

## SLOVENIJA V GEOPOLITIČNEM IN GEOSTRATEŠKEM OKOLJU 21. STOLETJA

### SLOVENIA IN GEOPOLITICAL AND GEOSTRATEGIC ENVIROMENT OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

Original Scientific article

**Povzetek** Republika Slovenija je kontinentalna in pomorska država. Leži na prostoru, kjer se stikajo slovanska, germanska in romanska kultura. V zgodovinskem in kulturnem pogledu pripada Srednji Evropi, vojaško pa je del južnoevropskega vojskovališča. Geostrateški položaj Republike Slovenije v evropskem prostoru je pomemben zato, ker je na njenem ozemlju stičišče treh geostrateških in geopolitičnih prostorov, in sicer srednjeevropskega, južnoevropskega in jadransko-sredozemskega. Zavezanost evroatlantskim integracijam, skrb za varnost in mir na območju Jugovzhodne Evrope ter Zahodnega Balkana sta rdeči niti, ki opredeljujeta slovensko geopolitično in geostrateško ravnanje slovenskih političnih elit v preteklih dveh desetletjih. Prav tako bo to ostalo pomembno tudi v njihovem prihodnjem delovanju, saj bo varnost Slovenije še naprej odvisna od varnostnih razmer v regiji in od sposobnosti slovenskih političnih elit, da uspešno rešujejo s sodobne varnostne izzive v Natu in Evropski uniji v globaliziranem, multipolarnem, geopolitično nestabilnem svetu, polnem različnih tveganj ter priložnosti. Slovenija je po osamosvojitvi leta 1991 postala sodobna država s temu primernimi izzivi in vprašanji, ki je tudi s predsedovanjem Svetu Evropske unije v prvi polovici leta 2008 dokazala, da so se manjše države sposobne uspešno udeleževati na globalni ravni.

**Ključne besede** *Geoekonomika, geopolitika, geostrategija, Jugovzhodna Evropa, Evropska unija, Slovenija, Zahodni Balkan, Nato.*

**Abstract** The Republic of Slovenia is a continental and maritime country. It is situated in a place where Slavic, Germanic and Roman cultures meet. Historically and culturally speaking, it belongs to Central Europe; however, from the military point of view, it forms a part of the Southern Theatre of War. The geostrategic position of the Republic of Slovenia is extremely important in European area because its territory represents a crossroads of three geostrategic and geopolitical spaces: Central European, Southern European and Adriatic-Mediterranean. The commitment to Euro-Atlantic

integrations, as well as the interest in security and peace in Southeast Europe and Western Balkans are a red thread which has characterized the activities of Slovenian political elites in the past two decades. This will also be the core of their future engagement, since also in the future the security of Slovenia will depend on the security situation in the region and on the capacity of Slovenian political elites to successfully address contemporary NATO and EU security challenges in a globalized, multipolar and geopolitically instable world, full of various risks and opportunities. Following its independence in 1991, Slovenia became a modern country with corresponding challenges and dilemmas. By presiding the EU Council in the first half of the year 2008 it proved that small countries could successfully participate on a global level.

**Key words** *Geo-economics, geopolitics, geostrategy, Southeast Europe, European Union, Slovenia, Western Balkans, NATO.*

**Introduction** Slovenia, its territory and population were many times in the history used as a pawn on a chessboard in important geopolitical and geostrategic games. Used as territorial and demographic 'strategic crumbs' it had no influence on what would happen with its territory as a result of mutual promises made by those taking important decisions which was best proved by geopolitical dynamics of Slovenian space in the 20th century. If the 20th century was characterized by numerous wars, armed conflicts, border changes and migration of population in Slovenian space, at the beginning of the 21st century our future seemed relatively less pessimistic. The membership in NATO and EU, as well the assessment that Slovenia is not under a direct military threat instill optimism not only in the country, but also in the wider region where the absence of potential war is still not completely guaranteed. More than ever before in the history, the development and future of Slovenes depend on our capacity to use opportunities offered by membership in important international organizations. Relations with international environment are of crucial importance for Slovenia, as well as for its present and future development, since they highly depend on import, export and future globalization trends. So, a global economic crisis means also a local crisis for Slovenia.

The realization of Slovenia' wish to become independent was a long process, but historically speaking, relatively short. Even shorter was the way leading from its independence in 1991 to NATO and EU membership in 2004, as well as to the EU Council Presidency in 2008 as the first country from behind the iron curtain<sup>1</sup>. The path towards these enviable achievements was paved with a wider national consensus: where, how and when. In December 1993, two years after the triumphant war, the Slovenian Parliament adopted a Resolution on the Starting Points for the Concept of National Security of the Republic of Slovenia, and in January 1994 its amendment

<sup>1</sup> *The iron curtain, which fell on Europe and stretched from the Baltic Region to the Gulf of Trieste, was a term used by Winston Churchill in 1946 to denote a division between democratic Europe with free and democratic elections, and Europe of socialist countries unfamiliar with elections of this kind. This was the time before the appearance of official blocks in Europe; however, during the time of NATO/Warsaw Pact division, the former Yugoslavia skillfully maneuvered between the two.*

which defined wishes and the path of the young nation towards Euro-Atlantic integrations. »In the integration process into European and other international economic and political integrations the Republic of Slovenia at the same time assumes rights and responsibilities required by these integrations in the defence area, except from the provision of a peace-keeping force in the area of former Yugoslavia until the settlement of the current crisis. That even more, because the Republic of Slovenia is vitally interested in the establishment of an efficient collective security system in its neighbourhood, Europe and in the world. Its important goal is to integrate into NATO or Western European Union as a European NATO pillar« (Chapter 1, Article 12)<sup>2</sup>. On the basis of this guideline given by the National Assembly, Slovenia joined the Partnership for Peace as soon as in March 1994. The disappointment felt when Slovenia was rejected membership in NATO during its expansion in 1999 did not prevent Slovenia from further focusing on Euro-Atlantic integrations. Slovenia confirmed its strategic orientation towards membership in the European Union and NATO in numerous strategic, development and normative documents. As the key strategic goal this was written also in the Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia (ReSNV) adopted in 2001<sup>3</sup>. The introduction of ReSNV highlights that »the Republic of Slovenia wishes to guarantee its basic security interest also within its membership in the European Union and NATO«. From the point of view of regional security situation, it was generally assessed in 2001 that »in Southeast Europe a certain level of security threat still exists for the Republic of Slovenia. Security of the Republic of Slovenia indirectly depends on the situation in the Region«.

Although Slovenia has been a member of EU and NATO for as long as six years, the revised and updated basic strategic national security document was adopted by the National Assembly only on 26 March 2010. The Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia (ReSNV-1)<sup>4</sup> stresses that »important comparative advantages of the Republic of Slovenia as a member of EU and NATO will also in the future result from its historical, political, economic, social, ethnic, cultural and other relations with Southeastern Europe.« From the standpoint of the international security environment it is generally assessed that »in Euro-Atlantic area the possibility of international armed conflict has dramatically decreased; however, what has increased at the same time in this area is vulnerability of the countries to asymmetric threats and risks, usually posed by non-state subjects, whose effects have distinctive transnational dimensions.« The Resolution states that »the security in Euro-Atlantic area will also in the future be most influenced by political-security and other events in the Western Balkans<sup>5</sup>, East Europe, South Caucasus, Middle and Far East, North and Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.« (Article 3.2, ReSNV-1).

<sup>2</sup> *Resolution on the Starting Points for the Concept of National Security of the Republic of Slovenia and its amendment, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 71/93 and No. 2/1994.*

<sup>3</sup> *Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 56/01.*

<sup>4</sup> *Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 27/10.*

<sup>5</sup> *The area of the Western Balkans includes Albania and former Yugoslavia without Slovenia. Southeastern Europe is a wider geographic term and, of course, includes also the area of the Western Balkans.*

Examination of complex geopolitical and geostrategic topics requires an interdisciplinary approach using a wide spectrum of scientific methods. To this end, the author uses a method of strategic analysis which takes into account the balance of force, as well as the time and place which witnessed radical changes in the strategic environment and in Slovenia itself. A special emphasis was given to the usage of statistical data of all kinds, their comparison, appropriate processing and interpretation. Within his critical analysis the author uses the advantage of being not only a careful observer, researcher and examiner of the topics addressed, but also an actor in certain important events. In this way he can upgrade theoretical and empirical topics with the method of direct observation using the appropriate information gained from practice. Geopolitical and geostrategic tectonics of Slovenian space as well as its placement in wider contemporary environment are thus presented in a comprehensive and original scientific way. In doing this and also when analyzing contemporary global trends and changes in security environment, he accepts the challenge of indicating and not predicting future trends.

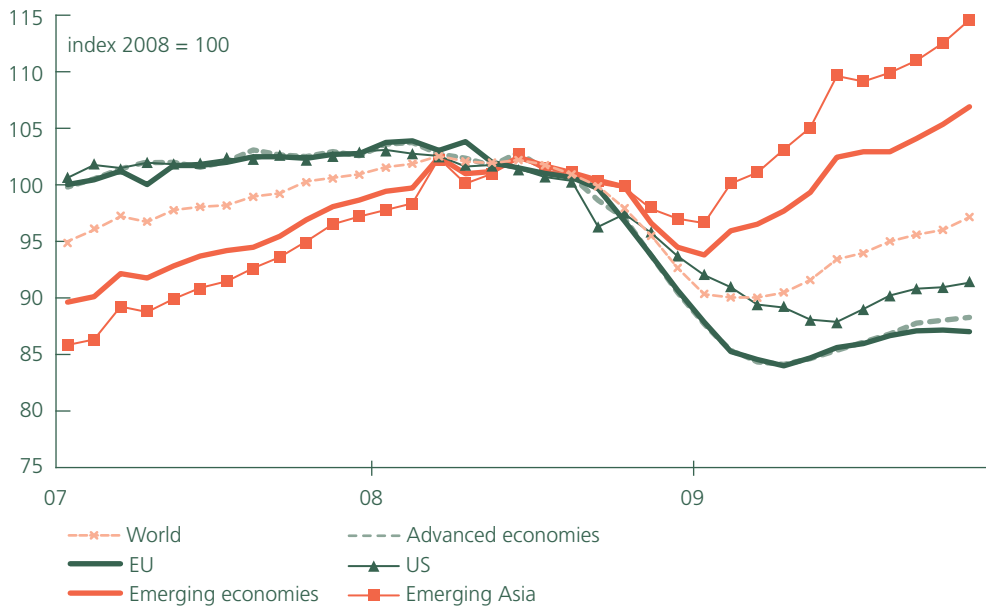
But of course not only in Slovenia, but also wider, regionally and globally, since the Resolution specifically stresses the need to continue with enlargement processes<sup>6</sup> because »stability and security of Euro-Atlantic area highly depend on further EU and NATO enlargement (ibid.)«, where benefits and burdens are shared and where, as very picturesquely described by Slovenian Defence Minister, »you can not be a free-rider of security. You must invest something in the common security framework (Jelušič, 2010).« The commitment to Euro-Atlantic integrations and the interest in security and peace in Southeast Europe and Western Balkans<sup>7</sup> undoubtedly present a gravitation force which unites all strategic documents adopted in almost two decades. Slovenia's security will also in the future depend on the security situation in the region and its capacity to deal with contemporary NATO and EU security challenges in a globalized, multipolar, geopolitically unstable world full of various challenges

<sup>6</sup> *EU and NATO wish and are (on principle) ready to continue with further enlargement processes despite the enlargement tiredness. The goal of both organizations is to conclude the enlargement process with Balkan countries. Four countries are actively engaged in becoming EU members, three with a status of candidate countries; Croatia is relatively successful in negotiations, Iceland applied for EU membership in July 2009, Macedonia is being hampered by Greece due to the conflict on the name Macedonia, (the same is true for its membership in NATO), while Turkey became associate member of EU in 1963 and officially applied for membership in 1987. The path towards EU is being announced also by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia. During the Bucharest Summit in 2008 NATO promised the invitation to the Alliance to Macedonia, Georgia and Ukraine. This path is followed also by Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. Relevant questions which at the moment have no appropriate answer are: what is happening with Moldavia, Ukraine or even Georgia with regard to their EU membership and what are realistic chances of countries with international peacekeeping forces in their territory (BiH, Kosovo, etc) to become EU members, since EU membership depends also on the will of individual countries which can change on the basis of election results (e.g. Ukraine).*

<sup>7</sup> *Slovenian West Balkan Coordinator and future Slovenian Ambassador to Croatia Vojko Volk divides Slovenian approach to the Western Balkans into two periods. The first period was characterized by Slovenian diplomacy's escape from the Balkans. Slovenia disgustedly claimed to be a non-Balkan country. We were a Central European country. This period lasted until Slovenia became an associate member of the EU in 1996. Our trump card was the idea that »we are not the Balkans and do not want to deal with it« Whatever initiative was launched in the Balkans, we had reservations whether to even go there. When the first salvation came – confirmation of the associate membership in EU in Florence in June 1996, Slovenian diplomacy could breathe with full lungs again. It was then that we returned to the Balkans. Slovenian diplomacy did not only return to the Balkans, it was also successful. (The Balkans starts in Trieste, an interview with Vojko Volk published in a daily Dnevnik on 21 December 2009).*

and opportunities. In a world which is, as said by Thomas Friedman (2005, 2006), transformed and made smaller – **flattened** by the information revolution and globalization of economy. Through numerous examples Friedman highlights geo-economic aspects of globalization thus enabling a simpler understanding of the change from a bipolar understanding of geopolitics, based on security and defence questions, to a more geo-economic-relevant world where an important role is played by various old and new global and regional organizations based mainly on economic interests, and new economic superpowers such as India and China. And, finally, how has the last economic crisis in such a short time become an opportunity for newly emerged economies and a cruel reality for the West?! (Graph 1).

**Graph 1:**  
Strong rebound  
of industrial  
production in  
newly emerged  
economies.



Source: EU Interim Forecast February 2010 Report.

## 1 GEOPOLITICS FROM TRADITIONALISM TO POSTMODERNISM

The concept of geopolitics is closely related to the concept of political geography<sup>8</sup>: the difference between the two was in a very simple way tried to be explained by Haushofer. In his opinion political geography views the state from the standpoint of space, while geopolitics views space from the standpoint of the state, making it a distinctively applicable discipline (Haushofer v Bufon, 2007:21). Ratzel is a pioneer of modern studying of political geography, while his student, Rudolf Kjellen from

<sup>8</sup> Morgenthau (1995: 264) is very critical towards the concept of geopolitics. It calls it pseudoscience which raises the geography factor to the level of absolute, seemingly defining the power and, consequently, the fate of individual countries. For Morgenthau geography is, besides natural resources, industrial capacity, military preparedness, population, national character; national morale and quality of government only one of the eight elements of national power (ibid., 207-254).

Sweden, is considered to be a founder of geopolitics as a theory which conceptualizes a state as a geographic organism or space phenomenon (Bufon, 2007:21).

In *The Geographical Pivot of History*<sup>9</sup> Mackinder develops a retrograde thesis<sup>10</sup> (Figure 1) that world history is actually a constant conflict between land and sea peoples. The centre of Eurasian mainland – the area of Eastern Europe is, in his opinion, the Heartland: who rules the Heartland will command unless he is stopped. The Rimland consists of two concentric circles; the inner circle was the home of great historical civilizations of Europe, Middle East, India and China, while the outer circle includes both Americas, Sub-Saharan Africa and Australasia. Mackinder put all this in a today anachronistically sounded triptych:

*Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland;*

*Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island;*

*Who rules the World Island commands the World* (Parker, 1997: 77-93).

Figure 1:  
Mackinder's  
Heartland  
concept.



Source: *The Geographical Pivot of History*, *Geographical Journal* 23, no. 4 (April 1904): 435 and in Parker, 1997:80.

At the turn of the 20th century, Mackinder's concept was very arguably rejected by his contemporary Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan who developed a mercantilist thesis on the dominating influence of a fleet on the »World Island« - Eurasia. Considering the fact that the power of countries depends on their successful trade<sup>11</sup>, he developed

<sup>9</sup> Mackinder, H. J., *The Geographical Pivot of History*, *Geographical Journal* 23 (1904).

<sup>10</sup> His thesis was generalized on the basis of the then balance of forces in Eurasia and constant clashes in Great Britain and Tsarist Russia in the 18th and 19th century.

<sup>11</sup> Based on the analysis of the development of the British Empire where the sun never sets. After World War II that meant in practice that »nuclearized« US naval forces dominated land forces, the Soviet Union and China.

a thesis that the development and future of the world will be significantly influenced by the naval power which will dominate sea routes with its fleet and project its power from the sea to the land.

After World War I the study of geopolitics was, mainly due to German experts, very popular and geopolitical schools were gradually established in the entire West. After World War II the old »geopolitics was forbidden (sic!) as a way of thinking, a science or a political recipe. It was reproached for inspiring racist theories of Nazi Germany and territorial expansion of the Axis powers. It shyly started to appear in the 1960s, while the boom of interest came in the 1990s« (Simoniti, 1997: 10-11).

The affirmation on the ban of geopolitics and the shyness of its appearance is extremely exaggerated and does not sustain a serious judgment. It is worth mentioning that at the beginning of the 1940s, Spykman, on the basis of Mackinder, justified the American need for having its bases in Rimland and an appropriate naval power, since the balance of powers in Eurasia directly influences the security in the USA (Spykman, 2007). Spykman is most often called the godfather of containment between the blocks where from Iceland to Japan an important role is played by regional organizations and forms of cooperation, such as NATO (1949- ), CENTO (1955-1979), SEATO (1954-1977), ANZUS (1951- ), ANZUK (1971-1974), FPDA (1971- ), etc<sup>12</sup>. Former socialist countries established the Warsaw Pact (1955-1991), while Marxists also implemented their geopolitics: from the intervention of the Soviet Union with its fleet in Cuba (Missile Crisis in 1962) to the export of revolutions to the Third World (Che Guevara, 1965-1967)<sup>13</sup>.

By the 1970s the majority of geopolitics had implicitly accepted the hegemonic position of the West. This determinant is also included in the idea that the world is a concluded and ultimate whole. Interpretations of constants of geopolitical theories with various shades can be united in six main schools: binary, marginal, zonal, pluralist, centre-periphery and idealistic (more in Parker, 1997: 239-248). Contemporary understanding of geopolitics has thus travelled a long way: from studying who will rule the Heartland to a more complex understanding of space which is not only physical, but also imaginary or even virtual. It can be divided into five fields or action spaces, namely: physical, natural space; demographic, demo-political space; interstate or more generally speaking diplomatic-military field; socio-economic field dealing with globalization and symbolic space, idealistic and cultural – e.g. Western Ideology (Dussouy, 2010: 143-148).

<sup>12</sup> *Regional organizations or forms of cooperation are: North Atlantic Treaty Organization – NATO; Central Treaty Organization - CENTO or Middle East Treaty Organization - METO, also known as Baghdad Pact; Southeast Asia Treaty Organization – SEATO; Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty – ANZUS; a tripartite force formed by Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom – ANZUK and defence cooperation between Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain - Five Power Defence Agreement - FPDA.*

<sup>13</sup> *Also as a response to the Informbiro Resolution, in 1953 the former Yugoslavia signed the Balkan Pact: Agreement of Friendship and Cooperation with NATO members Greece and Turkey, thus revoking the Soviet Union's access to the »warm sea«, which in turn built a huge submarine base on the island of Sazan. As an alternative to both blocks, a gray zone where proxy wars were fought, in 1961 Nehru, Nasser and Tito established the Non-Aligned Movement which outlived both blocks; in 2009 it had 118 members states and 17 observer countries.*

A branch of geopolitics which more thoroughly than former Mahan's mercantilism stresses the importance of economic aspects for geopolitics was in the 1990s named **geo-economics**. According to Luttwak's definition, a geo-economic discussion, defined by **geo-economics**, is »the mixture of the logic of conflict with the methods of commerce...., where countries act geo-economically simply because they are what they are, space-defined entities intended to win one another at the global scene« (Luttwak, 1990). The conflict thus continues in another, economically conditioned way, with national interventions, or, as said by Luttwak, »geo-politics is a new version of ancient rivalry among countries«. The rivalry where the battle for markets is fought with economic resources. The enforcement of customs and favouring of national economies is, of course, in conflict with the principle of free movement of goods and services (e.g. EU), as well as with various international agreements, such as GATT<sup>14</sup>. »Geo-economics analyzes economic strategies -- notably commercial --, decided upon by states in a political setting aiming to protect their own economies or certain well-identified sectors of it,... where it represents an element of power and influence to the state or "national enterprise" and helps to reinforce its economic and social potential« (Lorot, 1999)<sup>15</sup>. Geo-economists put the transition of developed or pivotal countries into a position where economic priorities prevail over security and military priorities which dominated during the Cold War (Aligica, 2002). From the economic point of view, in the period of globalization on global and regional level, a special role is played by international organizations<sup>16</sup> which act as companions or a type of heirs to the post-block arrangement.

The grand strategy, the greatest of all is **Astropolitik** or geopolitics, based on the presumption that the key factor for control over the development of the Earth is supremacy in the space from where the force can be projected on selected targets. The neoclassical formulation explains the Astropolitik thought with a saying which continues Mackinder and Spykman's examples: who controls low-Earth, controls

<sup>14</sup> *The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade - GATT was concluded in 1947 under the auspices of UN. The original GATT wording was valid until 1994. Since 1995 it has been implemented within the World Trade Organization - WTO with 153 member states. The organization was established with an aim to exercise control and liberalization of the world trade.*

<sup>15</sup> *The founders of this relatively young branch of geopolitics are American military strategist and historian Edward Luttwak and French economist and politologist Pascal Lorot.*

<sup>16</sup> *If we mention only a few well-known organizations: during the period of both blocks, in 1952, the European Union, which today has 27 member states, was established in Europe for purely economic purposes. In the area of Southeast Asia, a geopolitical and economic organization the Association of Southeast Asian Nations - ASEAN was established in 1967 which today has ten member states: the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. In 1989 the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation - APEC was established, a forum of 21 Pacific Rim countries. The aim of APEC is to increase economic growth and prosperity in the region and to enhance Asian-Pacific community. APEC member states include approximately 40% of world population, 54% of global BDP and 44% of world trade (member states are e.g. Australia, Japan, China, Russia, the USA, etc). In 1994 Canada, Mexico and the USA established the North American Free Trade Agreement - NAFTA, a trilateral trade block in the area of North America. Following the example of the European Union, a similar organization with ambitious plans is being established in the area of South America, the Union of South American Nations (SP Unión de Naciones Suramericanas - UNASUR) which has 12 member states and two observer countries and whose beginnings go back to the year 2004. In May 2008 the UNASUR Constitutive Treaty was signed by member states in Brazil; however, by April 2010 it had been ratified by four member states; Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela and Guyana, while the validity of the Treaty requires the ratification of at least nine member states.*



near-Earth; who controls near-Earth, dominates Terra; who dominates Terra, determines the destiny of humankind (Dolman, 2002). Space is still interesting from various points of view; therefore, countries are developing their capabilities to conquer it. Since the launching of the first artificial satellite Sputnik 1 in 1957 approximately 50 countries have sent thousands of satellites into space. In the context of Terra-related geopolitical thoughts, influential countries can not avoid Astropolitik or questions related to controlling or discovering the space.

Chinese and Russian perception of the world contributes an important stone to the mosaic of discussions on geopolitics. A completely different, non-West reflection of Mao Zedong from February 1974 on the existence of **three worlds**<sup>17</sup> is of key importance for Chinese strategic thought of the past four decades. The first world consists of the USA and Soviet Union, while the second or in-between world includes Japan, Europe and Canada. The third world is densely populated. With the exception of Japan, it comprises Asia, the entire Africa and Latin America<sup>18</sup>. Deng Xiaoping explained and upgraded Mao's strategic reasoning and stressed the commitment of Chinese support to the third world countries. Chinese contemporary geopolitical policy is obvious also from the Chinese navy's extrovert orientation towards the wide spaciousness, which implies a significant change from, as said by Qi Xu (2004), »deliberate absence« to »the navy's strategic choice oriented toward the world's oceans and formulated with a perspective of the grand strategic space« (ibid.). From the Chinese presence in the so called third world can be concluded that the strategy is successful in practice and that it will be followed by, we can say that for the first time in the history, Chinese navy<sup>19</sup>.

The most stable geopolitical school in Russia<sup>20</sup> is **Eurasian School** founded by brothers George and Evgeny Trubetskoi at the beginning of the 20th century. Its basic idea is that Russia is neither Europe nor Asia, but Eurasia. Contemporary leader of this school is Aleksander Dugin<sup>21</sup>. Contemporary geopolitical schools in

<sup>17</sup> Triple A: South Asia, Africa and Latin America.

<sup>18</sup> See Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website: <http://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/ziliao/3602/3604/t18008.htm>.

<sup>19</sup> It is known from the history that Chinese »ocean« navy used to be a diplomat/military instrument with strategic reach. At the beginning of the 15th century Admiral Zheng He carried out a series of trade expeditions to the shores of Africa, Asia, India, etc., with an impressive force of over one hundred ships and a few ten thousands of men. Following his death in 1435 Chinese emperors no longer decided to cover a huge strategic space with Chinese navy.

<sup>20</sup> Geopolitical strategies of Prometheism and Intermarium developed in Poland at the beginning of the 20th century as a counterweight to Russian political aspirations. Polish Marshal Pilsudski is the father of strategies whose roots go back to the battles of numerous nations subjugated to the Russian Empire in the 19th century. With the establishment of independent states the countries of the Baltic, Black and Caspian Sea regions would be defended from Russian expansionism. Prometheism is a relatively unknown school in Slovenia. Rather unknown is also the fact that before and during World War II Slovenian intellectuals cherished the idea of joining the Intermarium, a federation of Baltic, Central and Eastern European space. The Polish and Slovenes nourished the idea of a new political arrangement in East Europe, a type of a loose association of 16 nation-states sharing the external defence and internal market (Arnež, 2002: 354). If a state or association of this kind had been developed, it would have certainly been a better and upgraded form of cordon sanitaire from the period between both world wars.

<sup>21</sup> Dugin is famous for his non-moderate views. He is an author of a 600-page book *The Foundations of Geopolitics: The Geopolitical Future of Russia, 1997*, allegedly written with the help of high officers of Russian Army.

Russia are rather unpopular. Russian geopolitics traditionally deals with internal affairs of Russia and its position in the world, rather than with global issues. From the standpoint of the future, a large debate is being run between two schools, the so-called *Westerners* and *Slavophiles*<sup>22</sup>. While the former recognize the universality of western values, the latter advocate the development of Russia towards a genuine direction since western values are not universal (Okunov, 2009). The School of »Westerners« is undoubtedly also stable in Russia; however, numerous examples reject the affirmation on the orientation towards internal Russian affairs. Russia is, among other things, active regionally and globally also in the following areas: active participation in Asian space, SCO, engagement in the near neighbourhood of the former Soviet Union, BRIC and the initiative on strategic partnership among the USA, Russia and Europe<sup>23</sup>.

The Internet has shrunk geographic borders, while the digital division between North America, Europe and East Asia on one side and Sub-Saharan Africa and Middle East on the other remains huge despite the spreading of Internet access. The access of this kind enables the flourishing of various activities, positive and negative, including the global terrorist network Al Kaida (Dodds, 2007: 166-167). In post-modern geopolitics the space can first be imagined and only then widely represented in national and also non-national frameworks (Luke, 1993; Ó Tuathail in Dalby, 1998). Ó Tuathail (1998, 27-28) suggests that geopolitics-related problems of the key countries in the contemporary world should be addressed in a different way, through the following questions:

1. How is global space imagined and represented?
2. How is global space divided into essential blocs or zones of identity and difference?
3. How is global power conceptualized?
4. How are global threats spatialized and strategies of response conceptualized?
5. How are the major actors shaping geopolitics identified and conceptualized?

Post-modern geopolitics is accompanied also by the so called *popular geopolitics*. Popular geopolitics is a way of distribution of pictures and images of global political geographies within national political cultures and above them; therefore, a relation between political life and mass media, and also the way in which various media, a part of global politics, produce and distribute their messages on the television,

<sup>22</sup> *During the Tsar period they were Orthodox Slavophiles, today they are Eurasians who, the same as Žirinovski, can not see Russian perspective in its orientation to impoverished Western Slavs, but through Iran and India to South Asia. Materialization of this doctrine is presented by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization – SCO, established in 2001 as a successor of the Shanghai Five which in 1996 was founded by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Russia and Tajikistan. SCO was co-founded also by Uzbekistan. Observer countries today are also India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan. Belarus and Sri Lanka have a dialogue partner status, while guest attendances are Afghanistan, ASEAN and the Community of Independent States.*

<sup>23</sup> *The initiative on the new pan-European security architecture was suggested to Europe by Russian President Medvedjev in Berlin 2008, while at the Council of Europe session in April 2010 Foreign Minister Lavrov suggested dealing with common global challenges and forming a strategic triangle USA-Europe-Russia, Worth mentioning as a symbolic gesture is the fact that in May 2010, for the first time in history, members of NATO member states, namely France, Poland, Great Britain and the USA, participated in a military parade on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of victory in World War II at the Red Square in Moscow.*

radio and/or Internet. (Dodds, 2007: 17). Following 11 September 2001<sup>24</sup> the area of geopolitics saw the establishment of new reality, balance of forces and response strategies. Asymmetry of global security threats and reality of popular geopolitics shook the foundations of the traditional understanding of geopolitics. We can find causative consequences between an attack of a small group of terrorist on a symbol of economic power in the USA and two wars within the so called Global War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq. The importance of asymmetric actors for geopolitical issues is greater than ever before.

Non-state asymmetric actors are an integral part of anti-geopolitics that represents constant independence from a state, regardless of who is in power, and articulates two interconnected forms of anti-hegemonic fight. Firstly, it challenges the *material* (economic and military) geopolitical power of countries and global institutions, and secondly, it challenges their *image* in the world, forced by political and economic elites. (Routledge, 2003, 2008: 236-237). Anti-geopolitics has in practice a local character, which, however, definitely changes in line with the globalization process. In a codependent world, terrorists with global reach can be considered also as actors of geopolitics, since their goals and ambitions significantly exceed the ideas and environment of their origin. And not only terrorists as individuals, but also as members of a certain group or idea, such as Al Kaida which for some is a loose movement oriented against the West, and for others a very well connected and led terrorist network.

And what role do small countries play in this changed, post-modern and complex understanding of geopolitics? Since the size of territory, number of population, length of borders and geographic position are not of such key and exclusive importance as in the past, this is also a chance and opportunity for small actors. Only sixteen years following its declaration of independence and as the first former communist country Slovenia presided over a 27 member state community comprising half a billion population, the Council of the European Union<sup>25</sup>. Therefore it is important to see and understand how, on the basis of development of its own statehood, Slovenia achieved this historic moment for all Slovenes in the year 2008.

<sup>24</sup> *Just like the fall of bipolar world caused numerous geopolitical changes. The period following the end of the Cold War was characterized by the movement from the periphery to the center and from focusing on military power to focusing on economic power. It was the non-interest in problems, conflicts and difficulties in the periphery that turned the traditional border areas in battlefields, which happened in the former Yugoslavia. (Tunander, 1997: 6-7).*

<sup>25</sup> *Despite a significant amount of praise Slovenia received for successful presiding over EU Council, it would have been illusionary to expect that Slovenia could have made radical changes in this bureaucratic mastodon, especially from the standpoint of Slovenian economy; EU Commission employs approximately 25 000 people, Secretariat 3 300 and Military Staff 200 (sic!).*

## 2 GEOSTRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SLOVENIAN SPACE

### 2.1 Short historical review

A historical review of Slovenian territory shows that from approximately 70 000 km<sup>2</sup> of Slovenian land in its largest size in the first half of the 9th century, 10 000 km<sup>2</sup> soon became a part of Hungarian space. By the end of the 15th century, three fifths of the remaining territory – 36 000 km<sup>2</sup> had become a part of Bavarian-German space following several hundreds of years of development, while two thirds – 24 000 km<sup>2</sup> remained the foundation of Slovenian national development after the 15th century (Grafenauer, 1994: 8). Contemporary Slovenian state is thus based on almost 29% of historical territory from one thousand years ago, or on 83% of territory which has formed the basis of development for the past few centuries<sup>26</sup>. Through the entire history Slovenian territory and Slovenes have been, as the northernmost southern Slavic nation, in the middle and at the crossroads of Germanic, Roman and Hungarian interests clearly expressed also in both world wars<sup>27</sup>.

The Republic of Slovenia is a continental and maritime country. It is situated in the European space to which Slavic nations managed to penetrate on their way to the West and in the area where Slavic, Germanic and Roman cultures meet. Historically and culturally speaking it belongs to Central Europe<sup>28</sup>. The Republic of Slovenia's geostrategic position<sup>29</sup> in European space is unique<sup>30</sup> since it represents the crossroads of three geostrategic and geopolitical spaces, namely, Central European, Southern European and Adriatic-Mediterranean<sup>31</sup>. The shortest land routes run through its

<sup>26</sup> This percentage would be considerably lower if General Maister after the end of World War I, in the fights for the northern border, had not succeeded in winning almost one third of today's Slovenian territory in the east, including Maribor, and if Slovenia after World War II had not been given back a large portion of the national territory in the west it lost after World War I.

<sup>27</sup> For a detailed presentation and comprehensive analyses of historic perspective of the strategic importance of Slovenian theatre of war and geopolitical dynamics of Slovenian space see Žabkar, 1996 and 1997. Prof. Dr. Anton Žabkar is a pioneer of Slovenian, not only military science, but also of geopolitical and strategic thought. Special author's thanks goes to the fact that the article is significantly enriched by lucid, meticulous and critical remarks and comments made by Prof. Žabkar.

<sup>28</sup> According to NATO and Jane's Sentinel's classification, Slovenia forms a part of the Southern Theatre of War.

<sup>29</sup> Geostrategy as a social science discipline, sub-area of geopolitics and a type of foreign politics guided by geographic factors. In this context, technological, military, political, economic and cultural aspects of a country are taken into account. Besides the above mentioned theorists of geopolitics, famous geostrategists are Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, Nicholas J. Spykman, George F. Kennan, etc.

<sup>30</sup> Every country believes its space is unique. Whether this is true from the global or regional geostrategic and geopolitical point of view is another question. For example, Slovenia connected the northern part of the South Wing of NATO, Italy and Hungary, and later this connection expanded also to Croatia.

<sup>31</sup> Slovenia is active in numerous forms of regional cooperation which include all three types of space. The most well-known are the following: The Central European Initiative, whose beginnings go back to the year 1989, brings together 18 member states from Central and Southeast Europe. It includes the highest number of member states of all regional initiatives. The Adriatic-Ionian Initiative includes eight countries situated along the Adriatic and Ionian Sea. The Alpe-Adrian Working Group brings together 13 provinces and regions, while Croatia and Slovenia cooperate at the state level. Other forms of regional cooperation are also: The Danube Cooperation Process, the Southeast Europe Clearinghouse Initiative (SEEC), the Southeastern Europe Defence Ministerial Initiative (SEDM), etc. (see <http://www.mors.si> in <http://www.mzz.gov.si>). Slovenia and other 43 member states from Europe, North Africa and Middle East participate in Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean which was initiated by French EU Council Presidency in July 2008. It is co-chaired by French and Egyptian President and based in Barcelona in Spain.

territory connecting Western Europe and the central part of Southern Europe with the Danube Region and Balkans, and through them with Eastern Europe and Anatolia. Slovenian territory also offers the shortest and most favourable connections leading from continental Central European countries to the coast of the Adriatic Sea and Apennine Peninsula (Chapter 3.2. ReSNV, 2001).

The total length of the Slovenian state border is 1370 km. The land border – 67.2% - is 920 km long, the river border – 29.3% - is 402 km long, while the maritime border<sup>32</sup> – 3.5% - is 48 km long. Slovenia has open issues regarding the state border with Croatia. In this context, the maritime border is of vital importance for Slovenia. The current and future position and (non)-concession of Croatia<sup>33</sup> regarding the border in the Gulf of Piran will most probably be influenced by the situation along its southern maritime border with BiH and Montenegro. Any potential unilateral Croatian concession during negotiations on the border in the Gulf of Piran would aggravate Croatian negotiations on the maritime border with Montenegro and BiH; these two countries could probably refer to the potential Croatian concession regarding its northern maritime border to negotiate the most favorable course of the border at the sea (Žabkar, 1997).

The in-between geostrategic position of Slovenia has – considering the fact that various actors determined borders between the Western Balkans and Europe in different way, in the 20th century Slovenia formed a part of multinational countries (Austro-Hungarian Empire and Yugoslavia) whose geostrategic centres were in Central Europe and in the Balkans – contributed to the fact that international analyses, as well as geopolitical and strategic classification sometimes consider Slovenia as a Central European country (Figure 2) and sometimes as a Balkans area or country. Since Slovenia was internationally recognized, it has generally been assessed as Central European and Southern European country; Slovenes should therefore be Central European Southerners<sup>34</sup>. Slovenes mainly identify themselves as belonging to Western Europe and consider Slovenia similar to Alpine countries and regions,

<sup>32</sup> See [http://www.stat.si/doc/pub/slo\\_figures\\_09.pdf](http://www.stat.si/doc/pub/slo_figures_09.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> Croatia had in the past already withdrawn from the signed agreement on solving Slovenia-Croatia border dispute. In September 2002 Croatia sent a letter to Slovenia saying it could not accept the Treaty on the Common State Border (the so called Drnovešk-Račan Agreement) initialed by Slovenian and Croatian Prime Ministers on 20 July 2001. Eight years later, on 4 November 2009 in Stockholm, Slovenian Prime Minister Borut Pahor and Croatian Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor, in the presence of Swedish Prime Minister and a co-signatory of the Agreement Fredrik Reinfeldt, the then President of the EU Council, signed the Arbitration Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of Croatia. The Arbitration Agreement establishes the Arbitral Tribunal which must determine: (a) the course of the maritime and land boundary between the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Croatia, (b) Slovenia's junction to the High Sea and (c) the regime for the use of the relevant maritime areas (Article 4 of the Agreement). The Agreement was ratified by Slovenian and Croatian Parliament. The Arbitration Agreement caused numerous polemics in Slovenia, namely what could Slovenia gain or lose with the Agreement. The key question which divided the opinion of supporters and opponents of the Agreement was whether Slovenia, once the arbitration procedure was concluded, would keep the junction to the international waters. On the basis of the joint-decision made by the ruling coalition and opposition, a legislative subsequent referendum was called for 6 June 2010 to decide on the final adoption of the Act Ratifying the Arbitration Agreement. The referendum was attended by 42.3% of the country's voters, of whom 51.5% supported the ratification of the Arbitration Agreement.

<sup>34</sup> Since the beginning of the 20th century Slovenia has favoured a common European idea in various versions and modalities, from the »United Danube Countries« to »Federal Europe« (Rahten, 2009: 23-31).

Figure 2:  
Changing of  
borders and  
establishment of  
new countries  
after World  
War I.



Source: On <http://media.photobucket.com/image/map%20ww1/SerbianCulture/Europe20Map20Before20After20WW2008.jpg>.

such as Austria, Switzerland, Northern Italy and Bavaria. From the standpoint of the military-geographic classification, there is no doubt that Slovenian space has always been an integral part of the Southern Theatre of War. In the 20th century Slovenia for more than a quarter of the century presented the edge of an unstable Balkans »black hole« in the heart of Europe. In and near Slovenian space four wars were fought (World War I, Northern Border War, World War II and Independence War in 1991) in the total duration of ten years. In this context we must also mention six crisis years in the period between both world wars (TIGR<sup>35</sup>, Fiume<sup>36</sup>), nine crisis years after World War I caused by Trieste and the Free Territory of Trieste<sup>37</sup>, as well as a five-year war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1991 to 1995. In 1999 Slovenia granted NATO use of its airspace for the purposes of the intervention in the Balkans. (ibid.). Since Slovenia's entry into NATO and EU, military threat has no longer been a question. The current issue enjoying an increasing share of interest is Slovenia's participation in international operations and missions which are

<sup>35</sup> TIGR is an abbreviation for the names of three towns (Trieste, Gorizia and Rijeka) and a peninsula Istria. It was an organization active in the period between both world wars. TIGR was an underground organization oriented against Italian fascism. The organization was, like General Rudolf Maister, unjustifiably kept in secret for almost five decades after World War II; today, however, the historic role of both is recognized.

<sup>36</sup> Fiume is Italian and Austrian name for the town Rijeka which is now in Croatia. Between 1918 and 1924, following the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the town was a bone of contention between Italy and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia). In line with the Treaty of Rome, signed on 27 January 1924, the town Rijeka/Fiume was assigned to the Kingdom and Italy.

<sup>37</sup> The Free Territory of Trieste was a free city-state (1947-1954) established in line with the Peace Treaty signed by Italy and Allied Forces. The territory was divided into Zone A and Zone B with Italian and Slovene as official languages. Following the London Agreement of 1954, Zone A was assigned to Italy and Zone B to Yugoslavia.

not only of peacekeeping or humanitarian nature. (Iraq, Afghanistan)<sup>38</sup>. From the military perspective, Slovenia was in 2009 and 2010 characterized by similar public debate on Afghanistan as in 2006 when its participation in Iraq was discussed. The Slovenian Armed Forces participated in NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) with four instructors at the beginning of their mission and then with two instructors until the withdraw from Iraq at the beginning of 2009. The discussion whether Slovenia is in war in Afghanistan, what Slovenian soldiers are doing there, what will be the quality transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Contingent within ISAF, etc., continues also in 2010<sup>39</sup> due to the expected take-over of Slovenian Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) in autumn this year.

## 2.2 Short contemporary review

Independent Slovenia covers an area of 20 255 km<sup>2</sup>. According to the 2002 Census, the population in Slovenia was 1 964 036, which meant a 2.6% increase in comparison to the 1991 Census. In 2005, the number of population for the second time in history exceeded two million, whereas in March 2010, according to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, the number of population was approximately 2 055 000. In the 2002 Census, 83.06% of population declared themselves as Slovenes, 0.11% and 0.32% of population belonged to Italian and Hungarian autochthonous minority respectively, while 8.9% of population did not wish to declare their nationality or they did not wish to answer the question on national affiliation. Other large nationalities living in Slovenia are Serbs with 1.98%, Croats with 1.81%, Bosniaks with 1.1%, Muslims with 0.53%, Bosnians with 0.41% and Albanians with 0.31%<sup>40</sup> of population.

In terms of size, Slovenia qualifies to the upper third of the group of the fifteen smallest European countries<sup>41</sup> (smaller than Slovenia are the Holy See, Monaco, San Marino, Liechtenstein, Malta, Andorra, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Kosovo and Montenegro, while Macedonia, Albania, Belgium and Moldavia are bigger for 25%, 40%, 50% and 67% respectively). From the standpoint of the number of population, Slovenia also belongs to the upper third of the group of the fifteen smallest European countries whose population is up to 2 310 000 (besides the above mentioned countries, Estonia also has less population, whereas Macedonia, Latvia and Lithuania have more po-

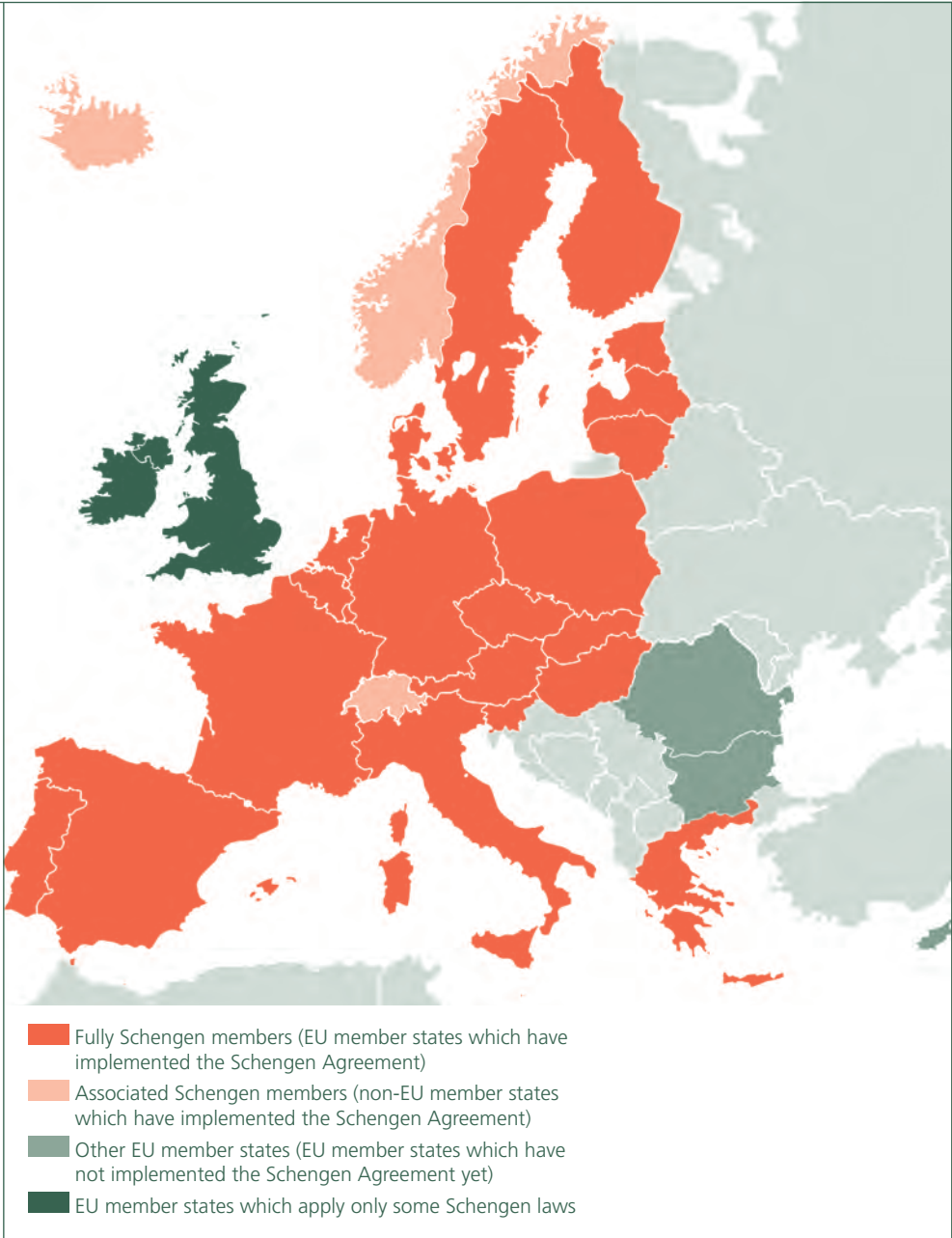
<sup>38</sup> For a detailed insight into Slovenian participation in international operations and missions see »Participation of the Republic of Slovenia in international operations and missions«, (Ed. Bric, R.), Ministry of Defence, Ljubljana, [http://www.mors.si/fileadmin/mors/pdf/publikacije/zbornik\\_f.pdf](http://www.mors.si/fileadmin/mors/pdf/publikacije/zbornik_f.pdf).

<sup>39</sup> On 6 May 2010 the Slovenian Armed Forces participated in international operations and missions with 468 servicemembers; with 350 within KFOR in Kosovo, 67 within ISAF in Afghanistan, and elsewhere in the Western Balkans, Lebanon and Syria, <http://www.slovenskavojska.si/mednarodno-sodelovanje/mednarodne-operacije-in-misije/>.

<sup>40</sup> See <http://www.stat.si/>. In the third quarter of the 20th century citizens of other republics of the former Yugoslavia started migrating to Slovenia as economic migrants.

<sup>41</sup> Thirteen out of fifteen countries are members of the United Nations Organization with 192 member states, see <http://www.un.org/>). The Holy See has the UN observer status, while Kosovo is not a UN member. Kosovo declared its independence on 17 February 2008. By 1 June 2010 Kosovo had been recognized by 69 UN members. Slovenia recognized Kosovo's independence on 5 March 2008, <http://www.kosovothankyou.com/>.

Figure 3:  
European Union  
and Schengen  
Area 2010.



Source: Available on <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/97/Schengenzone.svg/1000px-Schengenzone.svg.png> <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/focuson/film/images/activities/cold-war/europe-cold-war.png>.

population<sup>42</sup>). Within the European Union and its 27 member states, Slovenia ranks on the fifth place from the bottom from the standpoint of the number of population; only Malta, Luxembourg, Cyprus and Estonia have less population, and among

<sup>42</sup> For statistical data see <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>, the number of population is based on the 2009 assessment.



the last four countries in terms of size; Estonia is 125% bigger. Within NATO and its 28 member states, Slovenia ranks on the fourth place from the bottom from the standpoint of the number of population; only Iceland, Luxembourg and Estonia have less population. Smaller than Slovenia is only Luxembourg since Iceland is five times bigger. Slovenia is also one of the 14 new European countries formed after the Cold War (upon the disintegration of socialist federations) and recognized by the international community between 1989 and 1993. It is one of the seven countries established after the fall of the Social Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; the last three were Montenegro and Serbia in 2006 and Kosovo in 2008.

Slovenia realized its pre-set Euro-Atlantic ambitions with the entry into NATO on 29 March 2004 and into the European Union on 1 May 2004<sup>43</sup>. On 1 January 2007 Slovenia adopted a common European currency Euro. On 22 December 2007<sup>44</sup> it joined the Schengen Area when it abolished border checks at common EU land and sea borders. On 30 March 2008 it did the same at air borders (Figure 3). The key tool enabling the implementation of the Schengen Agreement is the Schengen Information System (SIS) – a common electronic database on individuals and objects which includes data on persons who have been banned entry to the Schengen area, persons who are wanted for arrest, missing persons, as well as on stolen vehicles and documents, money, weapons, marked banknotes deriving from criminal offences, etc.<sup>45</sup>.

Today Slovenia is a modern information society; in 2008 one mobile phone was registered per capita, 58% of population used the Internet and 65% of population used personal computer, while these shares are increasing from year to year<sup>46</sup>. This is extremely important because »the time we live in is the period of information and information society, in short, the information age. Everyday life of Slovenes, citizens of the Republic of Slovenia, Europeans and the whole global world is characterized by the use of mobile phones and the Internet (Črnčec, 2009: 12).« The need to study, among other things, also a geo-economical aspect of the geostrategic position of Slovenia is related also, or mainly to the information society, globalization and changed security environment.

<sup>43</sup> *The referendum on Slovenia's entry into NATO and EU was attended by over 60% of the country's voters. NATO membership was confirmed by 66% of voters, and EU membership by almost 90% of voters.*

<sup>44</sup> *The main idea of the Schengen Area, created by the Schengen Agreement signed by five EU members (Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Germany and the Netherlands) in a Luxembourg village in 1985, is the provision of free movement across internal borders. Tighter border controls are thus concentrated at external Schengen borders, mainly to stop illegal migration, drugs smuggling, trade in human beings and other illegal activities. When Slovenia and six other countries joined the Schengen area, the total number of member states increased to 22.*

<sup>45</sup> *Slovenia – Schengen Newcomer, Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, December 2007.*

<sup>46</sup> *The Internet is the fastest growing telecommunication medium of all times. In 1998 it was used by 140 million people in the world, in 2001 by 700 million, in the middle of 2007 by 1.173 billion or 17.8% of world's population and on 31 December 2009 by 1.802 billion or 26.6% of world's population. In February 2008 the number of Chinese users of the Internet for the first time exceeded the number of American users (220 million versus 216 million). At the end of 2009 this ratio increased to 384 million users in China versus 234 million users in the USA (<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>).*

### 3 SLOVENIA THROUGH GEOPOLITICAL – GEO-ECONOMIC PRISM

In 2005 Slovenia adopted the *Slovenia's Development Strategy* (SDS)<sup>47</sup> setting out the vision and objectives of Slovenia's development. SDS determines four basic development objectives: (i) economic development objective – to reach the average level of the EU economic development in the period of ten years; (ii) social development objective – to improve the quality of living and the welfare of all individuals; (iii) cross-generational and sustainable development objective – to enforce the sustainability principle in all areas of development, including the sustainable renewal of population; (iv) Slovenia's development objective in the international environment – to become a recognizable and distinguished country in the world. Development goals were some more and other less successfully realized during the period of economic growth. The sudden change caused by economic crisis is now so much more painful.

Numerous public polemics and discussions, as well as statistical data show that Slovenia has been more affected by economic crisis than the majority of its EU partners. This fact was confirmed also by Slovenian Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (IMAD) in its 2010 Development Report which says that »the economic crisis in 2009 disrupted the implementation of SDS goals in the area of economic and social development. The crisis has, so to speak, annulled the progress in the area of economic and social development made on the basis of high economic end employment growth in the past cyclically favourable years«<sup>48</sup>.

Cooperation with international environment is of vital importance for Slovenia and its present and future development since it highly depends on imports. Until the year 1991 two thirds of Slovenian exports were intended for the former Yugoslavia. Following Slovenia's independence, its economy reoriented to western markets. The majority of Slovenian international trade is with EU members (in 2008 69% of export and 77.9% of import). Slovenian direct investments abroad are oriented mainly to the area of Western Balkans, while the main investors in Slovenia are EU countries with 85% share (Chart 1). The biggest investors are Austria with 48% share, France with 7%, the Netherlands with 6.5%, Italy with 5.7%, Germany with 5% share, as well as other EU countries. Slovenia dedicates 76.8% of all direct investments to non-EU countries, mainly to the Western Balkans. Slovenia's direct investments to Serbia amount to 28.5%, to Croatia 19.7% and to Bosnia and Herzegovina 12.4%. Austria, the biggest investor in Slovenia, enjoys only 2.5% of all Slovenian direct investments.

<sup>47</sup> It was adopted during the 30th Government session on 23 June 2005, [http://www.svez.gov.si/fileadmin/svez.gov.si/pageuploads/docs/katal\\_inf\\_javn\\_znac/02\\_StrategijarazvojaSlovenije.pdf](http://www.svez.gov.si/fileadmin/svez.gov.si/pageuploads/docs/katal_inf_javn_znac/02_StrategijarazvojaSlovenije.pdf).

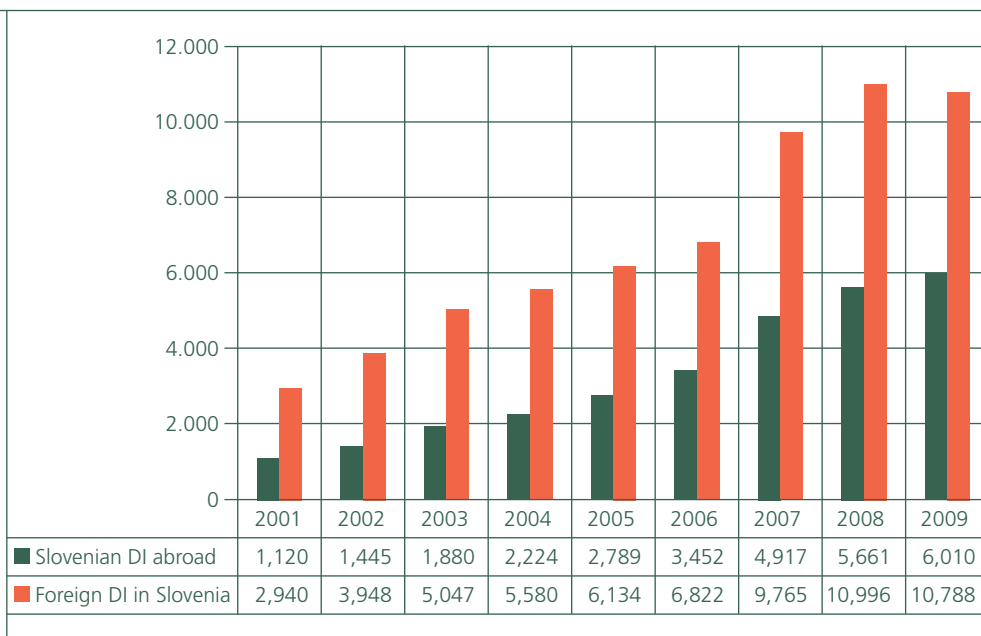
<sup>48</sup> The 2010 Development Report was published on 3 May 2010, highlighting numerous structural weaknesses, especially the fact that the so far economic growth has over-relied on technologically not enough demanding industrial activities and traditional services, limiting the competitiveness of Slovenian economy; therefore, the economy recovery and improvement of welfare are demanding challenges, especially because the economic crisis has exacerbated public finances and accessibility to financial sources, and decreased the level of potential gross domestic product. ([http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user\\_upload/publikacije/pr/2010/POR\\_2010.pdf](http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/publikacije/pr/2010/POR_2010.pdf)).

**Chart 1:**  
International  
investments  
by individual  
countries or  
groups of  
countries (in  
million euros) on  
31 December  
2009.

Countries or groups of countries	Assets							Liabilities				
	Total	Direct investments abroad	Investments in foreign securities	Financial derivatives	Other investments	International reserves	Total	Direct investments in Slovenia	Foreign investments in securities	Financial derivatives	Other investments	
	2= 3+4+5+6+7	3	4	5	6	7	8= 9+10+11+12	9	10	11	12	
World	-12,128	6,010	11,249	81	16,827	749	47,043	10,788	9,355	191	26,709	
European Union, of that	-18,774	1,072	9,311	70	10,292	135	39,654	9,134	5,526	169	24,825	
Austria	-11,759	2,342	633	27	1,513	0	14,083	5,171	485	124	8,303	
Belgium	443	982	-4	609	6	371	539	396	60	1	83	
France	94	2,089	24	1,628	6	431	1,995	773	3	6	1,213	
Ireland	-971	314	1	233	1	78	1,285	1	4	0	1,280	
Italy	-530	1,235	25	611	4	595	1,765	612	23	5	1,125	
Germany	-2,002	3,319	220	2,125	8	966	5,321	531	173	1	4,615	
The Netherlands	388	1,373	182	838	1	352	985	706	19	0	259	
Great Britain	-2,967	834	9	479	12	257	3,801	94	2,269	14	1,424	
EU institutions	-913	4,639	0	66	0	4,554	5,552	0	0	0	5,552	
EFTA	-881	692	56	108	2	483	1,573	1,183	52	1	337	
Other European countries, of that	8,016	9,313	4,616	351	8	4,338	1,297	260	113	18	906	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,302	1,475	746	57	2	670	173	22	3	3	145	
Croatia	2,129	2,794	1,187	79	0	1,528	665	296	51	5	313	
Serbia	2,645	2,886	1,715	66	2	1,103	241	2	51	4	184	
Montenegro	440	491	163	8	2	318	51	0	5	2	44	
Macedonia	520	581	384	44	1	152	62	2	3	2	55	
USA	920	1,250	21	979	1	123	330	86	131	1	112	
Other countries	912	1,570	245	500	0	459	658	125	25	2	507	
Unclassified	-2,321	1,210	0	0	0	1,131	3,530	0	3,508	0	22	

Source: Bank of Slovenia.

**Graph 2: Direct Investments (DI) and Slovenia (in million euros)**



Source: Bank of Slovenia.

The trend of increasing of both indexes has slightly decelerated, and in the event of investments to Slovenia in 2009 even decreased by 2% (Graph 2). All this results from the global economic crisis which has badly affected also Slovenia.

The only Slovenian port, the Port of Koper<sup>49</sup>, is of key importance for Slovenian international trade. The total cargo throughput in 2008 amounted to a record 16.05 millions of tons and decreased by 18% in 2009 to 13.14 millions of tons<sup>50</sup>. Therefore it is of vital importance for Slovenia to be granted an appropriately regulated access to the High Sea and epicontinental shelf. Today the access is not important only for the free movement of vessels (vessels sailing towards Slovenian coast can freely sail through Croatian and Italian waters, in line with provisions of the so called Innocent Passage), but also, and even more importantly, for the exploitation of marine resources. The neighbouring Italy is, for example, already pumping natural gas from the bottom of the North Adriatic Sea. A very pressing issue at the moment is the construction of the Regasification Terminal for Liquefied Natural Gas in Žavljje in the

<sup>49</sup> There are two other important ports in the North Adriatic Region, Trieste in Italy and Rijeka in Croatia, which can both serve as an entry into Central and East Europe.

<sup>50</sup> Statistical data on cargo throughput as of the year 2006 are available on <http://www.luka-kp.si/slo/terminali-in-tovor>. The largest decrease was registered in the amount of loaded and unloaded vehicles, from 816,192 tons in 2008 to 444,621 tons in 2009, and in the amount of loaded and unloaded dry bulk cargo, from 7,900,610 tons to 5,575,403 tons. In the year 2010 the trends have re-started to increase; in January 2010 the cargo throughput in the Port of Koper amounted to 1,506,878 tons and in February 2010 to 1,224,876 tons, which is 15.8% more than in February 2009.

Port of Trieste<sup>51</sup>. The fact is that on the bottom of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the North Adriatic Sea huge amounts of natural gas have been found. In 2006 Italy<sup>52</sup> pumped approximately 10.7 billion cubic metres of natural gas, approximately half of it in the North Adriatic Sea, and Croatia approximately two billions. If Slovenia was granted an access to epicontinental shelf, it could also pump natural gas.

Slovenian gross domestic product and gross domestic product per capita have gradually increased in the past decade. In the years 2006, 2007 and 2008, Slovenian gross product increased by 5.8%, 6.8% and 3.5% respectively, to decrease dramatically in the year 2009 by 7.8%. In comparison with EU, Slovenia has been worse affected by the global economic crisis, making its pace of approaching towards the EU level decelerate. If Slovenia before was gaining upon the average level of EU<sup>53</sup> development, it has now started to **lag behind** which is proved also by the increase and decrease of GDP in EU. In EU 27, the GDP growth in 2008 amounted to 0.6% and to 0.7% in the Euro Zone. In 2009 GDP in EU 27 decreased by 4.2% in EU and by 4.1% in the Euro Zone. Slovenian gross domestic product thus decreased from 37.135 billion in 2008 to 34.894 billion in 2009, while GDP per capita decreased from 18.366 billion in 2008 to 17.092 billion in 2009. Only in 2009 the national budget debt increased from 8.389 billion euros to 12.519 billion euros, which meant an increase by 13.3%, from 22.6% to 35.9% GDP. In comparison with EU this were still favourable statistical data since the EU 27 public debt in the year 2009 amounted to 73.6% and in the Euro Zone to 78.8%<sup>54</sup>. At the end of 2009 the national budget debt amounted to 1.915 billion (5.5% GDP), while at the end of 2007 there was still an eight million surplus. The number of unemployed increased from less than 60 000

<sup>51</sup> *Italy's intent to build a Regasification Terminal for Liquefied Natural Gas in the Port of Trieste has caused heated reactions, not only by Slovenian and Italian environmental organizations, but also by official Slovenian politics. The Government has considered the opinion made by the interministerial group of experts and decided that the construction of the terminal is not acceptable. It also demands from Italy the official documentation, while speculations have appeared in the media that the documents used in the consensus-gaining process were false. The abstract of the study on the influence the Regasification Terminal for Liquefied Natural Gas in Žavljje would have on the environment is available on [http://www.mop.gov.si/fileadmin/mop.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocja/okolje/pdf/cpvo/terminal\\_zavljje.pdf](http://www.mop.gov.si/fileadmin/mop.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocja/okolje/pdf/cpvo/terminal_zavljje.pdf).*

<sup>52</sup> *In 2009 intensive cross-border cooperation between Italian company Eni and Croatian company Ina started. Annamaria A and Annamaria B are the first gas platforms situated on both sides of the border between Italy and Croatia, Eni Starts Up Annamaria A Platform in Adriatic Sea, [http://www.rigzone.com/news/article.asp?a\\_id=82569](http://www.rigzone.com/news/article.asp?a_id=82569); First gas at Annamaria; <http://www.oilonline.com/News/News.Articles/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/31590/First-gas-at-Annamaria.aspx>.*

<sup>53</sup> *Slovenian GDP, expressed in purchasing power parity in % of EU average, in 2008 amounted to 90.9%, ranking Slovenia to the 16th place among 27 EU members. Slovenia was thus at the bottom of the second third of EU members, lagging behind the bottom of the first third of EU members for 25% percentage points. According to Slovenian IMAD, in 2009 Slovenia returned to the 89% of EU development level which meant a decrease by 2% to the level from the year 2007 and also the first decrease since the independence, [http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user\\_upload/publikacije/pr/2010/POR\\_2010.pdf](http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/publikacije/pr/2010/POR_2010.pdf).*

<sup>54</sup> *Available on <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>. Over-borrowing and lack of control can push a country to the edge of bankruptcy, which happened to Greece in 2010. The EU and IMF are forced to lend it 110 billion euros in order to save the Euro Zone. As an EU member, Slovenia will participate in this three-year restoration of financial situation in Greece with 387 million euros, although economists have been warning that the solution of this problem will not be possible without the cancellation of debts. The Greek problem will thus be solved by workers in Slovenia and Slovakia whose average gross wages amount to 1203 and 529 euros respectively, while the average Greek gross wage amounts to 1651 euros (sic!). (Data for the year 2006 in Labour market statistics, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>).*

unemployed persons in September 2008 to almost 100 000 in January 2010<sup>55</sup>. From statistical point of view, Slovenian unemployment rate of 6.2% is still well under the EU 27<sup>56</sup> rate which amounts to 9.6%.

In 2008 the energy independence of Slovenia amounted to 55.3%. In the same year the import of vehicles amounted to 2.856 billion euros, oil and oil derivatives to 2.231 billion euros, iron and steel to 1.357 billion euros, electrical machinery and appliances to 1.264 billion euros and industrial machinery for general use to 1.040 billion euros. From the entire value of import, which in 2008 amounted to 23.046 billion euros or 62% of GDP, the import to export ratio was 86%.

Regardless of the above mentioned statistical data, which from Slovenian point of view are not encouraging but compared to the EU still favourable, in May 2010 Slovenia completed the accession process for OECD<sup>57</sup> membership, the club of the most developed countries. Slovenia started the accession process for membership in this distinguished international economic organization based in Paris in 2007<sup>58</sup>. Slovenia must look for its opportunities in development, knowledge, knowledge-based society, as well as in research and development. In this area Slovenia and the entire EU are far from realizing the Lisbon Strategy which predicts 3% of GDP for research and development. The new strategy Europe 2020 suggests that 3% of GDP should be spent on research and development, 1% of public and 2% of private resources. According to Eurostat, Slovenian share of public resources in 2008 amounted to 0.55% of GDP, while the EU average was 0.72% of GDP. As said by the competent Minister, in 2009 this share should increase to 0.74% of GDP and in 2010 to 0.85%. In 2007, Slovenia spent 1.45% of GDP on research and development, lagging behind the target 3% of GDP by more than 100%. In 2007, the 3% target was in EU exceeded only by Sweden and Finland with 3.6% and 3.47% respectively. The EU average in 2007 thus amounted only to 1.85% of GDP which was far from the target Lisbon commitments, as well as from the statistics of EU partners/competitors; only Chinese share amounting to 1.44% of GDP was smaller, while the shares of the USA, South Korea (in 2006) and Japan (in 2006) were 2.67%, 3.0% and 3.4% respectively.

<sup>55</sup> *Slovenia in numbers 2009, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia and [www.stat.si](http://www.stat.si).*

<sup>56</sup> *According to Eurostat from January 2010.*

<sup>57</sup> *Estonia, Israel and Slovenia received invitation to join OECD on 10 May 2010. OECD accepted three new members, the total number of members is now (will be) 34, at the ceremony during the Ministerial Council Meeting on 27 May 2010 in Paris. Slovenia signed the Accession Agreement on 1 June in Ljubljana, ([www.sta.si](http://www.sta.si)).*

<sup>58</sup> *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development brings together 31 (20 founding) countries characterized by democratic pluralism and open economy. The organization was established in 1948 as Organisation for European Economic Co-operation – OEEC. In December 1960 it was renamed into the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD. OECD collects information, follows and analyzes trends, predicts economic development, researches social changes and develops models in various areas, such as trade, environment, etc. For over forty years it has been the strongest and most reliable source of comparable statistical data, as well as economic and social data.*

#### 4 GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

Geo-economical factors are becoming increasingly important; nevertheless, we should not neglect the significance of the traditional understanding of the space, since in the future an appropriate amount of attention will have to be given both, to geo-economical factors and to the space as it was understood by some classicists. The discussion on future geopolitical challenges always presents a unique challenge of indicating extremely complex and interwoven trends on global, regional or national levels. In Slovenia the beginning of the 21st century was characterized by the implementation of key (geo)strategic goals, as well as by the entry into NATO and EU (Figure 4). Slovenian transition from the most developed republic of the former Yugoslavia towards the average EU development level was relatively smooth. It reached its peak in successful presiding over the Council of the EU, »the EU whose interwoven institutional structure provides small countries with an attractive framework where they can control their smallness in the international environment – on one side it offers them an opportunity to co-decide on matters which they would only hardly control if they were not EU members, and on the other side it provides them with an opportunity of being supported by the power of other member states in pursuing their goals« (Zupančič, 2004: 183). The size does matter, it offers advantages and disadvantages. In the environment of a higher number of small countries, what the EU undoubtedly is, we must look mainly for opportunities, since also »for the economic theory the importance of a country's size for its economic efficiency is not as relevant as it was a few decades ago. In today's relatively free world trade any country can be efficient regardless of its size, which depends on its efficiency to use natural, capital and human resources, as well as on its international trade openness« (Damijan, 1996: 190). A higher emphasis on education, especially technical<sup>59</sup>, as well as on research and development was given to this purpose; however, the wish to qualify for the middle or even the upper third of EU development encountered the economic crisis, when Slovenian GDP decreased by almost twice as much as on average in the EU. But the goal must remain and remains a knowledge-based society in a knowledge economy. »The exact definition of knowledge economy is hard to determine. It generally refers to the economy in which ideas, information and forms of knowledge support innovations and economic growth«. This is also the environment of contemporary organizations and corporations which, in order to be competitive in global environments, have adjusted accordingly and become more flexible and less hierarchic (Giddens, 2001).

<sup>59</sup> *The percentage of population with college or university education gradually increased: from 3.3% in 1971 to 6% in 1981, to 8.9% in 1991 and to 13% in 2002 (www.stat.si); however, we should shorten the duration of the study, improve its quality and change the ratio between social sciences, natural sciences and technical graduates to the benefit of the latter. In 2004, the ratio in the EU was 25:1.5 and in Slovenia 2.5 to the benefit of social sciences graduates, in Lithuania and Hungary even 4.2 and 3.9 respectively. We should look up to Sweden with the ratio 0.8 or Germany with 0.9. With regard to the ratio between social and natural sciences graduates Slovenia ranked on the last place with the ratio 12.6, while Greece's ratio was only 1.9 to the benefit of social sciences graduates. Resolution on National Programme of Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia 2007-2010 (ReNPVS), Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 94/07.*

At the global level, the contemporary security environment is under influence of the changed security circumstances and globalization – interdependence and unprecedented development of information technology. Popular and post-modern geopolitics have additionally been characterized by global terrorism threat and *Global War on Terror*<sup>60</sup>. This term was first used by the USA after 11 September 2001 and was later adopted by numerous countries, including Great Britain. European countries were in general very sceptical towards this term, also Slovenia which reasonably held a »critical distance«. Terrorism is a security threat, a criminal offence which should be, from the point of view of criminal justice, punished accordingly. In the USA it represents a threat to national security; therefore, the USA fights it with all resources, including the army. Great Britain decided in 2007 not to use the term Global War on Terror any longer. At the beginning of 2009 the term silently said goodbye also in the USA; however, the terrorist threat<sup>61</sup> has remained.

A terrorist threat is only one of the numerous sources of threats and risks on various levels, from individuals to transnational organizations and global environment. When facing various threats, an appropriate level of attention should also be given to soft power which is primarily based on three sources: culture (the way in which you attract others), political values (that we live at home and abroad) and foreign politics (which is perceived as legitimate and moral). Hard and soft powers sometimes enhance and sometimes oppose each other. The ability to share believable information is becoming a strong source of attraction and power. Soft power is more of a social and economic by-product than only a result of deliberate government policy. With the use of soft power non-profit organizations can exacerbate or hinder government attempts, just like popular culture actors (films, singers, media, etc.) can facilitate or aggravate government efforts in this context (Nye 2004)<sup>62</sup>. An upgraded concept of combined and balanced use of hard and soft power is a smart use of power (Nye, 2008). In a contemporary security environment *smart power* is an important tool of individual countries and organizations facing challenges and risks at the global level.

#### 4.1 Global sources of threats and risks

With Slovenia's entry into NATO and EU Slovenian opportunities and obligations became also common Alliance threats and risks on one side, and mutual help and burden sharing on the other. NATO, EU and individual member states are trying to identify the sources of threats and risks. The adoption of documents which define them, the process of dealing with them, the measurement of effectiveness and implementation of documents is a never ending story for NATO, EU or Slovenia.

<sup>60</sup> *Global War on Terror – GWOT.*

<sup>61</sup> *According to the annual threat assessment given by Director of National Intelligence in front of the competent organ in the Senate, in 2008 terrorism was still the major threat for US security. In 2009 the major threat was the global economic crisis and in 2010 the far-reaching impact of the cyber threat (see <http://www.dni.gov/>).*

<sup>62</sup> *A popular saying which actually depicts what is written above, is: To win hearts and minds. The war in Iraq was a glorious military victory using military power which was not sufficiently supported by the use of soft power. In the continuation of the war the hearts and minds were not won and now a favourable result is trying to be achieved with the use of military power supported by soft power.*



NATO Strategic Concept<sup>63</sup> clearly explains that in line with the Washington Treaty, the basic and permanent purpose of NATO is to protect freedom and security of all member states with political and military resources. Since the very beginning NATO has been striving and will continue to strive to protect just and permanent peace in Europe founded on common democratic values, human rights and rule of law. This purpose could be threatened by crises and conflicts which influence the security in Euro-Atlantic Region (Article 6). »The fundamental guiding principle by which the Alliance works is that of common commitment and mutual co-operation among sovereign states in support of the indivisibility of security of all its members« (Article 8). Since the document is more than ten years old and was adopted by the Alliance with 19 member states, at Strasbourg/Kehl NATO Summit in 2009 heads of states and governments of NATO members tasked NATO Secretary General with the preparation of a new NATO strategic concept<sup>64</sup> by the end of 2010.

The New Strategic Concept will be adopted by 28 member states. The document must take into account not only the changed security challenges with the emphasis on proliferation, failed countries, energy storage, terrorism and climate changes, but also how NATO has transformed and adjusted in the past decade to better cope with these challenges<sup>65</sup>.

The EU is facing similar security challenges as NATO. The EU challenges, written in the EU Security Strategy – »A Safe Europe in a Better World«, were adopted in 2003. In practice, within EU structures in the framework of the so called »second pillar« dealing with the provision of common European security and defence policy, this area was a responsibility of Secretary General /High Representative<sup>66</sup>. In 2009 the European Parliament, in order to upgrade European Security Strategy and numerous other documents, adopted the Resolution on European Security Strategy and European Security and Defence Policy. In Article 23 the European Parliament ascertains that the 2003 European Security Strategy identified the main threats for the European Union (terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, failed countries and organized criminal), and defined strategic objectives which served as a basis for sub-strategies. Article 24 addresses the receipt of reports on numerous security threats, such as: cyber security, reliable energy supply, including European energy supply, unsolved regional conflicts in EU neighbourhood, challenges in Africa, consequences of climate changes,

<sup>63</sup> *The Strategic Concept, first published in 1991, revised and adopted on 23 and 24 April 1999.*

<sup>64</sup> *He entrusted the work to a group of experts chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright.*

<sup>65</sup> *All on the New Strategic Concept and the Group of Experts chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Ms. Madeleine K. Albright is available on <http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/what-is-strategic-concept.html>. On 17 May 2010 the group of 12 experts concluded its work with a report/analysis entitled NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement.*

<sup>66</sup> *Javier Solana performed this function as EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and as Secretary-General of the Council of the EU and WEU from October 1999 to December 2009. In line with the Treaty of Lisbon, Catherine Ashton has become de facto Foreign Minister of EU. Since 1 December 2009 she has officially been EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy and since February 2010 also Vice-President of the European Commission.*

competition for natural resources, projects aimed to enhance civilian and military capabilities, the importance of space for common security and maritime security.

At the beginning of 2010, on 25 February, EU interior ministers adopted the Internal Security Strategy for the European Union: Towards a European Security Model<sup>67</sup> which identifies common threats and risks due to which it is becoming increasingly important for EU members and institutions to jointly engage in the fight against new challenges which surpass our national, bilateral or regional capabilities. The Strategy defines the European security model with common instruments and commitments to a complementing relation among security, freedom and security. It particularly stresses the importance of connection between internal and external security. Common threats and the main challenges for internal security of the EU are the following: terrorism in all forms, serious criminal offences, organized, cyber and cross-border crime, violence, natural disasters and disasters caused by man. EU and NATO challenges are relatively successfully dealt with also by Slovenia in its new National Security Strategy.

Slovenian ReSNV (Chapter 4) determines that the sources of threats and risks for the national security of the Republic of Slovenia, from the standpoint of their origin, appear at global, transnational and national levels. *Global sources* of threats and risks are, besides their global origin and universal-local consequences of their operation, characterized also by the multiplicative nature which influences the appearance of other security threats and risks and at the same time increases their effects and consequences. These sources include climate changes, financial, economic and social risks and crisis areas. *Transnational sources* of threats and risks are characterized by transnational origin and cross-border dimensions. They include terrorism, illegal activities in the area of conventional weapons, weapons of mass destruction and nuclear technology, organized crime, illegal migrations, cyber threats, abuse of information technologies and systems, activities of foreign intelligence services and military threats. *National sources* of threats and risks are, in terms of their origin, related to events and phenomena in national environment. They include threats to public safety, natural and other disasters, restriction of natural resources, degradation of living environment, health-epidemiologic threats and some factors of uncertainty.

A successful fight against threats and risks requires an appropriate provision of financial resources to institutions which cope with them. The defence system is only one of the national security subsystems under fire, since Slovenia has under-

<sup>67</sup> *Development of European security model is available on <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/sl/10/st05/st05842-re02.sl110.pdf>.*

taken to NATO to guarantee 2% of defence expenditure for its own needs<sup>68</sup>. The fact is that this political commitment is far from being realized<sup>69</sup> and in this context Slovenia is no exception. In the time of economic crisis numerous countries find it the easiest to give up a share of their defence costs. Of course we can not speak of demilitarization in Europe; however, more than appropriate is Kagan's<sup>70</sup> metaphor from the second Iraqi war that Europeans come from Venus and Americans come from Mars, especially in the light of the events in Afghanistan where NATO is participating in combat operations. Only few member states enable their armed forces to participate in operations without the so called national caveats and in this context Slovenia is no exception.

## 4.2 Slovenian challenges in globalization era

In the first decade of the 21st century Slovenia became a full EU and NATO member. A symbolic moment was undoubtedly Slovenian EU Council Presidency. 2720 Slovenian civil servants, 133 outside experts and 245 students took part in this important task performed by the Republic of Slovenia in the first half of 2008. During Slovenian presidency over 8000 events were carried out: 283 in Slovenia, 3285 in Brussels and 4242 elsewhere in the world<sup>71</sup>. It is worth mentioning that these events were attended by numerous important world leaders. Slovenia was thus also *de facto* for the first time in its history put on the stage of the world's history. For a small, young country with a short democratic tradition this was its moment in the history.

Slovenes have always understood that membership, besides benefits, brings also obligations. Within NATO, Slovenia is one of the member states contributing the highest share of their servicemembers to international operations and missions. Since 1997 members of the Slovenian Armed Forces have participated in 18 NATO, UN, EU and OSCE-led operations and missions. Participation of the Slovenian Armed Forces in crisis response operations is their permanent task with a 12-year long tradition. So far the Slovenian Armed Forces have took part in 18 operations and missions in 15 countries on three continents. According to 2008 data, the majority or 86% of Slovenian servicemembers participated in NATO-led operations. Geographically speaking, the majority or 66% took part in operations in the area of Balkans (Furlan, 2009). In a certain moment, due to the engagement

<sup>68</sup> In the year 2008, when the defence expenditure should have for the first time been 2% of GDP, it amounted to 1.52% and in 2009 to 1.63%. On the basis of financial movements defined by the Spring Announcement 2010 the adopted proposal on defence expenditure suggests 1.65% for the year 2010 and 1.61% for the year 2011. (<http://www.mors.si/fileadmin/mors/pdf/dokumenti/SPOR2009.pdf>). However, considering the general economic situation in Slovenia and the announced revised budget, the defence expenditure for the year 2010 is expected to be approximately 1.5% of GDP.

<sup>69</sup> The Ministry of Defence's budget covers also the subsystem for civil protection and disaster relief. In the year 2009 the related costs amounted to 38 million euros which are not considered as defence expenditure. However, the defence expenditure does include the costs of (military) pensions, approximately 59 million euros, and the subsystem of civil defence.

<sup>70</sup> Kagan, R., 2003, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*; New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

<sup>71</sup> See [http://www.eu2008.si/si/News\\_and\\_Documents/Press\\_Releases/June/0630UKOMstevilkePEU.html](http://www.eu2008.si/si/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/June/0630UKOMstevilkePEU.html).

of their battalion in KFOR in Kosovo, the Slovenian Armed Forces participated abroad with more than 7% of their active component which is undoubtedly an impressive number.

At the beginning of the 1990s Slovenia still had a conscript army which, including the reserve force, amounted to 60000 members. In the process of transformation of the Slovenian Armed Forces towards a fully professional army, they now comprise 9212 members, 82% of active component and 18% of reserve component<sup>72</sup>. In line with strategic documents, the goal is to have 14000 members, 8500 members of the active component and 5500 members of the reserve force<sup>73</sup>. The Slovenian Armed Forces remain committed to the conduct of tasks within national defence, although a large share of their responsibilities includes the conduct of tasks in the system of collective defence. Slovenia still forms a part of the Southern Theatre of War connecting Italy with Hungary and Croatia and through Romania and Ukraine with the Black Sea Region; however, the military dimension of space is perhaps not as important (sic?!) as it used to be.

From the standpoint of transport and energy it must be noted that Slovenian space is a transit crossroads of European corridors V and X<sup>74</sup> and Adriatic-Ionian corridor. Slovenia represents a gateway – a logistic starting point for Central and Southeast Europe, while it is expected to participate also in the energy project South Stream<sup>75</sup> through Slovenian territory towards Italy. Due to enhanced relations with Asia and its importance for Europe it would be wise to strengthen cooperation between the key Adriatic ports (Koper, Trieste and Rijeka) and Asia in the area of trade. The time will tell if this is realistic, since the past experience stirs serious doubt with regard to this possibility. What do Slovenian, North Adriatic and the entire Adriatic Region mean for Slovenia and Europe in the period of EU integration now and within a

<sup>72</sup> Data for March 2010, <http://www.slovenskavojska.si/o-slovenski-vojski/>.

<sup>73</sup> Article 6.2. of the Resolution on the general long-term programme of the development and equipment of the Slovene Army (ReDPROSV), Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 89/04. The document is relatively obsolete; therefore we can expect its revision in the near future. The future size of the Slovenian Armed Forces is more likely to be similar to the present size than to the one defined by ReDPROSV.

<sup>74</sup> Ten Pan-European corridors were defined at the second Pan-European Transport Conference in Crete in March 1994. Routes leading to Central and East Europe are being defined which in the following ten to fifteen years will require large investments. Corridor V is 1600 km long (994 mi) and includes three shorter branches (see [www.corridor5.org](http://www.corridor5.org)). It goes from west to east, from Italy to Ukraine, in the following direction: Venice - Trieste/ Koper - Ljubljana - Maribor - Budapest - Uzhhorod - Lviv - Kiev. Corridor X goes from north to south, from Austria to Greece in the following direction: Salzburg - Ljubljana - Zagreb - Belgrade - Niš - Skopje - Veles – Thessaloniki and comprises four shorter branches (<http://www.unece.org/trans/main/ter/Countries/PanEuCorridors.html>).

<sup>75</sup> Slovenian and Russian economy ministers, Matej Lahovnik and Sergej Šmatko, in the presence of prime ministers of both countries, Borut Pahor and Vladimir Putin, in Moscow on 14 November 2009 signed a cooperation agreement on the construction and use of the South Stream Pipeline in Slovenia. Putin on this occasion stressed that Russia had signed the South Stream Pipeline Agreement with all European partners required for the project. The South Stream pipeline is expected to become functional in 2015 when the gas will be distributed also to Slovenian consumers. The last country to join the project was Austria in April 2010. All required documents are now signed between Russia on one side and Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Slovenia, Serbia and Hungary on the other. The end of the line of a partly competitive project Nabucco which will connect Central Asia, Caucasus Region and Turkey with the EU, is predicted for Austria, while the line itself will run through the countries (south)east of Slovenia.

reasonable time period of 20-30 years from the standpoint of maritime and sea-related economy (e.g. Port of Koper, maritime transport, tourism, fishing industry, water sports, education of personnel in maritime area, etc) is a question which in the future will require an appropriate level of attention.

The future challenges Slovenia will have to deal with and still have no answer are the following: how to decrease the high level of unemployment, increasing borrowings of the country and population, health and pension system which, in the long-term period, will not be possible to maintain and poor demographic growth: 1.3 child per mother is one of the lowest rates in Europe. Demographic projections show that by the year 2060 Slovenian population will have decreased to 1.8 million, while the share of people over 65 will have doubled and will amount to over 30%. Public opinion polls show that the majority of Slovenes feel safe. This is the opinion expressed by 82% of respondents who assess that the national security is mostly threatened by drugs, traffic accidents, unemployment, crime, etc. It is interesting that the research »National and International Security 2003<sup>76</sup>« was conducted after the terrorist attacks in the USA; however, Slovenes did not mention them as a threat to their security. In Slovenia important geopolitical and geostrategic issues are not areas Slovenian citizens would deal with; nevertheless, our attention should be given also to global aspects which Slovenia as an open society and economy can not avoid.

## 5 POSSIBLE GEOSTRATEGIC SCENARIOS BY THE YEAR 2020–2025

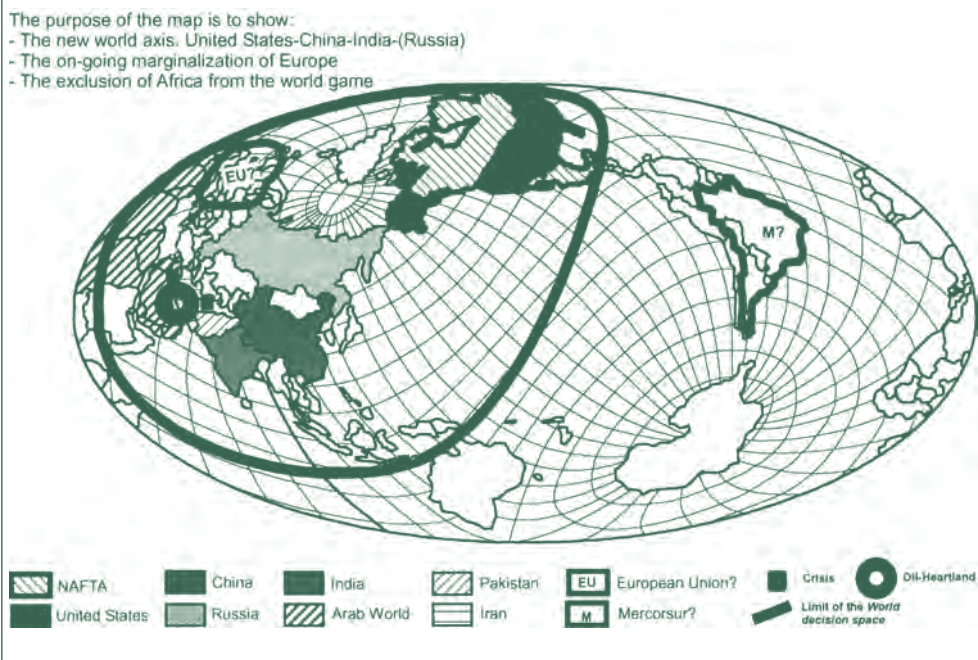
Scientists and experts do not entirely agree on who is losing the status of great power and who is gaining the status of this kind. In Dussouy's world system between unipolarity and disorder (Figure 4), the new world axis is extremely »cruel« to the EU since it excludes it from this axis. It mentions a long-lasting marginalization of Europe and continues to exclude Africa from the world game. The new world axis is formed by: USA-China-India-(Russia) (Dussouy, 2010:148-149). A bit as a joke and a bit seriously we could say that the axis consists of only two countries. The neologism *Chimerica*, created at the end of 2006 by historian Niall Ferguson and economist Moritz Schularick, stresses the interpenetration<sup>77</sup> of both economies and huge Chinese reserve of dollars<sup>78</sup>, and tries to assign a part of the blame for global economic crisis also to this relation.

<sup>76</sup> On <http://nato.gov.si/slo/javno-mnenje/nacionalna-varnost.pdf>. The level of safety feeling among Slovenian population remains high, since 81% of people feel very safe. This is obvious from the public opinion poll in which citizens of the Republic of Slovenia evaluated the work of Slovenian Police for the year 2008. The poll was carried out by the School of Advanced Social Studies from Nova Gorica, <http://www.mnz.gov.si/nc/si/splonso/cns/novica/article/12027/6240/>.

<sup>77</sup> The relation described by Ferguson as the partnership between the big saver and the big spender (on <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/11/16/AR2008111601736.html>).

<sup>78</sup> In 2009 China had over 2 trillion US dollars reserves which could increase to 4 trillion US dollars in the next five to ten years. As said by Rogoff (2009), if this happens, China will not want to encounter the dollar crisis with 4 trillion US dollars in the sack.

**Figure 4:**  
The configuration of the contemporary world system (between unipolarity and disorder).



Source: Dussouy, 2010: 149.

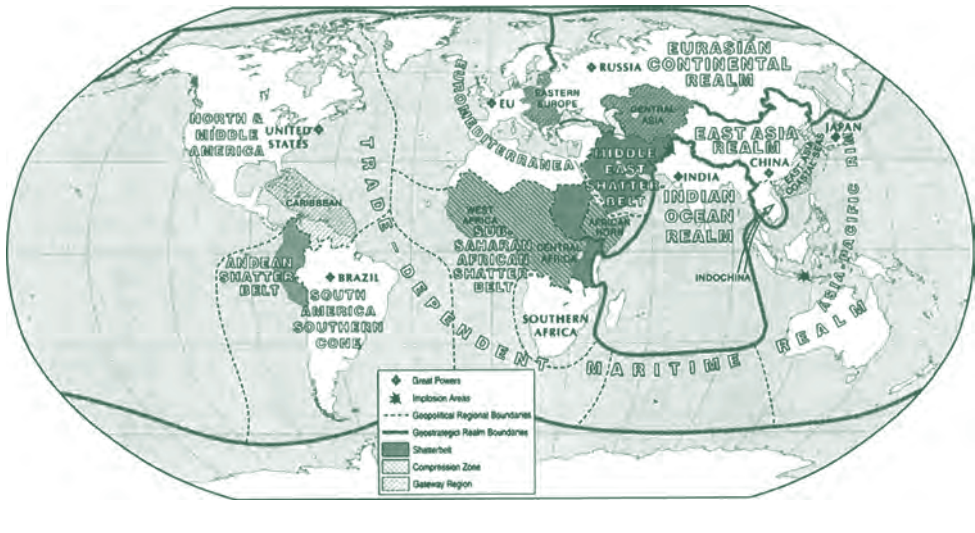
Cohen is more lenient when saying that since the end of World War II, which was followed by a two-block period and its fall, five great powers have been established: the USA, the EU, Russia, China and Japan (Figure 5). In the first quarter of the 21st century this relation additionally dispersed since the five existing actors were joined by Brazil and India. Areas of internal conflicts moved from East Europe and the former Soviet Union to Indonesia and Central Asia. The roles and areas of the *Shatter Belt*, *Compression Zone* and *Gateway Region*<sup>79</sup> have also changed (Cohen, 2010: 157-164). Upon this a question arises whether the key global organization which brings together all countries and continents, the United Nations Organizations, is a reflection of this new reality. Despite numerous efforts the structure of the Security Council has not adjusted to a new reality; India, as the second biggest country in the world, South America and Japan thus remain without a seat. The fact that no one seriously considers an African member confirms the thesis that Africa remains outside the global game.

<sup>79</sup> For the most part, geopolitical structures are organized along the following hierarchically ordered spatial levels:

- The geostrategic realm – the most extensive level, or macrolevel;
- The geopolitical region – a subdivision of the realm that represents the middle level, or mesolevel;
- National states, quasi-states and territorial subdivisions within and across states at the lowest level, or microlevel.

Outside of this ordering of structures are regions or clusters of states that are not located within the realm of regional frameworks. These include regions such as Shatterbelts, whose internal fragmentation is intensified by pressures of major powers from competing realms; Compression Zones, which are torn apart by internal divisions and the interference of neighbouring states within the region; and Gateways, which serve as bridges between realms, bridges and states (Cohen, 2003: 33).

Figure 5:  
World  
geopolitical  
map in the first  
quarter of the  
21st century.



Source: Cohen, 2010: 163.

On the other hand, numerous thoughts and arguments flourish favouring the idea of the 21st century as the Asian century, the century of the rise of the East and the fall of the West. We are therefore talking of an increasing role of one sphere and a decreasing role of the other, and in this context, of the effects at mesolevel and microlevel. The arguments are based on certain explicit empirical indicators which, aided by good interpretation, sound very convincing. Mahubani (2088) says that by the year 2050 three out of four biggest economies in the world will be Asian<sup>80</sup>: China, India and Japan. The number of population in the West is decreasing, while in Asia it is increasing, the number of Asian students at technical faculties is increasing, while in the West the number of students is decreasing, etc. Asia wishes to copy, not rule the West. However, the West will start to share the power with Asia in the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, G-7<sup>81</sup> and the UN Security Council. Mahubani depicts the 21st century development through three scenarios named the Asian March to Modernity, Retreat into the Fortress and Triumph of the West. The latter is considered to be the least likely, while the first scenario seems to present the best chance and opportunity for mutual cooperation between Asia and the West, as

<sup>80</sup> In the first century AD, Asian GDP amounted to 76.3% of global GDP and European to 10.8%. In the year 1000 European share fell to 8.7% and Asian to 70.3%. During the industrial revolution period European share started to increase, while Asian share started to decrease. In 1820 the Western European share amounted to 23.6% of global GDP, Asian share decreased to 59.2%, while the total share of the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand amounted to 1.9%. In 1998 their share amounted to more than 25% of global GDP, Western European share to 20.6% and Asian share only to 37.2% (Mahubani, 2008: 51). In the future this ratio will undoubtedly turn (it is turning) again to the benefit of Asia, as shown by the following indicator: during the global world crisis in 2009 the EU's GDP decreased by 4.2%, the USA's GDP by 2.4% and Japanese GDP by 5.2%, while Chinese GDP increased by 8.7% and Indian GDP by 6.7%. With the 9% economic growth in 2008, China contributed 20% of global economic growth.

<sup>81</sup> In 2009, the G-20 was more in the spotlight than the G-7 (G-8). The global economic crisis was the main topic of leaders of 20 biggest economies from all continents (19 countries and the EU) which together create 85% of GDP, 80% of trade and include two thirds of the world's population.

well as for their co-management of the world founded on equal basis. If the 1990s were characterized by the victory of the West and the end of history as defined by Fukujama, the future will belong to Asia. Will the future be characterized by the Rise of the Rest, meaning mainly Asia with its three billion population where in the past we have witnessed economic miracles? The influence within the key international organizations must change, the key organizations must change or break (Overholt, 2009: 15-18). A demand for changes within the UN Security Council, International Monetary Fund and World Bank, as well as for a »new world order« was again very clearly expressed by the four emerging superpowers, named BRIC<sup>82</sup>, at their second summit in Brazil in April 2010.

The largest »regional« security organization with global reach is also dealing with its future role. In order to enhance our understanding of future threats for the Alliance, NATO, through the exact analysis of future security challenges, carried out the Multiple Futures Project – MFP<sup>83</sup> which was not meant as a contemporary oracle from Delphi (Mattis, 2009). Prophecies can easily be mistaken for predictions of future trends, challenges and threats, especially if they are made for two decades in advance. Intelligence experts will also avoid giving intelligence assessments or projections so far into the future because of too many unknown factors, since special capacities are necessary to make predictions so far in advance. MFP identified 40 risk factors, from failed countries and ethnic conflicts to the »challenges of values and world views«. In this context it is therefore difficult to speak of exact science; nevertheless, the efforts of this kind are of extreme importance in the terms of adopting long-term strategic decisions which in the West represent decisions lasting over one mandate. On the basis of current trends we can of course quite successfully predict future also in the defence area, while the new Strategic Concept will try to adjust, qualify and prepare NATO for a wide spectrum of regional and transregional security challenges.

From the Eurocentrist or geo-European point of view, scenario theories offer arguments for at least three geostrategic scenarios by the year 2025<sup>84</sup>. In a very short and general explanation, according to the *optimistic scenario* globalization processes continue in the following way: the EU keeps its current positions, a relatively balanced levelling of the world continues, while the consequences of the economic crisis are quite evenly spread out. According to the *moderate scenario*

<sup>82</sup> BRIC, Brasil, Russia, India and China include almost a half of the world's population and a quarter of the territory. Their first summit took place in Russia in 2009, while the second is predicted to be held in China.

<sup>83</sup> A kind of a predecessor of this project is a 2007 study "Future Security Environment".

<sup>84</sup> As said by Secretary-General of the reflection group on the long-term future of Europe, chaired by former Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzales, and former Slovenian Minister of Development Dr Žiga Turk, **changes and adjustments** (underlined by Damir Črnčec) in Europe are the »only way for Europe to preserve its economic and social model, continue the quality of life and enforce its priorities, firstly, by being strong inside and undertaking radical reforms in economic and political areas, and secondly, by speaking with one voice beyond Europe and directing the world order towards regulated multilateralism« (Žiga Turk for STA: Europe will maintain its influence in the world only with radical changes (interview), 9 May 2010, <http://www.sta.si/vest.php?s=s&id=1510788>).



the European development setback starts or continues, conflicts with Russia<sup>85</sup> arise due to the expansion to the East and fluctuations between cooperation and conflicts occur. The rise of China and its central role are in the forefront, NATO is involved in war conflicts in Asia and Africa<sup>86</sup>, while the increasing rivalry between the USA and China is present. According to the *pessimistic scenario*, the period of instability is characterized by the worsening of general crisis, expansion of nationalism and xenophobia, competition for raw materials, appearance of new nuclear forces, expansion of »new wars« and terrorism with weapons of mass destruction, rivalry between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and NATO, new cold war with the centre in Asia and internal problems in China<sup>87</sup>. All scenarios should include the responsibility for the following common concerns: ***water and energy resources, climate changes, migrations, cyber threats and security of nuclear weapons***. This latter was also the main topic of the Nuclear Security Summit in April 2010, hosted by US President Obama<sup>88</sup>.

It should also be mentioned that the globalization has become so powerful that the world today is facing the inevitable conflict between the globalization and self-determination. The latter expresses the ambition of people in real or imagined communities to keep their own ambitions and values, to pursue happiness in their own ways, and to feel in control of their own destinies (May, Zelikow 2008: 21). The future challenge we will have to deal with lies on the axis of globalization and self-determination in the framework of an open, civilized world founded on five key principles:

- Respect for the identity of others,
- Cooperating welfare: commitment to openness and international economic cooperation,
- Mutual security: we jeopardize our own security if we jeopardize other countries,
- Taking care of the planet, food, water, earth, air, fossil fuels and ocean resources<sup>89</sup>,

<sup>85</sup> *Worth mentioning is a special collective security organization relatively unknown in Europe, namely the Collective Security Treaty Organisation – CSTO, (Russ. Организация Договора о Коллективной Безопасности). The founding treaty was signed by presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan in Tashkent in October 2002. In June 2006, CSTO was joined also by Uzbekistan. CSTO is a successor of the Collective Security Treaty – CST signed by the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1992. Former members of CST who did not join CSTO are Azerbaijan and Georgia.*

<sup>86</sup> *See Joseph E. Stiglitz: Globalization and Its Discontents in Zbigniew Brzezinski: The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives.*

<sup>87</sup> *See Naomi Klein: The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism, London : Allen Lane, 2007 in Alvin in Heidi Toffler: War and anti-war, Boston [etc.] : Little Brown and Company, 1993.*

<sup>88</sup> *The summit attended by representatives of 47 countries, including 38 Heads of States or Governments, was the biggest diplomatic event hosted by any U.S President after 1945.*

<sup>89</sup> *This care is never-ending; however, the first half of 2010 was characterized by two events, a natural disaster and an ecological disaster caused by man. Both events alarmed environmentalists and entailed global economic-security consequences. Dust and ashes from Iceland volcano Eyjafjallajökull caused numerous problems in Europe; air traffic, for example, was seriously disrupted for six days in the entire Europe during which 95 000 flights were cancelled, including overseas flights. The damage suffered only by airline companies exceeded 1 billion euros. On 20 April 2010 the worst ecological disaster, oil spill, in the US history happened in the Gulf of Mexico. The oil rig accident claimed 11 lives. Experts reveal that between 12 000 and 19 000 barrels of oil gush into the sea on daily basis. By 1 June 2010 all attempts made to fill the bore hole and block the passage of oil to the sea had been unsuccessful. So far, these attempts, lasting over forty days now, have cost the company British Petroleum (BP) almost 1 billion US dollars, while the disaster will have long-term consequences for life in the sea and on the coast.*

- Limitation of governments by the rule of law, democratic responsibility, division of power among the branches of power and on regional levels (May, Zelikow: 2008).

When considering various future scenarios and predictions, from less to more positive, it is appropriate that in the 21st century we try to learn from mistakes made in the 20th century when two world wars, as well as numerous regional wars and conflicts were fought, and find a better future for predicted 8 billion people.

## 6 INSTEAD OF THE CONCLUSION

Central and Southeast Europe represent the area where both world wars started and where after World War II we witnessed the largest slaughter and the longest military engagements. The Western Balkans Region is also an area where a significant size of international police/military force is still present. Although their size tends to decrease, it is difficult to predict when they will completely withdraw from this area. Therefore it is a huge success that at the beginning of the 21st century we can say that from geopolitical and geostrategic point of view the position of Slovenia is more solid than ever before. April 2010 marks the 20th anniversary of the first democratic elections after World War II, while the geopolitical balance of the past two decades is undoubtedly more than satisfactory. Membership in Euro-Atlantic integrations is based on equality, the principle Slovenes could not enjoy in any previous state formation. What is more, Slovenia is a modern country which exports peace and stability. In the international environment its words are undoubtedly much more appreciated than the size of its territory. With its geopolitical and geostrategic position Slovenia also represents a natural bridge between NATO and EU members situated both, along the Adriatic and Black Sea.

Slovenian EU Council Presidency proves that small countries can also participate on a global level and in this context, the then Slovenian Prime Minister and President of EU Council presented global challenges of EU to the European Parliament. It does not suffice to address the global changes facing the European Union only in terms of “competitiveness” and “combating terrorism”; at the global level, the European Union must address also the following four challenges: the UN reform and the establishment of a new order, combating poverty, combating climate changes and intercultural dialog. Only if the European Union deals with these challenges, it will be able to play a more important role in the global world, ensure peace and security for its citizens as well as sustainable and safe energy supply, and control migration pressures. (Janša 2008: 8) These are huge ambitious and words, especially if said by Prime Minister of a two-million nation on behalf of a half a billion people. In other words, Slovenia for a short time followed this saying: think globally, act globally. From the traditional geopolitical point of view this is almost impossible, since the size matters; however, with globalization and expansion of information technology in all corners of the world the traditional geopolitics has had to adjust to contemporary times and their challenges, while the current and future challenge remains: think globally, act locally and, especially, regionally. From this point of view we

must also assess the efforts made by Slovenian Prime Minister Borut Pahor in 2010 to organize a conference »Together for the European Union: Contribution of the Western Balkans to European Future«. Although the conference was not attended by all heads of governments and states of the Western Balkans, the beginning of the »Brdo Process« was a difficult, yet necessary step into the right direction<sup>90</sup>.

Although Slovenia can justly be self-confident, in the future we will have to devote our energy to increasing the competitiveness, development and knowledge-based society in knowledge economy. Economic indicators of the past period are not very encouraging; these challenges therefore require an appropriate treatment in Slovenia and in EU. Greece is a very good example that Europe is not a land flowing with milk and honey. The future will be characterized by numerous challenges EU members and the entire EU will have to deal with. This, however, requires ideas, changes and adjustments, visions and measurable goals, while the path has to be paved with short and long-term measures. We have to ensure a sufficient number of jobs with a high added value, an appropriate level of investments in research and development, improve the education structure to the benefit of scientific and technical areas and identify clear methods of the implementation of results. And in this area much more can still be done. Failure is a risk and threat, both, for an individual country or for a community of countries. The analysis of results of the Slovenian Development Strategy is not very encouraging; therefore, additional attention should be given to the heavy, measurable geo-economics: to increase the trade beyond EU framework or southern neighbourhood to China, India and Russia by using not only the Port of Koper, but Slovenia as a logistic bridge for the EU and Central Europe, a bridge with excellent infrastructure; following the independence the motorway network was constructed, which is, however, not true for the next required precondition – the second railway track from the Port of Koper to Slovenian inland areas. Open questions remain the construction of the third pier in the Port of Koper, the larger use and extension of the runway at Portorož Airport, the construction and upgrade of pipelines, the use of gas terminals, etc. All these development questions are related to large financial investments and ecological risks and it seems that this represents the highest obstacle; therefore, we will have to reach the national consensus on whether we want the development, what it will be like, how much it will cost and if we are ready to expose ourselves to environmental risks and threats with which it seems we easily identify ourselves.

On the other hand, »conventional« sources of risks and threats of one nation or region became transnational or transregional long ago. They are guided by asymmetry where

<sup>90</sup> *In cooperation with the EU, the conference was on 20 March 2010 organized by Slovenian Prime Minister Borut Pahor and Croatian Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor. Besides Slovenian Prime Minister, Heads of Governments of five countries in the region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia) attended the conference which started an informal form of cooperation named »the Brdo Process«. According to Prime Minister Pahor, the Brdo Process is open also for those who were not present on that day. Serbian President Tadić did not attend the conference because Kosovo Prime Minister was one of the participants, <http://www.kpv.gov.si/nc/si/splosno/cns/novica/article/1914/4489/>. We can expect that in the future the Brdo Process will have positive multiplicative regional effects in numerous areas, from economy to questions related to (national) security.*

individuals or groups have a greater power than ever before. With the use – abuse of benefits of information revolution they carried out the biggest terrorist attack on the center of world power and shook the foundations of the world order still dominated by the West. Empirical data of economic, financial, demographic or scientific nature show that Asia or the rest of the world is on the rise – and the basic question remains whether we will be able to live with each other or fall in conflicts. Equal co-existence based on universal ethnic and cultural principles is a way in which we can satisfy the wishes and needs of all those who feel deprived or discriminated. The task of all responsible, chosen and selected leaders is to find an appropriate *modus vivendi* with which the highest possible number of people will be able to identify. Therefore it is in the interest of the Republic of Slovenia to, in cooperation with all well-intentioned actors, contribute to the stability not only in Southeast Europe or in the Western Balkans as it is often said; our obligation is also to look wider, also to the areas where our friends and allies are fighting challenges which directly or indirectly influence the security situation in Slovenia. Slovenia, as a small country non-preoccupied with geopolitical ambitions, can offer its non-preoccupation, experience and advice to all who care for our future and for the future of our successors since it is our obligation and responsibility to leave them a well-preserved planet.

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