



## A German view on a World in Disorder

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After the fall of the German wall, the German reunification, the demise of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact between 1989 and 1991 many people in the Western world saw the end of global wars and conflicts. They asked for peace dividends and the Western government delivered. They reduced their military expenses and cut their troops almost by half.

„Peace for ever“ became the widespread slogan.

Now, 25 years later, the world looks different. It is a world of global disorder. There are more wars and conflicts than before the political changes of the past.

The USA have lost the status of the only world superpower, but have regained more power by re-industrialization, fracking, dynamic and optimism.

China and India joined the USA at the top, Russia tries to overcome the deep crisis after the demise of the Soviet Union, which Vladimir Putin calls the „greatest geostrategic catastrophe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century“, emerging countries like Brazil and South Africa had a temporary boom, the transnational terrorism threatened the stability of many countries. China and Russia are threatening the territorial integrity of their neighbourhood and beyond, the „Arab awakening“ was a shortlived episode and the number of „failed states“ increased to more than 50. These weak states of today cause more problems than the strong states in the past.

New economic and financial global crises, the legal and illegal migration to and within Europe as well as the so-called „Euro crisis“ and the conflict in and around the Ukraine push many countries to their limits to master the various challenges. The UN is not able to play a leading role in a worldwide crisis management.

The numerous wars and conflicts are not to be solved one after the other. As they are interwoven they have to be treated simultaneously. There is no political time-out. Globalisation has advantages and disadvantages. It transformed the world in a „Global village“. The tempo of communication and information has increased dramatically. Economic crises and even pandemics do not know national borders.

In Europe, we face a dangerous re-nationalization, no common comprehensive approach to the human tsunami from Africa and The Balkans. In reality, the so-called „Euro crisis“ and the human tragedy have split Europe as political entity into many pieces. There are movements of separatism in some European countries. There is the risk that UK might leave the European Union. Many European countries show a negative demographic development with negative consequences for aging societies with a growth of no-skilled workforce. That is also true for China, Russia and Japan.

NATO as stabilizing force has lost its clout. From 28 member states only 3 meet the financial goal of spending 2 percent of the GNP for military purposes. The military operation in Libya with only 10 of 28 member states participating has shown the great dependence of Europe from the „indispensable“ military superpower USA. The USA – often criticised in Europe as „war mongers“ -

shoulder 72 per cent of NATO expenses. European countries are neither willing nor able to a fair burden sharing with the USA, which shift the main political and military main effort to the Asian-Pacific region. NATO has been degenerated to a „coalition of the willing and capable“.

This weakness has been cold-blooded exploited by Putin-Russia with the „hybrid war“ against Ukraine breaking the international law with the annexation of the Crimea.

Especially NATO members in Eastern Europe are heavily concerned from Russia's aggressive politics.

NATO tries to convince Putin that an attack against one NATO member states is an attack against 28 NATO member states. Some exercises should underline NATO's resolve and readiness to counter a military aggression by Putin-Russia. It is a bitter joke that Putin-Russia is one of three guarantors – Russia, UK and USA - of the territorial integrity of Ukraine – based upon the so-called „memorandum of Budapest“ signed in 1994.

The military coup by Putin-Russia in Syria in September/Oktober 2015 has obviously a hidden agenda. It is obviously not the fight against the „Islamic State“. The real goals and objectives seem to strengthen the regime of Assad by fighting mainly the anti-Assad groups and to protect Russia's influence and power in this fragile part of the Near/Middle East. Tartus harbours the only Russian

stronghold in the Mediterranean sea. This commitment in Syria is not without risks for Putin-Russia. It could be drawn in a long fight with combat troops, which would Russia unable to sustain. In contrast to the strong military appearance Russia is financially, economically and demographically in a very weak situation. The low prize for gas and oil is only one reason. Putin feels forced to look for external military success to cover internal problems, which he cannot sustain too long. The Russian people, who are used to suffer are no threat for him – but the oligarchs who lost and will further loose a lot of their wealth and privileges.

The conflict between Israel with its neighbours is another hot spot. There is no peaceful solution in sight.

Iran is a mighty player in the Near/Middle East. Iran exploits the fragile situation to strenghten the Shiits against the Sunnies with the regional power Saudi-Arabia – look at Yemen -, to keep Assad in office, to mitigate the biting sanctions through the „nuclear deal“ - which is not without dangerous traps especially for USA and to support proxis like Hizbollah in Syria and in their fight against Israel. Iran and Hizbollah lost already many warriors in their fight against the „Islamic State“ .

Cyber activities add a new dimension to political opportunities – be it in the military or in industrie and business.

The view from Europe to Asia is not very encouraging. There are many political tensions and conflicts for example between South Korea and Japan as well as between China and Japan – a result from World War II.

The greatest danger stems from Chinese aggressive political and military activities in the East and Southern Chinese sea, which China regards as „mare nostrum“. There are tensions and open conflicts with all states bordering the sea from Vietnam to Japan. It is a kind of irony that China's aggressive activities forge a strong alliance from Vietnam to Japan backed by the military superpower USA.

The „Chinese Mediterranean“ is of great importance for the region. It is a transit route for about 50 per cent of the maritime trade, it harbours a lot of oil and gas and with Chinese eyes it is seen as buffer zone against the USA.

Just recently China increased the ten-

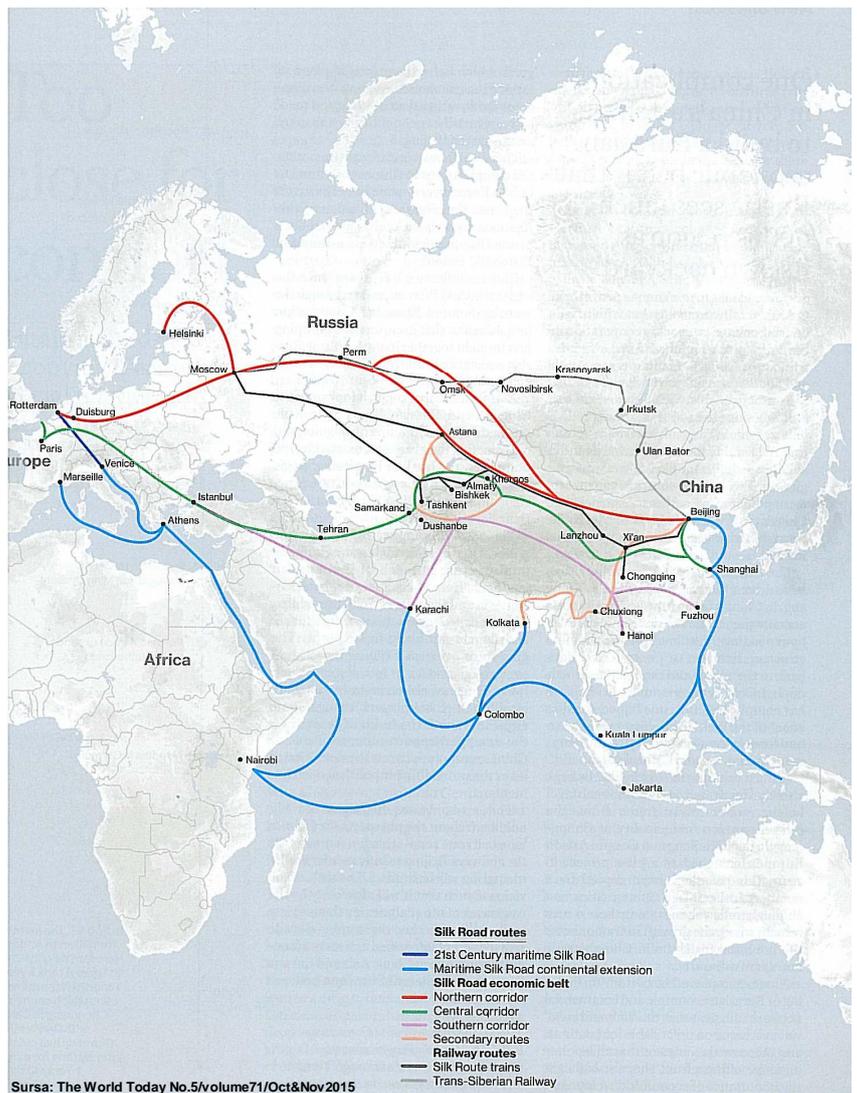
sions by building artificial islands with military infrastructure.

To be realistic: The danger of a great war is higher in this area than for example in the Ukraine. It comes to no surprise that Japan is reacting to the Chinese threat. They are changing their „ pacifist constitution“ to allow Japanese military forces to counter Chinese activities.

There is always the question whether China will take Taiwan by military force. China must be aware that any attack Taiwan will call Japan and USA to defend Taiwan. Even the ongoing build-up of Chinese maritime power put any Chinese attack under a high risk. The cost-benefit relations are not in favour of Chinese military activities against Taiwan – at least for the next 10 years to come.

„Wait and see“ seems to be a pragmatic Chinese approach.

China has paid a high prize for its march to the top 3 in the world. Li Xinping is the strongest leader



since Deng Xiaping, but he faces great internal problems: the decreasing of economic growth, national debt and shrinking financial reserves, „shadow banks“ the consequences of Chinese „one-child“ politics, aging population, gap between have and have-nots, gap between the rich coastline and the poor rural areas, the environmental pollution and the scarcity of drinking water. The high expenses for security and military purposes are a huge burden for the national budget. The armed forces are too big.

In Asia, there is another „bad guy“: North Korea a nuclear power. The tensions between North Korea and South Korea are dangerous for the Asian regions.

China's power and influence on North Korea seem to be less efficient than the Western world thought in the past. China cannot be happy with the high-risk politics of North Korea, but it obviously cannot stop them in spite of North Korea's strong dependence on China's support.

In contrast to USA China has no powerful partners and allies in the region.

The containment of China by USA and its partners and allies has a strong pillar: India.

India will surpass China demographically within the nearest future. The population of India is younger than the population of China. There is a strong and well-educated middle class to achieve progress under the new President Narendra Modi, if and when he will overcome the weakness, corruption and inefficiency of the Indian government.

China is very active and successful in Africa and Latin America to safeguard – and even run - production sites of raw material – like mines in Peru - and to buy land for agricultural purposes enabling China to feed an even greater population and to reduce the dependency from agricultural imports.

Africa is no longer the „dark continent“, but it became a split continent. There are booming countries like Ruanda and Botswana South of the Sahel Zone. In contrast to the Republik of South Africa.

Northern Africa is a nightmare from Morocco in the West to Syria in the East. The „Arab spring“ has been transformed into a „Arab winter“ with some failed states as Libya.

One route from Northern Africa to Europe starts in Lybia crossing the Mediterranean Sea heading for European coasts - mainly to Italy. They come from different African countries. They flee unemployment, dictatorship, the lack of human right protection the lack of justice and the lack of a vision of their future life. Billions of foreign aid of the past did not change

anything. It went into deep pockets of the leading tribes and clans.

A second route goes from Syria/Turkey via Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia or Hungary to Austria and Germany.

Thousands lost their lives on the way to Europe.

The European Union was not able to install a fair system for the distribution of the millions of refugees. Only few of the 28 EU member states are prepared to take great number of refugees.

That fact splits Europe for the years to come.

It is the end of the vision of a United Europe.

The recently mentioned idea to stabilize the situation on the African continent by increased foreign is not very realistic based upon the past experience of foreign aid. At least, it is no quick solution to mitigate the current problems.

About ten years ago, Latin America was a continent full of hope and optimism – with Brazil as a front-runner. Within the group of BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – Brazil became a worldwide respected player on world's stage. The honeymoon is over. Brazil is in a deep financial, economic and moral crisis - caused by poor governance, corruption and greed. There are fears that Brazil will not be a super host for the Olympics in 2016.

Argentina and Venezuela are on the brink of bankruptcy.

Chile and Peru benefit from their geostrategic location bordering the Pacific which has become significant with the emerging trade partner China across the sea.

Without further internal communication and formal cooperation Latin America will remain without great worldwide political clout.

## Outlook

There is not much hope for a safer and better world in the nearest future. Confidence and optimism are scarce in most countries.

The worldwide financial and economic crisis will continue with negative consequences for worldwide trade and business.

China, India and USA will remain the top 3. There is some hope that their competition will not lead to higher tensions or even conflicts. All three should show more responsibility for peace on earth.

It has to be seen whether the current economic dip in China will transfer into a real crisis.

The hot spot „Chinese Mediterranean“ should be

object of fair negotiations between the bordering countries plus USA.

The tensions and conflicts in Northern Africa will not be solved. The „Islamic State“ will try to widen and strengthen the „Califat“. The conflict between Israel and their neighbours is far away from an peaceful solution.

In sum, many more people will try to get to Europe – into the „paradise“.

Frustration and resignation will arise if and when those refugees realise that Europe is no paradise any longer.

Even „friendly“ countries like Germany and Sweden do not have the capabilities and capacities to meet the expectations and hopes of the refugees. Their life in camps will stay hard and with growing internal tensions and conflicts. The high-tech and high-skill labour market sets high hurdles for refugees – especially regarding language and professional skills.

The host nations will be exhausted and tired to support the refugees.

There will be a competition between the indigenous people and the refugees for social aid and benefits from the states.

In Europe, there is the additional burden of the so-called „Euro Crisis“ - which is almost forgotten with refugee crisis taking almost total public attention. But the crisis is still there – especially in Greece. A fair and well prepared and organized „Grexit“ might still be the best option.

„Refugee and Euro Crisis“ have the potential to destroy the Eurozone and the European Union. That scenario is very likely to become reality – a set-back for the whole world.

