

NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE MULTI-DOMAIN ENVIRONMENT: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ISSUES

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Abstract. *New complex problems arising in the modern security environment require a new, holistic approach that could ensure strategic decision-making in a qualitatively new system of global security – a multi-domain environment. The aim of this study is to explore the transformation of national security paradigms in the context of a complex, multi-domain environment, with a particular focus on the challenges and implications for public administration. The research adopts a conceptual and analytical approach grounded in a synthesis of theoretical models, strategic doctrines, and contemporary security literature. This article analyzes the traditional and contemporary theoretical context of national security ensuring in the multi-domain environment with links and emphasis of it to main task of conventional and non-conventional struggle for political interests achievement. The analysis identifies that the risks and uncertainty of the future security environment necessitate the need to ensure the conditions for the effective implementation of existing and potential strategic and operational capabilities to achieve certain goals plays and will continue to play one of the key roles in the successful implementation of national security tasks both on the territory of one's own state and on the territory of other states, that is, in fact, it should be transferred to the global security environment. Of particular interest in this aspect are irregular threats to achieve and strengthen power from other states and countering these threats. Findings highlight the strategic potential for ensuring security in a multi-domain environment provides for the theoretical possibility of actions at the intersections of interests or at the intersections of spheres, which is due to the growth of opportunities for technological and informational influence, in general, the use of special methods of point influence on the source of danger and gaining an advantage in the geopolitical environment. In this context, a steady trend is being formed towards the theoretical understanding and conceptual consolidation of the principles of globally integrated domains, which defines the development and justification of a system of all forces and means, state and non-state organizations, etc. as the main priorities for national security ensuring.*

Keywords: *achievement of strategic goals; dominance; multi-domain environment; national security; security; world geopolitical space; active strategic and operational environment; hybrid warfare; non-traditional environments.*

JEL Classification: *F52, H83*

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Introduction. The challenges facing the world (cyberthreats, resource scarcity, space security etc.) are too hard to solve with traditional research methods. These problems called for a new, holistic approach which could to ensure strategic decision-making in quality-new systme of global security – multi-domain environment. As a rule, issues of ensuring national security become relevant only in the conditions of a real threat to national sovereignty, although the prerequisites, as a rule, exist in advance and can be identified in the security environment as trends. However, this is connected with the need for theoretical understanding of changes in the paradigm of ensuring national security in the new conditions of existence of society, the state and the individual.

Literature review. In the framework of the national security research theoretical tradition is the situation, when “the types of participation in security activities are changing, the main purposes of actors making such a contribution remain largely consistent with one general proposition: that although security policy-making now features more actors, their agendas tend to be instrumentalised through conventional rubrics about the national interest. At the same time, normative values are intersecting with material considerations; non-traditional threats are meeting old ones; and new actors are challenging established elites in ways that often seem mystifying” (Clarke, Henschke, Legrand & Sussex, 2022). In the same time, “over the past few decades, national security has gradually evolved, with the recognition of a domain of protection and defense of the society, its values, the environment, and the state as a political institution, which goes beyond the military aspects. This is due to the fact that many different (not only military) causes of threats to national security have been taken into account, as well as the fact that in the modern era, so far, not only armed forces can be a tool to influence other actors in international relations and other sources of threats (economic, environmental, social, cultural, and religious). Security issues have therefore become expanded to include economic, environmental, demographic, cultural, social, and other problems. The democratization of social life and the emergence of important interdependencies between the interests of the state and those of individuals have also resulted in the need to balance these interests in the area of security” (Kitler, 2021).

Traditionally, the twin topics of safety and security have been addressed as discrete and separate entities at government, corporate and professional levels. This conceptual separation into de facto silos, typically reinforced by legislative boundaries as well as by practical issues, professional interests and dominant experience, has led to security in its broadest sense being addressed differently (Boustras & Waring, 2020; Sussex, Clarke & Medcalf, 2017). In fact, the literature on this issue is too extensive. However, we can generalize the main tendencies and directions of the theory's development, bypassing their particulars, since their certain limitation to the sphere of “geopolitics” is sufficiently illustrative. The latter has a significant impact on the positioning of public administration in the area of ensuring national security from the point of view of indirect functionality. As result, considering internal and external threats to public administration in the field of national security that require conceptual approaches to address is out of attention. In fact, it is not only and not so much a

question of whether the public administration system is capable of resisting security environment threats, but rather a question of whether this system is capable of actively influencing the security environment itself to ensure the sustainability and stability of the entire system of society and the state.

Common theoretical context of security problems usually is not pay attention to future perspectives of the global situation forming and development, main tendencies of it which connected with change understanding and discursivity of security domains (Table 1).

Table 1. Theories of the security and its implications for public administration

Theoretical context	Security	Most important responsibility	Principles	Public administration issues
Realism defensive realism	a key issue in global affairs	own security, preparing for war	balancing	dismissing economic concerns, issues of development and internal domestic situations
Neo-realism (realpolitik) offensive realism	state and national security	maximization of the state power	balance-of-power system	doubts about the international law, diplomatic measures
Liberal Internationalism	a key issue in global affairs	compromise and cooperate	collective security	incorporating economic concerns, issues of development, and internal domestic situations
Neoliberal institutionalism	survival of the state	international institutions and international law	complex interdependence	increasing interconnection among transnational actors and the intricate dynamics of develop mutual dependencies
Alternative theories				
social constructivism	goals, tactics, and strategies of state	tangible threats, threats are socially constructed	securitization	the role of identities in IR
critical or radical perspectives	the potential sources of conflict	dominating in the economic relationships	dependency theory	state in colonialism, imperialism, post-imperialism

Source: developed by the authors on base (Boustras & Waring, 2020; Clarke, Henschke, Legrand. & Sussex, 2022; El-Muhammady, 2021; Sussex, Clarke & Medcalf, 2017)

Despite the breadth of theoretical discourse the problem of conceptual views on national security as a social phenomenon as a whole, transformation of the classical paradigm of national security research, global components of problems of national security theory, stability and destabilization of the situation in the state, society and security environment, priorities of public administration subjects in practice of national security ensuring and development of public administration approaches in the study of national security problems stay actually. The safety globalized, that creates new emerging risks. That is why, “one challenge for safety research is to keep up with changes, some of which are perhaps of an unprecedented scale” (Le Coze, 2020).

Aims. The aim of this study is to explore the transformation of national security paradigms in the context of a complex, multi-domain environment, with a particular focus on the challenges and implications for public administration. It seeks to analyze the interplay between conventional and non-conventional threats and the strategic responses required to manage security across diverse and increasingly integrated domains — including cyberspace, electromagnetic space, space operations, psychological influence, and socio-political dimensions. The article intends to establish a theoretical framework for understanding national security not merely as a military concern but as a multidimensional phenomenon that demands coordinated actions by state and non-state actors within an evolving operational and geopolitical landscape. The ultimate goal is to formulate conceptual and practical approaches that enable public administration to proactively shape and secure the national strategic environment amid hybrid warfare and irregular threats.

Methodology. The research adopts a conceptual and analytical approach grounded in a synthesis of theoretical models, strategic doctrines, and contemporary security literature. Drawing upon comparative analysis of classical and alternative theories of international relations — including realism, liberal institutionalism, constructivism, and critical security perspectives — the study contextualizes the evolution of national security thinking in relation to public administration. The methodology includes the examination of strategic documents such as military doctrines, policy papers, and operational concepts (e.g., Joint Concept Note 1/20, Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1), as well as scholarly interpretations of emerging security environments. By integrating insights from interdisciplinary sources, the paper identifies critical vulnerabilities, maps out the contours of a multi-domain operational environment, and proposes a reconceptualization of public administration's role in securing national interests. The study employs deductive reasoning to generalize trends and inductive analysis to derive strategic implications for state policy and administrative practices.

Results. The general approach to ensuring security in a multi-domain environment can be outlined as follows: “In the future joint operating environment, deterrence must address a broader range of potential adversaries and situations than in any previous era of history. Deterrence requires a grand strategy that considers adversary-specific deterrence on a global scale, incorporates cross effects, and factors in second and third order effects. This deterrence strategy must be integrated within a national deterrence strategy that integrates and brings to bear all elements of national power: diplomatic, information, military, and economic. The military component of that strategy involves deterrence operations. Such deterrence operations must now work in concert with a reinvigorated homeland security posture and continuously evolving concepts of major combat and stability operations. These new deterrence challenges require revised joint force capabilities that provide a wider range of timely military options integrated with other elements of national power to discourage aggression or any form” (Deterrence Operations. Joint Operating Concept, 2006; Saur, 2021).

Because it is right that “until we understand what constitutes a domain, and just as importantly what does NOT, we cannot move forward with the paradigm shift that is Multi-Domain” (Donnelly & Farley, 2019). And if the purpose for the existence of the domain concept is to provide a framework for focusing action in pursuit of strategic aims, really “critical macro maneuver space whose access or control is vital to the freedom of action and superiority required by the mission” (Nettis, 2020). But is “need access or control of a medium in order for it to be a domain” (Donnelly & Farley, 2019), or such medium is a domain, which we simply don’t consider like a domain? May be the reason of it in that, if in the framework of traditional theory of security solving the such problem on the conceptual base of contradiction between divergence and convergency, contemporary situation requires displacement to the discreteness/integrity opposition, when yet equally important is the synchronization of military capabilities with nationally integrated instruments of power and external stakeholders, because “a “multi-domain” mindset must go beyond that to include military and non-military assets, which is the key differentiating factor” (Donnelly & Farley, 2019).

Moreover, from the point of view of national security ensuring, an emphasis on managed integration is necessary. There are such reasons for this (El-Muhammady, 2021; Joint Concept Note 1/20 Multi-Domain Integration, 2020):

- we face constant threats in the grey zone, below the threshold of traditional conflict. These threats are complex, fast moving and occur daily;
- the battlespace is broader and more complex than ever before. The space and cyber & electro-magnetic domains are ever more prevalent, and our adversaries are becoming better at integrating their actions within and across these domains – which are being increasingly contested there has been an exponential explosion of data;
- conflict is increasingly a competition for what people think. Our adversaries target public opinion through disinformation campaigns, and seek to undermine cohesion, and erode our economic, political and social resilience.

Ensuring security is and will always be associated with the restriction of freedom, that is, control. Control of event involves preparing the environment for the occurrence of an event, taking into account the set of possible options for its development (filling the environment with the desired probability), ensuring the completeness of the event’s development in all directions of its impact on the environment. An uncontrolled (sudden controlled) event results in the desired disturbance of the environment, removing the system from the equilibrium state. Here it is important to create conditions in advance under which one’s own security will avoid the negative impact of an uncontrolled event, taking into account the remote (or deferred) temporal perspective (strategy, in fact, loses its relevance in the concept of a multi-domain environment, leaving its content almost exclusively in the connection of “strategy-operationality”).

This, in essence, requires a change in the paradigm of ensuring national security. At least, theoretical context of it paradigm. Because the modern emphasis to assure the capacity to handle unforeseen events, such as resilience promises to deliver, will become even more important in the future (Wu, Wang & Xie, 2019). The main reasons

for the transformation of traditional approaches to ensuring the security in the multi-domain environment (Townsend, 2019; Wu & Wang, 2023):

- theoretical substantiation and practical implementation of the idea of the combined capabilities, integrated in several aspects, which requires a departure from the traditional understanding connected with time, place, and conditions of actions;
- the need for doctrinally determined coordinated and united efforts of the management, which should ensure the dominating in the all domains, which significantly changes the acts to achieve political goals;
- high dynamics of the development of the environment which influence to obtaining and maintaining an advantage in domains;
- obtaining and maintaining competitive advantages outside the time parameters of conflicts of all levels.

Based on this, need the description of additional environments (The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028, 2018; GTA 31-03-003, Special Forces Detachment Mission Planning Guide, 2020), which forming multi-domain environment in the whole or can be considered as elements of such an environment at least (Mandel & Irwin, 2021):

- an uncontrolled sphere of interests, characterized by instability and uncertainty, the non-linear influence;
- a high-risk and high-sensitivity environment (closed areas, which associated with high political risk, that involves the preferential conduct of secret and special actings in the multi-domain environment);
- an environment of irregular armed struggle (characterized by the presence of acts of political violence carried out by the enemy with the aim of changing the political structure of the state, government, politics, etc. with the use of insurgent movements, subversive activities, terrorism etc.).

These additional operational environments are directly related to the concept of multidimensional operations, which is aimed at providing the most complete picture of the space and reducing the time for decision-making in conditions of uncertainty and risk. As a result, it is possible to justify a comprehensive approach to minimizing existing and potential threats to the strategic and operational environment, bordering on one of the main threats to the state, which is associated with the possibility of losing national control over the domestic political situation.

Among the main directions of development of theoretical foundations, the following practical issues of ensuring national security are relevant (Dekker, 2015; Galula, 2006; Radvani, 1990):

- informational and psychological impact on the population;
- coverage of all strata of the population according to ethnic, national, linguistic, cultural, religious composition with the involvement of informational and pro propaganda materials aimed at a specific population group along with the use of religious figures for informational and propaganda purposes, as well as creating conditions for access of the population to information sources (including provision of technical means of obtaining information, free access to the Internet, etc.);

- preparation of achievement the goals taking into account political, national, and national-ethnic, socio-cultural characteristics of the state and region to ensure their actions in conditions of social and political instability in the state and region;
- long-term support on political level of illegal armed formations, opposition radical movements, criminality to ensure the conditions for increasing social and political instability in the state and region.

Thus, the creation of a controlled security environment, in which non-traditional forms of conflict development and resolution, including armed ones, prevail, requires the use of the entire spectrum of non-traditional methods of struggle, political wars, etc., which are transferred to the territory of other states, and as objects of defeat, determining state and non-state structures (according to the traditional approach), as well as all spheres of life of society, the state and the individual.

Discussion. Ensuring security in a multi-domain environment is considered as a complex of managing the operational and strategic environment, accepting and recognizing political consequences, clearly responding to the threat, taking into account long-term effects, indirect use of capabilities, multi-variance of actions, ensuring long-term sustainability, etc. In the same time, among the main imperatives of ensuring security in a multi-domain environment, special attention is paid to ensuring a balance between national security and the synchronization of stable development of society. It is need, because the risks and uncertainty of the future security environment necessitate the need to provide the process of developing deterrence strategies with elements of reliability and flexibility. Ensuring the conditions for the effective implementation of existing and potential strategic opportunities to achieve defined goals plays and will continue to play one of the key roles in successfully achieving a balance between national security and the synchronization of stable development of society. Of particular interest in this aspect are irregular threats to the achievement and strengthening of power by other states and countering these threats in the geopolitical sphere.

This is come a very important to ensure the achievement of the strategic goals of the state both at the local and global levels, including the desire to gain dominance in the world geopolitical space, is carried out taking into account the capabilities of real and potential opponents to conduct all types of struggles. We must emphasize, that in this case means the realization of the global interests of the state by capturing, maintaining, and increasing the positions of dominance in the world geopolitical space, which is considered as an active strategic and operational environment. At the same time, the rejection of the force method of resolving the armed struggle is not one of the main priorities of ensuring the interests of national security and defence of the state.

Factly, threats to national interests arising from the decisive influence on the adoption of specific military-political decisions by third countries require the formation of a single complex of military-political and diplomatic measures, which in aggregate should provide the third party with confidence in the unacceptability of the results of potential aggression in any of the domains of the multi-domain space. This is not only about the influence on state and non-state actors, when the priority of a certain government policy is the use of indirect methods of warfare (including non-

conventional wars), or the combination in a single complex of various components of security and defense forces aimed at preventing or deterring state and non-state actors of the security environment that pose irregular threats (See Fig. 1).

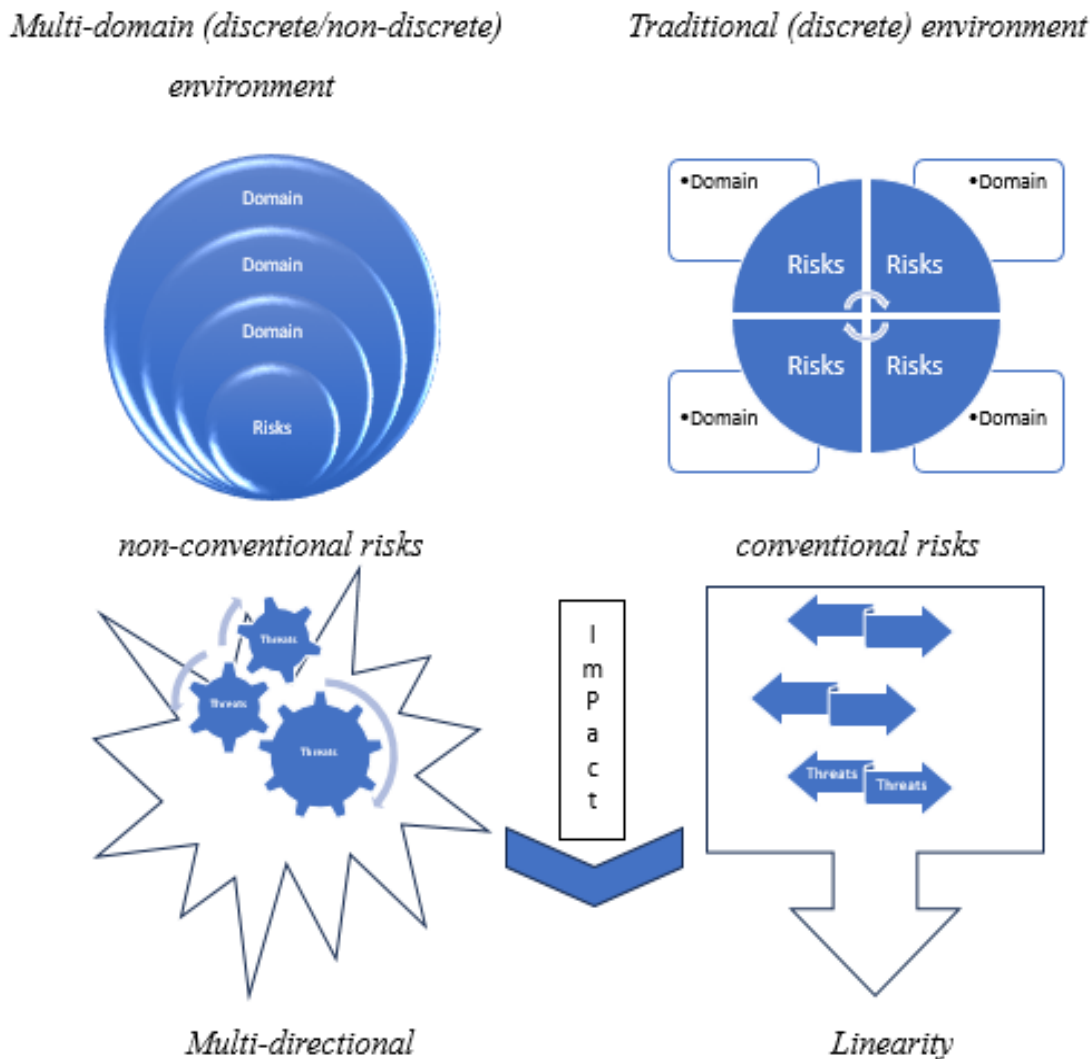


Figure 1. Complex impact of conventional and non-conventional risk and threats by the traditional and multi-domain environment

Source: developed by the authors

That is why in the point of view the national security ensuring the main attention and effort should be given to planning and conducting multi-sectoral operations in the multi-domain environment aimed at ensuring the realization of the state's global interests by capturing, maintaining and increasing positions of dominance in the global geopolitical space, which is considered an active strategic and operational environment.

In such situation is need conducting multi-sectoral operations to minimize existing and potential threats to the strategic and operational environment, bordering on one of the main threats to the state, which is associated with the possibility of losing national control, first of all, over the domestic political situation. In fact, we are talking about the simultaneous implementation of a system of strategic and operational tasks

related to ensuring the achievement of a coordinated set of goals and priorities of the state's foreign and domestic policy, taking into account the trends in the development of the strategic and operational environment, as well as the situation in potential theaters of war. In this aspect, the system of security ensuring requires the producing and implementation an appropriate system of multi-sphere targets involves changes in spheres and zones of influence, which also sometimes lose the completeness and conditional limitations of the physical environment, requiring the use of new methods of remote influence on the enemy.

Conclusion. Theoretical issues of safety in multi-domain environment ensuring is considered in the context of the general trend towards the emergence of threats to national security in one or several spheres, which is due to a high level of control or achieving an acceptable level of security in each sphere. Achieving this level requires special measures in each sphere, taking into account the complex nature of the goals that ensure the achievement of a positive impact on a specific sphere in which national interests and strategic goals of foreign and domestic policy are achieved or priorities for overcoming hybrid threats that arise in a particular sphere or within the relevant clusters are determined. At the same time, the strategic potential for ensuring security in a multi-domain environment provides for the theoretical possibility of actions at the intersections of interests or at the intersections of spheres, which is due to the growth of opportunities for technological and informational influence, in general, the use of special methods of point influence on the source of danger and gaining an advantage in the geopolitical environment. In this context, a steady trend is being formed towards the theoretical understanding and conceptual consolidation of the principles of globally integrated domains, which defines the development and justification of a system of all forces and means, state and non-state organizations, etc. as the main priorities for ensuring security.

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