How has globalisation affected international security?

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Abstract: *Globalization is a powerful force that affects the political and economic development of the world today. It has become a basic prerequisite for thinking about major international and domestic issues. The development of globalization has promoted the interconnection and dependence between different countries and regions, and contributed to the formation of international society. . But at the same time, with the development of globalization, the security threats brought about by globalization have further increased, and no country is immune to many threats to international security.*

Keywords: *Globalization, international security, Terrorism, Political instability, Human trafficking, Money laundering*

1. Introduction

For over centuries, human beings have considered the issue of security as of critical importance. Security represents not only freedom and comfort, but the very essence of life. Therefore, when the global security is compromised, people suffer and all effort is made to restore a sense of security. Feenstra and Weinstein (2017) claim that from as early as the stone age period, human being were inclined to secure their habitats from the internal and external threats in the surroundings and today, the budget allocated to security across different countries is among the highest compared to other needs such as health, education, and agriculture. With globalisation, the wold is united towards forming a common shield against diverse security threats. Ozekin (2019) explains that the end of world war II saw the formation of the United Nations (UN) and other international bodies such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), whose core responsibility is to guarantee the security of its member states. Therefore, the analysis of the effect of globalisation on international security points to various issues that are directly correlated to international security such as political instability, terrorism, money laundering, cybercrime, drug trafficking, human trafficking, among others.

2. The Concept of Globalisation

Globalisation is multidimensional and involves several elements that involves the convergence of states and different regions of the world. Tomlinson (1999) claims that "Globalization, as a complex connectivity, may situate before few decades but globalization process comprised of social, political, economic and cultural flows instigates us to go further back in times" (as cited by Mir, Hassan, & Qadri 2014, p 608). Scholars assert that the term globalisation become popular after the second world war, that is the second half of the 20th century. However, the process of globalisation has been taking place for thousands of years before scholars and policy makers started considering it. Zvarych (2018) claims that from the time human beings started to travel beyond their locality, they started to engage in globalisation. They shared their cultural practices, copied technological advancement, and even engaged in military alliances against common enemies. Therefore, the concept of globalisation started ago but it was only recently after the establishment of nation-states that it became clear.

As such, the core of globalisation is the proliferation of trade, people, culture, technology, and political influences and ideologies across established nation or state borders. It implies that the global community is no longer divided among homogenous traits but share a common platform where interaction and cooperation is open across diverse spheres. Ozekin (2019) argues that with globalisation, nation states and the global population are interlinked with common problems that makes them united and cooperative in their endeavours. The issue of security is among the key factors that makes the global community to work together and share a common table when seeking solutions to insecurity issues. Therefore, in this essay globalisation is assumed to affect international security based on the different points of interactions and conflicts of people, ideologies, cultures, technologies, and regions of the world.

3. The Concept of Security

Analysing the effect of globalisation on international security would also require the conceptualisation of the term "security." In literal terms, security is often related to the presences of peace, safety, and protection. However, Hill and Cavatorta (2019) explain that there are various dimensions of security that may impact humanity. They point to the existence of physical, social, economic, ecological, and political security. Social security relates to the ability of people to enjoy their cultural and social uniqueness without intimidation from others. The world is comprised of people from diverse social groups and it is imperative to maintain the identity of all the communities while maintaining cohesiveness. Problems such as racism and ethnicity threaten social security. Economic security points to the ability of people and nations to overcome the burden of poverty or financial constraints. Political security entails the stability of political systems and governance systems in the countries and ecological security touches on the protection of the environment. On the other hand, physical security, personal security, or human security concerns protection against bodily harm or injuries. It is the type of security that requires the use of police, military, and weapons to safeguard. Hadzhiev (2019) argues that all the other dimensions of security impact on the physical security in some way. For example, social insecurity may result in tensions that can cause violence, and this directly impacts physical security. As such, this essay examines how globalisation impacts the international physical security. However, it also relates to how the other facets of security impacts on the physical security of the global community.

4. Effects of Globalisation on International Security

4.1 Terrorism

Today, terrorism is one of the core threats to international security. Since second half of the twentieth century, the problem of terrorism has grown to be a global concern and it is directly interlinked to globalisation. Zhadan (2016) claims that unlike other security threats that are caused by criminals with the intent to gain financially, terrorism is ideological in nature. People with divergent religious, social, and political ideologies use terrorism as a means to instil fear and propagate their dogmas by use of violence. In the sense, the different political, cultural, and religious groups in the world try to compete for attention and supremacy in the face of globalisation and this contributes to the growth of terrorism.

In the last few decades, the scourge of terrorism has manifested as a direct conflict between the western and eastern ideologies, or between the Christian dominated west and the Islamic States in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions. Hayes (2019) explains that with globalisation, the United States and other western developed countries wanted to impose a common global political, economic, and social system. During the Cold War era, after the World War II, the United States worked closely with its allies to encourage countries to embrace democratic political system, a capitalist economic system, and liberal social system (Zhadan, 2016). They supported regimes that promoted democracy and found clandestine ways to destabilize or overthrow governments that went against their recommended political and economic systems. It is from that conflict that the problem of terrorism became a global concern as people such as Osama bin Laden his Al-Qaeda went out to harass the United States and its allies. The same applies to the divide of Christianity-dominated western countries that supported the occupation of Israel in Gaza and the Arabic countries that opposed the move.

Globalisation has encouraged people to travel and move across the world as temporary tourists or permanent immigrants, and this has further complicated the problem of terrorism. Some of the people who travel to foreign countries have evil intentions to commit acts of terrorism and it might be challenging for countries to distinguish genuine visitors from the terrorists. Baker and Carson, (2020) agree that many of the countries directly affected by the threat of terrorism have been forced to have excessively strict rules for immigrants from particular regions of the world. While globalisation encourages people to travel, work, and, live in any part of the world, the same pose a security threat to countries that are targeted by terrorists. For example, the terrorists who perpetrated the September 11 attack in 2001 travelled to the United States as immigrants seeking education and employment but they had other motivates. At some point, Szkurłat (2019) claims that the United States was forced to restrict entry of immigrant from high risk countries because of the security threat.

4.2 Political instability

Globalisation has also impacted on the political stability of nation states and this has directly affected

international security. Political instability implies that a country is facing civil unrest or conflict that often becomes violent. As noted, MengYun et al. (2018) explain that globalisation is responsible for advocating for the same political and economic system across the world. Superior economies such as the United States have used their global influence to compel states and leaders to adopt a democratic governance system that adheres to international standards. The result has been the development of antagonizing forces that breeds political instability. For instance, historically, during the cold war period, the United States was in direct conflict with countries that advocated for a communist political system. Hayes (2019) states that the superior powers sponsored political unrest through their international network and this caused political instability that resulted in violence. For example, an individual such as Ernesto "Che" Guevara was inclined to the Marxists political ideology and was responsible for revolutions in Cuba, Guatemala, Bolivia, and Congo (McCormick & Berger, 2019). It is from such a world wide spread of political unrest that the effects of globalisation become evident.

The interconnectedness of political instability is evident in the manner the Arab String caused a serious threat to international security. In 2010, the Arab spring started in Tunisia and quickly spread to five other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Anderson (2011) explains that many countries in the region faced the same political problem of depots regimes that had overstayed in power with minimal economic development. Therefore, when the Tunisia revolution started with the ousting of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the same happened in several other countries such as Egypt, Yemen, Libya, Syria, and Bahrain. The case clearly shows that political challenges can directly or indirectly affect the international security.

In the particular, the Arab Spring was fuelled by the global interconnectedness that is facilitated by the digital technology. Abushouk (2016) explains that when protests started in Tunisia, the social media platforms such as Twitter was instrumental in motivating the other countries with the same tyrant type of leadership. They saw what the Tunisians were doing and applied the same approach of using street protests to effect a regime change. Sahide (2017) agrees that the Arab Spring showed the effect of the digital technology in promoting an international civil unrests across several countries. Therefore, some governments have made it a point to censor access to global media to avoid the influence of global political movements.

The effects of the Arab Spring became clear with the prolonged war in Libya and Syria that got several countries involved. The situation in the two countries started as a political instability situation but quickly escalated to be a global security threat. Musarurwa and Kaye (2016) claim that the Syrian war evolved from an internal political instability issue and escalated to an international conflict that involved several countries such as the United States, Russia, Turkey, China, Iraq, Iran, and several other proxies. More so, the conflict in Syria and Iraq that started as a civil unrest gave rise to the Islamic State (ISIS) that has become another major threat to international security. Sahide (2017) claims that ISIS and other Islamic groups used the global network facilitated by digital technology to recruit and radicalize fighters from different countries of the world. Young men from developing countries such as Nigeria, Lebanon, Kenya, Yemen, Somalia, and Saudi Arabia joined the Syrian conflict because they were made to believe that is jihad war that requires the input of Islam from different parts of the world (Musarurwa & Kaye, 2016). Consequently, what started as a national problem quickly became a global security threat.

It is also evident that the political instability in Somalia resulted in a significant threat to international security due to the piracy activities in the Indian Ocean. The instability in Somalia provided a perfect opportunity for pirates to venture into Indian Ocean along the Gulf of Eden and hijack cargo ships and fishing vessels. The prevalence of piracy incidents in the region was alarming to the extent of attracting global attention. The Somali pirates were operating in the region were inclined to hijack ships from any part of the world passing along the eastern sea route. According to the International Maritime Organization (IMB) (2011), the rate of piracy activities off the east African coast pushed the statistics of global piracy to an all time high of 237 attacks in the year 2011. The activities of the pirates did not only affect trade along the sea routes but also international security in the East African mainland. According to Cwinya-ai (2013), the huge amount of ransoms the Somali pirates got from piracy was believed to be partly financing terrorists' groups such as Al-Shabaab in the main land. Therefore, if the activities of the pirates continued uninterrupted they would affect trading between different countries that relied on the eastern route from the Suez Canal through the Gulf of Eden. Heckler (2012) ranks the route off the Horn of Africa coast as the second busiest in the world because it connects Europe to Asia, East Africa, and the Middle East. Many vessel owners were afraid of going through that route because of the huge risk involved even with security escort. Insurance companies were contemplating considering the route a war zone in an effort to increase the premiums or discourage their clients from using the route.

4.3 Human trafficking

Globalisation is also aggravated the insecurity problem of human trafficking. Human trafficking refers to the illegal movement of people across state and regional borders. Globalisation made it easy for people to move across borders due to the integration of trade and improvement of road networks. Villacampa and Torres (2019) indicate that human traffickers take advantage of the elaborate global transport and communication networks to move people from far off countries in Asia, South America, and Africa to the developed countries in Europe and North America. Human trafficking is a direct threat to international security because a good number of the people trafficked are made to work as slaves or forced commercial sex workers in the major cities in the world. For example, in 2019 39 trafficked individuals were found dead inside a truck in Essex, England (Berger, 2019). The victims were trafficked from China and Vietnam and were expected to join the illegal immigrant market in Europe. The case points to the serious threat of human trafficking in the world.

A key factor that contributes to human trafficking is globalisation that enhances trade and migration of workers across country borders. It is common to find immigrant workers from third world or developing countries working in the informal sectors in the large cities in Europe, Middle East, Asia, and North America. Stamper (2019) states that the human traffickers take advantage of the lucrative global labour market to provide cheap or forced workers from the poor countries. The illegal immigrants join the large populations of foreign workers in the developed countries and it is not easy for the authorities to distinguish the genuine from the smuggled workers.

Exposure to the developed countries lifestyle through the media and word of mouth motivates thousands of people to risk their lives as they try to get trafficked with the hope of getting a better life. Gębska (2020) explains that some human traffickers use social media to communicate to their targets and use videos and images to entice them on the good life beyond the borders. Globalisation has allowed people from different parts of the world to communicate efficiently and this has increased the threat of human trafficking. The young people from poor countries get the opportunity to interact directly with trafficking agents who promise them high paying jobs or wealthy spouses when they get to their destination. Stamper (2019) notes that a good number of those smuggled are shocked to find themselves in illegal jobs such as prostitution and crime when they get to their destination. Since they entered the country illegally, they are forced to work without or with meagre payment.

4.4 Drug trafficking

Another major threat to international security is drug trafficking and is also affected by globalisation. The drug trafficking menace is one of the criminal activities with a global network and this make it complicated for law enforcing authorities to combat. da Cruz (2016) writes that drug trafficking is not only a threat because of the harm caused by illegal drugs but also the impunity of the drug lords who control the business. The illegal trading of drugs across international borders is a multibillion business and this has empowered the drug barons to the extent that they comprise national and international security. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2020 claim that the opium business that supplies the main ingredient for illicit drugs contribute over 10% of Afghanistan's GDP. The processed drugs then go through various countries before arriving in the lucrative markets of Europe and North America. Hence, the global transport and communication network that is at the heart of globalisation facilitates the drug trafficking business.

The global network of drug barons makes the entire business complicated and difficult to unravel. In most cases, the individual arrested with drugs are just junior workers who serve well-connected powerful individuals controlling the global drug trafficking network. Azizi (2018) claims that besides dealing with drugs, most of the tycoon involves in the trade are also involved in other criminal activities such as smuggling of small firearms across the borders. In this case, the international trade supported by globalisation act as the perfect camouflage for the drug trafficking business. Sandor (2016) notes that some of the well-established exporting and importing business are also involved in drug shipment and this makes it difficult for the authorities to detect the illegal business. They conceal the drugs inside sealed industrial products and this is moved across several international borders.

The drug trafficking business is a serious threat to international security because of the "mafia" approach they use to execute their business. The drug dealers are organised into criminal gangs that use force to control their markets. Azizi (2018) claims that in the major cities in the world, the drug trafficking gangs engage in killings, torturing, and harassment of members of the public or rival gangs. They contribute massively to the insecurity of the large cities, especially the informal settlements or ghettos,

where the sell their drugs. Worse still, Sandor (2016) reports that the fact that the drug traffickers compromise the police by bribing them or threatening them makes the situation complicated for international security. These individuals have the power to engage in other criminal activities without being stopped by the authorities.

4.5 Money laundering

Globalisation is supported by the enhancement of global trade and this has also facilitated money laundering and compromised international security. Money laundering is the movement and usage of illegally acquired money by depositing in financial institutions or injecting into legal businesses. Miller, et al. (2016) argue that money laundering is a key factor in the sustainability of global criminal activities and this makes it complicated for international security. Powerful criminal elements in various parts of the world have perfected the art of laundering illegally acquired money and this ensures continuity of their businesses. They are able to clean the dirty money because they are facilitated by the open global trading platforms that allows individuals or companies to invest in foreign countries and also keep their money in offshore accounts (Hendriyetty, & Grewal, 2017). Therefore, even when arrested, the criminal elements still have their money to hire the best lawyers, bribe the judicial officers, and continue funding their illegal business empires. Money laundering is a threat to international security because it supports terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal firearm trade, corruption, human trafficking, and rebel groups that cause political instabilities (Busuncian, 2018). The fact that these criminal activities are able to blend and camouflage as legitimate international business transactions makes it a serious threat to international security. Terrorism cells and illegal training camps for militants are financed by wealthy individuals using the many available money laundering options. Stopping the flow of illegal money is a key step towards enhancing international security.

5. Conclusion

The analysis shows how globalisation has affected international security in various ways. It is evident that the process of globalisation is spontaneous and government policies may not stop the world from being connected. Despite efforts by some state authorities to minimize influences from around the world, the threat of insecurity that emanates from globalisation is inevitable. As people travel, communicate, and engage in business across state and regional boundaries, they are also likely to encounter threats of insecurity. More so, those inclined in advancing their illegal activities across different countries have found it easy to operate because of globalisation. Serious security challenges such as terrorism become complex to tackle because it is not easy to distinguish terrorists from tourists, business travellers, or genuine immigrants looking for work in foreign countries.

Therefore, it is expected that even as the world continues to interact, the threat of international security will continue to be a major concern. In future, security challenges such as cybercrime and bio welfare will be critical international security threats. Today, the entire world is struggling to deal with the Coronavirus pandemic that some people believe might have leaked from a bioweapon laboratory. The spread of the virus across the world points to the fact that the world is interconnected courtesy of globalisation and no country is spared from the many threats of international security.

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