2016/1/1: The strategic situation at the turn of the year

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Lothar Rühl

Four outstanding and interconnected crises have confirmed old strategic research doctrines:
- the proceeding destabilization of the Near East states caused by the break-up of Iraq and Syria in war, together with the civil war in Yemen;
- the spreading of the revolutionary and terrorist power of militant Islamism in the shape of "Islamic State" (IS) or "Caliphate" in Syria and Iraq, together with the rejection of the international borders of 1919-21 and the endangering of all neighbouring countries;
- the military intervention of Russia in Syria, side by side with the Assad-regime, officially against IS and "other terrorist groups" according to the West-Arabic intervention;
- the wave of migration and fleeing across borders from the Near East, from Southwest Asia and Africa, aiming at Europe, which, with 60-70 millions of people at the moment, might already represent the beginning of a worldwide global emigration of nations, flooding some European countries, and which has driven the EU into a tensile test of solidarity because of the distribution of the immigrants.

These destructive developments, which both America and Europe so far have more met than confronted, from a distance, with only marginal commitment in the Orient, predominantly reservedly or passively, together with the Russian intervention, have finally forced Turkey and Saudi-Arabia - two main allies of the USA, with Turkey as a border country of NATO in the Near and Middle East as well as a near neighbour of Russia, since 2011 directly endangered in the crisis area on its borders – actively to enter the stage as intervention powers. Israel as well, confederated with the USA, both strategically and diplomatically shielded, has been affected by the borderline incidents on Golan, but until the autumn of 2015 it had not been immediately threatened by the aggression, although a certain security risk remains. This is because of the fact that in October 2015 occupied Palestine with Jerusalem once again flared as a focal point due to street tumults between Jews and Muslims, originating in the conflict about the Temple Hill. In 2015, IS did not play a greater role in Palestine or Gaza, and do far has not harassed Israel, because until the autumn of 2015 it had not attacked neither Israel nor Jewish targets in the Near East. The Russian attack was considerably more precarious, firstly with tactical aircraft which limited the operational freedom of the Israeli air force over Syria, thus impeding the option of a "no-fly area over Syria" before an agreement which had thus become more difficult. The problem of a "strategic outward border of Europe" in front of the Levante coastline as well as the coast of Maghreb – a maritime apron for controlling the south-eastern and southern periphery of the EU and NATO in the Mediterranean region and on the Balkans – will also hit the core of relations between the USA and Europe in the near future. The USA will not abandon the Europe of NATO and the EU, despite all difficulties. The influence of Europe on North America, however, might continue to plummet on to a secondary level, the more so because of the strategic dependence of the European allies from the USA. This dependence results, on the one hand, of the expansion towards the east as far as the borders of Russia with its Ukraine Conflict, on the other hand of Europe's risky position towards the Orient in the Aegean and the Balkans. Africa in the Mediterranean, crossing the Maghreb, is an additional critical factor of insecurity. The uncontrolled mass exodus, caused by the Syrian civil war escalating especially in the summer of 2015, across Turkey and the Aegean to Europe, has dramatically made clear the political relevance of a strategic European apron border in the southeast and south. The regions from the east to the south of Europe are geopolitically unstable. So far the European forces and resources have not been sufficient for protecting this critical periphery.