THE NEW WORLD (DIS)ORDER AND THE CONFLICTS EVOLUTION – THE IRAN NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE AS CASES OF STUDY

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Abstract:

The World Order is a concept in constant mutation that has lost a lot of what characterized it when it was established with the Peace of Westphalia. The conflicts also went through changes. They lost its State distinctiveness and became dispersed and chaotic due to multipolarization. These two concepts share some connections and both dissociated from their traditional definition. This paper aims to establish a connection between the contemporary World Order and the conflicts evolution. The threats to the stability of the World Order contribute to the current disorder and reflects how the conflicts distanced themselves from the clausewitzian battles. To understand how these threats impact the World Order stability and evince the conflicts evolution two cases of study were selected: the nuclear proliferation in Iran and the crisis in Ukraine. These two examples will help establishing the link between the contemporary World Disorder and the conflicts evolution.

Keywords:

World Order, Conflicts, Iran, Ukraine.

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Introduction

The World Order and the conflicts represent pertinent themes to the international stability. Understanding how they operate and progress is halfway to understanding how the contemporary political reality functions. These two concepts certainly evolved and modified. The contemporary World Order acquired a distinct context from that it had obtained in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia. The conflicts acquired a new side that transformed them from Clausewitzean wars to chaotic wars. Both phenomenon are affected by some points in common: the multipolarization; the technologic evolution and the growing importance of the economic factor.

Are the conflicts and the World Order connected? There are links that will be evinced during this study and which its objective will be the demonstration of how the two concepts are intertwined and even interdependent, influencing one another. To better explain the present World Disorder as well as the evolution of conflicts two cases of study were selected: the nuclear proliferation in Iran and the Ukraine crisis. These cases will demonstrate how conflicts evolved and how they represent threats to the stability of the current World Order, contributing to its disorder. The main point of this investigation is to understand the connection between the World Order and the conflicts and what led, respectively, to its disorder and evolution. The cases of study will help evidencing precisely this disorder and evolution because they represent different types of conflicts as well as different threats to the stability of the World Order.

A Disorderly Order

The current World Order began in the 17th century with the Westphalia agreements. The Peace of Westphalia established the concept of Sovereign State meaning each one could structure its own policies. The international relations changed and stopped being guided by imperialist and religious interests gaining an independent political structure.

The equilibrium of the World Order became based on a balance of power. The State acted accordingly to its *raison d'État*. "*(…) each society's perceptions are affected by its domestic structure, culture, and history and by the overriding reality that the elements of power (…) are in constant flux (…) the balance of power need to be recalibrated from time to time*". (KISSINGER, 2014, p. 30 – 31). However, not every state shared the same views posing a problem: how to combine different interests and prevent conflicts? A system based on pluralism was essential to the survival and stability of the order.

The French Revolution replaced the World Order by a revolutionary system. Afterwards, Napoleon Bonaparte gained control in 1799 and morphed the country into an imperialist regime. With Napoleon the World Order was based in a scale of power regulated by his will and the success of his campaigns.

With the end of the french havoc it was necessary to redefine the order and so the major powers assembled at the Congress of Vienna[1]. The order that was born would be focused in a balance between legitimacy and the use of power. The ambition was to design a new scale of power that would keep France from becoming a future threat and contain Russia's rise. To ensure the World Order's survival it is crucial to assign the correct equilibrium between legitimacy and the use of power.

The most significant events to the post-Vienna Order were the First and the Second World Wars. The First World War destroyed the World Order base and brought great changes such as the fall of the Russian, Austrian and Ottoman empires. After the first war, Russia went through a transition period resulting in the creation of the Soviet Union.

The Treaty of Versailles was the attempt to re-establish order after the war. Its context was based on the use of power instead of legitimacy. As a result Germany and Russia were ostracized and the world assisted to the creation of two opposing orders: one guided by international law supported by western democracies and other by countries that rejected the traditional order. The Second World War was a matter of time due to the limitations in constructing an effective order.

The World Order has always been a mutable concept, never static, that remains in redefinition and is constantly changing. The international community went from a World Order balanced between legitimacy and the use of power to an order based in the military capacity with the World Wars. The order post-World Wars would need a strong foundation. That is why the ECSC[2] was created becoming first step towards uniting the European divergences. The scale of power was stabilized with the creation of NATO.

There was yet the Cold War[3] where the World Order became bipolar with two opposites, one composed by western countries and the other by the Soviet Union and its allies. In 1989 two key events happened: the fall of the Berlin wall and the reunification of Germany. The end of the Soviet Union, in 1991, reinforced the cohesion of Europe. These events brought new characteristics to the international relations. The world acquired a multipolar perspective through the appearance of new States, international organizations and other actors. The 1989 marked beginning of the multipolarization responsible for the contemporary disorder. Legitimacy and the use of power are no longer defining factors while the nuclear capacity, economic matters and multipolarization are responsible for the disorder of the traditional order.

The EU and the US are no longer the sole actors of the World Order due to the multipolarization. Organizations with supranational capacity contribute to subtract State's autonomy. Both EU and the US depend on their interdependence to prevail in

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[1] Conference taking place between September 1814 and June 1815. The main goal was to achieve an understanding after the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars and to give more equitable powers to obtain a balanced scale.

[2] The European Coal and Steel Community, created in 1952, was an international organization created after the Second World War through the Paris Treaty. It was the first supranational institution and stablished the bases to the creation of the European Union in 1958 through the Treaty of Rome.

[3] Conflict that took place between 1948 and 1991 and was characterized by political and military tensions that remained after the Second World War between the Soviet Union and the western countries. It ended in 1991 with the fall of the Soviet Union.

the contemporary order. After the Second World War the USA won the status of "world police" and its political values were considered as the ones to follow. However, the world is composed by States with distinct politic and cultural values which difficult the propagation of American ideologies. Contrary to Westphalia, the Western World Order acts by implementing its values while the Westphalia order defended the integrity of everything. The World Order cannot be defined as a unique set of values that must be adopted by everyone, but as a system which accepts different politic and cultural principles. Trying to implement democratic values in countries with different history will affect international stability.

To establish a long-lasting World Order it is crucial to address existent divergences. The multipolarization created the contemporary disorder and to achieve stability it is necessary to understand it. The World Order must cover every divergence, have the capacity of evolve and adapt, the further the order gets fragmented the more relevance it loses.

The incapacity in accommodate the evolution of the relations of power that contribute to the balance of the international scale of power affects the order's stability. If the equilibrium between legitimacy and power fails the world will go through constant tensions that might ignite future conflicts and contribute to the order's fragmentation and disorder.

The contemporary World Order presents limitations. The basic unity of its existence, the State, has lost autonomy. The economic system became globalized while the politic structure remained focused on the State. The objective of a global economy is to create a market free from any barriers. The contemporary politic system, however, keeps stuck by frontiers imposed by States. While the economic globalization overlaps any frontier, politics has emphasized their importance and integrity.

If the rebuilding of the international system fails there will be different spheres of influence. The challenge of establishing a World Order is adapting it to different realities. To obtain equilibrium it is necessary to do a revaluation of the balance of the scale of power because it has proved quite difficult to conjugate a common set of policies with actors with so versatile interests. The search for a new World Order will be based in common principles and tolerating different realities. A new order will never be achieved through defending the interests of one country. The goal of this era is to reach the fundamental balance to the world's stability without recurring to conflicts.

The current order is long fragmented and what exist now are remnants of a world that wants to keep being unipolar and is incapable of admitting the present multipolarity. Every event that happened in the world's history contributed to the contemporary disorder. The only certainty is that a system of homogenous values does not bring stability.

The project for a unipolar world was replaced by a polycentric order. These power centres are unbalanced, comprising different realities. Failing to obtain an international consensus will result in a precarious order. The new World Order will not be unipolar

nor bipolar but multipolar with a high level of interdependence. The world is divided in forces of order and forces of disorder, the first ones are formed by actors that defend the traditional values while the second acts accordingly to their views. The disorder will persist and the emerging actors will form autonomous centres of power causing difficulties in obtaining stability. The current World Order might be outdated but it is not lost. A renovation that includes the contemporary reality is vital to its survival.

The Evolution of Conflicts

Carl von Clausewitz helped to understand wars are not isolated acts but comprise a political context being more than an act of aggression destined to defeat the opponent. *"War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will".* (CLAUSEWITZ, 2007, p.13). The politic goal determines the military objective. Sometimes a different approach is needed hence the use of diplomacy. Iran represents an example of how diplomacy helped to reach an understanding. Sometimes the political factor is the only necessary tool. War is a politic instrument used to achieve an objective showing that conflicts represent the continuation of politic decisions through other channels.

The ways conflicts precede suffered changes giving origin to chaotic wars. The emergence of multiple actors with capacity to start conflicts grew while States lost the war's monopoly. The rising of non-state actors, multinationals and private actors contribute to conflicts evolution. The growth of the economic factor is the reason why many conflicts might endure decades. The capacity of financing gained new dimensions and allowed irregular groups to auto-finance themselves.

The contemporary conflicts do not have the goal of building new State infrastructures but to disintegrate it. The concentration of forces in these conflicts is dispersed which difficult a solution and causes the impossibility of having a decisive battle, like in clausewitzian conflicts. The geographic dispersion makes it tougher to end a threat, a common characteristic in the new conflicts: the dispersion of a determined group does not allow a definitive combat. *"(...) the new wars lack what characterized the inter-state wars: the decisive battle (…) the new wars have neither an identifiable beginning nor a clearly definable end."* (MÜNKLER, 2004, p. 12-13).

There is a development of a parallel economy through the pillage of natural resources, enslaving a specific group based on ethnic differences or the intervention of international organizations. The actors of these types of conflicts find in pillage, hostages taking and the black market some ways of financing. Not even humanitarian assistance is free from tax payments[4]. The trade of illegal weaponry, selling oil, diamonds or human traffic are other important revenues. The use of extreme violence

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[4] *Militants in Somalia seize UK-funded humanitarian aid.* The Guardian (11.08.2013). Available at http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/11/militants-somalia-seize-uk-humanitarian-aid (consulted in 12.08.2015).

serves as intimidation and forces population to comply. The soldiers belonging to irregular groups are not restricted by international norms.

The use of weaponry changed and the actors of new conflicts can easily obtain light calibre weapons. *"(...) the new wars are downright cheap (…) it is cheap to prepare and wage them."* (MÜNKLER, 2004, p. 74). Wars are cheaper of conducting that is why many endure for decades. The media gained a participative role. Without its presence the events perpetuated by terrorists would not have the necessary popularity to their survival.

The humanitarian interventions are currently the most used to solve a conflict. Organizations like the UN created policies to develop a diplomatic way of solving conflicts. However, countries like the USA only seem to enlighten the humanitarian principles when strategic interests are in danger. The double standards are due to the economic factor, the main decision maker of the contemporary order and influencer of new conflicts that determines if the costs of an intervention are superior to the costs of the conflict. The new conflicts are extremely cheap to start but expensive to end. In the current World Order war is cheaper than peace.

These conflicts use society infrastructures to proliferate and are difficult to mediate, demonstrating the inefficiency of the mechanisms used to their resolution. There is a fundamental difference between traditional and modern conflicts. The first involves a combat between States decisive to dictate the winner. The second involves a network of actors, State or non-State, that directions acts of violence against civil, targets.

"The new wars can be contrasted with earlier wars in terms of their goals, the methods of warfare and how they are financed. The goals of the new wars are about identity politics in contrast to geo-political or ideological goals of earlier wars". (KALDOR, 2012, p. 7). All conflicts involve a clash between different identities like Iran against the West or in Ukraine between Russia and the USA/EU. Contemporary conflicts introduce extremist policies through hatred. Identity is the main catalyser in new conflicts whether it is a religious conflict or ultranationalist motives in Ukraine, the identity politics is more accentuated than before.

Globalization accentuated the international cooperation between governments and strengthened ties with international organizations demonstrating that States no longer detain full control when it comes to applying their interests.

Another characteristic of new conflicts is the destruction of historic monuments, aiming at erasing traces of a specific cultural presence as the example of *Daesh*[5] or what happened in Ukraine[6] validate.

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[5] *UNESCO: Islamic State's destruction of heritage sites may be war crimes.* JURIST (30.06.2015). Available at http://jurist.org/paperchase/2015/06/unesco-islamic-states-destruction-of-heritage-sites-may-be-war-crimesuction-of-he.php (consulted in 12.08.2015).
[6] *Ukraine crisis: Lenin statues toppled in protest.* BBC News (22.02.2014). Available at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26306737 (consulted in 12.08.2015).

The mechanisms to solve these conflicts have proved inefficient. *"One response to the new wars has been to treat them as Clausewitzean wars in which the warring parties are states or, if not states, groups with a claim to statehood."* (KALDOR, 2012, p. 120). Existent mechanisms to mediate modern conflicts have proved incapable of understanding their nature by using an approach based in clausewitzian war. The development of a cosmopolitan policy is needed to efficiently address these conflicts. The existent interdependence in the contemporary World Order has spread to the new conflicts. The politic goals of the new actors are contrary to the political reality of the contemporary order which difficult a solution. Other problem in solving conflicts is that the parts in dispute have more to gain while in conflict. To solve a conflict it is necessary to first control the violence. The assistance process must be decentralized to encourage integration. The reconstructions, the application of cosmopolitan laws, the international and humanitarian law are fundamental mechanisms to deal with modern conflicts.

In the new conflicts the parts involved have total disrespect by the laws of traditional warfare and human rights which only exacerbates that the international norms, if not adapted to the context of each situation, do not have viability. It is necessary that the politic and social integrations are accompanied by an economic one. The economic strategy must embody a plan to create legitimate ways of obtaining income.

The World Order has difficulties in adapting to different realities. The politic approaches did not have the same evolutionary process that conflicts did. New conflicts have politic purposes even if they are contrary to the current World Order. According to Clausewitz, the foreign policy interests were the goal of traditional wars and the mechanisms to achieve it were politic mobilization. In the new conflicts the politic mobilization is the goal and the foreign policy is what justifies it.

To understand modern conflicts it is necessary to understand the disorder in the World Order and how it influences conflicts. To solve these conflicts a malleable approach is crucial, preferably one with the capacity of adapting to different realities. The new conflicts represent the evolution of multipolarization in the World Order and consequently disorder because conflicts are likewise disorderly and chaotic.

Is the development of the World Oder connected with the evolution of Conflicts?

The World Order is not a static concept because its definition is constantly being updated. The conflicts are another concept in constant redefinition. Conflicts are one of the options States dispose to defend their interests. The disorder of the current World Order comes from the appearance of multipolarization, also responsible for making conflicts chaotic. Conflicts goal is precisely to change the World Order, calibrating the international scale of power. The conflicts adapt to the needs and evolutions of the World Order: from territorial expansion, to military capacity, to technologic vanguard and to economic power. As the World Order modifies, the conflicts reflect those changes.

The goals involving State's actions and the military motivations are connected because States cannot operate without the military component and the military aspect functions regarding State's interests. The globalization influence is reflected not only in the World Order but in conflicts: the multipolarization, the influence of technology development and the importance of the economic factor. The economic factor is, like in the World Order, the most important decision maker in conflicts.

World Order and conflicts are connected and the changes in the first implicate changes in the second. Conflicts are one of the mechanisms available to the application of the interests of World Order and change according to the order's evolution. The end of Cold War provoked changes in the World Order which consequently caused changes in conflicts. The multipolarization contributed to the contemporary World Disorder and the appearance of chaotic conflicts due to the emergence of numerous State and non-State actors. The conflicts are the necessary tool to defend strategic interests and these interests appear according to the development of the World Order. The World Order is inconstant, its definition is constantly changing and oscillates according to the element that acquires preponderance. The conflicts reflect those elements. It is according to State and non-State interests that conflicts happen and those interests influence the World Order's conception. The evolution of the World Order has influence in the evolution of conflicts something patent after the end of Cold War where globalization and multipolarization contributed to strengthen that connection.

Iran and Ukraine represent examples that influence the current World Disorder and demonstrate how conflicts have evolved. In both cases the traditional order is disputed with the goal of implementing an alternative. In relation to conflicts, the cases do not represent traditional conflicts. Iran is an example of how diplomacy acquired importance in solving divergences amongst States. The Ukraine conflict is characterized as chaotic excelling by the intervention of multiple intervenients: Ukraine's and Russia's governments and the separatists. The conflict in Ukraine resulted in the fragmentation of the country. It was through the creation of political and social instability that the separatists succeeded.

Regarding World Disorder, the cases of study represent threats to the stability of the traditional order. Iran and Ukraine examples evince the will of other actors in creating a World Order of their own and their rejection of Western values. Iran is a threat to World Order's stability because it seeks to establish an alternative system. The crisis in Ukraine comprehends two different conceptions of World Order in collision: on the one hand the traditional order and on the other hand an order headed by Russia. These happenings contribute to the growth of the uncertainty in the contemporary order.

These two examples illustrate how the contemporary order is in disorder and the evolution of conflicts as they are threats to the traditional order's stability and prove the existence of new forms of conflict: Iran's nuclear programme created a diplomatic conflict with the West; Ukraine represents the chaotic part of new conflicts where multiple intervenients fight for the country's future. The referenced cases evince some of the greatest threats to World Order's stability and illustrate the evolution of conflicts:

the rising of chaotic conflicts, like in Ukraine, or how States are unable of using a military approach and choose a diplomatic one, as the Iran case shows. Both denote the limitations in the contemporary World Order and the need of the same in developing inclusion mechanisms that allows its subsistence.

The Nuclear Proliferation in Iran

"Understand the nuclear programme and you understand modern Iran; understand modern Iran and you have the best chance of resolving the nuclear impasse". (PATRIKARAKOS, 2012, p. XX). It is important to comprehend what the nuclear program means to Iran to understand its importance: "*(...) the only way to find a solution is to understand, on a political, economic, security and (...) psychological level, what the nuclear programme means to Iran"* (PATRIKARAKOS, 2012, p. XIX). The consequences of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons would be dangerous. The main focuses of Iran's foreign policies are to obtain an independent status and preserve its integrity.

Iran always rejected nuclear weapons and reinforced it by signing the NPT[7] in 1968. This agreement made non-nuclear States commit to never obtain nuclear weaponry while the nuclear States would share the benefits of nuclear technology and cooperate in disarming all nuclear arsenals[8]. Iran understood that it had the right, under NPT's Article IV, to enrich uranium and master the fuel cycle.

In 1979 Iran's political context changed. Ruhollah Khomeini led the *coup d'État* that dismissed the Shah. The country created would be an ostracized, populist Islamic Republic with anti-Western ideology. *"The nuclear programme was now officially viewed as the continuation of colonialism by other means. The atom was not merely too expensive, it was ideologically unclean. (…) Khomeini had declared that he wanted "no Westoxification" in Iran."* (PATRIKARAKOS, 2012, p. 99). The nuclear program was discontinued, partly helping the USA. In retrospective Iran had reasons to militarize its program: it was isolated; in conflict with the USA and in war with Iraq. A nuclear deterrent would preserve its essence from foreign intervention. Pulling out all the contexts defining the policies of Iran and including the application of the security and defence policies the country as legitimacy in acquiring a military nuclear program.

In 2006 the P5+1 was created to negotiate with Iran and a new chapter arose: the sanctions. In 23 December 2006 the P5+1 approved the Resolution 1737[9] stating that all UN's members should stop the supply of nuclear materials to Iran. On 24 March 2007

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[7] NPT complete version available at: http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/pdf/NPTEnglish_Text.pdf (consulted in 25.06.2015).

[8] Article IV of the NPT gives to every signatory the undeniable right of developing research and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes without any discrimination. Article VI states that all the States must start negotiations to proceed to the disarmament of all nuclear arsenals through a rigorous control.

[9] Resolution 1737 - S/RES/1737 (2006). Available at https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/unsc_res1737-2006.pdf (consulted in 01.07.2015).

the Resolution 1747[10] was implemented focusing on the nuclear program and ballistic missiles. On 4 March 2008 the Resolution 1803[11] was the third round of sanction applied. On June 2010 the Security Council adopted Resolution 1929[12] strengthening the economic restrictions and the arm's embargo. The USA and the EU also implemented unilateral sanctions.

The nuclear program is the path towards modernity and Iran has motives to build nuclear bombs. The Islamic Republic was born into conflict proving to Khomeini that the path for stability was self-sufficiency. The politic drive will decide the program's future and influence the diplomatic conflict with the West. If nuclear arms are acquired, Iran will obtain an important deterrent against external threats.

The intrinsic values of Iran go against the values of the contemporary order. An Islamic version of the World Order would be based on a revolutionary and heretic version of religion, being Iran a fundamental pillar of Shiism, and not in creating stability. The nuclear crisis, as a diplomatic conflict, is the result of two different conceptions of World Order in collision. On the one hand there are the States that perceive it with the principles acquired by Westphalia. On the other hand are the States, which give World Order a secondary level.

Iran's nuclear proliferation represents a new aspect in conflicts: the perils of a nuclear war; the diplomatic conflict; and the dissemination of influence through *proxies*. The nuclear era changed the way of evaluating conflicts, now the effects of a nuclear war are taken into consideration that is why present conflicts between States are addressed through diplomacy. The nuclear weapons have a dissuasive purpose not only for those who do not have them but for those who do.

On 14 July 2015 Iran and the P5+1 reached an agreement[13]. *"It is politics not physics that will dictate the resolution of this crisis (…)."* (PATRIKARAKOS, 2012, p. 279). This agreement fails in stopping a nuclear arms race in the Middle East and was received with discontent by some States that understood that this will result in Iran's legitimation as a nuclear State. Iran agreed to alter some points[14] on its program regarding uranium enrichment[15]; the nuclear program's control[16]; the use of reactors and nuclear fuel's

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[10] Resolution 1747 – S/RES/1747 (2007). Available at https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/unsc_res1737-2006.pdf (consulted in 01.07.2015).
[11] Resolution 1803 – S/RES/1803 (2008). Available at http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/1803.pdf (consulted in 01.07.2015).
[12] Resolution 1929 – S/RES/1929 (2010). Available at https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/unsc_res1929-2010.pdf (consulted in 01.07.2010).
[13] The document can be viewed in its entirety on http://www.documentcloud.org/documents/2165388-iran-deal-text.html (consulted in 17.08.2015).
[14] All parameters relative to JCPOA can be seen in full at http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/04/240170.htm (consulted in 09-07.2015).
[15] *"Iran has agreed to not enrich uranium over 3.67 percent for at least 15 years".* (Parameters for a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Program, U.S Department of State, 02.04.2015).
[16] *"Iran has agreed to implement the Additional Protocol of the IAEA, providing the IAEA much greater access and information regarding Iran's nuclear program (…)".* (Parameters for a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Program, U.S Department of State, 02.04.2015).

reprocess[17]. Relatively to the sanctions[18] the P5+1 and the EU commit to lift up those implemented as a response to the nuclear program. This will avoid Iran's capacity to obtain nuclear weapons in the immediate future[19].

Despite of the voices contrary to an agreement it is better to have one than keep having an unsupervised country, like North Korea. The result of this agreement will put Iran in a protagonist position in the Middle East and the World Order. The main opponent is Israel[20] because Iran represents a threat to its existence and is a strategic rival financing Hamas in Palestine. This agreement will have an impact in the Middle East, although it is not possible yet to ascertain which. It can result in the appearance of other nuclear programs or in conflicts.

The main goal of the agreement is to block, in an immediate future, Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. To Iran the agreement means the end of economic sanctions and the return to the international community. This agreement does not interfere with its regional status and legitimates Iran as a nuclear State. Iran is still a threat to the traditional order, having a nuclear program that can be militarized. To those who oppose the agreement the alternatives are to wait for a better one or risk a conflict.

A country with the nuclear *know-how* of Iran can obtain nuclear weapons if it wants. This agreement contains that possibility and can help changing Iran's foreign policy if all intervenients work towards its integration. Iran will not destroy any nuclear infrastructures only limit its developing process temporarily, it has not abdicated from its ballistic missile program, its support to terrorist groups or its search for hegemony. Even if what was agreed is respected in ten to fifteen years the agreement will lose validity. This is why everything happening during this period will determine the future of the program.

Ukraine Crisis

"The main reason for all these ups and downs is that Ukraine has a predatory elite presiding over a deeply divided society. (…) The new Ukrainian state has always been weak and vulnerable to capture by regional clans and oligarchic and even mafia interests." (WILSON, 2014, p. 39). On 21 November 2013, Ukraine rejected to sign the

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[17] *"Iran has committed indefinitely to not conduct reprocessing or reprocessing research and development on spent nuclear fuel".* (Parameters for a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Program, U.S Department of State, 02.04.2015).

[18] *"U.S. and E.U. nuclear-related sanctions will be suspended after the IAEA has verified that Iran has taken all of its key nuclear-related steps. If at any time Iran fails to fulfil its commitments, these sanctions will snap back into place".* (Parameters for a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Program, U.S Department of State, 02.04.2015).

[19] *"Iran's breakout timeline – the time that it would take for Iran to acquire enough fissile material for one weapon – is currently assessed to be 2 to 3 months. That timeline will be extended to at least one year, for a duration of at least ten years (…)".* (Parameters for a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Program, U.S Department of State, 02.04.2015).

[20] *"Stunning historical mistake": Netanyahu says Israel is not bound by Iran nuclear deal.* RT (14.07.2015). Available at http://www.rt.com/news/273589-israel-blasts-iran-deal/ (consulted in 17.08.2015).

association agreement with the EU as a result of Russia's pressure; of Ukraine's intransigency to EU's requirements; and Yanukovych's increasing exigencies. This refusal triggered protests in Kiev. The people were not only protesting about the EU's agreement, but for the end of the existent corrupt and repressive regime. This crisis represents more than the future of Ukraine: it represents the future of Russia and the EU. *"(...) Ukraine cannot be defined by touchstone issues of region, ethnicity, language, history and religion which divide more than unite (…)".* (WILSON, 2014, p. 40). Most of the changes happened on western Ukraine where the political movements were propitious to close ties with the EU. The story in some of the eastern parts of Ukraine would be quite different.

"Russia's annexation of Crimea and its undermining of Ukrainian sovereignty were direct challenges to the whole post-Cold War security order, which Russia had previously stoutly defended." (WILSON, 2014, P. VII). Crimea was invaded by unidentified soldiers that forced the local government's secession and created a referendum. On 16 March 2014 the referendum[21] was realized with 95% voting on favour of annexation to Russia. Analysing these numbers within the 2001 census in Ukraine the Russian population in Crimea was 58, 5%. The fact that there were roughly 25000 Russian troops in Crimea at the time might help to explain the results. On 21 March 2014 Putin signed Crimea's annexation[22] and recognized Abkhazia and Ossetia as independent States taking away Ukraine's maritime capacity and giving Russia an important geostrategic point to southern Europe.

The next chapter occurred in the Donbas[23] region where militias and pro-Russian manifestations demanded referendums in Donetsk and Luhansk. The annexation of Crimea triggered a wave of Russian nationalism. Vladimir Putin justified Crimea's annexation with Russia's duty of protecting Russian speakers throughout the world[24]. According to his vision, any region of the world with Russian speakers will provide a pretext to intervention. Inside this context borders lose meaning.

In an inquiry[25] conducted in the south and east of Ukraine on April 2014, 44% of the inquired believed that the country would be better if it established economic ties with the EU and 21% with Russia. In the east 46% favours close ties with Russia and 16% with the EU.

On the 25th of May 2014, Petro Poroshenko was elected President of Ukraine in a scrutiny that happened mostly in the west. The biggest change since Poroshenko's

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[21] *Crimea referendum: Voters "back Russia Union".* BBC News (16.03.2014). Available at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26606097 (consulted in 18.07.2015).

[22] *Ukraine: Putin signs Crimea annexation.* BBC News (21.03.2014). Available at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26686949 (consulted in 18.07.2015).

[23] Represents the most eastern region of Ukraine and is formed by Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk and Luhansk.

[24] *The world according to Putin.* The Economist (10.05.2014). Available at http://www.economist.com/news/international/21601862-why-should-russian-presidents-innovative-attitude-towards-borders-be-restricted (consulted in 19.07.2015).

[25] *April 2014 Ukraine Survey Results.* International Foundation for Electoral Systems (30.04.2014). Available at https://www.ifes.org/surveys/april-2014-ukraine-survey-results (consulted in 19.07.2015).

election was the signing of the association agreement with the EU[26]. This agreement does not mean membership. The crisis demonstrates the country's fragility and this type of vulnerability cannot have an entry in the EU. The Ukrainian official institutions have proven too fragile to produce significant changes. The fact of being a weakened State means it is open to external influence.

Europe, Russia, pro-Russian separatists and the Ukraine also resorted to diplomacy to solve the crisis. The first attempt occurred in the negotiations of Minsk: on 5th September 2014 a cease-fire protocol[27] was signed but was not effective. On 12 February 2015[28] Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France reached a new agreement.

Russia has toughened its approach with former Soviet Republics. Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, the Baltic States and even Greece can be targeted by Russia's intrusive foreign policy. In June of 2015 Russia announced that it would revise the legality of the Baltic States' independence[29]. Russia always had a tense relation with its neighbourhood; to them a good neighbour is a submissive one. The Russian military doctrine[30] evinces its ambitions. NATO's expansion is considered a threat. The country denotes the strategic interest in strengthening relations with other countries and recognizes the existence of conflicts in adjacent regions that need to be addressed. Russia is establishing alternative ties with other countries to avoid being isolated. The approximation towards Central Asia, to South America and Greece, its interference in Ukraine, the attempt of destabilizing the Baltic States, the creation of the EEU and the BRICS demonstrates that it keeps focused in developing an alternative model. The international position hardening from Russia towards the EU, the USA and NATO's expansion can be understood as a war against the West.

The emergence of an alternative World Order created two spheres: on the one hand an order composed by the USA, the EU and NATO, on the other hand an alternative order comprised by Russia, the BRICS, the EEU and any other that can provide a counterweight. While Russia keeps reinforcing its ties with alternative actors it destabilizes the traditional World Order.

The Ukraine events are a crisis about Russia's future; Europe's stability and a test to USA's capacity of response. To Ukraine this crisis is about defying a post-Soviet order, ending the political corruption and implementing relevant reforms. The crisis in Ukraine contributes to the present disorder with the appearance of multipolarization and the

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[26] *A look at the EU – Ukraine Association Agreement.* European Union External Action (27.04.2015). Available at http://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2012/140912_ukraine_en.htm (consulted in 21.07.20145).

[27] *OSCE releases the 12 – point protocol agreements reached between Ukraine, Russia and separatists in Minsk.* Kyiv Post (08.09.2014). Available at http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/osce-releases-the-12-point-protocol-agreements-reached-between-ukraine-russia-and-separatists-in-minsk-363816.html (consulted in 22.07.2015).

[28] *Factbox: Minsk agreement on Ukraine.* Reuters (12.02.2015). Available at http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/12/us-ukraine-crisis-minsk-agreement-factbo-idUSKBN0LG20Y20150212 (consulted in 22.07.2015).

[29] *Russia tries to soothe Baltic states over Independence review.* Reuters (01.07.2015). Available at http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/01/us-russia-baltics-idUSKCN0PB4M520150701 (consulted in 23.07.2015).

[30] *Russia's New Military Doctrine Shows Putin's Geopolitical Ambitions.* Business Insider (12.01.2015). Available at http://www.businessinsider.com/russia-has-a-new-military-doctrine-2015-1 (consulted in 24. 07. 2015).

emergence of new actors capable of presenting an alternative model to the traditional order.

The World Order that Russia wants to create is based in the distortion of international law. If the international agreements lose their validity what happened in Crimea might create a precedent to other countries. It is necessary to decide which type of order is most suitable: one where States respect the territorial integrity of others and the international agreements or an order where the agreements and the borders are disrespected. To develop an efficient multipolar order it is necessary to address the present limitations and to develop policies that avoid geopolitical rivalries.

The new conflicts in Ukraine can be characterized by the use of *proxies* comprised by separatist groups with interference capacity in State matters and by the use of political and information manipulation. This conflict created an instability that resulted in the fragmentation of Ukraine and might result in a reality identical to Bosnia Herzegovina. Russia's moves are putting in risk the traditional order and will result in its fragmentation and creation of two opposing groups: on the one hand a traditional World Order and on the other hand the alternative comprised by Russia and every international actor that does not identify with the traditional order. The use of *proxies*, demonstrations of force, the establishment of referendums without legislative validity and politic propaganda represent a new way of engage into conflict that is centred in the destabilization of a territory ignoring international law, the values of borders and the State's sovereignty. A World Order based on Russia's ideology will not bring balance only further disorder.

Discussion

Like in most studies, it is important to have a debate when analysing and establishing conclusions. This case is not different since it focus on important subjects of the international relations contemporary reality. This paper aimed at establishing a connection between two great concepts and to evince that connection through cases of study.

"Every international order must sooner or later face the impact of two tendencies challenging its cohesion: either a redefinition of legitimacy or a significant shift in the balance of power" (KISSINGER, 2014, p. 365). The referenced concepts were the World Order and the conflicts evolution. Apparently these two subjects do not seem to have any relation, however, when looked from a specific prism one can find multiple connections. The World Order and conflicts complement each other since this last one functions according to the order's interests and represents its defence mechanism. This can be important for future studies as it will allow to better understand the new types of conflicts and connect them with the international reality.

The cases of study represent different examples of conflicts and threats to the stability of the traditional order. In Iran there is no *de facto* conflict, like those characterized by Clausewitz, but diplomatic tensions. This is due to numerous reasons, but the main is

that the States lost their autonomy in international politics and are currently restrained by international agreements and supranational organizations. Iran seeks to establish its own order because it does not relate to the traditional one. *"The nuclear programme is the ultimate expression of modern Iran (...) is the ultimate expression of its desire for acceptance (but on its own terms) that is pursued through the one means that will ensure it remains a pariah."* (PATRIKARAKOS, 2012, p. 289 – 291). The nuclear program is the path to obtain its desired status and acquire independence from the West's intrusive policy.

"The new Ukrainian state has always been weak and vulnerable to capture by regional clans and oligarchic and even mafia interests." (WILSON, 2014, p. 39). Ukraine represents a more complex example since it is not just the country's future in the balance. The country got caught in the middle of a geopolitic dispute between Russia and the EU/USA due to geopolitic rivalry. A fragile State, Ukraine was since its independence easy to influence by the communists that kept in power after the fall of the Soviet Union. This crisis represents the West's attempt to further weaken Russia's position in Europe and Russia attempt to retaliate the West's and NATO eastern enlargement. Russia, like Iran, wants to develop an order far from the traditional one in which it can obtain the leading status instead of being open to third party interests.

All of this is much more complex than just this paper. There are a lot of questions to be asked. Why is the traditional World Order decaying? When and why the world did became so fragmented that it can no longer homogenize all its differences? How have States lost their autonomy in conflicts and why did conflicts developed to multiple forms of hybrid war far from the clausewitzian concept? What will a nuclear Iran mean to the contemporary reality of the traditional world order? How the Ukrainian crisis does affects the world's balance? Is it possible to have a functional international order in which all different political realities coexist?

These are some of the questions one might ask when reading this paper. The aim of this study was to answer them and some more, but it is important to not take any study as a universal truth since it is the debate that allows us to improve our knowledge and develop capacities that may invert the contemporary tendencies. Any good paper must have a part open to discussion where the reader may agree or disagree about certain points and provide a different point of view about them. This is why doing research is fundamental to understand the politic contemporary reality.

Conclusion

The World Order is a concept in constant reformulation since its implementation. The reality that comprehends the contemporary World Order is distinct from that implemented in the 17th century.

Iran's example demonstrates one of the existing threats to the traditional World Order's stability with the attempt of creating an alternative system. The lack of flexibility in the

traditional World Order has been one of the causes to its present disorder and to the appearance of new actors that try to establish an alternative model. Regarding the conflicts, Iran's case demonstrates the loss of State's autonomy in taking decisions. The diplomatic channel is now the first mechanism of choice to solve divergences, when this option fails the next one are the sanctions. The military option is rarely used and only as a last option.

The Ukraine crisis represents a set of values greater than its future: it is an arm-rail between a traditional World Order and an emergent one. Russia is trying to establish an alternative system and searches for new ties with countries that do not share the same values as the traditional order. The EEU, the BRICS and the establishment of new economic partnerships with countries like China have the goal of creating a counterweight to the traditional model. In the search for an alternative order, Ukraine represents an important strategic point to Russia.

Each civilization has its particular process of development, not all these processes coincide. Countries such as Russia, Iran and Ukraine are currently facing their maturation process, one that the West already went through. From this intransigency between Russia and the EU a political and economic crisis was born and resulted in Ukraine's territorial fragmentation being this last aspect a demonstration of the evolution of conflicts. Ukraine's integrity and sovereignty were disregarded by Crimea's annexation. UN's Security Council cannot take any significant position since Russia has a permanent seat having the capacity to veto any resolution. Contrary to what happened in Crimea, the same tactic failed in Donbas because the Ukrainian government intervened. The conflicts in Ukraine can be characterized as disperse, irregular and chaotic all aspects defining new conflicts. There is also the identity policy used by separatists to fragment Ukraine, another peculiarity of new conflicts. The will of creating autonomous regions like the self-proclamations of independence in Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv demonstrate are aimed at taking the legitimacy of intervention to the government being another characteristic of these conflicts. The identity policies and the self-proclamations of independence have the goal of creating further instability in countries going through crisis.

The mutations in these concepts are connected because the conflicts represent the World Order's defence mechanism and evolved as the order complexified. The phenomenon that affect the World Order such as multipolarization and globalization also produce effects in the conflicts. The chaotic conflicts are a result of the consequent multipolarization. The clash between different conceptions of World Order derives from the collision between different levels of modernity, in this case, the impact is between Russia's, Iran's and Ukraine's different ideologies against the West's traditionalism. The States sovereignty, especially the Western, had a favourable internal evolution but their international projection is encountering an opposition contributing to the fragmentation of the contemporary order.

The goal of this study is to demonstrate that there is a connection between the World Disorder and the evolution of conflicts through the use of cases of study. The

conclusions reached demonstrate that there is a relation between the evolution of the World Order and the conflicts because the last one is the mechanism of defence from the order's values. The same factors that determine the contemporary World Disorder gave rise to a transformation in conflicts. Both Iran and Ukraine illustrate different forms of conflicts and represent distinct threats to the stability of the traditional order.

This study helps understanding the contemporary World Disorder and the reasons why conflicts evolved to something outside the Clausewitzian concept. The emergence of non-State actors with capacity of developing and implementing a political model is the result of an outdated World Order incapable of adapting to multipolarity. Does the current order need to be updated to obtain a conjugation with the contemporary multipolarity? The World Order is outdated, but it remains immutable. It represents a concept that has proved to be unshakable, but might have to readapt in case alternative models acquire greater preponderance. The World Order and the conflicts must be understood as concepts that complement one another through the defence of their status with recurrence to Clausewitzian or chaotic wars. It is necessary to work this connection because it will help understanding the current politic, economic, social and military realities and to cognize the values that influence these aspects and are determinant to the constitution of the World Order and to the evolution of conflicts.

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