



EDITORIAL NOTE/NOTA EDITORIAL

Antonio Marquina¹

Director, UNISCI

This issue of the journal includes a wide selection of studies on different topics. Asia continues to be one of the journal's priority themes.

The first article analyzes the Indo-Pacific, a crucial issue in US policy and of growing importance in the new European Union foreign and security policy. The article looks precisely at the meaning and content of the concept itself and its adoption, with different nuances, by the US, the EU, ASEAN and several Asian and European countries. It is precisely the revision of the Indo-Pacific policy by the new administration of President Biden what is especially explained, as well as China's reaction and the position adopted by ASEAN. For the United States this area is already the core area where a crucial question is to be settled, whether China can be prevented from changing the rules and norms that have prevailed in international relations up to now. China is clearly revisionist and its rapid advance in the Indo-Pacific is of notable importance politically, economically and militarily. The article also notes the limited importance of ASEAN's reaction and the weakness of its initiative. Its centrality is already more a geographical than a political issue. The great power competition leaves ASEAN unsettled and divided.

The article on Hong Kong is a remarkable article that presents the evolution of the soccer rivalry between Hong Kong and Mainland China as a manifestation of the political and social conflict existing between the former British colony and Mainland China, given the constant political interference that Hong Kong has been suffering in the functioning of the 'one country, two systems' model. This growing rivalry is a form of social protest where spectators and fans have moved from an absence of antagonism to outright hostility.

The core group of studies focuses on several specific problems currently affecting to several ASEAN countries. The first deals with the military coup in Myanmar and the difficulties and divisions in ASEAN in managing and confront this conflict, which represents a rupture with the democratic development process that Myanmar was developing. The article explains the approaches taken by ASEAN, their ineffectiveness and proposes the transformation of this ineffectiveness by overcoming the sacrosanct principle of non-intervention, adopting the principle of the responsibility to protect, putting pressure on the military to restore democracy, This is a complicated task in a country with a long guerrilla tradition and the recent creation of new resistance groups, including urban guerillas, under the control of the National Unity Government's (NUG). Added to this is the ASEAN's weakness in the face of Chinese and Russian support for the military regime that needs to be mentioned and underlined.

Another hot topic, the issue of fishing activities in the South China Sea and China's claims is addressed from the perspective of the Philippines and its dispute with China unresolved in the last two decades. The authors argue that the Philippines and China can reach

¹Antonio Marquina Barrio is Chair in Security and International Cooperation (emeritus) and Director of UNISCI. His main lines of research focus on European Security, the Mediterranean-Middle East, Asia-Pacific and Arms Control.

E-mail: <amarqbar45@gmail.com>



a fisheries management agreement that provides for a middle ground, known as a provisional measures zone (PMZ), as a means of resolving their dispute. By doing this, the Philippines and China can establish a common area for fishing that lies in the overlapping area between the Philippines' EEZ and the area of China's historical claims.

A novel study explains the negotiation conducted for the release of 10 Indonesian sailors, captured by the Abu Sayyaf militia on May 2016. The article uses primary data on the negotiation process conducted by the Sukma Bangsa Foundation and explains the building of a working relationship that later led to the transformation of the image of the negotiating parties, from "hostage-takers vs. negotiators" to "fellow Malays/Moslems" and finally the "brothers-in-arms".

Two other articles deal with the migration issue, the diaspora policies in the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia and the explanation of the limits of the Indonesian government's intervention in the management of the Indonesian migrant's worker remittances.

It is precisely the migration crises and their recent use by different governments as a tool for hybrid warfare, the subject of the last article of the journal. It is a very recent study written by several professors from Ukrainian universities that draws attention to recent migration crises turned into new tools for hybrid warfare by Syria, Venezuela, Belarus, Turkey and Morocco. The article outlines the characteristics of this new tool, criticizes the *totum revolutum* policies, approaches and activities dealing with the present migration crisis, mixing refugees and non-refugees, and tries to identify the stages in its development of this new tool. This article, which will be expanded in another publication, is worth reading carefully, especially in Spain, European countries, including the Holy See, and in several Brussels Headquarters.

UNISCI thanks all the authors for their contributions to this issue of the journal.