

Multi-Order

Clingendael Strategic Monitor 2017

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Multi-Order

What is wrong with the world? Just twenty years ago, it was unthinkable that Russia would be asserting itself through sabre-rattling on Europe's eastern border, that China would be one of the world's largest economies, that jihadi terrorism would be one of the main security challenges facing the West and that the immediate ring of countries around Europe, rather than being the hoped-for ring of stability, would seem to have degenerated into a ring of fire. As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs puts it, 'a quarter of a century after the fall of the Wall, the hopes of that time have turned into the uncertainty of today'.¹

But as EU High Representative Federica Mogherini notes, uncertainty cannot be used as the basis for policy:

“ *This is no time for uncertainty: our Union needs a Strategy. We need a shared vision, and common action.* ”

The questions for the Clingendael Strategic Monitor, therefore, are: What is the strategic environment? What threats can be expected? And to what extent is the 'world order' changing? The updated Clingendael Strategic Monitor 2017 identifies the major trends on the basis of a solid evidence-based and transparent method. In this way, despite all the uncertainty, the Monitor offers some firm ground to stand on.

On the basis of an expert analysis of ten themes, this Monitor draws two key conclusions. First, a ten-year trend analysis (2006-2016) suggests a **substantial increase in threats to European security** in the next five years. In addition to the existing threats (jihadi terrorism, fragile states/crises), Clingendael expects that a number of threats (cyberattacks, crumbling EU unity and threats to territorial integrity) will grow more acute. Clingendael also expects new threats in the area of free trade. In short, traditional geopolitical security threats and (as yet) non-geopolitical threats – or in the words of the Brookings Institution, 'functional threats' – will together continue to set the European agenda. Non-state actors are generating the main threats, but the share of state actors is expected to increase.

In addition, the Monitor concludes that the world order is moving into uncharted waters. Clingendael uses the term '**Multi-Order**': a highly diverse system in which international cooperation takes place (or fails to do so) in totally different ways in separate areas. The state of international cooperation thus depends on the specific theme. Within the

¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Beleidsagenda 2017*, 6.

multi-order, Clingendael expects an ongoing rules-based system in which the level of cooperation varies, depending on the theme. The multi-order bears no resemblance to the 19th-century multipolar order, nor to the bipolar order of the Cold War, nor to the unipolar order of the 90s. There is no historical precedent. In short, the idea that the world and the EU in particular are mainly suffering the effects of a multipolar malaise that is leading to greater insecurity, more frequent conflict and a crumbling international order, is one that requires nuancing.

Methodological enhancement

These two findings have been arrived at – by contrast with previous years – on the basis of the Structured Expert Approach, a Clingendael method developed in spring 2016 for the purposes of reliable and transparent expert forecasting (see Appendix 2). Clingendael regards experts as crucial, because a purely quantitative analysis has its limitations and Clingendael has very well-established experts both on its staff and in its network.² However, it is clear that even the best experts are prone to prejudice and bias. The method is therefore designed to limit forecast bias.

The structured expert approach uses a number of principles that have been shown to improve experts' assessments, such as reasoning from a base rate, and wisdom-of-the-crowd techniques (see Appendix 2). These principles are systematically incorporated into four mutually reinforcing and complementary methods. For the threat assessment, use is made of the Clingendael Trend Database, a validated set of quantitative and, where necessary, qualitative indicators (as not everything can be expressed in figures). This dataset ensures that the assessment is reproducible. The main indicators are shown schematically in a table for each of the ten threat assessments (see the underlying theme studies). The second method involves the Clingendael Expert Survey, a questionnaire sent out to some 2,500 scientists worldwide. The Expert Survey is a wisdom-of-the-crowd technique that above all identifies possible 'shocks' and then assigns probability and impact scores to them. In addition, the survey is a horizon-scanning tool for identifying new security challenges. The qualitative Structured Focused Comparison method provides the basis for the international order analysis, in which five qualitative indicators are used. Finally, the Clingendael Assessment Tool has been designed, consisting of two controllable scoring mechanisms to support accurate assessments of the threat situation and the international order. Together, this set of

2 For example, the backgrounder to the EU Global Strategy states: 'Global trends are neither linear nor preordained, but often the product of shocks and human choices. This highlights the uncertainty that lies ahead, but also the role of agency'. Missiroli, A. 2015. *Towards an EU Global Strategy: Background, Process, References*, European Union Institute for Security Studies, 128.

methods ensures transparent, evidence-based assessments and an opportunity to evaluate and elaborate further on the Structured Expert Approach. Appendix 2 gives a comprehensive summary of the methods. The full version is not publicly available (but is provided to the client and is thus open to peer review).

This evidence-based Monitor is structured around the following question:

“ *‘What have been the main developments regarding European security and international stability in the past ten years, and in what direction do the trends point up to 2021?’*

In answering this question we focus on two sub-questions. These sub-questions were originally also central to the Future Policy Survey of the Dutch Ministry of Defence:³

1. What threat assessment can be expected for the EU and its Member States in 2021?
2. In what direction will the rules-based order develop between now and 2021?

In order to answer these questions, the Monitor starts with a theoretical and empirical critique of the often-heard diagnosis of the current state of the world: the existing order is crumbling and European security is in danger due to emerging great powers (the multipolar order). Part Two then outlines the complex threat assessment up to 2021 for ten policy areas, on the basis of ten evidence-based trend studies. Part Three analyses these ten areas in more detail and describes the trends that are foreseen for the international system. Finally, Part Four indicates where the largest policy gaps are, with reference to a number of policy issues. Perhaps the most important policy implication is the acute need for an integrated approach.

Both this syntheses report as well as the underlying thematic studies have been written in the fall of 2016. An important development since then is the election of Donald Trump as the 45st President of the United States. The possible effects of his presidency are outlined in an epilogue: “Donald Trump and the Multi-Order”.

3 Ministerie van Defensie, *Eindrapport Verkenningen: Houvast Voor de Krijgsmacht van de Toekomst*, 2010, 53–54.

1 A 'return to geopolitics'?

The problems facing the EU and the Netherlands are regularly summed up in terms of 'power shifts', 'multipolarity' and 'the return of geopolitics'. It is certainly true that, broadly speaking, a transition appears to be occurring from a multilateral to a multipolar order (see also previous versions of the Clingendael Strategic Monitor).⁴ This characterisation is one of the most important strategic lenses through which international developments can be understood.

It is often assumed that the meaning of 'multipolarity' for the strategic field in which policy-makers must operate is obvious: there will be more uncertainty in an international system in which a large number of parties call the shots, rather than just one (the US) or two (the US and Russia). The reason for this is that each actor has to assess the intentions and capacity of a much larger number of actors, and these complex assessments, it is thought, lead to uncertainty and increase the risk of miscalculation.⁵ In other words, the probability of conflict increases as new powers emerge. A second implication is that the international order will be challenged. As a hegemonic power, the US has determined the rules of the game since 1945.⁶ New states – such as the BRIC countries and the Next 11 – will operate according to principles and rules that do not coincide with American (and European) interests. In short, the argument goes, power shifts, the return of geopolitics and/or multipolarity will have negative consequences for conflict – including armed conflict – and the stability of the international order.⁷

4 See inter alia Clingendael Institute, *Strategic Monitor 2015 and 2016*, https://www.clingendael.nl/pub/2015/clingendael_monitor_2015/, https://www.clingendael.nl/pub/2015/clingendael_monitor_2016/.

5 Rosencrance, R.N. 1966. 'Bipolarity, Multipolarity, and the Future', *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 10(3), 314-327; Waltz, K. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*, McGraw-Hill, 160-193; Mearsheimer, J. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Norton, 338-347.

6 Gilpin, R. 1983. *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 197-209.

7 See: Daniels, R. 2015. 'Leadership at Home and Abroad', *Centre for Strategic and International Studies*, 5 november, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/pacnet-76-leadership-home-and-abroad>; Waal, de, T. 2016. 'Russia, Turkey, and a Multipolar World', *Carnegie Europe*, 30 August, <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=64421>.



Theoretical justification

Threat and security analyses are often plagued by three problems: 1) it is not always clear whose security is central; 2) it is not always clear which issues are to be identified as a security problem; and 3) it is not always clear when there is a security threat. This box outlines the conclusions of Clingendael's reflection on these questions (see Appendix 1 for a detailed explanation).

It is clear that Dutch security policy is embedded in European security. For this reason, the Clingendael Strategic Monitor takes the security of the EU and its member states as its starting point, with the recent *Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy* (2016), taken in conjunction with the Dutch security agenda, leading to the selection of ten security interests. Moreover, threshold values for security have been chosen with reference to the five vital interests set out in the National Security Strategy (2007).

To make matters worse, the analysis of the international order is plagued by still further uncertainty: it may refer to the way in which states but also non-state actors interact, to a hierarchical or an anarchical order, and to an amoral or a normative order. The familiar quadrant chart provides useful support to the analysis of the international order in the Clingendael Strategic Monitor. However, it is adapted to the layered international order that is described in this Monitor – in line with previous editions. The main changes concern a number of concretely defined options for more (or less) cooperation on the horizontal axis and a number of clear categories of actors. The categories are based on various scientific discussions (see Appendix 1).

Are these assumptions correct? (Also: whose agenda is actually served by this characterisation? A number of publications point to a Chinese and Russian agenda).⁸ One is immediately struck by the fact that the supposed negative consequences of power shifts represent a relatively new interpretation. Until the publication of a book by Kenneth Waltz (1979), most scientists (including well-known thinkers such as Hans J. Morgenthau) thought that a system in which multiple great powers vied with each other for influence was much more stable than one with only two great powers.⁹ In 1964, for example, Deutsch and Singer wrote: 'For the most part it has seemed intuitively reasonable that [...] as the system moves away from bipolarity towards multipolarity,

8 China, the US and Russia (see Lo, B. 2015. *Russia and the New World Disorder*, Brookings Institution). Incidentally, it is also in US interests to portray multipolarity as negatively as possible.

9 Morgenthau, H.J. 1960. *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 346–64. Waltz, K. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*, McGraw-Hill, 177).

the frequency and intensity of war should be expected to diminish.¹⁰ It was thus assumed that there would be less conflict in a multipolar order. Of course, the presumed stability of 'the return of geopolitics' had its origins in history, and in particular in the stable 19th-century system known as the Concert of Europe. The idea was that by means of flexible alliances and changing systems of collaboration, great powers could achieve goals far more easily without the need for force.

A second reason for doubt is that it is far from clear that uncertainty leads to conflict. Some thinkers believe that there is little uncertainty even when there is a large number of great powers. For example, large power differences leave little room for inaccurate assessments.¹¹ Another analytical model (the Balance of Power Model) goes even further, arguing that in uncertain conditions, states will above all exercise caution.¹² Moreover, a third group believes that international institutions exist partly in order to eliminate uncertainty so that states are better able to pursue their own interests.¹³ Would the new group of international players really wish to put an end to an international order that ensures more predictability and also reduces the chance of conflict? The Chinese agenda, for example, despite obvious revisionist traits, is emphatically one of ongoing international and multilateral cooperation.¹⁴

The idea is thus open to serious question that power shifts and the return of geopolitics constitute the main or even the sole causes of the perceived security challenges and should therefore be the definitive lens through which to interpret the strategic environment of the European Union and the Netherlands. The Clingendael Institute is not alone in this view. For example, the Brookings Institution states: 'Multipolarity has been sometimes compared to an incurable disease that will eventually kill the

10 Deutsch, K.W. and Singer, J.D. 1964. 'Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability', *World Politics*, 16(3), 390. (Underlining added by authors).

11 Bremer, S.A. 'Dangerous Dyads Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816-1965', *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 36(2), June 1992, 309-341; Kugler, J. and Lemke, D. 1996. *Parity and War: Evaluations and Extensions of the War Ledger*, University of Michigan Press; Oneal, J.R. and Russett, B.M. 1997. 'The Classical Liberals Were Right: Democracy, Interdependence, and Conflict, 1950-1985', *International Studies Quarterly*, 41(2), 267-293; Kugler, J., et al. 1980. 'Deterrence and the Arms Race', *International Security*, 4(4), 105-138.

12 Kugler en Lemke, *op. cit.*, 5; Singer, J.D., et al. 'Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965', *Peace, War and Numbers*.

13 Keohane, R.O. and Nye, J.S. 1977. *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Little Brown and Company.

14 Zheng, C. 2016. 'China's Domestic Debate on Global Governance', *The Diplomat*, 23 November, <http://thediplomat.com/2016/11/chinas-domestic-debate-on-global-governance/>.

liberal order. But there is insufficient evidence to take this as a foregone conclusion.”¹⁵ The Egmont Institute argues that ‘the problem with multipolarity is that it does not help us to explain military, diplomatic and economic developments’, and reaches the following strongly worded conclusion: ‘History as usual is back. Some call that multipolarity, others unipolarity. It does not matter. Reality is stronger than this kind of simplistic classification.’¹⁶ In short, there is a need for careful thought about the forthcoming world order and the significance of the observed trends, without falling back on facile characterisations and solutions.

15 Alcaro, R. 2015. ‘The West, Multipolarity, and the Liberal Order’, *Brookings Institution*, 10 April, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/04/10/the-west-multipolarity-and-the-liberal-order/>.

16 Keersmaecker, de, G. 2015. ‘Multipolar Myths and Unipolar Fantasies’, *Egmont Institute*, Policy Brief No.60, <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/SPB60-.pdf>.

2 The European threat assessment

The European Global Strategy and the security agenda of the Netherlands offer a broad interpretation of security. Not only states, but a group of individuals, or communities, or even the world as a whole may be threatened by disruption, socioeconomic insecurity or destruction. A risk assessment of ten security issues – conducted by ten experts and set out in the thematic contributions – forms the basis of this analysis. For each theme, the assessment identifies the current threat to European security values (2016) and the developments that can be expected up to 2021. In other words, the forecasting period is five years, based on ten-year trend analyses (2006-2016).¹⁷ To determine whether there is a larger (or smaller) threat, five fundamental European interests are distinguished (see the box on Risk assessment for an explanation).



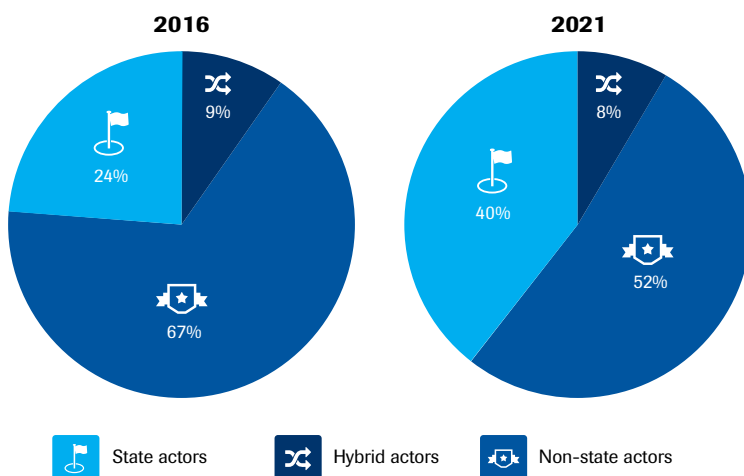
Risk assessment

To clarify to what extent a deteriorating security situation should really be expected, this study uses the standard risk formula ‘probability times impact’. For each theme, experts were asked to determine the (expected) impact on the basis of the extent to which vital security interests have (or may have) been damaged. Five vital interests were distinguished, in line with the Dutch National Security Strategy, and adapted to the European context. For each interest, different levels were distinguished, from ‘a nuisance but not damaging’ (Level 1) to ‘major impact’ (Level 5). Probability was scored on a scale from 1 to 7 with a corresponding quantitative description. The exact categories are defined in Appendix 3. In accordance with the Structured Expert Approach, scores were assigned on the basis of ten-year trend analyses. All results have been provided to the client. A less comprehensive summary is presented here.

Findings

The ten threat assessments are presented in detail in the thematic contributions (Table 2 provides a brief summary). On the basis of the composite assessment, two main conclusions can be drawn.

¹⁷ See conclusion and appendices for an explanation.

Figure 1 Actors behind the threats (2016-2021)

First, the current (2016) overarching threat assessment is – self-evidently – very diverse and hence complex. For that reason, this report refers to **Complex Security**. There are genuine threats to all five vital interests.¹⁸ Threats to European territorial security result from terrorism, territorial tensions, organised crime, the proliferation of CBRN weapons and a number of crises on Europe’s margins (Libya, Syria, Mali, Ukraine). The economic security of some EU member states is currently under threat as a result of the asymmetrical energy relationship with Russia. Society’s security is threatened by the very difficult relations within the EU, combined with the internal terrorist threat and the social tensions to which this has given rise. Ecological security is under pressure from climate change. Finally, technological security is threatened by cyberattacks (including by terrorists). Equally unsurprising is the fact that non-state actors (e.g. armed groups, terrorist organisations, criminals and hacker collectives: see Figure 1) play a very significant role in the array of threats. In other words – and this is why these self-evident points are nonetheless important – the threat assessment in terms of both content and actors ranges far more widely than the effects of classic geopolitical tensions. Although geopolitical tensions are evident in connection with territoriality, the proliferation of CBRN weapons, energy supply and free trade (partially), and cyberattacks, reference is usually made to (as yet) non-geopolitical or ‘functional’ threats in the areas of climate change, fragile states, the EU and terrorism.

¹⁸ Impact scores vary per subject from 1 to 5, where 1 means that there is no harm to security (see Appendix 3). This analysis only presents scores of 2 or higher.

Table 1 Quantitative threat assessment 2021¹⁹

	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Top 3 2021
Territorial Security	A fundamental threat to European member states' monopoly on violence and/or territorial integrity.		2016	2021			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrorism • Territorial tensions • Crises
Economic Security	Harm to the economic foundations of the EU and its member states.	2016	2021				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber-threats • Threats to free trade • Tensions within EU
Societal Security	Harm to the foundations of a peaceful European social climate and the democratic rule of law in the member states and/or European institutions.	2016	2021				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tensions within EU • Cyber-threats • Threats to free trade
Ecological Security	Fundamental harm to the European living environment.	2016	2021				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change
Technological Security	Harm to the integrity and openness of essential information or information systems of the EU and its member states.	2016	2021				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber-threats • Climate change



























Second, Clingendael expects the security assessment to **deteriorate further** over the next five years. Tables 1 and 2 summarise the main conclusions. Table 1 describes the expected adverse effects on European interests in general terms. The impact and probability scores for each of the ten thematic contributions are pulled together and produce a worsening picture for all five vital interests. It should be noted that the threat levels are not comparable to each other: Level 3 for territorial integrity is not equivalent to Level 3 for economic security. The last column of Table 1 indicates the top three

19 The exact values are as follows: territorial security 2.53 (2016)/3.31 (2021); economic security 1.04 (2016) /1.34 (2021); societal security 1.34 (2016)/ 1.90 (2021); ecological security 1.29 (2016)/1.75 (2021); technological security 1.73 (2016)/2.90 (2021).

expected threats to each security interest. Naturally, a more qualitative interpretation is of interest, and Table 2 gives a brief explanation of the expected developments in the next five years.

- Without any doubt, one of the biggest causes for concern is the **increased threat of breaches of the territorial integrity** of some EU member states and NATO partners. Over the past decade there has been marked deterioration as a result of a more assertive Russia on the eastern frontier, a more uncertain US security guarantee and a divided European Union. There are no reasons to believe that the driving forces underlying the trends (see the contribution on territorial integrity, for example) will grow any weaker.
- There are also substantially higher **risk assessments in the areas of free trade, tensions within the EU, cybersecurity** and, to a lesser extent, climate change and the proliferation of CBRN weapons. The threat in the area of free trade is set against a backdrop of declining global trade. It can be expected that negative economic trends (including limits to the growth of value chains and regionalisation) can be absorbed by the market, but this is less true of the clear trend towards increasing protectionism and the deployment of geo-economic instruments. The threat to the EU is set against a backdrop of declining confidence. The process by which problems of trust at national level having become bound up with the politicisation of the European project and a fragile economic recovery will be the key drivers. The increased cyberthreat, finally, is a result of the ever growing trend of cyberattacks, but is also a result of the ongoing digital interconnectedness. Worryingly, these new threats can be mutually reinforcing. The threats in the area of free trade and the tensions within the EU, for example, hamper a European response to territorial violations.
- Finally, the **role of states** is striking. In an absolute sense, states are responsible for less threats, but they do play an increasing role as originators of threats (see Figure 1). This is reflected in an alternative measure in which the severity of the threat is linked to actors behind the threat (and thus its potential impact). By this measure, the greatest security impact in 2016 comes from non-state actors (around 70%), but the severity (impact) of threats from state actors will rise rapidly (a two-fold increase).

Table 2 Qualitative threat assessment 2021

Theme	Expected threat assessment 2021	Actors
 Threats to territorial integrity	The return of geopolitics has not yet led to more conflicts, but there is cause for concern. The trans-Atlantic axis has been weakened by the interaction between a reinterpretation of American and other interests and perceived responsibilities and a less effective European Union.	 State
 Terrorism	The threat of terrorism in the EU remains high. The past two years have seen a new trend as a result of greater variety in the <i>modus operandi</i> of terrorists and the risk of returning foreign fighters.	 Non-state
 Use of CBRN weapons	Despite continuing dismantling of CBRN weapons, the threat has increased. The arsenals of some emerging players are growing, weapons are being modernised and there is greater escalation potential for the use of chemical weapons.	 State  Non-state
 Crises on the margins of the EU	The trends for all fragile states give cause for concern. At the same time, the consequences for the EU (terrorism and migration) are confined to spill-over from a small group of recently fragile states. A greater threat is not expected.	 Non-state
 Threats to energy security	In overall terms, no major problems for the EU's energy security are expected over the next five years. There is structural overcapacity and mutual dependence between consumers and producers.	 Non-state
 Threats to free trade	The outlook for free trade is gloomy. The growth of world trade is slowing down. The market will be able to cope with negative economic trends, but will prove less resilient against increasing protectionism and the deployment of geo-economic instruments.	 State
 Tensions within the EU	Trust in the EU and European institutions has been decreasing for years, and is expected to erode further. Above all, the EU has become intertwined with national politics (where there is a similar problem of trust), a turbulent election period is imminent and the economic recovery is very fragile.	 State  Non-state
 Transnational organised crime	Organised crime (human trafficking/smuggling, arms trafficking, money laundering and drug trafficking) will increase slightly, unlike other forms of crime. Despite the undeniably negative effects of this, no fundamental security threats are expected.	 Non-state
 Climate change	Tensions in the Arctic and the risk of flooding and extreme heat may be expected to increase. Trends in mitigation policy are positive, but the pace of climate change will increase the threat in this area.	 State  Hybrid  Non-state
 Cyberthreats	Digital threats will increase rapidly. Growth in cybermanipulation and cyberattacks is continuing. In addition, the world is very rapidly becoming digitally interconnected. The cyberspace and the increased escalation potential will further exacerbate the threat.	 State  Hybrid  Non-state

3 The multi-order

Jochem Wiers, special professor of Dutch foreign policy at the University of Groningen and former head of the Strategy Advisory Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, lists four themes for the coming years for a strategic agenda for Dutch foreign policy. One of these themes is the rules-based system: the organisation of a safe, sustainable and fair world, with validity not just in 'the West' but also extending to developing countries and non-state actors.²⁰

The interest in the rules-based order is partly accounted for by the supposed return of geopolitics. The emergence of new players, it is expected, will put fundamental pressure on the rules-based order.²¹ The Clingendael Institute analyses reveal a different picture. It is certainly true that there are situations in which international relations are growing less harmonious and the world order (including the rules-based order) is coming under pressure. It is also fair to say that in these cases problems are often encountered as a result of more assertive action by the great powers. Yet it is simply not true that the world order is merely crumbling away. Clingendael's analyses show continuing cooperation in many areas. Moreover, in many areas the rules-based order turns out to be fairly stable, although there are worrying trends.

The current order: where do we stand?

First, we present some quantitative data on cooperation (within the G20 and G7/8, the General Assembly and the Security Council) and institutional developments.²² The quantitative data provide an initial indication that the rules-based order is not simply crumbling away. Figure A (in the Appendix) presents the voting behaviour in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), on the basis of the affinity score database.²³ GA resolutions are often adopted without a vote after an intensive consultation process.

20 Wiers, J. 2016. *Mind the Gap: Hoe de kloof tussen buitenlandbeleid en wetenschap te overbruggen?*, Speech on acceptance of the Chair of Policy and Policy Development in Dutch Foreign Relations, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 28 June, 5.

21 Porter, P. 2016. 'Sorry, Folks. There is No Rules-Based World Order,' *The National Interest*, 28 August, <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-skeptics/sorry-folks-there-no-rules-based-world-order-17497>.

22 The authors would like to thank the G7/8 and G20 data centre for their contribution to the Clingendael Strategic Monitor.

23 Erik Voeten Dataverse, *United Nations General Assembly Voting Data*, Georgetown University, <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/Voeten>.

However, some resolutions are put to a vote, and these votes provide a measure of the agreement between countries. In the period 2004-2014 the level of agreement remained unchanged and even improved on important topics. However, voting behaviour in the General Assembly tells us little about the great powers; to learn about them, we look at a number of indicators for the behaviour of large(r) powers in the Security Council, the G7/8 and the G20. In the Security Council, veto behaviour has remained roughly similar, as Figure B shows. For the G7/8 and the G20, the picture is even more positive. Meetings of the G7/8 and G20 are concluded with a communiqué. The G20 and G7/8 data centre encrypts all promises and then describes the extent to which eight great powers keep their promises. In cooperation with the data centre, Clingendael has identified the trends since 2004. Figure C shows the level of compliance on a scale from -1 to 1, where 1 represents full compliance and -1 no compliance. The trend is clear: within these forums too, there turns out to be a considerable degree of compliance, and even signs of a slight improvement.

Lastly, Figures D and E, based on the analyses of the Yearbook of International Organizations, show the growth in the number of international organisations and the proliferation of treaties. These quantitative data also show a still expanding international order, although growth of both organisations and treaties appears to be tailing off somewhat. In short, a number of quantitative indicators suggest that the international order is persisting rather than breaking down.



The quadrant chart as a framework for the analysis of the international order

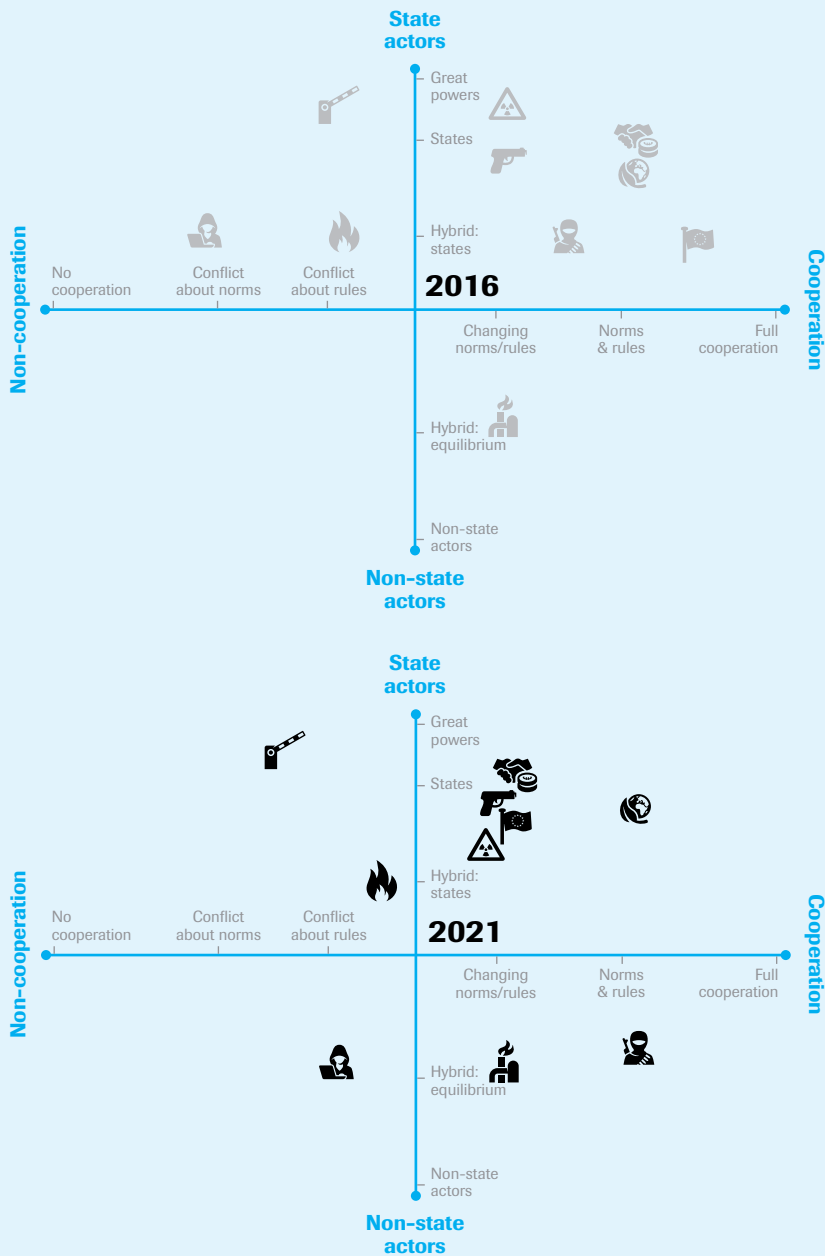
The quadrant chart as developed in the Future Policy Survey of the Dutch Ministry of Defence forms the basis for the analysis of the international order. The horizontal axis represents a continuum from non-cooperation to comprehensive institutionalised cooperation. On this axis, a distinction is then made between fundamental norms (principles regarding the structure of the international order, such as non-proliferation) and practical rules (concrete procedural agreements, such as the WTO dispute settlement bodies). The idea behind the axis is simple; the closer one tends towards non-cooperation, the more disagreement there is about the fundamental structure of the international order. The vertical axis then describes which actors determine the structure of the international order, and represents a continuum from state to non-state actors. It provides space for situations where great powers call the shots, but also for hybrid situations where states, NGOs and other actors take joint decisions. In short, the quadrant chart as developed in detail is a useful tool for showing the extent and variety of cooperation in the international order.

To present a more nuanced picture of the international order, Clingendael uses qualitative expert analyses based on a transparent and completely redesigned methodology. Figure 2 outlines the outcomes for ten policy areas and hence the degree of rules-based order within the current international system (for 2016; the underlying analyses are to be found in the individual studies). Table 3 summarises the main findings from the thematic contributions. There are three main conclusions:

- European security policy and hence that of the Netherlands is defined within the context of a **multi-order**. Rather than one world order with one system of cooperation, there are multiple simultaneous world orders. There is a very diverse system of international cooperation in which individual systems are organised in completely different ways. The 195 countries in the current international system are interwoven in a web of relationships that varies according to the policy area.
- Only in one case, the cyberregime, are there fundamental differences about the structure of the order. In most cases, there is **normative agreement** (for example, concerning the principle of territorial inviolability), but there is either disagreement about the rules that must be followed (for example, the circumstances in which peacekeeping operations may be used), or an inadequate degree of compliance with the rules (despite agreement on the inviolability of territorial borders, this principle is violated with some regularity).²⁴ What is more, despite lack of compliance with principles, and the usual tensions in international relations, it remains true that most regimes are situated in the cooperative (multilateral) portion of the chart. In short, we are justified in speaking of a *multi-order*. Table 2 gives a qualitative description of each individual regime.
- The international order continues to be based on the **Westphalian** principle, i.e. on nation states. Only in the field of energy (in which the market plays a major role and the key players are companies, including state enterprises) and digital (where the entire infrastructure is controlled by non-state actors) is there a system in which non-state actors actually take decisions or set the agenda. In addition, it is striking to say the least that according to our analysis the great powers only have complete self-determination with regard to territorial integrity and CBRN (where they are only limited by other great powers). In almost all other cases, great powers are not only limited in their room for manoeuvre by other great powers, but also by a large group of heterogeneous states. This does not mean that great powers play a subordinate role, but that they definitely share power.

24 Moreover, there is no quantitative trend evidence of an increase in conflicts over spheres of influence, territory or resources (classic geopolitical indicators). See the contribution on territorial integrity.

Figure 2 The international system 2016 -2021



Forecast: where will we be in 2021?

On the basis of our trend analyses, some shifts can be expected in the multi-order by 2021. Figure 2 presents these shifts visually and paints a very varied picture, in which more cooperation can be expected in some regimes and less in others. The overall picture is of a world order that is somewhat less cooperative but that will also provide *more* space for non-state actors. Three trends stand out:

- The most striking shift is without doubt the expectation of more strife over the principle of territorial integrity. In fact, a **fundamental normative shift** is expected. The forecast is that the principle of territorial inviolability will change and great powers will start to be able to operate relatively freely within their own sphere of influence (Russia in Eastern Europe, China in the South China Sea). For the EU and the Netherlands, this shifting norm presents an enormous challenge, with the use of force in defence of the borders or in defence of the NATO alliance no longer inconceivable.
- A second trend is that some very mature regimes (i.e. those with strong normative frameworks, agreement about rules and well-developed compliance) are susceptible to change. In particular, this trend concerns the unity of the European Union, which is under pressure mainly as a result of declining trust on the part of the population. The 'permissive consensus' has come to an end, the 'consensus principle' is under pressure and the EU seems to be becoming increasingly intergovernmental in character. Another bastion of the rules-based system, the free trade regime, is likewise under pressure from increasing protectionism on the one hand and recourse to regional free trade agreements on the other. In both cases, the main question is not whether these **mature regimes are changing**, but to what extent a new normative consensus can develop.
- At the same time, and this is perhaps an even greater challenge than the developments described above, it is expected that these self-same states will **start cooperating with each other *more*** in a different context. Within the terrorism regime and the cyberregime in particular, more cooperation and/or less disagreement is expected. Cooperation is also improving slightly within the crisis regime. Thus the BRIC countries seem to be partly (and doubtless for pragmatic reasons) conforming to the existing set of principles for peacekeeping missions, and there is a shared interest among great powers and regional and small countries in both intensifying anti-terrorism operations and stepping up prevention measures. The EU is very likely to find itself increasingly at odds with Russia on territorial questions (and in a normative sense perhaps with China), but will also maintain more or less cooperative relations with both countries in the fight against terrorism (both), energy supply (Russia) and climate policy (China). The biggest strategic challenge of the next five years is thus to formulate a convincing response to a changing multi-order.

Coherence in the multi-order?

How do the elements fit together in this multi-order? Are some regimes more important than others? How should the multi-order be assessed? The easy answer is that the traditional security regimes (territorial integrity in combination with CBRN) are decisive, and that other regimes will follow developments in the traditional security regime, doubtless in fits and starts, and probably with a considerable time lag. If this were the case, analyses would need to focus mainly on the role of the great powers and the conflict about rules in which they have become involved.





However, such an answer would be misleading. There is simply too little scientific evidence to back it up. In empirical terms, no convincing demonstration has been provided that the international order is determined by the traditional security regime alone. On the contrary, this question has been a subject of debate for decades, without any clear consensus having emerged. Even if it had, the weighting (one in which the traditional security regimes of territorial integrity, CBRN and – to a lesser extent – free trade are weighted by a factor of 10 and are thus very decisive) results in a score in the cooperative sector of the chart. Another reason for not only considering traditional security threats is that the current state of international relations bears little resemblance to the 19th-century multipolar order, the bipolar order of the Cold War or the unipolar order of the 90s (for example, the unofficial agenda of a major player such as China is one of selective multilateralism). There is no historical precedent.





In short, the way in which the various chessboards of this multi-order interact with each other is not (yet) clear. There are two possible directions that developments could take. On the one hand, it is conceivable that there will be negative spill-over, with the less cooperative systems pulling the other systems in the direction of a less cooperative order. There are recent examples that point to such negative spill-overs. For example, former 'islands of cooperation' on one chessboard have been turned into pawns on another chessboard (such as Russia's unilateral suspension of some nuclear cooperation programmes in response to 'America's hostile actions').²⁵ On the other hand, the opposite is also imaginable. There is a long tradition, of which the European project is the best-known example, which suggests that there will be positive spill-overs in which cooperative relationships on one chessboard serve to cushion against shocks on other chessboards.²⁶ In short, exactly how the multi-order hangs together, and above all which type of spill-over will dominate, are open questions for which there is an explicit and urgent need for further study.



25 'Angry over sanctions, Russia suspends an arms-control deal', *The Economist*, 8 October 2016, <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21708251-angry-over-sanctions-russia-suspends-arms-control-deal-going-nuclear>.

26 Functionalist theory and 'cross-cutting cleavages'. This concept of political science from the early 1960s was described by various authors including S. Lipset and S. Rokkan, who explained how non-coinciding fault lines in national politics gave a divided community sufficient cohesion to avoid breakup and violent instability.

Table 3 The international system (2016-2021)

Regime	Current assessment (2016)	Outlook (2021)
 Territorial integrity	<p>The classic security regime is under pressure. There is global consensus on the main principles (such as non-intervention, territorial inviolability and self-determination) and rules (the primacy of the Security Council). The principles are subject to change (e.g. R2P) and violations of territorial integrity occur regularly with impunity.</p>	<p>The regime is expected to deteriorate further. The principle of self-determination and inviolability will come under further pressure because great powers feel free to operate within their own sphere of influence.</p>
 Terrorism	<p>The past 10-15 years have been characterised by a normative development from hard and oppressive (counter-terrorism) to more comprehensive and preventive approaches (countering violent extremism and preventing violent extremism). Cooperation has been common in regional contexts, but is increasingly emerging within multilateral forums. Moreover, there is more agreement about the rules. In many cases – especially in the ‘hard’ domain – there is increasing compliance with agreements.</p>	<p>Between now and 2021 developments are expected to continue. Two developments are particularly worth noting. First, it is expected that agreement about and compliance with principles and rules will increase. Second, the voice of non-state actors will become more important.</p>
 CBRN	<p>There is an intricate system of multilateral treaties and organisations aimed at reducing the risks of the use of CBRN weapons. There is a normative consensus and a clear set of rules (especially authentication mechanisms). There is compliance in many cases. However, cracks are appearing: support for the principles is decreasing and there is less and less agreement on new rules.</p>	<p>No fundamental change to the CBRN regime is expected. What can be expected, however, is a decrease in the role of the great powers due to growing discord between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states.</p>
 Crises	<p>The crisis regime is not very highly developed. Although there is a growing global consensus on principles (such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Deal and peacekeeping operations) and a complex system of rules, the level of compliance with agreements is limited. A heterogeneous group of states plays a leading role.</p>	<p>Existing trends are expected to continue. Thus the BRIC countries are partially conforming to the existing order, the trend of further normative agreement appears to be continuing and the level of compliance with agreements is expected to increase.</p>

Regime	Current assessment (2016)	Outlook (2021)
 Energy	<p>The global energy regime is a combination of market and government. There is agreement on the principles (reliable, affordable and clean energy) and a set of rules to uphold these principles. At the same time, there has been uneasiness about the rules (e.g. concerning energy liberalisation in the EU).</p>	<p>The expectation for 2021 is twofold: states will continue to agree on the principles, but more conflict about concrete rules can be expected. There is also a clear trend towards non-state actors gaining a greater role in setting the agenda.</p>
 Free trade	<p>The global free trade regime appears to be one of the most developed systems. Despite difficult multilateral negotiations, there is broad agreement among states on principles such as free trade and non-discrimination. Also, most countries adhere to the already agreed trade rules and compliance mechanisms, although the number of protectionist measures is growing. States are still dominant in the regime, with the largest economies playing a very important role.</p>	<p>Between now and 2021 no fundamental change to the underlying norms and rules is expected: capitalism and free trade remain the key principles. At the same time, increasing pressure can be expected on the regime, as a result of regionalisation of trade agreements, disagreements about the structure of the system and growing protectionism.</p>
 The European Union	<p>The EU is undoubtedly the most developed international organisation and an example of a mature regime. There is strong normative agreement, an extensive <i>acquis</i> and generally binding mechanisms to ensure compliance. States are dominant, but non-state actors (including the European Commission and the European Parliament) are central to setting the agenda.</p>	<p>Significant changes are expected by 2021. The centre of gravity in decision-making is increasingly shifting towards the member states (especially within the European Council). In addition, implicit and explicit principles and rules such as 'ever closer union', the rule of law and the consensus principle are coming under pressure.</p>
 Transnational organised crime	<p>International cooperation is weak and dominated by states. Despite a high degree of support for principles and rules, there is relatively little operational cooperation at the multilateral level apart from the widespread practice of information-sharing. The global regime lacks monitoring mechanisms to oversee implementation, and is consequently characterised by low levels of compliance. As a result, the regime continues to be organised largely on a national basis (through national criminal law) and sometimes on a bilateral or regional basis.</p>	<p>Significant changes are not expected in the next five years. There is a growing conviction that civil society should be involved in the approach. Although NGOs and regional actors are emerging, it is expected that state actors will remain dominant.</p>

Regime	Current assessment (2016)	Outlook (2021)
 Climate	<p>The climate regime is a constantly developing global regime. Despite the many non-state actors, states remain dominant (mainly through the 'shadow of regulation'). There is a set of principles (e.g. global warming is a fact and should be prevented) and a set of rules. The recent climate agreement in Paris reaffirmed existing principles and rules, but above all secured global (as opposed to Western) acceptance of principles and rules. Compliance with rules is (apart from the EU) voluntary and subject to uncertainty.</p>	<p>By 2021 it is expected that the regime may have acquired some new nuances, but will not have changed significantly. The Paris Climate Agreement is important, but also continued existing trends and normative developments.</p>
 Cyber	<p>The cyberregime is the least developed regime to be discussed here. There are no specific institutions with natural leadership throughout the cyberdomain, there is a lack of regulation and the variety of actors is huge, although state actors are significant within this hybrid system (through bilateral agreements). There has been some normative development, but there remains much disagreement.</p>	<p>A trend towards less conflict within the regime is expected, due to more agreement on principles (out of necessity). New players will become involved in the system, especially with regard to the physical side of the cyberdomain, which is completely controlled by private parties.</p>

4 Policy issues and lines of enquiry

What do the threat assessment and the multi-order signify for policy-making? This Monitor does not offer any concrete policy recommendations, but sets out some lines of enquiry and dilemmas with reference to which future policy could be shaped.

The first line of enquiry concerns the strategic orientation of the EU and the Netherlands. This orientation still seems to be heavily affected by the notion of the negative consequences of changing power relations. In 2013, for example, the Dutch Ministry of Defence stated: 'The world is on the move as a result of shifting geopolitical and economic power relations', and noted increasing uncertainty, with a greater risk of crises and consequent pressure on the security institutions'.²⁷ In the same year, the Dutch government wrote in the International Security Strategy: 'The world has become more opaque and unpredictable with the emergence of major new geopolitical and economic powers and shifting international power relations'.²⁸ Similar ideas can be found in the Dutch policy agendas for 2016 and 2017.²⁹ Without detracting from the importance of great powers in the international system, this Monitor makes some points which qualify this strategic orientation. First, the current and expected threat assessment reveals a highly complex range of threats that often have little to do with changing power relations. Often these are non-state and sometimes even internal in nature (see the epilogue on Trump and the multi-order). Second, the emergence of new great powers does not seem to be leading to a complete breakdown of the order. There is a multi-order with ongoing cooperation – including between the great powers – in many areas. In addition, these great powers often share power with a large group of actors. An excessive policy focus and fixation on shifts in the balance of power can lead to tunnel vision and may even prove counterproductive. *The same* actors are responsible for both worsening and improving cooperation, which is why a more varied orientation is desirable. One question for the next few years, for example, is how to deal with Russia (and, to a lesser extent, China), given that on the one hand it is clearly putting the rules-based order with regard to territorial integrity under pressure, but on the other hand is complying with the existing order in other areas.

27 Ministerie van Defensie, *In het belang van Nederland*, 6, <https://www.defensie.nl/downloads/beleidsnota-s/2013/09/17/in-het-belang-van-nederland>.

28 Internationale Veiligheidsstrategie, *Veilige Wereld, Veilig Nederland*, 2013, 1.

29 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, *Beleidsagenda 2016*, 6; Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, *Beleidsagenda 2017*, 6.

A second line of enquiry concerns the consequences of a complex and worsening threat assessment. The worsening threat assessment means that in the next few years greater tensions can be expected to arise on the eastern borders, that the threat of CBRN proliferation is increasing, that free trade is under pressure, that cyberattacks on essential information will increase and that the EU will come under further pressure. In addition, there will remain a substantial threat from terrorism and ongoing crises on the EU's southern borders. This complex threat assessment leads to three crucial policy dilemmas:

- 1) There are various conceivable ways of responding to the threats. It is clear that the threat to the eastern border will further increase the demand for security guarantees within NATO and that NATO member states will be called on to contribute. However, it is also clear that other security challenges require a different set of tools, including improved information exchange, the reinforcement of the diplomatic network and confidence-building measures. Given the limited budget, it seems inevitable that a choice of which resources to deploy will have to be made.
- 2) In light of this, consideration will have to be given to the setting of priorities between security interests at the political level. For example, should priority be given to economic security challenges, or to addressing social unrest?
- 3) And does this prioritisation relate to the priorities defined in the European context? Dutch and European priorities will not always be the same. An example of this is threats in the field of energy security, which will mainly affect eastern member states. The same applies to the migration issue.

A third line of enquiry concerns how to deal with the multi-order. The Netherlands is committed to promoting the international legal order. The multi-order presents some opportunities in this respect, as a legal order persists in certain areas. At the same time, it is also clear that working to bring about improvements in *all* areas is not very realistic. For this reason, a more **pragmatic multilateral attitude** could be considered. In support of this pragmatic approach, Table 4 presents a simple gap analysis featuring both the expected threat assessment and the development of the international order in the ten policy areas that have been examined.³⁰ Roughly speaking, two possible orders of priority emerge from this:

- The first option mainly involves supporting those regimes where there is already cooperation and where the prospects are good – in other words, betting on quick wins. The most likely candidates for this option are cooperation in the fields of terrorism and cyber. Both regimes are expected to improve in the coming years.
- The second option mainly involves supporting the rules-based system in areas where there is little cooperation (the crisis regime) or where the international order has seriously deteriorated. A particular example of this would be an effort to improve cooperation in the areas of territoriality and free trade.

30 Note that neither the quality of principles nor their positioning in this analysis is taken into account.

Which of these priorities to choose mainly depends on exactly how the multi-order is structured. At present, there still seems to be too much uncertainty about potential spill-over effects within this multi-order. In a positive spill-over situation, in which a reasonable degree of cooperation in one regime facilitates cooperation in other areas, it will be necessary to concentrate primarily on the first option (quick wins). However, if there is mainly negative spill-over, in which deterioration in one area exacerbates the problems in others, the second policy option seems the more sensible. Further research into these spill-over effects is therefore of great importance.

Tabel 4 Gap analysis

	Threat 2021	Order 2021
Territorial Integrity	Increased	Deteriorated (strongly)
Terrorism	Unchanged	Improved
CBRN	Increased	Unchanged
Transnational Crime	Unchanged	Unchanged
Crises	Unchanged	Improved (slightly)
Energy	Unchanged	Deteriorated (slightly)
Free Trade	Increased	Deteriorated
Tensions within the EU	Increased	Deteriorated
Climate Change	Increased	Unchanged
Cyber	Increased	Improved

A fourth line of enquiry, finally, concerns the consequences of the Monitor's conclusions for the institutional structure of the different government departments. It is clear that there is significant cooperation within and between the ministries, extending far beyond individual themes. Within departments there are cross-thematic directorates, and between departments initiatives such as the interdepartmental strategic monitor ensure convergence and overlap between separate threat assessments. At the same time, it is noticeable that each department has to deal with a different threat assessment and structure (based on a conventional interpretation of roles). The level of threat for the Ministry of Security and Justice/the National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism and Security remains the same, but the international order is presented as improving. The Ministry of Defence assessment is predominantly of deterioration in terms of both threats and the international order. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is confronted with the prospect of both increasing and decreasing cooperation. This raises two points:

First, there is the dilemma of information exchange and the associated strategic coordination. In international relations, the Netherlands deals with actors with which there is simultaneous cooperation and conflict. Although there is considerable

coordination and information-sharing, in some cases it is also clear that the current structures are somewhat fragmented (as the approach to the MH17 disaster shows).³¹ Better information-sharing could help with the identification of similarities between policy areas and the possibility of issue linkage. At the same time it needs to be borne in mind that greater information-sharing may also have unintended negative effects: linking policy areas can lead to the spill-over of conflict from one policy area to another. In short, here too a better understanding is needed of the relationship between policy areas in the international order.

The second point is that the complex threat assessment could call for an authoritative cross-departmental platform in order to achieve a truly integrated whole-of-government approach. At present, there is a somewhat fragmented range of coordinating forums. A cross-departmental platform would help firstly to set priorities, but above all to further unify the various departmental threat and order assessments – not only in an integrated assessment, but above all in **an integrated strategy and corresponding strategic coordination**. Without enhanced strategic coordination, there is a significant risk that policy initiatives by one department will have (unintended) consequences for other departments. Protecting the eastern borders of Europe may increase territorial security, for example, but drive away parties to cooperation against terrorism. It is also conceivable that a cooperative relationship with a player in one regime, such as free trade, might lead to the same player becoming too prominent in a different policy area. One promising initiative, for example, is the integrated approach within the EU context in the area of internal and external security. In line with this initiative, and to overcome the compartmentalisation of policies, resources and actions, various options are conceivable. For some time there has been a debate in progress about a national security council in which the relevant government departments outline an approach under the direction of the Ministry of General Affairs.³² One important question in this regard is how, given the constitutionally guaranteed autonomy of the ministers and the lesser decision-making powers – compared with counterparts in the United Kingdom or the United States – of the Prime Minister (who remains *primus inter pares*), an authoritative and controlling body could nonetheless be created.

31 Majoor drs. Hazelbag, L.J. EMSD. 2015. 'Nationale Veiligheidsraad: Politiek Wenselijk en Staatsrechtelijk Haalbaar?', *Militaire Spectator*, 20 April, <http://www.militairespectator.nl/thema/artikel/nationale-veiligheidsraad-politiek-wenselijk-en-staatsrechtelijk-haalbaar>.

32 See Koenders, B. 2016. 'Toespraak Minister Koenders over Wereldwijde Veiligheid', 17 November, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/toespraken/2016/11/17/toespraak-minister-koenders-over-wereldwijde-veiligheid>.

Appendix figures

Figure A UNGA voting behaviour¹

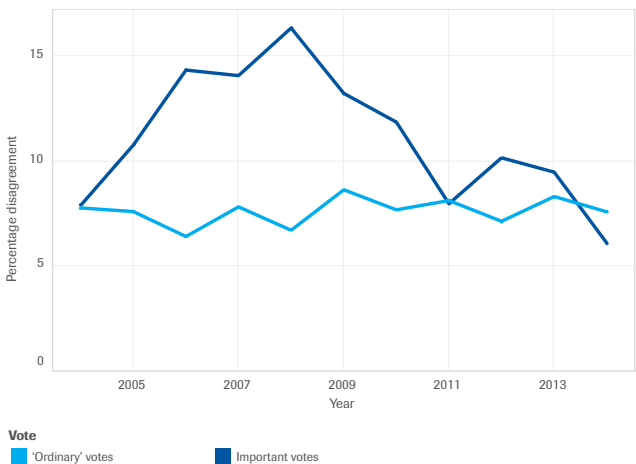
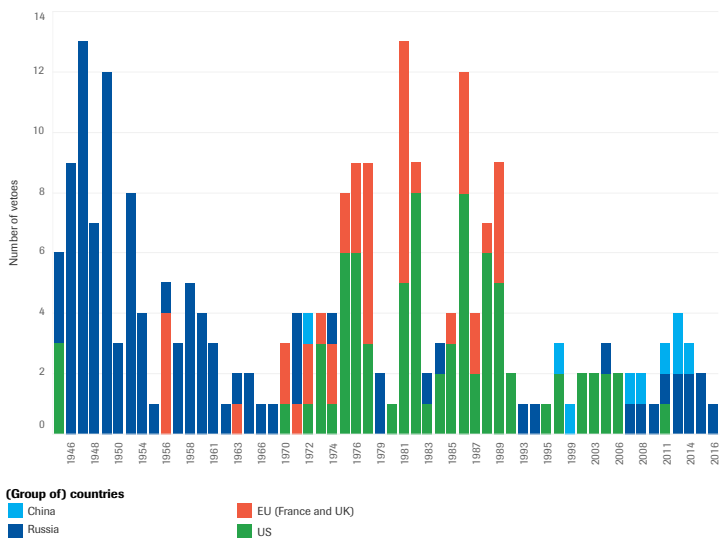


Figure B UNSC voting behaviour²



1 Erik Voeten Dataserve, *United Nations General Assembly Voting Data 2004-2014*, <https://dataserve.harvard.edu/dataserve/Voeten>.

2 VN Documenten, *Veto List, 1944-2016*, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/sc/quick>.

Figure C Compliance levels in the G7/8 and G20³

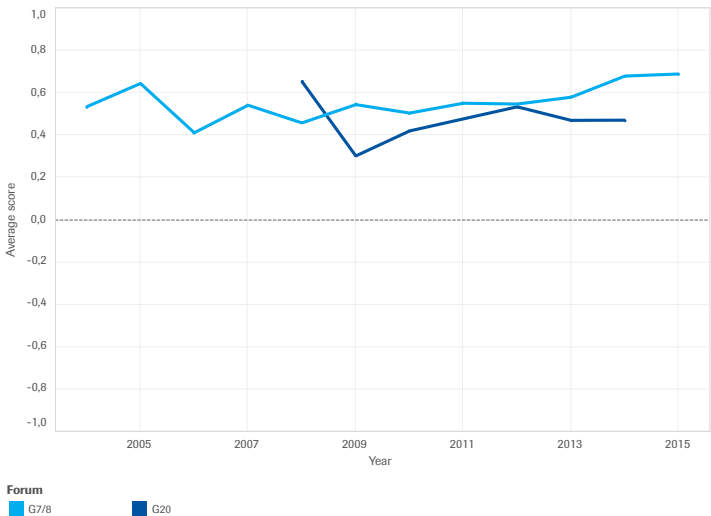
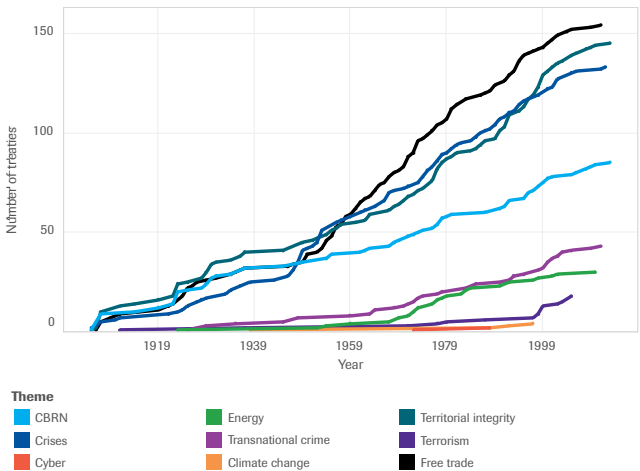


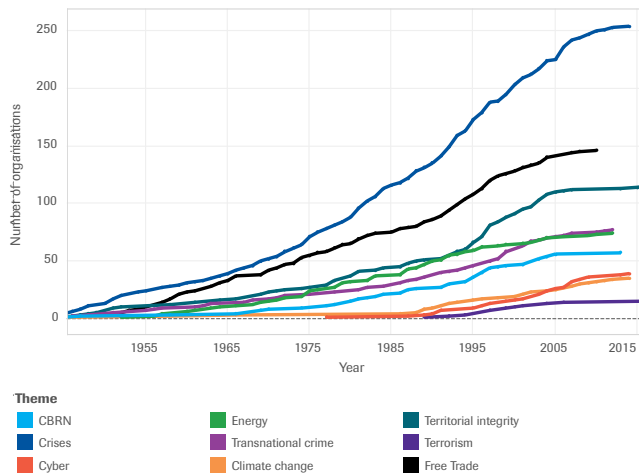
Figure D Number of treaties in international organisations⁴



3 University of Toronto, *G20 Information Centre and G7/G8 Information Centre 2004–2015*, data received personally, <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/>, <http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/>.

4 The Paris Climate Agreement is not included; Union of International Associations (UIA), *Yearbook of International Organizations 1905–2015*, 2016, <http://www.uia.org/yearbook>.

Figure E Number of international organisations⁵



5 Union of International Associations (UIA), *Yearbook of International Organizations 1945-2015*, 2016, <http://www.uia.org/yearbook>.