Combating international terrorism

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Introduction

In the aftermath of 9-11 attacks, the United Nations Security Council labelled any act of international terrorism as a threat to international peace and security. In further resolutions, it referred to terrorism as a violation of human rights, connected the struggle against terrorism with the maintenance of international peace and security, required States to ratify the relevant instruments, and encouraged them to adopt rules for implementing a principle defined «extradite or prosecute»[1].

In another relevant resolution, the Council pointed out that all measures directed at combating international terrorism are to be taken in accordance with international law, in particular international human rights, refugee, and humanitarian law[2].

Before dealing with measures and restraints effectively adopted by States and international organisations to face the menace, it is useful to clarify what «international terrorism» means.

The effort to draft a comprehensive instrument dealing with terrorist acts, including a definition of it, started early in the XX century, since in 1937 the League of Nations promoted the Convention for the prevention and punishment of terrorism. The proposed Convention has never entered into force and has been replaced by a sequence of specific instruments dealing with each of the different modes in which the phenomenon appeared[3]. The most recent convention on the matter, the United Nations Convention for the suppression of the financing of terrorism (1999), in its article 2, defines terrorism as an act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict. The act of violence is finalized to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act[4].

[1] Security Council resolution 1368 (2001).

[2] Security Council resolution 1456 (2003).

[3] Texts and status of the United Nations Conventions on terrorism available at Url http://treaties.un.org/Pages/DB.aspx?path=DB/studies/page2_en.xml&menu=MTDSG.

[4] International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1999.

Professor Bassiouni defined international terrorism as «individual or collective coercive conduct employing strategies of terror violence which contain an international element or are directed against an internationally protected person»[5]. Among the protected persons, he numbered citizens of different States and members of non-belligerent armed forces.

In the Us there are several definitions for terrorism[6]. The Fbi, as well as the Department of Defence have their own notion, while the Us code has also its proper definition of international terrorism, as violent acts or acts dangerous to human life, criminal in nature, that occur primarily outside of the territorial jurisdiction of the United States, or transcend national boundaries. The Us Department of State referred to it as «premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents». In this definition, an important aspect concerns the word used to identify the victims of international terrorism: non-combatants, a category that has a precise connotation only in the law of international armed conflict and that the Department of State exemplifies as «[in addition to] civilians, military personnel (whether or not armed or on duty) who are not deployed in a war zone or a war-like setting»[7]. The use of the term non-combatants depicts acts of terrorism containing an international element as acts of war and suggests the idea of the enemy and the military option to tackle it.

In a recent decision, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon tried to identify a comprehensive and customary (i.e. binding all States) definition of terrorism in peacetime. In a speech delivered in February, the distinguished former president of the Tribunal recently departed, Antonio Cassese, held that the crime of terrorism is characterized by the intent to spread fear among the population or to coerce a national or international authority to take some action, or to refrain from taking it, and possesses a transnational element, which may lie «in a connection of perpetrators, victims, or means used across two or more countries, but may also reside in the significant impact that a terrorist act in one country may have in another country»[8].

To summarize, «*è "internazionale" il terrorismo "dello straniero"*»[9] which kills civilians.

The response to a criminal phenomenon like international terrorism may possibly be articulated in national and international measures. It could be either a criminal proceeding, at a domestic or international level, but also a military intervention.

[5] M. C. Bassiouni, *International terrorism and political crime*, Springfield, Charles C. Thomas Pub. Ltd, 1975, p. XIV.

[6] M. R. Hassanien, *International law fights terrorism in the Muslim World: a middle eastern perspective*, «Denver Journal of International Law and Policy», Vol. 36, No. 2, p. 248.

[7] United States Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country reports on terrorism 2005*, available at Url http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2005/64331.htm.

[8] Interlocutory decision on the applicable law: terrorism, conspiracy, homicide, perpetration, cumulative charging, case No. STL-11-01/I, Feb. 16, 2011, par. 85.

[9] L. Bonanate, *La politica internazionale fra terrorismo e guerra*, Bari, Laterza, 2004, p. 86.

The response to international terrorism in the form of self-defensive/offensive use of military force beyond national borders, and its legal constraints, is the focus of this work. It requires putting together considerations pertaining to inter-State relations and the use of force by States (*jus ad bellum*), humanitarian law (*jus in bello*) and human rights. Section 1 contains a brief outlook on the progressive militarization of the response to international terrorism. Section 2 and 3 respectively illustrate how the Us and Israel, two States profoundly involved, have dealt and are dealing with the problem of terrorism.

Section 4 discuss the legitimacy of targeted killings of suspected terrorists, under humanitarian and human rights law.

The military response to international terrorism

During the Seventies and Eighties of the XX century, terrorism acquired a firm transnational connotation, since the armed groups realized that to obtain a sufficient impact and proselytise at the domestic or local level they needed international visibility, which in turn presupposed military might. The attacked States combined law enforcement measures with limited military responses even abroad – in form of commandos operations –, which escalated hand in hand with the amplitude and temerity of new terrorism challenges. Alongside with hostage-rescue operations, formally justified as «protection of citizens abroad», and notwithstanding the stalemate produced by the Cold War, the reaction to murderous or destabilizing activities involved alternatively massive or high-intensity interventions, as occurred respectively in Lebanon, in 1982, or against Libya in 1986 (Operation El Dorado Canyon).

A central transformation of the post-Cold War era, the partial disappearance of the battlefield in the traditional sense and the raise of asymmetric warfare – consisting of confrontations between the State and non-State actors –, was at some point anticipated by the decade-long Ussr intervention in Afghanistan. During that war small, unorganised, tribal groups of fighters (supported by Cia, actually[10]) successfully confronted a gigantic military machinery. Those predicating the attack against the West – culminated in the 9-11 tragedy –, participated in that confrontation and retained fundamental teachings from that experience, including the benefits of mounting attacks from ungoverned hideouts located in remote areas of the globe.

Military operations confronting terrorists conducted on an internal front are internal problems. Each government is formally obliged to react to an attack coming from the inside respecting the constraints imposed by its domestic law and the international law on human rights, and materially free to react to terrorism using massive overwhelming firepower, as occurred, for example, in Chechnya[11]. Military interventions to combat (international) terrorism abroad suffer the limits

[10] S. Coll, *Ghost wars*, New York, Penguin Books, 2004.

[11] W. Abresch, *A human rights law of internal armed conflict: the European Court of Human Rights in Chechnya*, «European Journal of International Law», 2005, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 741–767.

imposed to States by article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations, a norm considered as peremptory (*jus cogens*) which bears only two exceptions, resulting in articles 24 and 51. Accordingly, military interventions cited above are acts of self-defence (under article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations), waged by the attacked State against another State hosting and sponsoring terrorists, or are a by-product of directives authorising all necessary means, issued by the Security Council to member States – under article 24 (conferring on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security) and Chapter VII of the Un Charter –, and thereby justifying the extraterritorial use of force by a State or a coalition of States implementing an international mandate, coupled with other non-military measures, mainly the freezing of financial resources referable in some way to the extremists.

In the aftermath of 9-11, the Security Council recognized to the Us its inherent right to self-defence against the State guilty of shielding instigators and organizers of the attacks, and authorized the member States to take all necessary measures to eradicate terrorism in Afghanistan through a military campaign, while exhorting them to adopt at national level specific regulations to combat international terrorism. In resolution 1904 (on continuation of measures imposed against the Taliban and al-Qaeda, December 17, 2009), the Security Council ordered the freezing of the funds and other financial assets or economic resources of terrorists. It also reminded to the States the principle «extradite or prosecute». Actually, a remainder on universal jurisdiction, which refers to the duty to investigate and prosecute crimes constituting a violation of international law, irrespective of the location of the defendant or plaintiff, the place where the crime occurred, or the nationality of the persons involved.

Operation Enduring Freedom (started October 7, 2001) was a major combat operation. The operations conducted by the Israeli Defence Forces to disrupt the terrorist infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, such as Operation Defensive Shield (started March 29, 2002), have been full-scale military operations, on the assumption that «in today's reality, a terrorist organization is likely to have considerable military capabilities. At times they have military capabilities that exceed those of States»[12].

Pursuing a tendency to move towards a contingency posture instead of a campaigning one, tailoring the force to the challenge, the last evolution in the struggle against terrorists is represented by more limited targeted killings operations, using preferably unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones.

The global war on terror

The Us government, contrary to those who believe that the war on terror is not a war in the proper significance[13], but simply a rhetoric phrase or a metaphor for

[12] *Public Committee against torture in Israel et al. v. government of Israel et al.* (HCJ 769/02), December 13, 2006, par. 21.
[13] A. Gioia, *Terrorismo, crimini di guerra e crimini contro l'umanità,* «Rivista di diritto internazionale», 2004, Vol. LXXXVII, n. I, p. 47.

«resolute struggle», retains that members of terrorist organizations in some way linked to the network of Bin Laden or those however involved in the destabilization of Afghanistan, are combatants. Having chosen a continuous combating function, those fighters remain combatants even when well beyond the zone of combat[14]. To chase al-Qaeada operatives the Us mounted in October 2001 Operation Enduring Freedom, combining special forces, air strikes and hi-tech support to the so called Northern Alliance. Progressively and informally, Operation Enduring Freedom enlarged its area of responsibility – while leaving to Nato-led Isaf the main part of its tasks within Afghanistan –, to the Pakistani tribal zone named Fata, a strip of ungovernable districts close to the Afghan border, proving that, politically speaking, the XXI century conflicts have often no battlefield in the traditional sense[15]. In that area the Us is now conducting targeted killings using Predator and Reaper combat drones and (so called) covert operations.

The focus of the Us counter-terrorism operations is today enlarging further, involving other «hot spots» in the region and beyond, from Yemen to Somalia, through a hybrid military/Cia approach. For example, in Yemen the Cia killed in 2002 the mastermind of the suicide attack against the Uss Cole warship and recently the American citizen Nasser al-Aulaqi, a cleric and the alleged leader of «al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula». In Somalia, a drone operated by Us special forces killed two leaders of the al-Shabab militant group.

According to international law as currently stands, the Us should not be entitled to conduct military activities in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia, since it is not engaged in armed hostilities with those countries. At least the first and the second are sovereign States and, as a matter of international law, the Us cannot intervene without the consent of the territorial sovereign or a legal justification of the Un Security Council, which enjoys the power under the Un Charter to authorize military actions in foreign countries.

In the opinion of a growing number of experts, however, an armed attack by a non-State actor can trigger the right of self-defence[16]. Since every territory throughout the globe is subject to the rule of one of other sovereign State (except in respect of some rare ungovernable politically speaking *terrae nullius,* such as Somalia), the exercise of self-defence of the offended State involved the sovereignty of the State in which the non-State actor is locate. The Us has already displayed a willingness to operate unilaterally in Pakistan, as in occasion of the killing of Bin Laden and attacks by drones, in safe havens close to the border with Afghanistan, from which extremists have mounted attack against Western troops in Afghanistan.

A State can strike its enemies, and thus use its military power in the territory on another sovereign State with the consent of the government of that State

[14] D. Kretzmer, *Targeted killing of suspected terrorists,* «European Journal of International Law», 2005, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 171–212, p. 203.

[15] G. Solis, *The law of armed conflict*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 10.

[16] J. J. Paust, *Self-defense targetings of non-State Actors and permissibility of Us use of drones in Pakistan,* «Journal of Transnational Law & Policy», 2010, Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 237.

(*volenti non fit iniura*). However, as renown, the Us don't trust the State apparatus of Pakistan or Yemen, since relevant parts of it result out of control, and normally prefers to inform local authorities when the operation is accomplished. Lacking the consent of the sovereign, it remains the issue of how to justify non-consensual uses of force on the territory of other States. Military actions in foreign territories, – against citizens or residents and their goods and premises – should equate to aggression. They could transmute in acts of defence, in accordance with the new doctrinal orientation, only with the concurrence of specific circumstances. When the State actually harbours the terrorists providing them with a safe haven to plan, train and recover, or deliberately tolerates groups of terrorists launching attacks abroad from those territories, or when that State is incapable to oppose them, an intervention should be justifiable. The criterion used is that of a State unable or unwilling to impede terrorists from attacking the world using its territory as a platform to plan, organise, and conduct attacks and recover after the effort. An argumentation yet proposed by Israel, to justify the military intervention in Palestinians camps in Lebanon, in 1983.

According to an increasing pool of Us experts, conducting lethal operations using military means, even if operated by State «civil» agencies like Cia, outside conventional war zones is allowed, simply because the Us is involved in a non-international armed conflict with al-Qaeda that by nature does not have a geographic location. Narratives considering the struggle against terrorism properly as a war are increasing. Indeed, those a decade ago were anti-terrorist operations became invasions and wars. Therefore, the Us is still engaged in active combat with al-Qaeda – notwithstanding the operation following Bin Laden's death. In those contexts, there is incertitude on which set of rules apply, since international instruments (*jus in bello*, the international law of armed conflict) relate to interstate violence or internal confrontation which have attained the civil war amplitude within a State, while no rule concerns specifically the transnational violence of non-State actors, such as terrorist networks.

A different point of view sustains that the Us war against al-Qaeda is neither a non-international armed conflict nor an armed conflict of transnational nature. It is not an armed conflict at all.

> «Under international law, we could not be at "war" with an entity that has a status less than that of an insurgent (which status pertains during an insurgency or armed conflict not of an international character within the meaning of common article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions), unless that entity is directly involved with others engaged in a "war". […] We could not be at "war" with Osama Bin Laden, since he and his entourage are in no way representatives or leaders, et al., of an 'insurgency' within the meaning of international law» [17].

According to this perspective, *jus in bello* does not apply and the potential targets benefit from the international law of human rights, which *inter alia*,

[17] J. J. Paust, *Addendum: war and responses to terrorism,* «ASIL Insight», September 2001, available at URL http://www.asil.org/insigh77.cfm.

permits a defensive use of force, based on the presence of danger, perceived as real, or an unjust attack, imminent or already in progress.

Supposing the war on terror inaugurated by the Us administration in 2001 is properly a war, and specifically a conflict of non-international nature, the regulation should be common article 3 to the Geneva Convention. Article 3 prohibits violence to life and person, in particular murder, against persons taking no active part in the hostilities.

For those who believe that continuous combat functionaries are targetable «any time – any where», an actual attack is not necessary and the active participation and imminence requirements tend to vanish. However, even during an armed conflict, targeting a civilian who is not directly involved in combat is a violation of humanitarian law. Even when labeled as «unlawful combatants» not respecting the law and customs of war – a description of convenience, meaningful only in international armed conflicts and, more importantly, even then only denoting persons taking direct part in hostilities while not being members of the regular armed forces or of assimilated units –, terrorist enjoy the (summary) protection of fundamental human rights granted by common article 3 and article 75 of the 1977 Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, both customary rules binding all States, valid in every kind of armed conflict.

A local war on terror

Israel – actually an occupying power –, asserts it is combating an international armed conflict against terrorist organizations active in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip (no matter it abandoned the Strip in 2005) since the second Intifada broke out[18]. Clearly, the operational context is that of a struggle based on terrorist tactics or *guerrilla*, which grant to the opponents greater security and demand relatively low support.

If one undertakes that the assumption formulated by the Israeli Supreme Court (and the Israeli government) that the State of Israel is involved in an international armed conflict against terrorist organizations operating in the Occupied Territories, the law of international armed conflict applies. In that context, the question of the legality of strikes is based on instruments specifically governing the conduct of hostilities under international law, namely the IV Hague Convention of 1907 and the part of 1977 Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions which has attained the status of customary law (since Israel has never ratified the Protocol). In such war and war-like conditions, the use of lethal force against those who directly participate in hostilities is permitted. The problem could be the use of unnecessarily overwhelming force, which causes a collateral damage, in terms of loss of civilian lives, excessive in respect of the military advantage anticipated, i.e. a disproportionate attack. In asymmetric conflict, because of advantages in fires and technical surveillance possessed by

[18] *Public Committee against torture in Israel et al. v. government of Israel et al.* (HCJ 769/02), December 13, 2006, par. 16.

advanced conventional army, the enemy is unlikely to choose to fight in open battle. They fight among civilians, increasing the risk of collateral damage. Laser guided weapons and drones have made more accurate targeting feasible. However, in order to avoid incidental casualties, additional precautions are needed. In particular, disciplines and rules of engagement should be issued, to ensure conformity with the law of war core principles of discrimination, proportionality, necessity and precaution. Those measures include the positive identification of the target by a qualified controller, a collateral damage estimate procedure, as a prerequisite of the strike, and a guidance explaining what the authorized targets are. Proportionality refers to civilian deaths in respect of anticipated military advantage. Necessity relates to imminence of the threat and its lethal nature. Discrimination between civilian and military targets implies additional precautions to avoid civilian casualties or disproportionate outcomes. Violations of these standards make the operation illegal.

A second, more difficult issue concerns the use of lethal weapons against a person who, although suspected or effectively involved with an armed opposing group, is not directly participating in combat and is not posing an immediate threat to life of others.

In order to target an individual under the law of armed conflict, he must directly participate in hostilities, or, according to the last doctrinal elaborations, he must serve in a continuous combat function with an armed group party to the conflict. The legitimacy of the strike can be sustained by referring to the threat represented by the target, or on its militancy. The first approach (attack or menace of attack) satisfies lawyers, the second the military. The issue concerns principally those who commit hostilities without sharing continuously in the war, but who do so with intermitting returns to their homes and avocations. The Supreme Court of Israel held that «a civilian who has joined a terrorist organization which has become his "home", and in the framework of his role in that organization he commits a chain of hostilities, with short periods of rest between them, loses his immunity from attack "for such time" as he is committing the chain of acts»[19]. For a strike to be legitimate, the participation in hostilities should be unequivocally established. In the opinion of Antonio Cassese, irregular combatants may be targeted only in *flagrante delicto*[20]. This interpretation of the norm is quite restrictive, and favours the «revolving door» effect, according to which civilians join the benefit of immunity from attack as soon as they have dropped arms and returned to their normal (non-combat) existence. It is however, the law as it currently stands, while different solutions, aiming at enlarging the concept of direct participation, are matter of policy, not law.

[19] *Idem,* par. 39. The Court cited D. Statman, *Targeted killing*, «Theoretical inquiries in law», 2004, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 179-195.

[20] A. Cassese, *Expert opinion on whether Israel's targeted killings of Palestinian terrorists is vonsonant with international humanitarian law*, *Public Committee against torture et al. v. the government of Israel et al.*, June 2003, p. 5.

The use of lethal force outside of combat zones

As seen above, the States more committed in the struggle turned to hi-tech weapon systems to chase and neutralized terrorists. Israel Defence Forces has engaged in targeted killings numerous prominent figures of armed groups operating in the Territories since 2000. The strikes against them require a vast work of intelligence for the identification of the target and its constant surveillance. Ground-level information and human intelligence (*humint*) data collection are also extremely important. Actually, imminence of the threat, which puts the legitimacy of the strike out of question, is not a feature of targeted killing or named operations. It is true that the concept of imminence is conditioned by the capability of terrorists to strike with minimal notice, and praises for a more flexible understanding. However, in the majority of cases, the temporal window often permits to elaborate a plan for the strike as well as a special operation aiming at the capture of the target. The choice for the strike is thus an evaluation of costs and benefits of the ground operation, at the end of which the targeted killing option prevails. In this case, there is a lack of necessity, which makes the strike solution illegal.

Out-of-theatre environments deserve a «law enforcement» pattern, based on the universally recognized human rights standards. In law enforcement situations, pre-emptive attacks on individuals carried out in self-defence – such as against a terrorist who is about to attack –, are lawful. A targeted killing can occur in defence of a victim in an *in extremis* situation, when the practicability of non-lethal means is excluded. The norm is «capture, prosecution and conviction» following the rules of due process. It applies when circumstances make capture feasible without incurring undue risk to nearby civilians. The exception is «move directly to kinetic engagement». It requires the exhaustion or non-availability of reasonable different options, keeping in mind that reasonableness is not convenience. If the use of force is not strictly necessary, it violates the due process clause and becomes an extrajudicial killing.

Human rights law allows the use of potentially lethal force only in response to an imminent and sufficiently grave threat, in accordance with a stricter interpretation of the criteria of necessity and proportionality. The imminence of the danger should be evaluated using the Daniel Webster's classic formulation in the Caroline case, adopted also during the Nuremberg trial to identify the concept of anticipatory self-defence and the legitimatization of preventive actions[21]. A threat is imminent if it is «instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means or time for deliberation». In case of a factual situation that permits margins to deter the potential assailant, defendant must take action to make the assailant to desist. Moreover, the need to defence, coupled with the requirement of a defensive response proportionate to the attack, must be taken to mean that the response

[21] R.Y. Jennings, *The Caroline and McLeod cases*, «American Journal of International Law», 1938, Vol. 32, pp. 82-89.

must be the only one possible, in the sense that it could not be replaced by another less damaging response. It requires the necessity to defence and a response proportionate to the attack. Thus, the «kill or capture» model should be radically modified and turned in «capture and in case kill», but only as *extrema ratio*.

Concluding remarks

International terrorists proved they can project power and strike with little notice throughout the world. A vast amount of resources is today employed in the prevention and surveillance of that threat. The strategy includes military solutions, namely drone attacks and special operations. In some respects, that strategy raises difficult questions, related to the legitimacy of the use of military force on foreign territories.

When a State suffers an attack by non-State actors based abroad, it has an inherent right to intervene in self-defence. However, the Un Charter prohibits it to strike the enemy in a foreign territory without the consent of the State in which the targets are located. There is a tension between the inherent right of self-defence and the prerogatives of sovereignty. To solve the question it is necessary to sustain that the Charter cannot impair the customary law on self-defence and that there is no shared expectation toward a restrictive interpretation of the rule on self-defence. Alternatively, it is necessary to sustain that although the sovereignty of a non-culpable State normally prevails, the right to self-defence applies in its normal fashion in all cases in which the State hosting terrorist elements is unable or unwilling to deal with them.

The strategy adopted in the so called war on terror is based on the idea of a worldwide battlefield, which is by definition spatially unlimited. It is an idea that does not want to consider that the struggle, if global, is waged contemporary on theatres of war and in the rest of the world, on real battlefields and (relatively) peaceful areas. Within battlefields, those who participate in hostilities are legitimate targets. Civilians conducting combat operations forfeit their protected persons status. By joining in the fighting, they are legitimate targets as long as they participate in hostilities. *Jus in bello*, the law of armed conflict, permits to shoot them at sight, respecting however some fundamental precautions towards peaceful bystanders, in order to avoid disproportionate outcomes in terms of innocent civilians casualties. In pursuing extremists, States are not allowed to practice terrorism. They must discriminate. As Harold Koh pointed out in his 2010 Asil speech[22], targeting particular individuals serves to narrow the focus when force is employed and to avoid broader harm to civilians and civilian objects.

Outside of the theatre of operations, the pattern must be different, since *jus in bello* does not apply. When operated out of the battlefield, the use of deadly force may be permissible, as a measure of last resort in accordance with

[22] Available at Url http://opiniojuris.org/2010/03/25/bleg-for-harold-kohs-asil-speech/.

international standards on the use of force, in order to protect life[23]. Outside of the zone of operations, the law enforcement pattern imposes a less rapid and more risky effort to capture terrorists, deserving lethal strike for extreme situations of individuals' self-defence. The core requirements for resorting to lethal force are an imminent and unlawful attack menacing the life of human beings, and the impossibility to capture the attacker. Lacking imminence of the threat, or the absolute necessity to use lethal force, human rights norms prohibit the killing of terrorist operatives as extra-judicial executions.

[23] *Joint statement by the Un Special Rapporteurs on summary executions and on human rights and counter-terrorism*, May 6, 2011.

Cara Lettrice, caro Lettore,

La ringraziamo per quest'anno trascorso con la «Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali».

Come avrà avuto modo di notare, la Rivista accoglie contributi di alto valore culturale, concernenti tutti gli aspetti della vita internazionale, con particolare riferimento al tempo presente. Frutto dell'intenso lavoro di una équipe multinazionale, essa è un luogo di confronto e di collaborazione fra accademici, diplomatici, politici e specialisti delle diverse branche delle scienze sociali ed umane ed un punto di riferimento per gli attori internazionali.

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Con viva cordialità

MARIA GRAZIA MELCHIONNI