International terrorism and the regional security challenges are today the major threats to the Asian and global security. The strategic question of XXI century is whether the liberal democracy could control these threats, especially in Asia and in broader “arc of instability” stretching from Balkans to the Philippines.

Preventive approach to the international politics is extremely important today. Preventive strategies are the tool number one in war against terrorism, in conflict management and confidence building. On the other hand asymmetric strategies always had been the “favorite instrument” for the international terrorists as well.

Preventive and asymmetric strategies have a lot in common. It is much easier to prevent the terrorist act or acute crisis than to manage them after they have escalated. No less important is the cost-effectiveness question: the budget of only one day of present USA operation in Iraq or NATO operation in Afghanistan is roughly equal to this one of all UN peacekeeping operation worldwide for a year. Thus preventive approach implicitly corresponds to the demands of cost effective security organization. But the studies related to crisis prevention, preventive diplomacy or preemptive contingency planning are still very sketchy and fragmentary.

From the other point of view it is quite obvious that prevention is the key feature of modern strategy. In the National Security Strategy of the USA adopted in September 2002 a heavy accent had been made on the preventive
measures and preemptive actions. “United States can no longer solely rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past… the United States will if necessary act preemptively”.¹ The European Security Strategy “A Secure Europe in a Better World” (December, 2003) especially stresses the necessity “to act before a crisis occurs. Conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early”².

The idea of preventive strikes, including use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries, presupposed in the open or restricted parts of new military doctrines of Russia (February 2010) and France (under discussion now)³. Nevertheless the absence of system approach to the theory and art of prevention, lack of foresight and effective intelligence sharing in international relations, including conflict dynamics, still prevail. The same situation exists in the sphere of asymmetric strategies - the favorite and very effective tool of international terrorism. International terrorism itself is a typical asymmetric (“not fare”) response to what we usually elegantly call “the inequalities of contemporary world”. Some more adequate words should be found for this appalling “inequalities”. The international terrorism is only the first symptom of the inevitable conflicts of redistribution that expect the mankind sooner or latter. Something radical should be done here.

But the main problem of preventive and asymmetric strategies is that this approach objectively contradicts not only to the regulations of international law (we will speak about it latter) but to the basic principles of liberal tradition and ethics in general, including human rights and respect to human life. These principles regrettably are completely incompatible with the requirements of the effective war against terrorism. In more broad sense the question arrives about ability of liberal democracy to stand against new challenges in general and international terrorism in particular.

The problem is aggravated with the helplessness and practical uselessness of international organizations. These organizations are ineffective and their decisions are very often ignored, especially by the superpowers.

Moreover the passive, reactive approach to the mentioned above challenges is dominated today. It reminds the reaction of dead frog crucified on the laboratory table with two electrodes one connected to the leg and other inserted into the back part of the poor amphibian. If one switch the 100 volts battery to these electrodes the dead frog jerk its leg convulsively, if not - correspondingly not. This is the way of the dead frog, the way the majority of present day politicians react. They begin to jerk only when acute crisis began and bloodshed started. Only then they awake and try to do something and in result
they are always late. Such purely reactive behavior in crisis management is aggravated by liberal pluralistic nature of democratic systems. What we need to cope with the present day’s challenges is the future oriented thinking and active preventive way of action - in other words we need preventive forecasting and management. And the core of this management is the creation the network of early warning structures, sophisticated intelligence gathering systems, permanent flexible preventive forecasting. Not one time act, but regular activity that allows estimating and predicting the crisis dynamics form the proper and timely correction signals. These signals should be accumulated and send through the back-loop channels to prevent the father conflict escalation, to tame the possible crisis. Simultaneously the development of prevention strategies, confidence building measures and peacekeeping should start.

This is the concept of adaptive management - the most effective tool of crises resolution. But true political will is needed here to take action before not after the crisis or conflict has blown up. Above mentioned early warning institutions and more “intelligence sharing” are necessary as well. But the existing structures and international organization are very bulky, inefficient and overbureaucratised.

Official Early Warning UN Structure – office for Research and the Collection of Information (ORCI) that had mandate for early warning was integrated into the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and Regional Political Services of the Secretariat and now is practically useless. Early Warning System of the UN Administrative Coordinating Committees deals mainly with humanitarian field (refugees, displaced persons, foods etc.). UNDP Bureau of Crises Prevention and Management are oriented mainly on the natural disasters and recovery from crises and up to now did little to develop effective mechanisms for conflict prevention and management.

Conflict Prevention Center (CPC) of OSCE in Vienna that had been given the task to serve as a forum for comprehensive consultations on security issues with political military implications (monitor missions and recommendation on crisis management)4 proved to be ineffective and often ignored by conflicting sides.

NATO Early Warning structures (including Current Intelligence Groups or NATO Situation Center) depending upon national intelligence gathering and assessment systems is oriented mainly on military crisis and military actions.

The numerous national analytical and antiterrorist centers as a rule are isolated from reliable intelligence information and up to now cannot play the
role of effective early warning institutions. The situation in many regions (especially in Asia) is enhanced by the unwillingness of the national governments to cooperate closely with international missions and observers. One of the possible solutions is to create the network of non-governmental analytical early warning centers that could make the independent regular monitoring of the local and regional threats and conflicts and cooperate closely between themselves and international structures. This idea for example is under discussion in the Black Sea - Caspian region, but this is not the subject of this report.

The problems of effective crisis prevention are not only organizational one. A lot of other problems concerning the estimation, measurement and analysis of the conflict and terrorists activity parameters are still unresolved.

So I’d like to speculate a little on these issues.

The general idea of conflict monitoring and possible terrorists acts prevention is enough simple and transparent. It is necessary to chose a number of key causal so-called risk or conflictogeneous factors and than scaled them (set up criteria for their estimation and measurement). After the key factors have been analyzed and scaled the general summary index that characterized the intensity level of the threat or conflict could be calculated. Going ahead with the regular monitoring of this general index and corresponding risk factors the reliable forecast for the future could be made and preventive actions started.

As an example let as consider the imaginary conflict dynamics and possible early warning / preventive measures/ thresholds (fig.1).

**Fig.1.** Conflict dynamics and early warning / preventive measures thresholds
The crucial question here is the question of selection and measurement of key parameters. One of the simplest and most efficient methods of factor selection and scaling is the expert procedures. The national or international team of experts (usually 10-20 persons) is asked to select and range on intensity and importance (weight index) the key parameters of the given conflict. As a result the table of key parameters/conflictogenouse factors is formed (tabl.1). General index $I$, that characterize the conflict intensity usually is calculated as an arithmetical:

$$I = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{k} WiPi}{\sum_{i=1}^{k} Wi}$$

or geometrical sum of weighted parameters

$$I = \left[ \prod_{i=1}^{k} Pi \left( \frac{W \ min}{Wi} \right) \right]^{1/k}$$

where $Pi$ – intensity parameter, $Wi$ – weight index, $k$- number of parameters.

The expert procedures could be traditional, anonymous or more sophisticated methods like “Delphi technique”, methods of multidimensional statistics, factor and cluster analysis could be implemented. The list of these factors should be strictly classified (effectively a higher classification than “Top Secret”) like the list of key words in the system of global monitoring “ECH-ELON” run by the US NSA, with the participation of 5 countries from UK to New Zealand.
In result the whole dynamic of the threat or conflict could be determined and preventive measures could be started timely.

The absence of adequate network of early warning institutions is not the only problem of conflict and terrorist attacks prevention. The other fundamental problem is the lack of future oriented thinking in the international relations, outdated and overbureaucratized system of decision-making. In result the pessimists among the professional analysts are deeply convinced: even if timely early working information signals were send, they are never received in a proper way. If the signals were received they are never analyzed. If the signals were analyzed, they are never reached the end user (so called Decision Making Persons). If the signals were reached the DMP no timely decisions would be taken. If the decisions were taken they would never implemented into reality. And if even a miracle has happen and decisions were implemented, they were implemented in a completely different way they had supposed to be implemented.

The CIA met exactly this problem in case of al Qaeda terrorist attack in N-Y. There were the warning signals about attack, numerous signals and CIA had got them, but these signals had never reached the DMP and had never been analyzed properly. As a result no preventive measures had been taken. In other words from pessimistic, skeptical point of view any attempts of terrorist attacks or conflict prevention is today mainly useless.
But let us try to be the optimists and speculate a little about general problems of conflict and crises prevention. Conflict prevention is not universal panacea. Conflict/crises in itself is an useful phenomena. The great philosophers from Heraclitus and ibn Haldun to Hegel repeatedly stressed that conflict/crisis is necessary precondition of the social development. There is no progress without the conflict/crises. In international politics the major danger of conflict/crises prevention and management especially in military interpretation is that it could undermine the basic principles of international relations, such as non-intervention and national sovereignty. It is highly possible that the major powers will misused the intervention and conflict/crisis management to push forward they own selfish interests. The all national liberation and self-determination movements could be very easy proclaimed as terrorist organizations, threats to national and international security. Colonial war in Chechnya for example could be considered as honorable and legal anti-terrorist operation.

From the “preventive thinking” logic invasion of the Warsaw pact troops in Czechoslovakia in 1968 was only typical and very effective peacekeeping operation on the broad multinational base. Operation that had guaranteed the peace and stability in the region for more than 20 years. So it is obvious that prevention approach objectively have some limits and never should be used indiscriminately. From the other point of view there is no doubt that effective war against terrorism presuppose certain kind of intervention and preventive measures. They are absolutely necessary even if they contradict to the classical principles of the international law. A lot should be done in this sphere. Under existing international law a state have no right for preventive, especially military operations on the territories of foreign countries without their consent. Even more up to now international community failed to elaborate generally accepted definition of terrorism.

Today international law experts debate three concepts that may serve as cornerstones for the global consensus in this sphere:

• the classification of terrorism as the human enemy of mankind;
• a renewed emphasis on sovereign responsibility as the corollary of sovereign rights;
• application of the logic of the inherent right of self defense to the realities of the 21st –century.

But the most important thing is to consolidate the understanding that UN Charter is not a suicide pact or the sacred cow and if the effective war against
terrorism demands some changes to the international law – they should be made in the interests of all mankind.

Discussing the role of preventive and asymmetric strategies and its moral implications in the war against terrorism leading American strategist Colin Gray gives far reaching recommendations: “If there are cultural barriers on our side to incorporating particularly murderous options into the policy, strategy or operational intent, than we may need to reconsider some of our attitudes and rules of engagements.” 6

The terrorist as a rule prefer to use “dirty” asymmetric strategies. One of the most popular definition of asymmetric strategies (US National Defense University) is - “asymmetry is not fighting fair”. In this situation “war on rules” with terrorism will never be effective.

The rules of engagements should be reconsidered. “All is fair in love and war” - wrote in his time William Shakespeare. No less radical were the representatives of other great nation: – “A la guerre, comme a la guerre”. There are no alternatives to the broad use of preventive and asymmetric strategies in the war against terrorism. That while considering the role of these strategies not only from the point of view of liberal tradition and ethics but in the context of 9/11 events and their consequents, it will be very useful to remember the other great representative of European culture - Niccolo Machiavelli and his recommendations.

Adapting a little these recommendation to the present day situation we may stress:

**There are no moral or unmoral strategies in war against terrorism there are strategies effective and ineffective.**

Notes