



## *EDITOR'S NOTE*

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This issue of the journal deals with various topics of especial interest: The role of sanctions in the European Union Foreign and Security policy, the global terrorism forecast for 2017 and, finally, the different approaches of the Polish political parties regarding foreign and security policies, in particular to the European Union and Eastern Europe.

In the first topic, the EU sanctions policy, the articles coordinated by Professor Clara Portela present different approaches in order to clarify several questions and its particular characteristics: The difficulties in cooperation at the EU level in order to establish a common sanction policy and the struggle between the national and supranational levels for the control of the sanctions process. How the EU utilizes autonomous sanctions as an instrument to obtain its political and cultural predominance. How sanctions are diversified according to geographic vicinity or political motivation and which security objectives the EU promotes, concluding that the EU still focuses on geographic vicinity and security relevance and only the area of sanctions application has changed, from Eastern Europe to the Middle East. The internal tensions in the EU process of imposing sanction regimes and why and under what conditions the EU is ready to resort to sanctions in post-Soviet conflicts. Finally, Russia's discursive reaction to sanctions imposed by the West during the Ukrainian crisis and how the Kremlin has been able to rally the public opinion behind a political narrative, framing the crisis as the consequence of Western hegemonic ambitions against a resurgent Russia and presenting the resistance and response to the Western sanctions has as a test of Russia's ability to remain a Great Power.

With regard to global terrorism, Professor Rohan Gunaratna explains how three significant developments will characterize the global threat landscape in 2017: The likely transformation of the so-called Islamic State (IS) as a caliphate-building entity into a global terrorist movement in a similar manner as Al Qaeda (AQ). The possible collaboration and unification of both terrorist groups as a consequence of the death of either the IS leader, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, or AQ leader, Ayman al Zawahiri. And finally how the IS, AQ and their associates will try to expand themselves in compensation for their losses in the physical space.

The last article by Professor Maciej Raś explains the evolution of the Polish political parties and groupings since 1989, the debates and the consensus reached on foreign and security policies, connected largely with Poland's accession to the Western institutions, in particular the accession to and participation in the EU, and with the policies towards Eastern Europe. This article tries also to clarify the policies of the present Polish government, once the

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PiS won an absolute majority in the Sejm. A new, more assertive foreign and security policy is being implemented with important consequences not only for Poland and Central Europe but also for the entire EU. The new government prefers an EU *a la carte*, displaying several arguments and explanations for this change.

UNISCI wants to thank all the authors, coordinators and partners for their contributions to this new issue of the journal.