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EDITORIAL NOTE

Antonio Marquina¹

Director of UNISCI

This issue of the Journal marks an important milestone in its trajectory. This is the number 50 of the Journal. We started the publication in 2003 trying to fill a gap in the few Spanish journals dealing with international relations, periodicals that did not focus in general on issues of security. In this field, numerous obstacles and barriers were originally raised, even personal, if the scholars did not maintain the official policies and lines, lines that, as various circumstances and approaches have demonstrated, were debatable or deeply misguided: On NATO, the Spanish model, the national security strategy, Gibraltar, the Mediterranean policies, the Iraq War, the European security and defence policy, the dialogue on civilisations and a long etc. This is something that cannot be hidden, because, in part, it lasts. It would deserve an institutionalized review of what happened in the last fifty years since the campaign against NATO, the interests and trajectory of its promoters, the policies adopted, misinformation, mediocrity in nominations, the turns of 180 degrees and the policy of partisan subsidies with well-known results. Thus, at the official level, some serious rants and complaints about the current Spanish shortcomings in the culture of defence would be avoided.

Fortunately, the Journal has not received any financial support from any institution, government or university. We made it on our own. That is, with the selfless support of the UNISCI team, the collaborators and the Scientific Committee, whom I want to thank. Thanks to all of them, the Journal has been placed in an important scientific range, being selected by SCOPUS and by nearly twenty national and international databases. The Journal receives more consultations from people and scholars of more than 150 countries around the world than from Spain.

This issue is divided into several sections. First, two subjects of notable interest are addressed: Indonesia, its democratization and political reforms, and the Chinese conditions for signing FTA agreements with Latin American Pacific Rim States. Both studies, given Indonesia's importance as ASEAN's leader, and the present trade debates and China's behavior, will leave no one indifferent.

Secondly, the Middle East, the trajectory of the US policies on the Palestinian issue, and the present deterioration of the security framework in the Middle East are addressed, both of remarkable implications nowadays. This block also contains an article about Algeria, which we wanted to include in this issue, in order to attract attention to the need to support the stabilization of this country, a fundamental country in North Africa. The article explains the relationship between Algeria and the European Union, a framework that is fundamental in supporting the renewal that this country is experiencing.

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The issue also includes the subject of Europe in its two current open fronts: the adaptation of transatlantic relations, updating the NATO political alliance, and the question of the Balkans, with an article on the negotiation agreements between Serbia and Kosovo, the role of the EU and the current situation where the UE has substantially lost influence, given its divisions. It is a great lesson on the shortcomings of the EU and the Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy. It can also be instructive for Spain, given the weakness of the negotiating methodologies adopted on the nationalist issue, which are highlighted in the article. The negotiating ambiguity, which seems to please some Spanish sectors, in formal and informal talks and negotiations over nationalists' issues, has very serious limitations and the underlying problem always ends up as a central theme. To this, other lessons can be added, such as the international meddling.

Two other important topics serve to close this issue. The first, the new public diplomacy and the soft power, and the second, the strong migratory flows that push over the southern border of the United States. Both articles help us to understand, first of all, the importance and limitations of public diplomacy and the shortcomings in the approaches on migratory issues, their present extremely high politicization and the partial solutions offered in the last decades. It is fundamental the definition and clarification of all the factors that are conditioning the uncontrolled migratory flows, including, as the main question, the role of mafias and organized crime, and their effects in the different states. That is not a merely humanitarian or religious question.

I would like to thank again the collaborations received for this issue, especially those written for this event, *id est*, the publication of the issue number 50, by several members of the Scientific Committee, who, in this way, have helped to enhance the significance and importance of reaching this number.

The full issue will be available in MAY 2020