

The European Union Intervention Policy in Ethnic  
Conflicts:  
The Cases of South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-  
Karabakh, Transnistria and Cyprus

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## Abstract

The European Union is concerned by ethnic conflicts, especially those that are on its borders and can threaten the security of the EU from outside and inside. Examining the cases of South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria and Cyprus, this research investigates to what extent the European Union is committed to ethnic conflict resolution. Hypothesizing that *1. EU direct involvement in the conflict resolution process is more successful than the mediated efforts* and *2. the failure of the European Union to assist territorial entities sharpens the secessionist trends*. The theories of third party intervention, credible commitment theory and the costs and benefits theory form the theoretical framework of my research. The review of the literature formed bases to understand the EU policies and tools deployed for the conflict prevention in the cases selected, on which the applied theoretical framework created strong bases to make conclusions. The concluding remarks of my research provide broad observations based on the cases studied. The results show that the EU direct involvement in the conflict resolution process is more effective: in the conflict of Transnistria EU has had a positive effect, guaranteeing maximum communication between Moldova and Transnistria, and Moldova and Russia, whereas the EU non-involvement in the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh shows no significant step towards the settlement promoted by the EU. Rejecting the second hypothesis the argument is that EU assistance – substantial or not - does not affect on the conflicting territories' decision to take the path of secession.

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## Introduction

The European Union, as an emerging power in the international relations, is concerned with the solution of ethnic conflicts, especially those that are on its borders or close to the borders and can threaten the security of the EU from outside and inside. The evidence of this is the EU involvement in the different conflict settlement processes with different tools and mechanisms. Meanwhile it is important to note that conflict resolution is intrinsically a fragile process: there are many parties involved in ethnic conflicts; different economic, political and cultural interests clash over the conflicting territories and complicate the process of the conflict settlement with multi-tieredness and race for getting more benefits from the prevention, resolution or keeping the status quo of the conflicts.

EU intervention in ethnic conflicts has been addressed by different authors: one of the brilliant scholars of the field, Stefan Wolff, in his different books, articles and co-authored articles addresses third-party intervention in its theoretical perspective<sup>1</sup> and the EU intervention policies in ethnic conflict management.<sup>2</sup> Annemarie Peen Rodt and Stefan Wolff consider the EU intervention in ethnic conflicts as a matter of investing in the democratization, human rights protection, rule of law for the sake of creation of non-discriminatory environment for all the citizens and to secure the states' and the citizens rights.<sup>3</sup>

The research is constructed around the question: to what extent is the European Union committed to ethnic conflict resolution?

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: A global perspective*, (Oxford University Press: New York 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Annemarie Peen Rodt and Stefan Wolff, *The EU and the management of ethnic conflict*, in *Institutions for the Management of Ethnopolitical Conflict in Central and Eastern Europe*, Minority Issues Handbook, Council of Europe, June 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 245

The relevance of the research and the questions I raise are explained with the still ongoing tough ethnic conflicts, which from time to time erupt into violent clashes, causing destructions, violations of human rights and death. In order to explain EU intervention policy in different conflicts I have limited the cases to five, based on several assumptions, in order to have similarity between the conflicts and variety. The conflicts observed and compared are three conflicts of the South Caucasus – the conflicts of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh, and the conflicts of Transnistria and Cyprus. It is important to note that the conflicts are observed isolated from other third-party intervention observations: the only third-party involved in the analysis of the conflicts is the European Union and the time slot of the observation of conflicts starts from the 1990s because major changes in EU policy towards the involvement in selected cases was observed since the beginning of the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The purpose of this research is to find credible answers to the questions via testing the hypotheses drawn from the combination of the theory and the case studies. In my research I introduce two hypotheses; the testing of which, I believe, will lead to partially answer the research questions. I must emphasize that the conclusions will be partial, because 5 cases are not a satisfactory number of conflicts to generalize the conclusions to overall EU commitment to all ethnic conflicts and the assessment of its success.

*Hypothesis 1: EU direct intervention in the conflict resolution process rather than mediated efforts successfully contributes to the conflict settlement process.*

*Hypothesis 2: The failure of the European Union to assist territorial entities sharpens the secessionist trends.*

The methodology of the research conducted is the literature review, in order to be able to make solid theoretical bases for the further analysis. In-depth case studies are drawn from the EU officially deployed peacekeeping forces' description and the literature assessing the the

effectiveness of the EU intervention in the certain conflicts. As far as the research is qualitative the discussion of the results is based on the comparison of the cases and the application of the theory to the cases analyzed and presented in the context of EU involvement in the conflict settlement process.

In the first chapter I make detailed analysis of the theoretical background, which will serve as the backbone to apply the theory to the cases, and construct a meaningful comparison. The theoretical framework for the research counts the third party intervention theory, credible commitment theory, the theory of costs and benefits and the mediation theory which help explaining EU involvement in the conflict resolution process. After introducing the main definitions and concepts by different authors, firstly I refer to the third-party intervention theory, which is the main theory on which the whole logic of EU intervention policy is constructed. Based on the costs and benefits of the intervention in different conflicts for both sides I will assume and express myself in favor of using sanctions and embargoes for the conflict prevention and clear identification of preference in the scopes of Walter's positive discrimination logic.<sup>4</sup> The credible commitment theory is at the meantime creating assumptions for the successful conflict resolution process, ensuring the commitment of the third party to the conflict and the conflicting parties' commitment to the benefits offered by the third-party to keep the status-quo or to change the state of the affairs.

The second chapter includes the in-depth case studies. I review the literature, the official documents and the speeches, in order to identify all possible EU tools and mechanisms existing to address the conflicts, leading to comparisons. Talking about the South Caucasus it is important to note that EU established closer contacts with the region in 2004, bringing the borders even closer to the region famous with "frozen" conflicts, instability and the lack of

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<sup>4</sup> Walter, *The Critical Barrier*, p. 362 in Stephen M. Saideman, *Overlooking the Obvious: Bringing International Politics Back into Ethnic Conflict Management*, International Studies Review, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), p. 74.

democratic governance<sup>5</sup>. The significant increase of the role of the EU in the region coincided with the EU Eastern Enlargement in 2007 becoming a family of 27 states, when Turkey's candidacy for membership was raised: the borders of the EU would need significant safety measures to be taken in order to ensure prosperous deepening process. Meanwhile the EU enlargement in 2007 made the Union face another conflict –Transnistria. The conflict of Cyprus has a different time scope, but the time when the EU got more involved in the conflict resolution process was the 1990s, coinciding with the time, when the EU addressed the conflicts of South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria.

In the third chapter I make comparisons and draw conclusions, while testing the aforementioned hypotheses and evaluating the EU policies and intervention in ethnic conflicts, its failures and successes and the possible paths leading to more committed involvement in conflict resolution process.

A short conclusion will become the discussion of the results of the hypotheses tested: at the meantime I expect that first hypothesis will not be rejected, but the second hypothesis will be rejected.

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<sup>5</sup> Christoph Zurcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the South Caucasus*, (U.S. A. New York: New York University 2007) ,p. 1.

## Chapter 1. Theoretical Background and Literature Review

The conflicts of the South Caucasus - the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh and the conflicts of Abkhazia and South Ossetia – and the conflict of Transnistria gained international dimension after the collapse of the Soviet Union, meanwhile the conflict of Cyprus has been addressed by the European Union after the 1990s, when the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) applied for EU membership. The resolution of the conflicts has gained the attention of different states, international organizations and powers. The European Union designed its policy towards the South Caucasus and Transnistria after the collapse of the Soviet Union, stressing the necessity to resolve the conflicts in the region and later caring about the stability and the safety of the EU borders on the East, where the conflicts could become the threat to the safety of the EU periphery, meanwhile the EU attention to the conflict of Cyprus coincides with the same time slot – 1990s.

Approaching the main topic it is necessary to define the term conflict. Stefan Wolff describes conflict as a “situation in which two or more actors pursue incompatible ... goals.”<sup>6</sup> The broader term for the word ethnic mentioned by Horowitz includes religion, tribe, caste, language, race, etc.<sup>7</sup> Stavenhagen describes conflict as "a confrontation (at any level: political, social, military) in which the contending actors or parties identify themselves or each other (or are so identified by outsiders) in ethnic terms, that is, using ethnic criteria.”<sup>8</sup> The definition of Brown describes the ethnic conflict as based on the important political, economic, social, cultural and territorial differences between two or more ethnic

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<sup>6</sup> Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: A global perspective* (Oxford University Press: USA, New York, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society: India and Beyond*, World Politics, Vol. 53, No. 3 (Apr., 2001), p. 364.

<sup>8</sup> Stavenhagen, R. 1990. *The ethnic question*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press, p. 15 in Errol A. Henderson, *Culture or Contiguity: Ethnic Conflict, the Similarity of States, and the Onset of War, 1820-1989*, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 41, No. 5 (Oct., 1997), p. 651.



communities.<sup>9</sup> Agreeing with the definition of Stefan Wolff, my research corresponds to the definition of the conflict based on religious, language and ethnic criteria, while the groups identifying themselves in ethnic terms, meanwhile have certain political, social, cultural, territorial and economic identity.

The definition of the conflict is not enough to realize the whole concept and the framework analyzed. It is necessary in the confines of my research to present the definitions of conflict management, conflict settlement and conflict prevention. Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff bring in and discuss the three concepts of the conflict resolution: conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict settlement.<sup>10</sup> Conflict prevention is aimed at shifting the conflict to non-violent action, raising the costs of the violent escalation or providing sufficient incentive for the peaceful acceleration of the process and conflict settlement is the tool giving incentives for the establishment of the efficient institutional framework that will prevent the escalation of the conflict and reduce the possibility of further evolvement of violent conflict due to invested efforts in the institutional development and the balanced situation when the benefits overweight the costs of the violent confrontation.<sup>11</sup>

Dennis Sandole's concept of conflict intervention coinciding with the idea of conflict prevention, management and settlement introduces the idea of forced peace settlement, such as NATO actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo.<sup>12</sup> Consequently the idea developed is the means the foreign intervener needs to have in order to be able to affect on the conflict resolution process, described by Sandole as the effect of failed peace building

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<sup>9</sup> Brown, M. 1994. *Causes and implications of ethnic conflict*. In *Ethnic conflict and international security*, edited by M. Brown, 3-26. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, p. 5 in Errol A. Henderson, *Culture or Contiguity: Ethnic Conflict, the Similarity of States, and the Onset of War, 1820-1989*, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 41, No. 5 (Oct., 1997), p. 651.

<sup>10</sup> Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: Cases- Consequences- Responses*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK 2009, p. 79.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Dennis J.D. Sandole, *Peace and Security in the Postmodern World: The OSCE and the Conflict resolution* (Routledge: USA and Canada 2007), pp. 41-42.

process, when the causes and conditions of the conflict give possibility to address the whole conflict resolution in itself.<sup>13</sup>

To emphasize the importance of the means the intervener needs to address the conflict, the idea of forced peace settlement can be efficiently implemented when the identification of force is the sanctions, embargoes and conditionality the European Union owns. The section, providing the main definitions of conflict, ethnic conflict, conflict management, settlement and prevention, further will be developed into the third-party involvement theory, which is a close look to the intervention in the ethnic conflict, identifying third party tools, mechanisms and policies. The European Union acts as a third-party, which intervention in the ethnic conflicts will be identified further.

### **1.1. Third-Party Intervention Theory**

Third-party intervention is the main theoretical approach that serves as bases for my research on the way of analyzing EU involvement as a third-party intervener in the conflicts under this theoretical paradigm.

Stephen M. Saideman presents third-party intervention in four dimensions: conflict prevention, the use of force, security guarantees and partition.<sup>14</sup> Saideman, judging about the timing and the costs of the third-party intervention, argues that it is less costly to intervene in many conflicts rather than to intervene in a few conflicts but later.<sup>15</sup> The assumptions for the intervention are presented by Brown and Rosecrance stating that the preventive action, as a method of intervention is less costly than the military, political and economic intervention, so

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<sup>13</sup> Dennis J.D. Sandole, *Peace and Security in the Postmodern World: The OSCE and the Conflict resolution* (Routledge: USA and Canada 2007), p. 42.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen M. Saideman, *Overlooking the Obvious: Bringing International Politics Back into Ethnic Conflict Management*, *International Studies Review*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), p. 68.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

far the third-party mainly relies on the domestic national basis as a conflict prevention mechanism.<sup>16</sup>

Though the citation by Brown and Rosecrance states that the outside power might prefer to take the side of one of the actors involved in conflict,<sup>17</sup> this assumption in the case of EU involvement in the South Caucasus conflict-resolution process is not applicable, so far it hasn't identified any strong support to one of the sides involved in the conflict, meanwhile in the Transnistrian and Cyprus conflicts the EU has a decisive policy and openly supports the reunification of the conflicting territories. The discussion leads to the biasness and impartiality of the third-party. Saideman talking about the bias and impartiality of the third-party brings in Walter's positive-discrimination judgment, claiming that in case the third-party intervention is in favor of the weaker group, it may lead the group to feel more secure,<sup>18</sup> but in the meantime the criticism of the point significantly reflects the possibility of radicalizing the conflict, because of the ignorance of the strong and the amelioration of the security dilemma, making the disfavored party reject to disarm, feeling serious threat.<sup>19</sup>

The costs and benefits logic, behind the use of force, are based on the threat of some kind of punishment, which will follow the non-implemented precondition: this makes the costs of the conflict too high imposing on the threatened side either not to attack or to cease the aggression.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile the security guarantee intrinsically assumes foreign help in securing the conditions of the combatants.<sup>21</sup> The case of partition is the most difficult one,

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<sup>16</sup> Brown and Rosecrance, eds., *The Costs of Conflict* in Stephen M. Saideman, *Overlooking the Obvious: Bringing International Politics Back into Ethnic Conflict Management*, International Studies Review, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), p. 70.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 70-71.

<sup>18</sup> Walter, *The Critical Barrier*, p. 362 in Stephen M. Saideman, *Overlooking the Obvious: Bringing International Politics Back into Ethnic Conflict Management*, International Studies Review, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), p. 74.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen M. Saideman, *Overlooking the Obvious: Bringing International Politics Back into Ethnic Conflict Management*, International Studies Review, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), p. 74

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

during which the third-party intervention is hardly justified.<sup>22</sup> Saideman agrees with Kaufman's definition that partition is possible against a small nation, which does not have major allies: though agreeing with this definition he does not agree with the optimism of other scholars that other types of partition is possible to be achieved.<sup>23</sup>

Categorizing the motives of intervention Jonathan Paquin and Stephen M. Saideman mention two types of categories: instrumental and affective.<sup>24</sup> Instrumental factors comprise intervention for economic gain, military power, natural resources, regional stability or national security, whereas affective motives respond to the identification of the combatants, their ethnic and cultural considerations.<sup>25</sup> I am examining the EU intervention policy in the conflict resolution, I find it inappropriate to examine instrumental categories only, since the EU comprises some sort of benefits while inputting efforts in conflict resolution in the region.

David Carment and Dane Rowlands speak about high intensity intervention to force settlement, which is more costly but the costs are very high; less intense intervention is less costly and less effective as well.<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile they argue that the middle choice is the worst option for the conflict development: that will mean rising costs without improving outcome.<sup>27</sup> The intensity of the intervention assumes high costs: big military force is very difficult and costly to maintain, meanwhile authors conclude that the more intensive the intervention is the more likely cooperative outcome is achieved.<sup>28</sup> Consequently the EU involvement in different conflicts is differently assessed: the EU involvement in the South Caucasus is less intense,

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<sup>22</sup> Stephen M. Saideman, *Overlooking the Obvious: Bringing International Politics Back into Ethnic Conflict Management*, International Studies Review, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), p. 76.

<sup>23</sup> Kaufmann, *Intervention in Ethnic and Ideological Civil Wars*, p. 93. in Stephen M. Saideman, *Overlooking the Obvious: Bringing International Politics Back into Ethnic Conflict Management*, International Studies Review, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Paquin and Stephen M. Saideman, *Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts*, March 10, 2008, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-3.

<sup>26</sup> David Carment and Dane Rowlands, *Evaluating Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 42, No. 5 (Oct., 1998), p. 579.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 591.

meanwhile its policy towards the resolution of Transnistrian and Cyprus conflicts is more credible and more intense.

Kelley mentions the positive role of international organizations and their input in the conflict resolution process.<sup>29</sup> Jonathan Paquin and Stephen M. Saideman argue that the International organizations have enough power to press the domestic governments to face the ethnic resolution issues in beneficiary for them way, by putting conditionality upon their membership, so far the authors mistakenly list the European Union in the range of International Organizations parallel with OSCE, which makes the whole argument invalid about the implication for the European Union.<sup>30</sup> Though the EU uses conditionality for getting the things solved, this cannot be applied to the conflicts outside the EU, which is also overlooked by the authors; meanwhile strategically important conflicts are resolved without conditionality, such as the case with Cyprus, when the EU accepted Cyprus as EU member as the lobbying state, Greece, had big influence in the EU.<sup>31</sup>

Under the realist approaches third-party assistance and commitment emphasizes the importance of timing and the commitment to get maximum utility from the intervention via strategies aimed at ripening the conflict.<sup>32</sup> So far commitment tactics play a bigger role in utility maximization from the conflict, taking into account the possible third-party assistance and the shape of the assistance provided to the conflicting sides vis-à-vis the costs of the agreement.<sup>33</sup> Depending on the strength of the third party defined by Touval “mediators with muscle.”<sup>34</sup> definition I can identify as highly applicable not only to the negotiation phase but

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<sup>29</sup> Kelley, Judith. 2004. *International Actors on the Domestic Scene: Membership Conditionality and Socialization by International Institutions*. International Organization 58:425-457 in Jonathan Paquin and Stephen M. Saideman, *Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts*, March 10, 2008, pp. 12-13.

<sup>30</sup> Jonathan Paquin and Stephen M. Saideman, *Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts*, March 10, 2008, pp. 12-13.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>32</sup> Fen Osler Hampson, Chester A. Crocker and Pamela R. Aall *Negotiation and international conflict* in Charles Webel and Johan Galtung, *Handbook of peace and conflict studies*, Rotledge USA and Canada 2007, p. 43.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Touval, S. *The Peace Brokers: Mediators in the Arab Israeli Conflict 1948-1979*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, in Fen Osler Hampson, Chester A. Crocker and Pamela R. Aall, *Negotiation and international*

also to the whole process of the conflict settlement, so far the triadic bargaining framework, consisting of the third party side-payments/ intervention, and/or penalties and sanctions change the logic of the costs and benefits calculations.<sup>35</sup> Consequently the argument made by Zartman and Touval “the less ‘muscle’ a third party has, and the more removed or distant it is from the conflict, the weaker will be its intervention potential”<sup>36</sup> perfectly describes the EU involvement in different ethnic conflicts. But still the overlooked concept here is the third parties benefits and input efforts in the certain conflict without looking at its general overall capacity. The other missing framework is the definition of ‘muscle’- the capacity the third party owns and the short and long-run implications of the ‘muscle’ in the conflict settlement process led by the strategies and calculation of benefits for the investments in the conflict resolution efforts.

The assessment of the means the EU comprises as a foreign intervener in different conflicts and its chances to enforce peace settlement are among the owned means and mechanisms.

Economic intervention in the form of embargoes and sanctions, having controversial character in the sense of weighting the impact and utility, are among the most important determinants to guarantee the existence of the preventive mechanisms for conflict proliferation. The EU policy in the conflict resolution process is guaranteed via economic assistance and intervention, but the system lacks the possibility to use sanctions and embargoes as far as the recommendation presented to the ENP countries do not have any binding force and have consultative character only, which makes the region fragile for the

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conflict in Charles Webel and Johan Galtung, *Handbook of peace and conflict studies*, Rotledge USA and Canada 2007, p. 43.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p. 43.

<sup>36</sup> Touval, S. *The Peace Brokers: Mediators in the Arab Israeli Conflict 1948-1979*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, in Fen Osler Hampson, Chester A. Crocker and Pamela R. Aall, *Negotiation and international conflict* in Charles Webel and Johan Galtung, *Handbook of peace and conflict studies* Rotledge USA and Canada 2007, p. 43.

occurrence of violent conflicts, but Cyprus, being an EU member-state gives incentives to the EU to address the conflict in the advantageous prospect.

The argument that the usage of force and the threat to use force shifting power between different third parties and international organizations<sup>37</sup> brings to the certain degree of conflict settlement when the force or the threat of force are considered by the conflicting sides costly in case they get into a violent conflict.

I find it important to address mediation as means of the third-party intervention. Although the EU cannot be defined as a full mediator, so far the framework is partially applicable to the way the EU translates its policy in the region. Defining the mediation the definition by Zartman & Touval, meaning the efforts made by the external parties without any in advance commitment to the conflicting sides accept the role of the mediator, trying to reach the point of resolution or settlement acceptable for both conflicting sides.<sup>38</sup> The EU policies in the region and its aim to resolve the ethnic conflicts can become a basis to judge the EU as a mediator in the conflict resolution process, though the term mediation and its characteristic elements do not completely describe the EU role. The mediation practically promises the involvement in the resolution making process to further the possible violence at a relatively low cost.<sup>39</sup> The EU is not directly involved in the resolution making process either in the case of the Nagorno-Karabakh, or in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, addressing the conflict resolution issues under the same logic of the Neighborhood Policy, but is more involved in the conflicts of Transnistria and Cyprus, although still it is not a negotiator and mediator, but addresses the conflicts directly, without any other third sides.

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<sup>37</sup> Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: Cases- Consequences- Responses*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK 2009, p. 97.

<sup>38</sup> Zartman, I. William & Saadia Touval, 1996. *International Mediation in the Post-Cold War Era*, ch. 30 in Crocker & Hampson, eds. in William Ayres, *Mediating International Conflicts: Is Image Change Necessary?*, Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Nov., 1997), p. 431.

<sup>39</sup> William Ayres, *Mediating International Conflicts: Is Image Change Necessary?*, Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Nov., 1997), pp. 431-432.

One of the main elements identified as the structurally necessary preconditions for the mediation is the “image” of the third-party and the creation of image via credibility, trust, reduction of threat perception and legitimating the agreements.<sup>40</sup>

To specify the EU role in the region, I find it appropriate to refer to the framework suggested by Roy J. Lewicki et.al.<sup>41</sup> In order to avoid defining the EU as a mediator the “dealmaker” is a better fitting for EU actions role in the conflicts: the dealmaker treats the past efforts to resolve the conflicts as history and designs a completely new approach to the conflict.<sup>42</sup> From the three descriptive methods of the mediation - dealmaker, orchestration and discussion<sup>43</sup> - the dealmaker as a better suiting role for the EU policies in the conflict resolution policy I ignore the other two methods, so far they are in-depth conflict resolution instruments, rather than the dealmaker, though it is important to mention that deviating from the dealmakers role, that is to explain the concessions on the basis of the pressure made,<sup>44</sup> the pressure is not the tool that the EU uses in order to make its policies, rather the tools used are the economic and political benefits offered the costs of which should be calculated by the countries of the region. The detailed provided analysis of the costs and benefits theory explains the general framework of in which case the third-party considers it beneficial to intervene and which are the possible costs and benefits of the intervention.

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<sup>40</sup> William Ayres, *Mediating International Conflicts: Is Image Change Necessary?*, Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Nov., 1997), p. 432.

<sup>41</sup> Roy J. Lewicki, Stephen E. Weiss and David Lewin, *Models of conflict, negotiation and third-party intervention: A review and Synthesis*, Journal of Organizational Behavior, Vol. 13., No. 3, Special Issue: Conflict and Negotiation in Organizations: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives (May 1992).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 233-234.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 234.



## 1.2. The Costs and Benefits of third party intervention.

The conflict evolves when the system comprises two or more incompatible goal-states.<sup>45</sup> The characteristic to the conflict logic to snowball in time and space bringing more people, resources and energy into the state-of-conflict exhausts the resources over time and space.<sup>46</sup> The involvement of new sources and investments in the process to maintain the system in its current status or to take the path of change becomes a subject of foreign intervention and assistance.

The costliness of the conflict existence can be the subject of attention for different actors. The efforts to keep the costs of the conflict below the maximum level is mistakenly considered as conflict management, rather Johan Galtung names it conflict behavior, not always aimed at achieving the conflict resolution.<sup>47</sup>

The determination of the conflict resolution tools used by the third parties identified as military, economic and diplomatic interventions<sup>48</sup> ensure the basis for the creation of the conditions that make the possibility of the violent conflict occurrence less likely due to high costs of the invested means in the negotiations and the development and reform of institutions. The three types of the interventions aimed at the conflict resolution at different levels and degrees in the end achieve different outcome, depending on the efforts input and the costs of those efforts. So far the Rambouillet negotiations in Kosovo in 1999 failed and the mediation of the EU and NATO was unsuccessful<sup>49</sup> not only because of the insufficient costs input but also because of the miscalculation of costs and benefits by the sides or the lack of information and the transparency about the complexity of the situation or the lack of the commitment.

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<sup>45</sup> Johan Galtung, *Institutionalized conflict resolution: A theoretical paradigm*, Journal of Peace Research Vol. 2, No. 4 (1965), p. 348.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 349.

<sup>47</sup> Johan Galtung, *Institutionalized conflict resolution: A theoretical paradigm*, Journal of Peace Research Vol. 2, No. 4 (1965), p. 350.

<sup>48</sup> Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: Cases- Consequences- Responses*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK 2009, p. 90.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

The rationalist explanations for war address the rationality of the actors and the rationality of their decisions related to the costs and benefits, gains and losses and the consequences of the calculations or the miscalculations of the costs and benefits which can lead the conflict to the dead-lock of violence. The ex ante negotiated settlements are considered as the main instruments to avoid costly and risky war.<sup>50</sup> As the supportive idea to the usage of the force or the threat of force introduced by Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, Fearon speaks in favor of credible threat by the third parties, without which the war becomes the best option,<sup>51</sup> so far the absence of penalties and the lack to specify the costs of the loss can become the source of war based on own calculations of costs and benefits in the framework of bilateral negotiations or the impossibility to handle any negotiations. Meanwhile the success and failure have two-dimensional distribution: capabilities of the actors and the situation faced still depend not only the efforts of the international, regional and local organizations' assistance and policies, but also on the in-conflict parties' efforts to prevent or settle the conflict.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> James D. Fearon, *Rationalist explanations for war*, International Organization, Vol 49, No 3 (Summer 1995). p. 380.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 384.

<sup>52</sup> Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: Cases- Consequences- Responses*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK 2009, pp. 98-99.

### 1.3. Credible Commitment Theory

The aforementioned concept of the costs and benefits leads to the ensuring the commitment of the third party to the conflicts to the certain degree. The credible commitment theory can be based on the costs and benefits theory, as far as the more the third party invests in the conflict resolution process and the expectations for benefit are high, the more the third party is committed to the conflict and supports the conflict resolution process more credibly. The conflict resolution process can itself become a matter of discussion under the Credible Commitment Theory. The theory introduced and applied by James Fearon<sup>53</sup> gives basis for applying the third-party intervention in the light of abolishment of the previous power that was keeping the balance in the conflict as a third-party credibly guaranteeing the commitment of the sides to the tools used to keep the system in balance, whatever those tools would be. The weakening and the collapse of the Soviet Union gave incentives for the eruption of the conflicts in the post Soviet area: the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh, although considered as a Soviet, rather than Post-Soviet conflict, the conflicts of South Ossetia and Abkhazia made the region highly fragile. The weakening of the Soviet Union and the possibility for the conflicts due to the lack of the commitment associated with the rule of Soviet power and fear vanished. According to the security dilemma argument states that conflicting preferences, shift of the power and anarchy do not lead to the hostility, rather the uncertainty about the other side's intentions.<sup>54</sup> The discussion of the security dilemma, when assuming that the two conflicting sides are interested in security only, leads to the discussion of uncertain and incomplete information, that makes a vicious cycle of not being able to identify the steps of the other side and the miscalculations due to the situation, leads to the overvaluation, or undervaluation of

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<sup>53</sup> James D. Fearon, *Commitment problems and the spread of ethnic conflict*. In *The international spread of ethnic conflict: fear, diffusion, and escalation*, ed. David A. Lake, Donald S. Rothchild, Princeton University Press 1988, pp. 107-150.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

the other side's forces. The commitment is based on five factors, first the strength and the cultural preferences of the minority group, second the pattern of settlement of the minority and majority, third the presence of the third-party or the neighboring country that can be credibly threaten to intervene in favor of the minority if they are abused in the majority, fourth the extent of the minority's expected decline in ability to secede in future and the fifth, the possibility of the "exit" option for the individuals in the minority and the minority's level of social and political organization.<sup>55</sup> Assuming the five factors the third-party intervention can be applied to the extent of the first three factors: the other two fall behind the scope of the research.

The patterns of the settlement have the same shape in all five conflicts:<sup>56</sup> though argued that the Azeris were ejected from Nagorno-Karabakh<sup>57</sup> by the time of the war the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh was ethnically homogeneous and there were no intermixed groups living together, the same observed in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The pattern of the settlement was obvious; the territories took the path of secession claiming their independence. The presence of the third-party in the ethnic conflict changes the scope of the commitment of the sides to the commitment of the third party, if it is willing or able to commit to the conflict in the case the majority does not respect its commitment to minority.<sup>58</sup> Fearon's argument stands that the international organizations can rarely credibly commit to the situation,<sup>59</sup> meanwhile the possible credible commitment of the EU as a *sui generis* entity is not discussed: consequently I argue that the EU cannot credibly commit to the minority rights protection vis-à-vis the steps of the majority taken against the minority as far as the lack of the common identified policy towards taking the side of the majority or

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<sup>55</sup> James D. Fearon, *Commitment problems and the spread of ethnic conflict*. In *The international spread of ethnic conflict: fear, diffusion, and escalation*, ed. David A. Lake, Donald S. Rothchild, Princeton University Press 1988, p. 121.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp. 122-123.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

minority because 27 EU member-states perceive their own foreign political goals and take different positions in the certain conflict.

The paper by Erin Jenne significantly contradicts to the credible commitment theory making the argument against the commitment of the center to credible protection of minority rights.<sup>60</sup> The framework used and applied refers to the minority policy, hypothesizing that if minority feels strong external support from a powerful third-party, be it a nation state, an international organization, or any external actor, it radicalizes its demands against the host state even if the center is credibly commitment to defend minority rights.<sup>61</sup> Credible commitment theory meanwhile argues that the minorities tend to take the way of secession if the majority cannot commit to offer satisfactory conditions for the minority.<sup>62</sup> The Grievance Theory, as a logical consequence argues, that the minorities, in case seriously discriminated will mobilize as secessionism or irredentism, as soon as they get enough resources.<sup>63</sup> The appearance of the third-party, ready to provide resources may become the cause for the conflict radicalization and taking the aforementioned forms. Although this does not change the angle of the whole approach it explains why the European Union does not take the position to strongly protect secessionist or irredentist tends of the minorities (An irredentist conflict defined by David Carment and Patrick James states that the irredentist conflict is already an interstate conflict which includes territorial claim usually of an independent states where the ethnic group is a numerical minority),<sup>64</sup> so far its strong position might lead to the radicalization of the conflict. The logic behind misses only the point whether the EU can take strong position in the certain conflict or not, which I find a quite contradictory topic that does not fit in the scope of my research.

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<sup>60</sup> Erin Jenne, *A bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog that didn't Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia*, International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 48, No. 4. (December 2004), pp. 729-754.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 729.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 731-732.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 732.

<sup>64</sup> David Carment and Patrick James, *Internal Constraints and Interstate Ethnic Conflict: Toward a Crisis based assessment of Irredentism*, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Mar., 1995), p. 95.

To conclude I find it important to emphasize that third party intervention theory and the credible commitment theory will form the bases for the application on the cases. Meanwhile the other frameworks developed are consistent parts of the theories presented and form the bases for third party intervention and credible commitment: the theory of costs and benefits is one of the main tools through which the EU assesses the scope, framework and intensity of its involvement in the conflict resolution process and the role it will take in the mediation efforts.

## Chapter 2. Case selection and historical background

Since 2003 The European Union has launched about 22 operations, 19 of which were deployed in the countries experiencing ethnic conflict.<sup>65</sup> The cases I am going to research are the ethnic conflicts of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Cyprus and Transnistria. The selections of the cases are based on several assumptions.

### 2.1. Assumptions for the case selection

The use and the demonstration of force by the European Union, based on the division presented by David Carment and Patrick James<sup>66</sup> became the assumptions chosen for the selection of the cases I am going to discussion. From the two categories characterized as the techniques on the use and demonstration of force I have selected my cases on the first category assuming that the third-party intervention associated with the EU intervention in the conflict resolution process has been a non forceful crisis management, including negotiation, adjudication, arbitration, mediation and nonmilitary pressure.<sup>67</sup>

The ethnic conflicts on agenda reflect the territorial dispute and differences, where the aim of the minority groups is “to exit” the metropolitan state: as mentioned by Don Lynch conflicts of South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria and Chechnya claim to

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<sup>65</sup> Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: Cases- Consequences- Responses*, Polity Press: Cambridge, UK 2009, p. 91.

<sup>66</sup> David Carment and Patrick James, *Internal Constraints and Interstate Ethnic Conflict: Toward a Crisis based assessment of Irredentism*, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Mar., 1995), p. 100.

<sup>67</sup> David Carment and Patrick James *Internal Constraints and Interstate Ethnic Conflict: Toward a Crisis based assessment of Irredentism*, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Mar., 1995), p. 100. The second category comprises forceful crisis management techniques, nonviolent military and multiple techniques and violence.

the territorial integrity of this or that state.<sup>68</sup> I exclude the case of Chechnya from my research, as Chechnya is not experiencing the same set of complexity as the other conflicts: there is no lobbying state for Chechnya and the negotiation cycle in this case is less with one tier. In the cases of other conflicts on the agenda each conflict territory has its lobbying state, which presents the interests of the territorial entity: South Ossetian, Abkhazian and Transnistrian interests are presented by Russia, the Greek Cyprus is presented by Greece, the Turkish Cyprus - by Turkey and the lobbying state for Nagorno-Karabakh is Armenia.

One of the most important assumptions is that all the conflicts have secessionist character and different parties involved in the conflict either tend to unify the territorial entity with one of the parties or to promote the complete secession and the de jure recognition as sovereign.<sup>69</sup> All the five conflicts are ethnic conflicts, fitting the definitions of ethnic conflict introduced by different scholars. Although I have to note that the three conflicts – the conflict of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh – are very similar, meanwhile the other two conflicts – the Transnistrian and Cyprus conflict - are dramatically different. This gives me possibility, after describing the conflicts and the EU involvement in the conflict resolution process through comparisons make significant conclusions assessing the role and the degree of the European Union intervention in the conflict settlement process.

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<sup>68</sup> Dov Lynch, *Separatist states and Post-Soviet Conflicts*, International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) Vol. 78, No. 4 (Oct., 2002), p. 834.

<sup>69</sup> Bruno Coppieters, Michael Emerson, Michel Huysseune, Tamara Kovziridze, Nathalie Tocci, Gergana Noutcheva and Marius Vahl, *Europeanisation and Conflict Resolution: Case Studies from the European Periphery*, Academia Press: Gent 2004 p. 1.



## 2.2. The conflicts of Abkhazia and South Ossetia

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union in early 1990s, the internal wars in Georgia broke out throughout all over the country; this was connected with the day by day weakening of the Soviet Union and the emerging anti-Soviet trends, which later turned into anti-Russian attitude, predicting the military interference later<sup>70</sup>. The growing nationalist ideas in Georgia, blaming Soviet-Russian rule in victimization of the country, distortion of the country's history and prohibition of national memory put the bases of demonstrations organized by and around radical nationalists.<sup>71</sup>

The bases for the conflict after the Soviet-Union collapse were already set. Although Zurcher mentions that it is not fair enough to blame only the Soviet Union and Russia in the misfortunes of Georgia, he argues also for the evidence that in fact although the Russian and Soviet politics cannot be observed openly in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but the provocation made by the Russian part encouraging Abkhazia and South Ossetia enter the war supporting them militarily, speaks about the intervention of Russian politics in the regional policies.<sup>72</sup>

The conflict of Abkhazia was failed to be solved during the Soviet period: the war in 1992-1993 occurred between Abkhazia and Georgia.<sup>73</sup> The first wave which hit Abkhazia spread all over the Georgian territory lasting until 1993.<sup>74</sup>

In South Ossetia the war ended in 1992 with the agreement signed in Sochi establishing a joint peacekeeping force (PKF) including Russian, Georgian and Ossetian Units with the

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<sup>70</sup> Christoph Zurcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the South Caucasus*, (U.S. A. New York: New York University 2007) p. 115.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 119-120.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., pp. 146-147.

<sup>73</sup> Bruno Coppieters, Michael Emerson, Michel Huysseune, Tamara Kovziridze, Nathalie Tocci, Gergana Noutcheva and Marius Vahl, *Europeanisation and Conflict Resolution: Case Studies from the European Periphery*, Academia Press: Gent 2004, p. 3.

<sup>74</sup> Christoph Zurcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the South Caucasus*, (U.S. A. New York: New York University 2007) p. 145.

OSCE monitoring in the territory.<sup>75</sup> In Abkhazia the peace building process was more complicated usually labeled as “negotiations about negotiations”: the ceasefire of 1994 intended the establishment of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) forces, which stalemated the conflict as far as the forces were the Russian troops.<sup>76</sup> The UN observers’ mission (UNOMIG) deployed in July 1994 had a limited mandate and was powerless to prevent the deepening of the conflict and re-eruption of war.<sup>77</sup> Both conflicts on the territory of Georgia became frozen conflicts.

After presidential elections in 2004-2005, serious steps were taken to promote democracy and growth in Abkhazia. After the Rose Revolution the new closer approach of the EU to bring the countries of the South Caucasus closer to the EU did not consequently satisfy Georgia’s expectations of EU getting involved in the conflict resolution replacing OSCE monitoring mission: afraid of the possible reaction from Moscow, the EU did not accept the invitation of having direct mission instead of EUSR mandate extension.<sup>78</sup> The newly appointed EU Special Representative (EUSR) Peter Semneby replacing Heikki Talvitie got a broader mandate gaining the right to support the economic and political reforms, conflict prevention and resolution.<sup>79</sup>

The neutrality and the uncertainty of EU policy can be viewed in its reaction to Georgian request for free trade agreement and visa facilitation, enhanced cooperation of border management, fight against organized crime and Georgia’s involvement in EU transport and energy programs and networks, meanwhile initially it was promised to Georgia a “stake in the single market”.<sup>80</sup> So far the absence of ex post conditionality speaks about the low level

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<sup>75</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 132.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. p. 143.

<sup>79</sup> International Crisis Group, *Conflict resolution in the South Caucasus: the EU’s role*, Europe Report N 173- 20 March 2006 p. 22.

<sup>80</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 144.

involvement and interest in the region, where the conflicts are not sufficiently specified by the EU: established conflict-related obligations and perceived legitimacy is not adequately formalized.<sup>81</sup>

The other side of the token is the EU-Russia relations and interdependencies between EU member-states and Russia: the EU orientation is not to antagonize Russia and to keep the balance of relations between the relations with Russia and Georgia.<sup>82</sup>

Although the appointment and the broadening of EUSR mandate became a serious step showing the EU involvement in the conflict resolution process, still the EUSR is appointed for the whole South Caucasus, which involves two frozen conflicts, so far its involvement cannot credibly address both conflicts and make serious investments in the conflict resolution process. Meanwhile the existing factor of the third party – Russia – with which the EU has strong ties, does not give the EUSR possibility to get involved in the conflict resolution process in a way Georgia requests and take the side of one of the conflicting parties.

Appreciating the economic rehabilitation assistance of the EU to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Georgian side insisted on political and military-security related engagement, in the meantime demanding from EU to put on the agenda of the negotiations with Russia Georgia's territorial integrity and the discussion of its internal conflicts.<sup>83</sup> The aim initially thought to prevent sharpened conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia and South Ossetia failed to accomplish its goal, so far the relations entered a deadlock in 2008, turning into a violent conflict.

The EU had launched EU Rule of Law Mission to Georgia - EUJUST THEMIS – in July 2004: this became the first Rule of Law mission the EU launched in the ESDP (European

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<sup>81</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 146.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. p. 148.

<sup>83</sup> International Crisis Group, *Conflict resolution in the South Caucasus: the EU's role*, Europe Report N 173- 20 March 2006 p. 10.

Security and Defense Policy) context.<sup>84</sup> The EUJUST THEMIS “supported, mentored and advised Ministers, senior officials and appropriate bodies at the level of the Central Government” supporting Georgian authorities in the management of urgent challenges in the criminal justice system, assisting in the development of the coordinated reform implementation.<sup>85</sup> As far as the mandate of EUJUST Themis was only given for 12 months and the aim of it was judicial system, it failed to invest any substantial support to conflict resolution process, meanwhile another problem is the support to Georgian government, but not to the territories experiencing conflict – South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

After the war in 2008 on the 15 September the Council decided to establish an autonomous civilian monitoring mission in Georgia: the mission was deployed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2008, further extended until September 2010.<sup>86</sup> The European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia is an autonomous mission functioning under EU CSDP (Common Security and Defense Policy) led by the EU.<sup>87</sup> The aim of the mission is to contribute to stability in Georgian, stabilizing the situation in accordance with Six-Point Agreement, aiming at the implementation of monitoring and analysis of the existing situation, control of full implementation of Six-Point Agreement, investment in normalization building and the safe return of displaced people and refugees, reduction of tension and the promotion of contacts between the parties and confidence-building<sup>88</sup>

The EU involvement in the conflict resolution process in its current shape is more credible for making a significant increase in the settlement process of the conflicts of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, at the meantime after the failure of investing in the conflict prevention process

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<sup>84</sup>Council of the European Union official web-site, EUJUST THEMIS, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=701&lang=en> , (accessed 24 May 2010).

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

before 2008, now the EU involvement has to be more intense in order to prevent the conflict erupt once again.

### 2.3. The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh

The similarity of the problem between Armenia and Azerbaijan is predicted by the same logic of Post Soviet wars, occurred in Georgia. The war over Nagorno-Karabakh as a consequence of Soviet “diplomacy” occurred between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The roots of the conflict lie back in the history but it became sharper during the last years of the existence of the Soviet Union, because of the weakened role of Moscow on periphery. Closer to the time of collapse of the Soviet Union in 1988 the conflict of Karabakh developed on 4 political levels: Moscow, Karabakh, Armenia and Azerbaijan.<sup>89</sup> The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is different from the conflict of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the sense that the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh was rather a Soviet conflict than a post-Soviet conflict.<sup>90</sup> The conflict had a uniting role for Armenia in terms of the regime change desovietizing and nationalizing political elites around the question of Karabakh meanwhile this was not the case in Azerbaijan.<sup>91</sup>

The logic behind addressing the conflicts in the region is reflected in the “frozen” character of the conflicts and “trapped between the conflict and stagnant development” cycle.<sup>92</sup> Emphasizing the close link between the democracy and good governance and conflict resolution and regional cooperation, Natalie Tocci argues that the absence of democratic governance, rule of law and strong states is derived from the state-of-affairs of conflict existence and constant differences and clashes over the region, that obstacle prosperous development.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Christoph Zurcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the South Caucasus*, (U.S. A. New York: New York University 2007) p. 157.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., pp. 181.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>92</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 126.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 128.

The advantageous position of Azerbaijan as a provider of energy security for the European Union biases not only the EU but also the EU member-states approach towards addressing the conflict resolution issues mutually beneficial for Azerbaijan and the EU way, putting emphasis on energy cooperation and the possibility of oil and gas extraction and distribution from Azerbaijan.<sup>94</sup> The advantage of Azerbaijan is embedded in its role of the largest trade partner in the South Caucasus dealing mainly with cotton, oil and gas.<sup>95</sup> Becoming the strategic aim of the European Union, the South Caucasus appeared in the Center of the attention due to Baku-Supsa pipeline which transports oil through the Black sea and two newly constructed gas pipelines- Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (1999) and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzrum(2006).<sup>96</sup> Enjoying the most beneficial conditions due to the indecisiveness of the EU in its practical goals, lack of substantial support and strong position towards conflicting countries in the region, Azerbaijan easily manipulating with its advantageous condition, affects the stagnation of the whole region: for instance in late 2005 the disagreement between Azerbaijan and Cyprus suspended the negotiation between the EU and Armenia and Georgia.<sup>97</sup> The postponement of the publication of the Action Plans with the three countries in the region, because of direct flights between Azerbaijan and northern Cyprus, were politically reasoned that the EU cannot distinguish Christian Armenia and Christian Georgia from Muslim Azerbaijan and cannot start the process separately, was a veil of silent remark that the whole region has the same importance for the EU and there is no evidently emphasized preference for one of the countries of the region.<sup>98</sup> So far the same framework under which the European Union addresses and builds its negotiations on and the different

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<sup>94</sup> International Crisis Group, *Conflict resolution in the South Caucasus: the EU's role*, Europe Report N 173- 20 March 2006 p. 7.

<sup>95</sup> Elkhan Nuriyev, *The South Caucasus at the crossroads: Conflicts, Caspian oil and Great Power Politics*, (Transaction publishers: New Brunswick (U.S.A.) and London (U.K.) 2007), p. 92.

<sup>96</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 126.

<sup>97</sup> International Crisis Group, *Conflict resolution in the South Caucasus: the EU's role*, Europe Report N 173- 20 March 2006 p. 15.

<sup>98</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 144.

levels of support to the sides of the conflict bring to the creation of unbalanced situation, when the impossibility to assess the real outcomes of the policy is highly possible.

The EU addresses the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh territory through two Principal policy tools – the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) in the South Caucasus, operating under the Council of the European Union mandate<sup>99</sup> which does not guarantee either short-run or long-run conflict settlement perspective.

The only way the EU is involved in the conflict resolution process in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is via OSCE Minsk group, which means that in this way the EU lacks credibility of direct involvement in the conflict resolution,<sup>100</sup> meanwhile looking at the other side of the problem it is necessary to note that in 2006 the diplomats of Armenian and Azerbaijan told OSCE Minsk Group French co-chair and the EUSR that they consider it too early for the EU to get involved in the conflict resolution process with increased policy proposals preferring to keep the monopoly in the hands of the OSCE Minsk Group.<sup>101</sup>

To conclude I underline that the EU is very weakly involved in the conflict-resolution process of Nagorno-Karabakh. The ENP Action Plan only makes vague concepts towards conflict resolution, at the meantime the EUSR does not have that broad mandate to affect on the conflict resolution process. The OSCE Minsk Group which is the main body conducting the negotiations and providing background for political communication and dialogue yet has not reached any noteworthy achievement in the conflicts resolution process. The only way the EU is represented in Minsk Group is via France co-chair, which does not mean that he represents the interests and benefits of the whole European Union.

<sup>99</sup> Stefan Wolff, *The European Union and the Conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh Territory*, Report prepared for the Committee on Member States' Obligations Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Centre for International Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution, University of Nottingham, Berlin 4-5 November 2007 <http://www.stefanwolff.com/policy-papers/EU-NK.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2010).

<sup>100</sup> International Crisis Group, *Conflict resolution in the South Caucasus: the EU's role*, Europe Report N 173-20 March 2006, p. 21.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 25.



## 2.4. The Conflict of Transnistria

The stability of the regions on the borders of the European Union is an important element for EU Security Strategy.<sup>102</sup> The South Caucasus is also a part of EU security concerns: after the accession of Turkey the EU will have a direct common border with the fragile region that has 3 unresolved rather “frozen” conflicts. The same problem arises on EU current border, which is a more urgent problem for the EU rather than the South Caucasus.

Moldovan nationalist movement began to form in 1987 spilling over to the current state of conflict.<sup>103</sup> In 1990 separatist movements started in Transnistria and Gagauzia: Russian elites in Transnistria proclaimed “Dniester SSR” at the Eastern bank of the Dniester River and Gagauz Turks declared a Gagauz Republic in the South.<sup>104</sup> Transnistria had a strategic role both for Moldova and Soviet Union, controlling the most important energy and transport links passing from Moldova to Soviet States.<sup>105</sup> In 1991 Transnistrian Russians with a consolidated power took the administrative, police and media stations parallel Eastern Bank of Dniester: due to the strategic importance Moldova decided to agree on the cease-fire in July 1992.<sup>106</sup>

The conflict of Transnistria is different from other ethnic conflicts so far there is no violence in the region, no fighting, people are not dying but still the conflict exists and it is on the EU border challenging the Security of the Union with the high level of “trafficking in arms, people and drugs, organized crime, money-laundry and smuggling.”<sup>107</sup> The conflict of Transnistria is not a classic ethnic or religious conflict; rather the conflict is in the benefit of

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<sup>102</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 3.

<sup>103</sup> Steven E. Lobell and Philip Mauceri, *Ethnic Conflict and International Politics: Explaining Diffusion and Escalation* (PALGRAVE MACMILLAN: New York, USA and Hampshire: England, 2004), p. 65.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>107</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 5.

the local elites enjoying the status quo and the support of different powerful groups inside Russia, Ukraine and Moldova.<sup>108</sup>

The Moldovan conflict is one of the salient problems that EU faces: after 2003 the EU has used different CFSP instruments to address the conflict for the support of the settlement.<sup>109</sup> In 2003 the EU dedicated a range of statements to the Transnistrian problem, credibly committing itself to the resolution of the conflict, as far as the sanctions took a shape of creating a perspective for the EU involvement in the process.<sup>110</sup>

The appointment of the EUSR in Moldova became a significant step towards the conflict settlement.<sup>111</sup> The EU Special Representative to Moldova appointed in March 2005 aimed at contributing to conflict settlement and the EU positive role in the conflict resolution process.<sup>112</sup> With the EU-Moldova ENP Action Plan signed in 2004 the EU agreed to put sanctions with the US against separatist leadership of Transnistria under the strengthened and more visible CFSP.<sup>113</sup>

The initiative to arrange talks between Moldova and Ukraine for joint border control between the two countries in Moldova's territory was a response to Moldova's claims of creating a joint border control of Ukraine and Moldova on Ukrainian territory as well, ensuring the stability and safety of Moldova's external borders.<sup>114</sup> The conceptualization of the Transnistrian conflict as "near abroad" by the EU changed its interest in the Transnistrian conflict shifting from non-involvement and weak interest to commitment and credible

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<sup>108</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 6.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>110</sup> Valeriu Gheorghiu, Oazu Nantoi, Nicu Popescu, *External Factors in Transnistrian Conflict Settlement: A Role for the European Union*, Journal of Foreign Policy of Moldova, issue: 03 / 2004, pp. 2-3.

<sup>111</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 31.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>114</sup> Valeriu Gheorghiu, Oazu Nantoi, Nicu Popescu, *External Factors in Transnistrian Conflict Settlement: A Role for the European Union*, Journal of Foreign Policy of Moldova, issue: 03 / 2004, p. 3.

involvement in the process.<sup>115</sup> After receiving the joint letter from the Presidents of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the EU Border Assistance Mission to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine had been established in June 2005, addressing the border management, including customs issues on the whole border of the two countries and the border of Ukraine and Transnistria, as far as the Moldovan authorities are not able to be present on this border.<sup>116</sup> A Memorandum of Understanding on the Border Assistance Mission signed between the Commission and the Moldovan and Ukrainian governments in October 2005 established the technical and advisory missions' work, aimed at improvement of capacity of the border and the customs services, preventing trafficking of goods and humans, customs fraud, providing advice and training to the sides.<sup>117</sup> The Mission acted in close ties with the EUSR for Moldova until November 2009, when the mandate of the Mission expired.<sup>118</sup>

The negotiation format about the status of Transnistria consisting of Moldova and Transnistria, Russia, Ukraine and OSCE was referred to as "Five-sided format."<sup>119</sup> Figure 1 presents the five sided format and the actors involved in the format.

The EU involvement in active diplomatic actions with EUSR actions and the EU Border Assistance Mission shifted the format from five-sided to direct dialogue between the EU and other actors to increase the transparency and safety of Moldova-Ukrainian border.<sup>120</sup>

In 2003 the five-sided and peacekeeping format conflict resolution became useless in the current state of negotiations: Moldova did not trust Ukraine and Russia anymore and the peacekeeping operations were promoting only the status quo, which was not in the interest of Moldova, which started insisting on more credible involvement of EU and US in the

<sup>115</sup> Valeriu Gheorghiu, Oazu Nantoi, Nicu Popescu, *External Factors in Transnistrian Conflict Settlement: A Role for the European Union*, Journal of Foreign Policy of Moldova, issue: 03 / 2004.

<sup>116</sup> Council of the European Union official web-site, EUBAM Moldova and Ukraine, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=986&lang=en> (accessed 24 May 2010).

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 16.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

negotiation process.<sup>121</sup> The statelike entity created in Transnistria with its organized leadership, control over territory became more or less functioning system, demanding international recognition.<sup>122</sup>

The Russian elites in Transnistria sanctioned as Russian “peacekeepers” created the whole problem, against which Ukraine and Moldova raised their voices: The Ukrainian government as well was interested in the solution of the conflict in favor of Moldova, but the presence of Russians in Ukraine’s Eastern border and the territorial losses after the collapse of the Soviet Union, prevented Ukraine to raise its voice against Russian military presence in Transnistria.<sup>123</sup> Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union kept supporting the separatist movements for two reasons: already involved local military units and the post-Soviet Russia’s dependence on the army.<sup>124</sup> Russia should have withdrawn the troops and armaments from Transnistria before the end of 2002 according to the OSCE Istanbul Commitments, but it failed to.<sup>125</sup> The EU-Russia dialogue involves two key issues – withdrawal of Russian military troops from Transnistria, reform of the peacekeeping mechanisms that exist now, assuming that status quo is not possible to break if the troops are not fully withdrawn and the peacekeeping forces’ setup is not changed.<sup>126</sup>

The conflict of Transnistria became a threat for the border stability and safety of the European Union. The EU got involved in the conflict resolution process directly, assisting with Border Mission and the changed EU-Moldova direct negotiations, which make many scholars assume the conflict as the most solvable conflict nowadays.

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<sup>121</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris , Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 29.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>126</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris , Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 36.

## 2.5 The conflict of Cyprus

The conflict of Cyprus is evaluated as a necessary component of stability and peace in the Eastern Mediterranean, especially after the accession of Greece to the European Union in 1981.<sup>127</sup>

The conflict of Cyprus has been addressed by the UN since 1974 presenting and proposing different solutions and resolutions, but through the decades the failed negotiations ended up in stalemate: only in the 1990s, when Cyprus applied for EU membership, new incentives for the alternative conflict resolution were created.<sup>128</sup>

The EU failed to reunify the island: the 1993 Commission's Opinion on Cyprus stating that the negotiations would begin only in the case of the settlement of the conflict is sure was changed in 1997 in the Commission's Agenda, eliminating this precondition for the accession.<sup>129</sup>

After the 1990s EU membership perspective became a cornerstone and objective for the Greek Cypriots' foreign policy: with the motto of better to be a member of the EU without settlement rather than accept a bad settlement, the Greek Cypriots took the path of the EU membership,

In 1994 in Corfu the European Union decided to involve Cyprus in the next round of enlargement: after the completion of 1996 Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) the General Affairs Council opened the phase of accession negotiations with Cyprus after six months.<sup>130</sup> The Luxemburg European Council decided to start the talks for accession in December 1997: the negotiations started in March 1998 and ended in December 2002.<sup>131</sup> The accession

<sup>127</sup> Nathalie Tocci. *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*. (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 28.

<sup>128</sup> Bruno Coppieters, Michael Emerson, Michel Huysseune, Tamara Kovziridze, Nathalie Tocci, Gergana Noutcheva and Marius Vahl, *Europeanisation and Conflict Resolution: Case Studies from the European Periphery* Academia Press: Gent 2004, p. 2.

<sup>129</sup> Nathalie Tocci. *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*. (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 45.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

negotiations were launched and conducted by Greek Cypriot RoC, at the meantime the Turkish Cypriots were excluded from the negotiation process and the benefits of association were disappearing systematically.<sup>132</sup> The funds established to Turkish Cypriot were becoming less with each financial protocol accorded.<sup>133</sup> Turkey's own accession process also had a big effect on the change of the EU attitude to Turkish Cypriots, but after Cyprus' accession the EU role in solving the conflict decreased taking a negative character.<sup>134</sup> The EU failed to keep its promise to lift the economic isolation of Turkish Cypriots: the two draft proposals for the disbursement of 259 million to the north and reestablishment of trade between the north and the EU stayed unimplemented.<sup>135</sup>

Meanwhile the Turkish Cypriots up until the late 2001 looked at the accession process as a threat and the economic benefits offered to them were rather considered as "bribe".<sup>136</sup> By 2002 the shift in the attitude happened, considering the EU accession not as a threat but a necessary condition for the security, communal survival and the prosperity of the Turkish Cypriots.<sup>137</sup>

The European Union has never adopted and presented conflict settlement resolution, only supporting the United Nations Security Council's resolutions and the mediation efforts of the Secretary General.<sup>138</sup> Though argued that the EU is committed to the UNSG and UNSC resolutions and mediation, while having its own approach to the conflict resolution,<sup>139</sup> it is not credibly committed to the conflict resolution process. The two emerging UNSC resolutions –

<sup>132</sup> Nathalie Tocci. *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*. (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 40.

<sup>133</sup> The 1977 first protocol established the percentage of 20 % of its funds to the Turkish Cypriots, the 1984 protocol reduced the amount of percentage to 3 % , the fourth and the fifth protocols were based on the EU funds based on bi-communal Nicosia Master plan project in Nathalie Tocci. *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*. (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 40.

<sup>134</sup> Nathalie Tocci. *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*. (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 41.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 30-31.

367 and 750 – culminated into the “Annan Plan”, were supported by the Union accommodating the provisions into the Cyprus’ Treaty of Accession.<sup>140</sup> The lines of federal settlement proposed by the UN between the years 2002 and 2004 on the basis of Annan Plan failed to be supported by both, Greek and Turkish Cypriots.<sup>141</sup> The most valuable benefit for the Cyprus was the full membership promised by the EU, but the time gap and the manner of promising the benefits tuned against serving as benefits.<sup>142</sup>

The EU approach to Cyprus problem was rather based on passive enforcement than political conditionality, which had a negative impact on the process of the credible resolution of the conflict.<sup>143</sup>

The Greek government was the lobbying state for the Greek Cypriots and had a big impact on the EU attitude towards the conflict of Cyprus, having strong and clear interests in Cyprus: Except for UK and Greece the other member-states were not interested much in the Cypriot conflict and its accession process and gradually accepted demands presented by Greece.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Nathalie Tocci. *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*. (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 31.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 39-40.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. 46-47.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 50-52.

### Chapter 3. EU intervention in the conflicts

Based on the theoretical background provided and the in-depth presentation of the EU intervention tools and policies in the aforementioned conflicts, I introduce two hypotheses, which I do believe are remarkable and the current literature lacks the assessment of the difference between EU mediated and direct intervention in ethnic conflict prevention and the local consequences of its policies.

#### Hypothesis 1.

*EU direct intervention in the conflict resolution process rather than mediated efforts successfully contributes to the conflict settlement process.*

Firstly it is important to define what direct involvement is. To test the hypothesis I assume direct involvement as the direct mediation, involvement in the negotiation process, deployment of peacekeeping forces, missions and operations.

In order to be able to assess the success of the EU intervention in the conflicts of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria and Cyprus, I will apply the framework given by R. William Ayres dividing the relative outcome into three facets, adding the forth facet – failure- so far I assume in many cases the EU failed to have impact in preventing conflict escalation:

- Full success - de-escalation of the means of struggle, negotiations aimed at settlement and contribution to lasting resolution.
- Decrease of the conflict intensity, increase of communication between the parties, reaching agreement.



• Partial success - a significant breakthrough which is does not include the points of the first two points.<sup>145</sup>

- Failure - failure to prevent conflict escalation or have no impact on conflict settlement.

Table 1 presents the assessment of EU intervention in the conflicts in a certain period of time based on my own conclusions.<sup>146</sup>

The similarity of the four conflicts - the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Transnistria is in the “frozen” logic of the conflicts which erupted between the years 1992-1994 and became frozen conflicts.<sup>147</sup> The conflict of Cyprus after the 1990s did not see a violent clash: the relative calm conflict was predicted by the perspective of EU membership and EU direct involvement in the process of negotiation.

Emphasizing Patrick Regan’s outlines that the intervention policy can be undertaken when the three conditions - reasonable expectation to succeed, the time horizon is short and domestic opposition is minimal<sup>148</sup> - are met, I admit that the EU involvement in the five cases differs, having different expectations of success. Time horizons for Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh are long, as far as EU relatively weaker role in the region is predicted by the absence of common border, meanwhile the conflicts of Transnistria and Cyprus are assumed to have a solution in a short run perspective. In all cases there are no significant domestic opposing powers against EU involvement in the territorial entities experiencing ethnic conflict. Meanwhile Transnistrian and Turkish Cypriot elites for a long time used to see threat in EU involvement, but the suspicion towards EU involvement did not last long: the promised benefits would be of bigger importance for the conflict settlement.

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<sup>145</sup> R. William Ayres, *Mediating International Conflicts: Is Image Change Necessary?*, Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Nov., 1997), pp. 433-434.

<sup>146</sup> It is important to note that the assessment made in the Table 1 is not a general knowledge, it is based on my subjective views on EU intervention efficiency separately on each of the conflicts observes in a certain period of time and according to the assumption presented in the second chapter and the limitations introduced in the theoretical background and in-depth analysis of the cases.

<sup>147</sup> Jaap Ora, *Frozen conflicts and the EU – a search for a positive agenda*, Director of Division, Policy Planning Department, p. 50.

<sup>148</sup> Patrick M. Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict* (The University of Michigan Press : USA) 2002, p. 40.

The EU policies in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria are reflected through the ENP as a means and tool to address the conflicts, meanwhile the added value to the conflict settlement efforts is different in all four cases. Rather highly committing itself to Transnistrian conflict resolution process through ENP AP, EUSR, opening the office of Commission in Chisinau in 2005 and the phase of the negotiations for visa facilitation, the EU intensified contacts between EU and Moldova.<sup>149</sup> This assumes more direct involvement in this conflict compared with the other conflicts which are addressed in the scopes of ENP. The direct involvement is one step ahead because of EU willingness to open the negotiations for visa facilitation for Moldova, whereas the Georgian request for visa facilitation<sup>150</sup> was turned down. The EU joined the mediation process with the USA in a 5+2 formatted negotiations, which replaced the five-party format, becoming the only conflict where the EU is a part of the settlement process.<sup>151</sup> The next EU contribution to the conflict resolution process was the EU Border Assistance Mission, deployed since 2005 on the border of Moldova and Ukraine.<sup>152</sup> Though there are certain obstacles that keep the EU far from full scale involvement in the conflict resolution, the reason I exclude looking at other parties' involvement in the conflict is that all the selected cases experience such third-party intervention – in case of the conflicts of South Ossetia and Abkhazia the third party strongly interested in certain outcome is the USA, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has strategic importance for Russia and Turkey, the Conflict of Transnistria is involved in four-tiered mixed interests between Russia, Moldova, Ukraine and Transnistria and the Cyprus concentrates the attention of UK, Greece and Turkey on it. It is logical to admit that the EU is facing obstacles while dealing with different conflicts. The obstacle for the EU to enter into

<sup>149</sup> Jaap Ora, *Frozen conflicts and the EU – a search for a positive agenda*, Director of Division, Policy Planning Department, p. 52.

<sup>150</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 144.

<sup>151</sup> Jaap Ora, *Frozen conflicts and the EU – a search for a positive agenda*, Director of Division, Policy Planning Department, p. 52.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

the process with full capacity and get credibly involved in the conflict settlement process of Transnistria is Russia's strong influence over Transnistria, its support to the local leadership and the presence of the Russian troops in Transnistria.<sup>153</sup>

The EU involvement in the conflict resolution process of Abkhazia and South Ossetia had the same development process as other ENP countries, but the EU, taking into account the Georgian elites' enthusiastic proposals for deeper EU involvement in the conflict resolution process deployed EU Rule of Law Mission in 2004, which mandate was until 2005 aimed at supporting the judicial criminal system and reform. The war broke out between Georgia and Russia in summer 2008, which made the design of the implementation of common EU policy almost impossible. During the war time and after the EU active diplomatic efforts interacted with the UN, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, NATO, CIS and GUAM sharing the EU role in the region through aforementioned regional players<sup>154</sup>: this engine worked against EU as far as it was not a decisive player and was not able to provide infrastructural and substantial support to the conflict settlement. During the period of war the EU member states were divided into two camps: those loudly criticizing Russia's actions, meanwhile expressing their loyalty to US and neutral, cautious states which had strategic relations with Russia and did not want to lose their trading partner in the face of Russia.<sup>155</sup> Unable to provide any political assistance and specify its own position, the EU role was focused on humanitarian aid for Georgia's post-war rehabilitation.<sup>156</sup> Only after the war in September 2008 did the Council decide to establish an autonomous civilian monitoring mission in Georgia.<sup>157</sup> Only after the warfare did the direct EU involvement make an

<sup>153</sup> Jaap Ora, *Frozen conflicts and the EU – a search for a positive agenda*, Director of Division, Policy Planning Department, p. 53.

<sup>154</sup> Elkhan Nuriyev, *The South Caucasus at the crossroads: Conflicts, Caspian oil and Great Power Politics*, (Transaction publishers: New Brunswick (U.S.A.) and London (U.K.) 2007), p. 293.

<sup>155</sup> International Crisis Group, *Georgia and Russia: Clashing over Abkhazia*, Europe Report N 193-05 June 2008, p. 16.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>157</sup> Council of the European Union official web-site, EUJUST THEMIS, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=701&lang=en>, (accessed 24 May 2010).

investment in the efforts to stabilize the region, promoting normalization of the created situation, implementation of monitoring and giving incentives for dialogue and communication between the parties.<sup>158</sup> Thus it is necessary to mention that EUJUST/Themis did not succeed in its role of giving incentives for peace building and during the years 2005-2008 the EU was not represented directly in the conflict resolution process, acting in cooperation and mandate of different international organization. The deployed EUMM mission after the end of the war, guaranteeing EU direct interference in the conflict resolution process assumes more substantial support to infrastructural change, elites, institutions and reform.

The conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh is also addressed in the confines of ENP Action Plan: expressing its “strong” commitment to the conflict settlement of Nagorno-Karabakh, in consultation with the OSCE Minsk group and EUSR without having its own strategies and prioritizing the conflict settlement necessity with the first number of the ENP AP Azerbaijan, and the 7<sup>th</sup> number of AP Armenia, the EU has an even weaker role in the conflict, compared with the other cases.<sup>159</sup> The EU is represented in the OSCE Minsk group with France co-chair,<sup>160</sup> which in its turn reduces the level of the commitment and makes the issue for the EU less salient and important. The first appointed EUSR Heikki Talvitie was operating with a broad mandate, but with small budget and staff.<sup>161</sup> The newly appointed EU Special Representative Peter Semneby replacing Heikki Talvitie got a broader mandate gaining the right to support the economic and political reforms, conflict prevention and resolution.<sup>162</sup> Although significant increase of the number of staff, budget and mandate was obvious, Peter

<sup>158</sup> Council of the European Union official web-site, EUJUST THEMIS, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=701&lang=en>, (accessed 24 May 2010).

<sup>159</sup> Stefan Wolff, *The European Union and the Conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh Territory*, Report prepared for the Committee on Member States’ Obligations Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Centre for International Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution, University of Nottingham, Berlin 4-5 November 2007 <http://www.stefanwolff.com/policy-papers/EU-NK.pdf>.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> International Crisis Group, *Conflict resolution in the South Caucasus: the EU’s role*, Europe Report N 173-20 March 2006 p. 22.

Semneby mentioned that in practical terms the change will not be dramatic, though it became a political signal.<sup>163</sup> Although the strengthened role of the EUSR became a step forward for more credible commitment to the conflict resolution, still the change was not significant and did not have a remarkable impact on the conflict resolution process. Rather the argument that the EU has to be represented via its own co-chair replacing France co-chair in the OSCE Minsk Group is one of the proposals usually made, which still does not mean EU direct involvement in the conflict resolution process, meanwhile this proposal is not being considered yet as well. The EU possible involvement in peacekeeping forces will be a step forward towards creating a new state of relations both in South Caucasus, meanwhile the replacement of the France co-chair in OSCE Minsk group with the European co-chair will present the EU interests in the settlement of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.<sup>164</sup> The constructiveness of the suggestion can be challenged from the possible lack of the European co-chair to be able to present any certain position. The suggestion of the change of France co-chair with the European statesmen<sup>165</sup> is not developed completely and there is a lack of explanation how this change is going to make the EU more committed and how the EU will take the leading position directing and promoting conflict settlement in the scopes of OSCE Minsk group.

Addressing the EU impact on the conflict resolution process of Cyprus, the case is different from the other conflicts observed because Cyprus is an EU member-state today with its unresolved conflict and the EU is credibly committed to the conflict resolution, meanwhile in case of using sanctions, embargoes and conditionality to maneuver with the conflict the EU is more likely to reach acceptable resolution, but the EU rather uses passive enforcement

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<sup>163</sup> Stefan Wolff, *The European Union and the Conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh Territory*, Report prepared for the Committee on Member States' Obligations Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Centre for International Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution, University of Nottingham, Berlin 4-5 November 2007 <http://www.stefanwolff.com/policy-papers/EU-NK.pdf>.

<sup>164</sup> Svante E. Cornell and S. Frederick Starr, *The Caucasus: A Challenge for Europe*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, 2006, p. 10.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

tools, which did not prove to be efficient. The case is unique in the sense that the EU is directly involved in the conflict resolution process and the settlement of the conflict is in the interest of EU, but the outcomes of direct involvement in terms of success can be assessed as failures. Focusing on the EU role, I believe it is important to mention that in the case of Cyprus as well the EU never adopted and presented any conflict resolution, but supported the UNSG mediation efforts and UNSC resolutions.<sup>166</sup>

Failing to reject the hypothesis, I argue that the EU is more successful in the conflicts where it has more mechanisms and tools to get involved in the process of the conflict resolution directly, rather than through mediated means. In this sense the EU is more successful in the Transnistrian conflict resolution process, which is usually labeled as one of the conflicts more likely to be solved in short run, whereas the EU is the least successful in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, because it lacks appropriate framework to directly address the conflict. The case of Cyprus I emphasize to be a direct intervention as far as the change of the Acquis and the membership of the Republic of Cyprus with the existing conflict became a direct tool to be able to further resolve the conflict with the whole capacity.

## Hypothesis 2.

*The failure of the European Union to assist territorial entities sharpens the secessionist trends.*

Hypothesizing that the EU assistance to institutional change, reform and infrastructural sustainability to territorial entities experiencing conflict is an important indicator for further escalation of the conflict, I draw lines from the EU policies in the conflict areas, rather than

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<sup>166</sup> Nathalie Tocci. *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*. (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 30.

all the parties of the conflict. In the case the evaluation of the assistance to South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria and Turkish Cyprus is drawn. The choice of Turkish Cyprus, excluding the assistance to the whole Cyprus is not by accident, because I consider that the EU assistance to Northern Cyprus is more important to be addressed, in a sense that the North is occupied by the Turkish troops and does not enjoy all the benefits of EU membership.

The three sets of European interests, interrelated to each other – governance, energy and security<sup>167</sup> – are reflected in EU policies in ethnic conflicts. The EU approach to governance and democracy is a core concept in EU policies in the South Caucasus, as argued by Svante Cornell and Frederick Starr, making clear the statement that the EU has to adopt a long-term state-building approach, concentrating on the functioning and accountability of core state institutions,<sup>168</sup> so far the framework is highly applicable to other conflicts where the EU is involved in more or less intensive way. Assuming that the changes through the conditionality policies can occur in short-run and medium-run perspective, the transformation of identity and interests may be expected in the long-run.<sup>169</sup> Thus the EU assistance to the latter will ensure long-run sustainability and resolution of conflicts.

One of the incentives for EU engagement in the conflict settlement process in the South Caucasus is the significance of Caspian and Black Sea regions in terms of energy issues.<sup>170</sup> This should make the EU more committed to the conflict resolution process while providing means for the democratization of the conflicting territory, development and reform, at the meantime the question arises how beneficial it is for the EU to assist to the development of

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<sup>167</sup> Svante E. Cornell and S. Frederick Starr, *The Caucasus: A Challenge for Europe*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, 2006, p. 5.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>169</sup> Bruno Coppieters, Michael Emerson, Michel Huysseune, Tamara Kovziridze, Nathalie Tocci, Gergana Noutcheva and Marius Vahl, *Europeanisation and Conflict Resolution: Case Studies from the European Periphery*, Academia Press: Gent 2004.

<sup>170</sup> Jaap Ora, *Frozen conflicts and the EU – a search for a positive agenda*, Director of Division, Policy Planning Department, p. 51.

Nagorno-Karabakh, which seeks secession and independence, while being interested in establishing friendly relations with Azerbaijan for economic benefits. The vagueness of the ENP AP to refer to this question is explained by the dilemmatic situation, lacking the possibility to identify exact steps, when the tools are available or can be made available. From the other hand the dilemma becomes even more problematic, while looking at the question from the hypothesized view: if the EU using its tools, promotes the institutional change, reform and stability in the Nagorno-Karabakh, it both gives incentives for secession, but meanwhile guarantees the commitment of local authorities to the status quo or the condition beneficial for the EU, whereas the failure to invest in this framework may lead to more tensioned development of the conflict due to the lack of commitment and low costs for violence. This question is addressed by Jaap Ora, mentioning that the EU has an advantage to combine wide range of policies and tools offering rational and structured systematic assistance to improve the situation in the affected countries, but the EU “should also possess the political authority to push at the highest level for an agreement to end the conflicts”,<sup>171</sup> so far the current EU state-of-affairs shows that while having capacity without will to commit to the conflict settlement issues, the existence of tools and mechanisms is not enough, considering the lack of sanctioning and conditionality necessary to push in favor of the conflict resolution strategies.

Georgia has a unique attitude towards EU integration and is committed to transformation, modernization and Europeanization.<sup>172</sup> The EU financial assistance to Abkhazia and South Ossetia in line with the EUSR Border Support team<sup>173</sup> provide with the sufficient incentives for reform, although the frozen conflicts obstacle the successful implementation of the whole agenda, involving the promotion of the dialogue between Georgian government and South

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<sup>171</sup> Jaap Ora, *Frozen conflicts and the EU – a search for a positive agenda*, Director of Division, Policy Planning Department, p. 51.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.,p. 53.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.,p. 54.



Ossetian and Abkhazian governments and the restoration of ties.<sup>174</sup> The negotiation formats used before did not reach desired results, so far Georgia has requested the EU to take closer role in the negotiation process and establish peacekeeping forces in order to satisfy the conflicting parties' needs.<sup>175</sup>

The pre-war policy of the EU focusing on local infrastructure, agriculture and social services undermining demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR), the rule of law, promotion of human rights and media development as traditional conflict resolution fields of assistance became a failure of the whole designed policy and did not change the logic of the further tensioned development of the conflict, silently speaking about very weak role of the EU in the conflict resolution in the certain case and lack of appropriate strong instruments.<sup>176</sup> In the meantime the essentially arising question is the impossibility of the EU to take strong position due to its close ties with Russian Federation and diverse relations of EU member-states separately with Russia.

Despite the argument that Georgia's conflict outbreak is dependent only on the relations of the parties involved in the conflict,<sup>177</sup> still the denial of the importance of third-party actors such as EU might be misleading in the conclusions, so far the mediation, which can be attributed to EU, in case being wisely thought and addressed based on strong position and the logic of costly losses for both sides in case of sharpening and the eruption of violent conflict, the least can be successfully avoided.

To criticize the EU strategic mistake in the region, which can be described as passive enforcement mechanisms implementation, the need arises to criticize its weaker role in comparison with the role of Washington and Moscow in the region. The silent involvement of

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<sup>174</sup> Jaap Ora, *Frozen conflicts and the EU – a search for a positive agenda*, Director of Division, Policy Planning Department, p. 54

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>176</sup> International Crisis Group, *Conflict resolution in the South Caucasus: the EU's role*, Europe Report N 173-20 March 2006 pp.18.

<sup>177</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 139.

EU in Georgia's two conflicts can be viewed as a lack of invested efforts to prevent further development of the conflict into violent clash. In case of Abkhazia the EU called for "maximum autonomy" for the Abkhazians as a way to express their freedom of speech and identity in Georgia, whereas in the case of South Ossetia the approach of the EU was even vaguer, making broad claims such as autonomy of South Ossetia in Georgia, demilitarization of the conflict zone and the confidence-building, which scope was not appropriately specified.<sup>178</sup> These kind of vague concepts without any substantial statements and back up lower the costs of staying committed to peace process and develop secessionist feelings. At the meantime the EU, having further going perspectives with enlargement and border security can use the situation to provide costly help, the benefits of which will be seen in a long-run perspective.

The EUJUST Themis "supported, mentored and advised Ministers, senior officials and appropriate bodies at the level of the Central Government" supporting Georgian authorities in the management of urgent challenges in the criminal justice system, assisting in the development of the coordinated reform implementation.<sup>179</sup> This mission failed to accomplish its goal, so far the commitment of the elites was not achieved and the escalation of the conflict- not prevented.

"Government officials, parliamentarians, members of civil society, media, and other opinion shapers throughout the South Caucasus lack information on the ENP and Action Plans. Especially in Azerbaijan and Armenia – a small circle of perhaps a couple dozen persons have seen Action Plan drafts."<sup>180</sup> The words in itself speak about the EU weak

<sup>178</sup> Nathalie Tocci, *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*, (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 129.

<sup>179</sup> Council of the European Union official web-site, EUJUST THEMIS, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=701&lang=en>, (accessed 24 May 2010).

<sup>180</sup> Sabine Freizer, *Responding to South Caucasus Conflicts in the European Neighborhood*, European Parliament, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Hearing on the South Caucasus, "Promoting Stability and Democratization in our Neighborhood: What Role for the EU in the South Caucasus?", Brussels, Belgium, 22 February 2006,

involvement in the regional political implications. The underlined lack of information among officials is the direct line to the situation that the EU does not give appropriate incentives to the authorities of the region to realize the importance of EU involvement and does not show any interest to get involved in institutional change in the region, which will guarantee the commitment of the local authorities to the EU and its policies. The highlighted assumption that the ENP implementation is an elite driven process, leaving aside the participation of the members of the civil society, mass media, local authorities and citizens,<sup>181</sup> which assumes lack of democratic transparency, still misses the elites' credible involvement in the implementation of the ENP. The Georgian elites acted more enthusiastically in this framework, demanding stronger EU involvement in the conflict prevention process in Georgia, insisting on the restoration of Georgia's territorial integrity and the setting of EU-Russia cooperation agenda on the resolution of Georgian internal conflicts.<sup>182</sup> The "wait and see" approach to the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh addressing the conflict via OSCE Minsk group tools<sup>183</sup> and the ENP AP for all three conflicts makes the region fragile for the secessionist conflicts. The evidence of the EU non-involvement in the assistance to democratization, institutional change, stability and sustainability promotion led to the eruption of the war in 2008, meanwhile in other cases the significant support of the EU prevents the wars because of the huge costs and efforts input in the development of the conflicting territories.

The Commission's approach to Cyprus conflict showed that the EU is flexible with changing the Acquis in order to address the conflicts in their complexity and the solutions can be achieved via pragmatic approaches.<sup>184</sup> The Accession Process started with Greek Cypriots excluding Turkish Cypriots from the negotiation process. The suspicion of the Turkish

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[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004\\_2009/documents/dv/afet\\_220206\\_freizer\\_presentati/afet\\_220206\\_freizer\\_presentation.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dv/afet_220206_freizer_presentati/afet_220206_freizer_presentation.pdf) (accessed 24 May 2010).

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Michelle Pace, *Images of Border Conflicts within EU Policy-Making Circles and Their Impact on Policy* Working Papers Series in EU Border Conflicts Studies, University of Birmingham, No. 16, June 2005, p. 5.

Cypriots that the accession is only a threat and an economic “bribe” changed only in 2002 looking at the accession now as a guarantee for the security which would bring economic benefits marginally decreasing during the time.<sup>185</sup> The failure of the EU to lift the economic isolation of Turkish Cypriots stalemated the status of the conflict, but still the EU hopes to unify the two Cyprus’ which is not implementable yet unless the EU clarifies its role and assistance- financial, political and diplomatic, to solve the conflict.

The case of Transnistria differs from the previous cases in a sense that here the EU assistance is not aimed at providing more assistance to Transnistria, but to Moldova, to make it attractive for the people living in Transnistria to find their way back to Moldova, meanwhile the aim is to shatter the status quo in the region. The EU in this case pledged funds for the border infrastructure creation between Moldova and Ukraine, giving the assistance of 22 million more Euros for strengthening the border control between Moldova and Ukraine and creating the EU Border Assistance Mission to monitor the customs and border control on the border of Ukraine and Moldova, including the control over Transnistrian sector.<sup>186</sup>

The statelike entity created in Transnistria with its organized leadership, control over territory became more or less functioning system, demanding international recognition.<sup>187</sup> The economic, political and security issues - main pillars on which Transnistrian interest groups are entrenched - are supported from the outside groups in Chisinau, Kyiv and Moscow for the same reasons.<sup>188</sup> This is what makes the region highly fragile and is on the EU high agenda. Considering economic, territorial and political ties of Transnistria, the EU is interested in the resolution of the conflict assuming its importance for the regional development and the

<sup>185</sup> Nathalie Tocci. *The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the backyard*. (Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: USA and Canada 2007), p. 40-44.

<sup>186</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris , Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 32.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

failures of the OSCE, US and Russia to resolve the conflict.<sup>189</sup> The EU assistance to Transnistrian NGOs, elites and interest groups is connected with its interest to democratize and reform the entity, but the general aim is to reunify the region with Moldova.

The economic factors in Transnistria can be used by the European Union to sanction the possible conflict settlement conditions. The Transnistrian region is highly flexible to economic forces, dependent on external investments in business sector.<sup>190</sup> The weakness of Moldova is its economic situation, which is not significantly better than economic conditions Transnistria; consequently Moldova is not attractive for Transnistrians to move to.<sup>191</sup> The EU strategy is aimed at helping Moldova to develop and to become attractive for Transnistria after the unification with Moldova enjoys benefits which were not available before.

The cases show that the EU support for the territorial entities experiencing ethnic conflict can ensure more credibility in the commitment to peace. Though all four cases are negative, where the EU did not succeed in providing appropriate assistance, the statement can be neither argued nor falsified. Another problem is the difference between the cases: in case of South Caucasus - Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh - the EU does not have certain policies designed and a strong position whether to support unification or secession, but the cases of Transnistria and Cyprus assume EU bias in favor of the reunification of the territories with Moldova and RoC respectively, meanwhile failing to provide substantial support to both territories.

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<sup>189</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 2.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

## Conclusion

This research began with the questions to what extent is the European Union committed to ethnic conflict resolution? Two hypotheses were introduced: *EU direct intervention in the conflict resolution process rather than mediated efforts successfully contributes to the conflict settlement process* and *the failure of the European Union to assist territorial entities sharpens the secessionist trends* respectively.

My conclusion after testing the first hypothesis is that the European Union is more successful when it is directly involved in the conflict resolution process, whereas mediated efforts appeared to be not so significant. From the cases chosen the European Union is more credibly committed to the Transnistrian conflict settlement via direct tools, at the meantime it is least successful in the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh. The conflicts of South Ossetia and Abkhazia show that the EU was not involved in the conflict resolution process credibly as far as the EUJUST/ Themis mission was dissolved in 2005, and after the war only in 2008 the EU decided to deploy its first peacekeeping mission in Georgia. In the case of Cyprus the EU is directly involved in the conflict resolution process, as RoC is an EU member state, but the conflict is not addressed by the EU with full capacity and the EU does not use all available mechanisms to solve the conflict. Table 1 shows the success and the failures of the EU in the conflict resolution process during different times.

The second hypothesis has been rejected: the failure of the EU to assist to secessionist regions does not make them go to the way of violence and increase secessionist feelings. The hypothesis is rejected because EU approaches different conflicts differently: in the South Caucasus the EU does not have clear policy determining its own side, while the influence of other powers is bigger and the secessionist trends are not the consequence of the lack of EU commitment. In the cases of Transnistria and Cyprus EU has clear preferences in favor of the reunion of both territories with Moldova and RoC respectively. EU commitment is higher to

the conflicts and the benefits the territories enjoy prevent from the secessionist feelings, meanwhile as soon as they feel the decrease of assistance and reduced benefits the territorial entities start fighting for independence, like in the case of Cyprus in 2002. This hypothesis should be tested on a larger number of cases considering also the influence of other forces.

This leads to the limitations of the research and further suggestions for research. One of the limitations was the isolation of the conflicts from other third-party interventions except for the EU; case selection was limited to five in order to be able to observe the conflicts closer, the time slot is taken after the 1990s, because major changes in EU attitude to selected conflicts were observed during this period of time. The areas on the agenda were EU tools and mechanisms, mainly direct tools, to assess the intervention intensity and the possible consequences.

There is a big gap of assessing EU efficiency in conflict resolution process, so the cases of Kosovo, Chad, Israel and Palestine with modified assumptions could add certainty and clarity to the model, meanwhile the time period should be extended accordingly. One of the most interesting topics for a future research is to assess EU economic intervention in the conflicting territories and the consequences of this intervention in terms of local institutional transaction and democratization, specifically referring to territorial entities but not lobbying, or conflicting states.

My last suggestion for further research comes from Nicu popescu: support for democracy in secessionist entities, as Popescu argues, is one of the most important tools for conflict settlement, making the future settlement of the conflict sustainable on the long-run perspective, if the separatist regions are provided with the necessary support for the improvement of the democracy level, based on the assistance to domestic structures and external pressures.<sup>192</sup> This argument, although very constructive, does not reflect reality; so

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<sup>192</sup> Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris , Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 12.

far the EU assistance to secessionist entities is not significant enough for ensuring long-run democratic performance improvement and sustainability. This proposal to provide support to certain groups inside entities, reducing the political and economic centralization of the governance<sup>193</sup> could become more effective means for the implementation of the objectives of the EU in conflict experiencing territories.

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<sup>193</sup>Nicu Popescu, *The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood*, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris , Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 13.

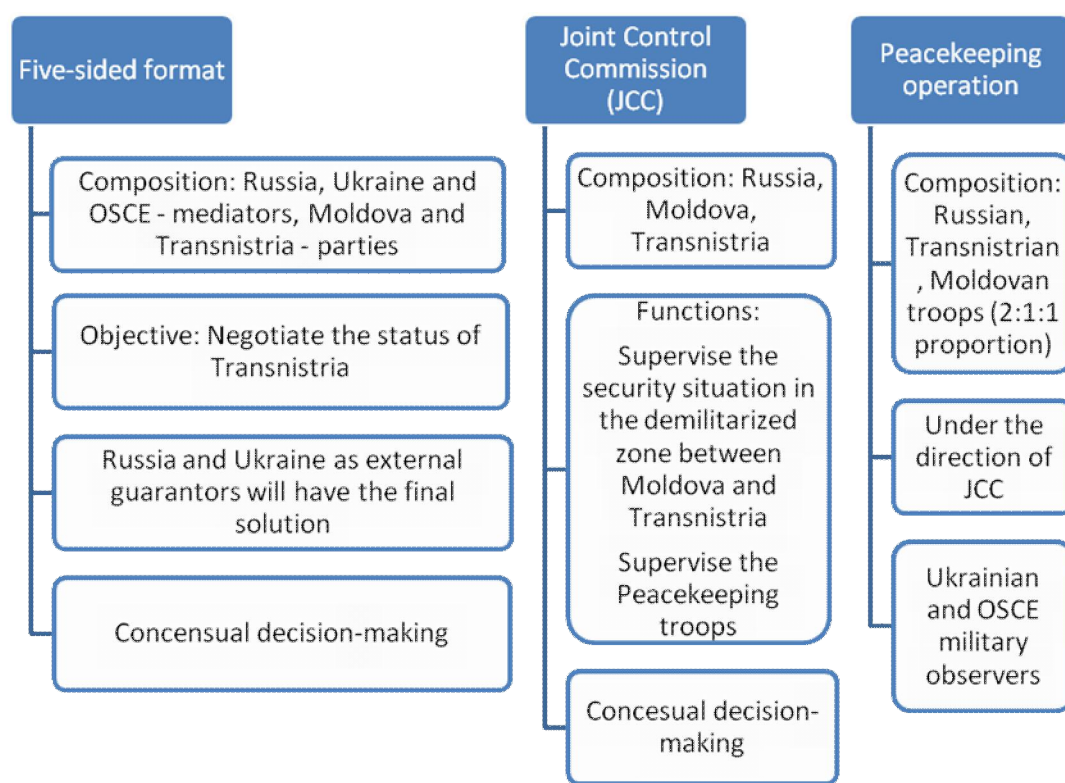


## Appendix

**Table 1. EU intervention assessment**

<b>Conflict</b> <b>Time slot</b>	<b>Abkhazia</b>	<b>South Ossetia</b>	<b>Nagorno- Karabakh</b>	<b>Transnistria</b>	<b>Cyprus</b>
<b>1990-1995</b>	Failure	Failure	Failure	Failure	Failure
<b>1996- 2000</b>	Intensity decrease	Intensity decrease	Intensity decrease	Partial success	Failure
<b>2001-2005</b>	Partial success	Partial success	Partial success	Partial success	Partial success
<b>2006-2010</b>	Failure	Failure	Partial success	Partial success	Partial success

Figure 1. Five-sided format of negotiations



Source: Source Nicu Popescu, “The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood”, published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris , Occasional Paper n°60, October 2005, p. 16.

## Maps

### 1. Map of Georgia, South Ossetia and Abkhazia.



Source: The World Factbook Georgia, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gg.html> (accessed 25 May 2010).

### 2. Map of Nagorno-Karabakh.



Source: Conciliation resource, <http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/nagorno-karabakh/large-map.php> (accessed 02 June 2010).

### 3. Map of Transnistria



Source: The World Factbook Transnistria, [https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/maps/maptemplate\\_md.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/maps/maptemplate_md.html) (accessed 25 May 2010).

#### 4. Map of Cyprus



Source: The World Factbook Cyprus, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cy.html> (accessed 25 May 2010).

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