changes, with the new constitution of 2009, resources were recognized as the property of the people, and the rights of the indigenous population (they make up over 60% of the population) were generally strengthened. It has been established that indigenous peoples have the right to be consulted before the exploitation of resources on the territory where they live begins. The Bolivian government first applied the so-called resource nationalism and announced investment in exploration in Salar de Uyuni. The plan included three phases: a pilot (exploration), an industrial phase (mining, production of lithium ubiquitane), and a phase for the production of electric batteries (Hancock, Ralph and Ali, 2018) in order to avoid dependence on primary commodities. Gradually, however, the Bolivian government's approach to foreign investments softened, in 2014 Bolivia signed a political agreement for cooperation in the development of the lithium industry with the Netherlands. This was followed by cooperation with the German firm ACI Systems with the intention of building four plants for the production of lithium hydroxide and lithium batteries (Marmolejo Cervantes, Garduño and Rivera, 2022). ACI System was designated as a strategic partner. Although the agreement was interrupted, cooperation is currently underway.

Cooperation with China in the field of lithium deepened after 2015. Currently, cooperation is underway with the Chinese consortium Catl Brunp and Cmoc, China Molybdenum and Contemporary Amperex Technology. According to the latest news, Chinese companies are developing a new technology called of direct lithium extraction, which raises certain concerns (waste management, non-use of other salts and minerals in the brine, environmental risks). Bolivia plans to produce lithium batteries by 2025 with the help of Chinese partner Contemporary Amperex Technology (NikkeiAsia, 2023).

A moderate resource nationalism can be talked about mainly in the period 2017-2019. In 2017, the state company *Yacimientos de Litio Bolivianos* was created to develop mining processes. The originally determined 60% for Bolivia in the joint ventures was changed to 51%, through YLB. The mining industry is overseen at all stages by the Bolivian state miner company Comibol (2023).

Bolivia's approach to lithium can be characterized by a high degree of resource nationalism and the creation of public-private partnerships with foreign corporations, to varying degrees over time. It is a specific model whose goal is to ensure the

industrialization of lithium (strategy of brine industrialization) without the dominant role of international corporations. The goal is *"to avoid the historical link between mineral extraction by foreign corporations, continued community/indigenous poverty and conflict, environmental damage and resource depletion"* (Hancock, Ralph and Ali, 2018).

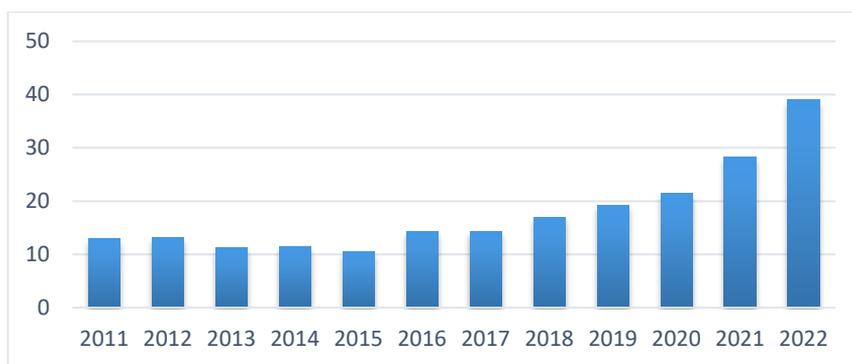
Bolivia is also aiming to transform its economy and transition to renewables, and lithium can significantly contribute to the transition to a low-carbon economy. Bolivia has set a goal of producing 79% of energy from renewable sources by 2030 (Hancock, Ralph and Ali, 2018). YLP has signed a contract with local car manufacturer Quantum Motors to produce electric vehicles (Marmolejo Cervantes, Garduño - Rivera, 2022).

3.3 Chile

Chile is the country that has the most proven lithium reserves in the world (9.3 million metric tons), which corresponds to 52% of the world's reserves in the form of brine (CCHEN, 2020). Chile is the fourth country with 11% of the world's resources.

The most important reserves are located in the north of Chile: in the *Salar de Atacama* in *San Pedro* and *Atacama* and in the *Salar de Maricunga* in *Copiapó*. Up to a third of global production is produced on the territory of Chile. Lithium mining began in the 80s of the 20th century, but only in the last decade has there been a boom in both production and export. Lithium mining experienced a more significant expansion from 1997 (4,500 tons) to 2017 (14,100 tons) (LIU, W. et al. 2019). Currently, mining reaches 39 thousand metric tons and lithium production is on the rise (Figure 4). Currently, lithium is considered a strategic raw material in Chile (Barandiarán, 2019) and Chile declares that lithium is crucial for the country's economy and will have growing potential in the future.

Fig. 4: Lithium mine production in Chile (in 1,000 metric tons)



Source: own processing according to STATISTA, 2023f.

Chile's foreign trade in lithium is growing in both quantity and value. Even in 2022, lithium became Chile's third most exported commodity after copper and various copper derivatives and products in dollars. Even ten years ago, lithium was not even considered a strategic raw material, and it was not even in 15th place in the commodity structure of exports (TradeMap, 2023).

In Chile, mining takes place only in the *Salar de Atacama*, where at the same time the largest lithium reserves in the world are located. In addition, the brine from this salt flat contains the highest concentration of lithium in the world (Vásquez, 2023).

Mining and processing of lithium is ensured by 2 private companies of the company: the Chilean company *Sociedad Química y Minera de Chile* (SQM), which is also the largest producer of lithium in the world, and the American company Albemarle. Both companies have a lithium mining plant in *Salar de Atacama*, SQM processes lithium in a plant in *Salar de Carmen* (SQM, 2023) and Albemarle in a chemical plant in La Negra, 27 km from the city of *Antofagasta* (Albemarle, 2023). The companies have been operating on the market for a long time, since the 80s and 90s of the 20th century, basically no new mine has been put into operation for about 30 years.

The largest exploration project is taking place in the *Salar de Maricunga*. Lithium has not yet been produced here also due to environmental concerns. The *Salar de Maricunga* area is only a tenth of the *Salar de Atacama*, and has the second highest concentration of lithium (Codelco, 2023). The Chilean company Codelco has been exploring it since December 2020, investing approximately \$ 23 million (LT, 2023). Mining is expected to begin within a few years. However, Codelco's mining is complicated by the ownership rights of other private companies in the *Salar de Maricunga*: Simco (an alliance between the Asian fund Simbalik and the Errázuriz group) and *Minera Salar Blanco* (a subsidiary of the Australian company Lithium Power International), which have announced an interest in lithium exploration. Under the Proyecto Blanco project, *Minera Salar Blanco* plans to start in 2023 with an initial investment of US\$700 million (*Minera Salar Blanco*, 2023). In the future, cooperation between the companies is not ruled out.

With the inclusion of *Salar de Maricunga*, lithium production in Chile could triple. At the same time, research into extraction methods is still ongoing, which will also help to increase production. Despite Chile's efforts and natural factors (the highest concentration of lithium in brines), Argentina is believed to be able to overtake Chile in production in a few years. The biggest influence is attributed to the market friendly policy of Argentina (a high number towards investments in mining and processing of lithium). On the contrary, Chile is much more strict in granting permits for mining of lithium. It is paradoxical considering the orientation of the Chilean economy - for a long time it applies one of the most liberal economic models in Latin America. Lithium production is state-controlled and only SQM and Albemarle can operate under strict production quotas and requirements to sell up to 25 percent of production at discounted prices to local buyers.

Royalty rates can also be very high, Chile has a variability system, rates fluctuate between 6.8 and 40% of the export price of lithium (Vásquez, 2023). Both companies therefore pay high rates at current prices, SQM paid the state \$ 5 billion in 2022 (LT, 2023). The main role in the regulation of lithium mining is played by Chile Commission for Nuclear Energy (CCHEN). According to Article 8 of Act 16.319 on the establishment of CCHEN, lithium is classified as a mineral of national interest and only the Commission may grant a permit for lithium mining, the so-called CEOL (special lithium operation contract). To date, the Commission has granted nine CEOLs: *Codelco Pedernales y Maricunga* (Codelco for short) in 2018, *Minera Salar Blanco*, Cominor, Simbalik, SQM (1996 and 2018) and Albemarle (1980 and 2016) (CCHEN, 2023).

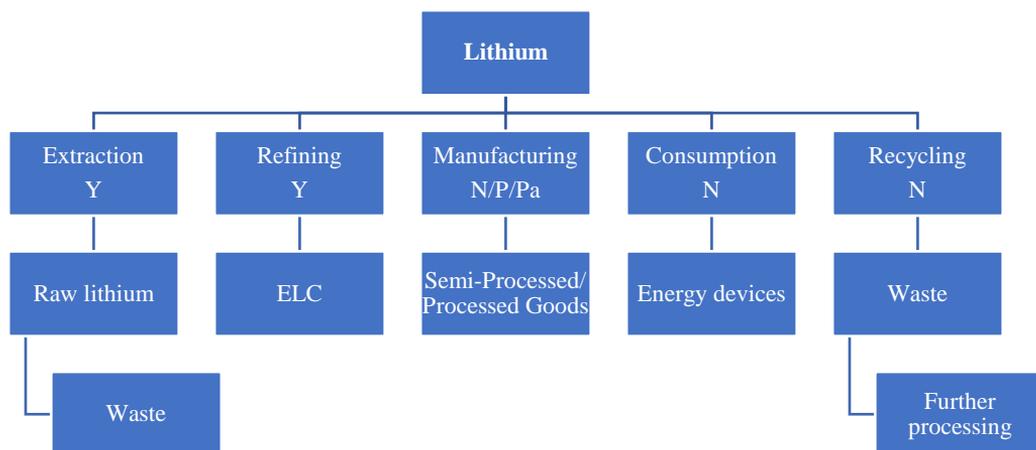
In the future, a new constitution may also play a role (which enshrines the protection of nature and natural resources for future generations, the relationship of harmonious balance between people, nature, etc.), but the proposal of which has not yet been approved by the population in a referendum. However, a new proposal is being prepared by the end of 2023, and given the agenda of the current government, pressure to protect the environment can be expected. In the spring of 2023, the president of Chile, Gabriel Boric, announced that he planned to nationalize lithium mining. Its goal is the protection of the environment and at the same time the industrialization of Chile also in the context of lithium processing. Even China's BYD Co announced plans to build a \$290 million lithium cathode factory in Chile's northern Antofagasta region (Reuters, 2023).

However, lithium has a role to play in the transition to a low-carbon society, so we do not expect its mining to be at risk. Various researches in the energy field are currently underway, also under the auspices of CCHEN.

4 GREEN EXTRACTIVISM IN LITHIUM TRIANGLE

According to the theory of Bruna (2022), the countries of the lithium triangle can be defined as the so-called extractive economies. The following diagram describes the material transformation of lithium in the context of the countries of the lithium triangle, which are located at the beginning of the global supply chain. They are active in the first two stages (extraction, refining), to a large extent compared to other countries in the world. We consider them net producers and exporters. Due to production, they also have to bear the impacts it brings (waste, environmental degradation, social impacts). Waste is not so voluminous in the case of pumping lithium from brines, because mainly the pumped water is returned to the brines. Manufacturing of lithium batteries, i.e. the third phase, is not actively underway yet. Pilot programs in cooperation with foreign investors are announced. The third and fourth degrees are partially represented. Only in Argentina, a factory for the production of electric batteries was opened in 2023. In Argentina, Bolivia and Chile represented only slightly through the production and subsequent consumption of solar energy. However, there are relatively large unused capacities in this direction, which is also the subject of other country plans (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5: The five stages of material transformation and value capture of lithium in lithium triangle



Notes: Y – the activity is carried out in the lithium triangle, N – the activity is not carried out in the lithium triangle, P – planned activity in the next years, Pa – partially.

Source: own processing according to Bos and Forget, 2021.

Lithium, as a metal that has the ability to store energy, is a critical element not only for electromobility but also for renewable energy sources. Lithium-ion batteries are also used in building capacities of renewable energy sources. Among the countries of the lithium triangle, Chile is clearly the leader in renewable energy, but its capacities have fluctuated over the last decade. Currently, the emphasis is on building the capacities of renewable energy sources. Argentina has several solar energy projects in the works in regions where lithium is mined. Bolivia, the least developed country of the triangle, has an ambitious goal of producing 79% of renewable energy by 2030 and the goal of achieving full electrification of the country by 2025 (Lopez et al., 2021). It should be noted that the electric batteries placed in the structures do not come from national economies. In the future, all three countries are trying to reverse this trend. The countries of the lithium triangle, especially Bolivia, have excellent conditions for generating solar energy.

Lithium mining leads to environmental impacts: it disrupts biodiversity and fragile ecosystems (Hancock, Ralph and Ali, 2018, Lopez, 2021; Liu et al., 2019), endangers *flamingos* and *vicuñas* (Vasquez, 2023), wetland habitat (Alam and Sepúlveda, 2022), both underground and fresh water are pumped out (Díaz Paz, 2022).

The *Laguna Santa Rosa* wetland area is partially threatened by lithium mining, but this has not been fully confirmed by research. The exceptional weather situation also

played a role, when significant rainfall hit the region in 2015, and thus the downward trend of the groundwater in the southern edge of the *Salar de Maricunga* was not demonstrated (Alam and Sepúlveda, 2022). However, wetlands continue to be among the most endangered ecosystems on earth. The production of LCE creates several tons worth of waste for each country. We found the least information about environmental degradation or its risks in Bolivia, which is connected to the late onset of lithium mining in this country.

Another significant problem with lithium mining in the lithium triangle is the excessive use and withdrawal of water in the driest regions of the Earth. There is a threat of a lack of fresh water for local communities, even contamination of water needed for agriculture (Khakmardan et al., 2023; Ahmad, 2020). Despite the fact that both Argentina and Chile have established monitoring institutes to monitor water level change (Ahmad, 2020; Vasquez, 2023), there is pressure on local communities and disputes over the right to water in the areas.

In Bolivia, resources are defined by the 2009 constitution as the property of the people, and the indigenous population has the right to be consulted by law before the resource is used (Hancock, Ralph and Ali, 2018). Chile is the only country in Latin America that does not recognize the indigenous population in its constitution (IWGIA, 2023), therefore it does not even publish the available statistics on the shares of the Indian population in the regions.

Based on data from the population census of Bolivia and Argentina, it is clear that the areas affected by lithium mining are inhabited by indigenous people. In both cases, these are the regions with the highest shares of Indian population in the country, although with significant differences between countries in terms of the overall population structure. Bolivia is the most indigenous country in South America, it belongs to the most diversified countries in this regard. Currently, there are up to 36 different ethnic groups living in Bolivia. In the *Potosí* region, up to 53% of the population identifies itself as Native American based on their mother tongue, while it is not entirely clear what percentage of the population using Castilian as their mother tongue identifies as Native American. We assume that the real share of indigenous people is even higher. At the same time, Potosí is the poorest region of Bolivia.

In Argentina, traditionally the country with the highest proportion of population of European origin, indigenous people live in the provinces of *Jujuy* 7.9%, *Salta* 6.6%, and *Catamarca* 1.9%. In the case of the first two, the shares are high, only 2 Argentine provinces (*Chubut*, *Neuquén*) achieve a higher share of indigenous people. However, in the provinces of *Jujuy* and *Salta* live the highest number of indigenous people in the whole of Argentina in total terms. At the same time, we detected a high level of poverty and destitution (equivalent to extreme poverty) in these regions: in *Salta* 40% of the population lives in poverty and 6.9% in destitution, in *Jujuy* 41.8% in poverty and 8.5% in destitution, in *Catamarca* 44.3% in poverty and 6.6% in destitution (Indec, 2022).

Despite incomplete data on the poverty rate in the affected regions and the poverty rate of indigenous people in the affected regions, reports indicate that it is this population that comes into conflict with the mining companies and their intentions most often. It is possible to state many clashes with local communities and their opposition to mining. The most common reasons are water problems (shortage, unresolved water rights, threats to freshwater flows), lack of information about planned projects of mining companies, the violation of indigenous rights, lack of benefits and royalties from mining for local communities (Opini3n, 2023; Reuters, 2023); Ahmad, 2020; Desaulty, 2023, D3az Paz, 2022; Dorn et al., 2022; Jerez et al., 2021). The table 1 summarizes other aspects as (Statista, 2023g, h, i).

In Bolivia, we can observe a higher participation of indigenous people and in general the population living in the affected area than in the other two countries. It has to do with the history of Bolivia and the *Potos3* region, traditionally suffering from extractivism since colonial times (silver) and later in relation to natural gas and water, resulting in protests. It was from these riots that former President Morales gained political power. He is committed to supporting local communities and organizations (FRUTCAS², COMCIPO³). Despite the governments' efforts to industrialize lithium, the aforementioned organizations were also partially successful: they achieved the exclusion of foreign mining companies in the first two phases, the cancellation of the contract with a foreign company in 2019 (Obaya, 2021), within the framework of Bolivia's strategic plan for the industrialization of lithium. Their successes can be partially attributed to their relatively close relationship with former President Morales.

At the same time, the territory of *Potos3* (specifically the provinces of *Nor Lipez*, *Enrique Baldiviezo* and *Sud Lipez*) has been included in the Community Lands of Origin (*Tierra Comunitaria de Origen*) since 2010, according to which the property rights to the territory belong to indigenous groups and the property is inalienable, indivisible, non-foundable and tax-free (Sanchez and Lopez, 2021).

Tab. 1: Selected aspects of lithium extraction

	<i>Argentina</i>	<i>Bolivia</i>	<i>Chile</i>
Mining area	<i>Salar del Hombre Muerto,</i> <i>Salar de Olaroz,</i> <i>Salar de Cauchari</i>	<i>Salar de Uyuni</i>	<i>Salar de Atacama</i>
Survey area	<i>Salar de Olaroz,</i> <i>Salar de Cauchari,</i> <i>Salar Tolillar,</i> <i>Salar De Rinc3n,</i> <i>Salar Tres Quebradas,</i> <i>Salar de Jujuy</i>	<i>Salar de Uyuni</i>	<i>Salar de Maricunga</i>

² The Regional Federation of Peasants from the Southwest of Potos3

³ The Potosinista Civic Committee

Strategic importance	partially	yes	yes
Reserves/ resources (in million tons)	2.7/ 20	N/A / 21	9.3/ 11
Mining administration	decentralized	centralized	centralized
Nationalization of the sector	no	yes	no *
Economic policy	liberalism	state-run/ resource nacionalism	regulated by the state
The opportunity for local communities to be involved in decision-making	partially	yes	no
Renewable energy (share of total production)	9.2%	18.4%	89%
Building renewable energy capacities	yes	yes	yes
Expected start of production of lithium batteries	2023 (already open)	2025	2025
Proportion of indigenous population	1.9% - 7.9%	53%	N/A
Poverty rate in the regions	40- 44.3%	N/A	N/A
Declared environmental impact	the decrease freshwater, the decrease of biodiversity, massive water withdrawals, waste, water contamination	waste	the decrease in the water level, massive water withdrawals, waste degradation in vegetation and fauna
Area of environmental impact	<i>Salta, Catamarca</i>	<i>Salar de Uyuni, Potosí</i>	<i>Atacama, Laguna Santa Rosa, San Pedro</i>
Conflict with local communities	Water consumption, social injustices, lack of information and participation, displacement of peasant communities, the violation of indigenous rights	ownership rights, royalties from extraction, benefits	water consumption, water injustices and lack of water
Area of conflict with local communities	<i>Salta, Catamarca, Jujuy</i>	<i>Salar de Uyuni</i>	<i>Atacama</i>
Mitigation projects	yes	N/A	yes

Note: N/A – no available data, *in plan.

Source: own processing.

Through civic organizations, the population in the area is partially informed, but the current situation does not meet the demands and expectations of local communities. Despite the declared rights, lithium belongs to the state, which decides on its treatment. *De facto*, local communities do not have decision-making rights. According to Sanchez and Lopez (2021), this is a contradiction where, *"regardless of any legal and symbolic recognition in the original territories, they (local communities) lack real decision-making power, especially in relation to mineral resources."*

We detected projects and compensations in Chile and Argentina (e.g. SQM, 2023, Albemarle 2023) that are intended to mitigate the impacts of lithium mining, especially the disruption of traditional ways of life. The mining companies themselves employ workers from local communities either voluntarily or in fulfillment of set quotas, which increases their standard of living. Minare Exar in Argentina disclosed that 65% of its employees are indigenous, earning above-average wages for the region (Ahmad, 2020). It is difficult to trace the reported financial compensations to local communities, but some information indicates that there are violations of the declared values. Companies are committed to creating social values and supporting local communities. However, the results of these projects are not clear from secondary sources (information in the press and on the websites of mining companies).

However, it is not only negative impacts. Among the positives we include the placement of solar panels and the increase in capacity for solar energy in the region. In poor regions, this can lead to breaking out of energy poverty and universal energy availability. On the other hand, renewable energy capacities in Argentina and Bolivia have significant reserves: in Argentina they contribute only 9.2% to the total energy production and in Bolivia 18.4%. We consider only Chile as an economy that is transitioning to a low-carbon economy. According to Isla (2021), we include the Argentine and Bolivian regions in the so-called sacrifice zones, because by mining lithium they contribute to the creation of low-carbon societies in other regions, but they themselves are not moving towards this.

Barandián (2018) offers the concept of mining 2.0, i.e. carrying out mining activities without abusing the rights of local communities. From the point of view of this perspective, it is necessary to carry out several reforms and changes: strengthen the rights, awareness of the population in the territory and compensation for them, increase their living standards, qualifications and find them a full-fledged place in the mining economy of the regions.

According to Dorn et al. (2022) argue that the economies of the lithium triangle have adopted green extractivism. In Argentina, we can also talk about agrarian extractivism (due to the soy business). Argentina's economy is struggling with the reprimarization of the economy, which the mining sector has also contributed to. At the same time, if the Argentine government's intentions are fulfilled and the lithium battery production capacity is expanded, it may lead to a reversal of the reprimarization of the

economy. Bolivia and Chile do not struggle with reprimarization, because they were never sufficiently industrialized. In the future, if they want to gain/maintain competitiveness, they should move to produce products with higher added value.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In the paper, we examine the lithium industry and the so-called industrialization of lithium in the countries of the lithium triangle. All three countries possess substantial world resources and reserves, and two of them (Argentina and Chile) are among the world's largest producers and exporters of LCE. The importance of lithium to their economies is growing, production has increased in all three countries over the last 10 years, while we are seeing a delay in production in Bolivia. The countries have ambitious plans for the transition to the use of renewable energy sources and a higher level of industrialization of lithium (production of electric batteries). In Argentina, a plant has already been opened, two more announced the planned opening in 2025. From an economic point of view, Argentina has the greatest potential for the expansion of lithium industrialization due to the application of liberalism and decentralization.

The fact remains that mining regions are poor regions and some of them have a high proportion of indigenous people. It is the center with local communities that is most alarming in the context of mining. These are primarily rights to water, which is used in the evaporation of lithium. Other problems are emerging waste, threat to habitats, traditional way of life, etc. Mining companies respond to protests by local populations with partial compensation in the form of direct payments or by integrating local populations into corporate structures. Environmental impacts were only partially proven by research. The problem is not given as much attention as it demands.

The positions of the countries differ in relation to the theories of green extractivism: we can classify the Argentine and Bolivian regions as sacrifice zones. At the same time, it is important to add that in Bolivia the local indigenous communities have a stronger negotiating position than in Argentina and Chile.

If countries adopt the necessary changes and strategies, lithium industrialization has the potential to facilitate the transition of the studied countries and neighbors in Latin America to renewable resources and achieve energy sovereignty of the region. So far, Chile is the closest with 89 percent representation of renewable sources in total energy production.

Last but not least, research on lithium resources is still ongoing and the position of the countries of the lithium triangle will depend on the potential amount of lithium discovered in other regions. Mining methods are also constantly being improved, and other players will enter the global market as mining costs decrease. Time and technology will change its structure of the global lithium supply chain. The countries of the global South no longer have to play such an important role, i.e. and the lithium triangle. For this reason, countries should take advantage of their strategic position today.

We consider the contribution of the article to be the processing of the definition of green extractivism in the Slovak scientific space, its application to the lithium triangle, and the definition of opportunities and threats in the lithium triangle. Further research should focus on a deeper analysis of the impact of lithium extraction on the most vulnerable population, its decision-making powers, the level of information and the transparency of the actions of mining companies not only towards them but also towards the environment.

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UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL AND GLOBAL STABILITY

*Temitope Peter Ola*¹

The United Nations remains the only institution with the universality and breadth to address global problems. Given the scope, scale and nature of the challenges there is a need for a new reading of the United Nations Security Council in light of the changing global security. Using the theory of functionalism this study argues that like previous experiments at global institutional building, the Security Council will incrementally provide the platform for a radical reconsideration and reversal of global peace to make the United Nations decline into irrelevance and ultimate obscurity. That will happen not necessarily because the Council is a site of established global power inequalities but in response to the impotence of the veto powers in gatekeeping global stability for collective wellness.

Key words: World Provinces, multilateralism, global security, veto power, United Nations reforms

JEL: F51, F53, F55

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper contextualizes the social crucibles that forge disarticulation in the task of inventing a holistic dialogue between the Security Council, one of the institutional building blocks of the United Nations, and global stability thus producing the perennial maladjustments which unglue the search for sustainable solutions to global problems. It seeks to understand the internal logic of the continued valorization of veto power fixation despite the availability of the plethora of material evidence on the ominous failure of the Security Council-based security paradigms. The paper owes its significance to the deliberate focus on the deep and festering inclusion deficit problems bedeviling the activities and processes of the Security Council given that it is almost inefficient, defective, malign, compromised and unreliable. In addressing the nature of the intersections of United Nations problematic regarding the Security Council as progression towards a more stable and peaceful global polity, it is necessary to pay

¹ Temitope Peter Ola, PhD., Department of History and Diplomatic Studies, Faculty of Arts, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria, e-mail: ola.temitope@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2523-7947>

attention to the institutional vacuum that led to the creation of the world body. It was Auguste Comte (1798–1857) in his classic treatise entitled *Système de politique positive* (*System of Positive Polity*, 1851–54) who argues that human beings create institutions to deal with serious problems, and when they are no longer able to perform the vital function, they are replaced by other institutions. True to expectation, between 1914 and 1945 diverse dynamics shaped pre-United Nations attempts at international organizations and the agency which encased global peace and stability played epoch-making roles in making diplomacy, collective security, balance of power, and wars into the grundnorms for global security. While the instruments engage the perennial maladjustments which unglue states relations in their change milieus they seek new anchors to operate in a new socio-political framework. The new framework is the United Nations Security Council. If Comte (1851–54) is right to posit that, historically, institutions are often imperfect and evolve slowly then the actions and inactions of the most vital organ of the United Nations, the Security Council, are capable of incrementally providing the platform for a radical reconsideration and reversal of global peace that would make the United Nations lose its relevance and ultimately fade away.

Of the many purposes and objectives identified for the United Nations in the preamble and Article 1 of the Charter (United Nations, 1945), the organization's strategic project is the maintenance of international peace and security. In other words the creation of the United Nations delegitimizes international aggression. Owing to its universal membership; decision-making processes; unequalled reach; and its ability to provide critical services the United Nations provides a unique platform for international cooperation. The founders of the United Nations based its structure on the assumption that threats to international peace and security would arise primarily between nation-states (Ola, 2021) and, ahistorical though, that the victors of World War II would continue as world powers. The inability of the founders of the United Nations to see far beyond the immediate aftermath of World War II in their design of the institutions of the international organization has multifaceted implications for the ultimate viability of not just the organs but the organization itself.

Though a new wave of interstate wars is not preordained, however a number of other important developments are likely to influence the future direction of world peace. Yet a combination of global intolerance and religious fanaticism could easily bring about a global upsurge in inter-state wars particularly among the Security Council's five permanent members as well as between anyone of them and other members of the United Nations. The task of reaching agreement about what security policies states would adopt is difficult due to the absence of a true consensus about what global peace should look like, as the continuing contest over possessing of nuclear weapons illustrate. For this reason the Security Council of the United Nations is empowered by the Charter to make decisions, under Chapter VII, that are binding on the entire membership of the United Nations. The Security Council is expected to help the United Nations in being proactive

and instrumental in promoting international peace and security. Consequently, advancing on extant literature, this piece explores the challenges bedeviling the Security Council in the performance of its responsibility of sustaining global peace and security. It considers the extent to which the Security Council performs the tasks of maintenance of global peace and security.

The corollary implication of our objective in this article is the answers proffer to the fourfold set of puzzles. These are:

1. What are the achievements and shortcomings of the United Nations Security Council in respect of global peace and security since 1945?
2. Since the Security Council's inability to find common approach to handling complex security challenges starting with Iraq in 2003 to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has the entire system of promoting peace and security envisioned in the United Nations Charter collapsed, did this not call for the creation of a new institution that will be better engineered to bring lasting peace to the emerging international environment of the 21st century?
3. Is the United Nations merely a framework through which its members pursue their interests or an actor that enjoys significant autonomy to pursue its own interests and programmes, and how does this affect the effectiveness of the United Nations?
4. What prospect does the United Nations Security Council have in addressing global security challenges?

With a view to determining whether the United Nations will continue to find relevance in the coming decades we answer the research questions by drawing on empirical evidence to document our assertions, reinforce our speculations, and stimulate an appreciation of the multifarious implications brought about by the activities of the Security Council. Therefore, the piece is evocative of backwards in critical introspection of the imperfect past and forwards in apprehension of the uncertain future.

The paper is divided into eight interconnected sections, the first of which is the introduction. It introduces the cruise of an assessment of United Nations Security Council and global stability. This was done by detailing the research problem, questions, objectives, and significance of the study and so provides a framework within which the analysis of United Nations Security Council and global stability can be understood. In the second section, we take a cursory look at the context within which the United Nations is constructed in literature while the third section speaks to the mode of data generation for the paper which is intended to establish a conceptual framework within which to engage the questions of United Nations Security Council and global stability. We then go on, in the section that follows, to x-ray the United Nations Charter and global security in (post)World War II international system. We also look at the legal peculiarities that shape

the way the United Nations Security Council engage with and in security, and the overall implications of all these for the ability of the United Nations to effectively participate in the maintenance of global peace. In section five, we answer the questions of “why” and “how,” by looking at the various ways in which the veto powers of the Security Council have used their privileged positions to condition the rights of other sovereign states of the international system. The sixth section takes a look at the attempts to balance the powers of the Security Council through a denial of sufficient fund. With a look to the future the seventh section takes due note of the broad challenges confronting the United Nations and suggests ways of ameliorating them. The concluding section summarizes the key arguments and draws attention to their implications.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW: THE UNITED NATIONS

Studies on international organizations date back as far as those organizations themselves. The appearance of the League of Nations and the United Nations were accompanied by scholarly exposition on the new organizations. Prominent among the efforts is that of Claude (1984, first published in 1956) who critique international organizations in a world of sovereign states. Meanwhile, Mitrany (1943) and Haas (1958) came up with functionalism and neo-functionalism theoretical footing of how international organizations could be useful for solving the problems of war. Furthermore, Kohane and Nye (1971) attempt to shift the focus of International Relations scholarship from state-centered and conflict-based realist paradigm to nonmilitary interaction among states as well as the growing presence of non-state actors in world politics. However, the early writings are bedeviled by historical detail, thick legal description and a focus on what the organizations were at the expense of how they functioned. Notwithstanding, the paradigms suffered from a number of weaknesses (Archer 1992, pp. 88-106) as they did not explore the formal and informal structures and processes that determine the decision-making procedures within these new actors.

On January 1, 1942 twenty-six (26) countries signed the United Nations Declaration in Washington D.C. and in April 1945 fifty (50) states met at the San Francisco United Nations Conference on International Organization to draw up the United Nations Charter which was subsequently signed on 26 June 1945 (United Nations, 1945). At that outset of the United Nations, in 1945, Beardsley Ruml projected that “... everyone believes the United Nations is essential today; after five years people will believe that the United Nations is the greatest vision of man; after ten years, doubts will begin to creep in about the United Nations and its place in the world, but all of you will still believe in it, after fifteen years, there will be general assumption that it cannot succeed; but after twenty years, everybody will reverse and love it as the only alternative to the demolition of the world”

It has to be admitted that matters are not so simplistic, and no one dares lay claim to omniscience, or profess prophetic insights into the future of any complex organization

such as the United Nations. Yet, there are now enough unresolved tragicomedies of the United Nations to determine the validity of Ruml's conjectural speculation. The United Nations is changing in diverse ways into an extraordinary complex network of overlapping institutions. The United Nations can now be described as a decentralized conglomerate of numerous committees, commissions, centers, boards, offices, agencies, bureaus, and institutes scattered around the world (the United Nations system). Many of the changes to the United Nations are in response to concerns of non-permanent, non-veto wielding members of the organization who have continued to seize upon their numeric advantage under the one-state/one-vote rules of the General Assembly to push and pull the organization in new directions. If the United Nations has been able to adapt and evolve and meet other needs that were not necessarily envisioned when it was created contemporary reality means that the Security Council cannot continue to be the most important and powerful organ of the organization.

3 METHODOLOGY

This paper is historical, interpretative and analytical. It is also conceptual and qualitative in nature. The qualitative approach facilitates new perspectives on things about which much is known or to gain also more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively. The paper draws insights from relevant virtual and physical secondary constructs such as scholarly exegesis, empirical materials and historical evidence using the theoretical prism of functionalism as postulated in the seminal works of Mitrany (1933) and Haas (1958). The basic argument of functionalism, according to Haas (1958) and Mitrany (1933, p. 101), is that the international political system has to be analyzed within the context of international integration – the collective governance and material interdependence between states – which develops its own internal dynamic as states integrate in limited functional, technical and economic areas. Using this problem of international governance as core analytical foci the descriptive analysis cast light on the identified empirical and normative questions that are directly related to the contemporary concerns of statesmen and students of international affair. For convenience of systematic organization of thought, the thrust of analysis in the paper is schematically presented under a number of select themes and carefully formulated to prosecute the paper's derived assumption to wit: the United Nations will fade away in response to its impotence in gatekeeping global stability.

4 UNITED NATIONS CHARTER AND THE PATHOLOGY OF SECURITY

While the international community is expected to continue on its peace path the profound hybridity of global insecurity exemplified in the intractable Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the protracted Arab-Israeli wars, the Iraqi war, the Kuwait war, the conflict in Georgia, the Rwandan genocide of 1994, the 2009 massacre of the Tamils in Sri-Lanka, the Arab Spring which led to the Syrian civil war of 2011 and which

made Libya and Syria to become failed states, the forceful annexation of Crimea by Russia in March 2014, the civil wars in Africa such as in Congo, Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Sudan and other places around the globe are clear indications that the global peace which the United Nations built up over the past seven decades remain fragile even though spectacular. That is partly because the United Nations and its member-states suffer from the limitations of the provisions for security in the Charter.

The United Nations was established to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” (United Nations, 1945) and one of its primary responsibilities is to silence the guns. In carrying out this universal public-interest objective of combating by all means, in accordance with the Charter, threats to international peace and security, the Security Council has the authority to take a variety of actions, including the establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission. Although the Security Council is not required to refer to a specific Chapter of the Charter when passing a resolution authorizing the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation the legal basis for such action can be found in Chapters VI, VII, and VIII of the Charter. Since the first armed United Nations peacekeepers were deployed in Congo in July 1960 over one million personnel have served under the United Nations flag in over 70 United Nations peacekeeping operations. Though each of the interventions requires context specific study so as to understand the political and social circumstances around it, the Security Council has adopted the practice of invoking Chapter VII of the Charter when authorizing the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping missions. The invocation of Chapter VII is an evidence of firm political resolve and a means of reminding parties in conflict and the wider United Nations membership of their obligation to give effect to the Security Council's strategic decisions. Some of the decisions are: Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace, and security; Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict; and Security Council Resolution 1674 (2006) on civilian protection in armed conflict.

While it was expected that whenever other States are unable to settle their disputes peacefully, the United Nations Security Council's five permanent members would act in concert to deter or rollback aggression. However, the Charter is silent on how to respond to a permanent member of the Security Council who is an aggressor and who also refuses to settle its disputes peacefully. Also, unlike the European Union's Lisbon Treaty of 2007 (which came into force on December 1, 2009) which in Article 50 outlines how a country could leave the EU² the United Nations Charter provides no option of exit for states that see their national interest at variance with the goals of the organization. However each of the P5 chose to remain in the United Nations so far

² European Parliament. (2022):The Treaty of Lisbon. [Online.] In: *European Parliament*, 2022. [Cited 21.06.2022.] Available online: <<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/5/the-treaty-of-lisbon>>. The United Kingdom has invoked it rights under Article 50 of Lisbon Treaty of 2007 to exit the European Union.

because they know that inclusion rather than exclusion offered more options and benefitted their ability to make policy decisions internationally and expand their room for maneuver. Unlike the pulling out from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) by the United States in the 1980s, the vote powers chose to remain within the United Nations because they are able to achieve their objectives in spite of the Security Council.

The creation of collective security doctrine on which the United Nations Security Council is based is an admittance of the failure of balance-of-power as the path to global peace. French ecclesiastic councils held in Poitiers (1000), Limoges (1031), and Toulouse (1210) discussed versions of collective security. Similar proposals emerged in the writings of Pierre Dubois (1306), King George Podebrad of Bohemia (1462), the Duc de Sully (1617-1638) and the Abbe de Saint-Pierre (1713). As a concept collective security is premised on the creed espoused by Alexandre Dumas' d'Artagnan and his fellow Musketeers: 'One for all and all for one!' To make it suitable for application in the comity of nations the Musketeer creed is translated into four (4) rules of statecraft thus:

- a. All threats to peace must be a common concern of everyone;
- b. Every member of the state system should join the collective security organization;
- c. Members of the organization would pledge to settle their dispute through pacific means; and
- d. If a breach of the peace occurs, the organization will apply timely, robust sanctions to punish the aggressor.

In line with this, Article 1 (1) of the Charter (United Nations 1945) of the United Nations directs the organization to take "effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace". In Article 2 (paragraph 4) all members of the United Nations are to "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force" and are to (in paragraph 3) "settle their international disputes by peaceful means". But, learning from the failure of collective security under the League of Nations the Charter of the United Nations created the United Nations Security Council which resembles a great-power concert by permitting the Council's five permanent members to veto any proposal for military actions it disagrees with. Under this arrangement, relative to the United Nations Security Council each of the great powers has more authority. Article 39 of the Charter gives the United Nations Security Council the power to act when there is a 'threat of breach of international peace and security'. To this end, the Charter provides that the General Assembly can only initiate studies of conflict situations; bring perceived hostilities to the attention of the Security Council for initiatives to keep the peace. Furthermore, Article 99 (United Nations, 1945) restricts the roles of the Secretary-General (and the Secretariat under him) to that of a chief administrative officer alerting

the Security Council to peace-threatening situations and providing administrative support for the operations that the Security Council approves.

The composition of the Security Council is provided for in Article 23³ of the Charter (United Nations, 1945). Most significantly five states (the P5) are identified in the article as permanent members: the Republic of China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States. Though these names of the P5 have not been amended in the Charter, two changes have occurred regarding which states exactly occupy these permanent seats (Bailey and Daws 1998, p. 137). The seat of China was occupied by the Nationalist regime in Taiwan until 1971, when it was taken over by the People's Republic of China, and the seat for the Soviet Union was assumed by the Russian Federation in 1991 when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) dissolved into 15 separate states. The privilege and function of the permanent seats are that all must agree on the action to be approved. The idea is that any permanent member could in effect defeat an item or proposed decision by objection (veto) of the Council. The unique materiality of the veto power system bestowed on each of the P5 is to not only appease them individually but to also guarantee their continued collective and individual commitments to the global peace processes since the comity of nations suffers from the exhaustion of the era of the two world wars. By virtue of the investiture of the power to veto on the P5 it was expected that, in fidelity to the privileged position confers (*noblesse oblige*), each and every one of them would be honorable, restrained and generous in their general collective and individual specific governance of global affairs. In other words the Charter wants each of the permanent members of the Security Council to be chief peace-brokers for the international system. But is it so?

From a functional perspective many of the generic ideas underlying the Security Council made sense and were acceptable at the time of its creation. However the conditional factors have changed irreversibly since then. The changed geopolitical development trajectories of the 21st century as compared to 1945 and the breadth of the value-oriented happenstance have now made the Security Council not only a non-representative body which fails to fulfill the customary law requirements of general practice and *opinion juris* but the institutional status granted the five states run counter to the principle of sovereign equality of member states of the United Nations guaranteed under Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Charter (United Nations 1945). A *jus cogens* norm or natural rights on which rests, according to article 53 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969 (United Nations 2005), "the international community of states as a whole". As the need for greater inclusiveness rises the Security Council becomes an

³ Amendment to Article 23 of the Charter was adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 1963 and came into force on 31 August 1965. The amendment enlarged the membership of the Security Council from eleven to fifteen.

object of principled critique, the most intractable United Nations reform issue⁴ and for Charter amendment in the process of adaptation to evolving needs in line with the purposes of the United Nations.

The institutional crowding which allows the obscure selection of the privileged minority as well as the composition of membership and the *modus operandi* of the Security Council is not just a political problem – it is also a serious human right challenge. The composition of the Security Council is “top down multilateralism” foisted on society. Therefore, it lacks *process legitimacy* derived from an inclusive consultative process. Inaction on the inadequacies of this hierarchical artifact of World War II has the potential to compromise the long-term sustainability of global macro-political stability. Indeed the post-World War II order that provided the framework for the creation and structure of the Security Council that was tied to ‘super power’ represents the ‘old’ odd order which have become not only nugatory but incongruous also. Moreover the veto powers have ceased to reflect the values-aspirations-consensus-goal formation sequence of the world’s population in a world that is increasingly non-Western. Insofar as the veto-wielding member states have acted against other elements of the United Nations to achieve common political goals then it should be clear that the might of the veto powers is no longer a *sine qua non* to global peace. Moreover given the gradual expansion of its functions there is no doubt that the United Nations’ privileging of the hitherto untrammelled powers (nuclear arsenals) of the permanent members, which they would not use for global collective good (Greenstock 2008, p. 258), and the anachronous *diktats* of military fetishism as the space of arrival is not necessarily “*for the best*”, not for the members of the Security Council and not for the system at large. It subjects the international community to continuous psycho-material bondage.

⁴ Amendments to Articles 23 and 27 of the Charter were adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 1963 and came into force on 31 August 1965. An amendment to Article 109, adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1965, came into force on 12 June 1968. The amendment to Article 23 enlarges the membership of the Security Council from eleven to fifteen. The amended Article 27 provides that decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members (formerly seven) and on all other matters by an affirmative vote of nine members (formerly seven), including the concurring votes of the five permanent members of the Security Council. The amendment to Article 109, which relates to the first paragraph of that Article, provides that a General Conference of Member States for the purpose of reviewing the Charter may be held at a date and place to be fixed by a two-thirds vote of the members of the General Assembly and by a vote of any nine members (formerly seven) of the Security Council. Paragraph 3 of Article 109, which deals with the consideration of a possible review conference during the tenth regular session of the General Assembly, has been retained in its original form in its reference to a “vote, of any seven members of the Security Council”, the paragraph having been acted upon in 1955 by the General Assembly, at its tenth regular session, and by the Security Council.

5 VETO POWER IN SECURITY COUNCIL: A PEACE BROKER OR A PEACE BREAKER

Having provided a broad view of what global stability means, we can now go on to examine the specific question of Security Council of the United Nations. The Security Council is the only organ with an exclusive strong decision-making and enforcement competence and powers since it is laid out that “*the Members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter*” (Article 24, paragraph 1) (United Nations, 1945). The Security Council which is the legislative body of the United Nations, but also acts as an executive body as all resolutions of the General Assembly on security matters must be approved by the Security Council. Beyond that, the Secretariat which is the official administrator of the United Nations cannot act without approval from the Security Council. The Security Council is thus the only organ of the United Nations that reports to no one, yet its resolutions are binding on the United Nations (Article 24, paragraph 1). The framers of the Charter were oblivious of the fact that making the Security Council unaccountable to none other has the tendency to isolate the vital organ and such isolations can lead to ultimate destruction. But as a quasi-military decision-making apparatus the Security Council was established on a humanitarian ground to act as a succor, a defense and advocate for humanity without biases and intimidations while sustaining the morality, integrity and effectiveness of the United Nations. The ideal behind the powers invested in this vital instrument of policy of the world body is novel and would have stabilise the polity and with huge successes if not that the cauldron of irreconcilableness in the divergent interests of the key members stalled the workings of the United Nations Security Council on several occasions as the veto power is chaotically deployed to achieve certain primordial national interest starting from 1963. As the Council gets bogged down in increasing selfish nationalistic hardline positions it is not capable of taking rapid, simple, and appropriate decisions. That explains why global peace often remain a helpless bystander while global stability is mostly left to the unilateral whims and caprices of any interested great-power whenever the veto wielding states’ refusal to cooperate conspire (occult politics) against the establishment principle of the United Nations Security Council. This does not however provide adequate explanation for the methods the veto wielding powers of the Security Council navigate the geography of global security challenges. In deconstructing Security Council handling of global security it is helpful to answer the questions of “why” and “how”. “Why” helps us to understand the specific factors that draw veto powers into wars conduct while “how” explains the tactics and tools with which they navigate the dangerous geography of conflict. Both questions collectively provide important insights into the dynamic engagement of veto power with wars and the implications for the United Nations. To address the question of “why,” we can note that for instance “*After reaching consensus to insist on Iraqi disarmament and send back United Nations weapon inspectors, the Security Council split on whether to authorize force against Iraq – the United States and Britain voted in favor;*

France, Russia, and China against. After France threatened to veto a UN resolution authorizing war a U.S.–British coalition toppled the Iraqi government without explicit United Nations backing. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan later called the war ‘illegal’ ” (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2009, p. 59).

Of the other four permanent members of the Security Council, only the United Kingdom supported the United States’ decision to go to war with Iraq. China, Russia and France were united in opposition to the plan. The decision likewise divided the European Union. The United Kingdom, Poland and Spain supported while France, Germany and Belgium opposed it. However, the inability of the United Nations Security Council to reach a common ground and the eventual invasion of Iraq by the United States and its “coalition of the willing” in 2003 torn up the rule book of United Nations’ international peace and security maintenance processes. That means the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council are increasingly shaped by, rather than to shape, states’ policies – thus challenging the security prerogative of the Security Council itself.

The other question of “how” relates primarily to methods and tools for navigating the complex geographies of wars by the veto powers. In line with this we recall how the United States tried to gain legitimacy for an essentially aberrant social form. On 5 February 2003, United States’ Secretary of State, Colin Powell, addressed the United Nations Security Council, charging Iraq with a breach of its disarmament obligations under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441. Unable to move away from the realm of speculations to that of evidence-based reality Powell asserted, hypocritically, that American intelligence agencies had evidence that Saddam Hussein’s regime possessed weapons of mass destruction. Emphasizing the gravity of the threat the weapons posed, Powell reminded his listeners of Hussein’s ruthlessness and submit that he would ‘stop at nothing until something stops him’. Powell’s assertions are not only deceptive but also clearly deflective from complete truth. Events have since punctured and dispelled Powell’s misleading innuendoes and untruths. By purporting to engage in war on behalf of, in the name of, or through the agency of humanity, the United States gain public support or at least acquiescence for what is essentially a personality clash with a hostile foreign head of state. But the United Nations Security Council saw through the United States and refused to approve the invasion. With the benefit of hindsight the United States’ invasion of Iraq was occasioned by illegal motives. As the debacle of the United Nations on this occasion shows the established diplomatic channels at the United Nations Security Council are practically a recipe for stalemate since most of the great powers are always reluctant to forego controlling the negotiations. In fact the parliamentary diplomacy involve in the political processes of the United Nations Security Council is not working.

In an effort to galvanize global support for the war against Iraq the United States announced in September 2002 that it would rejoin the UNESCO. The United States had in the 1980s withdrew from UNESCO, in part as a rejection of the organization’s role in

promoting the demand for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)⁵ being championed by developing countries. The United States' invasion of Iraq and the subsequent overthrow of the state's sovereign by the invading forces were helped by the fact that the Cold War was ended. As such there was no rival ideological bloc that could support Iraq against the United States onslaught. The collapse of communism allows the United States to deploy unbridled power and treat every other state in a condescending way. By its actions in Iraq the United States demonstrated its willingness to defend its rank (position) and vested interests in comparison with other states in the international system.

One of the reasons for the United Nations Security Council refusal to grant United States' request for invasion of Iraq is the understanding that allowing the use of coercion by one state to change the political regime in another (Iraq) would significantly change the normative climate of international politics. The eventual invasion of Iraq by the United States despite its failure to successfully manipulate the Council for approval means that decisions of the United Nations Security Council which the veto wielding states disagree with can be likened to sermons, providing gallant rhetoric to encourage the pursuit of wistful ideals (Wedgwood 2002, p. 45). The victimization of Iraq by the United States lays the precedence for the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. And the veto at the Security Council is the icon behind which the duo hides thus revealing its defects. Though the conflict history reveals that the actions of the United States in Iraq are for opportunities (*greed*) and those of Russia in Ukraine are motive-oriented (*grievance*) the tragedies of the two super powers' resort to military self-help raise public disillusionment and fundamental questions about the balance between United Nations veto wielding states' commitments to the core objectives of the United Nations while pursuing their own parochial national interests that are at variance with the exalted positions they hold in trust for the comity of nations. Indeed, the original sin of international politics is that actors, irrespective of their privileged positions, will always be tempted to take shortcuts to reach their desired results. It is now clear that a Security Council led by pro-unilateralism and bloodthirsty warmongering global political aristocrats like Vladimir Putin of Russia cannot commit the United Nations to do the right things.

The veto powers of the Security Council have been indicted for sponsoring proxy wars in different regions of the world during the ideological conflict of 1945 to 1991. While those peace-breaking activities are not excusable the roles of the United States and Russia in post-Cold war invasions of Iraq and Ukraine are unpardonable. But the United Nations Charter lacks ways to genuinely curb the excesses of veto-wielding member states that transgress its powers. Neither the United Nations nor the Security Council was created to block the actions of super powers. Rather the United Nations and the Security

⁵ The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) were adopted at the twenty-first general conference of the UNESCO in Belgrade (1980).

Council are to work for the benefit of veto-wielding member states [alternatively, other power structures/groups/individuals] which explains why the interference of the United States in Iraq in 2003 despite the non-approval of the Security Council was of no immediate consequence and Russia could advance on Ukraine while also threatening Sweden and Finland with similar actions for daring to consider the membership of the European Union (geographic crowding). Yet the same debacle of Article 2 (7) of the United Nations Charter which proclaims that “nothing should authorize intervention in matters essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state” (United Nations 1945) confronted the United States then and confronts the still unfolding oil-for-food scandal of Russia in Ukraine now.

Thus, two of the States mandated to be chief peace-brokers for the international system by the United Nations Charter have constituted themselves into peace-breakers. The question is if it were another State other than one of the P5 that went to war in Iraq would the Security Council have responded the same way? For now the unilateral determinations by the United States and then Russia constitute setbacks to the evolution of the United Nations. With this privatization of a public authority it became clear that as far as relations between the United Nations and its member states are concerned the veto wielding members of the United Nations Security Council are already invested with more power than even the United Nations itself. This is a perfidious letdown of multilateralism pregnant with deleterious effects and it is not a state any international organization that wants to claim the twenty-first century should be. Yet in a post human rights revolution era the United Nations should be able to, *en groupe*, invoke the provisions of its September 2005 United Nations World Summit on the ‘responsibility to protect (R2P) populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity’ to stop the war between Ukraine and Russia.

In the meantime with the broad-based disrespect of the norm of international community by the institutional law of the United Nations Charter it is well-nigh inescapable that the usage of veto power brings the ethos of sovereign equality of States under the assault of binarity making the concept to completely lose its *jus cogens* character. The long-term by-product and penal connotations of this transposition of general international law not only present dilemmas to States in the implementation of their obligations under the Charter but also constitute the bane of the political, judicial and legislative peace processes of the international system.

6 BUDGET OF THE UNITED NATIONS: HARMFUL OR AGENTIC EMPOWERMENT?

Deconstructing Security Council attempts to arrive at global stability is incomplete without an engagement with the availability of fund for the operations of the United Nations. One reason the United Nations is a victim of its own mechanism is its budgeting methodologies including the inefficient payment schedules and borrowing and funding restrictions. The United Nations budget consists of three distinct elements: the

core (regular) budget, the peacekeeping budget, and the budget for voluntary programs. The core budget is approximately US\$1.9 billion per year, while the total spending on United Nations peace keeping operations, agencies and programmes and fund is roughly US\$15 billion. The real problem of the United Nations is in how the money is raised. The core budget and fund for peacekeeping activities are raised through assessments. But assessments are allocated based on a complicated scheme of states' capacity to pay. The formula used to determine contributions to the United Nations core budget, known as the "scale of assessments," serves as the starting point for each country's contribution to United Nations peacekeeping. The core budget scale is based on a country's share of global gross national income (GNI), with adjustments made for the country's level of indebtedness and position relative to average global income. Payment restrictions apply to both the least-developed countries and the largest contributors.

Based on the formula the United States contributes 22% of the United Nations annual budget while Japan pays – 19%; Britain 6.1%; France 6.1%; China 2.1%; Russia 1.1% while the poorest members, about seventy per cent of the membership, pay the minimum (0.01%) annually. By this formula, the richest states pay more than four-fifths towards the United Nations' 2020/2021 budget. This method of financing the United Nations is broken. One perpetual problem facing United Nations is that member states do not always pay their bills. This has led to depleted cash reserves, raids on peacekeeping accounts, ballooning accounts payable, and great uncertainty about the extent to which the United Nations can fulfill its responsibilities. The United Nations' extremely detailed budget effectively proscribes the secretary-general from transferring funds and staff into priority activities. The Secretariat was, for some time, able to deal with the funding shortfalls by drawing on its limited cash reserves however, due to the accumulation of late payments in recent years, these reserves are no longer sufficient to keep the United Nations solvent. If the cash-flow crisis continues to deteriorate at its current rate, the Secretariat may be forced to consider furloughing employees or curtailing certain aspects of its operations. The United Nations surely needs predictable financing.

At the same time, the wealthy countries which consider themselves the overburdened financial backbones of the United Nations are complaining that those who do not have the money, but only the vote at the General Assembly are the ones channeling the United Nations through majority rule. Therefore, the argument and debate on the challenge of a system of taxation without power versus the need for great-power United Nations members to shoulder financial responsibilities commensurate with their wealth persist. That explains why, for instance, since year 2000 the United State has deliberately being in arrears of an average of US\$1.35 billion annually. But, even then the total budget of the United Nations, an organization expected to serve the world's 6.7 billion people is less than the annual budget of New York's Police Department. Enshrined in the Charter is the General Assembly's final say over the purse (Article 17, paragraph 2) (United Nations, 1945) perhaps to maintain a semblance of power balances between the organs.

Thus it might be no coincidence that the General Assembly places insufficient funding at the disposal of the United Nations. What is clear is that the General Assembly balances the powers of the Security Council, at least, through limited finance. Little wonder that Krauthammer (2006, p. 39) observes that the United Nations “has not worked. It never will.”

7 A FUTURE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

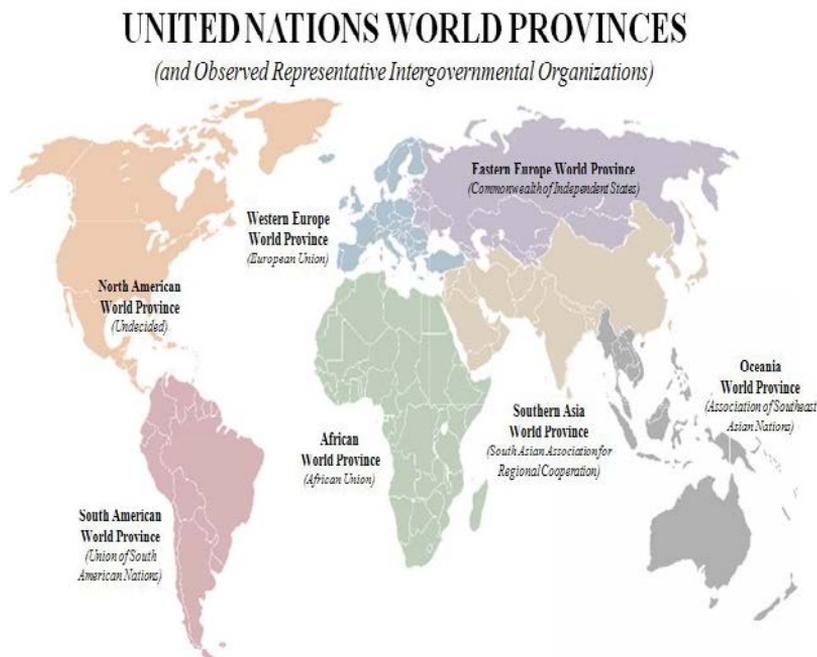
At its formal inception on 24 October 1945, the United Nations had only 51 member-states which has since increased to 193, covering all the continents of the world, just as its initially narrow focus on the maintenance of international peace and security has expanded to include other matters of common global concern such as human rights protection and advancement, equitable trade, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-support operations, environmental protection, terrorism, etc. While it is true that the United Nations’ membership and focus have broadened, it is equally true that its essential Cold War power structure and inequalities have not changed substantially since 1945. The original great powers that founded it and awarded positions of significant power and influence to themselves still hold sway in spite of considerable alterations in the global power configuration. For example, the Security Council, which is its most pivotal organ with the constitutional powers to undertake or order enforcement actions in maintaining international peace and security, has remained firmly in the hands of the original five permanent members. All of them have shown great unwillingness to ease their hegemonic stranglehold on the organ or even dilute their control of the agenda and decision-making capacity (agency), in spite of the recommendations for wide-ranging reforms. Instead of leveling up to the expectations of the global community, veto powers have built anecdotal evidence around themselves. Thus, wallowing in complacent self-absorption the veto powers went off-tangent in the attempt to make their acquisition of non-democratic control over the United Nations a once-and-forever decision even as their conservative instincts and self-serving fear of loss of power does not only sacrificed facts for the convenience of dogmatic schematization but are strategically obstructive of the system. This has implications for the entire membership of the United Nations but their expressions are surely graver for the marginalized continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

There are contemporary developments that question the United Nations’ ability to perform its core function of maintaining international peace and security and still remain relevant to the vast majority of the world. These worrying developments include the United States gradual but cynical retrenchment from multilateralism and deliberate weakening of the United Nations and its organs; the increasing predilection of great powers for unilateral use of force in total disregard of the United Nations Charter and disdain for the Security Council; the rise of new great powers such as China, Germany, India, as well as the rise of new economic blocs such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India,

China, and South Africa), etc. Perhaps a much greater concern is the refusal or failure to implement the recommended reforms which are intended for inclusiveness and equity. For example, Africa with 54 states, more than a fourth of total United Nations membership, has no permanent member in the Security Council. The same goes for Latin America. Contrarily, Europe with 44 states has three (United Kingdom, France and Russia). Additionally, countries like Japan and Germany, though defeated powers at the time the United Nations was formed and had no say in its structure, have since emerged two of the largest economies in the world, whose individual annual contributions to the United Nations purse is more than that of United Kingdom and France and yet have no permanent seats in the Council. These inequalities in regional power relations have a rolling effect, leading to even more and continued inequalities in the future. Correcting regional power inequalities where they exist in the organization are both a challenge and an opportunity for the United Nations.

As there is currently a mismatch between global problems and global institutions and processes expedient realism suggests a rejig of the United Nations structure in order to make it more representative and reflective of contemporary global realities as well as cope with the increasing complex emergencies across the globe. Previous attempts to reform the structure of the Security Council both through Charter alteration and or institutional practice are at best inadequate and at worst ineffectual. Though the solutions to the age long problem of the United Nations is complex yet if the United Nations is to begin to surmount the glitches of militating challenges which providence has strategically planted to ambush the peace, development and progress of the international system something has to be done and quickly too. There are a number of options to make the most vital organ of the United Nations and its veto more representative. The options include regionalism, population distribution, economic weight, civilization and democracy. But given that the biggest challenge is the absence of representation for Africa, Asia and Latin America to start with, the permanent seats on the Security Council should be increased to seven. Given the inability of the power to veto to transform selfish nationalistic and arrogant power politicians into world-minded, justice-oriented statesmen of humanity. None of the permanent seats of the Security Council would be promised to individual member states. The seven seats would be held, on an “equitable geographical distribution”, by the seven World Provinces of North American World Province, Western Europe World Province, Eastern Europe World Province, South American World Province, African World Province, Southern Asia World Province, and Oceania World Province (see Fig. 1). A permanent seat on the Security Council would have all the privileges and functions of the current permanent seats. Each of the seven World Provinces will elect their respective World Province representative to fill the seat. If this is done it will strengthen the structure of incentives to make countries’ commitment to the United Nations much stronger just like the commitment to their various regional economic communities.

Fig. 1: United Nations world provinces



Source: United Nations, 2022.

The future of global peace is in the ability of the United Nations to prevent the type of United States and Russia's invasions of Iraq and Ukraine respectively through the elucidation of the facts in dispute, clarification of the applicable law, and invocation of the calmness and self-possession of reasonable men. The foregoing notwithstanding, the argument that the unilateral invasions of Iraq and Ukraine by veto wielding States confirm the signals that the United Nations Security Council is finally about to descend into somnambulism is problematic. That is because international politics is a baffling mix of patterned regularities and novel events, deliberate choices and inadvertent accidents. Though under certain conditions, certain types of international actors respond the same way to the same kind of events yet, sometimes similar actors in similar situations make different decisions. Thus, world politics' regularities notwithstanding, we cannot draw on a body of uniform, deterministic laws to predict the future of the United Nations Security Council precisely. Rather, we will make probabilistic forecasts about what is likely to happen, other things being equal (Singer 2002, pp. 12-13). Whereas it would be premature to abandon the focus on the United Nations Security Council, it would be equally mistaken to exaggerate the United Nations' power as a determinant of the world's fate and the shaper of global future.

8 CONCLUSION

The United Nations Security Council has, since the end of World War II, been helpful in ensuring a semblance of global peace and stability. Notwithstanding, if the international system will save itself from global security catastrophe a holistic overhauling of the United Nations security architecture is inevitable. That is largely because, as presently fashioned, the United Nations is only a little more than a willing tool in the hands of its most powerful member states. With that being the case the United Nations' prospects in being able to effectively address global security challenges are indeed very blink and prone to failure. The need to reconfigure the international security architecture as represented in the Security Council in ways that take due cognizance of the broad context of global progress has become pertinent. It is in recognition of this fact that the paper considers the expansion of the number of states with veto powers within the United Nations Security Council in the indubitable quest for social justice as critical tools in the search for a stable peace of the United Nations. This is with a view to addressing the matrix of (dis)empowerment which the unrepresented peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America have long been subjected. Even though the complex tapestry of lived deprivation experience which the three continents have to navigate flows from the broader crises of their late entries into global relevance there is a sound conviction that the empowerment and inclusion which the extension of the Security Council veto power to them connotes is the surest resident source of global stability and fructifying gateway to sustainable peace. The participation of these three continents in global security decision making bodies cannot merely be considered an indulgence grudgingly accepted by the victorious powers of World War II but as an imperative for success. This concern is neither unfounded nor misplaced, not just because more than two-thirds of global population is located on these continents but more importantly because the variety of their concerns have become central and strategic to the making and unmaking – for good or bad – the global community. Unfortunately, it is clear that substantial ground still needs to be covered before the United Nations can seize the initiative.

That the United Nations is going through a recession due to system-fragility is not strange but the Security Council intentional stifling of multilateralism despite its vagary of inherently peculiar structural inequalities is a misnomer. These are no doubt symptomatic of deeper and festering problems bedeviling the (un)United Nations system. Therefore as the veto powers of the United Nations Security Council rail against multilateralism, privileging the virtues of unilateralism, leading to the informal disappearance of the Security Council through increasing performance and representativeness illegitimacies, it might just be time to replace the global intergovernmental organizations that were established at the end of World War II as they seem too old to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Insofar as the veto powers are too uninterested to pay the price for relevance it would be a big mistake for anyone to grant validity to the United Nations Security Council. And of course the history

of the Council shows that the wisdom of its resolutions at the best is but a blind guide; its policies are meteor that dazzles and lead astray.

A sustainable, functional and unbiased United Nations remains pivotal to ensuring global peace and stability. From a functional perspective, given the failures of the United Nations Security Council to act decisively for Iraq and Ukraine, it is not difficult to see that those who think that the Council really means something today are those who wish to tie the world down to existential peril and political liabilities of the bloodiest war (World War II) in history which the super powers have learnt to not only manipulate, but also to appropriate its discourses and patterns for self-advancement. In any case, as an organ of the United Nations the Security Council is more useful in the past than in the present, and it is still more useful now than it is likely to be in the future except it is able to device more awareness of risk, and beforetime risk management instruments to hedge against crisis escalation as the organization would increasingly become an object of contemptuous universal derision. If collective actions cannot be attained within the United Nations on vital global security issues Security Council architecture will lose its legitimacy as a guarantor of global peace and security and the United Nations Security Council would fade into irrelevance. As global conditions get to the level of making that to happen the super powers' worst apprehensions and fears metamorphose into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

What we have done above is to explicate the reflective and refractive implications of the geographies of exclusion and inclusion that help solidify United Nations Security Council's management of global peace and stability along with the undercurrent of great powers' positions and vetoes that ultimately frame it, understanding it as both a failure of institution and a strategy for global dominance. In sum, this study extends and deepens the discourse of functionalism of survival tactics in the etiology of global stability. This is particularly relevant in a world that is being eclipsed by refractive temperament birthed by socio-historical decompositions, economic crisis and sectorial exclusion. The corollary implication of these topical issues is that it raises valid empirical questions which deepen the argumentation on the client-patron structure and paternalistic congruency of international peace. What is obvious is the fact that the issues that are thrown up by the Security Council's roles in the maintenance of global peace have always recurred: absence of democracy, personalization of global security apparatus, persistent usage of the veto and refusal to implement reform proposals.

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INDO–FRENCH DEFENCE AND SECURITY PARTNERSHIP

*Mukesh Shankar Bharti*¹

The article aims to describe the regional security challenges and major threats for India in South Asia. Since 1947, India has been suffering from external security threats such as, a form of proxy warfare and terrorism from its neighbouring countries. To this purpose, the article also examines recurring issues where India has major border issues with China, in the Himalayan terrain to the eastern region of India. This article looks at the defence cooperation between India and France through the prism of India's security threats in the South Asian region. India's soft power policy reflected in a neo-realist approach and expanded its long-standing defence cooperation with France. Therefore, India has been receiving support from the French government whenever the country needs defence equipment and other assistance. The article uses empirical and discourse analysis methods to answer the questions, and to draw a proper conclusion to the study. Finally, as a result of the study, we can see that India's serious security threats in the South Asian region are pushing the country to purchase defence equipment from France. The relationship between India and France is strengthening the bilateral cooperation at a broader level and shaping a strong strategic partnership by uniting South Asia and the Indo-Pacific as well. Key words: defence cooperation, strategic partnership, geopolitics, India, France, South Asia
JEL: F52, H56

1 INTRODUCTION

War has been deliberately imposed on India since 1947, when the British ended their colonial rule over India. India was divided into two parts, and the new country, Pakistan, was born as an Islamic country and became an enemy to India from birth. Pakistan had invaded India on October 22, 1947 from the northern side of the country. China had attacked India unprovoked, in 1962 which resulted in India losing a portion of its land. Gradually, China and Pakistan became allies, united in their interest against India and began to create problems for India. The Pakistan army has been getting all military

¹ Mukesh Shankar Bharti, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Amity Institute of International Studies, Amity University, Noida, India, email: msbharti.jnu@gmail.com.  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3693-7247>

equipment and assistance from China. This article critically examines the role of China in the unbalancing of the regional peace and security situation in South Asia. India feels that China is a major cause of instability in the South Asia region. India's key attention is directed towards China's military modernization, the increase of the land border, and the extension of maritime activities in the Indian Ocean. The increase of China's military power and expansion of the economic corridor in its neighbouring countries has created a security dilemma for India in this region. India has been importing 70 per cent of its military and defence assistance from Russia since the era of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). When Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, the Bharatiya Janata Party-led (BJP) government immediately started a defence partnership with France. The Indian government pioneered the purchase of Rafale fighter jets from France in flyaway condition. Later, in 2015, both the governments signed an intergovernmental agreement to acquire 36 Rafael fighter jets.

After the Chinese invasion of India, Pakistan also started a war with India both in 1965, and 1971 respectively. The regional balances were disturbed by Pakistan at every juncture in South Asia. During the 1971 war, Pakistan ended up losing eastern Pakistan which later became a newly independent country, Bangladesh. Sri Lanka had also been suffering internal problems since the 1990s, the extremist group called the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) wanted to be separated from Sri Lanka. The Indian government decided to send their troops as peacekeepers to maintain law and order. India always believes in non-violence which is the Gandhian philosophy. In 1999, once again the Pakistani army invaded the Jammu and Kashmir region in Kargil, and it came to be known as the Kargil War between India and Pakistan. At the end of this war, the Indian army won the battleground and Pakistan had to suffer the losses. In 2008, some Pakistan sponsored terrorists attacked different places in Mumbai. Thus, India has been suffering severe security threats in the South Asian region from its own neighbours.

Paper tries to find out which kind of security threat perception India has been suffering in South Asia? To what extent does India make security balances in this region, and how the country is responding to its neighbouring countries? The article also tries to answer how the French government can meet Indian aspirations to modernize the armed forces, and provide modern technological weapons for India? Further, the article discusses how India can manage the regional balance and its security issues? The principal issues are that the Indian government does not achieve the success to manage the regional security threats and the perception of the threats is the reality in South Asia. This research uses both primary and secondary data to identify the core ideas and results.

The study extensively discusses the research problems through the analysis of qualitative approach. It implies inductive methods to elaborate the key arguments and research questions. Further, the use of empirical and discourse analysis to investigate the results of this research through the study of primary and secondary resources. The bilateral strategic partnership between the French and India has been strengthening deeper

defence cooperation, which can be understood through qualitative comparative analysis. There are reliable scientific data used in this research collected from various Indian and French government public sector websites as primary literature. Moreover, as a primary resource data is also collected from the EU's websites such as Europa.eu, Library Sciences, Think Tanks, online and offline newspapers' articles, speeches of prominent leaders, and online interviews. The study uses secondary literature from books, published journal articles, and archival materials.

2 INDO-FRANCE POLITICAL AND MILITARY COOPERATION

Lawale and Ahmad (2021) highlights India as a resident player in Indo-Pacific Region (IPR) and geopolitical construct has been increased the importance of this region's countries. France has two overseas islands namely Mayotte and La Réunion in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), which strengthen the French stronghold in its Asian connectivity. France wants a deeper strategic partnership with India's growing role in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region. Since 1998, India has multiplied strategic partnerships and celebrated 25 golden years of strategic partnership. Since 2014 the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led government is giving importance to and prioritising bilateral economic and trade partnerships with individual EU countries, for example, such as France, Germany and Denmark. France is the only country in Europe which has developed a trustworthy strategic partner with India in the Asian continent. During the Presidency of the EU, France has been playing an important role in India and the EU strategic partnership (Kavalski, 2016).

Buraga (2022) explains the Indian government's focus on sovereignty, peace and prosperity, human rights, non-violence and democratic ethos to include in its bilateral partnerships with European countries European Union as well. India is the largest 'democracy' in the world, joined hands with EU Member States, i.e., France, Germany and other EU countries, which have been spreading the norms of 'liberal democracy' in the world as well. India and France have been cooperating in the area of political, economic, diplomatic, strategic, defence, maritime security and trade, and cultural ties up and science and technology. Apart from these initiatives, the armies, navies and air forces of the two countries regularly organize military exercises to show the joint power of India and France.

Indo-French relationship is based on mutual respect and equality. The Indian government has tried to have healthy and quality cooperation with the French government. Both governments have been shaping their relationship in a strong way, and has developed a defence dialogue free from bitterness. The French government had to make a foreign policy doctrine for India, which would not build any kind of external pressure on the issues of nuclear proliferation and Kashmir (Racine 2010, p. 183). It is apparently in public discourse about the traditional and non-traditional security issues regarding India's concerns in South Asia. The French defence policy uses the military-

industrial factor as the main driver between the two countries in order to influence the regional security balance in South Asia. India needs modern technology-based military equipment from the French side. The Indian government wants to import the fifth-generation fighter jets and allow French aviation companies to invest in India (Karambelkar 2021, p. 92). India's strategic cooperation had started in the Cold War Era. The French defence also supports the changing of the dynamics of India's excessive dependence on Russia. In the South Asian region, India is the only tested and trusted strategic partner to France. For example, during the war between India and Pakistan in 1971, India had the full support of the French government (Barma and Sinha, 2022).

India's defence needs have been fulfilled by France over a long period of time. The defence cooperation between France and India has emerged comprehensively since 1998, when both the governments had agreed on common security issues. In the last decade, all the three services had started mutual regular exercises. The French government has agreed with the Indian government to provide better training facilities for Indian fighter pilots. The defence and military agencies from France have been providing skill-based training to the Indian fighter jet pilots in France for a long time. The Indian air force uses French fighter jets, these are the Mirage 2000, the Jaguar and the new Rafale entrants. The inclusion of Rafale fighter jets in the Indian air force wrote a new chapter in the relationship between India and France. The Rafale deal had deepened the defence ties between India and France. The Indian Navy gained access to French naval facilities on France's Reunion Island and appeared to gain access to French facilities in Djibouti (Peri, 2019). France continues to support India in order to emerge as strong nation to counter any security threat. The French armed forces have been supporting the Indian armed forces and have launched joint training and exercises in France and the Indo-Pacific region. The Naval exercises are a key feature of cooperation between both sides (Roger, 2007).

Historically, India has been maintaining a deep engagement with France for defence cooperation. Thus, there have been robust defence ties between the two countries for a long period of time (Halder 2022, p. 1). The French government contours their defence cooperation and expedites the many defence agreements. And both countries have agreed to the further expansion of strategic cooperation. The four squadrons of Rafael aircraft have been successfully assimilated into the Indian air force during 2020-22. The Indian government appears to have extend the additional deal on fifth-generation fighter jet cooperation with the French government. The French administration also seeks agreement on India's flagship project "Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft" (MMRCA) procurement.

France has changed the dynamics of the Indian strategic partnership to transfer the armaments for the Indian air force and Navy. As India had been dependent on Russian defence equipment, it has now changed the scenario of Russia being the ultimate strategic ally of India. At the moment, India has 36 modern 4.5 generation Rafale aircraft which

had been supplied by the French aviation company Dassault to India. The Rafale jets have an upper hand on the Russian fighter jets Sukhoi 30 MKI, India currently has more than 270 Sukhoi 30 MKI fighter jets. The Indian Navy uses the six Scorpene-class submarines which are made by French companies in India with the transfer of technology (Das 2019, p. 58). In 2018, the French President Emmanuel Macron and the Indian Prime Minister Modi had signed an agreement in the defence sector, on the provision of reciprocal logistic support for the Armed Forces of both sides. The mutually logistic support on reciprocal access to needed facilities for French and Indian armed forces (Prime Minister's Office, 2018).

France initiated a cohesive political framework toward the Indo-Pacific region and supported India in South Asia. The increasing nexus of China in South Asia is a major threat to India. Through the Belt Road Initiative (BRI), China's policy in South Asia is to connect all the surrounding countries of India. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is passing through the Pakistan occupied Kashmir. The Indian administration has critically opposed the Chinese project which has been crossing the occupied region. And France wants a better strategic cooperation with India in the Indo-Pacific. This is an opportunity for India to expedite a defence cooperation with France (Meijer 2021, p. 1).

In 1998, many countries had opposed India, when it had successfully tested nuclear weapons in Pokhran. But India had gotten the support of France, who had critically opposed the US sanctions against India. Since then, France has gradually approached India as a European country. India's foreign policy had been based non-aligned since the era of the Cold War. But Pakistan was getting Chinese support to run the nuclear plan behind the curtains. The Chinese government did not want India to be a regional power in South Asia. The emerging ties between China and Pakistan had been creating challenges for India. That was why India had stated an indigenous nuclear testing plan. It became reality in 1998 when the Indian Prime Minister announced that India was a nuclear power, and thus became the 6th nation in the world to become a nuclear power. During this critical time, India got full support from the French government at the international level. Thus, the Indian defence staff moved forward toward France to deepen the collaboration in the naval, space, and military equipments for the Indian army (Howorth, 2016, pp. 392-393). In recent years India's security dilemma has only increased from the recurring standoff happening at the Himalayan frontier border. Since the 1962 war, borderline is not decided, it is called the Line Actual Control (LAC). The latent power, and the increasing number of Chinese soldiers has been causing anxiety on the Indian side. The incident had happened between the Indian and the Chinese forces at Galvan Valley. Many army personnel from both the sides had lost their lives during this standoff in 2020. Third insecurity feeling, created because of border issues is one of the causes, but China's expansion through its maritime politics is also another cause that is creating a major security threat to India. Furthermore, the Chinese policy is continuously

working against India and igniting neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Nepal, and Afghanistan (Joshi and Mukherjee, 2018, p. 4).

China's economic strength had created anxiety among the Indian strategists, decision-makers, and military think tanks. This situation has created a panic that China will use to modernise its forces. The Chinese administration is strengthening its army, navy, and air force according to a hidden military doctrine and is gaining charm over India. There is an increasing gap between India and China in the context of political, economic, and military strength. The Indian side also joined hands with France, the USA, and the European Union as well to strengthen the strategic cooperation. The Indian and French governments mutually accelerated the strategic cooperation, and agreed to expedite their comprehensive, substantive and mutually beneficial security and defence relationship (Ministry of Defence, 2018).

The government invited foreign investors to set up the arms and weapon industry under the Make in India. Thus, the Indian government is focused on the Indianisation of defence-related production. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) got an order from the Indian Air Force (IAF) for the production of 83 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) – Tejas. It is a fully indigenous fighter jet that has been developed by the DRDO. The government aims to achieve self-dependency through the transformation of the indigenous production line in India. The French government is providing technical support to the Indian defence institutes. The Indian defence institutions have deeper agreements with many Russian companies to make several missile projects and fighter jets under the technology transferred in India (Rossiter and Cannon, 2019, p. 353). On May 4, 2022, French President Emmanuel Macron hosted the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi during his official tour to France. Both leaders agreed to strengthen the defence partnership and face new global challenges together after the post-COVID-19 in the Indo-Pacific and South Asia as well, respectively (Ministry of External Affairs, 2022).

3 SOUTH ASIA AS A REGION OF SECURITY ISSUES

South Asia is a strategically important part of Asia. The Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean surround the South Asia region and are relevant for maritime politics and are gaining the key attention for blue economics. India has been living under severe security threats for decades. The nature of threats is conventional and nuclear as well in this region. Nowadays India has suffered from sub-conventional threats such as the form of insurgency and terrorism. Apart from this, there are also land frontiers with China and Pakistan that create a security threat to India. The thousands of kilometres of the land border were disputed with both Pakistan and China. The unmarked boundary with China is identified as the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and the de facto boundary with Pakistan is called the Line of Control (LoC). Furthermore, over the last two decades, China-Pakistan strategic cooperation has been increasing the security challenge to New Delhi.

The two countries have agreed on several areas such as the port of Gwadar, where China has been establishing strategic shipping routes in the Indian Ocean, and expanding to the Arabian Sea. The Chinese agency is developing the port of Gwadar for use in a broader concept, where the Chinese navy can use the port against India to launch operational planning and cover military doctrine (Pant and Bommakanti 2019, p. 837).

The CPEC projects of China are creating a skeptical situation for India in South Asia. It has changed the dynamics of geopolitics in this region. India has observed the CPEC project which has passed from the occupied region of the Gilgit-Baltistan region. India has criticised this kind of act which has been envisaged by the China and Pakistan regional cooperation. The Indian government claimed that Gilgit-Baltistan is a disputed area of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. India refused to the part in this project when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited China in June 2015. The Indian think tanks and policymakers are drawing alternative projects to restrict the Chinese initiatives in South Asia. India has been starting a talk with the Oceanic countries in recent years. The Indian Prime Minister had travelled to Mauritius, Seychelles, and other island countries to promote geoeconomic cooperation. Thus, India has triggered alternative geopolitics and wider connections with its neighbouring countries. And India understands that China's intention is different from the reality of the economic development of Pakistan. It is creating security issues in the region rather than focusing on the economic development of Pakistan (Ali 2020, p. 108).

Pakistan has been easily accessing Chinese support to promote the nuclear and missile programme. China supports Pakistan to build a high level of military equipment which would be used against India, and terrorists can access these military weapons. The defence cooperation between China and Pakistan is troubling the Indian policymakers to initiate the major security cooperation in the world. That is why India has decided to purchase military weapons from France and USA. Since 1990, India has been suffering cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. Thousands of people died from counter-terrorism and insurgency. India is joining the hand with France and USA in the areas of defence cooperation to balance the regional security in South Asia. In recent years, China and Pakistan are producing military equipment as a part of joint ventures in Pakistan. China continuously supports Pakistan in building fighter aircrafts and missiles (Garver 2002, p. 118).

According to Hans Morgenthau, a state always tries to gain much power and wants to become superior in the area of power. The global nations are thus eager to gain maximum strength and balance of power, and seem to achieve maximum power among nations (Morgenthau, 1960, p. 240). In the case of South Asia, India is geographically bigger than the other neighbouring countries and wants to cooperate. But Pakistan always wants to restrict the Indian approaches in this region. Furthermore, Pakistan always indulged to help the Chinese activities in this region. The South Asian Association for Regional Development (SAARC) is not functioning in a proper way since Pulwama was

attacked in Jammu and Kashmir. After Pulwama was attacked, the Indian Air Forces launched an operation inside Pakistan and destroyed the terror camps in 2019. The situation deteriorated when Pakistan Airforce entered the Indian territory.

The theory of power transition assesses international politics has been divided into hierarchical systems. The various countries themselves understand the dominant nation, the great power state, the superpower state, and the small powers. There is a situation that occurred in global politics, where between two states the possibility of war seems to be happening. The prospects of crisis can increase during the power balance among the nations and this political crisis can be converted into a full-fledged war between the two states. The challenging country can claim, and is eager to assume that its decision is the correct one. And also, it shows that their role at the global level is legitimate, and responds to long-standing grievances. Thus, the South Asian countries have been associated with India to cooperate in several development areas but Pakistan interrupts every initiative of regional developments. The Pakistani authorities always relied on China's indication, and understood the Chinese conspiracy theory against India. That is why SAARC is becoming a failed regional organisation in the South Asian region. The Chinese policy worked to restrict the Indian influences in South Asia, and Pakistan always seconded every movement of China which are against India. This implies that the Chinese policy is based on its dominance in South Asia and makes a strong power position in Indian Ocean Region (IOR) as well. Through the CPEC and Gwadar port, the Chinese initiative is creating a challenge for India on the western side of the Arabian sea (Tammen, 2008, p. 326).

There is a security dilemma in South Asia and also in the Indo-Pacific region. According to Organski (1968), the collaboration of many countries creates a balance of power situation and struggles for the establishment of peace in the world. There is a need to maintain equilibrium among the nations through the sharing of power, but many countries unanimously declared it as the supreme leader. The rivalry between China and US in the Indo-Pacific and the South China Sea is creating severe problems. American policy is close to India to support its maritime policy (Hornat 2016, p. 393). The Chinese policy is incorporating the approach of the string of pearls which is a concerning strategy for India. The construction of a port in the Indian Ocean that China can use in the future against India for the deployment of the People's Liberation Army and Navy. The Sri Lankan port of Hambantota has also been taken over by China on a lease basis. Thus, the Chinese policy is based on restricting India in the South Asian region through the Belt Road Initiatives and island chains. In the future, China can accommodate the People's Liberation Army (PLA) at these ports (Lou 2012, p. 631).

Although the Sri Lankan government had invited India to build the Hambantota port, the Indian government refused Sri Lanka's proposal to rebuild the port. In later days, China intervened in this Sri Lankan project, now the port of Hambantota is being fully operated by China. Now the Indian authority is anxious about the Chinese intervention in

Sri Lanka. Through this port, China can operate various future projects and restrict the Indian possibilities (Mohan 2010, p. 9). Despite the Chinese project in Pakistan, China wants better collaboration with India. Because India is the biggest market to export, which is why China has tried to have a better economic engagement with India. After the Doklam standoff, India had banned the many Chinese Apps and has applied restrictions on many initiatives. In the maritime business, India had started to cooperate with the US in the Indian Ocean. India is scared of the Chinese intervention in South Asia and always got support from Pakistan. This is the reason behind India nurturing its geoeconomic ties with France, Australia, Japan and the US in maritime politics (Jacob 2018, p. 117).

India is claiming at the international forum for the situation of terrorism which is a threat to humanity worldwide. The Indian policy discusses that China has to assure the Indian policymaker that Pakistan would restrict all terrorist activities against India. In contrast, China has used the veto power to declare some terrorists from Pakistan. This has created a problematic situation for India to make better geoeconomic cooperation with China in South Asia and Indo-Pacific as well. India wants assurance from China to put pressure on Pakistan to cooperate with India and solve the border problem. Non-state actors (NSAs) are facilitated by state-sponsored support in Pakistan, which caused the India-Pakistan relationship to deteriorate since the 1990s. The terrorist organisation is getting support from the Pakistan military against India in Jammu and Kashmir. And Pakistan is getting an international shield from China in United Nations (UN). There are several facts that show Masood Azhar's link with the terrorist organisations. Despite this fact, China refuses to acknowledge the ties between Al-Qaeda and Masood Azhar. This is a big threat to India at an International level. India has been providing all facts to the international communities, while China has been continuously refusing the Indian dossier against the terrorist organisations and some renowned terrorists (Verma, 2020, p. 3).

In essence, the Chinese policy is approaching the physical presence across South Asia and the Indian Ocean. China's geo-economics engagements in the IOR depends on the terms of defensive security rather than a direct threat to India. The presence of the US military in the IOR is decreasing the expansion of China's possibilities. The construction and development of the Gwadar port will be helpful for China in the future course to use against India. That is the main security challenge faced by the Indian authorities. The geo-positioning balance in the South Asian region, Pakistan helping the Chinese engagement in building the port to emerge as regional strong holder in this region (Bharti, 2022). The nexus of Pakistan and China is weakening the Indian position in South Asia to gain the power balance among the neighbouring states. The Chinese government has refused that our policy is aimed at encircling India in South Asian politics. There are suspicions in India that China extended a supply line, thousands of kilometres long to the southern naval base on Hainan Island. In contrast, it is understood that China's People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) does not act as the rival of the Indian navy in the IOR. The purpose

of building the port in the Ocean is to extend the business route, through which China hopes to attempt to establish the commercial activities in the IOR (Garlick 2018, p. 523).

The Indian government is responding to China-Pakistan through the development of the Chahbahar port in Iran. Which is only seventy kilometres away from the Gwadar port of Pakistan. Both governments agreed to the development of the Chahbahar port to access the business route toward Central Asia. Thus, India can reach Afghanistan and other central Asian countries which will help the Indian investment in central Asia. And India and Iran together is working on the construction of a highway project to link the Chahbahar port. India is using the encirclement theory to expedite regional development. It is for the betterment of the central Asian countries and India as well. India is eyeing central Asia for economic cooperation. (Daniels 2013, p. 96). The Indian authorities are working to mitigate security threats on India from China and Pakistan in the South Asia region. Because India has security threats from these countries in both conventional and non-conventional forms.

South Asia is a geoeconomically an important region in Asia. China's increasing presence and domination in this region is creating a challenge for India in South Asia and the Indo-Pacific region. China's growing power in South Asian countries lays the groundwork for India's balancing strategy towards Beijing (Pant, 2016). India is driving its own approach in South Asia, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean region with the assistance of France. Simultaneously China has a vision for these regions as well, and China wants to dominate the other power groups through the Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI), the Maritime Silk Road (MSRI), and the Digital Silk Road projects. The Chinese concept of "Strings of Pearls" is to encircle India in the South Asia region. The actual challenge to India is how to tackle these issues (Barua, 2020).

4 DISCUSSION

Geopolitically, the Chinese seem to increase belligerence in South Asia and the Pacific region. China has been expanding cooperation with the littoral states of the Indian Ocean region and as well in South Asian countries. India is located in the heart of the Indian Ocean region. India is sharing a long land border with China, which is around 3490 km. This presents India with many challenges and opportunities in this region, that have been pivotal to the geopolitical importance in the region (Kamal and Sahni, 2022).

In the South Asian region, India is the biggest country in the sense of geography and population as well. But the country has been facing severe security threats from Pakistan and China. India's security and defence policy are fully based on maintaining the regional security threats in South Asia. History has forced India to adopt the modernisation of the Indian defence system. Both China and Pakistan have indulged the creation of problems for India both internally and externally. This is the reason behind India's strong defence cooperation with France. China is providing all kinds of military support to Pakistan, and before 9/11, the US had also supported Pakistan in the defence

sector (Budania 2003, p. 88). The Indian defence policy had adopted the modernisation of its services since 1990. There are several reasons behind why India has been forced to adopt the military doctrine, and import military equipment from the French government. The following are some of the key factors: (1) The aggression from China and Pakistan (2) The incongruity between India and her neighbouring states (3) The testing of nuclear weapons and the acquisition of fatal military arms by Pakistan (4) The weapons export and sales policy of China and the US. Thus, the Indian defence policy had decided to purchase modern fifth-generation fighter jets from France, and both countries had agreed to develop the submarine in India. The issue of Kashmir, the arms race, and the nuclear doctrine of China and Pakistan was emphasised by India. During the 1990s, the US and China played a vital role in the South Asian region where Pakistan had been easily getting the modern technological military weapons. India was receiving support from the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and France. India had faced great security challenges from Pakistan because the United States and China are very supportive of Pakistan. Today, India seems to be aware of the military cooperation between China and Pakistan.

India has the strength to tackle the Pakistani stance against the strategic balance. India has also developed the nuclear deterrent as a presumption to counter the Chinese approach in South Asia. India's nuclear capability creates anxiety for the neighbouring countries. Right now, India has the ability to strike around five thousand kilometres through the Agni-5 missile. Further, India is developing a broad range attack nuclear missile. And on the other hand, the Chinese policy is supporting Pakistan's stance on the issue of Kashmir at the international forum. China's Kashmir policy has been changed many times since 1975. Now China has adopted a view that the Kashmir issue is a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan. After the Doklam confrontation between India and China in 2020, India believes that China is creating long-term security challenges for India in the South Asian region. According to Barry Buzan, India's military and defence transformation is related to its status as a great power and does not offset its rivalry with China. India can achieve its goal with the cooperation of neighbouring countries as well (Buzan, 2002).

Terrorism is a severe threat to human life and it is an anti-social element that has been destroying people's lives across the globe. The international community is now in favour of restricting the terrorist act, after the emergence of international consensus on terrorism at the international level. This has brought positive news for India in the South Asian region where it has been suffering from terrorism. Since the issue of Kashmir, India had been receiving several terrorist activities inside the country. There have been many cities that had been bombarded by terrorism, even the Indian Parliament in December 2001. In 1999, an Indian Airline passenger aircraft had been hijacked from Kathmandu by the Taliban terrorist group. After 9/11, the world order tremendously changed, and the international organisation unitedly opposed the terrorist activities. Moreover, many

western countries made laws on the terrorist act and seized the economic roots of these terrorist organisations. And India got international support against Pakistan. Because Pakistan is indulging the support the non-state actors against India and supporting the counter-terrorism in Kashmir (Bharti and Singh, 2023).

The Indian government has established a higher defence body called Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces in 2020. This institution is directly associated with deciding the procurement of military equipment. Because India has lots of security issues which has emerged in the recent years from China and Pakistan. These security threats are both military and non-military. India has procured lots of military weapons from France in the recent years but India's strategic balance in South Asia is unfavourable. In Afghanistan, last year the Taliban has come back to the country and has replaced the government but the Indian stance on this was not clear (Bharti, 2022). The relationship between India and Nepal is not being maintained in a good manner since 2016. Despite this reality, the Modi government has no interest in the SAARC meeting that should be held for regional cooperation. Through the regional organisational policy, India can pressurise Pakistan to stop counter-terrorism against India. India's policy is running under the idea of bilateral cooperation and talk. India wants to solve the border issues with China and Pakistan through talk and bilateral agreements. Furthermore, Indian diplomacy is always relying on the diplomatic ways and accelerating it to build a peace process and eradicate border and other issues (Bharti, 2020).

The Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval-Bonne's meeting resulted in a significant security partnership with France. This meeting resulted, in both countries' enhanced mutual cooperation on security and defence in the areas of expanding military drills, bolstering mutual capabilities, pursuing initiatives in maritime, information sharing, cyber domains, and space cooperation. India and France have a common agenda on the changing dynamics of global security, and both the countries are aware of the enormous challenges in the Indo-pacific, Africa, Southeast Asia, Afghanistan and West Asia. Similarly, threats seem to have cyber and space zone, threats in maritime, and challenges of terrorism. Most importantly, the French President Emmanuel Macron has been supporting the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visions of self-dependent (Atmanirbhar Bharat) and defence modernisation. The French government has expressed its commitment to India, in order to incorporate the joint technology development in India. Thus, the Indian policy is to modernise the defence industrialisation for self-dependent (Pradhan, 2021).

Beijing is now expanding its extensive presence across the Pacific and the Indian Ocean region. It is a common geostrategic and maritime challenge for Australia, Japan, India, and the US. Thus, India is preparing to face these challenges in the Pacific and South Asia. New Delhi has been strengthening the strategic partnership with Paris and basically focusing on the defence sector to face the challenge of the Chinese aggression in this area. India has been accepting the challenge from China, and supporting the

European Union strategy in the Indo-Pacific, and boosting securities areas with western partners (Barua, 2020). India has been shaping the multipurpose strategic partnership with France including the key trade routes in the land and water. There are links between East Asian economies and the natural resources of Africa and West Asia. New security challenges have been emerging, and India's importance is growing, and it is crucial to note that China has been increasing its assertiveness in this region (Pardo and Leveringhaus, 2022). India has the two largest neighbours China and Pakistan, and has been facing tough relationships with both of them for a long time. Since its independence, India has had a top priority toward China and Pakistan for a rational relationship. India wants extensive cooperation in either development and economic growth, or in enlarging its towards vis-a-vis Pakistan and China (Kamal and Sahni, 2022).

The trusted and long-standing strategic partnership between France and India is shaping geopolitical trends in South Asia and the Indi-Pacific region. There is a close relationship with France that makes it a more reliable partner for India. France has been supporting India in the area of defence. Thus, India aspires to build a military presence to cooperate at a global level through its closer partnership in the Indo-Pacific, which is the key geographical region for trade and business (Rajagopalan, 2022). Beyond diplomatic relations, France wants to stop the Chinese aggression in the Indo-Pacific, and India has encountered China's aggression in the Galwan Valley border clash and the Doklam standoff. India is opposing the Chinese domination and military aggression in its northern Himalayan border region.

India and China have had the world's largest disputed border since when the Chinese Armies' aggression in India in 1962. The Indian and Chinese border is called the Line of Actual Control (LAC) because the border is yet to be decided between both countries. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the Indian Army has clashed many times in this disputed border area. China has been constructing roads, and new airports in frontier areas and vice versa India is initiated to build roads and other connectivity in border areas. These are the main causes of the tense border between both countries. China is dominating India because of its military powers, in the contrast, India is modernising Armies and purchasing modern military equipment from France. The French support for India is making a power balance in South Asia and India is gaining defence power against the aggressor country (BBC, 2021).

5 CONCLUSION

The article has come to a conclusion: the relationship between India and France is getting stronger year by year. The successful inclusion of 36 Rafale fighter jets in the Indian Air Force has created a history for India. India's security and defence cooperation has been achieving the new landmark. Thus, the Rafale aircraft is one that strengthens the Indian Air Force, as it is a 4.5 generation modern fighter aircraft. Naval support to India from French defence agencies is also steadily increasing. India is in a strong position to

counter the opponent in the air. After the inclusion of the Rafale fighter jets, China and Pakistan has begun to fear the Indian Air Force. In the South Asian region, India now has a dominant role in achieving regional security balance. India is also receiving a huge amount of support in the Indo-Pacific region to restrict Chinese aggression. France is transferring submarine technology to India and French companies are moving to India and building a modern Scorpene-class submarine for the Indian Navy. Now India hopes to purchase more Rafael aircraft from the French Company Dassault.

Despite the Chinese aggression and encircling India, this article has seen that India is in a commanding position in South Asia. The Indian government is not scared of the Chinese and Pakistani military nexus. The power of the Indian Army is shown during the Doklam standoff where the Chinese aggression was restricted by the Indian armed forces. The Indian Air Force launched an airstrike inside Pakistan at Balakot with Mirage 2000 fighter jets, which are also French fighter aircrafts. Pakistan has always threatened India with a nuclear attack inside the country, whenever India had tried to attack or launch military operations in Pakistan. After the air attack on Balakot, Pakistan by the Indian Air Force, Pakistan took no action against India. Whereas China still supports Pakistan in this incident. The article concludes that despite the China and Pakistan nexus which creates an imbalance in the regional security in South Asia, The Indian government and associated agencies are responding in a better manner against all kinds of regional security threats to India. Finally, the Indian Army is capable of responding to any type of military threat to India. The article further suggested that there is a scope of empirical work on the regional security threats and balance in South Asia and that the western power is relevant to restrict the expansionism politics of China in the South Asian region.

Furthermore, this article assesses the French and Indian governments jointly working in the maritime domain to get a deeper involvement in security and the economy. India has been supporting the EU presence in the Indo-Pacific region in several key areas of cooperation and France herself supports the EU's extensive cooperation between pacific countries. By and large, India is very keen to establish stronger cooperations with France apart from the security issues. The recent visit of the Indian Prime Minister to Paris has paved the way for the "Parks Partnership" in the Indo-Pacific region. Both countries are eager to develop cooperation in the area of the blue economy. This could help in the creation of jobs and new settlements of industries to explore the vast maritime resources.

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SECURITIZATION OF MIGRATION AFTER RUSSIA'S MILITARY INVASION OF UKRAINE

Radoslav Štefančík¹, Beáta Biliková,² Svitlana Goloshchuk³

This paper aims to explain how the Slovak public perceived migrants coming to Slovakia from Ukraine after the outbreak of the war. Like other countries neighbouring Ukraine, Slovak state institutions have had to deal with issues related to the migration of Ukrainian refugees. In addition to spontaneous aid, negative attitudes towards refugees have also appeared in the public debate since the beginning of the war. Using the method of discourse analysis, this paper examines the formation of opinions on Ukrainian refugees in Slovakia since February 24, 2022. This paper confirms that, as in 2015 and 2016, during the debate on the migration situation, opinions about refugees as a potential threat to the domestic population continued to emerge. These negative messages were mainly presented by representatives of the far right and far left, who are usually characterised by a positive attitude towards Russia and a negative attitude towards the US.⁴

Key words: securitization, war, far right, far left, migration, integration, populism, Slovakia

JEL: O15, F22, F50

¹ Doc. PhDr. Radoslav Štefančík, MPol., Ph.D. Department of Intercultural Communication, Faculty of Applied Languages, University of Economics Bratislava, Dolnozemska cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava, Slovak Republic, e-mail: radoslav.stefancik@euba.sk.  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6042-2668>

² Mgr. Beáta Biliková, Department of Linguistics and Translatology, Faculty of Applied Languages, University of Economics Bratislava, Dolnozemska cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava, Slovak Republic, e-mail: beata.bilikova@euba.sk.  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1974-3675>

³ Mgr. Svitlana Goloshchuk, PhD. Department of Intercultural Communication, Faculty of Applied Languages, University of Economics Bratislava, Dolnozemska cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava, Slovak Republic, e-mail: svitlana.goloshchuk@euba.sk.  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9621-9688>

⁴ This paper was written within the framework of the MAGYC project, which received funding from the European Union's Horizon H2020 scheme under the Grant Agreement No. 822806; VEGA 1/0452/21 Jazyk sekuritizácie v súčasnom slovenskom verejnom diskurze [The Language of Securitization in Contemporary Slovak Public Discourse] and from the EU NextGenerationEU through the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Slovakia under the project No. 09I03-03-V01-00118.

1 INTRODUCTION

The large number of refugees arriving in Slovakia from Ukraine in 2022 was one of the consequences of the Russian military invasion of Ukraine. Most of the Ukrainian refugees went to Europe via Poland (Varpina and Fredheim, 2022), and some have found protection in Slovakia. The Slovak Republic thus experienced the largest migration wave in its modern history. Yet, Slovakia was not a typical immigration country until this period, even though the number of migrants living in Slovakia has gradually increased since 2004 (Letavajová et al., 2020).

„The sudden and rapid growth of Ukrainian migration has been facilitated by the availability of safe exit options, a welcoming attitude in Europe, and an existing culture of migration“ (Lloyd and Sirkeci, 2022). Similarly, the overwhelming majority of the Slovak public reacted positively to the refugees from Ukraine at first. Individuals and legal entities were looking for ways to “help” Ukrainians. Slovak citizens helped at the border, contributed to fundraising, and provided their apartments and houses to accommodate Ukrainian refugees (Bárta, Sabo and Dobrovanov, 2022). It can even be argued that the public responded to the need for help to Ukrainians faster than state institutions. Despite the positive reaction of Slovak citizens, however, in the first days after the outbreak of the Russian invasion, there were sporadic opinions that refugees from Ukraine posed a threat to Slovakia. The bearers of such views came mainly from the ranks of representatives of the Slovak far right and far left.

After a few weeks into Russia’s military attack on Ukraine, negative views of Ukrainian refugees started to appear more and more also in the political discourse. Some people in Slovakia have begun to negatively perceive that Ukrainian children have to be placed in pre-schools and schools. It is generally known that in some Slovak cities, there is a shortage of places in kindergartens compared to the actual demand. The question has also been raised as to whether Ukrainian refugees will pose competition in the labour market for the domestic workforce. Finally, crimes committed by incoming Ukrainians have also become a subject matter of public discussion.

The Slovak public discourse on Ukrainian refugees has been negatively affected by two factors. The first factor is the long-standing cautious negative attitude of the Slovak public towards migration. A significant part of the public perceives the phenomenon of international migration negatively. This attitude can be observed since 2015, when many Slovak politicians used the topic of international migration to mobilize voters, drawing attention mainly to the negative aspects of international migration and its potential threats to the autochthonous society (Androvičová, 2017; Lidák, 2019; Spálová and Račeková, 2022). The second factor is the traditionally positive attitude of a part of the Slovak public towards the Russian Federation. This positive attitude towards Russia is subsequently reflected in the policies of some political parties, mostly far-right, as well as in the high level of distrust towards the USA and NATO. Thus, a positive attitude

towards Russia on the one hand and a negative attitude towards the USA on the other can also be reflected in a negative attitude towards Ukraine, or towards Ukrainian refugees.

The aim of this paper is to explain how the public discourse in Slovakia has shaped views on Ukrainian refugees since the start of the Russian full-scale aggression in Ukraine, i.e. since February 24, 2022. The text will present the views of representatives of the far right and the far left, who have a positive attitude towards Russia and a negative attitude towards the USA. Thus, the text seeks to answer the question of what Slovak radical politicians say about Ukrainian refugees and how they talk about them as a possible security risk for the domestic population.

2 SECURITIZATION OF MIGRATION

The subject of international migration has long ceased to be a matter for the Ministry of Labour or Social Affairs. Migration has become an important issue in relations between states or between states and organisations. For this reason, political scientists and international relations experts have become interested in it (Seresová, 2022a; Demirkol, 2023). In the past, migration was seen as a „*factor for the production and development of capitalism*“ (Ibrahim, 2005). With the increasing number of migrants, migration has also come to be discussed in the context of security issues (Weiner, 1993; Demirkol, 2022). Some politicians have begun to present migration as a source of threat to nation-states and European civilisation. Their arguments are based on the belief that homogeneous national communities can exist if migration from culturally and religiously distinct states is curtailed (Huysmans, 2000).

Nowadays, the issue of security is also being addressed by representatives of various social science disciplines. Among the pioneers of this concept are representatives of the Copenhagen School, such as Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998). These authors interpret security as a speech act (Wæver, 2007). It is for this reason that a wealth of security research can be found among researchers on the language of politics (Dulebová, 2022). In the subject of security, the state plays an important role because it claims the right to use any means to eliminate the threat (Wæver, 2007). Gerard (2014) sees securitization in a similar way. According to this author, securitization is represented by „*discursive practices that produce an existential threat to which a security response is then required*“ (Gerard 2014, p. 30).

In the context of this definition, it is necessary to note the discursive strategies of the representatives of the far right and the far left. They argue that security threats need to be responded to forcefully. According to radical politicians, international migration is one of the significant security threats to contemporary society. These politicians tend to argue that there are several ways to eliminate the threat (better border protection, even physical barriers at the borders, restrictive immigration and asylum policies, and policies to expulse the migrants suspected of criminal activity from the country) (Onufrák, 2012; Štefančík, Némethová and Seresová, 2021).

Previous research shows that radical politicians present migration as a multidimensional threat (Štefančík and Kiner, 2021). In the first dimension, it is a personal threat, i.e., migrants are supposed to threaten either the health or even the life of a person. In the second dimension, it is the cultural dimension. In this context, radical politicians mainly consider migrants coming from other religious regions as a threat. Islamophobic populism was identified in the communication strategies of some Slovak politicians even before 2015 (Štefančík, 2011). The economic threat is expressed in the fear of competition in the labour market. Finally, we also register a political threat in the migration discourse, when radical politicians speak of migration policy as coercion of Brussels on the policies of nation-states, as the European Union is supposed to impose its views of migrants on national governments.

3 METHODOLOGY AND OVERVIEW OF MIGRATION DATA

We will arrive at the above-formulated goal through political discourse analysis. Political discourse covers a wide range of different topics and different methods can be used in the analysis. One of them is qualitative discourse analysis based on the evaluation of political actors' statements on different topics. Political discourse is not only made up of politicians but also of representatives of non-governmental associations, political analysts, academics or scientists (van Dijk, 1997). In the context of this article, we are talking about an analysis of migration discourse. Van Dijk (2018) accentuates that migration discourse is not always just about migration, but can also be an essential part of migration as a phenomenon.

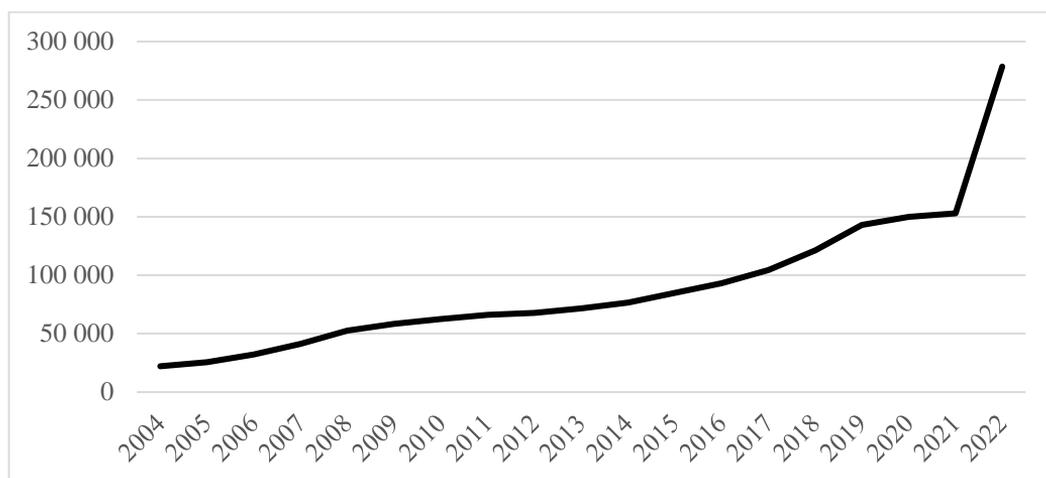
According to van Dijk (2018), there are several genres of migration discourse. These can be, for example, narratives of migration actors, and equally so parliamentary speeches by politicians. Actors other than politicians can also engage in migration discourse, such as journalists, commentators, or readers of newspaper articles who express (often anonymously on social media) their views on migration as well as integration policy.

This text presents the results of research on the communication of representatives of the Slovak far right and far left on the topic of migration from Ukraine since the beginning of the Russian military aggression. The corpus consists of statements by representatives of three political parties, two far-right – *Republika* and *Kotleba's People's Party Our Slovakia* (ĽSNS) and one far-left – *Smer - Slovak Social Democracy* – published in the period from February 24, 2022 to the end of February 2023 in various forms (audio video, official party documents or social media posts). By searching for texts about Ukrainian refugees, we also used special text search engines such as “blbec.online” (aimed at searching comments and posts on social networks) and the search engine of the digital archive of the Slovak Parliament (<https://www.nrsr.sk/dl>).

The public discourse on international migration in Slovakia fully developed only in the context of the migration situation in 2015 and 2016. After this period, interest in

international migration also grew among Slovak scholars in the humanities and social sciences (Přivara and Kiner, 2021; Seresová, 2022b). As shown in Figure 1, Slovakia did not experience a significantly higher increase in the number of foreigners with residence permits during this period. However, Figure 1 shows a significant increase in the number of foreigners from 2022, the year of the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. Of the 278 595 foreigners, 56 070 were from EU Member States. The remainder were foreigners from third countries. By comparison, in 2011 the ratio was 56 092 and 111 427. While the number of foreigners from EU countries has slightly decreased, the number of foreigners from third countries has doubled. The main reason for this was immigration from Ukraine.

Figure 1: Number of valid residencies for foreigners as of 31.12.2022



Source: Bureau of the border and foreign police, 2022.

As of March 1, 2023, there were 98 095 residents of Ukraine registered in Slovakia who had applied for temporary protection in Slovakia. This number does not include immigrants from Ukraine who came to Slovakia before the war. The structure of the migrant population may be crucial for the relationship of the autochthonous society to migrants. In the case of Ukrainians, three factors are involved. The first factor is the reason for arrival. The war in Ukraine was perceived more intensely by the Slovak population because of its close proximity. A country neighbouring Slovakia was attacked. The second factor is the cultural proximity of the Ukrainian refugees. Finally, the third factor is the demographic structure of the Ukrainian refugees. As shown in Table 1, Ukrainian refugees are dominated by women. When the media reported on migration from African and Middle Eastern countries in 2015 and 2016, the opinion that migrants are mainly male emerged in the public debate. Indeed, some (alternative) media showed mainly male migrants. In the case of Ukrainian refugees, this manipulative view would not have held up, as women (circa 50 per cent) and children (circa 35 per cent) dominated

among the migrants. More than half of the refugees from Ukraine are people of working age, so they can enter the labour market immediately and, thus, are not dependent on social assistance.

Table 1: Number of tolerated stays of foreigners on the Slovak Republic territory for temporary protection as of 2.3.2023

<i>Age/Gender</i>									Total
0-17		0-17	18-60		18-60	60+		60+	
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
17274	16811	34085	12325	43326	55651	2524	5835	8359	98095

Source: BBFP – Bureau of the Border and foreign police, 2023.

Politicians’ attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees can also be influenced by the overall view of society. In this context, we will draw attention to the 2022 Eurobarometer opinion poll, which aimed, among other things, to find out what the citizens of the European Union Member States think about military and humanitarian support to Ukraine, as well as to Ukrainian refugees. According to the results of this survey, 86 per cent of the Slovak population thinks that we should provide humanitarian support to people affected by war (EU average 91 per cent). Although at first sight, this is a high number, Slovakia is the third country after Romania (71 per cent) and Bulgaria (81 per cent) with the lowest willingness to provide humanitarian support to people affected by the war. At the other end of the scale, there is the Netherlands, where 99 per cent agree to humanitarian aid. Slovakia is similarly at the bottom of the rankings when it comes to supporting Ukrainian refugees (81 per cent, EU average 88 per cent). Slovakia ranks dead last among the EU Member States when asked whether the population agrees with the diversification of energy sources, the aim of which would be greater independence from the Russian Federation (55 per cent, EU average 84 per cent). Although most of the Slovak society thinks that the government should help Ukraine, Ukrainian refugees, and even the majority of society thinks that energy resources should be diversified, compared to other EU member states it is clear that there is an unignorable group of people in Slovakia with a positive attitude towards Russia and a negative attitude towards Ukraine. It is precisely this fact that may influence the political discourse on issues related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

4 RESULTS OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In Slovakia, far-right populists are just one of several actors in the migration discourse. However, their communication strategy contributes significantly to the securitisation of migration discourse (Štefančík, Némethová and Seresová, 2021). They were already extremely negative towards migrants in 2015 and 2016 and presented a similarly negative attitude towards migration from Ukraine after the outbreak of the war. The far-left Smer-SD party presents a similarly negative attitude towards migrants.

We consider Smer-SD to be a far-left populist party because it uses similar rhetoric and communication strategies to far-right radical parties. This rhetoric is based on creating an image of the enemy. Enemy groups have left-wing radical parties similar to right-wing populist parties (immigrants, the US, free media), expressing positive messages towards Russia and criticizing foreign aid to Ukraine.

The attitude of far-right and far-left populists towards Ukrainian refugees is based on their relationship with the Russian Federation. Although a positive attitude towards Russia is more likely to be assumed in the communication strategies of the far left (Štefančík, 2022), the far right also has a positive view of Russia. In explaining this consideration, we can find three reasons. First of all, pro-Russian sentiment fits into dichotomous thinking in the sense of friend versus foe. If populists criticize the establishment, which openly supports the pro-Western direction represented by the governments of Western Europe and the USA, populists, on the contrary, support the Russian Federation because it represents the opposite of the Western world. Public opinion polls show that there is a large group of people in Slovakia who have a positive perception of Russia and are not disturbed by the authoritarian style of Putin's regime. According to an AKO poll conducted at the end of February 2022, up to a quarter of respondents held the US responsible for the war in Ukraine (Blaško, 2022). The third reason may be regarded as speculation, but there is ample evidence to support its probative value. The assumption that Russia is financially supporting some Slovak political parties cannot be completely ruled out. In the past, there have been suspicions that Slovak right-wing extremists were financially supported by a Russian businessman on the European Union's sanctions list (ČTK, 2017). One of the goals of the Putin regime is the unstable situation in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which could have a negative impact on the situation across the European Union.

The pro-Russian sentiment was present in the language of radical populists even after the military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian army. Despite the fact that the entire democratic world condemned the attack on the free country and saw Russia as the clear aggressor, Slovak populists sought the reason for the attack on Ukraine in the US foreign policy. Even though the media brought horrifying videos of the war zone every day, Slovak populists were looking for a way to express sympathy for Russia:

– „I am sad to see Slav brother fighting against brother, while the one who pitted them against each other is already enjoying how much money he will make out of it, and how he will weaken the family of our Slavic peoples once again“ (M. Uhrík, FB, 24.02.2022).

The combination of a positive attitude towards Russia and a negative attitude towards migrants was also reflected in the negative attitude towards migration from Ukraine in the early days. In addition to Ukrainian citizens, foreigners who were in

Ukraine for various reasons, such as foreign students at Ukrainian universities, also migrated from the war-affected country. As they were foreigners with a different skin colour than the indigenous population, they immediately came to the attention of both left-wing and right-wing populists. They pointed out that persons accused of criminal activity were also coming to Slovakia from Ukraine, which could have caused a negative attitude towards the immigrated Ukrainians and thus undermined the initially majority-sympathetic attitude of the Slovak public towards the Ukrainian war refugees. The following statements highlight the threat of migration, albeit not of Ukrainian refugees, but of other migrants arriving in Europe from Ukraine as a result of the Russian invasion:

– *„I personally don't see any mothers with children here. I see one Africa here. ... This is the absolute end of all European civilisation. All this is an absolute negation of what we have achieved here in the two thousand years of our European civilisation. I'm shocked, I'm disgusted“* (Mizík, S., youtube, 28.02.2022).

– *„Two Africans, one from Tunisia and the other from Nigeria, also so-called Ukrainian refugees, left Ukraine on 6 March this year. They even had Ukrainian passports, so they raped a Ukrainian girl, just 18 years old, in Düsseldorf, Germany“* (Schlossár, R., NRSR, 30.03.2022).

The analysis of the political speeches confirmed the assumption that the representatives of the far right and the far left will not emphasize the cultural dimension of the migration of the Ukrainian population due to cultural proximity. The populists mainly drew attention to the negative aspects of migration from Ukraine, and they found these in some criminal acts:

– *„We bring you an exclusive interview with a taxi driver who was recently ambushed by three Ukrainians... Among Ukrainians, some are a great risk, a great danger to us... We would like to bring you an interview with a taxi driver who was recently hijacked by three Ukrainians to Poland“* (ĽSNS, youtube, 18.02.2023).

In addition to representatives of the far right, representatives of the far left have also expressed negative views on Ukrainian migrants. Ľuboš Blaha, the vice-chairman of the Smer-SD, stressed the criminal character of the Ukrainian refugees in his statement:

– *„They can't even protect Slovakia from the thick-skinned mafia that comes here from Ukraine“* (Ľ. Blaha, FB, 01.04.2022).

The country's economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic created new jobs that could have been filled by refugees from Ukraine. For this reason, the economic threat of migration from Ukraine is articulated cautiously for the time being. Some

politicians suggest that the state takes better care of Ukrainians than it does of its citizens, or that in the case of Ukrainians it is mainly economic migrants, not military refugees:

– „Solidarity – great, we can help, but the help must never be higher than the help for the Slovak citizen“ (Kočiš, E., NRSR, 22.03.2022).

– „We are not facing an influx of some destitute war refugees, because the women, children and elderly who are coming to us are very few indeed, but that we are facing an influx of economic migrants“ (Schlossár, R., NRSR, 15.11.2022).

– „The state accommodation allowance for those leaving Ukraine will increase by 10% due to high energy prices. What about Slovak citizens, when will they receive relevant help?!“ (Vorobelová, S., FB, 01.12.2022).

– „It seems that the Slovak Treasury is a bottomless well when it comes to aid for those who have left Ukraine. In any circumstances, there are hundreds, thousands, hundreds of thousands, hundreds of thousands or even millions of euros to be found in it for aid for people coming to us from our eastern neighbour. Are they war refugees at all, or are they just economic migrants?“ (Vorobelová, S., FB, 01.12.2022).

5 DISCUSSION

Representatives of the far right and the far left have so far been very cautious in expressing their negative attitude towards Ukrainian refugees. They are not as openly opposed to them as, for example, to the Ukrainian politicians, especially to President Zelenskyy. However, the above-mentioned messages, published mainly on social media, provoke hateful comments from voters and sympathisers of radical politicians. For example, if a politician publishes a critical message on aid to Ukrainian refugees, anonymous commentators usually use vulgar language to comment on the state's policy. Politicians do not openly spread hatred, but create all the conditions for its spread among their voters and sympathisers. We predict that in the near future, critical contributions to the aid to Ukrainian refugees may increase, which Slovak politicians from the far right and far left will use to mobilise the electorate. Inciting hatred towards migrant Ukrainians is now a way of communicating, especially through various disinformation websites. Information about refugees behaving illegally in various European countries is then disseminated by voters of far-right and far-left parties. We, therefore, believe that in the near future, it is the radical parties that will use the change in viewing Ukrainians to mobilise voters. Political parties are taking note of how different parts of society react and are adjusting their political messages according to the current mood of public opinion. In this context, it is appropriate to note that the actors of securitization are mostly politicians, but they can also be people outside politics (Dulebová, 2022), and it is them who accentuate the security threat of migration processes more than politicians.

A common feature of the refugee debate in 2015 and 2016 and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine is the use of the term “economic migrants”. This term originally had

a neutral to positive connotation in the general migration discourse. As a rule, labour migrants can have a positive impact on the national economy of the destination country of migration (Přivara and Kiner, 2021). In the context of the situation in 2015 and 2016, Slovak politicians used this term to refer to refugees from African and Middle Eastern countries. Using this term, politicians rejected the idea that those migrants were refugees persecuted in their homes or leaving their home country because of war. The politicians pointed out that the real reason for the migrants' leaving the country was economic. So, after a few years, the term is coming back into the Slovak migration discourse. Some politicians, by using this term, reject the idea that Ukrainians leave their country of origin only because of the war. The term that has since acquired a negative connotation in the public debate is thus reappearing.

6 CONCLUSION

The analysis shows that some Slovak left and right radicals have already communicated various forms of security risk in connection with the migration of Ukrainian refugees. In particular, radical politicians articulate threats to personal security. Politicians draw attention to the criminal offences of some refugees, without taking the same view of the native population. The economic dimension is also emphasised. From this perspective, refugees are perceived as people who are being helped, even though Slovakia's indigenous population would also deserve help. As we expected, radical politicians do not emphasize the cultural dimension of the threat. This dimension of threat was present in migration discourse in 2015 and 2016, but in the case of Ukrainian refugees, radical politicians do not articulate the threat from refugees' different cultural patterns of behaviour.

So far, radical politicians have been very cautious in expressing their criticism towards Ukrainian refugees. However, they are particularly active in the case of the war in Ukraine. They often take a pro-Russian stance on this issue. It is precisely their pro-Russian attitudes that may also influence their attitude towards possible aid to Ukrainian refugees in the near future. The pro-Russian politicians criticise in particular the foreign policy of the Slovak government. They criticise sanctions against Russia or military aid to Ukraine (e.g. the donation of the S-300 anti-missile system or MIG-29 military aircraft). There have even been fears that the government will mobilise young men who will take an active part in the war. They are equally critical of Ukraine's political representation.

Surveys of the European institutions (Eurobarometer, 2023) show that Slovakia ranks last among the EU member states in terms of willingness to assist Ukraine with military or humanitarian support. Many Slovak citizens reject economic sanctions on the Russian government or are not willing to help Ukrainian refugees. Based on this survey, it can be assumed that some politicians will want to mobilise precisely those voters who have a critical and negative attitude towards Ukraine. We, therefore, conclude that anti-

Ukrainian attitudes will continue to be part of the communication strategies of some political actors – especially left-wing and right-wing radical populists.

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MEDZINÁRODNÉ VZŤAHY

SLOVAK JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Faculty of International Relations, University of Economics in Bratislava

2023, Volume XXI., Issue 2, Pages 186 – 190

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53465/SJIR.1339-2751.2023.2.186-190>

ISSN 1336-1562 (print), ISSN 1339-2751 (online)

Submitted: 16. 8. 2022 | Accepted: 7. 9. 2023 | Published 15. 9. 2023

LAKHAN MEHROTRA: THE ODYSSEY OF A DIPLOMAT: THROUGH THE CORRIDORS OF TIME

New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 2020, 356 p., ISBN 978-8170264569

*Souvik Chatterjee*¹

In his memoir, “The Odyssey of a Diplomat through the Corridors of Time,” former Indian diplomat Lakhman Mehrotra provides a historical narrative of India’s diplomatic endeavours. Filled with personal anecdotes from the author’s illustrious diplomatic career, the book is composed of a foreword penned by eminent Indian diplomat K. Natwar Singh and divided into twenty sections, accompanied by an endorsement written by Shyam Saran, Former Foreign Secretary of India. Mehrotra worked as diplomat in the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Mexico, and many more. With expert storytelling, diplomatic deadlocks and historical events, this book delves into the socio-political contexts that profoundly transformed Indian Foreign Policy since independence. The book covers diverse region from the Arctic to the Pacific.

The initial chapters, “My Early Years: 1934-1951” and “Sojourn at Allahabad: 1951-1958”, introduces readers about author’s educational and personal background. Mehrotra’s upbringing and education in Uttarakhand along with the local customs he has imbibed, inspired his intellectual pursuits. The next section includes author’s experience at the University of Allahabad as a student. Engaged in student politics, Mehrotra scrutinized the surging tide of Indian politics. It was also in Allahabad, Nehru’s political ideals ignited and inspired Mehrotra’s understanding of Indian Foreign Policy, He further explored the philosophical principles of Ashoka and interacted with various eminent Indian freedom fighters, such as Rajashri Purushottam Das Tandon during this time. This section chronicles author’s odyssey and lesson he congregated as a student, followed by his subsequent employment at the University of Allahabad.

The historical narrative then shifted to the 1950s. It was a period characterised by India’s conviviality with China. Nehruvian Policy of Non-Alignment and Peaceful

¹ Souvik Chatterjee, M.A. Assistant Professor, Amity Institute of Liberal Arts, Amity University Mumbai, Panvel, Maharashtra 410206, India, e-mail: chatterjeesouvik101@gmail.com.
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5340-5453>

co-existence, enshrined in Panchsheel, takes centre stage in India's Foreign Policy. In the 1960s, Mehrotra worked as a liaison officer for the Government of India in China. During this time Mehrotra had the opportunity to witness this evolving relationship between these two nations. However, the challenges arising from the Tibetan issue between India and China marred the bonhomie. The leadership role of Sardar Patel is also discussed. The author discusses China's aggressive posture in Northeast India and its ramifications on India-China bilateral relations. India's encounter with China in the 1962 war redirected India's foreign policy and recalibrated the power dynamics between these two Asian powerhouses. As both countries were vying for supremacy, the 1962 war ignited a seismic shift in Indian Foreign Policy.

Cultural Diplomacy takes centre stage in the chapter "With His Holiness the Dalai Lama at Dharamsala". Buddhism and Tibetan perspectives helped Mehrotra to explore people-centric approach on global cooperation. His conversations with his highness Dalai Lama offer new outlook about Indian diplomacy which is based on compassion and peaceful settlement of disputes. Mehrotra's memoir fall in line with Joseph Nye's concept of Soft Power. The author further investigates the extensiveness of India's cultural diplomatic assets. His conversation with Dalai Lama, he was convinced him, by embracing spirituality and cultural diversity India can harness its true soft power potential.

In the subsequent chapter "New York: 1962–1964" the author was posted in the Indian Consulate in New York. After his encounters with distinguished Americans and Indians, this memoir shed lights on US Foreign Policy towards India at that time. The author meticulously recounts the UNSC deliberations following the liberation of Goa in 1961. In the UNSC deliberations, the United States put forward a resolution to condemn India's actions. USSR provided unwavering support to India by vetoing on this resolution. Within this chapter, the author bestows historical event that happened in the United States and in India. For instance, the author discusses Civil Rights Movement, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and the death of Prime Minister Nehru (Tayal, 2020). After a brief tenure in Mexico, the author was posted for two years in Cuba. The pinnacle of his stay on Cuba is the depiction of his encounter with Fidel Castro and Cuban revolution.

In the subsequent chapter, the author discusses, India adopted unperturbed diplomatic techniques to deal with neighbouring countries particularly China. After the 1962 war with China, delicate negotiations were needed to restrict further aggressions. Through Mehrotra's memoir, readers can witness the thrust of intense negotiations and the complexities of diplomacy.

The next section deals with the role of Indian leadership in shaping Foreign Policy. The untimely demise of Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and the transformative policy measures enacted by Indira Gandhi's administration were vividly explained in this memoir. Under Indira Gandhi's regime from 1967 and 1977, the focus of Indian Foreign Policy was concentrated to ensure regional security by limiting cross

border terrorism, and fortifying border defences. This was a transition from India's idealistic posture to proactive strategies with a keen eye on regional stability. The reader is whisked away on a thrilling rollercoaster expedition and bearing witness to the tectonic shifts in India's foreign policy landscape.

Understanding the dynamics of Cold War politics and India's stance of neutrality is meticulously explored in the chapter "From one Hemisphere to the Other: 1966-1969". The focus of this chapter is India's deepened relationship with the Soviet Union. As the USA was supporting Pakistan, disrupting India's aspirations for a peaceful neighbourhood, India was compelled to forge stronger defence ties with USSR. Thus, the burgeoning defence agreement is born out of necessity, ensuring India's survival, and averting the suzerainty of the USA and China. The Rupee-Ruble agreement follows, solidifying India's path and cementing its place on the world stage (Tayal, 2020).

In the upcoming chapter "Historic Changes in the Sub-Continent", Mehrotra's memoir delves into India's intricate relationship with Bhutan, Bangladesh Liberation War, and the annexation of Sikkim into India. Despite Bhutan's proximity to India, in the 1980s, Bhutan deviated from India's interests. Bhutan aligned itself with China and the Khmer Rouge regime of Cambodia during the NAM's summit. Consequently, in 1985, Bhutan inked the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and lent support to Pakistan on various issues. As situation became complex, India adopted a delicate balancing act to safeguard Bhutan's autonomy from the clutches of China. To accomplish this, Mehrotra argues that since the 1980s, India has strived to fortify Bhutan's territorial integrity, exemplified by consenting to the amendment of Article 2 of the Friendship Treaty in 2007. Hence, liberating Bhutan from seeking India's advice on foreign policy. Amidst Bhutan's mountainous landscapes, a vibrant tapestry of power dynamics and diplomacy unfurls, leaving readers enraptured. In the ensuing segment, Mehrotra steers his focus towards the appropriation of Sikkim into India. In 1973, anti-royalist uprisings erupted just beyond the Chogyal's palace, the final monarch of Sikkim. In 1975, following the Indian Army's takeover of Gangtok, a referendum was conducted that resulted in the dethronement of the monarchy.

In the upcoming chapters titled "Back to Moscow" and "Soviet Military Intervention in Afghanistan," the author delves into his experiences as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Moscow during the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The author unravels the manifold challenges faced by India. The Soviet Union anticipated India's endorsement of this invasion and believed that true friendship is put to the test in times of adversity. India defied the USSR's agenda and opposed this intervention in the UN General Assembly. Following this, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was re-elected, and despite the differences concerning the Afghan intrusion, the two nations remained resolutely united in their pursuit of peace and stability in Afghanistan. The author delivers a historical narrative and carefully picturises the falling state of the Soviet system (Tayal, 2020). From the turbulence of Moscow, the author was dispatched to seemingly serene

Argentina. He provides a first-hand account of the UK-Argentina clash over Falklands in 1983. Surprisingly author's omission of India's standpoint on the events is notable, considering the resemblance between the Argentinean intrusion and India's manoeuvres against the Portuguese in Goa in 1961 (Tayal, 2020).

The subsequent section grapples with India's convoluted relationship with Sri Lanka in the chapter "Sri Lanka". Mehrotra focuses upon India's role ensuring peace and stability during the Tamil-Sinhalese conflict by sending Indian Peace Keeping Force. The complex negotiations between India's then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan president Premadasa are expounded upon with meticulous detail.

In the concluding chapters "Back to India" and "My Last Dream", the book delves into Mehrotra's personal odyssey as Secretary in the Ministry of Indian External Affairs. Mehrotra argues it was during the 1990s, there were fundamental shifts. India's aspirations were no longer confined to Asia, as it was striving to become regional to a global power. This transformation comes alive during Nelson Mandela's historic visit to India in 1990. During his visit in India, Mandela praises India's nonviolence principle rooted in Gandhian doctrine. A deeper association between India and Africa became evident after this visit. India's Look East Policy is another prominent theme explored in this memoir. The adroit execution by Narsimha Rao's government to develop dynamic relationships with Southeast Asian nations is also applauded by the author. Entwining historical facts with personal reflections, the book presents a unique perspective that breathes vitality into India's past.

However, Mehrotra's excessive reliance on personal experiences obfuscates the objective analysis of Indian Foreign Policy. Instead of a mere memoir, a comprehensive analysis should have accorded equal importance to the triumphs and tribulations faced by diplomats. Such balanced approach would have helped readers to understand India's diplomatic landscape properly. Moreover, India's geopolitical factors which greatly influenced India's policy choices haven't explored in detail. India's global engagements in the book suggests a favourable bias, yet diplomatic history is teeming with complexities and challenges that shape events. While the book acknowledges hurdles such as the 1962 China conflict, a more profound analysis of India's diplomatic mistakes would have added depth to the narrative.

Upon closer examination, absence of detailed discussion on pivotal Indian foreign policy decisions becomes apparent. The annexation of Sikkim and its political implications on India's Foreign Policy are missing from memoir. In terms of coalitions, the book presents a hyper optimistic viewpoint on India's relationship with the Soviet Union. Despite India good relations with the USSR, comprehensive perspective would have discussed the potential drawbacks or dependencies that may have arisen from this partnership. Scrutinizing how this alliance impacted India's autonomy in foreign policy could have elevated the memoir to unprecedented heights.

Notwithstanding various limitations, “The Odyssey of a Diplomat through the Corridors of Time” delivers a panoramic view of Indian Foreign Policy. Mehrotra’s memoir endeavours to journey across the chasm between the complicated realm of diplomacy and the ordinary public life. The book can be useful to gain practical knowledge on negotiation and the indispensable role of socio-cultural elements in shaping foreign policy. Mehrotra’s encounters and the experiences he gathered can help future diplomats to navigate the complex domain of diplomatic service.

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Medzinárodné vzťahy

Slovak Journal of International Relations

2/2023

Ročník XXI
Volume XXI

Medzinárodné vzťahy

Vedecký časopis pre medzinárodné politické, ekonomické, kultúrne a právne vzťahy Fakulty medzinárodných vzťahov Ekonomickej univerzity v Bratislave, ročník XXI, 2/2023.

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Časopis je zaregistrovaný na Ministerstve kultúry

Slovenskej republiky EV 4785/13.

ISSN 1336-1562 (tlačené vydanie / print)

ISSN 1339-2751 (online)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53465/SJIR.1339-2751>