GLOBAL MIGRATION

Mafias, States and Hybrid Warfare

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Mafias, States and Hybrid Warfare

Edited by

Antonio Marquina

Complutense University of Madrid, Spain

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About the Editor

Antonio Marquina holds the position of Emeritus Chair in international security and cooperation at Complutense University of Madrid, Spain. His primary areas of study include European and Mediterranean politics and security, the Middle East, disarmament, NATO, Asia-Pacific security and Spanish foreign, security and defence policies. He is the author of 119 articles in specialised scientific journals on the same topics. He has authored, co-authored and edited nearly 130 books in English and Spanish, including *NATO's Partnerships in the Mediterranean and the Greater Middle East* (2022), *Southeast Asia: Redefined Strategic Order, Challenges and Impacts to Regional and Global Security* (2022) and *Perspectives on Migration Flows in Asia and Europe* (2011).

Marquina is also the director of UNISCI (a research unit on international security and cooperation), which includes a research group that comprises over 20 researchers and the scientific journal *UNISCI*. Previously, he acted as the chairman of the Asia–Europe Human Security Network (ASEF), connecting 35 universities and think tanks, as well as the first president of STRADEMED (bringing together 32 Mediterranean universities and think tanks). He is an editorial board member of *The International Journal of Military History and Historiography* (Scopus-indexed journal), *Quaderni di Scienze Politiche* (Milan University), *Proceedings of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts* (The Official Journal of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts).

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About the Contributors

Kostas Ifantis (Konstantinos Yfantis) is a professor of international relations in the Department of International, European and Area Studies, Panteion University of Athens, Greece. He is also the director of the Institute of International Relations. He served as an associate professor at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens until 2015. Among others, he was a Fulbright visiting scholar at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, USA; a senior research fellow at the LSE, UK; and a visiting professor at the University of Seoul, South Korea. In 2012–2020, he was also a professor at Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey. Since 2022, he has been serving as the scientific director of the Center for Foreign Policy Planning of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His most recent publication is "Arms Racing, Military Build-Ups and Dispute Intensity: Evidence from the Greek-Turkish Rivalry, 1985–2020" (with I. Choulis and M. Mehrl) in *Defence and Peace Economics*, 2022.

Aleksandra Jaskólska is a professor at the Department of Regional and Global Studies, Faculty of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Warsaw, Poland. She is a scholarship holder of the Erasmus Mundus programme SALAM, EMMA and SIGMA. She is involved in several EU-funded projects, including the Centre for Contemporary India Research and Studies, the India–EU Joint House for Science and Innovation and Eurasian Insights: Strengthening Indo-Pacific Studies, in the framework of the EU Strategic Partnership. Her recent publications include the chapter "India's Response to COVID-19: A Soft

Power Perspective" in *Global India* (Routledge, 2023) and the *Handbook of Indo-Pacific Studies* (with B. Kratiuk, J. Van den Bosch and Y. Sato (ed.), Routledge, 2023).

Agapi Kandylaki is a professor in social work and multiculturalism at the University of Thrace, Greece. She has also been the director of the joint master's course on "counselling" since 2020 (Athens University, University of Thrace and University of Crete) and a member of the Committee of Gender Equality at the University of Thrace. Some of her recent co-authored publications include "Feminist Counselling with Women Victims of Human Trafficking" in *Social Work and Social Deprivation* (forthcoming), "Social Work with Minorities in the Field of Education: The Value of Recognition Theory, Class and Status" (*Journal of Critical Approaches to Social Division*, November 2023), "Critical Social Work and Unaccompanied Minors' Social Inclusion: An Example of Critical Best Practice" (*Quarterly of Refugee Problems*, 2023) and "Social Work with Immigrants and Refugees in Greece" in *International Social Work and Forced Migration* (2021).

Ali Maksum is an associate professor at the Department of International Relations, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, a private university supervised by the Muhammadiyah organisation in Indonesia. He earned his PhD in international studies from the Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS), Universiti Sains Malaysia. He was also a visiting scholar at the Institute of International Relations (IIR), National Chengchi University, Taipei, under the Taiwan Fellowship Program 2018, and a visiting scholar at Universiti Sains Malaysia (2022). His research focuses on international relations in Southeast Asia, foreign policy and migration. His recent publications include *Nasionalisme, Media Sosial, dan Pekerja Migran Indonesia* (*Nationalism, Social Media and Indonesian Migrant Workers*) (Yogyakarta: MIHI Press, 2023) and *The Current Developments and Achievements of Taiwan's Humanistic Soft Power on Indonesian Migrant Workers* (London: Routledge, 2023). His articles have appeared in various reputable journals, such as *Southeast Asia Research*, *UNISCI Journal*, *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* (Elsevier) and *Kajian Malaysia*.

Gloria Inés Ospina holds degrees in human geography and in Spanish and American history and is currently a senior analyst on international

migration at UNISCI. She has written two books: *Spain and Colombia* (1988) and *Jews in Spain in the Twentieth Century* (1987). She has also produced nine chapters in various books published by UNISCI on different migration topics, including migration in Europe, Spanish migration policies, Sahel and North African migration, United States policies and impacts from irregular migration. Her research papers with UNISCI include "La oportunidad del Aquarius para impulsar una política europea de Migración y Asilo" (2018) and "Los Menores No Acompañados en la Unión Europea. La Unión Europea necesita expertos realmente competentes y con un mandato adecuado que resuelvan los problemas. Bruselas es claramente incapaz." (2022). She has authored a number of articles, including "La inmigración desde el Magreb. Un reto para la Unión Europea" (*UNISCI Journal*, October 2015) and "The Illegal Migration Flows to the United States of America" (*UNISCI Journal*, May 2019).

Gianluca Pastori is an associate professor in the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, Italy, where he teaches the history of political relations between North America and Europe and international history (Milan campus) and the history of international relations and institutions (Brescia campus). He collaborates with several public and private research structures, such as the Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale (ISPI), where he is an associate research fellow in the transatlantic relations area. His scientific interests focus on the history of international relations, military history, NATO history and security studies. His most recent works include "The Atlantic Alliance, NATO and the Post-Arab Springs Mediterranean: The Quest for a New Strategic Relevance" (2021), "Dall'Occidente al mondo. L'evoluzione dell'Alleanza Atlantica fra dimensione politica e militare" (2022), "A Troublesome Relaionship: The US Grand Strategy and NATO" (2022) and "The Belt and Road Initiative and Beijing's Evolving Role in Middle Asia" (2023).

Ángeles Portela holds a degree in international relations from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where she completed a pre-specialty in international scenarios and a diploma in foreign trade. She did a research stay on the impact of climate change on human security in the Pacific region at the Complutense University of Madrid, Spain. She currently works at the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Mexico,

dealing with human rights issues in the General Directorate of International Cooperation. She has also worked in the area of international trade.

Xira Ruiz-Campillo is a lecturer in international relations at the Faculty of Political Sciences, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain. She is a member of the Complutense Institute for International Studies (ICEI). Her lines of research are focused on European leadership, the role of cities in the international environmental regime, crisis management and the relationship between environment and security. She has been a visiting fellow at the Urban Institute, University of Sheffield, UK, and has completed short stays at the University of Chile, Chile, and the University of Padua, Italy. Her previous professional career includes her work in the Field Safety and Security Division at UNHCR's Geneva Headquarters and as an analyst at the Spanish Defense Staff (EMAD) and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She is an editorial board member of the *Journal Relaciones Internacionales* of the Autonomous University of Madrid, Spain.

Surwandono is an associate professor at the Department of International Relations, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia. He earned his PhD in international studies from Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia, with a dissertation on "Governance Negotiation in Mindanao Conflict". His research focuses on foreign policy, disaster diplomacy, Islamic political thought and migration. His articles have appeared in various reputable national and international journals, such as *Insight, Business: Theory and Practice, UNISCI Journal, Sociología y tecnociencia* and *Journal of ASEAN Studies.*

Contents

Introduction

Antonio Marquina

Emeritus Chair in International Security and Cooperation,
Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
Director of UNISCI, Madrid, Spain

This book focuses on the evolution of migratory flows and the policies planned to deal with uncontrolled migratory flows in different regional areas: the European Union (EU), with particular attention to the entry routes through the central, eastern and western Mediterranean, as well as the Atlantic route; the United States (US); and South and Southeast Asia, with the intention of providing a fairly global vision of a phenomenon that is on the rise. In addition, a chapter discusses the future challenges posed by climate change projections.

In the case of irregular migratory flows in various regional areas, the focus is on one of the main drivers of their growth: organised crime. This actor is often not paid the attention it deserves by other players, especially aid organisations and governments. Therefore, efforts should be made to provide more convincing explanatory analyses, build defenses that prevent infiltration or third-party manipulation, and increase deterrence, as well as the necessary means of prosecution and control.

The various chapters essentially deal with events up to the year 2022, with only some data and analysis added for the year 2023, a year in which irregular or illegal migratory flows increased sharply. Both concepts are

used interchangeably in the book, as official documents use one or the other and also to avoid entering into the existing debate on their use.

1. What the European Union Has Achieved

The book begins with an account of what the EU has been trying to do since 2002, with the Council Directive 2002/90/EC of 28 November, aimed at defining the facilitation of illegal immigration on European soil. The study shows the vicissitudes of this policy and the lack of a solution to the problems that have arisen. Sometimes, the decisions taken by the Council or the European Commission are overturned by the European Parliament in the name of human rights violations. On other occasions, disagreements between member states have prevented the adoption of effective measures, and their action plans have not been effectively implemented. After several ups and downs and in a reactive way, four action plans are currently underway, the first being the EU Action Plan for the Central Mediterranean and the EU Action Plan for the Western Balkans, which was adopted at the end of 2022. It was later followed by the EU Action Plan for the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic routes, launched in June 2023, and the EU Action Plan for the Eastern Mediterranean route, launched in October 2023, which represent the EU's commitment to address the challenges of irregular migration in an operational way. The EU has implemented specific cooperation measures with transit countries to enhance cooperation in the management of illegal migration. The EU recognises the need to address the root causes of illegal immigration, in particular from Africa.

It also explains some of the major initiatives adopted, such as the creation of the Frontex agency, which was set up in 2004 and transformed into a full-fledged European Border and Coast Guard Agency in 2016. The problems it has had to deal with have been significant, which has reduced its effectiveness. Different interpretations of its mandate and the combination of border protection and rescue have led to complaints and conflicts between EU institutions, resignations and complaints from third countries interested in using illegal migration as a bargaining chip. The general result has been that Frontex's activities have not yet proved to be a deterrent to illegal immigration and the criminals who try to manipulate it at will.

This issue is linked to the defence of the Schengen area, which came into force in 1995 to abolish common borders between member states and

establish common controls at their external borders. Without external border controls, this Schengen area is problematic, and we have seen the introduction of non-temporary controls by various states in recent years. If violations of the Schengen borders are considered mere administrative offences, it is not a deterrent. An area where internal borders have been abolished must also strengthen its external borders. The French presidency of the EU in 2022 has made Schengen reform a priority. The massive and largely uncoordinated internal border controls and other restrictions on movement imposed at the start of the pandemic revealed several shortcomings in the Schengen area. Nonetheless, internal controls have continued.

After the failure of the Juncker-led commission on migration reform, the new migration reform proposed by Brussels on 23 September 2020 is characterised by what it calls "obligatory solidarity", on a voluntary basis and without obligatory reception quotas. Other key points include: speeding up decision-making and making asylum procedures and returns more efficient; harmonising rules on the reception of migrants; developing a common database; strengthening the protection of external borders; a crisis and force majeure regime; new identification mechanisms that will be refined to distinguish asylum seekers from economic migrants, the latter of whom have no right to stay in the EU; deterring unauthorised movements to other member states and facilitating the resettlement and better monitoring of returnees.

The agreement finally reached on 20 December 2023 has provoked criticism from the more left-wing groups in the European Parliament and some NGOs, who accuse Brussels of prioritising border protection over solidarity, which requires complementary policies to combat illegal immigration and other complementary measures to create legal and regular immigration channels.

In reality, the position had changed in France, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and Belgium. Social democratic parties in several countries have adopted positions on immigration that were previously branded as extreme right-wing. Conservative parties have emerged in countries such as Sweden, Finland and Italy as a result of the need to introduce into the official discourse an issue that had been excluded from public discussion.

The migration pact has taken a considerable time to develop. Despite the grand declarations that a historic agreement has been reached between the European Council and the European Parliament on 20 December, this

is only a wishful statement, as the agreement will have to wait until it is actually formalised.

From this perspective, the book looks at the evolution of irregular/illegal migratory flows on the three main entry routes: Spain, Italy and Greece.

2. The Three Main Entry Routes in the Mediterranean

In the case of Spain, an overview is given of the policies adopted since 2005, when arrivals by sea began to increase, with the Canary Islands being the most affected area.

Migrants from Senegal, Mali, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea Bissau, the Republic of Guinea, Mauritania, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and a total of 29 different nationalities arrived in the Canary Islands using the services of smuggling mafias. The chapter begins by explaining how this route, as well as the western Mediterranean route, has been controlled and stabilised since 2008. One key point in this period was that people smuggling was already more profitable than drug trafficking. It explains the subsequent impact of the economic crisis on irregular migration flows and the massive influx of migrants into the EU caused by the Arab revolutions. The reactivation of the previously less-frequented migration routes in the western Mediterranean became one of the most important developments masterminded by criminal networks. However, the figures on asylum granted by Spain provide an important perspective on the discussion around the arrival of large flows of refugees. The numbers of people, including refugees, under subsidiary protection were minimal and extremely small, compared to the numbers of economic migrants.

Finally, in 2018, the Canary Islands route was reactivated, and the western Mediterranean route was consolidated. The main migration crisis surfaced in 2020 and continues today. The most prominent has been Morocco's open use of migration flows to achieve its foreign policy objectives. To a lesser extent, Algeria has followed suit , and the chapter details the ups and downs of this "masterstroke", including the weak performance of the Spanish Interior Ministry. From 2020 onwards, the number of refoulements and expulsions decreased even more than required by minimum border protection, which has acted as another pull factor for attracting new irregular migration flows.

Added to this is a new tactic now used massively by migrants who enter illegally by sea, air and land that involves destroying their identity documents and applying for asylum. With asylum granted, they are allowed to prolong their stay until they can be identified — a rather difficult process — thus favouring their stay and permanent residence. This tactic, recommended by the smuggling mafias and NGOs, causes tremendous bottlenecks in the reception centres, which are overcrowded, and leads to solutions that facilitate smuggling, such as transporting them to different cities in Spain for a short stay and then releasing them without proper documentation so that they can live on their own and become easy prey for criminal groups, especially diaspora groups.

The chapter highlights the role of mafias and organised crime not only by explaining irregular migratory flows but also by presenting the variable costs of transporting migrants collected by different means from different places and countries by criminal groups. It ends with an explanation of the limits of the fight against human trafficking.

Another point to consider is the role of migrants in replacing the Spanish population due to the low birth rate. The influx of migrants already accounts for almost all population growth. This figure must be added to the tens of thousands of naturalisations of immigrants, which further corrects the growth of the native Spanish population and warns of the consequences of a demographic substitution in the medium term.

The case of Italy is very significant in explaining and understanding the critical role of the mafias in irregular migration flows.

Since the mid-1980s, when the problem was still in its infancy, efforts to control flows have been accompanied by amnesties, and the various mafia criminal organisations soon began to invest in what was quickly becoming a promising new sector. As a result, as early as 1994, ISTAT, the Italian National Statistics Institute, noted a "progressive entry of foreigners into the criminal milieu" and observed that "a considerable quota of immigrants, mostly from non-EU countries, not finding the hoped-for opportunities for integration, has ended up constituting an inexhaustible recruitment basin for cheap criminal labour".

The chapter explains the efforts made by the authorities to control illegal immigration by closing the main routes, which led to a proliferation of sub-routes in an attempt to evade controls, the transnationalisation of the phenomenon and the adaptation of criminal groups using new and increasingly sophisticated means. The chapter also includes an explanation of the complex relationship between migrants and criminal groups

and how diasporas provide fertile ground for the emergence and consolidation of mafia-like organisations, especially in the most closed communities, where they often replace the role of the state in many areas. Even migrants who have already entered the country illegally are increasingly used to manage the irregular presence of foreigners, either by infiltrating official reception structures or by developing a parallel and clandestine ("black") reception system, which also supports the exploitation of illegal immigrants/trafficked persons.

The book also contains a chapter on the economic aspects of emigration, which, despite its specific focus on Italy, reflects a situation that is largely applicable to other European countries. The role of migrants in the economy is growing, but their high illegal presence has a negative impact on the country's economic competitiveness in many ways and jeopardises the effectiveness of social integration policies due to a number of factors that lead to differentiation. Immigrants are concentrated at the lowest levels of the labour market, are often employed on temporary contracts, work in the informal economy and in hazardous sectors of the labour market, are also overexposed to occupational accidents, participate less in vocational training and earn significantly lower wages than Italians. Adding to this, organised crime is heavily involved in the existence of the black labour market.

In terms of migration and Italy's relations with the EU and its member states, there is a long list of highs and lows. Meloni's government makes no exception. The present Italian proposals to reduce the incoming flows differ in important aspects from the European Commission's approach.

In the case of Greece, the chapter focuses on recent years, detailing the consequences of the Arab revolutions, the distorting role of Turkey and the migration mafias.

Since the early 2000s, Greece has been receiving irregular migrant flows due to its geographical location on the edge of the Balkan Peninsula and on the southeastern flank of Europe, with its islands just a few miles off the Turkish coast being a popular transit point to Europe. The flows increased dramatically in 2018 and 2019, creating a challenge for Greece to manage the reception of large numbers of migrants and asylum seekers across the Aegean Sea and Evros land borders.

Turkey is referred to as "an essential global hub of migration and migrant smuggling" . Since July 2015, an increasing number of Syrians have been travelling directly from Syria to Europe via Turkey. The route from Turkey to the Greek islands (Lesbos, Samos and Chios) has been used mainly by Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi nationals.

The book explains the path of the different migratory flows, the means used by the mafias and how the increasing mafia-induced migratory flows have exceeded the capacity of the reception centres by 500%, forcing vulnerable people to live in degrading and dangerous conditions. Finally, the EU and Turkey agreed on a Statement of Cooperation, which was signed on 18 March 2016. This document contributed to the recognition of smuggling in Turkey and the role of smugglers and facilitators, which is explained in some detail. Later, the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown, introduced at the beginning of March 2020, became "the great disruptor of migration", but a significant increase was observed at the end of the pandemic, when countries stopped sealing their borders.

But the study doesn't stop there; it goes on to address another issue highly relevant to understanding the increasing use of hybrid warfare by neighbours and third states: Turkish blackmail and the weaponisation of migration.

There are several common elements that appear in this first block of chapters dealing with the EU:

- The growth of uncontrolled migratory flows affecting these three countries, with large displacements caused by the Arab revolutions, opportunities created by EU humanitarian approaches, light defence of borders, lack of deterrence and the role of smuggling mafias, which have further increased irregular migratory flows;
- The use of different means of transport and different routes, which change according to the controls, money paid and opportunities created by changes in political and other state interests;
- The varying costs associated with this smuggling and trafficking of migrants and the colossal profits of the smugglers;
- Changes in the way mafias operate, their penetration of destination countries, migration and asylum centres and connections with NGOs;
- The evolution and modernisation of smugglers' own business agendas and links with other mafias and even state political agendas, as well as their mutual support and transnationalism;
- How these three countries are in multiple cases transit countries for irregular migrants who use the Schengen space to move to other EU countries;
- The increasing weaponisation of migration by third states.

Apparently, European policies and police forces have not been thoroughly adapted to the real needs and changes introduced by the smuggling mafias in their own organisations as a transnational phenomenon. It is also worth mentioning the increasingly sophisticated means of corruption at their disposal and the remote operations carried out by these criminal groups. Even after the adoption of the European Agenda for Migration and the Common Action Plan against the Smuggling of Migrants on 27 May 2015 as well as the creation of the European Smuggling Centre for Europol in February 2016, the situation has been worsening year after year until the present, with the Common Action Plan against Smuggling being renewed without effective results.

3. Migration Flows in South and Southeast Asia and Trafficking in Human Beings

This subregion has the largest number of emigrants in the world, with 10 of the 20 largest migration corridors in Asia originating in South Asia.

India is the largest recipient of migrant workers in the subregion and has a unique position in the intra-regional migration scenario, playing multiple roles as a source, destination and transit country. There are several reasons for this: easy cross-border transit, porous borders, greater affordability compared to other countries, better earnings potential and, last but not least, stronger social ties with neighbouring countries. The dominant international migration flows in South Asian countries consist of workers migrating on a temporary (contractual) basis, mostly with low-skilled or low-status jobs, and there has been a significant increase in the migration of female workers to the region, particularly in service-related sectors such as domestic work and healthcare. These workers tend to migrate to other South Asian countries and to the Gulf. However, while the number of people who decided to migrate during the COVID-19 pandemic fell sharply when compared to the numbers in 2019 and 2020, remittances, which play an important role in the economic and social development of these countries, did not fall drastically. Only Afghanistan, Bhutan and Sri Lanka experienced a decline in remittance flows.

In terms of regional cooperation, it is important to note that while South Asian countries have signed various inter- and intra-regional agreements and participate in several initiatives dealing with international migration, this does not mean that there is strong cooperation among

South Asian states on this issue. Due to lack of interest, resources, regularity and commitment, most of the findings and recommendations remain on paper. These countries are characterised by *ad hoc* regulations in the field of migration, especially labour migration. There are no common mechanisms, ministries or policies that function across the states. And one of the characteristics of the subregion is the failure to implement all the available international instruments on migration.

The role of organised crime is also significant. In most cases, irregular migration is facilitated by smugglers. Criminal groups are present in all areas of migration where governance is lacking, which creates opportunities for such groups. Private agencies play a significant role in the recruitment process of labour migration, and it is not easy for governments to regulate their activities, the legality of their operations and the fees they charge for their services. This leaves a lot of room for criminal groups to use these agencies for their illegal activities. Smuggling of migrants to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Europe and Australia is a common phenomenon, but the majority of irregular and criminal activities take place in the GCC countries, where the lack of regulation and protection of migrant workers' rights often results in low wages, poor working conditions and abuse of workers. Smugglers resort to bribery to obtain the necessary documents for illegal emigration, such as false birth certificates, passports or visas. In some cases, they are able to obtain genuine emigration documents from airport officials in order to board international flights and pass through immigration controls in transit and destination countries. This process involves smugglers from the migrants' country of origin as well as nationals of the transit and destination countries.

Organised crime uses three main routes for smuggling migrants: via Central Asia and Russia; via Southwest Asia, West Asia and the Western Balkans; and via West Africa, which is the least popular route. Since the early 2000s, Australia has also become a popular destination for irregular migrants from South Asia.

Finally, South Asian countries serve as the countries of origin, destination and transit for victims of trafficking. All these countries are placed by the U.S. State Department in Tier 2, which considers that the estimated number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or increasing significantly, and the country is not taking proportionate concrete action, or there is no evidence of an increase in efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking since the previous year. The only exception is Afghanistan, which falls into Tier 3.

Moving to Southeast Asia, the picture differs. Migration patterns in this region are diverse. In general, cross-border mobility has been prevalent in the Southeast Asian region for many years, but after the formation of nation-states, migration patterns became increasingly diverse among the different Southeast Asian countries.

Migrant workers were highly concentrated in three countries, namely Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, and outside the region in countries such as China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and also in Europe, North America, the Middle East and Australia. However, the regulation of migration has not been a priority for ASEAN compared to other issues. Numerous regulations seem to have failed to solve the various problems of illegal recruitment of migrant workers, whose perpetrators use more diversified strategies, the topographical contours of the archipelagos and a number of possible routes, which increase the difficulty of solving crucial problems related to the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings. Nonetheless, several countries have developed rules to protect their citizens working abroad.

In 2022, Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand were the three largest countries in the region that benefitted from the remittances of their residents working abroad. The Philippines was, for many years, the principal recipient of remittances. However, the COVID-19 pandemic had a clear impact, forcing a good number of migrant workers to return to this country.

Another significant future issue is private migration. Private migration is common in Southeast Asia, where many potential illegal migrants already know the ins and outs of the immigration process and what to do if they get into trouble with the law. Typically, these immigrants work part-time and on short-term contracts in the informal sector, mostly in households. These immigrants enter the territory of a country through formal channels, using a tourist passport. ASEAN countries facilitate this kind of activity given the fact that they allow visa-free entry for travellers planning to stay for less than 30 days or one month. Thus, in a difficult situation, potential workers take the cheapest option for finding work, even if they are living illegally in a neighbouring country. Hence, the governance of migrant workers in ASEAN remains problematic, and the credibility of the border police forces in combating people smuggling is questionable.

In this region, smuggling activities cannot be separated from accessible infrastructure, including the existence of illicit routes known to smugglers, areas of institutional corruption, clandestine spots and areas that are dangerous to human life.

Criminal gangs and people smugglers are constantly moving a wide range of illegal goods and people around the region. Many of these illegal migrants work in the plantation industry near border areas, which makes it easier for them to enter and leave the country. Agencies controlled by smugglers plan a variety of means of transport, including fishing trawlers, small boats and speedboats if they have to cross sea borders, or hidden roads (usually footpaths) that take 2–5 hours to reach the territory of other countries via routes not heavily guarded by border officials or border routes guarded by corrupt officials.

By 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic was raging, people smuggling appeared to have stalled, as countries closed their borders, but smugglers created alternative routes by sea. As the COVID-19 curve fell in 2022, people-smuggling operations intensified.

Regarding trafficking in human beings, Southeast Asia remains the leading region for these operations. Malaysia and, in particular, Thailand are the main destinations from neighbouring countries. There are different types of trafficking, ranging from sexual exploitation and domestic servitude to other forms of forced labour, forced marriage and child trafficking. In many cases, the women and children are from remote and impoverished communities.

The recruitment process, carried out by agents and mafias, often involves the use of recruitment agencies. This process is conducted with some transparency, opening a work entry registration in many countries, giving the impression that this is a legitimate company with operating licenses in many countries. The majority of targets are women, who are offered lucrative wages and bonuses in the entertainment, electronics, travel and convection industries. The agency facilitates and mobilises job searches in areas with low levels of welfare and education in Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia and Thailand, where women are recruited directly from the farms where they work. Many victims migrate in search of paid work but end up being forced to work in agriculture, fishing, construction or domestic service.

4. The United States: Between Organised Crime and Internal Politics

The US is a special case. President Donald Trump's administration had sought to address the problem of relentless migratory flows at the

southern border of the country. The attempts by caravans of thousands of illegal immigrants to cross the southern border began during President Obama's administration. The administration realised that illegal immigration was more of a problem than an opportunity, a problem that affected the security of the US, which was increasingly vulnerable to the threat of organised crime infiltrating the country and using migration. From this perspective, a series of measures were implemented, including the extension of the existing wall.

But Biden's presidency began with a direct attack to dismantle the regulations and decrees of the previous administration. His motto was to start from scratch because, according to his speech, Trump was undermining democracy in the US. The day after his inauguration, Biden signed 17 executive orders, including six on immigration that put an end to the previous president's policies.

But the problems at the southern border continued. New caravans began to prepare in the Northern Triangle of Central America, based on the new, more humanitarian messages from the new US administration. The caravans did not appear spontaneously. Popular social networks such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok and WeChat played a key role in recruiting and organising these caravans and people movements with attractive but misleading information. The smuggling mafias had organised themselves to ensure that business did not continue to decline, as had happened during the Trump administration.

Coyotes had also lost business because of Trump's anti-immigration policies. And within the US, the network of immigration NGOs found relief from the crisis they were experiencing due to the restrictions that Trump's policies had imposed on their profession. Prices for helping people cross the border were high and kept rising.

By March 2021, the US southern border was in a state of collapse due to the huge numbers of illegal immigrants attempting to enter the country. Particularly dangerous was the exponential increase in unaccompanied minors, estimated at up to 9,000 children approaching the border alone. The Biden administration's solution to stopping this exodus from the Northern Triangle countries of Central America was to tell the immigrants not to leave their countries.

Mexico, in turn, faced a rather difficult situation with an increasing number of asylum claims from immigrants who had been unable to cross the border into the US, or who simply preferred to stay in Mexico rather than attempt to cross the US border.

The situation worsened, and the changes made have not prevented the creation of caravans and border assaults after a dramatic journey, usually on foot and with no guarantee of safety. They have no safe place to stay for the entire journey and have to spend the night in the parks and squares of the cities they pass through without food or sanitary facilities. And at the US–Mexico border, they are threatened by drug-smuggling mafias and Mexican drug cartels already established on both sides of the border.

Testimonies from smuggling experts and even Mexican President López Obrador revealed how much smugglers charge to help people cross the border. Migrant smuggling at the border once again became a multi-million-dollar business. The Sinaloa, Jalisco, Zetas and Juárez cartels often clashed over control of the migrant caravans.

The number of illegal crossings reached record levels, which the foreign services were unable to cope with due to a lack of personnel, resources and facilities, including the care of a growing number of families and unaccompanied minors who were detained for a limited period. All the migrants were already seeking asylum, as was the case in the EU, and the solution was none other than to release them into the US with pending claims for protection. The Biden administration's initiatives to make immigration policy fairer and more orderly have stalled or remained too limited to reduce the chaos at the southern border, even as deportations and refoulements have increased. As already happened during the administration of President Donald Trump, immigration advocates and Congress limited or blocked certain measures. The call to the private sector to increase investment in the Northern Triangle to address the root causes of migration, launched on 27 May, also did not have the desired effect, although it did reduce illegal crossings from Guatemala and Honduras. For Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador, personal remittances represented between 20% and 30% of GDP.

But the problem has also been exacerbated by the arrival of growing migratory flows from Venezuela and from Africa, Asia and even Europe, mobilised by smugglers. Since Joe Biden became president of the US, more than six million illegal entries have been recorded, plus another two million who managed to enter the country without being caught by border patrols.

Although southern states, such as Texas, had begun to develop their own immigration legislation, the situation became more complicated when the southern states of Texas, Florida and Arizona, fed up with the ineffectiveness of the authorities in the face of such an invasion, began to

develop the internal transfer of emigrants within the US to sanctuary cities such as New York, Chicago, Washington, Boston, Denver, Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

They promoted free trips for illegal immigrants without informing the political authorities of these cities. As a result, these cities' streets were flooded with people from various South American countries, setting off alarms.

The mayors asked Biden to put an end to this unsustainable situation. The mayor of New York, Eric Adams, was one of the loudest voices protesting against the enormous numbers of illegal immigrants arriving in the city, which could no longer bear the costs and where the shelters and social services to care for them were already completely saturated. The measures taken did not solve the problem.

On the other hand, pressure from the Republican-dominated Congress has been so great that it has forced the administration to expand the wall with funds that were not used for its construction. The issue sparked a clash between Congress and the governors of 20 states, with the administration demanding restrictions on existing asylum rights and other coercive measures to prevent illegal entry and secure the border, such as expanding the powers of deportation or limiting the president's ability to use parole to exempt immigrants from visa requirements.

The power of the mafias and drug cartels had twisted the arms of Joe Biden's administration. Mexico's role was crucial, but its power was undermined by the cartels' effective control of large swathes of territory, particularly along the border with the United States.

5. Looking to the Future: The Growing Importance of Environmentally Induced Migration

The final chapter of the book attempts to highlight the growing importance of environmental migration, which is a complex issue because it is not monocausal.

Although debate about the reliability of the various climate change models continues, with notable deniers of the phenomenon, there is an important scientific consensus that cannot easily be swept away. Certainly, there have been exaggerations or overestimates of the importance and reliability of the models. However, this does not preclude the assertion that there is a problem with human-driven greenhouse gas emissions, despite

the fact that the planet Earth has a life of its own, and historically, there have been climate fluctuations with large periods of relatively cool temperatures and periods of warming in many regions.

The chapter examines the relation between climate change and a myriad of factors contributing to forced displacement: economy, food, health, sea-level rise and natural disasters. It provides a broad understanding of how climate change is affecting people's lives to the extent that it may be contributing to regional and international migration flows.

Again, it is important to underline that it is a complex issue and that prevention and adaptation measures, which can become very costly, play a fundamental role in avoiding displacement.

In general, it can be said that uncontrolled migratory flows are undergoing a profound transformation over time. This transformation is already giving rise to serious security problems, which are being dealt with in an inconsistent manner, as if uncontrolled emigration and the problem created by mafias and states in third countries were still a purely humanitarian issue. An in-depth analysis of this challenge and of the means of deterrence needed to deal with it is required. Unfortunately, we are witnessing statements by civil and military authorities on the current security challenge, its implications and the means to face it, as if the problem, its actors and its technical tools were the same as thirty years ago.