

**EDITOR'S NOTE / NOTA EDITORIAL**

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This issue of the journal is dedicated to Italian foreign and security policy. Professor Massimo de Leonardis, professor of History and Institutions and of History of Treaties and International Politics at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, has coordinated the first part of the issue. The articles present a vision of the makeup of Italian politics. Professor Leonardis explains that some traditional features of Italian diplomacy are still present today. This includes the issue of Italy's rank and collocation in the international hierarchy of powers which had been central in its foreign policy since the birth of the country, the attitude to compromise and even the reliance on armed forces to enhance Italy's status.

The collection of articles explains Italian Atlanticism, Italian-European policy, Italian foreign policy in general, the approach to international crisis, the politics of cooperation and development, defence policies, nuclear choices and finally the Italian military missions since the 1980's. Regarding Atlanticism, Professor de Leonardis explains the paramount importance of Atlanticism with two principle objectives: military purpose and internal political stability. In regards to European policy, Professor Antonio Varsori presents the necessary steps in the European integration process. Despite the euro-scepticism that has begun to surface, the European choice is still of fundamental importance in Italian foreign policy. Ambassador (ret.) Guido Lenzi analyzes the ups and downs of the role of Italian diplomacy in foreign policy and highlights the set of current difficult decisions that Italy must make at the global level. Professor Luciano Tosi outlines Italy's role in the United Nations and its position regarding UN Security Council reforms. In respect to cooperation and development policy, Professor Lorella Tosone presents the priorities of these policies which were centred on the Mediterranean and Africa, describing the increasing amount of funds for cooperation, a change in their composition, and finally, its discredit due to corruption. Towards the end of the nineties, the funding for cooperation rose and is now in line with international parameters.

Three articles focus on defence aspects. The article by Professor Nicola Labanca focuses on the civil-military relations in Italy. The second, by Professor Leopoldo Nuti, presents Italy's military nuclear policy during the Cold War and the post-Cold War periods, explaining the rationale of Italy's nuclear policies, its relation with the US, and the Western European government's perception of Italian nuclear policies. Finally, Professor Gianluca Pastori explains the evolution of the military missions abroad, their changes after the cold war and their impact in internal politics.

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This first set of articles is especially interesting because it explains the historical process, allowing the reader to understand the evolution of Italian politics and the dynamics of change.

The second part of the issue contains an interesting article by Rohan Gunaratna and Karunya Jayasena on global support for Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. The article shows that despite anti-American sentiment and a wide-spread opposition to the U.S.-led War on Terror, majorities demonstrate openness to improving their country's relations with the U.S. This is followed by an article describing the historical analysis of the relations between the European Union and Algeria after the Cold War. It shows the political and economic difficulties between the two during the process of negotiating the Partnership Agreement.

This issue closes with an article about Pope Benedict XVI's Message for the World Day of Peace in January 2011 and its content. The article emphasizes the topic of liberty, the importance of religious freedom and the respect of human rights of all citizens. The message confronts one of today's most pressing problems, describing the condemnation of relativism and religious and anti-religious fanaticism.

I would like to thank Professor Massimo de Leonardis for his efforts in coordinating this special issue on Italian foreign and security policy, and also the UNISCI team, in particular Eric Pardo and Daniel Barnes, for their collaboration.