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GOING BLUE FROM RED – CHINESE ENGAGEMENT IN THE UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Abstract

This paper shall explore the reasons that triggered China to boost its security and economic influence within the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) as a tool for embracing international challenges. By doing so, China is not just sharing the burden of providing international stability and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, but exerting its influence in the process. Analysing the proposed subject, it will be demonstrated that China faces numerous obstacles whilst trying to insert the “*Chinese characteristics*” within the geopolitical order, geo-economics distribution of wealth and international security architecture. Instead of being perceived as a responsible stakeholder, China’s ambitious initiatives can, additionally, stir the China Threat Theory in the international community. This paper shall be consisted of two parts. The first part will tackle China’s growing footprint within the UNPKO from the end of the Cold War onward. The second part will explore the reasons that triggered China to swift its role within the UNPKO. Both global and domestic reasons will be analysed too.

Keywords: China, UNPKO, global governance, geopolitics, security, geo-economics, multi-polarity

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INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this paper is to analyse the reasons for and implications in the Chinese breakthrough within the UNPKO. It is notable that in terms of economics, diplomacy and power projection China is becoming more active, which some actors understand as Chinese assertiveness. (Bull H, 2002). China also perceives the UNPKO as a fertile soil for disseminating its philosophy on common values and common interests “common future for all”. This might be a useful tool for the Chinese interpretation of the democratic peace theory. Chinese researcher He Yin in his paper titled *Developmental Peace: Chinese Approach to U.N. Peacekeeping and Peace building* (何银: “发展和平：联合国维和建和中的中国方案”) claims that China offered different interpretations of concepts and praxis on the UNPKO management. Thus, the Chinese contribution to the sustainability of the world development and securing peace will not be limited just to the Chinese material, logistic and financial support of the UNPKO, but will include cultural, philosophical and normative influence. In that context, China is striving to confront its “horizontal model” of conducting the UNPKO to “vertical model” predominantly advocated by Western countries that is based on imposing of Western political and economic values and praxis (何 2017). Therefore, China is no longer a passive watcher of the international trends, but it is becoming proactive and a goal-oriented actor on the global stage. In that context, we can say that Beijing is adopting the *God's eye perspective* in its foreign policy behaviour. Hence, *keeping a low-profile* strategy is about to become anachronism, as China's national interests become global in character and in line with that, more vulnerable to the international turmoil. According to John Ikenberry, China is not only facing the United States; it faces a Western-centered system that is open, integrated, and rule-based, with wide and deep political foundations (Ikenberry 2008). Thus, Western world could not afford to itself the luxury that China rose up as a creator of values that will manage global governance rules.

The Chinese participation in the global security through greater involvement within the UNPKO could also be analysed from the point of view of practical application of the New Security Concept. Namely, this security concept seeks to achieve security through mutually and commonly beneficial and coordinated cooperation. After the Tiananmen incident, the collapse of the Soviet Union was another enticement to the Chinese strategists and public policy makers to reconsider old security concepts and previous strategic approaches (Finamore 2017). After the changes that occurred regarding the mental, physical, geopolitical and

geo-economics world map under the Western unquestionable power, Beijing understood that it has to be prepared for the upcoming (un) certain world order structure. Simultaneously, this represents China's changed perception of multilateralism. According to Xiong Guangkai, China started to perceive multilateralism as a call for mutual respect for one another's security interests, and creating favourable conditions for other's security while protecting one's own (Xiong 2009, 232). This represents tremendous change in the Chinese foreign policy, because in the past Beijing perceived multilateralism as an American tool for imposing Western unilateralism, which disannuls "harmonious diversity" regarding different political and economic system and cultural traditions. Besides that, China understood multilateralism as the US praxis for creating predictable behaviour within the international society that will be suitable for achieving the US national interests.

Transfer from theory to practice in realizing the *Two Centenary* and *China Dream* was realized in the form of dealing with security and economic challenges on both regional and global level. Instead of doing that unilaterally, China adopted international course under the auspices of the OUN. Therefore, we accentuate the next four reasons that triggered China to be more engaged within the UNPKO, namely, within the activities of creating sound international environment:

1. Building its international image and status;
2. Acquiring military experience, improving military diplomacy and justifying military expenditure;
3. Protecting domestic and overseas security and economic interests as a platform of international stability and sustainability;
4. Development of multi-polarity as a global governance structure.

Each of these reasons and implications that follow, make a framework for the comprehensive understanding of the UNPKO's position within the Chinese foreign policy. Consequently, the Chinese proactive leaning towards greater involvement within the UNPKO cannot be considered as a kind of *ad hoc*, short-term reaction to outside stimulus. It also reflects its overall assessment of the nature and trends of the international system and the international environment, its evolving concepts of national security, and its deepening understanding of the function of multilateral diplomacy under new circumstances (Wang 2005, 160).

CHINA'S GROWING PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE WITHIN UNPKO

From an isolated and autistic country, China became the second world largest economy, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the biggest trading country, financial super power and the biggest importer of oil (Mitrovic 2011). It organized spectacular Olympic Games, Shanghai Expo, it created numerous cooperation mechanisms i.e., 17+1 and initiated one of the largest network of public diplomacy tools i.e. the Confucius Institutes. As noted by Mitrovic, China managed to achieve the mentioned goals in the global ambiance of the absolute domination of the USA, the super-power with different value and identity discourse – and these made its achievements even more outstanding (Mitrovic 2012, 57). Even though, Beijing states in the White Paper on National Defence that this is the period of strategic opportunities for achieving the China Dream and Two Centenary, still, China faces economic, political, traditional and non-traditional security and other challenges defined by the cold-war and traditional power politics mentality manoeuvres (Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China 2010). Due to the world instability, for which China claims that it was mainly created by others, Beijing is forced to provide military protection for its geo-economics initiatives. Instead of becoming the global super power by unilateral and militaristic deployment and employment of power projection capabilities, China selected international and peaceful course under the UN auspices (Popovic 2018). In that context, China gives alleged consent to the other participants of the international order that they have the power to influence the Chinese economic development and national security. In the future we can expect the continuation of this trend, because China has a strong interest in strengthening the overall role and legitimacy of the, as the UNPKO gives legitimacy to the Chinese global deployment of military forces UNPKO (Bates and Chin-Hao, 2009). By doing so, Beijing believes that the international community will perceive the Chinese global activism as a peaceful development. The continuation of the Chinese insisting on the importance of the UNPKO for securing global security and providing global development can be viewed from the Chinese concept of the 'strategic frontiers'. According to Michael D. Swayne, the Chinese principle of "strategic frontier" is intended to encompass the full range of competitive areas or boundaries implied by the notion of comprehensive national strength, including land, maritime, and outer space frontiers, as well as more abstract strategic realms related to China's economic and technological

development (Swain 2005, 281). Nevertheless, in White Paper on the National Defence 2012, Beijing stated that—China’s armed forces will continue to participate in UN peacekeeping missions, strictly observe the mandates of the UN Security Council, maintain its commitment to the peaceful settlement of conflicts, promote development and reconstruction, and safeguard regional peace and security (Ministry of National Defense of the People’s Republic of China 2012).

For much of the Cold War period, China was highly sceptical of the concept of United Nations peacekeeping, but the past thirty years have seen a dramatic reversal of this view and a greater acceptance of participation in peacekeeping operations as a major component of Beijing’s still-evolving “military operations other than war” (MOOTW) policies (Lanteigne 2018, 2). China’s shift from “pure red” perception of the UNPKO towards “blue China” is awe-inspiring, on both domestic and international level. According to the official web site of the UN as of 31st December 2018, China sent 2441 personal (United Nations). So far, China has deployed approximately 36.000 “blue helmets” and “blue berets” within the UNPKO. China’s commitment to the UNPKO continued despite the fact that the Chinese soldiers were killed, wounded or died. Many of them were rewarded by medals of the highest Dag Hammarskjöld rank (United Nations 2018).¹ On the other side, there is a question as to whether China will use its new position within the UNPKO to reshape it according to its foreign policy goals and *raison d’être*? China is now in a position to become more active in UNPKO reforms and provide greater input into mission parameters, given its greater contribution to the UN budget and expanded international commitments (Lanteigne 2018, 4).²

In regard to the domestic level, this aspect of Chinese “great diplomacy approach” was followed by institutional and administrative changes, i.e. improvements. With that in mind, China established the Peacekeeping Affairs Office of the Ministry of National Defence of the People’s Republic of China in 2001. In 2002, it joined the

1 In that respect, ambassador Ma Zhaoxu, argues as follows: “China has actively participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations and has made major contributions. We are the second-largest troop contributing country among Security Council members and the second-largest financial contributor to United Nations peacekeeping budget, with more than 2,500 Chinese peacekeepers now deployed in 10 missions, including those in South Sudan, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur of Sudan. In the face of complex security situations and difficult natural conditions, they are working diligently to maintain peace and protect local civilians, and winning praise for the United Nations and its peacekeeping operations (Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of China to the UN 2018).

2 At the end of 2016, it was even reported that Beijing was seeking the leadership of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a position that to date has been dominated by France (Lanteigne 2018, 3).

UN Stand-by Arrangement System. In 2009, China established the Peacekeeping Centre at the Ministry of National Defence of the People's Republic of China and China International Search and Rescue Team (Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China 2010). Furthermore, in May 2009 the PLA General Staff Department announced that China established an 'arms force system' for MOOTW. The aim is to strengthen the PLA's emergency response system and enhance its capacity for rapid deployment both inside and outside China. Five specialized forces were created under this system: a flood and disaster relief force; a post-earthquake emergency rescue force; an emergency rescue force for nuclear, chemical and biological disasters; an emergency relief force for transport facilities; and an international peacekeeping force (Bates and Chin-Hao 2009, 15). Besides all of these official changes, China opens new training centres for future "blue helmets" and "blue berets" and organizes many workshops, for English-speaking (military academics), French-speaking (director of military hospitals) and Portuguese speaking African countries (intermediate and senior officials). Furthermore, in the speech *Working Together to Forge a New Partnership of Win-Win Cooperation and Create Community of Shared Future for Mankind*, Xi Jinping, stated the following: "I wish to take this opportunity to announce China's decision to establish a 10-year, US\$1 billion China-UN peace and development fund to support the UN's work, advance multilateral cooperation and contribute more to world peace and development. I wish to announce that China will join the new UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System and has thus decided to take the lead in setting up a permanent peacekeeping police squad and build a peacekeeping standby force of 8,000 troops. I also wish to announce that China will provide a total of US\$100 million of free military assistance to the African Union in the next five years to support the establishment of the African Standby Force and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis" (Xi 2015).

China's swift of attitude regarding its involvement within the UNPKO can be categorized in several phases. In its first phase, throughout the 1980, there was just China's NO – no contributing and no voting. In the second phase, China softened its NO regarding the peacekeeping votes. The very first step occurred in 1981, when China voted to extend the mandate of the cease-fire monitoring UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. In the third phase, China sent its first peacekeeping personnel to United Nations Transitional Authority to Cambodia (UNTAC) in 1992, where the UN took over the administration of Phnom Penh's regime. But, China, still, has been refusing to authorize Chapter VII, non-consensual peace enforcement

missions, remaining inactive regarding the Rwandan genocide. The only exception was United Nations Task Forces (UNITAF) in Somalia, which was justified as Mogadishu no longer had a sitting and legally confirmed Government. China entered the fourth phase in 1999 when it voted in favour regarding the peace enforcement and transitional missions in East Timor. In the same year, America bombed Chinese embassy in Belgrade. In its fifth phase, China, additionally, reinforced its role within the UNPKO. During this phase, China deployed combat troops which represented the major breakthrough compared to China's previous decades of troop deployment to the UNPKO (Fung 2016).

REASONS FOR AND IMPLICATIONS IN “GOING BLUE FROM RED”

The following section of the paper will examine and explain the reasons for Chinese “going blue from red”, i.e. shifting its greater support to UNPKO as a part of its military strategy and expanding its participation in the international arena. We will notice that every reason is not free of implications. Furthermore, we will demonstrate China's reactions to those challenges, i.e. the Chinese strategies in transforming the implications into benefits.

Building its International Image and Status

Courtney J. Fung argues that China is the only permanent member of the UN Security Council to claim simultaneously a great power and a member of the Global South in regards to peacekeeping (Fung 2016, 419). Why does China need this double identity? On one side, China is leaning to be accepted as a legitimate super power of the prestigious Global Governance. Simultaneously, it wants to be perceived by Third World Countries, amongst which China started lucrative jobs, as an engine of their economic development and supporter of political stability. Consequently, Chinese unprecedented breakthrough within the UNPKO could jeopardize its relations with the developing countries, if they perceive China as imperialist which does not respect sovereignty, defined in terms of Westphalia world order, and the non-interference principle (Patey, Day and Einsiedel 2017). To avoid the later, China, only, accepts peacekeeping operations strictly under the UN Secretary-General tutorship, and by consent of the host state (Wang and Dottin 2017, 4). By doing so, China, as a non-creator of Westphalia world order and which it entered very traumatically by signing the non-equal treaties, is striving to present itself as unique powerful state which protects

Westphalia heritage, in this concrete case - sovereignty. Furthermore, China's double identity provides stronger legitimacy to the UNPKO. As both a permanent member of the UNSC and a developing country, China's growing participation in UN peacekeeping lends credibility to UN missions, many of which have robust mandates allowing them to use force. Senior UN officials believe that China's participation in peace operations in sensitive areas such as Darfur, Southern Sudan and the DRC helps to temper the host governments' suspicions that the missions are really Western-led military interventions (Bates and Chin-Hao 2009, 27).

China's remarkable and unparalleled, but still in many aspects questionable, development triggered many questions regarding what kind of great power China will be? From Chinese side, China wants to represent itself as a responsible power (Richardson 2011; Xia 2001). One of China's foreign policy goals is to rebut by West imposed China Threat Theory and to transmute *Sinophobia* into *Sinophilia*. What are the relations between the UNPKO and China's endeavours to represent itself as a responsible and benevolent global power?

Having in mind, that China inherits different perception of human rights compared to the Western, it was in many occasions accused that it gives impetus to many authoritarian regimes. Some states or even blocs of the international community exerted great pressure on Beijing before the 2008 Olympic Games. Because China is respecting principles of peaceful coexistence and disobeying to the militaristic export of democracy, Western countries stated that 2008 Olympic Games are Genocide Olympic Games. Consequently, Beijing found itself in the rift between the Western struggle to mire China's national image on the global level and the proud of Chinese citizenship to host Olympic Games as a confirmation of Chinese power and tradition and rising Han nationalism. Western countries accused China for its policy over Darfur and its export of weapons to Sudan. According to these accusations, China "heats up" the genocide in this country, which has tremendous importance for the Chinese energy security and overall national development. At the very beginning China advocated that business is business and that China has no rights to interfere in the internal situation and affairs of Sudan without consent of the internationally accepted government. After a long process of negotiations, in which every involved stakeholder was defending its interests, China agreed to send its peacekeepers to participate in UN-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Although, China became one of the strongest advocates for peacekeeping operation in Sudan, it avoided jeopardizing relations with Darfur, and at the same time its contribution

to the human right protection was acknowledged (Fung 2016; Xue 2011).³ After that, China was able to follow the path of its venture to be perceived as a global responsible and benevolent power, which is willing to shoulder the burden whilst respecting the norm of the international law and working principles of the UN. Recognition by international community as “socialized” and responsible state provides China wider space for geopolitical and geo-economics manoeuvres. According to Hedley Bull, these states ‘are powers recognised by others to have, and conceived by their own leaders and peoples to have, certain special rights and duties’, namely the right to ‘play a part in determining issues that affect the peace and security of the international system as a whole’ and the responsibility ‘of modifying their policies in the light of the managerial responsibilities they bear’ (Bull 1995, 196). Relying on Bull’s presumption, Beijing is striving to create an international image as a cooperative and non-competitive actor who is willing to actively participate in preventing the occurring new international turmoil which jeopardizes the stability of the community of shared future for mankind, for which creating China is investing tremendous sources and energy. In the same context, China will not be perceived as an “outsider” with respect to securing global security and continuity of flow of goods, capital, people and ideas. On the other side, China claims that it is prepared to work on resolving the problems that were created by the others, but which solutions China needed for both security and economic reasons. (Mitrovic 2012, 60). So far, Chinese peacekeepers over the past 22 years, have built and repaired over 10,000 km of roads and 284 bridges, cleared over 9,000 mines and various types of unexploded ordinance (UXO), transported over one million tons of cargo across a total distance of 11 million km and treated 120,000 patients (Ministry of National Defense of the People’s Republic of China 2012). Besides protecting international stability and improving its international image, by participating in the UNPKO, China is protecting its material interests that invested with the aim to achieve Two Centenary and China Dream. To this end, peacekeeping is a low-cost, high-return activity: instead of repeating desires for mutual peace, harmony and coexistence, peacekeepers demonstrate a commitment to world peace and development through their activities in peacekeeping missions (Richardson 2011, 291).

3 However, there are many issues that still exert pressure on human rights situations in China. As illustrations we can underline the re-education camps in Xinjiang and refugees from North Korea.

Acquiring Military Experience, Improving Military Diplomacy and Justifying Military Expenditure

In recent times, Chinese military spending and modernization, although that was announced in 1974 by Zhou Enlai as a part of four modernization concepts, raised concerns amongst public policy makers, academia and citizenship. For the most part, concerns related to the modernization of the Chinese power projection capabilities, stem from Western countries and their allies, due to the apparent power shift. In that context, some countries are triggering many initiatives and theories, through which they want to “objectively” represent the danger of the Chinese new military power and changes that are occurring within the *active defence principle*. Meanwhile USA initiated the NATO expansion all the way to the Chinese border and Obama administration decided to re-deploy the USA military such as THAAD in South Korea and other actions to bolster the network of military alliances. According to David Shambaugh, the U.S.A.-led alliance system remains the predominant regional security architecture. This system is commonly referred to as the “hub and spokes” model, with the United States serving as the hub of a wheel with each of the five bilateral alliances (Australia, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand) serving as the spokes. The system has benefited the United States and its Asian allies for more than five decades and has been the predominant regional security architecture since the end of the Vietnam War (Shambaugh 2005, 79). By applying these initiatives, USA is striving not just to constrain Chinese military and economic development, but to speed up the arms race and to create the atmosphere of tension amongst Chinese neighbours. In such a situation, USA imposes itself as a guarantee of peace and stability and as an actor who engages China to play a more constructive role in economic and security affairs. On behalf of such pretensions, Washington in 2006 published American Quadrennial Defence Review Report. In this document, USA is encouraging China to play a constructive, peaceful role in the Asia-Pacific region and to serve as a partner in addressing common security challenges’ and that the USA’s goal is ‘for China to continue as an economic partner and emerge as responsible stakeholder and force for good in the world’ (State Government of USA 2006). From the official Beijing’s point of view, American actions still represent the continuation of the Cold War mentality and application of traditional security concepts, amongst which the containment and balance of power dominate (Mitrovic 2005).

According to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, in 2020 China’s national defence budget will rise to RMB 1.268tn, an

increase of 6.6 % - the lowest in decades (Glaser, Funaiole, and Hart 2020). Although Chinese national defence budget drooped, in its latest report NATO 2030: United for New Era declared that NATO must devote much more time, political resources, and action to the security challenges posed by China – based on an assessment of its national capabilities, economic heft, and the stated ideological goals of its leaders (NATO 2020). Financial Times published that in 2019 China increased its defence budget by 7.5 per cent to Rmb1.2tn that year, as the Communist party attempted to balance the cost of building its military into a modern fighting force with growing economic challenges. The rise to \$179bn continues 25 consecutive years and that made China the world's second-largest military spender. Chinese expenditure still lags far behind the US, which spent \$686bn on defence in 2019 (Hille 2019).

In regard to the military expenditure and the UNPKO, the situation is more than clear. By sending its troops and organizing trainings, official Beijing is trying to communicate to the international community that a strong military represents the Chinese contribution to common, internationally accepted, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable actions for achieving world peace. Taking the approach of super power in embracing and dealing with international turmoil, China demonstrates its capacities of structural and relational power in building up international security and peace.⁴ There is also a great concern with Chinese strategists regarding the military expenditure and the UNPKO as they worry that Chinese peacekeepers will not be able to fulfil their tasks. Namely, China is concerned that its troops will not be able to contribute to the Chinese reputation as a global security provider due to the lack of experience. Perceptions of Chinese peacekeepers as less than competent could erode the PLA's justification of budgetary growth to fund military transformation and revolution of military affairs (RMA), especially at a time when there are few traditional security threats to the Chinese state (Lanteigne 2018). Conversely, Chinese peacekeepers are consistently rated among the most professional, well-trained, effective and disciplined contingents in UN peacekeeping operations. Assessments of Chinese peacekeepers' performance are generally positive. UN officials working within missions have reported that Chinese peacekeeping contingents are among the best prepared, most professional and well disciplined. To date, no allegation of misconduct has been lodged against a Chinese peacekeeper (Bates and Chin-Hao 2009, 25). Furthermore, China's peacekeepers won the top three places

4 China's comprehensive national strength, core competitiveness and risk-resistance capacity are notably increasing, and China enjoys growing international standing and influence (Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China 2012).

in a Military Obstacle Competition held recently at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) Sector West. Brigadier General Diodato Abagnara, Commander of the UNIFIL Sector West, said at the award presentation: “Chinese peacekeepers are very brave and excellent in fulfilling missions entrusted to them as well as in the competitions of UNIFIL. I am proud of your achievement” (Meng 2019). Still, Chinese officials are worried about taking fire, returning fire, and dealing with injured or dead Chinese peacekeepers.⁵ The UNPKO provides Chinese soldiers great opportunity to obtain experience in terms of modern warfare. As we know, the latest deployment of Chinese military capabilities was in 1979 during the Vietnamese war.⁶ Having in mind Chinese ideological principle of non- participating in military alliances, the UNPKO is a great source for Chinese strategists and soldiers to acquire military experience, project and test its power capabilities or to promote military confidence building measures. In that context, the UNPKO is in service of Chinese endeavours to widen the global network of its military diplomacy. Military diplomacy is important to China from several points of view. According to Shannon Tiezzi, China’s military diplomacy has three principle goals. The first goal is to advance the overall diplomatic goals. The second goal could be understood as a safeguarding national security. The third goal is visible as a further construction of China’s military (Tiezzi 2015). For Courtney J Richardson, peacekeeping is a part of China’s military diplomacy, used to counter-balance Western power and to counter negative perceptions of Chinese military spending, modernization and force projection (Richardson 2011, 292). For Defence Ministry spokesman Yang Yujun, better-organized and widespread military diplomacy gives China the opportunity to demonstrate our [Chinese] fine image on the international stage (Zhang 2014). Furthermore, through the UNPKO, China stipulates military diplomacy relations with the defence community of the host state. There is evidence that China is rotating military officers with prior experience as military attaché officers into missions on the same continent, so that these officers can deepen their regional expertise (Richardson 2011, 291). Nevertheless, Chinese opening of its army is a

5 This is a very important concern due to the former Chinese one-child policy and preference of family to have a son instead of daughter.

6 To date, English has been recognized as a main flaw of Chinese peacekeepers. Namely, English language skills are generally weak, according to officials who have worked with them in peacekeeping operations. Each contingent includes at least one or two interpreters. Although UN officials contend that language constraints have not affected the Chinese troops’ performance or their ability to carry out specific assignments, they also report that lower-ranking Chinese peacekeepers tend to keep to themselves and refrain from extensive interaction with other peacekeeping contingents or with local populations, due in part to language barriers (Bates and Chin-Hao 2009, 26).

diplomatic wisdom and political calculus in projecting China's global strength, which can appease the alarm of worried countries of China's military employment in aggressive way.

Protecting Domestic and Overseas Security and Economic Interests as a Platform of International Stability and Sustainability

After the Tiananmen incident and collapsing of the Soviet Union, Chinese strategists became aware that Chinese domestic security, economic and social development, as generators of the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party are vulnerable to the international changes and challenges. With the growth and globalization of China's national interests, its national security is more vulnerable to international and regional turmoil, terrorism, piracy, serious natural disasters and epidemics, and the security of overseas interests concerning energy and resources, strategic sea lines of communication (SLOCs), as well as institutions, personnel and assets abroad, has become an imminent issue (Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China 2015). In that context, Chinese strategies in making international and regional environment convenient for achieving Chinese security and economic aims should be reconsidered and reorganized in accordance with Chinese objective advantages and disadvantages. The mentioned brought many changes within the Chinese foreign policy behaviour, amongst which the most important and the most (un)expected was *proactivity*. The Chinese proactivity, by some countries was perceived as assertive or even aggressive challenge to the international stability, because China offers new models of cooperation for securing security and providing economic development. It is obvious that in the Chinese case, which is not unique, economy and security are intertwined. Consequently, the transforming and pompous Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), announced in 2013, is based on interconnectedness between economy and security, that is, geopolitics and geo-economy. BRI global in character and pretentious in its ambitions, expresses the Chinese will to make globalization more in line with the Chinese identity and its values system. On the positive side it gives impetus to the flow of goods, people, capital, information and services. Geopolitical protection of this new global and vibrant initiative has geo-economics importance, because during 2018 trade volume between China and countries along the Belt and Road (B&R) Initiative totalled 1.3 trillion U.S. dollars. This marked a year-on-year growth of 16.3 per cent, 3.7 percentage points higher than China's trade growth in 2018. China exported goods worth

704.73 billion dollars to B&R countries in 2019, up 10.9 per cent year on year, while importing goods from them worth 563.07 billion dollars, rising 23.9 per cent year on year. Chinese firms invested 15.64 billion dollars in non-financial sectors in B&R countries last year, up to 8.9 per cent year on year, while receiving investment from them totalling 6.08 billion dollars, up to 11.9 per cent (Cao 2019). This represents a normal trend, because many states admit the possibilities offered by BRI. Although, many involved stakeholders accentuate that BRI lacks transparency, accountability and that it is still unfolding, by the end of 2016 over 100 countries and international and regional organizations had expressed an interest in participating, and more than 40 of them had signed cooperation agreements with China (Xinhua 2017). On the negative side it facilitates the drug smuggling, illegal trade of weapons of mass destruction, spreading of terrorism and other types of organized criminal activities. Beijing, particularly now, with BRI as its main in every aspect invests and relocates tremendous assets overseas. Regarding geography, BRI encompasses many unstable and insecure countries. It would be non-responsible if China pursues “wait and see approach” in protecting its overseas interests, which, simultaneously, reinvigorate world development. So abovementioned China’s double identity within the UNSC and greater involvement within the UNPKO is requested by the Chinese need to protect its geostrategic interests and to provide support for its endeavours within the international arena. Additionally, the role of BRI in providing security in those countries is complicated by American, EU and Indian activities within the UN. They are trying to diminish geopolitical and geo-economics potential of BRI, because they are not the most influential factors, but the most influenced actors. Namely, the last vestige of BRI propaganda was deleted from a resolution on Afghanistan on December 6 in a final act of cleansing that started last year when India took a strong stand against BRI and rained on Xi’s parade by raising questions about transparency, environmental standards, predatory economics and violations of sovereignty. Just as last year, when the coalition of India, US and EU worked to remove references to BRI from two other resolutions, the three-pillar resistance was led by the young Indian diplomats at India’s permanent mission who negotiated with other delegations and gathered widespread support (Sirohi 2018).

Development of Multi-polarity as a Global Governance Structure

China’s official documents accentuate the importance to continue building multi-polar system within the global governance structure.

With this in mind, Beijing in each White Paper on National Defence accentuates the importance of multi-polarity, which is already an irreversible process. This has not been recognized solely by China. Japan, also, believes that the world order is now multipolar due to changed sources of power. Changes that occurred in the global balance of power which accelerated further multi-polarization are the consequences of emerging of countries such as China and India and the change of relative influence of the United States (Ministry of Defense of Japan 2014).

China needs global governance multipolar structure for many reasons. From one point of view, it has been perceived as a tool in establishing more democratic, fair and prosperous international order, and win-win cooperation under the Chinese conditions. For this kind of world structure and efforts to achieve it, official Beijing states that is not targeted at any particular country, nor are they aimed at re-staging the old play of contention for hegemony in history (Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN 2004). Strategically, by establishing multipolar world order China will have three new capacities to prevent, manage and resolve world uncertainties, to fulfil "security vacuum" and to shape security architecture more in line with its set of norms. First, China will have structural capabilities or might to transmute material resources into bargaining power. Second, China will obtain higher diplomatic and relational skills, i.e. entrepreneur capabilities which imply the might to resolve problems by creating new types of relations. At the same time, China's strategists, policy makers and academia knew that *pax Americana* and American Manifest destiny can control further Chinese development and status advancement. Therefore, multi-polarity is necessary to demonstrate that unilateral world order is not feasible, as a result of emerging powers and the international balance of power shift, especially in economic terms.

The UNPKO is a very useful/powerful "engine" for China to promote multi-polarization of the world order. In that context, multi-polarity and the UNPKO show that the world security cannot be provided just by one pillar. Creating the nexus between the multi-polarity and the UNPKO, official Beijing will be able to demonstrate that multi-polarity presupposes the world security architecture based on win-win, collaborative, rather than on solipsistic principles (Zhimin, Guorong, and Shichen 2018). Furthermore, China reinforces this kind of attitude by implementing NSC. Insisting on resolutions based on non-breaching the international norms and state sovereignty, NSC and the UNPKO clearly demonstrate to the world that China's rise will be proactive, but within the current international system; that it will be peaceful in

the execution of its international “responsibilities”, but will do so in a manner that moves it intentionally toward “great power” status (Wang and Dottin 2017, 3). By creating multipolar system, many presupposes that China will, inevitably and assertively, impose itself as the most important Asian pol. This was especially underlined after the speech, *New Asian Security Concept for New Progress in Security Cooperation*, delivered by Xi Jinping in 2014, during the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA). Namely, in his speech Xi Jinping stated “In the final analysis, it is for the people of Asia to run the affairs of Asia, solve the problems of Asia and uphold the security of Asia. The people of Asia have the capability and wisdom to achieve peace and stability in the region through enhanced cooperation” (Xi 2014). Consequently, this could challenge the Japanese and, surely, Indian, position and intention for becoming permanent member of the UNSC. However, China does not have capacities nor the regulations of the UN to give China the right to unilaterally decide which state will become the permanent member of the UNSC.

CONCLUSION

China’s involvement within the UNPKO has drawn global attention, because it offered its solutions for further world sustainable development, at a time when the world is burdened by many crises and the UNPKO is severely overstretched. America must be aware that China will not miss the opportunity to transfer its strength and power into geopolitical and geo-economics manoeuvres in providing the world with new and different opportunities, which some states understand as challenges. In that context, China’s greater involvement in the UNPKO creates an image of China as an unavoidable partner in any issue of global concern (Finamore 2017).

China’s involvement in operations of creating suitable environment is driven by security and economic reasons both domestic and global. The interconnectedness among them is strong and domestic security and sustainable economic development could not be achieved if international order is not fertile soil. On the other side, unstable China, i.e. its misbalanced market absorption power, and foreign direct investment reserves can produce new circle of crises. As it is already known, China is trying to promote further and different domestic, regional and global development under the auspices of the BRI. The implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative will also promote regional [and global] economic integration. For China that is the most productive way to exercise its growing potential as a rising power and

better use its influence, especially as the United States' rebalancing to Asia led to the United States strengthening its military and trade alliances in East Asia and the Pacific (Mitrovic 2016, 78). Furthermore, as we demonstrated, the UNPKO can reinforce confidence-building measures providing China with support, whilst many countries are trying to sabotage BRI in terms of ideology, geopolitics and geo-economics. Those countries raised the question about the intentions of Chinese breakthrough in global security matters. To what extent China's participation is motivated by a sense of global responsibility, and how much by the strategic influence that China stands to gain by filling the peacekeeping vacuum left by the other Permanent Five countries (Ling 2007, 3). Therefore, better understanding what motivates Chinese decisions to deploy can tell us much more about the potential trajectory of today's rising power as a global security provider, which is a question mostly ignored in the China Rise discourse (Fung 2016, 413). Hence, countries concerned for the international community, are encouraging China to take on a greater influence within the UNPKO, could create omnidirectional advantages for the international community. This can serve as an accelerator in China's integration with the rules of the international society. Furthermore, it can improve the level of accountability, transparency and visibility regarding Chinese military spending and foreign policy goals.

Western colonialism made China become one of the toughest advocates of sovereignty, which is the most influential legacy of Westphalia. If we put this on the level of the UNPKO, there is a question in what way this will affect the Responsibility to Protect Concept (R2P)?

China was accused that it does not provide global security, because it has stable relations with authoritarian leaders. Scholars mainly emphasize the Chinese interests in African states.⁷ Compared to the proportion of the size of the economy, in Africa, China invested five times more than in the rest of the world (Mitrovic 2014). In that context Miwa Hirono argues that China had chosen to deploy more peacekeeping forces to represent itself as a "responsible great power," while indirectly protecting its own interests (Zheng 2017). But many scholars fail to

7 Regarding, Sino-African relations, China represents itself as a strong protector of African interests on the global level. For example, in the case of the Darfur crisis, China's special envoy Liu Guijin said pointedly that "Beijing plays a role of bridge; and at the UNSC, China dares to speak out to maintain justice for African nations, support African countries to independently handle their internal affairs and to equally participate in international affairs." In practice, Chinese and African diplomats have jointly launched a political consultation mechanism at the UN headquarters in 2007 with a view of ensuring a more coordinated approach in addressing regional security issues. This means that "representing Africa" at the UNSC can help serve to balance competing interests (Wang and Dottin 2017, 7). Furthermore, strong China's support in protecting African position dates back to Bandung conference 1955.

observe the fact that the UN will not pay for transportation, nor will it fund the troops for the first 30–60 days after the troops are in the country where the operation is taking place (Bates and Reilly, 2000). For this reason, the regionalization of interests could be considered as a consequence of imposed administrative and bureaucratic obstacles. On the other side, we cannot deny that China is primarily focused on points which are important to its further development.

As we see, there are a lot of doubts, challenges, many answers that must be addressed, analysed and explained. However, we are witnesses that New and Global China is already emerged on the international stage and it is yet to be seen how it will affect the current world order. China as the potentially great contributor to the international peacekeeping, providing the full adoption of UN principles (Stahle 2008, 631), is the argument we should count with.

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ОД ЦРВЕНИХ ДО ПЛАВИХ БЕРЕТКИ – АНГАЖОВАЊЕ КИНЕСКИХ ВОЈНИХ СНАГА У МИРОВНИМ МИСИЈАМА УЈЕДИЊЕНИХ НАЦИЈА

Резиме

Рад се бави разлозима јачања кинеског утицаја у Мировним мисијама Уједињених нација. НР Кина се све више ангажује у обезбјеђивању међународне стабилности и постизању УН циљева за одрживи развој, паралелно јачајући и свој утицај у међународним односима. У раду смо представили изазове са којима се Кина суочава у настојању да уведе „кинеске карактеристике“ у геополитички поредак, геоекономску расподјелу добара и међународну безбједоносну архитектуру. Перцепција Кине у међународној заједници је све лошија и умјесто да се Кина посматра као одговорни актер, њене акције додатно намећу тему „Кине као пријетње“. У првом дијелу рада смо обрадили улогу и активности Кине у оквиру Мировних мисија Уједињених нација од краја Хладног рата до данас. Други дио рада анализира разлоге промјене улоге кинеске политике према УН-у и конкретне Мировним снагама Уједињених нација. У раду су анализирани и узети у обзир и глобални разлози као и домаћи који су утицали на промјену кинеске политике и веће ангажовање у оквиру УН мисија. У закључку наводимо да и поред изазова, сумњи и недоречености везаних за ово питање, свједочимо „новој и глобалној“ Кини која је већ заузела централну улогу на међународној сцени и да можемо рачунати на Кину и њен допринос у очувању глобалног мира.

Кључне ријечи: Кина, УНПКО, глобално управљање, геополитика, безбједност, геоекономија, мултиполарност

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