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Multilateralism as Germany's Response to Change in International Order in the 21st Century

Introduction

The change of paradigms defining foreign policy of the main centers of power: the USA, Russia and China, along with the subsequent transformation of relations between these powers, influenced determinants of the global relations. They have transformed the political order and, due to the change of the canon of values and norms desirable in international relations, they have seriously undermined the foundations of formal and legal order. As a consequence, the remaining countries faced the necessity to redefine their global foreign policies.

The article deals with the attitude of Germany to changes in international order. The aim of the research process is to identify the main assumption of the German policy selected in response to the changes in the world and the coherence of the German approach with the European Union concept. First of all, the statements of present politicians and German diplomats (mainly the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany Heiko Maas and Chancellor Angela Merkel) and as well as EU officials (mainly the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker) were subject to analysis. In order to identify the previous German approach at work, the paper includes also references to the statements of the German Chancellors and the Ministers of the Federal Government of Germany from the 90s of the twentieth century.

Research is within the mainstream of constructivism. Germany is included in the group of "significant others" in the global game between power centers. According

to the accepted research assumption, the actors qualified as “significant others” are able – although not in a deterministic way – to influence the shape of relations between global centers of power. They exert a significant forming influence on the principles regulating relations in the environment of global centers of power, especially in international organizations, and exert impact on shaping the canon of values and norms deemed desirable by members of the international community.

Changes in the world order

According to the statement of Haiko Maas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, and the main author of the German foreign policy vision in the current international situation can be considered, “That world order that we once knew, had become accustomed to and sometimes felt comfortable in – this world order no longer exists”¹. At the same time, as Walter Ischinger, chairman of the Munich Security Conference and former German ambassador in the US sums up, the changes that are taking place today are an epochal turn, comparable to the collapse of the Soviet Union².

Significant changes shaping the new international order seem to include:

- reconfiguration of centers of global strength and relationships between them, including: the end of American leadership in the Western world, the breakdown of Western unity and calling into question transatlantic cooperation in all three main dimensions: security, politics and economy (Jean-Claude Juncker: “In today’s world, Europe can no longer be certain that words given yesterday can still be counted on today. That old alliances may not look the same tomorrow”³. Heiko Maas: “Donald Trump’s egoistic policy”⁴); the new role of Russia (Heiko Maas: “a Russian attack on international law and state sovereignty”⁵) and Chinese expansion resulting in a growing dependence of Europe on China;
- abandoning effective multilateralism and a comprehensive approach to the problems of the modern world for selective action resulting from current policies that produce: unilateral actions changing elements of world order, explicit application of double standards of conduct and flexible interpretation of legal norms and contracts (e.g. the non-proliferation regime of nuclear weapons, in which the US unilaterally changes relations with North Korea and Iran); the key words of new international relations are unilateralism, differentiation and flexibility of approach;

¹ *Speech by Foreign Minister Heiko Maas: “Courage to Stand Up for Europe – #EuropeUnited”, 13.06.2018, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/maas-europeunited/2106528> [accessed: 16.04.2019].*

² W. Ischinger, *Welt in Gefahr: Deutschland und Europa in unsicheren Zeiten*, Berlin 2018.

³ J.-C. Juncker, *State of the Union 2018. The Hour of European Sovereignty*, European Parliament, 12.09.2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/soteu2018-speech_en_0.pdf [accessed: 16.04.2019].

⁴ *Speech by..., op. cit.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

- dethronement of the leading foreign policy values of democratic countries (democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, humanitarian solidarity) leading to change in relation to the perpetrators of conflicts in the modern world, actively supporting bloody regimes with passive acceptance of this state of affairs by other global actors (conflict in Syria, Russian support for Bashar Al-Assad and passive EU reaction), as well as restrictions on admitted refugees;
- contesting the liberal economic order and globalization of trade, leading to protectionism and customs reprisals;
- proliferation of the use of armed force (mainly in the Middle East and North Africa) changing the security conditions of states and regions, especially of the European Union;
- growing acceptance of the violation of international law in the name of political pragmatism, meaning consent to acts of aggression in the name of current, utilitarian benefits (proposals to abolish sanctions imposed on Russia for a double attack on Ukraine).

The most important changes that define the newly emerging world order seem to be for Germany: the resignation of the US from multilateral international politics and the end of American leadership in the Western world and the contestation of the liberal economic order and democratic values, because these changes lead to the liquidation of mutual trust in international allied relations.

Multilateralism as the German response to “America first”

Changes in international relations mean for Germany the loss of one of the two key pillars of German post-war foreign policy. Until now, the global policy of the Federal Republic of Germany defined two main features: a developed European integration project and good transatlantic relations. At present, it seems that the first of the pillars has become the core of German global activity, and striving to strengthen the European Union and make it a significant global player the basic goal of German foreign policy. The second one was redefined for the strong cooperation of the remaining countries of the Western hemisphere, which is complemented by Germany's multi-faceted cooperation with countries from different regions of the world, uniting around shared goals, especially peaceful, humanitarian and pro-environmental ones, and significant German activity on the forum of international organizations. It can therefore be assumed that Germany's response to changes taking place in the global order is a stronger multilateralism, which in recent years has been elevated to the role of Germany's flagship response to the unilateral manner of conducting policy by American President Donald Trump. Germany has become the global leader of multilateral politics. At the same time, the German concept has also been Europeanized.

Germany's preferences for practicing global politics in a multilateral way are considered a permanent element of Germany's foreign policy before and after the reunification of Germany. The character of the German multilateral relations with other countries seems to exhaust not only the classic definition of Robert O. Keohan, who

considers multilateralism as “the practice of coordinating national policies in a group of three and more countries”⁶, but also of John G. Ruggie, who stresses the importance of the relationship between states and believes that “multilateralism is based on the principle of refraining from using a weaker partner by a stronger partner” and on cooperation between them in order to achieve the chosen goal⁷. The German multilateral policy is characterized by the will to cooperate.

Since the unification of Germany, the multilateral nature of politics is an element constituting the German presence on the international arena. Helmut Kohl, acting in 1998 at the 34th Munich Security Conference, called for “cooperation, integration, dialogue and confidence building” and considered these activities as characteristics of German foreign policy⁸. From the analysis of speeches of German politicians (Helmut Kohl, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Joschka Fischer, Rupert Scholz, Gerhard Schröder, Angela Merkel, Heiko Maas) it appears that the understanding of the need for multilateral involvement of Germany has changed over the last three decades and has gained – apart from the custom – also a utilitarian justification⁹. Gerhard Schröder in 1999 stated that “our support for effective multilateral structures within the EU, NATO, OSCE and UN is based on the awareness that these structures are the best safeguards against unilateralism and hegemonic aspirations”¹⁰. Over the years, the understanding of the benefits of multilateral policy has expanded and deepened. Intensification of contacts within multilateral organizations (regional and global) and progressive tightening of ties and integration with closer partners and allies gave Germany the opportunity to strengthen their impact on international relations. Already in 1998, Klaus Kinkel stated:

Only Europe has a ‘critical mass’ to actually influence development on a global scale. Only inside within and with Europe, we Germany can influence the realization of our interests. For this reason, I tell eurosceptics: in a multi-polar world, we need more Europe, no less¹¹.

The same opinion was presented in 1999 by G. Schröder, who stated that due to globalization, “credible and effective assurance of interests is only possible on

⁶ R.O. Keohan, ‘Multilateralism. An Agenda for Research’, *International Journal*, 1999, no. 4 (45), p. 731.

⁷ J.G. Ruggie, *Multilateralism matters. The theory and practice of institutional form*, New York 1993, p. 11.

⁸ H. Kohl, ‘Sicherheit für die Zukunft. Rede des Bundeskanzlers Dr. Helmut Kohl bei der 34. Müncher Konferenz für Sicherheitspolitik am 7. Februar 1998 in München’, *Bulletin, Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung*, 1998, 15, p. 170.

⁹ R. Bauman, ‘The Transformation of German Multilateralism. Changes in a foreign policy discourse since unification’, *German Politics & Society*, 2002, vol. 20, no. 4 (65), pp. 1–26.

¹⁰ G. Schröder, ‘Die Grundkoordinaten deutscher Außenpolitik sind unverändert: Frieden und Sicherheit und stabiles Umfeld für Wohlstand festigen. Rede von Bundeskanzler Schröder bei der 37. Kommandeurstagung der Bundeswehr in Hamburg (CCH) am 29. November 1999’, *Bulletin, Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung*, 1999, 83, p. 786.

¹¹ K. Kinkel, ‘Deutsche Außenpolitik im Zeitalter der Globalisierung. Rede des Bundesministers des Auswärtigen, Dr. Klaus Kinkel anlässlich der Vortragsreihe der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik e.V. (DGAP) zum Thema „Reden zur Außenpolitik der Berliner Republik“ am 1. Juli 1998 in Berlin’, *Bulletin, Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung*, 1998, 51, p. 659.

a European basis. For this reason, the federal government will continue to be the driving force behind European integration”¹².

For decades, the construction of a new post-Cold War international order based on sustainable foundations of the institutionalization of international relations and mutual respect and cooperation of states in responding to challenges and threats to global processes of peace and security and cooperation of win-win in international economic relations seemed to be safe. In the Western hemisphere, the cooperative procedures developed between transatlantic partners constituted the framework for global state policy. Rejection of the paradigm of cooperation in the Western hemisphere by the US, with the start of the Donald Trump presidency, and the adoption of the unilateral doctrine of America's priority, has changed the relationship with partner and cooperative to competitive and confrontational. It also forced the remaining states of the transatlantic community (and the EU) to re-determine the nature of their further foreign policy.

The slogan and symbol proposed by Germany (Heiko Maas) as a response to the confrontational policy of Donald Trump became “#EuropeUnited”. It was coined after the stormy G7 summit in La Malbaie, Canada (June 7th–8th, 2018). Heiko Maas asked the public in a suggestive question, “Will the European flag become a new banner of the free world, just as there used to be US stars and stripes?” It preceded his conclusion that at present Europe has the responsibility to save the multilateral world order and free trade and to introduce protection against climate change, the challenges of digitization, migration and social problems related to globalization. This obligation can only be fulfilled if Europe remains united and able to pursue an effective foreign policy.

(...) with only just over five percent of this number in the EU. (...) Only when these five percent are united will we have any chance of being able to influence things in this changing world of ours. This is why our common response to “America First” today must be “Europe United”!¹³

This slogan has been widely disseminated by German diplomacy in the intergovernmental forum and in the societies of EU Member States (including through social media). The call for unity in Europe Heiko Maas has repeated on many occasions, also during the discussions in the European Parliament on September 12th, 2018¹⁴. The German minister said that in the face of divisions and particular interests of the powers, Europe's response would not be unilateralism and differentiation, but still unity and multilateralism. In the speeches of the German diplomatic service, three main adjectives defining the policy of the European Union desired by Germany were heard: united, strong and sovereign.

¹² G. Schröder, ‘Regierungserklärung von Bundeskanzler Gerhard Schröder zum bevorstehenden Europäischen Rat in Helsinki am 10./11. September 1999 vor dem Deutschen Bundestag am 3. Dezember 1999’, *Bulletin, Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung*, 1999, 85, p. 805.

¹³ *Speech by...*, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ *Heiko Maas podczas debaty w Parlamencie Europejskim*, 12.09.2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/soteu2018-speech_en_0.pdf [accessed: 16.04.2019].

The Europeanization of the German vision

The vision of united Europe outlined by Heiko Maas was europeanized by the European Commission. Jean-Claude Juncker in the European Parliament addressing the role of Europe in the world used the words: “The world today needs a strong and united Europe”. To determine the EU’s desired role of Jean-Claude Juncker used the German word *Weltpolitikfähigkeit*, meaning the ability to shape international relations in a global dimension. “It is time Europe took its destiny into its own hands”, “The hour of European sovereignty”. “Should we not [let], our immediate neighbourhood will be shaped by others”. “Europe can no longer be a spectator or a mere commentator of international events. Europe must be an active player, an architect of tomorrow’s world”¹⁵. Jean-Claude Juncker presents a vision of the new role of the European Union in the modern world in accordance with the concept of Heiko Maas. It seems that Germany had a significant impact on the vision of Jean-Claude Juncker. The text of the speech of the President of the European Commission contains assumptions and proposals regarding the international role of the EU, identical to earlier proposals of German diplomacy. The adjectives “united”, “strong” and sovereign – dominant in the Juncker’s speech – referred to the European Union. This vision of the Union was promoted by the Federal Republic of Germany.

According to Jean-Claude Juncker Europe must be more autonomous in its activities and must become a global player – a center of strength in international relations – from a global payer. There are challenges facing the Union, which today – after significant reduction of the current US involvement – no other international actor from the liberal Western world will take. These include, among others: ensuring security for citizens of EU countries, defining the international order in the zone of the EU Neighborhood (Balkans) and the Near Abroad (Syria), stabilization of humanitarian crises as well as protection of jobs in Europe, climate protection and global digitization. Leaving these challenges without regulation will jeopardize the future security and prosperity of the continent. The President of the European Commission declares the arrival of the “hour of European sovereignty”, which he presents as the independence of EU action in international relations and leads it out of the sovereignty of individual Member States. Jean-Claude Juncker, however, stipulates that EU sovereignty is not intended to replace the sovereignty of the Member States and is to be a shared EU sovereignty.

Europe from the vision of Jean-Claude Juncker – *a contrario* USA – is not committed to “selfish unilateralism,” but remains a supporter of multilateral action and compliance with agreements concluded, especially those concerning peace and security, trade agreements and stable exchange rates. The President of the EC presents multilateralism as the essence of the EU’s action in international relations and refers it not only to the way of negotiating, but above all to the shared responsibility of Europe for solving global problems. Juncker reserves that Europe cannot become same here either a fortress or an island and cannot “turning its back on the world or those suffering within it”. Europe should remain tolerant and open, because “the world we live in belongs to all and not a select few”¹⁶.

¹⁵ J.-C. Juncker, *op. cit.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

However, the possibility of fulfilling a global role is conditioned by the unity of the EU Member States and the strength of the united Union. J.-C. Juncker emphasizes that “Europe is too small to let itself be divided in halves or quarters”, It is time we put an end to the sorry spectacle of a divided Europe [into the post- Cold War East and West]”. Only “strong and united Union”¹⁷, which the EC President has repeatedly emphasized, can meet the current challenges that other actors want to shape in a way that is unacceptable to the EU.

According to Heiko Maas concept, Germany is to be the driving force behind joining and a pillar of the European Union Member States unity:

We therefore cannot allow Europe to disintegrate into separate groups today or to establish new borders. We must heal the rifts that have emerged in our Union in recent years – between North and South and West and East.

Germany must offer Europe the willingness to overcome what divides us. We want to be a guarantor of the inner unity and strength of Europe so that Europe is better able to fulfil the hopes of Europeans and the expectations of the world¹⁸.

Germany also has the will to speak for Europe on the global forum. Even before taking up the function of an unstable member of the UN Security Council, the foreign minister of Germany declared: “That is why we will set out to make our United Nations Security Council membership in 2019/20 a European membership (...) we also want to speak on behalf of all EU Member States from January 1st, 2019”¹⁹.

Germany's global multilateralism

From the beginning of Donald Trump's assumption of the presidency, German politicians, especially Chancellor Angela Merkel and Heiko Maas, have constantly called for a multilateral policy on the global forum and maintaining a culture of cooperation between states. Many symbolic acts sought to signal the need for cooperation, made efforts to involve states in cooperation in solving global problems and sought to consolidate the current multilateral framework of global cooperation. The appeal of Germany for action taken by Heiko Mass during the session of the UN General Assembly echoed widely. The Minister, assessing the challenges facing the UN, stated in it that: ‘It becomes clear that we are indeed faced with a crisis – the crisis of multilateralism. And this crisis makes conflicts around the world appear irresolvable. When I say they “appear” irresolvable, this reflects the faith we Germans have in multilateralism”. Maas recalled the post-war history of Germany and Europe as an example of the “success of multilateralism” and stated that “the fact that it was this Europe that was able to become one of the United Nations' most important partners is a triumph of multilateralism. We believe in the United Nations because international cooperation changed our own fate for the better”²⁰. By declaring an increase in commitment

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Speech by..., op. cit.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Speech by Foreign Minister Maas at the General Debate of the 73rd General Assembly of the United Nations*, 28.09.2018, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/maas-general-assembly-un/2142300> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

to the UN, the German minister said in New York that “We Germans can have no interest in a ‘jungle growing back’ in the world order”²¹.

Currently, the most important forum for Germany’s global presence is the United Nations. From January 1st, 2019, Germany is a non-permanent member of the Security Council. The presidency of the Security Council held by Germany in April 2019 was aimed at emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in responding to the challenges of the modern world. The symbol of this activity was the close cooperation between Germany and France, which – as the first countries in the history of the Security Council – agreed a joint agenda for two consecutive presidencies (France in March and Germany in April). This action – according to German diplomacy – was supposed not only to be a proof of cooperation between European Union members, but also a way to promote “multilateral cooperation in international politics”²².

Similarly, within the G20 group, which remains an important forum for international dialogue, Germany emphasizes the importance of multilateralism. Their annual chairmanship in the G20 (from December 2016) was conducted under the slogan of “shaping an interconnected world”. Even before Germany assumed the presidency, Angela Merkel pointed out that “closing in and focusing on your own country has always been harmful in history. (...) If we act on our own, each for ourselves, then we will not solve the problems of the world”²³. It seems, however, that the chancellor at that time did not underestimate the scale of changes in American foreign policy, which will be introduced by Donald Trump. Summing up the German presidency of the G20 during the Davos summit in 2018, Angela Merkel said: “We tried to foster global cooperation in what is not a particularly easy time”²⁴. She also defined the German attitude to protectionism and unilateralism:

Germany (...) wants to be a country that continues to play its part in the future in order to solve tomorrow’s problems by working together in the world. We believe that isolation is not constructive. We believe that we need to cooperate and that protectionism is not the right answer. And we believe that if we think things are not being run fairly and mechanisms are not reciprocal, then we should seek multilateral solutions, and not unilateral responses, which ultimately only serve to further isolation and protectionism²⁵.

²¹ *#strongerUNited*, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/internationale-organisationen/vereintenationen/maas-un-stronger-united/2140488> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

²² *Germany’s Security Council Presidency: Heiko Maas in New York*, 1.04.2019, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/internationale-organisationen/vereintenationen/security-council-presidency/2205172> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

²³ *Niemcy obejmują przewodnictwo G20. Szczyt przywódców w lipcu w Hamburgu*, <https://www.bankier.pl/wiadomosc/Niemcy-obejmaja-przewodnictwo-G20-Szczyt-przywocow-w-lipcu-w-Hamburgu-3622184.html> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

²⁴ *Speech by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos on 24 January 2018*, <https://m.bundestkanzlerin.de/bkinm-en/news/speech-by-federal-chancellor-angela-merkel-at-the-world-economic-forum-annual-meeting-in-davos-on-24-january-2018-455144> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

²⁵ *Ibid.*

This stance was also confirmed by Angela Merkel a year later, at the next Davos summit (January 23rd, 2019), where she stated that “I for one stand before you as someone who values multilateralism and multilateral institutions and believes them to be indispensable if the world is to thrive”, she declared Germany’s active actions to protect the multilateral world order²⁶:

That is why I and my colleagues in the German cabinet will champion a multilateral order which does not end at the European Union, but which is capable of giving really good responses to the new global challenges. However, that means that we must take care not to ruin the existing order so much that no-one believes in the validity of new parameters any more²⁷.

The year 2018 can be seen as a breakthrough for German diplomacy in terms of the development and implementation of the concept of defense of the multilateral world order. One of the most important initiatives of this year, successively continued and – it seems that more and more widely supported on the international arena – is inaugurated on July 25th, 2012 by Heiko Maas during his visit to Japan the idea of creating a multilateralist alliance, whose heart may be Germany and Japan (“Germany and Japan have the potential to be at the heart of an alliance of multilateralists”²⁸). The alliance includes:

- defending existing rules and developing them when necessary;
- showing solidarity when international law is being broken in the immediate surroundings of other countries;
- filling the vacuum that appeared after the withdrawal of other countries from many parts of the international arena;
- taking action to protect the climate as one of the most important challenges facing the international community;
- acceptance of co-responsibility – political and financial – in international organizations;
- compliance with international law, including maintaining the arms control regime.

According to the postulate of Heiko Maas, the alliance of multilateralists is intended to strengthen the postulates of smaller countries from different regions of the world, which in a confrontational and competitive international environment may have a problem with achieving their goals.

In his speech in Japan, Heiko Maas stressed that “At the end of the day, each and every international order is based on one thing, namely on trust. And trust only emerges when treaties are upheld and when promises made today aren’t broken again tomorrow”. Regarding Germany and Japan, he stated that “If we pool our

²⁶ *Rede von Bundeskanzlerin Merkel zur 49. Jahrestagung des Weltwirtschaftsforums am 23. Januar 2019 in Davos*, <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/aktuelles/rede-von-bundeskanzlerin-merkel-zur-49-jahrestagung-des-weltwirtschaftsforums-am-23-januar-2019-in-davos-1572920> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Heiko Maas at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo, Japan*, 25.07.2018, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/maas-japan/2121846> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

strengths – and we can do so to a greater extent than we have done in the past – perhaps we can become something like “rule shapers”, who design and drive an international order that the world urgently needs”. He also stated that “(...) in fact we do not live in blissful isolation” and the current uncertainty is compounded by US policy (“the United States’ course under President Trump, who also calls alliances that have developed over decades into question in 280-character tweets”), Russia (which “has openly challenged the world order through its illegal annexation of Crimea and its conduct in the conflict in Syria and elsewhere”) and China (which “wants to shift the geopolitical balance of power to its own advantage and is demanding what I would describe as allegiance from many countries in its neighbourhood”)²⁹.

The initiative presented by Heiko Maas consists in constructing a network of states declaring foreign policy with respect for liberal values, i.e. cooperation, free trade without unjustified protectionism or respect for international law, as well as strengthening international organizations and institutions guarding the existing – multilateral – order international: United Nations, groups: G7 and G20. By the end of 2018, the initiative of Heiko Maas supported – as the framework states: Japan, South Korea and Canada. The Germans have also started cooperation, among others with Australia, Argentina, Mexico, Norway and South Africa. In 2019, France joined the ‘alliance of multilateralists’. In a joint article of French and German foreign ministers, Jean-Yves Le Drian and Heiko Maas, published on February 14th, 2019, both countries concluded that “the multilateral order is experiencing its perhaps gravest crisis since its emergence after the Second World War”³⁰. Ministers agreed that the basic values of the modern order are at stake: trust and commitment, the pursuit of joint solutions and the existence and functioning of international institutions. They may not survive the rivalry between major world centers of strength and be overcome by nationalism, which reverses the process of cooperation and leads to the “increasingly fragmented world order – in political, economic and social terms”³¹. Both states declared a joint presidency in the “Alliance for Multilateralism” and the central role of the European Union in it. France and Germany have pledged to support multilateralism also through treaty. One of the objectives enshrined in these countries by the Treaty of Aachen, signed on December 1st, 2019, is to strengthen international cooperation.

The opinion about the destruction of the global formal and legal order, based on the progressive institutionalization of subsequent areas of international relations and respect for international law, was also shared by Chancellor A. Merkel. During the 55th Munich Security Conference (15th–17th February 2019), she referred to the process of disintegration of international structures and – recalling the rivalry between the great powers – stated that “something that we regarded as a whole, as an architecture of the world, is under pressure, and is even likened to a puzzle,

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ J.-Y. Le Drian, ‘H. Maas, Who, if not us?’, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14.02.2019, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/maas-le-drian-sueddeutsche/2189696> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

³¹ *Ibid.*

i.e. something that breaks up into pieces"³². After addressing the challenges and problems in the political, military and economic dimensions of security (including the annexation of Crimea and the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, problems with arms control and disarmament, including the ending of the INF Treaty, conflicts and instability in Africa and the Middle East, war against terrorism, US unilateralism, economic competition between China, the USA and Europe) added:

all these issues that are coming at us like puzzle pieces (...) are ultimately the expression of a fundamental question. Because we are noticing how great the pressure is on our traditional and, to us, familiar order, this raises the question of whether we are going to break up into a lot of individual puzzle pieces (...). As German Chancellor, I can only respond: if so, our chances are poor (...) The one big question is this: Are we going to stay with the principle of multilateralism, which was the lesson we learned from the Second World War and the National Socialism caused by Germany, even when multilateralism is not always fun, but often difficult, slow, complicated? (...) the right response to the motto of this conference "The Great Puzzle: Who Will Pick Up the Pieces?": Only all of us together³³.

The German and French diagnosis of the current state of international relations is shared not only by countries included in the multilateralist network, but also by the European Union acting as a whole. The EU position presented during the open debate in the UN Security Council regarding the strengthening of the multilateral order (United Nations Security Council: Open Debate on Strengthening Multilateralism and the role of the UN), which took place on November 9th, 2018, remains unambiguous. João Vale de Almeida, head of the EU delegation to the UN, said:

We live in an interconnected and rapidly changing world. As such, we need commonly agreed rules and effective global institutions to ensure stability, security, respect for Human Rights, prosperity and development. A rules-based international order is a safeguard for everyone, not a constraint. It acts as an enabler for both large and small nations alike to benefit from a safer, fairer and more sustainable world. Protectionism and unilateralism are not the answer. (...) In a multipolar world, multilateralism is not only a more equal and democratic way to deal with international affairs. It is also the only realistic way to address national interests. We, Europeans, have advanced our national interests in the last 60 years. Not in spite of multilateralism but through multilateralism. The European Union is a demonstration that this approach works as a force multiplier³⁴.

³² Rede von Bundeskanzlerin Merkel zur 55. Münchner Sicherheitskonferenz am 16. Februar 2019 in München, <https://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/bkin-de/aktuelles/rede-von-bundeskanzlerin-merkel-zur-55-muenchner-sicherheitskonferenz-am-16-februar-2019-in-muenchen-1580936> [accessed: 16.04.2019].

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ EU Statement – United Nations Security Council: Open Debate on Strengthening Multilateralism and the role of the UN, 9.11.2018, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/53544/eu-statement-united-nations-security-council-open-debate-strengthening-multilateralism-and_en [accessed: 16.04.2019].

Conclusions

As a consequence of significant changes in international relations, in particular: US implementation of assumptions about the unilateral nature of their foreign policy and America questioning the liberal values in global political and economic relations, further US leadership in the Western world has been questioned. Along with these changes, the Federal Republic of Germany lost its good transatlantic relations, which – together with the deepened and extended cooperation of the European Union Member States – determined the shape of the global presence of Germany. After the transformation of the character of American foreign policy by the administration of President Donald Trump, the European Union has become the main channel for the transmission of German interests on a global scale.

Germany perceives the EU as the right entity capable of providing an adequate response to the slogan “America first”. They call for strengthening the construction of a strong, sovereign and united Europe – “Europe united”. Together with the European Commission and EU Member States (especially with France) and with non-EU countries (mainly with Japan), Germany promotes the use of multilateral solutions in global politics. Established by Heiko Maas in 2018, the “multilateralist alliance” assumes the cooperation of states striving to defend the multilateral world order and the existing norms and values governing it: cooperation, free trade, respect for international law and cooperation within and through international organizations. Significant support for the “multilateralist alliance” expressed by France and the European Union in January and February 2019 can be considered as a positive prognosis for the future effectiveness of the influence of the mode of action promoted by Germany on the international arena. It seems that this alliance can have a significant forming influence on the catalog of rules and norms desirable in the international arena and regulating relations in the environment of global centers of power.

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Multilateralizm jako odpowiedź Niemiec na zmiany w porządku międzynarodowym w XXI wieku *Streszczenie*

Zmiana paradygmatów definiujących politykę zagraniczną głównych ośrodków siły: USA, Rosji i Chin, wraz z następującym po niej przekształceniem stosunków pomiędzy tymi mocarstwami wpłynęły determinująco na układ relacji w skali globalnej. Przekształciły ładu polityczny oraz, ze względu na zmianę kanonu pożądanych w międzynarodowych relacjach wartości i norm, poważnie nadwyrężyły podstawy ładu formalnoprawnego. Artykuł traktuje o stosunku Niemiec do zmian w ładzie międzynarodowym. Celem procesu badawczego jest identyfikacja głównego założenia niemieckiej polityki wyłonionego w odpowiedzi na zaistniałe przemiany na świecie oraz ocena koherentności niemieckiego podejścia z koncepcją Unii Europejskiej.

Słowa kluczowe: multilateralizm, polityka globalna RFN, UE, Heiko Maas, „America first”, „Europe united”, stosunki transatlantyckie

Multilateralism as Germany's Response to Change in International Order in the 21st Century *Abstract*

The change of paradigms defining the foreign policy of the main centers of power: the US, Russia and China, along with the subsequent transformation of relations between these powers, determined global relations. They have transformed the political order and, due to the change of the canon of values and norms desirable in international relations, have seriously undermined the foundations of formal and legal order. Article deals with Germany's attitude to the changes in the international order. The aims of the research process are: Identification of the main assumption of the German policy selected in response to the changes occurring in the world and Assessment of the coherence of the German and EU approach.

Key words: multilateralism, German global politics, EU, Heiko Maas, “America first”, “Europe united”, transatlantic relations

Multilateralismus als Antwort Deutschlands auf den Wandel der Weltordnung im 21. Jahrhundert *Kurzfassung*

Der Paradigmenwechsel, der die Außenpolitik der wichtigsten zentralen Mächte definiert: die USA, Russland und China sowie die anschließende Transformation der Beziehungen zwischen diesen Mächten bestimmten die globalen Beziehungen. Sie haben die politische Ordnung verändert und durch die Änderung des Wertekanons und der Normen, die in den internationalen Beziehungen wünschenswert sind, die Grundlagen der formellen und rechtlichen Ordnung ernsthaft untergraben. Der Beitrag befasst sich mit der Haltung Deutschlands zu Veränderungen in der internationalen Ordnung. Die

Ziele des Forschungsprozesses sind: Identifizierung der Hauptannahme der deutschen Politik als Reaktion auf die Veränderungen in der Welt und Bewertung der Kohärenz des deutschen und des EU-Ansatzes.

Schlüsselwörter: Multilateralismus, deutsche Weltpolitik, EU, Heiko Maas, „America first“, „Europe united“, transatlantische Beziehungen

Мультилатерализм – ответ Германии на изменения международного порядка в XXI веке

Резюме

Смена парадигм, определяющих внешнюю политику главных центров власти: США, России и Китая и вытекающих отсюда преобразований отношений между этими государствами, коренным образом повлияли на систему отношений в глобальном масштабе. Они изменили политический порядок, канон существующих в международных отношениях ценностей и норм, серьезно повлияли на формально-юридические основы мирового порядка. В статье рассмотрено отношение Германии к изменениям в международном порядке. Цель исследовательского процесса – указать основные предпосылки немецкой политики, сформулированные в ответ на происходящие перемены в мире, и оценить когерентность немецкого подхода и концепций Европейского Союза.

Ключевые слова: мультилатерализм, глобальная политика ФРГ, ЕС, Хейко Маас, «America first», «Europe united», трансатлантические отношения

