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## DEMOGRAPHY AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY: EVOLUTION AND TRENDS

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I was in Hong Kong in an International Relations Seminar some days before the 11 September, talking about Demography and Strategy. It took part in a panel about "Demographic Clash" between the North, Rich and Old, and the South, Poor and Young, in the presence of professors from America, Russia and China where I analyzed the need of the study of "Demographic Strategy". Few days later, the world changed, and new threats started to dominate the global agenda of international relations: terrorism and the weapons of mass destruction.

I am neither a demographer, nor a politician, yet I have become intensely interested in this issues. But it is important to remember the causes and the reasons of the instability and the insecurity in the world. Some of them can be find in demography, especially if we consider in a global perspective and in a large period of time.

The purpose of this presentation [1] is to highlight the Demography Evolution and his relationship with International Security.

This presentation is organized as follows:

- Section 1, Introduction;
- Section 2, Analyze the Global Demographic Evolutions and Trends
- Section 3, Analyze the Demographic Evolution and International Security implications
- Section 4, Conclusions.

### 1. Introduction

A number of recent books and articles have held that demography affects security. This is sometimes viewed as something quite new. But population growth, decline and movements have almost always affected perceptions of security. Students of international relations generally ignore demography, and demographers ignored politics.

In 2005, the economic, cultural, technological and demographic flows, dominate the traditional states and contribute to a volatile, insecure and uncertain "Global City" (different than "Global Village").

With the clash of civilizations of Samuel Huntington still in our minds, based on ethnicity, religion, and language, the new world without the typical ideologies of the Cold War, has the USA, the United Nations, the NATO and the terrorism as the major actors of a "theater" with more than six billion people and about 200 countries. But the demography (combined with other components of national power) continues to determine the scope of national power. Some scholars like Hervé Le Brás think "Demographic demon will change the Nuclear demon".

To Raymond Aron[2], demography includes the number of man and the art to transform them into soldiers.

Gaston Bouthoul considered that population is one of the driving forces behind war and that was the reason of many historic conquests like the Viking expansion, Elisabeth the first's England, the French Revolution and the "Realpolitik" of William the first. To Bouthoul, young people mean more delinquency, more criminality, more aggression, and a stronger possibility towards conflict and war.

More recently, Samuel Huntington[3], said that the demographic evolution often change the geopolitical map if we talk about a country or a region. For him, the increase of Islamic population (from 20% of world population now, to a previous 30% in 2025) is, and will be, a premeditated strategy.

In fact, the big demographic change happened in the last 50 years and previous to the next 45 years, will impose a reflection about the relation between International Security and Demography and will put important global, regional and local questions to the leaders of the 21st century.

### 2. Global Demographic Evolutions and Trends

For better or worse, our time are characterized by rapid and pronounced demographic changes. The numbers speak for themselves: the earth's population, which totaled 1.7 billion people in 1900, and 2.5 billion in 1950, is now 6.5 billion and will become 7.8 billion in the year 2025 and 9.1 billion in 2050, according to the UN medium term forecast.

World population is now growing by 1.2 percent or 76 million people are added each year.

Table n° 1, on Population Growth by Regions between 1950 and 2050, suggests some important remarks:

- population increase 3.6 times in 100 years;
- Africa will increase its population from 8.9% to 21.3% and Europe will decrease its population from 21.7% to 7.2% of the world population;
- in 1950, about one out of every three people in the world lived in the developed regions. In 2000, one out of every five people were inhabitants of developed regions and by 2050 this figure is expected to decline further still to about one out of seven.
- the "Demographic Clash" between North and South will be intensified between Europe and Africa on one hand and between North America and Central and South America on the other hand.

**Table 1- Population of the World, Major Development Groups and Major Areas, 1950, 1975, 2005 and 2050, by Projection Variants**

REGION	1950 (Millions)	%	1975 (Millions)	2005 (Millions)	2025 (Millions)	2050[4] (Millions)	%
WORLD	2519		4074	<b>6465</b>	7823,7	<b>9076</b>	
EUROPE[5]	547	21,7	676	<b>728</b>	702,3	<b>653</b>	<b>7,2</b>
NAMERICA	172	6,8	243	<b>331</b>	363,6	<b>438</b>	<b>4,8</b>
CSAMERICA	167	6,6	322	<b>561</b>	696,7	<b>783</b>	<b>8,6</b>
ASIA	1396	55	2395	<b>3905</b>	4723,1	<b>5217</b>	<b>57</b>
AFRICA	224	8,9	416	<b>906</b>	1298,3	<b>1937</b>	<b>21,3</b>
OCEANIA	13	0,5	21	<b>33</b>	39,6	<b>48</b>	<b>0,5</b>
<b>MDR[6]</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>32,3</b>	<b>1188,0</b>	<b>1267,1</b>	<b>1214,9</b>	<b>1236</b>	<b>13,6</b>
<b>LDR[7]</b>	<b>1707</b>	<b>67,7</b>	<b>4867,1</b>	<b>5197,86</b>	<b>6608,8</b>	<b>7840</b>	<b>86,4</b>

(Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (2005). World Population Prospects: the 2004 revision. Highlights. New York: United Nations)

Table n° 2 shows the Population Growth by Countries between 1948 and 2025, and we can say the following:

- with more than 100 million people there were 4 countries in 1948 and 15 countries in 2000;
- in 1948 we had 5 European countries among the 12 most populated countries, and in 2025 we will have only 1 European country (Russia);
- two countries, China and India, will represent around 36% of the world population in 2025;



Philippines	20.0	<b>20</b>	76.0	<b>14</b>	108.3	<b>13</b>	<b>-7</b>
Egypt	19.5	<b>21</b>	68.5	<b>15</b>	95.6	<b>16</b>	<b>-5</b>
Turkey	19.5	<b>22</b>	66.6	<b>17</b>	87.9	<b>18</b>	<b>-4</b>
Thailand	17.7	<b>24</b>	61.4	<b>19</b>	72.7	<b>20</b>	<b>-4</b>
Iran	17.0	<b>25</b>	67.7	<b>16</b>	94.5	<b>17</b>	<b>-8</b>
Ethiopia	15.0	<b>28</b>	62.6	<b>18</b>	115.4	<b>12</b>	<b>-16</b>
Congo DR	10.9	<b>30</b>	51.7	<b>23</b>	104.8	<b>15</b>	<b>-15</b>
Colombia	10.8	<b>32</b>	42.3[13]	<b>26</b>	59.8	<b>23</b>	<b>-9</b>

(Fonts: U.N. Statistical Year Book 1949-50; Nazareth, 1982; U.N.-unfpa.org)

That demographic evolution, in different ways and in different regions, will create and emphasize a "Demographic Clash" that will change, during the 21st century, the power relations in the world, and will eventually increase the conflicts between the North, Rich and Old, and the South, Poor and Young.

### **2.a. The South: Poor and Young**

The less developed countries and regions, which represent about 81% of the world population (5.2 billion of the actual 6.5 billion) continue to have annual population growth rates higher than 2%, child mortality rates higher than 62/1000, high illiteracy rates, about 40 % of young people and only 3% of old people, and a GNP per capita of about 1.000 dollars.

The largeness of their population, far from being an asset for their national power, is an obstacle to their development. The excess of underdeveloped population will imply that populations are more vulnerable to ideological and religious movements, with more poverty, more hunger, more social and political instability, more disputes on resources, more ethnic tensions, more conflicts and wars.

Some governments could explore that potential with expansionist politics or some economic advantages of the immigration to the North. Government efforts still need to be concentrated on responding to challenges of modernization and political change.

The Armed Forces are bigger in percentage of soldiers/population and the conscription system will continue to be a solution for the majority of the countries. That military solution resolves part of the unemployment and the instability.

### **2.b. The North: Rich and Old**

The developed nations are characterized by chronic low fertility[14]. The more developed countries of the North represent about 20% of the world population. The population growth rates is practically zero, and child mortality rate is less than 9/1000, they are less than 18% of young people and more than 20% of old people (they will be about 32% in 2050) and a GNP per head is higher than 12.000 dollars.

These older population and the negative average population growth rates pose others problems to this countries: lack of manpower and brain drain; they have a low ratio between active and inactive population; they must increase the investments in social security and in medical care; they do not have enough young people for the military service. To Peter Peterson[15] the global crises of oldness will pressure the political agenda of the developed countries and their strategies in the next years. According to Peterson, in 25 years, the investments in social security and in medical care will triple (1 out of 4 will be 65 or more years old) and about 9 to 16% of the GNP will be destined to the old people.

The Armed Forces are little in percentage and the professionalization system will continue to be a solution for the majority of the countries. They may have to accept volunteers from immigrated people or even turn back to a longer military service conscription system, even against public opinion. To overall the lack of manpower, armed forces options will be from Revolution on Military Affairs (RMA) to

weapons of mass destruction.

### 3. Demographic Evolutions and International Security implications

In a global point of view we heard someone put three key questions:

- How do changes in demographic variables influence political stability and security?
- How do governments respond to demographic trends and how do these responses affect security?
- How do governments attempt to influence or change demography to enhance security?

Besides we haven't answers for all the questions we could try...

We live in an era defined by many challenges, from global warmth to global terrorism. To the United Nations, in today's world, a threat to one is a threat to all. In a more secure world there are six clusters of threats which the world must be concerned, now and in the decades to come:

- war between States;
- violence within States,
- including civil wars, large-scale human rights abuses and genocide;
- poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation;
- nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons;
- terrorism;
- and transnational organized crime.

International Security has a direct relationship with the responses to these "new" global threats. Besides the UN flag about "equilibrium between population and resources and environmental protection and economic development", the demography evolution and some demographic policies and strategies had taken place in the international security domain such as: the actions developed in Timor by Indonesia and in Western Sahara by Morocco; the case of the Rwanda and Burundi conflicts; the case of the Kosovo and Bosnia conflicts, where, in a few years, the minorities were transformed in majorities; and the situation with the Kurd people, used by the demographic strategies of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Armenia.

A recent RAND study (who classifies three global principal demographic trends: fertility, urbanization and refugees) noted that demographic factors could serve as catalysts for conflicts. The demographic evolution and trends suggest (in Brian Nichiporuk point of view) three potential changes[16] in the international security environment: in the nature of conflict; in sources of natural power; and in sources of conflict.

#### 3.a. Changes in the nature of conflict

The urbanization increased from 29% in 1950, to more than 50% in 2050 and 61% expected to 2030. Projections suggest that more than 20 megacities (cities of 10 million or larger) will exist by 2015.

So, we will assist to the prevalence of urban conflict which tends to be attractive to insurgents, terrorists and guerrilla forces, "in part because it can equalize conflict between technologically sophisticated and less sophisticated armed forces". Cities constitute complex and difficult security environments and the presence of large civilian populations could complicate military operations (with new capabilities, such as unmanned aerial vehicles). The conflict in urban battlefields is unregulated, savage, and dangerous...as in Beirut, Mogadishu, Grozny, Sarajevo, and Baghdad.

The new information technology, such as internet and mobile telephones, is creating "more opportunities for emigrant populations to influence conflict in home countries very quickly", and will increase the influence of the ethnic Diasporas, the terrorists, etc...

Water will become increasingly important as a strategic tool in some areas of the world, especially if they have high fertility.

#### 3.b. Changes in sources of national power

"Differential fertility rates also have implications for sources of military power in low and high fertility

states”.

In the North, Rich and Old low-fertility states there will be fewer young people to fill military roles. They will be increasingly forced to substitute manpower (including weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons) for technology.

In other hand, population aging (medium age in the developed world: 1950- 28,6; 2000-37,6; 2050- 51,1)[17] will affect the military security of advanced welfare states in three ways:

- will reduce economic performance and increase competition for scarce labor assets within the civil economy as well as between the civilian and military sectors;
- will be a growing scarcity of funds available for modernizing Western military establishments (the impact of the industrial world's "pension time bomb" could put severe pressure on funds for defense and even be catastrophic for military security)[18];
- there is the very real possibility that threats to these nation's vital economic and security interests will increase over the next several decades, precisely at the time when their military capabilities are weakening

In the South, Poor and Young high-fertility states "will build a two-tiered force structure, with a smaller elite force and larger but less-skilled and less well-equipped force. The relatively young population increases the tendency toward violence. Developing countries with high birth rates often fail to maintain economic growth levels sufficient to absorb large number of new workers. This results in high unemployment, and fertile grounds for radical political movements. These radical movements can destabilize governments and, if they seize institutional power, they can precipitate international conflicts.

### **3.c. Changes in sources of conflict**

A major new demographic factor that will influence conflicts is refugee flows[19] (for example, the flow of Kosovars into Macedonia). Mass migrations and refugee movements can result in cascading security problems throughout the regions in which they occur. Most of the Europeans recognize that immigration (especially Islamic emigrants) is often de-stabilizing, and associated to social, political and emotional issues (the neighbours of Kosovo would attest to that, as would Zaire or the current Congo with relation to Uganda and Burundi).

But to Stephan DeSpiegeleire[20] "international migration can actually have a stabilizing effect by creating a "safety valve" to defuse problems tied to overpopulation in "sending" countries and by improving relations between the sending and destination countries".

In addition, "the differential growth rates in neighboring culture groups or populations can also lay the groundwork for ethnic conflict". If there are inter-ethnic tensions in a country, and if one group increases its size more rapidly than others, this will likely exacerbate inter-ethnic tensions.

### **4. Conclusions**

The theory linking demography and geo-political power or international security is limited because it depends critically on the role that societal leaders take in shaping these trends in the context of the social and economic policies they adopt for their countries.

We talked about demography evolution until 2050 and its relationship with international security. And we come to the following conclusions:

- Demography, as a political and a strategic instrument, will tend to be more prominent and will induce a new geopolitical map in the next 45 years, in which the "Demographic Clash" will be bigger than ever in History;
- Political stability and international security will be influenced by Demographic evolution and trends in three levels: in nature of conflict; in sources of national power; and in sources of conflict.
- The world will tend to be more insecure: the international security environment could change into a more urban warfare, will require more combined armed forces, new equipments and weapons systems, more active civil emergency planning, and a better intelligence global system as a result of a more effective international cooperation;
- International Organizations and Governments could respond to the demographic evolution (it's not necessarily a fatality) by increasing information and analytical studies connecting Demography and

security issues, planning for urban warfare, developing new demographic policies and strategies, but still “maintaining the equilibrium between population and resources on one hand and between environmental protection and economic development, on the other hand”.

Besides evolution and trends, we still believe in what Jean Bodin wrote in the 16th century “There is no wealth but in people”

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[1]Presentation made in Sintra, Air Base 1, 28 July 2005, in the 10 th Portuguese Atlantic Youth Seminar (organized by “Comissão Portuguesa do Atlântico”), about “Global Civil Society and International Security: Different Approaches for a Common Path”

[2]See *On war*, New York, 1968.

[3]See *The Clash of Civilizations* and *The soldier and the state*

[4]According to the medium variant.

[5]Includes USSR or Russia.

[6]Highly Developed Regions. Includes North America, Japan, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

[7]Less Developed Regions.

[8]United Nations, Statistical Year Book: 1945-50, New York, 1950. Some countries are not mentioned here: Spain (13), Poland (15), Korea (19), Burma (23), Argentina (26), Romania (27), Canada (28), Czechoslovakia (29) and Afghanistan (31).

[9]Population ranking.

[10]Ranking variation 1948-2025.

[11]Burma will rank 24th , with 58.1 million people (45.6 million in 2000), Tanzania the 25th , with 57.9 million people (33.5 million in 2000), Korea the 26th , with 52.5 million of people (46.8 million in 2000).

[12] Estimated population since it did not exist as a country in 1948. Its population was 55 million in 1960.

[13] The 24th is the Republic of Korea (46.8) and the 25th is the Burma (45.6).

[14]The developing world is bifurcating into two types of countries- those lowering their fertility rates (Brazil and Indonesia) and those with continuing high fertility rates, which are mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Central America.

[15]See "The global aging crisis", *Foreign Affairs*, Jan/Feb99, vol. 78, n°1, New York.

[16]See Brian Nichiporuk, “The Security Dynamics of Demographic Factors” (RAND MR-1088, 2000).

[17]When NATO was formed the medium age was 31. Now it is 36 and rising. By 2050, it will be 45, and without USA and Turkey, it will be 49.

[18]Retirement spending will leave little room for national defense: 1960 (6,9 Defense; 5,8 Pensions and Health); 1980 (3,8 Defense; 11,5 Pensions and Health); 2000 (2,3; 13,9); 2030 (?; 21,7).

[19]In terms of annual averages for the period 2005-2050, the major net receivers of international migrants are projected to be the United States (1.1 million annually), Germany (202,000), Canada (200,000), the United Kingdom (130,000), Italy (120,000) and Australia (100,000). Major countries of net emigration are projected to be China (-327,000 annually), Mexico (-293,000), India (-241,000), the Philippines (-180,000), Indonesia (-164,000), Pakistan (-154,000) and the Ukraine (-100,000).

[20]“Effects of Immigration on Domestic Stability in Sending Countries: Three Case Studies”, in **MURAWIEC**, Laurent e **ADAMSON**, David (ed.), Demography and Security, RAND, Paris, November 2000.