

# Back to the Past: Is the West Moving from Crisis Management to Full-Spectrum Deterrence Including Nuclear Force?

Geçmiş Dönüş: Batı Kriz Yönetiminden Nükleer Kuvvetler Dâhil Geniş Spektrumlu Caydırıcılığa mı Dönüyor?

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*Power is the currency of great power politics and states compete for it among themselves.  
(J. Mearsheimer)*

## Abstract

*During the Cold War, the West tried to deter and contain the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact. This deterrence was based on both conventional and nuclear forces and various concepts and doctrines. After both sides achieved an assured destruction capability, deterrence was achieved by nuclear balance. Once the Cold War ended, the focus shifted from deterrence and containment to crisis management as the international security environment became dominated by internal conflicts, international terrorism, global crime, and problems related to failed states like refugee crises. This resulted in defence cuts as neither side expected a significant conventional and nuclear war. However, this security perception has changed after Russia annexed Crimea and then invaded Ukraine. Recent*

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*Western measures to deter Russia, such as deploying conventional forces to Eastern Europe, resemble the Cold War mentality. Accordingly, this paper examines recent developments in the international security environment compared to the Cold War era. It finds that states and alliances have increased their defence budgets and implemented harsh measures to ensure their security and deter potential aggressors.*

**Keywords:** *Deterrence, Cold War, International Security, Crisis Management, High Intensity Conflict.*

## Öz

*Soğuk Savaş yıllarında Batı, Sovyetler Birliği ve Varşova Paktı'nı caydırmaya ve kontrol altına almaya çalışmıştır. Bu caydırıcılık hem konvansiyonel hem de nükleer kuvvetlere dayanıyordu. Her iki taraf da karşılıklı imha kabiliyetine ulaştıktan sonra nükleer denge onları caydırdı. Soğuk Savaş sona erdiğinde, odak noktası caydırıcılık ve çevrelemeden kriz yönetimine geçti, çünkü uluslararası güvenlik ortamına iç çatışmalar, uluslararası terörizm, küresel suç ve mülteci krizleri gibi başarısız devletlerle ilgili sorunlar hâkim olmaya başlamıştı. Bu durum Doğu ve Batı Bloğu arasında konvansiyonel ve nükleer savaş riskinin azalmasına ve böylece tarafların savunma harcamalarında kesintiler yapmalarına neden oldu. Ancak Rusya'nın Kırım'ı ilhak etmesi ve ardında da Ukrayna'yı işgal etmesiyle bu güvenlik algısı değişti. Batı'nın Rusya'yı caydırmak için Doğu Avrupa'da konvansiyonel kuvvetler konuşlandırmak gibi son önlemleri, bir anlamda Soğuk Savaş dönemi zihniyetine benzemektedir. Bu kapsamda bu yazıda uluslararası güvenlik ortamındaki son gelişmeler Soğuk Savaş dönemi ile karşılaştırılarak incelenmiştir. Bu dönemde devletlerin savunma bütçelerini artırdıkları, kendi güvenliklerini sağlamak ve potansiyel saldırganları caydırmak için sert önlemler aldıkları da görülmektedir.*

**Anahtar kelimeler:** *Caydırıcılık, Soğuk Savaş, Uluslararası Güvenlik, Kriz Yönetimi, Yüksek Yoğunluklu Çatışma.*

## Introduction

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, many NATO countries enjoyed a new and cooler security environment. The Cold War years were over, and there was no need to maintain large armies or arsenals, whereas NATO had tried to deter and contain the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact during the Cold War. This deterrence was achieved with various concepts based on both nuclear and conventional forces. Their priority changed continuously in line with each side's security perceptions and agreements. Both blocs heavily pursued power politics, mainly between the two superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union. During the

Cold War, the two main pacts implemented several concepts to deter and contain each other. In particular, reliance on their nuclear arsenals peaked during this era.

Once both sides achieved mutually assured destruction (MAD) capability, the nuclear balance deterred them as they realized the existential dangers they faced and refrained from the first use of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, the early Cold War years were characterized by an arms race and intense competition between the superpowers. Following certain key crises, particularly the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, they became more flexible and reduced their security competition. Détente during the early 1970s, when superpower relations improved, helped reduce Cold War tensions. As both sides realized the danger, particularly of a nuclear war, they understood that reducing the risk and improving relations could benefit everyone. Hence, the Cold War is a history of deterrence, escalation, containment, and appeasement. “In international politics, deterrence refers to efforts to avoid being deliberately attacked by using threats to inflict unacceptable harm on the attacker in response”.<sup>1</sup> Deterrence has been a significant concept for all sides to prevent another major war, with national security policies and postures being designed around it.

This paper examines recent developments in the security realm to determine whether NATO and its allies have implemented new security policies that resemble those during the Cold War. To do so, it reviews the official announcements and approaches retrieved from open sources regarding the new security architecture by various actors (e.g., NATO). The main focus is on the recently intensifying confrontation between NATO and Russia (also China) because this will significantly impact global security, given that the countries involved represent most of the world’s leading economies and military powers.

The paper first reviews the Cold War and the notion of deterrence. It then considers post-Cold-War security perceptions and new approaches to security in the changing security environment after recent Russian

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick M. Morgan, *Applicability of traditional deterrence concepts and theory to the cyber realm. In Proceedings of a Workshop on Deterring Cyberattacks: Informing Strategies and Developing Options for U.S. Policy*, National Academic Press, 2010, p. 55.

initiatives. In particular, it questions whether this new phase resembles the Cold War. NATO has been part of this evolution in global security. Having relied on deterrence and collective defence during the Cold War, NATO subsequently adopted a new security concept focused on collective security through crisis management operations. However, security perceptions have changed due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, so NATO is again adopting a new security concept that will likely rely more on deterrence and collective security. This new concept resembles that adopted during the Cold War.

### 1. Multi-Phase Evolution of Security During the Cold War

Idealist expectations and the rise of liberal political ideas after World War I failed to prevent World War II, while the achievements in institutional organizations like the League of Nations and the development of international law through international settlements were unable to establish international peace and stability. The liberal approach generally considers nation-states as the most important actors, whose behaviour we should be most concerned about and wish to explain. It also pays considerable attention to other actors: international organizations (I.O.s), international regimes, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multinational corporations, and domestic actors such as interest groups, elites, political parties, and government bureaucracies.<sup>2</sup> International institutions can develop international law, norms, and regulations, which can then be used to establish peace in the global system. However, the horrors of World War II and large-scale humanitarian suffering devastated humanity's hopes for an ideal world of peace. Accordingly, states' foreign policies focused on power politics, state-centric security perceptions, and military responses. As Mearsheimer put it, "Power is the currency of great power politics, and states compete for it among themselves."<sup>3</sup> The realist paradigm prioritizes national security issues, power, and state survival within the anarchic international system.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Alan Collins ed. *Contemporary Security Studies*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013. p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. WW Norton & Company, New York, 2001, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Collins. ed. *Contemporary Security Studies*, p. 14.

After World War II, several factors increased Western countries' concerns about Europe's security, particularly the division of Germany, Soviet influence and ambitions in Eastern Europe, and its interest in the Turkish Straits. This made these countries seek alliances. As Pick and Critchley note, "States find security in combining with other states, which on the whole share some of their values and most of their interests. Historically, these combinations have been more cohesive when they were formed for a specific purpose and with a 'preferred enemy' in mind. Ideally, a worldwide combination of all states directed against all potential aggressors could create a global system of collective security."<sup>5</sup>

Thus, NATO was established to guarantee European countries' security while U.S. economic support programs helped rebuild Europe's welfare societies to preserve their freedom against the Soviet Union. NATO exemplifies a regional collective defence and security system against a perceived enemy. Collective security relies on regulated, institutionalized balancing based on the concept of all against one. States agree to abide by certain norms and rules to maintain stability and, when necessary, band together to stop aggression.<sup>6</sup> This approach can provide more stability than unregulated, self-help balancing when each country acts independently.

One promoter of this approach was the formation of the United Nations after World War II. This eliminated existing notions of war in that states could no longer take a neutral stance between warring powers. It thus introduced a new form of international relations.<sup>7</sup> "The term 'collective security' implies an arrangement by which states act collectively to guarantee one another's security. Defined in general terms, in an ideal collective security system, each state 'accepts that the security of one is the concern of all, and agrees to join in a collective response to threats to, and breaches of, the peace.'<sup>8</sup> Collective defence is one way to

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<sup>5</sup> Otto Pick, Julian Critchley, *Key Concepts in Political Science: Collective Security*, MacMillan, New York, 1974, p. 15

<sup>6</sup> Charles A. Kupchan and Clifford A. Kupchan, "The Promise of Collective Security", *International Security*, 1995, 20:1: 52-61.

<sup>7</sup> Kenneth W. Thompson, "Collective security reexamined", *American Political Science Review*, 1953, 47:3, p. 753.

<sup>8</sup> Gary Wilson. *The United Nations and collective security*. Routledge, 2014. p. 5. from

exercise the right to self-defence as delineated in the United Nations Charter Art 51.<sup>9</sup> NATO originated as, and remains, a group of nations dedicated to collective defence – ensuring protection for its members against aggression or coercion. While it has multiple functions, NATO's core function continues to be collective defence (sometimes called territorial defence) for alliance members.<sup>10</sup>

During the Cold War, the arms race, including technological developments in ballistic missiles and nuclear capabilities, made both blocs fortify their defences while realist policies dominated national security affairs. The arms race also extended into space, becoming a new conflict area. However, “[g]iven the massive destructive power, all-out nuclear war threatened the existence of life on earth and therefore made ‘winning’ such a war virtually useless.”<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, the deterrence capabilities of each country's armed forces became the most significant feature. Deterrence is the use of a threat by one party in an attempt to convince another party to refrain from action. Although the definition of deterrence neither requires nor implies any reliance on nuclear weapons,<sup>12</sup> nuclear arsenals were undeniably the determining deterrent factor during the Cold War. Nuclear escalation only ended after the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 brought the world to the brink of nuclear war with the possibility of exchanging hundreds of nuclear-armed ballistic missiles. This crisis forced both blocs to realize the horrifying danger of the use or even the existence of nuclear weapons. Deterrence theory argues that, in order to deter attacks, a state must persuade potential attackers that it has an effective military capability and that it could impose unacceptable costs on an attacker. This means that “the enemy must be persuaded not only that the instrument exists but also that its power is operational.”<sup>13</sup> Both sides had enormous nuclear and

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Roberts, Adam, and Dominik Zaum. *Selective Security: War and the United Nations Security Council since 1945*. Routledge, 2013, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Web, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7>

<sup>10</sup> David Yost, “The new NATO and collective security”, *Survival*, 1998, 40:2, 135-160.

<sup>11</sup> Stephen Quackenbush, *Understanding general deterrence: Theory and application*. Springer, 2011, p. 1

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2

<sup>13</sup> William W. Kaufmann, "The Requirements of Deterrence" 1945 November 15. Henry A. Kissinger Papers, Part II (MS 1981). *Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University*

conventional capabilities that they were determined to use in case of an attack from the other side. Moreover, both sides had convinced each other about their stance. Given that all three deterrent factors were in place, deterrence functioned well during the Cold War.

Because the Soviet Union-led Warsaw pact and the USA-led NATO both relied on nuclear and conventional forces, they each developed nuclear weapons with different ranges and delivery systems. This continued until détente policies affected both sides during the early 1970s. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed several achievements through various agreements to eliminate many nuclear weapons, prevent their proliferation, and develop guarantees not to resort to nuclear weapons quickly. Given many years of hatred and distrust by the sides, these were remarkable achievements. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I-II) were two rounds of nuclear arms control negotiations between the USA and the Soviet Union. SALT I (1969-1972) led to the ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) Treaty<sup>14</sup>, while other negotiations led to the Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile Treaty (IBMT) in 1987 and the Strategic Arms Reduction (START) treaty in 1991.

Following the end of the Cold War, new agreements eliminated a significant portion of the stockpile of tens of thousands of nuclear weapons.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the immediate nuclear threat was at its lowest point since the end of World War II. After the Soviet Union collapsed, the security of nuclear weapons based in its now fragmented territories became a major international concern in case they were acquired by illegal organizations such as terrorist groups. This was addressed through several initiatives, so it is no longer a major issue. Given that security and deterrence relied heavily on nuclear weapons during most of the Cold War, successful negotiations during the 1970s and 1980s and the end of the Cold War provided enormous relief from the dangers of nuclear war.

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*Library*, p.7.

<sup>14</sup> Nuclear Threat Initiative, ABM Treaty, <https://www.nti.org/education-center/treaties-and-regimes/treaty-limitation-anti-ballistic-missile-systems-abm-treaty/>, accessed 01.02.2022.

<sup>15</sup> Arms Control Association, Nuclear Weapons: "Who Has What at a Glance," <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Nuclearweaponswhohaswhat>, accessed 17.04.2022.

Extended deterrence refers to building alliances to pursue deterrence through collective actors.<sup>16</sup> This form of extended deterrence through alliances became significant during the Cold War, which was characterized by the balance of power between NATO's and the Warsaw Pact's international security architecture. Both sides tried to deter each other using both conventional and nuclear capabilities, which helped prevent a major war worldwide. Deterrence during the Cold War mainly relied on enormous numbers of vastly destructive weapons, nuclear arsenals and their retaliation capability, the high alert status of nuclear weapons, conventional forces for countering lesser threats, and several bilateral and multilateral international arrangements to ensure stable security. According to Morgan, after World War II, nuclear weapons and the Cold War made preventing attacks vital, and interest in deterrence soon became intense.<sup>17</sup> Despite several wars and warlike events during that period, deterrence seems to have been successful, while various peaceful institutions, such as the U.N. and other large-scale organizations also contributed to preserving global stability.

## **2. The End of the Cold War and the Changing Security Environment**

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union raised expectations of a peaceful world, free from the danger of war and security concerns. However, these expectations did not last long due to ethnic clashes within regions influenced by the former Soviet Union, particularly the Balkans and Caucasus. In addition to ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent first Gulf War, the rise of international terrorism, and refugee crises in armed conflict areas made clear that the global security environment was becoming unpredictable and difficult to control. Optimism subsequently faded following conflicts and humanitarian disasters in many regions.

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<sup>16</sup> Patrick M. Morgan, "The State of Deterrence in International Politics Today", *Contemporary Security Policy*, 2012, 33:1, p. 94. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13523260.2012.659589>, accessed 12.02.2022.

<sup>17</sup> Patrick M. Morgan, *Applicability of traditional deterrence concepts and theory to the cyber realm. In Proceedings of a Workshop on Deterring Cyberattacks: Informing Strategies and Developing Options for U.S. Policy*, National Academic Press, 2010, p. 59.



These situations needed to be dealt with because they were not only harming security locally but also threatening peace and order in peaceful countries. In contrast to the Cold War era, nuclear weapons were no longer a credible deterrent in the new security architecture. Risks and threats were not emanating from conventional or nuclear forces. Instead, they were entirely different. World peace and security were now threatened more by internal armed conflicts within states, ethnic cleansing, refugee problems, and humanitarian disasters. In addition, international terrorism and the fear that these terrorists or other non-state actors might acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD) became critical.

Regarding defence strategies, the focus shifted from deterrence and containment to crisis management, with some of the most important international efforts being Peace Support and Humanitarian Relief Operations. During the 1990s, these focused on the crisis in former Yugoslavia, particularly Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Macedonia. During this period, one of the primary sources of instability was failed and failing states, which was a major concern for NATO, as its website explains: “[T]he definition of ‘security’ has radically expanded to include the individual’s freedom from the violent extremism bred by instability and nation-state failure.”<sup>18</sup> Other growing security issues were crime organizations and the cyber domain.

On the one hand, states had the luxury of cutting defence spending, but on the other hand, the new situation created new tasks and required new capabilities for the armed forces to conduct new missions. NATO’s European members mainly benefitted significantly from this. Given that conventional and nuclear war threats had been greatly reduced in the short run, they had much room for manoeuvre to divert resources away from defence as the large, costly, and heavily equipped Cold-War armies were considered unnecessary. Accordingly, many European countries significantly transformed their armed forces to suit the new security environment, particularly light, agile, flexible, and multi-purpose armies were more desirable than those designed for conventional warfare. Thus,

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<sup>18</sup> NATO WEB, “A short history of NATO,” [https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/declassified\\_139339.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/declassified_139339.htm), accessed 20.02.2022.

this period was characterized by rapid reductions and transformations of armed forces and reduced defence budgets.

NATO's Strategic Concept 2010 refers to nuclear forces for security assurance: "Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of our overall strategy. [...] As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance."<sup>19</sup> However, nuclear issues were no longer at the centre of security matters or discussions in security forums. NATO's approach was in line with developments in nuclear issues since the implementation of détente in the late 1960s and 1970s. Humanity has long dreamed of ending nuclear proliferation or even creating a nuclear-free world, however unachievable it seems. It was understandable for NATO countries to rely on conventional forces with an appropriate mix of nuclear forces in the post-Cold War era since they faced no immediate risk of war. Risks and threats have changed in character and need to be addressed in different ways.

Nevertheless, the West kept most of its military capabilities, including its alliances. NATO reshaped its command and force structure to adapt to the changing security environment and kept its military strength and command and control capabilities to counter threats from potential adversaries' conventional and nuclear forces. Moscow and Beijing followed the same pattern of behaviour. After the Cold War, many states underwent reforms to transform their armed forces to counter new threats in the changing security environment. Indeed, this is routine since security parameters continually change, and states have to adapt. At the end of the Cold War, many advocated a new approach since the threats of a major war, and the dangers of nuclear forces seemed remote. The new security challenges were considered more manageable and less costly, thereby allowing many states to cut their defence budgets. In fact, the major powers kept their military might for future needs in case the security parameters changed. Thus, despite cuts and reforms, the central tenets of the military capabilities remained intact, which is appropriate for

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<sup>19</sup> NATO Web, "NATO's nuclear deterrence policy and forces," [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50068.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50068.htm?selectedLocale=en), accessed 13.02.2022.

this period because deterrence became more complicated with newly evolving threats and challenges.

Whereas the Cold War security environment had been linear, the new environment was non-linear and complex. Previously, NATO deterrence was mainly based on conventional and nuclear capabilities, with ballistic missile systems playing a significant role in delivering nuclear warheads. However, this could not meet the new era's needs since weak and failing states provided space for non-state actors to become effective in security matters. Given that these actors offered no clear, tangible forms or targets to deter, such as territory, infrastructure, and equipment, it raised the question of how to deter suicide attackers of a terrorist network since the only thing they can lose is their life, which they are ready to risk. Similarly, it was unclear how deterrence could prevent actors from conducting cyberattacks on cyberspace, where attribution is mostly questionable. To counter these threats, deterrence, therefore, had to evolve to use technological developments in intelligence, precision weapons, and targeting systems, and cooperative efforts among states like sharing intelligence and working together. Nuclear deterrence is not a credible tool in these circumstances. Rather, deterrence has to operate in conventional and other domains, such as cyberspace, and other hybrid warfare functions. Despite these developments, which indicated that traditional deterrence was insufficient for the new security environment, it was not abandoned in case it might be needed again.

### **3. Re-change in Security Perceptions in the Post-Cold-War Era**

The post-Cold War era became hotter when Ukraine and Georgia – two members of NATO's Partnership for Peace program – decided to deepen their relations with NATO. They might even have gained full membership if Russia had not intervened. In 2008, in a clear sign that Russia was not happy with Georgia's attempt to move close to NATO, it started a military conflict over South Ossetia.

Differences in opinion between East and West had already started before the Ukrainian crisis. For example, Russia expressed its concern when NATO leaders decided at the 2010 Lisbon summit to develop a ballistic missile defence program as a part of its collective defence. NATO stated that the missile defence system aimed to protect NATO members'

territories, populations, and deployed forces against ballistic missile threats from many potential aggressor countries. Therefore, there was an immediate necessity for NATO to maintain its credible collective defence argument. The system includes a radar site in Türkiye, a command-and-control centre in Germany, two land bases in Romania and Poland, and a sea base in Spain.<sup>20</sup> Although several NATO announcements were made explaining that the system did not target Russia, and cooperation was offered through the NATO-Russia Council at the NATO Chicago 2012 Summit,<sup>21</sup> Russia perceived it as a threat. However, it had few options other than cooperating with NATO since rejection would cause a new arms race while the previous one had led to the Soviet Union's disintegration two decades before.<sup>22</sup>

A similar pattern occurred over Ukraine. Russia perceives Georgia and Ukraine as being within its zone of influence, so NATO advancement toward these areas threatens Russia's security. The turning point in Georgia's relations with NATO occurred in 2008, while Ukraine experienced a similar fate after the orange revolution while trying to build closer relations with the European Union. Russia harshly declared that it would not tolerate NATO expanding to its borders or either country joining the Western alliance. Russia's annexation of Crimea clearly indicated this policy in 2014 and support for separatists in Eastern Ukraine. This move was the second difficult moment in the Russian relationship with the West since the end of the Cold War.

These developments changed the post-Cold War security environment dramatically. Russia's move in Ukraine was perceived as a clear violation of the Budapest Memorandum, signed in 1994 by Russia, the USA, the U.K., and Ukraine, to govern the handover of all Ukraine's nuclear

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<sup>20</sup>NATO WEB, "NATO Fact Sheet (July, 2016)" [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2016\\_07/20160630\\_1607-factsheet-bmd-en.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_07/20160630_1607-factsheet-bmd-en.pdf), accessed 14.02.2022.

<sup>21</sup> NATO Web, *Chicago Summit Declaration*, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_87593.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_87593.htm?selectedLocale=en)

<sup>22</sup> Steven A. Hildreth., Carl Ek, "Missile Defense and NATO's Lisbon Summit, CRS Report for Congress." *Congressional Research Service*, December 28, 2010 <http://missiledefenseadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/CRS-Lisbon-Summit.pdf>, accessed 20.02.2022.

stockpiles to Russia in exchange for security guarantees.<sup>23</sup> All signatories promised to respect Ukraine's territorial integrity.<sup>24</sup> When the Soviet Union collapsed, Ukraine had the third-largest nuclear arsenal after the USA and Russia, although Russia maintained its command and control. This arsenal was a significant burden for Ukraine, so the government chose to hand them over to Russia. After Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, many Ukrainians changed their ideas about this handover as they suspected that Russia would not have dared to act in Ukraine as it had if Ukraine had not gotten rid of its nuclear under the Bucharest agreement memo. Pavlo Ryzanenko, a former member of the Ukrainian parliament, is one who had second thoughts and was not happy with Ukraine's decision in 1994: "We gave up nuclear weapons because of this agreement, now there is a strong sentiment in Ukraine that we made a big mistake."<sup>25</sup>

The end of the Cold War enabled the European Union (EU) countries to benefit from the calmer security environment by cutting their defence budgets and transforming their armed forces to meet the new era's needs, mainly the soft skill capabilities required by peace operations and crisis management. The EU could not react swiftly to Russian actions in Ukraine in 2014 due to its dependence on Russian energy sources and the financial crisis that hit EU countries severely. Furthermore, EU NATO members could not invest in large militaries and achieve the new goals for EU military capabilities. All of these factors handicapped them from responding decisively.

Meanwhile, the USA continued pushing NATO allies to fulfil their commitments to the Alliance by not reducing defence budgets below 2% of GDP. However, the behaviour of many European members seriously disappointed the USA, which wanted to meet NATO defence goals requiring

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<sup>23</sup> Steven Pifer, "Why care about Ukraine and the Budapest Memorandum", 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/12/05/why-care-about-ukraine-and-the-budapest-memorandum/>, accessed 17.02.2022.

<sup>24</sup> Steven Pifer, "The Budapest Memorandum and U.S. Obligations", December 4, 2014, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2014/12/04/the-budapest-memorandum-and-u-s-obligations/>, accessed 12.02.2022.

<sup>25</sup> BBC news (20 March 2014) "Ukraine's nuclear regret?" Anthony Zurcher Editor, Echo Chambers <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-echochambers-26676051>, accessed 15.02.2022.

financial commitments from all members.<sup>26</sup> Despite these difficulties, the USA and many EU countries imposed economic and diplomatic sanctions against Russia, marking a deviation in the post-Cold-War harmony between the Western World and Russia. While security issues were getting complicated by Russian actions in Ukraine, civil war broke out in Syria as a continuation of the Arab Spring uprisings. Many Iraq regions were seized by ISIS, which claimed to represent suppressed people after Iraq's decades-long occupation by foreign forces. Libya's situation had not improved since the overthrow of Ghaddafi, while ISIS was operating in many parts of the Middle East and North Africa. Finally, refugee flows into Europe amid the financial crisis were a significant concern for EU states. Thus, the security situation was no better than during the early years after the Cold War ended, and hopes for stable world order and increased prosperity disappeared. Global security parameters were evolving into a new era that differed from expectations at the end of the Cold War.

To counter these new threats and challenges, NATO adopted its NATO Readiness Action Plan at the Wales Summit in 2014.<sup>27</sup> The plan included assurance measures for member states and aimed to strengthen NATO's collective defence capabilities. This introduced the new path that NATO has followed since the 2010 Strategic Concept and is distinct from other efforts used to focus on non-Article-5 operations since the end of the Cold War. It thus deviates from recent approaches to the security environment. NATO's reaction to Russia was to deploy troops in Eastern Europe, change security measures, and conduct large-scale collective defence exercises after many years.<sup>28</sup> Thus the potential for high-intensity conflict has returned while military exercise scenarios are using old warfighting concepts and doctrines from the Cold War. In recent years,

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<sup>26</sup> Christine Wilkie, Trump is Pushing NATO Allies to Spend More on Defense. But so did Obama and Bush, CNBC, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/11/obama-and-bush-also-pressed-nato-allies-to-spend-more-on-defense.html>, accessed 10.06.2022.

<sup>27</sup> John R. Deni, "NATO's New Trajectories After the Wales Summit", *The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters*, 2014, 44:3, p. 60.

<sup>28</sup> Alasdair Sandford, Luke Barber, Euronews, NATO begins 'biggest military drills since end of Cold War' <https://www.euronews.com/2018/10/25/nato-begins-biggest-military-drills-since-end-of-cold-war>, accessed 22.04.2022.

NATO has conducted more exercises with high-intensity conflict scenarios than in the previous three decades.

NATO has also deployed battlegroups to the Baltic states and Poland while continuing air policing missions there.<sup>29</sup> This was another significant change from post-Cold War defence policies when troops were reduced in Europe and the U.S. forces withdrew. The deployment of combat-ready forces to the Eastern fronts, mainly to new NATO members, was not the expected policy for the new security environment. This is interesting considering these new frontier countries are former Warsaw Pact countries. Meanwhile, the Black Sea has become another area of competition, with the USA establishing bases in Romania and Bulgaria.<sup>30</sup> In this new security atmosphere, NATO naval exercises and shows of force with heavy U.S. involvement have become more frequent.<sup>31</sup> In response, Russia has conducted large-scale military exercises in western Russia and landing exercises on the Black Sea coast.<sup>32</sup> Russia's annexation of Crimea and its support for the separatist movement in Eastern Ukraine radically changed relations between NATO and Russia. The whole region has entered an unprecedented new phase, opening a new chapter in the security realm, both in Europe and globally.

#### 4. The Rise of Realist Policies on Security Issues

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, along with long-range missile and airborne attacks on Ukrainian cities, relations between NATO countries and Russia became even more estranged as the West responded with heavy economic and diplomatic sanctions while NATO military force deployments in the Baltics and Eastern Europe increased.

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<sup>29</sup> NATO WEB. NATO Air Policing: Securing NATO Airspace [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_132685.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_132685.htm), accessed 10.06.2022.

<sup>30</sup> Dorinel Moldovan, Plamen Pantev, and Matthew Rhodes, "Joint Task Force East and Shared Military Basing In Romania and Bulgaria," *Marshall Center Occasional Paper*, no. 21, September 2009,

<sup>31</sup> Robyn Dixon, The U.S.-Ukraine Sea Breeze Naval Exercises, Explained, *The Washington Post*, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/07/02/ukraine-us-military-black-sea/>, accessed 12.06.2022.

<sup>32</sup> Maria Kiselyova and Ece Toksabay, Six Russian warships en route to Black Sea for drill, *Reuters*, <https://www.reuters.com/world/russia-says-six-warships-are-heading-black-sea-drills-ifax-2022-02-08/>, accessed 12 June 2022.

The invasion marked a significant turning point in relations between the two sides, while the international security environment of the previous three decades will never be the same. The risk of conventional warfare breaking out between states within and around Europe is now higher than in the post-Cold War period.

The liberal policies of the post-Cold War period are declining. Fukuyama's prediction "that liberalism and the West won the Cold War and it is the end of history"<sup>33</sup> proved inaccurate. Anti-globalism sentiment is spreading while states are adopting more nationalistic postures over foreign policy issues. NATO's European members declared that they would raise their defence budget dramatically as Germany's Chancellor Scholz said the government had decided to supply 100 billion euros for military investments from its 2022 budget when Germany's entire 2021 defence budget was only 47 billion euros.<sup>34</sup> Other NATO alliance members will follow this trend to increase their defence spending beyond 2% of GDPs. Indeed, NATO defence ministers agreed to commit a minimum of 2% of GDP to defence spending to continue to ensure NATO's military readiness.<sup>35</sup>

NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg has announced on several occasions that NATO foreign ministers discussed achieving NATO's goal of spending 2% of GDP on defence, and this decision was reiterated during the 2014 Wales Summit.<sup>36</sup> However, most members failed to meet the goal. As the former USA President, Trump regularly reminded European allies of this commitment during NATO summits, but without success.<sup>37</sup> Now, it is happening on its own due to recent developments in Ukraine.

Realist approaches, which mainly focus on power politics, have prevailed in the international system despite previous post-Cold War

<sup>33</sup> Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?", *The National Interest*, 16, 3–18. 1989.

<sup>34</sup> Maria Sheahan and Sarah Marsh, Germany to increase defence spending in response to 'Putin's war'-Scholz, *Reuters*, <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/germany-hike-defense-spending-scholz-says-further-policy-shift-20-22-02-27/>

<sup>35</sup> NATO Web, "*Funding NATO*", [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_67655.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_67655.htm), accessed 12.02.2022.

<sup>36</sup> Tim Haesebrouck. NATO burden sharing after the Wales summit: a generalized set qualitative analysis, *Defence and Peace Economics*, 2021, 1-18.

<sup>37</sup> BBC News (11 July 2018) "Trump urges Nato members to double military funding target" <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44799027>, accessed 01.03.2022.



developments, supporting the realists' argument that states must rely on their own power for security in the anarchic international system. State survival cannot rely on other actors like alliances, international institutions, or international law. This development clearly indicates that countries have to help themselves, especially since the international system is likely to become more anarchic in the near future. According to realists, self-help is now preferred and pursued by many states, which may reduce international cooperation and institutions and eventually damage the development of international law.

As a defence alliance, NATO became a more political organization after the end of the Cold War by focusing more on peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions and becoming more of a forum for discussions on international security matters. NATO has had no direct adversary after former Eastern Bloc countries either became NATO members or cooperated with NATO under the Partnership for Peace initiative. Instead, NATO became a military intervention and peace establishment tool for the U.N. in several internal conflicts. For the Alliance and its partners, it has become more of a forum to share opinions on security matters. However, this posture is now changing rather rapidly. NATO is returning to Cold War concepts with more emphasis on Article-5 collective defence missions and more expectations of high-intensity inter-state conflict. NATO's increased exercise and training efforts for high-intensity conflict scenarios indicate that conventional warfare expectations are rising and that the Alliance must be ready to counter these risks.

## **5. Nuclear Forces and the New Deterrence Policies**

After a prolonged interruption during the post-Cold War era, states are returning to NATO's original deterrence policies. After three decades, forgotten nuclear forces, which were expected to be reduced if not wholly destroyed, are now attracting attention. While they have never been used, nuclear weapons appear to be the most effective way to deter potential adversaries. During the 1950s, deterrence was heavily based on nuclear capabilities. After Russia's annexation of Crimea and its invasion of Ukraine, nuclear weapons and forces are once again being discussed in

security issues. During the first days of the Ukraine invasion, Russia's President, Vladimir Putin, announced that Russia would put its nuclear forces on high alert,<sup>38</sup> which escalated tensions worldwide, given that nuclear forces had not been a concern since the end of the Cold War. However, this perception is clearly changing as nuclear forces may become prominent in security matters in the near future. As Morgan states, "Nuclear weapons came to be considered the ultimate basis for the great powers' survival and the international system's stability, and extended deterrence then made stable security available for numerous other states."<sup>39</sup>

Whether the world is ready for this evolution in security perceptions is not clear. Recent security concepts were usually designed without nuclear options, a massive shift in understanding. This may mean more reliance on nuclear forces and an increase in nuclear arsenal stockpiles, which are already relatively high. A new nuclear balance of terror could dramatically change the world's security architecture. Although Putin's reference to nuclear forces was eye-opening for many, there were already calls to strengthen nuclear deterrence before the Russia-Ukraine crisis. At a meeting with his defence chiefs in 2016, for example, President Putin said Russia must strengthen its strategic nuclear forces to develop missiles capable of penetrating any current and prospective missile defence systems. The former U.S. President Trump also declared that the U.S. should expand its nuclear capabilities,<sup>40</sup> claiming in a tweet that his "first order as President was to renovate and modernize U.S. nuclear arsenal."<sup>41</sup> According to the Congressional Budget Office, plans for U.S. nuclear forces would cost 634 billion USD between 2021 and 2030, or 60

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<sup>38</sup> Deutsche Welle, (28.02.2022) "How Serious are Vladimir Putin's Nuclear Threats?" <https://www.dw.com/en/how-serious-are-vladimir-putins-nuclear-threats/a-60951577>, accessed 18.03.2022.

<sup>39</sup> Patrick M. Morgan, (2012). "The State of Deterrence in International Politics Today", *Contemporary Security Policy*, 201233:1, p. 96.

<sup>40</sup> Max Seddon, Demetri Sevastopulo, (23 December 2016), "*Financial Times, Putin and Trump call for stronger nuclear forces*", [https://www.ft.com/content/7e5c8ce0-c857-11e6-9043-7e34c07b46ef\\_](https://www.ft.com/content/7e5c8ce0-c857-11e6-9043-7e34c07b46ef_), accessed 20.02.2022.

<sup>41</sup> Peter Jacobs and Alex Lockie, Trump touts US nuclear arsenal day after threatening 'fire and fury' on North Korea, *Insider*, <https://www.businessinsider.com/trump-nuclear-arsenal-tweets-north-korea-2017-8>

billion USD per year.<sup>42</sup> Recently, President Joe Biden signed a new U.S. defence strategy and nuclear weapons policy, which declares that the “fundamental role” of the U.S. nuclear arsenal is to deter nuclear attacks. It allows the use of nuclear weapons both for retaliation and to respond to non-nuclear threats.<sup>43</sup>

This evolution of nuclear forces started long before the Ukraine-Russia Crisis. In 2001, the USA withdrew from the ABM treaty<sup>44</sup> after the 9/11 terror attacks. This treaty, which was an integral part of the arms control regime, was signed in 1972 to limit anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems designed to counter ballistic missile-delivered nuclear weapons. This unilateral withdrawal was a significant development for the post-Cold-War arms control regime as it provoked several developments, such as Russia’s suspension of the CFE (Conventional Forces in Europe) treaty in 2007<sup>45</sup> and the U.S. suspension in 2011.<sup>46</sup> In 2010, the USA and NATO adopted the Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) concept to counter ballistic missile threats to NATO members.<sup>47</sup> Russia expressed its disappointment at this new development, although NATO repeatedly stated that it was not aimed at Russia. Russia invested in various missile defence systems, including sophisticated ballistic and cruise missiles. Russia has recently declared its first use of new hypersonic missiles in Ukraine,<sup>48</sup> which can

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<sup>42</sup> Congressional Budget Office (May 2021) “Projected Cost of U.S. Nuclear Forces, 2021 to 2030,” <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57240>, accessed 20.02.2022.

<sup>43</sup> Daryl G. Kimball Biden Policy Allows First Use of Nuclear Weapons, Arms Control Association, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2022-04/news/biden-policy-allows-first-use-nuclear-weapons>, accessed 29.04.2022.

<sup>44</sup> ABM Treaty Fact Sheet, Statement by the Press Secretary Announcement of Withdrawal from the ABM treaty, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/12/20011213-2.html>.

<sup>45</sup> Mark R Wilcox, Russia and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty)—A Paradigm Change?. *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 2011, 24:4: 567-581.

<sup>46</sup> Daryl G. Kimball, U.S. Suspends CFE Treaty Implementation, Arms Control Association, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2011-12/us-suspends-cfe-treaty-implementation>, accessed 20.04.2022.

<sup>47</sup> NATO Web, Ballistic Missile Defence, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49635.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49635.htm), accessed 25 April 2022.

<sup>48</sup> Aljazeera, Russia says it used hypersonic missiles in Ukraine again, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/20/russia-says-it-used-hypersonic-missiles-in-ukraine-for-second-day>, accessed 24.04.2022.

travel to targets at over five times the speed of sound (the definition of hypersonic) or Mach 5.<sup>49</sup>

In another significant development, the USA withdrew from the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) treaty in 2019, followed immediately by Russia. This treaty was signed in 1987 to eliminate nuclear and ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometres. The treaty had been another significant step toward ending the Cold War by cutting strategic forces.<sup>50</sup> The demise of the INF treaty was another warning of instability in Europe for both sides. Finally, the U.S. withdrew from the Open Skies Treaty in 2020.<sup>51</sup> Taken together, these developments have led to the current global insecurity and instability regarding arms control and the prevalence of nuclear forces. Hence, the situation is similar to the Cold War years.

After the 2019 NATO Summit, NATO declared that “as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance.”<sup>52</sup> Thus, a movement to return to nuclear deterrence is rising, with existing and aspiring nuclear powers focusing more on nuclear capabilities. Increasing these nuclear options probably will open a new chapter for security matters, while growing defence budgets amidst economic difficulties for many nations may mean more struggles on welfare issues.

Besides developments in nuclear issues, the deployment of conventional rapid reaction forces like the multinational Battle Groups to the Baltics and Eastern Europe and NATO’s air patrol support in the same areas mark significant steps toward an escalation of security concerns in Europe. After many years, NATO again conducted Article-5-related exercises in another clear indication of expected uncertainties in the region. NATO’s deployment in the Baltics and Eastern Europe after Russia

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<sup>49</sup> Lia Sokol, Russia’s Kinzhal Hypersonic Missile: A Game-Changing Weapon or a Distraction? Nuclear Treaty Initiative, <https://www.nti.org/atomic-pulse/russias-kinzhal-hypersonic-missile-a-game-changing-weapon-or-a-distraction/>, accessed 24.04.2022.

<sup>50</sup> Augusto C. Dall’Angol, Marco Cepik, “The demise of the INF Treaty: a path dependence analysis”, *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 2021, 64.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> NATO Web, “NATO London Summit Declaration December 2019”, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_171584.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_171584.htm), accessed 12.02.2022.

annexed Crimea was somewhat symbolic and based on a show of force with relatively few troops, mainly the deployment of four multinational battlegroups to these areas on 10 February 2022 (Table 1). Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, NATO allies agreed to establish four more battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia,<sup>53</sup> thereby doubling NATO forces in East Europe. This shift may continue if tensions are heightened further. The USA is also committing more troops and establishing bases in Eastern Europe, having withdrawn its large forces from Europe when the Cold War ended.

**Figure 1: NATO Enhanced Forward Presence (NATO Web)**



[https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_136388.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm)

## Conclusion

NATO has been the world's most successful alliance in keeping peace and providing security to its members while producing extended deterrence through a capable alliance. However, the world remains far from the expected security environment after the Cold War due to

<sup>53</sup> NATO Web, NATO Enhanced Forward Presence [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_136388.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm), accessed 12.03.2022.

growing risks and threats. Changes are constant and inevitable in the security environment, so change and adaptation are necessary for organizations like NATO.

Several significant developments have changed the world's security architecture in recent years. The Russia-Ukraine crisis has made high-intensity conflict between states much more likely than before in the post-Cold War era. Additionally, nuclear weapons are on the agenda again. Thus, we are no longer in the post-Cold War era, although it is hard to describe. The risk of conventional war is rising while all the other risks remain matters of concern (e.g., international terrorism, failed states and internal conflicts, challenges from non-state actors, irregular migration and refugee crises, and hybrid threats). This new Cold War period, with its unique dynamics, will probably become more complicated than the previous era.

States' security policies have become more similar to those of the Cold War, while realism is prominent in security perceptions, planning, and execution. This may represent a significant shift in the international security paradigm. With the end of the Cold War, realist approaches to security were fading due to new risks and challenges to international security. Considering the developments discussed in this paper, the new era's security reality will not be the same as that of the Cold War period, although we remain remote from that period's risks and security challenges. The only resemblance with the Cold War parameters is the heightened risk of conventional warfare and focusing more on nuclear capabilities. Newly emerged security challenges that were not a concern during the Cold War still pose risks to the international security environment as this new era seems more complex than the Cold War challenges. Realist policies alone cannot address these complex challenges, so comprehensive approaches may be required once the new security realm becomes clearer as it is still evolving.

Relations between the two nuclear superpowers remain tense for several reasons. The USA is concerned about Russia's actions in Ukraine, its policies in Syria, and its alleged interference in the last U.S. elections. Russia is concerned about the USA sanctions and missile defence system in Europe and NATO's enlargement and troop deployments in Eastern Europe. These differences in security matters make the two sides act

slowly in confidence-building measures and further talk about reducing nuclear and arms control issues.

Given the latest developments, we are far from post-cold war optimism in the new security realm. However, compared with the Cold War's dangerous years, neither are we very close to those security practices. The world and the structure of the international system are not the same as then because security is a dynamic and ever-evolving phenomenon. Interdependence in the international system is much more profound than in history, making states have second thoughts in their relations with others. Whether or not the global nuclear arsenal remains at its current levels and capability, it is vital to reduce the risks of its use worldwide. Implementing nuclear weapon limits, namely the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty 2010 (new START) talks between the USA and Russia,<sup>54</sup> is ongoing, however, the current number of nuclear weapons is already too risky for humanity. Challenges from different directions have already hit societies worldwide due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, complications of escalating tensions and security issues will cause more suffering for humankind.

### Geniş Özet

İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın ardından Batı ittifakı, Soğuk Savaş yıllarında Sovyetler Birliği ve Varşova Paktı'nı caydırmak ve kontrol altına altına tutmak için büyük çaba göstermiştir. Bu caydırıcılık hem konvansiyonel hem de nükleer kuvvetlere dayanıyordu. Blok ülkeleri de bu dönemde, ABD ve Sovyetler Birliği arasındaki güç politikalarını yoğun bir şekilde takip ettiler. Etkin olarak nükleer silahlara dayanan caydırıcılık, Soğuk Savaş'ın zor zamanlarında zirveye ulaştı.

Bununla birlikte, her iki taraf da karşılıklı imha kabiliyetine ulaştığında, nükleer dehşet dengesi taraflar için caydırıcı bir etken olmuştur. Bu farkındalık tarafların ilk kullanıcı olmaktan kaçınan konseptler

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<sup>54</sup> Arms Control Association (2022) "New Start at a Glance," <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/NewSTART>, accessed 10.03.2022.

benimsemelerini sağlamıştır. Soğuk Savaş sona erdiğinde, güvenlik konusunda odak noktası caydırıcılık ve çevrelemeden kriz yönetimi konularına kaymıştır. İç çatışmalar, uluslararası terörizm, küresel suç örgütleri ve esas olarak mülteci krizi gibi başarısız devletlerle ilgili sorunlar uluslararası güvenlik ortamını etkisi altına aldı. Berlin Duvarı'nın yıkılması ve Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasından sonra, Batı ülkeleri yeni güvenlik ortamının tadını çıkarmışlardır. Zira her iki blok için de önemli bir konvansiyonel ve nükleer savaş olasılığı nispeten düşük bir seviyeye gelmişti. Bu değişim, devletlerin savunma harcamalarını kısımasına ve diğer alanlara yatırım yapmasına izin verdi. Yeni dönemde uluslararası toplum, dünyanın birçok yerinde kriz yönetimi konularıyla uğraşmakla meşguldü

Ancak bu yeni güvenlik ortamının doğası, Rusya'nın 2014'de Kırım'ı ilhakı, Ukrayna'daki Rus yanlısı ayrılıkçı milisleri desteklemesi ve ardından Şubat 2022'de Ukrayna'ya saldırarak işgale başlamasından bu yana değişmeye başlamıştır. NATO, güvenlik ortamında oluşan bu yeni risk ve tehditlere karşı koymak için 2014 yılında Galler Zirvesi'nde NATO Hazırlık Eylem Planı'nı kabul etmiş ve üye ülkeler için güvence önlemlerini başlatmıştır. Güvenlik konularındaki bu değişim, güvenlik algılarını da değiştirmeye başlamıştır. Bu yeni dönemde NATO'nun Rusya'ya karşı caydırıcı bir önlem olarak Doğu Avrupa'ya konvansiyonel kuvvetlerin konuşlandırılması gibi önlemleri uygulanmaya başlaması, Soğuk Savaş yıllarının zihniyetine benzemektedir. Özellikle Rusya'nın Ukrayna'yı işgali sonrasında NATO ittifakı konvansiyonel silahlı çatışma riskinin yükseldiği değerlendirilerek yaparak yüksek yoğunluklu çatışma ve caydırıcılık konseptlerine yeniden ağırlık vermeye başlamıştır. Bu kapsamda NATO, 2014 yılından beri Soğuk Savaşın bitişinden beri görülmemiş şekilde konvansiyonel savaş tatbikatlarına ağırlık vermeye başlamıştır. Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesinden bu yana ilk kez, güvenlik konularına ilişkin algı ciddi gerginlikler içermekte ve bu gerilim kısa vadede sakinleşecek gibi görünmemektedir.

Muhtemelen, artık uluslararası güvenlik ortamı soğuk savaş sonrasında ilk yıllarında olduğu gibi olmayacaktır. Devletler ve ittifaklar savunma bütçelerini yükseltmeye ve güvenlikleri için olası saldırganlara karşı caydırıcılık sağlamak için sert önlemler almaya başlamışlardır. Geleneksel durumda ulaşılan bu güvenlik algısı sonucu devletler soğuk savaş dönemine benzer önlemlere geri dönme eğilimini göstermektedir. Bu



değişim aynı zamanda silah sistemleri, konsept ve doktrin ve organizasyonlar ile ilgili değişiklikleri de beraberinde gerektirecektir. Soğuk Savaş döneminin bitişiyle adeta unutulmaya yüz tutan nükleer silahlar yeniden gündeme gelmeye başlamış ve devletler nükleer kuvvetlerine tekrar yatırım yapmaya ve bu kuvvetlerin hazırlık seviyelerini yükseltme eğilimi göstermeye başlamışlardır. Bu kapsamda son iki on yılda meydana gelen gelişmelerle tarafların karşılıklı olarak silahların kontrolü antlaşmalarında çekilmeleri sonucu durum daha da gergin bir hal almaya başlamıştır. Uzun sürede gelinen anlayış ve görüşmeler sonucu başarılan bu silahların kontrolü antlaşmalarının birer birer raftan kalkması da güvenlik ortamının gerginleşmesine giden yolun taşlarını döşeyen etkenler olmuştur. Yeni dönemin güvenlik algısı Soğuk Savaş yıllarını andıran bir yapı içermektedir, ancak bu dönemin kendine has özellikleri ile farklı bir görünüm arz edeceği beklenmelidir. Zira Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemin risk ve tehditleri ortada iken yeniden eski risk ve tehditlerin de ortaya çıkmasıyla yeni dönemin güvenlik yapısının bütün zamanlara göre daha karmaşık bir yapı içermesi olasılığı da son derecede yüksektir.

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*The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.*

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