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THE RELEVANCE OF 'NATIONAL SECURITY' IN THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD

Abstract

National security has remained a major theme of International Relations (IR) because of its academic as well as policy relevance. Grounded in realism, national security dominated the security discourse during the Cold War era. However, the demise of the Cold War and the emergence of new security threats, i.e. climate change, environmental degradations, poverty, endemic diseases, transnational crime and drug trafficking etc., pose significant challenges to the national security paradigm. Many among the new generation of security experts, moreover, negate the relevance of national security. In this context, the paper explores the relevance of national security in the post-Cold War era by applying four objective criteria, viz., levels of analysis, nature of threats, goal of security and means of security. The paper eventually concludes that given the new realities, the notion of national security has been gradually redefined though not drastically abandoned. This redefinition of national security could deal with new challenges while keeping many of its traditional aspects intact. These modifications in the concept have helped 'national security' remain as a relevant and predominant concept in IR.

1. Introduction

The end of the Cold War is a watershed in the contemporary history of international politics. The event brought about dramatic changes in the field and sub-fields of the discipline of International Relations (IR). In the post-Cold War period, intense debates have been witnessed in context of the conceptualisation of security, which is an "essentially contested concept"¹ in IR. The debate mainly centred on the relevance of traditionally understood 'national security' in this new era.

The debate has divided the security scholars into two clearly identifiable camps, the traditionalists and the non-traditionalists. Traditionalists view that the realist interpretation of security which is essentially 'national' and militaristic in orientation is still relevant for the post-Cold War period. Traditionalists like Stephen Walt do not want to include new issues into the domain of national security although they acknowledge the change in international security environment. This is because

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¹ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, (2nd Edition), Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991, p. 7.

such inclusion “would destroy its intellectual coherence and make it more difficult to devise solution to any of these important problems.”² Some traditionalists even argue that there is no fundamental change in international security, and military security is the core of state security.³

The non-traditionalist camp consists of two different sub-groups: wideners and deepeners. Considering the abysmal effects of new challenges i.e., environmental degradation, climate change, human and drug trafficking, endemic diseases and terrorism on the stability and security of states, the wideners argue to broaden the definition of national security. In contrast, the deepeners question the significance and validity of considering states as the sole referent object of security. To them, there is no meaning of security if humankind is not secured. As such, they go beyond the traditional security discourse and focus on humankind, communities, their culture and society as the new referent objects of security.

Keeping this debate in perspective, the paper seeks to analyse the importance of national security in the post-Cold War world. In this endeavour, the paper begins with introductory remarks in section one; while an attempt has been made to provide a critical overview of the realist interpretation of national security in section two. In doing so, the section applies four basic elements of national security: a. levels of analysis, b. nature of threats, c. goal of security and, d. means of security. Section three explores the application of national security in the Cold War period. Section four surveys how and why this traditional notion of security has been challenged by the new generation of scholars. Section five examines the relevance of national security in the post-Cold War era. Finally, the paper eventually has reached the conclusion that given the new challenges, the notion of national security has been gradually redefined though not drastically abandoned. This redefinition of national security could deal with new challenges while keeping many of its traditional aspects intact. These modifications in the concept have helped the notion of ‘national security’ remain as a relevant and predominant concept in IR.

2. National Security: The Realist Lens

Realism is one of the most important theoretical traditions in IR which is well-known for its methodological rigour and practical value. Since the 1940s, after its clear victory over idealism, both academia and policymakers have embraced this tradition for their analysis. Consequently, it has also shaped the security discourse in IR for decades. Snow has rightly pointed out that because of realists’ domination in the security discourse, “the pattern of historic and contemporary national security concerns cannot adequately be understood without understanding the realist paradigm.”⁴

² Stephen M. Walt, “The Renaissance of Security Studies”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 2, June, 1991, p. 213.

³ Cited in David A. Baldwin, “Security Studies and the End of the Cold War”, *World Politics*, Vol. 48, No. 1, October, 1995, p. 117.

⁴ Donald N. Snow, “Geopolitics: American and the Realist Paradigm”, in *National Security for a New Era*:

The realist interpretation of security is mainly centred on the absence or presence of war.⁵ This notion of security involves both an objective dimension and a subjective one. According to Wolfers, "Security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked."⁶ Almost in a similar fashion, Walter Lippmann has defined security with its primarily goal being the protection of a nation's core values, i.e., sovereignty/territorial integrity of the state. According to him, "A nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values, if it wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war."⁷ Hence, the security of a state rises and falls with a state's ability to address the threat.⁸ Such conceptualisation essentially considers security to be 'national' and focuses solely on military aspects to ensure it. It assumes that there is a 'sovereignty contract' between states, which considers that "military force is a necessary evil to prevent the outside – difference, irrationality, anarchy and potential conflict – from conquering the inside of homogeneous, rational and orderly states."⁹

Realism views the international system as characterised by anarchy with states being the primary actor/unit of analysis. Neo-realists argue that the nature of this international system creates an insecure environment in which states feel threatened by other states. Without any overarching authority to control the behaviour of states in this system, states have to depend on the logic of 'self-help' for their survival. The accumulation of power is central to the idea of 'self-help'. Therefore, power conceived mainly in military terms has become a defining characteristic of the international system.¹⁰ To Morgenthau, power is both a means and an end in itself; power is important to achieve national interests and that makes acquiring power a primary national interest.¹¹ The accumulation of power by individual states for ensuring security renders national security a zero-sum notion.¹² It encourages competition rather than cooperation among the states creating a 'security dilemma'.

The realist conceptualisation of security, therefore, has a unique view of states. It views states as the sources of insecurity and the referent object of security

Globalization and Geopolitics, (2nd Edition), United States: Pearson Education, Inc., Longman, 2007, p. 51.

⁵ Jacqui True, "Feminism", in Scott Burchill, et.al. (eds.), *Theories of International Relations*, (4th Edition), UK: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2009, p. 251.

⁶ Cited in Joseph J. Romm, "The Concept of National Security", in *Defining National Security: The Nonmilitary Aspects*, New York: Council of Foreign Relations Press, 1993, p. 5.

⁷ Cited in Anthony D. Lott, "Realists on Security", in *Creating Insecurity: Realism, Constructivism, and US Security Policy*, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004, p. 14.

⁸ Mohammad Ayoob, "Defining Security: A Subaltern Realist Perspective", in Keith Krause and Michael Williams (eds.), *Critical Security Studies*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, p. 124.

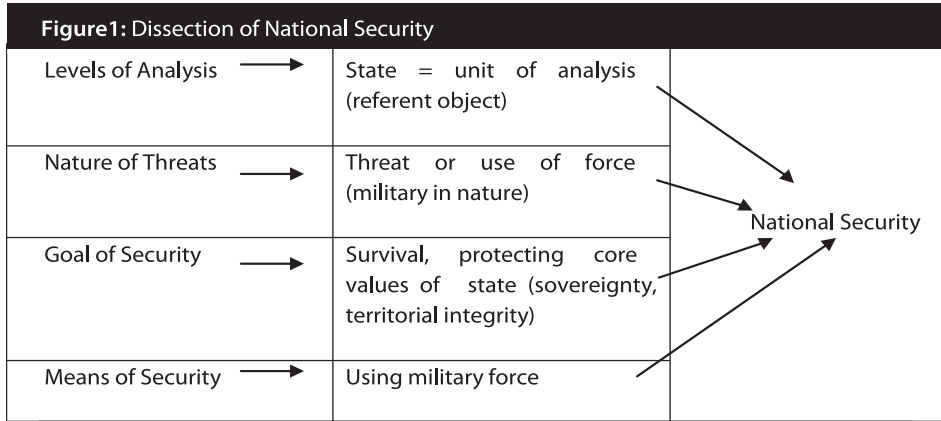
⁹ Jacqui True, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

¹⁰ Charles L. Glaser, "Realism", in Alan Collins (ed.), *Contemporary Security Studies*, (2nd Edition), UK: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 16.

¹¹ Terry Terriff, Stuart Croft, Lucy James and Patrick M. Morgan, "International Relations and Security Studies", in *Security Studies Today*, UK: Polity Press, 2001, p. 33.

¹² Jacqui True, 2009, *op. cit.* p. 253

at the same time.¹³ The key characteristics of the state will remain unchanged as long as the international system remains anarchic in nature.¹⁴ Therefore, states continue to accumulate their military power to safeguard their sovereignty from threats posed by other states in the system. It is, thus, clear that the four basic elements: levels of analysis, nature of threats, goal of security and means of security are essential to conceptualise security. These elements are summarised in Figure 1.



As shown in Figure 1, the main goal of national security is to ensure the survival of states by protecting the core values of the state, i.e., sovereignty and territorial integrity. That means level/unit of analysis is the state because it is the referent object of security. In the national security paradigm, the nature of threat is always militaristic in nature where military is the only means that can ensure the security/survival of the state. Because of their importance for understanding security from a comprehensive perspective, these elements are used as objective criteria to dissect the current debate between the traditional and non-traditional security schools and evaluate the validity of the notion of national security in the post-Cold War period.

3. Cold War Security Discourse: Golden Age of National Security

After World War I (WWI), idealism emerged as a dominant theoretical tradition in IR that viewed international institutions as the important tool for promoting peace and stability in the world. With the horrific experience of the WW I in mind, the adherents of this tradition denounced the use of force or war in IR to attain security. The onset of World War II (WWII) challenged the fundamental tenets of idealism. Contrary to idealist assumption, war once again came to the centre stage of statecraft. Thus, idealism failed to explain the onset of growing conflicts and to prevent the WWII. The vacuum created by the demise of idealism was immediately filled up by the emergence of realism. Realism became prominent in a short span of time because of

¹³ Anthony D. Lott, 2004, *op. cit.* p. 13.

¹⁴ Terry Terriff, et. al., 2001, *op. cit.* p. 35.

its explanatory power and special focus on the national security defined in terms of military security of states.¹⁵

International politics in the post WWII period was characterised by the ideological rivalry between the two superpowers: USA and USSR. The communist expansionism by the USSR was identified as the key security threat to the free world upheld by the USA. The US officials became worried about the Soviet expansion in the war-torn Europe and elsewhere since early 1946. It was evident in the Clark Clifford's September 1946 report to President Truman in which top US officials predicted about possible communist expansionism posing a grave threat to the world.¹⁶ As a result, the US adopted the 'containment policy' and focused on military preparedness to counter the Soviet threat. In line with these developments, the US national security policy (NSC 68) defined security as the "preservation of the US as a free nation with the fundamental institutions and values intact."¹⁷

Though the first decade (1945-1955) after WWII was characterised by an increase in conflictual relations and the struggle for hegemony between the US and the USSR, "security was not first and foremost about a military relationship but rather about political one."¹⁸ Given the massive devastation caused by the WWII in Europe, security during this phase was conceived in its widest term including military aspect, economic welfare, economic stability and individual freedom. Notably, the relationship between national security and domestic politics such as economic, civil liberties and democratic political process was of crucial importance at that time.¹⁹ Above all, there was an understanding that national security had to be achieved through both military and non-military means.²⁰

The second decade (1955-1965) after WWII was considered to be the Golden Age for national security. During this phase, security was solely defined in military terms and "a focus on threat manipulation and force projections became the central, almost exclusive, concern of security."²¹ Carl Von Clausewitz's famous dictum, "War is the continuation of politics by other means", remained central to the foreign policy orientation of the superpowers. The centrality of state, military force, balance of power,

¹⁵ In 1947, Morgenthau's famous book, *Politics among Nations*, identified key principles of the realist interpretation of international politics focusing mainly on power, national interest, and war. These principles were well received by academia and policymakers. They had a strong bearing on subsequent foreign policy and military policy making during the Cold War.

¹⁶ Anon, "Realism and Idealism – The Cold War", *Encyclopedia of the New American Nation*, available at <http://www.americanforeignrelations.com/O-W/Realism-and-Idealism-The-cold-war.html>, accessed on 15 October 2010.

¹⁷ K. M. Fierke, "Definitions and Redefinitions", in *Critical Approaches to International Security*, UK and USA: Polity Press, 2007, p. 19.

¹⁸ David A. Baldwin, "Security Studies and the End of the Cold War", 1995, cited in K. M. Fierke, 2007, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

¹⁹ David A. Baldwin, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

²⁰ K. M. Fierke, 2007, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

²¹ Edward A. Kolodziej, "Renaissance in Security Studies? Caveat Lector!", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 4, December, 1992, pp. 421-438.

and the use of threats became the core of national security policies. In addition, military tactics and doctrines such as massive retaliation, deterrence, first and second strike capabilities, strategic force vulnerability, competitive risk-taking, escalation, damage limitation, flexible response, limited war and arms control came to the forefront during this golden age.²² The military and foreign policy establishments were preoccupied by these themes. The world, for the first time in history, was on the verge of nuclear war in 1962. Thus, military force and capability became the single most important instrument of statecraft. It is clear that all the key elements as identified in section 2 were applicable to the notion of national security as understood during this phase.

Though the introduction of détente and the end of Vietnam War led to a decrease in interests in the military affairs, it revived after a brief interval in the late 1970s. The prominence of national security remained relatively unquestioned till the end of the Cold War.

4. Post-Cold War Security Discourse: A Critique of National Security

With the end of the Cold War, the prominence of national security has been critically challenged by a plethora of new issues such as intra-state ethnic conflicts, drug trafficking, transnational crimes, international terrorism, resource scarcity, environmental degradation and climate change, poverty and malgovernance etc. Writing in the mid 1980s, Ullman rightly envisaged that, "The coming decades are likely to see a diminution in the incidence of overt conflict over territory: the enshrinement of the principle of national self-determination has made the conquest of peoples distinctly unfashionable. But conflict over resources is likely to grow more intense as demand for some essential commodities increases and supplies appear more precarious."²³ The realist definition of the security with its focus on military aspects has been criticised for its inadequacy in acknowledging these new challenges. Based on the four objective criteria identified in section two, this section attempts to examine the challenges faced by the national security discourse in the post-Cold War era.

Levels of Analysis: Scholars supporting non-traditional security agenda argue that realism's central focus on state as a unit of analysis is no longer applicable in the new security agenda. Given the new challenges, it seems that a range of new referent objects for security are emerging at different levels.²⁴ Buzan explains that different set of rules, regimes and institutions forming the international economic order, the global climate system, various international regimes like Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) have emerged as the referent object above the state while nations and religions can be the distinct referent object alongside the state. Moreover,

²² Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "International Security Studies After the Cold War: An Agenda for the Future", The Center for Science and International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, December, 1991.

²³ Richard H. Ullman, "Redefining Security", *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1983, p. 139.

²⁴ Barry Buzan, "Rethinking Security after the Cold War", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1997, p. 11.

individuals can be regarded as a referent object below the state.²⁵ Buzan with others argue that state centrism ignores the importance of other sub-units, sub-systems, transnational units as levels of analysis. It is not analytically sound to privilege states as a level of analysis because the unit level can incorporate much more than states.²⁶

Security scholars who are termed as 'deepeners' like Ken Booth also criticised realists' levels of analysis saying that there is no meaning of security if human being are not the referent object of security.²⁷ They defined security in terms of human emancipation as both state and human being are the two sides of the same coin.²⁸ Krause and William argue that it is the individuals and the communities, where they live in, is to be secured.²⁹ According to Booth, the problem of realist theory is that it sees the structure as anarchic, because there is no "supreme law-maker or law-enforcer to keep the order."³⁰ Booth argued that, "this anarchy between states does not necessarily produce chaos, the non-technical, everyday meaning of 'anarchy'. States form a primitive society, with rules, norms and values (such as international law, diplomacy and sovereignty). This element of society usually cushions states from each other."³¹ The concept of human security, as adopted and popularised by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), has also focused on individuals not the state as the referent object of security. This new approach to security is people-centered.³² It stresses on the freedom from hunger and freedom from fear.

Nature of Threats: As mentioned earlier, the post-Cold War era have experienced major challenges from non-military issues like global climate change, poverty, famine, transnational crime, terrorism etc. Traditional militaristic security paradigm propagated by the realists has failed to recognise these threats. Thus, this paradigm has given birth to what Ullman identified as the 'false image of reality'.³³ Ullman further argues that this false image is misleading and dangerous because it is, on one hand, concentrates on military threats ignoring the others and thus reduces the total security.³⁴ On the other hand, it leads to excessive militarisation in international relations which in the long run increases global insecurity. Therefore, the new generation of security experts including Ullman, Jahn et. al., Nye and Lynn-Jones, Mathews, Brown, Crawford, Haftendorn, Tickner, Waever et. al., Buzan, Deudney who belong to different schools of thought recognise the importance of such non-military sources of threats.³⁵ They argue that these non-military sources of threat

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

²⁶ Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver and Jaap de Wilde, "Introduction", in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998, pp. 6-7.

²⁷ Paul D. Williams (ed.), *Security Studies: An Introduction*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 7.

²⁸ Ken Booth, "Utopian Realism in Theory and Practice", *International Affairs*, Vol. 67, No. 3, July 1991, p. 539.

²⁹ Cited in David Mutimer, "Critical Security Studies: A Schismatic History", in Alan Collins (ed.), *Contemporary Security Studies*, (2nd Edition), UK: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 89.

³⁰ Ken Booth, *op. cit.* p. 529.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Jon Barnett, "Reclaiming Security", *Peace Review*, Vol. 9, No. 3, September, 1997, p. 407.

³³ Richard H. Ullman, 1983, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*; Egbert Jahn, Pierre Lemaitre and Ole Waever, "Concepts of Security: Problems of Research and Non-

have even brought about changes in the function of the military establishments in recent time. Militaries in many countries may be trained and called upon to contribute to global security such as peace-keeping and humanitarian intervention but these states do not necessarily face existential threats from other states in the system.³⁶

Realist interpretation of security is further criticised for its ethnocentric obsession with external military threats to the state.³⁷ Because of its ethnocentrism, the western security discourse has failed to analyse the nature of threats found in the developing countries that account for 75 per cent of the total number of states in the world. Unlike neo-realists who claim that insecurity stems from the anarchic nature of the international system, security scholars like Ayoob argue that in the developing countries security threats primarily originate within the boundaries of states rather than threats coming from the international system. These threats have their roots in the relative weaknesses of governing structure and the lack of development in those countries.³⁸ Ayoob noted that since the end of WWII, most of the conflicts in the developing world (Third World) have been part of the nation-building process.³⁹ As a result, the developing countries experience more internal conflicts rather than external threats. This is evident from the recent findings cited in the SIPRI Year Book: 2010 which states that amongst all the armed conflicts in the world during 2000-2009, only three were inter-state in nature.⁴⁰ More importantly, all the major conflicts were concentrated in the developing world (Figure 2). It "reflects the remarkable difference between the security concerns of the Third World states and those of the developed countries in relation to the international system as a whole."⁴¹

Military Aspects", *Copenhagen Papers No. 1*, Copenhagen: Centre of Peace and Conflict Research, 1987; Joseph S. Nye Jr and Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "International Security Studies: A Report of a Conference on the State of the Field", *International Security*, Vol. 12, No. 4, Spring, 1988; Jessica Tuchman Mathews, "Redefining Security", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 1989; Neville Brown, "Climate, Ecology and International Security", *Survival*, Vol. 31, No. 6, 1989; Neta C. Crawford, "Once and Future Security Studies", *Security Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1991; Helga Haftendorn, "The Security Puzzle: Theory-Building and Discipline Building in International Security", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 1991; Ann J. Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992; Ole Weaver, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Order in Europe*, London: Pinter, 1993; Barry Buzan, 1983, *op. cit.*; Barry Buzan, 1991, *op. cit.*; Barry Buzan, "From International System to International Society: Structural Realism and Regime Theory Meet the English School", *International Organization*, Vol. 47, No. 3, Summer, 1993; Barry Buzan, "Rethinking Security after the Cold War", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1997; Daniel Deudney, "The Case Against Linking Environmental Degradation and National Security", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1990.

³⁶ Barry Buzan, "Rethinking Security after the Cold War", 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

³⁷ Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

³⁸ Steve Smith, "The increasing insecurity of security studies: Conceptualizing security in the last twenty years", *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1999, p. 81.

³⁹ Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op. cit.* pp. 122-123.

⁴⁰ Ekaterina Stepanova, "Armed Conflict, Crime and Criminal Violence", in Summary of SIPRI Yearbook, 2010, available at <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2010/files/SIPRIYB10summary.pdf>, accessed on 22 October 2010, p. 5.

⁴¹ Mohammad Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995, p. 7.

Figure 2: Major Armed Conflicts around the World, 2009

In 2009, 17 major armed conflicts were active in 16 locations around the world

Conflict Location	
Africa	Rwanda
	Somalia
	Sudan
	Uganda
Americas	Colombia
	Peru
	USA
Asia	Afghanistan
	India (Kashmir)
	Myanmar (Karen State)
	Pakistan
	Philippines
	Philippines (Mindanao)
	Sri Lanka (Tamil Eelam)
Middle East	Iran
	Israel (Palestinian territories)
	Turkey (Kurdistan)

Where a conflict is over territory, the disputed territory appears in parentheses after the country name. All other conflicts are on taking control over government.

Only 6 of the major armed conflicts in 2009 were over territory, with 11 being fought over government. Indeed, conflicts over government outnumbered those over territory in 9 of the 10 years 2000–2009.

For the sixth year running, no major interstate conflict was active in 2009.

Source: Summary of SIPRI Yearbook, 2010, p. 4, available at <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2010/files/SIPRIYB10summary.pdf>, accessed on 22 October 2010.

Given the huge number of new challenges, there is a possibility that security could become an all-encompassing concept thus blurring the distinction between security issues and non-issues. Therefore, a number of security scholars have come up with specific criteria. Buzan and his colleagues argue that to be included into the security domain, an issue, be it economic, environmental, political and military, has to pose an existential threat(s) to the referent object.⁴² For example, in political sector anything that questions recognition, legitimacy or governing authority can be regarded as an existential threat to sovereignty.⁴³ Similarly, Ayoob also sets criteria for an issue to be regarded as a security issue though it is different from what Buzan and his colleagues developed. To him, an issue can be included in the security domain if it can “either affect the survivability of state boundaries, state institutions, or governing

⁴² Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver and Jaap de Wilde, “Introduction”, in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998, p. 21.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

elites or dramatically weaken the capacity of the states and regimes to act effectively in the realm of politics, both domestic and international."⁴⁴ Human Security approach, however, considers an issue to be a security issue if it jeopardises the human development. Such threats include epidemics, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environment hazard among others.⁴⁵

Goal of Security: The sole focus of the realist security paradigm on the protection of core values, i.e. sovereignty/territorial integrity of the state excludes other important goals of security such as ensuring the individual emancipation, economic security, environmental security and political stability etc. Baldwin eloquently remarked that if a country fails to provide food, shelter, clothing and things that are necessary for survival of human being, military security for that state will be of no use.⁴⁶ It is, however, important to note that the new generation of security experts has not come up with a new agreed goal of security. Experts define the goal of security from their own ideological perspectives.

The security scholars who are termed as wideners like Buzan and Ole Wæver recognise multiple threats to states and they argue that addressing all the existential threats emanating from multiple sources should be the goal of security. To them, the goal of the security is dependent on how an issue is securitised by the 'speech act' of the political elites of the state. For Ayoob, however, the primary goal of security is to save the state from both internal and external threats. Hence, ensuring security for state structure, both territorial and governing regimes are important in his conceptualisation of security.⁴⁷

On the other hand, the scholars who belong to the deepeners' camp emphasise on different referent objects for security and propose different goals of security based on their referent objects. Scholars like Kruase and Williams opine that the goal of security is to protect the ideas, norms, values that constitute the communities because they give importance on the individual and communities where individual live in.⁴⁸ For Booth and Wyn Jones, who focus on individual as the referent object of security, the stress is on human emancipation. According to Booth, emancipation "is not universal timeless concept; it cannot be at the expense of others; and it is not synonymous with Westernization. Instead, it has the following three roles: it is a philosophical anchorage; it is a strategic process; it is a tactical goal".⁴⁹ Thus, Booth sees human emancipation as the goal of security.

⁴⁴ Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op.cit.*, p. 130.

⁴⁵ Roland Dannreuther, *International Security: The Contemporary Agenda*, UK: Polity Press, 2007, p. 47.

⁴⁶ David A. Baldwin, 1995, *op.cit.*, p. 128.

⁴⁷ Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁴⁸ Cited in David Mutimer, "Critical Security Studies: A Schismatic History", in Alan Collins (ed.), *Contemporary Security Studies*, (2nd Edition), UK: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 89.

⁴⁹ Cited in Steve Smith, 1999, *op.cit.*, p. 90.

Means of Security: The realist's sole reliance on military means to ensuring security cannot withstand the changing realities of time. Baldwin rightly pointed out that "many of the problems – for example environmental protection, promoting human rights and democracy, promoting economic growth – are not amenable to solution by military means."⁵⁰ Hence, non-military means are recommended to address these hydra-headed security concerns. The recommended means are, however, dependent on the way how security is conceptualised. For example, security defined in terms of human emancipation can be achieved through social justice, relative prosperity and liberal democracy. Therefore, unlike realists, Booth argued that "to achieve security in anarchy, it is necessary to go beyond Bull's 'anarchical society' of states to an anarchical global 'community of communities'. Anarchy thus becomes the framework for thinking about the *solution* to global problems, not the essence of the problem to overcome. This would be a much messier political world than the states system, but it should offer better prospects for the emancipation of individuals and groups, and it should therefore ultimately be more secure."⁵¹

For Buzan and his colleagues, the means of security is dependent on the way an issue is securitised. When an issue is securitised, it is regarded as "an existential threat requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure."⁵² Though Ayoob focuses on the security of state like Buzan, his position is different than that of Buzan. He argues that maintaining political order in the state is an important means to ensure the security of the state.⁵³ Without political order, social and individual values can neither be realised nor be protected from assault, violence and chaos.⁵⁴

5. National Security: Exploring the Relevance

The forgoing section makes it clear that all the key elements of the realist notion of national security have been challenged by many security experts after the end of the Cold War. The changes in the security discourse in the post-Cold War era led to the widening and deepening of the security discourse. The concept of security has been broadened to include multiple sources of insecurity apart from traditional military threats. Furthermore, it has been deepened to include new referent objects for security other than states.⁵⁵ Rothschild coined the term of 'extensive security' to refer to such reconceptualisation of security.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ David A. Baldwin, 1995, *op.cit.*, p. 130

⁵¹ Ken Booth, 1991, *op. cit.*, p. 540.

⁵² Barry Buzan, et. al., 1998, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

⁵³ Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Sarah Tarry, "Deepening' and Widening': An Analysis of Security Definitions in the 1990s", *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Fall, 1999, available at http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/jmss/jmss_1999/v2n1/jmss_v2n1c.html, accessed on 05 October 2010.

⁵⁶ Emma Rothschild, "What Is Security?", *The Quest for World Order*, Vol. 124, No. 3, Summer, 1995, p. 55.

In spite of the new challenges, scholars like Stephen Walt stress on the national security as understood in the realist paradigm or so-called traditional approach to security. On the other hand, scholars like Ken Booth, Keith Krause and Michael Williams put emphasis on individual and community as the referent object of security. These deepeners discard the old paradigm as an inadequate framework for understanding new security challenges after the Cold War. The wideners' position falls between these two extremes. Without being ideologically driven like the deepeners, the wideners like Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver, de Wilde and Mohammad Ayoob have come up with new frameworks for understanding national security. Their frameworks are important because they still focus on the security of states while addressing multiple sources of threats posed by the new security issues. Moreover, to make the framework analytically sound, they set threshold to define security issues. Thus, they keep the security issues distinct from other non-security issues so that the notion of "national security" does not run the risk of becoming an all-encompassing idea.

The contemporary world is still divided into sovereign states that emerged through the Treaty of Westphalia. The post-Cold War era could not transform this basic architecture of the international system. Therefore, states still remain the primary actors in the international system. It is the primary actor because on the one hand, it holds the authority within a given territory and thus exercises power over its population. On the other hand, it has the right to act independently in international affairs.⁵⁷ The post-Cold War period, however, has witnessed the intensity and extensity of new actors such as transnational organisations, international organisations and non-state actors. It is to be noted that these new actors are not as strong as states and they could not undermine the primacy and supremacy of states because their power is dependent on states and they have to function within the settings provided by states. States could, for example, impose more strict restrictions on trade and transnational corporations could not do much in this regard.⁵⁸ Moreover, in spite of the spread of globalisation as experienced in the post-Cold War era, nations still highly value their sovereignty and statehood. Palestinians' struggle for statehood is a glaring example in this respect. These issues revalidate the primacy of states in the international system. Hence, non-recognition of state as a referent object of security would be tantamount to ignoring the reality. Buzan has identified three reasons that qualify states to remain the referent object for security. Firstly, it is the state that has to cope with the sub-state, state, international security problematic. Secondly, the state is the primary agent for addressing the sources of insecurity. Finally, the state is the most important actor in the international system.⁵⁹ Therefore, it can be argued that the state-centric character of the international system helps 'national security' remain a dominant concept in international politics.

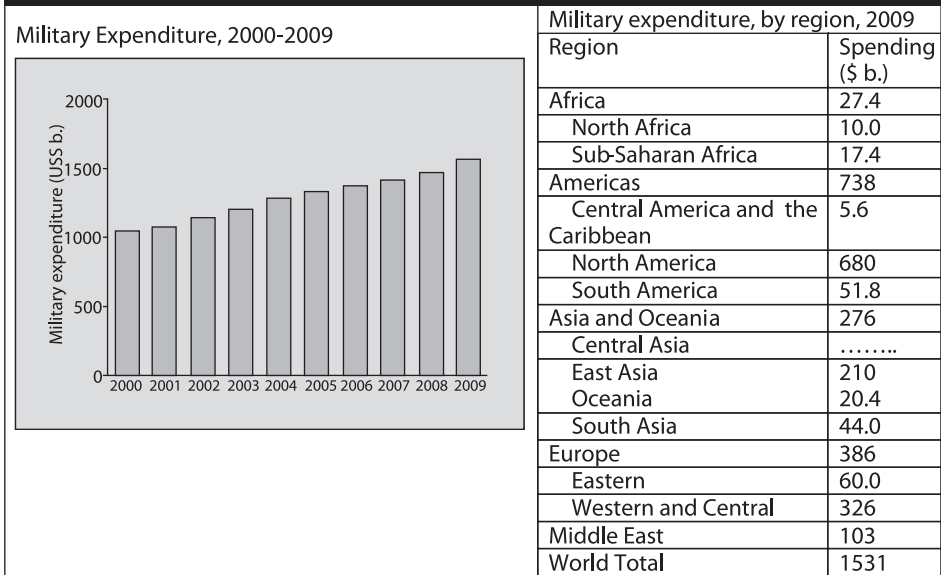
⁵⁷ Jill Steans and Lloyd Pettiford, *International Relations: Perspective and Themes*, United States: Pearson Education Limited, Longman, 2001, p. 29.

⁵⁸ Katja Keisala, "The European Union as an International Actor: Strengths of the European Civilian Power", Academic Dissertation, University of Tampere, Finland, 2004, available at <http://acta.uta.fi/pdf/951-44-6157-6.pdf>, accessed on 25 November 2010, p. 9.

⁵⁹ Cited in Steve Smith, 1999, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

It is, however, to be acknowledged that the traditional notion of 'national security' understood solely in military terms has lost its credential to the extent that it cannot adequately address the non-traditional challenges or threats to states. However, military security has not become an outdated or irrelevant concept. Therefore, Romm once commented that "military security has not vanished as key element of national security, but it has certainly declined in importance relative to the issues of economic, energy and environmental security."⁶⁰ As a result, states are increasingly recognising the new threats but they have not discarded military options for ensuring their security. The SIPRI Year Book 2010 reveals that the total military expenditure of the world was US\$1531 billion in 2009 which represent an increase of 6 per cent in real terms compared to 2008, and 49 per cent since 2000 (statistics shown in Figure 3). It was also estimated that military expenditure was 2.7 per cent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) in 2009 and this increase was observed in all the regions and sub-regions except the Middle East.⁶¹ More importantly, the global financial crisis could not even subdue the military expenditure. The upward trend in military expenditure is a clear indication that states still rely heavily on military means for ensuring their security.

Figure 3: Military Expenditure, 2009



Source: Summary of SIPRI Yearbook, 2010: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security, 2010, p.10

⁶⁰ Joseph J. Romm, 1993, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁶¹ Sam Perlo-Freeman, Olawale Ismail and Carina Solmirano, "Military Expenditure", in *SIPRI Yearbook, 2010: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, 2010, available at <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2010/files/SIPRIYB10summary.pdf>, accessed on 22 October 2010, p. 10.

Moreover, the neo-realist interpretation of the anarchic international structure and its logic of self-help are still evident in the behaviour of many states. Iran's controversial nuclear programme can be explained through this framework. Israel's undeclared possession of nuclear weapons has created security dilemma for Iran because these two countries are locked in a competition for regional dominance in Middle East. Driven by the logic of self-help, Iran feels the acquisition of nuclear weapons can ensure its security establishing a power parity vis-à-vis Israel. Similarly, the acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1998 by the two South Asian neighbours, India and Pakistan, can also be explained through the national security paradigm. Intense insecurity feelings from the neighbouring countries led both India and Pakistan to the nuclearisation process. India armed itself with nuclear weapons targeting the extra-regional power, China. India's nuclearisation, however, tilted the precarious regional balance to India vis-à-vis Pakistan. To maintain the regional balance of power, Pakistan followed the suit. In addition, various conflicts and arms races across the globe such as Russia's invasion in Georgia in 2009 and Kargil war in 1999 between India-Pakistan and the nuclearisation of North Korea also indicate the prominence and relevance of 'national security' in the post-Cold War era.

In the post-Cold War era, many new non-traditional security threats such as resource scarcity, transnational terrorism, climate change, intra-state conflicts etc. have the potential to entail military engagements. Thus, these issues could crawl into the domain of traditional notion of national security. In the context of environmental security, Toronto School led by Homer-Dixon argued that increased environmental stress may lead to intra and inter-state conflicts.⁶² Similarly, in the context of terrorist attack, it has been observed that after the terrorist attack on Indian parliament in 13 December 2006, Indian government held Pakistan-based terrorist organisations responsible for the attack. This incident escalated tension between these arch rivals to the extent that both of them deployed more than a million soldiers, eyeball to eyeball along the border.⁶³

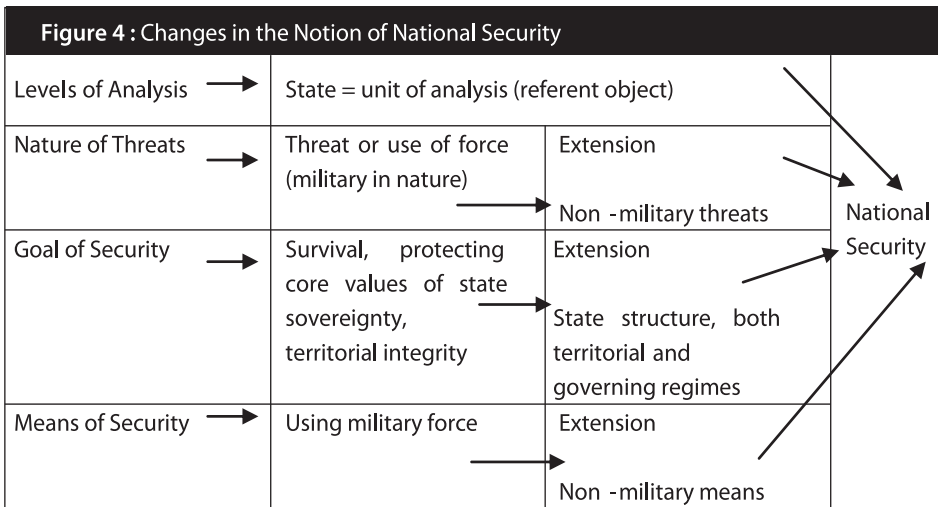
The importance of "redefined" national security could be explained with a case study of the US war on terror. By definition, international terrorism is a non-traditional security threat in the sense that the threat is posed by al-Qaida, a non-state actor operating globally. International terrorism came to the centre stage of contemporary international security through the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in the US in 2001. Immediately after the attack, the US declared war on terror to counter the threat posed by international terrorism. Subsequently, the US national security policy adopted the policy of preemption. Invoking this policy, the US attacked Iraq on the basis of the allegation that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMD)

⁶² Thomas Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases", *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1, Summer, 1994, pp. 5-6.

⁶³ Sidhu Pal Singh Waheguru, "Terrible Tuesday and Terrorism in South Asia", *South Asian Survey*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2003, p. 216.

that would hamper the US national security. Thus, a non-traditional security issue has become top on the security agenda in the world and this is being addressed through the framework of national security.

The forgoing analysis makes the argument evident that 'national security' with some modifications still remains the most dominant approach to security. This shift is summarised and shown in figure 4.



Substantial changes in national security have been observed in terms of nature of threats, goal of security and means of security although no important changes is evident in terms of levels of analysis. Analysis shows that states still remain unchanged as a unit of analysis for national security while the nature of threat has changed with time. At present, the threats could be posed by both non-state actors such as terrorists as well as state actors. Furthermore, the threats are no longer strictly military rather it could include various issues like climate change, transnational crime etc. Hence, states need to employ both military and non-military means to address these threats. Extension has also been observed in the goal of security. Apart from ensuring the territorial integrity and sovereignty, other issues such as ensuring democracy, establishing strong governing regimes and other issues which destabilise social cohesion and induce internal crises have also been considered as the goal of national security.

6. Conclusion

The demise of idealism with the beginning of the WWII followed by the forty years of ideological war between the two super powers precipitated the triumph of the realist notion of national security. Arms race between the super powers including

nuclearisation, deterrence, balance of power, limited war, proxy war and many other issues of militaristic security characterised the Cold War world politics. Hence, the notion of national security enjoyed its overwhelming supremacy during that time and dominated the security discourse in IR for subsequent decades. However, it has faced significant setbacks in analysing “more complex security problems” in the post-Cold War era. Several attempts have been made to redefine the notion of national security in this new era.

Considering the current nature of security challenges, many scholars suggest broadening of the definition of national security by incorporating new issues into its paradigm. Apart from militaristic threats, non-militaristic aspects also have the potential to be considered as threats to state and its people. Thus, they argue that the survival of the state is significant goal of security but threats to its survival can not only emerge from the anarchic structure of international politics but also from internal sources. Accordingly, the strong military is not the only means to ensure security. As such, they stress on the incorporation of non-military means depending on the nature of the security challenge. Another group of scholars defined as deepeners argue that humankind is the main locus of security instead of states. Security can only be ensured once human emancipation is achieved. There are many barriers i.e., poverty, illiteracy, diseases, mal-governance and social injustice etc. to human emancipation. Therefore, they observe that ensuring social justice and human rights, addressing social inequalities and establishing just society are the means to achieving true security in the true sense of the term.

Notwithstanding many analytical and normative challenges to the notion of national security, the analysis in this paper has revealed that the discourse of national security has still retained its predominance because of its practical implications. This is mainly because the end of the Cold War has not experienced any viable replacement of the sovereign-state system. Even though many new actors have emerged in the contemporary international politics, none of them is as powerful as the state. It is still the state which exclusively enjoys sovereignty. States must jealously protect their sovereignty in this anarchic international structure. The Bush doctrine or the US global war on terror and the Palestinian’s struggle for liberation indicated that every nation in the world still value sovereignty the most.

The changing trend of war and conflicts in the post-Cold War era indicate that national security paradigm should acknowledge the new realities of intra-state conflicts. It, however, does not indicate that there has been substantial change in the anarchic structure of international politics. Therefore, arms race and nuclearisation in different parts of the world are still evident.

The paper has argued that the fundamental idea of national security of protecting the sovereignty still today motivate the state to focus more on arms and

military institutions as far as the security of the state is concerned. The upward trend in world's defense expenditure also suggests that military means remain as the primary tool for national security for the states. All these indicate that the notion of national security is not obsolete in this age of globalisation. With important modifications, the concept of national security has retained both analytical rigour and practical relevance to address the security threats that characterise this new era.