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Eurasian Geopolitics: NATO and its Global Implications

Geopolítica Euroasiática: La OTAN y sus Implicaciones Globales

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Abstract

The present approach focuses on the changes and adaptations that NATO has undergone since its inception to better understand the situation of the Euro-Asian conflict. The objective of this analysis is centered on the changes, treaties, conflicts, threats, and implications of NATO's expansion and limitation. A documentary analysis was conducted using secondary sources and data available on official websites of international organizations, which were systematized chronologically or sequentially. NATO's expansion increased from 21,124,478 km² (12 members) to 24,508,200 km² (32 members). In terms of population, there was a change from 172,988,700 to 886,597,483 people. Eurasia is a geopolitical space that is still under discussion regarding its delimitation due to various territorial, economic, and religious conflicts. It is estimated that NATO's expansion is a political move to exert influence and power in the region, and that allies seek this supremacy for the control of resources and territories.

Keywords: Territory, geopolitics, population, security, war.

Resumen

El presente trabajo aborda los cambios y adaptaciones que tuvo la OTAN desde su creación. Lo anterior con el fin de entender la situación del conflicto euroasiático. Se realizó un análisis documental empleando fuentes secundarias y datos disponibles en portales oficiales de organismos internacionales. La ampliación de la OTAN pasó de 21,124,478 km² (12 miembros) a 24,508,20 km² (32 miembros). En su población, hubo un cambio de 172,988,700 a 886,597,483 personas. Eurasia es un espacio geopolítico que aún se encuentra en discusión de delimitación con diferentes conflictos territoriales, económicos y religiosos. La expansión de la OTAN es un movimiento político para la influencia de poder en la región y los aliados buscan la supremacía para el control de recursos y territorios.

Palabras clave: Territorio, geopolítica, población, seguridad, guerra.

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Introduction

The present study examines the geopolitical implications that the expansionism of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has provoked in the Eurasian region. To this end, it traces NATO's origins as an institution created to confront the Cold War, the subsequent geographical changes and boundaries, the conflicts that arose during periods of expansion, the threats and challenges posed, and an analysis of Russia's strategic interests.

Understanding this subject is crucial given the geopolitical and economic implications that NATO entails for the international community. Accordingly, the study explores how international relations operate with respect to national security in the face of emerging conflicts.

The working hypothesis is that these conflicts stem from NATO's expansion and its intent to project regional ideological influence across Eurasia. As a consequence, Russia has adopted a defensive and repressive stance—one that goes beyond the ideological sphere, representing instead a struggle over international sovereignty. Within this framework, the research addresses NATO's chronology and the conflicts that emerged in the process of collective security.

Throughout history, rivalries, conflicts, and strategies have shaped Eurasia (Maçaes, 2021). Today, the rise of China, Russia's influence, European integration, and major infrastructure projects continue to reshape its geopolitics. This territorial concept can be traced back to the European colonial invasions of Asia, which established a power system spanning the entire continent (Maçaes, 2021).

According to the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2024), Eurasia, in geopolitical terms, consists of: the South Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan), the five Central Asian republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), Russia, and Turkey. There are also states that do not strictly fall within these boundaries but exert direct influence on the region, such as China, Iran, the United States, India, Pakistan, Israel, North

Korea, Japan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Ukraine, and NATO member states (Merino, 2022).

The war in Ukraine, in which Russia invaded Ukrainian territory, is considered a Eurasian conflict due to Moscow's concerns about NATO's expansion. Ukraine perceives the invasion as a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Other actors have also been involved beyond the immediate scope of the conflict, such as the European Union (EU), which has supplied weapons to Ukraine to strengthen its defense (European Parliament, 2023). This support has bolstered the country's resilience in the face of Russian aggression. The provision of tactical training for Ukrainian soldiers has been crucial to enhancing their military capabilities and preparing them to confront external threats (Hernández, 2024).

In this context, the objective of the research is to identify the geopolitical implications in the Eurasian region that have arisen from NATO's expansionism. Its central location between major global powers makes it a crucial arena for both competition and cooperation among regional and international actors, directly impacting stability and security at both levels. To this end, six analytical categories have been established to shape the study:

1. The origins of NATO, necessary to understand the institution's genesis and subsequent redefinition;
2. Changes in geographical boundaries, reflecting NATO's territorial and demographic strengthening from its creation to the present;
3. Eurasian conflicts, addressing the addition of members to both NATO and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), as well as the main tensions among countries in the Eurasian region;
4. Threats, challenges, and adaptation in international security, focusing on the new demands imposed by globalization and technological change;
5. Current areas of tension in the Eurasian region since the Soviet era; and

Russia's perspective, analyzing all the interventions that Russia—formerly the USSR—has undertaken since 1949 as a dissatisfied response to NATO's expansion.

Methodology

This study follows a documentary research design. According to Arias (2006), this type of research is based on the search, retrieval, analysis, critique, and interpretation of secondary data. In this regard, the present work draws on official documents hosted on NATO's website, along with historical documents and scholarly articles available in digital repositories.

For purposes of analysis, the information was organized into six categories: a) the origins of NATO, b) changes in geographical boundaries, c) the Eurasian conflict, d) threats, challenges, and adaptation in international security, e) areas of tension in the Eurasian region, and f) Russia's perspective, focusing on its interests affected by NATO's expansion.

Results and Discussion

The Origins of NATO

The Second World War was the most destructive conflict of the twentieth century, once again leaving Europe in a state of profound social, economic, and political disruption. In 1945, against this backdrop of devastation and with the aim of preventing Germany from ever regaining the capacity for military resurgence, the victorious powers—the United States, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and the United Kingdom—met in Yalta to determine Europe's postwar order (Delàs, 2004).

This conference, known as the meeting of the "Big Three," was presided over by the heads of state of the victorious powers—Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin. The negotiations addressed four key points: 1) the division of Germany into four occupation zones controlled by the USSR, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France; 2) the reparations that Germany was required to fulfill; 3) the establishment of a Provisional Polish Government;

and 4) the Declaration on Liberated Europe (Sadurní, 2021).

However, the agreements reached at Yalta soon gave rise to numerous disputes that ultimately divided Europe into two opposing blocs: capitalist and communist. As Zubok (2008, pp. 1–7) notes, "the USSR adopted an expansionist profile; from being a backward nation on the defensive against the West, it became a conquering power charged with organizing new territories under communist regimes."

Faced with the perceived Soviet threat and the fear of a possible German rearmament, France and the United Kingdom signed the Treaty of Dunkirk in 1947. This agreement was expanded in 1948 with the accession of the three Benelux countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg), after which it was renamed the Brussels Treaty. The treaty included a clause on automatic assistance in the event of aggression against any signatory state and laid the groundwork for the creation of the Western European Union (WEU) Defense Organization (Acosta, 2009).

Nevertheless, in an economically weakened context still reeling from massive human losses, these European countries were not in a position to defend themselves effectively. This situation led them to seek U.S. support in containing the growing Soviet threat (Acosta, 2009). In 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was founded with the signing of the Washington Treaty, its principal objective being to confront the expansion of the USSR. As Cuerda (1997) observes, the WEU quickly fell into obscurity under NATO's rising prominence.

NATO's creation linked the defense of North America with that of ten Western European countries, under the framework of Article 51 (Chapter VII) of the United Nations Charter, which recognizes the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense in the event of an armed attack (Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Unión Europea y Cooperación, 2024).

The treaties and events preceding NATO's formation are highly significant for understanding both its origins and its structure. Table 1 presents a chronological overview of the key agreements that laid the groundwork for the Washington Treaty.

Geographical Changes and Boundaries

From 1950 onward, the effective implementation of the alliance and the reinforcement of military cooperation among member states began. Delgado (2022) explains that the treaty is composed of a total of 14 articles, but it is the content of Article 5 that makes it essential for NATO's cohesion and effectiveness. In line with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, it establishes the principle of collective defense, reinforces cohesion, and above all, guarantees security for member states:

Article 5. The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all, and consequently, they agree to assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as deemed necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the necessary steps to restore and maintain international peace and security (North Atlantic Treaty, 1949).

This article demonstrates the collective understanding among all members that they benefit from an identical level of security. Such an understanding fosters the conditions necessary to achieve greater cooperation among NATO member states (Caramés, 2000).

From its foundation to the present, NATO has grown both territorially and demographically. Table 2 details the evolution of NATO's expansion from 1949 to 2024.

In 1950, the practical implementation of the alliance and the strengthening of military cooperation among its twelve founding members began. One of the most important events faced by NATO during this period was the Korean War (OTAN, 2024). The Korean War was the first armed conflict of the Cold War and

precipitated the militarization of the great powers (Kiss, 2023). In 1952, the organization began to expand by admitting Greece and Turkey. Both countries, having received assistance under the Truman Doctrine and having sent troops in support of the United Nations to defend South Korea against the North Korean incursion, viewed NATO membership as both a security guarantee and a means of reinforcing their Western identity (OTAN, 2024).

Table 1. Foundational Treaties of NATO.

Treaty	Outcome
Dunkirk, 1947 ^a	A Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance signed between France and the United Kingdom in response to the Soviet threat and the fear of a possible German rearmament.
Brussels, 1948 ^b	Expansion of the Dunkirk Treaty through the accession of the three Benelux countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. It constituted a precedent for Cold War alliances. Its content established an automatic assistance clause in the event of aggression against a signatory state and led to the creation of the Western European Union (WEU).
Washington, 1949 ^c	The founding treaty of NATO; it established the principles of collective defense among the United States, Canada, and ten European countries.
Paris, 1951 ^d	The founding treaty of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Considered the first milestone in European integration, it was signed by Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.
Western European Union (WEU), 1954 ^e	Attempt to create the European Defence Community (EDC) with the inclusion of the Federal Republic of Germany, which was strongly opposed by France. This led to the formalization of the WEU, which admitted West Germany and Italy. Subsequently, this paved the way for West Germany's accession to NATO.
Rome, 1957 ^f	The Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), constituting the "founding treaties" of the European Communities.

Note. ^aAcosta (2009). ^bAcosta (2009). ^cOTAN (2024). ^dParlamento Europeo (2024). ^eDelàs (2004). ^fBermejo (2024).

Tabla 2. Chronology of NATO Integration.

Year	Members	Territory (km ²)	Population
1949	12 ^a	21,124,478 ^b	172,988,700 ^c
1952	14 ^a	22,039,997 ^b	373,518,698 ^c
1955	15 ^a	22,288,997 ^b	441,986,529 ^c
1982	16 ^a	22,794,367 ^b	619,329,712 ^c
1999	19 ^a	23,029,947 ^b	785,493,660 ^c
2004	26 ^a	23,623,642 ^b	857,904,818 ^c
2009	28 ^a	23,680,236 ^b	893,459,626 ^c
2017	29 ^a	23,694,048 ^b	935,844,582 ^c
2020	30 ^a	23,719,761 ^b	950,998,531 ^c
2023	31 ^a	24,057,906 ^b	876,075,927 ^c
2024	32 ^a	24,508,201 ^b	886,597,483 ^c

Note. ^aOTAN (2024). ^bThe World Factbook (2024). ^cThe World Bank (2024)

Subsequently, in 1955, one of the most important accessions took place: the Federal Republic of Germany. A few years later, in 1982, Spain decided to join; it is worth noting that by this year France was no longer part of the military structure, as it had decided to withdraw in 1966, arguing the need to preserve its independence and freedom of action regarding the establishment of nuclear missile launch systems on French soil (Pereira, 2009). To understand why France's withdrawal was not absolute, it is important to highlight the content of Article 13 of the treaty: "After the Treaty has been in force for twenty years, any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the United States of America" (Tratado del Atlántico Norte, 1949, p. 3).

In 1974, Greece also withdrew from the military structure in protest against the Turkish invasion of Cyprus; and although it threatened to leave the alliance altogether, it eventually rejoined the military command in 1980 (Gallego-Díaz, 1980).

In 1999, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic joined, becoming the first to enter after having belonged to the communist bloc. In 2004, the organization welcomed seven more former communist countries: Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania,

Bulgaria, and the former Soviet Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. At that time, the United States ambassador to NATO, Nicholas Burns, declared that 40% of NATO's members would consist of former communist countries that would strengthen the organization militarily (Brussels, 2004).

In 2009, Albania and Croatia joined, while France rejoined under the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy, after having been out of the military structure for 43 years (Hasselbach, 2009). Finally, between 2017, 2020, 2023, and 2024, four new members joined: Montenegro, North Macedonia, Finland, and Sweden.

Eurasian Conflicts

One of the main objectives of NATO's creation was to counter the growth of the Soviet bloc; however, with the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, its founding purpose was redefined. Table 3 shows chronologically the growth of NATO and that of the USSR, up to its eventual dissolution.

Table 3 reveals the significant changes in the position of countries as they joined NATO. After the dissolution of the USSR, its former allies distanced themselves due to its weakening and the failure of its model in the face of the international community.

Tabla 3. Accession of members to NATO and the USSR.

Year	USSR Members	NATO Members
1922	Official founding of the Communist Party, which established the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a confederation with the countries of: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Federative Soviet Republic of Transcaucasia (currently this area comprises Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan) (6) ^a	NATO was founded in 1949.
1924	Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan (2) ^a	
1929	Tajikistan (1) ^a	
1936	Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (2) ^a	
1940	Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (3) ^a	
1944	Moldova (1) ^a	
1949	No country was added	United States, Canada, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, and Portugal (12) ^b
1952	No country was added	Greece and Turkey (2) ^b
1955	No country was added	West Germany (1) ^b
1982	No country was added	Spain (1) ^b
1991	The dissolution of the USSR occurred and later it was reconstituted under the name Russian Federation (referred to as the successor or principal heir of the Soviet Union).	
1999		Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland (3) ^b
2004		Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia (7) ^b
2009		Albania and Croatia (2) ^b
2017		Montenegro (1) ^b
2020		North Macedonia (1) ^b
2023		Finland (1) ^b
2024		Sweden (1) ^b

Note: ^aVelarde (2017). ^bOTAN (2024)

Notably, after the dissolution of the USSR, three Baltic countries—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—chose to join NATO. These nations experienced political and security instability during the transition stage following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Given their proximity to Russia, they faced significant security challenges. NATO membership offered them regional security (not only against attacks but also in terms of economic stability), integration into the international community (granting access to economic, trade, and diplomatic resources and opportunities), and assistance in military modernization and technology, all of which contributed to strengthening their position and sovereignty in a challenging geopolitical environment.

Georgia – South Ossetia

Georgia was angered by the strengthening of ties between Russia and South Ossetia in April 2008. However, Moscow was troubled by Tbilisi's ambition to join NATO and the European Union. Clashes between Georgian troops and separatist forces broke out in early August 2008, but it was Georgia's launch of a coordinated air and ground bombardment on

South Ossetia's main city, Tskhinvali, that triggered the conflict on the evening of August 7–8 (Harris & Traperro, 2018).

When a ceasefire was negotiated on August 12, 2008, Russia recognized the independence of South Ossetia and another region, Abkhazia. Yet, it was one of the few countries in the world to do so. Diplomatic relations between Tbilisi and Moscow were suspended, but Russian influence remained in the separatist regions.

Ukraine – Russia

War broke out on February 24, 2022. As early as 2014, taking advantage of Ukraine's political crisis, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops to invade the Crimean Peninsula. This maneuver resulted in an unrecognized annexation. International pressure on Russia materialized through the positions of Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine's president.

With this, between late 2021 and early 2022, Russia increased its pressure and massed troops on Ukraine's border.

Threats, Challenges, and Adaptation in International Security

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) faces a dynamic and challenging scenario within the context of shifting security realities, particularly in the Eurasian region. The evolution of threats and conflicts in this area has required NATO to continuously adjust its strategies and approaches to safeguard the stability and security of its members (OTAN, 1999).

One of the threats considered of global importance today is cyber conflict. In the NATO Secretary General's Annual Report (2022), the significance of state-sponsored and non-state-sponsored cyber threats is highlighted. To address this particular circumstance, member nations have jointly supported NATO's Comprehensive Cyber Defense Policy and are determined to employ all their capabilities to prevent and counter cyber threats within the protective framework of NATO and International Law (Cárdenas, 2022).

NATO seeks to work with preventive tools in order to avoid resorting to military means (Cárdenas, 2022). The alliance faces the dilemma of how to strategically address these tactics, which aim to undermine the cohesion and political will of its members, without resorting to traditional military responses. Poland is said to serve as NATO's shield, as it constantly faces Russia's cybersecurity attacks (Chodownik, 2024).

According to Fernández (2018), globalization is not a peaceful phenomenon, since while it increases relations among countries, it can also heighten conflict. Conflict is linked to the changes and disruption of the status quo that globalization brings. NATO has sought to adapt to this new geopolitical order, which is why it continues to expand.

It is known that NATO was created as an organization to counter the Soviet bloc. However, after some time and the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, NATO had to adapt to new challenges and policies. García (2014) refers to the 1991 North Atlantic Council meeting in Rome, which served to reaffirm the organization's fundamental principles after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly, there were certain alterations to its original purpose, as prioritizing the security of member countries became essential.

NATO is an alliance with a purely defensive purpose, yet it has become increasingly militarized over the years. In this sense, *"NATO ensures that its cooperative approach to European security is carried out through arms and disarmament"* (García, 2014, p. 84). Nevertheless, it also maintains a diplomatic approach, as its mission is to safeguard security and avoid the use of force where it is not viable.

Between Russia and NATO, the organization represents a key guarantee of security for its members. In this regard, Fernández (2018) notes that there is an imbalance in military spending between the United States and Europe, alongside the efforts of some European countries to increase their defense budgets. Thus, the transatlantic bond between Europe and the United States is crucial, primarily embodied by NATO, and there is strong advocacy for strengthening this relationship in a world of constant change and global challenges.

Within the context of the Ukraine–Russia conflict, NATO's cooperative security focuses on the efforts of its members to prevent war in general. According to Cantero (2022), NATO applies Richard Cohen's four-ring theory. This theory emphasizes: individual security, collective security, collective defense, and the promotion of stability.

The threats that emerged after the dissolution of the USSR were equal to or even greater than those that arose during the Cold War. According to Cruz (2005), NATO as a body was no longer only defensive, but also preventive. Some of these threats include regional conflicts, bacteriological and chemical weapons, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism. It is also important to note that *"with the end of the East–West conflict and the subsequent political, social, economic, and military vulnerability suffered by the member countries of the former communist bloc"* (Cruz, 2005, p. 82), a clear threat to international security was reflected.

In Russia's 2024 elections, Putin was elected for the fifth time as the nation's leader. He issued a warning about the onset of a third world war (ABC, 2024). Likewise, French President Emmanuel Macron stated that he would send troops to Ukraine to confront Russia, with Germany's support (AFP, 2024). With

this information, a new threat emerges for the Eurasian region, as arguments regarding the use of nuclear weapons have generated international insecurity.

NATO does not pursue specific ideologies, since it encompasses liberal democracies, constitutional monarchies, and republics. On the contrary, it seeks global economic and trade benefits, and above all, security. The ideologies present within NATO share a common commitment to democratic principles and Western values. At present, Russia is considered the greatest enemy to the stability and security of the region due to its military strength and unyielding stance regarding the conflict in Ukraine.

Tension Zones in the Eurasian Region

In 1991, the end of the Cold War led to a functional and compositional renewal of NATO, since the main purpose of its creation—the containment of the USSR—had ended. According to Martínez (2018), for NATO, surviving in this new scenario required a profound revision of its security functions; and, alongside this functional diversification, the alliance also had to consider new states that could become part of the organization.

Some conflicts that have arisen in the Eurasian region after the Soviet era include:

- Kosovo and Serbia (since 1999). This conflict is related to the history of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Cuesta, 2022).
- Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh (since 1991). Following the fall of the USSR, separatist Armenians declared the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh, a territory recognized by the international community as part of Azerbaijan (DW, 2023).
- Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (since 2021). After the dissolution of the USSR, a 1,000 km stretch of border territory between the two countries remained unresolved, leading to violent clashes (Rozanskij, 2022).

Russia's Perspective: Interests Threatened by NATO Expansion

The USSR, and later Russia, have historically engaged in marked interventionism within their immediate sphere of influence. Table 4 chronologically outlines the various Soviet and later Russian occupations.

In relation to this, Chomsky (2022) argues that NATO membership increases security, but there are many reasons to contend that joining the Alliance actually threatens security by heightening tensions. For Russia, once the Cold War had ended, NATO (at least in its current configuration) no longer made sense, and thus can only be understood as an organization whose sole purpose is to defend U.S. interests in the region (Pérez, 1995).

Conclusion

The geopolitical implications of NATO's expansion revolve around three aspects: shifts in the balance of power, the increase of Western influence, and enhanced security for member countries. The more members NATO has, the more it reinforces the institution's political influence and the more tensions it attracts.

The appeal of joining NATO lies in the security and protection against potential threats that the institution provides. These expansions demonstrate the stability of a united front and of cooperation. Such regional stability contributes to international stability by promoting military cooperation among members.

The elements of geopolitical implications have led to the adaptation of military, technological, social, and economic strategies. In fact, these tensions, with rivals and potential rivals, pose threats to security that can lead to active armed conflicts.

The addition of new NATO members also has limitations regarding mutual growth in Eurasia. This stems from the division between East and West (Western and Eastern Europe), since while some Western countries seek to strengthen transatlantic integration and cooperation with the United States, others aim to antagonize Russia. For example, the conflicts in Ukraine and Georgia, due to NATO's

expansion, have prompted Russia to engage in military escalations.

In other instances, adaptations have also been made to address threats, mainly in cybersecurity, the modernization of military structures, and the strengthening of cooperation among members. The alliance has faced challenges such as nuclear

proliferation, terrorism, and instability in the Middle East, which have required a multifaceted and flexible response. The possible consequences of NATO's limitations may cause disruptions in the dynamics of world affairs. These changes could manifest as geopolitical realignments and the formation of new alliances or coalitions, all in response to the ongoing reconfiguration of power.

Tabla 4. Russian Occupations and Interventions between 1949 – 2021.

Year	Conflicts/Interventions	Outcome
1949-1953	USSR – East Germany ^a	The USSR put an end to the workers' uprising.
1950-1953	USSR – North Korea ^b	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established under Kim Il Sung.
1955	USSR – 7 socialist republics ^c	Creation of the Warsaw Pact.
1956	USSR – Hungary ^d	Hungarian Revolution.
1968	USSR – Czechoslovakia ^e	The Prague Spring ended with the Soviet invasion.
1955-1975	USSR – Vietnam ^f	Signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.
1978	USSR – Afghanistan ^g	Foundation of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (supported by the USSR).
1981	USSR – Poland ^h	The Polish–Józefów war.
1980-1988	USSR – Iran ⁱ	The USSR viewed itself as a threat to Islamic fundamentalism and supported Iraq against Iran.
1989	USSR – Romania ^j	Romanian Revolution: after the fall of Nicolae Ceaușescu, Romania was freed from communist rule.
1989	USSR – Czechoslovakia ^k	Velvet Revolution: Czechoslovakia freed itself from communist rule.
1989	Fall of the Berlin Wall ^l	Germany was reunified, accelerating the disintegration of the USSR.
1994-1996	Russia – Chechnya ^m	First Chechen War: the Chechens declared de facto independence from Russia.
1999	Russia – Chechnya ⁿ	Second Chechen War: Russia regained control and the Kremlin restored its influence over the territory.
2008	Russia – Georgia ^o	Independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
2014	Russia – Ukraine ^p	Russia annexed Crimea.
2015	Russia – Syria ^q	Russia consolidated its role in the Middle East: it protected its naval and air bases, and supported Bashar al-Assad's government.
2022- Present	Russia – Ukraine ^r	Ongoing war.

Note: ^aBrendel (1953). ^b Enciclopedia Humanidades (2024). ^cEl Mundo (2022). ^dFerrero (2006). ^eEnciclopedia Humanitaria (2024). ^fLópez (1978). ^gKiss (2023). ^hNawrocki (2021). ⁱEl Orden Mundial (2018). ^jSayago (2023). ^kRei (2017). ^lLeiva (2024). ^mSalazar (2022). ⁿGarcía (2023). ^oHarris & Traperó (2018). ^pBBC News (2022). ^qKofman & Rojansky (2018). ^rPadinger (2024)

Authors' Contribution

Conceptualization, María Fernanda Zepeda and Luis Gerardo Reyes Flores; Project design, María Fernanda Zepeda; Literature review (state of the art), Erika Xochilt Cárdenas; Methodology, Luis Gerardo Reyes Flores; Data collection, María Fernanda Zepeda and Julio Cesar; Data analysis, all authors; Presentation of results, Erika Cárdenas and María Fernanda Zepeda; Discussion and conclusions, Luis Reyes and Julio Cesar; Draft writing (original draft), María Fernanda Zepeda and Julio Cesar; Final

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