

CHAPTERS ON SECURITY (KAPITOLY O BEZPEČNOSTI)

Miloš Balabán, Jan Duchek and Libor Stejskal
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My task is to review the book called *Chapters on Security*, which was written by the experts Miloš Balabán, Jan Duchek, and Libor Stejskal. I have read this book due to my University studies and that is why I want to review it as a student as well.

I am going to mention the structure of the book where I will describe each chapter in a brief, concise way. After this introduction, I will focus on the parts of the book that I am interested in the most. I will show my interest by emphasizing concrete topics that will be analyzed in detail.

Security as a complex term?

The *Chapters on Security* include five chapters plus appendices. The first chapter is called *Security–Threats–Risks*. This part of the book is mainly focused on the concept of security. An important fact is that the author sums up the Copenhagen school, which can be introduced as a compromise between the realistic and idealistic conceptions of security. This school spreads the concept of security and adds more *referential objects*. A state is not the only unit that can be threatened, but there are also global international systems such as the UN or the WTO, international subsystems such as the NATO, subdivisions that can be represented, for example, by political parties, and individuals. The security of all these objects is ensured in five areas, namely the military, political, economic, environmental and societal areas. It means that not only the political system with the power or a local army can ensure our security, but economics

is also important, sometimes even more important, for example due to its influence on the quality of military equipment. The environmental sector cannot be overlooked either. Preparing for war can really damage the environment and, conversely, the destruction of nature (e.g. lack of water) can cause a military conflict. According to the book, environmental problems in the Czech Republic are mainly perceived in the context of world's environmental problems such as global warming, tsunamis, or floods. Except the floods, we do not have to solve other environmental threats, not now, but the book emphasizes a possibility to solve them in future.

The conclusion is that security cannot be considered as an isolated referential object, but it rather depends on other referential objects. That is the reason why it is better to study security within a regional security complex. That is what emphasizes the interaction between all referential objects and their influence on security as well.

I appreciate very much the fact that this chapter is not explaining all of the old security theories but it fully concentrates on an up-to-date concept which, I think, is the most relevant to our society.

Do politics and economy influence our security?

Although the second chapter is called *Security of the Czech Republic: Legislative and economic context*, it is mainly descriptive. It provides important information concerning the Czech Constitution and the relation between this document and the concept of security—and how security is being ensured. Other Czech security documents such as the Security Strategies are also included and completely described. These descriptions are very useful for students as well as all Czech citizens interested in this topic because one can compare how this issue has changed and what progress has been made.

What exactly ensures our security?

The security system of the Czech Republic and its main components is the name of the third part of the book. It includes chapters focused on the Czech Police, emergency services, or private security services. The most interesting and most important part for me focuses on Intelligence Services and describes their function after 1989. The content of this chapter is very well organized, and I especially appreciate the structure. First, we can read about the Intelligence Services in a theoretical way. This introduction can be measured up by either specialists or non-experts. This insight is followed by a classification that first focuses on the period of communism. A description of the current structure follows. Readers can easily understand which kind of Intelligence Services the Czech Republic had, what their names were and how those names changed. We

can also simply find specific laws that define the different divisions of our Intelligence Services, which can help us gain more information if we are more interested.

The Czech Republic as a member of international partnership?

I have already said that this book does not define security or security policy as a single part of Czech government policy. It is not only described in the context of the army or policy matters but it also takes into account economic, social, or environmental influences. Although some of the definitions may be complex, a comprehensive attitude can also be found in the chapter called *International guarantees for the security of the Czech Republic*. Our country is not described as a single unit in the world but as a member of powerful international organizations such as the European Union, the NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and, last but not least, the United Nations. This chapter provides information about their activities in a theoretical and practical way so that the reader can first realize what exactly their goal is in the context of ensuring international security. Practical evidence on the Czech Republic's work in these organizations and their missions abroad follows. Above all, I appreciate that the book does not omit news about specific operations, for example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina or in Kosovo, the southern province of Serbia that has already declared independence.

How will the situation change?

As I have already said, the book does not only provide the necessary information but it also includes ideas that we can think of. The most important in this context is the fifth part called *Forecasting the security situation in the world until 2020* by Miloš Balabán. The reason why it is important is that it sums up all necessary information and anticipates the future of international relations and security issues. It emphasizes the interconnection between the lack of natural resources and terrorism. In the near future, especially the countries of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf will control the biggest amount of natural resources. Thus, these resources will be concentrated to an area where democratic governance does not have a long tradition, compared to Europe. That is why there is a big possibility for Islamic radicals to gain power over those resources, which can be very problematic for future development, especially in Europe.

This chapter does not forget to mention the future role of the United States and the European Union as well. Apart from this comparison, the current position of China is emphasized and I appreciate it very much. The role of China is more and more important in the context of its economy and also in the context of its raw material consumption.

Who should be interested?

Thanks to its structure, this book can be very useful for students as well as for non-experts who are interested. Useful bibliography for each topic is practically placed at the end of each chapter.

The topic of security is included in many publications such as the book written by Šárka Waisová called *Current Questions of International Security*. But this book mainly focuses on security at global level, comparing different periods of its history with current situation. International organizations such as the UN, the OSCE, the NATO, or the ASEAN are mentioned as well as and their effort in ensuring global security. But there is a lack of local focus. Waisová's book does not provide information about the situation in the Czech Republic. Apart from that, we have another book called *A Secure Czech Republic in a Secure Europe* published by the Office of the Government. Here, we can read information on our country, but only in the context of the European Union, which is not enough. That is why I appreciate the most that the *Chapters on Security* mainly emphasize the Czech Republic in its global or international position. I also underline the fact that the book sums up the Copenhagen school, as I mentioned earlier. On the other hand, this attitude—the effort to put all necessary information together in one book—can be also seen as a disadvantage. There is not enough space to analyze all aspects and points of view in detail. Some mentioned information, especially for college graduates, can be found as useless.

I think that this publication can mainly serve as a superior course book that helps to give students a great overview of security topics. Even if the majority of the book is descriptive, there is also a place for considerations and reflections, especially at the end of the book. First, we gain all important information that we should know and after that, during our reading of those reflections, we can realize what is really important and influences security the most. The authors provide us ideas to think about in the context of global security. It is up to us how effectively we can work with them.