SWP Research Paper
Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik
German Institute for International
and Security Affairs

Lars Brozus (Ed.)

Unexpected, Unforeseen, Unplanned

Scenarios of International Foreign and Security Policy

Foresight Contributions 2015

RP 1
January 2016
Berlin

All rights reserved.

© Stiftung Wissenschaft
und Politik, 2016

SWP Research Papers are peer reviewed by senior researchers and the executive board of the Institute. They reflect the views of the author(s).

SWP
Stiftung Wissenschaft
und Politik
German Institute
for International
and Security Affairs

Ludwigkirchplatz 3–4
10719 Berlin
Germany
Phone +49 30 880 07-0
Fax +49 30 880 07-100
www.swp-berlin.org
swp@swp-berlin.org

ISSN 1863-1053

Translation by Meredith Dale

(English version of
SWP-Studie 20/2015)

Table of Contents

5 **Introduction:**
The Benefits of Scientifically Based Foresight
Lars Brozus

11 **Mississippi Blues:**
National Crisis in the United States
Johannes Thimm and Lars Brozus

17 **Asia-Pacific:**
Earthquake Shatters Geopolitical Balance
Christian Becker, Hanns Günther Hilpert,
Hanns W. Maull and Alexandra Sakaki

21 **The Ukraine Conflict and the**
Danger of Nuclear Accidents
Oliver Meier and Marcel Dickow

26 **Before the 2018 Presidential Election:**
Autonomy Conflict in Russia's Far East
Sabine Fischer, Margarete Klein and Alexander Libman

32 **Small Cause, Large Effect:**
Rapid Loss of Bees in North Africa Endangers a Fragile Region
Bettina Rudloff and Nils Simon

38 **2020 – How Germany and the EU**
Overcame the Great Refugee Crisis
Steffen Angenendt, Anne Koch and Amrei Meier

44 **2025 – New European Foreign Ministry**
Takes Command
Ronja Kempin and Barbara Lippert

50 **Foresight Retrospective: "One Land, One People, One Dream" –**
Albanians Abolish their Borders
Dušan Reljić

Appendix
55 Abbreviations
56 The Authors

Introduction: The Benefits of Scientifically Based Foresight

Lars Brozus

> *The future is always in large parts unknown and unknowable. But the degree to which we can anticipate future consequences of current decisions and the degree to which we can keep the future open for later choices and changes is certainly variable – as well as the degree to which we submit unreflectively to the past, to cultural traditions and historically pre-given assumptions. (Bernhard Peters)**

A cursory review of the most notable foreign policy and security crises of recent decades reveals that genuine surprises ("black swans") are very rare.[1] Of course the collapse of the Soviet Union, the 9/11 attacks and the popular uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East took most politicians and analysts by surprise, and each of these events was followed by painstaking discussions about how such decisive developments could have been overlooked. Unsurprisingly, in retrospect it is much easier to identify the "critical junctures".

With hindsight, however, it also becomes evident that pointers and warnings existed in all of these cases, both in research analyses and in official documents. The worsening nationality crisis in the USSR, al-Qaeda's plans to attack the United States, and the growing dissatisfaction with the conditions of everyday life in many Arab states were well-established facts. What was missing was adequate attention to them at political leadership level. Such a constellation represents a so-called "grey swan":[2] a crisis that develops over a longer period in the absence of adequate political prioritisation.

Why Foresight – And How?

The present collection is SWP's third Foresight publication examining the realm of "grey swans", following "Expect the Unexpected" (2011) and "Keep Expecting the Unexpected" (2013).[3] SWP understands "foresight" as

* Bernhard Peters, "Why Is It So Hard to Change the World?", *International Sociology* 9, no. 3 (1994): 275–93 (290).

1 Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable* (New York, 2007).

2 Michael J. Mazarr, "Hide in Plain Sight: The Strategic Challenge of 'Gray Swans'", *World Politics Review*, 24 February 2015, http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/15153/hide-in-plain-sight-the-strategic-challenge-of-gray-swans (accessed 25 September 2015); Nate Silver, *The Signal and the Noise – Why So Many Predictions Fail, But Some Don't* (New York, 2012).

3 2011: Volker Perthes and Barbara Lippert, eds., *Expect the Unexpected: Ten Situations to Keep an Eye On*, SWP Research Paper 1/2012 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, January 2012), http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2012_RP01_lpt_prt.pdf (German version, November 2011: *Ungeplant ist der Normalfall: Zehn Situationen, die politische Aufmerksamkeit verdienen*); 2013: Volker Perthes and Barbara Lippert, eds., *Un-*

a scientifically based analysis of conceivable future situations and developments of international foreign and security policy. These are not forecasts, as we cannot of course predict what will occur. But we can draw attention to conceivable scenarios that – were they to come about – would be of great political relevance to Germany and the European Union.

Correspondingly, our Foresight contributions consider possible future events that we believe deserve greater political attention today. The starting point is that the described situations take political decision-makers by surprise. As such they present foreign policy and security challenges, regardless of the balance of crisis and opportunity they represent. Some involve putative developments in the near future for which the decisive political actors are presently inadequately prepared. Other contributions concern events much further in the future and discuss developments that would come as a great surprise seen from today's political perspective.

What all the contributions share is the scientific rigour of their argumentation. Discussing potential future developments presents special challenges to the analyst. Because the future cannot be foreseen, such statements are necessarily associated with great uncertainty. Foresight is therefore certainly not uncontested in academic circles – like the retrospective analysis of past events, the so-called "counterfactuals".[4] Nonetheless, we still believe that it is worthwhile, and in fact essential, to risk a glance at possible future developments. In everyday politics, the foresight approach is practised all the time anyway, but often without being explicitly identified as such. After all, political decisions made today always seek to shape the future in one way or another. Therefore, the question is not *whether* foresight is being practised but rather *how* this is done.

SWP subscribes to a scientifically based approach to foresight. This means above all explicitly revealing the assumptions and causalities that characterise each (imagined) scenario rather than leaving them implicit. Such transparency is an essential precondition for exposing the inherent assumptions to identification and discussion. It represents an important touchstone for distinguishing diligent foresight from guesswork, and enables critical debate.

Transparency is also essential for another reason. The foresight situations described in the following represent a contribution to illuminating the "universe of possibilities" for political action.[5] It is thereby unavoida-

geplant bleibt der Normalfall: Acht Situationen, die politische Aufmerksamkeit verdienen SWP-Studie 16/2013 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2013) (no English version), http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/studien/2013_S16_prt_lpt.pdf (accessed 20 October 2015).

4 Silver, *The Signal and the Noise* (see note 2); Philip E. Tetlock and Aaron Belkin, eds., *Counterfactual Thought Experiments in World Politics: Logical, Methodological, and Psychological Perspectives* (Princeton, 1996); Philip E. Tetlock, Richard Ned Lebow and Geoffrey Parker, eds., *Unmaking the West: "What If" Scenarios That Rewrite World History* (Ann Arbor, 2006).

5 "[C]urrent and future political choices can (and must) be made from a wide universe of possibilities and not from an overdetermined past that permits only one inevitable divisive response." Philip E. Tetlock and Geoffrey Parker, "Counterfactual Thought Experi-

ble that they also play a part in forming that universe, because the analysts are selecting from all the conceivable factors, variables, trends and influences. By necessity they concentrate on those that are pertinent to their analysis and neglect others. Thus the reader is confronted with an, as it were, prestructured image of the future that influences his or her perspective on future events. So an academically reflected approach to constructing the situations is all the more important to preserve transparency concerning the choice of factors taken into consideration and the reasons for that choice. This implies that the "foreseer" should occasionally reflect upon their analyses (foresight retrospective).[6]

Overview of Topics

The spectrum of issues, geography and timeframe spanned by the situations and developments addressed in the contributions is gratifyingly broad. Taken as a whole, they certainly comprise a representative cross-section of the research conducted at SWP. The contributions are presented in their (fictitious!) chronological order.

Racist police violence against black Americans and protests against it represent the background to the contribution by Johannes Thimm and Lars Brozus. They describe how a nation-wide escalation of violence during a highly polarised 2016 presidential election campaign leads to a crisis of state.

Christian Becker, Hanns Günther Hilpert, Hanns W. Maull and Alexandra Sakaki examine the repercussions of a devastating earthquake striking Greater Tokyo in June 2016, including the geopolitical consequences for Sino-Japanese relations and Germany's options for a response.

In summer 2016 a Russian warplane with nuclear weapons on board crashes in Ukrainian territory. Could such an incident contribute to reviving cooperation between NATO and Russia? Oliver Meier and Marcel Dickow analyse the circumstances and responses that would require.

Remaining with Russia, Sabine Fischer, Margarete Klein and Alexander Libman consider potential trajectories of autonomy endeavours arising in 2017 in Russia's Far East. As well as the repercussions within Russia, they also consider the effects on Sino-Russian relations and on Germany and the European Union.

Bettina Rudloff and Nils Simon examine an often overlooked risk to the stability of North Africa. They outline a situation where agricultural production collapses because of a sudden loss of pollinators, and sketch out the consequences for the countries north of the Mediterranean.

ments: Why We Can't Live without Them and How We Must Learn to Live with Them", in *Unmaking the West*, ed. Tetlock, Lebow and Parker (see note 4), 14–44 (27).

6 This exercise helps to avoid analytical "tunnel vision". Gary Saul Morson and Morton Schapiro, "Introduction: The Future of Prediction", in *The Fabulous Future? America and the World in 2040*, ed. Gary Saul Morson and Morton Schapiro (Evanston, 2015), xv–xxix.

Method

Alongside its conceptual design, the scholarly quality of SWP foresight research is secured by a rigorous multi-stage selection and review process.[a] The contributions were selected in a competitive forum. First of all, short concept papers dealing with future questions of relevance to international foreign and security policy were gathered from researchers across the institute. Three questions served as a rough guide: 1. What could happen? 2. Why could it happen? 3. What would this mean for Germany and the European Union? At a day-long workshop the fifteen submitted outlines were presented by their authors, commented on by a discussant and discussed in depth with SWP colleagues. Three criteria allowed for a comparative discussion: 1. consistency, 2. plausibility, 3. originality and relevance.[b] The likelihood of a scenario actually occurring played no role in the assessment process.

The workshop concluded with an evaluation round, where points were awarded to each proposal. Here, again, the criteria were consistency, plausibility, and originality and relevance. The seven proposals that received the highest scores were subsequently expanded into full-length drafts. The objective here was to use the methodologically guided combination of critical analysis and creative imagination to arrive at plausible and convincing descriptions of conceivable situations and developments. The drafts then passed through two rounds of peer review and feedback.

a Methodologically the preparation of a good foresight situation faces similar challenges to a counterfactual historical analysis. See Tetlock and Parker, "Counterfactual Thought Experiments" (see note 5).

b The individual assessment criteria were defined as follows: 1. Consistency relates to the structure of the argumentation. Are the ideas developed stringently? Is the described situation or development coherent? 2. Plausibility refers to the persuasiveness of the proposal, in the sense of whether the described situation *could* actually occur – but not whether it in fact *will*. Is the narrative plausible? 3. The criterion of originality and relevance includes features such as drawing attention to significant developments that have to date been ignored (politically), and assessing which actors the situation is important for.

Steffen Angenendt, Anne Koch and Amrei Meier hypothesise that Germany and the European Union succeed in coping with Europe's biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War over the course of the coming years. Looking back in 2020, they describe the measures and strategies that were required.

How should we imagine the process whereby the foreign ministries of the EU member states are integrated into the European External Action Service? Ronja Kempin and Barbara Lippert investigate that question and describe – from the perspective of 2025 – the associated opportunities and difficulties.

Foresight retrospective: Dušan Reljić's contribution about the "race" between nationalist and European ideas about integration in the Albanian-populated regions of the Western Balkans occupies a special position. Here, the author critically re-examines his contribution for the 2011 Foresight Study.[7]

Such a review serves to test the validity of one's own assumptions in the sense of quality control. What is today's perspective on a scenario drafted several years ago? What were the key observations at that time? Where is there continuity today, where do the differences lie? Have new factors emerged? And have others receded? The fundamental trend turns out to be unchanged today, but the political, social and economic dynamics have sharpened.

Crisis of Statehood: Territoriality, Problem-solving Capacity and New Options for Action

Reviewing the Foresight situations as a whole, one common feature stands out: all the contributions address challenges of statehood occurring in different forms. On the one hand, this concerns the *territoriality* of states, concretely where existing borders are more or less explicitly called into question. The situation Reljić describes in the Western Balkans arises when an Albanian popular movement unites territories divided by established borders. But the developments following an earthquake in Tokyo described by Becker and colleagues also include possible border changes in East Asia.

Secondly, the contributions contain very different types of *functional* challenges to the problem-solving capacity of states. This applies for example to the national crisis in the United States described by Thimm and Brozus, where it proves impossible to resolve pathologies and dysfunctionalities in the police and justice system. Fischer and colleagues attribute the striving for autonomy in Russia's Far East partly to economic divergence between the European and Asian parts of the country and Moscow's failure to compensate this. Finally, the North African food crisis described by Rudloff and Simon is worsened by a political response that fails to take adequate account of looming supply risks. Neither the affected North African states nor the European Union have this challenge to food security properly "on their radar".

Other contributions address specific *answers* to the challenges to established statehood. Kempin and Lippert describe the transfer of national foreign policy powers to the supranational EU level. Angenendt and colleagues sketch out the conditions under which a concerted national effort in Germany, backed up by a complementary EU policy, could be successful in addressing the refugee crisis. This includes reshaping the relationship between society and state and between national, state and local government. Meier and Dickow, finally, examine the question of whether a Rus-

7 Dušan Reljić, "Border Changes on the Cards again in the Western Balkans", in *Expect the Unexpected*, ed. Perthes and Lippert (see note 3), 31–34.

sian warplane carrying nuclear weapons crashing over Ukraine might potentially persuade NATO and Russia to return to the path of cooperation. In the scenario, Ukraine's inadequate problem-solving capacity is compensated by a concerted cooperative effort by the major powers.

It is no coincidence that the crisis of statehood plays a role in all the contributions. Both the comparatively stable OECD world and the more or less unstable states outside it find themselves facing sweeping challenges at a juncture where governance research indicates that states are increasingly transforming from "monopolists of power" to "managers of political authority".[8] Especially under conditions of fragile, unconsolidated statehood, it can be expected that this transformation will continue to produce critical escalations whose repercussions pay no heed to existing borders.

8 Philipp Genschel and Bernhard Zangl, "Metamorphosen des Staates – vom Herrschaftsmonopolisten zum Herrschaftsmanager", *Leviathan* 36, no. 3 (2008): 430–54; Gunnar Folke Schuppert and Michael Zürn, eds., *Governance in einer sich wandelnden Welt*, special issue 41 of *Politische Vierteljahresschrift (PVS)* (Wiesbaden, 2008); *Wozu Staat? Governance in Räumen begrenzter und konsolidierter Staatlichkeit*, ed. Marianne Beisheim, Tanja A. Börzel, Philipp Genschel, Bernhard Zangl (Baden-Baden, 2011); *Governance without a State? Policies and Politics in Areas of Limited Statehood*, ed. Thomas Risse (New York, 2011); *The Oxford Handbook of Transformation of the State*, ed. Stephan Leibfried, Evelyn Huber, Matthew Lange, Jonah D. Levy, Frank Nullmeier and John D. Stephens (Oxford, 2015).

Mississippi Blues: National Crisis in the United States

Johannes Thimm and Lars Brozus *

United States, a Friday evening at the end of February 2016. A clip recorded in Meridian, Mississippi, spreads like wildfire on social media. It is difficult to recognise anything in the shaky video. A black youth is lying on the ground. A policeman presses a knee into the boy's back, shoving his face into the asphalt, while a colleague handcuffs him. Finally the dazed youth is pulled upright, pushed into a patrol car and driven away.

Erin and Kyle: Opposing Perspectives

Erin spends the entire night at her laptop. Her Twitter has been buzzing since news got out that the youth died in intensive care shortly after his arrest. Anderson Regional Medical Center refuses to comment on the cause of death until an autopsy has been performed. But to Erin there is no doubt. Yet again police have killed an unarmed black person while making an arrest, and this time a minor. She is shocked but not surprised, given the wave of reports of police violence against black people since 2014.[1]

Erin attends the liberal Vassar College in New York. Most of her fellow students come from wealthy families, although they do include members of minorities. Few depend on student loans or grants, but the reports of those who do about their experiences growing up in areas where the police are seen as a threat deeply affect Erin.[2] She wants Washington to finally act to end the many forms of discrimination that still exist.

At home in Fort Worth, Texas, Kyle is unsettled by the evening news. On Fox News Sean Hannity fumes about the reactions of leading Democrats and civil rights activists to the events in Meridian. Hannity accuses them of playing politics with tragedy by blaming the police. They could at least wait for the results of the investigation, Kyle thinks, but no: whenever an unarmed non-white dies during an operation, the police involved are immediately condemned as murderers. "Innocent until proven guilty" no longer seems to apply.

* The authors would like to thank Florian Gawehns for his assistance with the research for this contribution.

1 The killings of Eric Garner (17 July 2014, New York), Michael Brown (9 August 2014, Ferguson) and Freddie Gray (12 April 2015, Baltimore) drew international attention. On average in 2015 more than two people per day were shot dead by the police in the United States. Regularly updated overviews are published by the *Washington Post* and the *Guardian*: http://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/national/police-shootings/ (accessed 13 October 2015) and www.theguardian.com/us-news/series/counted-us-police-killings (accessed 23 September 2015).

2 "Stop and Frisk Policy: New York City Police Department", *New York Times*, http://tinyurl.com/83md7ln (accessed 23 September 2015).

Kyle dislikes this trend. He knows how dangerous police work is, as his brother serves in the Texas police. Instead of honouring this work, Obama's Department of Justice launches one investigation after another into municipalities that decide against prosecuting police involved in killings. More broadly, too, he believes, Washington has been interfering increasingly strongly in the states' affairs, seeking to dictate everything from same-sex marriage and the treatment of illegal immigrants to gun laws, as well as whether the police is representative enough. Kyle sees these as dangerous excesses on the road to tyranny. He no longer understands his country.

Unrest in Mississippi: Washington Intervenes

More than one third of the population of Mississippi is black. To them, the latest incident is typical of a long history of brutality and injustice, suffered at the hands of an overwhelmingly white police and justice system. The Department of Justice had already investigated the Meridian police for systematic civil rights violations in 2011/12, after black youths had been routinely arrested for minor disciplinary infractions at school and held for days.[3] Against this history, responses to the current case are angry. Protest rallies are held in Meridian and the state capital Jackson. Outside political activists, many of them veterans of protests in New York, Ferguson and Baltimore, support the local organisers.[4] They denounce the police violence that affects black people more than twice as frequently as other groups.[5] With each incident they become more organised.

But not everyone is blaming the forces of the state. Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant demonstratively backs the local police.[6] After successive nights of rioting and looting in Jackson he imposes a curfew enforced by a massive police presence. Bryant also rejects President Obama's criticism of the actions of the local police and condemns any outside interference. For this, he can count on the support of Mississippi's overwhelmingly conservative white population, where mistrust of Obama is widespread.[7]

3 "Justice Department Releases Investigative Findings Showing Constitutional Rights of Children in Mississippi Being Violated", *The United States Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs* (online), 10 August 2012, http://1.usa.gov/1FBnguL (accessed 23 September 2015).

4 Steven Hsieh and Raven Rakia, "After #Ferguson: The Protests that Followed the Police Shooting of Michael Brown Created a Network of Youth in Revolt", *The Nation*, 27 October 2014, 18–21.

5 The relative proportion of unarmed black people killed by police, compared to white, is even higher, *Guardian* (see note 1).

6 Bryant is one of the most conservative state governors, cf. Nate Silver, "In State Governments, Signs of a Healthier G.O.P.", *New York Times* (online), 16 April 2013, http://nyti.ms/1V6HfHR. He is a sharp critic of Obama; see for example his "Letter to President Obama" of 18 July 2014, http://www.governorbryant.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Letter-to-President-Obama-Concerning-Illegal-Immigration.pdf, and Shushannah Walshe, "Several State Legislators Say No to Federal Gun Control Laws", *abcNews* (online), 17 January 2013, http://tinyurl.com/bcqwgjv (accessed 15 October 2015). In early 2013 Bryant called on the Mississippi State Legislature to outlaw any unconstitutional Presidential order tightening gun controls, http://twitpic.com/bvq96z (accessed 15 October 2015).

7 Almost 49 percent of those polled by Gallup in Mississippi in 2014 described their po-

After a second death at a protest rally in Jackson, Washington decides to intervene directly to prevent a nation-wide escalation. Obama makes a statement expressing his concern about the collapse of law and order in Mississippi and orders the deployment of the National Guard.[8] President Kennedy's response in 1962 to the rioting over desegregation at University of Mississippi is used as a precedent.[9]

Governor Bryant is not prepared to accept this, and accuses Obama of violating the constitution.[10] The governors of Texas, Alabama and Tennessee declare their solidarity with Bryant. Mississippi's Republican-controlled State Legislature passes a resolution denying all and any state support for presidential decrees not authorised by the US Congress.[11] Some members of the National Guard refuse to follow orders, while Mississippi's police cannot agree which side to serve. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter suggests to Obama that he consider deploying regular army units.

Escalation in Primary Season

While one half of the country sees the demonstrations as a legitimate protest against racism and police brutality, the other half has no patience with the daily demonstrations, which frequently end in violent clashes. The events dominate the Republican primaries for the 2016 presidential election, many of which are held on March 1. The candidates vie to slam Obama's handling of the crisis. Jeb Bush accuses the incumbent of weakness. Ted Cruz complains that the President had trampled on states' rights and encouraged the "anarchists" on the streets. Donald Trump draws attention with racist comments. What "Super Tuesday" does not bring about is a decision about who will be the Republican presidential candidate.

The protests spread during the following weeks. And they are no longer directed only against police violence. The people on the streets now begin

litical views as conservative, the highest figure in the United States, cf. http://tinyurl.com/6uas895. In 2012 more than half of Republican voters in Mississippi believed that Barack Obama was a Muslim, cf. David Meeks, "Poll: Obama's a Muslim to Many GOP Voters in Alabama, Mississippi", *Los Angeles Times* (online), 12 March 2012, http://tinyurl.com/855hmst (all accessed 15 October 2015).

8 Under Title 10 ("Armed Forces") §12406 of the United States Code (U.S.C.), the President may call state National Guard forces into federal service, http://1.usa.gov/1MrGmlE (accessed 15 October 2015).

9 In 1962, following unrest over the enrollment of the first black student at the University of Mississippi, President Kennedy placed the National Guard under federal command and deployed the Army to ensure the enrollment could take place, cf. http:// microsites.jfklibrary.org/olemiss/home (accessed 23 September 2015).

10 The Mississippi State Legislature protested in 1962 against the "invasion of the sovereign State of Mississippi" by federal forces and the placing of the National Guard under federal command. That argument is revived here. See http://microsites.jfklibrary.org/olemiss/aftermath/doc1.html (accessed 23 September 2015).

11 Arizona's House of Representatives passed a similar resolution in 2015, which was adjourned indefinitely in the Senate: Arizona House Bill 2368, 17 March 2015, and Colbert I. King, "Encouraging a Rebellion against Obama", *Washington Post*, 5 April 2015, A17.

Conditions of Escalation

Structural discrimination of minorities by the police and justice system and economic inequalities originating in the segregation era continue to be felt in the United States today.[a] The income gap between black and white has scarcely narrowed since the end of the 1960s.[b] But today there is a great deal more scientific data and publicly accessible information about these injustices.[c] The ubiquity of cameras and social media allows police violence to be documented and publicised as never before, while a fundamental diversification of information sources in the internet age amplifies the fragmentation of perspectives and opinions. Radical views become entrenched in "islands of perception" with little exchange between different world views. Instead of profiting from debate, citizens seek out news sources that confirm their existing ideas. Partially as a result of this development, ideological and partisan polarisation in the United States is more pronounced than at any time since 1945.[d] Exacerbating the polarisation, part of the white electorate perceives the demographic and social changes – as reflected in a rising non-white proportion of the US population and a liberalisation of social values – as a threat.[e] The interaction between these trends leads to an erosion of the fundamental social consensus. Willingness to work together across party lines, which is essential in the strongly compromise-based US political system, is at a historic low.

While the expectation that the government will tackle injustices has grown, its possibilities to implement far-reaching reforms have shrunk. This discrepancy between expectation and reality particularly affects the Obama Administration, which had generated great expectations of reducing structural political, social and economic asymmetries. Disappointment with the lack of positive change can be a significant driver of social unrest, even in consolidated democracies.

a Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations", *The Atlantic*, June 2014, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631 (accessed 23 September 2015).

b Michael A. Fletcher, "Fifty Years after March on Washington, Economic Gap between Blacks, Whites Persists", *Washington Post*, 28 August 2013, http://wapo.st/17hLgAz (accessed 23 September 2015).

c Jill Lepore, "Richer and Poorer: Accounting for Inequality", *New Yorker*, 16 March 2015, http://tinyurl.com/maq4o4s, and John Cassidy, "Is America an Oligarchy?", *New Yorker*, 18 April 2014, http://tinyurl.com/mlnaou8 (both accessed 23 September 2015).

d Matthew Yglesias, "American Democracy Is Doomed", *Vox*, 8 October 2015, http://tinyurl.com/p49bf7f (accessed 16 October 2015).

e Matthew W. Hughey, "White Backlash in the 'Post-racial' United States", *Ethnic and Racial Studies Review* 37, no. 5 (2014): 721–30.

raising general political demands, above all for a reduction in economic inequality. After shootings occur at demonstrations in Detroit, Jackson, St. Louis and Los Angeles, Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch warns of anarchy. Finally, the Mississippi primary scheduled for 8 March is cancelled, because public security can no longer be ensured. Obama orders in the Army.[12]

The opposition in Congress rages. The Republicans stand united behind the state government of Mississippi. Supporters of the Tea Party accuse the President of violating the constitution. They apply for an emergency hearing before the Supreme Court and prepare to impeach Obama. Conservative media rally to their cause, in uproar over the Administration's actions. The gun lobby's long-standing accusations that the President is seeking to undermine the Second Amendment boosts conspiracy theories.[13] The FBI reports increased activity among right-wing militias and armed groups that regard themselves as the guardians of liberty against central government's tyranny.[14] Finally, national politics grinds to a complete halt. While the army occupies strategically important points in Mississippi, the country spirals into a grave crisis of state.[15]

International Reactions

The events in the US reverberate globally. Across the world news channels report the crisis round the clock. Russia advises Washington to concentrate on resolving its domestic problems rather than playing the global policeman. Egypt and Turkey call for the demonstrators' human rights to be respected. Washington's allies wonder how effectively the United States can still fulfil its role as guarantor of security under these circumstances. With the attention of the political leadership in Washington completely absorbed by domestic unrest, fear of provocations grows in crisis regions around the globe. While some fear foreign policy paralysis, others worry that Washington could be tempted to pursue military adventure abroad to distract from domestic political problems.

12 Here again, Kennedy is Obama's model, in particular Executive Order 11053 of 30 September 1962 on the basis of U.S.C. Title 10, Subtitle A, Part I, Chapter 15: Insurrection. The Order cites "Assistance for Removal of Unlawful Obstructions of Justice" as grounds for deploying federal forces in the state of Mississippi, cf. http://1.usa.gov/1LPJNIh (accessed 15 October 2015).

13 Clyde Haberman, "Memories of Waco Siege Continue to Fuel Far-Right Groups", *New York Times*, 12 July 2015, http://nyti.ms/1Hpb1jF (accessed 23 September 2015).

14 Adam Nagourney, "A Defiant Rancher Savors the Audience That Rallied to His Side", *New York Times*, 23 April 2014, A1, http://nyti.ms/1fs2xIO, and Charles Kurzman and David Schanzer, "The Growing Right-Wing Terror Threat", *New York Times*, 16 June 2015, A27, http://nyti.ms/1MHqhcP (both accessed 15 October 2015).

15 The scenario of an uprising by armed right-wing militias against central government is discussed by Kevin Benson and Jennifer Weber in "Full Spectrum Operations in the Homeland: A 'Vision' of the Future", *Small Wars Journal* 8, no. 7 (25 July 2012), http://tinyurl.com/pegmjje (accessed 23 September 2015).

Many Europeans are shocked by the escalation in the United States and wonder whether similar events could occur in their continent. Debates about the decline of the United States and the repercussions of its turn away from Europe are not new, but now they acquire an added urgency. Those arguing for a more independent and self-reliant European Union feel vindicated. Their argument that it is high time to reduce political, economic and social inequalities to prevent the disintegration of the Union is supported by more and more people.

Asia-Pacific: Earthquake Shatters Geopolitical Balance

Christian Becker, Hanns Günther Hilpert, Hanns W. Maull and Alexandra Sakaki

Around noon on 17 June 2016, Tokyo is hit by an earthquake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale. The immediate consequences are devastating: 15,000 are killed immediately and many buildings collapse or burn (despite strict building standards), blocking roads and hampering rescue efforts. If that were not enough, Beijing senses an opportunity to take a decisive step towards its objective of dominance in Asia and to create facts on the ground in its territorial conflict with Japan over the Senkaku islands (Chinese: Diaoyu). Germany and Europe come under pressure to adopt a position on the conflict.

The disaster does not come out of the blue. In 2012, Japanese experts put the probability of a quake of 7.0 or higher at up to 70 percent by 2016 and up to 98 percent by 2041.[1] In the days after the disaster the government appears paralysed, barely able to function with communication channels broken and major government buildings unusable. Although the government possesses an alternative centre at the Tachikawa Disaster-Preparedness Base thirty kilometres west of Tokyo, this is also damaged and initially not functional. The yen comes under massive pressure, despite the repatriation of Japanese foreign assets. The Fed, the European Central Bank and other central banks intervene to help, with mixed results. Facing enormous and initially unquantifiable reconstruction costs on top of already excessive public debt, interest rates spike; the state faces insolvency. The international stock and finance markets are increasingly nervous.

As after the last two major quakes in 1995 and 2011, Japan experiences a wave of help and solidarity. Thousands of citizens from across the country join the rescue and clearance efforts. The United States announces it is mobilising 24,000 soldiers for disaster relief. But soon harsh criticism is also heard: after the last two major quakes, the Japanese government should have worked much harder to enforce stricter building rules and implement preventive measures. The government itself appears shaken and paralysed, with recurring outbursts of nationalist anger from certain quarters and attempts to shift the blame for the consequences of the quake.

China's Duplicity

Mere hours after the tectonic disaster, Chinese President Xi Jinping declares his deep sympathy and offers Japan massive support for national reconstruction using funds from the new Asian Infrastructure Investment

1 Elizabeth Yuan, "Tokyo Sees High Quake Probability, Scientists Warn", *CNN*, 27 January 2012, http://edition.cnn.com/2012/01/24/world/asia/tokyo-quake-forecast (accessed 23 September 2015).

Bank (AIIB) and loans from the Chinese state. However, currency traders in Hong Kong report large-scale selling of Japanese bonds on behalf of unnamed Chinese institutions. Even more unsettling is the growing number of Chinese fishing vessels entering Japan's contested territorial waters around the Senkaku islands.[2] Some even land on the islands, ostensibly because of mechanical difficulties or medical emergencies. Chinese crew members detained on land by Japanese security forces are freed by their colleagues, while a nearby Chinese coastguard vessel warns the Japanese against taking action against the fishermen. The Japanese radar station on Yonaguni island, 150 kilometres south of the Senkaku group, reports Chinese warplanes close to the islands' airspace. Footage showing scuffles between Japanese security forces and Chinese fishermen appears in Chinese social networks and on Twitter. After these incidents Tokyo is afraid to take any further action. The Chinese make themselves at home in the islands and exercise passive resistance. A stalemate emerges. Government figures in Tokyo say they suspect these are not fishermen, but Chinese special forces in disguise.

In the meantime, progress on restoring the Japanese telecommunications infrastructure is slow. Even after makeshift repairs, significant nodes are not operating as reliably as hoped. US cyber-experts suspect the reduced performance of electronic networks to be a result of coordinated cyber-attacks, whose trail supposedly leads directly to the People's Republic of China. They believe the Chinese want to exploit the physical destruction to delay Japan's recovery and lever greater opportunity for a power shift in the region. Beijing angrily dismisses such accusations and counters that China had offered the Japanese people substantial disaster relief.

Reactions from the Asia-Pacific Region

The described events presage a massive shift in strategic power in East Asia. Washington believes that Beijing is exploiting the opportunity to reshape the regional order in its favour and pursuing asymmetrical strategies to gain control over the contested Senkaku islands. Washington also doubts Tokyo's resolve to stand up to the Chinese incursions.

Although certain South-East Asian states are alarmed, as are Australia and India, there are signs that even they may be able to come to an arrangement with the emerging geopolitical shift. Russia stresses how important it is to resolve the dispute "bilaterally" and without "external interference"; in view of Japan's limited options this stance is tantamount to taking sides with China. Even in the United States many voices warn against opposing Beijing too energetically. With smooth cooperation

2 On the conflict over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands see Nadine Godehardt, Alexandra Sakaki and Gudrun Wacker, "Sino-japanischer Inselstreit und europäische Beiträge zur Deeskalation", in *Ungeplant bleibt der Normalfall: Acht Situationen, die politische Aufmerksamkeit verdienen*, ed. Volker Perthes and Barbara Lippert, SWP-Studie 16/2013 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2013), 24–28, http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/studien/2013_S16_prt_lpt.pdf (accessed 9 October 2015).

essential to stabilise the international currency and financial markets, they say, the good relationship with the Chinese central bank should not be risked lightly. On the other hand, the Republican presidential candidate takes a harder line on the campaign trail. America must unequivocally condemn the Chinese attacks, he says, and stand by its ally Japan in this difficult situation. In response a US government spokesperson announces that Beijing's double game is unacceptable and that Washington is considering sanctions. At the same time Obama is desperately trying to integrate China into multilateral efforts to deal with the symptoms of an incipient global economic crisis. Washington therefore seeks allies that can exert a moderating influence on Beijing and encourage it to compromise.

Options for Germany

The German government finds itself in a complicated situation. It believes that China is indeed seeking to unilaterally alter the status quo in East Asia, which would further undermine an international order already fractured by the Ukraine conflict. But German observers cannot agree whether Beijing has correctly assessed the risks of its policy – or is instead looking for face-saving opportunities to beat a retreat. Washington presses for European support and expects Germany to take a leading role. At the same time many in Berlin worry about the good relationship with China, in which many years of work have been invested, and fear economic costs if relations were to deteriorate.

Berlin has three obvious options in this situation. Firstly, to continue its existing policy of seeking as far as possible to keep out of the territorial conflict; secondly, a hard line based on the conviction that China's actions strongly endanger the regional and international order; and thirdly, a middle line of sanction-backed dialogue.

Continuing the existing policy is likely not only to harm relations with Japan and the United States. It would also contradict the fundamental German interest in a functioning international order. It is questionable whether Beijing would reward such a policy of appeasement, whose consequence could be to lastingly weaken Germany's standing in China. If, on the other hand, Berlin pursued a hard line, German businesses would have to expect losses. This option might also make it difficult for Beijing to find face-saving compromises, and thus in fact further escalate the crisis.

These considerations mitigate for a sanction-backed dialogue. Berlin's premise would be that changing the status quo – de facto Japanese control over islands whose status under international law remains unclarified – by use of force is not acceptable. Berlin would also propose economic sanctions in the event of the Chinese fishermen refusing to leave the islands. Sanctions could include restrictions on Chinese investments in Germany and on German technology exports to China. At the same time German diplomacy would seek to mobilise the broadest possible international support for this position, working to cooperate above all with states in the

region (like Australia and ASEAN states) that are also affected by the Chinese actions and favour a similar response.

Preventive Measures

What could and should Berlin do to avoid the political dangers of this scenario coming about? Effective preventive measures would have to be initiated by the affected states themselves. Germany has only limited scope to influence the three most important participants, China, Japan and the United States. Nonetheless, Berlin can and should work above all to persuade Tokyo and Beijing to defuse the territorial conflict and adopt confidence-building measures. To this end, for example, the Sino-Japanese agreements of 2008, which provide for joint exploitation of oil and gas reserves in parts of the East China Sea, could be revived. International observer groups could monitor implementation and ensure transparency. In these contexts Germany could offer its good services and contribute European experience. Here too, Berlin should pursue a twin-track approach, seeking bilateral talks and working towards joint positions and initiatives within the European Union while at the same time exploring opportunities to form coalitions with other states in the region and in multilateral contexts like the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

The Ukraine Conflict and the Danger of Nuclear Accidents

Oliver Meier and Marcel Dickow

In July 2016 a Russian Tupolev Tu-22M3 intermedium-range bomber crashes over eastern Ukraine. It was apparently en route to the Crimean Peninsula from the Russian air base and nuclear weapons storage site Belgorod-22.[1] After a catastrophic engine failure close to the Russian-Ukrainian border, the jet crashes inside Ukraine. The three Russian crew members die.

Ukrainian armed forces secure the crash site about ten kilometres from the Russian border, not far from the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv. They measure increased levels of radioactivity. Soon, four tactical nuclear warheads are found close to the crash site. All are damaged, and the conventional detonator of one has exploded, fortunately without initiating a chain reaction. However, the explosion has dispersed fissile material. Kiev passes the information to Washington, which informs its NATO allies under strictest confidentiality.

Given the risk of a nuclear explosion, Kiev requests US nuclear experts to secure and recover the warheads. Members of the elite Delta Force, which is responsible for salvaging damaged nuclear weapons, seal off the crash site. The US specialists succeed in securing the three less seriously damaged warheads, so that it would in principle be possible to transport them. But they advise involving Russian special forces to help with securing the fourth warhead and decontaminating the site.

Potential for Escalation

In reacting to the incident, the Kremlin initially merely states that a Russian bomber has experienced technical difficulties over Russian territory and has crashed inside Ukraine. Moscow demands the immediate repatriation of the remains of the crew and unhindered access to the crash site "to secure and recover Russian property". Since Russia remains silent on the nuclear dimension, the United States, France and Germany deliver a joint démarche, demanding clarity. But even in a confidential setting, the Kremlin refuses to provide information about the nuclear weapons involved.

At the same time, NATO observes special forces gathering on the Russian side of the border. It is feared that Russia intends to seize the warheads by force. For any state that possesses nuclear weapons, losing control of a warhead represents a worst-case scenario. Nuclear weapon designs are among

1 On the background to a possible stationing of nuclear weapons in Crimea, see for example Hans Kristensen, "Rumors about Nuclear Weapons in Crimea", Federation of American Scientists (FAS), *FAS Strategic Security Blog*, 18 December 2014, https://fas.org/blogs/security/2014/12/crimea (accessed 23 September 2015).

the most closely guarded national secrets, and loss of such information must be prevented at almost any price.[2]

Two days later, Ukrainian media report that the crashed plane might have had nuclear weapons on board. Journalists observe US special forces and nuclear weapons experts in the vicinity of the crash site. Independent sources soon confirm increased radiation levels, at distances of up to five kilometres from the crash site.

With the nuclear dimension no longer deniable, Moscow goes on the offensive. The Russian government announces that four tactical nuclear warheads had been on board the bomber, which had been part of a squadron of nuclear-armed Tu-22M3s stationed in Crimea. The Kremlin also states that it had deployed nuclear warheads for Iskander short-range missiles to Crimea months earlier. The Russian foreign minister says it is "the right of every sovereign nuclear weapon state to station nuclear weapons on any part of its territory".[3] While Russia, he says, "bases its nuclear weapons only within its own territory", the United States continued to "deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of non-nuclear-weapon states under NATO nuclear sharing". Moscow protests against the presence of "US armed forces" close to its border and demands immediate unhindered access to recover its warheads.

Russia implicitly threatens to recover and return the weapons by use of force. Its foreign minister publicly declares that "no nuclear-weapon state would, under any circumstances, permit another state to gain control over its nuclear weapons. Such a step would have the gravest consequences for international stability and security." The longer Kiev and Washington deny access, he says, "the greater the danger of a catastrophe".

After the speech, Western intelligence services report indications of Russia raising the alert level of its strategic nuclear forces. Simultaneously Russia conducts a snap exercise involving nuclear weapons deployed in Siberia. NATO believes that Moscow is signalling its readiness to use military force in order to prevent removal of the warheads from Ukraine. The Alliance now discusses whether it should also deploy nuclear-capable delivery systems to demonstrate its readiness to escalate. The United States then indeed deploys nuclear-capable B-52 long-range bombers to the United Kingdom and Turkey. Several US warships, including two cruisers equipped with the Aegis missile defence system, are sent to the Black Sea for manoeuvres.

2 "Physical security safeguards required to prevent unauthorized access to classified information and proper control and disposition of classified material must be strictly enforced during all operations involving the weapon(s) or weapon components". "Nuclear Weapon Accident Response Procedures" (NARP), U.S. Department of Defense, Manual Number 3150.08, 22 August 2013, 43, 65, http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/315008m.pdf (accessed 23 September 2015).

3 For similar statements, see: "Crimea Became Part of Russia, Which Has Nuclear Weapons According to NPT – Lavrov", *Interfax – Ukraine*, 15 December 2014, http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/239978.html (accessed 23 September 2015).

The Interests Involved

All actors involved share an interest in having the damaged warhead removed safely, and in dealing with the radiological consequences of the accident. Beyond these immediate goals, however, their interests diverge.

Ukraine wants to leverage the crisis to extract concessions from Russia. It condemns Moscow for sending a nuclear-armed Russian aircraft over Ukrainian territory and rejects the Russian request to send special forces to the crash site. Instead, Kiev requests a special session of the UN Security Council to discuss the incident. The Ukrainian President declares: "More than twenty years ago, we voluntarily renounced our nuclear weapons and transported them to Russia for dismantlement. In return, in the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, Moscow promised to respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Now, Moscow deploys nuclear weapons on our territory, threatens us with the use of such weapons, and endangers the safety of the citizens of Kharkiv and the entire region."

The Ukrainian President demands that Russia end its "occupation" of Crimea, and calls for the international community's support "against Russian aggression". The Russian nuclear weapons will not be returned, he says, until Russia withdraws completely from Ukraine, including Crimea. Behind the scenes, Ukraine demands more specific concessions: Russia should immediately and visibly end its support for the "rebels" in eastern Ukraine and pay compensation of $5 billion for the environmental damage resulting from the crash. Only under these conditions, it indicates, would it grant access to the crash site and permit the warheads' removal to Russia. As a sign of goodwill, Ukraine returns the bodies of the three Russian crew members.

The United States wishes to exploit the incident to its own diplomatic advantage. US experts also want to be present when the warheads are disarmed in order to gain knowledge about the Russian nuclear weapons technology. Washington condemns Russia for the overflight and calls on Moscow to cooperate in recovering the weapons under Ukrainian and US oversight. Washington also joins Kiev in demanding an immediate end of Russian support for the "rebels" in eastern Ukraine, and insists that Russia officially promises never to store or deploy nuclear weapons on Ukrainian territory (including Crimea). Washington is implicitly threatening to transport the three undamaged Russian warheads to the United States.

Russia wants to re-establish control over the weapons as quickly as possible, and at all costs want to prevent them falling into American hands. Yet, a cross-border military recovery operation appears risky to the Kremlin. Not only could the United States pre-empt such a move by removing the warheads. Moscow also fears that an incursion bears a high risk of a direct military confrontation between the United States and Russia.

Conflict as an Opportunity for Cooperation

In such a situation, Germany can seek to initiate the search for a cooperative solution. Berlin could – possibly in concert with other states and in coordination with the United States – propose a compromise as a way out of the confrontation. The basis for an initiative would be the shared interest in safe removal of the weapons.

Such a solution could include arrangements for Russian special forces to be given controlled access to the crash site. Russian specialists would secure and then remove the four warheads, without the United States or other states directly observing the action on the ground. In this scenario, military observers from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) could fulfil the role of neutral monitors, while German experts would assist with radiation monitoring and decontamination.

In return, Russia would agree to cover decontamination costs of up to $1 billion. NATO and Russia jointly promise not to store or deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of third states, absent the consent of the host nation. A confidential additional protocol to the agreement would clarify that Moscow will not store or station nuclear weapons on Ukrainian territory, including Crimea.

On German initiative, NATO and Russia also agree to conduct joint seminars and exercises, which would focus on how to avoid similar incidents in future, as well as cooperative consequence management. Berlin hopes that this could initiate a process of confidence-building between NATO and Russia and help to reopen channels of communication that were closed as a result of the Ukraine conflict. After signing the agreement at the Federal Foreign Ministry's lakeside guesthouse in Berlin-Tegel, the German foreign minister declares:

> Just as the Cuba crisis in 1962 was a wake-up call to remind us that nuclear weapons present an incalculable risk, especially in times of crisis, this unfortunate incident has left us in no doubt about how quickly a crisis can spiral out of control. In the 1960s, the Cuba crisis ushered in a phase of arms control that laid the basis for overcoming the political confrontation between East and West. The Kharkiv crisis reminds us again how – especially in the nuclear field – transparency and cooperation now are more important than ever. Such cooperation is essential not despite the conflict between NATO and Russia but precisely because of it.

Berlin points out that its confidence-building proposal could be seen as a continuation of the joint exercises on handling nuclear accidents and incidents conducted under the auspices of the NATO-Russia Council between 2004 and 2007.[4]

4 See for example Katarzyna Kubiak, *NATO and Russia Experiences with Nuclear Transparency and Confidence-building Measures*, background paper for the workshop "Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Practice"

Recommendations for Preventive Measures

Germany should be prepared that the nuclear dimension of the Ukraine crisis, to which Russia has contributed through to its own actions, makes an unintended escalation of the conflict more likely. This could occur, for example, following an accident involving nuclear weapons and/or nuclear-capable delivery systems. An exercise involving nuclear assets, or a Russian commander with control over nuclear weapons "going rogue", could also initiate an escalation unintended by political or military leaders. Nuclear accidents and incidents not only involve the danger of release of radioactivity or even nuclear explosion.[5] Consequence management also contains political risks that could potentially cause the situation to escalate further. On the other hand, as history shows, nuclear crises can increase awareness of the need for cooperation precisely because so much is at stake.

NATO should therefore do everything it can to work jointly with Russia to prevent any unintended nuclear escalation of the Ukraine crisis. Vis-à-vis Russia, the Alliance should:

- continue to propose improvements in crisis communication, building on previous German efforts within NATO;
- offer to resume practical cooperation to prevent nuclear accidents and incidents;
- in this context also press to update, strengthen and expand existing bilateral mechanisms between Russia and the United States for avoiding incidents (for example the Incidents at Sea Agreement and the Agreement on the Prevention of Dangerous Military Activities). The potential benefits of opening these bilateral arrangements to other NATO states should be considered;
- push for better cooperation in consequence management of intended or unintended use of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons. Should such cooperation prove to be too difficult in the NATO-Russia Council, other institutional frameworks, such as the OSCE or UN Security Council Resolution 1540 on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, could be used.

(Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 27 and 28 March 2013), http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/arbeitspapiere/wp_kubiak_April2014.pdf (accessed 24 September 2015).

5 Oliver Meier, *Die nukleare Dimension der Ukraine-Krise*, SWP-Aktuell 66/2014 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, October 2014), http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/ products/aktuell/2014A66_mro.pdf (accessed 24 September 2015).

Before the 2018 Presidential Election: Autonomy Conflict in Russia's Far East

Sabine Fischer, Margarete Klein and Alexander Libman

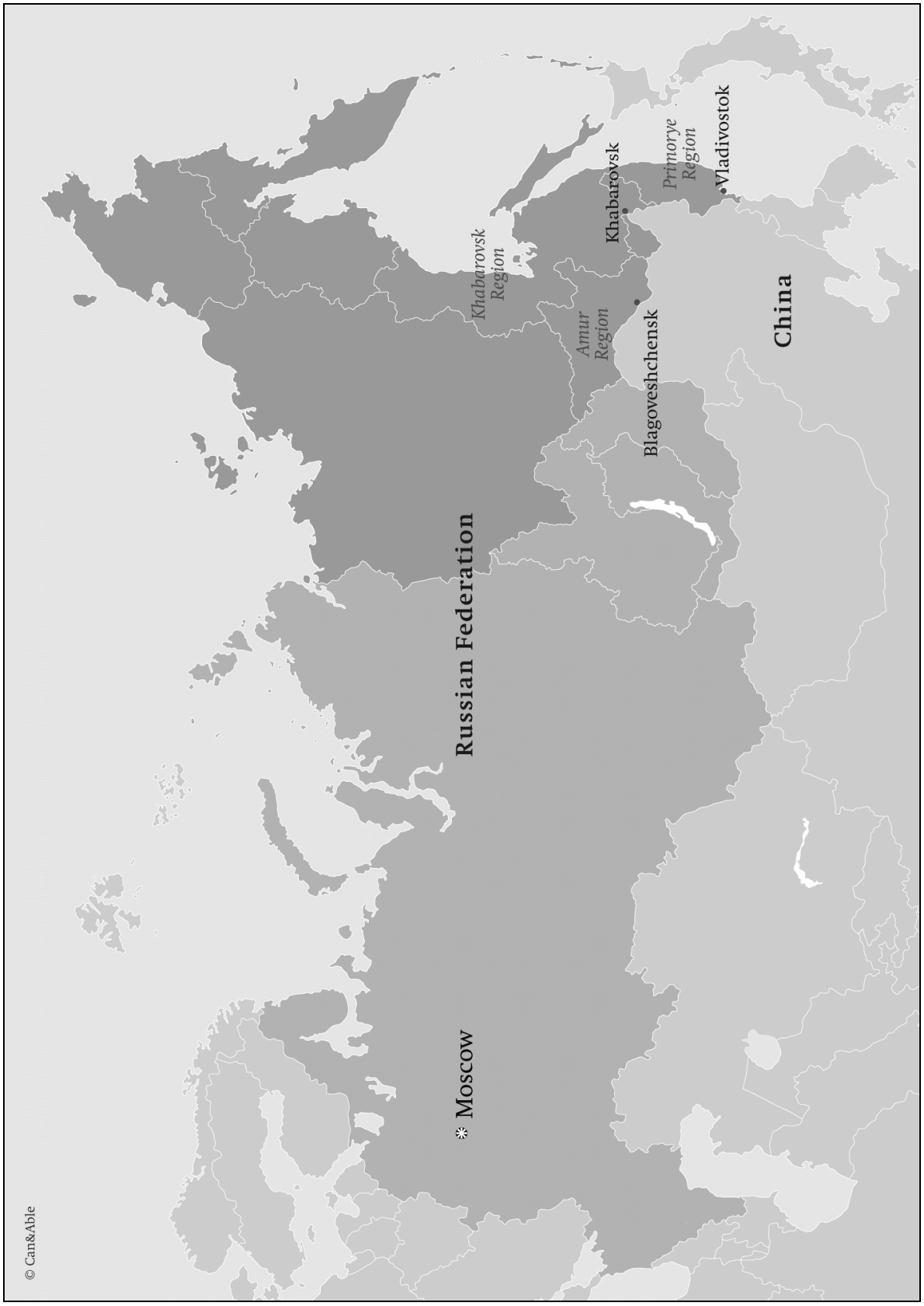
In October 2017 the governors of the Primorye, Amur and Khabarovsk regions in Russia's Far East (see Map, p. 27) demand far-reaching foreign policy and trade autonomy.[1] They want to establish a special economic zone to permit the three regions, which lie along the Silk Road Economic Belt, to connect more closely with China – independently of Moscow. Shortly beforehand, the Eurasian Economic Commission had decided to impose a prohibitive tariff on Chinese textiles and drastically intensify customs controls to clamp down on illegal imports. This move originated in pressure from Moscow, and represents a major threat to the three border regions, because it obstructs trade with neighbouring Chinese regions. That in turn undermines the income streams of regional political actors, high-ranking bureaucrats and businesses associated with them, which have in recent years invested massively in expanding the infrastructure for cross-border trade, including bridges, transport links and logistics centres. The foreseeable end of the flow of goods from China will make these investments literally worthless. The socio-economic status quo in the region is also at risk, threatening to generate popular protests and create political instability.

The Kremlin responds with an iron fist. The three governors are dismissed and replaced with long-serving senior security officials sent from Moscow. But they must yet win the regional elections, scheduled for September 2018. The bosses of state-owned and partly state-owned businesses in the regions are replaced. By these actions the centre hopes to stamp any inkling of a precedent for moves towards regional autonomy.

Conflicts ensue both between different camps within the affected regional elites, and between these elites and representatives of individual federal power centres, especially the presidential administration, which plays a prominent role in appointments at governor level. The dismissed governors announce they will be standing in the 2018 regional elections. The presidential administration sees this as the emergence of a potentially dangerous opposition and launches a campaign to discredit its opponents. Federal and regional television stations accuse the former governors of rampant corruption. The Moscow-loyal interim governors attempt to organise demonstrations against their predecessors, but are blocked by resistance within the regional administrations. Some of the regional television stations participate only unwillingly in the defamation campaign, and even permit the dismissed governors and their supporters to appear in their

1 The executive heads of the constituent territories of the Russian Federation have a range of titles. For the sake of clarity, in the following – as in the Russian and Western academic discourse – the term "governor" is used for all of them.

Map: Russia's Far East



programmes. Opinion polls show that Moscow's measures are having practically no effect. It transpires that the events in the Far East massively endanger the stability of the Russian political system – shortly before the March 2018 presidential election, for which Vladimir Putin announced his renewed candidacy in September 2017.

The crisis acquires a cross-border dimension rapidly and rather accidentally, after the Russian authorities expand the clampdown to include Chinese businesses associated with the three renegade governors. Chinese export companies operating in the three regions are subjected to surprise audits, blocking their business for weeks. One Chinese businessman is even detained for three days. The government of Heilongjiang province protests vociferously against these practices. Beijing does not explicitly adopt a stance, but does not seek moderation either. This feeds Russian suspicions that China hopes to exploit the conflict for its own economic interests.

Conditions and Implications for Russian Domestic and Foreign Policy

Central control over regional politicians and bureaucrats is one of the most important pillars of the Russian regime. Fear of national disintegration is widespread not only among Russia's leaders, but also within the population. Even limited autonomy is often regarded as a first step in this direction. The principal task of the governors in Putin's power vertical is to ensure their regions deliver the results the centre wishes in federal elections. Overwhelming majorities are imperative to demonstrate the political leadership's grip on power. The smallest deviation is interpreted as an affront to Moscow, and undermining the system. This lends the conflict between the Kremlin and the sacked governors of Khabarovsk, Amur and Primorye far-reaching implications for the stability of the Russian regime. This is also the reason for the centre's over-reaction to the initiative of three governors: it is determined to stamp out the spark before flames can spread. Moscow also fears bandwagon effects in other regions, above all Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, which could also seek a special economic status of their own. Elsewhere, the regime-critical civil society in Moscow, St. Petersburg and regional centres like Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk and Kaliningrad could see new opportunities for political resistance. A destabilisation of the system could also upset the delicate balance between Moscow and the Chechen leadership.

At the same time the economic situation in the Far East remains problematic. The remoteness of these regions makes outside supplies expensive, and the cost of living is noticeably higher than in many other parts of Russia. In the first half of the decade the price of the basket of goods used by the statistical agency Rosstat in these regions cost between 110 and 135 percent of the Russian average.[2] So to obtain the same standard of living in

2 Figures for 2013: Primorye 121 percent, Khabarovsk 133 percent, Amur 113 percent. Rosstat, *Regiony Rossii: Social'no-Ekonomicheskie Pokazateli 2014* [Russia's regions: Socio-economic indicators 2014] (Moscow, 2014).

the Far East, the nominal income must be considerably higher than the average. Only in Khabarovsk region did nominal per-capita income make up for the higher prices in the mid-2010s. In Primorye per-capita income in 2013 was 94 percent of the average, in Amur 95 percent. Thus taking into account price differences, real income in Amur amounted to just 84 percent of the national average, in Primorye even less at 78 percent. Although this still does not put the Far East among Russia's poorest regions, the political and economic elites cannot for the foreseeable future expect the centre to supply development stimuli or ensure rising incomes. Instead government programmes to modernise the regions have been suspended as the economic crisis places growing pressure on the federal budget. Integrating Crimea, increasing military spending and expanding international military engagement siphon off further resources.

Unlike places like the North Caucasus, the three Far Eastern border regions possess an abundant source of income in the guise of trade with China, which at least partly compensates the internal economic imbalances. Since the end of the Soviet Union a network of formal and informal business ties with China has emerged, upon which the prosperity of both the economic and political elites and the population at large depend. In 2013 about 50 percent of Primorye region's foreign trade was with China.[3] For Khabarovsk the figure was 46 percent (followed by South Korea with 20 percent and Japan with 9 percent).[4] As far as Amur is concerned, China accounted for 90 percent of its exports of goods and 77 percent of its imports.[5]

Since the breakdown in relations between Russia and the West, however, Moscow's economic protectionism endangers ties between Russia's Far East and China more than ever before. Russia's economic policy continues to rest upon a strategy of import substitution, aiming to boost domestic production by imposing high tariff barriers to ward off international competition. Three factors are decisive. Firstly, this reduces dependency on other countries, in line with the Kremlin's stance of granting priority to security aspects. Secondly, import substitution is regarded as a sensible strategy to achieve economic development and make the protected sectors competitive in the longer term. Here Moscow ignores criticisms from economists that this approach has rarely been successful anywhere. Thirdly, import substitution also benefits certain internationally uncompetitive sectors in Russia and is therefore supported by their lobbyists. For example, in 2014 Russian textile producers asked President Putin to restrict textile imports.[6] For all its political and economic overtures to Beijing,

3 "Kitay stal krupneyshym torgovym partnerom Primorskogo kraya Rossii" [China becomes Russian region of Primorje's most important trading partner], website of the Association for Promotion of Sino-Russian Trade, 12 August 2013, http://www.cniru.ru/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=9&id=796 (accessed 23 September 2015).

4 Ministry of Economic Development of Khabarovsk Region, *Vneshnyaya torgovlya Khabarovskogo kraya w 2013 godu* [Foreign trade of Khabarovsk region 2013], (Khabarovsk, n.d.), http://minec.khabkrai.ru/content/2013 (accessed 10 September 2015).

5 Amurstat, *Vneshneekonomicheskaya deyatel'nost' Amurskoy oblasti za 2005–2013 gody* [Foreign trade activity of Amur region 2005–2013] (Blagoveshchensk, 2014).

6 "Associaciya tekstilshchikov prosit Putina zapretit' vvoz tkaney iz ES" [Association of Tex-

Moscow shows no sign of opening its markets to China, and continues to regard its eastern neighbour only as a source of loans and investment. Protectionism is also behind Moscow's recent initiative to raise Eurasian Union tariffs on Chinese imports.

This policy directly endangers a vital source of revenue for the Far Eastern border regions. The later dismissed governors found themselves forced not only to protect their own incomes but also to avoid massive popular dissatisfaction – for which the centre would have punished them. Thus the origins of the conflict lie in the contradiction between the economic interests of regional actors and the actions of federal forces driven by a combination of economic, security and ideological objectives. But over time the conflict gains a life of its own that transcends the original motives.

Tempting as it might appear to interpret the governors' initiative as a step towards decentralisation and democratisation of a hypercentralised political system, a glance at Russia's post-Soviet history warns caution. Under the weak President Boris Yeltsin many governors exploited their de facto autonomy to assert sweeping power over their regions. At the regional level, for example in Bashkortostan, Kalmykia and Tyva, regimes emerged that were considerably more authoritarian than today's Russian central state.[7] Moreover, civil society in the regions is too rudimentary to stand up to local political leaders.

The crisis also demonstrates the fragility of the Sino-Russian rapprochement, despite the post-2014 boost. Old grudges and threat perceptions reappear in Russian elites and society, which fear above all a Chinese "colonisation" of the Far East. Fears now focus not on Chinese mass immigration, as was the case in the 1990s,[8] but suspicions that China might exploit its enormous power advantage to directly seize the resources of the Russian Far East. Points of friction also exist beyond the immediate border regions, with Moscow continuing to observe with concern China's growing influence, especially in Central Asia.

The Russian leadership feels existentially threatened by the domestic crisis, and deliberately stokes fear of external enemies. NATO, the United States and the European Union are the obvious traditional targets, already standing under fundamental suspicion of pursuing regime change in Russia. But now Moscow even abandons its practice of never officially criticising Beijing or presenting China as a threat. Even if the danger of escalation is small, Sino-Russian relations cool noticeably. As a result Russia now has tense relations not only with the West, but also with China.

tile Producers asks Putin to ban textile imports from the EU], *gazeta.ru*, 8 September 2014, http://www.gazeta.ru/business/news/2014/09/08/n_6460285.shtml (accessed 14 October 2015).

7 Anastassia V. Obydenkova and Alexander Libman, *Causes and Consequences of Democratization: The Regions of Russia* (Abingdon, 2015).

8 Mikhail Alexseev, *Parting with "Asian Balkans": Perceptions of Chinese Migration in the Russian Far East, 2000–2013*, Ponars Eurasia Policy Memo 319 (April 2014), http://www.ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm319_Alexseev_April2014.pdf (accessed 29 October 2015).

Perspectives and Options for Germany and the European Union

The strivings for autonomy in Russia's Far East and first fracturing of the Sino-Russian relationship outlined in the scenario are of great political relevance for Germany and the European Union. Yet at the same time Berlin and Brussels possess few instruments for influencing the situation in their interests.

Tensions in Sino-Russian relations cannot be expected to lead to any rapprochement between Russia and the West. While isolated symbolic steps are possible, this alters neither Moscow's claim to hegemony in the post-Soviet space nor its deep conflict with the European Union and NATO over the European political and security order.

The destabilisation of the "Putin System" further polarises the Russian debate in Germany and the European Union. Those who call for greater cooperation with Moscow despite the crisis over Ukraine and differences over the Middle East see their position confirmed by the domestic crisis in Russia. They interpret the autonomy movement in the Far East at the beginnings of a collapse of the state that would also be dangerous for Europe, and call for the West to make overtures to Putin as supposed guarantor of stability, support him in his power struggle with the Far East elites, lift the sanctions imposed in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine without concessions from Moscow, and readmit Russia into the G7. On the other side are those who argue that the correct response to Russia's authoritarian hardening at home and aggressive policies abroad is to adopt an unyielding stance towards the Kremlin. They urge for support to be given to the Far East autonomy movement, which they see as an opportunity to weaken the "Putin System".

Berlin and Brussels should do neither. Ultimately, the decentralisation ambitions of the regional political and business elites have as little to do with strengthening a democratic division of powers as Putin alone guarantees state stability. Germany and the European Union should therefore remain neutral in the conflict and call for peaceful conflict resolution and respect for the principles of democracy and rule of law. If civil society engagement for more democracy were to grow in the course of the conflict, Brussels and Berlin could discreetly support this development. Extreme sensitivity is required here, because experience shows that supporting civil society activities can lead to greater repression against the civil society itself by the regime.

The European Union and Germany possess only modest possibilities for influencing the outlined explosive development. Given that the scenario involves an internal conflict between federal and regional elites, intervention by the European Union is neither realistic nor desirable. Instead Germany and Europe must respond with sophisticated, nuanced and well-coordinated small steps, by which they can contribute to conflict resolution without betraying their own principles and values.

Small Cause, Large Effect: Rapid Loss of Bees in North Africa Endangers a Fragile Region

Bettina Rudloff and Nils Simon

From 2020 North Africa experiences extensive and unexpected failures of fruit and vegetable crops, one of the region's main exports. The cause is a massive bee die off, triggered by a newly introduced parasite and worsened by inappropriate counter-measures in the affected countries. The outcome is devastating: the most important crop plants are no longer pollinated.

Food prices explode and rural incomes collapse. Unrest grips the societies of the region, which already stand under severe economic, political and social stress. The situation is reminiscent of the beginnings of the Arab Spring in 2011, when high food prices similarly triggered mass protests. Now destabilisation again threatens the still fragile region.

These events come at a sensitive juncture for the European Union, whose long-term Mediterranean Partnership already stands accused of contributing neither to economic nor political stability in North Africa. In fact early prevention and ecologically sensible counter-measures could have helped avert the worst of the crisis.

A Parasite on Board

Two stowaways were hiding in the wares of a flower trader from East Africa: a specimen of a previously isolated bee species, and on its back a hitherto unknown parasite. Arriving in North Africa, the parasite finds perfect living conditions among the local honey bees. It reproduces rapidly, and within a few years has killed more than 90 percent of colonies. Attempts by beekeepers to quickly repopulate their hives fail because the parasite also carries a highly contagious virus.

North Africa is especially dependent on functioning pollination, above all in the Egyptian Nile Delta and certain regions of Tunisia and Libya.[1] The region's decisive export products – fruit, vegetables and nuts – are largely pollinated by insects. Egypt alone produces 21.6 million tonnes of fruit and vegetables annually, one fifth of the total quantity produced in the EU-28.

The affected states respond by encouraging farmers to massively intensify production to make up for the losses. But this eviscerates flower diversity, eliminating the already scarce habitats and breeding places for the wild bees that, alongside honey bees, are responsible for a significant proportion of pollination. This leads very rapidly to the almost complete loss of pollination as a central production factor. Yields of the most important

1 Sven Lautenbach, Ralf Seppelt, Julia Liebscher and Carsten F. Dormann, "Spatial and Temporal Trends of Global Pollination Benefit", *PLOS One* 7, no. 4 (2012).

Pollination – Central Factor in the Global Food Supply

Of the 115 plants most widely used in global agriculture, 85 depend to a greater or lesser extent on animal pollination. In terms of production volume the figure is somewhat lower, because grain crops for example are wind-pollinated. Overall it can be said that 35 percent of agricultural crop production is partly or fully dependent on pollination by insects and other animals.[a] It is calculated that a complete loss of these forms of pollination would reduce global agricultural production by 3 to 8 percent.[b] The direct economic losses in such an event are put at €153 billion per annum,[c] the figures for the United States and the European Union approximately $15 billion and €15 billion respectively. For all the uncertainty involved in such prognoses, the order of magnitude is considerable. The sum is equivalent to the total global development aid for 2013.

a Alexandra-Maria Klein, Bernard E. Vaissière, James H. Cane, Ingolf Steffan-Dewenter, Saul A. Cunningham, Claire Kremen and Teja Tscharntke, "Importance of Pollinators in Changing Landscapes for World Crops", *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* 274, no. 1608 (2007): 303–13.

b Marcelo A. Aizen, Lucas A. Garibaldi, Saul A. Cunningham and Alexandra M. Klein, "How Much Does Agriculture Depend on Pollinators? Lessons from Long-Term Trends in Crop Production", *Annals of Botany* 103, no. 9 (2009): 1579–88.

c Nick Hanley, Tom D. Breeze, Ciaran Ellis and David Goulson, "Measuring the Economic Value of Pollination Services: Principles, Evidence and Knowledge Gaps", *Ecosystem Services* 14 (2015): 124–32; Nicola Gallai, Jean-Michel Salles, Josef Settele and Bernard E. Vaissière, "Economic Valuation of the Vulnerability of World Agriculture Confronted with Pollinator Decline", *Ecological Economics* 68, no. 3 (2009): 810–21.

agricultural exports collapse, and improved EU market access for agricultural products, realised just a few years previously, turns out to be worthless. The incomes of the affected farmers in North Africa plummet, social unrest ensues. Population movements follow, first to the cities, then heading for Europe.

Repercussions for the European Union and Germany

The renewed destabilisation of North Africa threatens negative consequences for Europe that are not restricted to foreign policy and security. The collapse of food production in the region also incurs economic, social and ecological costs north of the Mediterranean.

Initially southern European producers enjoy rising profits, as competitors fall by the wayside and their own sales increase correspondingly. Although North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean account for only about one fifth of all fruit and vegetable imports into the European Union,[2] the loss of this share restricts supply enough to increase consumer

2 Eurostat, "Agriculture in the ENP-South Countries: Largely Determined by Climatic Conditions and Influenced by Cultural Values" (2014), http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-

prices in Europe noticeably. This hits Germany especially hard as the European Union's largest consumer market. German per-capita consumption of fresh and processed fruit is about 100 kilograms per annum, with a similar figure for vegetables.[3] Additional harm is incurred when existing nutritional programmes, for example providing fruit in schools, are hindered by rising costs. In an extreme case, higher prices for fruit and vegetables could leave only affluent households able to afford to eat healthily. Qualitative undersupply ("hidden hunger") has long been a problem in developing countries. It could worsen further, especially through vitamin A deficiency, if rising prices make fruit and vegetables unaffordable for the poorest.[4]

In the past the European Union has responded to exploding grain prices by increasing food aid, for example for Tunisia. An expansion of longer-term development aid could also become necessary to compensate for the crop failures. This could place an extra cost burden on the only recently revamped European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD).

Counter-measures: Prevention and Improved Monitoring

A series of national and international pollinator conservation initiatives already exist, most of which have attracted very little attention.[5] This changed in June 2014, after the media coverage accompanying US President Barack Obama's announcement of the founding of the Pollinator Health Task Force. In May 2015 the multi-agency working group presented its first report and a programme of action. The latter concentrates on the protection of a number of key species, at the same time as promoting the renaturation of almost three million hectares of land as a refuge for all types of pollinators. From 2016 $82 million are earmarked for this in the budgets of the responsible federal agencies. Individual US states are also already responding, for example with stronger regulation of pesticides that are potentially harmful to bees.

Although the European Union already possesses a framework that accounts for the needs of pollinators, in the shape of its Sustainable Development Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy, EU-wide mainstreaming in rele-

explained/index.php/Agriculture_statistics_-_North_Africa_and_Eastern_Mediterranean (accessed 24 September 2015).

3 Robert-Koch-Institut, *Zahlen und Trends aus der Gesundheitsberichterstattung des Bundes* (Berlin, 2011), 3.

4 Matthew R. Smith, Gitanjali M. Singh, Dariush Mozaffarian and Samuel S. Myers, "Effects of Decreases of Animal Pollinators on Human Nutrition and Global Health: A Modelling Analysis", *Lancet* (published online 16 July 2015); Rebecca Chaplin-Kramer, Emily Dombeck, James Gerber, Katherine A. Knuth, Nathaniel D. Mueller, Megan Mueller, Guy Ziv and Alexandra-Maria Klein, "Global Malnutrition Overlaps with Pollinator-Dependent Micronutrient Production", *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* 281 (published online 17 September 2014).

5 Andrew Byrne and Úna Fitzpatrick, "Bee Conservation Policy at the Global, Regional and National Levels", *Apidologie* 40, no. 3 (2009): 194–210.

vant policy spheres is still lacking, as is a pollinator action plan that could serve as its basis. Such an action plan should cover the following aspects:

- The European Union should continue to promote the monitoring of honey bees and wild bees, both within its own borders and world-wide. A start was made with the ongoing Pollination Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).
- Internationally supported agricultural projects should be selected and assessed also according to their impact on pollinators and the extent to which they are dependent on them. Habitat preservation and natural pest control could be added to the project goals. This is already provided for in the second pillar of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), under which so-called agri-environmental measures can be rewarded. But the needs of pollinators should be taken into account more explicitly in the future.
- Pesticide approval procedures, especially for systemic neonicotinoids, must take into account how the substances affect insects, predators and prey under realistic conditions in the field. Interactions with other agricultural chemicals must also be considered. This would contribute to stabilising pollinator populations everywhere, not just in North Africa.
- Technological solutions, such as breeding self-pollinating strains, are also conceivable. This could help to reduce the economic risk of pollination failure. Increased manual pollination is also possible, as practised for example in Chinese orchards and Madagascan vanilla plantations. But this method is economically feasible only where wage costs are very low. The growing trade in pollinators, in turn, can in fact have counterproductive effects. Imported species may spread at the expense of native pollinators or worse still introduce alien viruses and pests. Such risks can be reduced by strengthening local populations and enforcing stricter controls on the international trade in honeybees and bumblebees.

Pollinators are an essential factor for global food security. That is an important reason to protect them – but not the only one.[6] More broadly, the scenario upon which this contribution is based demonstrates what large risks can potentially emerge even from rather obscure spheres of economic life.

6 David Kleijn, Rachael Winfree, Ignasi Bartomeus, Luísa G. Carvalheiro, Mickaël Henry et al., "Delivery of Crop Pollination Services Is an Insufficient Argument for Wild Pollinator Conservation", *Nature Communications* 6 (published online 16 June 2015).

Risk Factors for Pollinators:
Lack of Data and Productivity Pressure

Pollination-related crises arise through the interaction of many risk factors encountering an already fragile situation. Here a single new element or the worsening of an existing problem can trigger a cascade leading to massive pollination failure.[a]

The lack of monitoring risks unexpected pollination failures. There is, for example, little reliable information on current pollinator populations in North Africa. Although data from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) shows the number of managed beehives rising world-wide, its data for North Africa is patchy and error-ridden. The very few monitoring studies that do exist on the situation of wild bees – which accomplish a substantial proportion of pollination – suggest that wild bee populations have dropped noticeably in certain regions.[b]

Another form of control is also deficient. Although Sustainability Impact Assessments (SIAs) are conducted for every EU trade agreement, in the case of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement the original assessments from 2006 were updated in 2014 by conducting an analysis of the new Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).[c] But a detailed focus on species diversity including pollination is lacking here.

Two further interconnected risk factors are the focus on monocultures and heavy use of pesticides to increase yields. The European Union's concentration on relevant exports promotes the large-scale cultivation of single crops and increases dependency on agricultural chemicals such as fertilisers and pesticides.[d] At the same time important breeding habitats for insects are lost. The use of pesticides is also associated with considerable risks for pollinators. The widely used systemic neonicotinoids are especially controversial. There is evidence that bees react highly sensitively to these substances, wild bees even more strongly than honeybees.[e]

a Dave Goulson, Elizabeth Nicholls, Cristina Botías and Ellen L. Rotheray, "Bee Declines Driven by Combined Stress from Parasites, Pesticides, and Lack of Flowers", *Science* 347, no. 6229 (2015); Adam J. Vanbergen, Insect Pollinators Initiative, "Threats to an Ecosystem Service: Pressures on Pollinators", *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 11 (2013): 251–259; J. Jelle Lever, Egbert H. van Nes, Marten Scheffer and Jordi Bascompte, "The Sudden Collapse of Pollinator Communities", *Ecology Letters* 17, no. 3 (2014): 350–59.

b European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC), *Ecosystem Services, Agriculture and Neonicotinoids*, EASAC Policy Report 26 (2015); Simon G. Potts, Jacobus C. Biesmeijer, Claire Kremen, Peter Neumann, Oliver Schweiger and William E. Kunin, "Global Pollinator Declines: Trends, Impacts and Drivers", *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* 25, no. 6 (2010): 345–53.

c See for example for Egypt: Ecorys, *Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment in Support of Negotiations of a DCFTA between the EU and Egypt: Final Interim Technical Report* (Rotterdam, 30 June 2014).

d Sameeh A. Mansour, "Environmental Impact of Pesticides in Egypt", *Reviews of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology* 196 (2008): 1–51.

e EASAC, *Ecosystem Services, Agriculture and Neonicotinoids* (see note b); Maj Rundlöf, Georg K. S. Andersson, Riccardo Bommarco, Ingemar Fries, Veronica Hederström et al., "Seed Coating with a Neonicotinoid Insecticide Negatively Affects Wild Bees", *Nature* 521 (2015): 77–80; H. Charles J. Godfray, Tjeerd Blacquière, Linda M. Field, Rosemary S. Hails, Gillian Petrokofsky et al., "A Restatement of the Natural Science Evidence Base Concerning Neonicotinoid Insecticides and Insect Pollinators", *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* 281 (published online 21 May 2014); Tjeerd Blacquière, Guy Smagghe, Cornelis A. M. van Gestel and Veerle Mommaerts, "Neonicotinoids in Bees: A Review on Concentrations, Side-effects and Risk Assessment", *Ecotoxicology* 21, no. 4 (2012): 973–92.

2020 – How Germany and the EU Overcame the Great Refugee Crisis

Steffen Angenendt, Anne Koch and Amrei Meier

Germany in 2020: Here, and across the European Union, the refugee crisis no longer dominates the political agenda. Not that there has been any decline in population movements: In each of the preceding years more than one million people have applied for asylum in the EU. But now, immigration no longer concentrates on Germany, and threatens neither the country's internal stability nor the cohesion of the EU as a whole. Instead, inflows of refugees and migrants take place in an orderly manner. In Germany, reception centres are well-equipped, asylum procedures are firmly established and their duration is significantly reduced. Debates on reintroducing border controls within the EU have vanished. Political cooperation within the EU has been strengthened; trafficking and fatalities at the external borders have been significantly reduced. Opinion polls show that welcoming attitudes towards refugees have increased, because that they are perceived as people who can make a positive contribution to their host societies.

Only five years earlier the situation was rather different. By the end of 2015 Germany and the European Union were looking over the ruins of their existing asylum policy, and facing one of the greatest tests of European cooperation since the integration process began after 1945. In Germany an already emotionally charged discussion about asylum and immigration threatened to explode. Despite a hitherto unparalleled wave of voluntary support for asylum-seekers, right-wing groups and populist movements received growing support. A radical racist minority threatened reception facilities across the country and mobilised violent protests against refugee accommodation facilities. Member states along the EU's external borders invested massively in border security, others threatened to reintroduce permanent controls at the internal borders and thus end freedom of movement within the Union.

In this situation the German government called a round table to discuss how to cope with the asylum crisis, inviting representatives of the political parties, the federal states, local authorities, business, trade unions, churches, charities, researchers and migrant groups. Although representing very different interests, the participants concluded that a policy orientated on single issues would not suffice to address a crisis of these dimensions. Instead the focus of the debate shifted to the connections between asylum, immigration and integration, searching for joined-up solutions for the entire complex. Above all, the participants agreed to replace the "bottleneck" of the single asylum process with flexible approaches more in tune with reality.

The "Coalition for Action on Asylum and Migration" that emerged from the round table prepared the so-called Asylum Strategy 2020, a comprehensive plan of action pursuing twin goals. On the one side, it provided for a reduction of the burden on the asylum system through setting out special arrangements for individuals in clear need of protection, speeding up the asylum process while maintaining high standards of protection, expanding legal immigration options, achieving European responsibility sharing, and supporting countries of first asylum outside the EU. On the other side, new integration instruments were introduced for prospective long-term residents.

Reducing the Burden on the Asylum System

Now, refugees with good prospects of recognition are offered a new type of protection outside the asylum process. This is initially granted for a period of five years, after which those who have made use of particular integration offers are to be granted unlimited leave to remain. In 2017, applying this new protection scheme to Syrian refugees reduced the number of asylum applications by 140,000. The instrument proved so successful that it was quickly emulated in neighbouring European states. These individual initiatives then formed the basis for an EU-wide joint strategy for Syrian refugees under the 2001 EU Directive on Temporary Protection. In addition, charities, Non-Governmental Organisations and families are now permitted to actively engage in the reception process as sponsors and accommodation providers. In particular, "private immigration" and "private asylum" arrangements were introduced. These were modelled after the Canadian example, where non-state organisations and individuals agree to cover all costs for a period of ten years.

At the beginning of 2017, the German government reconsidered its line on so-called safe countries of origin. As the experience of the preceding years had shown, simply adding a country to this list did not lead to a substantial reduction in asylum-seekers arriving from it. While the government retained the accelerated procedure for citizens of such countries, it linked the categorisation of a state as a safe country of origin to the establishment of training centres in the country and of bilateral labour recruitment programmes (especially for the service and care sectors). The opening of legal migration paths and the preparation of migrants for the German labour market initially met with cautious demand, but acceptance soon grew both on the part of German employers and on the side of the migrants. For the Western Balkans a direct connection can now be identified between the falling number of asylum applications and participation in labour migration programmes.

The government also succeeded in resuming the talks on a permanent European system for distributing asylum-seekers that had been broken off in winter 2015. After it became apparent that certain EU member states would only very half-heartedly realise the redistribution of 160,000 refugees agreed in September 2015, and were threatening to subvert the shar-

ing of responsibilities in practice, the debate about a permanent distribution system was conducted only with the willing member states. A core group of eleven countries agreed on criteria for a fair sharing of refugee arrivals, to which another six countries then signed up. The group agreed that the new formula would not necessarily be used for physical redistribution but as a basis for a fair financial compensation system that largely permitted refugees to choose where they wished to settle.

In a large-scale EU-wide pilot project interested local authorities were encouraged to accept refugees by offering them financial support considerably higher than the incurred costs. This pilot project constituted a ground-breaking shift from the usual top-down process of refugee distribution towards a bottom-up approach considering the needs and interests of local communities. Now, local communities can profit from welcoming and integrating refuges. So far, especially low-income and demographically shrinking communities have applied for the new programme.

In addition, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) was given more staff and the EU's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund was considerably enlarged. These measures made it easier for EU member states to harmonise their standards for asylum procedures, accommodation and integration services.

Finally, financial and institutional support for countries of first asylum was further expanded, especially for Syria's neighbours and North African and sub-Saharan African countries, in order to reduce secondary movements from there. Alongside the existing programmes for healthcare and accommodation, special attention was given to school attendance and refugees' economic and entrepreneurial activities. In order to provide further assistance and ensure particularly vulnerable groups access to international protection under European standards, the Federal Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and the Foreign Ministry set up a resettlement programme for initially 60,000 particularly vulnerable persons per year. Staff from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) in cooperation with representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) select these refugees in the countries of first asylum and assist them in travelling to Germany.

Taken together these measures have led to a substantial shortening of the asylum process. Despite upholding high standards, the average processing time is now just three months. Rejected asylum-seekers who do not face persecution or other dangers in their country of origin and cannot claim other grounds for protection are deported more rigorously than before. But high standards of protection continue to come first. The overall effect of the Asylum Strategy 2020 has been to restore popular confidence in Germany's asylum policy and the government's ability to control migration policy.

Effective Integration

In order to assist the municipalities, the German government massively increased its transfers to the federal states and local authorities. A constitutional amendment permitted central government to channel funds for refugees directly to the local authorities and thus lend them short- and medium-term support. Federal funds were used to create an Integration and Participation Fund that channels additional resources to local authorities that accept extra refugees, yet permits them to decide freely how to spend the money. This improved the staffing and funding of integration policy, contributing decisively to the successful resolution of the refugee crisis in Germany. Equally important was the pooling of all relevant responsibilities in a new Federal Ministry for Migration and Integration.

There have been major changes in the housing of refugees. First of all the "Königstein formula" has been abolished as the sole distribution method for asylum-seekers and refugees. Refugees now have a say in choosing their place of residence, in particular where reuniting families is concerned. Secondly, most refugees are no longer housed in collective accommodation but live in their own homes under the so-called "Leverkusen model". Having refugees living as neighbours in established communities facilitates integration. Local advice and support services run by refugee initiatives and charities make a decisive contribution to integration. Ultimately, decentralised accommodation has cut costs for local authorities and contributed to a greater acceptance of refugees in the population.

Considerable additional funds now flow into schooling and vocational training for refugees. Children and adolescents immediately join school lessons. Apart from receiving additional German teaching in small groups, they are integrated into normal classes, rather than being taught separately from German and established immigrant pupils in so-called integration or welcome classes. Classroom teachers are supported by student teachers, who complete part of their teaching experience as personal mentors for refugees. In a Hamburg pilot project launched in 2018, teachers of classes with a high proportion of refugee children have been receiving support from teachers who themselves came to Germany as refugees. If the project proves successful other states have indicated their interest in similar models.

Language support for refugees and easier access to the labour market are two central components of the new integration policy. Language learning is promoted by offering a better range of German courses. The successful Bavarian pilot scheme "Initial Orientation and German Teaching for Asylum-Seekers" was expanded to the whole of Germany in early 2016. Since then even those whose asylum application is still pending can participate in German courses quickly and without bureaucratic hurdles. A well-resourced childcare system, partly funded by the childcare allowance declared unconstitutional by the Federal Constitutional Court in 2015, makes it easier for mothers to access language courses. The ban on asylum-seekers entering the labour market has been reduced to one month and

the requirement to give priority to equally qualified EU nationals has been suspended.

Alongside these legal changes, administrative reforms have also made a decisive contribution to integrating refugees more quickly into the labour market. The Federal Employment Agency joined with the chambers of commerce and industry, the employers' organisations and the trade unions to found a public body to integrate asylum-seekers with relevant skills as quickly as possible into the German labour market. Now education, qualifications and career aspirations are recorded during the asylum process. On the basis of this information local advice services assist asylum-seekers in finding suitable adaptation and training measures and in applying for jobs. The new state integration policy has also strongly encouraged private engagement in refugee integration. One outcome of this is the strengthening of numerous neighbourhood initiatives that assist refugees and other immigrants in everyday matters.

The successes of this comprehensive integration policy are already obvious. Municipalities with a high proportion of asylum-seekers profit from generous financial assistance. Most of the costs incurred by central government are balanced by the integration measures functioning as an economic stimulus package for rural areas. On the one hand, the spending translates into orders for local and regional businesses; on the other jobs are created for nursery staff, teachers, language instructors and social workers. In particular economically underdeveloped regions profit from this development. Investments in expanding childcare and schools also benefit the local population. Beyond this, the immigrants are prepared for the German labour market and subsequently often taken on by local businesses that previously experienced difficulties recruiting trainees and keeping skilled staff. These developments have generated competition for asylum-seekers in certain regions.

Longer-term Strategies

In 2020 the annual net immigration to Germany, whether as asylum-seekers, workers, family members or for education and training, amounts to about 500,000. This at least party compensates the demographic shrinking and ageing of the autochthonous population. Immigrants have become vital to meet the needs of German firms for skilled workers, and even low-skilled migrants make a positive contribution to funding the social systems. The same applies to other EU states with healthy economies.

Beyond these decisive factors at the national level, Germany has also emerged from the major refugee crisis strengthened internationally. The fact that a core group of EU states were able to agree on a European sharing of responsibilities has led to greater solidarity and more willingness for dialogue between the affected countries. This trend now acts as a catalyst for a more comprehensive joint migration policy in Europe. The political weight of the countries that have so far boycotted a fair distribution has tangibly shrunk in this process, with the result that further states plan

to participate. Through its resolute advocacy for a generous intake of refugees and a comprehensive, coherent but at the same time pragmatic migration and refugee policy, Germany has strengthened its leading role on migration policy at the European level and boosted its influence internationally. This has also been consolidated through its leading participation in global consultation processes like the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). Additionally, the labour migration programmes in the Western Balkan states are demonstrating their first successes on the ground and making an important contribution to stabilising this European neighbourhood.

For all the progress made, there is still room for improvement. The German government is therefore using resources and capacities gradually released by the resolution of the refugee crisis to take preventive action. It is further expanding legal migration paths and deploying development aid to reduce the root causes of displacement in the longer term and convert involuntary and unregulated movements into voluntary and regulated forms.

2025 – New European Foreign Ministry Takes Command

Ronja Kempin and Barbara Lippert

A summer day in 2025, Werderscher Markt in Berlin. Like every morning in the headquarters of German diplomacy, trolleys trundle along the corridors of power. The post is being delivered. Today it contains information that will dominate the morning meetings of every division. It is the day the staff of the German Federal Foreign Ministry receive the organigram of the new "European Foreign Ministry". On 1 September 2025 the European External Action Service (EEAS) will become a fully-fledged ministry, and all of Germany's diplomats will become representatives of the European Union. This represents the provisional culmination of the Europeanisation of German foreign policy.

Driven by Internal Dynamics of Integration

In the Ministry's canteen and International Club, too, the organigram is soon the topic of the day. The diplomats readily agree that it was not external shocks that motivated the twenty-eight EU member states to upgrade the EEAS. The European Union has certainly faced massive challenges in its neighbourhood during this period: the Ukraine conflict brought war back to Europe, while the refugee crisis of 2015/2016 took the Union to the brink of a break-up. And in the Middle East Iran and Saudi Arabia have been conducting an arms race since they jointly defeated the Islamic State. But the decisive developments in European policy were internally driven, with one integration step following another until a spirited decision at the last intergovernmental conference was all that was required to take the big leap.[1]

Originally, the EEAS began operating on 1 January 2011. Its first years were marked by institutional wrangling between the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (under Article 22(2) TEU), the President of the European Council (Article 15(6) TEU) and the President of the European Commission (Article 17(1) TEU). The failure to clarify its external representation paralysed the Union, especially during the Arab Spring, its aftermath and the subsequent efforts to reform the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).[2] The functioning of the College of

1 Neither from a neo-functionalist nor a historical institutionalist or liberal intergovernmental perspective are individual integration steps automatic, still less deterministic processes. Instead political decisions are required at the "critical junctures". See the corresponding contributions in Hans-Jürgen Bieling and Marika Lerch, eds., *Theorien der europäischen Integration*, (Wiesbaden, 2005), in particular Melanie Morisse-Schilbach, "Historischer Institutionalismus", 271–92 (284).

2 Cathleen Berger and Nicolai von Ondarza, *The Next High Representative and the EEAS: Reforming the EU Foreign Policy Structures*, SWP Comment 40/2013 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissen-

Commissioners was tangibly enhanced under Jean-Claude Juncker's 2014–2019 Presidency. A new project team, "Europe in the World",[3] succeeded in implementing "The EU's Comprehensive Approach to External Conflict and Crises"[4] and enabling the EU's foreign policy instruments to operate in concert. The "Global EU Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy" adopted in 2016 laid the basis for effective coordination of the actions of the member states and the EU level in this sphere of policy. It was agreed that the member states would initiate and shape foreign policy initiatives, but leave their implementation to the EEAS. The Treaty of Stockholm, which came into force on 1 January 2023 to create a "real" economic and monetary union, constitutionalised this practice.

The model for the new relationship between EU member states and Brussels – with the EU level strengthened – was the "Germany–United Kingdom Initiative for Bosnia and Herzegovina" of November 2014, in which the two foreign ministers made proposals for reviving Sarajevo's EU convergence process. First of all they ensured that their initiative was supported both within the region and by the United States. But then the High Representative assumed political leadership in successfully shaping the bilateral relationships.[5]

In order to implement foreign policy proposals, numerous national diplomats moved to the EEAS. In parallel to this process the Europeanisation of foreign and security policy gained momentum. After 2010 the financial and debt crisis led many EU member states to slash their budgets for foreign policy and defence. Spain for example cut its foreign ministry's budget by two-thirds in the space of four years, from €3.64 billion in 2009 to €1.34 billion in 2013. In the course of this economy drive, Madrid closed numerous foreign representations – as did the Czech Republic, Finland, Greece,

schaft und Politik, December 2013), http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/comments/2013C40_bee_orz.pdf (accessed 23 July 2015).

3 The new team established by the Juncker Commission was headed by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission; its members included the Commissioners for European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, for Trade, for International Cooperation and Development, for Humanitarian Assistance and Crisis Management, for Climate Policy and Energy, for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, and for Transport. A dedicated Council formation for defence policy had already been formed.

4 European Commission, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: The EU's Comprehensive Approach to External Conflict and Crises*, 11 December 2013, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013JC0030 (accessed 11 June 2015).

5 "Ein Neustart für Bosnien und Herzegowina", joint contribution by German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and his British colleague Philip Hammond on the Germany–United Kingdom initiative for a revival of the reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a reform of the convergence process with the European Union, *Frankfurter Rundschau,* 6 November 2014, http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Infoservice/Presse/Interviews/2014/141106-BM_Hammond_FR.html (accessed 23 September 2015).

Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Portugal.[6] Thanks to an agreement with the EEAS, whose 139 delegations possessed considerable larger material resources, Spain succeeded in organising its diplomatic representation via the European External Action Service and delegating national diplomats to the EU embassies.[7] Numerous smaller member states copied this example.[8]

The European Foreign Ministry

So now, in 2025, a major step of European integration has been taken. The EEAS's upgrading entailed numerous changes in the structures of European foreign policy (see Figure). Now there is a European Foreign Minister heading a European Foreign Ministry in Brussels. In the meantime the EU delegations in third countries have gradually been transformed into EU embassies, while the foreign ministries and embassies of the member states have been dissolved and their staff transferred either to Brussels or to the new EU embassies. One half of the Brussels staff is assigned to divisions, the other forms a floating reserve available for task forces to tackle crises.

In the national capitals EU delegations have been formed out of the remains of the national foreign ministries, but staffed by personnel from across the Union. A chance is also offered to outsiders who have not passed through the traditional school of diplomacy. The delegations function as the European Union's window into the member states and as foreign policy planning and competence centres. The Berlin delegation, for example, is responsible for the European Union's Central Asia strategy. The German foreign minister also had to go, as that post was abolished in all the member states. The tasks of the foreign ministers are now officially taken over – in view of the general loss of importance of the foreign ministries – by the heads of state and government. Correspondingly, the Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels has been abolished. Matters pertaining to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) are now discussed and decided by the heads of state and government in the European Council, together with the President of the Commission and the European Foreign Minister.

Leaping into the Blue in 2025

Not all the German diplomats in Berlin are happy about this turn in their careers and a "leap into the blue" that appears to them as bold as Robert

6 Rosa Balfour and Kristi Raik, eds., *The European External Action Service and National Diplomacies*, EPC Issue Paper 73 (March 2013), http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_3385_the_eeas_and_national_diplomacies.pdf (accessed 23 September 2015).

7 Nicolai von Ondarza, "Weniger Geld und politischer Stillstand: Interne Effekte der Finanz- und Schuldenkrise auf die GASP", in *EU-Außenpolitik in Zeiten der Finanz- und Schuldenkrise*, ed. Ronja Kempin and Marco Overhaus, SWP-Studie 9/2013 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, April 2013), 79–87, http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/studien/2013_S09_kmp_ovs.pdf (accessed 20 October 2015).

8 House of Lords, European Union Committee, *The EU's External Action Service*, 11th Report of Session 2012–2013 (London, March 2013), http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldselect/ldeucom/147/147.pdf (accessed 23 September 2015).

Figure: The future of European diplomacy

Schuman felt about his own speech about merging German and French coal and steel production in 1950.[9] In his farewell speech the departing German Foreign Minister Botho Müller-Wohlfahrt envisions a bright future for his staff as European diplomats and lauds the birth of the European Foreign Ministry as the fulfilment of German European policy. Playfully, the last German Foreign Minister asks whether no-one had actually thought the process through to its very end and realised they would actually be abolishing themselves.[10]

Turning to the critics and waverers, Müller-Wohlfahrt rejects the objection that foreign states will not take the European Foreign Ministry in Brussels seriously, and instead continue to turn to London, Paris and Berlin. Although one unwanted side-effect of the power shift, Müller-Wohlfahrt said, might be that the heads of state and government could expand their foreign policy staffs into little foreign ministries, he pointed out that these possessed no foreign representations. their only instrument abroad was the "national houses" that covered only the spectrum from national culture to trade. The national governments possessed no powers of authority and were dependent on expertise received from the European Foreign Ministry and the decentralised competence centres in the member states. This reorganisation would bring advantages, Müller-Wohlfahrt said, because an increasing integration of those policy spheres where a differentiation between domestic and foreign policy is almost impossible had caused the failure of attempts to shape politics through coordination. In order to ensure that national traditions, political and cultural characteristics, interests and specialisations continued to be incorporated into the process, Germany would – like many other member states – be retaining if not expanding its training centres for future diplomats.

The departing foreign minister also emphasised that even for a large member state like Germany, the fusion of diplomatic services and the strengthening of the European Union as a framework for action were advantageous. At the same time, he said, one had to keep the smaller member states happy, because they rightly expected economies of scale and had no need to tolerate formal downgrading. In no respect, he said, had the threshold to supranationalisation been crossed by the creation of the European Foreign Ministry. Decisions, Müller-Wohlfahrt said, would naturally

9 French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, announcing the so-called Schuman Plan at a press conference on 9 May 1950. Jean Monnet, *Erinnerungen eines Europäers* (Munich, 1980), 388.
10 This is true to the extent that since the second half of the 1990s German policy on Europe had remained decidedly ambivalent and only tended to favour communitarisation where this concerned "how on the basis of the existing CFSP structures under the given conditions the introduction of a communitisation – in the sense of a partial convergence with community processes and structures – could be achieved", as Uwe Schmalz puts it in "Die europäisierte Macht: Deutschland in der europäischen Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik", in *Eine neue deutsche Europapolitik? Rahmenbedingungen – Problemfelder – Optionen*, ed. Heinrich Schneider, Mathias Jopp and Uwe Schmalz, 515–80 (552) (Bonn, 2001). See also practitioners opposing supranational procedures: Wolfgang Ischinger and Eberhard Kölsch, "Was Mehrheitsentscheidungen erreichen können. Zur Gemeinsamen Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik der EU", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 2 May 1997.

still be made by the heads of state and government in the European Council, in which a state like Germany could hold its own. But no shift to majority decision-making had been agreed. The minister's farewell speech again underlined that the the Union's foreign policy would retain its hybrid character of being supranational and intergovernmental at the same time. Additionally, neither bilateralisms nor the formation of groups would entirely disappear, he said. But in the area of external relations the European Foreign Ministry now represented a community structure promoting the shared interests of EU-Europeans with the potential to become internationally effective.

However, Müller-Wohlfahrt admitted, he was worried about the problem of legitimacy. Although he hoped that a more flexible and effective foreign policy would strengthen the output legitimacy, interest in foreign policy questions was traditionally pronounced in only a handful of EU states and restricted to expert circles.

Only recently the foreign minister had found his concerns confirmed in a lucid confidential analysis in which researchers at a German think-tank laid out the structural restrictions on Europe's foreign policy. A European public sphere, in the sense of a border-transcending functional space in which debates could be conducted and European foreign policy find resonance, was not to be expected for the foreseeable future, the experts argued, because communication spheres and media infrastructures remained nationally constituted and lacked interconnectivity. Moreover, it had been seen that the social media were more suited as instruments for campaigns than as platforms for political dialogue. The paper continued: "Because the EU is only in a very limited sense a community of experience and memory, and not a community of communication and language, there are fundamental limits to a continuing Europeanisation of the European community."[11]

National parliaments as the central sources of legitimacy should therefore keepbetter pace with Europeanisation. In foreign policy debates they should considerably more strongly than hitherto reflect the developments in the political arena of the Union. The same logic, the paper argued, applied to the media of the member states. Ultimately, the paper points to a concrete problem that needs to be urgently addressed: the transfer of CFSP powers to the European Parliament.[12] For all the progress on the road to a European foreign policy, appropriate participation by the legislative remains still a desideratum in 2025.

11 Peter Graf Kielmansegg, "Integration und Demokratie", in *Europäische Integration*, 2nd ed., ed. Markus Jachtenfuchs and Beate Kohler-Koch, 47–72 (58). (Opladen, 2003). Other experts are more optimistic about the prospects for an Europeanisation of the public sphere. See Thomas Risse, ed., *European Public Spheres: Politics Is Back* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

12 For an alternative perspective see Annegret Bendiek, "Handlungsfähigkeit durch politische Führung in der Gemeinsamen Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik", in *Entwicklungsperspektiven der EU: Herausforderungen für die deutsche Europapolitik*, ed. Annegret Bendiek, Barbara Lippert and Daniela Schwarzer, SWP-Studie 18/2011 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, July 2011): 60–69, http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/studien/2011_S18_bdk_lpt_swd_ks.pdf (accessed 20 October 2015).

Foresight Retrospective: "One Land, One People, One Dream" – Albanians Abolish their Borders

Dušan Reljić

It was supposed to be another of those celebrations Albanians had seen so many of in recent years. The heads of government of Albania and Kosovo were to ceremonially inaugurate a statue of Ismail Qemali, nineteenth-century leader of the Albanian national movement. But the press was already complaining that while almost every town "in the Albanian universe" of South-East Europe already had at least one "patriotic" memorial, the record of government achievements in remained threadbare in spring 2019. Poverty and unemployment remained rampant, the EU accession talks were making no headway, the flow of Albanian asylum-seekers into the European Union continued unabated, corruption was pervasive and quarrels with the "Orthodox" neighbours, the Serbs, Greeks and Macedonians, continued. Hope had vanished that the European Union might soon rescind its visa requirements for citizens of the Western Balkans, which it reimposed at the end of 2015 in order to stem the flow of migration. In order to dissipate popular dissatisfaction, the media asserted, politicians could come up with nothing better than to resort to a tried-and-tested scheme: a joyful celebration with historic flags, heroic songs and speeches announcing that the unification of the Albanian nation would now finally be completed. Naturally in the context of European integration, without altering any borders, the audience would be reassured with a nod and a wink, true to the motto: we do not intend to break our promise to Washington and Brussels that unification will occur only within the framework of the European Union.[1]

But this time the unexpected occurs. Even before the speeches can begin, the first chants are heard: "self-determination", "unity" and "we are one nation" swell out of the crowd. Standing at the edge of the grounds several dozen young men, many of them with beards and headdress, chant praise to Allah. The secret police inconspicuously keep watch. These are some of the many Albanian volunteers who have returned from jihad in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere.[2] Soon the emotions boil, the crowd denounces the

1 This idea, expressed particularly succinctly by Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama at the unveiling of the Qemali monument in Pristina on 25 May 2015, has often been repeated by other dignitaries. "The Sculpture of Ismail Qemali Was Placed Today in Pristine", *RTK Live*, 25 May 2015, http://www.rtklive.org/the-sculpture-of-ismail-qemali-was-placed-today-in-pristine (accessed 23 September 2015).

2 On the causes of the radicalisation of Albanian youth, see Shpend Kursani, *Report Inquiring into the Causes and Consequences of Kosovo Citizens' Involvement as Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq* (Pristina: Kosovar Centre for Security Studies, 2015), http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Report_inquiring_into_the_causes_and_consequences_of_Kosovo_citizens%27_involvement_as_foreign_fighters_in_Syria_and_Iraq_307708.pdf (accessed 23 September 2015).

"gang of corrupt politicians" and the "hypocritical West" and demands the founding of a "natural Albania". Some call for the immediate introduction of sharia.

Within a few hours the unrest engulfs not only the whole of Albania and Kosovo, but also many other areas from Montenegro in the north to Skopje (Republic of Macedonia) in the south and the Preševo Valley (Serbia) in the east: in short, the entire "Albanian universe". Protests also occur in Ioannina and other Greek cities with large Albanian immigrant populations. Solidarity rallies follow wherever the Albanian diaspora is concentrated – in Switzerland, Germany, Austria and the US East Coast. An "Albanian spring" breaks out, carried by desperation at chronic mass poverty, disgust at the corruption of the political class and yearning for national unity. The poorly paid security forces refuse to act against the demonstrators. In Kosovo the NATO-led international peacekeeping force KFOR is not capable of intervening, having been reduced to a few dozen advisers. Tirana and Pristina now ask individual Western states to send troops to restore public order. But Western capitals see little possibility of this, as their own forces are already committed to the war against Islamist extremists in the Middle East. Only Turkey offers to send its military. Neighbouring Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Greece deploy troops to their borders and inquire discreetly in Moscow whether Russia might offer military assistance. The Kremlin is delighted to hold sway again in South-East Europe.[3] The prediction of former CIA analyst David B. Kanin appears to be coming true: "The local networks and external kibbitzers also are going to prove incapable of managing any muscular jihadist or nationalist violence that develops in the Balkan security vacuum."[4]

Developments since 2011: Ambiguous Talk, Directed Action

Such a possible development had already been discussed in other analyses. One contribution to the SWP's 2011 Foresight Study pointed out that the largely Albanian-settled areas of the Western Balkans, which encompass Albania, Kosovo (without the majority-Serb northern part) and northern Macedonia, are merging into a compact economic, social and political unit.[5] But at that juncture not a few observers countered that inflated declarations from Tirana and Pristina about the Albanian nation growing

3 Kremlin circles have largely interpreted events in South-East Europe since the collapse of Yugoslavia as the outcome of a long-term "Washington strategy" designed to "end by all means with the Russian influence in the region". See Elena Guskova, "Are the Albanians and the Americans Now Deciding the Macedonian Question?" *Voltaire Network* (Moscow), 13 June 2015, http://voltairenet.org/article187876.html (accessed 22 August 2015).

4 David B. Kanin, "Inertia, Violence, Inertia", *TransConflict*, 26 May 2015, http://www.transconflict.com/2015/05/inertia-violence-inertia-265 (accessed 23 September 2015).

5 Dušan Reljić, "Border Changes on the Cards again in the Western Balkans", in *Expect the Unexpected. Ten Situations to Keep an Eye On*, ed. Volker Perthes and Barbara Lippert, SWP Research Paper 1/2012 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, November 2011), 31–34, http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2012_RP01_lpt_prt.pdf#page=31 (accessed 14 September 2015).

together would evaporate harmlessly. The West had grown accustomed both to the virulent nationalism of the governing classes and to the fact that Tirana and Pristina both spoke deliberately ambiguously about the realisation of national unity. If Albanian politicians got carried away in nationalist fervour, the drill was for senior diplomats from Washington, Brussels and Berlin to go there and read the riot act to the troublemakers. Over and again the admonishers from the West promised that the EU accession perspective still existed, but insisted that the candidate countries work harder to fulfil the prescribed criteria. The West was relying on enthusiasm for joining the European Union, which was stronger among Albanians than any other ethnic group in the region, surviving undiminished. But, as anyone who paid close attention realised increasingly clearly over the subsequent years, while the Western political dam was still holding back the nationalist flood, its resilience was steadily crumbling.

The development described in 2011 has continued unbroken in the years since. There are now virtually no border controls between areas with largely Albanian populations. Cultural homogenisation proceeds apace via the mass media. New economic links are appearing all the time. A road known locally as the "patriotic highway" has been completed between the Albanian port of Durrës and Kosovo's capital Pristina. Construction of another new motorway from Pristina to Skopje has also begun, passing through majority Albanian-settled areas of Macedonia. And a number of the ideas of Vetëvendosje (self-determination) – the third-largest party in the Kosovan parliament and often criticised as radical and "greater Albanian" – about the road to national unification are being implemented in practice: for example, harmonising the education systems and close coordination on foreign policy. Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama feels compelled to declare that Albania and Kosovo, whose unification is "unavoidable and unquestionable", will have to unite in the "classical way" if their convergence with the European Union continues to proceed so slowly.[6] These statements came just days after a joint session of the two governments in March 2015, held under the motto "One Land – One People – One Dream", where about a dozen agreements concerning "strategic coordination in the governance of our common Albania-Kosovo space" were signed.[7] The popular mood also speaks volumes. For years opinion polls have been showing that about three-quarters of the Albanian population in the region want a "Greater Albania".[8]

At the beginning of the decade it was not yet foreseeable how individual economic, political and religious factors would amplify dissatisfaction

6 "EU Says Albania Comment on Kosovo Unification 'Not Acceptable'", *EU Observer*, 9 April 2015, https://euobserver.com/foreign/128273 (accessed 22 August 2015).

7 "Meeting of the Two Governments, 'One Land – One People – One Dream'", address of Prime Minister Edi Rama in the joint meeting of the governments of Albania and Kosovo, Prime Minister's Office, 23 March 2015, http://www.kryeministria.al/en/newsroom/news/meeting-of-the-two-governments-one-land-one-people-one-dream&page=2 (accessed 23 September 2015).

8 See Reljić, "Border Changes on the Cards again" (see note 5).

with the status quo and further inflame nationalist demands. The protracted economic and financial crisis in the European Union, the prolonged agony of Greece and the slowing of the Union's enlargement all heavily burden its standing in the region.[9] Not only is the European Union losing credibility, but the attraction of the accession perspective is fading too. The situation is especially precarious in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the more the "European perspective" recedes the more brittle this state becomes. Its existence is based less on internal cohesion than on Western resistance to its disintegration. Finally, the prolonged civil war in Syria has emerged as a new radicalising factor. Many politicians in the region are well aware of the explosive nature of the mix of nationalism and religious fanaticism around them, and regularly warn their Western mentors of the risks.[10]

Gloomy Prospects: South-East Europe Without Adequate Security Order

As before the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991, since 2008/2009 we have observed a barely concealed race between the "nationalist" and "European" options in the shadow of uncertainty over the future of South-East Europe. Every year that Albania and the other Western Balkans accession candidates spend in the queue outside the gates of the European Union prolongs their socio-economic decline and deepens their political discord. This is what has fed the dream of abolishing the borders between the Albanian areas and unifying the nation in a single state.

The consequences have been felt above all in Macedonia. Events there in May 2015 sent an unmistakable warning of the direction events could take if radical forces take the lead: around twenty people were killed in clashes between the police and armed Albanians in the north of the country.[11] The following years saw a spate of similar incidents that gradually undermined the Ohrid Framework Agreement of August 2001, mediated by the European Union and the United States. Although the Agreement successfully ended fighting between armed Albanians and Macedonian security forces, the Western sponsors of the talks between Macedonian and Albanian politicians failed to demonstrate any viable alternative for the country's future.

9 In the first half of 2015 alone, 30,000 Albanians citizens and the same number of Albanians from Kosovo applied for asylum in Germany. "Über 218,000 Asylanträge" (Berlin: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, 19 August 2015), http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Meldungen/DE/2015/20150819-asylgeschaeftsstatistik-juli.html (accessed 23 September 2015).

10 Once 98 percent of his compatriots had believed in America, then in God, then in Europe. Today that's not the case, said Prime Minister Rama in July 2015. And if the EU is not able to show up in the way that is expected, there will be a huge space for radical Islam. "If EU Shuns Albania Radical Islam Beckons", *Financial Times*, 3 July 2015, http://blogs.ft.com/the-world/2015/07/if-eu-shuns-albania-radical-islam-beckons (accessed 23 September 2015).

11 "Kosovans Mourn Rebels Killed in Macedonia Shootout", *AFP*, 26 May 2015, http://www.businessinsider.com/afp-kosovans-mourn-rebels-killed-in-macedonia-shootout-2015-5?IR=T (accessed 23 September 2015).

The West's strategy for dealing with the consequences of the collapse of Yugoslavia is still based, despite all its failures, on a fallacious expectation. The accession of the post-Yugoslavian states and Albania to the European Union and NATO, it was hoped, would make the region part of the integrated Euro-Atlantic space and its security order. This, it was held, would undermine the nationalisms in South-East Europe. But this logic increasingly transpired to be illusionary, above all because the European Union was fully preoccupied with its own economic and political troubles and therefore recoiled from yet more expansion moves.

The European Union and its leading member states would be well advised to abandon the dogmas of a rigid enlargement policy and grant the Western Balkan countries at least provisional (partial) membership *sui generis*. At the same time it is urgently necessary to defuse the region's precarious socio-economic situation, best of all with the assistance of employment-intensive development programmes and generous migration arrangements. That might just be enough to prevent the region descending back into crisis and chaos.

Appendix

Abbreviations

AFP	Agence France-Press
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
BAMF	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge)
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (USA)
CNN	Cable News Network
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
EASAC	European Academies Science Advisory Council
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EEAS	European External Action Service
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPARD	European Neighbourhood Program for Agriculture and Rural Development
EPC	European Policy Centre
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (Rome)
FAS	Federation of American Scientists
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
G7	Group of Seven
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
KFOR	Kosovo Force
NARP	Nuclear Weapon Accident Response Procedures
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SIA	Sustainability Impact Assessment
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
U.S.C.	United States Code

The Authors

Dr. Steffen Angenendt
Head, Global Issues Division

Major GS Dr. Christian Becker
Associate, Asia Division

Dr. Lars Brozus
Associate, The Americas Division

Dr. Marcel Dickow
Head, International Security Division

Dr. Sabine Fischer
Head, Eastern Europe and Eurasia Division

Dr. Hanns Günther Hilpert
Head, Asia Division

Dr. Ronja Kempin
Senior Fellow, EU/Europe Division

Dr. Margarete Klein
Senior Associate, Eastern Europe and Eurasia Division

Dr. Anne Koch
Associate, Global Issues Division

Dr. Alexander Libman
Associate, Eastern Europe and Eurasia Division

Dr. Barbara Lippert
Director of Research, Executive Board

Prof. Dr. Hanns W. Maull
Senior Distinguished Fellow, The Americas Division

Amrei Meier
Research Assistant, Global Issues Division

Dr. Oliver Meier
Deputy Head, International Security Division

Dr. Dušan Reljić
Head, Brussels Office of SWP

Dr. Bettina Rudloff
Senior Associate, EU/Europe Division

Dr. Alexandra Sakaki
Associate, Asia Division

Nils Simon
Associate, Global Issues Division

Dr. Johannes Thimm
Deputy Head, The Americas Division