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# Geopolitical features of the position of Serbia and Serbian nation in modern international relations

**Abstract:** In this paper, the author analyzes geopolitical features of the position of Serbia and Serbian nation in the context of current international circumstances, with a focus on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Geopolitical features which will be the subject of the analysis are: knottiness, borderliness and fragmentation, since these are the paradigmatic features of the Balkan territory. Having this in mind, in this paper we will define the above-listed features so as to be able to analyze them further in the given contexts. We will analyze in particular how the former and the latter affect the conflict and, accordingly, make a synthesis and show how their consequences are reflected on the position of Serbia and Serbian nation. In addition to the description, analysis and synthesis methods, we will also use the geopolitical method for the purpose of understanding a strong cause-and-effect relationship between the political and the spatial in the current context. It is assumed that the ongoing conflicts complicate the geopolitical features of the position of Serbia and Serbian nation and aggravate the international position between the East and the West.

**Keywords:** geopolitics, Serbia, Serbian nation, Russian-Ukrainian conflict, international relations

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## Introduction

Current international relations are characterized by geopolitical dynamics caused by direct and/or indirect conflicts in different regions along, as coded by Nicholas Spykman, the zone of the Inner Crescent or the Rimland, which eventually leads to the trans-

formation of the international order from unipolarity to multipolarity. Bearing in mind that Serbia and Serbian nation are in the Rimland zone, and that current events leave geopolitical consequences on our position, dealing with this topic is justified both from the scientific and the social aspects. The 2022-2025 time frame directs us to the most current

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conflicts, primarily the Russian-Ukrainian war, enabling us to analyze, in a precisely given period, the geopolitical features that paradigmatically determine the position of the Serbian nation in the Balkans. Geopolitical knottiness, borderliness and fragmentation are the features in the focus of analyzing the position of Serbia and Serbian nation, with the aim of showing its complexity.

The research subject will be analysed at two levels – strategic and tactical. The first, strategic level entails the knowledge of geopolitical theories and the constant of global and regional powers, especially those projecting their interests towards the Balkans. The second, tactical level of the analysis focuses on current events, which are temporally and spatially determined and contextualized. Therefore, the contextual analysis is an inevitable part. In that manner, we reach the analysis of current events and their reflection on other regions and countries. We will use the geopolitical method to perceive “theoretical and practical cause-and-effect permeation of the geographical and the political, from the perspective of different interests, within the boundaries of specific territorial segments and in the context of certain sections on the chronological scale” (Stepić, 2016, p. 48).

### Geopolitical features of the position of Serbia and Serbian nation

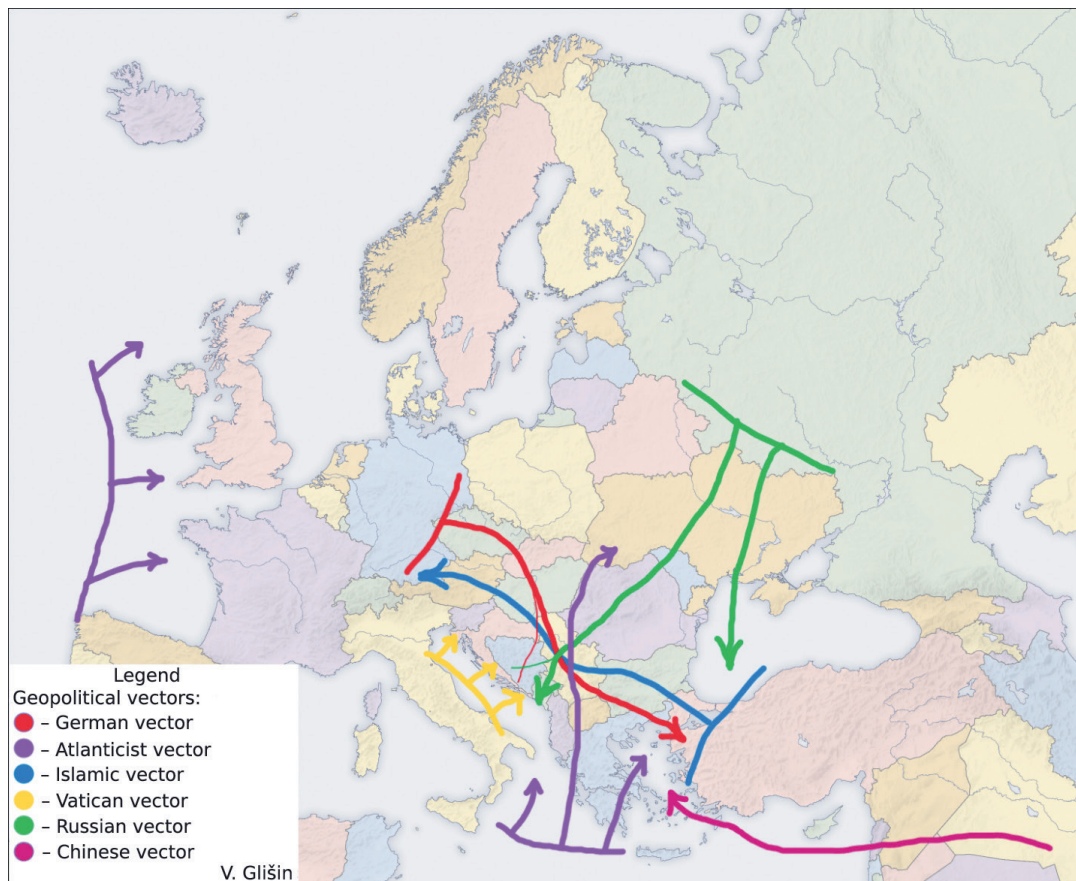
To determine the geopolitical position of a country, it is necessary to understand the geopolitical identity, which is defined as “an identification of geopolitical self-awareness and continuity in time and space” of a nation, as its “geopolitical

idiosyncrasy” (Stepić, 2019, p. 8) and, as “relatively objectifying identity-geographical properties of a national or religious group, in relation to its determined spatial, cultural-civilizational, religious-confessional and political-state form of existence” (Despotović, 2025, p. 301). Therefore, the geopolitical identity is determined by the geographical position and physical-geographical characteristics, regional and international contexts, internal political developments, foreign policy factors, military-strategic position of the country, and specific religious-confessional, cultural and civilizational features (Glišin, 2024).

Knottiness is a geopolitical feature that adequately reflects the state of affairs in the Balkans in the past few centuries. A geopolitical knot in this territory emerges due to the intersection and interweaving of the vectors of geopolitical appearance of global and regional powers in different periods throughout history (Glišin, 2024; Despotović, 2025). The German vector is projected from the northwest to the southeast. The Islamic vector is projected in the opposite direction, from the southeast to the northwest, and that is exactly where intersection occurred in the territory of the Balkans (Davutoglu, 2014). The Russian vector is projected from the northeast to the southwest. The Atlanticist vector, led by the United States of America, is projected in multiple directions, particularly if taking into account Nicholas Spykman’s theory of the Rimland and the position of the Balkans in that context (Spykman, 1942). We will emphasize the southwest-northeast direction which intersects with the Russian vector. The vector projected by the Vatican is directed from the west to the east and it is essentially a policy of

proselytism, i.e., of spreading Roman Catholicism towards the east, which affects Serbia and Serbian nation (Deschner, 2021). The Chinese vector is directed from the east to the west, which is reflected in the “Belt and Road” project and Initiative 17 + 1. Their activities in the Balkans are more than evident, particularly if we take into consideration diplomatic, economic and trade activities (Stekić,

2023). Therefore, knottiness is a rather complex geopolitical feature which shows the intertwined various political, geopolitical, economic, military, geostrategic, trade and other interests in the Balkans. We believe that it is not superfluous to speak about this territory as *Catena mundi*, or Chain of the World, since the geographical position led to such importance.



Map 1. Geopolitical vectors of global and regional powers – knottiness

Source: prepared by the author

Borderliness is a geopolitical feature recorded ever since the period of Roman Limes in the Balkans, when divisions existed most often along the rivers (e.g., the Roman Danube Limes) between the opposed sides. The military border (frontier) or *Terra Militaris*, was also drawn in other historical periods, when great powers clashed in the territory of the Balkans, for example, the conflict of Austro-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Knottiness is reflected in it as shown in Map 1. The above-mentioned historical circumstances developed the *Frontier spirit* among the Serbs. Apart from its military borders, the Balkans is the place where religious-confessional and civilizational borders were drawn, which largely affected the political circumstances during the past centuries (Glišin, 2024). The actual consequences of the religious-confessional division is proved by the events in the Serbian medieval state, when Saint Sava tried to fight for Serbian national interests between Rome and Constantinople (Despotović, 2025). Having this in mind, Professor Despotović writes about the geopolitics of Saint Sava's Orthodoxy "as a rational synthesis of cultural and political influences of the East and the West", in which "the responsible national and religious politics of the Nemanjić dynasty is contained and, in particular, of Saint Sava, whose priority was the Serbian national interest" (Despotović, 2025, p. 22). Based on the religious-confessional differences, in his book *The Clash of Civilizations*, Samuel Huntington makes a civilizational division which is largely reflected on the Balkans, where we locate the Western, Christian Orthodox and Islamic civilizations (Huntington, 2000). Taking into account that Huntington wrote that civilizational borders are bloody borders (Huntington, 2000), it is clear

why we believe that the division negatively affects the Balkans as an "area of multi-ethnic cocktail" (Brzeziński, 2001). Hence, Professor Mitrović says that "throughout history and in contemporaneity, volcanic contradictions thunder across the Balkans, trying to dismember it and divide it froth externally and internally" (Mitrović, 2006, p. 21). Speaking of borderliness, we can conclude that in this territory borders are drawn between the opposed, i.e., opposing sides, either for political, military, national or religious reasons, which inevitably leaves consequences on the functioning and existence of the Balkan states and nations.

Fragmentation (or disintegration, fracturing) as a geopolitical feature emerged through "a combination of numerous historical processes which destructed the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Serbian people" (Glišin, 2024, p. 279). It has been recorded for centuries since, due to invasions of conquerors, borders changed within which the Serbian people lived, and that led to the territorial compression towards the central part of the Balkans. In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, these processes were invasions of conquerors most pronounced especially after the world wars and the wars of the 1990s (Novak, 2015). For almost four decades we have witnessed the continuation of the aggressive suppression of the Serbian people from the territories where it has lived for centuries and these processes have not been completed yet. That is why the concept "Serbian lands" is quite significant because it includes all territories in which the Serbs lived and live, but, due to different aggressive processes, have been reduced to a minimum or no longer live there. The aim is to suppress the Serbs to the interior of the Balkans, i.e., towards the Serbian

motherland, and to reduce the territory of the Serbian lands to the territory of the Republic of Serbia and to prevent its access to the Adriatic that the Serbian people used to have for centuries. If we just mention the processes from the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we will understand how the geopolitical feature of fragmentation functions in practice, i.e., as a “destabilizing factor” (Despotović, 2025). Accordingly, in the south, the status of Kosovo and Metohija is one of the burning questions because of the open separatism of Albanian politicians and the unhidden project of forming “natural Albania”. Since 2008 we have faced the unilateral declaration of independence of so-called Kosovo and numerous problems in that context that might also pour into other parts of the territory of the Republic of Serbia, such as Bujanovac-Preševo and Raška regions (Glišin, 2022). Furthermore, fragmentation is also seen in the example of Montenegro’s leaving the state union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2006, when Serbia lost its access to the sea and found itself in an insular, territorially locked position (Despotović & Glišin, 2023). The deep divide between the Serbian and Montenegrin nations is a destabilizing factor in Montenegro which may be activated by foreign political actors if necessary (Leposavić, 2021). In addition, the status of Republic Srpska and the Dayton Agreement as its guarantor often brings into question the Bosniak leadership in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that is why we believe that there is potential for the destabilization and fragmentation process in the final outcome (Kecmanović, 2017). The above-mentioned calls for the consideration and analysis of security and geopolitical aspects of the position of Republic Srpska and the Serbian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the current

international circumstances, as well as the preparation for potential challenges and risks.

### Current international events and consequences to the geopolitical features of the position of Serbia and Serbian nation

In the previous part of the paper, we focused on the elements necessary for the analysis, first at the strategic, and then the tactical level, since we will also address them in the context of current international events. Namely, at the strategic level of the analysis, we have pointed to the geopolitical constants and paradigmatic features of the position of Serbia and Serbian nation, and in the following lines we will perform the analysis at the tactical level, i.e., in the current context, in order to reach consequences to the above-listed geopolitical features. In several past decades, we could observe numerous direct and/or indirect conflicts in the Rimland zone, which, although rarely of local character, had regional and global consequences (Halliday, 2005; Ozili, 2025; Schmidt, 2018; Despotović & Glišin, 2023).

The Rimland has been the most dynamic conflict zone since the end of the Second World War because that is where conflicting interests of thal-associatic and tellurocratic forces encounter, i.e., of Atlanticism (the USA) and Eurasianism (Russia), which affects the regions starting from the east of Europe, via the Balkans and the Middle East, to the Far East. Having in mind that the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict takes place in the Rimland zone, northeast of the Balkan region, we believe that there are geopolitical consequences to this territory,



which we will show in line with the previously described geopolitical features.

### Russian-Ukrainian conflict and consequences to geopolitical features

Antagonism between maritime powers and land powers in the Rimland zone is also reflected on smaller states such as the Republic of Serbia, both in the past and nowadays. An example of the NATO's expansion towards Europe's east and southeast actually shows the geopolitical expansion of Atlanticism, which is directly opposed to the interests of Eurasianism and that is why, *inter alia*, there has been an escalation in Ukraine. Moreover, in the

context of the NATO's expansion, we can see that the position of the Republic of Serbia is "insular", which means that the country is surrounded by the member-states of one military and/or political alliance and that is why it faces the problem of limited manoeuvring space (Glišin, 2024). The series of historical processes of suppressing the Serbian people inland led to the territorial reduction and loss of maritime participation, or to today's insular position. In that context, we will also analyze the geopolitical features of Serbia's position, starting from the assumption that the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is reflected on them.

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict, although lasting much longer, officially began on 24 February



2022, when decades-long intolerance culminated. Russia and Ukraine were primarily involved in the conflict, but with the indirect participation of other countries that support one or the other side, which shows the divide at the world level. That is why it is not surprising that one spatially limited conflict causes global consequences and accelerates numerous processes in international relations, in the spheres of politics, economy, trade, military industry etc. Division appears in that context as well, especially when speaking about the EU and the NATO on one side and the BRICS and the CSTO on the other side. It should be taken into account that, according to the National Security Strategy from 2019, “European integrations and the EU membership are the national interest and strategic orientation of the Republic of Serbia”, including military neutrality, which is not an obstacle in the development of the cooperation with the NATO and the CSTO (National Security Strategy, 2019). Moreover, the Strategy also stipulates the continuation of cooperation with the key international factors – the USA, Russia and China (National Security Strategy, 2019, p. 39). In this way, the multi-vector foreign policy of the Republic of Serbia is shown, which in the current context of the position in the geopolitical knot is rather complex.

As we have already stated, after 24 February 2022, a pronounced divide emerged in international relations into “pro-Ukrainian” and “pro-Russian” side, and such classification has become a model by which countries should be guided or they have to do it because of the pressures for aligning with the politics of international organizations they belong to or would like to join. The above-men-

tioned indicates that international circumstances in which countries need to create their foreign policy are much more complex than in the period before the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, particularly if they are situated in geopolitically vulnerable zones, on the imaginary line of the conflict of two geopolitical concepts. Therefore, we need to understand the geopolitical features explained in the previous part of the paper because they depict the geopolitical position of the Republic of Serbia and serve for the analysis in the current context.

Since the beginning of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, we have witnessed numerous foreign political pressures suffered by the holders of power in the Republic of Serbia, which is expected, having in mind the so-called side-taking model in international relations. First, we bear witness to the European Union pressurizing Serbia to impose sanctions to Russia and to align its foreign policy with the EU’s policy. As stated in the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), “the continuation of Serbia’s EU accession process is conditioned by its alignment with the sanctions against Russia and making significant progress in the reforms related to the EU” (*Politika*, 2024). Therefore, if the official attitude is that European integrations are Serbia’s strategic orientation, it is clear that pressures and messages from the EU are not favourable in that respect. Although more than three years have passed since the beginning of the conflict, the EU is announcing the 18<sup>th</sup> package of sanctions against Russia, with the emphasis on the Russian energy sector and the suspension of the sources of Russian financing (*Politika*, 2025a). The above-mentioned

confirms that foreign political circumstances in which the Republic of Serbia has been for more than three years are not favourable. The policy of balancing between the West and the East is also reflected in voting at the UN General Assembly, where Serbia condemned Russia's attack against Ukraine, but did not support sanctions against it. "Serbia's principled position against sanctions as a wrong instrument for achieving foreign political goals (since it also suffered years-long sanctions at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) was not met with understanding in the West" (Gajić, 2023, p. 64). Persistence regarding the non-imposition of sanctions to Russia is of national interest having in mind Russian support in the UN Security Council to the territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia and the position of Kosovo and Metohija. In addition, the relations of the two countries are also important for several other reasons: historical, religious-confessional, political, economic, trade, geo-energetic and military (Despotović, Glišin, 2024). Therefore, imposing sanctions on Russia would also have a negative effect on the geopolitical position of the state, as well as on the political position of the ruling party because, according to surveys, the majority of the people is in favour of maintaining good relations with the Russian Federation. The research conducted within the project "National interests of the Republic of Serbia: from contestation to legitimization" shows that 81% of the surveyed citizens of Serbia are against introducing sanctions to Russia, while 91% of the respondents believe that maintaining security of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija is a national interest (*Novi standard*, 2022). Other studies also show pronounced opposition to the sanctions

against Russia; namely, according to the "Henry Jackson Society" survey. 78.7% of the surveyed citizens of Serbia are against the imposition of sanctions on Russia (Ivanov & Laruelle, 2023, p. 27). Taking this into account, the worsening of bilateral relations with Russia is not a good option.

Looking from a different perspective, Serbia's strategic orientation towards European integrations raises new issues which were not in such a focus before the beginning of the conflict. In fact, Chapter 31 regarding common foreign and security policy is now much more important to the EU officials and this is exactly the question in relation to which Serbia has been largely criticized and found to regress in that chapter (Trailović, Rapać, 2023). Colleague Aleksandar Matić points to four reasons why Serbia is not coming closer to the EU. Those are: "Chapter 23 about the rule of law, Chapters 31 and 35 about Kosovo and Metohija, and fatigue from the EU's expansion" (RTS, 2025). Therefore, if the country does not harmonize its foreign policy with the EU's policy and fails to impose sanctions on Russia because of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the European integrations road will be uncertain. According to colleague Aleksandar Gajić, "Serbia's Euro-integration prospect (except for the rhetoric level) by starting a 'new cold war' with the conflict in Ukraine becomes extremely out of place, while the strategy of neutral, balancing avoidance, although aggravated and like 'tightrope walking' is turning into Serbia's life imperative" (Gajić, 2023, p. 69).

The previously-mentioned can be explained in the following manner. If Serbia imposed sanctions on Russia, the question arises as to the negotiating position of the state regarding Kosovo and Metohi-



ja, Republic Srpska, Srebrenica etc., since most EU member-states support the independence of Kosovo, participates in the destabilization of Republic Srpska and supports the Resolution on Srebrenica, in which the Serbs are labelled as a genocidal nation. At the UN General Assembly held on 23 May 2024, the Resolution on Srebrenica was adopted, which, according to Russian representative Vasily Nebenzya, further deepens the divides (RTS, 2024). Speaking of the pressures on Republic Srpska, Secretary of the Security Council Sergei Shoigu points out that Russia is oriented towards “providing any possible help to its development based on the observance of the Dayton principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality of three state-building nations and two entities with broad constitutional authorities” (Politika, 2025b). Russian ambassador Aleksandar Bocan-Kharchenko has emphasized many times that Russia supports the territorial integrity of Serbia regarding the status of Kosovo and Metohija (Tanjug, 2025). Therefore, Russia expresses a clear attitude and supports diplomatic tools regarding all sensitive matters of importance to the Serbian people, and that is why maintaining good relations is indispensable. Moreover, the attempt to maintain good relations with the Russian Federation is reflected in the fact that Serbia has not suspended either direct air transport or Russian media, e.g., Sputnik and RT.

The third perspective requires taking into account the insular position of the Republic of Serbia since, in the event of global turbulences, the country might become isolated, with no possibility of implementing a multi-vector and balancing foreign policy. Since the beginning of the conflict, all the neighbouring countries have harmonized their re-

spective foreign policies with the Atlanticist pole of power and joined the anti-Russian sanctions. Moreover, the neighbouring countries are exerting pressure on Serbia to impose sanctions on Russia, “insinuating that Serbia is a ‘Russian player’ and Trojan horse in the Balkans whose foreign policy threatens regional stability and security” (Gajić, 2023, p. 65). In the past few years, messages have been sent many times about “Serbia being Russia’s Trojan horse in Europe” (Cohn-Bendit, Garton Ash, Karolewski & Leggewie, 2022), which is a stereotype used throughout history to justify different hostile activities against Serbia and Serbian nation (Ekmečić, 2021). What does it actually mean? As we could see many times in history, great powers determined their followers in the Balkans through which they controlled and restrained the Serbian factor, seized Serbian lands and expelled and killed Serbian people. In this fragmentation as a feature is reflected, which in the newly-emerging circumstances can be seen as more and more pronounced in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, but also in the pressures exerted on Republic Srpska. At the same time, the conflict potential expressed in borderliness as a geopolitical feature may be activated. Since the neighbouring countries accepted the Atlanticist concept which is, globally speaking, anti-Russian and, at the regional level, anti-Serbian, there is no doubt that the goal is to continue pressurizing the insular position of Serbia and Serbian national interests. Therefore, since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, “Serbia undoubtedly has the narrower action space for keeping the former direction [...] and the balanced relationship towards all four pillars of its foreign policy (the EU, the USA, Russia and China)” (Gajić, 2023, p. 66).

## Conclusion

Geopolitical features paradigmatically show the position of Serbia and Serbian nation in centuries-long continuity, and that is why it is a justified starting point for the analysis in the context of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict. The effects of the conflict soon became global, which inevitably led to the acceleration of processes in international relations, placing the countries on two opposed sides, like the Cold War division. Serbia has found itself on the line of divisions due both to the multi-vector foreign policy and the interests and influences of foreign political actors which are intertwined in this territory. That is why knottiness as a geopolitical feature is unavoidable when speaking about the position of the Republic of Serbia in the current international context.

In addition, fragmentation as a new destabilization factor is a specific tool with the aid of which it is possible to exert pressure on Serbia and Serbian nation, which has been evident particularly in the past few months, in the examples of Kosovo and Metohija and Republic Srpska. The Atlanticist West exerts pressure on the Serbian leadership in the most sensitive spots of national interests both directly and indirectly, through the neighbouring countries. This is built upon by borderliness as a geopolitical feature, or political division by religious-confessional and civilizational affiliation, which has been used throughout history with the aim of destabilizing the Balkans. It is exactly on the lines of division that the conflict potential has been created and the state of permanent instability has been kept which, if necessary, could turn into an open conflict.

Therefore, since 24 February 2022, the Republic of Serbia has, unlike many countries that took either the “pro-Ukrainian” or the “pro-Russian” side, has been in an unenviable and complex geopolitical position, which affects the internal political state and foreign political positioning. Currently it is impossible to see the benefits of taking either one or the other side because of the previously stated facts about the geopolitical position of Serbia, and that is why persistence in the policy of balancing between the West and the East is justified, even in the narrowed manoeuvring space. Geopolitical circumstances in the future will undoubtedly depend on the outcome of the war in Ukraine and, concurrently with the balancing politics, different scenarios and potential positioning of Serbia in the forthcoming circumstances should be projected. In that respect, we will list four potential scenarios of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the effects on the position of the Republic of Serbia, as a basis for further comprehensive and detailed research and analyses. We would like to emphasize that each of the scenarios has several layers and aspects, and that is why it is impossible to draw comprehensive and thorough conclusions in only several passages.

The first scenario implies the success of the Russian Federation or, conditionally speaking, victory in the ongoing conflict. That would mean Russia’s stronger positioning in the international order, particularly in relation to the Atlanticist West as a geopolitical opponent to Eurasianism. According to this scenario, the position of the Republic of Serbia would become more stable and important in the region since it has not imposed

sanctions on Russia. A more favourable strategic position would provide a broader manoeuvring space for resolving questions of national importance, primarily the question of the status of Kosovo and Metohija. Furthermore, the position of Republic Srpska and the Serbian people in the region would be more favourable, particularly with the strengthening ties with the Serbian motherland. As for the internal political situation, there is a risk of Serbia encountering the EU's political, economic, institutional and other pressures exactly because of one of the priorities of its foreign policy – the European integrations road. We believe that Russia's potential success in the conflict will lead to the establishment of a multipolar international order, which we see as more favourable circumstances for the long-term positioning of Serbia. At the same time, we have in mind the insular position of Serbia in the EU/NATO surroundings, which continues to limit the state's diplomatic manoeuvring position and further complicates the analysis of the first scenario. Accordingly, we believe that it is necessary to follow actively all aspects of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, as well as the roles of different actors in the conflict in order to make political decisions on the basis of timely analyses.

The second scenario implies *a frozen conflict* with no clarified outcome of the conflict, with the continuation of the “cold” geopolitical confrontation of the East and the West. Such a context would substantially complicate the position of Serbia, whose balancing strategy would become more difficult and less sustainable. Foreign po-

litical pressures would be intensified, European integrations would be uncertain, while Russia's support would be reduced. The newly-emerging circumstances might call for taking one of the opposed sides. Fragmentation as a geopolitical feature may be an active instrument of the West's pressure on Serbia, especially in the regions such as Kosovo and Metohija, Bujanovac-Preševo region, Raška region, Vojvodina, but also Republic Srpska and the territory in the region populated by the Serbs. Apart from foreign political pressures, pronounced polarization would occur at the internal political level, into the pro-Western and pro-Russian sides. Moreover, the economic situation and cooperation with foreign partners would be uncertain, which would threaten economic growth.

The third scenario implies the end of the conflict at the negotiation table and the division of Ukraine in line with the state in the field. Namely, with the mediation of great powers, the proposal would be made that would be accepted by both warring sides. Such an outcome would lead to the de-escalation of global tensions and relaxation of pressures on the countries such as Serbia, particularly in terms of taking one of the two warring sides. By abolishing the forced side-taking model, it would be possible to continue the multi-vector foreign policy and the neutral military position, although we would like to emphasize that, in this context, the negotiations and cooperation with foreign political actors should continue from the aspect of Serbian national interests. It means that diplomatic tools should be activated for solving the status of Kosovo and Metohija and for more

favourable positioning of Serbia in international relations.

The fourth scenario implies the success of Ukraine, i.e., the West, or, conditionally speaking, victory in the conflict. In such circumstances, Russia would suffer a political and military defeat, and its international position would be undermined. Accordingly, Serbia would be forced to distance itself from Russia and fully align its foreign policy with the EU's policy. With the loss of its key ally in the UN Security Council, Serbia's international negotiating position would be substantially weaker and further political decisions would be brought

into question. It would be reflected on the status of Kosovo and Metohija, which would in further steps cause a domino effect in other geopolitical hotspots in the territory of Serbia. The European integration road might assume a new dimension, i.e., the demands for rigorous conditions and reforms in all segments. Because of Serbia's internal political polarization into pro-Western and pro-Russian sides, social tensions and conflicts might occur.

Potential scenarios are the basis for multidisciplinary research and analyses, which is also necessary in dynamic international relations we are witnessing.

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