

Postscript

On a sunny morning in July 2017, I stood at the railing of the New York City Ferry on my way across the East River from Williamsburg to Manhattan for the TPN Negotiating Conference held at the United Nations Headquarters. Like many others, I enjoyed the panoramic view of the city. An elderly lady assumed I was a tourist and wanted to show me something she thought was very special. She did not direct my gaze to One World Trade Center, the Chrysler Building, or the Empire State Building, but drew my attention to a relatively inconspicuous, almost negligible tower block in the so-called “International Style”. Unaware that I knew this building all too well, she explained to me that this was the United Nations, where all the countries of the world come together to discuss problems.

I am writing this book at a time when, in my personal opinion, the danger of nuclear weapons being used is high. The five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and NPT nuclear weapon states are engaged in several serious geopolitical conflicts especially along their demarcation lines – in the Eastern European border region with Russia, in the Taiwan Strait and on the Korean Peninsula – which harbor the potential for nuclear escalation. I live in a country that would be involved very quickly in case of a nuclear proxy war between the United States and Russia, due to NATO’s nuclear sharing arrangements within the framework of extended deterrence. While military preparedness and nuclear capabilities have been expanded both in the Russian sphere of influence (Belarus) and among United States allies, the spaces for diplomatic exchange and political discussion are shrinking. But we need to keep talking.

