

NATIONAL SECURITY ENDANGERMENT AS A RESULT OF THE DESTRUCTION OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES

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Abstract: The subject in matter, through scientific objectivity, aims to elaborate on the risks that are threatening economic resources. The state, that is ought to ensure national security, must be attentive towards internal and external risks. It is a fact that the trend of globalization is causing the creation of multinational companies, which are becoming economically even more powerful than certain states. This scenario is best evidenced in the Balkans, where the states are in their transitional process of recovering from the war consequences, which affected the entire former Yugoslavia. For the sake of profiting, unscrupulous individuals are destroying the economic resources – natural resources in particular – which in turn is fueling climate change. Massive destruction of natural resources in Kosovo, and in the region, was the main influence for choosing this topic. Another fact considered is that the destruction of the economic resources of any given country may impact and affect the neighboring countries or the entire region, as the destruction of the forests and the rivers trigger grave consequences. The immense and, in cases, irreparable such consequences have prompted me to investigate and study this phenomenon, which, moreover, implies a great threat to national security and even the very existence of human beings on Earth. In the Balkan region it seems that main focus of the states is on the financial investment in the military, as if they are competing with each other who drains more finances for military armament. Having said the aforementioned, the irony is that these Balkan states have way lower incomes per capita than the Western European states! In this way, the Balkan states treat the economic sector and the environment as a non-priority issue. This, in return, makes room for the local and international organizations to misuse and destroy the economic resources and degrade the living environment. The workforce or the active population of a country is one of the main economic resources of a state. This force enables the state to survive and proceed as independent from other states. As a matter of fact, it is one of the crucial elements of the state! By losing this force it would mean to lose the nation and the state itself. In order to have the best-completed research, the method of accounts and official data usage will be administered. Thereafter, the aforementioned aggregated data, which were undergone through the verification processes, will be promptly analyzed. This paper could also present an actual reflection overview.

Keywords: National Security, Economic Resources, Natural Resources, Human Resources, Destruction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Efforts have been put on this paper to outline the meaning, through given explanations, of national security and its endangerment in cases when economic resources are damaged. The first section of the paper consists of mostly the explanations given in lieu of the topic that will be treated in this paper. This section will mention mostly the national security and its purpose as seen by several authors of the same topic and then it will target the economic resources. They will be discussed from the classical economics point of view and then it will be pondered upon each of them separately. This section contains the explanations and the paper's purpose from both scientific and social points of view, and its benefits. Methods used in this paper are made available for the reader. The central part of this paper discusses the research topic itself: national security endangerment as a result of the destruction of economic resources and their intertwining; the significance of the state-care for the economic resources, viewed through the national security lens. By the final section of this paper, several topics of national security endangerments are pinpointed and discussed, which result as a destruction of the economic resources. The final section of the paper covers recommendations. National security depicts the inner and the outer security of a country or of an independent and sovereign state, which provides security to its inhabitants from the danger that may come from abroad or within. The national security threat, as a result of economic resources destruction, could be also viewed from the social and scientific point of view. The *social aspect* of the study of national security threat through economic resource destruction has a significant importance for the matter of fact that by destroying the economic resources the living environment itself is destroyed, thus, the continuation of life in those areas is thereby threatened. This study's purpose is to inform and aware society of the importance of preserving the economic resources, as they are necessary for the state to become sustainable and strong which in return would ensure security for its citizens. The *scientific aspect* of this research will focus on collecting and in the study of the information and of the materials, which will be compiled and processed through scientific grounds. Onwards, the outcome would serve to inform the proper authorities. The scientific results could be used by the institutions of the state to prevent further destruction of economic resources and treat seriously the threats of national security. Like any other scientific study, this study too

will serve other future researchers with its results and will influence to undertake similar initiatives to treat this particularly important issue.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

To have better-completed research, the official data and accounts will be used, which will later on be analysed. The intention rests in the matter that the used gathered information, that have been undergone through the verification process, will complete a credible picture of the actual situation. The data will be gathered not only in the public sector but also from non-governmental organizations and portals that publish text that provide data that are highly significant for the research. Descriptions and explanations will be offered after analysing the data collected from public and non-public sources.

Classical Economy recognizes three categories of known resources, which at the same time are produce factors: the land, labour, and the capital. Land includes all of the natural resources and is also considered as the resource of raw materials. Human resources or labour is comprised of the human efforts to create products, and, the last one, the capital is comprised of the products created by the people which are used for producing other goods and/or to offer services.

Natural resources cover all of the resources the state possesses that are in its land and, if applicable, its sea. The natural capital is the natural resource stock that covers: land, water, air, and all living organisms. Some natural resource assets provide individuals with goods and free services, which often are called ecosystem services. Two of the latter, which are water and fertile land, support the economy and the society, subsequently providing the conditions for living.

Human resources, per se, is the working class that a country possesses. It is not comprised of only the working class but also of the professionals that are qualified and ready for work. In many cases, in lack of human resources or in lack of professionals, countries cannot develop their economies. Faced with the fact of technology development, developed countries are urged to hire workers from abroad. In the beginning, their focus was on unqualified labour or handymen but, in due course of time, each and every day there's a demand for professionals, which are continuously being searched for, targeted, and lured by offering them better working conditions than they have in their own countries they come from. The exact afore mentioned affects emigration from developing countries towards the developed countries, which are trying to remedy their own deficiency of workers.

The capital is comprised of the goods made by a human or tools, such are: machines, buildings, and other infrastructures that are too used for producing goods or delivering services. In socialist countries, almost the entire capital was state-owned whilst, in the capitalist countries, in most of the cases, the capital belongs to the private companies, who pay taxes and contribute to the development of the state; the state owns only a handful number of strategically important sectors, such are: energy, irrigation systems, harbours, airports, and other significant sectors. However, these sectors too don't exclude private management since there is a considerable number of these sectors that states partially or fully privatized.

In order to better understand the threat of national security from the destruction of economic resources point of view, firstly we will have to make clear the meaning of the word *state*. The theories of the force in vast modern variants explain the origin and the nature of the state with the forms of organizing violence – conquer and submission. Social groups that are better trained for war (armed with organizational and military skills) reap victories over weaker groups and organize rule over them. This is how states are formed. Nowadays, the most spread theory treats the concept of the state as an organism that carries out a specific function within the social system, which in itself reflects a system of complementary functions with reciprocal interdependence (Mirsad D Abazović, D. M., Bećirević, E., Abazović, D., 2002). The state is comprised of: 1. Territory; 2. Population; and 3. Political power. If we don't have any of the given three elements, there can be no state. On the other hand, if there is no political power, we would have a country without state order. If there would be no territory or the people, there would be no preconditions to create a state. Balkan countries, in particular the ones that became independent from the former Yugoslavia, who suffered war, unlike Albania that suffered riots, are facing long and toilsome transitions, which sometimes appear endless. Transitioning from a single-party system and socialist economy into capitalism, many countries are looking up to other countries and are copying them, which I think is wrong! The transition is a much more complex problem than an internal administrative change in structure, society, and organization policies. No country in transition can be a reference point to another country. Subsequently, no copy can fit right the other one nor is possible to directly apply identical standards from one country to another, not even in the institutions and security services. (Kovačević, G. 2019). The traditional understanding of the *aggressor* is the country, which by acting towards another country, threatens another state's national security. The aggressor is the country that in any way is threatening the independence, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of the other country, i.e., attacking another country with armed forces. (Abazović, D. M., Bećirević, E. Abazović, D. 2002). Nevertheless, nowadays, national security

endangerment cannot be assessed only by attacks from other countries or other organizations. I think it should be assessed by the actions of companies that are endangering the state's economic resources for profitability, by which national security is breached. Globalisation is, from the economy's point of view, the process by which obstacles in the international sphere are diminished or eliminated for economic trading and the increase of the economic integration between the countries. (Kovačević, G. 2019).

Hereafter will follow explanations for three economic resources that could jeopardise national security if they are destroyed. As aforementioned, the Western Balkans is still undergoing the transitional phases and we encounter many private local investors, and from abroad, that are interested to privatize the state's natural resources or use them by concession. This should all be just fine if parties adhere to rules and regulations for environment protection against degradation and if natural resources would be used undamaged. After the fall of the socialist system all over the Western Balkans, the process of privatisation of public companies began. Kosovo will be a case study for the paper. In Kosovo, after the last war, the privatisation process was initially conducted by UNMIK⁶⁴ and later continued by Kosovo institutions. Socially owned enterprises were offered to private local and international individuals for buying. Agricultural lands and forests were privatised. Initially, in the process of privatisation, the article for not changing the nature of the property was not enlisted in the contract, by which the buyer would not be able to change the nature of the purchased property. This lack made it possible that vast privatised agricultural lands with the irrigation were chopped into small parcels and were converted into building sites or they were converted from farming lands into abandoned small parcels that today grow brackens and ferns. Based upon the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development data, every year some 500 hectares of agricultural land is changed into purposes other than agriculture. On the other hand, the Farmer's Syndicate data shows that the given number is much higher than that – it goes up to 1000 hectares per year.⁶⁵ It is clear enough that if the state is to function as independent, it has to take care of its own natural resources in order to fulfil the essential needs of its citizens. Kosovo has a law on the agricultural land but it lags in its application; a law that is not applied is marooned on paper. Building hydropower energy stations by local and international companies, by disrespecting the measures for the protection of the environment, has destroyed a considerable number of rivers in Kosovo and the region. This caused severe loss of the water life, which thereafter has endangered the birdlife that fed on those rivers. For the sake of the argument, let us observe the river Luma in Albania. In the report "Balkan Rivers Endangered Fish Species Distribution and Threats from Hydropower Development", a research conducted by the Professor of the Graz University, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Steven Weiss, says that the region is one of the most world ambitious plans for expansion of hydropower energy stations. Presently, there are some 2800 planned projects and one-third of those projects are in the protected areas, such are national parks. He makes notice that the dams have a catastrophic impact on the environment, apart from blocking the fish to pass through that part of the river, when the dam opens, the sheer power of the massive water wipes away all the fish eggs from the river, which makes impossible fish breeding. The beluga fish is on top of the list of endangered fish in Shkodër. The reports emphasize that the planned dams threaten 49 out of 531 species of fish of the European sweet waters and a loss of 50 to 100 percent of their dissemination in the Balkans; 11 endemic species are getting extinct throughout the Balkans⁶⁶. Apart from the fish, hydropower energy stations endanger also the plants and the rivers. The water levels are dropping continuously, which is impacting the entire ecosystem (Simović, M. N., et.al, 2020)⁶⁷. As mentioned earlier, natural resources are one of the three economic sectors and at the same time the land/territory is one of the state's elements; subsequently, if natural resources are destroyed, one of the economic resources is destroyed, which is one of the main elements of the independent state – the territory. By endangering the living environment, we've endangered national security for the fact that with no natural resources and by destruction of the environment for life we face endangerment of the living environment in that country. Human resources account for the people and their knowledge, their abilities, and their skills that they use to carry out their works in an enterprise or independently exercise their profession. In the Western Balkans, emigration towards developed countries was always present. However, this phenomenon made headway with the beginning of armed conflicts in the former Yugoslavia territory and the riots in Albania. The only difference in emigration is of the one during 90s, when people would seek shelter from armed conflicts or the riot and temporarily emigrate for safety reasons, whilst the other reason is that in the last two decades the emigration is done for the sake of economic reasons – they are leaving the country for a better life, not intending to get back to

⁶⁴ United Nations Mission in Kosovo

⁶⁵ <https://indeksonline.net/tokat-bujqesore-me-cilesore-te-kosoves-jane-betonuar/> (23 September 2018 Prishtinë)

⁶⁶ Prof. Dr. Steven Weiss, *Rivers Endangered Fish Species Distributions and threats from hydropower development*, (Graz 2018)

⁶⁷ Miodrag N. Simović et.al, *VICTIMOLOGY ABOUT THE VICTIMS OF NATURAL DISASTER AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA*, (Sarajevo 2020)

their country anymore. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Germany, the country is forecasted to annually accept 25 thousand workers coming from the Balkans. This statement was given by Labour Minister Hubertus Heil, who also added that the extension of the policies for another three years on the Western Balkans is fruitful for the German economy. Some industries, such as construction, are blooming and continuously seek workers. The lack of professional staff in such industries should not become an obstacle to growth⁶⁸.

According to the World Emigration Report data of 2020, three countries of the region are ranked amongst the top twenty countries in the world on the percentage in emigration since 1990; namely: Bosnia and Herzegovina (33 percent), Albania (29 percent), and Northern Macedonia (24 percent). The population in the region is growing old as the young population is leaving the country and the birth factor has collapsed into the average of 1.6 – on the same levels as the EU countries. These three tightly intertwined factors are giving birth to difficult circumstances for increasing the already falling demographic chart in the region. Actually, this is the phenomenon that most of the Southeast European countries are fighting with. On the other hand, rich countries compensate their low birth rate with immigrants, which is not the case in the Balkans⁶⁹. In reality, many Western Balkan leaders appear to be grateful about the emigration, considering the fact of the high rate of unemployment (the young generation in particular) and the lack of capacity to absorb the new working force in their own economy. A Gallup study on the “brain drain” (conducted from 2015 – 2017) shows that the Western Balkan countries ranked low in Europe, indicating an alarming number of people who want to emigrate from the region, e.g., 42 percent from Kosovo, 32 percent from Albania, similar figures hold Bosnia and Herzegovina, 30 percent from Northern Macedonia, and 24 percent from Serbia. Actually, the young generation is unsatisfied with the political situation, lack of meritocracy, and lack of employment options in their birthplaces⁷⁰. The working class, or so-called active population of a country, is one of the main and most important resources of a country in order to exist as independent from other countries, and at the same time, it is one of the main elements of the state. If a state loses its working-class, that nation and the state perishes. After World War II, the Western Balkan had had a considerable economic development. As an indicator to the aforementioned was the sufficient economy for the needs of the population, which, unlike in the last decades, made countries become independent from import; moreover, there were lots of companies that exported their goods to foreign countries – including western countries. With the fall of communism, the wars, and riots in the Western Balkans, the destruction of the states’ capital began. The capital was being destroyed from both segments: wars and riots on one hand and political mismanagement on the other – politicians who turned a blind eye and supported unfavourable privatisation of the assets in return for their own personal gain.

The German media stated that China considers Western Balkans territory as “a discovery for themselves”, i.e., all of the territory of the former Yugoslav countries which couldn’t quite reach the European Union after their independence. Twenty years later, these countries are still struggling with weak infrastructure and harsh living conditions. “This makes Balkans an ideal territory for the presence of China in their market and the creation of the so-called “The Silk Road”. During 2017, China invested in Serbia some 6 billion dollars in projects, which is equivalent to the European investment in all Western Balkans. There is a catch to this, though: Serbia has to return these Chinese funding’s⁷¹. Privatisation paved the road for foreign companies to own many of the main state assets of the countries in Western Balkans. Such an example is the privatisation of the energy sector with hydropower; privatisation of entire energy networks; or even public ownership with a concessional agreement, such is the case with the Prishtina Airport, privatised by “Limak” Turkish company. Yet another Turkish company privatised Kosovo Energy Network for 23 million Euros, whilst the net worth of this company’s premises alone reach amounts several times higher than that. Seizing control over public companies through investments or privatisations, which from the aspect of national importance are vital for the state, we have facilitated endangerment of the national security through the loss of control over our own economic segments which are now being run by foreign companies, which in turn makes us dependent of them – companies that could easily be of service directly to their own overall state politics.

3. RESULTS

Due to the loss of agricultural land, the state of Kosovo loses one of the most important economic resources. According to data published by the Ministry of Agriculture, the state of Kosovo loses about 500 hectares of agricultural land as a result of construction on these lands, while according to the farmers’ association this loss is

⁶⁸<https://www.bmas.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2020/westbalkanregelung-soll-verlaengert-werden.html>, Berlin 2020

⁶⁹UN Migration, *WORLD MIGRATION REPORT 2020*, Geneva 2020

⁷⁰<https://kanal10.live/oped/rjedhja-e-trurit-ne-ballkan-injorimi-i-asetit-me-te-vlefshem>, Prishtin 2020

⁷¹<https://www.dw.com/sq/kina-dhe-investimet-n%C3%AB-ballkan/a-45208003>, Bone 2018

even higher by about 1000 hectares, which seriously endangers Kosovo's future in terms of fulfilling basic agricultural needs. Giving license for the construction of hydropower plants is a mistake due to the fact that it is leading to the destruction of rivers and Kosovo is not very rich with water but on the contrary there is a lack of water. The state of Kosovo has the greatest potential for economic development of the young age of the population and continuous migration is endangering this economic potential and is coming to the risk of national security for the fact is coming to the loss of one of the most important elements of the state that of the population. If we look at the data above we see that two elements of the state are endangered, the element of territory as a result of ecological destruction and the element of population as a result of migration and both of these due to mismanagement of the third element of the state, political power.

4. DISCUSSION

Considering the investments of the states, it is easily notable that their main focus is on military security, which is quite normal for the fact that the biggest threat of the state comes in the form of aggression by the other state. The aggression is an unprovoked attack of one or more states to the sovereignty and the integrity of the other state with the intention of territorial conquer, forceful change in the internal affairs, or to achieve other political aspirations or similar, through which the independence and the sovereignty of that country is endangered (Abazović, D. M., Bećirević, E., Abazović, D. 2002). Security sectors of a state should also focus on the economic sector and environment sector for the same fact as mentioned earlier that the population and the living conditions are the main economic resources of a country and at the same time are the two crucial elements of a state; the third being the governing power. Therefore, we may have to wonder whether we are experiencing the destruction of the economy and degradation of the living condition and, moreover, if it is so, the question imposes: upon which population and what territory will the state's governing power stretch in the future? Balkan states have a relatively long hostile past, which fuelled the loss of mutual trust amongst each other. If we glance at the history of the West European states, we may see that they had wars for centuries and yet have found peace with each other and are presently well integrated into the great European family. Apart from national security measures taken in the military sector, a particular attention is paid to the living environment, which is not the case in Balkans. As mentioned earlier, it appears as if in Balkans there's a vicious race on who is spending more in the military department. In almost all Balkan countries, the incomes per capita are several times lower than of Western Europe's. Balkan countries appear not to focus neither on economic or environmental sectors, which paved the road for local and international companies to misuse and exploit economic resources and degrade the living environment. The fact that I involved Western Balkan countries and did not focus only on the country I come from is because the destruction of natural resources in one country has a domino effect in the neighbouring countries as well, one of them being the destruction of rivers and of the forests. The consequences of losing the population have already begun to be felt in the region. Based upon official government statistics and of the different organizations that study and research the Balkan region, it is noted that the Balkans is seriously being endangered with the loss of population; particularly with professionals. According to the UN Migration, *WORLD MIGRATION REPORT 2020*, Geneva 2020 report, as of 1989, the Western Balkan population has been decreased by some 2.5 million inhabitants, now accounting for 17.6 million inhabitants from earlier times of over 20 million. The trend shows that in the next 30 years the loss of population will be even higher, in the average of 13 percent or, speaking in numbers, some 2.3 million fewer inhabitants. By 2050, it is envisaged a drop in the overall number to only 15 million inhabitants in the region. The degradation of the environment due to the misuse of natural resources has already scored negative results in having fewer green spaces and an increase in air pollution. The AQI (Air Quality Index) measured in January 2017 in Prishtina scored 178, whilst on certain days of the month the direct measurement of the concentration of PM (Particle Pollution) 2.5 ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) scored up to 606, which is much higher than the acceptable numbers. It is the same situation in Northern Macedonia⁷², where the PM10 have reached levels of over 400 micrograms for cubic meter in Skopje, which is equal to five times higher than acceptable numbers. According to authors Arbër Bajrami and Aida Salihbegović⁷³, the number of victims due to air pollution in 100 thousand inhabitants varies from 160 to 230. Bosnia and Herzegovina is ranked first in the number of victims, followed by other Balkan neighbours: Albania, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, and then Serbia. The Balkan region is the most polluted area in entire Europe. The expert Vlatka Matković Puljić, in charge of Health and Energy in the Balkan region in the HEAL (Health and Environment Alliance), with its headquarters in Brussels, stated for DW (Deutsche Welle) that you can't fight pollution locally. If there's emission in the other country and is not being remedied, you can't do much about it. Hence, you need cross-border cooperation. I consider that it is about time for the Western Balkan's policymakers to

⁷²<https://www.evropaelire.org/a/macedonia-ngufatet-nga-ndotja-e-ajrit-29637108.html>, 2018

⁷³<https://www.dw.com/sq/ndotja-n%C3%AB-ballkan-ajri-nuk-njeh-kufij-shtetror> Bone 2018

think about the new-coming generations as to what do they want to leave to them as a legacy and focus more on the national security, particularly in the economy sector, i.e., in the prevention of natural and human resources since the consequences afflicting the countries may soon become irreparable, which further affects the entire region.

5. CONCLUSION

In the governing systems of the free economy, the state must stand firm in the protection of economic resources instead of helping to destroy them. The state is ought, specifically, to take care of the economic and human resources because if you lose them, you lose the state. Considering the disbursement and the dissemination of the investments in the Balkan region, we might easily conclude that there's no clear state policy to protect economic resources, with an emphasis on natural and human resources. Almost all Balkan states are interested to increase military capacities, which is quite normal, but they have almost neglected entirely the economic security sector and environment security sector. If we look at the investments and initiatives for the protection of natural resources, we might say that in most cases it is the local and international organizations that are dealing with environmental protection and in very few cases you encounter donors from Western Balkans in support. In most cases, the donations come from outside of the region. Western Balkan states should focus on the protection of natural and human resources, in order to protect national security. In the near future, the countries of our topic will be on the brink of facing grave problems of old age population due to *brain drain* phenomenon. The young or, as we called them earlier, the active population is the one that keeps the country running as they are the ones who pay taxes, develop the economy and keep the natality balance in check. If the destruction of the economic resources keeps this pace, the Balkan region is endangered to become a degraded environment unsuitable to live in, namely, Western Balkan's national security in the economic sector and its living environment is about to face grave danger.

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