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Commandant's message



Dear Readers,

The magazine ATHENA of the Hellenic National Defence College constitutes a dynamic forum for scientific dialogue, exchange of knowledge, and critical reflection on issues pertaining to defence, security, and the contemporary geopolitical environment. Through its pages, it seeks to promote the production of substantiated and meaningful academic discourse, while highlighting modern theoretical and analytical approaches within an international environment characterized by increasing complexity and constant change.

The current period is marked by the College's transition to a new institutional and organizational framework. This development does not merely constitute an administrative restructuring; rather, it also represents an opportunity for the further enhancement of jointness, the upgrading of the quality of the education provided, and the strengthening of the overall role of the College within the country's academic and strategic environment.

At the core of our mission remains the provision of high-level education and professional development to personnel of the Armed Forces and Security Services, as well as to officials of the public administration serving in critical sectors of policy and security. The strengthening of critical thinking, analytical capability, and strategic approach constitutes a fundamental prerequisite for the effective management of contemporary and complex geopolitical challenges.

At the same time, the expansion of cooperation with academic and military institutions, both nationally and internationally, substantially enhances the outward orientation of the College. This process contributes to the exchange of scientific knowledge, educational practices, and experience, highlighting the Greek strategic and academic perspective while simultaneously enriching the educational process through the incorporation of international standards and the monitoring and integration of modern educational trends.

The College's magazine is harmoniously and organically integrated into this broader strategy of information, communication, and outreach. Each issue aspires to serve as a platform for scientifically substantiated dialogue, analytical examination, and critical reflection on matters concerning defence, security, and international law. The contribution of the authors, together with the active participation of the readership, substantially enhances both the quality and the breadth of the academic discourse produced.

Investment in scientific knowledge and the systematic deepening of understanding regarding international developments constitute enduring necessities. The cultivation of strategic foresight, the focus on the essence of phenomena, and the development of predictive thinking represent fundamental values not only for the Armed Forces, but also for the broader public and private sectors.

In an environment of heightened demands, and with a strong sense of responsibility toward the mission of the College, I remain confident that our contribution will continue to be substantial and decisive in providing high-quality education and in shaping strategic thought.

I wish you an enjoyable reading of ATHENA magazine.

Konstantinos PITYKAKIS

Rear Admiral HN

Editorial

It is with great pleasure that we present the latest issue of our journal. Through high-quality contributions and multidisciplinary perspectives, this edition highlights contemporary challenges, historical lessons, and strategic analyses relevant both to Greece and to the broader international environment.

The Greek-language section of the journal includes three particularly noteworthy articles. First, we feature the article entitled "Leaders to Avoid": The Dangers Lurking in Plutarch's Account of "Charismatic Personalities" Such as Alcibiades of Athens and Demetrius Poliorcetes by Mr. Gerasimos Karabelias, Professor at Panteion University. The article examines the enduring pathologies of political leadership through the lens of classical literature. Readers may also explore the article The Issue of Military Command: A Philosophical and Empirical Investigation by Mr. Ioannis Stamoulos, PhD, School of Philosophy, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The Greek-language section concludes with the article "Legal Protection and Sustainability Strategy: Greek Participation in Multinational Operations Through the Lens of Operational Geometry," authored by Nikolaos Alexiou, a graduate student of the College's 78th Resident Course.

In addition, the journal presents a rich collection of photographs documenting the College's activities, showcasing its educational, academic, and social contributions.

The English-language section features three important articles of international interest. The article The Withdrawal of the United Arab Emirates from OPEC+: Energy Transition, Geopolitical Realignment, and the Weakening of Contemporary Energy Cartels by Ms. Anna Konstantinidou examines the geopolitical and energy-related implications of the United Arab Emirates' withdrawal from OPEC+. The article Shadows of the Mandala: Kautilya's Silent War in the Age of Hybrid Threats by Mr. Moreno Figueiredo analyzes Kautilya's enduring strategic thought through the lens of contemporary hybrid threats. Finally, the article IMEC: Greece's Geopolitical Opportunity in the Eastern Mediterranean, Maritime Security, and Strategic Convergence with India by Commander Athanasios Drivas of the Hellenic Navy highlights the geostrategic significance of the IMEC corridor and the prospects for cooperation between Greece and India in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The cover image was created using an artificial intelligence program. The composition functions as a timely, multilayered allegory of strategic studies, placing the King, the quintessential symbol of the strategic center of gravity and politico-military leadership, against the geopolitical backdrop of the Strait of Hormuz. The depiction of a fallen knight on the field of a "virtual" battle suggests the inherent vulnerability of tactical maneuvers when confronted with grand strategy, while the framing of the map with analytical concepts such as Risk Assessment and Strategic Analysis underscores the transition from an empirical approach to warfare toward the systematic and methodological evaluation of international crises. For the journal's readers, the image encapsulates the dialectical relationship between power and geography, reminding us that effective national security management requires the synthesis of theoretical knowledge with the rational assessment of risks in environments of high strategic importance.

We wish our readers an engaging, insightful, and rewarding reading experience.

Brigadier (AF) Nikolaos Methenitis

Director of Studies

The withdrawal of the United Arab Emirates from OPEC+: Energy Transition, Geopolitical Realignment, and the Weakening of Contemporary Energy Cartels

Anna Konstantinidou

PhD in Public Law and Political Science

The recent announcement regarding the withdrawal of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from OPEC+, effective as of May 1, constitutes one of the most significant developments in the international energy system in recent years, as its implications extend far beyond the oil market into the realms of geopolitical power, international political economy, and the global energy transition (Reuters, 2026; *The Guardian*, 2026). This decision should not be interpreted as an isolated or temporary move, but rather as the outcome of long-term structural transformations affecting both the functioning of international energy organizations and the strategic behavior of hydrocarbon-producing states. From this perspective, the UAE's withdrawal highlights the gradual weakening of traditional forms of collective energy governance and the emergence of a more competitive and multipolar energy environment.

To fully understand this development, it is necessary to examine the historical evolution of OPEC and, subsequently, OPEC+. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was founded in Baghdad in 1960 by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela in response to the dominance of major Western oil companies over the global hydrocarbon market (Yergin, 2011). During its early decades, the organization sought to strengthen state sovereignty over natural resources and secure higher revenues through the coordinated management of oil production (Parra, 2004). Its influence reached its peak during the 1970s, particularly following the 1973 oil crisis, when the Arab oil embargo demonstrated that energy could be employed as a strategic and

geopolitical instrument of pressure against Western powers (Yergin, 2011). That crisis underscored the importance of energy security for Western industrial economies and redefined the relationship between energy resources and international power.

However, by the 1980s, the inherent weaknesses of oil cartels had already begun to emerge. Diverging economic needs among member states, disagreements over production levels, and frequent quota violations undermined the organization's effectiveness (Colgan, 2014). Cartel instability theory explains precisely this dynamic: as economic incentives for individual gain increase, compliance with collective strategy declines. At the same time, the rise of non-OPEC producers, combined with technological advances in shale oil extraction in the United States, gradually reduced the organization's ability to unilaterally influence global oil prices (Fattouh & Sen, 2015).

Within this context, OPEC+ emerged as a broader framework of cooperation between OPEC member states and major non-member producers, most notably Russia. The institutionalization of this cooperation in 2016 was a response to the sharp decline in oil prices that had preceded it and aimed at stabilizing the market through coordinated production cuts (Fattouh & Sen, 2015). Cooperation between Russia and Saudi Arabia was regarded as particularly significant, as it brought together the world's two largest oil exporters. Nevertheless, OPEC+ remained a mechanism of limited institutional cohesion, relying more on temporary convergences of interest than on deep political or economic integration. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the temporary collapse of oil prices in 2020 revealed both the importance and the limitations of this cooperation, while geopolitical developments following the war in Ukraine further intensified the organization's internal contradictions (Reuters, 2026).

The UAE's withdrawal must be interpreted within precisely this historical and geopolitical framework. In recent years, the UAE has implemented an extensive investment program in the energy sector, significantly increasing its production capacity and seeking a larger share of the global oil market (Axios, 2026). However, OPEC+ production quotas functioned as

a restrictive mechanism for this strategy, preventing the country from fully utilizing its newly developed capabilities. From the perspective of political realism, the decision to withdraw reflects a rational pursuit of maximizing national power and economic capacity (Waltz, 1979). According to the realist school of thought in international relations, states participate in international institutions only insofar as these serve their national interests. When constraints begin to outweigh benefits, disengagement from the institutional framework becomes an expected and strategically rational choice.

At the same time, the timing of the withdrawal is far from coincidental. The Middle East is currently experiencing heightened geopolitical fluidity, characterized by multiple sources of instability, shifting relations among regional powers, and changing strategic balances within the Persian Gulf (The Guardian, 2026). During periods of crisis, states often abandon collective forms of governance in favor of greater national flexibility. The ability to independently adjust oil production grants the UAE enhanced strategic autonomy, particularly within an international environment in which energy markets are marked by high volatility.

The withdrawal is also linked to the underlying competition between the UAE and Saudi Arabia for regional hegemony within the Arab world. Although the two countries maintain close cooperation in matters of security and economics, they simultaneously engage in an ongoing rivalry over influence, investment, and strategic power projection. Saudi Arabia remains the dominant actor within OPEC+, a reality that limits the independent strategic maneuverability of other member states. From this perspective, the UAE's withdrawal also constitutes an indirect challenge to Saudi hegemony within the organization. This development presents notable parallels with France's 1966 decision to withdraw from NATO's integrated military command under the leadership of Charles de Gaulle. In both cases, withdrawal from a multilateral mechanism was interpreted as an effort to strengthen strategic autonomy and reshape balances of power. France's decision contributed to the development of an autonomous defense industry and enhanced the country's geopolitical standing in Europe,

demonstrating that disengagement from collective institutions does not necessarily imply weakening, but may instead function as a mechanism for redefining national power.

A central element in analyzing the withdrawal is its connection to the global energy transition and the growing importance of renewable energy sources. The UAE is among the states investing heavily in green energy, hydrogen, and low-carbon technologies (International Renewable Energy Agency, 2023). Nevertheless, its strategy does not entail abandoning oil, but rather pursuing the simultaneous exploitation of both hydrocarbons and emerging energy technologies. This represents a "dual-track" strategy aimed, on the one hand, at maximizing oil revenues while global demand remains high and, on the other, at financing the transition toward a post-oil economic model (Alam et al., 2025).

This strategy is closely associated with the concept of the "last-mover advantage," according to which producers with low extraction costs seek to maximize the exploitation of their reserves before the energy transition permanently reduces global oil demand (International Energy Agency, 2024). Possessing both low production costs and substantial investment capacity, the UAE seeks to strengthen its position before the global energy transition fundamentally transforms the structure of energy markets. Within this framework, renewable energy sources do not operate as a direct substitute for oil, but rather as a factor accelerating competition among producers while simultaneously weakening traditional cartels (Vlaskamp, 2025).

On a theoretical level, this development confirms the gradual transition from hierarchical and multilateral forms of energy governance toward more flexible and decentralized networks of cooperation. The theory of complex interdependence argues that contemporary international relations are shaped not only by military power or interstate institutions, but also by economic, technological, and social interconnectedness (Keohane & Nye, 2012). Within this context, energy policy becomes increasingly multidimensional, as states simultaneously develop bilateral partnerships, investment networks, and technological collaborations that often transcend traditional institutional frameworks.

The implications of the withdrawal extend beyond the oil market and affect the broader political architecture of the Arab world. The UAE's move signals the strengthening of national autonomy at the expense of collective regional action and accelerates the transition toward a more multipolar regional system. Strategic divergence among Arab states is expected to intensify as each country seeks to adapt differently to the demands of the energy transition and international economic restructuring (International Renewable Energy Agency, 2023).

The reactions of major powers further illustrate the significance of this development. For Russia, the UAE's withdrawal constitutes a negative development, as it weakens the coordination that contributed to maintaining high oil prices, which are vital for the Russian economy (Reuters, 2026). Moscow's limited ability to respond effectively reflects the pressures generated by the war in Ukraine and international sanctions. By contrast, the United States views the development with greater ambiguity. On the one hand, the weakening of a mechanism designed to control oil prices aligns with the long-standing American opposition to cartels. On the other hand, increased instability in global energy markets may generate economic pressures and geopolitical uncertainties (Barron's, 2026). Simultaneously, the development opens new opportunities for bilateral cooperation between Washington and Abu Dhabi in both the hydrocarbon sector and clean energy technologies (Oxford Open Energy, 2025).

Overall, the UAE's withdrawal from OPEC+ constitutes evidence of deeper transformations within the international energy system. The traditional logic of collectively controlling production and prices is gradually giving way to a more competitive and fragmented environment in which states seek greater strategic autonomy and flexibility. The energy transition does not immediately eliminate oil from the global economy, but it fundamentally transforms the conditions under which energy power is exercised. Within this new framework, energy organizations such as OPEC+ face increasing difficulties in maintaining cohesion and influence, while producer states redefine their strategies according to new economic, technological, and geopolitical realities. The UAE's

withdrawal is therefore not merely an energy-related decision, but an act of strategic power realignment that may well foreshadow the manner in which the global energy and geopolitical order will evolve over the coming decades.

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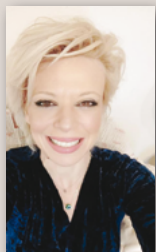
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She has published articles in peer-reviewed academic journals and edited volumes focusing on Greek-Turkish relations and Greek-Arab relations. In parallel, she contributes regularly to both print and digital media, maintaining permanent collaborations with the newspaper *Eleftheros Typos* and the blog *Speaknews*.

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Shadows of the Mandala: Kautilya's Silent War in the Age of Hybrid Threats

Moreno Figueiredo

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Abstract

The contemporary international order is shifting toward a "multiplex" configuration, where the traditional boundaries between war and peace are increasingly blurred by hybrid threats. As states seek to advance national interests while avoiding the costs of overt kinetic conflict, the strategic framework provided by Kautilya (c. 300 BC) in the *Arthashastra* offers a pertinent blueprint for the 21st century. This article analyzes the rise of the Mauryan Empire to demonstrate how Kautilya's "silent war" doctrine mirrors the dynamics of modern hybrid warfare. Kautilya's strategy rests on a holistic integration of foreign policy - exemplified by the *Mandala* theory - and internal security. Central to his doctrine is the instrumentalization of all available means, including espionage, disinformation, and the exploitation of social vulnerabilities to achieve hegemony without traditional battle. Furthermore, Kautilya identifies internal social cohesion and the well-being of the population as vital strategic assets for national resilience against external subversion. By bridging ancient Indian wisdom with modern concepts like "gray zone" competition and "unrestricted warfare," this study argues that the *Arthashastra* provides a timeless anthology of political wisdom. Ultimately, Kautilya's insights suggest that a state's external power is inextricably linked to its internal resilience, offering modern strategists a comprehensive framework to navigate the complexities of a pluralistic and interdependent global landscape.

Keywords: Kautilya, Silent War, Hybrid Warfare, Arthashastra.

Shadows of the Mandala: Kautilya's Silent War in the Age of Hybrid Threats

"Compared to Kautilya's Arthashastra, Machiavelli's The Prince is harmless." Max Weber.

1 - INTRODUCTION

The contemporary international order is undergoing a profound metamorphosis, shifting from rigid unipolarity toward a "multiplex" configuration characterized by a dense web of interdependent state and non-state actors. In this environment, described by Amitav Acharya (2018), power is diffused, and the traditional binary of war and peace has been replaced by a spectrum of competition where influence is contested through economic, informational, and political means. As the utility of overt kinetic force diminishes due to public aversion to casualties and the overexposure of battlefields—a trend noted by Galeotti (2023) regarding the post-Vietnam era—States are increasingly turning to the "silent" strategies to advance their interests.

To navigate this complex landscape, modern strategists often look to Clausewitz or Machiavelli. However, a strategist from ancient India, Kautilya (c. 300 BC), offers a perhaps more pertinent framework for the 21st century. Max Weber (1978) famously remarked that compared to Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, Machiavelli's *The Prince* appears harmless, while Henry Kissinger (2014) viewed Kautilya as a synthesis of Clausewitzian realism and Machiavellian pragmatism. This article proposes a re-reading of Kautilya not merely as a historical curiosity, but as the architect of a "silent war" doctrine that perfectly mirrors the dynamics of modern hybrid warfare. By analyzing the rise of the Mauryan Empire, we demonstrate how the *Arthashastra* provides a timeless blueprint for statecraft, focusing on the instrumentalization of all means—from spies to social resilience—to achieve hegemony without overt conflict.

Kautilya lived at the same time as Alexander the Great and was the chief advisor to the Indian emperor Chandragupta Maurya (317–293 BC), guiding him in

the unification of the Indian subcontinent¹. Together, they created the Mauryan Empire that was larger in size than the British Empire in India, stretching from Afghanistan to Bengal.

In this process of conquest and consolidation of the Mauryan Empire, Kautilya recorded his experience and teachings in the work *Arthashastra*. According to Vinay Vittal (2011), *Arthashastra* is the essence of the art of governing, whose focus should always be on the safety and comfort of the people of the State – the word *artha* means material well-being, in Sanskrit, and *shastra* means science. Kautilya argued that the nation's wealth lies in its territory and in the people who pursue a variety of specific occupations (Vittal, 2011).

After setting up the historical and cultural scenario in which Kautilya carried out his work, its applicability in the contemporary context will be analyzed, especially regarding hybrid warfare. Today, competitions in the gray zone, full of actions that instrumentalize all available means, are examples of how the nature of conflict constantly changes and how state and non-state actors are updating themselves in the search for advantages and influence in the International System (IS). Similarly, as will be shown in the following sections, the geopolitical dynamics during the expansion of the Mauryan empire were one of multipolarity, with several kingdoms vying for prestige and power (Vittal, 2011). Kautilya, by dividing war into phases (open, treacherous, and silent), presented several concepts that are also applicable to the hybrid context of the twenty-first century (Mirza and Babar, 2020).

Finally, it is hoped to demonstrate that *Arthashastra* provides a framework for strategic thinking that finds applicability even after 2,300 years. As Vittal (2011) argues, *Arthashastra* is truly an anthology of political wisdom and can guide policymakers in consolidating state power through internal crisis regulation and strategic control of foreign affairs.

2 - BRIDGING “HYBRID WAR” AND “SILENT WAR”

Today's world is marked by a profound transformation of international order, making room for a more plural and interdependent configuration. Amitav Acharya (2018) describes the world order as multiplex, characterized by the diversity and interdependence of state and non-state actors. Such an order would not be purely multipolar, divided between rival power blocs, but plural, comprising multiple sources of authority, legitimacy and influence. In this multiplex scenario, strategic and political challenges become more complex and require new approaches and tools. As Clausewitz (1976) reminds us, a ruler must understand what kind of conflict his state is in, in a pragmatic and unequivocal way. It must be able to identify the nature of this conflict and not try to turn it into something it is not. Clausewitz's warning could not be more topical, since there is a pressing need to adapt to the way states compete for space, power and influence in the twenty-first century.

The preference of States to resort to the conventional use of armed force for conflict resolution is being progressively restricted due to several factors. As pointed out by Galleotti (2023), the overexposure of the battlefield to public opinion, as in the Vietnam War (1955-1975), marked the beginning of a downward trend in the use of kinetic operations as a tool to achieve national objectives. This is largely due to the increasing exposure of the battlefield to public opinion and the aversion to the loss of human life in armed conflict.

Added to this is the multiplex character of Acharya (2018), including the web of interdependent actors, such as international organizations, non-governmental organizations, transnational social movements, social networks, large investment funds, transnational companies, and regional organizations. However, even recognizing that non-kinetic actions are more acceptable options, it is worth remembering that the conventional military solution should not be dismissed as something outdated, as observed in the Russian special operation on Ukrainian sovereign territory, launched in February 2022.

1 For the purposes of this article, the term "Indian subcontinent" consists of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan, and Nepal (Author's note).

Before dissecting Kautilya's methods, it is essential to harmonize the terminology of modern conflict with ancient wisdom. The current strategic lexicon is crowded with overlapping concepts. Kennan's (1948) "political warfare," Liang and Xiangsui's (1999) "unrestricted warfare," and the Russian concept of *gibridnaya voyna* (Fridman, 2018; 2021) all describe a state of constant struggle that precedes kinetic fighting. All resources at the disposal of the State could be used to shape the geopolitical environment, preferably in a veiled way, avoiding escalation to armed conflict.

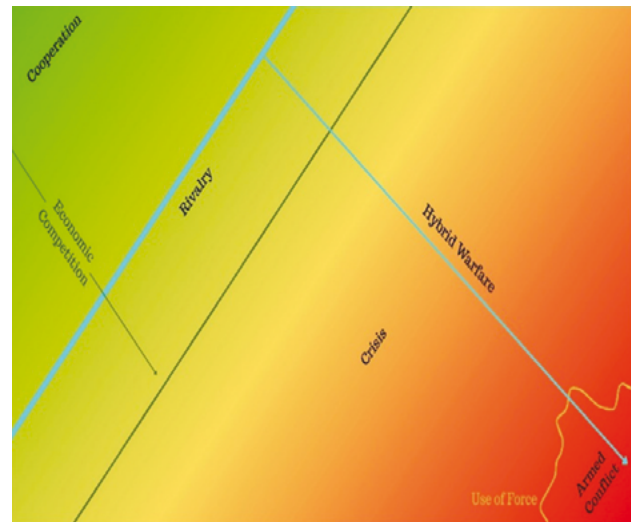
Similarly, Hoffman (2017) and the Hybrid CoE (2021) describe hybrid warfare as the synchronized use of conventional and irregular capabilities—including terrorism, economic coercion, and disinformation—to destabilize adversaries while maintaining plausible deniability. Hoffman, for example, argues that hybrid warfare, or next-generation warfare for Russian thought, exploits conventional, unconventional, irregular capabilities, and terrorist actions to create military, political, and economic situations favorable to the subsequent employment of conventional force.

It can be inferred that, well before the option of using violence, States are already employing a series of tools and artifices to achieve their objectives. Moreover, these activities are planned and executed in a veiled and hidden way, to maintain plausible deniability of the political level and avoid escalation into an armed conflict (Hybrid CoE, 2021 and French Republic, 2022). The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE) published in 2021 "*The Landscape of Hybrid Threats: a conceptual model*" expanding the debate on the subject. In this publication, the competition is divided into three phases: priming, destabilization, and coercion.

Arguing that the priming phase can last decades, tending to be carried out to contribute to strategic state policies, the publication argues that the approach should no longer be only at the government level. Action and resilience against hybrid threats must be something that looks at society, bringing together civil society, armed forces, and political actors to create a new security ecosystem (Hybrid CoE, 2021). To propose a concept that unifies the approach, the use

of all available means, in international competition, be henceforth simply called hybrid warfare (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Hybrid Warfare and the continuum of competition.



Source: Author.

As presented in this section, the modern hybrid warfare strategy is characterized by its multifaceted nature that uses all the instruments of national power. This article will present the similarities between this state of competition and the thoughts of Kautilya. But before, the next section will present how a teacher and an orphan, with a talent for kingship, conquered power, defeated the powerful Nanda Dynasty² in India. That is the history of how Kautilya became a real strategy legend.

3 - KAUTILYA'S STRATEGIC LABORATORY: THE MAURYAN ASCENT

The ancient Indian civilization, a fascinating mosaic of cultures and kingdoms shaped since 1,500 b.C. with the occupation of the Ganges River basin, is

² The Nanda dynasty originated in Mahajanapada Magadha and, at its peak, came to dominate much of the northern Indian subcontinent (Patrick, 2015).

notable for the 16 royal houses (*Mahajanapadas*) that ruled the Indian subcontinent until the third century B.C. (Figure 2). To better illustrate the world in which Kautilya lived, it is worth briefly contextualizing this multipolar dynamic, which according to Kissinger (2014), resembles pre-Westphalian Europe.

Figure 2 - The 16 Houses (*Mahajanapadas*) of ancient India in the year 500 BC.



Source: Purohit (2022).

The similarity pointed out by Kissinger concerns the balance of power between these houses, resulting in intense rivalry, cultural diversity and shifting alliances. It should be noted that there were great differences between the kingdoms, ranging from linguistic to political aspects. For example, in the Northeast region, between the *Mahajanapada Kosala and Vrji*, a peculiar political dynamic of meetings and votes prevailed, rivaling the ancient Greeks as the cradle of the concept of republic. In it, several clans met in assemblies called sanghas in Sanskrit and voted on ordinary matters and major political decisions (Patrick, 2015). In two of these clans, two princes named Siddhartha Gautama and Mahavira were born in the fourth century B.C., who would go on to found Buddhism and Jainism, respectively.

This was a very relevant period for Indian culture, since it was in this context that the epic poem

Mahabharata is estimated to have been written³. For Kissinger (2014), this poem can be compared to the Bible and Homer's epics due to the extent of its influence in that society. The Mahabharata narrates the story of this relevant Indian character who would be the great patriarch of the main dynasty in the epic. Although Hinduism has no mythical authorship, this series of hymns, legends, epic romances and rituals were, over the centuries, sedimenting the religion in the subcontinent.

In one of these territories, called Taxila and located in the northeast of present-day Pakistan, was the best and most sought-after center of higher education at that time. All families who wanted to complement the studies of their heirs sent them to boarding school in Taxila (Patrick, 2015). It is understood that it is necessary to mention Taxila because it was where Kautilya worked as one of the professors of higher studies. The city was divided into boarding schools conducted by these teachers who received students from different regions of India, and from outside it as well. According to Patrick (2015), they learned about ancient texts, military science, medicine, elephant training, archery and several other specializations.

One day, Kautilya sought an audience with Emperor Dhana Nanda, in Magadha, to request financial resources for his school and would have been severely offended and humiliated by the king, having to flee to avoid being arrested. From that moment on, Kautilya vowed to take revenge on Dhana Nanda. Patrick (2015) recalls that Dhana Nanda, during this time, controlled vast regions of the eastern Indian subcontinent (Figure 3).

But what would have been the size and power of the Nanda Empire? To illustrate the greatness of the Nanda, Alexander the Great will be used as a parameter. Even after defeating King Poros at the Battle of Hydaspes (326 BC), the Hellenic troops did

³ An episode of this epic is called the Bhagavad Gita and is, in itself, one of the classics of Indian culture. In this work, provocations about the relationship between morality and power are presented to the characters. Such is the relevance of this chapter that Mahatma Gandhi would exalt the Bhagavad Gita as his spiritual dictionary (Kissinger, 2014; Easwaran and Calif, 2007).

not advance further east of the Indian subcontinent, opting instead to descend the Indus River to the ocean and return west (Figure 2). In that battle, Alexander led a cavalry of about 4,000 men and 30,000 infantries against 3,000 horsemen, 50,000 infantries, 200 chariots, and 200 battle elephants (Patrick, 2015). While Alexander and Poros battled on the banks of the Hydaspes River, the Nanda empire already dominated the entire northern part of the Indian subcontinent, having subdued most of the Mahajanapadas (Figure 3).

Figure 3 - Alexander, Poros and the Nanda Empire.



Source: Adapted by the author of Purohit (2022).

Daniélou (1983) recalls that, in this same period, Dhana Nanda had an estimated force of 20,000 horses, 200,000 infantries, 2,000 chariots and 3,000 battle elephants. It is thus concluded that Alexander faced a secondary king in the Indian geopolitical dynamics of that period. Alexander's retreat after the victory over Poros may be an indicator that the Macedonian Empire had finally reached its limit of expansion. Moreover, it is now understood that overthrowing the Nanda Empire would not be trivial and that the fact that Kautilya did it starting out as just a teacher (Patrick, 2015), reinforces the interest in his strategy.

Kautilya needed a king to carry out his plan. Someone who could lead while he planned and calculated strategies. Buddhist and Jain historical

traditions say that Kautilya, fleeing after the humiliation suffered with Dhana Nanda, finds Chandragupta Maurya playing with friends in the street. The children played at being kings and simulated orders and judgments among themselves. Kautilya would have identified in Chandragupta the potential to be the vehicle of his revenge, taking him back to Taxila for training (Mookerji, 1981).

In this way, the two became inseparable, Chandragupta being an excellent military commander and example of Indian royalty⁴, and Kautilya his great strategist and master. Thapar (1996) explains that during Alexander's retreat, the two men recruited some people and marched directly to the capital of the Nanda empire, Pataliputra, where they were defeated. According to Thapar (1996), during the return march both saw a mother explaining to her son that one should not eat a hot dish in the center, but little by little and on the edges. As a result, Chandragupta and Kautilya began to attack the outer regions of the empire and, little by little, gained allies and strengthened themselves. After Alexander's death in 323 BC, the two began to attack the Greek invaders. In 305 BC, Chandragupta closed an agreement with Seleucus⁵, receiving the territories of present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some historians describe this agreement as a humiliating peace for Seleucus, in view of the territorial losses he suffered in exchange for elephants for his army (Bhargava, 1996).

After defeating the Nanda dynasty and continuing the expansion of its domains, the Mauryan Empire virtually unified the entire Indian subcontinent. At its peak, its population would be more than 50 million people, stretching from Afghanistan to Bengal (Wolpert, 1982). His armies were unmatched by any other of the time and several times larger than Alexander's. Chandragupta Maurya would have under his power about 600,000 infantries, 30,000

4 Mookerji (1981) recalls that Chandragupta was from a noble family of one of the clans of Northeastern India, but that it had been destroyed by Emperor Nanda, making him an orphan in childhood. This clan would be the Maurya, whose symbol was a peacock.

5 Seleucus was one of Alexander's generals and took control of the Greek territories neighboring India (Author's note).

horsemen, 8,000 chariots and 9,000 elephants (Bhargava, 1996). Moreover, the capital of the Mauryan Empire, Pataliputra, was the largest city in the world, possessing 570 towers and 64 gates, surrounded by a wall 200 meters wide and 15 meters deep. Pataliputra was twice the size of Rome during the command of Marcus Aurelius (Raychaudhuri, 1996).

Vittal (2011) recalls that, with Chandragupta, India was unified for the first time. Kautilya became the undisputed genius, creator of the strategy that founded and built the Mauryan Empire. To consolidate central power and ensure its full functioning, during this process, Kautilya wrote the *Arthashastra*, providing guidelines for a wise king to defeat his enemies, to rule with correctness and for the common good (Boesche, 2002).

The next section argues that Kautilya, 2,300 years ago, divided warfare into silent, treacherous, and open, already employing every tool available to the Mauryan Empire to impose its interests on the Indian subcontinent. Instrumentalizing religious actors, scattering spies, assassinating opposing leaders in a hidden way, and acting on the cognitive dimension of the population, Kautilya was a real mastermind of hybrid warfare.

4 - KAUTILYA'S HYBRID WARFARE: RESILIENCE AND SILENT CORROSION

Today's world, despite being very different from the one in which Kautilya lived and wrote his *Arthashastra*, allows for several parallels bringing these two realities closer together. Some of Kautilya's ideas are relevant and applicable to dealing with contemporary challenges, especially in the context of hybrid wars inserted in the dynamics of the multiplex world. Kautilya recognized that the state was not the only relevant actor in the international system, but that there were other state and non-state actors, such as neighboring kingdoms, foreign peoples, merchants, priests, religions, and spies. Roy (2023) argues that when writing about the various layers of state power, Kautilya would have addressed, among

several subjects, grand strategy, military strategy, and tactics.

The *Arthashastra* is a treatise composed of 15 books, which addresses various topics related to the government, administration, economy and strategy of the Mauryan Empire. The first six books describe in detail how the State should function. They range from the training of a king to the administrative division of government, taxes, laws, punishments, and crime control (Vittal, 2011). The other books address issues related to foreign policy, with emphasis on the methods of relating to neighboring kingdoms, the mandala of the circle of states, vulnerabilities and threats to a state, preparation for war, enemies and battlefields, functions of a conqueror, conquest of fortified capitals and secret formulas for poisons and "biological attacks". (Vittal, 2011). The fifteen books can be grouped into three major thematic areas: administration, the legal system and foreign policy.

For Kautilya, the state was composed of six internal constituencies that included the king, the ministers, the fortified city, the population, the treasury, and the army. The power that a state could exercise in promoting its own interests *vis-à-vis* other states depended on how close to the ideal these internal constituents were, and their maintenance and strengthening was vital (Singh, 2022). Still in the domestic field, despite his reputation for being pragmatic and ruthless, Kautilya was also seen as a great humanist, prioritizing the well-being of the people and introducing, for example, rights for pregnant women, the elderly, the disabled and people with less conditions to be independent. Roy (2023), however, explains that such measures aimed to prevent social vulnerabilities from allowing the interference of external powers. In this way, maintaining the cohesion of the social fabric would decrease the effectiveness of enemy spies, subversions, uprisings, and rebellions, strengthening the empire's resilience against silent threats from other kingdoms.

Kautilya's success relied on a holistic integration of foreign policy and internal security, and his strategy rested on three pillars applicable to the modern hybrid context. First, Kautilya visualized international relations as a "Mandala" or a circle of states. In these geometric geopolitics, immediate neighbors

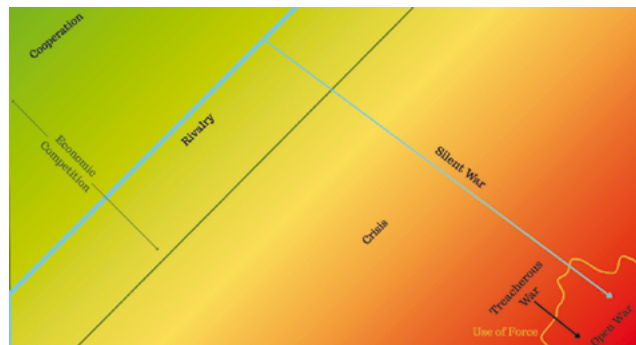
are natural enemies, while states beyond them are potential allies. This required a dynamic foreign policy capable of shifting between peace, war, and neutrality based on relative power. Patrick (2015) exemplifies this strategy by recalling that during the campaigns to overthrow the Nanda dynasty, Kautilya and Chandragupta formed an alliance with the king of the Himalayas. This kingdom was a historical rival of the Nanda and was crucial to Kautilya's initial victories. Once the Nanda empire was defeated, the Himalayan king would have been assassinated and his kingdom incorporated into Mauryan rule. Such an example illustrates the dynamic character of the mandala philosophy, being altered as the territorial conquest progressed, in addition to exemplifying the realistic and pragmatic profile of Kautilya.

Second, the weaponization of information and the targeting of society was the main effort in "silent warfare", using espionage and subversion. Kautilya advocated for a vast secret service comprising spies, double agents, and "poison damsels". These agents were not merely information gatherers; they were active disruptors. Priests were used to exploit religious sentiments to incite rebellion, and assassins were employed to remove key adversary leaders. Kautilya famously argued that a single assassin could achieve more than a mobilized army, a concept that resonates with the cost-effectiveness of modern cyber-attacks or targeted disinformation campaigns.

Third, focusing on internal resilience as a strategic asset was, perhaps, the most overlooked aspect of Kautilya's realism is his focus on internal welfare. He understood that a state's external power depends on its internal cohesion. The Arthashastra mandates the protection of the vulnerable—the elderly, disabled, and pregnant women—not solely out of altruism, but to prevent social grievances that foreign spies could exploit. This aligns with modern concepts of resilience against hybrid threats, where societal polarization is viewed as a critical vulnerability (Hybrid CoE, 2021). Kautilya prioritized "winning hearts and minds" internally to inoculate the state against the very "Silent War" tactics he utilized against others. Even in victory, he advised magnanimity toward the defeated to ensure rapid stabilization.

Kautilya argued that it is important to deal with the aspirations of other kingdoms by planning the employment of numerous peaceful or hostile means. For the Indian thinker, it was vital to understand war as more than a mere combat, but as a complex, continuous, and interconnected process of activities in all layers of human interaction (Roy, 2023). Kautilya divided the *continuum* of rivalry between the kingdoms into stages, which reflected the condition of power of his kingdom in relation to the others and the posture to be adopted in each situation. This self-analysis ranged from a perception that protection should be sought from a stronger kingdom to the ability to negotiate a conditional peace with an aggressor to the possibility of preparing armies for an expansive march (Singh, 2022). Next, a way of visualizing the divisions of war proposed by Kautilya (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Divisions of the war, according to Kautilya.



Source: Author.

Kautilya's territorial expansion project required a constant cycle of conflicts of the most varied intensities, from initial rivalries in the economic and social fields, to conventional open conflict. In this way, with the kingdoms still in the stage of rivalry, Kautilya already began to use silent war. In preparation for a conventional battle, the actions of treacherous warfare were aimed at wearing down and weakening enemy troops. Finally, conventional warfare between armies was defined as open warfare by Kautilya.

In the escalation of tensions, silent war begins using secret methods to achieve the objective, without having to fight a battle. It is the one in which the ordinary business of the empire continues normally, without any interruption.

The people of the land are unaware of any activities related to the war and even at the official level, the diplomatic relations of the kingdoms are still established normally (Patrick, 2015). The battlefield in this type of warfare is established through spies and secret agents who intend to create internal division in the enemy state.

Kautilya also warns of the need for a king to guard against internal betrayal, uprisings, and rebellions before proceeding on a military campaign. Once again, the ancient Indian document signals the urgency of investing in one's own social fabric, increasing resilience against silent attacks and reinforcing internal vigilance. Social vulnerabilities that fragment national cohesion must be identified and remedied to build and ensure a defense against hybrid threats in the context of silent war.

Thus, Arthashastra offers valuable *insights* that can enhance understanding of the phenomenon of contemporary hybrid wars. This theory, in combination with Amitav Acharya's multiplex perspective, reveals fundamental aspects for a more complete analysis of this global challenge. In addition, Kautilya's teachings also highlight the importance of exploiting vulnerabilities in external target actors. This translates into strategies that involve identifying weaknesses in adversaries and using hybrid means to exploit them. In the contemporary landscape of digital interconnectivity, this approach takes on critical importance. Destabilizing information can spread rapidly, reaching an entire society in a matter of hours, making understanding and protecting the social fabric even more crucial. In the same way, developing the ability to carry out these actions in states of interest, silently, may be increasingly necessary.

5 - FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Arthashastra, written over 2,300 years ago, stands not merely as a historical artifact but as a sophisticated manual for the modern era. Kautilya's division of conflict into open, treacherous, and silent wars offers a granular framework for understanding the "gray zone" activities that define the 21st-century multiplex order. His insights anticipate the comprehensive nature of hybrid warfare, which instrumentalizes religion, economics, and information to corrode an adversary from within.

In the first section, we sought to unify the bibliographic concepts around the phenomenon of hybrid warfare, dividing them into a political and strategic level, and an operational and tactical one. So *political warfare*, *unrestricted warfare* and *gibridnaya voyna* would be concepts of hybrid warfare at the political and strategic level. And, in the same way, the concepts described by Hoffman (2017) would encompass hybrid warfare at the operational and tactical level. In that section, Acharya's (2018) current multiplex scenario was also highlighted, which describes the coexistence of a complex network of interdependent actors, international organizations, NGOs, social movements, social networks, and transnational corporations. By avoiding the wear and tear of conventional conflicts, actors would be opting for alternative means, preferably silently, to compete for power.

Thus, as Clausewitz warned, it is necessary to understand the nature of the conflict in which one is immersed, whether military or not. Hybrid threats involve the strategic use of a wide range of instruments, both military and non-military, to destabilize and sow fear and uncertainty in society, directed at specific vulnerabilities of the target. These actions, which can include psychological operations, cyberattacks, propaganda, among others, operate in a continuum of state competition. International rivalry in the "gray zone" and the phenomenon of hybrid warfare requires a more proactive stance, increasing the resilience of national powers.

Then, in the second section, a contextualization was deemed appropriate to present the scenario in which Kautilya wrote his work. Understanding the challenge of building the Mauryan empire, one can perceive the importance of that character for the Indian subcontinent and for the world. Moreover, Kautilya teaches that offense and defense are two sides of the same coin, as the ability to wage silent war is predicated on a state's internal resilience and social cohesion. As global powers continue to navigate a landscape of shifting alliances and covert competition, the "timeless anthology" of the Arthashastra provides a necessary corrective to Western-centric strategic thought, proving that the logic of strategy remains constant even as the technologies of war evolve.

The third section of this article explored Kautilya's foreign policy, focusing on the division of war into three types (open, treacherous, and silent). The Indian

strategist developed a holistic approach, which went beyond physical battles, emphasizing the crucial role of intelligence agents, diplomacy, and the manipulation of the social fabric. His view of a Mandala of states highlighted the need to balance relations within neighbors, utilizing strategies such as alliances, manipulation, and balancing of power to protect the kingdom's interests. In addition, he emphasized the pressing need to invest in strengthening the internal social fabric, aiming to improve resilience against silent threats.

It can be inferred, therefore, that it is crucial to identify and correct social vulnerabilities that may undermine national cohesion, thus building a robust defense against hybrid threats, particularly in the context of Kautilya's silent war. This approach also extends to external competitors, as the protection of one's own state requires the ability to exploit similar vulnerabilities in foreign actors. Such concepts have a strong adherence to the modern challenges of hybrid wars.

In conclusion, Kautilya's History and his influence on the growth of the Mauryan empire offer a rich source of *insights* into contemporary strategic challenges. Furthermore, studying the "Arthashastra" provides a solid foundation for developing contemporary strategies, as it presents perennial principles that can be adapted to the complexities of the challenges faced in today's world. His insights into governance, intelligence, and resilience remain valuable sources of knowledge for modern leaders and strategists. The multiplex world requires a flexible and comprehensive strategic mindset, which goes beyond the hegemonic theories of the past. In addition, hybrid threats arising from competition between different actors are increasingly a reality. As global forces continue to redefine themselves, it is crucial to build a new strategy that is adaptable, agile, and grounded in timeless lessons, preparing states to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

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«IMEC: Greece's Geopolitical Opportunity in the Eastern Mediterranean, Maritime Security, and Strategic Convergence with India»

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INTRODUCTION

The global geo-economy is entering a phase of intensifying strategic rivalry, in which trade routes, energy flows, and digital infrastructure—including data cables—are no longer merely technical elements. Instead, they are moving to the forefront of international politics as tools of power, influence, and resilience. In today's global environment, connectivity is no longer simply a means for economic growth but has become a vital arena for geo-economic rivalry, strategic influence, and the rebalancing of regional and international power.

In this context, the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor, known as the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), which was proposed by India on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in New Delhi in September 2023, is emerging as one of the most important connectivity initiatives of this decade (see Figure 1, where the countries participating in the IMEC are shown in blue).

Map 1. Signatories of the 2023 IMEC MOU and Likely Future Signatories

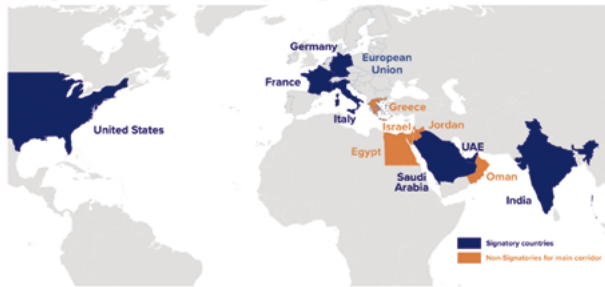


Figure 1, IMEC Participating Countries

The importance of the corridor goes beyond just enabling trade. It lies in its capacity to connect maritime and land transport, port facilities, energy infrastructure, and data networks, from the Indian Ocean to the Eastern Mediterranean (East Med) and the European hinterland¹ (see figure 2, which displays the land and sea routes along with logistics hubs of the IMEC).



Figure 2, IMEC Land, Sea Routes and Logistic Hubs

The IMEC is envisioned as a transcontinental corridor roughly 6,400 km long, designed to connect the port of Mumbai with ports in the Eastern and Northern Mediterranean by integrating existing and planned transport, energy, and digital links. Its transport component is divided into three related but separate parts: firstly, the maritime link between India's western ports and the Persian Gulf; secondly, the rail and multimodal connection of Gulf ports with the Mediterranean via Jordan and Israel; and thirdly, the maritime link from eastern Mediterranean ports to southern Europe.

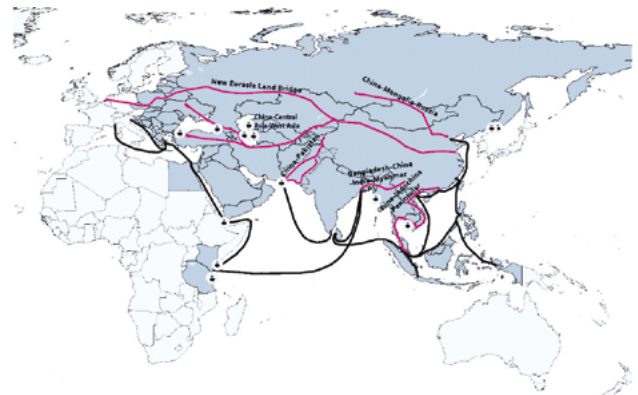
However, beyond its purely transport-related role, the corridor also includes vital energy and digital components, such as renewable energy initiatives, mechanisms for coordinating energy markets, and fibre-optic networks. As a result, IMEC is not just a new trade route but a complex strategic infrastructure designed to reshape the movement of trade, energy, and data between India, the Middle East, and Europe. In doing so, it bolsters the resilience of supply chains

1 Atlantic Council, The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor: Connectivity in an Era of Geopolitical Uncertainty (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, March 2025), available at <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/The-India-Middle-East-Europe-Economic-Corridor-Connectivity-in-an-era-of-geopolitical-uncertainty.pdf>

and offers an alternative pathway of connectivity within the broader landscape of international geo-economic competition.

In this context, IMEC is an emerging connectivity framework of complex geo-economic and geostrategic importance, integrating three interconnected pillars into a single system: transportation, energy, and digital connectivity. Its primary advantage is that it goes beyond a simple freight corridor to establish a multimodal connectivity infrastructure linking India, the Middle East, and Europe, thereby improving the speed, flexibility, and resilience of supply chains. The integration of maritime and rail networks, alongside energy and digital infrastructure, can reduce transit times, lower transportation costs, and increase participating countries' access to international markets.

At the same time, the strategic significance of IMEC is even broader. The corridor is part of the broader competition for control over infrastructure, transport routes, energy networks, and digital systems in the Eurasian region. From this perspective, it is not merely an economic venture but also an expression of a rules-based framework of open connectivity, presented as an alternative to geo-economic schemes dominated by a single power, the most notable example being China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)² (see figure 3). Consequently, IMEC is emerging not only as a new corridor linking India, the Middle East, and Europe, but also as an alternative—and, to some extent, competitive—route for goods, energy, and data vis-à-vis the Chinese connectivity architecture.



Note: Economies colored in blue are those along the BRI transport corridors. They have not necessarily signed collaboration agreements with China.

Figure 3, Belt and Road Initiative Trade Route

In this context, the IMEC initiative aims to present an alternative model of connectivity based on multilateral partnerships, diversification of supply chains, and reduced reliance on networks controlled by or heavily influenced by a single superpower. This development clarifies why IMEC should not be seen simply as a technical infrastructure project, but as a geo-economic and geopolitical response to an international environment of shifting power dynamics.

IMEC Strategic Theory

The main point of this article is that IMEC cannot be properly evaluated either as a straightforward transport project or as a typical alternative to the Suez route. Its success mainly depends on maritime security, political stability, institutional predictability, and crisis management capability. Without these factors, investor confidence cannot be established, and the risk costs remain high. From a strategic economic perspective, the absence of conflicts along the IMEC route is crucial for attracting capital, maintaining supply flows, and managing a complex corridor without significant fluctuations in costs and time³.

The Atlantic Council study views the IMEC as a multi-layered structure operating amid geopolitical uncertainty, rather than as a narrowly defined commercial project. It highlights the interdependence of transport, energy, and digital sectors. It also

2 The Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI, is the major transnational connectivity initiative announced by China in 2013, with the aim of strengthening its trade, transport, energy, and broader economic ties with Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. The concept rests on two pillars: the land-based "Silk Road Economic Belt" and the maritime "21st Century Maritime Silk Road." Source: World Bank, *Belt and Road Economics: Opportunities and Risks of Transport Corridors*, Washington, DC, World Bank, 2019, pp. 3–4.

3 Atlantic Council, op. cit.

stresses that the corridor's success depends on political coordination, financial backing, regulatory alignment, and effective risk mitigation strategies. Similarly, the analysis by the think tank Chintan Research Foundation (CRF) in New Delhi provides a more realistic operational outlook, noting that despite initial political enthusiasm, the IMEC remains a work in progress, with significant issues concerning maturity, governance, and implementation⁴.

The strategic conclusion for Greece is that the network of states linked to IMEC is not merely an “**economic alliance**” in which declaring participation alone suffices. Instead, it is a complex political-economic endeavour in which each country's position depends on its capacity to provide reliability, functionality, and security.

For Greece, this means that the country's role cannot be based solely on geography or on general rhetoric about being a “**gateway to the European Union**” but rather requires proven state capacity, synergy between port and land infrastructure, and, above all, strategic consistency and continuity⁵.

In this context, the maritime aspect of IMEC is crucial. Although the focus often falls on land and rail components, the corridor is primarily a maritime multimodal route. Flows from India to the Gulf and onwards to the Eastern Mediterranean and Europe depend on secure maritime communication lines, efficient port operations, and stability in high-risk zones. Even minor disruptions can increase insurance costs, cause route adjustments, extend delivery times, and ultimately reduce the corridor's reliability, especially where investment decisions are made⁶.

This is exactly where the vital role of security as a fundamental requirement for investment becomes clear. IMEC infrastructure, such as ports, railways, energy networks, digital hubs, and cables, is long-term, high-cost, and requires significant capital. This is not infrastructure that can be easily moved or

replaced if the security situation worsens. Because of this, stability is more important than development. Without a secure environment, the cost of risk rises, insurance premiums increase, funding gets delayed, and ultimately, the operational reliability of the corridor is compromised. The message is clear: implementing large-scale investments depends heavily on a secure, stable strategic environment⁷.

The connection between security and prosperity is also shown in official Euro-Atlantic documents. NATO's **Alliance Maritime Strategy** (AMS) reaffirms naval power as central to deterrence, collective defence, and crisis management, focusing on constant readiness, maritime situational awareness, and safeguarding maritime communication routes and critical infrastructure⁸.

Accordingly, the revised **European Maritime Safety Strategy** and the action plan on the safety of underwater cables emphasise resilience, surveillance, protection of undersea infrastructure, and rapid restoration capability as key aspects of European security⁹. By this logic, the energy and digital dimensions of IMEC are not secondary but an organic part of its strategic importance.

Geopolitical opportunity for Greece

The Greek aspect of IMEC holds particular strategic importance, as Greece is not just the western end of an interconnection corridor but also has the potential to become a key European hub within its broader framework. Its location at the western edge of the Eastern Mediterranean, its historic maritime strength, its membership in the European Union (EU) and NATO, and its growing role in regional security and energy all add to its strategic significance.

In this context, Greece's contribution to IMEC is more than simply acting as a gateway to the European market. It also has the capacity to serve as a secure,

4 Chintan Research Foundation, Conference on IMEC: Connecting Continents, Unlocking Opportunities, Event Report (New Delhi: Chintan Research Foundation, 4 June 2025).

5 Atlantic Council, op. cit.

6 Atlantic Council, op. cit.

7 Atlantic Council, op. cit.

8 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Alliance Maritime Strategy, 29 October 2025.

9 Council of the European Union, Council Conclusions on the Revised EU Maritime Security Strategy and its Action Plan, 24 October 2023.

reliable, and efficient terminal hub that connects trade, energy, and data flows to the European hinterland. Therefore, Greece's role in IMEC extends beyond geographical considerations and assumes broader geo-economic and geopolitical significance. The key issue for Greece's accession to the IMEC is not just having a large port, but ensuring the entire Greek segment of the corridor functions well. While Greece aims to use its strategic location as a natural gateway to Southeast Europe, the real challenge is to integrate port infrastructure, rail links, and efficient transit management into a single, dependable, and operational system¹⁰.

Even ports with clear technical advantages, like Piraeus, face geopolitical restrictions due to Chinese involvement. Other Greek options, such as Thessaloniki and Eleusis, either encounter political challenges or are not yet fully developed. This shifts the focus from asking "**which port**" to a more important question: "**How effective is the entire national infrastructure supporting the corridor?**"

Therefore, as Greece aims to turn its geographic location into a lasting geopolitical advantage, it is essential to manage the port, hinterland, transport links, customs procedures, and Digital Interoperability as a unified system of strategic efficiency. In particular, the rail link connecting the ports to Central Europe is the most vital factor because, without it, Greek involvement risks remaining merely a geographical possibility rather than having a full operational impact.

At the heart of this strategy is the Greek-Indian relationship, which now extends beyond merely bilateral trade. India seeks secure and politically reliable access routes to the European market, while Greece aims to establish itself as a highly trustworthy hub for trade, energy, and services entering Europe. The meeting¹¹ between Greek Prime Minister (PM) Mr Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Indian PM Mr Narendra Modi on 19 February 2026 confirmed this trend, with Greece highlighting defence, shipping, shipbuilding

and ship repair, infrastructure, and connectivity as essential areas for strengthening cooperation. Greece also emphasised its potential to serve as India's gateway to Europe and to actively participate in IMEC.

Similarly, the Indian side confirmed that the two leaders reviewed the entire strategic partnership, expressed appreciation for recent connectivity initiatives, and recognised the potential for further development of these initiatives within the framework of IMEC¹². In this context, the Greek-Indian relationship is likely to evolve into a strategic connection between India and Europe, through a framework that integrates trade, infrastructure, security, and geopolitical alignment.

Greece's geopolitical position under IMEC is significantly strengthened by US support. The Atlantic Council's analysis views the corridor as a framework for regional integration, which aligns with broader U.S. aims of stability, connectivity, and diversifying vital networks¹³. For Greece, this development presents an important opportunity to align geopolitical and geo-economic interests, but it does not create a strategic impact on its own. U.S. involvement can provide political depth and lessen investment uncertainty only if Greece can unify its infrastructure, security, and diplomacy into a cohesive national strategy.

In the same direction, recent articles of Kathimerini offer a useful interpretative framework for the Greek dimension of IMEC. Konstantinos Filis, in the article¹⁴ "Energy cooperative and geopolitics", argues that the energy cooperation between Greece and the USA, the **Vertical Gas Corridor**¹⁵ (VGC) and Chevron's activities in Greece do not automatically reverse the regional correlations in the East Med. Instead, they reflect a gradual geopolitical upgrade

10 Powergame Newsroom, "the challenges of the India – Middle East – Europe Corridor and the role of Greece", Powergame, 20 February 2026

11 Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, "Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis' meeting with the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi", 19 February 2026.

12 Ministry of External Affairs, India, "Prime Minister's meeting with H.E. Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic of Greece", 19 February 2026

13 Atlantic Council, op.cit.

14 Konstantinos Filis, "energy cooperative and geopolitics", Kathimerini, February 22, 2026.

15 It establishes a South – North natural gas transmission axis that interconnects Greek LNG inputs and the National Transmission System with markets in Southeast and Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine.

of Greece, boosting its usefulness to the West as a hub for the entry, regasification, and transit of natural gas to Central and Eastern Europe. The key point of the analysis is that the value of these developments lies not in a direct shift in regional balances but in the creation of a broader network of interests, which increases Greece's strategic relevance. The same logic applies to IMEC, which gains significant strategic importance only when integrated into stable structures of interest, protection, and lasting strategic utility.

Moreover, Kathimerini's article¹⁶ on U.S. pressure on the European Union (EU) highlights that the vertical Gas Corridor is no longer viewed as a mere energy infrastructure, but as a critical mechanism for the entry and transit of U.S. LNG to Southeast and Central Europe. In the context of Europe's intended full dependence on Russian gas by 2027, Greece is projected to be a regional energy hub, whose value stems from its geographical location, existing infrastructure, and ability to integrate into broader energy supply corridors. The essential point is that US support is not limited to political declarations but also includes specific demands to strengthen infrastructure, remove regulatory barriers, and make new investments, including additional projects in Bulgaria and Romania, as well as a second floating regasification station in Greece.

Finally, a related article¹⁷ in Kathimerini adds the critical regional dimension to the analysis of IMEC. The new alliances being formed in the East Med and the wider region, from the Middle East to India, demonstrate that the corridor is not developing in a geopolitical vacuum but rather within a new environment of strategic convergences and antagonisms. The deepening of ties between India and Israel, the participation of American, Arab, and European powers in relevant processes, and the establishment of alternative connectivity axes to competing actors are signs of a broader redeployment

of power. From this perspective, IMEC appears not merely as a commercial or transport corridor, but as a component of an emerging architecture of connectivity, security and political convergence.

In this context, India's role holds particular significance for Greece. India now presents itself not only as a major Asian partner but also as a strategic actor seeking secure and politically reliable access routes to Europe. Greece appears as the Mediterranean link, capable of providing a European finishing touch, maritime expertise, institutional stability, and connections to the EU's hinterland. Therefore, the Greek-Indian relationship gives IMEC a stronger strategic dimension, as it links India's pursuit of access with Greece's aim of geo-economic and geopolitical progress. For Greece, this means that its role in the corridor becomes even more vital, as the country functions not merely as a transit point but as a dependable European partner for India and a provider of security, energy, and political stability at the Mediterranean end of IMEC.

India's significance to IMEC becomes even more critical amid the recent regional crisis in the Middle East. New Delhi perceives the developments not as a distant regional issue but as a direct influence on its energy security, maritime transport, and broader strategic environment, since a large portion of its energy imports are connected to the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. In this context, India aims to maintain operational relations with all major regional players while bolstering alternative, more resilient routes to Europe¹⁸. In this sense, IMEC gains not only economic significance for India but also broader strategic importance, serving as a framework for diversification, predictability, and the strengthening of the resilience of its international links.

Regional Crisis: Persian Gulf

The regional crisis that unfolded on 28 February 2026, involving escalated military actions between the US, Israel, and Iran, shows that IMEC should not be viewed merely as a neutral technical or commercial

16 Chryssa Liangou and Lena Argyris, "Vertical pressures in E.E.: U.S. requirements for U.S. LNG import infrastructure and corridors, Kathimerini, March 2, 2026.

17 Giorgos Skafidas, "New alliances in the Mediterranean: Netanyahu's 'Hexagon' against the new axes of evil" Kathimerini, February 24, 2026.

18 Jacob Wirtschafter, 'Iran war tests India's balancing act between the US, Israel, and Tehran – analysis', The Jerusalem Post, 8 March 2026.

project but as a geo-economic and geostrategic infrastructure. Its viability depends on the stability of the broader regional security framework. The tension stretching from the Persian Gulf to the Eastern Mediterranean, the potential for the crisis to spill over into multiple power domains, threats to maritime communication lines, and the rising use of missile and unmanned systems have significantly impacted the strategic environment in which IMEC will operate¹⁹.

Tellingly, after operations began, the number of tankers passing through the Strait of Hormuz was significantly reduced and, by 5 March 2026, had nearly come to a complete halt, confirming the vulnerability of global energy and trade flows. Under these conditions, IMEC's operational and financial credibility depends not only on investing in Port, Rail, and Energy Interconnections but also on establishing a clear framework for deterrence, maritime security, critical infrastructure protection, and civil-military resilience.

In this context, Greece becomes more strategically important for IMEC, as it utilises its geographical location, credible alliances, and growing security capabilities at the western tip of the Eastern Mediterranean. Strengthening Greece's strategic position from northern Greece and Souda to the southeastern boundary of the Greek and Cypriot region enhances the nation's role not only as a transit gateway to the European market but also as an operational and geopolitical centre of stability that facilitates flows passing through the corridor.

At the same time, reactions to the changing power dynamics in the East Med reveal that Greek geography is becoming increasingly significant in regional affairs, and emphasise Greece's role as a secure link between the Middle East and Europe. The success of IMEC will therefore depend not only on its economic results but also on the participating states' capacity to establish it within a stable framework of

deterrence, maritime strength, and institutionally organised regional security.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

IMEC is more than just a transit project for Greece; it is a complex strategic arena where geoeconomics, maritime security, energy policy, and regional power dynamics intersect. Greek involvement in this corridor is particularly significant, as it depends on the country's ability to act as a stable, predictable, and institutionally reliable hub in the East Med. While Greece's geographical position provides a key advantage, this benefit only reaches its full strategic potential when supported by infrastructure resilience, administrative effectiveness, and consistent national policies.

The escalation of the crisis in the Middle East since 28 February 2026 has clearly highlighted the vulnerability of maritime communication routes and energy flows from the Persian Gulf to the East Med. This has emphasised the importance of dependable connectivity frameworks for Europe, centred on secure sea paths, stable hubs, and predictable institutional partners. For India in particular, this significance becomes even greater as access to European markets increasingly depends on maintaining alternative and resilient transport, energy, and trade routes. Within this context, Greece enhances its strategic value by positioning itself not only as a European gateway but also as a Mediterranean hub of stability, security, and administrative continuity.

The key conclusion is that **regional security takes precedence over investment, and IMEC functionality takes priority** over rhetoric. Consequently, planning for this geo-economic corridor must account not only for economic and technical indicators but also for a realistic evaluation of the strategic security environment. In this context, Greece's credibility will be assessed not only by its willingness to participate in the corridor but, more importantly, by its ability to ensure secure flows, protect critical infrastructure, maintain institutional stability, and remain operationally ready amid heightened uncertainty.

19 Reuters, "US and Israel launch 'pre-emptive' attack against Iran", 28 February 2026. Reuters, "Exclusive: Trump's Gaza plan on hold as Iran war pauses disarmament talks, sources say", 9 March 2026. Reuters, "Iran war: See how tanker traffic collapsed in the Strait of Hormuz", 6 March 2026; Reuters, "Global oil and gas shipping costs surge as Iran vows to close Hormuz", 2 March 2026.

The first priority is to **establish a unified national framework for Greece's involvement in IMEC**. Such a framework becomes vital when it links ports, rail connections, energy facilities, digital infrastructure, customs procedures, and critical infrastructure protection within a cohesive national action system. In this context, shifting from a focus on individual ports to an integrated national transit and connectivity system is particularly crucial. Simultaneously, the necessity to enhance maritime surveillance, cybersecurity, and underwater infrastructure protection is reinforced, ensuring that Greek territory serves not only as a transit corridor but also as a secure and resilient space.

The second priority is to **strengthen the strategic partnership with India and utilise American support** to achieve tangible outcomes. The strategic aspect of the Greek-Indian relationship extends beyond trade and includes infrastructure, energy, technology, and security. Likewise, U.S. support becomes more significant when connected to investments, technological collaboration, infrastructure improvements, and Greece's deeper integration into the stability and connectivity networks of the East Med. In this way, Greek involvement in IMEC shifts from a theoretical geopolitical possibility to a tangible advantage with operational and financial benefits.

The third priority is **Greece's role within the broader network of partnerships** linking the East Med with Cyprus, Israel, the United States, and India. IMEC becomes truly strategic when seen as part of a regional framework in which Infrastructure, Energy, Deterrence, and Political Credibility support one another. As long as Greece continues to invest in institutional stability, transnational cooperation, and strategic transparency, it can develop not just as a transit point but as a secure, stable, and indispensable European hub for IMEC in the East Med.

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Commander Athanasios Drivas, Hellenic Navy, is Deputy Commander of the Hellenic Navy War College (HNWC), having served in surface units and in staff positions at the Hellenic Naval Academy (HNA), the Hellenic Navy General Staff (HNGS), the Hellenic Fleet H.Q Ops Centre, the Hellenic National Defence General Staff (HNDGS) and NATO (NCIA JFC Naples). He is a graduate of the Hellenic Naval Academy (Class 1999), the Hellenic Naval War College, the Supreme Joint War College (SJWC), and the 10th Training Series of the International School of Strategic Studies of the Hellenic National Defence College. He holds an MSc in Electrical Engineering with Distinction from the Naval Postgraduate School in the U.S. and is currently a scholarship student in the MA Applied Strategy and International Security program at the University of Plymouth. He has many years of teaching experience at the Hellenic Naval Academy (HNA) and the PALASKAS Training Centre, and has published works on naval operations, WECDIS electronic nautical chart systems, information security, and StratCom

Change of Command Ceremony at Hellenic National Defence College (HNDC)

19 January 2026



On Monday, 19 January 2026, in the presence of the Chief of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff (HNDGS), General Dimitrios Choupis, the Change of Command Ceremony at the Hellenic National Defence College (HNDC) took place, during which Lieutenant General Athanasios Sardellis handed over command to Rear Admiral Konstantinos Pitykakis HN.

The ceremony was held at the Averof Building in Pedion tou Areos and was also attended by the Chief of the Hellenic Army General Staff, Lieutenant General Georgios Kostidis the Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff, Vice Admiral Dimitrios-Eleftherios Kataras HN members of the Supreme Military Council and the Supreme Air Force Council senior and superior officers of the Armed Forces and the Security Corps professors of the HNDC retired officers and other invited guests.

Training Program for the 16th Distance Learning Course of HNDC

9 - 11 February 2026



In the context of the 16th Distance Learning Course of the Hellenic National Defence College, at the Athens War Museum, from 09 to 11 Feb 26, a training program was held with lectures given, such as:

Dr. Ioannis Papafloratos, Associate Professor at the Hellenic Air Force Academy, on "The Cyprus Issue".

Mr. Konstantinos Ifantis, Professor at Panteion University, on "Foreign Policy in International Relations".

Dr. Spyridon Katsoulas, Geopolitics, on "Crisis Management Theory" and "The Crisis in Cuba".

Professor Konstantinos Koliopoulos of the University of Piraeus, on "Great War Theorists (Clausewitz - Sun Tzu - Thucydides)" and on "Hybrid Warfare".

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Visit by delegation from the Armenian Ministry of Defense to the Hellenic National Defence College

12 February 2026



On Thursday, February 12, 2026, as part of the Military Cooperation Program 2026 (MCP) between Greece and Armenia, a delegation from the Armenian Ministry of Defense visited the Hellenic National Defense College (HNDC) where they were briefed about HNDC's structure, mission and work for the purpose of potential enrolling Armenian students in the College educational programs.

Participation of HNDC in the 3rd Metis Strategic Foresight Workshop

16 - 17 February 2026



In the framework of the collaborations that the Hellenic National Defense College has developed with foreign Educational Institutions, on 16 and 17 Feb 26, HNDC's Commandant, staff officers and students participated in the 3rd Metis Strategic Foresight Workshop entitled "Challenges to the rule based international order", co-organized by the University of Plymouth and METIS Institute for Strategy and Foresight of the German Armed Forces University in cooperation with HNDC.

At the opening of the workshop, the Commandant of the College, Rear Admiral Konstantinos Pitykakis HN, addressed the participants.

Visit by the Defense Attaché of the State of Qatar in Greece at HNDC

24 February 2026



On Tuesday, February 24, 2026, the Defense Attaché of the State of Qatar in Greece, Colonel (Air Force) Mr. Eid AlKaabi visited the Hellenic National Defense College (HNDC), where he was briefed about HNDC's structure, mission and work.

Visit of the 78th HNDC Resident Course to the National Natural Gas System Operator (DESFA) and the LNG Terminal of Revithoussa.

25 February 2026



In the context of briefing the students of the 78th Resident Course of HNDC regarding infrastructures of strategic importance for National Defense, on Wednesday 25 Feb 2026, a visit took place at the facilities of the National Gas System Operator and the LNG Terminal Station of Revithoussa. The purpose of the visit was to inform students about strategic planning for the management, development, and exploitation of natural gas, energy security and Station's capabilities.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Visit of the 78th Resident Course of HNDC to the National Center for Scientific Research “DEMOKRITOS”

16 March 2026



In the context of briefing HNDC students regarding infrastructures of strategic importance for National Defense, on Monday 16 March 2026, a visit to the facilities of the National Center for Scientific Research “DEMOKRITOS” took place. During the event, the students had the opportunity to be informed about strategic planning of research, innovation, nuclear energy and security, artificial intelligence and emerging cutting-edge technologies, while they were given a tour to its premises.

Seminar for Newly Promoted Flag/General Officers

16 - 20 March 2026



From Monday, March 16, to Friday, March 20, 2026, a Seminar for Newly Promoted Flag/General Officers was organized by the Hellenic National Defense College (HNDC), under the auspices of Hellenic National Defense General Staff (HNDGS).. At the beginning of the seminar, the Commandant of HNDC, Rear Admiral Konstantinos Pitykakis HN, welcomed the flag Officers and congratulated them on their promotion, followed by a greeting from the Director of Studies at the Hellenic Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Michael Angelopoulos.. The thematic modules of the seminar included:.

a. Priorities of Greek Foreign Policy and Greece's relations with various countries..

b. Strategic Crisis Management and Crisis Management of National issues, NATO and EU issues management, as well as media management..

c. International and humanitarian law of Armed Conflict..

d. Economic matters of defence and AF..

Speakers - lecturers of the seminar included HNDGS staff officers, Directors of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as distinguished University Professors, from HNDC Teaching Personnel..More specialized briefings on relevant matters were given by the Chief of Staff at the Hellenic Army General Staff, the Deputy Chief of Hellenic National Navy General Staff and the Deputy Chief of Hellenic Air Force General Staff.

Visit by delegation of the Iraqi National Defense College at HNDC

20 - 24 April 2026



From April 20 to 24, 2026, upon request from NATO Defence Education Enhancement Program (NATO DEEP), a delegation of the Iraqi National Defense College (NDC), led by Major General, Hamid Mudeb Hussein, visited the Hellenic National Defense College (HNDC). The delegation was briefed about HNDC's structure, mission and academic work while its members participated as observers, to the Crisis Management Exercise (CMX) "ODYSSEIA".

Visit of 78th Training Course of HNDC at the Hellenic Parliament

29 April 2026



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



On Wednesday 29 April 2026, a visit of the 78th Training Course of the Hellenic National Defense College (HNDC), took place at the Hellenic Parliament.

During the visit, the students were given a guided tour of the Hellenic Parliament exhibition: "A Constitution of Our Own 1975-2025" and were briefed on the functions of the Parliament, by a scientific associate of the Parliament.

Afterwards, they met with the Vice President of the Standing Committee on National Defense and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dimitrios Kairidis and were briefed on the Committee's ongoing work, as well as current issues in defense and foreign policy sectors.

Visit by CAPSTONE General and Flag Officer Course at HNDC

6 May 2026



On Wednesday, May 6, 2026, students from the CAPSTONE General and Flag Officer Course of the US National Defence University (NDU), accompanied by the Naval Attaché of USA in Greece, visited the Hellenic National Defense College. During the visit, the students attended a lecture by the Commandant of the Hellenic National Defense College, Rear Admiral Konstantinos Pitykakis HN, while a discussion was held on specific topics of general interest.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Graduation Ceremony of the 78th Resident Course of HNDC

8 May 2026



On Friday, 08 May 2026, the graduation ceremony of the students of the 78th Resident Course of the Hellenic National Defence College (HNDC) took place at the Armed Forces Officers' Club (LAED), in the presence of Member of Parliament Mr Ioannis Tragakis, representing the President of the Hellenic Parliament, Nikitas Michail Kaklamanis, as well as

the Chief of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff (HNDGS), General Dimitrios Choupis.

The ceremony was also honoured by the presence of representatives of parliamentary party leaders and of His Beatitude the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, the Ambassadors to Greece of Egypt and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Chief of the Hellenic Army General Staff, Lieutenant General Georgios Kostidis, and representatives of the Chiefs of the Hellenic Navy and Hellenic Air Force General Staffs, the Commander of the Joint Academic Education Directorate (DI.D.A.E.), Lieutenant General Anastasios Polychronos, the Commander of the Hellenic National Defence College, Rear Admiral Konstantinos Pitykakis HN, active and retired officers, representatives of the Security Corps, academic authorities, as well as relatives and friends of the graduates.

In total, 63 students graduated, including 39 officers from the Hellenic Army, 8 officers from the Hellenic Navy, 3 officers from the Hellenic Air Force, 1 officer from the Joint Corps, 2 officers from the Hellenic Police, 1 officer from the Hellenic Fire Service, 1 officer from the Hellenic Coast Guard, 1 permanent civilian employee of the Ministry of the Interior, 3 officers from the Republic of Cyprus, as well as 4 foreign officers from allied and friendly countries (specifically, 2 from the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1 from the Federal Republic of Germany, and 1 from Bosnia and Herzegovina).

VISITS & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Visit and lecture at the HNDC by the Secretary General of the Hellenic Parliament Foundation Mr. Evanthis Hatzivassiliou

18 February 2026



On Wednesday 18 Feb 26, Professor of Postwar History at the Department of History of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Secretary General of the Hellenic Parliament Foundation Mr. Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, visited the Hellenic National Defense College and gave a lecture to the students of the 78th Resident Course.

Visit to the HNDC and Lecture by Chief of Hellenic Navy General Staff

9 March 2026



On Monday 09 Mar 2026, the Chief of Hellenic Navy General Staff, Vice Admiral Dimitrios-Eleftherios Kataras HN, visited Hellenic National Defence College, where he gave a lecture to the students of the 78th Resident Course, on "Main Issues, Challenges, Perspectives and Strategic Objectives of the Hellenic Navy General Staff".

Visit to the HNDC and Lecture by Chief of the Hellenic Police

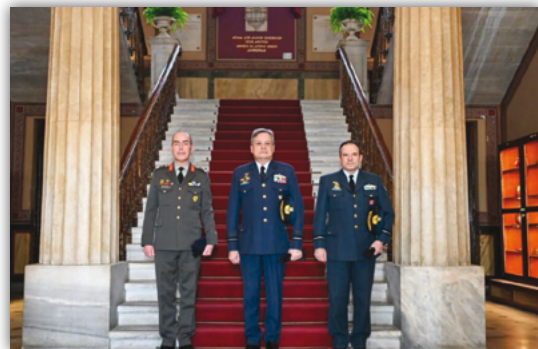
18 March 2026



On Wednesday 18 March 2026, the Chief of the Hellenic Police, Lieutenant General Dimitrios Mallios visited the Hellenic National Defense College, where he gave a lecture to the students of the 78th Resident Course, on "Illegal Immigration and Internal Security Challenges".

Visit to the HNDC and Lecture by the Chief of Hellenic Air Force General Staff

26 March 2026



On Thursday 26 Mar 2026, the Chief of the Hellenic Air Force General Staff, Lieutenant General Dimosthenis Grigoriadis, visited Hellenic National Defense College, where he gave a lecture to the students of the 78th Resident Course, presenting current developments concerning the Hellenic Air Force (HAF), as well as its future goals, placing particular emphasis on issues related to HAF programs, future planning, and personnel welfare.

VISITS & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

**Visit to HNDC and Lecture given by
journalist Mr. Alexis Papahelas****3 April 2026**

On Friday 03 April 2026, journalist and executive director of the newspaper "Kathimerini" Mr. Alexis Papahelas, visited the Hellenic National Defense College (HNDC), where he gave a lecture to the students of the 78th Resident Course.

VISITS & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Visit to the HNDC and Lecture by the Chief of Hellenic Army General Staff

27 April 2026



On Monday 27 April 2026, the Chief of Hellenic Army General Staff, Lieutenant General Georgios Kostidis, visited Hellenic National Defence College, where he gave a lecture to the students of the 78th Resident Course on “Challenges, Prospects, and Strategic Objectives of the Hellenic Army”.

Visit to the HNDC and lecture by Chief of Hellenic National Defence General Staff, General Dimitrios Choupis

30 April 2026



On Thursday, 30 April 2026, the Chief of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff (HNDGS), General Dimitrios Choupis, visited the Hellenic National Defence College (HNDC), where he delivered a lecture to the students on issues concerning developments in the geostrategic environment, contemporary security challenges, and the mission of the Armed Forces.

During his speech, the Chief of HNDGS referred to geostrategic developments at both international and regional levels and their energy-related implications, in conjunction with the geopolitical significance of our country. He also spoke about modern forms of conflict, as well as the growing role of technology in them.

Furthermore, he emphasized the enduring contribution of the HNDC, which is celebrating 75 years of service in the education and development of leadership personnel for the Armed Forces.

Finally, he called upon the students, as they approach their graduation from the HNDC, to apply their knowledge in practice, thereby contributing through their decisions to the security and strategic planning of the Armed Forces.

(Photos HNDC Public Relations Department)

PURSUIITS:

The objective of the HNDC, through the semiannual publication of the journal *ATHENA*, is to strengthen scientific and public dialogue on issues related to national defense and security. At the same time, the journal aims to provide valid and up-to-date information to members of the Armed Forces, as well as to the broader academic and strategic community, regarding contemporary developments in the fields of national strategy, international security, and international relations.

The publication also seeks to cultivate analytical thinking, promote scientific research, and encourage the exploration of new ideas and approaches that may contribute to the improvement of strategic thinking and planning in defense and security matters.

Through the publication of papers, articles, and essays, as well as through the submission of critiques and proposals, the journal aspires to function as an open forum for the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and concerns. Its goal is to encourage the creative contribution of students, Armed Forces personnel, and members of the academic community, thereby contributing to the development of strategic thought and the dissemination of useful ideas on national defense and security.

THE HNDC REVIEW PUBLISHES:

Scientific studies and research papers related to national defense, security, and international relations.

Articles, analyses, essays, and case studies addressing issues of national strategy, defense, history, international security, international law, technology, education, and related fields of interest.

Proceedings of workshops, conferences, and other scientific events organized by the School.

Interviews with retired military officers and distinguished personalities.

Book reviews concerning subjects relevant to the College's areas of interest.

Presentations of the College's educational, academic, and other activities.

Articles, studies, and analyses by active-duty and retired Armed Forces personnel, drawing on their operational experience, professional expertise, and strategic perspective. Selected papers produced by students of the College.

Papers containing classified information or expressions inconsistent with the ethics and spirit of the College are not accepted for publication.

PUBLICATION TERMS:

Texts must be submitted electronically (in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format) to the editorial committee of the journal at the following email addresses: res1@hndc.mil.gr and res2@hndc.mil.gr.

The preferred length of articles ranges between 2,000 and 4,000 words. However, the editorial committee may review and approve the publication of shorter or longer texts where justified by the content. Submissions must include scientific documentation and bibliography.

Texts containing bibliographic references are recommended to follow the APA (American Psychological Association) citation style or another widely recognized academic referencing system.

Where necessary, articles may be accompanied by tables, maps, diagrams, or drawings, all of which should include a clear title and caption.

The use of photographs is permitted when they substantially contribute to a more comprehensive presentation of the subject.

Submitted texts are evaluated by the editorial committee of the journal with regard to relevance, scientific substantiation, and overall quality.

The committee reserves the right to propose corrections, abridgements, or formatting changes, in cooperation with the author, with the aim of improving the clarity and coherence of the publication.

Published articles and studies express exclusively the views of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of the College or the Armed Forces.

Papers containing classified information or content inconsistent with the ethics and spirit of the College are not accepted for publication.