

UTRIKES PERSPEKTIV

The Student Magazine on Foreign Affairs

Nr. 4 2016

THEME
GEOPOLITICS



EDITORS' NOTE

“ UNFORTUNATELY, THE MOST ICONIC SYMBOL OF GEOPOLITICS IS THE ARMY OF A NATION

Barely had we drawn the last brush stroke on our previous magazine before time had us rush head on to the next one. Without pause or rest our dedicated team had to start contemplating ideas and put their pens to the paper. Despite the pressure they've managed to come through with a varied and comprehensive collection of articles on world affairs, and we are most impressed by their work.

THE TASK THAT we set before them, the theme we asked them to investigate and scrutinize, was what can be called the quintessential part of foreign affairs: geopolitics. In an effort to provide multiple perspectives on the world of today, our wish is to contrast the previous individual-focused issue with one that covers the largest aspects of the global drama. Tensions between countries are rising and are in many ways higher than in a long time. Hopefully the content of this magazine can help with the understanding of how and why these developments are progressing the way they are.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE MOST iconic symbol of geopolitics is the army of a nation. The Ugandan na-

tional army soldiers on the cover, who are featured in the World Brief on page 7, portray this in a harrowing way. On this aspect of geopolitics you can read about the changed security situation in Europe on pages 20-23, and on growing tensions in the Middle East and Central Asia on pages 24-31. But, it's important to note, geopolitics is a lot more than war. On pages 32-37 you can read about international justice and soft power in Africa, on page 48 about the growing power of diasporas, and on pages 41 about international trade and democracy in the EU.

WE ARE EAGERLY awaiting your reactions and responses. Hope you have a great read!



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PRESIDENTS' ADDRESS

As the University Library changes its leaves from green to red in front of Lund's Instagram crowd, followed by a layer of snow, Winter is officially here. It is time for rest, reflection and spending time with our near and dear (and unhealthy amounts of julmust and lussebulle).

WE WANT TO thank our members for yet another fulfilling year together, with a record amount of active members, hundreds of articles, explicit broadcasts, interesting lectures, rewarding seminars, lovely activities and trips to both Lebanon and Washington.

WHEN IT COMES to foreign affairs, the year of 2016 will especially go down in history as the year of Brexit and Donald Trump. Some might see these events as a reason for disappointment, others choose to see it as an opportunity. We believe that 2017 will be known as the year when we rolled up our sleeves to yet again stand up for our values and beliefs. As the famous philosopher Aristotle (didn't) say: "Let us not panic – organize instead!"

LET US ALL make 2017 the year of compassion and change. Therefore we urge all of you thinking about becoming active in something on your leisure time to do so, and what better way than through UPF? We are therefore happy to welcome you to our Get Active meeting on the 1st of February to tell you more about our plans for the upcoming year. UPF might be exactly what the world needs right now, a part of the young generation adapting to challenges and expressing values!



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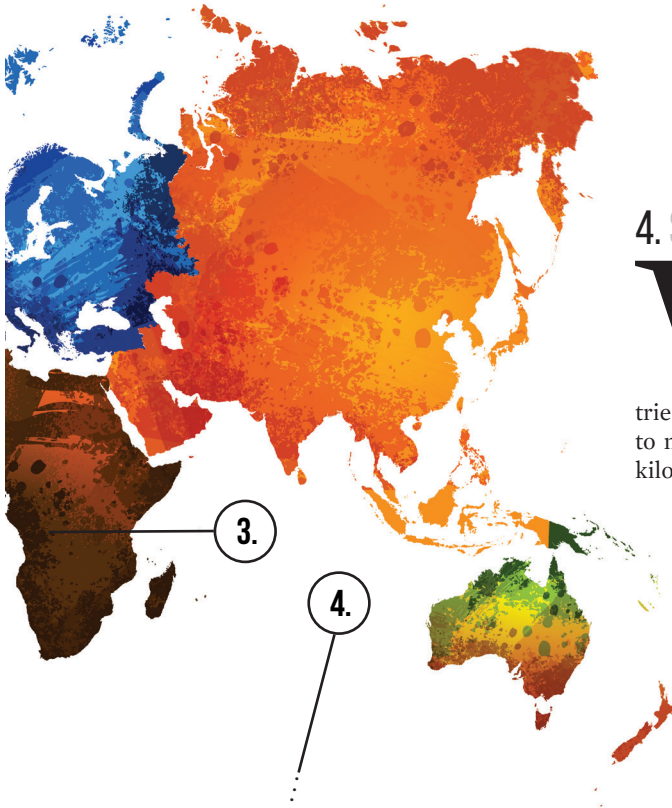
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1. A SMALL STEP FOR MANKIND

As the United States is about to wreck havoc on the progress of the last couple of years in trying to cap carbon emissions, the world might now look north for a brighter star to follow. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, recently announced that Canada is going to implement a federal carbon tax on all goods. The tax will start at C\$10 per tonne in 2018, and then increase by an additional C\$10 each year until 2022, when an evaluation will be done. Canada is a relatively small country (seen to population, obviously), but it has among the highest carbon emissions per capita, almost four times as much as Sweden. Thus is it by many seen as very important signal to the world that even a country dependent on natural resource extraction can impose a carbon tax. Of course, critics point to the fact that the tax would have to be C\$200 per tonne to make Canada reach the target it set for itself at COP21, but with possible additional increases after 2022 the decision is one that may let Canada keep both its economy and its national parks intact. ●

2. ROUGH TIMES FOR AFRICAN FOOTBALL

On January 14th Gabon will face Guinea-Bissau in Libreville to kick off the 31st edition of the African Cup of Nations in football. In total, Gabon will welcome 16 African national squads, from Algeria in the north to Zimbabwe in the south. Where the tournament was to be played was long in jeopardy, which reflects the political and social unrest in Africa. Initially Libya was supposed to host the tournament but as time passed it was clear that the country had not stabilized enough to be able to handle a major sports event. This was no good news for the Confederation of African Football, having already had troubles arranging the 2015th edition of the African Cup of Nations as Morocco decided to withdraw as hosts because of the Ebola epidemic. Eventually Gabon was announced as the arranger for the tournament kicking off early next year. For Africa as a whole it is important to manifest that the continent is capable of smoothly arranging a major tournament despite turbulent times. ●



3. CONGO IN CONFLICT

The wounds from the Second Congo War still bleed in the Democratic Republic of Congo. As the conflict reached climax, nine different African states fought each other – from Chad in the north, Uganda in the centre to Zimbabwe in the south. Due to the large amount of state actors the conflict was dubbed “Africa’s World War”. Being the deadliest conflict since World War II, the healing process is not yet finished. Clashes between government troops and rebels continue in parts of the country and this past few months saw tensions running high in Kinshasa as well. The capital has seen large turmoil ever since current President Joseph Kabila announced that the planned elections of 2016 were to be postponed until 2017 and clashes between protestors and police killed more than a dozen people. The political uproar continues in Congo and last month opposition leaders warned that the country could once again be thrown back to civil war – a scenario dreaded by many Africans across states. ●

4. SEALS VS. SOVEREIGNS

What is considered one of the most pristine marine environments in the world has been made into a marine protected area (MPA), after 24 countries signed an agreement that has taken years to negotiate. The area covers 1.55 million square kilometers, roughly the size of Germany, France and Britain combined, of ocean in the Ross Sea outside Antarctica. The MPA means that the region becomes a ‘no-take’ zone, which is to say no fishing or extracting of natural resources may be done for 35 years. The creation of the Ross Sea MPA marks the first time in history that this kind of deal has been signed, and many environmentalists are rejoicing with the hope that now many more may follow. Even US Secretary of State John Kerry seemed cheerful with the development: “The Ross Sea Region MPA will safeguard one of the last unspoiled ocean wilderness areas on the planet - home to unparalleled marine biodiversity and thriving communities of penguins, seals, whales, seabirds, and fish.” Politically the event is interesting also as the negotiations have been held back by China and Russia, both having had major fishing fleets in the region. To see two of the world’s largest powers renounce their self-interest for penguins and seals, is truly a moving sight. ●

INTERVIEW

TOBIAS ADOLFSSON & VILHELM FRITZON



SMALL TALK WITH THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Photo: Maria Sundström/UPF

Regarding the NATO discussion in Sweden, among the biggest questions concern the actual threat Russia pose to Sweden. Some claim it is substantial, others that it is exaggerated, and the answer to the question 'should Sweden join NATO or not' is dependent on that analysis. What is your idea of the situation?

Well, I don't really think there is anyone who mean that there is an actual and acute military threat against Sweden. However, the reasoning goes that we could be drawn into it, because as soon as the Baltic Sea is concerned we will also be affected. But that doesn't mean that we stand alone; that we are militarily neutral doesn't mean that we stand alone. Rather, it means that we must prepare ourselves both with regards to our own defense, for example by strengthening our presence on Gotland and making sure that we are investing in our territorial defenses, but also that we cooperate with the countries around the Baltic Sea. We also need, so to speak, to relax tensions. Of course, these could be seen as threatening acts, even if, as can be seen in the Bringéus report, in the long run they would be accepted, but in the short perspective we could expect a more unsafe existence for people in Sweden. We can expect some kind of retaliation from Russia, and that is not contributing to security for people in Sweden, but we shall keep our military neutrality, and we will cooperate with the countries around the Baltic Sea to prepare ourselves in the best way. To think that we simply can call for NATO to help us is an incorrect conception, and it is, further, to throw away out principle of neutrality, which has been so important for us for such a long time, to let Russia force us to abandon it, that is something I don't think we should do.

Your criticism of Saudi Arabia in 2015 created a big fuss worldwide. The feeling one got, however, when following the media coverage was that your statement in general led to good PR for Sweden, as many honoured your courage to speak your mind. The relationship with Saudi Arabia was rocky for a while, but now it seems to be back up and running. Keeping this in mind, why is it that politicians working with foreign policy are so afraid of being outspoken and plain, when it seems to do more good than harm?

That is a good and incredibly relevant question of which I have thought about a lot. Why are so many of my colleagues happy with just shaking people's hands and not willing to speak up? To me, it is really important that the European Union plays a part in solving this nervousness. A joint statement bears a lot of weight on the international arena, as the EU is the most important trading partner for a vast amount of countries. A unified foreign policy also protects the individual countries from diplomatic hassle. It seems as an increasing number of people are afraid of having opinions on democracy and human rights. We need to mobilize the forces that stand by these values, but politicians are afraid of what happened to us, to be subject to diplomatic sanctions. It was obviously very unpleasant to be in that situation, but we have worked on improving the relation since then. We will not reverse on our comments; we stand by what we've said. Nevertheless, there is still a need to be able to associate and have diplomatic ties between our two countries.



Photo: Wikimedia Commons



BETTY WILLIAMS

AN OUTLOOK ON THE WORLD THROUGH THE EYES OF A PEACE MAKER

In a conversation with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Betty Williams, *Utrikesperspektiv* is given the opportunity to hear her thoughts on war, peace, overcoming conflicts, and her lifelong work in peace-making. She calls upon us, students of Lund, to realise what possibilities we have to, dramatically put, “save the world”.

It is easy to forget where we've been, given the current political climate where everything supposedly is at stake. Speaking with Nobel Peace Prize recipient Betty Williams, we are thrown back to 1969 and a violent, divided and frustrated Northern Ireland. The era of blood, conflicts and discontent marks the years commonly known as “The Troubles”, a war that sprung out of the disagreements between those who wanted to remain within the United Kingdom and those who dreamed of a united Ireland. The conflict had political and ethno-nationalistic aspects, but a big part of the issue is to be found in the division between Protestants and Catholics. The protestants, who mainly expressed a wish to remain within the UK, and the Catholics who did not, stood against one another in an internal war that cost the lives of over 3500 people.

IN THIS POLITICAL, geopolitical and religiously infused conflict, Betty Williams took a stand. One specific incident in which three innocent children's lives were taken due to the violence conjured by the conflict sparked an urge in Williams to reach out for a change. Along with Mairead Corrigan-Maguire, she managed to mobilize thousands of women to march in demonstrations for

peace. The movement was highly successful and globally the world recognised the struggle, work and determination of women, whose religious and political differences were overtaken by their desire for peace. Looking back, Betty Williams sees that there truly was something remarkable about these actions and the women who fought for the cause. Surely it was exceptional as the efforts led to Williams and Corrigan-Maguire being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976.

“I BELIEVE THAT the women of Northern Ireland changed Irish history in 1976, by their work and their actions. It kind of forced the men to look at the issue, which was very grave. And I do believe that Mairead and I both knew that we were not the political answer, we didn't want to be the political answer. We wanted the unification of the people to come together, and then vote for their political answer. And to educate them on what democracy means.”

TODAY, THE MEMORIES remain of this deadly conflict, but Ireland is changed. “Eventually the devil dies”, Williams claims, and so it did when the “Good Friday Agreement” was settled in 1998. This agreement was meant to uphold and build

sustainable relations between Northern Ireland, The Republic of Ireland and England, and following the invoking of it the social, humanitarian and political situation changed for the better. Despite the Irish conflict settling down, Williams has yet to rest her fight for a better world. At the moment she's leading the non-profit organization World Centers of Compassion for Children International, aiming towards their self-announced mission of "a new paradigm within global cultures and governments that embrace, nurture, and empower children with a compassionate world view".

AS WE MOVE on to current affairs, Williams expresses her slight worry about Brexit and the choice to leave the European Union. Northern Ireland voted to stay, but as the majority of the union did not, the future may play out in a way that does not conform with the Northern Irish liking. A result of this referendum may be financial instability in the mobility of people and business between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Williams believes this was a big mistake, yet Northern Ireland has no choice but to follow suit.

MANY BELIEVE THAT there's a general uneasiness welling through other parts of the world. I wonder how we can overcome the division, that has come to surface with the increasing support of right wing parties as well as religious groups.

"I DON'T SEE much religion going on. I see a lot of idealising power, I don't see much of idealising on the "maker".

SOME PEOPLE FEAR a growth in extremism both from political and religious groups, but Williams believes that religion is not to blame for these conflicts. An interesting aspect, I believe, as a lot of people are quick to blame religion for the world's conflicts. Through Williams eyes, religion does not play the main role in the current political affair, but rather a greed for power and a will to govern far and wide.

QUESTIONING WHETHER THERE is a balance to be found between an increasing stream of refugees and the people that so sharply opposes the growing populations, is something that to Williams does not hold much vitality. "The problem is that there is no balance... there's conflicts that never should have happened going on in our world. And now we have to deal with that."

"THEY DIDN'T ASK to be refugees or disenfranchised people; it was forced on them by wars created in the Western world. We owe them."

FURTHERMORE, SHE INSISTS that the peace workers who actively fight for peace in these regions aren't recognised in the media. "They're coming togeth-



EVENTUALLY THE DEVIL DIES



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Loyalist banner and graffiti at Shankill road, Belfast, during the Troubles.

er more and more because they realise that the issues have got to be solved between regular people and all religions no matter what they are. So that's the silent work you don't see, but it does continue. And we must hope that we can free Palestine and liberate the Middle East from the terrible things that we as westerners have perpetrated there."

MOVING ON, I question whether we shouldn't be able to trust our governments to solve these fundamental issues. Williams describes her thoughts on this through the idealising of power that she previously talked about. "I look at what's going on in the Donald Trump-world. It's all for power. That's the wrong base for any politician to come from." With the US presidential election just completed, Williams expresses her discontent with new president-elect Donald Trump and as well as the constitutional right in the US to bear arms. "We must all disarm. The days of mighty armies should be over," she declares.

SO WHERE HAVE we been? And what light could history shed on the affairs of today? Betty Williams' experiences of how a movement of people can change the outcome of a conflict, is a life lesson we should all remember. Moving on to the dilemmas and problems we face today, the teaching of Williams is that we must accept that our cultural differences are not the be sources of conflict. On the contrary, our cultural differences can help us understand what we are yet to comprehend in this world and with that widen our perspectives, and unite us in the realisation that our joint beliefs are of far greater importance. Finally, the words Williams uses to describe what drives her organisation forward, will forever be stuck with me and they sure are important for us all to embrace.

"KEEP DOING GOOD no matter what happens. " ●

WHENCE AND WHITHER, KYRGYZSTAN?

An at once very young and very old country, squeezed in between large and power hungry neighbors, Kyrgyzstan has a history that leaves its inhabitants somewhat uncertain as to what their identity really is.



Kyrgyzstan, the most secretive of the stan's and somewhat hidden in the shadows of her charismatic neighbors China, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. When planning my travel there this summer I had to repeat to my friends several times before they remembered where it was I was going. Some hadn't even heard about it, which is not strange at all. Yet tourism is getting increasingly popular, and Kyrgyzstan has started to establish strong international relations in recent years. Even though it is rather forgotten, the history of Kyrgyzstan gives an insight to the nomadic culture that has spread to other parts of Central Asia, and of course an insight to Soviet power and how the USSR was structured.

AFTER BEING INHABITED by several great civilizations, and serving as an important stop along the silk route, Kyrgyzstan was ruled by the Mongols, and eventually incorporated in the Russian empire in the 1800's. Later, in 1919, Soviet power was established. Even though it is hard to trace whether the state that today is Kyrgyzstan was established as a unified territory before Soviet rule, the myth says that the statehood was strong before the Mongols destroyed it in the 1200's. Nevertheless, the nation state's has an inevitable need to create a common understanding of the national identity, a national myth, which is being focused around the Soviet past.

THIS YEAR KYRGYZSTAN is celebrating 25 years as a country. When the Soviet Union was resolved in 1991, the republic of Kyrgyzstan proclaimed independence. But the traces left by the USSR are still unmistakable. When walking around in the capital Bishkek you will pass numerous massive monuments, squares, official buildings and recreation areas with a very Soviet vibe, likewise, when looking out the bus window while traveling through the country. But the Soviet legacy is not exclusively esthetic.

KYRGYZSTAN HAS ALWAYS been a country of nomads. The nomadic people has been the foundation of society and the way of life for a majority of the people. The agriculture that most people lived of, was centered around the clan-system and was structured by nomads and semi-nomads. The Soviet way of re-structuring the agriculture in the 1920's was to collectivize it. The result of the collectivizing

process was the establishment of around 300,00 small and sedentary farms. The change met a lot of resistance from peasants and people from the rural parts of the country, and the resistance mirrored a pattern spread out through all of the Soviet Union when similar transformations were made. Peasants that refused to settle down were either imprisoned or executed, and some even forced to move into high-rise apartment buildings in the suburbs of the larger cities. Forcing the nomads to settle down in order for the agricultural system to better fit the economic model of the Soviet Union created fundamental problems for the nomadic people of Kyrgyzstan. Still today, long after the reforms, the country struggles with redistribution of the rural areas. The aim is of course to create a well functioning lifestyle where the nomads and the permanent farmers can live side by side.

THERE IS A contradiction in the way people in Kyrgyzstan remember and reflect on the Soviet times. Some claim that the negative consequences are obvious, reminding of that Stalin's rule led to several politicians, artists, poets and intellectuals imprisoned or executed, and large parts of the national collection of books and manuscripts written in Arabic destroyed.

ON THE OTHER hand, others say that it was a time of progression, development and positive change. During the 1920's cultural, political and social changes were made, resulting in increased literacy, growing economy and industry. It also resulted in increased rights for women, as it was stated that men and women are equal when it comes to work and the tradition of bridal kidnapping became prohibited.

THE CONTRADICTION in the Soviet legacy problematizes the creation of the national myth, and the strive to identify a common enemy and saviour. What is certain is that although Kyrgyzstan has a long way to go, the country is definitely on the right path. ●

THE CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF **GEORGE ORWELL**

Though mostly known for his novels *1984* and *Animal Farm*, George Orwell was a committed essay writer. In a recently released essay collection titled 'As I Please', after a column he wrote in *The Tribune*, he expounds on his thoughts and experiences on everything from taking part in the war against the Spanish Fascists to his years as a boy in school. The scope of the collection is much too vast to be covered here, and so I've selected here some fragments of its content that I believe to be just as relevant today as they were in the 30s and the 40s.



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

If there is something that I particularly admire in Orwell, it is the extent to and the way in which he opposes dogma moral wrongdoings: he does not stop at attacking it in his enemies, the fascists and the totalitarians of every kind, but spends just as much time ripping at the ones he share camp with. On this he gives a fine demonstration in the essay 'Notes on nationalism', in which he describes his perception of the psychological habits of what we today might call populism. This is his definition: "By 'nationalism' I mean first of all the habit of assuming that human beings can be classified like insects and that whole blocks of millions or tens of millions of people can be confidently labelled 'good' or 'bad'. But secondly—and this is much more important—I mean the habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unit, placing it beyond good and evil and recognising no other duty than that of advancing its interests." According to Orwell, a die-hard socialist, among the most nationalistic people were the English leftist intelligentsia, who despite the atrocities committed by the Russian communist regime will not and indeed cannot see in it anything but paradise on earth.

THIS KIND OF sentiments are just as prevalent today, if in a slightly more subtle manner: why, for example, is the Social Democrats nowhere near as criticized as the Sweden Democrats, who oftentimes are considered evil personified, when the former has implemented exactly the same immigration policy that the latter would have done is it was in power? A shadowy filter of 'us and them', 'you're a racist and I'm not', clouds reason and conditions good and evil to be dependent on this categorization, rather than on fact. The same thing could be observed in the recent American election. Clinton and most of the liberals were to that extent sure of their superiority over the deplorables, the sexists and the racists, that they neither would nor could accept even the possibility of any legitimacy in the Trump supporter's opinions. This deciding before even hearing an argument, 'because you are a Trump supporter, you are wrong and evil', is exactly what Orwell means by nationalism, and is indeed a common way of thinking among liberals and leftists today as well.

NOW THE POINT isn't that Trump's not a deplorable, unstable demagogue, but that you, to some extent, might be as well. Orwell is calling on everyone to be better than the nationalists, to be open to argument, to judge facts independently of our in-

terests, to not only have different thoughts but a different mode of thinking.

FOR ALL HIS violent opposition against nationalism and totalitarianism, Orwell is acutely aware of the reasons why its lure is so attractive to people, and it's an awareness that is all but lost in this era of labels. In a review of *Mein Kampf*, he writes that Hitler "has grasped the falsity of the hedonistic attitude to life" and of the tacit liberal assumption that "human beings desire nothing beyond ease, security and avoidance of pain." Rather, Hitler "knows that human beings *don't* only want comfort, safety, short working-hours, hygiene, birth-control and, in general, common sense; they also, at least intermittently, want struggle and self-sacrifice, not to mention drums, flags and loyalty-parades."

IN 'LOOKING BACK on the Spanish War' Orwell discusses what the so called 'ignorant workers' (or, say, the poor, white, uneducated Americans who voted for Trump) want that makes them unable to "see through the trick that is being played on them" and thus "easily swallow the promises of Fascism". The answer is simply, he writes, "the decent life which they are more and more aware is now technically possible". With this Orwell reminds us that whatever our wishful hopes of unlimited property rights and rational economic actors may be, decent levels of economic equality will always be necessary for a society that seeks to avoid chaos and ruin.

THESE, I BELIEVE, are the reasons why Orwell is so firm in his belief that socialism is a better form of government than, say, liberalism; the latter has, according to him, no way of filling the human needs which gives rise to nationalism. "The real objective of Socialism is not happiness", he claims in the essay 'Can Socialists Be Happy?', "the real objective of Socialism is human brotherhood."

PERHAPS HISTORY HAS proved the socialist schema to lead in the opposite direction Orwell would have wanted it to. But whether it has or not, the human needs Orwell hoped it would satisfy are just as real today, and their dissatisfaction is, once again, beginning to show. ●

A great online collection of Orwell essays can be found at gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300011h.html. Especially recommended are, along with the ones mentioned above, 'Shooting an elephant', 'Politics and the English Language', and 'Such, Such Were the Joys'.



THEME: **GEOPOLITICS**

From war and peace to social and economic issues, geopolitics is about the largest aspects of global politics. Utrikesperspektiv delves into the depths of the forces that shape our world.



WITH RUSSIA ON THE DOORSTEP

Putin's military buildup in the Baltic Sea is causing tension among Russia's neighbors in Northern Europe and the region has emerged as a friction point between NATO and Russia. Utrikesperspektiv's Zigne Edström has interviewed three experts at the Swedish Defense University trying to get some answers as to whether we should be concerned or not.

Russia has recently been strengthening its Baltic Fleet by deploying additional warships armed with long-range missiles. These Kalibr missiles can be armed with nuclear warheads and have a range up to 2 600 kilometers. Along with the Iskander missiles already deployed in Kaliningrad, Russia has the capacity to launch a pre-emptive attack against the Nordic countries. Not surprisingly, these military advantages are creating tension and concern among Russia's neighbors in Northern Europe.

ACCORDING TO TOMAS Ries, associate professor at the Swedish Defense University and expert on Russia's security policy, the country has systematically been upgrading its military forces since 2010. Today the Russian Federation holds Europe's strongest conventional military force. "Russia is a country with a brutal dictatorship," Ries says. Domestically, the situation is characterized by an oppressed population where any opposition to Putin's regime is threatened and harassed. Internationally, the invasion of Georgia in 2008 along

with the annexation of Crimea and occupation of the Donbass region in 2014 provides example of Russia's new and aggressive foreign policy. In addition, the country is consistently violating other countries' airspaces, creating further tension in the Baltic Sea region.

AT THE SAME time NATO's leading members, i.e. the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, are preparing to increase their military presence in the region by sending smaller troop units to the Alliance's Baltic members as well as to Poland. The US is, furthermore, planning to station 330 marines in Norway. This may not seem proportional to the Russian increased military capacity in the region – and it is not meant to be. Magnus Christiansson, PhD-student at Swedish Defense University describes this approach as a tripwire strategy. If the smaller military forces were to become engaged in hostilities, the troop contributing countries would automatically get involved in the conflict, and ultimately NATO as a whole, and thereby increase the costs for the attacker.



Utrikesperspektiv interviewed three experts at the Swedish Defense University about Russia's buildup in the Baltic Sea Region

SWEDEN AND FINLAND are not, however, members of NATO and are therefore not covered by the Alliance's collective defense clause. Furthermore, both countries national defense capacity has shrunk during the past decades and are at present time relatively poor. Consequently, both remain relatively vulnerable for military aggression or threats thereof. Security issues center on the strategic position of the Gotland and Åland islands. If Gotland, located in the middle of the Baltic Sea, were captured, Russian forces could position mobile surface-to-air missiles. Such a move could in turn restrict NATO's means to respond in the region, not least in the Baltic states, drastically.

JACOB WESTBERG, senior lecturer at Swedish Defense University has published several books on Swedish defense politics and is currently researching on Nordic defense cooperation. "Since 2014, and especially during 2015, Sweden and Finland have increased their cooperation," Westberg says. This includes exchanged and shared military information, combat unites, surveillance and even joint defense planning. Together the two

countries could build a considerably stronger defense compared to their individual capacity. However, they cannot be compared to Russian military strength. "We can only hope that NATO and NATO's leading allies will continue to be present in the region," Westberg says.

SHOULD WE BE worried then? According to the experts, we do have cause to be concerned. Whereas they do not predict an actual attack on Sweden, they believe that there will be consequences in the long run. Russia remains a military superpower in Europe and at the same time we are witnessing a divided EU with Brexit as just an example. "With its military superiority, Russia has the means to pressure and threaten other European countries," Tomas Ries argues. After the US presidential election we are facing further uncertainties. At this point we don't know what effects a Trump presidency will have on the geopolitics in the Baltic Sea region. Nor do we know what to expect of future US-Russian relations. The upcoming NATO summit in Brussels in early 2017 will potentially provide some answers. ●

GEOPOLITICS AND EUROPE: NO LONGER AN OXYMORON?

A part of war-stricken Eastern Europe, the Middle East as well as North Africa are the European Union's direct neighbors, and this unstable neighborhood poses considerable security threats to Europe today. In the face of these challenges, the European Union is increasingly pressured to demonstrate a greater awareness of these geopolitical risks.

With Russian military forces backing separatists in Ukraine, inching forward into Georgia, moving nuclear-capable missiles into Kaliningrad and exercising their troops in Syria, NATO bolsters its presence in Europe. Meanwhile, the uneasiness with Europe's external borders is ever-growing and adding to the necessity of internal border controls, currently established in a number of EU's Member States, including Sweden. After decades of Europe's liberal governance approach to international relations, the character of international as well as internal European politics seems to increasingly show signs of the old school geopolitics. The scope of foreign affairs is being

gradually shifted or at least expanded from liberal governance and win-win diplomacy to power and security politics for the first time since the Cold War. A bid to establish the EU's independent army is gaining momentum and is often seen as one of possible measures to counter-balance security risks, completely relying on NATO no more.

DESPITE THE SIGNALS that Russia has been pursuing a different type of foreign policy, one that is far away from the European win-win type of diplomacy, the EU seems to still lack in knowledge of how to oppose it effectively. With Russia's military invasion and subsequent war in eastern Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin has made it clear that the inviolability of borders is not regarded as a



norm under his rule. Symbolically, demonstrating the discontent with the received criticism, just recently Mr. Putin announced a withdrawal of Russia's signature from the founding statute of the International Criminal Court. Could it mean that the prevalent perception of continental order in Europe as determined by the rule of law is merely a wishful thinking? With the end of the Cold War, the West seem to have largely assumed that the most prominent geopolitical issues have been solved, yet today we see that the settlement have been more fragile than expected.

EUROPEANS WANT TO live in a political and international system where processes like development, growing economies and climate change are at the center of foreign policy arena much rather than military bases, national self-determinations or spheres of influence. In other words, they want to live in an international environment where most important priorities involve promoting human rights and democracy, not games of geopolitics. Thus, taking into account security and power relations again after the Cold War might naturally seem as a step back. However, failing to see that some of the immediate EU's neighbors live in line with different environments, experiences, cultures and sometimes even notions about statehood

might lead to a complete disregard of the character of the real and raw international dynamics. These dynamics are clearly not the ones that we would like to be a part of, yet Europe is not an isolated continent and cannot simply assume to be immune to the security threats.

RUSSIA'S MILITARY ACTIONS as well as its now increasingly visible unreliability is not the only source of a feeling of insecurity within the EU. Europe's refugee crisis, unstable neighborhoods of the Middle East and North Africa also greatly alarm Europe to take its geopolitical interests into account sooner rather than later.

THE EU HAS already survived a lot and is constantly seen as being on the brink of a crisis. Not only an economic or a political, but this time also an identity one. If geopolitics are indeed returning to Europe, a number of fundamental, existential and self-determining decisions are to take place. At the end of the day soft power is what defines the EU - it's both a precondition and an outcome of the existence of such a multi-actor organization as we know it to be. Thus retaining its old, soft image and addressing security challenges effectively might unfortunately be mutually exclusive. ●

THE HOT COLD WAR



The Balance of
Power in the
Middle East

مِثْلُ قَدَرِ الْمِثْلِ

IRAN



الله أكبر



SAUDI
ARABIA

The relationship between the two powerhouses of the Middle East, Saudi Arabia and Iran, has always been tense. In recent years the struggle has intensified through proxy wars throughout the region. With a political situation that is changing quickly, the battle for power in the Middle East could escalate further.

Ever since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran has been running high to say the least. Both dominant powers in the Middle East, both big oil producers and both representing the two major branches of Islam, Sunni and Shia. A very important aspect to this geopolitical time bomb is just that, religion. Saudi Arabia looks at themselves as the frontrunner for Sunni Muslims as the country holds two holy cities in Sunni Islam, Mecca and Medina. As Iran is expanding its influence in the region, the Saudis are getting nervous.

AFTER THE PASSING of Khomeini in 1989, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the tensions started to ease off. However, the Arab spring of

2011 made the situation blow up again, now worse than ever. The two countries were launched into a cold war, in a hot place. Just as the original cold war between the USSR and the USA, the war is not being fought with direct military confrontation, but with diplomatic, ideological and economical tools. Another mean that the two powers use is proxy warfare, a war instigated by a major power which does not itself become involved, but back different groups with economic or military means.

AFTER THE US invasion of Iraq, a Shia dominated government formed and Saudi Arabia watched in sheer panic as they saw the hand of Iran spreading through the Middle East. Iraq is what separates Iran and Saudi Arabia geographically and served as a buffer zone with Saddam Hussein's regime, a regime the Saudis were quite happy with. When the US invaded Iraq and broke the secular Ba'ath government, an era began which scholars deem

as the most destructive sectarian conflict in Islam for centuries. The Saudi-backed different militias, including Al Qaeda, that fought the Iranian-backed groups for control of Iraq. Iran won these proxy wars and the new Shiite government in Iraq was established.

IN 2006 SAUDI Arabia watched again as Iran-funded Hezbollah fought Israel to a stalemate which was alarming since Israel is considered one of the most powerful countries in the region. In 2015 Yemen, a Sunni neighbour to Saudi Arabia, got conquered by a Shia group called Houthi which is one of Iran's proxy warfare groups.



The countries does not share a border, with Iraq in between acting as a buffer zone



Ali Khamenei - Supreme Leader of Iran



Salman bin Abdulaziz - King of Saudi Arabia

“THE ARAB SPRING OF 2011 MADE THE SITUATION BLOW UP AGAIN, NOW WORSE THAN EVER

THE MAIN BATTLEGROUND that Iran and Saudi Arabia is using to fight each other is Syria and Yemen, where the Saudi regime wish to overthrow the Syrian president Assad who is an ally to Iran. The Saudis saw Syria as a good opportunity to gain another Arab ally to the fold, in an effort to weaken Hezbollah in Lebanon, and they are pumping huge amounts of money into rebel groups fighting in the Syria war. Another stalemate between Iran and Saudi Arabia is the war in Yemen. Saudi Arabia wants to pacify Yemen with a strong message to Iran, don't meddle in Arab affairs!

ALL THESE EVENTS, clearly showing that Iran is gaining considerable influence and power in the region, is very alarming to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, feeling more surrounded and isolated. Following the establishment of the Republic of Iran the US placed different restrictions on Iranian trading. In 2016 however the US arranged a nuclear deal with Iran, including a lifting of the sanctions. Saudi Arabia saw this as a massive betrayal as they consider the US one of their closest allies. Feeling abandoned by the US and weakened by sinking oil prices, adding up to 90% of their income, Saudi Arabia might resort to drastic measures to keep their influence in the region. The proxy warfare between the two powerful countries have so far been fought under the radar, but now that Iran seems to be “winning”, Saudi Arabia is beginning to act unstable. ●



TROUBLED WATERS

CONFLICTS IN CENTRAL ASIA

| Stranded boat in the Aral Sea Basin.

Central Asia remains largely unknown, despite its natural beauty, cultural diversity and turbulent transboundary tensions. Unequal resources, ethnic clashes and suspicious leaders all contribute to its fragile state, with water distribution becoming a critical trigger for many conflicts. All the while superpowers Russia, China and USA are scrambling to establish political power and influence in the region.

During the time of the Soviet Union, a water and energy exchange system between the five states was controlled by Moscow. Water from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan was released to downstream states for crop irrigation, in return for natural gas and oil energy from downstream Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan in the winter. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the resource-sharing system dissolved, as the now independent republics witnessed increased nationalism and started to withhold resources and build independence.

TODAY, CENTRAL ASIA is feeling the sting of the old soviet regime. The soviet ideology that nature can be exploited indefinitely had justified extensive irrigation systems, water-intensive cotton plantations and hydropower dams; leading to the region having the highest per capita consumption of water worldwide. The abundant water supplies have been stretched so thin that the region now suffers from severe water shortages.

TO MAKE MATTERS worse, irrigation systems are now degraded, leaking up to half of the water before reaching the farm, while

hydropower dams are no longer used harmoniously as they were for the sharing system. Rather than water being released in summer for downstream irrigation, the majority released during winter months to heat Tajik and Kyrgyz houses, counteracting the lack of energy from the oil and gas rich states. This is a double whammy for downstream countries, whom are left without sufficient irrigation water in the summer as well as flooding during the winter.

THIS UNEQUAL CONTROL and distribution has enabled water to become a powerful political tool for upstream countries. This was first used in 1999, when Kyrgyzstan cut water supplies to Kazakhstan after energy agreements turned sour. Since then, water projects have been at the heart of geopolitical tensions. The latest being Tajikistan's plan to build the Rogun hydropower dam, which will increase their economy and energy independence.

THE DAM WOULD not only severely restrict water flowing to Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, but also reduce their political leverage as the country would no longer be dependent on the downstream republics for energy. This would be especially disastrous for Uzbekistan, which, in combination with climate change, would devastate the agricultural sector that is currently accounting for 20% of their GDP.

UZBEKISTAN HAVE NOT held back in response to this; requiring Tajikistan citizens to have visas, cutting train routes, mining the border and raising import duties. The president even threatened war if the project goes ahead, quoting "we will ensure we have enough water even if we have to use force!". This geopolitical situation even became personal when Tajikistan and Uzbekistan presidents got into a brawl at a summit in 2004.

“ ALL OF THIS COULD
DETERIORATE TO THE
POINT WHERE NOT JUST
SERIOUS CONFRONTATION
BUT EVEN WARS COULD
BE THE RESULT.

- ISLAM KARIMOV, FORMER
UZBEKISTAN PRESIDENT



YET, THE ROGUN dam project cannot go ahead without external funding, which would likely come from one of these superpowers. Perhaps the US would pay for it in return for a military base, after they were forced to close an air base in Uzbekistan. Although Tajikistan is currently strongly

allied and protected by Russia, China may fund the dam project in order to encourage them to accept the proposed China-Central Asia military from one of these superpowers. Perhaps the US would pay for it in return for a military base, after they were forced to close an air base in Uzbekistan. Although Tajikistan is currently strongly allied and protected by Russia, China may fund the dam project in order to encourage them to accept

the proposed China-Central Asia military alliance. With Russia, China and the USA scrambling for influence in the area, a war would likely impact further than the valleys of Central Asia.

EXACERBATING FACTORS

ARAL SEA

EXCESSIVE WATER USE and diversion of rivers in Central Asia has led to, what the U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described as “one of the planet’s worst environmental disasters”. The inland Aral Sea has been reduced to a slither of a water and a small seasonal lake. Kazakhstan built a dam, which saved the northern part of the lake to the expense of the Southern part in Uzbekistan. Despite the current peril of the Aral Sea basin and a Soviet-Union decree ordering water usage in the area to decrease by 25% before 2000, Central Asian agriculture, hydropower and industry has been as thirsty as ever.

ISLAMIC EXTREMISM

EXPERTS HAVE EXPRESSED concerns that the number of Islamic extremists are increasing in the region, both from those entering via Afghanistan and locals rising against authoritarian regimes. However, this situation may have been played up by Uzbekistan as an excuse to increase border controls, restrict resources and justify increasingly bad relations.

ENCLAVES

ONCE BORDERS SOLIDIFIED and free movement stifled, many enclaves were formed within countries as isolated communities fought to be recognised as part of another country. This exacerbates pressures between republics, for example many major roads pass through these enclaves, forcing drivers to go through costly and time-consuming border control twice. Those living within the enclaves become increasingly isolated and governments are worried they are harboring extremists. Areas with a large representation of ethnicities associated with a neighboring country are often the subject of geopolitical dispute; the Tajikistan president shouted “Smarkand and Burkhaha will be ours again one day!” whilst grabbing the collar of Uzbekistan’s president.





INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT OR “INTERNATIONAL CAUCASIAN COURT”

HAS AFRICA HAD ENOUGH OF IT?

After the brutal Rwandan genocide, Africa joined the international community to say “never again”. In 1998, an overwhelming majority of the states agreed to the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court (ICC) with the goal to end impunity and to bring those responsible for international crimes to account. African leaders used to be ardent cheerleaders of the Rome Statute and the ICC so why is the current trend showing more and more African States leaving the ICC?

“I will not allow any other Kenyan to be tried in a foreign court... we have closed the ICC chapter,” the Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta proclaimed after the International Criminal Court (ICC) dropped charges against Kenyatta due to insufficient evidence. The Gambian Information Minister also expressed discontent with the ICC, calling it an “International Caucasian Court for the persecution and humiliation of people of colour, especially Africans”. Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni protested against the ICC, saying that he is done with the court and called for all African States “to get out of that court of the West. Let them (Westerners) stay with their court”. In fact, in October 2016, Burundi became the first country to leave the ICC, followed by South Africa and Gambia. South Africa’s decision to leave is likely to encourage more African States to abandon the ICC, which has jurisdiction over genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

“ THE ICC IS NOT A COURT TO BRING TO BOOK PRIME MINISTERS OF UK OR PRESIDENTS OF US; IT IS MEANT TO BRING PEOPLE TO BOOK IN THE THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES.

- ROBIN COOK, FORMER BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY

1) Why is South Africa leaving the ICC?

TO UNDERSTAND SOUTH Africa’s decision, we have to look at the Al Bashir case. In this case, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Sudanese President, Omar Al Bashir for crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes in 2009 and 2010. In 2011, when Al Bashir visited Malawi, a state party to the ICC, Malawi failed to surrender Al Bashir. In order for the ICC to exercise jurisdiction, the state needs to be a State Party to the ICC or the UN Security Council will need to refer the case to the ICC. Malawi argued that Sudan is not a State Party to the ICC, therefore, it is not obliged to surrender President Al Bashir as Head of States enjoy immunity. The Security Council referred the situation in Darfur to the ICC in 2005 and requested cooperation of all States. So Sudan, although not a State Party to the ICC, was placed under the same obligation as a State Party, as all UN Member States are required to carry out Security Council decisions under the UN Charter. Therefore, Malawi is obliged to surrender Al Bashir despite the customary international law on immunity.

IN 2015, WHEN President Al Bashir attended an African Summit in Johannesburg, the South African government failed to arrest him and claimed he had immunity as the head of member state. The Supreme Court of Appeal of South Africa ruled that the failure to arrest is unlawful and judges of ICC criticized South Africa on its failure to arrest. This prompted South Africa to reconsider its position under the Rome Statute. A written notice of South Africa’s intention to leave was submitted to the UN Secretary General in October 2016, claiming that its domestic law on diplomatic immunity is incompatible with the ICC. Withdrawal from the ICC will be formalized after one year of notification. South African President Jacob Zuma have

long criticized the ICC as being biased and only targets Africans. Other African leaders also have the same opinion.

“ THE IDEA THAT ICC JUMPED ON AFRICA IS WRONG. AFRICAN LEADERS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT CRIMES COMMITTED IN AFRICA AND THEY WERE ASKING ICC TO HELP AND NOW...THOSE COMMITTING CRIMES ARE PREVAILING.

- LUIS MORENO OCAMPO,
FIRST PROSECUTOR OF THE ICC

2) Does the ICC targets African states?

A SHORT ANSWER to this is yes, but this is not without reasons. Indeed, nine out of the ten investigations carried out by the ICC since its formation in 2002 are on Africa. However, six of the nine cases were brought by African government themselves. For example, in 2003, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni referred the situation concerning the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) to the ICC. The ICC then issued an arrest warrant for LRA's leader Joseph Kony for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The other two African cases – the Al Bashir case in Sudan and the Gaddafi case in Libya – were referred by the UN Security Council. So the ICC prosecutors only initiated one case, the Kenyan cases which included President Uhuru Kenyatta for the post-election violence in 2008. This was then withdrawn due to insufficient evidence.

AS OF MARCH 2016, 124 states have ratified the Rome Statute, almost a third of it are African states. However, some of the world's most powerful nations like United States, China, India, Pakistan, Turkey and Israel have yet to ratify it. This means that the ICC does not have jurisdiction over these countries. The UN Security Council nevertheless do have the power to refer a case to the ICC like the Al-Bashir case, making it legal for the ICC to exercise jurisdiction over a non-State Party.

For example, the UN Security Council could have referred the atrocities in Syria to the ICC. However, all the permanent members of the Security Council, including Russia and China, have veto powers. Since China have been backing Russia's support for President Bashar al-Assad, a referral by the Security Council is highly unlikely as it requires all permanent members to agree unanimously. All these reasons have drastically reduced the ICC's potential targets. As it has jurisdiction over most African states, Africa becomes the ICC's primary target.

“ YOU CAN'T TOUCH VLADIMIR PUTIN OVER UKRAINE. YOU CAN'T TOUCH HU JINTAO OVER TIBET. YOU CAN'T TOUCH GEORGE W. BUSH OVER IRAQ. ... HOW ARE YOU AN INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT...

- MEHDI HASSAN,
BRITISH POLITICAL JOURNALIST

3) What are the alternatives to the ICC for Africa?

AFRICA CAN SET up a temporary ad hoc tribunal to deal with specific cases. For example, the Extraordinary African Chambers, an African Union backed tribunal was set up in 2013 specifically to try international crimes committed in Chad between 1982 to 1990 by former President Hissène Habré. In May 2016 Hissène Habré was convicted of crimes against humanity, war crimes and torture and sentenced to life in prison. However, ad hoc tribunals are limited in efficiency and deterrent capabilities as they are usually only set up when it is financially and politically beneficial for states. African leaders have also taken steps to set up an African Court of Justice and Human Rights (ACJHR). In 2014, the African Union adopted the Malabo Protocol to strengthen the proposed ACJHR's jurisdiction by giving the court jurisdiction

to try 14 crimes, including crimes listed in the Rome Statute – crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes. However, African leaders took a step back in 2014 when they voted unanimously to give sitting Head of States immunity from prosecution by the proposed ACJHR. Therefore, by withdrawing from the ICC, African leaders are essentially shielding themselves with immunity as the ACJHR would not prosecute them. Currently, Africa lacks a viable alternative institution for the promotion of justice.

“ I DO NOT THINK THE VOICES OF A FEW LEADERS.. SHOULD BE USED TO DISREGARD THE SUPPORT THAT WE STILL HAVE IN AFRICA. WE STILL HAVE SUPPORT IN AFRICA.

- FATOU BENSOUDA,
CURRENT PROSECUTOR OF THE ICC

AFTER THE RWANDAN Genocide, Africa proclaimed to the world “never again” to allow such atrocities to happen. Somehow after 14 years since the inception of the ICC, African leader’s commitment to this proclamation are diminishing. The current trend of African States departing from the ICC is worrying. The ICC is a court of last resort, so the ICC will only intervene when States are unwilling or unable to prosecute international crimes. Remember, we are talking about crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. These are crimes that are “so egregious that it affects the core dignity of human beings”. So why would a democratic government who is committed to accountability and have no intention of committing international crimes be afraid of the ICC? ●

Photo: GovernmentZA



President Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan on the left and President Jacob Zuma of South Africa on the right, discussed strengthening the relations between South Africa and Sudan in Beijing in 2015.



THE HARD FIGHT FOR SOFT POWER

As the Chinese government continues to pour capital into Africa, it is struggling to convert that investment into soft power. Friendship, it would seem, is priceless.

The influence of China in Africa is strong and growing, at least economically. In this case the numbers speak for themselves. Although Beijing is secretive about its foreign aid and development funding, data from 2009 shows that 45% of China's foreign aid goes directly to the continent, more than twice that of the US's 20% or the UK's 22%. Furthermore it is growing at a tremendous speed, from being virtually non-existent at the turn of the century to presently being 94 billion dollars annually (both in direct aid and similar forms of funding). This is all part of a push from China not only to contribute to the continent and diversify its economy but for soft power. This latter endeavour has so far proven tricky.

SOFT POWER is a term coined by Harvard professor Joseph Nye and refers to all non-quantifiable tools used by countries to push their agenda. Usually this comes in the form of respect and admiration, thus increasing that country's overall influence. Essential to the process of gaining soft power is public diplomacy, and China's active strategy can be placed into two categories.

THE FIRST is its economic initiatives. In Africa this has taken the form of several mega-projects such as a coastal railway in Nigeria, futuristic cities in South Africa and financing for diamond mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Another form is education where Beijing finances the university degrees of thousands of African

Background: the TAZARA Railway, that links the port of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania with Kapiri Mposhi in Zambia, was supported and financed by China in the 70's.

students every year, far more than any other single country. Secondly is the country's cultural exports, which on the one hand consists of institutions funded by the state. Among them are the 50 or so Confucian temples on the continent, which have the collective goal of promoting Chinese as a language and the country's culture as a whole. On the other hand China's cultural influence in Africa comes in the form an interest for its history, its cuisine, traditional medicine and recently its tea.

HOWEVER ALL THESE efforts are not leading to the sought after soft power. In 2015, China placed outside of the top 15 in two of the three major soft power indexes, albeit still climbing a few ranks compared to last year. Disappointing for the world's second largest economy. The primary factors holding the country back are the lack of democracy and limited human rights. As valid as that sounds, one could make the argument that these are western norms and therefore shouldn't be viewed as inherently positive or negative. After all, in the eyes of many developing countries China has provided a viable alternative for rapid and sustainable long-term economic growth.

REGARDLESS OF THE cause the fact remains that China is struggling with its soft power status. Ultimately, the country must find a balance be-

tween it's craving for authority on the international stage and being well regarded at the same time. China's role as a superpower is now a fact as it maintains significant economic growth. This relatively newfound economic power enables it to provide generous foreign aid and financing to continents such as Africa, but it is doing little to enhance its image. Short-term beneficial measures that the government could take include resolving the conflict in the South China Sea and settle the constant accusations of cyber-warfare (regardless of their authenticity). Long term these measures would prove to the international community that China is a reliable superpower, thus boosting its soft power, even if it involves briefly swallowing its pride.

ON THE OTHER hand, Europe and the United states must realise that its increasing isolationist tendencies are occurring in concert with a reliable and growing Chinese economic presence in Africa, meaning that in the future is not unthinkable that the continent will look to China as its natural partner. For now China still lags behind, but both Europe and even more so the US must watch themselves if they are to maintain productive bilateral relationships with the continent. Your move, Mr. Trump. ●



DISAPPOINTING, FOR THE WORLD'S
SECOND LARGEST ECONOMY

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS?



Historically the norm of non-intervention has dominated international relations. In recent time, with an ongoing globalization, the intersection between the sovereignty of states and humanitarian intervention has been brought to the fore.

After 30 years of war the Westphalian settlement 1648 laid the foundation for the modern system of states. The system determined that the king was supposed to rule his own kingdom, to reign within it and that nobody was allowed to intervene. The states were to be seen as equal and did not recognize any authority above the state. They were what we call sovereign.

THE IDEAS OF the sovereignty of states and non-intervention later formed the basis for the UN, and was established into international law as a part of the UN Charter of 1945, the foundational treaty of the United Nations. This also meant that human rights went from being a national matter, to something that was governed internationally, with the prospect to underpin the emergent post WWII-peace.

SINCE THEN MUCH has changed and new emergent norms of humanitarian intervention are superseding the norm of non-intervention. While sovereignty gives rights to states, humanitarian interventions concern the responsibility to protect the citizens, derived from social contract theory. Human rights are not seen as much as a national concern, rather an international one - and the sovereignty of states and human rights have become more equal. The sovereignty of states is no longer regarded as unconditional, which have justified intervention based on humanitarian grounds.

THIS TRANSITION IS often ascribed the ongoing process of globalization, with increased intergovernmental connections and modern information technology. Another major change regards the nature of conflicts. Today rarely combatted between states, but rather a mix of traditional wars, civil wars and organized crime, including systematic violations of human rights - what Mary Kaldor describes as "New Wars".

FOR THOSE ADVOCATING the use of humanitarian intervention the outset is that there is a legal as well as a moral obligation to intervene if severe violations of human rights are at hand. The legal ground to this claim is found, according to the proponents, in both the UN Charter and within international common law, while the moral ground often derived from different forms of natural law and political liberalism. While the majority holds the opinion that humanitarian interventions must be sanctioned by the UN, some argue that individual states have the right to intervene if the UN fails to agree on the issue since they regard humanitarian intervention as a legal exception from the UN Charter article 2(4) concerning non-violence (similar to the case of the right of self-defense).

ONE ARGUMENT REFERS to international common law, since humanitarian intervention occurred and was accepted before the establishment of the UN. The third argument is usually of more moral than legal sort; that humanitarian intervention can be ethically necessary. That is to say, some things go above the law.

FOR THOSE ADVOCATING against the use of humanitarian intervention the outset is that the sover-



Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin at the Yalta Conference in 1945, laying the groundwork for the establishment of the UN.



The UN Security Council, chaired by US President Barack Obama in September, 2009.

eignty of states cannot be compromised. Doing so would diminish order and predictability. A perennial objection is the opinion that interventions happen primarily because of self-interest and that the stated humanitarian reasons only operate as smokescreens. Are there interventions where those involved are not biased, or affected by cultural predilections? Others just gainsay risking the country's own soldiers dying on foreign ground, for foreign reasons, when the state is supposed to defend its own inhabitants.

FOLLOWING THE TRAGEDIES in Rwanda and the Balkans in the 1990's (and the failures of the Security Council to act in a decisive manner) the question regarding who is responsible for protecting people from gross violations of human rights intensified – and so also the potential conflict between sovereignty and humanitarian intervention. As a result, Secretary-General Kofi Annan put forward a challenge to the Member States: “If humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica, to gross and systematic violation of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?”

IN 2001 THE International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) presented a report named “The Responsibility to Protect” (R2P), which found that sovereignty not only

mean to control, but also to protect the people within its borders. The report proposed that when a state fails to do so, either through lack of ability or a lack of willingness, the responsibility to protect proceeds to the international community.

AT THE UN World Summit 2005, all Member States accepted the responsibility to protect its population from war crimes, genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Even more, they also agreed that when a state fails to do so, the international community is responsible to protect the population. If doing so through peaceful means fail, the international community is to act in a “timely and decisive manner” through the Security Council, in accordance with the UN Charter, on a case-by-case basis. Since then the Security Council has made several references to The Responsibility to Protect, for resolutions regarding Libya (2011), South Sudan (2011), Yemen (2011), Syria (2012) and the Central African Republic (2013) to name some.

BUT QUESTIONS STILL remain, not only regarding the actual outcome in places like Libya and Syria. Is The Responsibility to Protect justified, considering the non-compatibility with the norm of non-intervention? Are we witnessing a major change in how we see the rights of a state? If missions connected to the Responsibility to protect increases further, one could argue that is the case. ●



CETA AND THE EU'S CRISIS OF SOVEREIGNTY

Thoughts on internationalism in the post-Brexit arena of European trade, and postulating a way forward.

In October of this year, we saw a great political upset between member states and the EU commission on the matter of CETA, or the “comprehensive economic and trade agreement.” In a peculiar and symbolic democratic hiccup, the Southern Belgian region of Wallonia managed to block the progress of the

compensious trade juggernaut in a moment of dissent towards the EU’s absolution of economic corporatocracy. The French speaking region of Belgium attested to the insidious ramifications of such lofty trade deals like CETA and the TTIP—in that, they fall in favor of corporate hegemony, and enervate the capacity of local communities to



Almost 250 000 people protested against the EU's free trade agreements CETA and TTIP in Berlin in October 2015.

resist environmental degradation, and out-competition from big multi-nationals. And, their voices resonate with many global communities, which echo the same points: “a number of provisions in CETA and TTIP affect the autonomy of states with regard to disputes with private actors, their capacity to regulate some markets, and their ability to open up (or close down) their public procurement sector to foreign competition.”

HOWEVER, DESPITE THE substantiated dissent of Wallonia, CETA's momentary impasse was decried as a failure of European democracy. Due to the backdrop of Brexit, the trade deal, which would normally be negotiated under common EU commercial policy (which grants the commission authority to negotiate directly with the trade partners), was actually negotiated as a “mixed agreement” requiring “national competence.” That is to say, a trade deal that would normally circumvent the democratic input of member states was instead put to a representative vote, requiring the assent of each. On its face, this is a manoeuvre that embodies the principles of democracy more palpably:

“If the European Commission is more prone to defending the interests of large multinationals, national governments and parliaments may be in a better position to channel citizens' claims and represent the interests of their respective societies, in line with the principles of representative democracy.”

IN THIS WAY, this pivot of democratic recourse reflects the rising invocation for national sovereignty in European politics, epitomised by the case of Brexit. Each state should have more power, more voice, in determining its own politics. Yet, as a result of these alternatively proffered democratic parameters, 3.5 million Belgians were able to determine a policy affecting 510 million Europeans.

THIS CASE EXEMPLIFIES the complexity of democratic due diligence, its uneven alignment with right and left politics, and the ambiguity in determining a way forward. On the one hand, there is the case of Brexit's iconoclastic appeal to national sovereignty, which, in the European case, is often conflated with democratic revival. In some cases, this is not an unfounded denouement. Having a representative democracy necessitates establishing



EACH STATE SHOULD HAVE MORE POWER, MORE VOICE, IN DETERMINING ITS OWN POLITICS. YET, 3.5 MILLION BELGIANS WERE ABLE TO DETERMINE A POLICY AFFECTING 510 MILLION EUROPEANS

more localised power through the formulation of an inclusive and deliberative *modus operandi* for state politics. Unfortunately, the nationalistic and demagogic language invoked in such right-leaning discourses has served to undermine the principles of freedom and solidarity democracy rests upon. On the other hand, there is the case of CETA, which was deliberated upon under a similar appeal to national sovereignty, but ended up producing a very undemocratic result through very democratic means. And despite the general (if not fiercely celebrated) agreeability of CETA's suspension as well as the democratic procedure that deterred it for those on the left, its means to an end are broadly unacceptable to the preponderance of the European body politic.

IN MANY WAYS, the two poles of the democratic debate are in fact one pole enduring a self-undermining identity crisis. There is no essential right or left side, there is one goal: greater self-determination, that is being mobilised in opposite ways, to different effects. CETA's temporary suspension evidences this phenomenon, and provokes a necessary conversation on what national sovereignty means and how it can be mobilised to fortify rather than unmoor international as well as national solidarity. For solidarity is the key to pacifying the right / left schism, and formulating a vision of democracy that can reconcile contemporaneous national / international tensions in EU politics. In a speech at London's Historical Materialism conference this November, Frédéric Lordon, CNRS director of research at the Centre européen de

sociologie et de science politique in Paris, evoked the need to establish a conception of nation and "the people" that is both post-nationalist as well as post-colonial and abandons its characteristic individualism. In particular, he asserted that the imperative for "national determination" does not foreclose "emancipatory potential for all." In order to realise this liberation from right/left insularity, Lordon invoked a commitment to dissent as well as assent, and the cultivation of cross-political bonds against domination (by capital, for instance, as is invoked in CETA/TTIP resistance). In these theoretics, internationalism can coexist with sovereignty, and the EU can ally itself with an internal will towards national autonomy. And, most importantly, "the self-determined political subject does not have to emerge from right fascism."

HAD THIS REQUISITE national/international solidarity been truly acknowledged in CETA's democratic proceedings, it probably wouldn't have been so easily ratified in late October with only a small addendum to qualify the dissent of Wallonia. Following CETA's enactment, 99% of border tariffs will be removed between the EU and Canada, portending an increase in trade of 10.9 billion euros per annum. The EU's thusly determined capitulation to the global corporatocracy, and how it conditions the staunchly (if not falsely) partisan debate on sovereignty and democracy, remains to be seen. Will it reify the divide, or provoke more communication between the right and left wings of a single body politic in flight? ●



THE EU - TURKEY DEAL: WHAT HAPPENED?

“One year later, with one whole year to anticipate and prepare, we’re back to where we were in the autumn of 2015: people sleeping outside in the cold, hoping rain will stay away one more day. This time not because we weren’t prepared or couldn’t predict this would happen, but because we don’t get the permission to set up something better – a direct result of the situation created by the EU- Turkey deal. “- Frederieke Van Dongen, Coordinator for the Organisation Boat Refugee Foundation stated on the Greek Island Samos.

The EU-Turkey deal got implemented 18 March this year. Stating that virtually all irregular migrants that would arrive from 20 March by crossing the Aegean Sea to Greece are supposed to be send back to Turkey from the Greek islands.

CECILIA WIKSTRÖM is a parliamentary member for Sweden within the alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group since 2009. She confesses that she as an elected representative, as all the others in the parliament, was excluded from the process that led to the EU-Turkey deal. “We believe that what the council of the European Union did in matter of fact is illegal.” The EU-Turkey deal is a question of two areas where co-decision with the parliament is required. The first area is the budget, since the EU has promised 3 billion euro to Turkey as a part of the deal, and the second is the political area of migration, which states in article 73 and 78 of the treaty that co-decision is required. “The council has completely ignored this and marched on in their own beat. This means that the deal is legally unviable. It is not justified to call this a deal or an implemented treaty. The closest you can come is call it a statement.” If the parliament would have been a part of the decision of the EU-Turkey deal, Cecilia thinks it had led to a conviction. “It is a kind of externalization of Europe’s external border which is happening. You can almost say that Turkey has kidnapped the EU.” Cecilia means that the deal is a symptom of the original problem, that there doesn’t exist a common Asylum policy within the EU. “What is needed is that all countries within the EU need to participate to reach a com-

“ WE BELIEVE THAT WHAT THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION DID IN MATTER OF FACT IS ILLEGAL

mon policy. That is the only way to find a better alternative replacing the deal.”

AS THE DEAL was made it’s legal justice was already in questioned. Not to mention the logistic difficulties it required. 18164 refugees crossed the Aegean Sea from Turkey to Greece since April this year until the end of October. Yet, the total number of readmissions to Turkey from Greece since the EU-Turkey deal took place is only 695. “The EU-Turkey deal was never a solution that would work practically. It is based on that the ministers of the EU buried their heads in the sand imagining for themselves that the problem will be solved.” Cecilia says.

ONE OF THE parts of the deal which got questioned is whether Turkey can be considered as a “safe third world” country which could justify the deportation of “the irregular immigrants”. While the president of the European Council Donald Tusk on a visit in Turkey praised the Turkish govern-

ment as “the best example in the world on how to treat refugees” a new report from the organisation Doctors of the World reveals that 75% of the interviewed patients in Turkey faced psychological violence, and 30% had experienced police or army violence.

ACCORDING TO THE official statistics from the 14th of November there are at the moment 16168 refugees placed out in the different sites on the Greek islands, whereas the total capacity of the sites are 8276 persons. Only on Samos all sites have surpassed their official capacity threefold. As the

“**CECILIA USED TO SAY THAT THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST MASS GRAVES IN THE WORLD. “I DON’T SAY THAT ANYMORE; NOW I SAY THAT IT IS THE BIGGEST MASS GRAVE IN THE WORLD”**

EU-Turkey deal isn’t working in practice the result is that thousands of human beings are stuck in miserable conditions on the several sites in Greece. UNHCR claims in their latest weekly report that the slow pace of decongestion is further contributing to overcrowding, poor living conditions and tensions. The Greek population already suffering from a financial crisis leaving many Greeks in poor living conditions, as well as having to take the biggest burden of the refugee crisis. As the lack of dignified accommodation for the refugees escalate the risks of riots are rising. UNHCR’s attempt to relocate camp residents who’s tents were destroyed by rain to the empty hotels of Samos faced resistance from the local hoteliers’ association. The head of the association revealed that he had received an ultimatum from tour operators

to “choose between tourists and migrants.”

CECILIA USED TO say that the Mediterranean Sea is one of the biggest mass graves in the world. “I don’t say that anymore. Now I say that it is the biggest mass grave in the world.” So far in 2016 the latest statistics confess that more than 3740 persons died or are missing by crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Further the number of people crossing the sea from Turkey to Greece has the last two months started to increase again since the EU Turkey deal got implemented. Between April and June, the Greek islands had an average of 50 daily arrivals as the last report covering October reveals an average of 95 daily arrivals.

AS THE STATISTICS convert refugees to numbers to create one kind of understanding, we cannot forget that there behind these numbers exist human beings. Therefor I want to finish this quite pragmatic article by quoting a conversation I overheard and wrote down between two friends in the camp of Samos in May this year. Both of them from Syria, both of them still stuck on the Island: “Are you okay?” he asked from one side of the gate. “I am okay”, she answered from the other. “Why? How could you be okay?” “Because I believe.”

“In what?”
“Tomorrow. And if not tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, and the second day after tomorrow, until it doesn’t matter if tomorrow exists or not. I believe in tomorrow and when I do that, I am happy. In the Koran the prophet tells a story that from all the dead comes life. We take wheat, which is dead material, create it into bread, that makes us live. Here, everything is bad. But within the bad, there are people. And I meet them, and they have other thoughts than me, different skin colour and different stories. And at least, we can create some understanding and produce some laughter. And I believe, that from the bad things that is happening to us now, there will be growing something good. Like dead wheat is the source of tasty bread.” ●

*For further information and more statistics see the UNHCR official database:
<http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean>*



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THE POWER TO BLUR BORDERS

When hearing “diaspora politics” the first thing that comes to one’s mind might be voting abroad. But the political power of diasporas is more significant than that.

Expatriates, refugees, EU migrants, global nomads, exchange students, guest workers, you name it. Not all of them are included in the classical definition of the diaspora, originally applied for the scattered Jewish and Armenian community. The mentioned experiences of migration are diverse, the people themselves claiming transnational or diaspora identities and considered cultural hybrids, integrated or assimilated – they can show different levels of commitment both to their home and their host countries. However, they all share a unique position, namely the violation of the standard experience of the nation state as they gain the possibility to be a political factor on their own in two or more different countries.

A GREAT ILLUSTRATION of this is Natalie Bennett, an Australian-born ex-journalist, who, after joining the British Green Party in 2006, became the par-

ty’s leader in 2012. Some might dream bigger, as did dual citizen Jesus Galvis in 1998, holding an elected office in the Hackensack City Council in New Jersey and running for another in the Colombian Senate.

ON A BIGGER scale, nation states have generally not welcomed the dual political positions of the diasporas, preferring single loyalties instead. A difficult demand, as clear in the confession of Edward Said, an American professor and writer with Palestinian origin: “I felt genuinely divided between the newly assertive pressures of my background and language and the complicated demands of a situation in the US that scanted, in fact despised what I had to say about the quest for Palestinian justice – which was considered anti-semitic and Nazi-like”

THE HISTORICAL APPROACH stating that minorities are pressured to integrate or used as messen-



gers in international political battles, seems to be clearly recognizable in Slovakia's unpopular 2010 amendment. This decision allowed to withdraw the Slovakian citizenship for those gaining another, and effected at least 800 people in four years. The majority newly became Czech, German or Austrian citizens. At a second glimpse, this policy was able to stir passionate debates only as dual citizenship seems to be a general emerging trend in legislation. We are probably to witness more conflicts around citizenship policies in the future.

AS GLOBALIZATION IS on its way to change the rules of the game, emigrant communities are getting perceived as a resource. A growing amount of states now accepts migration as permanent but is willing to acknowledge the migrant community as their diaspora as long as the expatriates keep their national identity and emotional ties to the homeland. This opens up an approach that sees

the diaspora as a resource of development and the building of long distance nationalism. The Hungarian Károlyi Csoma Sándor Programme, granting scholarship to individuals to work with Hungarian associations in 25 countries, even states on its website that "the Hungarian diaspora gains more and more significance in the progress of the Hungarian nation politics". Júlia Marton, who helped Hungarian associations in three Swedish towns and in Oslo for 9 months in 2015-2016, reflects on her experience: "Every association welcomed me friendly, although difficulties sometimes occurred because many people didn't realize why we were there, some put us down as "the state's spies". Yet, our task was only to execute events in the certain area where the goal was to cultivate, improve the language and to make the Hungarian cultural life more interesting. I suppose at this we all entirely succeeded!"

THE DIASPORAS ALSO operate in even bigger networks. The Turkish government's directorate of religious affairs, the Diyanet Isleri Başkanlığı, is cooperating with the religious organization Diyanet Foundation, which has operations in 108 countries, among other things funding mosque constructions in the UK and Philippines, as well as hiring imams abroad. In Germany and Austria this was seen as an attempt for Turkish influence, thus hindered by legislation. The main concern is that the Diyanet's acts are denied to be that of the government, and it is not only Turkish national identity but also religion that the institution promotes in the diaspora. From this article's point of view, however, the level of engagement is of interest.

ARE THESE GENERAL trends? Diaspora studies didn't exist within political science 30 years ago. In a field in constant change due to global migration it is hard to predict, but surely, there will be more change to witness. ●



GLOBALIZATION IS ON ITS WAY TO
CHANGE THE RULES OF THE GAME



DOGS OF WAR

Dogs of war is a phrase generally used to describe mercenaries. This profession, as old as war, has recently assumed a new name – baffling the international community.

One of the oldest profession in human history, the first proof of large-scale use of mercenaries was in the battle of Kadesh (1274 BC). The Egyptians employed Sherden mercenaries against the Hittite empire for the control of land now called Syria. History might be repeating itself, however, from then to now things appear to have changed. The traditional use of the word ‘mercenary’ has been mystified in the complex corporate outlook the soldiers of fortune have taken on. Now commonly referred to as the Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs), PMSCs are lawfully registered businesses under state laws, offering a wide variety of services to its clients ranging from tactical military assistance to training solutions. This private industry is worth somewhere between \$100bn and \$400bn a year. Their employees, mostly ex-military personnel, are generally referred to as “contractors”.

THERE ARE REASONS for the use of such euphemistic terminology instead of mercenary. It’s bad for the business – the reputation and goodwill matters to PMSCs. The infamous Blackwater (now known as Academi), one of the top contractors of US in Afghanistan, has undergone two name changes in an attempt to leave behind the atrocities they have committed, including the Nisour Square massacre in Iraq in September 2007. Another reason, albeit of little significance, is probably that the use of mercenaries has been criminalized by United Nations under the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries that came into force on 20 October

2001. Thirty-four states are party to this Convention with only seventeen signatories. Besides, its definition of mercenary is too vague; it will be a wild-goose chase to find someone who actually fits the criteria provided under it.

UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL humanitarian law, the first mention of mercenaries is in the 1977 Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Convention. Under the Protocol, if an individual is found to be a mercenary, they are deprived of the rights of combatant or prisoner of war status. The Protocol does not criminalize mercenary activity. The international conventions are silent on PMSCs and their use in international armed conflicts. The legal status of these “civilians” in ‘harm’s way’ is almost impossible to ascertain. In short, the international conventions provide an ambiguous, incomplete and outdated legal framework.

AS A RESULT, PMSCs largely operate in a legal vacuum, working in failed states with no rule of law and in absence of concrete international regulations. However, this is strenuously contested and actions have been taken to promote respect for international humanitarian law and human rights law where PMSCs are employed; the most important effort is called the “Montreux Document”. The document is not a legally binding instrument and only recommends “good practices” for use of PMSCs. The document, endorsed by seventeen states, attempts to highlight the responsibilities of the contracting states, the territorial states where PMSCs are deployed and the home states where the PMSCs are based. Not surprisingly, it expressly



excludes the central question of legitimacy relating to the use of PMSC; a question which is quickly fading in the background with the increased use of PMSCs. The smokescreen that further hides this issue is the claim of “transfer” of state legitimacy onto PMSCs upon hiring their services. No doubt an ill-thought out justification. Since if this is true, then is the American government responsible for the murder of 17 Iraqis by Blackwater in September 2007? The perpetrators, employees of Blackwater, were convicted by US Courts for murder and voluntary manslaughter, but does this absolve the government from their sins? Is the government not ultimately vicariously liable? Fact is, the US paid and empowered murderers to run rampant in the streets of Iraq. The company continues working while the unaffected US government continues hiring its services.

ARGUABLY, THE ONLY transfer that takes place between a government and PMSCs is the transfer of money. PMSCs, like all corporate entities, aims at maximizing profits. A product of neo-liberalism, privatization of peace appears to be the next logical step. After all, market forces and de-regulation are the answers to every problem be it related to education, electricity or, even, the armed conflicts. Unsurprisingly, governments are very much interested in this arrangement. It saves them from

the political backlash of dead soldiers and allows government agencies to bypass legislative controls while employing private armies in international armed conflicts. The UK, which houses the largest PMSC called G4S, prefers the voluntary self-regulation system for PMSCs. The International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers’ Association (ICoCA) with its International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers 2010, provides the turn-key solution so desperately required. Of course, it is a non-state mechanism based on voluntary participation and endorses the principles laid down in the Montreux Document. It is pertinent to mention here that UK and US have not ratified the 1989 UN Convention that criminalizes the use of mercenaries, but have endorsed the Montreux Document.

AFRICAN COUNTRIES HAVE been, for long, under the merciless grip of such corporations. The military actions taken in the name of global peace is speedily replacing countries with companies. In Iraq, Afghanistan and now Syria, the forces of “market”, free from the questions of morality, legality and legitimacy, are at play again. Will Syria be plagued by proxy wars conducted by the “neo-mercenaries” on governments’ beck and call or will it be able to free itself from the shackles of history? ●

PROBLEMS IN HIDING

From being one of the poorest countries in world to becoming one of the fastest growing economies. Mozambique's history since the civil war has been a bumpy one. There seem to be two hidden elements inhibiting its further development – let us see what they are.

First – the hidden debt. After discovering enormous gas reserves in 2011, things looked bright for Mozambique. Having already had great economic growth in the years leading up to the gas findings, investors from all over the world rushed to the country. Yet, five years later the government admitted to having hidden a massive debt of \$1,4 billion in London based banks. The revelation made the World Bank, IMF and United Kingdom halt aid donations.

SECOND – IS IT possible to hide a civil war? According to some that is precisely what is happening in Mozambique. A peace agreement between the Mozambican government and guerrilla group RENAMO was signed in Rome in 1992 and the country was on the Global Peace Index list of the world's 50 most peaceful countries in 2012. Nowadays the situation is very different. There is evidence of killings and destruction of villages in the country's westernmost province. Clashes between RENAMO, now the main political opposition, and government troops are being reported. Over 12,000 civilians have fled the country and settled in Malawi. The government repels any claim that a civil war is happening, describing the events as localized disturbances, thus media call the conflict "a secret civil war".

COUNTRIES AROUND THE world have experienced a common narrative gaining momentum – that policymakers are part of a political elite not working for the common man, but instead taking advantage of the people. This anti-establishment rhetoric has gotten Britain out of the European



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Filipe Nyusi - President of Mozambique

Union and brought Donald Trump to power in the United States. Whatever you make of this political movement in the Western world, one has to agree that its claims ring true in the case of Mozambique. The rise of GDP per capita has led to a rise of a Mozambican upper class, but the rural population is still one of the poorest groups worldwide. RENAMO keeps pointing to this fact to gain political ground. This is the reason why RENAMO, with its shady history (formerly supported by apartheid South Africa and Rhodesia), remains highly popular in large areas of Mozambique.

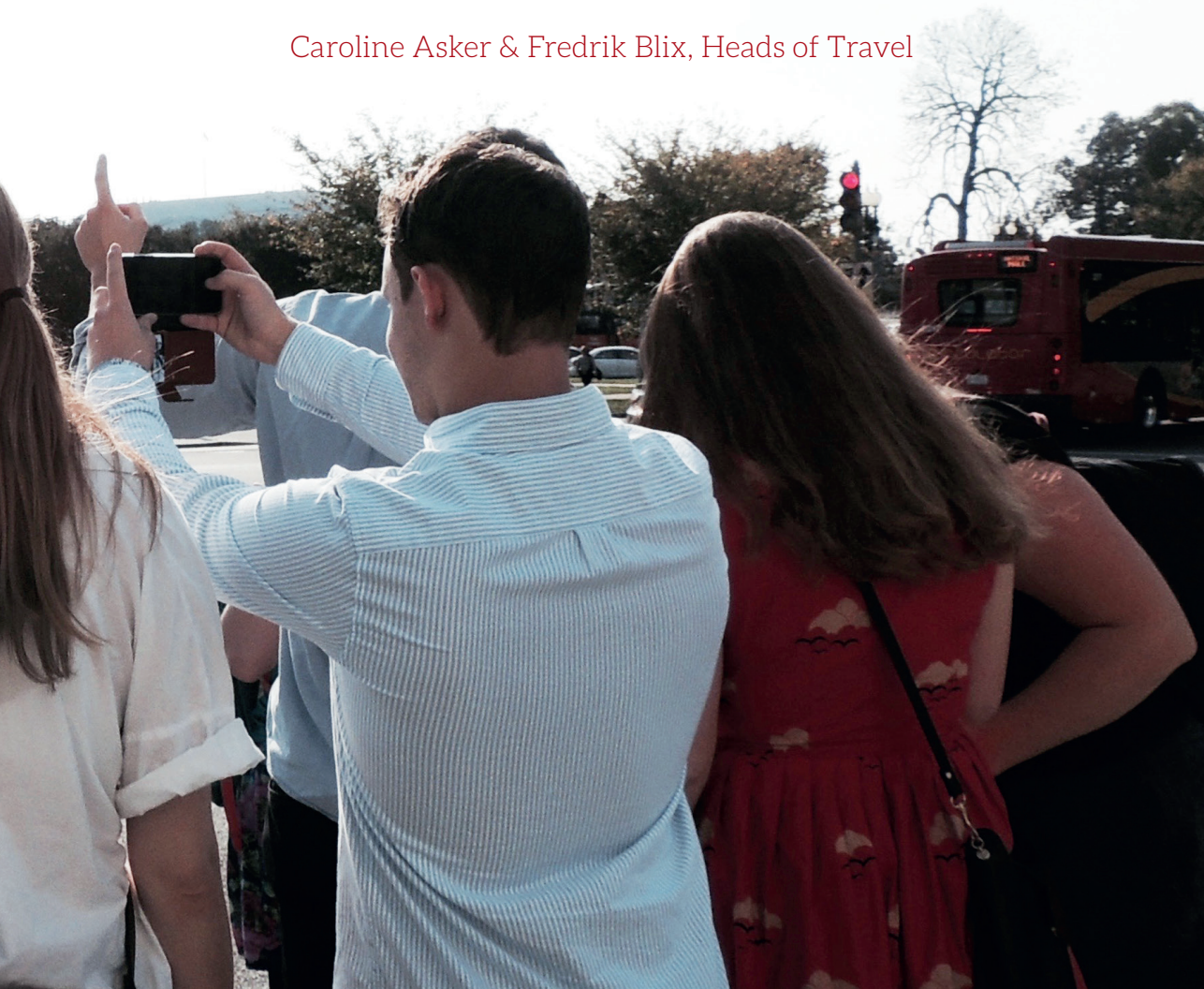
IT IS OBVIOUS that the two hidden obstacles to a prosperous future for Mozambique are deeply interlinked. Boosted growth has not reached the common Mozambican, the mess with hidden loan debts (plus reports of former President Armando Guebuza using \$500 million of the loans for personal use) fuels unhappiness with the political establishment – a discontent that fuels RENAMO's violent struggle to gain political power. Incumbent President Filipe Nyusi has a lot to solve if he is to reintroduce Mozambique as a shining star of African economies. To begin with, Nyusi made sure that the economic debt from Guebuza's regime was no longer hidden. Hopefully his next step is to steer the country to a sustaining cease-fire. ●



UPF GOES TO WASHINGTON

Only three weeks before the presidential election, the UPF travel committee visited the United States capital and political centre, Washington DC. During our week in Washington we met with institutions, organisations, and, last but not least, voters, in order to seek greater understanding of the political situation in the country. Some of the highlights include Green Party demonstrations, lectures on presidential campaigning, and listening to Hillary Clinton speaking at one of her rallies. Our thoughts and feelings about this trip will surely last with us for some time to come. Along with a collection of photos from the trip, some have been put into words by committee members Ebba Bergström and Emma Åberg.

Caroline Asker & Fredrik Blix, Heads of Travel





Photos: UPF Travel Committee



CAPITOL HOUSING AND CAPITAL GAIN

THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC OF U STREET

Gentrification has been a controversial issue in city planning for some time and an issue that's talked about more and more. While in Washington DC it became clear how gentrification follow not only class but also race lines. It was also clear that this visible evidence of inequality, especially in culturally important neighborhoods, creates tensions between the new and the old.

In Washington DC, the northern neighborhoods are changing. I went to DC earlier this autumn with UPF, and while riding the bus through Columbia Heights a woman in our company told us about what the area used to be like. She had lived there a couple of years ago and spoke of how she had been the only white person on the streets, how it hadn't been safe to go out alone after dark and of how the crime rates had been high. Now, however, wealthier, white people are moving in and that the area is much nicer. It is being gentrified.

CENTRAL WASHINGTON DC is built according to the grid plan that is common in US cities, with streets running parallel and crossing at right angles. The horizontal streets on the map are named after letters ranging from A street next to the National

Mall to W street in the northern end of the grid. The further north, and especially north-east, the blacker the community. In the 90s around 75 % of the population around U street and east of 14th would be African American. Today that number is around 20 % and housing prices have risen along with the richer, white crowd.

THE OFTEN CONTROVERSIAL issue of gentrification can be seen as both a blessing and a curse. The richer population brings down crime in the long run and business often flourish. On the map, it shows how a neighborhood can be revitalized and improved, but for the people who used to live there it is another story. Instead of helping the lower income families get over obstacles and help them flourish, their neighborhoods get taken away. The influx or expected influx of richer peo-



ple bring renovations and development of public spaces, things that famously increase demand. With a free market that consequently bring up rents and prices, those who move to make way for the new inhabitants often do so by necessity rather than voluntarily. The increase in land value allow the home owning population to sell to a high price but for tenants rising rents makes it impossible to stay.

WHEN OUR GROUP were walking up the northern parts of 14th street one sunny morning we were met with aversion from the African American residents. One man waiting for the bus shouted as we passed, “White people! Get off 14th street!”. As uncomfortable as this aggression was I don’t blame him for the hostility.

IN PSYCHOLOGY, VERBAL aggression can be a defense mechanism against feelings of helplessness or a reaction to frustration. Seeing the structural disadvantage of African Americans and their inability to affect or stop the gentrification forcing them to move, hostility towards the perceived physical evidence isn’t all that surprising. The man at the bus stop reminded me of the boys from immigrant families hanging around the neighborhoods where I grew up; most of them struggling to see the point of trying harder in school with little to no expectations on them; seeing and feeling the structural racism in our society and probably feeling quite powerless. To inflict helplessness onto others is then a way to regain a feeling of control of a life where society is out of your control; heckling and cat calling to feel powerful again.

NORMALLY AN INFLUX of upper middle class and the breaking up of the working class community is enough to create class resentment. In America

this is inevitably linked to race as well, and so the structural injustices become that much more visible and frustrating. In a country where the elite in control has always been white, and has shown little concern for the neighborhoods before, the white people taking over the streets, shops, and housing become a personification of that elite. We became personification of power.

IN WASHINGTON DC the area around U street also have a historical significance for the African American community. The intersection where we were walking, U and 14th was the stage for large parts of the 1968 riots. The riots were a reaction to poor living conditions for working class African Americans, triggered by the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. The insecurity caused many to move, increasing poverty and crime rates in the process, but before that the U street corridor was a cultural center for African Americans. U street was once nicknamed “the Black Broadway” and a prominent street for business and culture during the times of segregation. It is understandable that the gentrification here has stirred stronger feelings of resentment than other areas in the city.

GENTRIFICATION SEEMS LIKE an inevitable process when the city attracts young professionals and market forces rule. But perhaps it is more of a symptom of inequality than an issue in itself. Showing the structural injustice and how class align with race rather than perpetuating it. Either way, we need to be aware of the fact that the development towards a nicer area comes at a price, and that those who have to pay might resent the developers for it. ●

Background: a southward-facing view down 14th St. in Washington, DC from U Street NW.





IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEART OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOSE FREEDOM HE GAVE HIS LIFE
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER

A NEW ERA

With a new president on his way to office, the future of the United States of America and the Republican Party is unknown. Will the split within the Party deepen? Will Donald Trump keep to his promises?



The 2016 Presidential Election has been a pinnacle turning point in American history. After the media-craze debates, the potentiality of having the first female president and the international audience at its heels, this election has been nothing but controversial. With the projection polls strongly leaning towards a win for Hillary Clinton, the majority believed America would have a future female president. But Election Day crept around the corner, it was no longer the popular belief. As a part of the rollercoaster year of 2016 that included a string of unexpected events, such as Brexit and the neglect of the Peace Treaty in Colombia, we should have perhaps foreseen the result.

BOTH THE REPUBLICAN and the Democratic Party put forth two very prominent nominees and counterpole candidates; one having worked within politics for a continuing 30 years, as well as worn the role of the First Lady, while the other being a real estate tycoon; a proclaimed billionaire. These differences led to what some claim to be the most talked about election in recent history.

DONALD J. TRUMP, America's President-Elect, is set to be inaugurated on 20th January 2017. He will be the oldest president to take office and one of the few to hold office without any political background. However, many regard him as a bullet-proof negotiator and tough businessman. Will he live up to the expectations of a president? Does he have what it takes to be the Commander-in-Chief? Many see him as unfit due to his radical temper and conservative views on immigration. Others claim that his political and economic views can provide more domestic jobs and be a refreshment for America, in other words, "Make America Great Again". On the other hand, historians state that there is limited correlation between success in the business world and the success in the White House. It is more often than not shown that American voters rank past presidents, without a political career, more poorly when compared to those with a political background.

DURING HIS CAMPAIGN, Trump was very outspoken about what his plans for America's future was. Though, as he came closer to political power, he relaxed his rhetoric. The radical statements, such as deporting every Muslim in America, transformed

into a more thorough border control and background check. Therefore, one might say that the laws passed may not be as radical as he proclaimed during the campaign. The Republican president is entering a House controlled by the Republican Party, meaning that there is a majority of Republicans present in the House of Representatives and Senate, thus, allowing more Republican focused laws to be passed. This will create opportunities for Trump's focus on domestic jobs and supply of job opportunities. What could create problems for the President-Elect Trump is his strained relationship with Paul Ryan, the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives. Ryan chose not to endorse or support Trump during his campaign, which could lead to fewer laws being passed.

“TRUMP WILL HAVE A HARD TIME PLEASING CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANS

ALREADY DURING THE preliminaries, Trump caused eyebrows to be raised. Political leaders, such as Sarah Palin, chose to endorse him, while others, like already mentioned Paul Ryan, did not condone Trump's way of carrying himself. Trump has caused an evident split within the party, a divide that can be greatedened. As President-Elect Trump will have a hard time pleasing conservative Republicans as he might fail to eliminate ObamaCare and Planned Parenthood. This is due to a recent act signed by President Obama after the election that prevents future presidents from doing so.

AS THE AMERICAN democracy only offers two major parties at this point,, will the split within the Republican Party, as a result of the 2016 election open possibilities for a third party? Will the future candidates for both parties reverse to a moderate stand or become increasingly radical in the next upcoming election? The next four years, will be the time of a new era. ●



Photo: Michael Vadon/flickr

Ignorance of The Liberal Educated

Who would believe that Trump would be elected president of the USA? Yet the absurd notion has come to fruition. There is a myriad of factors at play, so much so that we can barely label them as factors, but more of relations. The times we live in are complicated, not just for those who are outside of academia's tower, but probably more so for us, the 'bubble-wrapped educated.'

The election of Republican candidate and businessman, Donald Trump, is in many ways a historic moment. The day of the election results, I woke to the sight of snow falling outside my window. It was magical – Winter’s first snowfall. I hadn’t slept for too long since I had stayed up late watching election results roll in on CNN. Realizing that all the election results would be in by now, I unlocked my phone and checked for the results. Clinton 218, to Trump’s 271 electoral votes. WHAT THE FUCK!

LONG BEFORE, I had supported Trump on the logic that his presidency will force America to address their systemic problems with regards to marginalization and disenfranchisement; Trump would be the ugly face of those problems. However, I was more inclined to him because a Trump presidency would be a catalyst for system change. Not based on his agency but rather due to undesired consequences of his actions accelerating the collapse of social, economic and environmental systems.

BUT ON THAT day, November 8th, a man I didn’t consider more than a mongrel had been elected president of the United States of America. The leaders of the free world! The champions of democracy!

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BUT NOW: THE idiot nation. Why? For electing a dumb, racist, sexist, fascist, red faced, eyes blood shot, evil, preposterous white man over a trained and seasoned politician in Hillary Clinton. Throughout that day I levitated on a cloud.

Surprisingly upbeat from the early morning news I tried reflecting on how this could happen. Was America truly racist?

**“ THROUGHOUT THAT
DAY I LEVITATED
ON A CLOUD**

TO SAY THAT the 49 million people who voted for Trump are all racist, is a crude and brash conclusion based on an ignorant impulse. Reading into the statistics, we see that Trump’s support was divided into the non-educated, lower class white (male and female), and significantly rural as opposed Clinton’s educated, urban, and more diverse voters. More shocking is that Trump actually secured more black and Hispanic votes than his Republican predecessor, Mitt Romney, and also got some more black voters who had previously voted for Obama in the last election. Maybe even more telling is the reduced number of voters in this election overall (or not telling at all).

THERE ARE MANY factors at play here, but the most striking to me, which is where I stood before the election, has to do with Trump’s image as portrayed by the media. Trump in his Republican convention speech stated “I will present the facts plainly and honestly. We cannot afford to be so politically correct anymore,” with regards to the state of the nation. His rhetoric could hardly be described as political, compared to the carefully manicured and substance-less nature of Clinton’s message. Here you had a guy saying things from the top of his head, switching his position constantly, and putting his views ‘out there’ for America/the World to see.

BUT BECAUSE OF his lack of political correctness the media had a gold mine of mis-quotes to pick and choose from to advertise a Republican Presidential candidate as being a monster. For me it made sense. Republicans are traditionally conservative, in other words racist, and so the story seemed about right. But if you go beyond what you



Hillary Clinton speaking in Arizona.

were fed by the incredibly advanced and intuitive Facebook newsfeed, Google search, other Internet media, and traditional media that bases a lot of content from the internet, all of which have been programmed by corporate interests to digest our every escapade, you will find that Trump had more substance than Hillary.

THIS MAN WAS for taking USA out of its foreign military obligations, unifying with Russia to defeat ISIS (which he correctly points a finger at the current administration's hand in ISIS birth), protecting American industries by stemming the flow of foreign products, relinquishing more federal power to the states, and controlling their borders not because Mexicans, Muslims and whoever are bad, but because America needs stronger policy to keep the bad ones out (sound familiar Europe?).

On the flip side he is pro-guns, pro-life, and a non-believer in climate change – not to say Hillary is the strongest proponent for it since she barely acknowledged the ongoing protests against the North Dakota pipeline.

“THE DEPTH BY WHICH MEDIA HAS CONTROL OVER OUR LIVES IS UNPRECEDENTED

AT THE END of the day almost every major polling site got their numbers wrong and America decided to vote for Trump, not because he was all the things identity politics hate, but rather Hillary was not a suitable candidate to address their real concerns.

AS FOR US, the liberal educated, we were fooled. The depth by which media has control over our lives is unprecedented. They have access to our thoughts in almost every step of our everyday existence. Whether through our phones, laptops, TV, and watches even. We have commodified our mental space and allowed the global corporates powers an insight into what we want, to the point that we think what we want is what we re-

“I STILL BELIEVE THAT TRUMP IS A CATALYST FOR COLLAPSE BUT FOR DIFFERENT REASONS NOW

ally want, but it's what they want us to want. It is Luke's 3rd face and possibly the Foucauldian 4th face of power beautifully at play. Media seduced us by playing on our self-righteous inclinations to reject a person who they could paint as racist etc.

And we assumed that no rational person would vote for him, based on our higher moral values. We were wrong!

I'M NOT SAYING that every single liberal educated has been ignorant, but to deny the extent to which we are secluded in our own self-righteous bubbles can't be dismissed. After you untangle yourself from the web of false truths, media stories, scientific facts, what is good and bad, your opinion and some well articulated blog's opinion, and you come out on the other side, the only conclusion you can draw is that, to an extent no truths are objective. A conclusion that feminist standpoint theory has revealed but modern society has yet to fully grasp even in the face of the Internet's infinite source of counter-arguments for anything. We the liberal educated must be more critical of ourselves and should reject the simplicity of black and white. The world and the people in it are more complex than that.

IT SHOULD BE noted that standpoint theory consequently led to intersectionality, which is the base of identity politics, to an extent.

I STILL BELIEVE that Trump is a catalyst for collapse but for different reasons now. It's a bigger one though. A collapse of the façade of 'everything will be alright.' The necessary collapse that precedes the thing that comes next. Hopefully, something good, or better, but at least one that is not riddled with inequalities cut across geography, gender, race, language, class etc. Because democracy is a sham if there is inequality. And inequality is the cornerstone of neoliberalism. Trump's shocking nomination is the mark of the paradoxical times we are in, and we have ahead of us. Its gonna get messy. So, strap up, and get ready to fight for something you believe in. ●

Photo: Wikimedia Commons



Liberal educated New Yorkers protesting against Trump.

Politics Watch List

2016 was full of surprising elections and waves of populist movements. As the dust settles from various election and referendum results, we can finally start seeing how some of the campaign rhetoric will bring tangible effects in 2017.

What does Donald Trump's presidency mean for world economies?

Talking and predicting on Trump's plans should always be taken with a grain of salt, as it is not always clear if and how he would follow up on some of his campaign promises. With that said, it is safe to expect that international trade deals will be at the forefront of Trump's economic plans to boost American growth.

TRUMP HAS HEAVILY criticized the NAFTA deal, which is the trade agreement between Canada, USA and Mexico that was completed in the President Clinton years. The deal has allowed trade between the three countries to occur under mostly tariff-free conditions. However, Trump has pointed to the relocation of some American companies to Mexico as evidence of NAFTA's detriment on American jobs. A major break from NAFTA would mean that Mexico would experience more factories closing and less overall foreign investment. Companies in Mexico may choose to move to another country with lower labor cost, shifting the economics of production to other parts of the world. If major tariffs do go up between Mexico and the US, American consumers will most likely see an increase in consumer product costs as well.

BOTH THE TRANSATLANTIC Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) are also under reconsideration. TTIP between the EU and US was already off to a rocky start but Trump will probably be the final straw that ends the trade talks.

THE TPP WAS finalized in early 2016 but has so far been waiting for ratification from the participating countries. Trump has expressed his doubts about TPP because he views it as a loss to American workers. Though TPP primarily concerned itself with trade, it was also a political move. USA sought to reduce Chinese influence in Asia by bringing countries like Japan and Vietnam more into the American sphere. With the TPP in doubt, China may take more of a center stage in the Asian trade sector.



Photo: Gage Skidmore/flickr

TRUMP HAS PUT more of an emphasis in domestic economy rather than international deals. If US does back down from some of its current global agreements, we may see a shift in influence economically and politically to other regions of the world.



Key Elections to watch in 2017

2016 SAW a rise in nationalistic sentiments geared towards protectionism and isolationism. With the Brexit and American election outcomes some see more support for right-wing populist parties in Europe. 2017 will be the year to see if those trends are here to last.

FRANCE WILL BE holding presidential elections in April and May of 2017 and Marine Le Pen of the National Front Party has been in the spotlight. With economic stagnation and rising anti-immigrant sentiments in France, many French citizens find their representative voice in the National Front and may challenge the more traditional parties come election time. Just across the border of France, another crucial election will take place, with Germany holding parliamentary elections in September 2017. The far right party, Alternative for Germany (AfD), is now in ten German state assemblies and has gained fast and increasing support since the party's founding in 2013. Recent polling suggests that AfD is on track to become the third largest party in Germany. A more hardened stance towards immigrants among German citizens is a contributing factor to the rise of AfD.

CLOSE BY IN Western Europe, Netherlands has their right wing populism represented by the Party for Freedom (PVV). Dutch elections for its 150 seats in the House of Representatives will begin in March 2017, and PVV is expected to gain significant number of seats in the house. PVV's proposals include a hard stance towards Islam, such as closing mosques and a ban on immigrants from

Islamic countries, and the party has also floated around the idea of detachment of Netherlands from the EU.

“ WITH THE BREXIT AND AMERICAN ELECTION OUTCOMES SOME SEE MORE SUPPORT FOR RIGHT-WING POPULIST PARTIES IN EUROPE

Will the Syrian Civil War end?

THIS CIVIL WAR, now in its fifth year and having displaced more than 4.5 million people from Syria, may come to an end in 2017. After his election Trump has affirmed that his priority is to take out ISIS instead of backing Syrian rebels against Assad's government. Trump has shown a propensity to work with Russia to fight terrorist activities in the Middle East. The end of Syrian Civil War would most likely mean the continuation of Assad's regime. If the US and Russia successfully work together and take out terrorist strongholds, would that indicate a thawing of US-Russian relations for the future as well? ●

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