CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN
THE BALKANS
MIDDLE EAST
ASIA & AFRICA

Edited by
NESRİN KENAR

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I dedicate this book to my beloved nephew Taylan Kenar. You are always my source of happiness and pride. I love you as much as from plus infinity to minus infinity.

Nesrin Kenar

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

1

Contemporary Issues in The Balkans, Middle East, Asia & Africa

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1. Introduction: Conceptual Framework

Crisis, conflict and war are the most fundamental problems of international relations, and these concepts are interrelated. *Crises* are generally defined as actions, events, or environmental changes that occurred before the outbreak of military conflicts. However, crises can also be triggered by the outbreak of war, such as the German attack on 22 June 1941 (Operation Barbarossa). Not every crisis turns into a war. A crisis can arise, persist, and end with or without violence. As with the India-China border crisis of 1959-63, crises can escalate into wars, and developments during a war can trigger a crisis for a warring state. War does not abolish or replace crisis. Instead, the crisis accentuated by the war. From this perspective, we can say that the war is a continuation of the crisis in other ways (Brecher, Introduction: Crisis, Conflict, War: State of the Discipline, 1996: 127-129).

Conflict is defined as the conflict of opposing interests. Conflict arises when the interests of one party arise or interfere with the interests of another or others. From another perspective, the conflict is also seen as an attempt to reach a compromise by force, intimidation, deception, or other less politically condemnable means. The opposite of conflict is avoidance, where each side's orbital interests work. In this case, each side follows its path without trying to invade or hijack the orbit of others. Such a situation does not create harmful competition for the coexistence of different interests in its orbit, but if the trajectories of the parties converge in a way that blocks the other's path, the possibility of conflict arises. Conflict can arise when the competition turns into a struggle. When opposing interests collide, competition turns into conflict (Cooper, 2003: 85-86).

There are many definitions of war. Among these, the most widely used is conflict in which the parties to the war are members of the international system, resulting in a total of 1000 or more deaths (Brecher, Introduction: Crisis, Conflict, War: State of the Discipline, 1996: 128).

According to Clausewitz, war is the act of resorting to violence to force the parties' wishes on the other side. Therefore it is a tool used to achieve the ends of the parties (Clausewitz, 2003: 14). International relations theorists define *war* as a large-scale organized act of violence between political units (Levy, 1998: 141). Clausewitz's work was at the centre of several studies during the Cold War that advocated prioritizing military issues as the only way to limit violence and avoid nuclear disaster (Schu, 2017: iii). From this point of view, it is possible to say that states, which are the main actors of international relations and are constantly in the struggle to become stronger by increasing their capacities, resort to using force if they cannot achieve their goals through diplomatic means. However, war is also considered as the failure of these institutions and the system, as there are regulations that prohibit states from using force or threatening to use force against each other in the international arena, as stipulated in the UN agreement, and thus, to prevent armed conflict between states. For example, since the League of Nations (MC) system was seen as unsuccessful because it could not prevent the emergence of the Second World War, it was revised at the end of the Second World War, and the UN system was established.

Although crisis, conflict and war are the most fundamental issues of international relations when the problems have turned into violent armed conflict between the parties or the problems between the parties turn into violent armed conflicts, they are of interest to the international community and international organizations established to maintain international peace and security, such as the UN. Although the concepts of "crisis", "conflict", and "war" have different meanings, the concept of "Contemporary Issues" is used in the book because these concepts pose problems and create instability between the parties.

From this point of view, we should point out that the relations between states, which are the main actors of the international system, develop at many levels, from cooperation to war. British Prime Minister Henry John Temple (Lord Palmerston) (Pradhan, 2020; Frick, 2021) in 1784-1865 and later British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (Iranian Diplomacy, 2014) during the Second World War started to define British foreign policy, "We have no eternal allies" and we have no permanent enemies. The statements made as "Our interests are endless and permanent" set an example for all countries, and countries try to put their relations on this basis and try to prioritize the national interests of their own countries in their relations with other countries. From this point of view, we can say that due to the nature of international relations, states have no permanent friends or permanent enemies in international relations: they only have permanent national interests. For this reason, crises and conflicts and wars

may occur among them in achieving national goals and increasing the capacity of states.

In the post-Cold War era, states' tendency to use "soft power" instead of military force to achieve their national goals has decreased the number of armed conflicts between states. Similarly, the number of armed conflicts within states is decreasing. However, the wars and terrorist attacks in Afghanistan, Libya, Mali, Iraq, Syria and Ukraine in the post-Cold War period show that the "war" has not entirely disappeared (Schu, 2017).

In the post-Cold War era, although the tools used by countries to achieve their national interests have reduced the possibility of military conflicts and, therefore, wars, the problems experienced between states for various reasons sometimes become international problems with the intervention of third parties and cause hot conflicts between states that are in conflict.

On the other hand, the emergence of intra-border (ethnic and religious) conflicts due to the change in the international system after the Cold War and the fact that non-state units were also involved in wars led to debates about the changing nature of war. Conflicting parties in wars in the post-Cold War period do not always state, but non-state actors are also involved in wars. Low-intensity wars have begun to replace conventional wars. In the long run, various war organizations began to take the place of states. In low-intensity conflicts, the people have become the war's centre of gravity, but civilians have also been targeted in conventional wars. Although the new conflicts and wars that emerged in the post-Cold War period show some changes, these changes are not deep enough to affect the nature of the war (Karaosmanoğlu, 2011: 5-13).

2. Causes of Conflicts

As in the Cold War period, in addition to the conflicts between states after the Cold War, there are also "intra-border conflicts" within the borders of the states. Although conflicts are called "ethnic", "religious", and "ideological" conflicts according to the period, region and parties to the conflict, the real reasons underlying the conflict often differ.

There are many different perspectives on the conditions of conflict and war and the causes of war. Since the mid-18th century, many European and American theorists have tried to explain war as an aberration in human relations or an event beyond rational control (Howard, 1984: 90).

While each of these perspectives is based on some assumptions and theoretical propositions about the causes of war, there is no consensus on

what the causes of war are, what method should be used to identify these causes, and what criteria an armed conflict must meet in order to be called a war. Some researchers state that factors related to the level of economic development, dependence on foreign trade, domestic political stability, government structure, distribution of economic resources, international participation, international status, participation in bloc politics and geography are the causes of conflict and war (East & Gregg, 1967: 249-25). With the end of the Cold War, the emergence of inter-border ethnic conflicts and the spread of democratic values have come to the fore as a turning point in the history of war. Francis Fukuyama predicts that the "end of history" has come, that from now on, wars, or at least wars between great powers, will gradually disappear (Levy, 1998: 139). Samuel P. Huntington states that the primary source of conflict in the post-Cold War era will be neither ideological nor economic, but cultural divisions and the dominant source of conflict among humanity. According to Huntington, nation-states will continue to be the most influential actors in the international system, but significant conflicts in international politics will occur between nations and groups of different cultures. The clash of civilizations will dominate international politics, and fault lines between civilizations will be battle lines in the future. The conflict between civilizations will be the final stage in the evolution of conflict in the modern world (Huntington, 1993: 22).

In studies conducted to investigate the factors that cause conflicts, there is a tendency to reduce the emergence of wars to a single 'cause'. However, it is possible to say that there is more than one reason that causes conflicts to arise and that conflicts arise due to the combination of these reasons. However, these causes may have different effects on the emergence of conflict, and one of these causes may even be a key catalyst.

For example, some researchers argue that the reason for the US-led coalition's invasion of Iraq in 2003 was the US's economic interests in the region and the control of oil resources, while some other researchers argue that this US intervention in Iraq posed a threat to international security because of the autocratic rule in Iraq. They claimed it was an intervention made as a political necessity to bring democracy. Thus, while explaining the causes of conflicts, some researchers have focused on conflict factors related to poverty and inequality, while others argue that war events depend on material interests. Therefore, although there are difficulties in identifying and identifying possible causes of war or armed conflict, investigating why violent conflicts occur is of great importance in understanding the causes of past conflicts and preventing future conflicts (Kett & Rowson, 2007: 403).

Researchers distinguish international wars from civil wars and interstate wars from other international wars involving non-state actors. During Cold War, the wars between the great powers have been the subject of research. However, researchers focused on understanding the causes of low-intensity wars and ethnic conflicts after the end of the Cold War. (Levy, 1998: 141).

As a result of the literature study we conducted within the scope of this book study, the factors affecting the emergence and continuation of "crisis", "war", and "conflict" are classified as follows.

2.1. Intra-State Causes of Conflicts

Another focus of war research is the intrastate causes of conflicts and wars, especially the relationship between regime type and war. Accordingly, the fact that power is distributed among different constitutional institutions under the principle of separation of powers in democratic states imposes institutional restrictions on the use of force by political leaders. According to liberal and Marxist theorists, public opinion is peaceful and favours the use of less military force than political leaders, regardless of regime type. However, since victorious wars increase popular support for political leaders and the external threat has a unifying effect, political leaders may create external conflict by pursuing more aggressive and risky policies to strengthen their internal political support. Because of this reason, it is stated that the tendency of the leaders to use military force abroad is at a higher level in the periods before the elections, when the economic performance is low or when the domestic political support is low. They argue that when a state wages war, it is usually because the political leaders or the capitalist class choose war over the desires and interests of the people and that public opinion may be misinformed if there is public support for war (Levy, 1998: 151-153).

Social divisions are possible if the constitutional institutions in a country cannot peacefully manage the interests of different groups in the country, cannot provide adequate protection to all its citizens, or cannot meet the demands for political participation in that country. Suppose the country's constitutional political institutions and organizations fail to maintain social peace and protect the interests of different groups in the country. In that case, excluded groups may engage in anti-government struggles, including armed movements, to gain the right to benefit from public resources and revenues, and thus militant movements may erupt in the country. In addition, if democratic institutions do not exist or are weak in a country, the risk of violence is likely to increase during the initiation of the democratization process in that country, especially when electoral policies come into play. Therefore, researchers state that encouraging

democratization will have dangerous consequences when the conditions for democratization are not mature in a country (Julius, Muliru, & Gichoya, 2015). On the other hand, weak and unsuccessful state structures also play an essential role in the occurrence of conflicts. If it cannot maintain a state's monopoly on the legitimate use of violence, it cannot protect its territory against insurgent groups in its own country and neighbouring countries or from military intervention by its neighbours (Auton & Slobodien, 2016: 5).

Many countries with colonial experience in Africa, the Middle East and Asia have faced various elements of instability, such as divisive policies, a fierce struggle for power and territory, and civil war after gaining independence. In these countries, which generally have multi-ethnic and religious and linguistically diverse societies, the exclusion of other groups and limiting or preventing their access to resources by dominating the access of any leader, group or political party to state structures and resources has exacerbated social divisions in these countries. Political stability in the post-colonial countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, where this situation is common, is only possible with the ability of the ruling political parties to overcome social fragmentation (Julius, Muliru, & Gichoya, 2015). However, since political parties in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are ethnically or religiously based, and their coming to power is possible with the "othering" policies they follow, they cannot follow policies to overcome social fragmentation.

It has been determined that income inequality in the country also triggers conflicts. In particular, it is claimed that the political and economic inequalities between ethnic, religious, and cultural groups in the country cause complaints from disadvantaged groups, which may lead to civil war in the country. (Julius, Muliru, & Gichoya, 2015). A study conducted in 71 developing countries in 1996 concluded that income inequality is associated with instability. Because in the research, the cause of instability, the political and economic resources of the country between the tribe, ethnic, and religious groups in that country. It is observed that the unequal distribution among the individuals creates a sense of deprivation in these groups. Such group-based inequalities create a destabilizing effect, and when inequalities increase over time, they are more likely to turn into conflict. It is possible to see the effect of income inequality on conflicts in conflicts in many African and Asian countries. For example, when the majority Sinhala population came to power after Sri Lanka's independence, the Tamil population's social, economic and political status deteriorated. This led to Tamil demands for a separate Tamil state and escalated into armed conflict in the 1980s (Kett & Rowson, 2007: 404-405).

Othering policies based on religion, ethnicity and culture in a country, especially by the government, can encourage ethnic, religious or cultural groups in the society to unite and organize and take collective action on behalf of their groups. Research shows that conflict increases poverty, but poverty is rarely the root cause of conflict. However, there appears to be a direct link between conflict and poverty, as poorer countries experience more Conflict (Julius, Muliru, & Gichoya, 2015).

Another factor is that instability and conflict are common in countries with low or negative economic indicators. Poverty undermines the ability of the state and communities to redistribute wealth in the face of economic distress and encourages the rich to seize the assets of the poor. On the other hand, there are also data showing that economic growth can reduce the risk of conflict in low-income countries. This confirms Keynes' view that "economic development will bind people together in more intense economic relations and make it less likely that any group will disrupt stable economic cooperation by resorting to violence." Violent conflicts impair the ability of states to function effectively, and states trapped in a cycle of poverty, conflict and lack of development (Kett & Rowson, 2007: 403-405).

The relationship between economic interdependence and war has also been a hot topic in the last few years. Liberal economic theorists claim that capitalist economic systems and free trade of goods in the international market economy are the guarantors of peace. Accordingly, international trade creates economic advantages for states. In the event of a war, international trade will be adversely affected by the war, and this will deter political leaders from going to war with essential countries, as it will cause the loss or reduction of gains from trade. However, realists oppose the liberal theory of economic warfare and argue that the effect of trade on war is minor compared to military and diplomatic reasons (Levy, 1998: 149).

Countries, where most of their income sources are the production of one or a few natural resources seem to be more prone to conflict. While governments in this situation need to manage their resources carefully, especially in post-colonial African, Asian and Latin American countries, the revenues from natural resource production are often unevenly distributed. Even countries can use these revenues against their revolting populations to benefit equally from their income sources. They use it to wage war. Groups that cannot benefit equally from the revenues from natural resource production may revolt by forming rebel groups to benefit equally from the revenues; for example, the Tuareg revolts in Niger to make equal use of their uranium income. It is impossible to say that there is a linear relationship between the existence of natural resources and conflict,

considering that there is no conflict in all countries where the majority of income sources are the production of one or a few natural resources. For natural resources to cause conflict, other factors must support them (Kett & Rowson, 2007: 404).

Due to the increasing industrialization level, countries need fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas. However, coal, oil and natural gas reserves in the world are decreasing and becoming scarce resources. For this reason, the competition over energy resources between industrialized Western countries dependent on energy resources and resource-rich countries in the south increases and facilitates the possibility of conflict between these countries; examples include the Iraq war in 2003 and the NATO intervention in Libya in 2011 (Julius, Muliru, & Gichoya, 2015).

The purpose of the research conducted by Maurice A. East and Philip M. Gregg is to investigate the factors affecting conflict and cooperation among states. According to the result of this research, there is a systematic relationship between the national conditions of the countries and the international conditions they are in directing the states to international actions such as conflict and war. A state highly involved in the international system through economic transactions and communication is more likely to participate in cooperative and conflict political actions. A country's dependence on international trade tends to reduce conflict and cooperation. Domestic conditions, which significantly impact domestic policy, appear to have less to do with international cooperation and Conflict (East & Gregg, 1967: 265-267).

2.2. International Causes of Conflicts

Systemic realists state that the balance of power in the international system, which is measured by the size of the states' economy, population, level of development and their ability to transform them into military power, affects the behaviour of a state and that the balance of power in the system shapes the actions of states, even if it does not. Realists state that in the period until 1945, when the balance of power system was dominant, there was a relatively stable bipolar Cold War period. After the end of the Cold War period, more interstate conflicts were experienced than in the unipolar period, when the USA remained the sole superpower and dominated the international system. Kenneth Waltz argues that interstate conflict is more likely in an international system where the balance of power in the international system is multipolar rather than bipolar. According to Waltz, the large number of potential enemies and allies in the international system makes war (Phillips, 2022: 3). In contrast, classical realists argue that the existence of multipolar power distribution and a "flexible" alliance system

in the international system will ensure stability in the system, neo-realists argue that bipolarity is more stable than multipolarity (Levy, 1998: 147).

Waltz claims that the leading cause of wars is the anarchic structure of the international system. Accordingly, *anarchy* is defined as the absence of legitimate authority to resolve disputes and enforce agreements between states, and the absence of a sanction mechanism to prevent wars in the international system causes war (Levy, 1998: 142).

Waltz states that systems theory does not explain all the features of international politics but a few big and important events such as wars between states. Therefore, Waltz does not explain how the structure of the international system and the polarization between states in the system can affect intrastate conflicts. However, in his work titled "The international system and the Syrian civil war", Christopher Phillips argues that this structural Realist framework can also help explain civil wars like in Syria. According to Phillips, the balance of power in the international system dramatically influences the policies and actions of local fighters and their foreign allies. According to this assessment, since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, the actions of foreign actors, including the USA, Russia, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, have been affected by the international system (Phillips, 2022: 3).

Shifts or perceptions of shifts in the balance of power in the international system can also cause interstate conflict and war. "Revisionist" states challenge status quo states when they perceive that there will be a significant shift in the balance of power. The perception of an impending balance of power shift may encourage state and non-state actors to launch an offensive before the change occurs. In addition, the side benefiting from the impending balance of power shift seeks to accelerate the transition and consolidate its position. This leads to the problem of commitment to previous agreements for all the actors involved. Political agreements between parties regarding a dispute that is acceptable in principle to both parties can be undermined if the possibility of shifting the balance of power arises. The stronger party can terminate the agreement and demand additional concessions from the other party. In this case, the disadvantaged party may seek outside support to change the scope and outcome of the conflict. Thus, concerns about changing the balance of power can increase and institutionalize regional violence (Auton & Slobodien, 2016: 6).

The division between the rich and industrialized "north" and the rest of the world in the post-Cold War era is also a factor that creates global insecurity. The global wealth that has increased with economic globalization is not shared equally between the rich and industrialized

"northern" countries and the rest of the world. The vulnerability of underdeveloped or developing "southern" countries to droughts and floods, high levels of poverty, and disruption of traditional livelihoods cause conflicts between and within the states of the region. The chronic problems of oppression, political exclusion, poverty, discrimination and food insecurity that exists in most "southern" countries have led to the marginalization and radicalization of groups that have witnessed, via the internet, the wealth and opportunities of elites in "northern" and "southern" countries, and increased the likelihood of violence—posing a threat to national, regional and international stability. Conflicts in many countries, such as Liberia, East Timor, and Sierra Leone, are violent events stemming from income and wealth distribution inequalities and economic recessions (Julius, Muliru, & Gichoya, 2015).

Although foreign aid looks like a humanitarian matter, it is actually an important foreign policy strategy to be used for states and is also one of the factors that are effective in the emergence of interstate and intrastate conflicts. Strategic calculations and expected political benefits from aid play a role in states' foreign aid allocation decisions. The economic, political, military and security interests of the donor and the economic and humanitarian needs of the recipient play a role in the foreign aid decisions of states. Among other effects, foreign aid can create a dependency between the recipient and the donor, resulting in development, reform and human rights compliance, and internal conflict. However, external aid, assuming it will lead to results that align with the donor's intentions and interests, can also have undesirable consequences for both the donor and the recipient, as recipients can divert resources and change goals. Foreign aid can lead to conflicts, either due to the donor's intentions or, instead, as an unintended consequence of the objectives mentioned above of the recipient country. In fact, given the expected benefits from foreign aid for both donors and recipients, the likelihood that foreign aid will lead to conflict is particularly relevant if foreign aid is provided shaped by rivalries and long-term conflicts. It is out of the question that all foreign aid is aimed at and causes conflict. Otherwise, the increase or decrease in foreign aid should lead to more or less conflict. Therefore, there is no direct link between foreign aid and conflict; other factors are required for foreign aid to lead to conflict (Rudloff & Scott, 2014: 37-39).

The international system consists of geographical (regional) subsystems. There are different levels of interaction between these geographical (regional) subsystems and between subsystems and the international system, and this interaction creates various effects. For example, it has been found that an increased concentration of military power at the regional level often contributes to large-scale regional wars. However, these regional

wars escalate into global wars only under conditions of the global concentration of naval power and economic wealth (Levy, 1998: 149).

The impact of the global system on civil war is determined by its interaction with the regional system. In order to understand how the global system affected the civil war, it is necessary to understand how this system interacts with the regional system. The Syrian civil war has emerged in a period of change in both the global and regional systems, and their interaction has affected the foreign policy strategies of the actors (Phillips, 2022: 4).

Increasing attention is paid to regional systems as a level of analysis to explain civil war and other forms of instability. At the state level, attention has focused on 'regional security complexes', defined as groups of states whose 'primary security concerns are so interconnected that their national security is inseparable. In other words, "regional security complexes" are defined as "situations where neighbouring countries experience internal or interstate conflicts, and there are important links between conflicts". These links are so crucial that changes in conflict dynamics or resolution of a conflict also impact neighbouring conflicts. In this process, massive refugee flows can create in themselves sources of insecurity (Auton & Slobodien, 2016: 4).

Regardless of the underlying causes of international or intra-state conflict and war, even if we accept the role of the dynamics mentioned above, wars start with conscious and logical decisions by the parties based on their interests. The parties aim to increase their capacities more by going to war rather than staying at peace (Howard, 1984: 103).

3. Structure and Rationale of the Book

This book entitled "Contemporary Issues in The Balkans, Middle East, Asia & Africa" consists of various topics and intends to focus on contemporary issues in The Balkans, Middle East, Asia & Africa. The content of this book was created on a regional basis because the crises and conflicts in the international arena are mostly experienced between the states in the same region and emerge as a result of the regional balance of power and regional dynamics in the region, which is also called the geographical subsystem.

Crises and conflicts in a region may remain regional or even a local crisis or conflict if they do not interact with other sub-demands and do not interfere with global powers. However, when a crisis or conflict in one subsystem begins to affect other subsystems, there is a conflict between

subsystems and the potential for this conflict to change the structure of the international system. For example, the clash of civilizations and the rise of religious extremism in the post-Cold War period are related to the exclusion and marginalization of the ideologies and cultures of some subsystems of the system. As we observe today, the ideologies or cultures of excluded subsystems are radicalized in such a way that they can shape the agenda of the international system (Özdemir, 2015: 21-22).

For this reason, it is necessary to determine the subsystems and their dynamics to understand, interpret and resolve the crises, conflicts and conflicts in various parts of the world. The properties and dynamics of each subsystem are different from each other. Subsystems differ from each other in terms of the attributes of the actors, the motives and concerns of the actors in the subsystem, the problem areas or the standards of behaviour of the states. However, the interactions within its boundaries cannot be understood or interpreted without determining what types of subsystems exist in a particular international system (Özdemir, 2015: 16-17).

Given the complexities of describing subsystems, fifteen geographic subsystems identified by the authors (Middle East, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Russia, North America, Latin America, East Asia, Southwest Pacific, Southeast Asia, Southern Asia, North Africa, West Africa), South Africa, Central Africa, East Africa (Cantori & Spiegel, 1970: 401-404)). Accordingly: Each nation-state is a member of a single subsystem. But the strongest states are active in other subsystems besides themselves. For superpower states like the USA, international politics is global and holistic. But for states with smaller powers, international policy is not global or absolute (Binder, 1958: 409). Some states are on the border between the two subsystems and are considered active to some extent in both subsystems (Finland, Turkey, Afghanistan and Burma). All subsystems are defined regarding geographical considerations, but social, economic, political and organizational factors are also important. Within the boundaries of a subsystem, there is a complex interaction between political, social and geographical factors, and this interaction is the most important factor in defining the boundaries of a subsystem. For example, political borders separate Eastern and Western Europe; political and social borders separate Latin America from North America; geographic boundaries help define the Middle East and separate North Africa from the rest of Africa (Cantori & Spiegel, 1970: 400-409).

On the other hand, besides the "geographical subsystem" concept, another commonly used concept is "region". The concept of "region" in world politics is closely related to the world's continents (Africa, America, Asia, Oceania and Europe). Geographically distinct subregions of continents,

i.e. subcontinents, are called "subregions". Areas surrounding the seas, such as South Asia and the Baltic and Caspian seas. However, "regions" are political and imaginary structures like nations, so geography alone is insufficient to define regions in world politics (Bailes & Cottey, 2006: 198).

Regions are also characterized as the level at which national and global security points intersect. The "Regional security complex" (RSC) concept has been developed as a relevant scale in which their interdependence on security in regions is strongly manifested. The "regional security complex" RSCs are generally characterized as structures that have intermediary effects on the dynamics of power in the international arena. RSCs have been theorized mostly by states due to the diversity of security dynamics and perceptions and practices of security. On the other hand, it also reflects the geopolitical representation of the RSCs of a nation-centred world: divided into states – superpowers, middle powers, and weak and failed states– and their interactions under structures of competition, conflict formation, containment, intervention, cooperation and/or integration. Such structures, in turn, are reflected in global security by geographic areas and regional dynamics that define degrees of security and insecurity within regions (Oliveira, 2017: 103-104).

Since subsystems interact with the global system, it is also necessary to define the structure of the international system to predict, understand and interpret the interactions between states in the international system and the possible foreign policy behaviours of states. However, in the post-Cold War era, the international community has had difficulty defining the structure of the new international system that will emerge (Özdemir, 2015: 16-17).

This period is called the "Long Peace" period in the international arena since there was no "great war" between the great powers in the international system during the Cold War, except for regional wars. Because a direct conflict between the USA and the USSR would be extremely risky, there was no war between these two superpowers. Although super powers didnt waged any war with each other directly, there was no direct war during the Cold War, the number of regional wars in which the super powers participated indirectly increased rapidly, and the number of conflicts tripled between Second World War and the end of the Cold War (Gaddis, 1992; Mack, 2007; Kalyvas & Balcells, 2010: 417).

During the Cold War, the military aid made by the superpowers to their allies and global power intervention in the conflicts affected the nature of the conflicts. Fierce conflicts occurred in the Middle East, Southeast Asia,

East Asia, North Africa and West Africa due to the competition between the superpowers. Therefore, global and subsystem conflicts have fused in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and crises and military conflicts have spread in these regions (Cantori & Spiegel, 1970: 422).

During the Cold War, the USA and the USSR, provided military and economic assistance to the allied states and supported insurgency movements in developing countries. This is why civil wars during the Cold War are often referred to as "proxy wars". While the US supported rebels such as the Contra guerrillas in Angola or Nicaragua, the USSR supported socialist insurgents in Third World countries. Therefore, as a result of the competition of the superpowers during the Cold War, there was an increase in civil wars. A key objective of Soviet foreign policy was to train and motivate insurgents in developing countries, either directly or through proxies. The Chinese and Greek Communists first benefited from this policy of the USSR, and in the 1950s, the Third World countries became the priority of the USSR's foreign policy. The United States, on the other hand, helped the rebels who challenged the pro-Soviet regimes but primarily supported the governments that advocated anti-communism. The United States has given much military aid to its friendly governments (Kalyvas & Balcells, 2010: 417-421).

When Cold War is over, the rivalry between the superpowers ended, and the reason why the USA and the USSR supported allied states and rebel groups disappeared. Therefore, the end of the Cold War caused the support of the rebels to disappear but also weakened some states. Due to the disappearance of the USSR threat, the USA ended its support to the dependent states in the developing World (Kalyvas & Balcells, 2010: 421-422).

With the end of the Cold War, contrary to expectations, there was an increase in the number of small armed conflicts. The disintegration of states accompanying the end of the Cold War also increased civil wars. Twice as many conflicts emerged in the 1990s as in the 1980s (Mack, 2007). From a regional perspective, Europe is increasingly becoming an arena for armed conflict. While the number of armed conflicts has decreased in Central and South America, little has changed in Africa and Asia, and there has been no armed conflict in North America. The end of the Cold War allowed suppressed conflicts to re-emerge (Wallensteen & Axell, 1993: 331; Kalyvas & Balcells, 2010: 417-418).

By the end of the Cold War, the USSR dissolved, and fifteen countries left the USSR and became independent states. The Warsaw Pact dissolved, and the two Germanys were reunited. Russian troops have withdrawn from

Eastern and Central Europe, and US troops have left Western Europe. The bipolar, seemingly stable world order has been replaced by fragmentation. Until the 2000s, America remained the sole superpower. However, the leadership of the USA was also uncertain because although the bipolar system ended, it was not replaced by unipolarity or multipolarity. In this environment of uncertainty, conflict patterns have also changed, and conflicts have arisen in Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and Cambodia (Wallensteen & Axell, 1993: 331).

Since the end of the Cold War, many significant conflicts whose resolution seems hopeless have come to an end, such as the wars in East Timor, Aceh (Indonesia), Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, southern Sudan, Peru and Nepal. However, resolving a series of protracted conflicts, such as those in Israel/Palestine, Colombia, Sri Lanka and Burma, seems distant (Mack, 2007).

This book, entitled "Contemporary Issues in The Balkans, Middle East, Asia & Africa", is an interdisciplinary study and consists of four parts, namely "Introduction" (Part I), "The Balkans: From War to Peace" (Part II), "Security Challenges in the Middle East" (Part III), "Critical Issues in Asia & Africa" (Part IV), Also, each part of the book consists of several chapters contributed by distinguished scholars and researchers from a wide range of disciplines and regions.

3.1. PART I: INTRODUCTION:
Contemporary Issues in The Balkans, Middle East, Asia & Africa

Chapter 1, titled "Contemporary Issues in The Balkans, Middle East, Asia & Africa", written by Nesrin Kenar and forming the Introduction, offers a theoretical and historical perspective on current problems and conflicts in The Balkans, Middle East, Asia & Africa. . In Chapter 1, the author supports the concepts of "crisis", "conflict" and "war" with various examples after discussing them theoretically and defining them in detail. Secondly, it explains the internal and non-state factors that cause conflicts to arise and continue, based on secondary sources, and thus aims to provide a better understanding of the studies in other parts of the book, which describe the problems experienced in different parts of the world. Finally, this book briefly summarises the topics covered in the study.

3.2. PART II:
The Balkans: From War to Peace

The "Balkans" region is a part of the European continent, and especially in the post-Cold War period, the concept of "southeastern Europe" has been

used to define the region and to emphasize that it is a part of the European continent. Although the Balkans is a region of the European continent, it is also a "subsystem" due to its characteristics. It has the dynamics that distinguish it from other parts of the European continent.

The Balkans region is not a region with strategic energy resources like the Middle East and Central Asia. However, the Balkans region is in a dominant position over Europe, the Black Sea, Mediterranean, Africa and Asia continents due to the (disadvantage) advantage of its geographical location. For this reason, the Balkans region has been an area that the great powers of the period wanted to control throughout history. The Balkans (Jelavic, 1983), the area of competition between the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire until the First World War, became the area of competition between the Eastern and Western Blocs during the Cold War. Competition over the Balkans region continued after the Cold War period ended.

Today, while Western institutions such as the EU and NATO are trying to ensure that Western European countries and the USA influence the region by taking the Balkan countries as members, on the other hand, the Russian Federation is active in the region within the scope of its attempts to re-establish its superpower position, which it lost with the disintegration of the USSR. trying to establish (Ekinci, 2013; Kamil, Soğuk Savaş Sırasında Balkan Devletleri (1945-1990), 2017).

In addition to the fact that the Balkan countries are multilingual and multi-ethnic, the fact that the Balkan peoples have vigorous ethnic nationalisms with conflicting interests constitutes the primary source of the problems experienced in the region. These vigorous nationalisms, which had critical national goals, unfortunately always needed the support of the great powers of the period, as their capacity was not enough to achieve these big national goals. For example, Serbia needed the support of Russia to gain independence from the Ottoman Empire. Likewise, Serbia needed the support of Russia in the First World War, which aimed to establish a Greater Serbia, and Serbia, which could not achieve this goal due to Russia's withdrawal from the war, had to accept to become the federal republic of Yugoslavia. On the other hand, the declaration of independence in 1991 needed the support of the USA in order to become an independent state in Kosovo, which was recognized only by Albania. Therefore, the existence of weak states with great national goals in the Balkans region also prepares the ground for the intervention of the great powers of the period.

The Balkans region has been a region of many instabilities and political turmoil throughout history for many reasons. While intense conflicts were

experienced in many parts of the world during the Cold War, the deterrence created by the rivalry between the superpowers during the Cold War kept the conflicts between the Balkan countries under control and the Yugoslav republics together. After the Cold War and the disintegration of the USSR, these frozen conflicts, which were suppressed rather than resolved in the past, have resurfaced, and the Balkans has once again become a vital conflict area in the international arena (Wallensteen & Axell, 1993: 335; Bardos, 2017; Neuhold, 2013).

The expansion policy to the Balkans, which the European Union and NATO initiated in order to end the problems in this region, finally prevented the problems that may be experienced in these countries as a result of the former Eastern Bloc countries and some former Yugoslav Republics accepted into the EU and NATO. The economic, economic and economic problems in these countries were prevented. Ensured the smooth transformation of the political and military system. Therefore, these armed conflicts, called the "Yugoslavia Question", do not occur today since they ended with peace treaties. However, the potential for instability and conflict still exists in the region, especially in countries such as Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Kosovo.

The Bosnia and Herzegovina war ended in 1995 with the Dayton Peace Treaty, signed by the governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia consisting of Bosnia, Croatia and, Serbia and Montenegro. In addition to ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Dayton Agreement also set a long-term agenda for post-war peace-building. The agenda for peace-building ensured international participation in the peace-building process and thus international control over Bosnia and Herzegovina (Chandler, Introduction, 2000: 1-6).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the long-term involvement of international organizations in political institution building and governance in the peace-building process is included in the Dayton Peace Agreement. This relationship established between Bosnia and Herzegovina, recognized as an independent and sovereign state, and the international community, started to arouse concern and discomfort over time (Chandler, Dayton and Sovereignty, 2000: 34–65). The aim of restoring peace in multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina has been the focus of international democratization strategy since the Dayton Peace Agreement, and democratization is seen as the key to maintaining peace in the region. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the multi-ethnic government was seen as a countermeasure to aggressive nationalism and vital to regional and international stability (Chandler, Power-sharing and multi-ethnic administrations, 2000: 66–89). However, the democratization strategy

adopted in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Dayton Agreement based on the institutionalization of ethnic division and the allocation of seats based on ethnicity. For this reason, the politicization of ethnicity and the success of political parties appealing to a single ethnic group has started to hinder democratization and the Dayton process (Chandler, Political pluralism, 2000: 111–134; Kamil, Dayton Sonrası Bosna-Hersek: İdari-Siyasi Yapı, Ekonomik Durum ve Dış Politika(1995-2017), 2017).

PART II (The Balkans: From War To Peace) consists of six chapters. Chapter 2, "Environmental Security in the Balkan Region", was written by Vera Arezina and Nenad Spasojevic. In Chapter 2, the authors examine environmental problems in the Balkan countries and the Balkan region and the impact of these problems on the development of countries. He states that, like many other countries in the world, Balkan countries also face environmental problems, and these problems turn into regional problems over time. Therefore, drinking water pollution and scarcity, flood management, air pollution, deforestation and droughts are available in the Balkans. It emphasizes the importance of making more investments, cooperation and joint ventures among the region's countries to solve environmental problems. Arezina and Spasojevic state that the problems continue despite the efforts of the United Nations and international and national non-governmental organizations to solve environmental problems, stating that each individual state should contribute to the solution of environmental problems.

Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 examine the post-Dayton problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Chapter 3, titled "Peace Building in Bosnia and Herzegovina", Azra Adžajlić-Dedović and Miodrag Simović examine the problems encountered in the peace-building process in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the civil war in 1992-1995. The authors state that the peace agreements do not meet all the expectations of the war victims, that there are no sanctions for those who reject the peace agreements and the decisions of the international courts, and therefore the peace-building measures in the country have failed. Accordingly, with the Dayton Agreement signed in 1995 and ending the war, Bosnia-Herzegovina was placed under the international rule, and the country divided into Republica Serbian and Bosnian-Croatian Federation. Adžajlić-Dedović and Simović, who state that Bosnia and Herzegovina is in a frozen conflict until today, state that the current regulations hinder the development of the country and put the parties in a superior position to the state. The authors state that there is no consensus among the country's ruling elite on the character of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, some state that it is a civil war, while others state that it is an attack on Bosnia-Herzegovina.

İbrahim Kamil and Gülten Haliloğlu examine the discourses aimed at disrupting the territorial integrity and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Chapter 4 entitled "Dayton Peace Agreement and Separatist Discourses in The Republika Srpska". After first examining the disintegration process of Yugoslavia and the war process in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the authors examine the post-war order established in Bosnia-Herzegovina with the Dayton Agreement. Stating that none of the signatories of the Dayton Agreement was satisfied with this agreement, Kamil and Haliloğlu stated that with the Dayton Agreement, legal entities based on ethnic origin were institutionalized in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where ethnic nationalism is strong. It is also stated that Bosnian Muslims' most criticized aspect of the Dayton Agreement is that the lands captured by the Serbs during the war, after ethnic cleansing, were handed over to the Serbs. Although the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina ended with the Dayton Agreement and the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina was preserved, the structure of the new state created with the Dayton Agreement created many problems. The authors state that the actions and discourses of Republika Srpska negatively affect the stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In Chapter 5, the policy of the Russian Federation towards the Kosovo issue during the disintegration of Yugoslavia and in Chapter 6, the transformation of the Kosovo Liberation Army, which played an essential role in Kosovo's independence struggle, is examined. As it is known, Russia has been to maintain its policy of having influence in the Balkans and on the Slavic peoples, which started with the Pan-Slavism policy in the nineteenth century, in the post-Cold War period. In particular, Russia's efforts to play an active and decisive role in the 1992-1995 Bosnia-Herzegovina and 1999 Kosovo crises, in which Serbia, Russia's historical ally, was the international community, made a party and military intervention, came to the fore. While Russia participated in the multinational peacekeeping process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it opposed the NATO operation in Kosovo without the decision of the UN Security Council (Ekinci, 2013).

Adelina Hasani examines the policy and impact of the Russian Federation in the struggle of Kosovo to gain independence by separating from Serbia, which was called the Kosovo crisis and experienced in the disintegration process of Yugoslavia in Chapter 5 entitled "Russia's Influence in the Kosovo Case". The author states that the Kosovo Crisis after the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union and NATO's intervention in 1999 were vital in reformulating the new international order. Stating that the Russian Federation's efforts to become a superpower after the US-led NATO intervention undermined the Cold War during the Kosovo Crisis, Hasani supported Serbia in Kosovo crisis of the Russian

Federation. On the other hand, with the NATO intervention, the position of the USA as a hegemon power has also been strengthened. The author had the opportunity to increase his influence on Serbia by supporting Serbia in the dispute between Kosovo and Serbia by engaging in a struggle with the USA and Western countries that the Russian Federation started to follow a revisionist policy after Kosovo gained independence in 2008.

İbrahim Kamil and Osman Şaşkın, in Chapter 6, entitled "From Resistance Organization to Politics: Transformation of Kosovo Liberation Army", examines the transformation of the Kosovo Liberation Army into a political party after Kosovo's independence. The authors state that the Kosovo Liberation Army, established in 1993, started an armed struggle against the Serbian forces to support the independence of Kosovo and became an essential actor after the Dayton Agreement signed in 1995 did not bring a solution to the status of Kosovo. A representative of the Kosovo Liberation Army also participated in the Rambouillet talks. Resolution 1244/1999, adopted by the United Nations Security Council after NATO intervened in Kosovo in 1999, also included the disarmament of the Kosovo Liberation Army. Thereupon, the Kosovo Liberation Army was armed on the one hand and reorganized as the Kosovo Defense Unit on the other. With the establishment of a political party by the leader of the Kosovo Liberation Army, Taci, he turned towards carrying out his activities in the political arena.

Chapter 7 examines the relations between Turkey and the European Union. In the explanation we made about subsystems above, we stated that each state is a member of a single subsystem, but some states are on the border between two subsystems and interact with both subsystems. Turkey is also a country on the border between the subsystem. Although Turkey describes itself as a European country, it is affected by the dynamics of Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Asia. For this reason, it was decided to include Chapter 7, which examines the relations between Turkey and the European Union, in Part II, where current problems in the Balkans are examined.

Cemile Arıkoğlu Ündücü, in Chapter 7, titled "The Decline in The Relations Between Turkey -The European Union (EU): From Europeanization to De-Europeanization", discusses the relations between Turkey and the European Union in the context of Turkey's accession process to the European Union and examines the democratization process of Turkey. The author also discusses the impact of changes in the European and international system and their effects on Turkey-EU relations. It examines the identity crisis that emerged in Europe, the rise of far-right tendencies, and the effects of changes in the international system and

Europe. It states that in the context of the European Union, the word "Europe" cannot be limited to being a geographical concept. Ündücü states that although there are many differences between European countries and there have been many wars in history, they managed to come together within the European Union. However, after the end of the Cold War, the definition of the sense of belonging through religion and ethnic group identities has also brought up identity debates in the European Union.

3.3. PART III:
Security Challenges In The Middle East

The Middle East region is one of the most dynamic and conflicting geographical subsystems in the contemporary international system. When we look at the historical background of the Middle East, the Palestinian problem and the wars, civil wars, revolutions, refugee problems, oil, the Iranian revolution, terrorism, the Gulf War and the US invasion of Iraq constitute only some of the problems in the Middle East (GoldschmidtJr & Davidson, 2006: 6; Brecher, The Middle East Subordinate System and Its Impact on Israel's Foreign Policy, 1969: 118).

The Middle East covers vast geography from Morocco to Afghanistan, located at the crossroads of Europe (Goldschmidt Jr & Davidson, 2006: 8), Asia and Africa, including Arab states in West Asia and North Africa (Arab League members) and non-Arab countries such as Iran, Israel and Turkey. The Middle East region is called a geographical "subsystem" for reasons such as low democratization level, authoritarian regimes, low economic level, ethnic origin (Arab), religion (Muslim) and language (Arabic) and culturally composed of peoples with common and unifying characteristics. However, these standard features do not mean that the region behaves in a uniform or static manner. Because the Gulf countries, characterized by solid economies based on oil income, conservative monarchical rule and close Western connections, are characterized as a separate regional system within the Middle East (Fawcett, 2013: 4).

The Middle East region has a complex structure regarding ethnic origins, religions, sects and regime types. The historical background of the Middle East has also contributed to the diversity of Middle Eastern peoples. The fact that the Middle East region was under the rule of different civilizations throughout history brought new races and traditions to the Middle East, and different belief systems, languages and cultures formed. In the Middle East, however, 90% of its people are Muslim, and half of the region's population speaks Arabic. Although oil revenues, the proliferation of factories and the growth of cities have made people somewhat alike, cultural and religious differences persist and encourage conflict. Because of

this, the Middle Eastern countries have an ethnically and religiously heterogeneous social structure. About 5 per cent of the Syrian population consists of Christian Arabs. Greek Orthodox make up 10 per cent of the Lebanese population. Israel, although predominantly Jewish, has one million Arabs living within its pre-1967 borders. For example, the civil wars in Lebanon stem from the feeling that Muslims do not have equal power and prestige with the Christians in the country (GoldschmidtJr & Davidson, 2006: 10; Hinnebusch, 2003).

The Middle East region is also a region that has been exposed to the interventions and effects of global powers for thousands of years. The borders of the states of the region and their forms of government were primarily shaped by the influence of the global powers of the period (Ehteshami, 2014: 30).

Some of the states that exist today in the Middle East, which have been under the rule of many civilizations throughout history, were established after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. At the start of the First World War in 1914, Yemen, the Red Sea province of the Hejaz, Greater Syria (modern-day Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and Palestine) and Iraq were officially under Ottoman rule. The Arab lands of North Africa, which had previously been under Ottoman rule, had been colonized by France, Italy and England with the weakening of the Ottoman Empire. Morocco became a French protectorate in 1912; Tunisia had been under French rule since the 1880s, and Egypt was under British rule. Algeria (1830), the first Arab region to come under European colonial rule, was incorporated into French West Africa (Rogan, 2013: 37-40).

 Britain, which saw Russia's expansion of its territory as a threat to its colonies in Asia and Africa, started to be interested in the Middle East region, which is on Russia's transition route to Asia and Africa, since the First World War. "Oil", another reason for Britain's interest in the Middle East, has further increased the importance of the Middle East. Oil, used only as a fuel and weapon in the first years of history, has become an energy source in the developing industry since the 1800s, and the Middle East, where oil located, has become open to foreign intervention. It has been the most crucial factor in emerging fundamental problems and conflicts in the Middle East. Industrialized Western countries have increased their interest in the Middle East, and oil regions have come under Western companies' control. The occupation of the Middle East by the British after the First World War further facilitated the fulfilment of the objectives of the Western oil companies. (Manaz, 2009: 70-71). First, a British company started oil exploration in Iran in 1901, and Iran started to export oil in 1913 (Goldschmidt Jr & Davidson, 2006: 201). In chronological order,

Iran has been exporting oil since 1913, Iraq since 1928, Bahrain since 1932, Saudi Arabia since 1938, and Kuwait since 1946 (Sluglett, 2013: 65).

During the First World War, Britain started an Arab revolt against the Ottoman administration by promising independence to the Arab peoples after the war in order to take the Arab lands separated from the Ottoman rule with the First World War into its sphere of influence and to prevent Russia from expanding to this region. At the same time, England and France signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which envisaged the division of the Arab lands separated from the Ottoman administration after the First World War. On the other hand, England gave official support to the Jewish demands for state formation with the Balfour Declaration in 1917 (Goldschmidt Jr & Davidson, 2006: 216; Rogan, 2013: 42).

After the First World War, the Middle East became an Anglo-French region. Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Syria and Lebanon were under French rule. Egypt, Aden or South Yemen, Palestine, Jordan and Iraq were under British rule. Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman were placed under British control differently. Only Libya was under Italian control from 1911 (Rogan, 2013: 49).

At the end of the First World War, at the Versailles Peace Conference, England and France, who wanted to add these lands separated from the Ottoman rule to their colonies, stated that the newly liberated Arab lands were not ready for independence. A period of tutelage was needed (Rogan, 2013: 40). However, according to the self-determination principle, which is one of the twelve principles of US President Wilson, he stated that with the disintegration of the Ottoman (and Austro-Hungarian) empires, the peoples who left these states could establish their states. Britain and France, which remained the most powerful states in the international system and the MC after the USA returned to its policy of isolation and did not become a member of the League of Nations, legitimized the plans for the sharing of the Middle East in the Sykes-Picot Agreement under the name of "mandate system" and established their administration in the Middle East region (Goldschmidt Jr & Davidson, 2006: 213-214).

During the period when the Middle East region was under the rule of England and France, the borders redrawn. New states established by dividing the territory of the great Syrian state into four, which include today's Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan (Rogan, 2013: 37). Thus, the rule of England and France in the region resulted in the division of the Middle East into many weak states that were hostile and dependent on England and France to ensure their security against each other, in line with

the rule-of-manage policy (Hinnebusch, 2003: 3). Moreover, while England and France gave independence to the Middle East countries, they established non-democratic administration systems. They transferred the administration to the administrators who would serve the interests of England and France.

The Middle East region, which started to be called the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) after the Cold War, has been the focus of international politics during and after the Cold War. The competition between global and regional powers during the Cold War and the global and regional dynamics that emerged in this period directly or indirectly affected the Middle East (Harrison, 2019: 4). The emergence of the USA and the USSR as new superpowers in the international system after the Second World War, and the transformation of England and France into medium-sized powers, as well as other parts of the world during the Cold War, the Middle East region, became an area of competition and conflict between the USA and the USSR. Has turned into The USA and the USSR, the superpowers of the Cold War era, aimed to gain a strategic influence in the region. Another reason was the oil reserves in the Middle East region. It was of vital importance in that approximately two-thirds of the world's oil reserves are located in the Middle East region and contribute to the economies of industrialized Western countries. By the mid to late 1940s, US oil companies came to control at least 42 per cent of Middle Eastern oil. Between the 1950s and 1970s, the Middle East became the primary source of oil for Western European countries and Japan (Sluglett, 2013: 60-65; Binder, 1958: 411-412).

The USA, which started to be more interested in the Middle East region in 1945, has focused on organizing the defence of the Middle East since 1950. The US legitimized its efforts to organize the defence of the Middle East region by referring to Soviet aggression. The USSR started to pursue an active policy in the Middle East after favourable intra-regional conditions such as the Egypt-Iraq conflict created (Binder, 1958: 412). During the Cold War, the USA and the USSR benefited from local rivalries to penetrate the region. The regional states, which wanted to pursue nationalist foreign policies and reduce economic dependence, also benefited from the competition between the superpowers to obtain aid and weapons from the USSR (Hinnebusch, 2003: 4). Intense military aid from the superpowers during the Cold War increased the level of conflict in the Middle East (Cantori & Spiegel, 1970: 422). For example, with the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 following the end of the Cold War, Palestinians and Syrians lost a loyal ally and a cheap source of conventional weapons (Korany, 2013: 79).

After the Cold War and the loss of the USSR's superpower position, Middle Eastern countries worried that the region's importance would decrease and their mobility in the unipolar international system, in which the USA remained the sole superpower, would decrease. However, by the end of the Cold War, the 1990-91 Gulf War and the formation of a US-led coalition to end the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq eliminated the concerns that the importance of the international region for global and regional states would decrease. The 'September 11' attacks in 2001, the jihadism of al-Qaeda, the war on terrorism by the USA, the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the USA, the Israel-Hezbollah war in Lebanon and the war against Hamas in 2006. There have been indications that the Middle East region will also be at the centre of international politics in the post-Cold War period (Korany, 2013: 79).

With the end of the Cold War, there has been a change in the balance of power in the global and Middle East subsystem. During the Cold War, there were two camps in the Middle East; one was made up of countries supported by the USA and the other by the USSR. After the disintegration of the USSR, with the USA remaining as the only superpower, two opposing camps emerged in the Middle East, one consisting of the USA and its allies and the other against this alliance. These two opposing camps competed for regional supremacy in the Iraq, Syria and Yemen civil wars (Harrison, 2019: 4). After the disintegration of the USSR, the Russian Federation, which lost power and closed itself in order to deal with the reforms within itself, gained strength from the 2000s and started to regain an influential role in the international system. The Russian Federation shows that it is an active actor in the international system by being involved in the wars in Syria and Libya. Therefore, we can say that since the 2000s, the USA and the Russian Federation have competed again in the Middle East.

PART III consists of six parts. Chapter 8 and Chapter 9 examine the US policy in the Middle East. Sibel Kavuncu examines the role of foreign aid in US foreign policy in Chapter 8, entitled "Middle East in The US Foreign Aid Policy", and argues that there is a direct proportionality between the foreign aid policy of the USA towards the Middle East and the importance attributed to the region. In her work, Kavuncu first discusses the issue of "foreign aid" conceptually and theoretically and then examines the foreign policy orientations of the United States and the role of foreign aid in US foreign policy. Accordingly, the USA started to use foreign aid as a foreign policy tool with the Marshall Plan, and it was determined by the US leaders that there was a connection between economic growth and stability with the Marshall Plan. However, the purpose of the Marshall Plan was the security interests of the United States

during the Cold War. The author states that the USA uses foreign aid as one of the means of establishing cooperation and directing its relations with its allies on common security issues.

In Chapter 9, entitled "The Question of Americanism and US Supremacy and the Enigma of the Middle East", Marwan Obeidat examines the role of the United States as a superpower and its relationship with Arab and Muslim Middle East countries. The author aims to reveal how American national identity is accepted in other countries of the world and whether the perception of American national identity is linked to the supremacy of the USA. Accordingly, the United States has always positioned itself as a global superpower, culturally and economically different from and above all other nations. The United States' involvement in world affairs constantly reflects its national ideals. On the other hand, while the USA evaluates other nations and cultures, they state that the development experience of the USA is a model that other nations should follow as a global practice model. Therefore, in this study, the author examines the role of the USA in world affairs.

There is no institutional structure to resolve the crises and conflicts between countries in the Middle East region. Although the Arab League was established after the Second World War, the Arab League accepted all Arab countries as members and included them in the Arab League but excluded non-Arab Muslim countries such as Turkey, Iran, and Israel, which it saw as an enemy. In addition, since the Arab League was founded, it has not been able to be active in ensuring stability in the region, and it has not even been able to play an active role in the Palestinian Question, which is one of its founding purposes. The Middle East subsystem intensely feels the lack of regional institutionalization (Brecher, The Middle East Subordinate System and Its Impact on Israel's Foreign Policy, 1969: 120).

On the other hand, NATO, which was the collective security organization of the Western Bloc during the Cold War, continues to strengthen by increasing the number of its members with the enlargement strategy it adopted after the Cold War. For more than 25 years, NATO has partnered with non-member countries from the Euro-Atlantic region, the Mediterranean and the Gulf region to strengthen stability and security outside NATO territory and to combat threats in these regions (Isaac, 2011; Schwarz, 2020).

Within the scope of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue program and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) program, a partnership has been established between NATO with Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan,

Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and United Arab Emirates (NATO, 2022). Although NATO was established as a regional collective security organization, all of NATO's operations since the day it was founded have been directed towards non-area regions, NATO's rapid expansion after the Cold War, increasing the number of its members, and most importantly, "Stability and stability outside NATO's territory." Establishing partnerships with the countries of Latin America, Asia, Central Asia and the Far East, including the Middle East, by adopting the aim of "strengthening security", gives the impression that NATO has turned into a global security organization.

Sibel Kavuncu discusses NATO's enlargement process and whether NATO will be a global security organization, and how its relations with Middle Eastern countries will be if NATO becomes a global actor in Chapter 10, entitled "NATO's Enlargement Policy and the Middle East". The author states that NATO has followed an enlargement policy since its establishment, the number of its members increased rapidly in the post-Cold War period, it is not known whether there is a limit to NATO's expansion, and questions which direction NATO's enlargement will take in terms of the new dynamics of the international system. Accordingly, NATO has rapidly adapted to the changing international conditions in the post-Cold War era and includes issues that pose a security threat on a global scale. For this reason, it is thought that NATO is transforming into a global security organization. In the face of this situation, the author discusses the possibility of the Middle East countries becoming NATO members in the future if NATO's enlargement continues.

The Palestinian Question emerged with the establishment of Israel and is also called the Arab-Israeli conflict, rather than international dynamics, the 1976-1989 Lebanese civil war, the 1979 Iranian Revolution, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991, the United States in Iraq in 2003. It is more affected by regional dynamics such as the invasion of Turkey and, finally, the Arab Spring. Current developments in the Middle East region, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the peace process in the Middle East are highly interconnected. Therefore, the Palestinian Question is dependent on stability in the Arab World. In the studies on the subject, it can be concluded that the problems in the Middle East and the leading causes of these problems are focused on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and that the Middle East region will not stabilize and stability will not be achieved until the Palestinian problem is resolved (Taffal, 2015).

The mass protests, called the Arab Spring that overthrew the governments in three countries, Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, in 2011 also affected other countries in the region. Under the influence of the Arab Spring, civil wars

broke out in other countries such as Yemen and Syria, and the governments of Algeria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Jordan turned to reforms to prevent similar developments from happening in their own countries. Considering that the civil wars in Yemen and Syria continue, estimations are made about whether the Arab Spring will spread to Iran or Israel if the effect of the Arab Spring continues (Korany, 2013: 77).

Aref Bijan and Ehsan Ejazi discuss approaches to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the post-Arab Spring period in Chapter 11, entitled "The Perspective of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Settlement in the Post-Arab Spring". The authors investigate whether there is a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by stating that Israel has started to turn the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in its favour by taking advantage of the chaos created by the Arab Spring in Islamic countries, especially by benefiting from the support of the USA during the Trump administration. Accordingly, Israel is trying to control the countries that support the Palestinians. On the other hand, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has become an insoluble issue due to the political, economic and military involvement of regional actors such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Turkey and Iran, and global actors such as the USA, European Union, Russia and China because each of the global and regional actors taking care of their interests in the resolution of the conflict and the conflicts of interest between them prevent the peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Power relations in the Middle East subsystem are dynamic, and this dynamism causes the Middle East subsystem to re-divide into sub-regions and leads oil-rich countries to play a more influential role in the regional balance of power. There are very few countries that affect power relations in the Middle East region, two of which are Iran and Saudi Arabia (Ehteshami, 2014: 29).

The Middle East region has become an area where Saudi Arabia and Iran compete to expand their spheres of influence. There has been a power struggle between these two countries since the 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution. Iran is trying to end the US influence in the Middle East and to strengthen the Shiites in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia is close to the USA. The administrative systems of the two countries are different from each other; moreover, Iran has declared that it is against the monarchy. Saudi Arabia is uncomfortable with Iran's nuclear program. The wars in Bahrain, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen have turned into a regional rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia (Tanoli & Ali, 2018; Mirza, Abbas, & Qaisrani, 2021).

Marina Pereira Guimarães, In Chapter 12 entitled "Saudi-Iranian rivalry: A Balance of power in the Middle East? : "The case study of Yemen" states that Saudi Arabia and Iran are rival states and examines the tools they use to combat proxy wars in the Middle East to increase their international and regional legitimacy. The author states that the origins of the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran are based on the 1979 Islamic Revolution and stemmed from sectarian differences between the two countries. Accordingly, since the Middle East is a region that is more vulnerable to foreign interventions, the relations of these countries with non-regional powers such as the USA and Qatar play an essential role in the Saudi-Iranian rivalry. The author states that during the conflict that started in Yemen in 2015, Saudi Arabia and Iran tried to expand their influence and maximize their power, they defended their interests in the Middle East, and the Saudi Arabia-Iran rivalry shaped the internal conflict in Yemen.

The rapprochement between Iran and Tajikistan began in the late 1980s. With the perestroika implemented by Gorbachev in the USSR, Tajiks had the opportunity to search for their common historical and cultural roots with Iran. Among the Tajik intellectuals, there was a perception that Iran was a country with a great culture. They even wanted to change the name of the national language of Tajikistan at that time from Tajik to Persian and the alphabet from Cyrillic to Arabic. At that time, Iran was trying to recover after the 1979 Iranian Islamic revolution and the war with Iraq (Shafiev, 2016).

With the disintegration of the USSR and the independence of the Central Asian republics, Iran, like many other countries, is one of the countries interested in Central Asian countries. After the Central Asian republics gained independence, Iran tried to establish political, economic, commercial and cultural relations with Central Asian countries to overcome the international isolation imposed on it after the 1979 Iranian revolution. Iran has quickly used its linguistic and historical proximity to its advantage in its relations with Tajikistan. Besides recognizing Tajikistan's independence, Iran is the first country to open an embassy in Dushanbe. Tajik elites visit Iran as part of various exchange programs (Shafiev, 2016). However, Iran faced various difficulties in this process. Because the Central Asian countries were worried about Iranian hegemony and therefore they did not look warmly at Iran's ideological motivations. Iran had failed in rapprochement with Central Asian countries, but Tajikistan was one of the countries where it achieved success by spreading its sect, especially in the cultural and religious fields. Since the Shiite sect reigns in Tajikistan, Tajikistan has seen Iran as a role model (Shakir, 2017). Iran has strong ethnic, cultural and historical links with Tajikistan. Tajik,

the official language of Tajikistan, is a dialect of Persian. Thus, Iran will likely develop pan-Iranian tendencies in Tajikistan (Aghazadeh, 2015: 97).

Tolga Erdem and Zabihullah Dashti examine the soft power tools used by Iran, a regional power, in its foreign policy towards Tajikistan and the limitations of its soft power capacity in Chapter 13, titled "Soft Power Sources in Iranian Foreign Policy: The Case of Tajikistan". The author also analyzes Iran-Tajikistan relations, foreign support and cultural activities in this study. Erdem and Dashti state that Iran aimed to become a regional power after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. For this, it adopted the soft power policy consisting of the country's rich cultural and historical background and put this policy into practice with different countries through various institutions. Accordingly, the Iranian government carries out various activities to teach foreigners the Persian language and to promote Persian culture through cultural centres, associations and scholarships established in different countries. Iran has the potential to use various soft power tools in India, Pakistan and other Central Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Iran and Tajikistan have strong historical and cultural relations. For this reason, Iran has the opportunity to use soft power tools on Tajikistan.

3.4. PART IV:
Critical Issues In Asia & Africa

The population of the Asian continent constitutes about 61% of the world's population. The Asian continent can affect the global system in international trade. In addition, the solid economic, political and cultural relations between the regional actors in Asia have enabled the region to become an influential power centre in the global system (Karaca & Yüce, 2017: 166). With its gigantic structure, the Asian continent is divided into five regions, each of which has different dynamics and is considered a "sub-system", namely Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and West Asia. Central Asia: Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan; East Asia China, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau; South Asia: Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Iran and Maldives; Southeast Asia is Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam and West Asia is Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Greek Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Oman, Yemen, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia. Since the West Asian region is considered within the "Middle East" region and has been examined in the previous section, the developments related to these countries will not be discussed within the scope of "Asia".

If we look at Asian countries' historical background, only Japan, China, and Thailand remained independent from Asian countries until the Second World War. Other countries in the Asian continent were colonized by Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, France, England and the USA. The independence process of these countries began after the end of the Second World War. Colonial administrations have many effects on Asian countries. The first of these is that the borders between the colonies were drawn by the colonial powers. State borders between Asian countries marked by colonial powers are one of the most important and long-lasting effects of colonialism in Asia, and this situation causes conflicts between the countries of the region even today. With colonialism - as in traditional states - the acquisition of land instead of the control of the people became the determining factor in the determination of the borders. There was also a territorial exchange between the colonial powers; The Dutch gave Malaka to England, and England gave Bengkulu to the Netherlands in 1824. Papua New Guinea was divided and shared by the Dutch and Australian colonial powers during this period. The UK determines the border between British Malaya and Thailand. Another effect of colonialism in Asia is that it causes immigration. While China and India were the countries sending the most immigrants, Malaysia and Singapore were the countries receiving immigration. Colonial administrations in many countries have been an essential factor in forming a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious heterogeneous society due to immigration (Abdullah, 2003: 61-67).

During the Cold War, countries in the Asian and African continents were also subject to competition between the superpowers. However, the Cold War period was different from other parts of the world in Asia and Africa, as the independence of Asian and African countries coincided with the beginning of the Cold War period. Cold War and hot wars have been experienced simultaneously in Asia, and global ideological struggles have interacted with rising Asian nationalism. For this reason, during the Cold War, Asian countries were shaped by extra-regional political and military forces but developed in a way that was not entirely the creation of great powers, with the influence of their dynamics (Szonyi & Liu, 2010: 4-7). For example, India declared neutrality after gaining independence during the Cold War. The Asian and African states that gained independence during the Cold War came together at the Bandung Conference in 1955 and established the Non-Aligned Bloc as a third bloc (Wallerstein, 2010: 18).

The United States was built on containment in Asia through a "circle of defence" strategy, creating model states. The defeat of the nationalist movement in China by the communists under Mao Zedong in 1949 and

the establishment of the Communist China caused the United States to rethink (Macfarlane, Fellows, Holland, & Wells, 2018: 8).

After the Second World War, the USA focused on controlling the Soviet threat and communism in Europe and Asia. The USA has started to follow a more aggressive policy in Asia by increasing its military expenditures three times. In the 1950s, the United States gave up its control over Japan and signed a US-Japan military alliance agreement with Japan in 1951. On the other hand, the Korean War in the 1950-1953 period and the defeat of the nationalist movement in China by the communists led by Mao in 1949 and the establishment of the People's Republic of China are a reflection of the US-Soviet rivalry in Asia. The civil war in China, Korean War. Developments The strategic importance of Asia increased during the Cold War period (Oyen, 2010: 59; Wallerstein, 2010: 21; Macfarlane, Fellows, Holland, & Wells, 2018: 8).

During the 1960s and 1970s, Asian countries suffered from many military conflicts, internal instability, and the Vietnam War. Military aid to Asian countries during the Cold War also increased the level of conflict in the region and made conflicts more dangerous. China also contributed to the turmoil in Asia by aiding guerrilla wars during this period. The division of Korea and Vietnam can be given as an example of the effect of regional conflicts by non-regional powers (Cantori & Spiegel, 1970: 422; Tanaka, 2017: 4; Kalyvas & Balcells, 2010: 415).

The decreas in the number of armed conflicts in East and Southeast Asia began in the late 1970s. The change here is about the end of foreign interventions driven by Cold War rivalries and the extraordinary economic growth and increasingly inclusive democratization that has characterized the region for more than three decades (Mack, 2007).

Tensions between the USA and China began to decrease in the 1970s. Diplomatic relations were established between the two. This situation caused the two countries to live together in peace until the end of the Cold War. However, relations between China and Russia deteriorated from the mid-1950s (Wallerstein, 2010: 19; Macfarlane, Fellows, Holland, & Wells, 2018: 8; Yan, 2010: 95).

It is possible to say that the Asian region was relatively peaceful in the post-Cold War period. There is no interstate wars have occurred in this region since the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War. In addition, after the end of the Cambodian Civil War with the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement, there was no large-scale civil war in the region (Tanaka, 2017: 4-5). By the end of the Cold War communist regimes collapse in Europe But, in Asia, communist

parties are still in power in the People's Republic of China, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea and Vietnam (Wallerstein, 2010: 19).

The rise of China in Asia continues in the post-Cold War era. The rise of China and its potential to become a global power will change the regional and global power balance. For this reason, Asian countries are trying to balance China's rising power with other powers: for example, Vietnam, China and South Korea; Myanmar, China and India; South Korea, China and the USA; Thailand tries to balance China, USA, South Korea and India and Indonesia China, South Korea, USA, India, ASEAN and Australia (Shiraishi & Sy Hau, 2010: 34).

PART IV consists of six parts. Ahmed Raza, in Chapter 14, titled "Pakistan in the Sino-US Conflict Scenario; The Way It Is!" examines Pakistan's position and policies in the geopolitical environment created by the escalating Sino-US competition and conflict in the international arena. The author states that in the current geo-strategic atmosphere prevailing in South Asia, China-Russia-Iran tried to create a balance of power against the US-led alliance, while Pakistan remained undecided. In the study, uncontrolled migration of Afghan refugees to Pakistan has started due to the policies followed by the Taliban, where the security environment is fragile in Pakistan, which is at a level that will affect Pakistan's economy. Due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project, which was vehemently opposed by the USA, India and the Gulf Cooperation Council, the security situation in Pakistan's Balochistan province deteriorated. The explosions, combined with terrorist attacks on the Pakistani armed forces, show that Pakistan is turning into a battleground for Chinese and US-led alliances. In this study, Raza focuses on the impact of the Sino-US conflict on South Asia and recommends measures to get out of the crisis.

The Kashmir problem is one of the oldest problems in the region between India and Pakistan. In the explanations we made above regarding the Asian region, we stated that colonial states drew the state borders of Asian countries. The Kashmir issue goes back to 1947, when India and Pakistan gained independence from Britain. Both countries claim rights in the Kashmir region, which is strategically crucial for India and Pakistan. Although many attempts have been made to solve the Kashmir problem, a solution has not yet been achieved (Ahmed & Chakma, 2012; Adhikari & Kamle, 2010).

India-Pakistan relations are examined in Chapter 15 and Chapter 16. In Chapter 15, titled "Kashmir under Modi's new India", Nasrullah Ali focuses on the policies of powerful actors such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey and the European Union regarding the Kashmir

issue and the lobbying activities of Pakistan on the Kashmir issue on the regional organizations such as the European Union. It also examines the reasons for its failure and, finally, discusses possible solutions to the Kashmir problem. The author states that Pakistan and India have made many peace attempts to solve the Kashmir problem, there have been developments in the solution of the Kashmir problem with the coming to power of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), but the peace talks declined during the Narendra Modi government of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Indicates that it is seen. Accordingly, the majority of the population in Kashmir consists of Muslims, and the Modi government follows identity politics in the region, and the Kashmir policy of the Modi government has turned into an anti-Muslim campaign. The author states that regional problems such as the Kashmir issue have the potential to endanger regional peace and stability. Therefore the international community should take regional issues seriously and resolve them before they become violent conflicts.

Taimoor Akbar Chaudhury, Naeem Shahzad and Syed Qandil Abbas, in Chapter 16 titled "Disaster Diplomacy: A case study of Pakistan and India", stated that disasters leave countries and societies vulnerable, and there is cooperation called "disaster diplomacy" between the country and other countries in the process of reducing the disaster risk and impact of disasters. In this study, the authors explore the possibility of "disaster diplomacy" between rival states such as Pakistan and India. According to the authors, bilateral diplomacy is not only negotiations involving diplomats but also the activities of scientists, athletes, academics, and celebrities who are not diplomatic officers in the modern era. Stating that the cooperation between two rival states such as Greece and Turkey, which started with "disaster diplomacy" during the earthquake in Turkey in 1999, continued after the earthquake and contributed to the development of relations between Turkey and Greece. The authors investigate the possibility of the same situation between India and Pakistan. According to the authors, in the case of initiating cooperation between Pakistan and India on "disaster diplomacy" on climate change, if this cooperation can develop into cooperation in counter-terrorism activities, this situation will benefit both countries.

Kazakhstan is one of the Central Asian Republics that gained its independence with the disintegration of the USSR, as well as a country that has assumed a leading role in the Central Asian region. Ardak Yesdauletova and Zhanar Medeubayeva analyze Kazakhstan's foreign policy in Central Asia and the factors affecting this foreign policy in Chapter 17, titled "Regional Dimension of Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy". According to the authors, the changes in the balance of power in

the Central Asian region have revealed new opportunities and risks in Kazakhstan's relations with neighbouring countries. Afghanistan is a factor that plays an essential role in Kazakhstan's Central Asian policy. Kazakhstan strives to resolve the current Afghanistan crisis and prevent security threats that may spread from Afghanistan to the region. Because Kazakhstan is the largest country in Central Asia and plays an essential role in ensuring peace and stability in the region, on the other hand, Kazakhstan's membership in the Eurasian Union is seen as a controversial and complex issue for the region. For this reason, in this study, the establishment of the Eurasian Union and its short and medium-term results and the possible positive and negative effects of Kazakhstan's membership in the Eurasian Union are examined.

Chapter 18 and Chapter 19 examine current issues in Africa. Asena Boztaş examines the main problems of the African continent in Chapter 18, entitled "Africa's Main Problem is Neither Hunger Nor Disease: Security and Stability", and states that contrary to popular belief, the main problems of Africa are not hunger, water and health problems, but stability and security. According to the author, although most of the problems in Africa stem from conflicts within and between countries, the international media is the reason for the international community's perception that Africa's main problems are hunger, thirst and health problems. In this study, security and stability problems in Africa are examined and focused on internal dynamics that threaten security and stability. In addition, the study examines coups, economic problems, conflicts and military interventions as factors that threaten the security and stability of African countries. The problems experienced in African countries are primarily due to the excess of weak and unsuccessful states, poorly functioning economic and political systems, identity-based politics, competition over scarce and strategic resources.

In Chapter 19, entitled "Impact of COVID-19 on Peace and Security in Africa," Claire Adionyi, Davis Makori, and Jane Wathuta examine the impact of the measures taken by the governments of African countries to combat COVID-19 on peace and security in Africa. According to the authors, due to the measures taken by governments in the fight against COVID-19, millions of people have lost their livelihoods in African countries and other countries of the world. As a result of the suspension of the ongoing peace support operations in some countries, popular uprisings and terrorist activities have been observed. There has also been an increase in genderbased violence due to COVID-19. While UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a global ceasefire and called for warring parties to lay down their arms, political violence continued in African countries throughout the pandemic. The hypothesis put forward by Adionyi, Makori

and Wathuta in this study is that the measures mentioned above taken by government institutions within the scope of combating COVID-19 have a domino effect on peace and security in Africa. While the pandemic itself is not a conflict-creating factor, the impact of COVID-19 on peace, conflict and security in Africa has increased due to the challenges posed by political forces' efforts to manage the COVID-19 crisis.

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PART **II**

THE BALKANS: FROM WAR TO PEACE

2

Environmental Security in the Balkan Region

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1. Introduction

The development of environmental problems can be found primarily in the excessive development of industry and the exploitation of non-renewable energy sources such as coal, oil and gas. Since the industrial revolution, the accelerated development of the world has started, as well as the increased level of environmental pollution. A far more pronounced level of pollution occurred in the period after the end of World War II. The accelerated development of the world and the constant need for the application of new technologies have led to a far greater exploitation of numerous resources. This sudden trend was a great blow to nature, and since the second half of the 20th century, environmental problems have become an increasingly pronounced factor in endangering the safety of people on planet Earth.

Therefore, since the 1970s, there has been a more pronounced commitment, primarily from the United Nations, but also over time from many other international and non-governmental organizations in order to solve these environmental problems. Despite their efforts, these problems are still present today and represent a great risk for the whole world. In this regard, the contribution of each state is important in order to solve these problems. According to the assessments, that the Balkan states also contribute to the development of some environmental problems, such as air pollution. Air pollution from this region is far more pronounced than in many other developed countries in Western and Northern Europe. In addition to the trend of the quality of drinking water, but also with flood management, the Balkan countries are far in relation to the mentioned European countries.

2. UN Conferences Regarding Environmental Security and Sustainable Development

The first United Nations Conference on Environment was held in 1972 in Stockholm, Sweden. Several important documents have adopted, the Declaration and Plan of Action, which set out principles for the preservation, environmental protection, and UN memeber states refer to mutual cooperation and application of these norms in their legislation. Also, the United Nations Environment Program - UNEP has established in order to coordinate UN member states activities in the field of environment. At the begining of '90s UNEP has estimated the negative consequences for all countries if the trend of global warming will continue in the coming years.

Twenty years later, the United Nations Earth Summit was held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro against climate change, pollution and depleting natural resources. Earth Summit has set up several principles, such as sustainable development, prevention, impact assessment, reuse and recycling, publicity of data, informing, education and raising awareness of environment protection. Also, the Agenda 21, UN Convention on Climate Change – UNCC and UN Convetion on Biological Diversity have adopted and UN member states accepted sustainable management of water, land and forest resources in the 21st century. Based on Agenda 21 (UNCED, 1992), national governments adopt National Strategies, Environmental Law and Local Environmental Action Plan- LEAP, with the aim of harmonizing their environmental policies.

In 1997 was held Special Session of the UN General Assembly in New York to review the implementation of Agenda 21 of UN member states and international organizations. At the same time, UN Framework on Climate Change has adopted the Kyoto Protocol, wich entered into force on 2005, with goals on further stopping the trend of rising temperatures, as well as the negative effects of climate change (UNFCCC, 1997). But the Kyoto Protocol failed because USA didn't sign it, as well as other countries. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – IPCC has published that by the end of 2100, the temperature will increase by an average of 1.4˚C - 5.8˚C (Arežina, 2011: 35-36).

The Millennium Summit established in 2000 the Millennium Development Goals – MDG, such as to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; ensure environmental sustainability; global partnership for development; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; and to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Millenium goal to ensure environmental sustainability means to integrate the principles of

sustainable development into countries' policies and programs, to protect ecosystems and to provide greater availability of drinking water and sanitation.

In 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development was held Johannesburg, when several documents have adopted, such as Sustainable Development Implementation Plan, as well the Plan on Global Goals Against Poverty, Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Clean, Drinking Water and Biodiversity. UNEP also predicted in a 2005 report that in the future, over 50 million people worldwide would be forced to migrate due to the effects of climate change, resource scarcity, especilly water scarcity (Spielmann, 1989).

UN Conference on Sustainable Development was held in 2012 in Rio, also called Rio +20. Goals of that UN Conference were implementation and development of institutions for sustainable development, sustainable cities, agriculture and water, food security, disaster preparedness, green economy, and others.

The Summit in Paris was held in 2015, and UN member states have signed the Paris Agreement on a voluntary basis. The main goal of the Paris Agreement is to stop a further increase in the average temperature below 2°C compared to the pre-industrial period. In order to achieve that, it is planned to gradually to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions (UN Treaty Collection, 2015). Other goals refer to adaptation to climate change and to provide help to developing countries; development of cooperation to reduce the damage caused by climate change; and development and implementation of National Action Programs – NPA in UN member states. According to some estimates, even if these plans will be realized by UN memeber states, we would still expect an increase between 2°C-3.5°C. There are many problems in the implementation, and the biggest inconsistencies are some of the most economically powerful countries. Also, the demand for certain resources (fossil fuels) and their exploitation in order to meet the energy systems of many countries continues to grow (Gidens, 2010: 221).

Also, Agenda 2030 has adopted and those eight Millennium Development Goals were changed into seventeen Sustainable Development Goals – SDG such as clean water and sanitation, access to clean energy, industry, reduce inequalities and others (UN Sustainable Development, 2021). Upon Agenda 2030, goals to achieve Sustainable Development Goals in European Union are:

- 'Education, science, technology, research and innovation are a prerequisite for achieving a sustainable EU economy meeting the SDGs;

- Educational institutions of all levels should be encouraged to embrace the SDGs;

- Research and innovation have an important role as catalyst for change. They are tool for analyzing the impacts of change` (European Commission, 2019).

3. Environmental Issues in Balkan Countries

With the development of technologies and the growth of the world economy, there has been an increase in environmental problems, which are present in all parts of the world. This is inevitably a consequence of the negative actions of people through various activities in previous decades. Such a situation is also characteristic of many Balkan countries that face the same environmental problems as pollution and water scarcity, flood management or air pollution problems. There are several patterns of these environmental problems. After the Second World War, in many Balkan countries there was a great development of industry and urbanization, with the increasing application of new technologies. In addition, there was an increase in living standards and purchasing power among citizens, which led to the emergence and growth of environmental problems. However, their existence was not clearly indicated in a timely manner (Markovic, 2005: 273–274). The development of environmental problems in the Balkans was especially contributed by the lack of sufficient interest in environmental issues, primarily by state bodies, which caused lack of information among citizens. Only in recent years has there been an awakening of awareness about these topics among citizens, and thus an awakening of positive changes.

Floods are one example of the characteristic natural disasters that have always occurred. However, although these are often natural disasters that are difficult to control, with human development this problem has begun to take on a new dimension. Although these disasters cannot always be prevented, they can at least be stopped by preventive measures. However, in many Balkan countries, the banks and riverbeds are not regulated, or due to the unscrupulous behavior of people, there is a large amount of waste in the rivers. For these reasons, these cases often only further contribute to the development of this natural disaster.

It is especially important to point out the catastrophic events in May 2014, when the Balkans were hit by a cyclone that had devastating consequences in several countries. These floods were one of the most devastating in this part of Europe, and caused great problems with landslides, arable land, but also problems with energy systems. According to various estimates, the damage caused by this disaster in Bosnia and Herzegovina is estimated at around € 2 billion, while estimates for the Republic of Serbia are around € 1.5 billion (AlJazeera, 2015). Although it is difficult to prevent such large floods, what has obviously facilitated their spread and the creation of even greater damage are insufficiently developed flood protection networks, primarily in the form of embankments, but also modern mechanisms used to prevent floods. The 2014 floods also showed the shortcomings of the energy system, which relies heavily on coal combustion. This sector has suffered huge losses, as more than 110,000 consumers have had power outages. The reasons for that are the flooded mines in Serbia, where this country had to import energy, due to the lack of the same that was caused by these floods (Bjelic and Lazarevic, 2016: 19). These floods have created another problem and thus shown how wide their negative impact can be.So these floods affecting the region and the municipality of Kraljevo in Serbia, where two major rivers flowing like a river Ibar and West Morava. Their frequent flooding are evidence of insufficient care to prevent permanent flooding. However, after the floods in 2014, after microbiological and physico-chemical analyzes at nine locations with a total of 100 analyzes, the results showed that in 83% of cases, water was not usable by any parameter.Such data indicate the risk of such disasters in the future can create with drinking water as a very important element of life (Marinovic et al., 2016: 169).

Also, the problem with water quality is still present in the Balkans. Such is the case with one of the largest rivers in Europe, the Danube. According to a study conducted by experts from the University of Austria, it is estimated that the Danube is polluted with feces, but also with the bacterium Escherichia coli. As a river that flows through as many as 10 countries, the Danube is the most polluted in its course through Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria. The main reason is that this river is additionally polluted in these countries, and a very worrying fact is that almost all wastewater in Belgrade goes to the Danube and its tributary Sava (Nedeljnik, 2019). In addition to these regional problems with unscrupulous treatment of water surfaces in the Balkans, we point out the problem of waste in the Lim River, which flows through Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and on which an artificial reservoir Potpećko Lake was formed, with two hydropower plants. This river is one of the larger tributaries of the Drina River into which it flows in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Due to the large amounts of waste in the Lim River, trilateral meetings of representatives of

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia were held in early 2021. However, unless a long-term solution is reached on all sides, waste in the Lim River and Potpec Lake will long threaten the environmental security of the three countries (BBC, 2021).

In the process of accession to the European Union, many countries are faced with the energy issues, because they usually use lignite instead of obtaining it from the renewable energy sources. At the end of the 20th century, the European Union set goals that the Balkan countries should achieve when producing and consuming energy from renewable energy sources. Thus, the following goals were set by 2020: Bosnia and Herzegovina 40%, Albania 38%, Montenegro 33%, Serbia 27% Kosovo 25% and Northern Macedonia 23% produce energy from renewable energy sources. However, according to Eurostat data, only Montenegro managed to achieve the set goal in 2018, unlike other actors. The data do not include Bosnia and Herzegovina, but it also failed to achieve the set goals (Eurostat 2020).

The main reason for not achieving these goals is small-hydro power plants. They have been a current issue in the Balkans for several years because of their harmful effects. Namely, as one of the forms for obtaining energy from renewable sources, these plants have attracted a lot of public attention. Plants are built on rivers that have smaller capacities or volumes of water, but also that are also fast mountain rivers. However, what is the problem with this type of renewables in the Western Balkans? In achieving these goals, all actors focused primarily on obtaining energy from hydro potentials, mainly from mini hydropower plants. Excessive treatment of this type as a priority, led to the fact that in Serbia and Northern Macedonia there are no restrictions on obtaining building permits, which were accompanied by benefits in the form of obtaining feed-in tariffs for starting mini-hydro power plants. Only the activism of the citizens prevents their excessive spread in the Western Balkans. In addition, solar and wind energy are used, but have not been sufficiently recognized, although there has been an increase in wind farms in recent years (Gallop, Vejnovic and Pehchevski, 2019: 10–11).

Although our planet consists about 70 percent of water surfaces, only 3 percent of it is drinking water, and the rest of water is in ice and groundwater. This problem is increasingly affecting large cities around the world, which is a consequence of climate change, but also population growth in urban areas and irrational consumption (Arezina 2010: 248–249). London, Istanbul, Moscow, Beijing, Cairo, Cape Town and others have faced this problem, which will continue in the coming years. (Nedeljnik; The National Geographic, 2018). Istanbul is one of the largest

cities in the world, it spreads over two continents, it is affected by the problem of scarcity of drinking water. The main reasons are the impact of the consequences of climate change, lack of precipitation but population growth, industrialization and traffic. Thus, Istanbul with over 17 million inhabitants, as well as many other large Turkish cities, will have this problem, if this is not approached in an adequate way, which was not the practice throughout Turkey (The Guardian, 2021).

Polluted air can certainly be pointed out as one of the most pronounced environmental problems in the Balkans. This problem has been present for a long time, and thanks to the civil sector, social networks and various applications, there has been a noticeable increase in the interest of citizens in solving this problem. However, this is only the first phase, which is reflected in the development of citizens' knowledge about the existence of the problem, and the next is proposing solutions to certain problems. Economic factors have a large impact on the increase of air pollution in the Balkan region, which we will point out at the level of citizens' earnings. Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, in some countries of the Western Balkans, the minimum gross earnings were: Albania € 213, Montenegro € 313 or Serbia € 343. Compared to them, in the countries of Western Europe the situation is much better, and the minimum gross salary in Spain is € 1,050, France € 1,539 or in the Netherlands € 1,636. (Nova Ekonomija, 2020). These economic problems are reflected in two sources that lead to an increase in air pollution. First of all, energy sources that are used for individual fireplaces when heating households and the impact on the quality of vehicles used by the citizens of this region stand out. As far as energy is concerned, wood and coal are primary. Unfortunately, these two energy sources are also large emitters of harmful substances such as SO_2 and PM – 2.5 and PM10 particles. However, a large number of citizens in the Balkan region are not able to afford more expensive, and yet more environmentally friendly energy sources. Thus, in a survey conducted in 2020 in the Republic of Serbia, data were found that 41.8% of the citizens of this country heat their households during the heating season with the two previously mentioned energy sources. (Spasojevic, 2020: 134). The increase in air pollution is influenced by another problem, and that is illegal deforestation due to non-compliance with legal documents, as well as omissions and corruption in the work of institutions and competent authorities. Thus, these surfaces are destroyed, instead of being one of the ways to purify the air.

Also, traffic is one of the cause that increase air pollution. Sustainable urban mobility is possible in this region, but the problems are related to the pollution created by these vehicles, and the dependence on fossil fuels to which they move. (Kolega, 2018: 44). Related to this is the age of the

vehicles (used) in the Balkans. Thus, according to the latest data from the Traffic Safety Agency, the average age of vehicles in the Republic of Serbia is around 19 years (Road Traffic Safety Agency, 2020). These are worrying data, compared to the fact that the average age of vehicles is around 11 years in most EU member states. However, some EU countries have the same problem, so the average age of vehicles in Greece is 16 years. This is the influence of several different factors, and above all the focus on solving this problem through the application of adopted EU regulations (ACEA, 2021: 10).

Energy efficiency is a problem facing many Western Balkan countries. This pollution factor refers to thermal energy systems, ie thermal power plants, given their negative effect on people and the environment. The big problem with energy efficiency in the Balkans is that thermal power plants and the production of energy from coal, which is low-calorie, ie. mining and coal combustion. Almost all thermal power plants in the Western Balkans use this coal, which results in a large emission of harmful substances. Thus, despite the warnings from the Energy Community that it is necessary to gradually shut down 12 plants, the plans of all actors in the region include the launch of 17 new plants (Health and Environment Alliance, 2016: 16–17).

The big problem with these plants is the excessive emissions of harmful substances, which, although they are limited by certain documents in the form of permitted emissions, this is often not the case in reality. Thus, thermal power plants on the territory of the Western Balkans emitted a total of 617,281.34 tons of SO_2 during 2019, while The Nitrous Oxide Emission Reduction Protocol – NERP of these actors is projected to emit an annual emission of 103,682.33 tons. In this way, there was an increase of six times the planned emissions. Very harmful to health, PM particles reached a growth of 160% of the limit value, ie to 17,556.75 tons, although 11,199.32 tons of emissions are allowed annually. According to SO_2 emissions, the largest emitters are thermal power plants from Serbia, followed by plants from Bosnia and Herzegovina. PM particles are declining compared to 2018, but still out of the allowed, which overall indicates the great care that these data give to all citizens (CEE Bankwatch Network, 2020: 6–7).

In addition to the impact on the environment, polluted air has consequences for the mortality of citizens, and in recent years it has become an increasingly pronounced cause. However, data on the specific number of deaths range up to several tens of thousands. According to estimates by the Health and Environment Alliance – HEAL, thermal power plants in the Western Balkans kill nearly 4,000 people a year. With the work of these

plants, the previously mentioned number of deaths refers not only to this region, but also to almost the entire European continent, thus this problem goes beyond the regional character. (Health and Environment Alliance 2019: 7–9). However, the total number of deaths due to poor air quality in this region is extremely high. In addition to endangering human health, thermal power plants create economic damage. Thus, according to various estimates made in previous years, Western Balkan thermal power plants in 2016 generated costs ranging between € 6.1 to € 11.5 billion, and according to others, between € 2.9 and € 8.5 billion in annual costs at European level. (Spasojevic, 2020: 974).

4. Improving Cooperation Towards Environmental Security

Although environmental problems have threatened the Balkans for several years, their solution is complex and therefore requires regional co-operation among Balkan actors. This especially opens space for the cooperation of citizens through various actions, from the private, commercial or non-governmental sector as well as regional initiatives. For these reasons, it is necessary to point out active and potential regional cooperation in this region in order to solve environmental problems.

In addition to environmental problems and their solution, there is certainly a related topic of energy security. This type of security has gained its importance in international and regional policies only in the last few decades. Accordingly, there is no generally accepted definition of this term, which is again a consequence of its short existence. While studying energy security, Bohi and Toman defined it as a decrease of well-being, as a consequence of energy shortage or energy price impact. In that way, energy security is connected with economic security, which can be clearly concluded from the above. However, it is important to point out that energy security also has one aspect related to environmental sustainability, similar to the fact that certain uses of energy have consequences for the environment (Lipovac and Simic 2015: 60–61).

Many Western Balkans countries have in common their membership in the European Union. That common goal may enhance their mutual cooperation, in order to solve problems in energy and environmental security. Thus, in 2005, the Energy Community was established, which was once one of the first types of cooperation among actors from the Balkans. It is important to point out that it was created with the aim of spreading the rules and principles, but also their application when it comes to the energy market of the European Union with the countries of Southeast Europe (Energy Community, 2020). Also, the EU prepare countries that have not yet become members by harmonization of their

policies, laws and standards, as well as the creation of an integrated market in this area.

Regarding cooperation in this area, it is necessary to mention the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the Regional Cooperation Council – RCC, and the South-East European Cooperation Process - SEECP (Lopandic and Kronja, 2010: 180). Those initiatives have left a significant mark in the cooperation of the countries of this region. Also, those initiatives, as well as many others, have been excellent opportunities for the development and improvement of cooperation of Western Balkans countries. In post-2020 Strategy in the Western Balkans, the Regional Cooperation Council and South East Europe provides cross-analysis of findings of six Western Balkan economies, and comparative analysis of linkages between strategic priorities of the Western Balkan economies with the UN Sustainable Development Goals SDGs (RCC, 2020). Therefore, due to environmental security we suggest to improve cooperation of those with both the private and civil sectors. Those sectors have great potential for cooperation in solving environmental problems. Therefore, the private sector could invest funds as a form of development incentives, and in which the civil sector often lacks. By organizing a larger number of scientific and professional conferences and other gatherings, it creates space for networking, but also for strengthening the the private sector. There are also opportunities for cross-border cooperation and implementation of joint projects. For example, Strawberry energy is a company founded in 2011 in Serbia, and their products are in more then 50 cities. *Strawberry tree* is the first public solar-powered charger for mobile devices in the world, or smaller solar powered *Smart Bench* ideal for streets, squaers or parks (Strawberry energy, 2021). In addition to private sector investment and expertise that can be provided by civil society representatives.

In terms of energy progress, the region has great potential for networking and cooperation. First of all, in terms of achieving higher environmental standards, and at the same time the transition to RES energy, which would greatly relieve the entire region in terms of problems with air pollution. Therefore, it is necessary to intensify in this region the idea of gradual cessation of energy production from thermal power plants by burning low-calorie lignite, and turning to exploiting the renewable potentials that the region is rich in. According to the highlighted figures on the negative impact assessments of these plants, the recommendations that the professional public and the civil sector should further encourage are the cessation of further coal exploitation, the combustion of which causes both environmental problems and negative impact on human health, leading to high mortality. in this region. In addition, the new thermal power plants are an obstacle to what the actors from the Western Balkans have adopted

when it comes to regulations in order to achieve quality air. Turning to RES energy production is defined through various plans, but also through set goals. However, as the data showed, these goals, except in the case of Montenegro, remained only a percentage on paper. But one way to improve that is to grow regional co-operation. In that domain, we can talk about several different aspects of cooperation. When it comes to the scientific domain, we have a lot of room for intensifying cross-border cooperation in the form of greater emphasis on organizing joint meetings, consultations, exchange of ideas, but also the possibility of greater networking, especially of different sectors and groups. Also, more detailed analyzes are missing, which would indicate potential cooperation, but also greater involvement of state and local actors, who would benefit greatly from such cooperation. In addition, the process of harmonization of adopted regulations towards the EU would be raised to a higher level by the gradual growth of this cooperation, which would strengthen cooperation in the region (Spasojevic, 2020: 977-978).

The best example of how citizens can influence to problems is when information about the harmfulness of small hydropower plants began to spread throughout the Balkans. Citizens increasingly began to realize the importance of information, which until then had been a real unknown to them. As the knowledge of the harmfulness spread, so did the movement grow throughout the Western Balkans. This has led to the association of activists, civil society organizations, experts, but also the citizens themselves, who are particularly affected because these plants would be built in their backyard. In addition, there are no exceptions that the planned works unite citizens of different religions and nationalities, so at the foot of the Šar Mountains, Serbs and Albanians act together in order to prevent the construction of small hydropower plants on the river, which is important for their water supply. In that way, the citizens overcame their differences and old quarrels in order to prevent environmental problems (Most, 2019).

The previously analyzed combination of environmental problems and energy efficiency entails another analysis, which refers to energy security in the Balkans. Namely, this region is not rich in gas with which it would be able to meet its needs. For that reason, it is necessary to provide the same, for the sake of security. This is not only a problem in the Balkans, but on the contrary, Russia has been the main supplier of this energy source for the European Union in previous years. In an effort to realize its economic and geostrategic interests, Russia is present in the Balkans through gas pipeline flows that cross the territories of several Balkan countries. This flow is extremely important when it comes to the energy stability of the region, but also for the whole of Europe (Stojadinovic, 2020: 117; 126–

127). At the beginning of 2021, the main gas pipeline Balkan Gas Pipeline, which passes through Serbia, was put into operation, and through which the inflow of this gas is delivered further to Hungary. The Balkan gas pipeline bears this name according to the territory over which it extends, ie over the territory of Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary. The commissioning of this part of the flow, where gas is delivered through the mentioned territory, also ensures regional stability in terms of this generally very important energy source, which Europe lacks (N1, 2021).

5. Conclusion

Since '70s many documents have adopted at UN Conferences, such as Agenda 21, UN Convention on Climate Change – UNCC, Millennium Development Goals and later Sustainable Development Goals – SDG, Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030 regarding climate action, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, etc.

Many Balkan countries are facing the same environmental issues such as water pollution and scarcity, water quality, flood management, air pollution, energy efficiency. Over time, these problems have acquired a regional character, and many countries in the Balkan region are dealing with it.

We are improving cooperation towards environmental security through several intitatives, as well as the Balkan Gas Pipline. Those inititatives, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the Regional Cooperation Council – RCC, and the South-East European Cooperation Process – SEECP have left a significant mark in the cooperation of the countries of this region. Besides, at the beginning of this year, started the Balkan Gas Pipeline, enhancing regional stability as well as energy and environmental security in Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary.

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3 |

Peace Building in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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1. Introduction

This paper is an overview of the problems facing Bosnia and Herzegovina in building peace after the 1992-1995 war. The Peace agreements that are flawed and do not clearly specify all the needs of war victims, as well as peacebuilding measures, are unsuccessful and cannot provide peace because there are no penalties and coercive measures for those who deny international court rulings and violate the peace agreement. That is why victimology needs a historical approach or "dealing with the past" which it considers the best measure, although painful for the victims, but necessary for the prevention of new conflicts and the realization of "social peace" in the future.

2. The Character of the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995)

Bosnia and Herzegovina had the right to self-defense because, on April 6, 1992, it had become an internationally recognized state, a member state of the United Nations. Self-defense is the justified use of deadly force against present or immediate aggression; ie it is not the right to inflict irreversible damage whenever the defendant subjectively believes in the necessity of a lethal action in order to prevent an expected threat that might sometime in the future mature into a real threat. (Bakircioglu, O., 2009). The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina also began when the JNA (Milosevic's army) crossed the Bosnian border with tanks and burned and demolished the Croatian village of Ravno to expel Croats from the territory and planned to create an "ethnically clean territory" for Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to tanks, in Zvornik, special units with Arkan from Serbia occupied the city and killed all who opposed them, while surviving Muslims, like Jews during the Holocaust had to mark their houses with white sheets to later be killed, expelled or burned alive (as in

Visegrad). These Serbian special forces were warmly welcomed by President Plavsic, who was then a member of the Presidency of Republic of Srpska (formations sent by Milosevic as volunteers for the defense of Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina). At the same time, terrorists with hoods (members of the Chetnik movement) began appearing in Sarajevo and several other cities, occupying parts of the cities with weapons and declaring them Serbian territory. So, in parallel with the arrival of terrorists from neighboring countries, we had internal terrorism, but also the hypocrisy of Milosevic's JNA - while burning the village of Ravno, the JNA negotiated with the Presidency on the protection of citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina while at the same time surrounding all major cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina with tanks and actively aiding to proliferate arms to the newly formed ethnic Serb militias. JNA weapons served to carry out the destruction of the defenders of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina ended with the signing of the General Framework Peace for Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton, 1995.). Since 1995 Bosnia-Herzegovina was placed   under international supervision for an undefined period until it develops into a modern and functional state. The Dayton Agreement, for the purpose of more successful implementation of peace and supervision over the building of stable peace, stipulates that the High Representative shall manage and supervise the implementation of this peace agreement until its full implementation and achievement of reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was stopped with a peace initiative that ended the war, but also divided Bosnia and Herzegovina into two entities (one Serb and the other Bosniak-Croat). By this agreement, the "occupiers" were recognized as "ruling" in half of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The peace agreement stopped the war, but produced injustice by allocating 49% of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territory to "sovereignty destroyers". So, it is certain that aggression is a crime that "does not become obsolete" as well as "genocide" because they are "the most serious crimes in international criminal law", but insisting on determining the character of the war now in Bosnia " turns into a "fear of new war" in Bosnia and Herzegovina. From 1995 to 2021, Bosnia and Herzegovina is in a "frozen conflict". More precisely, the government is organized on 3 levels (state, entity and local), and the right of "veto of one people" blocks the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and enables "supremacy of the entities over the state" (according to Professor Omer Ibrahimagic). Therefore, we believe that this war was an agreed and controlled war for the sake of the "new division of the world". The civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina took place at the same time as it was attacked Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the ruling elites have not yet reached a consensus on the character of the war, because for some it is a civil war, while others

that is aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina. Both are right, but they have not proved the same in the International Tribunals. Although two verdicts of the International Criminal Court for crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia clearly confirm the aggression carried out by the Serbian axis (Krstić case) and the aggression carried out by Croatia (the Tuta and Štela case). Lawsuits for aggression were not supported by the Serbian and Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina ended with the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Peace and justice are both very abstract terms that mean different things to different people. Some people think justice is primary and peace is secondary. This is the view embodied in the frequently-heard phrase "if you want peace, fight for justice." (Lederach, J. P., 1995) Peacebuilding seeks to build a bridge between groups of people - de-polarizing people's attitudes and behaviors toward each other. The media can be used successfully only when peacebuilding organizations have done the hard work to narrow down their goals and target audiences. The media in Bosnia and Herzegovina were controlled by the ruling political parties, which did not advocate „living together" but „living side by side". With the exception of a couple of independent media outlets that, like FACE TV, advocate a united Bosnia and Herzegovina and reconciliation among its peoples. These media were denied assistance and support in financing and were otherwise prevented from building peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That is why a "peace network" has been created, consisting not only of independent media but also of NGOs that have worked in various ways, despite obstructions, to build peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prof. Nerzuk Ćurak and some other independent intellectuals through the peace network and some other projects tried to build peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina through various peace actions and activities.

3. The Survey on Fear of Victimization

Bosnia and Herzegovina failed to prove responsibility for the aggression committed by the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro before the International Court of Justice, but has proved that the Republic of Serbia are responsible for not preventing the genocide in Srebrenica. The Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are obliged to pay compensation to the victims of Srebrenica.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in Bosnia and Herzegovina has handed down 106 verdicts. Since its inception, the ICTY has prosecuted and completed 18 cases involving

allegations of rape and other forms of war-related sexual violence. By July 2009, the Court of BiH had rendered final judgments in 12 cases against 15 indictees related to war crimes of sexual violence (Vranić, 1996: 239). The war crimes for which the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia has ruled since 1991 have also been slow to end and be selected. Since 2004, when the Witness Protection Department (SIPA) began operations until 2015, it has provided protection and support measures for 1,017 witnesses and 1,027 protection measures against them. By 2012, that number was about 700 witnesses. Only prompt and effective justice is adequate to satisfy the sense of justice for the victims of war. Unfortunately, even after 30 years, neither international nor domestic courts have been able to prosecute more than 20% of those responsible for war crimes, making justice an injustice for war victims and secondary victims (their families).

The state's failure to implement the 2004 Law on Missing Persons led to problems for the families of the disappeared, including the denial of their rights to justice and reparation. The Fund for Providing Assistance to the Families of Missing Persons envisaged by the 2004 Law had still not been established. Many judgments of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina in cases involving enforced disappearances remained unimplemented. The restitution, compensation, rehabilitation and punishment are the formal categories of reparations in the Basic Principals and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law (UN Resolution 60/147, on 16 December 2005.) remain inaccessible to war victims.

Many Bosnians are disillusioned with the Dayton Accords but Bildt (2015) observed that on the whole they are "happy with the absence of war" because "they have seen war and they don't want to go back to that" (Hartwell, L., 2019: 467). Victims have not been cured of post-traumatic stress disorder nor have they achieved justice through a sanction for war criminals. All victims (of all nations) and survivors are dissatisfied and deprived of compensation, aid and support, while only politicians at the highest level (unwanted elite) have managed to meet all their needs without a sense of responsibility and care for detainees (civilian and military) victims of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina has become an "unjust society" in which justice is available only "for the chosen" or "political representatives", while we have remained "damaged and disenfranchised". 25 years after the "bloody war", not only have we not convicted all war criminals, but we have not paid compensation for war victims, and some of them, like prisoners of war, are neither recognized nor defined by law as a special category of war victims,

which is certainly violation of a number of international legal obligation that we have as a member of the United Nations.

4.Discussion

The theory of just war is a theory that, in short, contains moral rules of conduct in war (before, during and after the war). According to the theory of "just war", developed by some of the greatest minds in human history, the generally accepted rule as a cogent rule is that the unilateral use of force is forbidden except in self-defense. The theory of "just war" came to life during the Roman Empire, through the practice of the clergy of ancient Rome (fetiles) who decided whether and how to react to the manifestation of hostility from neighbors. Subsequently, this theory became relevant at the time of St. Augustine in the 4th century who held that a war waged for the sake of inflicted evil and the restoration of peace was a just war. In addition to St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas made a special contribution to the development of this theory. He dealt with the theory of "just war" in the 9th century and according to which war is JUST only if three conditions are met: it is declared an "authorized sovereign" (auctoritas principis). to have a just purpose (iusta causa), and that there is a right intention of those who wage war (recta intentio), ie. promoting good and avoiding evil. For Hugo Grotus, who is considered the founder of international law, war is just only if it is waged in self-defense, to protect property and to punish the injustices done to the population. In contrast, the theory of just war, allowing for the possibility of a conflict being a war, has a monopoly on possessing a "just cause" for war. (Shaw, Malcolm N., 2014) According to Grotius' definition, the just side in the war is the one that can rightfully use force in the war to defend itself because it has been attacked. Although just, this side in the war is limited by the limit of a just goal - because greater resistance justifies a stronger attack, which "implies that the punishment deserved is proportional to the injustice that lies in their action." (Grotius. H., 1901/1646) Thus, the decision not to leave the dispute unresolved with the impossibility of resolving it in any other way is the essence of war - the acceptance of the institution of war as an instrument of decision-making. The constitutive rule of this institution is victory. According to the theory of just war, of course, this is not possible; according to that theory, it is impossible for both sides to be right, because it is necessary for (at least) one side to be to blame for the war, and this parameter of guilt for the war becomes its basic definition. Since guilt is the source and cause of the existence of the war itself, it then precedes it, which makes it possible to determine in principle easily and simply which side is fighting for a just cause, that is. (Gregory, V. & M. Reichberg, 2012:193) This moment of reciprocity and its normative justification shows that the theory of just war is not necessary for establishing the

difference between ius ad bellum and ius in bello, that this difference is independent and older than that "theory". Moreover, that, strictly speaking, the theory of a just war must deviate from that distinction and allow the" just side "to use all means, not just some, if it is necessary for that side to really win: it is impossible to allow the" good side " to lose only because they refuses to use some of the means at their disposal (Bosnia and Herzegovina is not allowed to arm for self-defense). According to military theories, the relationship of military forces and the end of the war are inextricably linked, because, as John Gould said, "We mostly sat idle while genocide ravaged the fields, streets and houses of Bosnia and Herzegovina like wildfire. We are, of course , published proclamations, we, of course, expressed contempt, but we did not act" (Galtung,1969).

The state and to a lesser degree corporations provide funding for science, and they also provide positions of influence to scientific elites. To gain access to this money and power, science has been restructured to be highly professionalised, bureaucratised, specialised and, at the level of interaction with the state and corporations, hierarchical. The influence of education on conflict and peace building in Bosnia and Herzegovina is importnant for Global Peace initiatives in the future. Gandhi and elements of his philosophy must be basis of peace education in Bosnia in Herzegovina because we must learn how we can live together in non violence with all our diversity and different interests. The concept of 'peacebuilding' became more prominent following the publication of Agenda for Peace in 1992 by Boutros Boutros-Gali, former UN Secretary-General. The document created UN definitions that distinguished between 'peacemaking' (action to bring hostile parties to agreement) and 'peacekeeping' (a way to help countries torn by conflict create the conditions for lasting peace), and defined 'post-conflict peace-building' as 'action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict'.There will also be the need for education that addresses deep-seated social and cultural issues such as the freedom of the media, or influence of religion on state institutions. Whilst this has highlighted the need for 'conflict-sensitivity' in education, it has tended to emphasize potentially negative effects and there is an understandable desire from those working in the field to identify how education may also make a positive contribution to peacebuilding.

The best illustration of this problem is the attitude of the so-called Badinter's commission during the disintegration of the former SFRY which was that "regardless of the circumstances, the right to self-determination must not include changes to the existing boundaries at the time of independence (uti possideis iuris) unless the states concerned agree otherwise." There are two cases in which it is possible to exercise the right

to self-determination (in the sense of changing the sovereignty over the territory), and which are both indisputable in theory and confirmed in practice. The first is the case of the self-determination of the colonial peoples, and the second is the case of the self-determination of the peoples subjected to foreign subjugation, domination or exploitation. The Declaration of Friendly Relations (1970) introduced the third case of the so-called safeguard clause. It prohibits "any action aimed at destroying or endangering, in whole or in part, the territorial integrity or political independence of any sovereign and independent state, acting in accordance with the principle of equality and self-determination of the people The position of the Badinter Commission was that Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, although they were the constituent and most numerous people in SFRY, and even the constituent people in these two republics, have only minority rights within the republican borders of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Second and more importantly, both documents explicitly prohibit any activity contrary to the basic principles of international law, and especially contrary to the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence of the states in whose territories they are located (Article 8 of the Declaration and Article 21 of the Convention). In this way, any possibility of granting the right to external self-determination to members of minorities or minorities as groups is undoubtedly excluded. In the words of Eleanor Roosevelt: "just as the concept of individual human freedoms brought to its logical extremes would mean anarchy, so would the principle of self-determination, if given unlimited application, result in chaos. (Bursać S., 2010: 106) States must take whatever measures are necessary to prevent and suppress all violations thereof. Such measures may include military regulations, administrative orders and other regulatory measures. In the process of reconciliation, our policies were unsuccessful in achieving justice for the victims of the war. Today, 26 years after the war, there is still no justice for the victims of the war, even as some victims of war crimes and their witnesses are already dying. Peacebuilding measures were to be implemented within 5 years of the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unfortunately, most of these measures have not been implemented to date, such as state property, which has been illegally appropriated and disposed of by the entities in the meantime. Failure to apply the measure violates the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as hiding "Mladic and Karadzic" and their late extradition to the judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Only fast and efficient justice is adequate to satisfy the sense of justice, unfortunately in Bosnia and Herzegovina the paths of justice have been long.

Nilsson (2012), assessing 83 peace agreements, found that the inclusion of civil society and political parties substantially increased the sustainability of the agreements understood as no return to violence. Some 80% of all recommendations made by the Forum were included in the peace agreement. (Paffenholz, T., 2014) Restorative models used so far in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been unsuccessful because they have been run by political parties. The Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in Srebrenica and Sarajevo have been unsuccessful. Women victims of war crimes instructed by politics (political pressure and blackmail, because the survival and funding of their NGOs depend on the budget available to politicians) have failed to achieve justice through "the Courts of Honor" for Victims of Sexual Violence.

Policies formed special education systems (after the division of the spoils of war) and did not allow the establishment of a state-level Ministry of Education and Science, so it was not possible to implement state-level education for peace culture towards the entities. So now we have three histories, three truths about the war and "blaming of the victims" by those who committed crimes against them. All of the above has contributed to the collapse of the peacebuilding process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is still possible to apply restorative justice in peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina in two ways: peace camps for young people (with education for a culture of peace) and "the Courts of Honor" in which war criminals will express sincere remorse for war crimes and apologize to victims of war. According to all the above, the obstructions of nationalist political parties in achieving stable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina are obvious. The peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina live in peace, but their policies are in a continuous conflict, which becomes especially pronounced in the pre-election period through hate speech and crimes against the state in defense of acquired position within local and state government.

There are two possible critical hypotheses: that the Restorative Justice is more effective at reducing re-offending and repairing for victim harm, and the role of embarrassing the perpetrator and his repentance is necessary to begin the process of forgiveness and reconciliation to war crime victims. The Restorative justice process will be the best psychological therapy that can be provided and enables the active participation of both sides (victims and perpetrators) in order to build a better Bosnian society in the future. Without confronting the truth and seeking forgiveness there is no peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The victims and offenders must agree to participate in the restorative justice process, even when faced with the difficult feelings which such processes elicit, because in the future we must find a way to live well with each other. Peace agreements can end wars, but building peace is a long-lasting process that can last for years, depending

on the severity of the war and the responsibility of the political parties, being entrusted with implementing the peace building process. The peace agreements that are deficient and do not clearly specify all the needs of war victims, as well as, peace building measures, cast doubt on the intentions of the agreements creators. In the future international peace agreements must have several parts:

1. Ending the conflict,

2. Assistance and support in remedy of the damage and the war consequences (restitution for victims and assistance of the state in their recovery),

3. Building of a stable peace.

Education for a culture of peace is a measure of the prevention of conflicts in the future, but it must be accompanied by a "culture of remembrance" and "dealing with the past", and fast and efficient justice and compensation for war victims.

Preventive diplomacy (diplomatic mediation) as a preventive measure is necessary before the outbreak of conflict if peace is to be preserved and a peaceful solution is to be reached between the conflicting states or in non-state conflicts between the conflicting parties. These processes can be led by the United Nations, but states can always use the "good services" of the "great powers" that are crucial in deciding on measures and sanctions against states that have disturbed the peace.

According to Biljana Plavšić in the books Witnesses 1 and 2, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was not religious, but political or war against communism. The victory of capitalism led to the destruction of state and social property, and the emergence of private property, but also to the division and sale of "state property" or natural resources of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and their appropriation by neighboring countries (Serbia and Croatia). The biggest victims of the war are not military, but civilian victims of the war. The Dayton Peace Accords rewarded the "occupiers of Bosnia and Herzegovina" and halted the building of stable peace within Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the entities became "states within a state", and became insistant on their continued survival this enabled the supremacy of the entities over the state.

In the countries where the rights of nation, meaning collective rights, have the exclusive and prevailing status over the rights of individual and over the fundamental human rights, there is no democracy. By the peace

agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina has become a "captive state" or a state of ruling elites in which all the rest of us have become victims of the general abuse of power and disenfranchisement. The rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, a referendum to amend the constitution, the right to call snap elections and the sanctioning of "threats to peace" or "crimes against the state" are necessary to preserve Bosnia and Herzegovina as a democratic state. Restorative justice is possible through the regional initiative for compensation for the victims of the wars in the Balkans

We suggest involving and confronting those most responsible for war crimes (politicians) through the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions with the victims of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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4

Dayton Peace Agreement and Separatist Discourses in The Republika Srpska

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1.Introduction

Ethnicity is determined by religion, language, history, culture and racial characteristics. Ethnocracy, meaning government or rule by an ethnic group, is ruled by an ethnos in multi-ethnic situations (Anderson, 2016: 1-2). Rather than citizenship, ethnicity forms the basis of resource and power allocation and only partial rights given to minorities in this management approach. Political borders are indefinite and the dominant ethnic nation seeks to expand its territory. The dominant ethnic nation shapes the political system, public institutions, economy, and culture in this case. In the ethnocratic system which is based on strict ethnic discrimination, "demos", namely the concept of the public is fragmented (Jiftachel & Ghanem, 2004: 650). Ethnocracy is a hybrid system that includes democratic and non-democratic factor. The rights and representation of ethnic groups are prioritized rather than individual rights and representation. Political parties focus on ethnic quotas and ethnic interests instead of issues such as economy and right-left rivalry. All of these mentioned characteristics are also valid for the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hulsey & Stjepanovic, 2017: 40).

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country that great powers want to control due to its geostrategic location. The region has been within the sphere of influence of empires such as Rome, Byzantium, Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian as well as Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union in the past centuries. Main countries showing interest in this region are the USA, England, France, Germany and the Russian Federation nowadays. Bosnia and Herzegovina can also be seen as a bridge between the Christian West and the Muslim East (Temel, 2018: 15). Likewise, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a mixed and different state with its own characteristics. It can be said that the country has a unique position among other European countries with these features. The multinational state of Bosnia and Herzegovina expressly

recognizes Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs as constituent nations in the constitution. Neither of these three nations has the right to claim the exclusive sovereignty of the state alone. Considering the ethnic and basic criteria, each mentioned nation has equal right to be represented in the legislative and executive bodies, as well as the right for education in the mother tongue (Stajanović & Hodžić, 2015: 1-2). Although Warren Christopher had the view that there should be an unitary Bosnian State with a single international personality and internationally recognized borders from the point of view of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Christopher, 2022), he also wanted to implement ethnocracy in the Western Balkans. However the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina consisting of strong local governments and a weak central government, has a fragmented structure determined by ethnicity quota (Arman, 2015: 5338).

None of the parties that signed the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina where ethnocracy is dominant, expressed their satisfaction with the agreement. Establishment of legal entities based on ethnicity has become a phenomenon that embodies the division with the signing of Dayton (Mearsheimer & Evera, 1995: 17). Also Alija Izetbegović explained that the agreement was incomplete and prepared immediately to end the war by the *statement ".. The Dayton Agreement was not fair, but it was necessary to end the war"* (Izetbegović, 2001; 259). Legal expert of the Bosnia and Herzegovina delegation in Dayton, Kasim Trinka, stated that Dayton Peace Agreement led to peace but it's just a basis for progress, not a completed process. That's why the agreement needs to be revised (Dnevni Avaz, 2020).

The Dayton Peace Agreement is an agreement made with the aim of immediately ending the war that has caused the division of Bosnia, the ethnic cleansing and the people to leave their lands. Therefore, although the agreement was formed on the basis of the identity structure of the state, it contains many shortcomings in itself. The agreement became a legitimizing and institutionalizing division while establishing the multinational state. Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been transformed into a state which is based on the cooperation of Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs, vulnerable against international supervision and has a weak authority. The most criticized part of the agreement is that the lands captured by the Serbs during the war through ethnic cleansing were given to the Serbs again (Tekin, 2012: 29).

2. The Road to Dayton: The Dissolution of the Yugoslav Federation and the War in Bosnia

The death of President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Joseph Broz Tito in 1980, (Kamil, 2019: 163) has led to occur a chaotic atmosphere. Dissolving process of Yugoslav upper identity (South Slavic) by giving place to increasing nationalist tendencies, significant financial problems, provocative attempts of Serbia – one of the six federal republics- to dominate other federal states were the main issues of the chatocic atmosphere (Kut, 2005: 47). It was observed that the chauvinistic approach of Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević negatively affected the federal states in Yugoslavia by the 1990s. Milošević turned to the ideal of "Great Serbia" in those years (Sancaktar, 2019: 134-135). Milošević who ordered academics and writers ethnic maps showing the borders of Serbian state in order to protect interests of Serbian natioan and expand its' sphere of influence, also created a parliament called Srpski Sabor (SS) (Stevanoviç, 2005: 123). Serbian historians drew the boundaries of this ideal map by including Montenegro, Macedonia, Dalmatia, some regions of Croatia and most of Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the borders before World War II (Bora, 2018: 126-127).

However, ideal of Slobodan Milošević was not limited to irredentism, he was also trying to wake up nationalism. Rising Serbian nationalism caused the spreading of Croatian nationalism and ignited the wick of Yugoslavia's separation. Slovenia, which has the most pro-Westernization and pro-independence policy among the federal republics in Yugoslavia, has regulated its constitution in this direction. Thus, the spring of 1990 was a year of multi-party elections for both Slovenia and Croatia (Malcolm, 1996: 214). By 1991 the Presidency of Yugoslavia determined by the rotation method was supposed to pass to Croatia which is one of the six republics that constitute the Federation. However Serbia's possessive attitude on everything in Yugoslavie became an obstacle for transferring of presidency to Croatia and that created beginning of the crisis and caused a civil war in Yugoslavia. Afterwards, the independence decisions of Croatia and Slovenia were not accepted by Serbia and the conflicts were stopped through the agency of European Community and Germany (Akarslan, 1993: 42).

With the dissolution in Yugoslavia, Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina declared their unilateral autonomy in the regions where Serb population was dense. Then they opened their own parliament and established the Bosnian Serb Republic on 9th January 1992 (Ençev, 2005:517). On the other hand, Muslim and Croatian deputies hold a referendum on separation of Bosnia and Herzegovina from Yugoslavia between February

29 and March 1, with a decision taken with the participation of two ethnicities (Gutman, 1994: 62).

Serbs boycotted this ballot. Therefore the participation rate remained at 63%. 99% of the participants voted for the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, as separatist demands of the Serbs and results of the referendum were diametrically opposed to each other, tense atmosphere led to start the Bosnian Civil War arose in Sarajevo. Then the FederalArmy started to fight on the side of the Serbs against the Bosnians and Croats (Alkan, 1995: 62-64).

While the crisis between Bosnians, Croats and Serbs going on, the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina declared its independence on 6th April 1992 by The European Community, (Malcolm: 234; Kamil: 167), its membership to The United Nations (UN) and its contact with many countries were criticized and not accepted by Serbs and Croats (Karatay, 2002; 15).

Many attacks such as destruction of the stone bridge over the Neretva River which is videotaped by the Croatian soldiers one of the main images imprinted on the memories of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, siege of Sarajevo by Serbian soldiers and bombing of the market place where the civilians shop, engaged attention of the international community (Glenny, 1999: 513). Therefore weapons were confiscated in the places considered security zone and Bosniaks was taken under protection of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) since 1993 (Alp, 2011: 15-16). At this stage, the USA and Germany supported establishment of a federation by Bosniak and Croat leaders, Alija Izetbegović and Franjo Tuđman, on 18th March 1994 (Babuna, 2000: 206-207). Even if these states think that they are realizing a multi-ethnic country, they will realize later that they have started the initiative basically confirms the ethnic division. This federation agreement reached a final form with the Dayton Agreement which was signed eighteen months after the federation agreement (Glenny: 513-514).

Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegović made a speech in order to to stop the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the 49th session of the UNSC on 27th September 1994. Izetbegović told that 70% of Bosnia and Herzegovina's lands were occupied, more than 200 thousand civilians were massacred, one million Bosnian citizens had to leave their homes alone, hundreds of towns and villages were destroyed since the first months of the war and added: "This war is not a classic war realizing between two armies. It is a war started by an army against civilians by committing genocide,

destroying cultural and religious objects in an unbelievable manner." (İzzetbegoviç, 2003: 120).

Army of the Republika Srpska occupied the security zone of Srebrenica on 11th July 1995. There were those who went to Potaçari to the UN Netherlands Military camp to be protected from all kinds of attacks and massacres after this occupation (Öner, 2013: 69). The UN Dutch soldiers just watched occupying of Srebrenica by Serbian soldiers and did not even try to prevent the occupation (Čekić, 2007: 12-13). Since the Dutch soldiers could not comprehend seriousness of the situation, approximately 20,000-25,000 people took refuge in Srebrenica and Potaçari between 11-23th July 1995 were imprisoned. 8,000-12,000 men between the ages of 14-65 among these people were elected and exposed to various tortures. Besides many women and child girls were raped (Alp, 2017: 128).

A series of meetings were organized for peace settlement in order to prevent possible further ethnic massacres and to end the war as soon as possible. The Vance-Owen Peace Plan was approved on 2th January 1993. According to this plan, Bosnia and Herzegovina would be divided into provinces and transformed into a decentralized state structure consisting of three ethnic nations and ten provinces (Selver, 2003: 145-146). The Bosnians did not accept this plan by considering that it would lead to the possible disintegration problems at the provinces based on ethnicity. That's why Bosnians objected to the plan and as a result of the objection, number of provincs given to Bosnians was increased. Thus, Alija İzetbegović has become content to this plan. However the Serbs held a referendum on this plan due to the decrease in the lands under their control. Then the plan was rejected as a result the referendum and lost its validity.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was planned to be divided into three nation-states based on ethnicity according to the three-zone peace plan (Geneva Plan) in 1993. According to the Safe Zones plan prepared between 1993-1994 and does not mean a peace plan or agreement in the strict sense; Sarajevo, Jepa, Goražde, Tuzla, Srebrenica, Bihać regions were declared as "Safe zone" in order to stop the attacks and ethnic cleansing by the Serbs and Croats and make the Muslim regions livable placess. "Joint Action Plan" was also approved on 22th May 1993. (Alp, 2017: 135-138).

Attempts to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina were initiated with the Lisbon and London Conferences in 1992. The Dayton (Paris) Peace Treaty was signed after numerous plans and treaties such as the Vance-Owen Plan, the Tri-zonal Plan, the Safe Zones Plan, the Bosnian-Croat Federation Treaty in 1994, and the Contact Group Plan (Kamil, 2017: 166). A draft was created through Richard Hoolbroke and after the sixty-day ceasefire,

negotiations were held between October 1-21st with the participation of Alija Izetbegović, Franjo Tuđman, and Slobodon Milosević under the auspices of the USA. The agreement decreed that 51% of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territory belongs to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 49% to the Republika Srpska was signed on 14th December 1995 (Turbiç, 2017: 67; Kenar, 2007: 190).

3. Problems Caused from the Dayton Peace Agreement

All peace plans regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina had to face some dilemmas. The first of these dilemmas is to protect the conflicting interests of the three nations and the second is to ensure the sovereignty of the central state of Bosnia and Herzegovina in general. However, ethnic identity regulative approaches on the basis of the plans also brought ethnic division to the forefront (Barışa Çağrı, 1997: 77-78).

Whereas Bosnia and Herzegovina has a tripartite state structure when Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), the Brcko autonomous region and the Bosnian Serb Republic (Republika Sprska) are considered and it has *a sui generis* feature in terms of international relations (Arman, 5341). Although the Dayton Peace Treaty was a treaty envisaged a unitary state, the result was a mixed state with two entities and an autonomous region. This confusion also shows its effect in the constitutional order. Having one constitution at the state level, two at the level of entities, one for the autonomous region of Brčko (Brçko) and ten constitutions for the cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been main source of legal problems (Dalar, 2008: 100).

Brčko region which is a part of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a place Serbs, Croatian and Bosniaks vulnerable against international control live in, as a special administration tradition and legislative, executive and judicial organs. The district does not have a flag or emblem, has a 29-member assembly. The laws of both Brcko and the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina must be applied in the region. (Kamil, 2017: 174).

The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the result of the Washington Agreement that ended the Bosnian-Croatian war. In this federation contains 51% of Bosnian territory, There are 10 cantons in total consisting of 5 Bosnian, 3 Croatian and 2 mixed in this federation contains 51% of Bosnian territory. Power is shared between Bosniaks and Croats at federation level while ethnic majority holders were going to control the power and have the right to make decisions at cantons (Keil, 2013: 111). On the other hand, Republika Srpska is a unitary republic modeled according to the Serbian state tradition and possibly founded to be annexed

to Serbia later. Except for Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and those transferred to its institutions, all state duties and powers belong to the entity itself. The party that makes the decisions in the entity is the entity government. Local units within the entity are responsible for implementing the decisions taken (Keil, 113).

Republika Srpska is a republic with a constitution, flag, parliament, ministers, but shares sovereign powers with Bosnia and Herzegovina and the UN High Representative. While the Dayton Agreement was ratified by Republika Srpska, it was not ratified by the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. While the actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina want Dayton to be revised, Republika Srpska has a very cold attitude regarding this request and threatens towards seperation (Arman, 5341). In addition, although Republika Srpska is one of the two entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and is not an independent state, it provides significant investment and partnership through the Cooperation, Trade and Investment Office in Washington DC opened in 2013 (RS Office), Belgrade (Predstavništvo RS), and the republic also has diplomatic representations in important places such as Brussels, Vienna, Stuttgard, Thessaloniki and Jerusalem (Baklacıoğlu, 2014: 350).

While these features are not generally seen in federal states, the federal structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina allows the federal units to be independent in their foreign relations. Since these each units formed the security forces by protecting their own armed forces, a general staff or police force was not seperately formed by Bosnia and Herzegovina (Keskin & Aydın, 2014: 190). Despite the ethnic cleansing that Republika Srpska executed unit during the war in Bosnia, being counted as an entity with the status of a Republic was seen as achieving political goals through the use of force and legitimizing what happened and criticized (Rüma, 2008: 243-244). When the existence of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serb Republic (Republika Srpska) are compared in the Dayton Agreement, which is an agreement prepared by reconciling the interests of the great powers, asymmetrical power relationship can be clearly realised. While decentralization is effective in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the cantons having a significant degree of autonomy, centralization is dominant in Republika Srpska (Rızvanović, 2018: 86).

When we look at the parliamentary structure created according to the Dayton Agreement, the National Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the House of Representatives are the upper common institutions of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Assembly of Nations of Bosnia and

Herzegovina consists of a total of 15 delegates, including Bosnians, Croats and Serbs, 10 from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 5 from the Republika Srpska. The House of Representatives consists of 42 members elected by the citizens. 28 of the members are elected from the Federation and 14 from the Republika Srpska. (Tekin, 48 Decisions are taken by the Council of Ministers and the Presidency In Bosnia and Herzegovina and the balance of distribution of the 3 ethnic groups must be paid regard in each organ of the state (Numanovic, 2011: 9). The Tripartite Presidency is a system that consists of Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats representing three ethnic groups and the person representing the office changes every 8 months by rotating (Numanovic, 11).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, where approximately 3.5 million people live, there are nearly 200 parties competing in national, regional and local elections. Despite this fragmentation, the common feature of political parties is that they represent one of the three ethnic groups. On the other hand the parliament consists of 8 electoral districts within two entities. 3 to 6 representatives are elected by proportional vote from each regions (Hulsey & Stjepanovic: 43). In Bosnia and Herzegovina where the elites tend to cooperate while the masses diverge within themselves, existence and languages of different ethnic groups are officially recognized, and each ethnic group has its own media organizations and schools, decisions are taken by majority of votes. (Seyaz, 2015: 5356-5357). Although Bosnia and Herzegovina appears to be a federal democratic republic consisting of a single unit on paper, it does not have the feature of a federal state in the strict sense. While the central authority can solve the problems of the sub-units in federal states, although the sub-units do not have the right to extend their constitutional powers and self-determination, they keep more powerful position than the central authority in this system (Rüma: 245-246).

The articles of Dayton Agreement prepared to avoid the domination of any ethnicity and ethnic quotas on ethnic and regional power issues. Existence of quotas, as well as the inserted provisions to limit the power of the majority in the Parliamentary Assembly seriously block out functioning of state institutions. According to the Office of the High Representative, a quarter of parliamentary sessions are wasted in unnecessary discussion of the agenda. Even if a consensus was reached on the issues related to the agenda, it has become very difficult to enact laws. The Parliamentary Assembly could enact most of the laws as a result of pressure came from the international community (McMahon, 2004: 200).

Another shortcoming of the Dayton Agreement established state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is that it made the country open to the influence of the

international community. As a matter of fact with this agreement, military regulations and border controls in federated units was started to be provided by NATO, functioning of the constitutional court was left to the ECtHR, operations of Central Bank were left to the IMF, elections were left to the OSCE, the police force was transferred to UN at first and then to EU, cultural assets were started be protected by UNESCO, establishment of Office of the High Representative was accepted (Seyaz: 5356-5357.)   As is seen, in Bosnia where there are different ethnicities, it is difficult to gather Bosnian Croats, Serbs and Muslims under a single roof, Western states have been trying to control the region with high-level attention and undemocratic methods. The fact that they keep diplomats, aid workers and soldiers in Bosnia is an indication that these states are in the position of virtual rulers in the region (Dempsey, 1998: 13).

4. Current Developments and Discourses in Bosnia and Herzegovina

All kinds of positive or negative developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina have important effects on the welfare and stability of the country. In particular, the policies, discourses and symbols of politicians Republika Srpska which is one of the two entities, affects institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, its place in world politics, and therefore disrupts its general functioning. For this reason, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a region where the international community mostly approachs with suspicion and hesitates while making decision in diffirent issues. Likewise, due to same concerns, Valentin Inzko, High Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, introduced legal provisions prohibiting the denial of the genocide committed in Bosnia shortly before he left office (Oslobođenje, 2021a). The attitudes of the presidents and vice-presidents of the Bosnian Republika Srpska in previous years, supporting and glorifying the convicts of The Hague, had impact on Valentin Inzko's introduction of the provisions regarding the denial of the genocide. Due to these negative attitudes, some countries such as Germany brought up the necessity of taking sanction decisions such as preventing these people from entering their countries and blocking their assets (Kurir, 2017).

Valentin Inzko spoke on this subject and said that; "I had to do something and I acted in accordance with my conscience. It can never be a good thing if you are in a country where war criminals are glorified" (BBC, 2021). According to him; "A person who publicly supports, ignores, trivializes or seeks to justify the crime of genocide, a crime against humanity, or a war crime established in a final judgment pursuant to the International Military Tribunal clause annexed to the London Agreement of 8 August 1945; , is punished with imprisonment from six months to five years for acting in a

way that incites violence or hatred towards a group of persons identified by race, colour, religion, origin, nationality or ethnic origin, or a member of such group according to Former Yugoslavia International Criminal Tribunal" (OHR, 2021). According to this law; monuments of people convicted of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes should not be built and suc people names' should not be given to places such as parks, streets, squares, bridges, public buildings. Otherwise, those who commit this crime are punished with at least three years in prison. (OHR, 2021).

According to Valentin Inzko, the competent authorities of Republika Srpska Bosnia and Herzegovina as a collection of states with limited and derived sovereignty based on two pre-existing entities, deliberately misinterprete the Dayton Peace agreement and try to undermine state institutions. On the other hand, Milorad Dodik is seen as a person who challenge the territorial integrity, authorities and institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Šehić, 2020: 117). Valentin Inzko stated that Milorad Dodik took concrete measures as a result of the threats made against him, he resigned from the Supreme Court of Justice appoints all judges and prosecutors in the country and the joint secret service and the tax system. He also added that the announcement towards establishment of Republika Srpska army created fear of war among the people (Oslobođenje, 2021b; Dnevni Avaz 2021a).

There have been developments in Republika Srpska which confirm the statements of Valentin Inzko. The most interesting one of these developments was that the Bosnian Medicine Agency reached a surprising conclusion regarding the sale of oxygen given to Covid-19 patients, during a review made in Serbian-controlled region in September 2021. Accordingly, it was understood that the oxygen sold is of a type that can be used in industrial machines, not on humans. However the authorities in the region did not make any effort to try to fix the situation and make a statement. Moreover Milorad Dodik announced that they had established their own pharmaceutical instutitons and forbade the central government to control the area covering half of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territory. Dodik also announced that they would withdraw from the multinational armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina and establish the Serbian army and that they wanted to leave the tax office, intelligence office and judiciary (Oslobođenje, 2022a).

At this point, it is necessary to remember the statement of American Diplomat Richard Holbrooke that it was a huge mistake to refer to the entity controlled by the Serbs as a "republic" while the Dayton Treaty was being prepared, and that they ignored the fact that this could be a big problem for the Balkans. For his reason Milorad Dodik has often

demanded an independence ballot for this reason (Türbedar, 2021: 441-442). As in seen, Milorad Dodik has already spoken to reporters in Banja Luka and said that it is difficult to understand Bosnia and Herzegovina and that they fight for independence taking into account the status of the Republika Srpska within the framework of the Dayton Agreement (Oslobođenje, 2022b). He also said that the decision taken not to return the Serb Representatives in the National Assembly of Republika Srpska to the joint institutions will remain in force until the amendment referring to the denial of genocide introduced by Former High Representative Valentin Inzko is repealed (Nezavisne Novine, 2022). Another issue that the nationalist politicians in Republika Srpska could not agree on by not accepting the Genocide Denial Law is the 9th of January which the Serb side tries to claim as an important symbol. Bakir Izetbegović, a former member of the Presidential Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, applied to the Constitutional Court (decision no. U3/13) in 2015 to question the legality of the Declaration of the Serb People's Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the proclamation of the Serb Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ustavni Sud BiH, 2015). On the other hand, Milorad Dodik held a referendum on the celebration of 9 January 1992 among his own entity in 2016. The referendum decision and its results were submitted to the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Court decided to suspend the referendum until the final decision on the demands for the protection of stability and order (Ustavni Sud BiH, 2016a). By 1st December 2016, the Constitutional Court decided to cancel the referendum in the interim measure decision numbered U10/16 dated 17th September 2016 and the decision taken based on the referendum, because it was inconsistent with the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the binding decision numbered U3/13. (Ustavni Sud BiH, 2016b).

Since the politicians in Republika Srpska could not reconcile the decisions with their ideological views, they declared them null and void. This attitude leads to implementations such as violations of the constitution. Although the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina rejected the referendum decision on the celebration of the 9 January Republika Srpska Day, Milorad Dodik had oppositional manner to the constitutional court many times. Dodik said in a statement that the day could not be changed "by the decision of an investigation by international judges, or any self-proclaimed high representative or anyone else" (Kurir, 2021). Looking at Dodik's statements, it is seen that he does not have a holistic approach for Bosnia-Herzegovina and is far from revising the Dayton Agreement. Dodik said on 9th January 2021 "We did not fight for Bosnia and Herzegovina, even today we do are not fighting for Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is an imposed framework for which we still suffer. We did not receive anything

good from Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is not a single factor that can benefit us in thee past 20 or more years" (Kurir, 2021), expressing that his own entities are not pleased to be together with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite the rejection of the Constitutional Court on 9th January 2022, a parade for Republika Srpska's Day was organized in Banja Luka, the capital of the Bosnian Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik celebrated the unconstitutional day and stated that Republika Srpska was a guarantor that was supposed to make dreams of Serbs in the region come true. Dodik declared that "Our freedom is our right, not a thing to the detriment of others and our aim is to defend freedom and Republika Srpska". (Kurir, 2022).

5. Reactions to Separatist Discourses in Bosnia and Herzegovina

It is observed that the practices and discourses made on behalf of the Republika Srpska have had a serious impact on Bosnia and Herzegovina. While the Bosnian Serb Assembly remains outside of Bosnia's institutional structure, the parliament has to hold a meeting for the implementations that come out from the Bosnian army, tax system and judiciary, the separatist discourse of the Serbian members is increasing; the USA hopes to turn Bosnia back from the abyss (The Guardian, 2021; Dnevni Avaz 2021). For this reason, Milorad Dodik's rhetoric and the practices of some officials were described as "*significant corruption and destabilizing activities*" by USA and a sanction decision was taken by USA as well. In addition, the USA government took steps to impose visa bans on Bosnian Serbina adminstrators (The Guardian, 2022). At this point, it should be noted that the USA and some Western countries applied sanctions by blacklisting many Serb names during the previous periods as well. The USA proves that it follows a strict attitude by not removing the names of the people who died from their list includes politicians make negative statements such as Milorad Dodik and International Criminal Court convicts such as Ratko Mladić, Radovan Karadžić, Veselin Šljivančanin also (Kurir, 2020).

Milorad Dodik, who has been trying to destroy the territorial integrity and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina and undermine the Dayton Agreement with ethno-nationalist discourses, has directed the media organization known to be affiliated with him called Alternativna Televizija, to defame other political figures, to show his own image better, and to realize his political goals. In addition, Dodik has been involved in many corruptions through this television channel. The USA blocked Milorad Dodik's and legal entities' property rights and their other interests in the United States on charges of destabilizing behavior and corruption Pursuant to decree EO 14033 of June 8, 2021, "On the Detention of Ownership of Certain Persons Contributing to the Destabilizing Situation in the Western

Balkans and the Suspension of Entry to the United States," (U.S Department of Treasury, 2022). Since similar corruption incidents in Bosnia and Herzegovina have turned into an ordinary event encountered in many institutions of the state, the public's trust in the government is extremely low. For this reason, the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina has put into effect the Criminal Law Convention against Corruption, and has tried to correct its negative image in the fight against corruption by becoming a party to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) (Dapo-Ridic, 2015: 5349).

Regarding the practices of Milorad Dodik, possible sanctions decisions will be conveyed by Gabriel Escobar, the Deputy Minister of the USA, who oversees the policy towards the Western Balkan countries, are wondered. (Dnevni Avaz, 2021b). Regardimg to Milorad Dodik's practices, Gabriel Escobar said, "There are some real threats to Dayton and most of them come from Milorad Dodik." Escobar informed that the European Partners are in agreement on the subject and said, "I should start by saying that we are fully act together with our European partners on this issue. So, yes there is more than one diplomatic effort. The first involves Milorad Dodik's refrain from trying to destroy the central institutions that have hurt Dayton's heart as you have pointed out. Second, he stated that Serbs should return to central institutions but that these central institutions should work for all people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whether Croat, Bosniak, Serb or others" (Oslobođenje, 2021c).

In general, citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina think that the destabilizing and corrupt 'nationalists' should no longer be trusted, Sarajevo should start prosecuting corrupt politicians, and the EU should join the US sanctions, regarding the US sanctions taken because of Milorad Dodik's rhetoric and practices (Dnevni Avaz, 2022). European states reacted to Milorad Dodik's rhetoric and started to discuss the possible sanctions. While there are those who oppose the recent discourse and practices of the Serbs, there are also those who support them. Meeting in detail with Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić on the sanction decision Dodik emphasized that it is impossible for the Serbian people to fight for the consistent implementation of the Dayton Agreement, primarily due to the unilateral approach of the United States. On the other hand, Aleksandar Vučić said that "Sanctions have always brought only problems and never led to a solution." and expressed his opinion that the sanctions should be considered as a terrible precedent and could have bad consequences for the development of relations for the three nations and two entities in the region. The parties agreed that Serbia has prepared financial support for the Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina and that the squads formed by the two presidents and the two governments should speed up

the talks and inform the public. (Srbija Danas, 2022). Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban thinks that the sanctions should definitely be prevented. Orban who said that the Balkans would not be able to achieve stability without Bosnia and Herzegovina and therefore the rights of the Serbs should be renewed, said, "This is where Hungary stands." (Danas, 2021). Another country sided with the Bosnian Serb Republic is Russia due to its Slavic-Orthodox identity. While Russia was competing with the West in way of the Balkans and Bosnia and Herzegovina, it supported many decisions taken by the Bosnian Serb Republic (Türbedar: 447).

No clear sanction decision which can completely eliminate the rhetoric of the ethno-nationalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been taken or announced. Undoubtedly, the international community needs to take effective decisions on such matters without delay. Therefore, the approach of the EU is important. Prof.Dr. Denis Pajić from Cemal Bijedić University in Mostar thinks that EU sanctions will be more effective than the US sanctions. Because if the EU imposes sanctions, these people are not only banned from entering the EU countries, also all their movable and immovable properties and bank accounts in EU countries can be blocked. In addition, the sanctions that can be implemented for Dodik to give up his separatist rhetoric will send a message to other political options and strengthen local judicial institutions. (Oslobođenje, 2022c).

Because of recent negative events and discourses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Academist Esad Duraković sent a letter to Christian Schmidt who was appointed to the High Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 1st August 2021. Duraković clearly summarized the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the letter; "The international community has created a miracle state here that is not found anywhere else and the miracle is that despite all these efforts to destroy it, the state still survives. Do you know why? Because Bosnia is more than a state: Bosnia is a country and it is not easy to destroy it". n the continuation of the letter, Duraković said that they were hopeful that Schmidt would neutralize the injustices in Bosnia and Herzegovina and said, "We need normality, common prosperity, not medieval hostility. He summed up his rightful demands by saying, "Neither less nor more" (Dnevni Avaz, 2021c).

6. Conclusion

After the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina's demand for independence and the ethnic slaughter suffered by the people due to the chauvinism of the Serbs after the war, left a bad mark in the memory of everyone affected by the war. However undoubtedly the Muslim Bosniaks were the community most affected by this process. Increasing nationalism

did not do any good other than fueling the war, let alone causing the war. Although many peace treaties were attempted to end ethnic persecution and return life to normal as soon as possible, reaching a conclsuion with all its pros and cons has been possible with Dayton Peace Agreement. Dayton Peace Treaty was an immediate agreement to end the war as soon as possible. That's why it has many shortcomings. With the agreement, it was desired to form a general framework for the Serb, Croat and Bosnian nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina to live together in peace and to be represented in the country. However, the formed framework revealed a structure dominated by ethnography in almost every area of the newly created state. Dayton Peace Agreement did nothing but remind constantly that there are different ethnicities all over the country and placed this difference in minds while desiring the establishment of peace. In addition, as a memberstate that holds a federation and a republic together, it has made the difference even more evident with its "sui generis" feature. These problems caused by the structural deficiencies of the agreement, led the justification for the irredentist policies of the nationalist politicians. In this way, the separatists in Republika Srpska have always taken shelter behind the structural deficiencies of Dayton in their unconstitutional actions and in the discourses they emphasized in order to drag the masses after them. Instead of solving these deficiencies by coming together, they use them for the separation goals they expect to realize in time and engage in practices that violate the constitution. On the other hand, The Bosnians who came out with great wounds and sufferings from the war, demand revision on the deficiencies of the agreement with the participation of three ethnic groups and that the international community should be more effective in order not to ignore the problem and that chauvinist practices should be punished with sanctions.

Annex 1

- *In the news in the newspaper, it is mentioned that since the president of
the Bosnian Serb Republic and his deputies who have separatist practices,
support and glorify the convicts of The Hague, a decision may be taken to
impose sanctions on banning them from entering Germany and blocking
their bank accounts. (Kurir, 2017).*

Annex: 2

- *The news that Milorad Dodik announced that the Court and Prosecutor's Office would be banned in the Serbian Republic and that he would leave the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, will sing the song called "Nema te više, Alija", written in memory of Alija Izetbegović in the presidential building was carried to the headlines with a provocative wording. (Dnevni Avaz, 2021a).*

Annex: 3

- -In this issue of the newspaper, information is given about the blacklisting
  of many Serbian politicians. The news that Milorad Dodik and Biljana
  Plavšić could not go to America, that Vojislav Šešelj could not go to
  Croatia and that Bogoljup Karić was threatened with EU bans were
  reflected in the headlines. (Kurir, 2020).

Annex:4

- -News about the US imposing new sanctions due to nationalist rhetoric and corruption (Dnevni Avaz, 2022).

Annex: 5

- - *News about whether Gabriel Escobar, responsible for US policies regarding the Western Balkans, will impose sanctions on Milorad Dodik (Dnevni Avaz, 2021b).*

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5

Russia's Influence in the Kosovo Case

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1.Introduction

After the Cold War, the republics and territories which till then constituted Yugoslavia have once again become a battlefield for the great powers. Recently, Russia began using this region as a means to more assertively position itself as a superpower in the international area. By strengthening its pan-Slavic ties with some Balkan countries, Russia attempted to legitimize its existence in the region. Historically speaking one can argue that Russian has never left the region, even though its foreign policy strategies towards the Balkan countries changed over time. From the days of the Russian Empire until the fall of communism in Europe, and the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the Balkans stood out as a critical field for Russian foreign policy. Despite the clear decline of Russian power after the breakup of the USSR, in the minds of Moscow's politicians Russia was still a crucial actor in Europe (Stevenson, 1991). Therefore, even after the collapse of the USSR, the former Yugoslav countries played a significant part in pursuing the policy of pan-Slavism, often associated with Russian approaches towards the region.

"The Kosovo-Serbia dispute was at the heart of Yugoslavia's descent into deadly conflict from 1991 to 1999" (International Crisis Group, 2021, p.1). Within the former Yugoslavia, Kosovo was an autonomous province as a part of the larger republic of Serbia. However, in 1989, its autonomy was revoked by force by the Serbian government led by Slobodan Milosevic (Malcolm, 2018). The majority of Albanians living in the province responded by demanding full independence. Kosovo's resistance against Belgrade's rule initially took the form of setting up a parallel system organized by the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), subsequently evolve into "an armed insurgency led by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)" (Mustafa, 2019). In September 1991, an independence referendum was held in Kosovo, with   98% of people voting in favor of independence, with a turnout of 87% (Malcolm, 2018). While the Serbs living in Kosovo boycotted the referendum, Albania was the first and the only country to recognize Kosovo's independence. After the referendum,

on 24 May, 1994 province-wide elections were held, with private houses serving as polling stations (Judah, 1997).

In 1998, the Serbian government launched a campaign involving police and military forces, against Kosovo Albanians. This move led to widespread acts of oppression. After political dialog to solve the status of Kosovo failed, NATO launched an air campaign in 1999, while the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1244, which effectively ended Serbian rule in Kosovo (Borgen, 2008). Thus, NATO's intervention finished a conflict which began with the Republic of Serbia gaining complete control over the territory of Kosovo, right after revoking Kosovo's status as a Socialist Autonomous Province in 1989 (Mustafa, 2019).

In the Post-Cold War period, NATO's air campaign in Kosovo also had the effect of drawing Russia's increased attention. During the initial Yugoslavia crisis, Russia was preoccupied with its domestic issues, and thus failed to play an active role in the solution to the crises the Balkans saw in early 1990s. Instead, it acted mostly in coordination with Western countries in the context of international efforts to bring stability to the region. Moscow collaborated with the West to finish the ethnic conflict in Croatia. Also, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Russian diplomats and military personnel contributed to peacekeeping efforts led by NATO (Lewis, 1992). However, by the time of NATO's air campaign in Kosovo against Serbia, that conciliatory foreign policy was being replaced by a rather hawkish one towards the policies of Western countries in general and the region in particular.

NATO's US -led intervention in Kosovo was contested from an international law perspective, triggering a new debate regarding the international order. On the other hand, "Russia has used the Kosovo case as a strategic opportunity to reassert its role in the international system" (Hasani, 2018), and acted as the prominent force opposing Kosovo's statehood in the international system, while Serbia is Russia's most important cultural and military ally in the region. In this context the two countries mutually benefited from this cooperation: Russia has been showing its international power through its influence in Serbia (and indirectly in the Balkans) and Serbia is utilizing Russia's support for its own political goals, and as an element in the negotiations with the EU – i.e. intimidating the EU with the threat of expanding Russian influence in the region even further (Hasani, 2018).

After NATO's air campaign, Russia's foreign policy paradigm shifted to overcome the recently embraced unipolar international system perspective – where the West is the greatest international power. Instead, a bipolar

system was embraced, with Russia playing a prominent role in determining daily politics. Yet, its influence is mostly directed towards countries aspiring to become EU and NATO members. In this context, Russia evolved into a crucial player to take into account in membership processes of these international organizations. The Kosovo case played an important role for Russia in repositioning itself once again as a great power in the new international system.

After a period of UN administration and an unsuccessful effort to negotiate a settlement, the US and most countries in the EU encouraged Kosovo for a formal declaration of independence in February 2008 (International Crisis Group, 2021). After Kosovo's declaration of independence, Russia embraced an even more aggressive policy towards the West and used the Kosovo case as a precedent for interventions in some former Soviet states, as was the case in Russia's military intervention in Georgia. It also played an active role in international relations, backing the position of Serbia against Kosovo. Serbia has been relying on Russia's veto power in the UN Security Council to avoid Kosovo's international recognition in the organization (Samorukov, 2019).

In this sense, the dispute between Kosovo and Serbia made it possible for Russia to spread its influence in the region. On the other hand, Russia also legitimized its presence in the Balkans, mostly through reference to the "orthodoxy brotherhood" between Serbs and the Russian people. Thus, the never-ending "normalization" dialog between Kosovo and Serbia, with many ups and downs, gave Russia a chance to present and even impose itself as an "alternative" mediator or a great power shaping the dialog (Hasani, 2018). Nevertheless, the crises in the Balkans are serving as useful tools for Russia in terms of retaining its presence in the region and protecting its political reputation in Serbia.

2. The Dissolution of Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia has been plagued by internal conflict and instability since the beginning of ethnic conflict in the 1990s. The instability in the region soon drew the attention of major powers (EU countries, US, Russia). The ethnic tensions in the region effectively provided a battleground for major powers – with Russia and the West acting as the opposing blocks. The end of the Cold War brought about a new international order (Bower, 1997; Mazower, 2015). That new order, however, was full of uncertainty for Russia, which arose as the leading heir of the USSR after the collapse of the latter. On the other hand, the emergence of Russia as a new state, its position in the international system, and its relations with other states raised a lot of questions for the other countries. In this regard, the collapse

of the USSR and the subsequent impaired position Russia had to endure and accept in the international system led Russia to trying to choose its stakes more carefully and play a significant role in the region after the NATO's air campaign in Kosovo.

During the Balkan crisis of early 1990s, Russia kept poking the eye of the West without having a clear strategy towards the Balkan countries in general. However, it still was under the impression that it played a defining part in the region, until the shock it had with the NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999. In contrast, NATO's military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) in 1995, and then in Kosovo, put the Western countries to the driving seat for stability of the region. One cannot emphasize enough how the dissolution of the USSR and the end of the Cold War led to the development of the US as 'the' hegemonic power (Hasani, 2018). The US -led NATO military interventions in the Balkans (both in BH and Kosovo), in this context, contributed to solidifying the US' position as a hegemonic power in the international system, and undermined Russia's attempts to present itself as a great power. Moreover, given the EU' shortcomings in terms of preventing systematical crimes that happened in Yugoslavia, the US-led NATO's military intervention and political engagements of the US in Balkan countries increased and expanded, with a view to providing stability and security in the region.

Before NATO's military intervention in Kosovo, Russia approved all UN Security Council Resolutions regarding the Kosovo crisis. Nevertheless, Russia did not support any military intervention in the region, and (with China) stood against the NATO's air campaign in Kosovo. The proponents of the intervention, in order to circumvent that opposition, did not seek UN Security Council's approval, as both countries opposing the intervention are permanent members of the Council and thus have veto power. Russia's most significant response to NATO's military intervention in Kosovo occurred when Russian Prime Minister was on route to Washington to meet US President on March 23 for an official visit. Upon learning about the beginning of the bombing, Primakov turned his plane around (Primakov, 2002). Likewise, "the Russian Parliament – Duma – vehemently denounced NATO airstrikes against Yugoslavia" (Headley, 2008: 234). NATO's intervention was opposed and condemned in the Russian public opinion as well (CRS Report of Congress, 1999). After the NATO's intervention, Russian peacekeepers was rushed to the Pristina airport as soon as possible, and virtually brought Russian and NATO armies to the brink of direct armed clash for the first time since the end of the Cold War (Clark, 2003). Yet, one would not be off the mark to argue that Kosovo bruised Russia's ambitions to reinvent itself as an independent center of power in a multipolar world (Bechev, 2017).

After NATO intervened in Kosovo, the UN Security Council convened, upon a call for meeting by Russia, to discuss "the extraordinary dangerous situation caused by NATO's military intervention against Yugoslavia". Russia argued that NATO's intervention was against the international law. That argument was supported by China as well (Weller, 2011). Even though NATO's airstrikes damaged Russia's superpower position in the international system, not to mention its reputation in the region, in the aftermath of the intervention Russia chose to have rather constructive relations with the Western countries, regarding the political situation in the region. Thus, "Russia voted in favor of UN Security Council Resolution 1244, which placed Kosovo under the international administration of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and mandated NATO peacekeeping operation KFOR" (Bechev, 2017). It is important to point it out that the deal reached between NATO and Russia was an opportunity for Russia to re-establish its relations with the US and the EU (Bechev, 2017: 47). Nevertheless, the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 has strengthened NATO's role in the region as a key peace and stability guarantor. In the light of the fact that, after the Dayton Agreement, NATO peacekeeping forces remained in Bosnia and Herzegovina until 2004 to supervise the implementation of the Agreement, NATO's Kosovo Force's (KFOR) introduced after the military intervention in Kosovo maintained its presence in Kosovo, for the purpose of safeguarding overall stability in the territory.

Even though, Kosovo case played a significant role in terms of shaping and defining Russian engagement in the region, its overall impact in the region "cannot be understood without analyzing the function of the international system, Russia's economic, cultural and political situation after the collapse of the USSR, relations among the great powers and their balance of power" (Hasani, 2018). The political and economic crisis that Russia experienced after the collapse of the USSR effectively forced Russia to seek close relations with the West (especially the US). Until the end of the 1990s, the Yeltsin administration followed a pro-Western foreign policy (Aron, 2000), all the while seeking to strengthen the economic system of the state. In this context, emerging good relations with NATO and the EU also paved the way for Russia's membership in international institutions such as the IMF, WTO, and G7 (Kamalov, 2007).

However, Russian foreign policy in general, and its foreign policy towards the West changed significantly after Putin came to power in 2000. The most important developments to happen during the earlier years of Putin's rule were the gradual strengthening of the central government, coupled with the ever-increasing control of the media by the state, while the legislature in general and the opposition voices in particular were weak

(Sağlam, 2015). In the 2000s, Russia's foreign policy was defined in a series of fundamental documents –the National Security Concept published in January 2000 (Kremlin, 2000) and the Military Doctrine published in April 2000 (Conflict Studies Research Center, 2000). These documents shaped Russian foreign policy after the 90s and clearly showed how Russia's military security was threatened directly by NATO's enlargement policies.

In summary, the Balkans represents a critical geopolitical area for great power competition in the international system. Therefore, the developments occurring in this region cannot simply be dismissed as local incidents, but should be viewed as moves in the struggle between great powers such as the USA, Russia, China, and the EU. In this regard, Russia's political endeavors and attempts in the region after the NATO's intervention in Kosovo were not shaped solely by what happened in Kosovo, but were more broadly formulated with the region as a whole. However, the growing strength of the nationalist faction in the Kremlin has weakened the Russia's international efforts to find a solution to the ethnic conflicts occurring in former Yugoslavia. Russia's primary interest was to stay involved in the international efforts in Yugoslavia, all the while continuing to support its traditional ally –Serbia. Especially, the declaration of Kosovo's independence in 2008 was seen as a direct affront to Russia's power in its traditional sphere of influence in the Balkans (Bechev, 2018).

2.1. Russia's Economic and Military Impact in Kosovo

Even though Russia tried to play a significant role in the case of Kosovo, the former province remains a place where Russia is unable to spread its influence, compared to the levels it had with other former Yugoslav countries. In many ways, Kosovo's case is unique in terms of Russia's levels of involvement. Elsewhere in the Balkans Russia can rely on ethnic and cultural relations or economic relations to spread its influence, while in Kosovo it cannot resort to the Pan- Slavist narrative given the ethnic structure of the territory, nor rely on economic instruments as the region does not have an economy based on natural gas, which tends to restrict the scope of Russian foreign direct investment. From a practical perspective, natural gas has become Russia's primary instrument of influence in the region. Russia remains the leading energy actor in the region, even though a range of EU policies and regulations serve to impose checks on how Moscow can wield that power. However, Kosovo is unique in the region in this sense, as it is not dependent on Russian gas (Visoka, 2019).

Even though some polls and surveys indicate increased support for Russia in the region, Western-centric attitudes are more rooted as the Western

culture serves as the main point of reference for the countries in the region, as it does in the case of Kosovo (KCSS, 2016: 8). For instance, according to a public opinion survey held in 2018, "93.6% of Kosovars support EU membership" (KCSS, 2016: 29). On the other hand, Russia's anti-Western sentiments, nationalism, and authoritarian leaders make Russia a preferable ally to some in the Balkans. While Moscow did not invest much in this regard, it still exercised its influence through social movements, connections with political parties and leaders (Bechev, 2017). Russia applies its political impact by having a familiar association with anti-Western political parties and politicians, such as Aleksander Vucic of the Progressive Party (SNS), Nikola Gruevski in North Macedonia, and Milorad Dodik in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Zakem, Rosenau & Johnson, 2017).

The cooperation between Russia on the one hand and nationalist populist political parties in the Balkans, on the other, serves to actively promote pan-Slavism and a shared agenda, along with the harmonization of the domestic and moves by the parties involved. By developing close relations with those political parties, Russia aims mainly to bring together Serbian nationalists, populists, anti- Western politicians, so as to build political coalitions advocating certain positions throughout the region.

2.1.1.Russia's Pan-Slavist Agenda in Balkan countries

From the Russian Empire until the dissolution of the USSR, the Balkans was considered a crucial region for Russian internal and foreign policy. Even though Russian lost its former power after the breakup of the USSR - in the eyes and minds of the policymakers in Moscow, Russia was still a vital player in Europe - a role that could be conserved by supporting its traditional allies such as Yugoslavia (Stevenson, 1991). Therefore, even after the collapse of the USSR, former Yugoslav countries played a significant role in terms of pursuing the Pan-Slavist agenda in Russia.

During the Ottoman Empire's rule in the region, Russia tried to expand its dominance mostly by sustaining the Orthodox population in the Balkans; thus, it supported the national movement for independence in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro. Back in the day, the support for Slav Orthodoxy in the Balkans was an honest manifestation of religious faith in St. Petersburg. Later on, the Russian governments saw themselves as the leaders of the Orthodox world, and by continuing a political supremacy in the Balkan countries, Russia found an opportunity to have impact over Europe (Headley, 2008). Likewise, Russia played an important role especially for the independence struggle of Serbia, which achieved success in 1878. Thereafter, cultural and regional links between Serbia and Russia

continued to exist as a main principle of Russian policy involvement in the Balkans.

After the Cold War, Russia resumed pushing for its interests in the Balkans, on the basis of religious and cultural ties with Orthodox Slav nations –e.g. Serbs (Perica, 2002). For example, the Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow who played a significant position in the resurrection of the Orthodox Church in Russia visited Serbia, Croatia, and Kosovo before 1999 (KCSS, 2017). This showed a vital sign of the Russian Orthodox Church's support for the Serbs in Yugoslavia.

Historically, the Russian Orthodox Church was important in shaping Moscow's foreing policy with the West over the Balkan countries. The Church pressed politicians and Duma to helping support a pro-Yugoslav rule as well as the Serbian Orthodox people in the ethnic conflicts surfacing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

2.1.2. The Kosovo's Independence Declaration

Kosovo's Independence Declaration on the 17th of February, 2008 triggered a sustained debate in international law and international relations circles. Before Kosovo's independence, negotiations which began in 2006 between Kosovo and Serbia solved many "bilateral issues that mattered most for the everyday lives of Kosovo's Serbian population" (International Crisis Group, 2021: 4). Yet, despite an agreement on many points, the most significant issue of all, Kosovo's Independence, looked unlikely to find a solution (International Crisis Group, 2021). Serbia supported by Russia insisted on preserving its sovereign rights over Kosovo by offering a high degree of autonomy but not independence. On the other hand, Albanian demands were nothing less than independence (Capussela, 2015). Kosovo's independence backed by Western countries came through UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari, seeking to balance Kosovar and Serbian interests (International Crisis Group, 2021). In February 2007, after discussions with the parties, Martti Ahtisaari stated that he would complete his settlement proposition for submission to the UN Security Council. In March 2007 Ahtisaari proposed independence of Kosovo under a temporary international administration, which would serve mostly to protect the minority rights in Kosovo. Nevertheless, the proposal was immediately refused by Serbia, followed by Russia. Even though the Western countries and the General Secretary of the UN welcomed the proposal, it was not discussed and put to vote in the UN Security Council due to Russia's veto threat (Weller, 2011). Kosovo declared its independence on 17 February, 2008. However, this was not the objective

of the Western nations at the time of intervention in 1999 (Cappusela, 2015).

It is important to point out that Kosovo's Independence declaration supported by the West in general also led to a conflict within the EU, as five members refused to recognize Kosovo as an independent country. The Kosovo case also deeply changed Russia's policies towards the Balkans region in general. After the independence of Kosovo, Russia started to take more vigorous steps to interfere in local political processes not just in Kosovo but also in the wider former Yugoslavia.

After the declaration of Kosovo's independence supported by the West, Russia has tried to question Western values and US hegemony by criticizing Kosovo's Independence Declaration as an act in violation of the international law. On the other hand, the US was not shy about its support for Kosovo's independence, as a move in the wider policy of maintaining a united block of the Europe and the US against Russian pressure (Winser, 2008). In this context, cultural institutions which serve as elements of soft power shaped the local discourse in former Yugoslavia, through their effects on local developments. Moscow, mainly by referring to its close ties with the Serbian cultural and religious heritage, for instance, managed to determine the political discourse in Serbia.

Following Kosovo's declaration of independence, Russia launched more aggressive policies towards the West, and used the Kosovo case as a precedent to intervene in the former-Soviet region. The Kosovo crisis opened the stage for a new sphere in the international system –the so-called "The Third World War"– when Russia started to intervene in the former Soviet geography by referring to the Kosovo case as a precedent. Thus, after the war in Georgia in 2008, Russia attempted to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent countries by referring to the precedent arguably provided by Kosovo (Bugajski, 2017). The same policy was also used in Crimea in 2014 by Russia, arguing that Crimea have the right to self-determination, just like Kosovo did. Thus, Kosovo's independence declaration served as a tipping point for Russian foreign policy in terms of legitimizing its military interventions in other regions, and exploiting the frozen conflicts to defend Russia from further enlargement of NATO and the EU into Eastern Europe (Bugajski, 2017).

Russia played an active role in international relations backing the position of Serbia against Kosovo. Serbia has been relying on Russia's veto power in the UN Security Council to prevent recognition in the organization, as it does not recognize Kosovo's independence (Samorukov, 2019). On the other hand, after 17 February, 2008, Russian policy towards Kosovo had

its most problematic stage since the early '90s. Russia could no longer manifest direct impact in Kosovo, however it persisted its influence through international organizations where it was a key actor, such as UN. By supporting Serbia, Russia's aim was to block Kosovo's membership in international organizations and its full international recognition as an independent state. Russia succeeded to achieve a "status neutral" position towards Kosovo's statehood in the UN. Moreover, with powerful Russian diplomatic support, Serbia achieved its aim to get a UN General Assembly Resolution, "seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legality of Kosovo's declaration of independence" (United Nation General Assembly, 2008).

 The dispute between Kosovo and Serbia has continued even after Kosovo's declaration of independence, which, in a sense, provided the circumstances required for increasing and expanding Russian influence in the region. Russia has legitimized its presence in the Balkans mostly by referring to the "Orthodoxy brotherhood" between Serbs and the Russian people. Against this background the "normalization" dialog between Kosovo and Serbia, which began in 2011, (KDI, 2012) and which proceeded with many ups and downs, served as a chance for Russia to present itself as an "alternative" mediator or a great power in the process of dialog (Hasani, 2018). Nevertheless, ongoing crises in the Balkans secure a place for Russia in the region, making it possible to maintain its presence in the region by opposing US hegemonic position in the international system.

Last but not least, Russia has used Kosovo as a vital asset to develop faithful relations with Serbia. More clearly, Russia has used Kosovo as a central card in its relationship with Serbia. Showing itself as the protector of Serbian benefits, Russia managed to increase its influence in the region, whereas Serbia was able to utilize its relationship with Russia to threat the EU enlargement politics.

2.2. The Never-Ending Dialog: "Normalization" between Kosovo and Serbia

Kosovo Albanians and Serbian regime did not sign any peace agreement after the end of of the active conflict in Kosovo (Visoka, 2017). Yet, the main struggle on the consolidation of Kosovo's statehood takes place through the "normalization" dialog between Kosovo and Serbia, mediated by the EU. The EU chose a discursive route to normalization between Kosovo and Serbia, as part of an attempt to avoid the usual problems involved in peace building, "and to seek fresh grounds for new sustainable deal-making between Kosovo and Serbia" (Visoka, 2017).

The dialog between Kosovo and Serbia began on 9 March, 2011 after the adoption of the resolution in the United Nations General Assembly, which welcomed the EU's willingness to mediate a dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia (United Nations General Assembly, 2010). Meanwhile, the resolution was adopted after the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding the act of Kosovo's independence declaration (United Nation General Assembly, 2010b). The EU played a key role in mediating the technical dialogue for normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia till the end of 2012, when the Assembly of Kosovo adopted a new resolution authorizing the executive to start political dialogue with Serbia with the purpose of normalizing relations with the two countries. As noted above, starting from the 2011, the EU-led mediation role achieved development on technical problems but foundered on the question lying at the essential of political disagreements (International Crisis Group, 2021).

Moreover, as a mediator in the process, the EU was not capable of imposing any supervisory mechanism to force the implementation of the agreements signed by the sides involved. Thus, the EU opted for a rather passive role in providing impartial clarifications of these agreements. Moreover, the policy of the EU was fragile due to the member states' contradictions towards Kosovo's independence. Therefore, it is safe to say that the EU has no official policy towards Kosovo's statehood. In these muddy waters, and with an unclear approach by the union, the EU members initiated the biggest rule of law mission to be organized so far – the so-called EULEX (Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo)–, which has a "status neutral" approach towards Kosovo's statehood (Obradovic – Wochnik & Alexander Wochnik, 2012).

The dialogue mediated by the EU did not improve people's lives though. "To the contrary, each side used this process not for frank political compromise and settlement, but for political consumption and domestic interests that can undermine the attempts for sustainable peace" (Visoka, 2017: 183). Moreover, the first Agreement on Normalization of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia reached in 2013 created further ambiguity for both sides, since from the Kosovar perspective the agreement meant recognition, while in Serbian eyes it only meant a set of pragmatic arrangements.

While the EU failed to bring a lasting solution to the Serbia and Kosovo dispute, Russia has progressed from being an outright supporter of Belgrade to trying to assume the role of a mediator. Likewise, Serbia has constantly supported Russia in the international system and even with respect to its annexation of Crimea in 2014 by refusing to join Europe in

terms of the sanctions against Russia. In response, since the annexation of Crimea Russia has displayed more attention in military collaboration with Serbia. Even though in practice Serbia gets little from its collaboration with Russia, "fears of an arms race have been developing in the region, with Serbia seeking to procure weapons from Russia" (Zakem, Rosenau & Johnson, 2017: 18).

In a period when Kosovo aims to start an advanced dialogue with Serbia, which could finally regulate Kosovo's relationship with the UN, it is not realistic to expect that, in the short-term, Russia would allow Kosovo to be full-member of the UN. Russian impact in and around Kosovo will pursue to pose a challenge to Kosovo's statehood and security. Russia can block Kosovo's full membership in the UN and other international organizations through its veto power and important position. Furthermore, it can block the development of relations between Kosovo and other countries by forcing others to stand aloof. Kosovo's shortcomings in terms of integration with the international community undermine Kosovo's international position as an independent state. On the other hand, China and Russia are expected to use veto in the UN Security Council, should a resolution to be brought to the table, to block Kosovo's membership in the organization, by defining Kosovo's statehood as an unsolved question.

The annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the instability of Ukraine showcase how Russia's foreign policy evolved into a rather aggressive one, as Moscow directly began to combat the Western principles hitherto accepted as international standards. Fighting against Western dominance in general and the US hegemony in particular placed Russia as an economic and military alternative for the former Yugoslav countries (Hasani, 2018). For instance, to balance NATO's military presence in the Balkans, in 2012 Russia established the so-called the Serbian-Russian Humanitarian Center in the city of Nis (Dolapcev, 2018). However, as Nis is less than 100 km from Pristina, Kosovo has a fear that Russia continues to pose a serious threat and can expand the capabilities of the Serbian Army (KCSS, 2017). From the perspective of the US, the biggest threat coming from that Center is its potential as an outpost for Russian military and intelligence events in the region, targeting largely Kosovo, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dolapcev, 2018). Such a move could cause serious destabilization of the region. Most importantly, the Center poses a direct threat for Kosovo's security, since the territory is completely dependent on the West for its security (Viskoa, 2019).

Nevertheless, one cannot point out a clear political strategy on part of Russia, towards the former Yugoslavia. It is rather focused on strategic profits that can be earned from the political mistakes committed by the

West. Thus, although the countries which appeared in what was once called Yugoslavia are in the process of integration into the EU, they still struggle in terms of ethnic tensions, corruption, nepotism and unstable social and economic conditions. These weaknesses are exploited by great powers (in this case Russia) to spread their influence in the Balkans. It is important to point out that, the EU performed a meaningful role in the democratic development of the former Yugoslav countries. Nevertheless, the Union's concerns such as immigration or Brexit allowed Russia to play a more active role, and expand its economic, cultural, and military influence in these countries. In this regard, Serbia became Russia's biggest economic, cultural and military ally in the region. They both have mutually benefited from cooperation with each other, with Russia demonstrating its international power through its influence in Serbia, and Serbia using it for its political benefits, and as a negotiating card with the EU. More precisely, it uses its ties with Russia as a threat towards EU, implying that it could chose to bring Russian influence into the region.

Moreover, Serbia is willing to have Russia as a mediator in the "normalization" dialog between Kosovo and Serbia. Hence, when Vucic met Putin in 2019, he intended to present the support of Russia in the dialog (Kremlin, 2018). While the details of the meeting were not shared with the public – Putin tried to give a clear message to the West, that they should take Russia into account with respect to important political developments in the region (Hasani, 2018). However, the greatest challenge Kosovo faces within the dialog is how the country might maintain the Association/Community of Serb Municipalities in Kosovo as a mechanism that would not devolve into a third entity to have its own governance structures with Russian influence, similar to *Republika Srpska* (KCSS, 2017). It is important to point it out that "the establishment of an Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities in Kosovo constituted one of the key elements of the April 2013 Agreement" (KFOS, 2018: 16) signed in Brussels. The Brussels Agreement was considered a "historic" act between Kosovo and Serbia, since it provided the first formal basis for normalized relations between the two neighbors. However, the ambiguity of the definition regarding the meaning of Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities in Kosovo provoked a political crisis in Kosovo (KDI, 2018). However, a second Brussels Agreement reached on 23 August, 2015 provided more extensive definitions of, and listed specific bodies involved in the Association/Community, compared to the picture drawn in the 2013 Agreement. The implementation of the agreement faced with the resistance from Kosovo though. The agreement which has yet to be implemented has triggered a criticism from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs against the Kosovo leadership, for not establishing the Association (KCSS, 2017).

Thus, the situation obviously showed that the eventual crisis in Kosovo would potentially make Russian an important stability 'spoiler' in the region.

The situation got even more complicated in 2018, when EU -led talks between Kosovo and Serbia were held secretly, without sharing the details of the meeting with the public. These meetings also saw a discussion of land swaps, widely presumed to involve trading of the four mostly Serbian Northern Kosovo municipalities for parts of Serbia's Presevo Valley, which are inhabited predominantly by Albanians (International Crisis Group, 2021). However, the idea of land swaps draws significant objections from the civil society in Kosovo and from some EU members, although they were supported by Russia and the US (International Crisis Group, 2021).

Even though, Russia does not have any active role in the dialog, it still has the potential to be involved in the process. "Possession of a veto in the UN Security Council makes Russia a crucial player in the process and also enables it to prevent Kosovo's membership in the UN and its full international recognition as an independent state" (Hasani, 2018). However, the Kosovo's recognition and the launch of diplomatic relations with Serbia were never officially part of the dialogue. This is considered a weakness or shortcoming of the dialogue. "Avoiding the question of Kosovo's recognition in the context of the dialogue mediated by the EU reflects the fact that it was the most divisive issue on the negotiation table, which could impede the outcome of the entire dialogue" (Visoka, 2017: 209). As noted earlier, these circumstances provided ample opportunities for Russia to insert itself into the process by supporting Serbia's interests. However, in order to successfully finalize the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, the talks mediated by the EU should be concluded with a legally binding agreement that will encompass all technical and political settlements signed between Kosovo and Serbia. A legally binding agreement could be seen as the main guarantee of constructive relations between Kosovo and Serbia (Muharem, 2018).

Nevertheless, for Russia, the Kosovo issue has been a critical tool for challenging the international system which appeared after the Cold War and which is marked by US hegemony. Russia's foreign policy is focused on highlighting that the international system is not unipolar - but rather bipolar – with Russia playing a leading role in determining daily politics. Its influence is engaged more towards states seeking for the EU and NATO membership, where it can play more active role in their membership processes.

3.Conclusion

After the end of the Cold War and till the end of the '90s, Russia had close relations with the West. In those years Russia collaborated closely with the West as ethnic conflicts began in Yugoslavia. However, its stance changed dramatically after the NATO air campaign in Kosovo in 1999, and Kosovo's independence declaration in 2008. Especially after Kosovo's independence declaration, Russia evolved into a more aggressive policy, as it directly begun to oppose the Western norms. Thus, after the war in Georgia in 2008, Russia attempted to gain recognition for Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent countries by referring to the Kosovo issue as a precedent. The same policy was also used in Crimea in 2014 by Russia by arguing that Crimea has the right to self-determination, just like what Kosovo purportedly had. Thus, the presence of the US in the region has strengthened Russia's conviction that the US intends to create a unipolar world system. Thus, the Balkan region, in general, provided a battleground for Russian score-settling with other superpowers.

The Balkan region has always been important for Russian foreign policy. From the days of the Russian Empire until the collapse of the USSR, the Balkans were considered as a region with geostrategic importance for Russia. Therefore, even after the collapse of the USSR, former-Yugoslav countries played a significant role in the pursuit of Pan-Slavist goals in Russia. Moreover, in the eyes of the policymakers in Moscow, Russia was still an important player in Europe even after the breakup of the USSR, and that role could be well-maintained through offering support to its conventional allies such as Yugoslavia (Stevenson, 1991).

However, Kosovo presents an unusual case as it does not fit the commonly accepted description of how Russia spreads its influence in the former Yugoslavia. Unlike other countries in the region, Russia does not recognize Kosovo. Furthermore, it does not offer an alternative to Euro-Atlantic integration in the form of comparable political or economic ties. On the contrary, Russian influence in Kosovo is hostile as it faces a population that is cannot be won over through courting. Thus, Russia does not seek to court the population by invoking ethnic-religious links, since the Kosovars are ethnically Albanian (non-Slavic). Furthermore, it cannot call upon a common history as Russia was historically allied with Serbia. Moreover, Serbia receives military support from Russia, which is perceived as the main threat for Kosovo as well as for NATO's peacekeepers in Kosovo. On the other hand, the clear aspiration of the Kosovo state to join the EU and NATO blocked any opportunities for Russia to increase its economic, political, or cultural influence in Kosovo.

Kosovo is plagued by internal institutional vulnerability and external influences that render it unstable. Thus, the country has been the target of the influence of different great powers. The post-conflict period in former Yugoslavia is characterized not by permanent peace deals, but by "postponing problems" in the name of stability. Postponed problems in the region, such as the "normalization dialog" between Kosovo and Serbia, served as an opportunity for Russia to assume the position of an important protagonist in the region, and to strengthen its position as a superpower in the international area. Thus, the case of Kosovo has served as a battlefield between the Russia and other important powers in Post-Cold War period.

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6

From Resistance Organization to Politics: Transformation of Kosovo Liberation Army

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1. Introductıon: Towards the End of Yugoslavia: Kosovo Events

In the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), various constitutional arrangements have been made for republics and autonomous regions since 1974. Yugoslav rulers allowed Kosovan Albanians to visit Albania for the first time and to have publications such as newspapers and books published in Tirana. In fact, what Kosovan Albanians wanted was equal status with other nations in Yugoslavia (Ündücü, 2021: 191).

However, the changes could not meet this demand of Kosovan Albanians and did not eliminate the economic problems and poor living conditions in Kosovo. As a matter of fact, one year after Tito's death in 1980, student protests and demonstrations expressed the above-mentioned problems started in Kosovo (Ağır, 2014: 274). The first of these demonstrations was held on 11 March 1981 by the students of Pristina University. Students protested their dissatisfaction with the food, dorm conditions and inefficient service. About 400 students participated in this demonstration. Despite the peaceful demands of the students, the police harshly intervened to protests and arrested some of the protestors. The arrests caused demonstrations and protests to continue to grow (Jakupi, 2017: 192-193).

The demonstrations became massive when the public, who complained about the economic problems and poor living conditions in Kosovo, joined the student protests (Ündücü, 2021: 191). Yugoslav authorities, who were not indifferent to the protests, declared state of emergency and sent many military units to Kosovo (Logoreci, 1982: 23). In addition, foreign media were not allowed to enter the region so that the protests would not be reflected in the world public opinion (Kenar, 2005: 240).

In his speech on the student protests, Hashim Thaçi emphasized the determination of the Kosovo youth. He said that the protests in question were manifestation of the Kosovan people's desire for independence and freedom. He stated that the participant youth, students, workers and intellectuals were fighting to act on the political and national rights of Albanians in the former Yugoslavia (Kosova Haber, 2016).

The harsh intervention of the Yugoslav government not only increased the number of participants, but also caused the aims and demands of the protesters to differ. As a matter of fact, while there were banners and slogans related to economic problems and bad living conditions in the first demonstrations, these started to turn into political banners and slogans such as "we want equality" and "we want republic". These actions prepared Kosovar Albanians for ongoing challenges and armed conflict. Finally, the independence of Kosovo was reached with the support of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). (Çeku, 2017: 280-281; Jakupi: 194).

The independence struggle of the Kosovan Albanians, which started during the dissolution of the SFRY, was examined in this study. In addition, the developments that started as innocent student protests and later turned into the freedom struggle of the KLA against the Serbian forces in the region were discussed. The influence and contribution of actors such as the USA, NATO, England, France and Germany and the process of organizations becoming political parties and becoming candidates for the Kosovo administration were researched.

2. Emergence and Activities of UCK

There were Albanian organizations working for Kosovo to gain independence from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). The most influential of these organizations was Levizija Popullore per Republicen e Kosoves (LPRK), which was established on February 17, 1982 (Türbedar, 2013: 141). The LPRK was operating illegally in 1980s. The organization held secret meetings in Macedonia, Kosovo and especially in the Drenica region by 1993. The most important of these meeetings was held in Drenica (Refworld, 2022: 22; Judah, 2000: 66).

On the agenda of the Drenica meeting attended by 100 leaders of local branches; there were important issues for the organization, such as choosing a new name for the LPRK, reconsidering the ideology of the movement, and the the making of the armed forces. A consensus on the ideology of the organization could not be reached at the meeting and the organization was divided into two fractions. On the one hand, Levizja Kombetare per Çlirimin e Kosoves (LKÇK), which wanted to continue

with communist ideology, and on the other hand, the organization called Levizja Popullore e Kosoves (LPK), founded by those who left the Marxist ideology, emerged. These two organizations also differed from each other in terms of tactics should be used. While LKÇK wanted an uprising and revolt, on the contraty LPK was thinking of starting a guerrilla war (Mulaj, 2008: 1108).

LPK created a special unit that consists of Hashim Thaçi, Kadri Veseli, Xhavit Haliti and Ali Ahmeti. The main purpose of this unit was to establish the armed forces and prepare for guerrilla war. LPK held a new meeting in December 1993 and changed its name as Kosovo Liberation Army, also known as Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosoves (KLA-UÇK). Rexhap Selimi, one of the founders of the UCK, stated that they made this name change for two reasons. First, they did not have a current military force against the Serbian invasion, but they would have an army soon. Second, they fit the word "Liberation" to the name of the organization, as it reflected their mission to liberate Kosovo from Serbian occupation (Judah: 66; Mulaj: 1108-1109).

The UCK, which was established in December 1993, was not very effective during this period and could not gain sufficient support from the people. Especially the policies carried out by the leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), İbrahim Rugova, caused the UCK to remain in the background. Rugova was implementing a policy of civil disobedience instead of clashing with Serbian forces and was working to establish his own parallel state in Kosovo. Thus, Rugova was making the world public accept his rightfulness with his propaganda and non-conflict resistance policy against the Serbian forces (Türkoğlu, 2001: 116; Kenar: 242).

Unlike the UCK, Rugova also stated that they had no chance of winning a guerrilla war in Kosovo. According to him, starting such a war could have consequences for the reduction of the Albanian population due to security concerns and immigration. This approach of Rugova also pacified the Kosovan Albanians, especially those who supported him. Rugova kept the UCK away from himself through the press and media. All these factors produced some effects on the UCK such as limited participation to the organization, financial difficulties and a lack of weapons. However, the organization could carry out guerrilla-type attacks against Serbian forces in various places, especially in Drenica (Tılıç, 1999: 118; Mulaj: 1109).

1995 was a turning point for the UCK. Because the Kosovo issue was not included in the Dayton Peace Agreement signed between the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina Aliya Izetbegovic, the President of the Federal

Republic of Yugoslavia Slobodan Milosevic and the President of Croatia Franjo Tudjman (Türbedar: 142).

In addition, Rugova's policy was not supported enough by both the Serbs and the international community. This situation began to strengthen the view that a result could not be reached with the non-conflict policy of the UCK. The fact that the conflicts in Kosovo turned into armed conflicts and there was not any international initiative to prevent it, also caused the Kosovo Albanians to gather around the UCK. The UCK, which was getting stronger, carried out various attacks since the summer of 1996. The organization claimed responsibility for the shooting of two policemen in Mitrovica, the explosion in Podujevo, and the attack on the Serbian rector of the University of Pristina (Malcolm, 1999: 411). These were also the first actions in which the organization publicised itself. (Wentz, 2002: 17).

The second turning point for the UCK was the looting of military equipment warehouses by the people in the chaos that emerged after the banker scandal in Albania in 1997 (Ercan & Pektaş, 2015: 120). This development led to the strengthening of the UCK which lacked weapons and equipment. The organization faced serious problems as Serbian police constantly searched houses and collected weapons found in the public. However, the situation in Albania seemed to have largely resolved the organization's problem in question (Kut, 2005: 152; Judah: 66).

The activities of the UCK and the armed attacks directed against the Serbian forces increased the public's belief in the organization. The conflicts became more and more intense. Hence, thousands of people came to the funeral of Adrian Krasniqi and Halit Geci who were the first UCK members died in uniform on October 15, 1997. Participation in the UCK increased by a record between 1998 and 1999. The killing of UCK commander Adam Jashari and his family in Likoshane in February 1998 and in Prekaz in March 1998 increased the public's participation in the UCK and caused the organization to be seen as the protector of Kosovo Albanians. (Rama, 2018: 1-2; Mulaj: 1110; Duclos, 2020: 7).

The UCK continued its activities immethodically and despite an inadequate chain of command until the beginning of 1998. The ceasefire, which had been in place in the region since December 1998, provided an opportunity for the organization to strengthen its central command and review its potential operations. Thus, the UCK became a well-organized actor that was addressed in the negotiations between the parties. Hence, Hashim Thaçi from the political wing of the organization, representing the UCK, attended the Rambouillet talks held in February 1999. In addition, Agim Çeku was appointed to the military command of the organization,

Rexhep Selimi to the police force and Kadri Veseli to the head of the secret service. This clearly showed that the UCK had fully formed the chain of command. (Refworld 2022, 62-63.).

While the UCK was providing its weapons, ammunition and militant needs from the region, its financial support was coming mostly from its citizens abroad. Kosovan Albanians abroad were collecting donations and creating funds for the organization (Türbedar: 143). The majority of the money sent by the "Three-Percent Fund" was transferred to parallel education and government institutions that were being tried to be established in Kosovo. The main fundraiser for the UCK was the "Homeland Calling Fund". In addition to these two funds, some people who had direct contacts with the commanders of the UCK, also provided direct financial support to the organization. It was understood that the financial support provided to the organization increased from 1996 to 1999. (Perrit Jr, 2008: 89-91).

3. UCK in the Independence Process of Kosovo

The partial balance between the parties in the period of Tito in Kosovo and the resulting lack of conflict did not last long after death of Tito and the disagreements between the parties started again. Especially after 1987, when Slobodan Milosevic came to power in Serbia, tensions and conflicts between Albanians and Serbs resumed on by even increasing (Karakoç, 2006: 229). Milosevic's policies differed from those of Tito in all aspects. Milosevic's goal was to completely Serbianize the region and bring back the Serbs who had immigrated from Kosovo instead of pursuing balance policy in Kosovo. In addition, Milosevic wanted to abolish the autonomy given to Kosovo with the 1974 Constitution. (Daskalovski, 2003: 18).

1989 was the 600th anniversary of the 1389 Kosovo War which was very important for the Serbs. Milosevic organized a rally in the Gazi Mestan region of the Kosovo plain, attended by more than one million Serbs (Sule, 2007: 310). In his speech here, he reminded the war made between the Ottoman Empire and the Serbs 600 years ago. He also said that Kosovo was the soul of Serbia and talked about his dream of "Greater Serbia". (Ençev, 2005: 424).

Milosevic announced that he was ending Kosovo's autonomous status in the same year. Thus, Serbian sovereignty over Kosovo was achieved. In addition, Kosovo Albanians began to be purged from the Kosovo Parliament and the state bureaucracy (Singh, 2008: 76). Milosevic, not content with this, took back all the constitutional rights granted to Kosovo Albanians, especially the closure of public schools that teach in Albanian

language. Thus, the situation of Kosovan Albanians became worse than in 1946. (Savaş, 2001: 104).

The Kosovo Albanians, who could not stand these injustices any longer, took an important political step and declared that Kosovo had the same status as the other six republics with the decision they took in the Kosovo Parliament on July 2, 1990 (Judah, 2008: 69; Wentz, 2002: 16). In addition, it was decided to hold a referendum for the independence of Kosovo in September 1991. In the referendum held on October 19, 1991 with 87% turnout, 99% voted in favor of Kosovo's independence (Manchev, 2006: 369). Likewise, in the general elections held on May 24, 1992, the Leader of the Democratic Union of Kosovo (LDK), which was founded on December 23, 1989, İbrahim Rugova became the President by receiving 99.5% of the votes. (Daltveit, 2022: 57-58).

On the one hand, President Rugova was travelling to Western countries and telling the injustices and oppression of the Serbs to the Kosovar Albanians, on the other hand, he made great efforts to establish the country's own instutions. Tax collections began to be made from the public for the organization and operation of many institutions, especially health and education. In other words, Kosovo was creating its own institutions to become a state (Daltveit: 59). In this process, Rugova took a stand in favor of non-conflict, peaceful and dialogue methods rather than the use of hard force in resolving the Kosovo Crisis. For this reason, he preferred a passive method in his policies (Oktay & Rrapaj, 2016: 48). Rugova's policy was in stark contrast to strategy of the UCK. Because the UCK was of the opinion that the Serbian attacks could not be prevented by Rugova's policies, and the independence of Kosovo could not be achieved in this way.

Rugova's desire to resolve the problem peacefully and through dialogue continued until 1995. However, the escalation of conflicts in Kosovo as a result of Serbian oppression and the fact that Kosovo was not included in the Dayton Peace Agreement signed between the conflicting parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, prompted the mobilization of the UCK which has been against Rugova's passive resistance from the very beginning and Kosovar Albanians who argued that neither this policy would attract Western countries' attention. According to them, it was not possible for Kosovo to gain independence with passive resistance. They saw armed resistance as the only way to make their voices heard and gain their independence against the Serbian Administration (Şahin, 2015: 522). After this date, while the number of supporters of Rugova's policies in Kosovo decreased, those who defended the UCK and its policies started to increase.

Kosovo Albanians who could not get what they wanted politically, changed their policy and started to commit acts of violence against the Serbian authorities and their institutions in Kosovo. Hence the UCK which did not openly take responsibility for these attacks at first, took responsibility for the attack on a Serbian police station in Kosovo in June 1996 (Lerardi, 2015: 4; Wentz: 17). Since 1997, political violence in Kosovo has dramatically increased. Serbian forces were exceedingly responding to the violent acts carried out by the UCK. The main aim of the Serbian security forces was to completely eliminate the UCK. For this, the Serbian Government declared the UCK as a terrorist organization and tried to legitimize its hunting, detention and all other attempts (The Kosova Report, 2000: 53; Janine 2000: 28). By 1998, the conflicts between the parties turned into a major war. While the UCK militants attacked the Serbian police and the Yugoslav Army Units, Milosevic administration was responding violently to the attacks (Woehrel& Kim, 2005: 7; Janine: 28). In addition, the attacks of the Serbian forces on the villages led to serious human rights violations from both sides, while at the same time causing the moderate Kosovo Albanians to support the UCK. This situation also caused the UÇK to gain power and controversial international interest (Friedrich, 2005: 231). The murder of 45 civilians by Serbian forces in Racak in Kosovo caused the international community to take action by 15th January 1999 (Demjaha, 2000: 35). The massacre in Racak had brought the UCK to the goal of bringing the Kosovo issue to the agenda of the international community which it had wanted to achieve from the very beginning (Ercan & Pektaş: 127). In addition, the organization was recognized as one of the main actors in the negotiations initiated by the international community after this event. In this context, the Rambouillet Negotiations started, the first of which was held on 6-23 February and the second on 15-19 March 1999. While İbrahim Rugova, Recep Qosja and the political leader of the UCK, Hashim Thaçi were present in the delegation formed to represent Kosovo in the negotiations, there were Ratko Markovic and Milan Milutinovic in the Serbian delegation (Gibbs, 2009: 187).

The first round of negotiations started between the parties, ended on 23rd February 1999 without a solution due to the uncompromising attitude of the Serbs. However, the international community continued its diplomatic activities to initiate a second negotiation process. As a matter of fact, both sides accepted the starting of the second round of negotiations on 15th March 1999 However, no positive results were obtained from the meetings held in this round. After all diplomatic efforts failed, NATO started an air assault operation on March 24, 1999 (Emiroğlu, 2006: 193; Türbedar: 143; Sule: 322). Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, England and the USA participated in the attack (Kamil & Şaşkın, 2019:

203). Countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Portugal and Turkey allocated fighter jets (Emiroğlu: 250).

4. The UCK's Entry into Politics

NATO's Kosovo operation lasted 78 days, ended with the Military-Technical Agreement signed between the parties on 9 June 1999 (Ağır: 282-283). In the clashes between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo, five thousand Albanians were killed and more than 1.5 million Albanians had to leave their homes by May 1999 (Çıtak, 2021: 265). More than 100,000 Kosovo Serbs also left the region. (Baev, 2021: 412).

Upon the ceasefire between the parties, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted the Resolution No. 1244 dated June 10, 1999 which included the disarmament of the UCK, the finding of peaceful solutions, the establishment of democratic institutions, the normalization of ethnic relations and the withdrawal of Serbian forces (Tsachevski, 2008). Especially after the withdrawal of the Serbs from the region, NATO created the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) to ensure peace and security and sent the forces to the region (Emin, 2014: 18; Levent, 2013: 864). KSF entered Kosovo under UN auspices on 12 June 1999. The withdrawal of Serbian forces from the region was completed on 20 June (Tangör, 2008: 130).

With the deployment of KSF forces to Kosovo, a new period has begun for both the UCK and other actors. After the KSF forces, United Nations İnterim Administration Mission in Kosova (UNMIK) which was established by the UNSC Resolution No. 1244, started its activities in Kosovo (Bozbora, 2008: 149; Ündücü, 2021: 193). UNMIK's mission was to fulfill the basic administrative functions, to ensure the establishment of self-government and autonomy, to facilitate the political process that will determine the status of the future of Kosovo, to coordinate the humanitarian aid provided by international institutions to the people of Kosovo, to support the reconstruction of the infrastructure, to ensure civil order by enacting civil laws, to promote human rights and to help ensure the safe and unhindered return of all refugees to their homes in Kosovo. (Akgün, 2012: 251).

Having settled in the region since 12 June 1999, KSF's most important tasks included disarming the UCK militants. KSF which created a plan, was also aware that the process would not end with only disarmament, also it was necessary to find jobs for these militants and reintegrate them into civilian life. An agreement was signed between NATO and the UCK on 20 June 1999. According to the agreement in question, the UCK would

end its military activities until September 20, 1999. (NATO, 2002: 20; Altun, 2021: 1716).

While the UCK was disarming, the organization also stepped up its activities to enter politics. As a matter of fact, the leader of the UCK, Thaçi, founded a political party called the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) in July 1999. Thus the UCK, which won the war on the field, would undertake activity as a political party to govern Kosovo. Meanwhile, the disarmament process of the organization was continuing rapidly in accordance with the agreement made with KSF. As a result of the successful joint work of KSF and UNMIK, the UCK was completely disarmed n September 20, 1999. The UCK was reorganized and renamed as Trupat Mbrojtjes Se Kosoves-Kosovo Defense Units (TMK) On February 1, 2000, (Perritt Jr: 153-154; Altun: 1717). Thus, the transformation of the UCK was completed in two main fields, political and military. In Kosovo, where the security was protected by the KSF established under the leadership of NATO, and the administration was provided by UNMIK, which was established by the UNSC Resolution No. 1244, the efforts for restructuring were continuing rapidly. In line with the structuring, new parties began to emerge in the field of politics. The common feature of these parties was that their founders were among the leaders of the UCK, which struggled for the independence of Kosovo. The most important of these were the PDK founded by Thaçi in July 1999 and the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) founded by Ramush Haradinaj in April 2000. (Pomak, 2015).

Thanks to the safe environment created in Kosovo as a result of the joint work of KSF and UNMIK, it was decided to hold the first local elections on 28 October 2000. While there were 913,179 voters from Kosovo in this election, there were 30 municipalities with a total of 5,500 candidates competing. However, since the elections were boycotted in 3 municipalities with a large Serb population, the voters did not vote in these places. In the election, in which 721,260 Kosovan voters voted in total, turnout was 79%. According to the election results; Rugova's party LDK received 58%, Thaçi's PDK 27% and Haradinaj's AAK only 8% of the votes. (UNMIK Report, 2000).

Rugova's party LDK won 21 of the 27 municipalities, and Thaçi's party PDK won 6 municipalities according to the vote rate in the local elections, AAK, another party founded after the UCK, showed its influence mostly in Western Kosovo. Although AAK did not win any municipality, it managed to become the second party in Pec, Djakovica and Decani. The LDK's victory in the local elections was welcomed by the international community. (UNMIK Report, 2000 ; Emiroğlu: 397).

The fact that the parties established by the founder cadres of the UCK did not emerge as a single party in the local elections was welcomed not only by the international community but also by UNMIK, which was holding the temporary administration in Kosovo. Thanks to this positive environment, UNMIK started preparations for the general elections to be executed in Kosovo in 2001 with the approval of all three parties Accordingly, the results of the general elections held on 17 November 2001 were no different from the local elections. LDK could achieve to be the first party in the general elections. According to the election results, LDK received 46.3%, PDK 25.5% and AAK 7.8% of the votes. Participation in general elections was lower than in local elections. Although Rugova's party was the first one in the election results, the result was not enough for the party to form the government alone. (Perritt Jr: 155-156).

After the general elections in Kosovo, efforts of the three parties continued for a long time to form the government. However, all three parties realized that they could not form the government alone and it was decided to form a coalition government upon the agreement of the three party leaders on February 28, 2001. In the coalition government, the President of Kosovo was Rugova from LDK, while the Prime Minister was Bajram Rexhepi from PDK. In addition, according to the coalition agreement, four ministries were given to LDK, two ministries to PDK and two ministries to AAK, while one ministry was allocated to Kosovo Serbs and one ministry to other minorities. (UNMIK Report, 2002).

After the successful elections in Kosovo, the interim administration UNMIK began to transfer the institutions under its control to the nascent Kosovo institutions. It did this in two phases: The first one was transferring of political authority to take urgent decisions and the second one was transferring of executive operations from international staff to Kosovan staff (UNMIK Report, 2003). This development meant that the Kosovo interim self-government institutions would make their own election preparations for the upcoming elections in Kosovo.

It was decided to hold the elections again in Kosovo three years after the general elections. Unlike the previous election, Kosovo's interim self-government institutions along with the OSCE were also involved in the election preparations. This was a very important step in terms of statehood and democratization.

LDK succeeded to be the first party in the second general election as well. However this time, there was a significant increase in the votes of both parties originating from the UCK. LDK received 45.4%, PDK 28.9%, AAK 8.9% and ORA 6.4% of the votes. According to these results, no

party could get the votes to form the government alone. It was decided to form a coalition government just like in the first election. AAK leader Haradinaj was appointed prime minister of the coalition government and took over this position from Bajram Rexhepi on 3 December 2004. However, Haradinay, who could not stay in the prime ministry for a long time, handed over his duty to Bayram Kosumi on March 8, 2005 (Pomak, 2015). The results of both general elections showed that the support given to the UCK by the people during the conflicting period, was not at the desired level when it turned into political parties, and Rugova was still a strong actor on the political ground.

Rugova's death on January 21, 2006 meant the beginning of a new era in Kosovo politics. He had a great influence on the LDK's succession in the elections held until that date. His death meant that the LDK would lose its voting power in the next elections and the parties established by the UCK leaders would gradually have a say in Kosovo politics. After Rugova's death, Fatmir Sejdiu from his party became the new president of Kosovo, receiving the majority of the votes in the electioın held at the parliament. Then, there was also a change in the office of prime minister elected by the coalition government. Kosumi resigned and left his position to Agim Çeku On March 1, 2006 (UNMIK Report 2006). The fact that Çeku became the prime minister in Kosovo meant that the UCK-based parties would be more effective in the administration.

While these political developments were taking place in Kosovo, on the other hand, the studies on the future status of the country continued without slowing down. UNMIK, which held the interim administration between 1999-2007, took great steps regarding Kosovo's democratization, establishing the country's own institutions and ensuring security. Marti Ahtisaari assigned to determine the status of the country and to solve the problem, prepared a report included controlled independence of Kosovo under the supervision of the international community on February 2, 2007, as a result of long negotiations with the parties. (Tsaçevski, 2007: 208). The report was supported by USA, EU and NATO (Türbedar, 2008: 25).

Within this framework, Kosovo declared its independence on 17 February 2008 (Türbedar, 2013: 152). Powerful countries such as the USA, England, Germany and France also supported this decision (Sancaktar, 2021: 12; Black, 2016: 56). The person reading the text of independence in the Assembly of Kosovo was PDK leader Thaçi, who received 34.2% of the votes in the elections held a few months ago and became the prime minister in the coalition government he established with the LDK (Pomak, 2015). Thaçi and his friends, who started their struggle for the

independence of Kosovo under the roof of an illegal organization, became members of a legal and ruling party in the Assembly of Kosovo.

Upon Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence, the Serbian Assembly held an emergency meeting. 225 of the 234 parlamenterians who attended the meeting did not acknow this independence decision. However, this voting was not legally binding and it was the last decision Serbia took regarding Kosovo (Karamuço, 2018: 86).

The disagreements that arose in the coalition government after Kosovo's independence caused to hold an elections again. As a result of the election held on 12 December 2010, Hashim Thaçi's party managed to become the first party by receiving 32% of the votes. Thaçi, who could not form the government alone, formed a coalition government and became the prime minister of Kosovo again. (İKV, 2011).

Hashim Thaçi was the prime minister from 2008 to 2014. He carried on task as the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the coalition government formed in the country in 2014. Thaçi succeeded to become the President of Kosovo by receiving the majority of the votes in the Kosovo assembly in 2016. Thaçi continued to carry on this task until 2020. He resigned from the presidency after he and his friends were prosecuted for crimes against humanity and war crimes. (AA, 2016; Euronews, 2020).

5. Conclusion

UCK, which struggled for the independence of Kosovo as an illegal organization from the 1980s until 1998, decided to continue its struggle with a different method and identity in 1999. In July 1999, the leader of the UCK, Thaçi, went into politics by founding the PDK. Many other comrades took this path like him, established political parties and continued their activities for the independence of Kosovo under the roof of these parties. In the first local election, the parties in question did not get the support they expected from the public. They could manage to get only 6 out of 27 municipalities as a result of the election,

The situation was not different in the general elections held on 17 November 2001. Again, the parties originating from the UCK failed to become the first party according to results. However, they took part in the coalition anyway. The fact that the UCK-based parties did not come out first in the elections was also welcomed by the international community. Three years after the first general elections, re-election decision was made in Kosovo and the first party in the election was Rugova's party. However,

although the UCK-based parties were not first in this election, it was seen that they increased their vote rates significantly. In addition, it was a very important development for them that they were in the coalition government in both general elections.

Rugova's death on January 26, 2006 was a turning point for Kosovo politics and for the UCK-based parties. As a matter of fact, this situation clearly showed itself in the general elections held in 2008. As a result of these elections, Rugova's party came in second for the first time, while Thaçi's party managed to come in first. In the coalition government formed between the parties, the position of prime minister was given to Thaçi. When Kosovo declared its independence on February 17, 2008, it was Prime Minister Thaçi who read the text of independence in the parliament. Having started his struggle as the leader of an illegal organization and completed this road as prime minister of the country, Thaçi became the Prime Minister of Kosovo between 2008-2014, the Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2014, and the president of the country in 2016. Although Rugova and Thaçi had different thoughts and methods in general, the independence of Kosovo was the common goal of both.

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7

The Decline in The Relations Between Turkey- The European Union (EU): From Europeanization to De-Europeanization

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1. Introduction

In the work titled From Universality to Regionalism: Europeanization and the Reflections in Turkey and published 11 years ago, the author of this article claimed that globalization has led to a shift from universal to regional sphere in democratic values such as human rights, freedom and economic wealth. In other words, the Europeanization concept, acting as an upper identity or connecting as an umbrella organization, has experienced identity-related discussions both in Europe and in the European Union candidates, such as Turkey, that are willing to get involved in the integration movement (Arıkoğlu Ündücü, 2011). The developments of the last decade proved that the claims of the author were correct and that an anti-Europeanization discourse and movement emerged among the European countries while Turkey moved away from the Europeanization and democratization ideals.

This article primarily attempts to express the integration and identity of Europe by answering "What is Europe?" and "Who is European?" in view of geography, history, culture and policy. The second chapter, on the other hand, explains, as a concept, the process of democratization of Turkey as of the Ottoman Period and deals with the relations between Turkey and the EU and the Europeanization process of Turkey. Finally, the article touches on the cracks and ruptures in the EU, the rise of the far-right movement, the resulting identity crisis and the authoritarian tendencies that have been felt in European state governance. To this end, this paper discusses the influence of the changes in Europe and the international system and their influences on the relations between Turkey and EU.

2. The Definition and Borders of Europe

There is no consensus as to where the geographical borders of Europe start and end. Siberia, where the population consists of Europeans, is not included within the borders of Europe. Although Malta is located at the intersection of three continents in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, it is considered to be a part of Europe. Similarly, why the Ural Mountains in Russia are accepted to be the definite border of Europe in the east? Where the borders of the Atlantic Ocean extend to? (Atikkan Gültekin, 1999) Such questions revealed many definitions of Europe. While the border of the Middle Age Europe was the Don River, the 18th century extended it to the Ural Mountains. The border attained a political character following the division of Germany at the end of WW2. The participation of the states that emerged after the Cold War in the Western world demonstrates that Europe is a concept that cannot be limited in geographical terms. According to McCormick, it is possible to claim that Europe is not a continent. This is because Europe is an extension of Asia reaching towards the west. Although this may be the case, Europe has a very distinct place from Asia for more than two millennia (McCormick, 2002).

The Hellenistic and Roman states of Europe idealized a Europe beyond continental Europe that covered the Mediterranean. However, the ideal could only prove to be an extension of the geographical territories. Especially the birth of Islam in the 7th century and its expansion towards the Mediterranean in the next a hundred years resulted in a Europe that was shaped as a land that was pressed to the north (Pirenne, 1983& Pirenne, 2003). The expansion of Islam both laid the foundations of the hostility between the East and the West and conceived a new Europe which is not defined as the West. Having inherited the legacy of the Byzantine Empire, Moscow and the European Slavs under the influence of the former established a world completely different than the Western Latin culture (Ratzinger, 2005).

Madariaga claims that Europe differs from the other territories with superior intelligence and will. He endeavours to interpret today's image of Europe which blends the Socratic thought with intelligence and Christianity with will (Madariaga, 1966). Morin, on the other hand, suggests that idealism and exultation based on Europe while defining it and placing the European perspective in the centre may produce disadvantages and that such an approach paves the way for pseudoconsciousness. The Arab conquests forced the compressed Europe to overseas journeys and brought about a new European history. The modernization phenomenon and the secular thought incorporated in to the history and identity of the new Europe separated it from Christianity with which it was associated (Morin, 1995).

Of course, the place of Europe on a map is known. However, it is quite difficult to indicate a physical and cultural definition of it because there isn't only one Europe. The points of divergence outnumber the points of convergence. Europe does not represent a common history, common language, common social values or common points of view towards the world. Its history has witnessed bloody battles, wars and hostilities (McCormick, 2002). Despite these controversies and the background, Europe achieved to start a new history bringing differences together.

3. European Identity and The Concept of Europeanization

Considering the foundations of Europe, the consolidation of the components, which had been regarded to be impossible, first started with the economic dimension. In other words, it can be suggested that an economic union was in question in the beginning. The union has two basic purposes: The protection of peace and the achievement of wealth (Hoffmann, 1999). The end of the hostility between Germany and France bore fruits for the former. However, economic wealth is a relative matter and cannot be claimed to have been attained. It cannot be asserted that a European identity emerged with the consolidation movement which evolved from European Economic Community (EEC) to European Community (EC). The subject of identity is an uninviting matter in Europe as it served as the battlefield of the religious, colonial, world and similar other wars in the past. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the identification of the sense of belonging on identities such as religion and ethnicity also brought along debates on European identity. The identity issue was first brought to the agenda in the Luxembourg Summit of 1997 (Gonzales, 1999). For the creation of a European identity, the acceptance of a shared currency was deemed necessary in addition to labour, capital and free movement of goods. The "Euro" currency was designed to leave a psychological and sentimental influence on particularly the young generations (Moisi, 1999).

However, there are certain obstacles to the formation of an identity. The strong nature of the nation state idea and nationalism in Europe, which are still strong even today, indicate that the "nation" is the missing element in the Union with powerful institutions. Indeed, identity is a social phenomenon and necessitates an "other." In other words, an identity requires the presence of another identity so that it may be defined (Göka, et.al, 2006). Throughout the history, the Western world has always identified an "other." For example; Europe identified itself as the civilized and the rest of the world and Turks as the barbarians. Similarly, it identified communism as "the other" before the civilization during the Cold War era. Today, immigrants or foreigners make up "the other" in

Europe where different religions and cultures are experienced together (Aktan, 1999).

In this sense, the elements that are required for building an identity are not present for creating a European identity. A European identity cannot be based on common geography, religion, history, language and ethnic origin. Although the common religion is accepted to be Christianity, it is an important problem for Europe to decide which creed would undertake the control from among Catholicism, Protestantism and Orthodoxy if we assume that Europe was a scene for religious wars in the past. Europe has also no common language. The Latin language lost its former quality to be a unifying language and was replaced by French. However, English became the most widely-spoken language in the world when the United Kingdom broadened the borders of the colonial empire and the US emerged as the new superpower of the world in the 20th century. In this sense, the claims that Europe draws from a common ethnic origin do not hold true today. The most populated communities of Europe, that is, the Slavs, Magyars and Fins do not spring from the Aryan race. In other words, there is no common point in terms of ethnicity (Yurdusev, 1997).

Due to these impediments before the formation of a European identity, the discussions on this subject have a two-dimensional quality. Since the identity is grounded on a common history, religion, culture and geography, the countries with these that do not belong to Europe (such as Turkey) would cause harm to the formation of a European identity. Therefore, the EU came up with two mechanisms which bespeak the European Constitution and the European citizenship. The principle of the European citizenship prescribes a form of citizenship that is over nation states. The idea to associate the people of the European countries has been designed as part of the citizenship concept so that the Union could achieve social and cultural, as well as economic, integration in order to maintain its presence. The adoption of the European citizenship as an "upper identity" has been facilitated with various applications such as free movement within the EU borders, the use of the "Euro" currency, the right to participate in local elections within a country of residence according to predetermined criteria and the participation and nomination in the elections of the European Parliament. In this sense, the discussions on the European Constitution were designated as a significant step towards the development of an identity. However, there were differences of opinion concerning the Constitution and its contents. In 2005, France and the Netherlands rejected the Constitution that was brought to referendum. Despite this, the Constitution was accepted as the Reform Treaty and signed by the member states with the title 2007 Treaty of Lisbon. Since the Treaty gave

voice to greater states, Ireland put the Treaty to a referendum where it was rejected due to its technical and complicated nature (Altınbaş, 2007).

The second dimension of the conflicts as regards to the European identity is the notion that if the identity cannot be built upon a common history, geography, religion and culture, it can be based on universal values such as human rights, freedoms, economic wealth and pluralism. Here, the European identity would serve as an upper identity acting like an umbrella. The concept of Europeanization emerged with the foregoing second discussion. The endeavours and approaches to Europeanize were shaped by the influence of the member states on the consolidation movement of the EU policies and the candidacy and membership processes of candidate states (Sedelmeier, 2006).

Europeanization refers to a change in national institutions and policies. It is a process where the rules of the EU shape national policies and applications with sanction power (Cowles et al, 2001 & Börzel and Risse, 2000& Gwiazda, 2002). Having become a part of the national policies and decisions of states, Europeanization is a mechanism and process that ensures the formation of European institutions (Ladrech, 1994). In addition to institutions and policies, Radaelli also includes identities, beliefs and discourses in Europeanization. He claims that identities, values and norms shape the concept of Europeanization and the enlargement policy of Europe. He describes the enlargement of the EU to include the Central and Eastern European countries as "the return to Europe" (Radaelli, 2000 & Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2002). On the other hand, Olsen points out to Europeanization as a fashionable concept and offers definitions of it which touch on the various aspects of the concept (Olsen, 2002);

> *"Europeanization as the change in the borders of Europe,*
>
> *Europeanization which formed and shaped the institutions of Europe,*
>
> *Europeanization which influenced and shaped the national policies of the European institutions,*
>
> *Europeanization as part of the exportation of the European institutions,*
>
> *Europeanization as a political consolidation and an upper identity".*

As the definitions may suggest, Europeanization ensures an influence on the policies, applications and procedures of the member states. For candidate states, Europeanization is a unilateral top-to-down process. The period that Europeanization becomes efficient is the process of

participation or negotiation. Europeanization builds this process with conditionality and socialization. The working procedures of the EU are *legal obligations* which are necessary for political and economic ends, *tangible changes* which are ensured with consolidation in the economic structure and *intangible changes* that allow the adjustment of beliefs, expectations and personal identities to the European norms (Emerson, 2004).

In some cases, resistance may be seen against the process of Europeanization. These are called veto points. These may appear as military, nationalist parties or media institutions in candidate countries. In return, there will also occur institutions and structures that support Europeanization. These are called support points. They may include NGOs, political parties and universities. Because they contribute to settlement as a mediator, it is necessary to increase the number of support points in order to ensure Europeanization. In return, the settlement would also empower the process of socialization (Börzel and Risse, 2000 & Hughes, 2002).

Since Europeanization is based on rule transfer, the most important mechanism is the conditionality. The Copenhagen criteria of 1993, which prescribe the acceptance of political, economic and community acquis, were extended with the absorption capacity in 2006. This represents the institutional, political and financial capacities of the EU as it enlarges. The candidacy of Turkey introduced a new title, which is cultural and social, to this criterion (Emerson et al, 2006).

4. The History of Turkish Democracy and Europeanization

The concept of modernization signifies a process. The birth of bourgeoisie after the dissolution of feudalism, industrialization that changed the modes and methods of production, and political participation which ensures participation to the decision-taking mechanism of bourgeoisie are all among the elements of modernization. Therefore, we can assert that urbanization, the birth of political parties, the spread of literacy, the right to vote, the birth of institutional power, the progress of mass media and similar other developments are the products of modernization (Çulhaoğlu, 2002). The emergence of modernization corresponds to the occurrence of capitalism. Modernization showed up in Europe and influenced the whole world through capitalism. Especially the term of industrialization became a determining factor in the distinction between development and underdevelopment (Kongar, 1979). Although the results obtained by the West could not be achieved in the societies that wished to modernize like the Western world and, therefore, had attempts to industrialize, the

initiated process of reforms brought along new issues. The steps to Westernization positioned underdeveloped countries as the periphery of capitalism and rendered them semi-colonies (Timur, 2003& Belge, 2002& Berkes, 1965& İnalcık, 2005& Doğan, 2002).

Whereas the term West bears a geographical meaning, it also indicates civilization (Tunaya, 1982& Ziya, 2002). The Westernization phenomenon has been adopted by underdeveloped countries rather in terms of form. Kohn pictures Westernization as "the Europeanization of the East" and defines it to be the transformation of the Eastern countries (Kohn, 1937).

The Westernization movements in Turkey dates back to the beginning of the 19th century. Integrated into the capitalist system with the 1838 British Free Trade Agreement, the Ottoman Empire implemented modernization reforms that were compatible with capitalism after the *Gülhane Hatt-ı Şerif*. Thus the empire questioned the reasons for and took certain steps against the loss of power in the face of the superiority of the West (Mardin, 2006). Many reforms were enforced in the fields of military, administration, economy, law, education, politics and society. These reforms added new institutions to the former ones and led to a complicated atmosphere. In consequence, the reforms did not produce the intended results and failed to prevent the collapse of the state. The Republic Period explicitly approved the Western civilization and replaced the former institutions with European ones. The proclamation of the republic clarified that the new state was not a succession of the Ottoman Empire (Tunaya, 2002& İnalcık, 2005& Karpat, 2006). The change in the political regime ensured a transition from monarchy to Republicanism. The state embraced a secular mentality, and the article that accepted Islam as the state's religion was removed from the Constitution in 1928. The goal was to replace the *ummah* perspective of the society with a national point of view (Arıkoğlu Ündücü, 2011). Tonybee states that Turkey waged a war against the West using the Western ideals. In other words, the Ottoman Westernization took place under the favour of the West while the Republican Westernization came true despite the West (Özüerman, 1998).

In Turkey, the reforms for modernization can be subject to criticisms past to present. These frequently allege that the reforms are imposed from top to down by the elites who engage in a Jacobin attitude. Here, it is claimed that the reforms are disapproved by the society, that they alienate the society from itself and that the Western and non-Western countries do not follow the same course of development (Kahraman, 2008& Keyder, 2005). In this sense, Berkes specifies that the reformist movements which particularly aim Westernization are perceived ill by religious circles as they

especially refer to the concept of secularism. He also points out that, therefore, a religious period is experienced in Turkey after each and every attempt for Westernization (Berkes, 2004).

In this regard, Turkey continued the tendency for Westernization with the 1963 Ankara Agreement and full membership application in 1987. Perceiving Europeanization as European-Unionization, Turkey consented to many harmonization packages offered by the EU on legal grounds. However, Europeanization is not related with states but democratization. It aims to civilianization (Arıkoğlu Ündücü, 2011). Carried with legal regulations, the Europeanization of policies is a task Turkey has achieved pretty quickly. However, Europeanization progressed very slowly for Turkey as regards to human rights and democratization which were set as conditions by the EU. Association with the modernization concept, Social Europeanization is a long-winded process (Diez, 2007).

There are certain impediments imposed on Turkey on the way to EU membership and Europeanization. These are;

- The Cyprus issue,

- Strong nation-state quality / sovereignty in Turkey,

- The lack of a common view and consensus in the European states as regards to Turkey. Some states suggest that a special status should be granted to Turkey in lieu of membership while France intended to put the membership of Turkey to referendum. On the other hand, some circles went into the effort of publications against Turkey (Barysch, 2007& Diez, 2007& Öymen, 2005).

- These claim that Europeanization is an elite project for both Turkey and the EU. In this sense, Turkey never put the EU membership to referendum and asked the opinion of its people. Moreover; the dissenting views towards Turkey, non-progressive negotiation processes and continuous introduction of new criteria caused a fatigue, aggravation and confidence crisis in Turkey. Turkish people think of EU membership rather as part of economic wealth. However, the European identity issue led to a problem within also Europe as well as Turkey (Arıkoğlu Ündücü, 2011).

5. The Threat of Rising Nationalism, Identity Crisis and Deviation From Democratic Values in Europe

During the Cold War era, the member states of the European Community defined communism as "the other" in line with the ideology of the period. Following the disintegration of the Soviet system and the end of the Cold War, "the other" or "the new enemy" became Political Islam in the international arena. Hence, the Muslim population have been perceived as "the other" in Europe with the identification and perception of the new terrorism based on religious values particularly after the 9/11 attacks. This, as a result, brought along the rise of far-right nationalism and its representation in parliaments. Certain parameters became the driving factor of the rise of nationalism in Europe (Ünver Noi, 2007). Among these, the leading factor is globalization. The competition created by globalization in the goods and service markets afflicted the wealthy state policy of Europe and caused a regression in the social policies. This also led to economic inequality and uncertainties. The economic issues and the weakening of wealthy states empowered far-right parties. Another determinant is the massive migrations to Western Europe. The immigrant crisis is among the top reasons of the radicalism in Europe. Having targeted the Jewish community in the past, the nationalist movement aimed at the Muslim population this time. However, the identification of the Muslim population as a target also facilitated the spread of radical Islam among immigrants. The increase in the number of offenses in Europe, the attacks in some European cities and their attribution to immigrants have triggered nationalism. Another factor which feeds the far-right movement in Europe is the rise of Neo-liberalism, which emerged in the 1980s, and the New-Right movement, the political leg of the former, and the regression of the leftist ideology and movement. Furthermore, the bans on far-right parties in Europe in the aftermath of the period between the two world wars (1919-1939) and the measures taken against them enhanced the trends towards these parties. Finally, the authority of the EU, after intensified and institutionalized in consequence of its enlargement, on all the member national governments and the assignment of the sovereignty of these states to the EU are also among the causes that escalated nationalism in Europe. Consolidation under the EU, European citizenship, European identity and Europeanization are considered to contribute to that end.

The exclusive attitude towards immigrants and especially Muslims in Europe are supported by many political parties in various countries. The National Rally (France), the Freedom Party of Austria, the Flemish Block (Belgium), the Party for Freedom (the Netherlands) and the Northern League (Italy) claim that it is impossible for immigrants and especially Muslims to adapt to the European values, lifestyle and political culture due to their religious and cultural characteristics (Erdenir, 2010). These parties

tend to increase the number of the seats they hold in the European Parliament by gaining both national and international popularity. Accordingly, these parties reject Europeanization and support anti-Europeanization.

Far-right movements also gradually acquire a radical quality. The Pittsburgh attack in 2018 and the Christchurch mosque and El Paso attacks in 2019 resulted in the death of many people. Although most of the far-rightist attacks are perpetrated by individual persons, the networks among the groups have attained a transnational quality. Social media and the Internet are among the most efficient platforms they employ in organization and mustering support (Nachtwey, 2017). On the other hand, the election of Afro-Americans in the US shows parallelism with the rise of violence in the country (Munich Security Report, 2020).

Viktor Orban, the Prime Minister of EU member Hungary where far-right parties have come to power, revolted against the EU and challenged the present state of the Union by issuing an ultimatum consisting of 7 articles. Suggesting, in particular, that decisions must not be taken by the institutions of the EU but by elected government officials, Orban claimed that the EU had become a super-state and that they didn't want a formation which acted like European Empire (SÖZCÜ, 2021).

Another negative attitude towards the EU and Europeanization is the scepticism against the Union since the beginning of the consolidation of Europe. The consolidation of Europe is a phenomenon that dates back to the 1950s, underwent changes and came up with the present condition. Although there are many who support the enlargement, intensification, institutionalization and the policies of the EU, there are also others who oppose. Defined as Euroscepticism, this stance has been widely discussed as of the 1990s when Europeanization started to gain speed and is used to refer to the criticisms and oppositions against the EU. The Euroscepticism concept was coined in an article in The Times, a British newspaper, in order to express the antagonism addressed to the Common Market (Aras, 2015). The United Kingdom's view of the consolidation of Europe is already known since the establishment of the Union. What is more, the United Kingdom was even likened to "the Trojan War" within the Union. In this sense, Brexit by the United Kingdom became the first rupture from the final stage of the EU which had been achieved after vigorous attempts (Latour, 2017). The process of this separation once more gave way to fierce debates as to the future, institutions and values of the Union. The first notable sign of the divergence within the Union became distinct with the Brexit.

As part of the recent developments, the relations with Russia are also among the issues that constitute a difference of opinion within the EU. These relations are determined not only by the EU member states but also according to a balance of power with the inclusion of the US. The policies of Germany, the locomotive and the leader of the EU, towards Russia cause disturbance in certain member states such as Poland. In this regard, the Polish government asserts that Germany prioritizes its national interests within the Union. The tension that mounted following the annexation of Crimea by Russia conduced to the dissociation of the EU states with Russia. Although these states exhibit a common attitude as the members of NATO; the United Kingdom and the US used harsh expressions against Russia and China and alleged them to be a threat before the democratic civilization during 2021 Munich Security Conference while Angela Merkel, former German chancellor, avoided using such expressions for Russia and China, such as competitor or threat, but stated that it was necessary to "develop common strategies" against these two countries. On the other hand, Emmanuel Macron, the French President, supported dialog with Russia and China (Munich Security Report, 2021).

The cracks and divergence not only among the EU states, but also within the Western block are reflected in policies. To this end, the Munich Security Conference, one of the most prestigious international meetings as regards to security and defence which attracts top government officials since 1963, defined the theme of 2020 as "Westlessness" (Munich Security Conference, 2020). The annual report of the conference used the term "Westlessness" so as to refer to the present situation of the Western unity and, in particular, NATO which cannot be identified as a single body anymore due to its fragmentation. The report pronounces that the US has moved away its from peace-making and peace-keeping roles while Europe has turned in on itself due to domestic issues. The Westlessness concept is rather about security and signifies an identity crisis within the West for NATO. In this sense, NATO has become a matter of discussion as a result of which the establishment of a full-fledged European Army is enhanced. Controversial voice is not something unfamiliar to Europe. During the meeting of 2019, the distribution of the load came to the agenda of NATO. The tension increased more during especially the presidency of Donald Trump in the US, and he was regarded as a symptom of the fragmentation of the West. (Munich Security Conference, 2019, Cliffe, 2020).

In 2021, the theme of Munich Security Conference was "Beyond Westlessness." This time, all the leaders of the West stressed the significance of cooperation among democracies. Joe Biden, US president, remarked that "democracy is under attack" and came up with the offer for

a "Democracy Summit"[1] (Munich Security Report, 2021). Indeed, the European countries started to witness unprecedented and undemocratic policies and applications with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the start of the pandemic, the European Union exhibited a disorganized picture due to the deficiencies in the struggle against the pandemic following the rise of the number of cases and deaths in Italy, France and the United Kingdom. The despair of Europe in the face of the pandemic paved the way for the discrimination among the youth and the elderly as to which group was eligible for respiratory equipment and concluded in the bereavement of the right of the elderly to life which is the most fundamental human right (Arıkoğlu Ündücü, 2021). Similarly, Boris Johnson, the Prime Minister of the UK, came up with a frivolous strategy against the pandemic which was called "the herd immunity" but this groundless policy was abandoned after he caught the virus and many British people lost their lives to the pandemic (Sputniknews, 2020).

The claims that the pandemic increased authoritarian tendencies are mostly discussed in terms of a balance between freedom and security. As the level of fear escalates in the society, it becomes easier to narrow down the space of rights and freedoms. Individuals consent to and obey all the rules imposed by a power in order to get rid of the sense of fear and its outcomes. In this regard, the Covid-19 pandemic stood in good stead for the people in power (Karakaş, 2020). In the process that started particularly with the end of the Cold War, democracy loses ground and the space of rights and freedoms gets narrower with the terrorist attacks and wars that tend to mount up relatively with the end of the of a stable and peaceful period, the sizable migration waves due to these wars, and the natural disasters and pandemics brought by the climate crisis. During the recent pandemic, security forces worked in full capacity just like the healthcare workers. Especially the police forces became more severe in their operations during the pandemic (Arıkoğlu Ündücü, 2021). The regular soldiers in France published a common notice which rejected pluralism and defended the French nationalism. V - Dem, a Swedish social science institution, recoded in the 2021 report that the number of liberal democracies went down from 41 to 32 within the last decade (Daloğlu, 2021). The report suggested that the world population who lived under autocratic governments was 68% in 2020 while the same was 48% in 2010. It also assigned that the number of countries where freedom of speech was under

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1 As a result of the outbreak of the pandemic and its effects, liberalism and the representation of democracy, the political apparatus of the former, revealed the frail quality of the American democracy with the defeat of Donald Trump in the presidential elections and the following White House Capitol attack on January 6, 2021 while, on the other hand, there were on-going racism debates in the country that started after George Floyd, a black US citizen, had been murdered due to police violence.

threat increased to 32 in 2020 from 19 in 2017. That is, the space of freedom of speech became attenuated within so short a time like 3 years (V- Dem, 2021).

In 2021, Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the UK, repeated his call for the establishment of D-10 which would consist of 10 democratic countries. Thus he referred to the need for the reinforcement of cooperation among free countries (Munich Security Report, 2021). This suggestion by Johnson is an offer for a narrower core structure which prescribes the concentration of universal democratic values (such as human rights, freedoms, rule of law and economic wealth) within a certain area with the Europeanization policy. However, democracy cannot be maintained by compressing it into a narrow frame or territory. The abandonment of freedoms and downgrading of democracy are contagious for all the societies like infectious diseases. Democracy proved to be a frail phenomenon also for the developed countries when, on January 6, 2021, the US capital experienced the White House Capitol attack which is a scene mostly observed in underdeveloped countries.

6. The Decline in The Relations Between Turkey and The EU and The Divergence of Turkey From Europe

The economic crisis, which came out in 2008 and perpetuated by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the refugee issue that appeared after the 2011 Syrian Civil War play a determining role on the shaping of the European society and politics.

Considering the last decade of the relations between Turkey and the EU, Turkey did not altogether give up the EU membership strategy despite the membership of the Southern Cyprus, which assumes the country as "the Republic of Cyprus" and that it allegedly covers the whole island, in 2004 as part of the enlargement policy of the EU and the insistence of the EU on the recognition of the Southern Greek Cyprus by Turkey as a precondition for membership. The delegation of a "chief negotiator" in 2009 reflected the political will of Turkey concerning the process. Nevertheless, the chapters that had been submitted in relation to Turkey were, many times, rejected by Greece and the Southern Cyprus. Turkey expressed its determination as to the negotiations with the EU by creating a Ministry of European Union on June 8, 2011. On December 16, 2016, the Visa Exemption Process, which prescribed the removal of the Schengen visa requirement for Turkish citizens, officially commenced. In 2014, the Ministry of EU opened provincial representative offices first in Antalya and then Istanbul and Izmir in order to accelerate the local operations. In 2015, the Ministry of EU and the Office of the Chief Negotiator changed hands

twice and, as of 2016, the basic theme that defined the relations between the two parties became irregular migration wave. The European countries enhanced the relations with Turkey in order to prevent the entry of immigrants into their territories, and this brought a new period in the relations. During this period, the determinations and requests of Turkey as regards to the migration crisis were accepted by the EU in the general sense. However, 2016 signified the beginning of a decline in the relations. Due to the approach of Austria against Turkey, the EU countries did not pose a common attitude about the "Enlargement, Stability and Partnership Process." What is more, the other member states did not put the membership negotiations of Turkey on their agenda. Dated June 26, 2018, the conclusions of the EU General Affairs Council asserted that "Turkey is moving away from the EU, the negotiations came almost to a halt and it is not expected to update the Customs Union and start the negotiations." In the same year, Turkey accepted the Presidential System and repealed the Ministry of EU which then became a department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On February 20, 2019, the draft resolution of the European Parliament which offered the suspension of the EU membership negotiations with Turkey was accepted by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the said Parliament (EU Department, 2019).

As well as the issues with Greece and the Southern Cyprus which are member states, the developments in the region also have a determining and notable role in the standstill of the relations between Turkey and the EU. These issues can be enumerated as follows;

1.   Following the Syrian Civil War, the migration crisis became the main topic that determined the relations. Signing the Readmission Agreement in 2014, Turkey undertook that it would readmit the refugees from the EU states. Thus the EU attempted to prevent the entry of refugees through the borders in Greece and Bulgaria. The refugee crisis turned the asymmetrical make of the relations between Turkey and the EU into a symmetrical and "equals" structure. However, the suspension of the relations and the ambiguous attitude adopted by the EU as to the membership of Turkey have deepened the doubt and distrust of the Turkish society and forced the JDP to develop an anti-EU discourse. The process that began with the 2013 Corruption Scandal in Turkey and continued with the Occupy Gezi protests acquired an unusual dimension with the coup d'état attempt by the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization (FETO) on July 15, 2016. The power in Turkey criticized the standing of the European states against these incidents and, in consequence, gradually drifted apart from the EU (Gençkal Eroler and

Süleymanoğlu Kürüm, 2021). The discriminatory approach towards the refugee crisis and the immigrants is not adopted only by the countries that were recently accepted to the Union such as Hungary and Poland, but also by earlier members such as Austria and Italy. On July 25, 2021, Sebastian Kurz, former Chancellor of Austria, said in an interview given to Bild, a German newspaper, that the refugee flow which would unfold after what had happened in Afghanistan should not be into the EU member states but Turkey. Appreciated by the far-right and racist parties of the EU, Kurz assigned Turkey as the refugee-keeper of the EU. The racist statements of Kurz mean a threatening situation for Europe which was of question a century ago (Yetkin, 2021).

2. In addition to the present problems between Turkey and, as an EU member state, Greece such as the Continental Shelf, the Aegean Islands and Cyprus, the tension became aggravated with the discussions on the execution of the rights to the petroleum and natural gas reserves discovered in the Eastern Mediterranean (Arıkoğlu Ündücü and Güngören, 2021).

3. The European Council agreed to apply sanctions due to the 2019 natural gas quests of Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean and extended the term of these sanctions until November 12, 2022 (DW, 2021).

4. A new competition developed between Turkey and France as a result of the conflicts in Libya.

5. In Syria, Turkey collides with the Western allies with respect to Idlib.

6. In this sense, the EU has no common road map as regards to Libya and Syria (Ayvaz, 2020).

There are clear indicators showing that Turkey breaks away from Europe. For example; the Istanbul Convention, which is a convention under the Council of Europe, was terminated on March 20, 2021 upon unilateral will of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Following the adoption of conservative and conventional standpoint by the power in Turkey, the negative opinion towards the equality of women and men scaled up. The rights and gains of women sustained injury while a safe life became more difficult for women under threat. Another example which indicates that Turkey drifts apart from Europe is that Turkey has not implemented the decision of the European Court of Human Rights which prescribes the

release of Osman Kavala and Selahattin Demirtaş, the co-President of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Therefore, the Council of Europe initiated a process of violation which may result in the exclusion of Turkey, a founding member, from the Council (Euronews, 2022).

Particularly after 2016, Turkey tends to deviate from democratic values under the guise of emergency state. While the regime evolves towards the power of an unquestionable authoritarian, the political culture and institutions feed on conservative values. This, as a result, pushes Turkey into an atmosphere where secularism and the Republican regime are matters of discussion once more. The press and artistic and cultural institutions become subject to censorship (Appadurai, 2017). In this sense, the party in power has completely moved away from the discourses on democratic freedoms which were promised during its initial period in power and embraced a nationalist one like the European countries.

7. Conclusion

Whereas Europeanization follows a course on institutions and policies, it couldn't achieve the necessary development on actors. In fact, the real transformation is possible in the hands of these actors. Anti-Europeanization discussions and tendencies escalate since Europeanization and the mechanisms employed by it is a process that weakens nation-state sovereignty and functions from top to down.

Once we consider the path of the relations between Turkey and the EU, it is possible to deduce that Turkey has always been subject to a stipulation. On the other hand, universal values such as human rights, pluralism and economic wealth concentrated in the European continent in the wake of globalization. While these values represented a matter of preference for the societies that were willing to Westernize in the past, the Europeanization concept became a necessity. Turkey replaced the ideal of Westernization, which emerged in the 19th century, with EU membership. Although universal values qualify as ideals and goals, Europeanization turned these values into a regional identity and enforced certain criteria and conditions to those who wished to get this identity (Özüerman,2003).

The causes of vetoes on the road to Europeanization (such as army and patriotic parties) are neutralized in Turkey. In fact, the Westernization project was accepted by the Turkish army while the Republican People's Party (RPP) institutionalized and embraced it as the party that founded the Republic of Turkey. However, Europeanization became a tool in the elimination of these institutions and unearthed the awareness in Turkey by drawing attention to the differences rather than to a national identity and,

therefore, brought along a debate on lower and upper identities. Here, it should be noted that nation-state and national identities preserve their significance in Europe while nationalism is on the rise.

In the EU member states, nationalist and far-right parties have been gaining support where, in some countries, they achieved a part of the coalition governments. Throughout the last decade, criticisms and dissenting opinions were loudly pronounced against the EU institutions, decision and policies which entailed a fragmentation within the Union. In this respect, the Covid-19 pandemic reinforced populist and authoritarian approaches. In parallel to the developments in Europe, the nationalist discourse also rose in Turkey which resulted in a drift away from democratic values.

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PART **III**

SECURITY CHALLENGES
IN THE MIDDLE EAST

8

Middle East in The US Foreign Aid Policy

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1.Introduction

As well known states have foreign policy objectives, strategies and instruments. The strategies and instruments used by states to achieve their foreign policy objectives vary. States resort to various instruments and methods to achieve their goals, to protect or realize their values, to defend their interests, and while doing these, to direct other states to certain behaviors or deter possible actions (Arı, 2013: 323). And also foreign policy instruments in general can be considered as political, economic and military instruments (Sönmezoğlu, 2019: 441).

Economic instruments have become one of the most significant foreign policy instruments used by states since the Second World War. Economic instruments are very important within the framework of the foreign policy instruments of states. In this context, foreign aid is one of the economic influence instrument that states use while carrying out their foreign policies (Sönmezoğlu, 2019: 496).Hence foreign aid is one of the economic instrument that states resort to in their foreign policies, foreign aid is used by many states to achieve their foreign policy objectives (Baldwin, 2020: 332).

Although foreign aid is mostly used for the purpose of rewarding among economic instruments, sometimes cutting foreign aid can come to the fore between countries that have foreign aid relations between them. Such a situation shows that foreign aid can sometimes be put into practice as a means of punishment (Arı, 2013: 323).

K.J. Holsti considers "*granting or suspending aid, including military sales or grants*" as "*Techniques of Economic Coercion and Reward*"(Holsti, 1995: 168, 170). In this context Holsti also mentions that foreign aid and military assistance are the most important forms of economic rewards (Holsti, 1995: 180).

As Sukhwant S. Bindra emphasized, "*foreign aid has always been an important component of international finance and foreign policy making and implementation*" (Bindra, Autumn-July-September 2018: 132).

The historical background of foreign aid are mostly based on the Marshall Plan, which is the aid program of the United States (US) to the restructuring Western European states after the Second World War (Baldwin, 2020: 302).

Faruk Sönmezoğlu mentions that foreign aid, which has a wide variety of definitions, "*can be defined in the shortest way as all one-way resource transfers except commercial ones*" (Sönmezoğlu, 2019: 496).

Foreign aid classifications are as varied as foreign aid definitions. While Hans Morgenthau defines that the transfer of money, goods and services from one nation to another constitutes the common point of foreign aid, He classifies foreign aid types under six headings as; "*humanitarian foreign aid*", "*subsistence foreign aid*", "*military foreign aid*", "*bribery*", "*prestige foreign aid*", and "*foreign aid for economic development*". Also he draws attention that of these different types, only humanitarian foreign aid is not political in its essence (Morgenthau, June 1962: 301).

From this statement, it is concluded that foreign aid mainly aim to create political influence. At this point, Sönmezoğlu's assessment that draws attention to the connection between foreign aid and creating political influence stands out. As Sönmezoğlu says; "*all foreign aids, except for exceptional cases, are mainly aimed at making a certain political impact on the target*" (Sönmezoğlu, 2019: 496).

Tayyar Arı's assessment of;

> "*Foreign aid is widely used in the use of economic relations as a foreign policy instrument. States try to influence their foreign policies within the framework of their own purposes, by giving foreign aid to other states when they are needed; and they use it to create a dependency relationship and create a sphere of influence*"(Arı, 2013: 394),

can also be considered in this context.

It is important to evaluate the place and role of foreign aid in foreign policy. In this context on foreign aid and foreign policy relevance by making an assessment Bindra says that;

> "*Foreign aid has always been an important component of international finance and foreign policymaking and implementation. Developed*

countries use economic power to achieve foreign policy goals. As such, they use aid to foster client–patron relationships. On the one hand, they reward allies for foreign policy compliance and on the other hold out threats of punishment for non-compliance…" (Bindra, Autumn-July-September 2018: 132).

Bindra makes an assessment on foreign aid and its types with the words ;

"The international transfer of economic resources is the main plank of foreign aid. The flow of assistance consists of grants and loans in cash and kind, including technical assistance from donor governments or international organisations to other governments or enterprises in recipient countries. The forms and purposes of financial and technical assistance are varied. The pure economic function of this type of aid should be distinguished from that of direct military assistance…" (Bindra, Autumn-July-September 2018: 136).

Also David Baldwin goes to classification of foreign aid. Baldwin classifies foreign aid into four groups as; "*loans as opposed to grant aid"; "economic as opposed to military aid"; "multilateral as opposed to bilateral aid"; and "private as opposed to public capital*" (Baldwin, April 1969: 434).

Yet another classification, Hans Singer and Javed Ansari classifies foreign aid in four classification as ; "*Bilateral Versus Multilateral Aid*", "*Hard Versus Soft Aid*", "*Project Aid and Programme Aid*", "*Tied Aid*" (Singer and Ansari, 1988: 183-195).

Holsti, defines foreign aid as; " *- the transfer of money, goods, technology or technical advice from a donor to a recipient -*"(Holsti, 1995: 180). According to Holsti, foreign aid can be grouped under four main headings; " *technical assistance"; "grants and commodity import programs"; "development loans"; and "emergency humanitarian assistance"* (Holsti, 1995: 182).

Arı says that, foreign aid can be classified under different categories, and that foreign aid can be classified as military aid, economic aid, technical aid and humanitarian aid, as well as bilateral and multilateral aid or aid in the form of debt and aid in the form of grants (Arı, 2013: 396).

Within the scope of all these various classifications it should be noted that, as Sönmezoğlu mentioned; "*It can be said that the main motive in foreign aid programs made for the purpose of political influence and/or resulting in this result is the interests of the giving country or countries, and the degree of need of the receiving country or countries for this aid is a secondary criterion*" (Sönmezoğlu, 2019: 497).

There are problems caused by foreign aid for the receiving countries. Sometimes, foreign aid can be used by states as an effective foreign policy sanction. As Arı stated; "*States want to maintain their political influence on the countries that they have given foreign aid to and become dependent on, by threatening to cut off these aids*" (Arı, 2013: 394).

Another problem created by foreign aid for the recipient countries is as Sönmezoğlu stated: "*It is mostly the condition of purchasing goods and services from the country giving the aid with the amount of aid. In such a case, the receiving country generally has to import some goods from the donor with higher prices and/or poor quality…*" (Sönmezoğlu, 2019: 497).

At this point, as Sönmezoğlu emphasized; It can be said that the main thing in foreign aid programs is the interests of the country or countries that give the source, and the needs of the receiving country or countries have a secondary importance (Sönmezoğlu, 2019: 497).

When considered as an evaluation that supports Sönmezoğlu's evaluation on foreign aid, in the context of the relationship between foreign aid and national interest, Bortolleto states that foreign aid is an extension of foreign policy and is guided by national interests (Bortolleto, 2010: 10).

Emphasizing that foreign aid is used as a tool of foreign policy, Bortolleto points out that in the context of foreign aid being "*an essential instrument and extension of foreign policy*", the giving of foreign aid is motivated by almost the same factors as foreign policy, including the goal of realizing national interest. Bortolleto states that since the purpose of national interests are, protecting the country and domestic order from external threats, often equated with national security, and today the important goal of providing foreign aid is national security (Bortolleto, 2010: 10).

Foreign aid is considered one of the most significant policy instruments "*that rich countries use to help poor countries improve population well-being and facilitate economic and institutional development*" (Qian, 2015: 277). As Qian mentions; "*Since World War II, foreign aid has been one of the most prominent policy tools that high-countries use to assist low-income countries to increase economic growth, improve population well-being, and facilitate institution*" (Qian, 2015: 278).

The influence of the US power in the economic field behind its position as a powerful country in the international arena is undeniable. In today's world, as one of the most powerful in the economic field, the US has effectively used foreign aid in its foreign policy since the end of the Second World War.

As Adelman pointed out, since with the implementation of the US's first official aid program, the Marshall Plan, the use of foreign aid as an instrument to advance national security interests has been quite important in US foreign policy (Adelman, Fall 2007: 62).

It can be evaluated that foreign aid is an extremely important tool in the realization of national interests in the US foreign policy since the beginning of the Cold War years.

It can be said that today's concept of "international development assistance" was shaped by the Marshall Plan after the end of the Second World War. George C. Marshall, who was US Secretary of State from 1947 to 1949, provided significant financial and technical assistance to Europe after the Second World War as part of the Marshall Plan (USAID, https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/usaid-history).

According to Samuel Huntington, economic development is the primary goal pursued by the US through foreign aid, but it is not the only goal. From this, Huntington argues that aid can also be used to "promote military security", "U.S. exports", "disposal of agricultural surpluses", "U.S. overseas investment", "private enterprise abroad", "social welfare", "political participation and democratic government", "diplomatic support for the US", "political support for friendly regimes" (Huntington, Spring 1971: 114).

In this context Ana Carolina Borteleto states that "*the formal goals of American foreign aid have always been political*", and she emphasizes that such goals "*as subsidizing allies to ensure their allegiance, fostering international influence, and serving the United States'(US) interests and national security*" of the US can be considered in this context (Bortolleto, 2010: 10).

And John D. Montgomery argues that foreign aid is more than an extension of American presence or payments for international favors, that foreign aid is also a strategic reflection of the US' worldview (Montgomery, June 1966: 323).

As a result of all these evaluations, it can be said that the main purpose of the US foreign aid policy, which has been maintained since the end of the World War II, is primarily to ensure the security of the US and to prioritize the US' national interests.

In the historical context, it can be said that while the US helped the developing countries achieve their goals with its foreign aid policy, on the

other hand, the US advanced its own foreign policy goals with its foreign aid policy (Runde, 2020:1).

The use of economic instruments has played a major role in the US foreign policy practices. Foreign aid, which is one of the economic instruments, has been a frequently used instrument in the US foreign policy, sometimes as a reward and sometimes as a punishment method.

The US has continued to follow foreign aid policies with a certain regularity from the post-World War II period to the present.

When the US foreign aid policies are examined, it is seen that the U.S. foreign aid program has official, formally-stated objectives and purposes. Also in this context US foreign aid is handled under three broad categories as; "Economic and Development Assistance", "Humanitarian Assistance" and "Security Assistance"(US Department of State, 2022).

The use of aid in the foreign policy of the US for diplomatic purposes started after the Second World War. While the US was one of the two superpower countries of the international system after the Second World War, one of the important instruments of its foreign policy was foreign aid (Lancaster, September-October 2000: 74).

In this direction it has been seen that in the post-Second World War decades, the United States whom was one of the two largest economies of the period became the world's biggest aid donor, starting with the Marshall Plan to help Europe rebuild (Phillips, 2013).

The analysis of the place of foreign aid in the foreign policies followed from the beginning of the US's foreign aid process until today is also important in terms of the analysis of the foreign policy orientations of the US, which was one of the two superpowers of the international system during the Cold War period and the only superpower of the international system after the Cold War.

Thus, in this study, first of all, the role of foreign aid in US foreign policy will be examined. In order to evaluate the importance of the Middle East in the US foreign policy, the US foreign aid policy towards the Middle East will be evaluated based on the idea that there is a linearity between the importance attributed to the region and/or the country and the amount of aid given.

2. Foreign Aid in the US Foreign Policy

In the context of understanding what foreign aid means for the US, and in a sense what is aimed with foreign aid by the US, the foreign aid policy of the US should be evaluated in a historical chronological perspective.

As it is known, it is considered that the Marshall Plan created the beginning of the use of foreign aid as a tool of foreign policy in the US foreign policy. While speaking at the Harvard University commencement on June 5, 1947, Marshall called for a foreign aid policy to help rebuild Europe after the devastation of the Second World War (OECD, https://www.oecd.org/general/themarshallplanspeechatharvarduniversity5 june1947.htm).

The US Congress passed the Economic Cooperation Act in March 1948 and so on The Marshall Plan which institutionalized and legitimized the concept of U.S. foreign aid programs that have become an integral part of U.S. foreign policy was passed in March of 1948 (United States Department of State, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/marshall-plan).

As Jamey Essex says;

> *"European economies rebuilt on American largesse were seen as bulwarks against the communist threat looming to the east, which made the Marshall Plan the political and ideological touchstone for U.S. development policy for decades after. Marshall Plan aid was both geoeconomic and geopolitical in outlook and structure, organized around economic aid and technical assistance designed to reformulate industrial relations in Europe, but with a broad strategic objective of territorially containing the Soviet Union and the expansion of its sphere of control"* (Essex, 2013: 29).

Approaching the issue of the importance of the Marshall Plan from another point of view, Curt Tarnoff mentions that the US leaders first recognized the connection between economic growth and political stability through the Marshall Plan (Tarnoff, 06 January 1997:15).

Adelman points out, considering that foreign aid has historically played a central role in US national security policy, And he states that the purpose of the Marshall Plan was clearly connected with US security interests at the beginning of the Cold War period. (Adelman, Fall 2007, 62).

As it is known giving aid from one country to another is considered as one of the foreign policy instruments, an instrument of influence. In this

context, it can be evaluated that the foreign aid of the US has been used as one of the instruments of forming and directing cooperation between the US and its allies on common security issues. And that the focus of the US foreign aid was to ensure mutual security (Essex, 2013: 28).

So, it can be said that officially use of foreign aid as a foreign policy tool, which started with the Marshall Plan, has been one of the important tools of the US foreign policy throughout the process.

Shortly after the Marshall Plan other initiatives like the Point Four Program in 1949 and the Mutual Security Act of 1951 was implemented. President Harry Truman introduced the Four Point program in his second Inaugural Adress on January 20, 1949 (https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/public/InternationalAid_Background.pdf). And after Point For Program, "*The Mutual Security Act of 1951 authorizing military, economic and technical assistance to friendly countries was signed by President Truman October 11*" (United States Department of State, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v01/d110).

However, at this point, Stephen Macekura points out and draws attention to the difference in scope between the "Point Four" and the "Marshall Plan". According to Macekura; While the aim of the Marshall Plan was the recovery and reconstruction of Western Europe, the purpose of the Point Four was the development of the "*entire underdeveloped World*". And the Point Four, unlike the Marshall Plan, had a global development objective that focused on less developed countries "*emerging from colonial status*" and "*proposed less governmental funding*" (Macekura, Spring 2013: 129-130).

Programs that support "*technical assistance*" and "*capital projects*" continued as the main type of US foreign assistance from 1952 to 1961 and were an important component of US foreign policy (USAID, https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/usaid-history) .

Nearly ten years after the initiatives; "Point Four Program" and the "Mutual Security Act of 1951", In 25 May 1961, Kennedy then-US president, delivered a message to the "*joint session of the Congress on urgent national programs*". In Kennedy's message the importance of military and economic assistance also mentioned among the main issues. In this regard, Kennedy's message also stated that his administration will soon submit a draft legislation to implement the US foreign aid program United States Department of State, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v09/d116).

After this statement, in the United States, under Kennedy's presidency, foreign aid efforts were tried to be centralized in a single institution. President Kennedy signed the "*Foreign Assistance Act*" into law in November 1961, and the "*United States Agency for International Development*" (USAID) was established by executive order. So, USAID was formed by the "*Foreign Assistance Act of 1961*"(USAID, https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/usaid-history).

As Lancaster and Dusen points out, USAID was formed in 1961 through the incorporation of various aid programs into its primary mission of advancing international development as well as US diplomatic objectives (Lancaster and Dusen, 2005: 10).

With Jamey Essex words;

> *"The agency's antecedents were temporary programs with specific, discrete purposes: the post–World War II Marshall Plan, designed to rebuild wartorn countries in western Europe; various aid accounts and programs authorized under the umbrella of "mutual security" legislation; and several short- term economic and military assistance programs of limited duration and scope. Within this wide array, U.S. development policy bundled military and economic aid with technical assistance for development, targeting specific world regions or countries seen as strategically important in the context of American- Soviet struggles for power and influence across the globe" (Essex, 2013: 27-28).*

And as Essex stated;

> *"Prior to USAID's formation, American development assistance efforts concentrated on achieving short- term objectives through strategic aid to a limited number of states, with development planning designed to meet immediate foreign policy and military needs in a given place and time" (Essex, 2013: 28).*

Has long been foreign aid played an important role in US national security since after the Second World War. Thus, the close relationship of foreign aid with national interests has made foreign aid one of the most efficient instruments of US foreign policy. In this context it is clear that in the 1960s, foreign aid continued to be an effective tool of the US's foreign policy as before.

On May 28, 1969 in a "special message to the Congress" President Nixon declared;

"Americans have for many years debated the issues of foreign aid largely in terms of our own national self-interest.

Certainly our efforts to help nations feed millions of their poor help avert violence and upheaval that would be dangerous to peace.

Certainly our military assistance to allies helps maintain a world in which we ourselves are more secure.

Certainly our economic aid to developing nations helps develop our own potential markets overseas.

And certainly our technical assistance puts down roots of respect and friendship for the United States in the court of world opinion …"
(United States Department of State, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v01/d26).

It can be said that Nixon's words show the importance of foreign aid in US foreign policy in the 1960s.

In the context of evaluations that US foreign aid has been one of the most important instrument of US foreign policy since its use as an instrument in US foreign policy after the Second World War. Considering the evaluation of David R. Obey and Carol Lancester; they state that every administration since Harry Truman sees foreign aid as an important part of US foreign policy (Obey and Lancaster, 1988: 141).

It is difficult to say that this evaluation made by Obey and Lancester in the last years of the Cold War period showed a fundamental change in terms of US foreign policy in the post-Cold War period.

After Cold War that ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union (USSR), the US become the international system's sole superpower and the international system has undergone a major structural change within the framework of military, economic and social dynamics.

Lancaster indicates the changes in the international system after Cold War as;

"The 1990s were a decade of enormous change. The Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The pace of globalization accelerated as the revolution in communication technologies reduced barriers to international trade and investment. The number of democratic countries expanded dramatically in the former Soviet sphere,

Africa, and other parts of the developing world. Although poverty remained widespread, real economic and social progress began to occur-especially in Asia and Latin America. And the capacity of many of these governments to manage their economies and open their markets to international capital became greater than at any time in recent history"(Lancaster, September-October 2000: 74).

And in the context of these changes that she indicate, Lancaster mentions that;

"These changes have left the United States the sole superpower and acknowledged world leader. They have also raised new challenges and opportunities for U.S. leadership that point to different purposes and priorities for foreign aid" (Lancaster, September-October 2000: 75).

In 1980's, in the last decade of the Cold War, as David R. Obey and Carol Lancaster point out; The Reagan administration placed its primary aid emphasis on supporting military and security objectives abroad (Obey and Lancaster, Summer 1988: 150).

As Curt Turnoff and Lary Nowels stated that after the end of the cold war, many changes took place in the size, purpose and composition of foreign aid (Tarnoff and Nowels, 15 April 2004: 1).

And Carol Lancaster and Ann Van Dusen stress that the end of the Cold War, while deflecting foreign policy concerns, did not remove foreign policy imperatives as the main focus of aid giving. (Lancaster and Dusen, 2005:11).

In the context of an assessment of what the goals of foreign aid were in the 1990s, in the first decade after the Cold War, James Meernik, Eric L. Krueger and Steven C. Poe's assessments can be addressed. They state that both the presidents and Congress have made it clear that with the end of the Cold War, democracy, development and human rights will be the main objectives of US foreign policy in general and foreign aid in particular (Meernik and Krueger and Poe: February 1998: 67).

Meernik, Krueger and Poe also state that with the end of the Cold War, security-oriented goals have become less critical, while ideological goals have become more important. In this context, he argues, in particular, that while the US is reducing its foreign aid to countries considered strategically important, it is increasingly rewarding democratic states with foreign aid (Meernik and Krueger and Poe: February 1998: 64).

From this point of view, it can be stated that, in the context of Meernik, Krueger and Poe's comments, in the post-cold war period, which states will receive assistance from the US and how much assistance they will receive are determined in accordance with the foreign policy goals of the US (Meernik and Krueger and Poe, February 1998: 64).

As an instrument of US foreign policy foreign aid since the beginning of its use, is used to achieve a wide range of national objectives, which are also indicated in official reports and statements, as the purposes for which assistance is provided such as; "*providing humanitarian relief*", "*furthering diplomatic goals*", "*promoting development and democracy abroad*", "*addressing global issues*", "*supporting economic and political transitions*", "*expanding export markets*", "*preventing and mitigating conflict*", "*and strengthening weak states*" (Lancaster, 2008: 3). And as Lancaster mentions, promoting development and also democracy abroad is recently been the most prominent among all the mentioned objectives (Lancaster, 2008: 3).

It can be said that although these targets have diversified over the years, the basis has not changed much.

However, at this point, we also encounter opposing evaluations, such as Douglas M. Gibier and Steven V. Miller's. According to Douglas M. Gibier and Steven V. Miller, with the end of the Cold War, the end of rivalry between the United States and the former Soviet Union brought with it a reduction in the use of foreign aid as a policy tool (Gibier and Miller, December 2012: 1203).

But, there are also evaluations against this view, for example Tarnoff states that, when the orientation of foreign aid of the US in the 1990s is evaluated, it is seen that foreign aid is at the forefront in the US foreign policy in the 1990s. In this context he states, in the early 1990s, Members of Congress proposed "Marshall Plans" for Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union (Tarnoff, 06 January 1997: 1).

In the State of the Union adress in 1994, President Clinton emphasized the need for them to do more to support democratic renewal, human rights and sustainable development all over the World (Clinton, 1994: 154-155).

In the context of Clinton's speech, that he called for the promotion of democracy and stressed that democracies should be spread around the World (Clinton, 1994: 154-155), USAID, in its January 1994 report named: "Strategies for Sustainable Development", it was stated that the Clinton administration determined the promotion of democracy as the

primary goal of the US foreign policy, and in this direction, foreign aid is a natural instrument to achieve this goal (USAID, January 1994: 22).

In this context generaly, it is considered that the priority of the goals of granting US foreign aid with the end of the Cold War has shown a transformation in the context of more humanitarian goals and ensuring development abroad.

Although, Lancaster makes an interesting determination about the granting and nature of US aid in the 1990s, suggesting that with the end of the Cold War, the value of aid as a tool of diplomacy declined. In this context, Lancaster notes that the importance of assistance and promoting development abroad has also decreased due to growing doubts about aid's effectiveness in advancing development (Lancaster, 2008: 4).

When the objectives and priorities of the US foreign aid in the 2000s are evaluated, Lancaster argues that there has been such a serious transformation in this regard since Kennedy administration (Lancaster, 2008: 1).

And according to Steven Radlet as he states that one of the most important developments regarding foreign aid during the presidency of George W. Bush was Bush's call to increase US foreign aid significantly (Radelet, September/October 2003: 104). And again Radelet emphasize that, after September 11, 2001, foreign aid was moved to the top of the US foreign policy again (Radelet, September/October 2003: 108).

In this context, Nancy Birsdall also emphasizes that the September 11, 2001 attacks against the US played a central role in the reshaping of the Bush administration's aid policy. According to her, foreign aid and as well as the effectiveness of aid have risen to new prominence after 9/11. (Birsdall, 2008: vii).

And according to Tarnoff and Nowels, the focus of foreign aid policy changed after September 11, 2001 (Tarnoff and Nowels, 15 April 2004: 1).

In the light of all these evaluations, it is very clear that both the end of the Cold War and the September 11, 2001 attacks constituted almost a breaking point in terms of US foreign policy as Robert K. Fleck and Christopher Kilby mentioned (Fleck and Kilby, 2010: 185).

As Radelet, Douglas M. Gibier and Steven V. Miller emphasized that President George W. Bush has aimed to make some serious changes in the

allocation and distribution of foreign aid since the Kennedy Administration (Gibier and Miller, December 2012: 1203) .

Evaluating the seven years of George W. Bush's presidency, Lancaster stated that during these seven years, from 2001 to 2008, the Bush administration initiated a transformation in US foreign aid. He states that there has not been much change in the organization and the general situation in the US foreign policy as in the Bush administration (Lancaster, 2008: 1).

It was seen that during the presidency of Barack Obama, there was no fundamental difference in foreign aid policy from that of George W. Bush (Gibier and Miller, December 2012: 1205).

And the Trump Administration has made changes to foreign aid financing and policy priorities consistent with the foreign policy orientation of "America First"(Morgenstern and et.all, 21 January 2021, https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/R46656.pdf).

During Trump's presidency, against his consistently proposes for deep cuts to foreign assistance, Congress maintained or increased the foreign aid appropriations (Congressional Research Service, 18 January 2022, https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/IF10183.pdf).

And with Biden's presidency, the Biden administration has proposed to increase funding for overall foreign aid (Congressional Research Service, 18 January 2022, https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/IF10183.pdf).

As well known foreign aid first became an important instrument of the US national security policy with the Marshall Plan under the Truman administration. And It can be said that foreign aid, which started with the Marshall Plan, constituted one of the most important foreign policy instruments of the US in the third decade of the 2000s although administrations changed.

3. Middle East in the Priorities of US Foreign Aid

Foreign aid, which is an important tool in the realization of US foreign policy goals, has been given within the framework of the changing and diversifying priorities of each US administration in the process.

However, it should be noted that although there are some changes in the purpose and amount of foreign aid depending on the process, the place of

the Middle East in US foreign aid has been important for each US administration.

As Peter Hahn evaluated, in the Cold War terms and conditions, after 1945, an increase in the interest of the US towards the Middle East was observed. In the US strategy to compete with the USSR on a global scale, the American officials began to consider the stability and friendship of the Middle Eastern countries as a vital issue. The fact that the Middle East is in a Western orbit would provide a great advantage in terms of accessing the strategic and economic resources of the region, and at the same time, the USSR would be deprived of this advantage (Hahn, May 2006: 5).

In this context, especially after 1950, the US began to focus more and more on the stability and security of the Middle East (Hahn, March 2006:39).

The Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957, the doctrine that the United States would use economic and military assistance to stop the Soviet influence in the Middle East region (United States Department of State, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/eisenhower-doctrine), in a sense meant the US commitment to the security and stability of the Middle East (Hahn, March 2006:38).

The importance attributed to the Middle East by all the administrations after Eisenhower was seen through the aid given to the Middle East.

As mentioned in a Congressional Research Service Report, the Middle East has always been a major focus of attention as the largest recipient region of the US economic and security assistance. (Sharp, Humud and Collins, 05 May 2020: 1) .

When the reasons for the US aid to the Middle East are evaluated in general, it can be said that, as Jeremy M. Sharp mentions, although the geopolitical conditions have changed with the process, when the foreign aid of the US to the Middle East is evaluated historically, it is seen that the aid is a necessity of the "*national security interests*" of the US in the region. The US has pursued a foreign policy seeking stability in the Middle East, where has energy reserves abundant, but where interstate relations are volatile. In this direction, foreign aid was frequently used in the US foreign policy orientations to achieve the objective of ensuring stability in the Middle East (Sharp, 15 June 2010: 1).

Much of the aid given by the United States to the Middle East is given primarily for the strategic interests of the United States, under the "Economic Support Fund" (ESF), a category of aid designed to advance

American strategic goals through economic aid, formerly known as "Security Support Assistance"(Tarnoff and Nowels, 15 April 2004:5).

As Tarnoff and Nowels point out, much of the US Economic Support Fund (ESF) has been used to support the Middle East Peace Process since the Camp David Accords of 1979, particularly after the Cold War (Tarnoff and Nowels, 15 April 2004: 5).

According to Lancaster, peace making in the Middle East, which began in the mid-1970s and included large-scale assistance to Israel and Egypt, was the basis for broad support for foreign aid across the political spectrum (Lancaster, 2008:10).

The US administration has tried to use US economic and military assistance as a tool in its efforts to mediate international disputes, so that assistance to the Middle East in the last years of the 1970s can be considered in this context (Gordon, July/August 1979: 34).

It can be said that starting from 1965, the levels of foreign aid to the region began to decline significantly, and by 1970, the levels of foreign aid to the Middle East had dropped significantly, resulting in an almost 80% decline in economic aid. But, by the 1970s, however, for ten years Middle East have seen a significant increase in US aid. So that the Middle East has become the region that has received the most US aid since the 1970s (Sharp, 13 June 2005: 3-4).

In the context of its main objective to prevent a new war in the Middle East; The Ford Administration provided aid to both Israel and Egypt, persuading both countries to agree to a interim ceasefire agreement (The White House, https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/gerald-r-ford/).

According to David F. Gordon, when Israel and Egypt took the final steps to sign a peace treaty in the spring of 1979, the offer of American aid was an important incentive for peace, especially for the Egyptians (Gordon, July/August 1979: 1).

It is evaluated that the US's promise giving aid to Israel and Egypt, in the negotiations held in the late 1970s, enabled both countries to make the necessary efforts for peace (Sharp, 13 June 2005: 2).

In the Reagan period, it is seen that Israel and Egypt, two Middle East country, shared the first two places in the list of countries receiving foreign

aid in terms of US foreign aid (Congressional Quarterly, November 24, 1984:3003; Congressional Quarterly, January 17, 1987: 115).

Throughout the 1990s, the Middle East has maintained this priority in US aid (Sharp, 13 June 2005: 6). And as Jeremy Sharp mentions, from the Camp David accords to the early 2000s, US aid levels have remained relatively consistent. For over two decades, the top three regional recipients of US aid have been Israel, Egypt, and Jordan (Sharp, 13 June 2005: 5).

As Morgenstern and Brown note about the orientations of US foreign aid in the period after September 11, 2001, "*Key foreign assistance trends since 2001 include growth in development aid, particularly global health programs; increased security assistance directed toward U.S. allies for anti-terrorism efforts; and high levels of humanitarian assistance to address a range of crises*" (Morgenstern and Brown, 10 January 2022).

And today, when we evaluate US aid on a Middle Eastern scale, it seems that the three countries; Israel, Egypt and Jordan share the top three places after Afghanistan (Congressional Research Service, 18 January 2022, https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/IF10183.pdf).

4.Conclusion

"Foreign Aid" has certain goals both from the point of view of donor states and recipients. Foreign aid can be economic, as well as military, humanitarian and similar assistance. However, foreign aid is an important instrument of foreign policy, regardless of what field it is given, economic or military. It plays an important role in the realization of foreign policy goals.

The United States has systematically used foreign aid as an instrument of its foreign policy since the beginning of the Cold War era. Although the purposes of using foreign aid in US foreign policy varied depending on changes in the international arena along with the process, it was most basically carried out within the framework of the national interest.

The Middle East has always been of central importance in the orientation of foreign aid expressed by all US administrations from the Truman administration to the present, where it is primarily carried out in the national interest and national security. The US administrations allocated the largest proportion of foreign aid to the Middle East. In the Middle East, on the other hand, Israel and Egypt have always been in the first place among the recipients of US foreign aid.

It can be said that, although the purposes and amount of US aid vary in the context of geopolitical and geostrategic changes and transformations in the international arena, the Middle East has always kept its importance in the focus of US foreign aid.

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9

The Question of Americanism and US Supremacy and the Enigma of the Middle East

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1.Introduction

I n another work, I have argued that cultures often establish the way some nations see other nations around the world. Cultures, to be sure, reflect nations' traditions, conventions, norms, practices and beliefs. For, in a way, peoples live in a cultural web that binds them together and simultaneously can set them apart by adopting certain stereotypes as part of commonly accepted cultural references. The most superseding ones among those come from the way certain people determine how to see the rest of the world, and at times they blind some to different ways of seeing it. Socio-political and socio-cultural characteristics such as these are deeply rooted in an array of commonly sophisticated cultural values to a degree that questioning them edges into a major questioning of how the world is seen by "the other," and how the world sees this "other."

Albeit, following 9/11, 2001, for instance, the Arab Muslim Middle East was occupied in a complex-in-demands initiative to develop new ways (cultural and otherwise) towards a better understanding of the region and its peoples, believing that much of the prevailing East-West misunderstanding largely stems from discontentment of Western policies (including the American without doubt) (1). Similar efforts have been performed in the West as Colleges and Universities developed new course offerings in Middle-Eastern Studies for that purpose.

In my view, people's differences are mainly political and are not cultural or religious, as some suggest. In a way, cultural and religious argumentations are used to justify political endeavors. The Arab-Israeli divergence remains an indelible point of controversy and dispute between the West and the Arab and Muslim World so much so that a fair and just peace in the region (to be referred to hereinafter as ME) would undoubtedly reduce political, cultural and intellectual misunderstanding among its peoples(2). Albeit, as

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those differences appear to be political in character, it is crucial to observe that notions such as these serve to make them universal as well.

My intention, in the present work, however, is to critically assess the inferences of America's pioneering role as a global super power and at the same time examine its relationship with the rest of the world, particularly the Arab Muslim Middle East. In considering this latter issue, it is also vital to look at some of the ways in which America's supremacy, preeminence, ascendancy, primacy, superiority, domination and dominance, as examples, are actually concealed within the broader context of the larger international hemisphere. In assessing this latter issue, it is important, I believe, to look at some of the ways in which America's supremacy (or whatever one would believe it to be) is actually obscured within the wider context of the distinction between the international and national spheres.

Diverse approaches to American studies as a field of academic study, which accentuate the way in which it is viewed through political conflicts and cultural differences in relation to such terms as "exceptionalism," "expansionism," "super identity," "outstandingness," and "supremacy," to mention just a few, look at this field of knowledge as a tool for defining things American that include the American character, the American mind and culture, which have produced it.

Another relevant purpose of this article is to see how the American national identity has been received beyond the US, in other parts of the world, and how this entire situation connects with the interpretation of American exceptionalism and supremacy that, in a sense, are inextricably intertwined. Culturally and economically speaking, America has always been keen on distinguishing itself as a global super power different from and on top of all other nations, and its involvement in world affairs is constantly accompanied by some kind of distinctiveness reflecting its own national ideals as exceptional, a fact which unwittingly edges into an imperialist function that threatens the "ideal" standing of the republic across other nations in the four corners of the globe.

Alongside those notions of expansionism and incomparability, Americans have in turn assumed, in assessing other nations and cultures, that the US experience of development should be followed as a leading model of global application. Thus, ways of thinking and re-thinking about America's function in world affairs remain steadfastly shrouded in American power and might. President Wilson, for a useful starting point here, led America into World War I to "fight…for democracy [and] for the rights and liberties of small nations [to] bring peace and safety…and make the world itself …free." President Wilson's call for a resilient American presence in

international affairs through a strong economy and a supreme culture continues to grow down the road, and it has become even grander ever since.

2. An Historical and Intellectual Review

In his conspicuous 1961 inaugural speech, President John F. Kennedy, on the other hand, declared, as example: "America would pay any price…to assure the survival…of liberty." Whether factual or not, in emphasizing typically American attitudes such as these, my purpose is to show the way Americans have conceptualized their relationship with the rest of the world to contextualize the way America has been envisioned in certain fields of human knowledge and simultaneously see how it has affected the ways America has been looked at as a country, beyond her borders.

On a more personal level, however, I have devoted the last thirty years of my academic career as an Arab Americanist to analyzing the diverse aspects of the discourse of American supremacy in an attempt to show the over-exceptionalness of American studies as an academic field of study, eventually to determine that the question of American exceptionality and its miscellaneous ramifications (political and otherwise) can best be portrayed in socio-political terms of reference that have compelled many Americans to renounce exceptions that endangered their opinions (if not stereotypes). In other words, the discourse of exceptionalism has structured and standardized Americans' reactions to global issues and international affairs ranging from the Soviet communism, to North Korean socialism, to the so-called "Islamic terrorism" all the way down to Iranian extremism and Saudi fundamentalism, so to speak.

Be this complex-in-demands situation as it may, the recent presidential US administrations and the American studies discourse thereof subsequently have, in my view, failed to change the dominant high-handed authoritarian image of America beyond its borders. It was arduous a matter to do so for the administration of George Bush (senior), the Bill Clinton's down the road, the George W. Bush's (junior) and eventually Obama's administration as it has obviously been more so for the administration of Donald Trump more recently; for this failure is structural in nature. In addition, the change I am speaking of here has to be real in terms of form and content other than a public-relations change in outward look, so to speak, (how people make pleasant expressions and exchange greetings with one another before the cameras)!

America has, to be sure, succeeded in forming an image of itself as a humanitarian (and racism free) country, but failed to encompass frenzied

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and problematic situations in the rest of the world because of the limited (but typical) politically structural options that are available for the administrators. The cold war on a potentially nuclear Iran, for instance, would make it a hard reality for Americans to accept, though hoping that this situation can still be changed at a later point in time. Nevertheless, different US governments have managed to make Iran busy all the way through possibly in an attempt to takeover Syria, in a way, and have Russia out of this political strategy charade--so to speak.

Following the deconstruction of the Soviet Union Republic and the surfacing of the European Union instead, America apparently lost an alarmingly threatening Soviet enemy, and the new conditions carried with them indications of US unmatched, unequaled, unrivalled superiority, not to say preeminence. For the dismantling of the Soviet Union required an essential restructuring of the US in the global arena. Thus American outstandingness forced a new and more powerful world order to meet the ever-rising demands of a newly restructured world that requires a new (but overruling) US presence within international powers, laws and cultures.

But the steps were slippery; American exceptionalness soon slips into what can only be called US imperialism. Displacing the American nation-state, globalization starts to implore a massive reconfiguration of the world at large and, unwittingly perhaps, attention begins to shift away from US culture per se to an immense network of commercial, political and cultural forces instead (3).

 Labeled as " Globalization," at one time, "Internationalization," at another, and as "Globalism," at a third time, Americanization has sneaked into ME bringing a pack of astounding, confounding and overwhelming promises and vocabularies, such as democracy, liberalization, humanization and diversity, to mention just a few, which call for feeling at ease, being civilized, communicating with others, accepting them and respecting their opinions, regardless of their creed, race, language and sex. For this belief is believed to put an end to "despotism," "primitiveness," "terrorism" and "fanaticism," to choose only few words!

In turn, words such as these have become an important part of the Middle Easterners' cultural and political heritage or the sociopolitical heritage. Descending from a new politically oriented discourse that differs in terms of time, personality and objective, these words are slippery and their surface meaning is often in sharp disagreement with the inner (4). The freedom fighters and defenders of their countries and compatriots, for instance, have become devils and savages who by no means fit in any civilized and developed human society. These fighters

are thought of as a potential threat not only to their society, but to the whole world as well.

3. Argumentation and Investigation

In fact, many Americans and Americanists in this network of globalization speak the same language and have a unilateral vision: Freedom fighters and defenders of their rights are, in their view, "devils" who are opposed to that vision, along which most countries in the Middle East have adopted the World Trade Organization measures of economic liberalization without question. Such an acceptance, as unfair as it is, is probably the product of anticipations related to the promised economic stability and prosperity pinned on globalization (i.e., Americanization). In spite of this imposed acceptance, however, nations of the ME have been looking askance at globalization. The reason for this is that they know well that their compliance with a foreign culture will detrimentally affect their own, an exposure that threatens the promising values they have been living up to for a long period of time.

Conscious of its potential threat, nations often take a fear-marked stand towards globalization simply for its being an American creation. Their fear has been growing even greater because economic liberalization connected with WTO has been generating larger poverty than economic dynamism and democratic and economic reform! This argument turns out to be true of countries such as the Sudan, Somalia and Libya, often described as being the least globalized ones in ME . Compared to these countries, Egypt is a little more globalized and its economy has been improving steadily, and Jordan has been making great strides along this path by opening its economy to world trade and approving of privatization as a common standard feature of globalization.

Such approval introduces a new economic policy that enhances, in turn, the role of the private sector in the national economy. Divided by political tensions and pressures, these countries were ironically deprived of the blessings of globalization. Instead of being able to make economically ample use of foreign investments, they, together with similar world countries, have become wide open markets for the blooming American goods including Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola, Burger King, Pop Eyes, Papa Jones, Star Bucks, Donuts, Max Factor, Maybelline, GM, Buick, Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren --to mention only a few examples for that purpose.

This view suggests that globalization has been only serving the welfares of an internationally leading, dominant power (i.e., the United States of

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America), subordinate to which are the developing countries (including ME) whose interests are less served because most transactions are intended to work for those of the Super Power, since they cannot but be her markets in the last analysis. Often, albeit, underdeveloped countries are to be blamed for being incapable of partaking in globalization (and, therefore, Americanization) to create just and productive economic opportunities among them as the situation is intended to do (5).

Because of its association with globalization, Americanization too becomes a multicultural norm, fostering a common understanding of the relationship between the underdeveloped and the more developed, more powerful international communities and countries in the four corners of the globe.

Be the previous standpoint as it may, Americanists and academic specialists of American studies have ignored America's forgotten imperial past while simultaneously focusing their research on advocating for the global economy, politics and socio-politics away from humanly crucial issues such as the refugees, homeless and stateless people (such as the Syrians, Iraqis and Yemenis, as examples, now escapees in neighboring countries like Jordan and Turkey).

This sophisticated, difficult and complex situation has led to a new awareness of America's global preeminence, politically speaking, that has hardly moved beyond the typical discourse of exclusion or supremacy obliterated by the national security priorities or demands in any way (6).

The implementation of globalization as the basis for the creation and scrutiny of new international affairs has as well shown a dire need in the US for a stronger discourse of exceptionality aimed at producing yet another configuration of economic and global power that overlook the exceptions to market regulations and international laws US leading, front-line think-tank people have created to give the US further (yet greater) economic benefits and supremacy in the global economy beyond the rule of the law and common regulations.

Therefore, Americanists (myself included) have failed to accommodate the discourse of US exceptionality by implementing the fundamental and ideal values of the American civil society, those of freedom and liberty and justice and democracy, regardless of race, ethnicity and religion. Americanists, in my view, have destabilized (if not demoralized) the ways in which America can activate the political powers needed to improve and relieve the economic odds and inequalities that globalization has stimulated, focusing instead on the US as the sole global example of dominance and control

within the global order without explaining how the US has hindered the accomplishments of other nations and communities outside America. Nor has modern American literature, for this purpose, done a better job (7).

Hence, American supremacy and superiority cannot be best described but as a tool that has always masked America's immersion in a world it seemed to rule. Following 9/11, to be sure, the American response to the incidents of the Pentagon and the World Trade Center and superseded common accounts of the American that have once more emphasized its global domination. The George Bush's strong manifestations of force in the global scene resulted in new rules of homeland security as an always powerful, always leading country of exclusion whose new national motto becomes even more alarming: "If you are not with us, you are against us!"

An enormous amount of complex-in-demands issues, concerns, topics and problems is embedded in the so-called "American exceptionalness." The "exception" that George Bush initiated, for instance, in proclaiming a massive war on terror carried with it, among other things, a feeling that eventually turned out to be dissimilar from Obama's sense of exceptionalism has boosted in a presidential campaign promising to carry an unsurpassed change in US international policies and affairs down the road. Both of these promises, so to speak, considerably differ from the common American outstandingness grounded in an intellectual aspiration to liberate Americanists worldwide from the widespread US "exceptionality" model and its discourse.

President Obama's sense of "American exceptionalism," therefore, outlined an understanding of Bush's relinquishment of related ramifications. Bush's view of the word was demonstrated in its intense encirclement of the US's colonial history as the root for its understanding of supremacy. Obama's presidential campaign speech discourse expressed, for this matter, its concern with exceptionalism this way: "Where else but in America could a man with [Obama's] story aspire to become President?" suggesting that President Bush's has ceased, in a way.

That being said, President Bush's insistence on majestic motivations hardly accomplishes liberating familiar American values and culture from an on-going controversy of the American exceptionalism implications and the assumption that America has in fact been practicing imperialism, more or less, and the state of exception manifested in a stately discourse of American exceptionalism has negatively reflected on American studies and Americanism inside and outside the US, thus eliminating American claims for the US to be a super, ideal model of fairness and democracy.

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This empire-building notion is recently made even worse and pushed to its furthest possible extremes under President Donald Trump! In a recent CNN interview, he straightforwardly declares, referring to the Arab Gulf countries and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in particular: "We [Americans] need to take oil from them. Yes, we need to take it from them. They are corrupt countries! They [the Gulf countries] gotta pay us. Yes, they gotta pay us! I mean it. Without us, they won't even exist. They're no sovereign countries. Sovereign? Give me a break!" Thus, from an imperialistic standpoint, not only other countries are denied control over their natural resources of oil, but their sovereignty as independent states and members of the UN becomes a bitterly questionable truism, if not an absent one!

As exceptionalism institutes the concept of an realm that internationalizes the "distinctiveness" of its colonial traditions, a scrupulous scrutiny of its structures would without doubt lead to the assumption that such exceptionalism is what makes the US colonial power peculiar, let alone other problematic issues along this path of understanding such as racism, prejudice, chauvinism and the geopolitical grounds in which it is embedded. To develop a subtle understanding of America as an imposing power, it is the unfortunate reality that one needs to become more aware of her role toward having absolute control over the world's natural resources and rich countries including the policy of extending the rule or influence over other countries or "colonies."

Americans often see America as an exceptional country. Be this confab as it may, however, some Americanists argue that America should maintain the present international order. But others, on the other hand, disagree with the commitment of the US to this American dominance and the supremacy in which it is embedded. They preferred to argue that American dominance should encourage economic growth and the spread of democracy worldwide instead. For that, American power and exceptionality are seen as grounded in the common belief that the United States is an internationally leading country committed to the freedom and independence of the countries of the world. It is exceptional because its liberal ethos and ideological vision are placed in political, economic and social liberty of the world.

To be sure, for some, American exceptionalism seems to be a useful tool for invading other countries and imposing governments, more or less. For others, it is a political ambition for a democratic and peaceful world that guards freedom, law and order. But, the question remains whether or not America can effectively address its outstanding international role as a global power without bias, prejudice or military interference. And, for this matter, can any American administration encourage the spread of democracy

without power exerted over others; a leap most needed today, more than ever before, for international mutual trust and understanding?

4.Conclusion

In conclusion, nations should build bridges of trust and respect instead of walls of segregation and exclusion. For their differences are NOT cultural, nor are they religious--by any means. They are political, and the political insinuations are at the core of the matter that at once needs to be instantly investigated, for the last time, to reach a fair, just and unbiased understanding of human and international relations at large (8). For that, American studies and Americanists, therefore, would be better positioned to re-consider the ways in which the land of exception, the American dream and success would prohibit (rather than support) the creation of any kind of state injustice and supremacy.

More recently, on May 25, 2020, to be exact, in an occurrence that best recalls Ralph Ellison's black hero, the "Invisible Man," kneeing on the neck of their prey, four white policemen cruelly and inhumanly got involved a brutal killing of mid-aged African American, George Floyd, in a recent Minnesota chaos, leading to a terrible misdemeanor, under the pretext of enforcing law and order, a dreadful act of killing inducing high sense of bigotry and prejudice! George Floyd's miserable death and last utterances, surrendering to his miserable fate, "I cannot breathe," remain a very gloomy story suggesting, among other things, savage abuse of an innocent soul! The final question in the end: Can George Floyd's murder serve as a useful turning point in the history of the US to restructure and adhere to the common American ideals of justice and fairness?

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[1] For a comprehensive historical and intellectual investigation, see my recently published e-book, *American Literature and Orientalism* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag and Walter de Gruyter, 2021). See, as well, my article, "Anglo-American Literary Sources on the Muslim Orient: The Roots and the Reiterations." *The Journal of American Studies of Turkey*, no.13 (2001): 47-72, for a detailed historical background discussion of this theme.

[2] See Edward W. Said's book, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), and Amrit Singh's, ed., *Interviews with Edward W. Said* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004). Also helpful is Philip Hitti's book, *Islam and the West* (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1962) and Norman Daniel's, *Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1960).

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[3] For an extensive and scrupulous analysis of the question of imperialism (American and otherwise), see Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*, [First Vintage Books Edition, 1994, copyright 1993], which offers a critically rigorous discussion of post-colonialism and of the empire imperative in political and socio-political discourse. In this book, Said looks at "the disputed value of knowledge about imperialism . . . [as] a compellingly important and interesting configuration in the world of power and nations." He also suggests "that in the past decade[s] the extraordinarily intense reversion to … religious sentiments all over the world has accompanied and deepened many of the discrepancies among polities that have continued since…the period of…European imperialism" (p. 35). Other works to consider looking at here are Josef Joffe's *The Imperial Temptation of America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006) and Tyrrell's "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History," *American Historical Review* 96 (1991): 1031–55.

4] Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) is a classic that explores connections between Western imperialism and culture reflecting representations of "The Arab Muslim East" and the societies and peoples who inhabit the places of ME, Asia and North Africa. According to Said, Orientalist work is inherently political in nature and subservient to Western supremacy.

[5] For a more elaborate and in-depth analysis on this point as well as the question of globalization and its relation to Americanization, cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, see my co-authored article, "Globalization in the Arab World: A Pack of Promises," *Asian Academic Research Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 4, # 5 (May 2047): 12-18 and my other article "Beyond American Borders: the Middle East and the Enigma of Anti-American Sentiments in the Aftermath of 9/11," *American Studies Today*, no. 18 (2009): 14-21. (Liverpool John Moores University, England).

[6] See on this point my article, "The Reception of American Culture in the Middle East after the Arab Spring," *Canadian Social Science Journal* 7, no.5 (October 2011), for a discussion of American studies and its political and literary discourse about ME.

[7] My article entitled "The Cultural Context of American Literature: A Barrier or a Bridge to Understanding?" *The Journal of American Studies of Turkey*, no. 4 (1996): 37-44, can be helpful on this point.

[8] For a more thorough, in-depth elaboration on this issue, see my article "Cultures in Contact: How Education and Cultural Studies Help Obliterate Unnecessary Perpetuation of Cross-Cultural Misunderstanding between the USA and the Arab World." *Studies in Language and Literature* 3, no.1 (August 2011): 23-29. here, I suggest that common educational resources should be devoted to helping the West gain access to other nations' history, philosophy, education, religion, manners and ethics, both in the Western hemisphere and in ME countries.

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10

NATO's Enlargement Policy and the Middle East

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1. Introduction

Considering that NATO has been pursuing an enlargement policy since its foundation, there have always been questions about whether there will be limits to NATO's enlargement? how long and to whom the door opened by NATO to new members will remain open?

Considering the enlargement of NATO in three separate periods, namely the "Cold War", the "post-Cold War (1990s)" and the 2000s, we can say that NATO's willingness to enlargement has shown an upward trend within the "post-Cold War".

However, as of the third decade of 2000s, it is not very predictable what kind of direction NATO enlargement will show after the membership of North Macedonia in 2020, considering that the wave of enlargement after the great enlargement in 2004 has not continued at the same pace.

The main question here arises as follows: how will NATO's door, which is open for new memberships, show a position in the new international dynamics of the rapidly changing international system at the beginning of the 2020s, when we are in the third decade of the 2000s?

In the international system of the 2000s, NATO, in an effort to adapt itself to the changing international conditions, includes the problems that pose a security threat on a global scale today, within its scope of work, and acts in search of solutions for these problems.

In this context, it is evaluated in the international arena that NATO is gradually turning into a global security organization.

At this point, the following question comes to mind; Is the enlargement of NATO, which is observed to be taking the change and transformation of

its mission and vision to a global dimension, going to be on a global scale today?

Based on this, if the enlargement is to be of a global nature, then will NATO's relations at the "partnership" level with Middle Eastern countries be able to move to the "membership" level within the framework of partnership platforms such as the "Mediterranean Dialogue" (MD) and the "Istanbul Cooperation Initiative" (ICI), which NATO has paid special attention to in recent years? the question is appears as a question that is looking for an answer.

2. NATO's Enlargement Policy

It can be said that since its establishment as an international organization for collective defense on 4 April 1949, as a result of the "North Atlantic Treaty" signed in Washington by twelve countries with the participation of ten West Europe countries and Canada led by the US, NATO has actually always been enlarging in the context of the participation of the new members. Considering NATO's enlargement process, which is an ongoing and dynamic process, from a chronological perspective, it can be seen that the Alliance has undergone eight rounds of enlargement since its establishment in 1949. And as a result of these eight rounds of enlargement NATO members increased 12 to 30 since 1949 (NATO, 05 May 2020).

It can be stated that NATO has been pursuing an expansion policy since its establishment on April 4, 1949, and the "open door policy" is also the first step of this enlargement policy pursued by NATO.

> "NATO's "open door policy" is based upon Article 10 of its founding treaty", the "North Atlantic Treaty" (commonly known as the "Washington Treaty") (NATO, 10 April 2019; NATO, 05 May 2020).

> "Article 10 of the Washington Treaty", "which states that membership is open to any "European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area"," was formed basis of the "open door policy" of NATO (NATO, 05 May 2020).

Although NATO enlargement based on the Article 10 of the "*North Atlantic Treaty*", when enlargement process is evaluated, it should be noted that most of the enlargement of NATO occured in post-Cold War years. NATO's enlargement became more intense with the end of the Cold War, with increasing number of the new member countries joining.

It is considered that the possibility of further enlargement of NATO has opened up with the Cold War period's end (NATO, 24 September 2020), so much so that developments in the process show that this assessment is not very wrong.

During the Cold War, NATO enlargement happened in 1952, 1955 and 1982, while after the Cold War, enlargement process took place in the years: 1999, 2004, 2009, 2017 and 2020 (NATO, 05 May 2020).

In 1949, there were 12 founding members of the NATO which were: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States (US). And in 1952 Turkey and Greece became the members of NATO, in 1955 Germany and in 1982 Spain became the members of NATO (NATO, 24 September 2020) .

At the beginning of the 1990s, there were different assessments within NATO about enlargement. However, within the process, the opinion has prevailed among NATO members that NATO should enlarge and that it will increase stability in the region where it is enlarging (Doğan, 2005: 96).

While the Brussels Summit held in 1994 was defined as a historical turning point for the Alliance, a principle decision has been taken at the summit regarding the opening of the organization to the new members (Wörner, Mart 1994: 3).

The opening of doors to new members has been stated in the "*Declaration of the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council (The Brussels Summit Declaration)*" with the following words:

> "*We reaffirm that the Alliance, as provided for in Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, remains open to membership of other European states in a position to further the principles of the Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area*" (NATO, 26 August 2010).

> *In 8 July 1997, in the Madrid Summit, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were invited by NATO to start the accession negotiations with the organization. And additionally in the sum it it was reaffirmed that "NATO remains open to new members under Article 10 of the Washington Treaty"* (NATO, 08 July 1997).

In 1997, in September and November, "*Accession talks were held with each of the three invited countries. At the end of the process, letters of intent were*

sent by the three countries confirming commitments undertaken during the talks"(NATO, 1999).

In 16 December 1997, NATO Foreign Ministers signed Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty on the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary's accession. And, "*During 1998, Allied countries ratified the Protocols of Accession according to their national procedures.*" And on 12 March 1999, "*after completion of their own national legislative procedures, the Foreign Ministers of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland deposited instruments of accession to the North Atlantic Treaty in a ceremony in Independence, Missouri, United States. This marked their formal entry into the Alliance*"(NATO, 1999).

Thus, the process of NATO membership of these three countries was completed, during which bilateral negotiations were held in the fall of 1997 and accession protocols were signed on 16 December 1997.

The Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, which were invited in the 1997 Madrid Summit to begin membership talks with NATO (NATO, 08 July 1997), officially became new members of the organization in the 1999 Washington Summit (NATO, 06 November 2008).

The wave of enlargement after NATO's enlargement in 1999 was experienced at the Prague Summit in 2002, the largest enlargement decision was made at the Summit since the establishment of NATO. Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria and Estonia were officially invited to membership (NATO, 22 November 2002).

Speaking at the opening of the Prague Summit, the then secretary general of the NATO, George Robertson, said that Prague Summit is a transformation summit for the Alliance, stressing that the world is facing new challenges after September 11, 2001 (NATO, 21 November 2002). In his speech, he also drew attention to the expansion of NATO, stating the reason for the expansion with the words:

> "*Today, NATO will demonstrate that a transformed and modernised Alliance is at the very heart of the free world's response. We have the organisation, the military capabilities and the will to deal with threats to our people and our security from wherever they may come. We are by far the world's largest permanent coalition of free democratic nations.*

That is why NATO is enlarging, extending invitations to countries across Europe to enter into accession talks" (NATO, 21 November 2002).

Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, which were invited to start negotiations of accession to NATO at the 2002 Prague Summit, officially became members of the Alliance on March 29, 2004, thus marking the largest enlargement wave in the history of NATO (NATO, 24 September 2020).

After the largest enlargement in 2004, NATO's enlargement continued with the process. Although there was not such a large-scale accession after the memberships in 2004, when we look at the new memberships from 2004 to the present, Albania and Croatia which were both signed the Accession Protocols in July 2008, became the official members of NATO on 1 April 2009 (NATO, 24 September 2020). And on 5 June 2017, Montenegro became member of NATO (NATO, 24 September 2020). And on 27 March 2020, Republic of North Macedonia became NATO's 30th member. (NATO, 24 September 2020).

3. NATO Enlargement and the Middle East

While US President Trump said, "I think NATO should be expanded and we should include the Middle East," in an interview he gave to journalists on January 8, 2020, he also made a new definition that he called "NATOME" in this context. In his statement, Trump said that when he talked about the issue with Secretary General of the NATO, he told him a name, by indicating the dialogue that took place between him and the Secretary General; *"And I actually had a name — "NATO," right? And then you have "M.E." — Middle East. You'll call it "NATOME." I said*" he said (White House, 9 January 2020).

After this interview, almost everyone began to think that NATO would open the doors to membership in Middle Eastern countries, but which soon became clear that this was not the case.

However, when the statement from the White House came without delay that the statements in Trump's speech were not related to the membership of Middle Eastern countries in NATO, it became clear that the idea that the door to NATO membership in Middle Eastern countries had been opened was not very valid.

Shortly after Trump's announcement, a White House official clarified that Trump wasn't calling for adding new alliance members from the Middle East but rather reiterating his demand that NATO do more in the region (Leary and Marson, 9 January 2020).

Following Trump's statement which he mentioned at the press conference that he and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg had talked about "NATOME", NATO made a statement on the subject. In the statement made by NATO, it was announced that a phone call was held between Jens Stoltenberg, the secretary general of NATO and the US president Donald Trump on Wednesday, 8 January 2020, about the situation in the region and the developments in the Middle East, where the role of NATO was discussed. In the statement, it was stated that the President asked the Secretary General for NATO's more involvement in the Middle East, while in the same statement, noted, the US President Trump and the NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg "*agreed that NATO could contribute more to regional stability and the fight against international terrorism*". It was also stated that they agreed on this issue and decided to stay in close contact (NATO, 08 January 2020).

A statement by the White House also stated that, "*in his call, Trump "emphasized the value of NATO increasing its role in preventing conflict and preserving peace in the Middle East.""* (Reuters, 09 January 2020).

After his speech, Trump's statements on NATO's enlargement were discussed intensively on the international agenda, and although it is understood from the statements of NATO and the White House that Trump did not make a statement regarding the membership of the Middle East countries to NATO, it can be said that after Trump's statement the issue of NATO enlargement has also been raised again.

In today's world in the 2020s, the question of what direction the expansion of NATO, by adding new members to its body, will take in this dynamic transformation process, which has undergone a great change both in terms of mission and vision, and which can be easily expressed that it is going through, comes to mind.

In this context, at the point reached since its establishment in April 1949 as an international organization for military defense purposes, today NATO takes global-scale security issues into its working agenda as if it were a global security organization.

Will NATO, which has shown a change by focusing on global-scale issues within the scope of its subject areas of work, also show such a change within the scope of memberships? will it open the doors of membership to all countries in the global space? and if there is going to be a global enlargement, then what about the Middle East's place in this enlargement? These questions also come to mind.

Although it cannot be evaluated in the context of membership, "partnerships" are of great importance in the evaluation of NATO-Middle East relations.

Chris Donnelly's assessment can be considered in this context. In this regard Chris Donnelly suggests that: "*The divide between "Allies" and "Partners" needs to close rapidly. Allies' security can only be assured by close collaboration with Partners in Central and Eastern Europe and the Greater Middle East as well as with each other*"(Donolley, 01 January 2004).

It is also possible to draw an inference from this assessment of Donnelly about the importance of "partnerships" at the same time.

Although it will be seen with the process whether the partnerships will turn into memberships, it may also be considered as a possibility that they will initially form the basis for membership.

Therefore, it can be said that in order to make an assessment of whether NATO's relations with Middle Eastern countries will reach the stage of membership in the future, NATO's partnership relations with Middle Eastern countries should first be evaluated.

In this context, when we evaluate the two Middle East partnerships of NATO, the "Mediterranean Dialogue" (MD) and the "Istanbul Cooperation Initiative" (ICI), we see that Middle East cooperation process of NATO began in 1994 with MD.

MD, which "*aims to contribute to security and stability in NATO's Mediterranean and North African neighbourhood, and promote good relations and understanding among participating countries and NATO Allies*"(NATO, 06 December 2021) was established mainly as a partnership forum in 1994. MD already consists of, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia which are non-NATO countries (NATO, 06 December 2021). Considering the participation in the "Mediterranean Dialogue" launched in December 1994, it can be seen that the countries: Egypt, Israel, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia were the first joined in 1995, then in 1997 Jordan joined and Algeria joined in 2000 (NATO, 06 December 2021).

And the ICI, as it defined by NATO: "*The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) is a partnership forum that aims to contribute to long-term global and regional security by offering non-NATO countries in the broader Middle East region the opportunity to cooperate with NATO*"(NATO, 02 December 2021).

Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the four countries which are the participants of the "Gulf Cooperation Council", are currently the participants of the ICI (NATO, 02 December 2021).

The ICI was established at 2004 Istanbul Summit of the NATO. As emphasized at the Istanbul Summit, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative was launched for cooperation with Middle Eastern countries (NATO, 28 June 2004). In the context of its aim to increase security in the region through bilateral relations, it can be said that ICI is considered the main instrument of cooperation with the Middle East for NATO.

Regarding the purpose of the ICI, in "Istanbul Summit Communiqué Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council" has been stated that:

> *"We have today also decided to offer cooperation to the broader Middle East region by launching our "Istanbul Cooperation Initiative". This initiative is offered by NATO to interested countries in the region, starting with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, to foster mutually beneficial bilateral relationships and thus enhance security and stability. The initiative focuses on practical cooperation where NATO can add value, notably in the defence and security fields"* (NATO, 28 June 2004).

Considering how MD and ICI will play a role in future orientation of the NATO, it can be said that the points mentioned about both initiatives at the NATO Summit in 2010 shed light on the issue.

In the new "Strategic Concept" of NATO adopted at the NATO's 2010 Lisbon Summit, it is seen that these two institutional frameworks are referred to (NATO, 23 May 2012), and that relations will be further improved within this framework.

In the "Active Engagement, Modern Defence Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation adopted by Heads of State and Government in Lisbon" it was stated:

> *"deepen the cooperation with current members of the Mediterranean Dialogue and be open to the inclusion in the Mediterranean Dialogue of other countries of the region;*
>
> *develop a deeper security partnership with our Gulf partners and remain ready to welcome new partners in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative"* (NATO, 23 May 2012).

In this context, it can be said that "Partnership for Peace" (PfP) cooperation was a priority for the Alliance in the 1990s, but based on the statements at the 2010 Lisbon Summit, in particular, the "Mediterranean Dialogue" (MD) and the "Istanbul Cooperation Initiative" (ICI) will play an increasingly significant role for NATO in the context of relations with the Middle East.

4.Conclusion

According to Marc Grossman "*… NATO enlargement is a means of achieving NATO's core purposes, and will contribute to NATO's continuing dynamism as the core security…*"(Grossman, March 2002:8).

It can be said that this assessment made by Grossman presents the principles of NATO's enlargement policy.

Considering NATO's enlargement policy within the framework of this assessment, the importance of considering enlargement in a historical context is also revealed.

When NATO was formed with the participation of the 12 countries which are: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States in 1949 (NATO, 24 September 2020), the international system was dominated by Cold War dynamics. In the international conjuncture of the era, NATO was formed as an international organization for collective defense purposes.

When the Cold War ended in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union, NATO went through a change and transformation in order to adapt itself to the new international structure of the new era. Having pursued an "open door" policy within the framework of enlargement since its inception, NATO's doors have been opened to the Central and the East Europe countries for membership on the axis of NATO's change and transformation since the early 1990s.

While the 1990s were the years when enlargement was one of the priority issues of NATO with these new memberships, it can be said that the issue of enlargement remained important on the NATO agenda in 2000s.

Especially from the Cold War period's end to the present day, although enlargement has been one of NATO's priority issues, it can be said that, the issue of enlargement has always contained question marks.

And again, it can be said that the focus of these questions was on the questions of who will enter through the NATO membership door? and how long the door will remain open for enlargement?

In addition, it is another question that comes to mind that NATO's enlargement will open the doors of membership to countries in which regions of the world.

In mid-1990s, NATO has launched the Partnership for Peace Project (NATO, 23 March 2020) and the Mediterranean Dialogue (NATO, 06 December 2021) initiatives. And in 2004, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative was launched (NATO, 02 December 2021). NATO has established relations with non-member states through partnerships within the framework of these initiatives. The partnership relations formed by these initiatives have also been structures that shed light on the possibilities in the international community's search for answers to questions about who will be the next members of NATO's enlargement process.

Here, one of the possibilities on the agenda for who the new members will be has been that Middle Eastern countries may be. In this context, the question of whether the relations at the partnership level will pass to the membership level has become the main one.

However, statements about enlargement in the summit declarations, statements made by NATO officials on enlargement indicate that the membership of Middle Eastern countries in NATO is not yet an issue on NATO's agenda. Therefore, it can be said that, at least for the near future, such a possibility does not apply.

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11

The Perspective of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Settlement in the Post-Arab Spring

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1.Introduction

Since the establishment of Israel in the Palestinian territory in 1948, Israel and Arab countries waged several war against each other to consolidate their positions. In order to prevent war and make a permanent peace, they have sometimes negotiated with each other successfully, during more than past 40 years. The U.S. has always had a key role in the negotiations between conflicting parties. However, the sides involved in the conflict are not restricted to the U.S., because the regional actors including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Turkey, and the Islamic Republic of Iran and the transnational actors including the European Union (especially Great Britain, France, and Germany), Russia, and to some extent China have crucial interest in the Palestinian territory and Israel. Nevertheless, the greatest debate in the U.S. foreign policy has been how to resolve the conflict between Israel and Palestine for 50 years (Rynhold, 2009), the U.S. and the other parties have faced seriously and tremendous challenges of finding a solution for this international dispute. Israelis and Palestinians, as two main sides of the conflict, have to deal with six formidable challenges including: 1. Security; 2. Refugee issue; 3. Settlement; 4. Border; 5. Jerusalem; and 6. Water. Needless to say, these daunting challenges combined with various actors involved in the dispute have highly complicated this global problem.

In order to analyze the complication of Palestine-Israel conflict, firstly, the author describes the methods of conflict resolution and then shows how far it is possible to settle Israel-Palestine conflict according to these methods. Moreover, the conflict can be defined as an interactive condition in which the behavior or goals of one party are to some degree incongruous with behaviors or goals of some other party or parties (Rahim, 2010). In

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conflict, in fact, different groups pursue incompatible goals. Therefore, the conflict is composed of three components: action, incompatibility, and actors. So, the conflict could be described as a social state in which at least two parties seek to gain an available set of rare sources simultaneously. There are four main reasons for international conflict including misunderstanding, sensitivity, values, and interest (Whitfield, 2012). The latter causes will be the main objective of this paper.

2. The Methods of Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution, as a comprehensive concept, means the profound sources of disagreement will be met and transformed. In this conditions, the parties behave no longer violently, their views are no longer antagonistic, and the mechanism of the hostilities has been dramatically transformed. Conflict resolution refers to the process to cause these transformations and to the completion of the process (Ramsbotham et al., 2011). Relying on the nature and source of the conflict, there are different methods to settle the conflict: 1) Negotiation; 2) Arbitration; 3) Adjudication; and 4) Mediation.

2.1. Negotiation

Stephenson and Morley (1977) have presented one of the most satisfactory definitions of the negotiation. They describe the negotiation "as any form of verbal (or non-verbal) communication, direct or indirect, whereby parties to a conflict of interest, discuss without resort to arbitration or the other judicial processes, the form of any joint action which they might take to manage a dispute between them" (Bercovitvh & Jackson, 2009: 21). Negotiation can be interpreted as puzzle solving, as a bargaining game, as organizational management, and as diplomatic politics. As puzzle solving, the negotiation has to be solved as a puzzle and game theorists prescribe the solution according to the parties' preferences. Moreover, the negotiation can be viewed as bargaining game, in which parties exchange concession and the situation in which it takes place, has an impact on the exchange. Furthermore, negotiation, as bargaining game, may be explained as a process of seeking consensus among diverse individuals (groups or nations), who have stakes in the results. As diplomatic politics, the negotiation is referred as microcosm of international relations, where parallel interactions or cross linkage among many kinds of diplomatic activities happen, each exerting an influence over the other (Zartman, 2007:113-119). Therefore, the negotiation is a process, in which parties strive for reaching an agreement by exchange of ideas and views.

2.2. Arbitration

In arbitration, an unbiased third party is responsible to provide parties with a decision that allows them to resolve their dispute. Different forms of arbitration can be distinguished by three criteria including 1) whether or not the parties have freely chosen the arbitration; 2) whether or not the parties have reached an agreement to obey from the arbitrator's decision; and 3) whether or not fundamental policy or economic issues are at stake (Schellenberg, 1996: 195).

2.3. Adjudication

Adjudication refers to the function, role or task belonging to permanent and independent judges to declare and enforce the law in order to resolve particular dispute brought before them by issuing legally binding decision based on a predetermined set of rules of procedures (Besson, 2014: 417). It is worth mentioning that international arbitration and adjudication are broadly similar in three general features. First, a third party, not the disputant, determines the conditions of any settlement. Second, the parties agree to respect the ruling before the third party officially announces a decision. Finally, the arbitration and adjudication incorporate principles of the international law which are not necessarily invoked in the other kinds of methods (Gent, 2013: 67).

2.4. Mediation

The most generally accepted definition of mediation presented by Bercovitch (1992). He describes the mediation as:

> *"A process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties' own efforts, where the disputing parties or their representative seek the assistance, or accept an offer of help, from an individual, groups, state or organization to change, affect or influence their perceptions or behavior, without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law" (Yassine-Hamdan & Pearson, 2014: 20).*

In the mediation, third party enters into the process of negotiation. Mediator (third party) is a person, organization or state seeking all relevant methods in a major effort to settle a dispute in a peaceful society (Bank, 1986: 589). The role of mediator is to help both sides in order to communicate effectively and find a solution accepted by parties. However, the lack of willingness to concede by disputants and the lack of motivation to engage in conflict management, achievement of a successful mediation outcome is very unlikely. Moreover, it has to be considered that the result of mediation is non-binding. These characteristics differentiate it from

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other kinds of external interventions like arbitration and adjudication. In fact, the third party has no power to compel disputants to abide by a mediated result. The experience of the international conflict resolution has shown the most disputants will not comply with mediation in the first place if mediation bound them to a result (Bercovitch & Lee, 2003).

The goal of conflict resolution is not to eradicate the conflict which is both out of question and unfavorable rather its goal is to transform actual or potentially violent condition into peaceful process. The ways may be used for conflict resolution are not restricted to above methods, however, four mentioned methods are frequently adopted by national, regional, and international actors to settle disputes. All of these methods are seeking to eliminate the incompatibility of parties' goals to increase the likelihood of conflict settlement.

Given Israel-Palestine conflict, actors involved in the conflict have tried to use negotiation and mediation methods to settle dispute between Israelis and Palestinians, however, their efforts has not led to a permanent peace.

3. Israel-Palestine Conflict

Since 1948 the conflict between Arabs and Jews (or Zionists) called Israel-Arab conflict, however, it is appropriate to describe it as Israel-Palestine conflict in 21st century. As "Moshe Ya'alon", former Israeli defense minister, said "Today, at the present moment, in the meantime, there is not an Israeli-Arab conflict: there is an Israeli-Palestinians conflict" (Keinon, 2019). Nevertheless, the key role of regional actors, especially Arab ones, can never be ignored due to their national and Islamic commitment to protect an absolutely crucial part of Islamic territory. Before dealing with undeniable role of regional and international actors, the leading role of Israel and Palestine in resolving of the conflict over six mentioned issues has to be considered.

3.1. Israel and the conflict

Even after the peace accord with Egypt and Jordan, Israel has adopted an intransigent policy towards Palestinians and has been reluctant to make a substantial concession to Palestinian people in order to meet their demands about six above issues. The occupation of West Bank, since 1967, has been a major obstacle against the peace. By conquering the West Bank, Israeli leaders have wanted to prevent the region from becoming part of much larger Arab state (Rubin, 2017: 9). For sixty years, any mainstream Israeli political parties has not seriously considered the possibility of handing over the control of the West Bank to Palestinians (Mitchel & Sachar, 2016: 57).

Given the fragmentation of the West Bank by Israeli government (Area A, Area B, and Area C), Palestinians living in the West Bank tolerate severe conditions which included: (1) curfew; (2) No political or administrative rights; (3) Living under permanent Israeli surveillance; (4)   Requirements that Palestinians gain licenses from the Israeli government for almost every activity including travel to visit family members; (5) Living under orders of Israeli military; (6) Low quality of housing, educational, employment opportunities for Palestinians compared with Israelis; (7) The expulsion of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza; (8) Severe constraints on Palestinian freedom and harsh penalty for any criticism of the Israel; and (9) The destroying of more than 1,200 Palestinian houses between 1967 and 1978 (Jon Armajani, 2011: 100). Nevertheless, Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli prime minister, has promised to claim sovereignty over all Israeli settlements in the West Bank if he was re-elected. Given the fact that settler population is more than 400,000, the next Israeli government is determined to annex the entire of the West Bank (Liebermann & Carey, 2019). The recent result of Israeli parliamentary election shows that the next Israeli government will be more religious, more extremist, and more militaristic. Therefore, it may be expected that Israeli policy toward Palestinian become more aggressive, in which Israel will be unwilling to make any substantial concession on Israel-Palestine conflict.

Moreover, Israel is extremely reluctant to compromise on settlement and Jerusalem with Palestinians. Initially, Jewish settlement in the West Bank was justified in terms of religion, a messianic religious motivation encouraged many of Jews to move to the biblical land known to them as "Judea" and "Samaria". Gradually, the settlement explained on the ground of national security as well as religious aspiration (Cohen, 2006: 689). Considering Jerusalem, international community has not recognized Jerusalem (even West Jerusalem which controlled by Israel since July 1948). In 1948, Israel formally announced Jerusalem as its capital and moving all its governmental institutions such as the presidency, Knesset, Supreme Court, and government offices. While the Defense Ministry continues to remain in Tel Aviv, the foreign office shifted to Jerusalem in 1953 (IDSA, 2019)

Regarding the water and refugee, Israel pays no attention to Palestinian rights. According to World Bank report, the lack of water supply available for domestic use has posed great and direct challenges to Palestinians, who live in the Gaza and West Bank. Indeed, Israel determines the water supply in Palestinian territory by negotiating with Palestinian Authority on internal water resources and import of additional supply. In other words, Palestinians are increasingly forced to purchase water from Israel. Nevertheless, the quality of water is undrinkable in Gaza (World Bank,

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2018). With regard to refugees, United Nation Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) has registered 6 million refugees at the end of 2017(UNWRA, 2018). While Palestinians claim to the right of return to their original homes, Israel and the U.S. have a plan to settle one million Palestinians in Jordan (Sheva, 2019).

3.2. Palestine and the Conflict

The most daunting challenge which Palestinians have faced is political and geographical cleavage between the West Bank and Gaza. The political tensions between Fatah (headed by Mahmood Abbas) and Hamas are extremely high as Hamas has gained control of Gaza since 2007. According to the Palestinian Authority (PA) sources, PA has a plan to have parliamentary elections in the West bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem. However, as long as Hamas rules the Gaza Strip, it seems highly unlikely (even impossible) that PA can hold election there. Moreover, it is obvious that Israel officials will vehemently oppose to the PA holding election in Jerusalem (MEMRI, 2019). While PA has supported United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which urges for establishing a Palestinian state according to the 1967 borders (West Bank, East of Jerusalem, and Gaza), alongside an Israeli state, Hamas has adopted resistance strategy toward Israel by strengthening its military capability, especially in missile production. Hamas has strongly objected to the peace process with Israel and considered Palestine as holy Islamic land consecrated for future generation until Judgment Day. Nevertheless, Hamas has declared it would accept a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with the return of Palestinian refugees (Aljazeera, 2017;Brenner, 2017) "Ami Ayalon", former head of Shin Bet, argues Hamas despite Fatah, has refused to accept the notation of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He claims Hamas avoids diplomacy, instead it resorts to violence in order to achieve political aims (Brookings, 2008). In addition to its war with Israel in 2009, 2012, and 2014, Hamas has called Palestinians to take part in the weekly "Great March of Return" (GMR) demonstrations near the perimeter fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel, urging Israeli government to lift their 11-year illegal blockade on Gaza and to permit Palestinian refugees to return to their own territory (OCHA, 2019). Since the beginning of marches in the last year, more than 250 Palestinians have been killed and thousands more wounded by Israeli military (Middle East Monitor, 2019). Sporadic war with Israel over a decade and March of Return demonstration indicates that Hamas is committed to a one-state solution, without the existence of a Jewish state. Therefore, Hamas and its proponents strongly not only believe that the West Bank and Jerusalem belong to Palestinians, but Jewish people has no right to establish any state in Palestine. It is obvious, Hamas, unlike PA, rejects any negotiation or

mediation by third party in order to make peace between Palestine and Israel.

3.3. The United States and the Conflict

Over two past decades, though the exchange of power between democrats and republicans, the US has adopted a stable approach towards Israel-Palestine conflict. When Donald Trump came to power, however, the U.S. has thrown its full weight behind Israel's policy in domestic as well as foreign affairs. The Trump administration seemed to be main proponent of Israel. David Friedman, for instance, as a New York-based bankruptcy lawyer, who generously contribute to the Israeli right and a property owner in Jerusalem, were appointed as the U.S. ambassador to Israel. He, also, has donated to an Israeli settlement in the West Bank and fiercely criticized a two-state solution. Moreover, Jason Dov Greenblatt, without any experience in foreign policy, were chosen as White House special representative for Israel-Palestine negotiations. It seems that he is an advocate of a two-state solution, however, he favors a solution allowing a settlement in the West Bank. In his point of view, the land, water rights, and security issues are subject to negotiation (Strategic Comments, 2017). Trump administration's policy towards Israel-Palestine conflict consists of several crucial elements: 1. Moving U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem (recognition of Jerusalem as permanent capital of Israel); 2. Presenting U.S. peace plan labeled as "Deal of Century"; 3. Backing Israel in UN Security Council; 4. Donating generously financial and military aids to Israel ($3.8 billion per year); and 5. Cooperating with Israel to improve its defense system. Regarding Jerusalem, Trump administration transferred the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in November 2017, illustrated as symbolic and disruptive act that will not transform the realities on the ground (Guase, 2018: 276). Unsurprisingly, this action will undermine U.S. peace plan, described as ultimate deal by Trump, and will certainly erect insurmountable barriers to the peace. It is assumed that the "Deal of Century" will include special and essential elements: 1. With regard to division of the West Bank into thee A, B, and C Areas, Palestine will consist of entire Areas A and B, and some parts of Area C; 2. The capital of Palestine will be within or near Jerusalem's expansive municipal boundaries; 3. An international entity will supervise a joint PA-Israeli administration governing Jerusalem's Holy Basin. In return, it is expected PA has to compromise on significant issues including: 1. PA need to accept Israeli military have control over Palestine's borders, its air and sea access, and the Jordan Valley; 2. PA has to surrender the "Right of Return" for Palestinians who live outside of Israel (Pipes, 2019). It seems extremely unlikely to reach an agreement, if U.S. does not recognize the right of Palestinians to come back to their homelands. Furthermore, the

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recognition of Jerusalem as an eternal capital of Israel by the U.S. has disappointed pro-peace Palestinians' hopes to achieve their political, civil, and religious rights.

Deal of Century, proposed by the former U.S. administration, has several features including: 1. Israel will maintain 20% of the West Bank and will lose a small amount of territory in the Negev near the Gaza-Egypt border. Israel will control all borders, 2. The capital of Palestinians will be in east Jerusalem based on northern and eastern neighborhoods that are outside the Israeli security barrier – Kafr Akab, Abu Dis and half of Shuafat. Jerusalem will be left undivided as Israel's capital, 3. Israel will retain the Jordan Valley and all Israeli settlements in the West Bank in the broadest definition possible, meaning not the municipal borders of each settlement but their security perimeters, 4. Israel will provide security from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. The IDF will not have to withdraw from the West Bank. No change to Israel's policy to Judea and Samaria would be necessary, 5. The plan does not include immediate recognition of a Palestinian state; rather, it assumes a willingness on Israel's part to create a pathway toward Palestinian statehood based on specific land, which is about 70% of Judea and Samaria, including areas A and B and parts of Area C, 6. A limited number of Palestinian refugees and their descendants will be authorized to live in the Palestinian state. None will be allowed to enter Israel (Harkov & Keinon, 2020).

3.4. Permanent Members of UN Security Council plus Germany and the Conflict

Great Britain, France, and Germany states, as European troika, have taken a balanced view of Israel-Palestine conflict in comparison with their American counterparts. European troika has fiercely expressed its opposition to Israeli settlement in the West Bank and depicted it as a main obstacle to peace (Landau, 2018). Moreover, they raised an objection to the U.S. decision to move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, believing it deteriorates the condition for peace (Agencies & TOI staff, 2018). It is obvious that European troika have the capabilities and resources to encourage both sides to resolve their disagreement, however, they lack political will to mediate between conflict parties. Therefore, the role of EU countries in the conflict is reduced to the Quartet, consists of the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and Russia. Concerning the role of Russia, it has established close diplomatic relations with Israel, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, as its "frenemy", in order to work constantly with all the necessary partners to ensure stability in the region as a broker or interlocutor (Battat, 2018). China has strongly believed in two-state solution with a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital and a halt

on settlement in the West bank. Although China "should not be in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process in place of the US", Israel cannot ignore the role of Beijing as a rising economic and military power (Burton, 2018).

3.5. Arab Countries and the Conflict

Five Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria), as key regional actors, have taken a vital role in the developments of the region and the peace will not be made without their compromise. Among these states, Saudi Arabia remain firmly committed to recognize Israel, if Israelis concede to the terms proposed by Saudi officials in the Arab Peace Initiative. According to the plan, Arabs has requested Israel to retreat from all the lands occupied since 1967, address the Palestinian refugee problem, and recognize east Jerusalem as capital of Palestine (Guardian, 2002). Uprising of Arab nations changed the course of events, causing Arab states preoccupied with their domestic affairs and therefore, Arab politicians paid less attention to the peace in the Middle East. Nevertheless, popular social and political movement in Arab countries destabilized the periphery of Israel. In Egypt, El-Sisi military government, which overthrew Morsi, replaced President Mubarak, is facing a flagging economy and terrorists in Sinai. Although Egypt has signed a peace treaty with Israel, its people are considering the Palestine issue as their religious and political identity. So, they cannot take no notice of Palestinians' vicissitudes in Gaza and the West Bank and sink the importance of Jerusalem to oblivion. In Syria, civil war devastated the entire country, leading approximately 850,000 Syrian refugees fled from Syria to Lebanon. Moreover, Jordan is struggling to cope with roughly 570,000 Syrian refugees (Berkowitz, 2013). The weakness of Arab countries provoked the Netanyahu government to set certain standard for peace, definitely rejected by PA, which decreased considerably the likelihood of conflict settlement.

3.6. Turkey and the Conflict

The relationships between Israel and Turkey was described as constant ebb and flow. After resumption of full diplomatic relations between two countries in 1991, political, economic, military, and cultural cooperation greatly expanded. Turkey, as a Muslim nation but not Arab one, has considered itself as mediator between Israelis and Palestinians. In this regard, Turkey want to use its economic capabilities to bring prosperity to Palestinian people. For instance, Turkey implemented the Erez industrial project in the border between Gaza and Israel, although the project ended in total failure (Anonym, 2012). Since AKP has taken power, Turkey has insisted the West Bank belong to Palestinians and therefore Israel has no right to annex the territory by building Jewish settlement (Anadolu

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Agency, 2019: 2). Regarding the Jerusalem issue, while Trump administration recognized Jerusalem as a capital of Israel, Turkish people have shown their interest in Jerusalem, as the capital of an independent Palestine state, by travelling there and Erdogan, Turkish president, has urged all Muslims to visit Al-Aqsa as sign of solidarity with Palestinians (Sever and Almog, 2019: 229). Compared to these controversial issues, Turkey may act as a peace maker by resolving the question of water, one of the most problematic issues between both parties. In fact, Turkey can encourage regional peace and economic development in the region by implementing "Peace Water Pipeline" project, proposed by President Turgut Ozal in 1986. The project, valued at $ 21 billion, aimed to transfer huge amount of water from Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers by two pipeline to Syria, Jordan, and the Persian Gulf countries. However, the progress in Israel-Syria relations is extremely essential to extend the pipeline to Israel and Palestinian territory (Gruen, 2007: 158). By mediating between Israel and Syria to resume peace talks, Turkey will be capable of exporting water to Israel and Palestine. Generally, Turkey has ability to contribute to peace between both sides, as a mediator, only when the condition in Gaza Strip and the West Bank is calm. The rise of tension causes Turkey to adopt an aggressive stance against Israel and therefore it will stain its reputation as an unbiased mediator by illustrating itself as guardian of Palestine (Ertosun, 2017: 216).

3.7. Iran and the Conflict

The Islamic Republic of Iran has not only recognized Israel, but it has made a pledge to completely obliterate the state which named Zionist regime. In attitudes of Iranian leaders, there should not be anything called the Jewish state in Islamic lands. It looks if Islamic Republic does not continue backing Palestinians, its legitimacy will be questioned by the majority of Muslim public. Nevertheless, the relations between Iran and Palestinian factions had ebb and flow due to contradictory stance of Palestinian factions to Israel and Middle East. Iran has sharply lambasted President Mahmood Abbas for his efforts to reach a peace treaty with Israel, describing him as a hostage of Israel (Wright, 2010: 173). Despite strong links between Iran and Hamas, their relationships had been undermined because Hamas did not support for the Assad regime's assault on its rebellious groups (Kear, 2019: 192). However, their harmonious ties resumed after victory of Assad over rebels. Regardless of any relations between Iran and Palestinians groups, Islamic Republic will not certainly acknowledge any peace treaty between Israel and PA.

In order to back Palestinians' resistance, Iran has a plan to smuggle arms into the West Bank, strengthening Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the region.

In doing so, Iran needs to create a channel between Syria, Jordan, and the West Bank (Inbari, 2019). Indeed, the ultimate goal of Iran is to establish a united resistance axis in Palestine territory to ensure the destruction of Israel. With regard to Jerusalem, Islamic Republic insists that the Jerusalem is the first *Kiblah* (the point to which all Muslims turn at prayer) of Muslims in which every individual Muslim has a moral and religious obligation to defend it against Zionists. Iran's approach has demonstrated that Iranian officials are committed to one state solution, but Palestine state.

3.8. Russia and the Conflict

Russia's approach to Palestine is determined by several factors, the most important of which are: First; Russia's effective role in the most important conflict in the Middle east, so that Russia's position is recognized by regional and supra-regional parties. Second; trying to maintain balance in Russian relations with the Israeli triangle; Palestinian Authority and Palestinian groups in the West Bank and their supporting Arab countries such as Egypt and Qatar, Hamas and Iran. Third; Russia's involvement in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict must have acceptable gains in the national interest. Based on these cases, although Russia wants to play a mediating role in relation to Israel and Palestine, it does not consider it in its interests to rush into this space.

According to Russia, the Israelis have blocked the progress of the talks and reached an agreement because of their refusal to withdraw from the West Bank, and the Palestinians because of their actions against the Israelis. Another issue is that Moscow does not want to enter into other regional cases and gaps until the Syrian crisis is resolved and it leaves the country successfully.

The "deal of the century," as it is being called in Washington, on the settlement of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict root out important aspects of the peace process (the building of the Palestinian capital in East Jerusalem and the return of Palestinian refugees), which leaves the State of Palestine with no option but to find new staunch allies. Mahmoud Abbas, President of PA, considers Russia as a force that can return the peace processes into the structure of current negotiation, which the PNA has openly told to the Russian party (Tass, 2018).

Russia first suggested to host negotiations between Israel and Palestine in Moscow in 2005. The idea of direct talks between Mahmoud Abbas and Benjamin Netanyahu was brought up at the meeting between Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Vladimir Putin in August 2016. The first direct meeting

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between the Palestinian and Israeli leaders since 2010 was expected to occur in Moscow in September 2016, but the parties blamed each other for it never happening. According to Mahmoud Abbas, Israel unilaterally called off the meeting. Meanwhile, the Israeli leaders declared that the pre-conditions set by PA were unacceptable (Barmin, 2018: 16).

For Mahmoud Abbas, persuading Russia to participate in the peace process serves both foreign and domestic policy goals. The PA have been unable to form a national cohesion for the people, while the administration is deeply localized and territorially fragmented. Many Palestinians are disappointed with the settlement strategy, which depended on the U.S. initiative for over 20 years now. Russia seeks to take a more active role in the peace process serve to reboot the internal Palestinian discourse and create opportunity for Mahmoud Abbas to gain additional internal political support.

Although Israel most likely does not see Russia's role as a mediator, Benjamin Netanyahu has to give at least some leeway to Vladimir Putin's mediation attempts. It is extremely crucial for the Israeli party to maintain its fragile partnership with Russia, as this partnership is closely tied with cooperation in Syria, while the deterioration in relations against the backdrop of disagreements on Palestine might ruin the dialogue on Syria. The issue of Israel's recognition as a Jewish state in the Middle East remains and, given Iran's growing presence in Syria, the peace process relies on the regional context. This is another reason why Israel may value Moscow's support (Barmin, 2018: 17).

It is noteworthy that as a result of the efforts of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Russian President Vladimir Putin, relations between Tel Aviv and Moscow have expanded dramatically over the past decade, although the two countries share a common position on the Syrian crisis And the presence of about two million Russian-Israeli citizens in the country has played an important role in strengthening relations between the two countries. Nonetheless, Moscow does not consider Palestine and Syria as related contexts in its relations with Israel. Moscow sees the prospect of Palestinian settlements as a continuation of its role in the Middle East, the process that was set in motion by the country's military campaign in Syria.

4. Conclusion

A lot of efforts have been concentrated to make peace in the Middle East by using different methods such as negotiation and mediation. In addition to Israel and Palestine as two main parties involved in the conflict, various regional and international actors have been playing a major role in the long

running dispute between Israelis and Palestinians. All of these actors, except Iran and Hamas which never admit any peace plan, are seeking ways to settle six major matters including: 1. Security; 2. Refugees; 3. Settlement in the West Bank; 4. Border; 5. Jerusalem; and 6. Water. There is no doubt that high number of parties and seemingly intractable problems made peace more difficult and onerous task. Indeed, every actor has adopted divergent views towards the issues playing a role in the conflict in a way finding a peace plan is getting extremely daunting task.

Nevertheless, three main parties such as U.S., EU, and Saudi Arabia have presented their peace roadmap, persuading Israelis and Palestinians to back to negotiation table. Among them, the U.S. is more capable of influencing both sides to settle their differences. Unfortunately, however, American policy makers have bias in favor of Israel, backing Jewish settlement in the West Bank, recognizing Jerusalem as eternal capital of Israel and so on. Moreover, it is obvious that the plans introduced by EU and Saudi Arabia are doomed to failure without the support of Israel and America. With respect to crucial role of non-Arab regional actors, Iran and Turkey have taken important steps to politically and financially strengthened Palestinians. Although Turkey has a diplomatic, economic, and even military relationship with Israel, it tries to consider the suffering of Palestinians living in Gaza and the West Bank, upholding their rights over Jerusalem and peaceful and prosper life in Palestinian territory. Just the reverse, Iran not only has not identify Israel as a country, but also it has emphasized the elimination of Israel and establishment of Palestine state in the region. In this situation, there is no sign of reconciliation between Israel and Palestine, let alone peace. Ultimately, peace will only be obtained if the U.S., Russia, and China, as international partners agree on the terms of peace and persuade other actors, especially Israel and Palestine, to concede it.

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12

Saudi- Iranian Rivalry:
A Balance of Power in the Middle East?
The Case Study of Yemen

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1. Introduction

The rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran is often traced back to the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and is commonly linked to the sectarian differences between both countries. The former, a Wahhabi Sunni predominant country, and the latter a Shia predominant state. This is not the only source of conflict between Tehran and Riyadh.

An important aspect when analyzing Saudi-Iranian rivalry are the extra-regional powers, such as relations to the US and Qatar. Saudi Arabia has strong bilateral ties to the United States, while Iran does not since the 1979 revolution (Adami and Pouresmaeili 2013:165). According to Simon Mabon, the events in 1979 shows how big of a role ideology can play in the region (Mabon 2016 : 217).

An effective way to analyze this conflict is to combine Hinnebusch's realist approach with the constructivist theory. Constructivism considers social constructs and sectarian differences in societies when analyzing an issue and international relations (Mabon 2016:20; C.Clemens 2004:29). Hinnebusch says that the Middle East is a "penetrated" system and, because of that, it is more vulnerable to external interference. Instead of using only a realist approach, that counts with a more secure and solid national identity, by combining the two, an analysis can be more complete (Mabon 2016: 19).

When it comes to Iran and Saudi Arabia, it is also important to analyze power structure in geopolitics. Both countries engage in so-called proxy wars to expand their influence in the region. By taking part in these kinds of conflicts, both countries make use of their expansionist foreign policies in countries in the Arab world, like in Yemen (Almarzoqi 2016; Mumford 2013:40).

2. Realism x Constructivism

Halliday tries to analyze the role of States and systems in International Relations in the Middle East. To do so, he uses the realist theory, which consists of security and "maximization of power" in an international system that is competitive and anarchical but argues that there are at least two "realism" perspectives; the global and the regional. To apply this theory in the Middle East, one should look at the way States behave and relate to each other by, for example forming alliances (Halliday 2011:25).

Realists see power as the primary goal of all states in international relations (C.Clemens 2004:25). Also, their own survival is crucial. This factor can be characterized as "a combination of territorial integrity and autonomy from outside rule. States also have a nested hierarchy of additional goals that are essential for survival. The most important of these is the avoidance of hegemony, a situation in which one state accumulates so much power, that it becomes able to dominate over the rest and thus put an end to the multipolar system" (S. Levy and R. Thompson 2010:49).

For most realists, an anarchic international system increases the possibility of war and the struggle for power. According to them, there are different paths to war, whereby the two most important ones are when two states have clashing interests and one of them sees no other way at succeeding other than using hard power; in the second one, however, states are more concerned with status quo and in maintaining the current situation to increase power, favorable positions and influence (Levy, Thompson 2010:29).

Simon Mabon argues that realist theories are often used to describe international relations in the Middle East. However, it is likely that they fail to explain the diversity of identities among Middle Eastern countries. The realist perspective, for example avoids explaining the interaction between internal identity groups and ignores the ideological sovereignty of states, which is relevant when dealing with Saudi Arabia and Iran (Mabon 2016:20).

This way, when trying to explain interactions in the Middle East, Mabon tries to combine Hinnebusch's realist approach with the constructivist theory because constructivism considers social constructs and sectarian differences in societies when analyzing an issue and international relations (Mabon 2016:20; C.Clemens 2004:29).

Balance of power by Hans J. Morgenthau attempts to explain the behavior of States and how alliances between States are formed in order to establish equilibrium among nations in the international system (Diez, Bode, and

Fernandes da Costa 2011:6). It also refers to the distribution of power in the international system and it is based on the realist approach that the system is anarchic and that actors are "territorial states" who want to increase their power, security and act to pursue those goals (S. Levy and R. Thompson 2010:39).

According to Waltz, States choose to balance when they feel threatened or when they are trying to counterbalance the rising hegemon by expanding their formal or informal alliances (Diez, Bode, and Fernandes da Costa 2011:7).

Alliance forming is also an important feature in the international system when it comes to balance of power because of the will to maintain peace amongst political actors due to the possibility to balance against a common aggressor/ enemy (Gulick 1955: 61 in: Levy, Thompson 2010:41).

Last but not least, realists argue that an anarchic international system increases the possibility of war and the struggle for power, however are different paths to war, whereby the two most important ones are when two states have clashing interests and one of them sees no other way at succeeding other than using hard power; in the second one, however, states are more concerned with status quo and in maintaining the current situation to increase power, favorable positions and influence (Levy,Thompson 2010:29).

2.1. Rivalry/ Enduring Rivalries

When studying rivalries in international relations, authors often base their arguments on Athenian historian Thucydides. Mitton uses Thucydides to study the roots of the studies of rivalries between States. According to him, wars don't happen due to one specific cause or issue, but because of conflicts between two rivals. This way, Gary Goertz and Paul Diehl found evidences that prove that 45% of "militarized disputes occur due to rivalries", therefore wars are most likely to happen between rivals and, accordingly rivals may behave pursuant to what they believe is convenient with their goals in the international scenario and the institutional structure of rivalry (Mitton 2016:69, 75).

Rivalries do not develop in a vacuum; the situation requires that attention be paid to the nuances particular to the history and culture of the states engaged in the situation." About criteria to qualify them include: states "must regard each other as a) competitors, b) the source of actual or latent threats that pose some possibility of becoming militarized, and c) as enemies (Mitton 2016: 70,73).

Levy and Thompson define rivals as states whose foreign policies are opposites, but whose interests often clash with each other. Rivals have, this way, the same objectives, such as controlling a certain territory, market or monopolize positions of influence and power. Notwithstanding, once a rivalry is formed, it is very likely that new sources of conflict may emerge with time easily (S. Levy and R. Thompson 2010:57).

According to the authors, rivalries are hard to define and there are different approaches to them: the first one sees conflict patterns as an important feature of enduring rivalries: "when states are involved in multiple militarized disputes within a designated period of time, the density of conflict will identify which states should be regarded as rivals. A problem, however, is that not all rivalries are constantly engaged in militarized conflict and are so only rarely. Another problem is that some states are in nearly constant conflict but the capability asymmetries that are involved make it difficult for one or both sides to treat the other seriously as a source of intense threat, as compared with, say, a persistent nuisance" (Levy, Thompson 2010: 57).

2.2. Diversionary Theory of War + Speech act theory

The diversionary theory of war tries to use scapegoating to defocus domestic attention to domestic issues and draw attention to the international arena, such as foreign policies, like wars. This happens in order to maintain stability and increase a regime's legitimacy at home. Its causes can be considered problematic domestic circumstances, like an authoritarian government rather than a conflict of interests, and this practice often generates a rally around the flag effect (Tir 2010:413). The diversionary theory literature also suggests that the use of military means is attractive to the public.

Wæver claims that an important feature of security studies is the 'Speech Act Theory', which argues that utterances are equivalent to actions. Therefore, when dealing with security, it is often the case that a state representative places a particular situation to a specific issue to use a "special right" to use whatever is necessary to solve the problem (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010: 77).

According to him, this process of securitization firstly occurs through a 'speech act', a move that puts an issue not dealt with previously as a security threat to be resolved by authorities (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010). Governments therefore stage the issue and position them above politics by dramatizing and by presenting it as a "security" matter (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010).

2.3. Proxy Wars

According to political scientists Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, war is a constant characteristic of social interaction between States. They define it as the most destructive form of human behavior, because it kills people, destroys resources, traumatizes people and harms economic development (S. Levy and R. Thompson 2010:10). Wars are also important when analyzing how states interact nowadays and how they are shaped because of wars in the past. Examples are World War I and II and the Cold War (S. Levy and R. Thompson 2010:10).

In this context, Bar- Siman- Tov classifies proxy war as an unique category of war (Wyss 2016:7). Mumford defines proxy wars as "the indirect engagement in a conflict by third parties wishing to influence its strategic outcome" and they are "constitutive of a relationship between a benefactor, who is a state or a non-state actor external to the dynamic of an existing conflict, and their chosen proxies who are the conduit for weapons, training and funding from the benefactor." Mumford also offers 4 possible scenarios when it comes to proxy wars: 1. A state using another state as a proxy, 2. A state using a non-state actor as a proxy, 3. A non-state actor using a state as a proxy and 4. A non-state actor using another non-state actor as a proxy (Wyss 2016:7).

3. Methodology

In this part, I will conduct a literature based qualitative analysis of the Saudi-Iranian rivalry focused on the conflicts between them both. What are their objectives? What are the motives for the Saudi-Iranian rivalry? In order to answer this question, I developed two hypotheses which also help to later explain and analyze the case study of Yemen on the 5th chapter of my thesis.

3.1. H1: Rivalry as a dispute to increase security and legitimacy

As it has been already mentioned, national security consists of 4 key aspects: a state's its "physical base (population and territory), the idea of a state (nationality and organizing ideologies), its institutions (the machinery of government) and finally its sovereignty", whereby sovereignty is the one that provides security and order to a political community (Smith, Hadfield, and Dunne 2012:192).

Assuming that rivalry can also be described as "a feeling of enmity between countries, materialized in a relationship characterized by extreme competition, and usually psychological hostility, in which the issues and

positions of contenders are governed primarily by their attitude towards each other", one can easily fit the relation between Iran and Saudi Arabia under this definition, being thus classified as a rivalry (R. Thompson 2001: 557 in: Gimenez Cerioli: 298).

Motives for rivalry

As already stated, Iran and Saudi Arabia's relation is considered a rivalry (Gimenez Cerioli 2018:295). However, there are different approaches to the sources of this antagonism. Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Fred Halliday trace the roots of the rivalry to the Iranian Revolution, which was a consequence of the state- building processes and emergence of nationalism in both cases (Tzemprin, Jozic, Lambaré 2015:188). On the other hand, Tipp and Chubin hold the argument that the rivalry exists due to sectarian issues (Tzemprin, Jozic, and Lambaré 2015:189).

Moreover, Simon Mabon claims that this antagonism between Tehran and Riyadh has several reasons and has had effects in both countries' foreign politics since 1979. Following his ideas, I will explain each rivalry issue in further detail on the next session. According to Mabon, the most important reasons are the religious Incongruence and the Arabian Gulf vs. Persian Gulf, the ethno-tribal incongruence, security and the Middle East in International Relations (Mabon 2016:40).

Even though it is commonly stated that the biggest motive and trigger for the rivalry between these two Middle Eastern actors is religious, the problem goes beyond the Shia- Sunni debate. It is also about identity incongruences (Arab / Persian). In addition, Anoushiravan Ehteshami argues that the tensions between both countries can also be analyzed based on the aftermaths of the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran, which also led to the rise of both nationalisms, the Persian and the Arab (Mabon 2016: 40).

When dealing with Saudi and Iranian relations, it is important to point out that Iran suffered an arms embargo from the UN and the US and this led Tehran to try increasing its military capabilities, by forming alliances to non- state actors, such as Hezbollah and Hamas (the so called "axis of resistance").

The reallocation of resources by the Kingdom, therefore, leads to the question on Saudi's diverse interests in conflicts in the region. The overspending in the military while investing in reforms at home (such as Vision 2030) proposes an "agenda of interventionism and aggression" that is not "proportionate to the threat". By doing so, Saudi Arabia shows its

efforts to lead the region again by uniting its people against a common enemy through a hostile rhetoric to increase fear domestically and to defocus from the political domestic agenda and issues (Kelemen 2018).

In the following and based on different perspectives, I divided Saudi-Iranian rivalry motives into two levels which are the ideological level, and the sectarian level.

Ideological level

When it comes to the Ethno-Tribal incongruence, it is important to discuss the formation of identity in both countries. According to theorist Alexander Wendt, countries' identities are created through interactions with other actors and also in this context, Farideh Farhi suggests that there are different elements used to create identity: language, religion, ethnicity and territory (Mabon 2016:15).

Firstly, I will discuss the process of the Saudi identity creation, both internally and externally. The former constituted of the destruction of autonomous tribes all over Saudi territory before the formation of the third State in 1932. This led to a feeling of nationalism and a better opportunity for the state-building process in the Kingdom. Other influential factors were in the domestic sphere, the religion, and in the external one, the country's foreign policies- influenced by nationalism, and its economic transformation (Mabon 2016: 143).

In the Iranian case, the process of national identity formation is also highly influenced by religion and nationalism, however, as earlier mentioned, was also deeply impacted by the 1979 revolution combined with the Iran-Iraqi war. In between Iranian borders, there are however, multiple ethnic groups, (more than in Saudi Arabia) such as the Persians, Azeris, Turkmen, Kurds, Baluchis, Arabs, which makes the process of a single identity more complicated than in its rival's territory due to discrimination, differences in language, among others (Mabon 2016 161).

However, the process of identity building in the Middle East, as formerly argued, can be better explained through the constructionist approach according to Simon Mabon. Alexander Wendt argues that "a state's identity is created through interactions with other actors/states, and therefore that the international structure is created through such processes, and not existing inherently: international politics are thus created rather than given." (Panaite 2017:8). Consequently, when analyzing the relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran and their rivalry, it is important to look at

the different aspects which form identity, such as the ideologies defended by each country.

This level is based on the historical- ideological tensions due to the Arab-Persian division that dates back to the conquest of Persians in Mesopotamia by Arab troops and finally led to the spread of Islam in Persia – which only turned Shia on the 17th century (Tzemprin, Jozic, Lambaré 2015: 189).

Saudi Arabia emerged from 4 different areas which unified themselves despite different identities and which, later led to the establishment of a strong identity, ideological movement, Wahhabism, and a ruling dynasty (Al Saud) that governs until the actual days Tzemprin,Jozic,Lambaré2015:189).
However, both of Islam's holy cities are within the borders of the Saudi Kingdom, Medina and Mecca. This intensifies the perception that the Saudis are the representatives of Islam in the world Tzemprin,Jozic,Lambaré 2015: 189).

Therefore, the struggle for supremacy is not something that came only as a consequence of the 1979 Revolution because of the former history and geography of the region, however, together with the regime change, the already existing conflict developed a religious aspect (Tzemprin, Jozic, Lambaré 2015: 190).

Sectarian level

The Sunni-Shia tensions are an important factor when dealing with Middle Eastern politics.

Sectarianism, although used by both rivals, Tehran and Riyadh, is not their main motivation for conflict. Iran, for example, tries to diminish the Shia nature of the 1979 revolution in order to attract more Muslims from different branches of Islam (Gregory Gause 2014:6). The same occurred to Saudi Arabia, which in 2005 and 2010 backed an Alawi party in Iraqi elections and in the Syrian civil war, supported the Free Syrian Army, one of the least sectarian groups and is not sympathetic to Sunni Muslim Brotherhood in countries such as Egypt, Syria and Iraq (Gregory Gause 2014:7) .

Mabon argues that the importance of religion is "overplayed" when analyzing Middle Eastern politics because it reduces "events to sectarian differences and, in doing so, reducing the agency of individual actors" (Bustan, Middle, and Book 2017:40). Issues such as security, mutual

suspicion, nationalism and political organizations play an important role in the conflict between Tehran and Riyadh (Bustan, Middle, and Book 2017:42).

Repeatedly, Khomeini openly stated his opinion on the Saudi government, claiming that they are "ungodly", "inept", "spineless" and too corrupt to be the guardians of Mecca and Medina (Bustan, Middle, and Book 2017:42). This statement, according to Mabon represents the importance of ideology in shaping security and also shows how regimes try to use symbols politically in order to maintain power (Bustan, Middle, and Book 2017:47).

To conclude, Saudi Arabia and Iran are the two biggest influence spheres in the Middle East, this way, they perceive each other as threats and this is why both states try to maximize regime security (Ekşi 2017). However, there different reasons for this antagonism, not only in the international relations field of study, but there are also motives that originated in the domestic sphere and are later on manifested through both countries' foreign politics. This will be discussed on my next Hypothesis.

3.2. H2: By engaging in Proxy wars, Saudi Arabia and Iran see the possibility of forming alliances

The rivalry spread to spheres of influence where both regimes defend their best interests across the Middle East and its "mosaic of identities" (Tzemprin, Jozic, and Lambaré 2015:191). The rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran takes therefore an international dimension and becomes therefore a determinant factor for Middle Eastern politics, responsible for proxy conflicts in neighboring countries the region (Tzemprin, Jozic, and Lambaré 2015:18).

A good example for that is Iran's "Arab street" strategy, which is a crucial ideological feature in Tehran's foreign politics. This ploy used in order to make up a front against Riyadh and had its "height with the July 2006 war in Lebanon". This led to a bigger Saudi hostility feeling towards the Islamic Republic (Wehrey et al. 2009:11).

Following this, the Arab Spring was another important factor which triggered again the conflict between the two powers. As formerly discussed, there are multiple factors which influence in the competition between both countries, such as the 1979 Revolution as turning point and, more recently, the Arab Spring protests. Before that, the countries had small bilateral problems and alliances to balance the Baáth party in Iraq and the Soviet expansionism in the region (Tzemprin, Jozic, and Lambaré 2015:188).

Barry Buzan argues that security interdependence in the Middle East can only be explained in terms of power relations (Adami and Pouresmaeili 2013:157). But what constitutes power? Tzemprin, Jozic, Lambaré define power as "in terms of a material and concrete element which could see itself powerful if it enjoyed factors such as vast territory, large population, appropriate geographical situation, military capabilities, etc." This way, they claim that countries in the Middle East based themselves in these factors in order to compete against each other (Tzemprin, Jozic, and Lambaré 2015).

Therefore, a way to gain power, is to defend national interests and spread ideologies. Iran, for example, tries to form alliances based on sectarianism and also based on weak governments, like the case of backing up Houthi militias in Ali Abdullah Saleh's weak regime in Yemen. By doing so, Tehran expects to increase security, defend its interests in the region and to achieve a more significant position in the Middle East (Almarzoqi 2016).

Furthermore, what is more dangerous to the stability of the region is not necessarily sectarian differences only, as it was formerly discussed in my former hypothesis, but their politicization in order to accomplish geopolitical goals throughout the Middle East. Their politicization is therefore one of the most important points when it comes to the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

By involving themselves in proxy conflicts, such as the Yemeni and Syrian war, both countries use minorities (or sectarian groups) as players in their rivalries (Bustan, Middle, and Book 2017:41). Moreover, when analyzing the rivalry between both countries, as I already formerly argued is the state formation and the role of identity and ideology. A good example for that is the way Ayatollah Khomeini described the 1979 as an Islamic Revolution rather than an Iranian to attract more Muslims worldwide since there are no differences between Muslims from different countries and that speak different languages (Bustan, Middle, and Book 2017:41).

Security cooperation and security dilemma

Another important factor when analyzing Saudi-Iranian rivalry are the extra-regional powers, such as relations to the US. The Kingdom, for example, has strong bilateral ties to America, for example a big arms deal of 20 billion USD in 2007, a plan for nuclear cooperation in 2008 and a security partnership for protecting Saudi oil establishments (Adami and Pouresmaeili 2013:165). This way, Saudi relations to the US have always

been friendly, while post- revolution Iran's deteriorating (Jay Dee Jamison 2004:9).

For Saudi Arabia, a scenario with an isolated Iran is the most favorable one. This way, the Kingdom tries to form regional alliances and to strengthen ties with countries, such as the GCC members. This regional interstate cooperation union was created in 1981 as a way to counter-balance the Iranian revolutionary threats (Nuruzzaram 2019:17).

Moreover, Saudi Arabia was also responsible for creating the royal anti-revolutionary club and held a conference in Saudi territory in Riyadh, in 2011. This coalition is supposed to make a counter-movement against Iranian advances "among Arab or non-Arab Sunni countries in the Middle East, north Africa and Asia to achieve this goal". On the other side, Iran leads the resistance axis consisting of Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas (Adami and Pouresmaeili 2013:166, 174).

This way, it is possible to claim that alliance building is an important feature in both countries' foreign politics, with both states and also non-state actors, such as groups like Hamas, Hezbollah and Al Qaeda (this will be further developed on the case analysis part). In order to increase security, both countries engage in proxy wars, whereas Riyadh and Tehran try to counter threats that they are facing, which can be considered each other (Mabon 2016:12). By forming coalitions, such as the GCC or the royal anti-revolutionary club in the Saudi case or the resistance axis in the Iranian one, both countries build stronger ties to fight each. Other (Ekşi 2017:137).

4. Case Description

In this part, the civil war in Yemen will be described and, on the next chapter, further analyzed in the context of international relations. Since it is an ongoing conflict, the facts covered will begin with the events that caused the Arab Spring protests until the latest developments of June 2019.

The country, whose population is around 28 million people faces several environmental and structural challenges, such as the scarcity of water (Sana'a risks becoming the world's first capital to run out of potable water). Its economy is highly dependent on the " declining oil resources", the country faces high unemployment rate, corruption, insecurity and is a growing ground for terrorism and radicalization (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:158).

In this vulnerable scenario, extremist groups such as Al Qaeda (AQAP) and The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) saw an opportunity to grow. This led to a fragmented scenario in the Arab Peninsula's poorest country and, after attacks such as the USS Cole in 2000 and the Christmas bombing of 2009, the US decided to launch drone counter-terrorism policies in Yemen (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016).

Yemen was unified in 1990 had former issues related to external interferences, with the northern part backed by the US and Saudi Arabia, and the south by USSR and Iran. Ali Abdullah Saleh, who used to be the leader of the north, took over leadership of the whole country after the unification. Yemen, however, even after the unification, remained a very divided country, with Saleh securing his power through patronage and the competition between different factions even after charged with corruption and authoritarianism allegations (Laub 2015:3). In the 2000s, Saleh started to receive money from the US under an antiterrorism motto. According to Security Assistance Monitor, Washington donated $1,2 billion in military aid (Laub 2015:3).

Influenced by other countries such as Tunisia, Syria and Egypt, political unrest also broke out in Yemen calling for the substitution of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Consequently, to take advantage of the government's erosion, militias associated with Al Qaeda took control of the country's southern province (Sharp 2019:5). This way, fearing that Yemen would become a secular state, a transition plan was made by members of the international community, such as Saudi Arabia and the United States, which led to Vice President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi to take over power and to try to reform the country's political system.

In 2014, the UN approved a peace deal which favored the Houthis, a northern Yemeni movement. The proposal included the group's withdrawal of Sana'a and the transition included transforming the government into a technocratic one (Laub 2015: 3). However, in the end of the same year, Yemen's sectarian differences and rivalry showed when the Houthis clashed with Al Qaeda, Sunni tribesmen and forces loyal to Islah- as well as southern separatists claiming independence while former president Ali Abdullah Saleh asked for the support of the armed forces (Laub 2015: 3).

The next year was marked by a constitutional dispute between the Houthis and the government, whereby the Houthis took over the capital, Sana'a, established governing instances and put enemies on house arrest, such as president in charge Hadi, who after resigning went on exile to Saudi Arabia

and asked for international military intervention (he remains the internationally recognized Yemeni executive chief) (Laub 2015: 3).

This led to Saudi Arabia's continuous airstrikes in the region to counter the advance of the Houthis and re-establish Hadi as executive chief. Even after attempts by the UN to solve the conflict, such as with the Security Council Resolution 2216 in 2015, both sides disagree over a political solution, whereby the Saudi-led coalition demands that the Houthi militia disarm its "heavy weaponry" (Rezk 2019:5).

The Houthis

The movement is also known as Ansar Allah or Partisans of God and are mostly a Zaydi Shiite group, which had their own Imamate in 893 in the north of Yemen until the revolution in 1962 (Sharp 2019:6). Thereupon, the Houthis founded their own movement in 2004 in order to stop the marginalization of the Zaydism and, with the Protests in 2011, saw an opportunity to spread and embrace a populist speech and to achieve political power (Sharp 2019:6).

After the 2011, the movement focused on the Arab uprisings and left the religious rhetoric aside in order to establish a more extended supporters base, which included Iran's backed Twelver Shia. This strengthens even more the claims of a supposed Iranian involvement and support, which were openly stated by American Newspapers Financial Times and The New York Times.

Conversely, even though Iran denies any kind of practical support to the Houthis, authorities close to Tehran's supreme leader, Khamenei openly celebrated when the Yemeni militia group took over the country's capital Sana'a (Salisbury 2015:8). This point will be further developed in the next chapter.

The Arab Spring in Yemen

In 2011, high levels of poverty, unemployment and corruption led Yemenis to protest for the fall of Ali Abdullah Saleh, the country's former president, who was a strong Saudi Arabia ally. After 5 months of unrest, Saleh fell and a pacific transition was backed up by the Saudi-led coalition and by Washington in exchange for "a guarantee of immunity from prosecution (Hill 2017:6). This way, the former president was replaced by his vice president, Abd Mansour Hadi, who also lost popular support due to his lack of ability to tackle issues which were the main triggers of the

protests in the first place. This generated a dispute between competing regime factions (Hill 2017:6).

The war

The civil war in Yemen has already damaged the country's infrastructure and, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, from the beginning of the conflict in 2015 until March 2018, the organization registered 17,062 civilian casualties (Rezk 2019: 5). Also, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs claims that out of 30 million Yemenis, 22.2 are in need of any humanitarian aid, leaving the situation to be considered one of the world's worse humanitarian crises (Rezk 2019: 5).

In June 2018, the war reached a critical stage when the Saudi-led coalition launched a mission to take back the port city of Hudaydah, dominated by the Houthis and which is crucial to the importation of goods and for humanitarian aid into Yemen (Sharp 2019:6). The city, located in the north of the Bab al Mandab strait, is important for the access to the Red Sea, to deliver supplies to Sana'a, the Houthi controlled capital and also to make profit, since the Houthis. Are the ones who control the food and fuel distribution (Sharp 2019:6). Thus, taking over Hudaydah could mean "turn the tide of the war" (Sharp 2019:7).

In late August 2018, after another failed attempt to negotiate a cease-fire, fighting spread to other areas, such as Zabid and Durahmi. Therefore, according to UN OCHA, organizations provided aid for around 50.000 displaced people and access to water and electricity is now severely restricted (Sharp 2019:7). The coalition, therefore, demands that the Houthis should withdraw from the territory they seized during the conflict, while the Houthis demand that the coalition accepts the conquered territory (Sharp 2019:7).

Yemen and Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia and Yemen have had special relations since the country's unification in the 1990s. However, with the Arab Spring protests taking over Yemen, Saudi Arabia feared a possibility of losing its influence in its neighboring country. Consequently, it presented a plan in March 2011 for a power transition in Yemen in favor of Saudi's interests. This plan included Yemen's former president, Ali Abdullah Saleh to give his power to the country's vice-president, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi with a cabinet formed by one opposition leader. This way, Saudi Arabia's main goal was

to maintain stability along their borders with Yemen (Adami and Pouresmaeili 2013:169).

Saudi Yemeni relations can be simply summarized by Riyadh's interests to maintain Yemen under their unofficial control according to what best suits them (Salisbury 2015: 3). The kingdom, which borders with the Middle East's poorest country, used to pay monthly stipends during the first 30 years of Saleh's regime and only stopped when Yemeni former president, Ali Abdullah Saleh decided to back Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq during the invasion of Kuwait (Salisbury 2015:4).

Ryiadh also made direct cash transfers in value of 4 billion USD to improve Sana'a's economy since the country's unification (Salisbury 2015:10). Together with this economy aid, they also sponsored groups fighting Houthis in the region in order to contain Shia and Zaydi's advancements (Salisbury 2015:4).

5. Case Analysis

Saudi Arabia and Iran compete for power and leadership in the Gulf region as they are the two main actors in the region whose desire to become a regional power is the main factor responsible for both countries' foreign politics (Gimenez Cerioli 2018:295). To do so, both Tehran and Riyadh attempt to influence politics in the region by building alliances, credibility and recognition. This way, it is easier to maintain stability and increase both regimes' legitimacy (Gimenez Cerioli 2018:298). Both countries, due to their regional rivalry, see each other as a threat to their hegemony, as it has been earlier discussed in this paper (Ekşi 2017:143).

There are different ways of winning legitimacy. The diversionary theory of war tries to use the scapegoating theory to defocus domestic attention to domestic issues and focuses it on the international arena, such as wars in order to maintain stability and increase legitimacy at home (Kelemen 2017). Since the Islamic Revolution, the illustration of an enemy has played an effective role in constructing domestic and foreign policy priorities (Nia 2012:49). Both Tehran and Riyadh do not experience high levels of freedom, democracy and autonomy (Panaite 2017).

Therefore, according to Graeme Davies, because of the high levels of unemployment in Iran and its economic crisis, Tehran tries to divert attention from domestic problems and to show competence in foreign affairs (Mabon 2016:17). The same theory can be applied to Saudi Arabia, which tries to divert its people's attention through its welfare state and through its foreign political decisions (Panaite 2017:10). Consequently, an

important example of both countries' foreign politics is the proxy war in Yemen, in which both parties are deeply involved.

Another important feature of security studies is the 'Speech Act Theory', which argues that utterances are equivalent to actions. Therefore, when dealing with security, it is often the case that a state representative places a particular situation to a specific issue to use a "special right" to use whatever is necessary to solve the problem (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010: 77).

According to him, this process of securitization firstly occurs through a 'speech act', a move that puts an issue not dealt with previously as a security threat to be resolved by authorities (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010). Governments therefore stage the issue and position them above politics by dramatizing and by presenting it as a "security" matter (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010).

Barnett, for example argues image of leaders are the most important guiding factor rather than military politics. He illustrates this argument by claiming that Arab leaders try to gain support by framing "events in a certain way" and by "using symbolism to convey their message" (Mabon 2016:21).

When it comes to Saudi Arabia and Iran, in order to improve legitimacy and security, both regimes try to promote the idea of "threats" and of the other as an enemy. To do so, they use the Diversionary theory of war to defocus domestic attention from domestic issues and draw attention to the international arena, such as foreign policies, like wars or an enemy (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010).

The Speech Act theory in Yemen

The Speech act theory is an important aspect too in the Yemeni war. Similarly to other situations, Saudi Arabia and Iran also use the rhetoric to attack each other and to promote each country's foreign politics. In this case, both countries use a justificatory discourse to promote their actions (Buys and Garwood-Gowers 2018).

When the Houthis took over Yemen's capital Sana'a, former Iranian foreign minister and a member of parliament declared that "Tehran was now in control of four Arab capitals: Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, and Sanaa" (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:164). This can be seen as an attempt to promote the country's foreign politics through speech.

Moreover, both countries try to increase leadership and their power in order to achieve security. To increase legitimacy though, both leaders use the Diversionary theory of war, as it has been earlier discussed in this paper and try to create an image of the other as an enemy.

A good example was when the Iranian Revolutionary Corps declared that the only reason Saudi Arabia was accusing Iran of financing the Houthis was to divert attention from their own attacks in Yemen. In addition, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister also declared that Tehran's planes were there only to provide medical aid and to provide Yemenis with health assistance- according to Iranian ambassador, the Houthis never needed the help and that the country was only trying to help the poor and oppressed (Gimenez Cerioli 2018:307).

Iran's supreme leader, Khamenei also publicly stated in 2015 that the conflict in Yemen was not a sectarian war, but a political one, since Saudi Arabia was the responsible for the negotiations that removed Saleh from power because they feared for the stability of the Arabian Peninsula (Salisbury 2015 in: Gimenez Cerioli 2018: 308). On the other hand, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman openly declared that Therefore, to contain the Houthis in Yemen really meant to contain an Iranian expansion in the Arab peninsula.

Iran is also referred to as the enemy, the main sponsor of terrorism, and as "the problem, not the solution" by Saudi ambassador Al-Jubeir. In this context, Saudi Arabia tries to use the narrative to portray Tehran and the Houthis as allies to the international media and community (Gimenez Cerioli 2018:309). This tactic was important when trying to form the alliance together with the US in the Yemeni intervention. In the end, Saudis received strategic, military and public support.

When analyzing both countries' governments-controlled press agencies, one can recognize the hostility coming from both sides. On an issue from June 19th from the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) on guns' sales to Saudi Arabia coming from European countries, such as Germany and France, authors use the opportunity to blame Saudi Arabia for the humanitarian crisis. "(…) showing that the lives of Yemeni women and children are least important for the union's 28-member states when it comes to their business interests. Saudi Arabia led a coalition of Arab states against Yemen back in 2015, leaving a large number of people dead and many other injured. However, it seems that documents, films and pictures of the bloody war and the killing of innocent women and children are no proof enough to stop the Europeans to stop arms sales to perpetrators of this bloodshed. The conflict has triggered what the UN describes as "the

biggest humanitarian disaster in the world" (Islamic Republic News Agency and Nikui 2019).

On the other hand, when looking at the Saudi Press Agency website, it is possible to recognize the hostility towards the Islamic Republic's backed Houthis. On June 21, the government-controlled institution issued a statement blaming the group for the humanitarian crisis that is happening in the country. According to the agency: "The Yemeni government has accused the Iranian-backed Houthi militias of being responsible for a World Food Program (WFP) resolution yesterday to partially suspend humanitarian aid operations in its areas of control, particularly in Sanaa, which will affect 850,000 Yemenis. The Yemeni Foreign Ministry stressed in a statement today that the continued Houthis intransigence and insistence on targeting and stealing the citizens of the most needy resulted in the partial suspension of the WFP activities in Yemen, calling on the international community and the Security Council to condemn these violations by the Houthi militias (Saudi Press Agency 2019)."

Yemen as a proxy war

The conflict in Yemen, however, is another example of proxy conflict in which Iran fights against Saudi Arabia (Kelemen 2018). The war made Saudis invest more than 25% of its budget in the military. Another important factor worth analyzing not only in the Yemeni case is the fact that, while Saudi Arabia tries to maintain stability in the region and avoid any kind of manifestation, Iran on the other hand is responsible for promoting a significant number of revolutions and promote regional instability in its favor (Cerioli 2018:295).

By using Mumford's definition of a proxy as "the indirect engagement in a conflict by third parties wishing to influence its strategic outcome" and as "constitutive of a relationship between a benefactor, who is a state or a non-state actor external to the dynamic of an existing conflict, and their chosen proxies who are the conduit for weapons, training and funding from the benefactor", it is possible to classify the civil war in Yemen as a proxy war. Mumford also offers 4 possible scenarios when it comes to proxy wars: 1. A state using another state as a proxy, 2. A state using a non-state actor as a proxy, 3. A non-state actor using a state as a proxy and 4. A non-state actor using another non-state actor as a proxy (Wyss 2016:7).

The Yemeni case, therefore can be classified as a proxy war between Tehran and Riyadh, whereby Iran provides the Houthis with material support. This way, the example illustrates a state using a non-state actor as a proxy. There are severe accusations of funding and supporting the northern

militia, as well as providing them with weaponry, such as AK-47 and RPGS (Wyss 2016:37). Another indicator of Iranian influence on the Houthis movement can be traced to the 1986, when Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, the brother of the current Houthi leader travelled to Tehran (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:158).

In January 2013, for example, the Yemeni Coast Guard intercepted a boat carrying "C4 explosives, 12mm rockets, bomb-making equipment in order to assemble IEDs, and night-vision-goggles made in Iran" (Wyss 2016: 37). Also, just like with the Badr Cops in Iraq, Iran is accused of providing Houthi rebels with military training in Eritrea and in Qom, with the help of Hezbollah members. Iran also provided the Houthis with propaganda support and an Iranian clergy openly declared their support for the Houthis (Wyss 2016: 37).

Therefore, in both cases it can be concluded that Iran engages in proxy warfare in Iraq and in Yemen through material and financial support, non-military means and, in both interventions, Hezbollah is involved. In addition, both of them are mostly triggered by pursuing interests rather than spreading ideologies and religious ties) (Wyss 2016:40).

Iranian interest in Yemen is mainly motivated by containing Saudi's influence in the Arab Peninsula. Therefore, by leading a proxy intervention in the region, the country tries to secure its hegemonic influence through empowering Shia groups throughout the region(Wyss 2016:35). By doing so, Tehran tries to turn the balance of power in its favor (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:160).

When analyzing the risks of its involvement in Yemen, it is important to note that Iran denies any kind of support in the war. This is then the case of a covert proxy, which may avoid potential additional costs or responsibility. The 2009 border clash (before the Arab Spring protests) between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which counted with the help of Houthi rebels in favor of Iran is another example of when both countries' interests were shown in the Arab Peninsula's poorest country (Wyss 2016:35 ; F Worth 2009).

Tehran, just like the situation in Bahrain in 2011, supported protests in Yemen against Saudi backed president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, willing to show the "Islamic Awakening" in the Yemeni case. Iran condemned the crimes committed by authorities in Bahrain and Yemen, claiming that the will of the people was not being respected in any of these countries (Gimenez Cerioli 2018).

The war in Yemen is of extreme importance for Mohammed bin Salman's legitimacy in the Middle East, since the Crown Prince claims he is committed to making significant changes in the Kingdom, such as the so called "Saudi Vision 2030" reforms (Gimenez Cerioli 2018). Therefore, the MBS's goal is to reestablish Yemen as an ally and to gain the status of a regional leader (Gimenez Cerioli 2018).

Yemen is an important zone of influence and a priority for Saudi Arabia even though the country is not a significant natural resources ground. It is, on the other hand an important point to increase and secure legitimacy (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:155).

Iran's involvement in Yemen, on the other hand, is not as severe as it is in Iraq and Syria. An important example is that sending Quds Forces is not an option. Instead, as mentioned before in this paper, Iran provided Houthi officials and other Yemeni groups with religious education, weaponry, naval transportation and in modernizing the Al-Hudaydah port (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:165).

Additionally, Tehran is aware that it is incapable of controlling the Houthis' decision-making process, since the group does not respond to the Republic in the same way that Hezbollah does. Therefore, it is possible to compare the Houthis to Hamas: both receive support from Iran, but do not respond to it in the same way. Also, because of its structure and military knowledge, the Houthis are not dependent on Tehran's support fundamentally (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:166).

Initially, Iranian support to the Houthis started out as discrete. However, after Saudi Arabia started to engage itself more in the conflict and to launch more airstrikes, Tehran began to take "public stand against it", such as engaging in "major media campaigns against the humanitarian catastrophe resulting from Saudi airstrikes and reinforcing the importance of a "Sunni-Shia unity"(Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:167).

Saudi Arabia and the conflict

Yemen is seen by Saudi Arabia as the "weakest link in the chain of security in the Arabian Peninsula, and thus easy prey for Tehran to penetrate and manipulate" (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:162). This is one of the main reasons why Saudi Arabia decided to continually launch airstrikes in the country. Also, because of the war, more than a million Yemenis tried to seek asylum in its neighbor country (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:162).

There are also attempts to insert Yemen in the GCC have been taking place since 2007 as an attempt to secure the Kingdom's influence in the country. However, taking part in the GCC would only benefit Riyadh depending on Iranian's influence in the country: if the Houthis are declared winners of the biggest humanitarian crisis of the century, Saudi Arabia would have its role decreased due to the group's relation to Tehran (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016). If this is not the case, Saudi Arabia, which already assumes the role of the leader of the GCC and of the Arab and Sunni world, would also win Yemen over. "This leadership, the Saudi establishment believes, comes with a responsibility to stand up to and check Iran" (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:163).

However, Jens Heibach argues that Saudi Arabia is the one contributing to the rise of the Houthi movement in Yemen because of its participation in "special committees" (al-lajna al-khassa). These cabinets, as mentioned in the case description part of this paper, were used to receive covert payments to increase and legitimize Saudi influence in Yemen. However, the decision to classify the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist group and to stop the payments to the organization's partner in Yemen, the Islah party, (a long time Saudi client and partner and also a Houthi rival) made the ascendency of the Houthis easier in the country (Heibach 2017:3).

Accordingly, Riyadh fears that the Houthis will become the next Hezbollah and that it may reestablish the sect balance between Shias and Sunnis in the country. This way, a report by the Yemen Data Project linked 8600 air attacks between March 2015 and the end of August 2016 to the Saudi coalition. Among them, 3577 hit military sites, 3158 hit citizen areas, such as schools, hospitals and 942 hit residential ones (Dilip 2019).

Riyadh tries to justify its intervention by the "war on terror" rhetoric in order to gain international acknowledgment, acceptance and support for Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's future monarchy (Buys and Garwood-Gowers 2018:1,3; Stenslie 2015). This way, it leads a coalition which was responsible for launching a mission called "Operation Decisive Storm" on March 26, 2015 to support former president Hadi. The coalition, formed by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait "submitted a Joint Statement to the United Nations Security Council offering justifications for the military intervention as a use of force (Buys and Garwood-Gowers 2018:2).

This Statement is however controversial. Because the country was facing a civil war, it is questionable if former president Hadi should have consented to the use of force by external actors inside Yemen "by virtue of the principles of non-intervention and self-determination" (Buys and

Garwood-Gowers 2018:2). In the document, the coalition formed by Riyadh claims that they are responsible to protect the Yemeni people from the Houthi militia. This way Saudi Arabia uses the humanitarian language to validate its policies in Yemen (Buys and Garwood-Gowers 2018:3).

On the other hand, although the kingdom uses the earlier mentioned humanitarian speech in order to justify its intervention in Yemen, the same Saudi Arabia is responsible for one of the actions with the biggest humanitarian impacts in the war (Fink 2017:291). In order to prevent the Houthis from acquiring weapons coming from the Yemeni coast, Saudi led coalition established a naval blockade with the approval of the Yemeni government on April 10th 2015 (Fink 2017:291).

Saudi Arabia, however, changed its foreign policy patterns in the last six years. The country's former policies were more leaned towards diplomacy, money and religion. Nevertheless, with the reduction of United States' military in the Middle East, Riyadh started to invest more in small-scale military campaigns in the region, such as in Syria, Iraq and in Yemen (Stenslie 2015:3).

Saudi Arabia and Al Qaeda in Yemen

Al Qaeda emerged in the 1980s as a consequence of the Soviet operation in Afghanistan with the objective to defend Muslims across the globe from oppression (Mabon 2016:127). Their leader was Saudi national Osama bin Laden and, after expanding, it consequently became an important actor in the Yemeni civil war (Mabon 2016:127).

In the present days, the terrorist group's capital is claimed to be Mukalla, a port city in the south of Yemen. There, al Qaeda fighters abolish taxes for residents, operate speedboats where they "impose fees on ship traffic, and make propaganda videos in which they boast about paving local roads and stocking hospitals" (Browning, Bayoumy, and Gobari 2017:1).

It is also estimated that the organization has already "extorted $1.4 million from the national oil company and earns up to $2 million every day in taxes on goods and fuel coming into the port." The group has also conquered the confidence of Yemenis who felt abandoned by the government and consider the situation in Mukalla "stable"(Browning, Bayoumy, and Gobari 2017:2).

The relations between Saudi Arabia and Al Qaeda are not recent. Their alliance is traced back to when Osama bin Laden offered Saudi king Fahd protection when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait (Mabon 2016:126).

However, the house of Saud rejected bin Laden's offer, which led to hostility between the Kingdom and the organization.

Nevertheless, the affinity between both is still demonstrated on different levels. The first one being the fact that 11 of the 15 jihadists involved in 9/11 were born in the Kingdom. Secondly, Saudi Arabia has contributed financially to the terrorist group; and thirdly, al Qaeda's ideology is driven by Saudi Arabia's Wahhabist ideology, and that "several members of the Al Saud family possess ties to al Qaeda" (Mabon 2016:127). Moreover, A considerable amount of reports trace continued financing of al Qaeda by Saudi Arabia. A Canadian intelligence document claims that Saudi charities, such as al Wafa Humanitarian Organization, channel $1 to 2 million per month to the terrorist group (Lantis 2008:51).

Saudi Arabia also aids the terrorist organization indirectly. When fighting the Houthis, Saudi Arabia helps al Qaeda grow stronger and expand in the port city. After "Operation Decisive Storm" led by the Saudi coalition, Yemeni army troops left Mukalla and made the way for al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) to become even stronger (Browning, Bayoumy, and Gobari 2017:3). Recent studies also show that several Sunni tribes in Yemen have allied with the terrorist organization in order to defeat the Houthis (Watson 2016:10).

In addition, a recent Associated Press (AP) report from 2018 showed that the Saudi coalition backed by the United States dealt secretly with Al Qaeda fighters so that the terrorist group wouldn't attack the West. The investigation also concluded that the coalition's biggest goal was to fight the Iranian backed Houthis- an al Qaeda's common enemy (Michael, Wilson, and Keath 2018).

The report is based on "reporting in Yemen and interviews with two dozen officials, including Yemeni security officers, militia commanders, tribal mediators and four members of al-Qaida's branch" and claims that it is "impossible" to say who is AQAP or not due to the numerous alliances it made in the last years of conflict (Michael, Wilson, and Keath 2018).

Iran and the conflict

One of the most significant characteristics of the Iranian foreign politcies is financing non-state actors, such as Hezbollah and Hamas (Heibach 2017:4). This way, the Islamic Republic chose to do the same in Yemen by backing up a non-state actor.

Its founder, al-Houthi invested in relations to Iran by expanding his religious education in the country (Salisbury 2015:5). This led to deep dissatisfaction with former president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, which led to Al-Houthis' arrest, later flee in central Sa'dah in the north of Yemen and consequent kill in action (Salisbury 2015:5).The Houthis were able to overthrow a government backed by Saudi Arabia in 2015 and this way, captured Yemen's capital Sana'a (Laub 2015:2).

Although Houthis' weaponry does not rely 100% on Iran, observers have concluded that Hezbollah and Iranian government have provided the militia with training, weapons, advice, and arms shipments (Sharp 2017:9). Moreover, Lebanese newspaper al- Mustaqbal claimed in April 2014 that Hezbollah fighters were killed in combat in Yemen, which also helps to assume the group's participation in the civil war (Wyss 2016:35).

According to Salisbury, Iran's relation to Yemen was also influenced by the country's division in 1962 in northern and southern Yemen, whereby Saudi and Iranian interests in the region started to clash after the 1979 Islamic revolution. This way, the separation led to the southern part supporting Iran and against Western colonialism, while the northern part took Saudi Arabia's side (Salisbury 2015: 4).

Iran's interest in Yemen would "enable to establish an intelligence outpost and covert weapons distribution network for supporting its interests in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa and provide the Iranians with strategic options in their shadow war with Israel, including increasing arms shipments to Israel's enemies at times of Tehran's choosing."(Wyss 2016:35). Moreover, the fact that the Houthi's basis is close to the Saudi border also arouses Tehran's interest in the region (Heibach 2017:4).

Balance of power in Yemen

Power relations are necessary to analyze when addressing conflicts between two countries (Panaite 2017:6). As it has been earlier stated, the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran is claimed by Gause to be a "balance of power game" (Gregory Gause 2014:4). This way, Saudi Arabia considers the Arabian Peninsula its own area of influence and, consequently try to prevent Iran, or any other State to dominate the region (Nuruzzaram 2019:14).

Therefore, if looked through a realist perspective, states often push balancing acts in order to increase their own capabilities and diminish the rivals' ones (Adami and Pouresmaeili 2013:166). The rivalry between

Saudi Arabia and Iran is claimed by Gause, to be a "balance of power game"(Gregory Gause 2014).

By using Hedley Bull's classification of the four different accounts of balance of power, it is possible to claim that the Saudi-Iranian rivalry can be classified as a local balance of power (Diez, Bode, and Fernandes da Costa 2011:7). Before 2003, the Middle East was considered a multipolar system, with Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt and Turkey leading a multilateral balance of power. However, through the process of alliance forming, Iran and Saudi Arabia's rivalry worsened (Ekşi 2017:13). In this context, the Middle East, therefore, can be considered a scenario where there is a simple balance of power between Saudi Arabia and Iran in a narrower sense (Ekşi 2017:13).

Moreover, another strategy of balance of power is to form alliances (Ekşi 2017:137). This way, it is possible to apply Waltz's approach to the balance of power in the Saudi-Iranian rivalry. Each state is therefore likely to continue competing to pursue a favorable balance of power (Jay Dee Jamison 2004:2). On the other hand, by engaging in proxy wars, Tehran exerts its expansionist foreign policies in countries in the Arab world, like it has already done to Syria, Iraq and Yemen (Almarzoqi 2016; Mumford 2013:40).

This way, when dealing with alliance building, Saudi Arabia does not only use its own capabilities, but tries to form alliances and to use allies' capabilities as well (Adami and Pouresmaeili 2013:166). Moreover, it is often argued by scholars that Saudi Arabia tries to maintain the existing balance of power internally and externally to increase regime security and to prevent Iran from achieving hegemony (Almarzoqi 2016; Panaite 2017:6).

In the Yemeni case, the situation is not different. When Iran increased its participation in the civil war, the Kingdom increased its participation by launching airstrikes on the "basis that Iran was backing the Houthis" due to its foreign policy to preserve the balance of power in the region after the Arab Spring. (Ekşi 2017:143; Hill 2017:3).

On the other side, when Iran increased its participation in the civil war, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia increased its participation by launching airstrikes on the "basis that Iran was backing the Houthis" due to its foreign policy to preserve the balance of power in the region after the Arab Spring. (Ekşi 2017:143; Hill 2017:3). Therefore, in order to prevent Yemen from becoming another Iraq, where "sovereignty lies in Tehran, not in Baghdad", Saudi Arabia leads a coalition with actors such as the United

Arab Emirates, the GCC countries (except for Oman), Morocco, Sudan, Egypt, Jordan and Pakistan (Almarzoqi 2016; Panaite 2017:6; Stenslie 2015:1).

This way, the main reason for Saudi Arabia's current Yemen intervention is the Iranian presence in its neighboring country (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016:163). Saudi Arabia thus tries to maintain Iran isolated due to the country's latest nuclear developments and due to the Islamic Republic's involvement in Middle Eastern politics, such as the Arab Spring protests and Tehran's formation of a "liberation army" (Almarzoqi 2016; Panaite 2017).

Arab upheavals are seen as the basis of the legitimate rule in the Arab World and their context for influence in the Middle East manifest in the region's weakest states' domestic politics (Gregory Gause 2014:4). With the number of protests, Iran saw an opportunity to use them as a way to fight for hegemony in the region (Ekşi 2017:2). Significant circumstances are, for example the regime changes and the power vacuum that took over after the protests that started in 2011. These are considered factors which pushed Saudi Arabia and Iran to fight for regional hegemony through another proxy war, but this time in Yemen (Almarzoqi 2016).

The domestic bases of the conflict in countries in the region are then explored by Riyadh and Tehran. According to Gause, domestically weak States tend to me more susceptible to being influenced by regional powers. He defines domestically weak states as the one "there the central government exercises little effective control over its society." Weaker states are therefore more fragmented, and an example for that is Yemen, which "never developed a strong central authority" (Gregory Gause 2014:8).

In addition, a possible victory in Yemen could mean an opportunity for Saudi Arabia to show its military force and to be recognized internationally as a regional leader. This is also a key point for Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who launched military airstrikes in the neighboring country before taking possession, expecting the kingdom's victory in the conflict before becoming Saudi king (Heibach 2017:5).

Consequently, this dispute can be considered a balance of power in the Middle East, where both Iran and Saudi Arabia try to play a bigger role in the conflict by backing up groups, through the use of an offensive rhetoric against each other, or by launching airstrikes.

6. Latest Developments

The war in Yemen is an ongoing conflict. Therefore, there are recent events currently happening which can also be classified as consequences of the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran and, logically, of the Yemeni civil war. These events, however, haven't yet appeared on academic papers, but only in Newspapers and are often referred to as "tit-for-tat attacks". Among them, this paper will exemplify the most recent ones happening in June 2019, the time which I started writing this paper.

An episode of significant importance in the course of the war were the Houthi drone attacks on June 12th, 2019 at Saudi airports in the cities of Jizan and Abha. Houthi's satellite news channel, Al-Masirah claimed the groups's responsibility for the attacks inside Saudi territory and the Kingdom informed that 26 people were consequently wounded (Associated Press 2019).

After the attack, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman declared that the Kingdom does not want war in the Middle East, but that it will not hesitate to counter attack in case of any threat coming from Tehran (Wintour 2019). Therefore, as a response, Saudi Arabia's led coalition launched an attack in Yemen's capital Sana'a, which is dominated by the Iran's backed group in the country (Wintour 2019).

7. Conclusion

It is possible to conclude that Saudi Iranian relations are a rivalry in the Middle East. As it has been argued in my paper, there are several factors which contribute to this rivalry, but the most significant are the religious incongruence, the ideological level, influenced by the Arab-Persian division and the sectarian level (Mabon 2016). Therefore, the differences between Riyadh and Tehran's identities and ideologies are crucial when analyzing Middle Eastern security issues (Mabon 2016:217).

However, in order to analyze the Saudi-Iranian rivalry, it is important to not look only from the realist perspective, but also from Hinnebusch's constructivist approach. To understand this identity incongruence is therefore crucial to evaluate security issues in the region, such as alliance forming processes and power struggles in the Middle East (Mabon 2016:20).

Since 1979, both countries engaged in different sides in several wars, such as in Bahrain, Iraq, Syria and Yemen. This event is considered by many scholars as an important peak of the hostility between both countries because identity issues between Tehran and Riyadh became more evident.

This way, both countries seek to gain regional dominance in the region through "power plays", such as proxy wars (Panaite 2017).

Therefore, because of the occurrence of different conflicts between Riyadh and Tehran, their relationship can be classified an enduring rivalry because Saudi Arabia and Iran consider each other threats (Mitton 2016:70).

It also is possible to recognize that each state's action leads to a counterreaction by the other (Panaite 2017:97). Since both countries have severe domestic issues such as the lack of access to basic rights, leaders of both countries make use of speech acts in order to legitimize themselves in power. By using the rhetoric to gain international and domestic support and defocus attention from both countries' authoritarian domestic policies and, in the case of Iran, from an economic crisis, Tehran and Riyadh try to win international and domestic legitimacy (Kelemen 2018).

The balance of power theory is therefore significant when analyzing the conflict between both Middle Eastern superpowers. In the Yemeni case, each country backs up opposite sides in the conflict and has formed alliances with state and non-state actors to engage in the war and win over hegemony in the region. However, it is important to reinforce the fact that Saudi Arabia only intervened in the civil war after fearing Tehran's influence in its neighboring country due to their military and strategic aid for the Houthis (Ekşi 2017:143; Hill 2017:3).

Secondly, some theorists also try to describe the Saudi- Iranian rivalry through the Balance of Threat theory, which would also be interesting in the case Study of Yemen since Tehran and Riyadh consider themselves threats to one another (Salavatian, Moradi, and Salehi Najaf Abadi 2015). However, to combine both theories of balance (power and threat) would have made my work too focused on the theoretical approach. This way, further research studies could attempt to explore both theories' strengths and weaknesses when analyzing the conflict.

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13

Soft Power Sources in Iranian Foreign Policy: The Case of Tajikistan

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1. Introduction

As a central concept in the field of International Relations, power is defined by many researchers and academicians. Power is broadly the ability and potential of a state to protect its interests or get its demands accepted by other countries. In other words, it means the potency and capacity of a state to affect and control the behaviours of other states. On the other hand, power is encountered in International Relations as a means used to achieve a certain purpose (Erdal, 2012). Soft power, as it is called, is another dimension of power and differs from hard power since the former aims to achieve desired outcomes using more peaceful ways in lieu of threats or oppressions.

In 1990, the term *soft power* was coined by Joseph Nye, a professor in Harvard University. Nye developed the term soft power in his 2004 book "*Soft Power: The Way to Success in Global Politics.*" He describes soft power as the ability to get a desired outcome by attraction rather than using hard power and force. On the other hand, Nye (2004) lists the most basic sources of attraction of soft power as the cultural values, political ideals and, in particular, the legitimacy of implemented policies in the eyes of others. A state needs to possess the indicated sources of attraction in order to be able to control the behaviours of other countries and guide the developments in favour of it. Soft power emphasizes the intangible aspects of power and is accepted as a new way of international use of power which shows that more legitimate applications should be practiced in order to attain goals in foreign policy. In other words, the historical background and culture of a state are the fundamental aspects that determine the soft power of it as well as the foreign and domestic policies and the place and respectability of it in the international arena (Sadeghi & Hajimineh, 2019).

The cradle of ancient civilizations, Iran[1] hosted many cultures throughout the history as it brought together many cultures owing to its geographical location. Having inherited a well-rooted and rich civilization, Iran has doubtless a rich accumulation of literature, history, culture and diplomacy. It can be claimed that particularly the Persian state traditions and the Persian language and literature still persist in the region. Since the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the foreign policy of Iran was shaped by the ideology and Islamic unity of Ruhollah Khomeini and is witnessed to be greatly affected by the relations with the USA and the extensive geopolitical changes in the region. Especially after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Iran adopted the soft power policy drawing on the rich culture and historical background in order to be a regional power, and started to implement this policy with different countries through various institutions (Üstüntaş, 2016).

The government of Iran holds various activities to teach the Persian language to foreigners and introduce the Persian culture through the cultural centres and fellowship associations around the world. In this sense, Iran has the potential to use various soft power actors owing to the cultural ties with the Central Asian and Middle Eastern countries including, in particular, India and Pakistan (Yegin, 2015). Tajikistan is the only country with which Iran has strong historical and cultural relations among the Middle Eastern countries. It is doubtless that the common cultural ties between the two countries refer to a significant soft power potential of Iran on Tajikistan (Reisi, 2017).

This study provides an introduction to soft power and its types and categories, and dwells on the soft power capacities and limitations of Iran towards Tajikistan as the former has a certain soft power potential as a regional power. Apart from that, this study also provides an analytical review of the relations, foreign supports, cultural activities, spheres and means of influence and applications between the two countries based on historical evidences, official documents, relevant researches, theories and the source of the media.

2. The Soft Power Concept

The history of International Relations suggests that the first person to influence the concept of and the discussions on power was Robert A. Dahl with his article "*The Concept of Power*" written in 1957. According to the famous definition included in almost all the works of Dahl (1957), power

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1 The official name of the country is "Islamic Republic of Iran." However, the term "Iran" is preferred in this study when emphasizing the civilization.

is defined as "*A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do*" (pp. 202-203). In other words, power, at its purest form, is the ability to get desired outcomes. Joseph Nye (2004) likens power to weather forecasts and claims that "*Everyone depends on power and talk about it, but few understand it.*" (pp. 1). As the statements of Nye suggest, power has a dynamic nature, and it leads to the emergence of differences in power itself. Power is classified under three categories as hard power, soft power, which is known as the second face of power, and smart power. Hard power defines the military and economic powers. According to Nye, hard power is based on the economic and military powers of states and their ability to force other countries. Hard power is an oppressive power for countries and is also described as a deterrent and protective one (Nye, 2004). Due to the application of power with various elements and methods, it is possible to see more than one type of power indicated in academic literature. However, power, in general, is analysed under two titles as hard power and soft power.

The term soft power was pronounced for the first time by Joseph S. Nye (1990), political scientist and former US Deputy Secretary of Defence, in 1990 with a work published in New York with the title "*Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*". Approached by the International Relations literature as a method of public diplomacy especially during the recent times, the term soft power is "*a state's ability to get what it wants by attraction*" according to Nye. In other words, soft power is the power which ensures that other countries want what the state with the soft power capacity wants. According to Nye, "*a country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries – admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness – want to follow it.*" By this definition, it is inferred that power is the ability of a state to get the outcomes it wants by attraction and to gain the admiration of other countries by affecting them (Nye, 1990). Based on these definitions, it can be remarked that soft power is the attempt of a state to get the outcomes it wants not by applying an oppressive power on other countries but evoking their admiration. The means used as soft power are the values, culture, implemented policies and effective institutions of a country. The difference of soft power from the other types of power is that soft power is used in conjunction with public diplomacy and is implemented as a mode of power which requires multidimensional diplomacy (Maili & Mutii, 2016). Today, it is observed that countries prefer to use soft power instead of hard power and that they adopt the soft power diplomacy in order to attain more political ends.

If we take the definition of power by Nye (2008) which is "the ability to influence the behaviour of others to get the outcomes one wants" (pp. 30),

we can claim that soft power is a kind of skill. In this sense, a state wouldn't have this power and, therefore, wouldn't have the capacity and get the outcomes it wanted if it had the financial means but didn't know how and where to use these. The extent of this potential can only be measured with the sphere of influence. That is, the more a state is able to influence a target mass with the means it has, the more it has the power potential. In this respect, there are various elements which play a significant role in the use of soft power such as democracy, strong economy, freedoms, an impartial and democratic system, high level of welfare, human and social capitals, historical experience and art (Kalın, 2011).

On the other hand, apart from hard and consistent efforts, a state should be able to use all the elements of soft power together and in harmony with each other in order to be successful or get the desired outcomes in this process. The important point is to identify what, when, how and by whom soft power elements will be used as well as to draw out a public diplomacy strategy in order to be able to attain the desired ends. A state should possess the ability to bring together the said elements in order to be an acclaimed and followed state or serve as a centre of attraction (Aydoğan, 2011).

International actors aim to influence the behaviours of other countries with their resources and thus to tip the scales in their favour. Especially after globalization, the importance of media and communication increased, and the cultural interaction among countries gained speed. Here, it should be noted that cultural elements are quite precious resources in terms of representing the living cultural image of a society. The capacities of countries to define the principles and establish the institutions that govern their cultural universality and international operations are among the most prominent sources of power (Maili & Mutii, 2016). In this sense, it is not possible for narrow-minded values and limited cultures to have soft power (Şener, 2014).

It is observed that Iran does not possess the sufficient resources for ensuring soft power since the soft power theories in question arise from the experience and applications of developed countries. However, it is not possible to explain especially the post-Revolutionary policies of Iran with these theories. Recently showing efforts to improve its regional power and influence, Iran develops a soft power mechanism based on cooperation in various fields such as the sect, religion, historical background and culture, in particular (Üstüntaş, 2016). In this respect, it is obvious that the soft power policies applied by Iran towards Tajikistan focus on the language, culture and historical background.

3. The Soft Power Resources of Iran in Tajikistan and Their Use

As a regional power in the Middle East, Iran influenced a wide geographical area (such as the Central Asia, India and the Middle East) with the cultural values it has throughout the history and, therefore, possesses a wide range of cultural elements (Yegin, 2015). However, it also possesses religious elements since it experienced a revolution in 1979 based on anti-Western discourses and since the leading actors, the discourse and the goals of the revolution were inspired by religion and the revolution was named after "Islam." Furthermore, it has also a wide range of sectarian elements owing to the Shia followers who live in Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Pakistan as well as the neighbours Afghanistan and Iraq (Üstüntaş, 2016). These elements ensure great advantages to Iran in the aforementioned geography in terms of soft power potential. Iran addresses particularly the sphere of the Persian culture and geography when engaging in soft power operations. In this sense, Iran applies soft power elements by prioritizing the Middle East, the Caucasus, the Central Asia and the South Asia (Yegin, 2015).

Defined by the State as "cultural diplomacy operations", the soft power applications of Iran are ensured through various institutions. Founded in 1995, the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) is one of the most important institutions to this end. Created by the Government of Iran, the institution introduces the Persian culture abroad and endeavours to integrate cultural activities (Official Website of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization of Iran, n.d.).

The main goal of ICRO (n.d.) was stated to be:

> *"The development of cultural ties with other nations and societies, the reinforcement of the cultural ties of the Islamic Republic of Iran with other nations, the accurate introduction of the Persian culture and civilization, the preparation of a ground for solidarity among Muslims, the practice and introduction of Islamic culture and tenets around the world, and the introduction of the scientific studies and touristic attractions of Iran around the world".*

To this end, Iran has opened more than 600 cultural centres in 45 countries. Of these, 13 are in the Middle East, 38 are in Asia-Pacific, 203 in the Central Eurasia, 281 are in Europe, 1 in Ghana and 99 are in North America. Additionally, there are around 100 Persian teaching centres in various areas around the world. Apart from these, there are 10 Iranian TV channels of the Iranian Radio and Television Agency that broadcast in 20 languages abroad (Sadeghi, 2019). These institutions directly contribute to the image and, therefore, the soft power of Iran in the region. Previously disconnected with the Central Asia due to the Tsarist Russian control over

the region until 1991, Iran gained the opportunity to reconnect with and develop influence on the Central Asian countries after their independence (Kalam & Gudarzi, 2013).

Iran follows a religion-based policy in the foreign policy towards the Middle East while prioritizing language and culture as regards to the foreign policy towards the Caucasus and the Central Asia. Iran pays particular attention to avoid a religious and sectarian discourse as it develops the relations with the Central Asian countries (Üstüntaş, 2016). At this point, Tajikistan bears a particular importance for Iran for the former is the only country where Persian is widely spoken among the Central Asian countries. It is doubtless that a common historical background and culture are the most considerable factors that help Iran to establish closer ties with Tajikistan compared with the other countries in the region (Shakir, 2017).

Also, the cultural affinity between the people of Iran and Tajikistan provide notable opportunities to Iran in terms of soft power. The policies developed and attempts made by Iran are accepted and adopted by the Tajiks more readily compared to other countries. For Iran, this signifies a strong potential of soft power on Tajikistan owing to the common cultural background (Reisi, 2017). Where a great majority of the people of Tajikistan (around 85%) belong to the Sunni branch of Islam, only around 13-14% of the people follow the Shia branch. Besides, the population of Tajikistan predominantly speak the Persian language (Dilek, 2011).

The conciliatory efforts during the "Tajikistani Civil War (1993-1997)" represent an active and constructive diplomacy by Iran (Reisi, 2017). However; Iran, isolated in the international arena and supporting the solidarity and freedom of Islam, did not support the Islamic dissidents for it could have caused damage to the relations with the Russian Federation and also moved together with and avoided contrary conducts against the Russian Federation in order to put an end to the war. Similarly, Iran stated that it "respects the territorial integrity" of the Russian Federation and disregarded the Russian invasion in Chechnya believing that otherwise would damage the present relations with the Russian Federation (Üstüntaş, 2016).

That is, the stance against the dissidents during the Tajikistani Civil War shows that Iran did not attempt to establish a new regime in Tajikistan and did not possess the necessary and sufficient means to ensure this. Nevertheless, the authorities in Tajikistan still have doubts that Iran may be the actor behind the political Islam and that the latter may have been forcing a new regime in the country. Although Iran undertook to act as a

mediator in order to fend off the perception that it supported the radical Islamic movements in Tajikistan, it cannot be claimed that the efforts were any successful (Devlet, 2017). It is witnessed that the government in Dushanbe exhibits a very careful attitude in the relations with Iran due to these perceptions (Devlet, 2017). Participating in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization since 2005 as an observer, Tajikistan rejects the full membership of Iran to the organization, despite great efforts, due to the alleged support to the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan as shown by the Russian Media (BBC Persian, 2017).

On the other hand, the ambassador of Iran was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan in order to show reaction to the invitation of Muhiddin Kabiri, the leader of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, by the government of Tehran to the International Islamic Unity Conference held on December 27, 2015. The government of Tajikistan previously alleged that Kabiri had been engaged in illegal armed activities and, therefore, closed the Islamic Renaissance Party led by him (Eastern Strategic Research Center, 2017). Similarly, the government of Tajikistan also closed the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation, an organization centred in Dushanbe. Shortly after these developments, Emomali Rahmon, the President of Tajikistan, made a visit to Saudi Arabia on January 3, 2016 in order to get financial aid and support for the fight against terrorism. The visit met a reaction by the government of Iran as it was held right after the execution of 47 people including Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, the great Shia leader. These developments naturally left an undesired impression in the relations between the two countries. Following the cold relations that lasted for four years, the visit by Sirojiddin Muhriddin, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, to Tehran on June 1, 2019 melted the ice between the two countries and helped the relations to proceed (BBC Persian, 2016).

Although there are strong historical and cultural ties between the two countries, the secular approach by the Government of Dushanbe and its elites and the Sunni faith of 85% of the people of Tajikistan limit the elbow room of Iran in Tajikistan. The Government of Iran grounded its Central Asian policy on Islam and common values following the collapse of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, during the mid-1990s, Iran also attached importance to the Shia and Sunni balance as part of the policy towards the region as well as taking into consideration the secular mentality of the Central Asian statesmen. Thus, Iran concluded that it would be beneficial if the religious discourse is minimized as part of the policies towards the region, so that the relations between the two countries could develop. For this reason, Iran rather focused on cultural and economic matters in the relations with Tajikistan (Aslan, 2016).

In this sense, Iran made great investments to the important projects concerning infrastructure and transportation in Tajikistan. Among the projects co-produced by Iran and Tajikistan, the most significant are the Sangtuda-2 Dam, the Istiqlol Tunnel and the hydroelectric power plant planned to be erected on the Zeravshan River. Apart from the foregoing, in consequence of the agreement concluded between Tajikistan and Iran, the Sangtoudeh-II Dam, one of the biggest power plants of Tajikistan, amounted to 220M USD to which Iran contributed 180M USD (Mahmudi, 2007).

The Anzob Tunnel, a 5 km project that connects the northern and southern Tajikistan, is also among the biggest projects implemented in Tajikistan in collaboration with Iran. 32M USD of the 40M USD project was funded by Iran. Following the completion of the tunnel, Tajikistan achieved the first highway transportation with the Central Asian countries and Iran and attained great economic advantages (Mahmudi, 2007). During the inauguration of the tunnel, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the sixth President of Iran, said that "*the Anzob Tunnel is a present of the people of Iran to Tajikistan*" (Mehrnews, 2006). Ahmadinejad (2006) also described the tunnel as "*the indicator of further and greater projects between the people of the two countries as the tunnel represents the achievement of the Iranian engineers and contributions by the State and people of Tajikistan.*"

On the other hand, Iran also provided financial support to the constructions of the Shurabskaya and Ayni dams, the Chahar-Maghzak Tunnel, the oil factory of Tajikistan, the TajIran tractor factory and the Avicenna Cardiac Hospital. The two countries founded a cooperation committee in order to develop the economic and commercial cooperation between each other. In 2010, more than 150 companies centred in Iran made investments in Tajikistan. Up to 2010, a total of 160 bilateral agreements were executed in various areas including, in particular, economic and commercial agreements. In 2010, Iran ranked the third country to have made the biggest investment in Tajikistan, preceded by the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China (Baduhi, 2010).

In an effort to develop the economic relations with Tajikistan, Iran exports various products to Tajikistan including, in particular, food and construction materials. In return, it imports cotton and aluminium from Tajikistan (Joharifard, 2010). The last 28 years proved an acceleration in the high-level visits as an outcome of the economic and cultural collaboration between the two countries. In different periods, the presidents of Iran have paid 8 visits to Tajikistan. Such that, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made 6 official visits to Tajikistan during his office as the President. Similarly, Emomali Rahmon, the President of Tajikistan, has

officially visited Iran 13 times. During these visits, significant economic, cultural, security and educational cooperation agreements were signed, among other fields, in an attempt to ensure the development of the mutual relations (Malikiyan, 2002).

Culture: As a political value and legitimized policy, culture is used by states as a means of foreign policy for it is one of the sources of soft power (Çavuş, 2012). Speaking of the foreign policy of Iran towards Tajikistan, it is witnessed that strong sources of soft power (such as historical background and culture) are efficiently used, and the policy is developed with this purpose by Iran. In this respect, Iran practices the means in order to expand its influence in Tajikistan, a country with strong cultural ties with the former. To this end, Iran organizes various cultural interaction activities in Tajikistan as well as holding significant organizations such as student and academic member exchange programs in educational and scientific areas (Malikiyan, 2002).

Following the collapse of the Russian Federation, Iran became the first country to recognize the independence of Tajikistan and immediately took the necessary diplomatic steps in order to establish and develop bilateral relations. To this end, the first embassy was opened in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, on September 21, 1992 (Mahmudi, 2007). In return, Tajikistan changed the name of an avenue in Dushanbe to Tehran which was previously a Russian one. Furthermore, as a symbol of the intimate relations, the statues of Lenin in the main squares of Dushanbe, remnants of the communist era, were replaced with the statues of the great poet Firdawsi (Joharifard, 2010). In 1995, the Embassy of Tajikistan in Iran was opened in Tehran. The relations between the two countries gained momentum during the presidency of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. During this period, a total of 19 agreements were made in various areas including cultural and economic spheres (Reisi, 2017).

Cultural activities account for another dimension of the soft power policy of Iran towards Tajikistan. After the collapse of the USSR, Iran commenced to engage in extensive cultural interaction activities with Tajikistan in order to be influential. In this context, Iran organizes book fairs, symposiums, seminars and scientific congresses in Tajikistan (Reisi, 2017).

During his visit to Tajikistan in May 2002, Mohammad Khatami, the former President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, mentioned the deep historical ties between the two countries and said that "*the good relations between Iran and Tajikistan paved the way for a better and more intensive cooperation and the political, economic and cultural trends between the two*

countries will continue based on mutual respect" (Isna, 2003). In addition, during his visit to Dushanbe, Tajikistan, Khatami signed various agreements in different fields in order to improve the cultural ties and collaboration. These agreements particularly relate to the protection, publication and introduction of cultural heritages, universities, higher education centres, cooperation between technology and research centres, joint research projects, academic member and student exchange programs, scholarships to students, and media (Malikiyan, 2002). In the same period, libraries were opened in Dushanbe, Kulob, Khorugh, Konibodom and Panjakent Oratep. Additionally, the Department of Culture of Iran in Tajikistan offer services with more than 8 thousand books, journals and newspapers (Malikiyan, 2002). In 2009, Iran and Tajikistan signed 6 agreements on a series of fields including joint educational activities together with academic member and student exchange programs between Isfahan Industrial University and Tajikistan University, thesis advising support for students, construction of science parks in Tajikistan, literary activities in three languages (Russian, Persian and English) and joint researches as regards to engineering and science (Journal of Isfahan Industrial University, n.d.).

 On the other hand, on May 19, 2009, the "1st International Courage and Heroism Symposium" was held on the occasion of the "World Firdawsi Day" in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Honoured by the ambassadors of Iran and Afghanistan, the symposium hosted scientists from the three Persian-speaking countries who submitted their reports. Owing to this activity, many Persian poets and writers were published and offered to readers which included Forugh Farrokhzad, Khalil Samani, Iraj Mirza, Mohammad-Hussein Shehriar, Parvin E'tesami, Hushang Ebtehaj, Jaleh Esfahani, Siyavesh Kesra, Nader Naderpour, Bozorg Alavi, Mohammad Hejazi, Mortazi Mushfiq Qasemi, Parwiz Qazi Said and Khosrev Kharezmi (İsakov, 2020).

Similarly, Dushanbe hosted the "Summit of the Persian-Speaking Countries" in 2006 with the initiatives taken by Iran and the participation of the presidents of Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The leaders who came together in Dushanbe, Tajikistan signed certain agreements to improve cultural and economic collaboration among the countries. Iran also aimed to found the "Union of the Persian-Speaking Countries" to include Afghanistan and Tajikistan. At the end of the summit, it was agreed to a start a television channel named "Nawruz", which would broadcast in Persian, in order to ensure cultural interaction between the participating countries. However, the channel could not be opened due to the differences of opinion between the parties (Ashurov, 2016). As an important element of the cultures of the Persian-speaking countries,

nawruz festivals are held with the participation of the presidents of Afghanistan, Iran and Tajikistan since 2010 (Öçal, 2018).

Iran usually performs the cultural interaction activities in Tajikistan through foundations and cultural centres. These centres intend to introduce the Persian culture, language and history and thus to add to the respectability as perceived by the Tajiks. Iran carries out various activities, particularly educational ones, in order to increase the cultural exchange and develop the amicability with Tajikistan. In this sense, among the said centres, "the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation", which was founded in 1995, is the most important one (Irna Agency, 2002).

Following the first branch of the foundation in Dushanbe, further offices were opened in various other cities such as Khujand, Khorog, Bokhtar and Rasht to offer services across Tajikistan. Although the foundation prioritizes religious doctrines in principle, it also teaches the Persian language, introduces the culture of Iran and offers humanitarian aids. Apart from cultural and humanitarian aid activities, the foundation implements substantial services such as vocational course, training and health projects (Official Website of the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation, 2013). To this end, there are 97 training centres founded in various cities of Tajikistan. These centres also provide vocational courses and scholarships to students. Furthermore, the foundation opened a clinic in Dushanbe which offers free healthcare services to Tajik citizens (Ashurov, 2016).

One of the most influential means of the soft power of Iran in Tajikistan is the "Iran Culture Houses" in Iran which operate under the Embassy of Iran. These Culture Houses offer especially education and research services in collaboration with academic institutions such as universities. Except for Tajik National University and Rudaki Institute of Language and Literature, there are 13 Culture Houses that operate in various cities of Tajikistan. The main purposes of these Culture Houses are declared to "*introduce the literature, poets and writers of the Persian culture, organize academic seminars and conferences, teach the Persian Language and Alphabet to the Tajik youth and improve the cultural interaction.*" In these cultural centres, there are works published in Persian and Cyrillic alphabets as well as scientific articles and journals (Malikiyan, 2002).

Again, inaugurated in 2012, Saadi Foundation is among the leading institutions that operate abroad in an attempt to teach and popularize the Persian language in target countries. Administering the international cultural relations of Iran, the purpose of foundation of Saadi Foundation (n.d.) was announced to "*popularize and expand the Persian language and*

literature abroad, make the best of the opportunities within and without Iran,
and strategically manage and implement the educational, research, cultural
and media activities based on goals, policies, strategies and regulations".

The Persian language training centres operate through the Persian Culture
and Literature Research Centres in India, Pakistan and Tajikistan while
340 Persian education centres offers services through Iran Culture Centres
in 61 countries, in total. According to the figures, there are 20 thousand
foreigner students who get their education in the Persian Language
Departments of various universities around the world. In India alone, there
are around 100 universities that offer the Persian language as a course. The
foundation also provides short-term training opportunity to the academic
members and students of the Persian Language and Literature departments
of these universities. (Iranian Students New Agency, 2019).

The foundation holds various activities and provides educational materials
(such as books, softwares and other sources in various languages) in order
to ensure that the Persian language is cherished by and taught to students
in these centres. Additionally, the foundation offers scholarships to the
students, researchers and professors who are engaged in the field of the
Persian Language and Literature (Saadi Foundation, n.d.). The centre aims
to provide the necessary opportunities to the aspirants of the Persian
culture and language and to reinforce the friendship between the people of
the two countries.

In 1994, the Foreign Affairs Department of Iran commenced operations
in Dushanbe with the "Persian and Tajik Culture Research Centre"
opened in collaboration with the Training and Research Department and
the Rudaki Institute of Language and Literature. Today, the centre is one
of the focal points where scientific and cultural studies are carried out
between the two countries. In this research centre, the works of the Persian
scientists are translated into Tajik while the works of Tajik scientists are
translated into Persian. Besides, the centre provides support for the
preparation and publication of the books of Tajik researchers. Apart from
these, the centre organizes seminars to introduce the culture and history of
Iran and plans to open representative offices in the universities across
Tajikistan so as to expand its field of activity (Official Website of the
Embassy of Dushanbe of the Islamic Republic of Iran, n.d.).

Opened in 2012, "Iranian Cultural House" is another centre that hosts
cultural activities in Tajikistan. Having attended the inauguration, Hamid
Baghaei, Vice President of Iran for Executive Affairs, said that the house
would "*help Iran to increase and develop the cultural activities in Tajikistan*
and ensure its expansion to other countries." Baghaei also stated that "*the*

cultural geography of Iran extends to Kashgar in the East, to Morocco in the West and to Western Africa in the South" (Information Dissemination Center of the State of Iran, 2012). The culture house particularly holds activities in order to help the Iranians of Tajikistan to get to know their languages closely and ensure maintained cultural ties with Iran. Considering the gradually escalating cultural cooperation between the two countries in the recent years, it can be remarked that the cultural houses and, in particular, the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation have contributed to a great extent. It should also be noted that these institutions played a significant role in the use of soft power by Iran in Tajikistan.

The Persian Language: The Persian language and civilization developed in Greater Khorasan, a region that covers the area between Mashhad, Iran and Tajikistan today. Rudaki, Firdawsi, Hafez and Saadi, all founders of the Persian culture, lived in this region Persian was used as an official language in India during the period of the Mughal Empire and the Khanates of Kokand and Bukhara (1876-1920), the latter of which were reigned by the Uzbeks. Persian served as the language of courts, the bourgeois, the intelligentsia and especially the Islam (Roy, 2009).

 As is known, there have been many personalities in literature, science and philosophy who contributed to the mutual interaction of the two countries throughout the history. Persian is a language that maintains its influence in the Central Asia since ancient times. Today, it is the official language of Iran and Tajikistan while it is spoken as one of the official languages in Afghanistan (Shakir, 2017). On the other hand, there are Persian-speaking groups in various countries such as Iraq, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Pakistan. It is also possible to notice the influence of Persian in language like Turkish, Indian, Urdu and Armenian (Hamadani, 2009). Therefore, language and literature is considered as one of the most important sources of soft power for the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Central Asia. While the whole Central Asia used the Arabic alphabet before 1925, many converted to Latin and then Cyrillic alphabets during the following period. In this sense, the change of languages prevented people from accessing their own written history and cultural heritages. Today, the Tajiks, who speak the same language with the people of Iran, encounter difficulties when referring to the sources in Iran due to the change of the alphabet (Atayi, 2008). However, since 2008, the Persian Alphabet is enforced as a compulsory course in the schools of Tajikistan so as to overcome the obstacle. Apart from this, Iran submitted 5000 volumes of books published in the Persian Alphabet to the Ministry of Education of Tajikistan for helping the Tajik people learn the alphabet. Furthermore, Iran provides Persian language courses so that the obstacle may be removed and the Tajiks may apply to the sources in Persian (Muhammadi, 2007).

Although the literary relations between Iran and Tajikistan continued during the USSR era, it is observed that these relations were very limited without any intimate interaction. However, the independence paved the way for serious works between the two countries. The works of the Tajik poets were published in many periodicals such as *Ayindeh*, *Simurgh*, *Kayhan Farhangi*, *Ashineh*, *Shark* and *Etlaat*. The same period also proved many scientific articles and studies on Tajikistan. The works of notable poets like Sadriddin Aini, Loiq Sher-Ali, Farzaneh Khojandi and Hakim Askeri were printed by various publishers in Iran such as Surush, Buali and Belh (Malikiyan, 2002).

Iran conducts significant activities to propagate and develop the Persian language and literature abroad as an important aspect of the foreign policy. Including particularly the language training centres operating around the world under Saadi Foundation, there are many culture and research centres that are engaged in extensive activities. As it can be inferred, Iran efficiently uses the Persian language in the foreign policy as a means of soft power. Today, there are more than 100M people around the world who speak Persian. This means that Iran has a great potential in terms of soft power (Saidi & Muqaddampar, 2014).

Cinema: Today, cinema is used by international actors as a means of soft power so as to influence and shape the perceptions and opinions of the people of a target country in favour. The ability of cinema to reach large masses within a very short time perhaps qualifies it as one of the most influential constituents of soft power (Medin & Koyuncu, 2017).

As a country attaching importance to the elements of soft power, Iran carries out considerable cinema and theatre activities in Tajikistan in addition to cultural operations. It organizes various cinema and theatre events in Tajikistan in order to improve the cultural interaction between the two countries. In this sense, the "International Hamsayeh (Neighbour) Film Festival" was held in Dushanbe and various other cities of Tajikistan in September 1991. In May 1993, the "Iran Film Week" was hosted in different cities of Tajikistan where seven feature serials were screened (Ashurov, 2016).

Recently, many movies and serials were broadcasted in the TV channels of Tajikistan after offered by Iran free-of-charge. Furthermore, it is also possible to make out that the cooperation between the film industries of Iran and Tajikistan developed and, in this respect, there are joint projects implemented. For example; "*Shukrona*", the serial shot in 2007 in Iran and Tajikistan, featured actors and actresses from both countries. During the recent years, theatre companies of Iran (such as "*Andisheh*" and

"*Esfandiyar*") staged their plays in various events organized in Dushanbe. Additionally, Tajikistan shows increasing interest to Iranian movies and serials in the last years (Malikiyan, 2002). This soaring interest can be explained with the presence of common cultural values. Playing an important role in the introduction and popularization of the Persian culture, cinema and theatre industries are accepted to be among the most significant means of soft power for Iran.

Media and Communication: The significance of media and communication increases day by day in the globalizing world. International actors use media so as to promote themselves, gain the sympathy of a target mass and form a public opinion conforming to their beliefs (Ertekin, 2012). Like other countries, Iran also profits by media and communication tools in order to promote the cultural values and reach the targeted societies.

In this regard, Iran operates 24 television channels that ensure satellite broadcasting abroad. Some of these channels are Al-Alem, El Kowsar, Seher Tv 1-2-3, Press TV, Jame Jem 1-2-3, Tv 1-2-3 and Hispan TV channels. Among these, Cami Cem TV channel addresses the Central Asian countries and especially Tajikistan, and broadcasts for 24 hours. However, Iran also intends use the channel in order to influence thousands of Iranians who live in various countries across the world. There are also radio channels which only target the Tajik audience and broadcasts in the Tajik language (Sadeghi & Hajimineh, 2019).

Following the endeavours of Iran, the Persian-speaking countries came to an agreement in 2006 to start a television channel which would broadcast in Persian in Tajikistan, Iran and Afghanistan (Avapress, 2010). Nevertheless, the television channel could not be realized due to the fact that Iran and Afghanistan had an Islamic regime where Tajikistan was a secular country and that there were discussions as regards to which and what country's values would be cherished in the TV programs. What is more, Afghanistan demanded that the channel should also broadcast in Pashto since the Pashtuns of Afghanistan did not know the Persian language. In short, the mode of appearance of presenters, the nature of entertainment programs and the broadcasting of Islamic values were the most important subjects of dispute as regards to the creation of a television channel among the three countries (Avapress, 2010).

Student Exchange Programs: Student exchange programs are among the principal activities that contribute to the promotion of the culture, language and state of Iran. The main purpose of student exchange programs is to ensure that the foreigner students who receive education in

the universities of Iran contribute to the development of the relations between the two countries after their graduation. In other words, the students who receive education in Iran are regarded as the diplomatic ambassadors of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this sense, Iran recently conducts noteworthy projects which offer scholarship to students from around the world and help them get undergraduate and postgraduate educations (Maili & Mutii, 2016).

According to the available data, there were 55,000 foreigner students who received education in various Iranian universities (Sadeghi & Hajimineh, 2019). Hassan Ghashghavi, former Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran, stated that great efforts were made to increase the number of foreigner students up to 300 thousand in the following years (Pars Today, 2017). After the conclusion of the Student Exchange Program Agreement between Iran and Tajikistan in 1995, for the first time Tajik students became eligible to scholarship for receiving education in Iran. Following the Student Exchange Program Agreement of May 2010 signed between the Ministers of Education of Iran and Tajikistan, the number of students who were eligible to scholarship and would benefit from the student exchange program went up from 100 to 250 which would continue to increase during the coming years. These undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students continue to receive education in various departments of the universities of Iran including, in particular, medicine and engineering (Ashurov, 2016).

Foreigner students are primarily taught Persian for 6 months and then transferred to other universities to commence their education once they prove proficiency. As suggested in this study, Tajikistan is the country where Iran practices soft power at its most owing to the Persian language. In sum, it can be seen that Iran implements a wide range of cultural interaction activities towards Tajikistan from education to publishing, media, vocational training and language courses.

4. Conclusion

Today, soft power is considered as one of the most controversial concepts in the discipline of International Relations. Following the end of the Cold War era, states started to use their sources of soft power, which is known as the second face of power used in lieu of hard power, in order to get the outcomes they wanted. In this respect, Iran adopted the soft power policy after the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and started to apply it in various countries through various institutions. Iran recognized the independence of Tajikistan right after the collapse of the USSR. It opened diplomatic missionaries in Tajikistan and developed the cultural and economic

relations. The two countries with strong ties have followed a positive course until now. It is discovered that Iran placed more emphasis to the elements of soft power in the foreign policy towards Tajikistan, a country with common language, culture and historical background with Iran. Iran usually performs the cultural interaction activities in Tajikistan through the foundations and cultural centres established in the latter country. Among these, the primary institutions are the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation, the Iran Culture Houses, Saadi Foundation, the Iranians Cultural Houses and the Persian and Tajik Culture Research Centre. These centres hold language courses, seminars and conferences as cultural interaction activities and seek for propagating the culture and increasing the influence of Iran as the constituents of its soft power. The Imam Khomeini Foundation provides humanitarian aid in various cities and especially the rural areas of Tajikistan as well as offering education scholarships, healthcare services and vocational training opportunities. The Culture Houses and Saadi Foundation focus on cultural activities. These institutions organize events especially in universities, the academic centres of the country, and thus take children as the target mass. On the other hand, Iran established Jame Jem TV, a television channel that broadcasts 24 hours in Persian, in order to introduce and popularize its culture. This channel address the Central Asian countries and, in particular, Tajikistan. Apart from the foregoing, there are also notable activities in the fields of cinema and theatre which are organized to ensure cultural interaction with Tajikistan. As a consequence of the joint projects held in these spheres, the movies and serials of Iranian production are highly-acclaimed by the Tajiks. The most important elements that paved the way for Iran's soft power in Tajikistan are common culture, language and historical background. In addition to the cultural activities, Iran also makes great investments in the infrastructure and transportation projects of Tajikistan. In this respect, Iran provided 180M USD to the construction of Sangtoudeh-II Dam, which is one of the greatest projects in Tajikistan. Also, the Anzob Tunnel project, among the most significant projects cooperated by Iran and Tajikistan, was built. The tunnel brought to Tajikistan highway transportation with the Central Asia and Iran for the first time in the history. Furthermore, more than 150 companies centred in Iran invest in Tajikistan and make great contributions to the economy of the latter. In conclusion, common cultural values offer significant opportunities and potentials as regards to soft power. The policies developed and attempts made by Iran towards Tajikistan are accepted and adopted by the Tajiks more readily compared to other countries. Other than that, one of the most noticeable reasons why the relations between the two countries developed positively is that Iran prioritizes religious references in the foreign policy towards the Middle East while avoiding the same attitude in the policy towards Tajikistan. Therefore, the eschewal of

religious approaches and the common values and cultural background strengthen the position of Iran in the expansion of its sphere of influence.

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PART **IV**

CRITICAL ISSUES IN ASIA & AFRICA

14

Pakistan in the Sino-US Conflict Scenario; The Way It Is!

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1.Introduction

Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger advised the Biden administration to re-establish the line of communication with China that ragged during former President Donald Trump's tenure failing which matters could escalate into military conflict. The US and China have to explore opportunities for cooperation in order to create congenial environment because prevalent military technologies would aggravate the crisis rendering it 'even more difficult to control'. The rapid diminution in the Sino-US relations has created the scenario of a 'New Cold War' (Huifen, 2020). It means that the era of 'Great Powers politics' has returned which the Trump administration 'formally enshrined' in its National Defence Strategy according to which 'Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security' (Defense, 2018). The document spells out that China has emerged as a strategic challenger employing acquisitive economic policies to overawe its small neighbors while ambitiously militarizing the South China Sea. It further criticized Russia for violating internationally recognized borders of its neighbours while at the same time, pursuing its veto power over the economic, diplomatic, and security measures in the region. The US diagnosis of the prevalent geo-political scenario in Southeast Asia expresses concerns about North Korea's prohibitive policies coupled with heedless magniloquence despite United Nation's cautionary measures. The document blames Iran for strewing violence and posing the most potent threat to peace and stability in the Middle East. In the meantime, security threats posed by terrorist groups continue to threaten peace in the Middle East (Defense, 2018). Foregoing in view, one of the US defense objectives is to maintain favourable balance of power in the Indo-Pacific and the Middle East; two regions interconnected by Pakistan. While the US accords top priority to expand alliances and partnership aimed at strengthening bilateral and multilateral security relationships against China in the Indo-Pacific region, it plans to reinforce coalitions, deny safe havens to terrorist organizations, dominate powers hostile to the

US in the Middle East and, subsequently consolidate gains in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. So, there is an emergence of 'Great Power Politics' termed as 'Cold War II' which is being anticipated extremely costly being a 'Forever War' (Tirpak, 2018). This is the mindset prevalent in Pentagon which incites China and Russia to be their competitors (Zenko, 2018). This is the scenario of fraught South Asian security environment where the US has concluded the strategic partnership with India to counter-balance China and in the process, if not abandoning Pakistan altogether, but leaving it in the lurch (Ali S. M., 2020). The blaze in South Asia, the Middle East and Indo-Pacific resulting from the Sino-US abrasions fuelled by hawkish responses by the Trump administration has created highly insecure situation for Pakistan. Despite realization among the Pakistani decagon-makers that the Pakistan-US relations are of strategic importance under the prevalent geo-strategic environment in the South Asia, the Middle East and Central Asia but, latter's unprecedented inclination towards India, its strategic shift towards the Indo-Pacific, leaves Pakistan in a state of quandary. This is the foremost cause of Pakistan's shift towards China; an opportunity which the latter befittingly exploited. This development seems to have changed the entire geo-political landscape of South Asia with regard to Pakistan's relations with the US and its regional allies in the Middle East where Israel has emerged as the single regional power with an objective to protect the interests of the US-led West, especially energy sources of the region which, for the time being, are crucially vital for the Western economies. This geo-strategic development is monumental that Israel has, with an exceptional resolution has expanded its direct influence over the Strait of Hormuz (the Persian Gulf) and the Strait of Bab al-Mandab (the Gulf of Aden) (Shamir, 1982). In fact, Israel has brilliantly accomplished to tilt the chaotic environment which bulldozed regional transformation in the Middle East, to its geo-strategic favour (Telci, 2019). There exists a strong rationale to concede that Israel's expanded sphere of influence in the Middle East has convincingly strengthened the US-led Western powers against the Sino-Russo-Persian alliance. This is a particular scenario in which Pakistan, after being replaced with India by the US coupled with Israel's enhanced role in the Gulf, has been relegated to lower echelons of diplomatic relations by its Arab allies, especially Saudi Arabia and UAE (Ramachandran, 2020).

This article focuses on the future of Pakistan under the geo-political environment created by the fast-escalating Sino-US conflict which the US officials term as an 'Infinite War'.

2.Pakistan – India's Scientific Frontier

In the mid of 19th century, Anglo-Russian relations in South Asia were adversely affected by geo-political developments in Afghanistan. British viewed the Russian advance in Central Asian Khanates and its growing influence in Kabul as an existential threat to British India. This rivalry had direct impact on the European politics (Andrew, 1880). Having anticipated the Russian invasion of India, British strategists were extensively engaged into formulating plans to defend India while, concurrently preventing Russian access to the Indian Ocean. Among these endeavours, the most intricate question pertained to the settlement of geographical frontiers on the north-west region, located at the confluence of Central Asia and Afghanistan. Although, India was accorded the top priority by the British military but, in the meantime, Afghanistan could never be allowed to fall prey to the Czarist Russia which overwhelmed the Muslim Khanates. While retaining a friendly government in Afghanistan on permanent basis, British military planners proposed redrawing of the Indo-Afghan borders aimed at securing the gates of India in their hands. However, the most far-reaching measure to defend newly carved north-west frontier was suggested to be assigned to the military as an independent entity. Sir William Patrick Andrew, unequivocally concluded that, although 'the political cannot be separated from the military, and yet to subordinate the latter to the former would be in the highest degree injudicious' (Andrew, 1880). According to British strategists, the North West Frontier region popularized as the 'border-lands' must offer the best Line of Defence which admits 'a bold offensive stroke as opportunity offers'. The defender should be capable of absorbing the thrust of attack followed by a counter attack to off-balance the attacker. Consequent to indispensability of securing an impenetrable line of defence aimed at protecting India from the north-western direction as their earnest desire, Anglo-Indian strategists explored an exceptionally important feature of inhabitants of border-lands. They rightly concluded that despite the most rugged terrain with the highest mountain peaks, determined attackers penetrated through inhospitable passes to invade India. Geographically, there are very few regions in the world possessing formidable natural defences than the subcontinent of India. But, threat of a military excursion through the wild and inaccessible mountainous region stretching from Sindh to Myanmar can be effectively repulsed by local warlike Muslim tribes who are highly possessive of their land, uncompromisingly averse to foreign presence in their areas, full of bigoted fanaticism and endowed with violent hatred to followers of religions other than Islam; especially Christians. Although, the northern terrain of India is hostile to the invader due to high altitude, but, the land strip stretching from the Khyber Pass to the shores of Balochistan (Gwadar) facilitates the adventurer to invade India with full might. This specific strip was named as the 'Scientific

Frontier' in order to defend India from any aggression, possibly from Russia or any other European power like FRance venturing from the west or north-west (Andrew, 1880). After 67 years or so, this 'border-lands' region inhabited by (so-called) wild, warlike tribes infused with bigoted fanaticism' was separated from the sub-continent of India and, named as Pakistan whose exclusive strategic task was to protect the Indian Peninsula from an invasion from the north, northwest and / or the west (Andrew, 1880).

3. Pakistan in the Cold War I

After Great War II, the world was divided into two blocs ensuing an era of geopolitical rivalry between the Western Bloc led by the US and the Eastern Bloc spearheaded by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). An English writer George Orwell named this era as 'Cold War' which, according to James Burnham's predictions, would polarize the world and, drift it towards slavery of poverty-stricken nations by the rich West (Orwell, 1945). This is what exactly confronted by small, weak and poor states, especially Pakistan. In this regard, the Truman Doctrine (March 1947) is considered to be the root cause of geo-political tensions with USSR. It emerged as an important US foreign policy matter envisaging the containment of USSR's expansion during the Cold War. In the aftermath of it, on 25th February 1954, the US administration announced a military assistance to Pakistan. On 2nd May, the same year both states concluded Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement. In the meantime, Pakistan emerged as 'America's most allied ally in Asia' by joining Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) (McMohan, 1988). Pakistan joined the US Alliance System exclusively for military assistance to counter (a self-concocted) threat from India (Kissinger, 1969). However, Americans were absolutely clear about their cooperation with Pakistan which was based on the policy of containment of USSR. They maintained solid strategic relations with India which remained an important country for the US-led West in South Asia. Under the prevailing geo-political scenario, its vitality for the West has increased manifold in order to counter China. Pakistan's 'total tilt' towards the US earned it suspicion and distrust among the entire Muslim community, especially the Middle East in which Egypt, Iraq and Syria were the leading nations. Its alliance with Iran and Turkey, both non-Arab states with centuries old enmity with the Arabs solidified Pakistan's adverse impression among the entire Middle East (Barrett, 2007). However, the Gulf States led by Saudi Arabia established 'dictated' cordial relations with Pakistan due to one distinct reason; the Americans and their allies' strategic interests in the region. The Pakistan Army was extensively deployed to protect pro-American regimes and energy resources

which were vital to the western economies. These relations were exclusively military based under the American and Western influence. Conversely, India played the most crucial role in strengthening the local economies in every nook and corner of the Middle East encompassing every state from the poorest Yemen in the south to the richest Iraq in the north. It provided highly professional and above all, exceptionally economical, ethically dependable, technologically well-educated and skilled workforce which maintained commendable pace with the west in developing economies in the region. This distinction between India's ever growing influence and Pakistan's receding relations with the regional states occurred in a broad day light (Ward, 1992). Pakistan's every administration irrespective of its democratic or non-democratic status chose to remain oblivious to this reality. But, this was a systematically articulated strategy adopted by every Pakistani leadership at the helm of affairs which always comprised predominantly by the elite chosen by the British colonialists who, later were replaced by Americans. The leadership of Pakistan was distinctly the Western oriented. It cold-shouldered every Soviet endeavour aimed at establishing good neighbourly and diplomatic relations with Pakistan. The first Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, after declining the Soviet invitation to visit Moscow, proceeded on a two-month trip to the US (Kaushik, 1974). This is how; Pakistan was sweating hard to create another giant enemy alongside India, exclusively for the sake of its (so-called) Western allies which had the history of abandoning their allies in the lurch. There existed a potent threat by a well-educated, ethically strong, technologically skilled and financially sound middle class which was fully capable of replacing the engineered political structure dominated by the Western loyalists, but it was averse to Western masters' scheme. So, who-so-ever attempted to break this vicious circle of socio-political subjugation of the nation, was ruthlessly eliminated. In this particular regard, the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah became the first victim of the Western scheme who, on 11th August 1947 addressed the first constituent assembly at Karachi and unequivocally envisioned a democratic political system assuring equal rights and total freedom for all citizens of Pakistan belonging to any religion or ideology (Nasir, 2017). He died on 11th September 1948 under the most mysterious circumstances (Cheema, 2015). After his death, those who happened to be his close associates during the (so-called) freedom struggle abandoned the ideology which was the basis for creation of Pakistan (Mahmood, 2016). The year of 1950 emerged as the most historic time in the diplomatic history of Pakistan when the USSR established its embassy in Karachi immediately followed by a number of states from the Communist bloc that genuinely worried the US led West. The first prime minister of Pakistan Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan recognized China in 1950 and established diplomatic relations with it in June 1951, moves which

fiercely antagonized the West. Supposedly, the Communists were gaining grounds in Pakistan alongside India, a development that the West could not afford. In fact, the US and its touted elite at home were adequately aware of their inherited incompetence to prevail over masses that were under perpetual subjugation. The exigency demanded a prompt action along with a concerted message to arrest the aggravating situation (State, 1951). Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan was assassinated in October 1951 under mysterious conditions (Balouch, 2015). The next victim was Fatima Jinnah, sister of the founder of Pakistan who campaigned against President Muhammad Ayub Khan in 1965 Elections which were blatantly rigged to ditch the democratic forces. The President's son Gohar Ayub paraded a female dog with a lantern around its neck which was an insult to the sister of the father of the nation but the crowd cheered in jubilation (Hamdani, 2018). Despite her defeat, Fatima Jinnah posed a formidable threat to the military ruler. The mystery shrouding her death is still unresolved (Balouch, 2015). Though highly controversial, but (so-called) the most popular democratically elected leader Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was threatened to abandon his ambitions to make Pakistan a nuclear power, his diplomatic moves to strengthen relations with USSR, China, North Korea and other socialist states and most of all, his endeavours to inculcate political awareness among the subjugated cum deprived classes of the nation. His adamancy cost his life which is popularly known as 'Bhutto's judicial murder' (Tarar, 2019), an episode which serves as an example for other aspirants. In sum, whosoever attempted to unshackle the nation in order to pursue the genuine democratic course was promptly eliminated. However, Bhutto made history on two accounts; Pakistan's nuclear programme and the Sino-Pakistan relations which the US and its allies never endorsed. During India-Pakistan Wars in 1965 and 1971, the US imposed embargo on both countries in which Pakistan suffered a colossal loss being solely dependent on the US military aid whereas India had concluded strategic Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in August 1971 (Kaushik, 1974). The Indo-Soviet relations were distinctly strengthened to counter the US policy of containment of USSR in which Pakistan emerged as one of the foremost adversaries of Soviets. The first secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Nikita Khrushchev marked the city of Peshawar with red on the map and, announced to engage it if the US U-2 aerial surveillance flights against Soviets continue. This incident flabbergasted the entire nation which was deliberately kept in the dark by President Ayub Khan who created an arch enemy in its neighbourhood, exclusively for the sake of the Western interests, whereas the people of Pakistan were enthusiastically inclined towards the USSR (Khan, 1961).

4. Role of Pakistan in the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

In July 1979, about six months prior to the USSR invasion of Afghanistan (December 1979), the US President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid without seeking approval of the Congress to opponent Islamists of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul (Blum & Gibbs, 2000). The situation in the region worsened further during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979-1988) when Pakistan was used as a front-line state against Soviet forces in Afghanistan (Donaldson, 1980). After the withdrawal of Soviets from Afghanistan in 1988, Americans did not waste a fraction of second to abandon Pakistan which, at that time, was home to over 2.5 million Afghan refugees. The so-called freedom fighters or 'bigoted fanatics' as named by the British colonialists, recruited from all over the world to fight the Soviet infidels found themselves bewildered in the Af-Pak region in the wake of western betrayal. Pakistan turned into a sanctuary of terrorists which set the country at ablaze. Kalashnikov gun culture flourished. Religious extremism reached uncontrollable heights. Sectarianism strengthened its roots in the lower middle class of the society. Moderation and tolerance vanished from the social structure. Religiously motivated militant factions literally dominated the national politics. This unprecedented calamity fell on Pakistan due to the US overnight departure from the Af-Pak region (Sprung, 2009). There is yet another important factor which merits attention. Even prior to the Soviet invasion, Pakistan was already struggling with dilemmas of religious polarization, political fragility and economic instability. Amidst the same scenario; its relations with the US plummeted sharply on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation. In this regard, amendments in the US Foreign Assistance Act; the Symington Amendment (1976) that prohibited aid to non-weapon countries importing Uranium enrichment technology and, the Glenn Amendment (1977) that barred assistance to countries importing reprocessing technology were invoked in April 1979 to cease aid to Pakistan. However, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, a waiver was provided to Pakistan in December 1981 to resume conditional aid to beef-up Pakistan's military efforts against the Soviets in Afghanistan (Shakoor, 1992). It was evident that the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, whenever it materializes, would serve as an opportunity for the US to re-tighten its noose around Pakistan's neck. By this time, when Pakistan was hectically engaged in the most crucial phase of Cold War, the Chinese leadership attracted Pakistan despite its overwhelming orientation towards the west.

5. Pakistan in the Post Cold War I Era; War on Terrorism

However, within a span of two decades; from 1988 to 2001, the same stock of non-state actors were embroiled to provide a plausible reason to

Americans to return to Af-Pak with an objective of 'Enduring Freedom' in the wake of War on Terrorism (2001). Those warriors, who played the most momentous role to further the US policy of containment of USSR in later part of the 20th century, were re-engaged as terrorists at the beginning of 21st century in order to contain the Sino-Russian influence which gravely threatened the US interests in the Middle East and South Asia. This was the same stock which was recruited from all over the Muslim world in order create 'America's Secret Army' trained in camps in Pakistan administered by Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), but, operated collectively by CIA and MI6 (Pilger, 2021). This era witnessed escalation of political instability, massive economic insecurity and religious extremism coupled with political violence in Pakistan since its inception in 1947 due to its pro-active involvement in 'Cold War I' against the USSR as a frontline state, and subsequently in the recent War on Terrorism (2001-2021) (Rubin, 2002). The nation of Pakistan paid unprecedented price in this war. More than 70,000 people, mostly civilians perished. In addition, the escalation of internal and external security challenges imposed an unmanageable cost on the economy. Moreover, social impact of this conflict was horrendous. Uncontrollable militant organizations established close nexus with criminal networks resulting in spike in crimes. Sectarian violence and target killings were a matter of routine. The psychological impact of terrorism emerged as the most dominant factor with the direst consequences for Pakistan (Abbasi, 2013).

6. Peculiar Nature of Sino-US Relations and South Asia

While Pakistan's leadership mostly breathing under fragile political environment was always inquisitive to be closely associated with Americans and the West aimed at elevating their socio-political stature against their opponents at home, the China Factor played a crucial role in this triangular relationship. This trend remains more relevant to non-democratic regimes which went all out while leaving nothing in reserve to maintain cordial relations with the US in order to pacify their opposition at home. But, the atmosphere of mistrust between the US and Pakistan as partners marred their relations for lasting cooperation. However, Sino-Pakistan relations did not confront the scenario what the US-Pakistan relations experienced since their establishment. Unambiguously, this credit straightaway goes to China's leadership which genuinely comprehends the geo-political compulsions confronted by Pakistan due to its over-dependence on the West. But, China is abundantly aware of the environment of perpetual uneasiness between the US and Pakistan that is expected to aggravate their relations further due to the Sino-US conflict in which Pakistan being a part of Af-Pak-India, may convincingly be considered as an eye of the brewing Sino-US storm in South Asia (Akram, 2019).

The Sino-US power struggle syndrome encompasses ideological, economic, geo-political and military aspects. Initially, it appeared to be a regional competition restricted to Southeast Asia or more precisely, covering states surrounding the South China Sea and Pacific. But, Americans and their regional allies' beating drums of war have escalated it to a global status which they earnestly desired to create conducive environment for the military-industrial complex (McHugh, 2021). The foremost objective of this Cold War II, as Dr Henry Kissinger has described the Sino-US conflict, is to secure geo-political influence which has been transformed into an ideological antagonism, an aspect which the US military is propagating aggressively (Roy, 2018). The US administration perceives China as its military adversary. This particular geo-strategic environment due to security dilemma shapes the American and Chinese conduct of diplomacy with other states in which Pakistan has re-emerged, if not as a front-line state, but an important part of the region which, according to the Trump administration is known as Af-Pak-India; geo-political framework in which India would have a dominating role over Pakistan and Afghanistan (Malhotra, 2017). Presently, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (The Quad) composed of the United States, Australia, India, and Japan is a top priority alliance for the United States which has intensified its security and economic relations amidst escalating tensions with China, especially in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean (Smith, 2021). However, Americans have not minced their words in downgrading Pakistan's status in their foreign policy during the Cold War II; the Sino-US conflict. In fact, the Sino-US strategic confrontation is particularly focused on China's maritime periphery particularly in the South China Sea which is dominated by the US military threat perceptions. It is widely anticipated that China intends to establish an exclusive sphere of influence in East Asia which would be a devastating blow to the US status as a global power (CRS, 2021). In addition, this global competition for the geo-strategic influence is closely interwoven with the technological dimension of American-Chinese rivalry. According to strategists, it is all about dominance in the digital age, too. Therefore, the risk for international politics is that intensification of this rivalry would condense into a structural world conflict thus triggering de-globalization and the emergence of two World Orders, one under the predominant influence of the United States and the other under China's sphere of influence. In a nutshell, the era of American global supremacy, if not over yet, but would be so in the foreseeable future. This fear of losing the global hegemony, prompts Americans to beat drums of an 'Infinite War'. There exists a convincing rationale that the world confronts the 'Thucydides' Trap' which means the Sino-US War is inevitable which is, in fact, the earnest desire of the West in order to prevent China's supremacy by employing all possible means.

As the name; Cold War II implies, both Superpowers would employ every possible means to pursue the conflict whether domestic or international, regional or global and conventional or unconventional overtly and covertly. Despite China's exhaustive efforts to convince the world that their cooperation with other states is exclusively on economic grounds, the western media is campaigning against the Chinese strategic move as an onslaught spearheaded by an ideology that poses an existential threat to the present system of democratic order. This particular rational with regard to the Chinese infringement into an established system of governance is baseless, yet it is being propagated as an 'Ideological War' (Huntington S. P., 1993). However, it was former President Barrack Hussein Obama's 'Pivot to Asia' policy which created abrasion between the two super powers in Southeast and South Asia (Ford, 2017). President Obama who referred to himself as the first president of an Asia-Pacific nation, the United States promised the nations of Asia a new era of engagement based on mutual interest and mutual respect (Allen, 2009). This was rebalancing of the US foreign policy focusing away from the Middle East to Asia, the hub of the 21st century economy. With this narrative, President Obama envisaged the US withdrawal from the most troubled regions in the world; the Middle East and Europe while, at the same time, escalating tensions in Southeast and South Asia (the Indo-Pacific region) (Ford, 2017). China perceived Obama's foreign policy to restrict the Chinese economic development ventures with other states in the world (Swaine, 2012). According to the concept of 'Offensive Realism', the rise of China would be resisted by the US by any means including the military while Chinese make every effort to retain their hegemony in Asia, or even elsewhere (Mearsheimer, 2014).

7. China's 'Asia-Pacific Dream' to defeat the US 'Pivot to Asia'

In response to 'Pivot to Asia', China has embarked upon its counter-strategy which focuses on the economic development in regions of its interest (Foot, 2006). Chinese have envisioned a gigantic network of logistic corridors aimed at establishing regional based economic integration under 'One Belt One Road' initiative (OBOR) (Hussain, 2016). This strategy is in sheer contravention to the US strategy which is based on defence oriented relations in Southeast Asia and South Asia aimed at countering China but, not the well being of the regional states (Kuo, 2017). According to the Obama Administration, strategy related to 'Pivot to Asia' is based on three distinct components; the importance of Southeast Asia (Indo-Pacific) region to the US having China into the fold, potential to project power in the region to counter Chinese growing military capability and, reassuring the US allies of its commitment to their security which felt abandoned (Chen, 2013), a dilemma which Pakistan confronted after the withdrawal of USSR from Afghanistan in 1988. However, there

exists a strong rationale to argue that the most important impetus explaining the pivot is nothing but, the escalating U.S. perception related to an upcoming military and geo-political challenge from China. Presently, it is abundantly proved that the U.S. alliances in Asia are directed against China (Manyin, et al., 2012) supported by the US officials aggressive statements. Responding to the US stance, Chinese' fiery stance signals that China is fully prepared to reciprocate disrespect on quid pro quo basis (Tiezzi, 2021). On the eve of the first U.S.-China dialogue under the Biden administration opened in Anchorage, Alaska on March 18, the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and National Security Advisor Jack Sullivan restricted themselves to the US standard position on China covering Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South China Sea, cyber attacks on the US systems and the economic coercive measures against the US and its allies. However, the jaw-dropping response by the Chinese delegation comprising Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Yang Jiechi, the director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs amply reflects that the era of "rules-based order" that features prominently in the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy confronts a fierce opposition. Yang reiterated China's commitment to be a part of international community which upholds the United Nations-based international system. He rejected the 'rules-based' international order which is advocated by a few countries with vested interests. He dismissed the U.S. stance as an arbiter of "universal values," reminding the US officials that US does not represent international public opinion, and neither does the Western world. The crux of Yang's rebuttal was to challenge the idea that Chinese are bound to heed criticisms from the US without striking back. However, it occurred now since the emergence of China in 1948 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021).

8. Pakistan at the Crossroads

China and Pakistan like all other countries in South Asia less India concluded a project under the OBOR initiative, China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC) on 22nd May 2013 which was fiercely opposed by the US led west and India. On 21st November 2019, Alice Wells, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South & Central Asia Affairs publicly criticized multiple aspects of CPEC, especially the project's cost escalations and non-transparent processes of awarding CPEC contracts to Chinese firms (Kugelman, 2019). The Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing challenged the US stance to suit befitting actions to its words. He urged the US to shun western media's propaganda and rely on credible evidence which must be presented before the public to specify cases of corruption related to the CPEC (Pakistan, 2019). The US response is still awaited. Amidst this particular geo-political scenario in South Asia when

US has established strategic relations with India aimed at preparing it to fight China for the western interests, Pakistan is left with two distinct options; either succumb to former US President Donald Trump's Doctrine of Af-Pak-India to convert China into an arch rival, or join the Sino-Russo-Iran alliance whose members are more reliable than the west as amply proved by the geo-political history of Pakistan. The pro-US lobby scares Pakistan through rhetoric that any drastic shift away from the US and its Middle East allies to the Sino-Russo-Iran alliance would not be in Pakistan's strategic interests (Ali S. M., 2020). Despite acknowledging "the absence of the existing political will within the Biden Administration to expand bilateral relations with Pakistan", these critics observe that still the onus will rest on decision makers of Pakistan to explore opportunities (surely at any cost) for bilateral cooperation with the US in tandem with a tightening embrace with China". Pakistan is being publically threatened to create more distance from China in order to preserve space for US (Ali S. M., 2020).

9. Dilemma for Pakistan

9.1. The US Shift from Afghanistan to China.

On 15th August 2021, the President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani fled the country immediately followed by withdrawal of the US forces so as to complete it by 30th August 2021 while abandoning its more than 100,000 civilians eligible for expedited US visas (Zucchino, 2021) while the NATO allies lurched in a state of unprecedented chaos. The 20-year combat mission, the longest in the US military history, persisted over the tenure of four presidents who reckoned with hundreds of thousands of civilian casualties, confronted a ruthless adversary and an exceptionally confounding Afghan government partner. Amidst this scenario, Pakistan is blamed for the US failure in Afghanistan (Zucchino, 2021) despite losing over 70,000 lives in this campaign and getting inflicted with $ 150 billion loss on its fragile economy. But, the US and its allies graded Pakistan a 'hypocrite' and doubted its integrity. Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) was blamed for covertly supporting and providing sanctuaries to the Taliban while the US forces with their technological might effectively covered every inch of Pakistani territory with their boots on ground. Pakistani forces worked very closely with their US counterparts who never complained about Pakistan's double-game; an allegation which echoed from Washington. Pakistan always denied these allegations (Gul, 2021) which the West never accepted. However, this scenario in which the US has declared Pakistan as an unreliable ally provides a clear direction of the US-Pakistan relations after the re-emergence of Taliban in Afghanistan. Whatever may be the cause of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, the

geo-strategic space has been created in the region which is being filled by the Sino-Russo-Persian alliance (Pasha, 2021) while the US and its NATO allies are rushing to approach Taliban in their individual capacity to curtail the damage lest they are comprehensively wiped out of the region which is most likely to materialize in the face of an exceptionally resolute China, Iran and Russia. According to realists, this development furnishes the least brainstorming for Pakistan to decide its future course of action. In this particular regard, Pakistan has already declared unequivocally that it would never join the US against China under any circumstances (Raza, 2021). However, there are certain quarters who observe that Pakistan would not abandon the US for China (Siddiqa, 2021). Whatever may be the case, in November 2020, militaries of both countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a closer engagement aimed at pushing their relationship to a higher level in order to cope jointly with multifaceted risks and challenges, safeguard the sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security of both countries while concurrently ensuring peace and stability in the region (Rajagopalan, 2021). In sum, the Sino-Pakistan alliance under the prevalent geo-strategic scenario especially after the US and NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan followed by an edge achieved by the Sino-Russo-Persian alliance in the region has become more relevant since the inception of Sino-Pakistan bilateral relations (Blank, 2015). While Pakistan is endeavouring to have stabilized Afghanistan under the Taliban rule which the US-led west is sweating hard to rescind, China has already sought assurances from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) that none will be allowed to launch hostile actions from Afghanistan against China (Kuo M. A., 2021), especially by East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) whose designation as a "terrorist organisation" has been revoked by the United States (AFP, 2020). In addition, China is in direct talks with the Taliban to access country's mineral deposits and strengthen its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which accords an outstanding opportunity for the expansion of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) into Afghanistan (Jun & Daye, 2021). According to analysts, trilateral cooperation between Afghanistan, China, and Pakistan on CPEC would incur colossal economic advantages to all three states while the integration of Afghanistan into the project will surely enhance peace and harmony in the region (Chandran, 2017).

9.2. Israel in the Middle East.

Although, the US withdrawal from Afghanistan is considered as the most astounding geo-political development in the region, but the fact remains that, strategically, the US led Quad was required to be strengthened in the Southeast Asian region or specifically South China Sea in order to maintain favourable force ratio against China. Therefore, the US withdrawal from

Afghanistan is nothing but shifting of troops from the Middle East and South Asia to other regions, especially the Southeast Asia with an objective of maintaining military advantage over their adversary; China (Czuczka, 2021). This particular scenario poses a (so-called) dilemma for Pakistan which can be converted into an opportunity for the nation. Amidst the recent geo-political developments worldwide, Israel has emerged as the most vibrant country in the Middle East. It has gained a very solid foothold in Gulf States alongside India which means that Pakistan's already depleted influence in the Middle East would worsen. There exists an exigency for Pakistan to rethink its foreign policy specifically addressing the case directly related to Israel. Out of 193 United Nations' member states, 164 states recognise Israel. A number of closer Arab allies of Pakistan, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain and Jordan maintain full diplomatic relations with Israel. Saudi Arabia and Oman are expected to follow their neighbours. Pakistan has no direct confrontation with Israel, a situation that renders its reluctance to recognize Israel, a mindset into oblivion (Kaura, 2020).

10. Pakistan's way-out; forging ahead with pragmatic orientation

10.1. Short-term Measures:

Amidst ever escalating Sino-US confrontation, Pakistan should:

- Formulate a national policy based on teachings directly derived from Quran precisely aimed at de-radicalising the society and inculcating pluralism, thus nullifying 'bigoted fanaticism'.

- Establish cordial relations on bilateral basis with India and Israel as the foremost priority and, facilitate access to Indian companies to Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia which was denied in the past due to the US led western interests.

- Adopt a pragmatic approach towards CPEC and all other related projects which must be exclusively governed by economic imperatives, aimed at enhancing regional connectivity, prosperity and fraternity especially with Iran, Afghanistan, India and Central Asian states.

- Recognize the Sino-Indian Panchsheel Treaty (Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence) as the basis for Pakistan's relations with all states, especially its neighbours and Israel.

- Undertake concrete measures assisted by Russia, China and Iran to reduce acrimony with India to secure broader regional integration and enhanced opportunities for connectivity with South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries in which Afghanistan should be invited as a full member while Iran and China may be welcomed as observers.

- Ensure that CPEC infrastructure bolsters Afghanistan's trade with all countries, especially with India, Bangladesh and the Middle East.

- Create an enabling regulatory and attractive environment to facilitate western, especially the US companies to invest in Pakistan where they have competitive advantages, especially in energy related sectors.

10.2. Long-term Measures:

Pakistan must undertake concrete measures to:

- Re-write its history incorporating all credible sources in order to explore the truth divulging the real geo-political causes of the creation of Pakistan for the benefit of our next generations.

- Re-formulation of Pakistan's foreign policy which serves interests of the nation instead of foreign powers which have entangled the country through their chosen elite; a legacy of the British colonial era.

- Re-formulation of all domestic economic and social policies under an umbrella of a comprehensive socio-politico-economic System whose foremost rather exclusive objective should be focused on the welfare of general public friendly on self reliance basis.

- Establish ideological, geo-political, social and economic relations with all nations, international groups and organizations on permanent basis aimed at sharing knowledge and learning from each others' experiences for refinement in domestic policies favourable to general public.

11. Conclusion

According to Dr Henry Kissinger, the world has slipped into an era of Cold War II in which two blocs have come into existence paving the way for ever-escalating US-China conflict. Referring to Asia, there is an emergence of Indo-Pacific region in which US has allied with India, Australia, Japan and South Korea. In addition, majority of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are comprehensively constricted to follow the US dictation due to their over-reliance on the US led west. On the other hand, Sino-Russo-Iran alliance exists which poses formidable challenges to the US led bloc. Amidst this geo-political scenario, Pakistan has only two options. One of them is to be a part of Af-Pak-India, former US President Donald Trump's doctrine pertaining to South Asia aimed at containing China in which Pakistan would emerge as an adversary of Sino-Russo-Iran alliance. The second choice is to remain aligned to China, re-inventing millennial old relations with Iran and Central Asia while strengthening relations with Russia. Under the prevalent circumstances, while Pakistan confronts unprecedented isolation worldwide coupled with the gravest risks to its sovereignty, it is left with one singular option to counter existential threat to its security which is to forge closer cooperation with its neighbours; China, Russia and Iran, especially under the peculiar Af-Pak-India scenario conceived by the US which has squarely blamed Pakistan for its withdrawal from Afghanistan and, labeled it as an 'unreliable' partner that lacks 'integrity'. This state of the US-Pakistan relations amply highlights the exigency for Pakistan to explore an alliance based on mutual respect and trust.

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15

Kashmir under Modi's new India

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1.Introduction

Research studies suggest that interstate territorial conflicts usually remain more prone to escalation leading to armed conflicts, pushing states to go for arms race enriching the defence production industry of the developed countries. Though at the same time territorial conflicts are also becoming less significant with the advancement of globalization paving the way for peaceful co-existence among the states. This is where natural symbiosis works. Nevertheless, there are still territorial disputes that hamper the regional peace and lead to armed violence. Therefore, it is important to know why disputed territories have remained a source of rising conflicts.

A report by National Geographic states that there are about 150 interstate territorial disputes around the world requiring resolution (Conant, 2014). Divided Kashmir – is one of the similar stories of a disputed territory which has been the bone of contention between both India and Pakistan since their independence (1947) from the British Empire. It has been for more than 70 years that two countries have been fighting over Kashmir both in the military and diplomatic battlefields.

Much has been said about and written on this issue, but it could never catch the global attention less after Narendra Modi; a Hindu nationalist of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), came in power in India. Present Indian government divested disputed Kashmir of its "autonomous status" by introducing a constitutional amendment. In this regard Article 370 of the Indian constitution has been amended. The amendment has been criticized not only by the Kashmiri diaspora living abroad but also by other saner elements of the society. Kashmiris living in the Indian administered part of Kashmir have been resisting the revocation of constitutionally awarded special status to Kashmir. To check the anger and rage of Kashmiris Indian government resorted to continual curfew, internet shut down in order to keep Kashmir off from media access.

The purpose of this book chapters is to argue that the world should consider the disputed territories as important issues as these can lead to serious implications on the regional stability. On Kashmir issue, for example two nuclear powers (India and Pakistan) in the region have already fought three wars. This is apart from recurrence of tension and war of belligerent words between the two. United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has already passed Resolutions asking for impartial plebiscite to determine the wish of Kashmiris. The region cannot afford any more wars considering the fact that the combined population of both the countries counts in billions. John A. Vasquez, in his book "The War Puzzle Revisited" pertinently puts it: "If you want to avoid war, learn how to settle territorial disputes non-violently".

On the other hand, this chapter would also highlight the efforts being made by Pakistan at various international fora as vowed by the Pakistani premier Imran Khan in his address to 74th session of the UNGC where he also hinted on taking the issue to the International Criminal Court on the ground of human rights violations in Indian administered Kashmir. So far Pakistan has somehow managed a diplomatic success by bringing the issue once again at the UNSC forum after almost 50 years when it was discussed in this august forum. However, at the same time I would also explore as to why Pakistan has not been able to gather international voice for solution of the dispute, a fact perhaps hints to its poor diplomacy and foreign policy.

With such extra-ordinary developing situation, Human Rights are under potential threat in the Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir. BJP government has blocked the internet services, detained political leaders, lawyers, journalists and put restrictions on the public gatherings. Besides, nothing is heard about a large number of Kashmiri youth abducted by the Indian paramilitary forces.

The status of Kashmir stands disputed in the face of UNSC Resolution on it. But the revocation of its autonomous status and its subsequent merger with India has complicated the situation there. Military escalation and air raids carried out (February 2019) by two militaries show the level of belligerence. Brinkmanship is seen going unabated. Present Indian government apparently wears an inflexible stance on the issue and terms it as bilateral problem beyond the scope of UNSC. On the other hand, Pakistan's foreign policy appears to be devoid of required weight to take up the issue at international fora. The issue requires to be solved keeping in view the resolutions of the United Nations by holding a plebiscite in the region.

This chapter mainly uses the qualitative research method. It includes reference books, scholarly articles and research papers, reports by International Organizations and already published interviews of the people related to the issue of Kashmir. To write this paper, I have taken much of the help from some of the books which includes "Kashmir in Conflict" by Victoria Schofield where she starts from the partition and ends at the year 2000 with five reasonable scenarios, all of which can only lead to a gradual improvement of the existing situation. The other book which I have used is "Contested Lands" by Sumantra Bose, a Professor of International and Comparative Politics at the London School of Economics. He critically explores the peace processes in Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Israel–Palestine, Bosnia, Cyprus, and Kashmir issue between Pakistan and India for an answer.

2.Kashmir: History of an Important Disputed Territory

Simmering tension that at times flares up too, may appear insignificant to some but it is a looming threat to peace in the region. Known by some as the Switzerland of Asia due to its beautiful natural landscape, Kashmir is located in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent in the Himalayan territory. Today, the contested territory, a by-product of the partition of British India, is divided between Pakistan and India with a Line of Control (LOC), a de facto border.

The brief history of the region reveals that Jammu and Kashmir by and large has been in state of turmoil way back before the partition of sub-continent. It has never been ruled by Kashmiris themselves ever since its annexation by the Mughal rulers of the time. It was ruled by Afghans (1753-1819), Sikhs (1819-46) and then by Dogras to whom the territory was sold under the terms of the Treaty of Amritsar for a payment of 7.5 million rupees (48,554 USD). Thus, Gulab Singh Dogra became its ruler who ruled it from 1846 onwards till partition of the subcontinent took place (Aziz, 2019).

The cause of the mutual hostility between both countries today is Kashmir. Maharaja Hari Singh, the ruler of Kashmir kept dithering which country to side with. In fact, he wanted to remain independent while ignoring the fact that the valley had to join either of the two countries before 15 August 1947, under the Independence Act of 1947. For almost two months, Kashmir remained independent until tribesmen from Pakistan invaded the state which in turn led the Mahraja to side with India irking Pakistan (Schofield, 2003: 7). As a result of the invasion, one-third of the region came under Pakistani authority while the rest under India.

After siding with India, Mahraja signed the Instrument of Accession on 26 October 1947. The document granted the region an autonomous status with limited legislative powers to Indian Parliament to make laws concerning Jammu and Kashmir in the domain of defence, foreign affairs, communication and currency. The region was allowed to have its own constitution and flag. The clause further granted special preference to residents in government jobs and prohibited non-residents of Kashmir from purchasing any sort of immovable property in the valley (Srivastava, 2019). The status was later transposed into the Article 370 and 35 A of the Indian constitution (Rai, 2019). It is pertinent to mention that said 'Articles' have now been undone by current Modi led BJP government. More discussion about the revocation of special status of Jammu and Kashmir has been made elsewhere in this paper.

Despite the fact that India took the control of more than half of the territory of the Kashmir, New Delhi had filed a complaint to the UNSC. As a result, Security Council adopted resolutions asking both countries to hold a free and fair plebiscite which has never taken place. Both countries have always been desperate to annex Kashmir to their respective countries. Nehru wanted to show that the Muslim population can stay with Hindus while Jinnah insisted Pakistan would not be complete without Muslim dominated Kashmir. Thus, the Kashmir problem rests on some ideological differences with palpable complications to be resolved easily.

However, at some later stage, India agreed on holding a plebiscite in the region. On 28th October 1947, Nehru assured Pakistan that the fate of Kashmir would be decided by the people of the region. He said: "…*We have declared that the fate of Kashmir is ultimately to be decided by the people. That pledge we have given and the Maharaja supported it, not only to the people of Kashmir but to the world. We will not and cannot back out of it. We are prepared and law and order have been established, to have a referendum held under international auspices like the United Nations. We want it to be a fair and just reference to the people, and we shall accept that verdict. I can imagine no fairer and juster offer* (Hingorani, 2017: 173). However, such an assurance didn't last longer. After several years, in 1954, Nehru withdrew the offer and preferred that the *status quo* remains.

Following such developments, both countries went into war in 1965 when Pakistan sent her army troops in Jammu and Kashmir in the hope of provoking a pro-Pakistani uprising against India (Andrews, 2017: 253). After six weeks both sides accepted a ceasefire agreement negotiated by Soviet Union Resolution held in Tashkent (Bratersky, 2016). Under Tashkent Agreement both the countries withdrew their forces to previous positions prior to the start of the war and resumed diplomatic ties.

Despite sporadic diplomatic overtures, peace again didn't prevail for a long time. After six years, in 1971, another war broke out which had nothing to do with Kashmir issue (however the agreement ending the war ostensibly had), when India militarily supported dissident Bengali population of East Pakistan in its liberation war to carve out a new country Bangladesh. The war lasted only 13 days, with Bengalis winning the war, and a new country Bangladesh came into existence. In the book, "Can Pakistan Survive", Pakistan based author Tariq Ali writes what Pakistan lost, *"Pakistan lost half of its navy, a quarter of its airforce and a third of its army"*. Besides this, more than 90,000 Pakistani soldiers were taken as prisoners of war by the Indian state resulting ultimately in the surrender of Pakistani army (Andrews, 2017: 253).

On 2nd July 1972, Pakistan and India signed "Simla Agreement" in Simla, capital and largest city of the Indian state Himachal Pradesh. The agreement signed by Pakistan's President Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (father of Benazir Bhutto, later Pakistan's Prime Minister) and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi asked both countries to release the prisoners of wars and to resolve their issues through bilateral negotiations. The treaty was ratified by both states the same year and it says the following: "*That the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them. Pending the final settlement of any of the problems between the two countries, neither side shall unilaterally alter the situation and both shall prevent the organization, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations* (Simla Agreement, 1972).

Since the signing of the agreement, India has been using Simla Agreement to shield herself from the implementation of the UN resolutions saying that both countries would solve the issues bilaterally without the involvement of any third party – that is to say United Nations. Besides this, India is also of the opinion that the resolution is not legally binding since Pakistan didn't withdrew her fighters from Kashmir as she was obliged under the resolution. However, Pakistan insists that the Simla Pact doesn't nullify 1948 UN's resolution number 47 which states that the fate of Kashmir should be decided by free and fair plebiscite (Lynch, 2019).

So much for good intentions: the political turmoil and domestic issues in both countries impeded the peace efforts in the region. In 1975, Indira Gandhi imposed a state of emergency in the country and subsequently lost the 1978 general elections in the country. Similarly, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's democratically elected government was overthrown on 5 July 1977 by his

army chief General Zia ul Haq. Following which Pakistan returned under a military rule.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi meanwhile tried to install puppet governments, manipulating the state legislature in Kashmir, undoing the *status quo* which remained almost until 1989. Such activities deeply enraged the Kashmiris who resorted to pro-independence and pro-Pakistan guerrilla activities (Telegraph, 2001). Such developments from the Indian side, made Kashmiri populace lose modicum of trust they had in the Indian government about holding a plebiscite in the region. Later both countries became nuclear powers which further froze the relations among them.

In such extraordinary situation, leaders of both the countries wanted some thaw in tense relations but there was too much 'trust deficit' amongst them. During this time, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, with his entourage included few diplomats and some pro-peace individuals took a bus ride from Amritsar (India) to Lahore (Pakistan) to meet with Pakistani premier Mohammad Nawaz Sharif. Vajpayee was in Lahore to sign the 'Lahore Declaration', a bilateral treaty, to improve relations between both the countries by minimizing the development of nuclear arsenals and to avoid accidental and unauthorised use of such weapons (Lahore Declaration, 1999). Such a step was applauded by majority of people from both the countries. However, General Pervez Musharraf, then chief of army staff wasn't satisfied with such a move and refused to salute Vajpayee upon his arrival to Pakistan (Gupta, 2018). Nonetheless to many 'Lahore Declaration' was a dawn of new era in the bilateral relations opening the gate of friendship, breaking the walls of hatred with a message of love, peace and harmony. Both leaders, agreed to start a bus service between Lahore and Amritsar with an aim to promote people to people contacts.

While Vajpayee was in Lahore, Pakistan's army chief General Musharraf's troops already infiltrated Kargil in the Indian administered Kashmir along with local Kashmiris to liberate Kashmir (Gupta, 2018). Such an important decision by the military was taken without taking into confidence the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who didn't know if such a thing was happening in his background. However, later on Mr. Sharif was presented with Kargil as *fait accompli* when he came to know about the situation in Kargil (Zehra, 2018: 236). Such a war-like situation created by the Pakistani military was a fatal blow to the 'Lahore Declaration' and to emerging hope for resolution of mutual disputes / irritants and peace. Later in 1999, Prime Minister Sharif was removed from power in a *coup d'état* and was put behind the bars by General Musharraf who then took reins of government in Pakistan.

Similarly, in 2015, Indian premier Narendra Modi, made a surprise visit to Pakistan on his way back from Afghanistan. He met Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif and briefly attended his granddaughter's wedding ceremony too. This was the first time after a period of 10 years that an Indian Prime Minister visited Pakistan. His visit was an attempt to ease the tensions between both countries which unfortunately couldn't last longer. A week later Indian city of Pathankot was attacked by armed militants resulting in killing of 7 Indian security personnel.

Militant attack should be called a coincident or not, but it is a fact that whenever efforts were put by the Indian side to improve the relations between both countries, unfortunate events took place weakening the initiatives for peace. Narendra Modi's government since 2015, has not shown any signs of improving the bi-lateral relations or opening to dialogues. Without being open to any dialogues it is impossible to make progress on bi-lateral issues including Kashmir dispute. Despite repeated attempts made by Pakistan to resume the dialogue process no earnest response came from the other side. In fact, the belligerent government of India started promoting its Hindutva policies targeting minority population, Muslims in particular. This is the reason that Modi administration is being criticized by Human Rights Watchdogs.

Kashmir, the Switzerland of Asia is in unrest. The latest developments in the regions have shaken the regional stability. Modi and his BJP party's anti-Kashmir movement has now turned more into an anti-Muslim campaign with laws like Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) passed by the parliament under which non-Muslim migrants can swiftly gain Indian citizenship, but Muslims cannot. The world has remained quite slow to grasp the gravity of what is happening in India. The sheer number of people negatively affected by such developments including the amendments in the citizenship acts is huge: if the Muslim minority in India had a separate state then it would have been eighth largest country in the world by population (Cockburn, 2020). Today, the Kashmir region is a paradise lost with human rights in the region being violated

3.Latest Developments in the Region

Ever since May 2014, when Narendra Modi's right-wing BJP came in power in India the situation in Kashmir valley has been tense. BJP was founded in 1951, by Syama Prasad Mukherjee, and has been regarded as a political arm of the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh), an Indian Right-Wing Hindu Nationalist outfit founded in 1925. One of the major agendas of RSS has been to ensure Hinduization of India at the cost of religio-ethnic diversity. According to some sources, some of its leaders, if

not all the followers of RSS, have remained admirers of Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany of the 1930s. Many actions of the ruling party are seen as being against the minority population in India and thus compared with those of Nazi Germany which would be discussed later in the paper.

International community's attention is turning to the latest developments in Kashmir. A few world powers including human rights organizations such as Amnesty International have questioned the revocation of the articles 370 and 35-A which accorded special status to Kashmir (Niazi, 2019). Therefore, it is necessary to see what are Modi's ultimate motives behind the decision of stripping Kashmir of autonomous status enjoyed by the region for the last seven decades in the history of India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other leaders of his party have claimed that the abolished articles (370 and 35-A) were obstructive to the economic development of Kashmir and were encouraging corruption, terrorism and separatist tendencies in the region (Chaturvedi, 2019). However, such reasons being less cogent do not satisfy the international community. On the other hand, many critics question the abrupt method opted by Modi's government in revocation of said articles because it was hurriedly carried out through a presidential ordinance instead of formally debating the issue in the Parliament of India or taking necessary approval from the legislature of the State of the Jammu and Kashmir before taking such important measures.

With such extra-ordinary developing situation, human rights are to remain under potential threat in the Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir. BJP government blocked the internet services, detained political leaders, lawyers, journalists and put restrictions on the public gatherings. Besides, nothing is heard about a large number of Kashmiri youth abducted by the Indian paramilitary forces that subsequently led to the dilemma what Danish Renzu named his movie after "*Half Widow*". Half widows are the Kashmiri women whose husbands are abducted (missing) with no word about them being alive or dead (if alive their whereabouts are not known). Apart from emotional dilemma, the wives of such Kashmiris are facing serious socio-economic problems as well for obvious reasons. Also, since they are unsure if their husbands are dead, they can't re-marry. In the end, it is not only the half widows who are suffering but half-orphans as well. Their children are not sure if their father(s) are alive and if they can fulfill their future educational and other dreams. According to media reports, as of January 2019, around 8,000 Kashmiris are missing and have not reached their homes back (Fareed, 2019).

Decision to remove the special status also left negative impact on the emotional integration of Kashmiris, with people in India taking it to the social media about marrying what they call 'White Kashmiri' girls and buying properties in the region (Ahmad, 2019). In fact, Indian politicians were the first to initiate such discussions. The Chief Minister of the Haryana state, Manohar Lal Khattar, from the ruling BJP Party, was quoted as saying: *"Our minister OP Dhankar [cabinet minister] used to say he will bring daughters- in-law from Bihar [state]. Nowadays people are saying that path to Kashmir has been cleared. Now we will bring girls from Kashmir."* Similarly, another BJP politician Vikram Singh Saini made such a comment saying *"The workers are very excited and those who are bachelors, they can get married there. There is no issue now. And the Muslim workers should celebrate this. Get married there, to a fair Kashmiri girl"* (Gaurav, 2019).

Upon the revocation of the articles, even a sharp increase in the online trending of the words "Kashmiri girl" and "Plot Kashmir" were noticed on the search engine Google in India. Figure-1 below shows that the words "Kashmir girl" on a scale of 100, the popularity of it was 10 on 30th July 2019 while on the day of abrogation of the article 370, it touched 100. Similar, results were found for the words "Plot Kashmir".

The situation in the Kashmir valley after the revocation of the article 370 and 35-A is getting worse with every passing day and the atrocities being committed by the Indian security forces in the region too. The constitutional amendments have met a lot of criticism not only from the Azad Kashmiri[1] diaspora living abroad but also from other saner elements of the society. There is huge backlash from the Kashmiris living in the Indian administered part of Kashmir. To check the anger and rage of Kashmiris, Indian government resorted to continual curfew and internet shut down and rendered the territory virtually off from media access. Human Rights watchdogs including Amnesty International expressed concern over human rights violations in the region (Niazi, 2019).

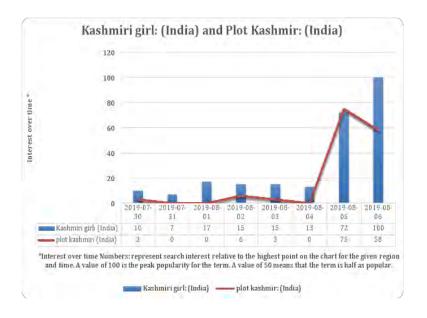1 Azad Kashmir is the Pakistan administered Kashmir

Figure 1: "Data source: Google Trends", Available at URL
https://trends.google .com/trends/explore?date=2019-07-30%202019-08-
06&geo=IN&q=Kashmiri%20girl,plot%20kashmir (accessed on 16 March 2020)

Many today draw parallel in the atrocities being committed under Modi's regime in Kashmir with the ones committed by Nazi Germany. And narratives exist what is happening today in Kashmir is because of the RSS's footsteps being followed by BJP. Imran Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan has repeatedly highlighted this on various platforms including the speech he delivered in the 74th session of UNGA. Moreover, in an interview to DW Editor-in-Chief Ines Pohl, he said: "The RSS's founding fathers believed in the racial supremacy and were inspired by then Nazi Germany whose ideology was based on racial hatred for minorities. The RSS ideology is also similarly based on hatred for Muslims and other minorities" (Shams, 2020).

Imran Khan's viewpoint about BJP promoting the agenda of racial hatred of RSS stands true when looked into the history of the RSS. It is said that Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, the second chief of the RSS got the inspiration from Hitler's ideology regarding the racial purity and termed it as a good lesson for Hindustan (India) to learn. In his book, "We, or Our Nationhood Defined" Golwakar argues: *To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic races—the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here.*

Germany has also shown how well nigh impossible it is for races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindustan to learn and profit by" (Golwalkar, 1939: 87-88).

Today, India is doing what China has already done and continues to do in the Muslim majority Xinjiang region by re-making their religious chemistry through certain indoctrination. India needs to review its actions which are exacerbating the tension situation in the region and catching the attention of the international community including that of United Nations. United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres on an official visit to Pakistan on 16th February 2020, called for implementation of UNSC resolutions and stressed the importance on restoring the freedom of movement in the Indian Administered Kashmir (Raza, 2020).

With the advancement of the steps taken by the Modi's government, Pakistani premier Imran Khan in the 74th session of the UNGC also emphasized on taking the issue to the International Criminal Court (Latif, 2019). Until now, Pakistan has somehow managed a diplomatic success by bringing the issue once again at the UNSC forum almost 50 years after the last time when it was discussed. However, at the same time Pakistan has not been able to gather international voice for solution of the dispute as she is yet to make serious endeavours to gather the consensus of other influential capitals including Washington, London, Paris etc and the blessings of the regional countries including those in Gulf like KSA, UAE etc.

4. Reaction of The Regional Powers and The EU

Despite the strong efforts being put in by Pakistan, a little tangible success is seen by Islamabad in convincing the regional allies to stand up against the unprecedented developments took place under Modi's regime. The country has repeatedly tried to highlight the Indian atrocities and raise the voice at many international forums and during the official meetings with foreign dignitaries from time to time. However, no concrete steps have been taken by any state, less usual statements condemning the developments. Regional allies like Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and United Arab Emirates (UAE) have remained silent observers while institutions like Organization for Islamic Cooperation (KSA dominating its affairs), second largest organization in terms of member of states after the UN, also seems to be not much interested.

Pakistan finds itself internationally isolated and distanced from the regional allies like Gulf states which mainly includes United Arab Emirates. For the

Emirates' muted response, it is the $100 billion annual trade question with India. Trading of human rights over the economic relations is what countries usually do, UAE being a good example (Batrawy, 2019). Estimates suggest that ratio between Emiratis to Indians is 1:3 who are contributing to uplift the Emirati economy. In addition to this, India is UAE's second largest trade partner which gives India-UAE relations edge over Pakistan-UAE relations. That said, the Emirates issued an official statement in favor of India calling the developments in Kashmir as India's internal matters (Batrawy, 2019).

Similarly, billion-dollar investments in India are ostensibly prompting Riyadh to maintain silence when it comes to Kashmir despite the fact that Islamabad and Riyadh have remained close allies with good bilateral relations. Historically, KSA's cooperation with Pakistan has remained in economic sphere or extending hard cash to Pakistan when in dire need to maintain the 'reserves' while nuclear armed Pakistan has provided security support to her. Since 1960's, Pakistani soldiers have been protecting two holiest places in KSA while engineers have fortified her border with Yemen. In return, Riyadh has always come to rescue of Islamabad not only during the political crises in the country but also during economic turmoil as well. Khan's Pakistan has already received financial aid of billions of dollars from KSA in helping to take the country out of balance of payment crisis (Farooq, 2019).

Keeping in view the historical relations with KSA, Pakistan requested KSA to hold a meeting of the OIC exclusively over Kashmir situation. KSA turned down Pakistan's request for calling of such a meeting of the OIC. While on the other hand, UAE awarded highest civil award to Modi few days after he scrapped article 370. Such response from UAE and KSA, didn't go well with Islamabad. Frustrated Prime Minister Khan reacted and said: *"The reason is that we have no voice and there is a total division amongst [us]. We can't even come together as a whole on the OIC meeting on Kashmir"* (Chaudhury, 2020).

In response to the turning down of calling a meeting on Kashmir issue by KSA due to her own vested interests with India, PM Imran Khan's recent visit (first week of February 2020) to Malaysia and his overtures to get closer to Turkey sent a message to KSA who feared that perhaps a new organization on the pattern of OIC was going to be made with Pakistan, Malaysia and Turkey, being the moving force behind such a possible initiative. These apprehensions apparently compelled KSA leadership to make OIC to have some weakly worded statements on the situation in Kashmir.

In such a situation, Pakistan has played well by getting Turkey's support in an attempt to counter KSA's response. Riyadh and Ankara are arch-rivals in the Muslim world (Marjani, 2020). By getting Turkish support on the Kashmir issue, Islamabad has given a message to Saudi Arabia and UAE that if they continue pursuing only their interests, then enough of good intentions. In February 2020, Turkish President gave his 4th address to the Pakistani Parliament during his visit to Pakistan. Referring what happened in Turkey during World War I, he said it was now happening in Kashmir valley. He was said as quoted, *"It was Canakkale [Gallipoli] yesterday and it is Kashmir today, [there is] no difference,".* He further added, *"The Kashmir problem can be solved not by conflict or oppression, but on the basis of justice and equity"* (Sibel & Faruk, 2020). As a result of the increasingly strong ties between Turkey and Pakistan, New Delhi has already cut its defense exports and also reduced the imports besides asking Ankara not to interfere in the internal matters of the Indian state (Marjani, 2020). However, such measures do not affect Turkey much since imports and exports between both countries are not significant unlike KSA and UAE.

Apart from this, reaction from European Union (EU), largest European bloc, is also of quite importance since it is one of the biggest European Institutions whose values are primarily built on protecting and promoting human rights. It has the moral obligation to stand up for protecting the human rights in the region as it does in the 27 member countries of EU. However, the EU looks keener to continue making trade deals like other gulf countries are doing instead of discussing the Kashmir issue.

In fact, situation seems more worrisome because on October 23, 2019, Modi's government had allowed far-right Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) belonging to different parties including France's National Rally (formerly National Front) and Germany's Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) to visit Indian Administered Kashmir while not allowing Indian opposition parties to visit the region. It drew the attention especially of Pakistani community because MEPs were granted access to a region where even foreign journalists were barred to visit (Leidig, 2020).

The far-right groups which also met Prime Minister Modi in New Delhi apparently to get a better understanding of the situation took to social media to express their opinion after the visit. Czech MEP Tomas Zdechovsky and French politician Thierry Mariani took to Twitter in support of the Modi's policies in India. It is not the first time that any MEP took social media to share his/ her opinion. Earlier on the day when article 370 was revoked in the region, the Dutch far-right Party for Freedom's (PVV) leader Geert Wilders openly supported the abrogation of said article in the disputed territory. He tweeted, *"India is a full democracy. Pakistan is*

a 100% terror state. So the choice is easy. Welcome home #Kashmir. #IndiaForKashmir" (Wilders, 2019).

Apparently evolving of such situations portrays how strong the Indian lobbying is in European institutions unlike Pakistan. Recently, a joint motion for a resolution by European Parliament to condemn the India's controversial Citizenship Act was postponed to a later date by the European Parliament. Many MEPs termed the postponement of motion as success of Indian diplomatic efforts and subsequently EU's business interests with India. However, at the same time, some MEPs (though not in simple majority) supported the holding of joint motion and expressed their disapproval to its postponement. German MEP Michael Gahler, who has thrice headed the EU Election Observer Mission to Pakistan, was of the opinion that the vote should take place on March 2 — exactly ten days before Modi's visit to EU (Farooqi, 2020).

Phil Bennion ex-MEP, a Liberal Democrats member of the Renew Europe Group from UK believes that Pakistan lacks the lobbying efforts. He said, *"The lesson I think to be learnt from Pakistan, for Bangladesh, for Kashmir is that their lobbies are not nearly as effective as the Indian lobby"* (Farooqi, 2020). Pakistan needs to put earnest efforts by activating her diplomatic missions functioning in the EU member states.

Prime Minister Khan in an interview to Russian media outlet RT admitted that he was upset that the international community has not reacted as much as it should have on the clampdown in Kashmir. When asked, *"Why do you think the world hasn't reacted"?* Khan replied, "*I am sad to say that I feel like (for people) markets, trade, material gains are much more important than the human beings"* (Khan, 2019). Keeping in view the statement of Mr. Khan and the actual facts on ground there remains hardly any doubt that in today's contemporary world, economic relations are being preferred at the cost of human rights.

Should it be called Pakistan's weak diplomacy or India's strong lobbying, the fact is that New Delhi moved an extra mile persuading the institutions and countries in her favor. But this cannot overrule the facts that the reaction from KSA, UAE and EU regarding the Kashmir issue are unsatisfactory.

In case of EU, Brussels should take earnest notice of the issue and should review the trade deals it has with India. In addition to this, it should reconsider GSP+ status – which allows developing countries to pay no duties on some of its exports to the EU, granted to India. After the regional instability and the gross human rights violations taking place in the

country, India doesn't fulfill all the pre-requisites of having such a status which includes implementation of 27 international conventions related to human rights and good governance (EU, n.d.).

5. Towards a Peaceful Solution: Learning from the European Past

Kashmir conflict has, never in the history ever seen an intensive and strenuous peace process similar to other regional conflicts like Israeli-Palestine in the 1990s or Sri Lanka in 2002–2003. No efforts made led to any positive results like a final settlement in the case of Cyprus in 2004 or in Bosnia in 1995. Efforts by the Indian and Pakistani government over the years have remained limited only to joint declarations of good will (Bose, 2007: 161).

Over the decades, Pakistani leaders have reached the conclusion that it is impossible to reach a solution to the contested land without a consensus among Pakistan, India, and the people of Kashmir. And also, it is impossible to find a solution which would entirely satisfy all the three parties (Kasuri, 2015: 218). There are a plethora of suggestions and ideas which came from different sides of the border for a peaceful solution to the issue, some of which would be discussed later in this paper.

However, the solution based on having a plebiscite in the region is not only obsolete, but inappropriate and risky to deal with the issues of sovereignty, says Sumantra Bose in her book, "Contested Lands". She further cites the words of then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan who admitted during a visit to the Indian subcontinent in 2000 that the *"old Security Council resolutions calling for a plebiscite were unenforceable and essentially defunct"* (Bose, 2007: 190) Later in 2003, Pakistan's then President and Military leader Musharraf offered to drop the demand for the plebiscite, becoming the first Pakistani leader to do so. He was quoted as saying, *"We are for United Nations Security Council resolutions. However, now we have left that aside. If we want to resolve this issue, both sides need to talk to each other with flexibility, coming beyond stated positions, meeting halfway somewhere. We are prepared to rise to the occasion, India has to be flexible also"* (Butler, 2003).

There should not be a second thought that a plebiscite on such important matters of sovereignty inflames differences between various ethnic groups and gives rise to ethnic self-determination among a populace. Experience of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is a vivid example where people still feel the difference of belonging to a different ethnic and religious group while living in one state. Holding a plebiscite in Kashmir, can have grave

consequences because of the different ethnic and religious groups residing in the territory more than that in BiH.

Besides this, the option for a three-way[2] plebiscite may also not result in any of the groups getting a simple majority. Its Hindu-majority districts would side with India while its Muslim-majority ones would probably get divided into different viewpoints, with independence supporters outnumbering the ones wanting to join Pakistan or India. Hence, making the region a complex fracture.

There are multiple formulas / models which can possibly solve territorial problems like that of Kashmir and some of the most relevant ones include Sweden-Finland Åland *Model*, Italy-Austria South *Tyrol Model*, *Andorra Model*, and *Chenab Formula*. All of these would be discussed briefly here:

Sweden-Finland Åland model:

The history of Åland islands, located in between Sweden and Finland, is vast. Finland had been an integral part of Sweden for almost six centuries until 1808 when things changed. Finland was occupied by Russia in a war against Sweden which ended upon the signing of Treaty of Fredrikshamn, ultimately resulting in the formation Finland under the title autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland (included Asland islands which was previously under Sweden). The autonomous status allowed them a certain degree of political power in return for some advantages like access to the sea. In 1917, with the Bolshevik revolution, Finland declared independence. This didn't go well with the tsar who intended to abrogate their autonomous status and wanted to merge them fully into the Russian state. Russia's such an attitude towards the Finns back then, today is pretty much identical to current Indian attitude toward Kashmir. However, ultimately Finns resistance led to their independence.

In such a scenario, the Ålanders wanted to join Sweden with 95 percent of people wanting to secede from Finland and come under the control of Swedish government. The matter went to the League of Nations, where the issue was considered eligible to be heard. This met a reaction from Finland who declared the matter outside the scope of the authority of the League of Nations by terming it as an internal matter of the country.

The League decided that Finland should retain nominal sovereignty over the province, but that the Åland Islands should be made an autonomous territory with obligations to ensure linguistic rights that is to say Swedish

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[2] Three parts include Pakistani, Indian and China occupied Kashmir

language. The Åland convention of 20 October 1921, was the first international agreement achieved by the League (Northedge, 1986). Today, the island enjoys a neutral and demilitarised status with its own postage stamps, police force and flag.

Sweden's handling of the matter by abiding by the League's decision, for a good, has a message for both Pakistan and India. Since then, both countries have excellent relations. It exemplifies the fact that in the end, different cultures can co-exist in peace and treated equally by the political and administrative processes of the country to which it officially belongs.

In the case of Pakistan and India, the model means that Pakistan and India both de-militarizing the zone and giving the power to one of the states to retain nominal sovereignty. Considering the historical political developments, none of the countries would give up their sovereignty over a region only to be taken by other.

South Tyrol model:

South Tyrol was part of Austria. It was inhabited by three linguistic groups namely Germans (70%), Italians (26%), and Ladin (4%). The model recognizes Italian sovereignty but concurrently allows greater autonomy of legislation and administration, recognition of cultural diversity, minority vote on issues of fundamental importance, and proportional ethnic representation (Javed, 2020). The autonomy statute of South Tyrol provides for election of the region's president and vice-president from among its own members, with a member each of the Italian and German language groups to serve rotationally in both posts. The President of Italy cannot veto their elections (Noorani, 2006). It is a good model to solve the issue of Kashmir however its drawback is similar to Sweden-Finland Åland model as it gives sovereignty to only one of the states even if it's just nominal.

Chenab Formula:

Chenab Formula stipulates the River Chenab (flows in India and Pakistan) to form the separation line between Pakistan and Indian occupied Kashmir (Noorani, 2006). Implementation of this formula would result in majority of the area going to Pakistan including Muslim majority populace within Pakistan's borders, and as well as the majority Muslim areas of Indian occupied Kashmir. In short, this would mean a clear victory for Pakistan which apparently would not be acceptable to India.

Andorra Model:

The model is based on an area called Andorra which was claimed by both France and Spain. Later on, based on an agreement signed in 1993, Andorra was granted autonomy. It has its own currency and constitution. France and Spain are jointly responsible for the defence of Andorra (Bhandari, 2015)

Hamid Bashani, a former Kashmiri student activist in an interview with a member of the South Asian Left Democratic Alliance discussed this model where he proposed some points in order to implement such a model. According to him, *"first of all, there should be a free and fair elections in all the three parts of the Kashmir and then the elected members should form a democratic and secular constitution to run the united autonomous Kashmir under the joint suzerainty of Pakistan and India. And for this all to happen, both countries need to demilitarize the whole region and get back to their prepartition positions.* He further adds, *"following this agreement would come free trade, free movement of people and goods. Andorra is a good example of this. It is under the joint suzerainty of France and Spain"* (Bashani, 2002).

Keeping in view the geographical and demographical history of the Kashmir, Andorra Model seems to be more appropriate in order to solve the issue, and make Kashmir, a paradise regained, then having a plebiscite in the region. That said, the solution proposed by Hamid is quite valuable and indeed can be a possible way out to the to resolve Kashmir imbroglio.

Implementation of such a model would ensure that Kashmiri people are represented by their own democratically elected people in a completely autonomous region with everything in their hands except defence and foreign affairs which would be looked after by both countries (Jaleel, 2002). This also means that there would be no problem with the minorities like Hindus, Sikhs, Pandits, Christians and Buddhists living in region, fearing of their rights, since the onus of ensuring such rights would be on Pakistan and India, who would be major players in it. However, implementing of such a model in the region depends totally on the political will and mutual consensus of both countries.

Since *Andorra Model* for solving the issue is based on the political will of Islamabad and New Delhi, it seems difficult that both countries would reach amicable settlement unless Modi reviews his mission of making a new India. If the Article 370 is not restored by any next political leadership of India that is to say after Modi, the will of United Nations should prevail despite the fact it is a "risky" and "essentially defunct" as said by Sumantra Bose in her book and Kofi Annan in a speech respectively.

Besides the political will of India to solve the issue, it is pertinent to highlight the serious domestic compulsions of Pakistani politics towards the effective resolution of the issue. For Pakistan (its military), Kashmir is an oxygen to keep them alive (Firdos & Ghulam, 2017). An effective solution to the Kashmir issue, would render Pakistan's army irrelevant or in other words it will lose its relevance and will make Pakistan's military establishment a non-entity.

In this chapter, I have mentioned several such stages where the elected representatives of both the countries tried to reach an agreement on Kashmir issue, but some unfortunate events disrupted the dialogues. The overthrowing of Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's democratically elected government by military dictator Zia ul Haq in a coup d'état, followed with his judicial murder in some trumped up charges, Kargil adventure by Pakistani military general Musharraf in the Indian Administered Kashmir launched when two premiers (both Indian and Pakistani) were trying to develop some agreeable environment. Later General Musharraf staged in coup d'état toppling PM Nawaz Sharif government and got put him behind the bars through pliable judiciary. These couple of events are two of the turning points in the Indo-Pak history where the military not only derailed dialogue process but also overthrew the elected governments. That said, the recent Pathankot incident which took place in India after Modi's first visit to Pakistan in 2015 should not be taken as a coincident.

The current widely divergent positions of Pakistan and India preclude a possible early settlement to the issue in the years to come. Pakistan refuses the inclusion of the Indian occupied Kashmir into the Indian Union and also does not agree to accept the existing Line of Control as the international border. On the other hand, New Delhi rejects Pakistan's position of having a plebiscite in the region. With such a stalemate, it would be difficult to reach a consensus. Both parties to the conflict would have to find a mid-way out so that the sufferings of the Kashmiri people come to an end and regional peace is promoted.

6. Conclusion

There is no possibility that Kashmir issue would get resolved any time soon. Nevertheless, there is definitely a need to end the violence in this world so that it becomes a cradle of peace and harmony. Unfortunately, twenty-first century has so far been one of the deadliest periods of the history and is a witness to many serious conflicts going in the world.

That said, even after 72 years since both countries came into being, Kashmir issue still remains unresolved. If something has changed since then, it is the increasing hostility between Pakistan and India. Surrounded with countless domestic problems, Islamabad is not in a position to win over the world opinion. India being one of the largest countries in the world in terms of size, geostrategic potential and above all economic resources outnumbers Pakistan and carries more preference in the world. This has been the reason that the regional powers including EU have preferred to side with India due to their mutual economic interests rather than standing with Pakistan on Kashmir.

People in Kashmir have been blinded, killed and traumatized over the past few years under the Modi's regime. *Today, those innocent people whose voices have been stifled want someone to stand up for their rights.* Under these circumstances, Pakistan's only promising recourse would be to concentrate on diplomacy, continuing to highlight the plight of Kashmiris at multilateral forums, like UN and the OIC.

To an ever-lasting peace in the region, leaders of both countries have a lesson to learn from different continents even from their very own Asia. In Europe and East Asia, the EU, and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were guided by a strong vision that the time had come to move from war to peace. Western Europe left behind centuries of bloodshed and today has become one of the most peaceful regions of the world despite their historical distrust. Similarly, in Modi and Khan's continent, Indonesia and Malaysia settled their own differences and since then have made ASEAN stronger. Hence, preserving the peace in East Asia.

History has seen many long-lasting conflicts and wars but in the end peace prevailed. Sooner or later, when Kashmir issue is resolved, only then people would realize how great the tragedy was that so many innocent people lost their lives and so much time and money was wasted arguing over ownership of a piece of land.

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16

Disaster Diplomacy: A Case Study of Pakistan and India

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1.Introduction

In and independent evaluation by the Asia Development Bank (Bank, 2010), it was discussed that Asia is the region that bears more share of disasters as compared to other continents, and again Asia is the region in which states have comparatively more unsettled disputes than other regions (Jenne, 2017). Disasters though have devastating and destructing impacts, but at the same time, disasters may provide an opportunity (Bănică, Kourtit, & Nijkamp, 2020). Disastrous events may play a positive role in bringing the states with chronic enmity together in different dimensions in order to mitigate, prevent or respond to a disaster (Kelman, 2011). There are numerous examples, where the nations with hostile relations cooperated and came closer to each other, as a result of a disaster (Kelman, 2011).

On the western side of the Hindu Kush Himalayan Mountain range, lies the region of Jammu and Kashmir. The region in present day expands into China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India (Chaudhury, 2019). Starting from 16th century, the region has been ruled by different ethnicities like Mughals, Afghans, and Sikhs and before the partition in 1947, by Dogras. Under the rule of Dogras, the region of Jammu and Kashmir, for the first time got the status of a princely state in 1846 (Rawat). The princely state of Jammu and Kashmir had cooperative relations with the British Empire, so that the princely state may expand its avenue in trade.

The vacuum created by the retreat of the British Raj and the Partition of Greater India in 1947 created such a situation that Jammu and Kashmir had to accede to either of the two major states Pakistan or India. The then

Maharaja, Maharaja Hari Singh wanted and wished to be independent, but later signed the Instrument of Accession to India. The area of wider Jammu and Kashmir region still remains disputed, being ruled by Pakistan, China and India in parts. The border between China and India is called the Line of Actual Control (LAC), whereas the border line between Pakistan and India is known as Line of Control (LOC) (McCarthy, 2002).

There had always been occurrence of environmental hazards in the region of Jammu and Kashmir, but what makes the case study worth researching is the ongoing conflict in the region between two regional powers, Pakistan and India. For both, environmental hazards, as well as manmade conflicts, there is a long list, which is still expanding because of the changing climate and transitioning conflict in the region.

Whilst discussing disaster diplomacy and environmental hazards in Jammu and Kashmir, the earthquake of 8th, October 2005, which occurred in northern part of South Asia cannot be neglected. The northern part of South Asia which makes region of Kashmir, where the earthquake struck resulting into more than 78,000 casualties in Azad Kashmir and more than 1300 casualties in Indian occupied Kashmir (Chaudhury, 2019). As an emergency response, India offered aid to Pakistan, which was accepted, and soon Pakistan received 25 ton of supplies including medicines, blankets and food. All the relief material on first stance was sent through the land route. Mega corporations in India, like Infosys offered US$ 226,000 as an aid. Cargo plane from Indian Air Force carried 50 tents, 15000 blankets and medicines to Pakistan. Second cargo flight could not be allowed, hence second consignment entered Pakistan through Wagah border via train. A third consignment also entered Pakistan through Wagah border, resultantly the then President of Pakistan publicly expressed his gratitude towards India for the provided aid (Kelman, Field, Suri, & Bhat, 2018).

Pakistan and India did not stop here, rather both countries worked together in order to enhance relief and response across the border between both states. After a week and a half, establishment of telephonic links were granted permission. After a month of the disastrous earthquake, masses were physically allowed to cross the line of control to search for the relatives lost during the dreadful event. The flexibility along the line of control was termed as "earthquake diplomacy" by media persons, commentators, politicians and general public (Keridis, 2006).

2. Disaster Diplomacy: A Background

Disaster diplomacy is the linkage of disaster and diplomacy, or in other words, diplomacy as a result of a disaster. Major portion of the literature

of disaster diplomacy has a share from the research of Dr. Ilan Kelman. The term "disaster diplomacy" was first used in a communication on disaster response, but was not offered any explanation, later, this term was used in an article of newspaper in Bangladesh. This article was referred in a purely academic paper for the very first time in 1995. The context used by Dove and Khan (Dove & Khan, 1995) was basically, how the government of Bangladesh, presented the cyclone that had happened in Bangladesh in 1991 to the world.

According to Kelman and co-authors (2018) Jammu and Kashmir is a region with an extended history of wars, natural disasters and significant vulnerabilities resulting in the disasters with great impact. This paper has tried to explore the relationship between vulnerabilities, natural disasters and the ongoing violent conflict in Jammu and Kashmir in the present as well as historical perspective. According to the authors, violent conflict is least impacted by the environmental hazards, whereas environmental hazards put a short break to the ongoing conflict. Though, authors have discussed in detail the environmental hazards and conflict side by side, however Azad Kashmir has not been discussed in the paper.

According to Koukis and co authors (Koukis, Kelman, & Ganapati, 2016), disaster diplomacy explores and explains how and why disaster-related actions and measures do or do not impact conflict and increase cooperation. The earthquakes in Turkey and Greece in 1999 became one of the standards for this particular field of research, with a few publications explaining and elaborating how disasters may influence conflict. The paper by the aforementioned authors presents a case study to explore diplomacy pertaining to disasters in pre and post-disaster activities in Turkey and Greece. According to authors, disaster diplomacy acts as a catalyst in resolving the conflicts among the rival states.

In their research, Koukis and co-authors (2016) have discussed the case study of collaboration among Turkey and Greece in 1999. According to them, disaster diplomacy can be a long term program, provided the one being helped, helps the helper in the time of need, i.e. tit for tat, moreover, realization plays a major role in making this type of diplomacy successful. Provided the tit for tat phenomenon and realization, there should be conducive environment, as in the case of Turkey and Greece.

According to Kelman (Kelman, Gaillard, & Mercer, 2015), disaster diplomacy may have a catalytic effect for notable changes in global politics, but those disasters cannot create new results on their own and may, conclusively have very less to their credit. Going beyond the strict definition of disaster impacting development, according to the author, it

can be deduced that vulnerabilities may very rarely generate significant political changes, rather they may catalyze the occurring changes in the political scenario.

According to Kelman (2011), the activities pertaining to disaster i.e. preparedness and response are kept separate from diplomacy. Here, the authors tried to establish a connection between foreign policy and disaster diplomacy, and deduced that disaster diplomacy could never be a priority in the foreign policy of any state resulting in the failure or not so successful in most of the cases.

3. Previous Disaster Diplomacy Examples

There are many studies which can be taken as prime examples of disaster diplomacy and which have been published in the context of disaster diplomacy, both individually and by certain group of people on the same topic, reaching far rear into the history. (Nel & Righarts, 2008) in their study discuss about the earthquake which shook Sparta in 465/464 BC which is accredited to being the generator of revolution of slaves against slavery. There is a difference in being a catalyst or to be source of something, while specifically talking about the issue of the conflict of Spartans and slaves, there is no clarity; if slave-Spartan clash was due to earthquake, as slavery on its own is or could be a major reason which happens to be sufficient for a revolt. As a matter of fact, (Urbainczyk, 2016) it is observed and researched that several slave rebellions that have taken place among the slaves in the Spartas took benefit of the turmoil which was caused by earthquakes.

A significant number of rebellions have occurred during the war or a war like situation. The slaves historically have taken benefit of the conflict and have tried to accelerate the conflict which helped them to get free from slavery. Mostly earthquakes and state of wars provided chances to look for liberty and to get rid of imprisonment. (Segalla, 2012) explains the American Government's reaction to the 10,000 paralyzed people in Morocco which was the result of consumption of unhygienic cooking oil by Moroccans in 1959. The oil contamination took place when traders from Morocco bought engine oil from a base of United States Air Force in Morocco, and mixing it with the cooking oil to earn more profit form the mixture they created. A great number of the consumers got paralysed due to the consumption of the aforementioned amalgam of engine oil and the cooking oil, which was poisonous in nature. The Government of America was aware of the fact that the negligence has been shown by the personnel of US Airforce hence provided Moroccan Government with the aid. The

provision of aid was a way to curb the conflict that may had had risen because of the mistake of the personnel of US Airforce.

The earthquakes of 1999 in Turkey and Greece were one of the positive additions in a series of steps towards Turkey - Greece rapprochement, but it cannot be said that, alone the earthquakes were the major reason behind this development (Ker-Lindsay, 2007). A similar perceptive case study was done by (Holloway, 2000) about the 1991-1993 emergencies all over Southern Africa. This emergency regarding famine surprisingly did not come up to be a disaster since the states which were being affected by famine collaborated to import food inspite of brutal clashes among the states.

Pakistan and India, since the day one after getting independence in 1947, have indulged in military and political friction amongst each other, which included a competition for nuclear warheads as well. Calamities and disasters one way or another are affecting both the countries, and sometimes both get affected at the same time. Both states have helped each other's government every now and then even after the chronic hostility. For example, in May 1999 when an Indian fishermen from Gujarat, were rescued by Pakistani authorities, following a storm. A similar incident happened when an earthquake occurred in western India on 26 January 2001, in which 20,000 people died, without any delay, Pakistan offered monetary aid which lead to a successful summit of Pakistan's and India's leaders from 14th July till 16th July 2001, but due to some reasons, the resolution among both the heads of the states could not be finalized.

On the 8th October, 2005, after an earthquake struck northern part of Pakistan, killing more than 70,000 people, hopes for earthquake diplomacy were revitalized. The 'Line of Control', was opened for a very limited time which allowed supplies and people to cross freely. Before this step of opening up of Line of Control, one more step was taken; staring of a bus service between the two sides of the Line of Control (Gaillard, Clavé, & Kelman, 2008).

4. Success in Disaster Diplomacy

The term 'disaster diplomacy' has though been discussed earlier but not in detail (Dove & Khan, 1995). First thorough study of this term's meaning and its practice was conducted by (Koukis et al., 2016). Though, there are case studies pertaining to Disaster Diplomacy such as the United States of America and Cuba (Glantz, 2000), Southern Africa (Holloway, 2000) and Greece-Turkey (Ker-Lindsay, 2000), but the researchers (Kelman & Koukis, 2000), pose a question 'Do the disasters that happen naturally have

any influence on international cooperation between the countries that have usually been considered as "enemies"?

Kelman, (2011), talked again about the disaster diplomacy questioning, why and how the activities related to the disaster do or do not give peace a chance and inhibit the conflict or friction. Moreover, further question is raised, why and how activities related to disaster do not or do encourage cooperation between adversaries. Hence the two questioning statements endow with an insight, formatting the methods to them through which disaster diplomacy is studied or ignored (Comfort, 2000). Descriptions and definitions are extremely necessary for 'cooperation' and 'peace', and their connections.

Disaster diplomacy interweave with these procedures and move towards a broader spectrum presenting a wide series of case studies in detailed discussions, various forms of disaster, ways of lessening the risk of disaster, and many other actions by different stakeholders within diplomacy. The disaster diplomacy hypothesis confirms that the activities that are disaster-related, can work as a medium, but not as a reason of the whole mechanism of diplomacy. As a result of a deeper and in detail research, (Streich & Mislan, 2014) reached to a result that disasters generally do not happen to be the cause of the conflict, secondly, disasters broadly do not make the states or communities to tread on the path of peace and cooperation and third that a disaster can act as a catalyst in an ongoing process or attempts of rapprochement or reconciliation.

If disaster diplomacy is studied in order to establish its relationship with the foreign policy, in the preview of the chances of making it successful or unsuccessful, the already carried out work is to be applied on the foreign policy. The answer to this question will open up the possibility of successful disaster diplomacy in disaster related activities. In order to determine the success of disaster diplomacy, success needs to be defined first. Relying upon the definition provided by (Kelman, 2011; Streich & Mislan, 2014), success in the context of disaster diplomacy means that disaster-related activities which are, disaster risk reduction and disaster response have a catalytic effect on the diplomacy and has brought about some positive outcome which has resulted into some kind of peace deal among the rivals, be them the rival states or groups within the same country or community, has improved the diplomatic interaction among the two or has lead to a positive dialogue among the two.

Positive effects for disaster-related activities may also be seen in the context of better disaster response, increased disaster risk reduction efforts or effective emergency management could also be considered as success.

Streich, & Mislan, (2014) and Kelman, (2011) explain that the diplomacy often gets catalysed by disaster related activities, but for the shorter period of time and does not affect the diplomacy in the longer run or for the longer period of time. The researchers add that, even in the shorter period of time, the diplomacy is only successfully catalysed if there exists an ongoing progress before the disaster strikes, examples of such ongoing process or progress could be trade links, dialogues, etc. Especially while discussing the case of Pakistan and India, there was an ongoing dialogue process going on, when Gujarat was shook by an earthquake, or whilst talking about Turkish and Greek rapprochement, towards the end of the 20th century, there was an ongoing trust building move between the two.

(Kelman, 2011) goes on to prove that the catalytic activity is for a very short span of time, because there are a lot of elements which influence the time period. It could be the change of the government, who thinks that the older enmity should not be let gone that easily, or another disaster might wipe away all the hard work done, which was short lived. If viewed from a broader perspective, the kind of analysis that the researchers have done considers the stakeholders as the passive participants, in the context, how does disaster related activities can or will affect the diplomacy.

Direct disaster diplomacy has been analysed by (Kelman, 2011) with case studies, but as far as most of the part was concerned, disaster diplomacy was viewed with a speculation and not analysed in the detail. The main observation was whether to study disaster diplomacy or not, rather than studying the case studies under this theoretical framework of disaster diplomacy like Streich, and Mislan (2014) who analyzed that the way disaster diplomacy is defined, is not clear and vague. The authorities that are involved, need to know not only what and how does disaster diplomacy unfolds, but should try to shape the events accordingly in order to see the positive impacts which can be brought about by the disaster diplomacy. This adds to the definition of the success in the context of disaster diplomacy's success. This proclamation clues to an advanced investigation regarding the definition of the term success. Anticipated result of a stakeholder keenly involved in disaster diplomacy is limited diplomacy or augmented disaster risk, then the consequence can be considered successful and this stakeholder could claim success. Additional stakeholders may not claim to be successful because they perceived a dissimilar result. Even if the anticipated result for one stakeholder is disaster diplomacy and that stakeholder works enthusiastically towards it, then other stakeholders might go against that result and might work against it (Kelman et al., 2018).

5. Climate Change in South Asia

South Asia is one of the regions in the world which are being effected by the climate change as well. As it has been mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, that Asia is the continent which shares a large chunk of the annual number of disasters. It is basically the geography of the region of South Asia, which makes it both, vulnerable and susceptible to the effects of climate change. Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India are the nations in South Asia which are being affected by the climate change, the most (Islam & Sultan, 2009). According to World Bank's official website, around 1.8 billion individuals live in South Asia. The population in South Asia is settled sporadically. Gross domestic product (GDP) of the South Asian states has also improved over the time, but the poverty still keeps the region vulnerable to the disasters.

Storms, earthquakes, floods, cyclones, terrorism threats, land sliding, avalanches are some of the common disasters which are faced by South Asia regularly. A new, very common disaster claiming lives of many in the big cities of South Asia is heat waves. Since most of the states in South Asia are dependent upon the agriculture, such a dramatic change in climate has resulted in both the extremes; dry spells and floods. Such is the challenge to the agriculture of the states of the region and has potential to make poor, poorer. Climate change has made the South Asian nations to focus on the activities pertaining to disaster prevention and mitigation. According to (Stern & Taylor, 2006), "from the Himalayas, which feed water to a billion of people, to the seaside territories of Bangladesh, South Asian nations must plan for the impacts of a drastic climate change even if they work to curtail the basic causes of the climate change".

Despite several international environmental conventions, treaties, agreements, protocols and legislation - just like the United Nations Conference on human rights (1972), Our Common Future (1987), the city Protocol (1992), the World Summit (1992), Johannesburg Summit (2002), Bali Conference (2007) and Poznan Conference (December, 2008), among others, the human society remains vulnerable to climate change.

Climate change is considered very deadly for the life on earth due to its intense impacts (Stern & Taylor, 2006). There is estimation that the global temperature has risen 1.5º Celsius during last two hundred years (Kraaijenbrink, Bierkens, Lutz, & Immerzeel, 2017). If this pattern of climate change continues, the quantity of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere may double as compared to pre-industrial period by 2035. It can be said that this may lead to an increase in temperature up to 5º Celsius. The standard concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere

should be between 450 to 550 ppm CO_2. Moreover, experts are of the view point that if necessary steps are taken from now, even then the consequences of what has been done in past in shape of rising temperature of earth and melting ice-bergs would continue. Sea-level rise would not end till 2200 due to warming of oceans. Earth needs an appropriate strategy to cope with the situation on emergency basis (Chaudhury, 2019).

Flood is not a new phenomena for the people of South Asia but extreme and unpredictable incidents that are happening are unprecedented. In the past few years, because of floods, masses are living in a difficult situation. Back in 1988, Bangladesh had to experience a flood in 50 districts out of its 64 districts causing huge destruction. More than 2000 human lives were lost. On the other hand, economic losses were in billions. After ten years in 1998, another devastating flood killed 1050 people approximately and even in 2004 it took 747 lives (Sabur, 2012). Bombay in 2005 faced a devastating flood that left millions homeless. A part of Haryana and Old Delhi in 2008 long-faced a similar fate once the water level from Yamuna watercourse grew higher (Bundela, Sethi, Meena, Gupta, & Sharma, 2015). Devastating floods in 2010 and 2014 in Pakistan could be another example.

People in one part of South Asia face floods and storms whereas inhabitants of the other part face droughts and dryness. Many Indian states like (Northern) Andhra Pradesh, (Southern) Gujarat, Maharashtra, (Southern) Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, (Northern) Karnataka, besides (Western) Rajasthan and a part of Haryana now often face droughts and dryness. They are distinctly susceptible to droughts. A change of precipitation pattern throughout region is resulting in dryness of the arid & semi-arid regions which will result in economic and social losses (Bhandari, Bhadwal, & Kelkar, 2007).

Other indicators of climate change in the region of South Asia include storms, cyclones, landslides, and so on. The conditions can be very adverse in South Asia in near future because of melting of glaciers and snows in the Himalayan region (Islam & Sultan, 2009). Maximum supply of water to South Asian Rivers comes from Himalayan region and it has most snow caps outside the Polar Regions. Around 33000 sq. km. area is covered by these snow caps and 86,000,000 cubic meter of water is received annually from there. Seven of the largest rivers of Asia: the Ganga/Padma, the Brahmaputra, the Indus, the Salween, the Mekong, the Yangtze and the Huang Ho, get Himalayan glaciers to provide them with billions of cubic meters of water. Almost a billion of South Asian people are dependent on water supply by these rivers (Rasul, 2014).

Experts are predicting very tough situation ahead for the region of South Asia. The stock of fresh water supply for South Asia will face a serious threat in near future as the Himalayan glaciers are melting very rapidly (Mani, 2021). Studies state that Gongotri Glacier which is 30 km long has shown considerable amount of melting. Satellite data has indicated that the ratio of melting of Himalayan glaciers is three times more than the ratio in last two hundred years (Rasul, 2014).

Keeping aside agriculture, fisheries and other means of livelihood, in India, Nepal and Pakistan, many hydropower plants would be under serious threat because of the low flow of water in rivers. This would force these countries to use other conventional ways to produce electricity like fossil fuels which is likely to increase carbon emissions in the air. Many parts of South Asia have already seen a slow but distinctive change in the rate of precipitation and in near future this will increase many folds. Areas which were very rainy are becoming dry due to the changes in the climate.

Many regions of South Asia are facing considerable variability in the rainy season. The monsoon, sometimes, delays or comes earlier and leaves adverse effects on agriculture and other means of livelihoods of millions of people. Untimely rains cause floods in many parts of South Asia. There are areas which were famous for heavy rainfalls, are facing dryness and some areas frequently subjected to dryness and droughts are getting heavy rainfalls. Due to changes in the rate of precipitation, groundwater levels in many areas of South Asia will be depleted while other parts will be over-flooded. It will leave a negative effect on agriculture in the region. People will be left with no other option except to pump more groundwater for agriculture and other means of life. This over-pumping of groundwater and more dependency over it has its own drawbacks (Bundela et al., 2015). Approximately 70% of people live in rural areas in South Asia and it amounts to 75% of its total population. GDP's 22% is gained from agriculture and around 60% people are linked with this. In the year 1999-2000, agriculture contributed about 27% of India's GDP and 13-18 percent of its exports (Ahluwalia & Malhotra, 2006). Currently agriculture sector of India gives 19% of the country's GDP and about 60% of its inhabitants are dependent upon it. 68% agriculture area in India is rain fed. Any change in agriculture sector will automatically affect a large population. A rise in temperature by 1.5°C and 2 mm increase in precipitation may lead to a reduction of rice yield by 3-15% for India (Ahluwalia & Malhotra, 2006).

5.1. Coping with Disasters related to Climate Change in South Asia.

In 2004, a serious question was raised with regards to preparedness and post-disaster rehabilitation after Indian Ocean's tsunami. The response of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation came in the form of a "Comprehensive Framework on Disaster Management" (CFDM) for the region in 2007. It was based on the report of the "World Conference on Disaster Reduction" or the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), which promoted "a strategic and systematic approach to reducing vulnerabilities and risks to hazards" (Zafarullah & Huque, 2018). CFDM's main purposes were to form and strengthen the disaster management system on the regional level so to improve relief and decrease the risks. DRR was to be a part of mainstream national policies, cooperation and coordination at all levels by reporting, information and warning system. Some goals were set like, professionalism in tackling with disasters, training centers at community level so to cope with emergency situations, empowering women and creating a connected regional and national cooperation at every level (Lamichhane, 2016).

To make the disaster management strategies more effective at the regional level, CFDM suggested standardized hazard and vulnerability assessment, obtaining the suitable balance in PPRR (prevention, preparedness, response and recovery) programming, standardized evaluation of loss and impacts, procedures for relief management and training for disaster management personnel. These were about establishing common practices across the region and ensuring compliance. The way how would they work was not clearly mentioned. The SAARC Disaster Management Center (SDMC) suggested a Rapid Response Mechanism to respond to disaster emergencies in the region using the available facilities, material and expertise.

SDMC has formulated many protocols on different issue regarding environment and strategies for climate change adaptation. A SAARC agreement incorporated a range of pre-, midst-and post-disaster activities that would form a regional "disaster management" cooperation as to avoid natural disasters, lessen their effects and restore areas affected by them. It emphasized joint response "to disaster emergencies through concerted national efforts and intensified regional cooperation". SDMC works on the basis of this resolution and a number of key relevant projects that, to some extent, serve its purpose. One has been the creation of the "South Asian Disaster Knowledge Network" and the other the "South Asia Digital Vulnerability Atlas" (SADVA). It is a platform for many stakeholders with the purpose to share information with regard to risk and prevention of natural disasters, also to provide relief, recovery and remedy (Zafarullah &

Huque, 2018). SADVA has been an information desk for hazards and vulnerabilities with assessments to cope with the emergency situations and analysis to help decision makers in South Asia.

5.2. Climate Change Diplomacy

It is argued that in the South Asian region, "adaptation to current climate change and climate variability is weak and many communities are highly vulnerable" and therefore it is important to adopt "locally appropriate methodologies for analyzing these effects and in increasing understanding of current interactions of climate, environmental and socioeconomic effects and changes" (Ahmed & Suphachalasai, 2014). As the effects of the climate change are of transboundary nature, cooperation and collaboration becomes more critical, especially in emergency situations (Ahmed & Suphachalasai, 2014). The SAARC Expert Group indicated seven areas which need attention: adaptation to climate change; policies and actions for climate change mitigation; policies and actions for technology transfer; finance and investment; education and awareness; management of impacts and risks; and capacity building for international negotiations. In order to prevent issues regarding environment, countries in South Asia should be willing to share great practices that have been applied by them to tackle with the situations presented by the climate change issues. Experts also pointed out the need for "assessing barriers to technology development for adaptation and mitigation options". At the national level, it was expected that the focus would be object-oriented.

However, needed steps have not been taken in this regard. The three-year action plan endorsed in 2011 has not been acted upon at the regional level as anticipated. Specific actions on climate change have been observed long before the SAARC initiatives. As an example, Bangladesh has offices for climate change issues since 2004 as government departments relevant to climate issues to incorporate protective measures in future projects. This was adopted by the National Adaptation Programs of Action in 2005 and 2009. In 2008, the government followed the Bangladesh model to cope with the issues created by climate change. A fund was made for this purpose and the government has the control over it though it is a multi-donor trust fund. Other countries have also adopted national adaptation action programs (Bhutan and Maldives in 2006, India in 2008, Nepal in 2010). The key thrust in climate change was proposed post-Hyogo Framework of Action, SAARC DDR framework 2015 as a part of regional sustainable development framework. It prioritized the development of regional principles and policy guidelines, appropriate financial allocations for implementing policies, integration of local and technical knowledge, utilization of best practices, information-sharing across the region,

reinforcing hazard and climate monitoring systems, and building institutional capacity.

However, there are some barriers to implementing this roadmap, such as lack of climatic information required in the design of local level adaptation measures, flawed policy guidelines and institutional incapacity, dearth of community participation and absence of sub-national, sub-regional and regional cooperation mechanisms. Most importantly, a lack of political will and disinterest on the part of policymakers offset initiatives in DRR and Climate Change Adaptation. Mainstreaming adaptation and mitigation strategies into sustainable development planning thus becomes difficult.

6. History of Terrorism in the South Asian Region

Beginning from India; the start of the twentieth century, a cult of the Indian Nationalist Movement turned towards the use of terrorism in the connotation of political extremism (Argov, 1964). Terrorism in political aspect was first time practiced in the State of West Bengal by the Maoist Naxalite Movement in the Post-Colonial era of subcontinent. This movement received significant support, publicity and material assistance from the Maoist Regime. The Indian state successfully and brutally crushed the Maoist terrorist movement (Shah, 2006). Resultantly, the most important terrorist movement got eradicated on the Indian border in state of the Punjab in the initial years of 1980. The origin of this very movement was acutely entrenched in the crises of Indian local politics (Gupta, 2007).

Along with this, India was facing another challenge at another front, and that was of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the members of which desired to create an independent state in the North Eastern part of India (Prabhakara, 2007). After the aforementioned challenges India faced, another challenge yet in 1989, when an ethno-religious insurgency started to show its existence in the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) was a local organization, which was and even now is at the forefront of this movement of freedom (Ganguly, 1997). India also observed a reactivation of Maoist terrorism due to different reasons and it has affected 14 states and 165 Indian districts (Chopra, 2008).

Pakistan is a country which is a key combatant and a partner in the war against terror. This war against terror has made Pakistan to suffer in so many ways; economically, socially, educationally, and in many other countless ways. The terrorism in itself is a disaster, which makes its victims vulnerable to many other natural or manmade disasters. In the world we

live, terrorism has started making so much difference in political streams that even the relations of states are changed on its basis.

Terrorism in Pakistan has also contributed to two major recent crises between India Pakistan foreign relations. This undoubtedly has become the attitude of India to allege Pakistan with any terrorist act in India, while Pakistan itself is suffering at the hands of terrorism. To counter this menace of terrorism, Pakistan has lost both civilians and army personnel. Internal displacement is another social issue that has been caused by this disaster.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation's (SAARC) Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and its additional protocols represent legal efforts to strengthen regional counter-terrorism cooperation by SAARC's member states, which include India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. This convention signifies the efforts carried out for suppressing the transnational terrorism. The India-Pakistan Joint Anti-Terror Mechanism of 2006 and the SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk of 1990 are examples of diplomatic counter-terrorism initiatives by South Asian states.

In 2016, there was an attempt between Pakistan and India to share information and also to investigate collectively a militant attack in the Indian city of Pathankot. Continued diplomatic engagement between the civilian administrations of both countries, even when attacks take place, would help to counter a longstanding pattern of terrorist attacks disrupting attempts to resume the peace process. It would also side-line the forces that benefit from the ongoing conflict.

International efforts, including the US, China and Russia, to negotiate with the Afghan Taliban are also evidence of a broad attempt to bring stability to Afghanistan. Willingness on the part of Afghanistan, Pakistan and India to participate in these diplomatic overtures underscores all three states' efforts to engage with the institutions of diplomacy and great power management in order to stabilize the wider region.

Thus, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan have repeatedly turned to the shared rules, norms and institutions of international society to work out their problems. There is sufficient shared ground on which to build mutual understandings on contentious issues. Regional cooperation is in the interest of all three states and would weaken the actors who benefit from conflict. Pakistan's and India's admission to, and Afghanistan's observer status in, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (an Asian security cooperation organization led by China and Russia) are cause for hope. The rising clout of China and Russia in the international order may provide the

necessary pressure for all three South Asian states to engage more constructively in regional security cooperation in the medium to long term.

7. Disaster Diplomacy between Pakistan and India

There are times, when the differences emerge between states, especially when both the states are nuclear powers and are neighbouring each other as well. Under such circumstances, hard power is not a solution. The solution to avoid such a havoc is to resolve the differences or at least build the confidence through usage of soft power. In the case of this study, the researcher has focused on the utility diplomacy.

Pakistan and India have a chronic enmity between them since the time of partition in 1947. The differences between both the rival states have seen climax four times, which resulted in war between both the states. Due to the rough history of relationship between India and Pakistan, both countries have suffered in one or other way, only the prevalent threat is enough to give the setback to both the states. Before the partition, it was decided that the princely states of subcontinent are free to join either of the newly created states, Pakistan or India, whereas it was recorded that India using its might annexed many a princely states without the will of the masses or sometimes rulers of those states, for example Deccan and Hyderabad. Same happened with Kashmir as well, India annexed Kashmir into it, without the will of the masses of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir, in all the aspects was meant to be part of Pakistan, be it culture, language, landscape or religion.

The struggle of Kashmiris is real, and eventually the case of freedom of Kashmir was taken to the United Nations Organization, which has passed numerous resolutions in order to resolve the issue diplomatically. Both Pakistan and India are signatories to those resolutions, which signifies that both the countries belief in peaceful and diplomatic resolution of the Kashmir dispute. Traditional diplomacy is the negotiation by the diplomats, who happen to be diplomatically trained representatives of states, but now diplomacy has turned out to be multi track diplomacy, where not only officials negotiate on the issues, but people from different walks of life are given chance to lobby in favour of the country they belong to. For example, celebrities are made part of the advertisements to endorse vaccinations, hence this type of diplomacy is called vaccine diplomacy.

Owing to the shared long stretched border between Pakistan and India, geographical proximity makes both these states vulnerable to same kind of disasters. For example, both Pakistan and India suffer destruction when flood comes, or both states suffer when earthquake shakes the land.

Similarly, both states suffer from terrorism. These common threats leading to common vulnerability, make both the states stakeholders.

8. Conclusion

The collaboration and cooperation in the field of disaster related activities by both the rival states can bring both the states closer to each other, helping both countries to build the confidence amongst themselves. This mechanism of collaboration has a practical example of Greece and Turkey, who had a conflict on Cyprus, came closer to each other after both countries got hit by earthquake one after another. Both these states supported each other at the hour of need, hence coming close to each other. Climate change is a real threat, and Pakistan is one of the countries, which is feeling the brunt of climate change more than many other states in the world. India and Pakistan can both work in the field of climate change together, in order to reverse or at least mitigate the climate change impacts. Both, Pakistan and India are agrarian countries, climate change is resulting in changing pattern of rainfalls, which either results in drought or a flood. Both countries can together devise a plan to curb the climate change and work in the field of science e.g., to devise hybrids of seeds, who can easily adapt to the changing climate.

It is a sad state of affairs that terrorism has always been present in South Asia, and has suffered a lot because of terrorism. As has been discussed in this chapter, trend of terrorism is same throughout the region in all the states. Together all the states, especially Pakistan and India can cooperate and collaborate in the field of counter-terrorism to bring about peace in the region. Combined training, intelligence sharing and across the border vigilance can give peace a chance. It can be inferred, that in the case of Pakistan and India, complete resolution of the conflict is not possible, but such cooperation through disaster diplomacy can help to build confidence in between each other.

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17

Regional Dimension of Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy

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1. Introduction.

The state of international relations in Central Asia has changed significantly over the past five years. It seems that the period when the five states of the region have experienced the worst time in their relations from mutual grievances to direct confrontation and mined borders are left behind. Today the improvement of interstate relations, gradual solutions to border and water issues, progress in economic and trade contacts between states are obvious trends in the CAR.

The chapter dedicates to the current processes and activities of Kazakhstan within the region. Kazakhstan being the largest country play a certain role for establishing stability, peace and understanding among five neighbors and nearest surrounding.

It gives analysis to the processes in the center Eurasian continent. It will embrace policies in developing countries with active political and economic transformations: integration gathering, regional relations, impact of Afghan conflict, etc.

2. Methodology

The following paper is research problem and descriptive case study. The main approaches are descriptive research design. This method is based on gathering, analyzing, and presenting collected data. Another approach is explanatory research design. It provides ideas and thoughts on a subject to further explore international relations theories. The research explains aspects of a subject and details about what, how, and why questions.

3. Shifts in Interstate Relations in Central Asia: Causes and Manifestations

Most experts are unanimous that positive shifts in the region began with the starting of the Shaukat Mirziyoyev's presidency after the death of Islam Karimov, who ruled the country since Uzbekistan gained independence. In 2017 "Country Development Strategy for 2017–2021" was approved which oriented the republic's foreign policy activities towards creating a belt of security, cooperation and stable development around Uzbekistan. Sh. Mirziyoyev adjusted the previous strategy of Uzbekistan having identified Central Asia, with which the main national interests of the country are connected, as the main priority of the country's foreign policy. The priority of Central Asia was also confirmed by the fact that Sh. Mirziyoyev held his first meeting as President with the Head of Kyrgyzstan A. Atambayev and made his first visits to neighboring Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. It is also worth noting that Sh. Mirziyoyev initiated a consultative meeting of the Heads of the five Central Asian states, implemented in March 2018. Then, for the first time, in Astana   the leaders of the CAR held a summit meeting without the participation of extra-regional participants. Generally even under the former President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I. Karimov reforms were initiated to liberalize the economy, establish regional cooperation, but it was precisely the policy of good neighborliness initiated by Sh. Mirziyoyev that made it possible to improve interstate relations in Central Asia.

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan

The improvement of relations with Kazakhstan, which is the country's largest trade and economic partner in the region, can be considered as the obvious foreign policy achievement of Sh. Mirziyoyev in regional policy. Compared to other CAR countries Kazakh-Uzbek relations were not greatly delayed by sharp disagreements and conflicts. There was no sharp downturn in trade relations and no break in political dialogue. The main border issues between states were relatively painlessly (unless, of course, counting cases with shooting and deaths at the state border) resolved. Experts explained some remoteness and coldness in bilateral relations by the circumstances of personal relationships between former presidents N. Nazarbayev and I. Karimov. Regarding the "rivalry for leadership" between the Heads of the two countries, this can be agreed with the Kazakh expert D. Satpayev:

> *"There was no competition. Uzbekistan under Islam Karimov and Kazakhstan demonstrated different models of development - both economic and political. Under Karimov Uzbekistan was somewhat "fixated" on itself, was a little in a state of isolation. If we talk about*

economic development, Kazakhstan was considered a "favorite", but precisely from the point of view of attracting investments. I believe that competition will begin right now, when Shavkat Mirziyoyev very abruptly begins to change both the foreign policy of Uzbekistan and the domestic economic policy" (Satpayev, 2018).

On March 23, 2017, Sh. Mirziyoyev made his second official visit to Kazakhstan as the newly elected president (and earlier it was even planned that this would be the first visit). The former president of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev paid a return visit to Tashkent in September 2017. Several key documents have been signed to provide further development of the important spheres of Kazakh-Uzbek cooperation, trans-regional contacts between the two countries. (Novyi etap sotrudnichestva, 2017).

The comparative analysis of the trade and economic sphere between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan shows a shift towards the growth of indicators in 2017 compared to the previous five-year period. This trend continued in the next 2018, when a breakthrough in regional policy in terms of mutual undestanding and political dialogue positively affected trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. The Presidents of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan held talks on topical issues of bilateral ties in a confidential atmosphere during the meeting of the leaders of the CAR states in Astana in 2018. On November 2018, the First Interregional Forum "Kazakhstan – Uzbekistan" took place in the Kazakh city of Shymkent. This forum has demonstrated the importance of interregional, cross-border cooperation and it has become a tradition to focus on close trade and economic contacts between regions and districts of the two countries. The issues of restoring air and railway communications were resolved relatively quickly. The interstate commission on border issues has been working in full force and has managed to relieve tension between the parties regarding the most controversial issues.

Uzbekistan became the first country where K. Tokayev paid his first official visit as newly elected president of Kazakhstan on April 15, 2019 and this became a landmark event for the further development of bilateral relations.

"The Presidents of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan called 2018 as a breakthrough year in the development of trade and economic cooperation, trade grew by 50% and exceeded $ 3 billion". (Uzbekistan i Kazakhstan namerenydovestitovarooborot do $5 mlrd, 2019). The upward trend in trade relations continued in 2019. "According to the Consul General of Uzbekistan in Kazakhstan, Abror Fatkhullayev, at the end of 2019, bilateral trade amounted to 3.3 billion US dollars". (YedinayaSilkWayvizapoyavitsya v blizhaysheyevremya, 2020). "The Kazakhstani side provides data at the level of $ 4.1 billion on the volume

of bilateral trade for 2019" (Tovarooborotmezhdu Kazakhstanom i Uzbekistanom v 2020 goduplaniruyetsyauvelichit' do \$5 mlrd, 2020).

Further dynamics of trade growth was suspended by restrictions, the closure of the border between the two countries due to the coronavirus pandemic. For 9 months of 2020, the decrease in the volume of mutual trade amounted to 16.5%. At the same time, Kazakhstani exports decreased by only a small percentage, but imports from Uzbekistan decreased by 40%. (Uzbekistan i Kazakhstan obsudilisnyatiyebar'yeroviliberalizatsiyuaktsiznoy politiki, 2020).

The intensity of the Kazakh-Uzbek interstate dialogue remains at a high level. The chronology of bilateral relations between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan for 2017-2021 includes almost monthly meetings, negotiations between relevant ministries representing the spheres of the economy, foreign policy, foreign economic relations. Particular attention is paid to interregional relations in the border regions, the central issue of which is cooperation in the agro-industrial sector and light industry. A number of projects have been outlined to establish and develop logistics at the interstate border, transport infrastructure, border trade and tourism. On the agenda is the removal of barriers and the liberalization of excise policy for further building up trade and economic ties between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The opening of a bus service, which has not been available for 11 years, remains unresolved. There is a problem of "gray trade" on the state border, which is difficult to regulate and control. But as mentioned above the dynamism of the Kazakh-Uzbek dialogue, with the further will of the leaderships of both countries for cooperation and partnership, will contribute to their speedy solution.

The flooding in the Maktaral region of Kazakhstan bordering Uzbekistan, in May 2020 was a test of maturity for Kazakh-Uzbek relations. As a result of the breakthrough of the Uzbek water reservoir Sardoba, residents of several border villages of Kazakhstan suffered from tangible material losses. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan began to prepare a note of protest for Uzbekistan and it seemed that tension in interstate relations could not be avoided (Vspomogatel'nyy rezhim: kak Kazakhstan i Uzbekistan likvidirovalinavodneniye, 2020). However, close interaction at the highest, regional levels between the countries, the desire of the parties to focus on joint efforts to eliminate the consequences of the catastrophe, and not on clarifying the question of "who was to blame", removed the sharpness that had arisen in Kazakh-Uzbek relations. At the same time, this incident showed that there are many pitfalls on the way of regional cooperation in the CAR, and only the will, the desire of leaders to cooperate, and a constructive state policy can create a solid basis for solving common problems.

Uzbekistan-Tajikistan

The improvement in Uzbek-Tajik relations since 2017 has clear progress against the backdrop of a situation in which the borders between the two neighboring states have been mined over the past nearly twenty years. The relationship between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, according to most experts, is the cornerstone for the CAR and their state is directly reflected in the entire complex of interstate relations in the region.

The reasons for the enhancement of diplomatic and economic relations in the CAR, between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, are explained in the analytical literature by different factors, including the political one. The high degree of personification of politics in the states of Central Asia emphasizes the role of leaders in international processes in the region. Today is the hightime for the leaders of the region to reconsider definitively the priorities in regional policy, focusing on the solution of pressing issues in the economic and trade sectors together with their neighbors. According to Tajik expert K. Abdullayev for Tajikistan;

"completely dependent on Uzbekistan in terms of transport communications, lacking deposits of such important minerals as gas and oil, the most promising survival strategy is maximum integration into the Central Asian (even Turkic) community. It is Uzbekistan that can and has a chance to act as a locomotive of regional integration. Dushanbe understands this very well, especially against the background of the weakening of Russia "trapped" in unequal confrontation with the West, as well as the growing role of China. The Uzbek vector is today the most promising and probable for Tajikistan. On the other hand, rapprochement with Tajikistan - the closest neighbor of chronically unstable Afghanistan - is a desirable path for Uzbekistan, if it intends to become a prosperous and safe "snow leopard" of Central Asia". (Ekspert: Integratsiyamozhetprivesti k sozdaniyusoyuznogogosudarstva Uzbekistan-Tadzhikistan, 2019).

The official visit of the Uzbek president to Tajikistan in March 2018 was of historical significance. Sh. Mirziyoyev once again proved that it was Uzbekistan that initiated the improvement of regional cooperation. (GosudarstvennyyvizitPrezidentaRespubliki Uzbekistan ShavkataMirziyoeva v Respubliku Tadzhikistan, 2018). Among the agreements reached as a result of this visit it is especially worth noting the decision to create an interstate working group for demining sections of the Uzbek-Tajik border. The Head of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, who arrived in Uzbekistan on a return state visit in August 2018, demonstrated strong support for the friendly policies pursued by the Uzbek president. The fact that the presidents of the two countries last met twenty years ago

underlines the importance of this meeting. After the promotion of the political dialogue at the highest level between RU and TU "... a rapid growth of economic cooperation and the process of complementarity of economies began (gas and fuel and lubricant supplies to Tajikistan from Uzbekistan, electricity supplies from Tajikistan to Uzbekistan, etc.) (Tadzhikistan i Uzbekistan kakvozmozhnyyedrayveryregional'nogosotrudnichestva v Tsentral'noyAzii, 2020).

The dominance of the water and energy factor in the entire complex of relations between Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan is obvious. The building the Rogun hydroelectric power station has been an obstacle in relations between Uzbeks and Tadzhiks for two or more decades and it took Tajikistan decades to start its construction. The construction of this hydroelectric power station which started in 2016 marked a restoration of relations between states. In September 2019, the launch of the second unit of the Rogun hydroelectric power station took place in Tajikistan. In recent years, the country has been persistently making every effort to complete the building of this hydropower plant, which can turn Tajikistan into the top producer of cheap and environmentally friendly electricity in the region in the near future. At the same time the full launch of the Rogun hydroelectric power station can be beneficial for growing needs of Uzbek economy, which is potentially the most important consumer of cheap, cost-effective electricity generated by Tadzhikistan. According to V. Paramonov, Head of "Central Eurasia analytical group: "In my opinion, neither the project for the construction of a nuclear power plant, nor projects for the construction of solar power plants will in any way affect the growing needs of Uzbekistan for cheap energy, the generation of which is possible only at hydroelectric power plants. Diversification and combination of different sources of electricity generation is the right way to develop" (V otnosheniyaTadzhikistanaiUzbekistanadobavilienergii, 2018). Therefore the water and energy sector may guarantee the policy of close interactions, supported by two countries. In continuation of this direction at the beginning of 2020 the two states began negotiations on the joint construction of two hydroelectric power plants on the Zarafshan River in Tajikistan, which will operate exclusively for the needs of Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan i Tadzhikistan obsuzhdayutstroitel'stvodvukh GES na $552 mln, 2020).

In the context of the last year pandemic, relations between the countries are developing in the humanitarian aspect: Uzbekistan has provided financial, material and technical assistance to neighboring Tajikistan which in fact has become the main help for this country in the fight against COVID-19. (Uzbekistan

stalglavnympostavshchikomgumpomoshchidlyaTadzhikistana, 2020). There is a hope that the positive attitude and dynamism in bilateral relations will soon contribute to the abolition of the visa regime, which still remains the main obstacle to unlock the full potential of Tajik-Uzbek relations.

Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan as a state is interesting in several ways for Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have an extensive connection system, which allow to realize joint transport projects in all three directions: Central Asia and Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus and the Middle East, Central Asia and China. The implementation of the project for the construction of the Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan-China gas pipeline, initiated in 2009, was a good practice for interaction between the two countries in the diversification of energy transportation routes. Of all the countries of Central Asia, Turkmenistan was the friendlier country for Uzbekistan during the administration of former President I. Karimov, who regularly paid visits to Ashgabat, with the exception of his visits to Kazakhstan. President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov visited Tashkent in 2015. The reason for the relatively satisfactory relations between the two countries compared to others was primarily the pragmatic issues of potential joint projects. Since 2011 Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have been jointly involved in a project to create an international transport and transit corridor with non-regional participants. "The Ashgabat agreement on the creation of an international transport and transit corridor between the governments of Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan" entered into force in April 2016. (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan i Iran namerenysozdat' tranzitnyykoridor, 2019).

In this context, it was quite predictable that Turkmenistan became the first country where the newly elected President of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev made his first state visit in March 2017. The opening ceremony of the railway bridge across the Amudaria River by two presidents during his visit was a symbolic event; the transit sphere has become a trigger of economic and trade contacts and political interaction between the countries. In 2017 alone, the President of Uzbekistan made three visits to Turkmenistan; 40 Uzbek delegations also visited this country during this period. This fact indicates a high intensity of political dialogue and practical interaction between countries, which was confirmed by the dynamic growth in the volume of international rail and road transportations, trade in the period from 2018 to 2020. Recently the geography of joint projects in the transit sector has been expanding. Within the framework of the Ashgabat agreement a sub-regional transport corridor "Russia-Kazakhstan-

Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Iran-Oman-India" is being formed. At the same time, both states are partners in such large regional energy projects as the TUTAP power supply network (Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan) (Uzbeksko-turkmenskoyestrategicheskoyepartnorstvo – yarkiy primer vzaimovygodnogosotrudnichestva, 2021).

Despite the global negative consequences of the pandemic the trade turnover between the countries at the end of 2020 amounted to $ 527 million, which is almost 3 times more than in 2017 ($ 177 million) (ISMI o uzbeksko-turkmenskomstrategicheskompartnerstve, 2021). In the meantime, the two countries have not yet managed to settle all the problematic points in bilateral relations.

> "There are still unresolved issues of visas, which is extremely important for residents of border areas as well as the lack of air connections between the cities of the two states. Turkmenistan demonstrates a willingness to cooperate, but not open up. And the position of Uzbekistan is its readiness to discuss cooperation in the field of logistics, economics and education without discussing topics that are "sore" for the neighbor country".

This expert assessment given by M. Shabalin is still relevant today (ShavkatMirziyeevplaniruyetuvelichit' tovaroborot s Turkmenistanom: 2019). Positive shifts in Uzbek-Turkmen relations have not yet been covered the social sphere.   The peoples of the two countries cannot freely visit each other despite the necessary infrastructure for civil transportation connecting two countries.

Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan

As in the case with other states in the region, the state of Uzbek-Kyrgyz relations has changed positively with the coming of the new leadership in Uzbekistan. Border incidents, gas skirmishes, interethnic clashes should not be repeated. In fact, with the presidency of Sh. Mirziyoyev, an intergovernmental commission between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, which had been dormant for 8 years, immediately started working.

During the visit of Sh. Mirziyoyev to Kyrgyzstan on September 5, 2017 the parties signed the "Treaty on the Uzbek-Kyrgyz state border" which defined 85% of its length. This was undoubtedly a big leap in bilateral relations. The most tangible sign of improved relations was the resumption of operation of the extended Dostuk / Dustlik border crossing on September 6, 2017. Thousands of citizens from both countries gathered to celebrate this event (AlmazbekAtambayev – o viziteShavkataMirziyoeva: "Etot den' zhdali 25 let", 2017).

"Another important signal for the establishment of good-neighborly relations between the states was that Sh. Mirziyoyev during his state visit to the Kyrgyz Republic stated that Uzbekistan was not against the construction of the Kambar -Ata-1 hydroelectric power station and agreed to participate in the implementation of this project". (Prem'yerUzbekistana v Kyrgyzstane: chtoob'yedinyayetdvestrany, 2019).

Two energy companies of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan signed a memorandum of cooperation on the construction of Kambarata hydroelectric power station in 2017. The escalated issue of Ungirtau at the state border between the two countries began to decline and soon subsided against the backdrop of such changes. And in the case of Uzbek-Kyrgyz relations, the water-energy factor became a catalyst for cooperation.

In addition to the water-energy factor, interactions in the transport and logistics sector play the role of a driver in Uzbek-Kyrgyz relations. In October 2017 the transport corridor "Tashkent - Osh – Kashgar", the length of which is 900 km, was completed in the result of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz cooperation in the construction sector. Today the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway the construction of which has been talked about since 2002 is another important transport project contributing to the enhancement of relations between the two states. This project implemented under the auspices of "One Belt-One Road" provides further economic penetration of China into the region. Kyrgyzstan and China could not reach agreement on the technical parameters of the future project for many years. "Despite the fact that Kyrgyzstan has been striving to implement this project for many years, due to latent opposition from Russia, the construction of the road has been postponed all these 15 years. Russia regards this region as a territory of its geopolitical interests, and therefore hindered the implementation of major projects of other powers" writes Kyrgyz analyst Aidanbek Akmat-uulu about the reason for the delay in the implementation of this project. (V stroitel'stvezh/d «Kitay-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan» zagovoriliobuchastiiiRossii, 2018). In 2018 China made concessions in determining the technical characteristics of the railway accepting the arguments of the Kyrgyz side after the Russian announcement about its participation in the project. The interests of both China and Russia in this geopolitical project can accelerate its implementation and also bring Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan closer together in their future intentions. Uzbekistan has already built its section and expressed a readiness to continue the construction of the road to Afghanistan and Iran (the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Iran route).

The two countries are not hung up on problem nodes (disputed territories, especially the problem of enclaves), focusing on the constructive aspects of bilateral relations. Progress is evident in the division of the border between states; today, only 6% of the entire length of the state border remains unresolved. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan aim to complete the legal registration of the state border line by the end of 2021 (MezhduUzbekistanomiKyrgyzstanomuzhe net "kamneypretknoveniya", 2021). "Eliminating the issue of delimitation and demarcation of borders will not remove the entire conflict potential. Of course, here a long-term comprehensive approach with the development of an adequate and effective model of cross-border cooperation is needed"- notes the Kyrgyz researcher K. Larionov (Pochemuzatyagivayushchiysyaprigranichnyyspor s TadzhikistanomiUzbekistanom, 2020). The controversial issues of territory, water and energy resources that have been accumulating for decades between the two countries naturally require a lot of time and effort for their final solution, and most importantly, irreversible political will from the leaders of states.

4. Conclusion

It is indisputable that positive changes in interstate relations, in regional cooperation in Central Asia are directly related to the new course of the President of Uzbekistan Sh. Miriziyoyev. The new leader of Uzbekistan was able to convince the heads of neighboring states that the reorientation of their foreign policy courses to a regional format and the strengthening of interaction in all spheres are a pressingissues in the context of today's realities. The desire and will of the CAR leaders for dialogue and mutual understanding led to the emergence of a new trend in regional politics. As is known from the history of independence of the Central Asian countries, a strong tradition of the participation of external actors in regional affairs and ensuring security has been established over more than two decades. Today the heads of states are inclined to discuss topical issues themselves without moderation from the external environment, which indicates the emerging independence of the region. A special emphasis on cross-border, interregional cooperation is a feature of the strengthening relations between the states in the CAR.

The fact, that almost all five countries of the region are interested in the development and diversification of transport and logistics routes can be the most obvious driver and guarantor of stable cooperation in the nearest future.

The water and energy factors, which play the role of a catalyst for economic and political interaction between the states of the region, are still

manifesting itself in a positive aspect revealing the desire of the parties for mutual understanding on water use issues. However, in the medium term with inconsistency on fundamental issues, methods of water distribution between states located at the sources of rivers and in the lower reaches, it can lead to undesirable effects in interstate relations.

The very world economic situation is inducing the CAR countries to enhance the whole range of relationships with each other. Also with sustainable growth of the Uzbek economy there will be more need for energy sources and new markets, which may ensure the consistency of the country in its policy of friendship and partnership with the Central Asian states.

Personification, which is a characteristic feature of international processes in the CAR, has favorably influenced interstate relations, creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding, constructive interaction in the region. But it is also a vulnerable factor since it subordinates the entire complex of regional policy to the will and preferences of individual leaders. Therefore, along with optimistic forecasts regarding the solution of such problems as the unchanged visa regime, "gray trade" in the border areas, insufficient communication between the countries of Central Asia in the nearest future it is necessary to make assumptions about the delay in the implementation of the reached agreements and in the achievement of new ones.

Afghanistan plays an essential role in security of the Central Asia region. Three (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) among five countries share the common boundaries with Afghanistan. However, these countries have loose ties because Central Asian countries belonged to the Soviet Union isolated by an iron curtain for a long period. "The combination of a cooperative logjam at the regional level, and the inward orientation of regimes desperate to secure their own survival, by implication means little ability to engage – or interest in doing so – with the country south of the Amy Darya River. While Afghan Tajiks, Turkmens and Uzbeks find designated nation-states in their name just across the border, a long history of separation has demolished family networks and led to disparate political systems and societal values" (Strand, Borchgrevink&Harpviken, 2017: 14).

The only sectors where there is strong complementarity are energy and water supply. Promising cooperation is seen in these sectors with Afghanistan. Another vector for cooperation is the fight against terrorism. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) plays the main role where China and Russia set the tone. Common problem is concern about radical

Islamism in the Central Asian countries in relations towards Afghanistan. It identifies the most prominent form of internal opposition. At the same time, several opposition groups related to the events in Afghanistan. Even the promotion of two major projects - the TAPI gas pipeline connecting Turkmenistan to South Asia via Afghanistan, and the CASA-1000, which will create infrastructure for transport electricity to Afghanistan and Pakistan – raises doubts about their realism (Casey, 2017).

From the point of view of Afghanistan, the untapped potential of the northern region is huge-in economic terms, in energy, in education and in the field of security. Changes in the region can be caused by either internal or external factors. Within countries, long-term stability does mask discontent, and various types of upheaval and regime change can lead to open political confrontation. As an external factor, of course, it is important how the major powers treat the region. Central Asia's interest lies in obtaining economic support or business connections, such as has been evident in the case of the NATO Northern Distribution Network (NDN) since 2009. The much more assertive foreign policy pursued by Russia, not least in the annexation of Crimea and its involvement in Eastern Ukraine, shows that a strengthening of the United States (or the West) is unlikely. China is potentially a much more serious rival to Russia. It has strong economic ties throughout Central Asia, and its new "One Belt and One Road" initiative offers both the preservation of stability and the further deepening of multilateral relations. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which took the bold step of including India and Pakistan as full members, has decided to keep Afghanistan in observer status, a sign of its hesitancy to spend the organization's political capital on resolving what most members consider an intractable crisis. (Strand, Borchgrevink&Harpviken, 2017:13-14).

The main threat, the source of which is seen in Afghanistan, is radical groups. In the areas adjacent to the Tajik border, there are about three thousand members of the terrorist organization ISIL/DAESH. At the third forum of the Bishkek Anti - Terrorist Forum of the EAEU member states, held on June 25, 2019, Vice-President of the International Association of Veterans of the Anti-Terrorism Unit "Alpha" Vladimir Berezovets noted that "in addition to ISIL, there are more than 20 terrorist groups in Afghanistan with a total number of more than 50 thousand people" (Tabarina, 2019). Terrorist organizations are planning to enter the countries of Central Asia. Today a large number of recruits from Central Asian countries from among the "disillusioned" in the Syrian war are attempting to return to their homeland using forged documents through third countries.

According to the Deputy Secretary General of the CSTO Alymbay Sultanov, the militants are returning to the EAEU countries purposefully, in order to create sleeper cells in their homeland.

The effectiveness of joint operations within the framework of the CSTO was increased. Thus, in 2018, more than 16 tons of drugs and 407 weapons were seized from illegal trafficking. 443 people who were on the international wanted list were detained. Now an interstate program is being coordinated to strengthen the Tajik-Afghan section of the border (Tabarina, 2019).

The problem of drug trafficking. For a long time, Central Asia has been facing a number of other security threats. Drug trafficking has been increasing in recent years due to the increase in the area of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and the low effectiveness of police measures in the country. The drug mafia actively uses the "Northern Route", the transportation of drugs through the territory of Central Asia, in connection with which the CIS countries face the threat of growing drug addiction and the spread of related diseasesUnfortunately, the effectiveness of border guards on the border with Afghanistan remains extremely low, because of a lack of resources and corruption caused by the low salaries of regional security forces (border-guards).

Increased military clashes in northern Afghanistan. According to Makhmud Ghiyosov and Sherali Rizoen (2020), "With the strengthening of the NATO position and the formation of the current government in Kabul in the early 2000s, the northern regions had stability and sustainable security for about 10 years. After the announcement of the withdrawal of NATO troops in 2010, the north of Afghanistan began to become a zone of activity of the Taliban, as well as foreign fighters, and gradually turned into an unstable region with real security challenges" (Ghiyosov and Rizoen, 2020).

Generally, over the years, there have been numerous battles between government forces and armed militants, both in small villages and in hard-to-reach places. The special geopolitical significance of northern Afghanistan still lies in the fact that the permanent and vital interests of Russia, China, Pakistan, and India are intertwined here, which individually have a significant influence on the ongoing political processes in Afghanistan.The current situation of the northern provinces of Afghanistan, especially the border provinces with the Central Asian states, has "stable instability" and is of serious concern to its neighbors. Some areas of such regions as Badakhshan, Tahor, Kunduz, Juzjon, and Forebare transferred from government forces to the Taliban, other foreign fighters

and vice versa. If we talk about approximate accuracy and assess the situation in the northern regions from the position of the opposing sides, then 40% of the territory is under the control of government forces, 20% is under the control of the Taliban, and in the remaining 40% of the territory, there are battles between the parties.

"Official Kabul and other involved states recognize the presence and serious influence of Taliban militants and their foreign partners on the northern regions of this country. Nevertheless, the question of how these militants have managed to increase their influence in these territories requires a detailed and impartial analysis. Over the past 20 years, we have witnessed the formation of an unstable and weak government in Afghanistan, which has not achieved its main goal: the creation of a democratic centralized government" (Ghiyosov and Rizoen, 2020). It is noteworthy that on June 21, 2020, the Security Council of Tajikistan discussed the aggravation of the situation on the border of Tajikistan with Afghanistan in the southern part of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region.

The formation of a zone of instability, which is developing in the northern provinces of Afghanistan as a type of threat, has two specifics:

1) Serious negative impact on the nature and content of economic, transport and communication projects. Due to the "stable instability", the implementation of a number of projects to connect the markets of Central Asia with other neighbors of Afghanistan is being slowed down.

The unstable south for the Central Asian countries delays economic cooperation, the expansion of which is generally beneficial to Afghanistan itself, since it can generate additional revenue for the state budget;

2) The clash of interests of key global and regional states poses a serious threat to the countries of the region, as there is a potential for the use of militants of Central Asian origin to harm the interests of states that have permanent interests in Central Asia.

Diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan were established on February 12, 1992. The diplomatic mission of the IRA in Kazakhstan opened its doors in 1993. On April 15, 2004, the treaty on the foundations of relations and cooperation between our country and the transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan was signed. Kazakhstan actively cooperates with Afghanistan within the framework of many international organizations: OSCE, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Conference on

Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Center for Combating Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Their Precursors. In addition, Afghanistan was the CICA co-coordinator in two areas: drug control, new challenges and threats.

Over the past few years, bilateral cooperation between Kazakhstan and Afghanistan has generally been characterized by positive dynamics of development. Contacts at the highest and governmental levels have intensified, and inter-parliamentary and business ties are being strengthened. Having no common borders with Afghanistan, separated by a distance of 1,500 kilometers, however, Kazakhstan demonstrates an active position in relation to the situation in Afghanistan. First of all, it is interested in solving regional security issues, the key of which is the stabilization process in Afghanistan.

Kazakhstan's policy towards this country, as it seems to us, can be divided into three directions. One of them is the security policy and the solution of the peaceful settlement of the conflict situation. In this case, the government of Kazakhstan bases its activities together with other states and international organizations. The promotion of the so-called "C5+1" forum, which was initiated by the United States of America in November 2015, is a top priority. It has established itself as a multilateral mechanism of interaction between the countries of Central Asia and the United States. Since then, the gathering of representatives of Foreign Affairs Departments from the five countries of the region and the US Secretary of State has been held annually. In 2020, it was no exception, despite the surge in the COVID-19 pandemic. On February 1 and 2, 2020, US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo visited Kazakhstan, and on February 3, he paid a visit to Tashkent. The International agency of Informburo highlighted, "the parties agreed to expand the dialogue on threats posed by foreign terrorist fighters and to exchange best practices in countering terrorism and violent extremism" (Masanov 2020).

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Tleuberdi M. (Nurmaganbetova, 2020) underlined the importance of working within the framework of the "C5+1" dialogue to strengthen cooperation in the field of new investments and technologies in Central Asia.

"Kazakhstan has allocated funds in the amount of $ 6 million in 2016 and 2018 to support the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANSOB) to the relevant NATO Trust Fund." In addition, Kazakhstan provides support to Afghanistan within the framework of international organizations. This country promoted issues of particular relevance to the

peace, security, stability and development of Afghanistan, when it was a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2017/2018 and the Chairman of the Security Council Committee on Afghanistan/the Taliban, (Kazakhstan and Afghanistan: cooperation through history. 2019, February 2)

The second direction, which is considered as a key sector in relations directly with Afghanistan, based on economic cooperation and gratuitous assistance. For example, on August 3-4, 2019, Almaty hosted the business forum "Afghanistan: New Trade Horizons". At the trade fair accompanying the forum, 72 Afghan companies producing spices, nuts, dried fruits, carpets, clothing, precious stones and jewelry presented their products. In 2018, the trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Afghanistan amounted to $ 795 million. With regret, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Kazakhstan, Mohammad Farhad Azimi, noted that only $ 4 million of this amount is accounted for by the import of Afghan goods to Kazakhstan (as cited in Central Asian countries strengthen trade relations with Afghanistan, taking care of stability in the region, 2019). Trade remains the traditional form of economic relations. The main export item of Kazakhstan is wheat flour. In recent years, its share has exceeded 60%. If in 2007 Afghanistan purchased 128 thousand tons of flour in Kazakhstan for 192.5 million US dollars, in 2016 the volume of flour purchased was about 1.5 million tons, for 486.89 million US dollars (Shibutova, 2017). Kazakhstan exports wheat and wheat-rye flour, natural gas, wheat, flat rolled products made of non-alloy steel and flax seeds. Afghanistan imports fresh and dried grapes and potatoes.

"Kazakhstan-Afghanistan trade relations can enter a new stage of development after the conclusion of trilateral transit agreements between Kazakhstan, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan, as well as between Kazakhstan, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, which contribute to the solution of the issue of transportation of goods," the Kazakhstan's Foreign Affairs Ministry notes (Kazakhstan and Afghanistan: cooperation through history, 2019).

It should be taken into account that the Republic of Kazakhstan supplied goods to Afghanistan mainly for the needs of the troops of the International Coalition, but currently the government supplies directly on its own initiative. In 2014, the Law of December 10, 2014 No. 263-V "On Official Development Assistance" was adopted, (The Law "On Official Development Assistance", 2014) according to which Kazakhstan has committed itself to provide assistance to countries that cooperate with it and need this assistance to develop. In addition, on January 31, 2017, the Decree of the President of Kazakhstan No. 415 "Main directions of the

state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of official development assistance for 2017-2020" was signed (Decree of the President of Kazakhstan "Main directions of the state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of official development assistance for 2017-2020", 2017)

Based on the criteria for selecting geographical priorities and comparative advantages, the Republic of Kazakhstan decided to provide priority development assistance to the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan. Moreover, Kazakhstan's membership in the UN Security Council (as a non-permanent member) in 2017 affected the provision of assistance, since our country headed the Committee on Afghanistan/the Taliban (the 1988 Committee). Kazakhstan also aimed to adopt a UN Security Council resolution on Central Asia and Afghanistan. A significant role belongs to the Republic of Kazakhstan in terms of the adoption of the Statement by the head of the Security Council on the significance the developing international, regional, and interregional maintenance of stability and sustainable process in the Central Asian region with Afghanistan (Statement by the President of the Security Council, 2018).

"In general, Kazakhstan is making humanitarian efforts to reduce tension in Afghanistan, so that it does not pose a threat to the region and specifically to Kazakhstan" (Shibutova, 2017). Employees of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan noted that the Afghan partners are sincerely interested not only in receiving gratuitous assistance, but also in implementing joint investment projects. Not the entire population of Afghanistan, which is about 32 million people, takes part in the fighting. In Afghanistan, there is a circle of people representing the younger generation who want to learn business and cooperate with foreign companies.

Currently, Kazakhstan is studying the possibility of launching a pasta factory in one of the northern provinces of the IRA. "Discussing this issue, we have established that production can be issued both in a trilateral format – with the participation of Kazakh, Afghan and Turkish companies that are ready for this cooperation, and only between the Kazakh and Afghan sides. Afghan entrepreneurs, including local banking sector entities, have expressed interest" (Kazakhstan and Afghanistan: cooperation through history, 2019).

In 2013, a trade representative office of the Afghan exporter of agricultural products Kanda Fruits Process Company opened its office in Almaty. The government of Afghanistan has contributed to the solution of the issue of establishing an air cargo link between Kabul and Almaty for the supply of

vegetables and dry and fresh fruits to retail and wholesale networks of Kazakhstan. A promising direction is the construction of new railways and highways, which will allow this country, which has no access to seaports, to get out of isolation.

It is necessary to highlight the training of Afghan citizens in Kazakh universities. In the field of education, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan signed an agreement, according to which Kazakhstan hosted up to one thousand citizens of Afghanistan from 2010 to 2014, of which 700 people studied in higher educational institutions, and 300 people — in organizations of technical and vocational education. At the same time, training in the organizations of technical and vocational education of the Republic of Kazakhstan was conducted in those specialties that were annually designated by the government of Afghanistan. The European Commission pays special attention to the rapprochement between Afghanistan and the countries of the Central Asian region. "The EU has decided to work closely with the Central Asian states in supporting projects that can help to establish links between neighboring countries and the countries of the region, in particular projects to improve interaction, as well as projects aimed at the education and employment of Afghan women," - underlined Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in summer 2019 (The European Union will allocate 2 million euros to Afghan women for training in Kazakhstan. And also in Uzbekistan... 2019, June 22).

Minister of foreign affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Mohammad Hanif Atmar said "Afghanistan expressed its interest in strengthening cooperation in the transit, transport and energy sectors, as well as in continuing the educational program of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Afghan citizens" (Government of Kazakhstan to provide humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. 2020, May 15).

In conclusion, we may assert, Kazakhstan adheres to an active position on all pressing issues and is the largest donor to Afghanistan among the Central Asian countries. The Republic of Kazakhstan as well as all the Central Asian countries are unanimous in ensuring that the military presence of NATO forces in Afghanistan continued long enough to stabilize the situation here. However, in the future, the West will eventually raise the question of expanding the participation of the Central Asian states in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. It will present the countries of the region with difficult political and economic choices. Assessing the possible consequences, Kazakhstan seeks to restore political stability and a peaceful economy in this long-suffering country.

After the collapse of the USSR in 1991 and independence euphoria time, the young governments recognized necessity of creation of some kind of integration organization that could help to solve economic and military-political issues. Despite the common infrasture, and historical roots, the path to the current formation was long and problematic.

> *"The first of these difficulties centers on economic relations. The second is the fear that Kazakhstan and Belarus have concerns about a potential loss of sovereignty, including a reduction in their capability to manage their internal and external affairs independently. The third set of problems relates to the smaller countries' desire to avoid dependence on one state, Russia, a situation that would lead to a rise in Russia's geopolitical role in the world. Also the Eurasian Union relates to counterbalance the strengthening of China's involvement in Central Asia policy" (Yesdauletova, Yesdauletov, 2014).*

In 2020 the EEU celebrated its fifth anniversary. For Kazakhstan the most significant tasks is the expansion of trade and economic cooperation. Access to the Russian markets allows Kazakhstan to diminish the energy sector's prevalence and get rid of reliance on the raw material orientation of the economy.

The following areas are considered the most profitable in terms of further cooperation within the framework of the EAEU:

> *"- attracting strategic foreign investors to the country and creating large scale high-tech industries focused on the common market of the EAEU;*
>
> *- growing non-commodity exports to the EAEU countries and the reduction of the economy's dependence on the volatility of the world commodity markets on this basis;*
>
> *- reducing vulnerability to external shocks and increasing the ability to withstand crises by strengthening the anti-crisis institutions of the EAEU and other supranational structures of the union;*
>
> *- accessing the common markets of services, labor and capital of the EAEU for both Kazakhstani suppliers of goods and services, and for consumers of relevant products, as well as for employees;*
>
> *- improving the quality and prices of goods and services offered in the domestic market of Kazakhstan by increasing competition with suppliers from the EAEU countries;*
>
> *- further intensifying trade and its positive impact on economic growth;*

> *- possible implementing coordinated actions of the EAEU countries in the markets of third countries and in the world market as a whole in order to increase the efficiency of foreign economic activity" (Dodonov, 2017: 51).*

For Kazakhstan, an important goal is to maintain a coordinated economic policy without moving to the level of political integration and maintaining political independence. Among the economic areas are increasing trade and entering international markets, attracting foreign investment, industrial cooperation, the development of the agricultural sector, improving transport infrastructure.

"The most vulnerable point in Kazakhstan's trade is the predominance of imports over exports. As a result, the country's leadership decided to support national exporters. In general, this organization is aimed at integrating small and medium-sized businesses into the export destinations of Kazakhstan" (Six Years Together: Chronicles of Integration, 2020). The most active in industrial cooperation are Russian and Belarusian manufacturers specializing in the production of agricultural machinery in the country.

Since 2016, Astana Motors has become an official partner of the Minsk Automobile Plant and the official dealer of JSC MAZ in the Republic of Kazakhstan. "The company produces two models of dump trucks-MAZ 5516X5 and MAZ 6501N9 with a load capacity of 20 tons. The level of localization of production reaches over 50%"(Gaifutdinova, 2017).

There is a possibility of creating transport corridors for the transportation of goods within the EAEU, which will change the geo-economy in the region. The "East –West" and "North-South" transport systems represent the most acceptable model of transport infrastructure, and it is realistic for Russia and Kazakhstan.

In general, regarding the industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy, it is necessary to identify at least three areas: (1) modernization and reindustrialization, (2) digital economy, (3) creation of an updated transport infrastructure within the EAEU.

An analysis of public opinion on Kazakhstan's membership in the EAEU in the early years shows that the majority of the population (from 51.8 to 86% in the period from 2014 to 2017) supported economic integration with Russia and Belarus. Historical factors contributed to the positive attitude of the society regarding the Eurasian economic integration; it should also be noted the great propaganda work carried out by the

government structures of Kazakhstan over the previous decades. There was a lot of informative material on integration issues on the republican TV channels, the Kazakh press also devoted many publications to this topic. Round tables, scientific and practical conferences with the participation of well-known foreign researchers and politicians were regularly held in the Republic where theoretical and practical issues of regional integration were discussed. Therefore it is natural that the majority of the population expressed a non-indifferent attitude towards integration, they were aware of events in this regard and supported the position of the authorities.

Many specialists in their research, relying mainly on the data of the "Eurasian Barometer" note that it is in Kazakhstan that public support for integration is higher than in other participating countries. It is also emphasized that it was in Kazakhstan where from the very beginning of the integration processes the expert circles reacted sharply to all the issues that arose during the formation of the economic union and heated debates unfolded in the press and social networks. As noted by the Russian economist A. Migranyan: "The ongoing discussion at the expert level about the effects of Eurasian integration contributes to a decrease in the positive perception of EAEU membership in the public perception of Kazakhstan, although public perception remains quite positive" (Migranyan, 2019).

The problems and prospects of Kazakhstan's participation in the EAEU are being comprehensively studied in the main think tanks of the Republic, among which the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter KISS) stands out. KISS experts have devoted a fairly extensive list of scientific publications to this issue. Along with reflecting the official point of view on the issue of the country's participation in the EAEU, their works contain a critical understanding of this problem based on the socio-economic, political analysis of various aspects of the functioning of the economic association between the five post-Soviet countries. Experts try to give scientifically balanced, verified assessments of Kazakhstani integrationism within the framework of the Eurasian association based on a thorough study of the current state of affairs in the EAEU. For example, the leading expert of the KISS Sanat Kushkumbayev focuses on economic pragmatism of Kazakhstan in its participation in the EAEU given the very name of the organization (Integratsionnyy pragmatizm Kazakhstana vyveren vremenem, 2020).

The expectation of positive effects from economic unification in the medium and long term is typical for the works of most Kazakhstani experts and, in fact, has become a constant, replacing from time to time a number of unknowns in understanding the complex tasks of economic integration.

At the same time, expressing the official position of the authorities on the problems of integration within the EAEU and pushing up their own research on these issues the KISS experts contributed to the completion of some discussions on topical issues of Kazakhstan's participation in the EAEU. For instance, the hypothetical possibility of creating a Eurasian parliament aroused great resonance in society. E. Karin at a certain time affiliated with KISS actually put an end to such pseudo-scientific discussions: "Despite all attempts to speed up the creation of supranational political structures, in reality, such a formulation of the issue is not and will not be on the general agenda. I will even say more - we cannot discuss the creation of a supranational political structure in principle, since it directly affects the sovereignty of our country" (25 let ideiyevraziyskoyintegratsii N.A. Nazarbayeva, 2019: 259).

Disputes over Kazakhstan's membership in the EAEU find a way out through Internet portals and social networks. Network discussions have become the main format for the expression of their views by scientists, experts and the exchange of views on the issues under consideration. Such news portals as "zakon.kz", "sputniknews.kz", "informburo.kz", along with news content, publish a lot of analytical material, expert opinion on the participation of Kazakhstan in the EAEU. Through Internet portals and social networks, serious scientific research, publications with sharp criticism of the authorities' policy regarding economic unification reached the masses. Naturally in the networks criticism of Kazakhstan's participation in the EAEU is harsher due to the wide range of participants in the discussion. It was noted that Kazakhstan's participation in the EAEU led to the depreciation of the tenge and by and large Kazakhstan did not achieve the goals that it set for itself when joining the EAEU (YEAES: oshchutil li vygodu Kazakhstan?, 2016).

Criticism of the EAEU did not weaken both at the initial stage and subsequent years of the organization's functioning. In the summer of 2018 the EAEU member states experienced a crisis as a result of the fall in the exchange rate of the Russian ruble. Kazakhstanis have another devaluation of their national currency which contributed to the revival in society the discussion about the advisability of Kazakhstan's membership in the Organization. Opinions about the country's unpreparedness for integration, about the obvious costs and disadvantages of Kazakhstan's participation in the EAEU began to circulate again. "We must enter into any union when we are ready for it. Kazakhstan without raising its industrial production hastened to join the EAEU. I am not against any kind of integration associations. However, I think that in the short term this was a premature step, it should have been laid in the long term. Of all the members of the Union, it is beneficial to those who have industry, for

example, Belarus" - B. Ziyabekov, the Kazakh economist wrote (Nastoyashcheyei budushcheye YEAES na fone antirossiiyskikhsanktsiy: 2018).

In the discourse of opponents of Eurasian integration that year, the concept of "withdrawing from the EAEU" was in full swing. After the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev noted in one of his speeches that Kazakhstan retains the right to withdraw from this organization, the concept of "withdrawal from the EAEU" ceased to be seditious, and began to actively discuss at all levels.

Kazakhstani experts are worried about the growing foreign policy activity of Russia which in recent years has become directly involved in international conflicts in different regions of the world. According to Kazakh political scientist Adil Kaukenov: "We do not want to be involved in geopolitical games. Because if, for example, Russia has interests, a military contingent in Africa, in the Middle East, then Kazakhstan does not have such interests. If a friendly, brotherly neighboring state participates in a conflict, this does not mean that we, too, automatically and contrary to our own interests should actively participate in it, especially if it concerns military operations when people die. There must be exact reasons. Therefore there are fears that the Eurasian Union may grow into a geopolitical one, contrary to the interests of Kazakhstan" (Soyuz s neyasnymigranitsami: s chemprishel YEAES k svoyemupyatiletiyu, 2019).

The Kazakh expert M. Laumullin expresses an objective and compromise view of the intermediate results of the EAU functioning: "There is a decrease in expectations from the Eurasian economic integration. Both sociological polls and expert interviews record this. This is largely due to the fall in the volume of domestic and foreign trade, crisis phenomena in the economies of all member states (falling GDP, devaluation of national currencies, etc.). There is an increase in the vulnerability of national economies, a sense of a slowdown in the pace of integration. However, a number of experts have an understanding that negative dynamics is mainly associated with the influence of external factors" (Kazakhstan iz YEAES uzhenikuda ne denetsya, 2019).

Along with criticizing the costs of Kazakhstan's membership in the EAEU, many Kazakhstani experts tend to see future positive prospects for Eurasian integration for Kazakhstan. They agree that the effective use of the transport potential in the establishment of uniform transport tariffs within the EAEU would become a powerful basis for the economic development of the Republic. Active participation in this organization expands its geo-economic capabilities, contributes to solving urgent problems of innovative

development in the near future for the country. Therefore, the undesirable effects of the EAEU for the country and the flaws in the formation of the central institutions of Eurasian integration should be recognized as characteristic of the initial stage of economic unification.

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18

Africa's Main Problem is Neither Hunger Nor Disease: Security and Stability

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1. Introduction

Consisting of 55 countries, the African continent is known as the most problematic region together with the Middle East in the international system. On this basis, the research question of the study is "Are the main problems of Africa, hunger and health, as it is known in the international system?". The answers to the research question were tried to be given with quantitative data. After all, although the international community thinks that hunger, thirst and health problems are at the root of these problems, in fact, the two most fundamental problems of Africa are stability and security. The reason for the difference in the perception of the international community can be shown as the international media and other international relations tools. While examining the security and stability problems in the Black Continent within the scope of the research question, first of all, the existence of the effects of external factors was accepted and internal factors were focused on. Because in order to produce "African solutions to Africa", the problems in internal dynamics must be resolved first.

Later in the study, the development and distribution of the elements (coups, economic problems, conflicts and military interventions in these conflicts) that put the security and stability of the countries that make up the Continent into difficulties one by one, are discussed. Thus, qualitative analyzes were made in the light of objective quantitative data about Africa in general. In this direction, the study mainly consists of the topics of stability in Africa and security in Africa. The necessary classification and data acquisition were obtained from local sources such as the African Union, COMESA and internationally reliable sources such as the United Nations and the World Bank. In this context, the stability problem in Africa has been interpreted with the coups, economic inadequacies, conflicts and military interventions against these conflicts in the Continent. The security problem in Africa, on the other hand, has been evaluated with the perspectives of the African Common Defense and

Security Policy Declaration and the African Peace and Security Architecture in connection with the instability problem. One of the results obtained in the study is security and stability, the main problems of Africa. The other is that despite the existence of external dynamics for African security and stability, solid and strong steps can be taken realistically with African internal dynamics.

Table 1. Coups in Africa 1946-2021

Country	Success of Coups
Angola	4
Benin	15
Burkina Faso**	11
Burundi	22
Cent.Afr.Rep.	2
Cameroon	8
Cen. African Rep.	15
Chad	17
Comoros	26
Congo-Brazzaville	23
Djibouti	4
DRCongo	5
Egypt	1
Equatorial Guinea	15
Ethiopia	9
Gabon	2
Gambia	7
Ghana	22
Guinea	31
Guinea-Bissau	24
Ivory Coast	13
Kenya	6
Lesotho	18
Liberia	38
Madagascar	13
Malawi	4
Mali	23
Mauritania	23
Mozambique	3
Niger	17
Nigeria	31
Rwanda	5
São Tomé and Príncipe*	1
Senegal	2
Sierra Leone	27
Somalia	10
South Africa	3
Sudan	66
Swaziland	14
Tanzania	12
Togo	25

Uganda	23
Zambia	17
Zimbabwe	13

Source: by authors (Opsur, 2021; Statista, 2021)

Notes: Coup leaders must seize and hold central authority for at least one week to be considered a "successful" coup d'etat. The names of coup "leaders" listed are those named in reports, accusations, and/or subsequent trials.

*Negotiations between the government and the coup leaders began on the second day of the coup Leaders of the 2003 coup were given amnesty for reinstating the president.

**On January 24, 2022, a military coup took place in Burkina Faso. This coup is not included in the table.

2. Stability in Africa

Most of the problems in Africa arise from conflicts between countries and their internal situations. Causes of instability; The excess of weak and unsuccessful states on the continent, dysfunctional political and economic systems, basing politics on ethnic origins and arbitrary practices in politics, armed conflicts that occur frequently due to scarce and strategic resources, and the intervention of soldiers in the political and economic structure. State-centered approaches are also known, linking insecurity in Africa only to states that are weak because of colonialism, tribal conflicts and forced democratization (Karagül and Arslan, 2014:58-59).

In this context, the African Union has been supporting the establishment of stability in the Continent and the formation of a "peaceful Africa" with effective policies since 2002 (Gökler, 2020). In the historical process, the main issues of the African Union have been and continue to be economic and political stability and security in the Continental countries.

When we classify the causes of the stability problem in the continental countries with data; We can measure the existence of political problems of countries with coups, economic inadequacies with economic data, the existence of internal democracy and stability problems due to ethnic, religious, climate change reasons and conflicts in election processes, and the impact of non-African factors on African stability through regional and international military interventions in conflicts. In this context, the data on the Continental countries were obtained from the works written in the field and the databases of local institutions such as the African Union, COMESA and international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank.

After the afronationalism movements, African countries, which started to gain their independence mostly in the 50s and 60s, were unable to realize their nation-building structures independently and secularly in the post-independence processes, and because the postcolonial order did not allow this, their democratic management processes were interrupted by constant coups. As can be seen in Table 1, the number of successful coups in 44 countries between 1946-2021 is quite high. However, there have been many more coup attempts in Continental countries. So much so that there have been 56 successful/unsuccessful coup attempts since the 2000s in African countries where democracy has not been able to settle (Anadolu Agency, 2021). While the world is chasing technological developments, there are of course many internal and external reasons and factors why Africa is still experiencing coups. However, unfortunately, the democracy crisis and the weaknesses of the administrations, which are one of the biggest causes of instability in Africa, continue to exist today. The latest example of this is the Burkina Faso military coup that took place on January 24, 2022 (Ochieng, 2022).

Table 2. Economic (In)Stability in Africa-2021

Country	GDP Per Capita USD	External Debt of Government USD
Algeria	11,829	5,280,760,000.0000
Angola	6,878	52,610,175,638.0113
Benin	2,552	3,813,717,617.1692
Botswana	18,113	1,561,877,832.4718
Burkina Faso	2,207	3,731,963,077.0104
Burundi	7,27	497,422,751.4603
Cape Verde	7,728	1,951,401,126.1049
Cameroon	3,745	13,519,947,223.4667
Central African Republic	8,23	665,322,966.4389
Chad	2,428	2,691,482,102.1728
Comoros	2,799	379,013,663.4272
DR Congo	843	4,503,337,648.2117
Djibouti	3,788	2,475,919,670.4631
Egypt	14,023	103,314,246,589.7730
Eritrea	2,00	1,220,358,225.7610
Eswatini	9,186	700,997,132.6777
Ethiopia	2,772	30,433,430,425.0041
Gabon	18,647	7,337,104,763.8490
Gambia	7,050	823,351,084.5438
Ghana	8,343	21,906,587,185.0840
Guinea	2,390	4,858,557,985.9268
Guinea-Bissau	1,951	381,631,452.3489
Ivory Coast	5,360	1,951,401,126.1049
Kenya	5,274	37,108,136,500.6092

Lesotho	3,868	1,030,700,000.0000
Liberia	1,413	1,359,545,810.5326
Libya	4,746	155,000,000,000.000
Madagascar	1,697	5,219,263,041.3752
Malawi	1,234	2,493,289,577.2464
Mali	2,271	5,127,968,621.1079
Mauritania	4,563	4,059,521,937.3722
Mauritius	25,029	2,383,670,635.7315
Morocco	9,339	38,423,480,597.3563
Mozambique	1,331	16,320,174,896.9790
Namibia	9,542	2,346,885,522.7933
Niger	1,213	4,219,671,359.9038
Nigeria	5,280	79,535,981,468.9597
Republic of Congo	7,119	3,678,277,157.6531
Rwanda	2,641	5,357,630,491.9398
São Tomé and Príncipe	3,220	305,656,123.0463
Senegal	3,675	13,665,051,698.8489
Seychelles	30,486	412,856,093.0047
Sierra Leone	1,608	1,825,685,779.3236
Somalia	8,880	5,000,000,000.000
South Africa	14,239	75,793,938,793.2038
South Sudan	1,420	1,355,000,000.000
Sudan	4,232	56,946,704,051.5944
Tanzania	3,574	17,826,190,956.2056
Gambia	2,278	823,351,084.5438
Togo	1,821	1,426,482,088.4450
Tunisia	13,417	28,660,696,591.3264
Uganda	2,566	12,209,093,831.2420
Zambia	4,148	15,581,154,071.5107
Zimbabwe	2,621	7,109,809,607.7289

Source: by author (World Bank, 2021; COMESA, 2021).

Compared to global averages ($10,910,084) (The World Bank, 2021); it can be stated that GDP per capita is quite low in most countries, except for African countries with tourism and trade income such as Algeria, Botswana, Egypt, Gabon, Tunisia, South African Republic Africa and Seychelles. On the other hand, it is seen that the external debt of African governments is quite high compared to their population and size (Table 2.). As of 2021, the total external public debt in Africa reached 726.55 billion U.S. dollars Compared to the previous year, the amount of foreign public debt increased from 696.69 billion U.S. dollars (Statista, 2021). The low purchasing power of the societies along with the fluctuations in economic fluctuations over the years and high inflation are other economic-based problems of African countries. These results, which are an indicator of the economic instability in Africa, bring with it the problem of security and stability, which is one of the main problems of the Continent.

Table 3. Conflicts in Africa 1945-2021

Country	Number of Conflicts
Algeria	6
Angola	2
Benin	-
Botswana	-
Burkina Faso	2
Burundi	6
Cape Verde	-
Cameroon	3
Central African Republic	4
Chad	8
Comoros	1
DR Congo	14
Congo Republic	3
Djibouti	2
Egypt	13
Eritrea	9
Eswatini	-
Ethiopia	7
Gabon	-
Gambia	2
Ghana	1
Guinea	1
Guinea-Bissau	2
Equatorial Guinea	-
Ivory Coast	2
Kenya	8
Lesotho	1
Liberia	2
Libya	7
Madagascar	1
Malawi	-
Mali	8
Mauritania	2
Mauritius	-
Morocco	5
Mozambique	4
Namibia	2
Niger	4
Nigeria	6
Réunion	-
Rwanda	2
São Tomé and Príncipe	1
Saint Helena	-
Senegal	-
Seychelles	-
Sierra Leone	2
Somalia	6
South Africa Republic	3
South Sudan	5

Sudan	9
Tanzania	3
Togo	-
Tunisia	4
Uganda	13
Western Sahara	3
Zambia	-
Zimbabwe	2

Source: by author

Conflicts in Africa; It can be classified as ethnic, religious, economic (such as not sharing pasture, seizing oil regions, etc.), political and military. However, in order not to disperse the subject within the scope of the study, all conflicts are given numerically in a single table instead of a separate table for each conflict type. In the study, the nation-state building processes of African countries after the Pan-Africanism movements, that is, II. Considering that it started after World War II, Table 3. includes the conflicts between 1945-2021. There were conflicts before this process. Most recently, there were 4 conflicts in 2021 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (political), Nigeria (religious-economic), Cameroon (political) and Mozambique (religious) (Babali, 2021). At the beginning of 2022, after the military coup in Burkina Faso on January 24, clashes took place mostly between the soldiers in the country (Arslan, 2022). As seen in Table 3, very few African countries did not experience conflict between 1945-2021. In most of the countries where the number of conflicts is low in the table, the conflicts continued for a long time without interruption, and even the conflicts continue. Table 3, like table 1 and table 2, reveals the instability in all of Africa with data. Because conflicts in a country mean that political, economic or social problems in that country exceed the limits of tolerance. The more frequently this border crossing occurs, the higher the level of instability in that country.

Table 4. Military Interventions in Africa

Country	Number of Interventions
Algeria	-
Angola	1
Benin	-
Botswana	-
Burkina Faso	1
Burundi	2
Cape Verde	-
Cameroon	1
Central African Republic	5
Chad	7
Comoros	3
DR Congo	4

Congo Republic	2
Djibouti	5
Egypt	-
Eritrea	1
Eswatini	-
Ethiopia	1
Gabon	3
Gambia	-
Ghana	-
Guinea	-
Guinea-Bissau	2
Equatorial Guinea	-
Ivory Coast	4
Kenya	-
Lesotho	-
Liberia	2
Libya	5
Madagascar	-
Malawi	-
Mali	5
Mauritania	1
Mauritius	-
Morocco	-
Mozambique	1
Namibia	-
Niger	2
Nigeria	1
Réunion	-
Rwanda	3
São Tomé and Príncipe	-
Saint Helena	-
Senegal	-
Seychelles	-
Sierra Leone	3
Somalia	-
South Africa Republic	-
South Sudan	1
Sudan	3
Tanzania	-
Togo	1
Tunisia	-
Uganda	1
Western Sahara	3
Zambia	-
Zimbabwe	-

Source: by author

In the study, the last of the causes of instability, which is directly related to the second part, the military interventions in Africa are discussed numerically on a country basis. There are many types of interventions to the continent such as agricultural, economic, political, climatic, food, etc.

For this reason, only military interventions were examined in the study in order to determine the limits of the study. Military interventions can also be national, regional (African Union, etc.) (African Union, 2020) and international (UN, France, England, etc.). This distinction was also ignored, as the study included general analyzes for the African Continent. Because the main purpose of the study is to show from a general framework that the main problems of Africa are not hunger and health, but stability and security. When evaluated in this context, it is possible to say that there are only 30 interventions carried out by the United Nations in Africa, where regional and international interventions are more effective than local interventions (United Nations, 2022). Similarly, there were 10 interventions of the African Union, with or without the support of the UN, of a regional nature (African Union, 2020). Therefore, within the scope of the study, regional (African Union/AU, Economic Community of West African States /ECOWAS etc.) and international military interventions were taken into consideration instead of national/local interventions. In countries where the number of interventions is not given, the problem has been resolved at the national level.

Military intervention is often seen as a must in the conflicts in Africa, where international and regional interventions are intense. This is an indication that the nation-building processes have not yet been completed and that the democratization expected from them is insufficient and the country administrations are weak. Therefore, the presence of military interventions, whether local, regional or international, brings instability and insecurity in African countries.

3. Security in Africa

Along with stability, another of Africa's main problems is security or insecurity. In general, there is no stability problem in the states that do not have security problems in the international system. African countries are not included in this scope. In order for security and stability to exist in African countries where instability and insecurity prevail, "African solutions for Africa" must first be produced. Only they will be able to do this in the most realistic way by themselves. In this context, the African Union (AU) takes important steps and puts them into practice. The most important of these are the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the "Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defense and Security Policy". The AU's Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defense and Security Policy, aimed at ensuring peace and security in Africa, sets out the principles related to the elements that make up the APSA, defines threats to security, and explains the principles and values (Karagul and Arslan, 2014: 71). General security threats to Africa are defined in the Declaration

of the Common Defense and Security Policy for Africa as threats that occur in all, some or one of the countries in the sub-regions and may be directed to the general defense and security interests of the continent. Accordingly, such threats that may hinder the establishment and development of peace, security and stability on the continent may be of internal or external origin. General internal threats, conflicts/tensions between states, internal conflicts/tensions; unstable post-conflict situations; classified as serious humanitarian and other situations. General external threats, on the other hand, are external threats that threaten the continental security of Africa or have the potential to directly or indirectly threaten it (African Union, 2004).

Right after the Cold War period, armed conflicts took place in 33 African countries between 1991 and 2008 (see Table 3). In the aforementioned period, internal, non-state and interstate conflicts were seen in a single country, as in the Ethiopian example. In the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, non-state conflicts that have been ongoing since 1916 continued after the Cold War. In 2012, there were 64 violent conflicts in 30 African countries, the causes of which can be categorized as national power, ideology, autonomy, separation, territory/region, natural resources and other reasons. Only in the period of January-December 2012, 34 conflicts in sub-Saharan countries were found to be violent. In the same year, the number of violent conflicts in the Maghreb countries was 14. In other words, one third of the armed conflicts between a government and an insurgent group/groups in the world between 1989 and 2007 took place in Africa. As a result of the conflicts in Africa in the last 38 years, millions of people, mostly civilians, have lost their lives and been displaced; small-caliber light weapons became widespread; economic growth and development of countries have been adversely affected. When the conflicts in Africa are analyzed, it shows that there are different types of conflicts in the Continent. Apart from classifications such as religious, ethnic, political and military; intrastate conflict, intrastate with foreign involvement, non-state conflict, interstate conflict, state It can be expressed as an extra-systemic conflict for a region outside the system (Ellerbrock, 2013: 31-33).

In this context, for the establishment of security in Africa, the African Union, as a new entity after the transformation of the Organization of African Unity, established in 1963, held its first regular meeting with the heads of state and government on 9-10 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa. The Union continues its efforts to achieve lasting peace and security in the continent with the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), in which member states and regional economic communities are integrated, among other objectives specified in Article 3 of the Founding Law. In this

context, between 1962 and 1992 in Africa, the capacity to prevent conflicts and promote peace, security and stability on a continental scale was almost non-existent. Between 1993-1999, when there were intense conflicts within the country and between states in Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda, Central Africa, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia, African leaders focused on peace and security, They believed that they should have stronger institutions and in 1993 they created the Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism (Karagul and Arslan, 2014: 89).

The main pillar of APSA is the PSC, which is supported by various structures in the exercise of its mandate. However, there is the Commission, the Wise Panel, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the African Standby Force (ASF) and the Peace Fund. The relationship between the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs), which have primary responsibility for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa, is a key component of the APSA. Interaction between the PSC and other AU bodies, such as the Pan-African Parliament and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and non-governmental organizations is equally vital for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. In addition, the PSC Protocol provides partnerships between the AU on the one hand, the United Nations (UN) on the other, and other relevant international stakeholders. In this context, APSA, for peace and security in Africa; early warning and conflict prevention; peacemaking, peace-support operations, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and development; promoting its democratic practices, good governance and respect for human rights; and supports humanitarian action and disaster management (African Union, 2012). Unfortunately, APSA is heavily dependent on external sources financially. E.g; In 2015, 95% of the total AU budget was financed by external partners (EU, EU member states, Japan and China) (African Union, 2015). Therefore, in practice, "African solutions to Africa" is not fully in question yet.

4. Conclusion

Stability and security in Africa are the two main issues that need to be resolved. These two chronic problems also hinder the economic, political and social development of the Continent and make Africa a troubled Continent. Problems in Africa are actually intricately intertwined. For this reason, it is also complex where to start about solutions to Africa with its chronic problems.

When evaluated in this context, it can be suggested that the study can be started from stability and security problems. Thus, solutions to economic, political and social problems can be offered more easily. It can be stated that the chronic instability and insecurity problems in Africa can be resolved by acting with the motto of "African solutions to Africa". Achieving this with the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the "African Common Defense and Security Policy Declaration", especially under the leadership of the African Union, may be the first target. However, the control of the implementation and budget of these structures should be in the AU. International support and cooperation such as the United Nations and the European Union and NGOs and regional support and cooperation such as SADC, IGAD and ECOWAS must be present, but the control must be in Africa.

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19

Impact of COVID-19 on Peace and Security in Africa

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1. Introduction

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on peace and security in Africa following the measures taken by Governments in the region to prevent the spread and effects of the virus. The Institute of Security Studies has reported that Africa continues to face popular uprisings, terrorism, a surge in gender-based violence, the loss of livelihoods for millions of citizens and the halting of ongoing peace support operations as a result of COVID-19.

On 23 March 2020, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a global ceasefire to focus on 'the true fight of our lives' (Dickinson, 2020). He urged warring parties across the world to lay down their weapons in support of the bigger battle against COVID-19.

However, there has been a continuation of political violence in Africa across conflict-affected countries. Some experts have connected the continued violence to the fact that governments in Africa (and throughout the world) have taken advantage of the thin line that exists between public health policies and the enjoyment of individual rights, by using COVID-19 as a pretext for taking measures that both threaten democratic institutions and undermine human rights (Mustasilta, 2020b). Some state actors have also used the pandemic to undermine political opposition and consequently consolidate their grip on power (The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 2020).

Non-state actors also took advantage of the *status quo* to advance their rhetoric and propaganda. In the first months of the pandemic, it is reported

that several armed groups tried to weaponize the global shock to their own advantage. Due to the pressure on states to reallocate resources such as military resources, to enforce COVID-19 related policy measures, local armed groups and actors such as the Islamic State (ISIS) increased their violent activities.

This weaponization demonstrated itself in a number of ways: ISIS explicitly advised its supporters to spread the virus in addition to stepping up attacks resulting in increased violence associated with the organization in Mozambique (The Conversation, 2020); competing political powers and local armed groups in Libya took advantage of the pandemic measures to make more secure their power and territorial control by hindering movement (including that of humanitarian aid) and undermining their opponents' legitimacy (Simpson, 2020; ACAPS, 2020:2).

The AU pre-empted this risk during its Peace and Security Council 918th Meeting on 14 April 2020 where it noted that there was a risk of terrorist, armed groups, criminal networks and traffickers to take advantage of, and exploit the current COVID-19 situation to continue their activities ergo undermining efforts being deployed by governments to fight the pandemic and provide essential public services to the affected populations (African Union Peace and Security Council, 2020:18). Furthermore, the High Representative of the AU for Silencing Guns in Africa by 2020, Ramtane Lamamra decried the impact of COVID-19 on this initiative in that it was slowing down the momentum of silencing the guns by 2020 (ACCORD, 2020).

The overall effect of the pandemic therefore, is that there has been an increase in violence on the continent. The AU reports that there was a 2.21% growth in the number of attacks and a 13.70% growth in casualties in the January to April 2020 period as compared to the same period in 2019, while AFRICOM estimated that violent attacks in sub-Saharan Africa between March and August 2020 increased by 40% over the same period in 2019 (Lee & Wehrli, 2020).

The operational hypothesis of this chapter therefore is that the said measures that have been taken by state actors (and to some extent non-state actors) have had a domino effect on peace and security in Africa. This is because, and as observed by Mustasilta, there is nothing inherently conflict-inducing in the pandemic itself but rather, its effects on peace and conflict on the continent have been escalated by different political forces and their willingness and capability to respond to the opportunities and problems that efforts to cope with the COVID-19 crisis invoked (Mustasilta, 2020, para. 10).

Further, the impact of the virus has resulted in what has been referred to as a shadow pandemic that has emanated in the disruption of peace and security in Africa. Here, the impact of the pandemic on non-traditional themes in peace and security such as the position of women and girls in conflict situations is noted. It is therefore imperative to confront the COVID-19 pandemic with gendered lens thus justifying the need to include gendered perspectives in the analysis of the impact of this humanitarian crisis.

The chapter is based on desktop research that relies on secondary sources and it takes a thematic approach which entails analysis and discussion of the impact of COVID-19 on traditional peace and security themes which include: cross-border security issues, prevention of violent extremism and peace and security efforts. Though not a traditional peace and security theme, the chapter also incorporates gender perspectives in the discussion in a bid to heed the UN Security Council's call in Resolution 1325.

2. Cross-border Security Issues

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimates that borderlands in Africa host approximately 270 million inhabitants, a number that is notably greater than the population of any other state on the entire continent (Lamarque, 2020). However, these regions often straddle both sub-national and international areas and are often insufficiently provided for by initiatives that target development at the national level (Lamarque, 2020). This problem originates from what Lamarque terms as an apparent paradox in that these regions are insufficiently provided for by national-level development initiatives as these initiatives extend just as far as the border, but no further. Accordingly, most border regions become a danger to international peace and security (UNDP, 2017:1).

With such an underlying recipe for disaster, how then did the pandemic affect cross-border security in Africa? To answer this question, this section focuses on the following border regions: the Liptako-Gourman (the border between Mali, Burkina Faso & Niger), the Mandera Triangle (the border between Kenya, Somalia & Ethiopia), the Chad Basin (the border between Chad, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria), and the Eastern DRC border (between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi and Uganda).

The African Union observes that most countries experienced a period of relative peace, especially across borders, noting that the region has experienced relative cross- border peace, with no major cross-border

conflicts in 2020 (AU Commission & UNDP, 2020:22, 27). The Horn of Africa, a region that is categorized as leading in instability and vulnerability in the world, has, as reported by the AU, seen an absence of significant conflicts at borders, marked by the adoption and preservation of peace deals (Regional Brief, 23). Here, peace deals that have been negotiated over the years have been lauded with a special mention being given to the Ethiopia-Eritrea peace agreement (AU Commission & UNDP, 2020:27). The AU further notes that, since the beginning of COVID-19, there have been no reported incidents along the borders with Sudan, Djibouti and Ethiopia (AU Commission & UNDP, 2020:24).

The actual situation, however, seems to be significantly different from the one painted by the AU in the referenced Regional Brief. The impact of the pandemic on cross-border security appears to have had a debilitating effect on some borders while other borders have experienced relative peace that has been associated with the pandemic, as discussed below.

Increased Violence Across Borders

In 2020, the Lake Chad borderland region witnessed increased levels of violence linked to extremist organizations, perpetrated primarily by Boko Haram (Jama'atul Ahl Sunnah Liddawati wal Jihad, JAS) and its sub-factions (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Africa Borderlands Centre, 2020:1). Recent findings indicate that the attacks and killings by Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) have not been curbed by COVID-19 restrictions (UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre, 2020:1). For instance, at the height of the COVID-19 lockdown, between March and June 2020, these two terrorist groups carried out 19 attacks around the Lake Chad borderland, resulting in the deaths of four hundred and fifty-two people. The attack on Chadian soldiers in March 2020 has been noted as being one of the deadliest attacks.

In order to effectively respond to COVID-19, some governments shifted focus and resources from borders in order to support efforts to curb the virus resulting in fewer border patrols creating a vacuum that has been exploited in various ways. For instance, the Kenya Defence Forces was withdrawn from the border to provide further support in the enforcement of COVID-19 measures resulting in increased insecurity and violence along some border towns. The crossing of the border by Ethiopian militia in March 2020 and consequent killing of Kenyans in Moyale town due to reduced security presence on the border provides an apt example (Mireri, 2020). This vacuum has similarly provided easy access to refugee camps and settlements – which are normally at borders – leaving them open to abductions by violent extremist organizations (VEOs), a tactic that has

been employed by Boko Haram and its sub-factions in the Lake Chad border area (UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre, 2020:8).

Militarization of borders and violent pushback of refugees and asylum seekers at borders

The pandemic continues to impact cross-border security through the refugee crises along borders throughout the continent. There has been increased militarization of borders as well as violent and systematic rejection of refugees and asylum seekers at borders due to the fear of the spread of the virus. A good example of this push-back operation is at the border between Niger and Libya. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), migrant flows, particularly along the Eastern Route, has been affected by COVID-19 as signaled by a significant reduction in migrant crossings to Yemen from the Horn of Africa since March 2020 (IOM, 2020:9). Due to the closure of borders and the suspension of assisted returns to Ethiopia, for example, a great number of migrants, majority of whom are Ethiopian nationals, have found themselves stranded (IOM, 2020:3).

In Kenya, asylum seekers and refugees who cross into the country are at times intercepted and taken back to the border point at which they entered as a measure to curb the virus (Amnesty International, 2020). Approximately 10,000 displaced people had been camped out since May waiting to seek asylum in Uganda along the border of DRC and Uganda (Amnesty International, 2020). This is an outright violation of the non-refoulement principle as the threat imposed by the pandemic is not covered within the ambit of Article 33 (2) of the 1951 Refugee Convention as governments could employ measures to manage the pandemic and still ensure that they uphold this obligation.

This violation of the principle of non-refoulement is likely to drive a range of security threats and consequently disrupt cross-border security. The lack of access to social amenities and food shortages for the stranded asylum seekers and refugees is likely to threaten social stability in these areas. Secondly, this provides breeding grounds for VEOs to continue radicalizing and recruiting around borders by targeting these at-risk vulnerable groups (UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre, 2020:8). Further, due to the exacerbation of poverty owing to the virus – resulting for example from the lack of financial prospective or actual support from family – these vulnerable groups are at a higher risk of joining VEOs. Reports show that Boko Haram and ISWAP have benefitted from this *modus operandi* in the SAHEL region, while the Al Shabaab has profited from the same tactic in the Northern Frontier Districts of Kenya along the

Mandera Triangle (UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre, 2020:8; R. Mohamed *et al*, 2020).

Likelihood of Increased Recruitment and Radicalisation by Violent Extremist Organizations at Borderlands

Some government responses to COVID-19 have made recruitment by VEOs at borderlands and towns easier and faster as the heavy-handed approaches by governments has exacerbated tensions between communities and the state. The AU Peace and Security Council seemed to have anticipated this scenario as it had already encouraged its member states to further enhance their cross-border cooperation in fighting these groups and networks (AU Peace & Security Council Communique, PSC/PR/COMM.(CMXVIII):18) The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) noted for instance that, despite the justification of these restrictions on the basis of public health, human rights concerns were raised in some cases due to the manner in which governments applied and enforced these measures (APRM, 2020:18). According to the National Human Rights Commission in Nigeria, approximately 30 people were killed by security agencies amidst other human rights violations such as unlawful detention, extortion and torture over the first five weeks of lockdown enforcement in Nigeria (National Human Rights Commission, 2020:3- 11). Kenya has similarly seen a surge in violence by security forces in the name of enforcement of COVID-19 measures. For instance, about six people were reported to have died as a result of police violence in the enforcement of the dusk-to-dawn curfew which was imposed to manage the spread of COVID-19 (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

VEOs are known for leveraging these sour relationships in their radicalization and recruitment campaigns. In a study conducted by ISS on radicalization in Kenya for example, individuals associated with Al Shabaab quoted brutality and injustice at the hands of security officials as a contributing factor to them joining terror groups (Botha, 2014). Therefore, use of violence and excessive force by security agencies in the implementation of COVID-19 directives and restrictions provides a conducive environment for VEOs to radicalize individuals along borders as is the case of Al Shabaab in the Mandera Triangle and the Boko Haram in the Lake Chad border region. Essentially destabilizing cross border security in these regions.

3. Prevention of Violent Extremism

Increase in Violence

VEOs have sought to exploit the pandemic to expand their footprint and increase civilian support (Columbo & Harris, 2020). The AU (2020) reported a 2.21% growth in the number of attacks by VEOs and a 13.70% increase in casualties in the January to April 2020 period as compared to the same period in 2019, while AFRICOM estimated that violent attacks in sub-Saharan Africa between March and August 2020 increased by 40% over the same period in 2019 (Lee & Wehrli, 2020).

The intensification of attacks has resulted in deterioration of the humanitarian situation among affected populations. In the first half of 2020, insurgent groups in Mozambique increased attacks by 300% compared to the same period in 2019 leading to widespread population displacement and the creation of temporary campsites that further left vulnerable populations exposed to COVID-19 infections (Carboni, 2020). The increase in fighting has also escalated the spread of COVID-19 and negatively affected delivery of humanitarian relief to communities affected by the violence. The United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate-CTED (2020) reported that UN agencies such as the World Food Programme have been forced to reduce or halt vital assistance to conflict affected populations due to targeting of aid workers by militants. Internally displaced people remain the most vulnerable to COVID-19 in Africa due to crowding in camps and other sites without adequate shelter, health services and access to clean water and sanitation- conditions conducive for extremist groups to exploit in future (Ismael, 2021:4).

Despite the foregoing challenges, there have also been situations where the pandemic provided opportunities for militaries to step up campaigns against VEOs. The Nigerian and Chadian militaries have had some military successes against Boko Haram from March to June 2020 with the pandemic restrictions denying extremist groups access to civilian populations (Iweze, 2020; Ismael, 2021:15). Lockdowns, curfews and other restrictions on movement have limited the ability of VEOs to move and recruit in urban areas while in rural areas, where most of these groups are located and lockdowns are harder to enforce, their movement and operations have not been significantly affected. The pandemic also impairs the capacity of VEOs to provide services, raise resources and fulfil promises to its recruits (Ismael, 2021:15).

Disinformation and Propaganda

The restrictions on public gatherings, travel and movement have reduced the ability of VEOs to attract new followers or recruit new members in public spaces (Columbo & Harris, 2020). The decreased visibility in public spaces and consequently in the media has forced VEOs to increase their recruitment efforts through social media platforms and other online forums (Ismael, 2021:15). Such groups have also exploited the pandemic as an opportunity to incorporate COVID-19 into their propaganda by spreading disinformation and extremist narratives intended to increase disaffection against governments; feed into underlying grievances underpinning their causes; and exploit the state vacuum to increase their influence and recruit new members. For instance, Al-Shabaab claimed that COVID-19 was spread by "crusader forces'' while other groups such as JNIM portrayed the pandemic as a "punishment" on France for supporting counter-terrorism operations in Mali (Columbo & Harris 2020). Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau also characterized measures to slow the spread of COVID-19, such as restrictions on travel and social distancing, as part of the war against Islam by evil forces (Ismael, 2021:8).

However, it is too early to assess the effectiveness of these propaganda campaigns as some of these extremist groups themselves have also taken measures to address the pandemic. Some extremist groups have attempted to step in and fill the humanitarian vacuum by positioning themselves as alternative service providers and acting as *de facto* authority to validate their narrative and further undermine government credibility (Ismael, 2021:13). Both Al Qaeda and ISIS issued guidelines for their followers to prevent the spread of the illness while Al Shabaab claimed in June 2020 that they had set up a COVID-19 treatment center and urged their followers to stop the spread of COVID-19 by visiting the center (Staff, 2020).

Fueling Grievances

A sense of grievance or lack of confidence towards government is widespread in regions of Africa associated with the highest incidence of violent extremism. State security actions and responses to crises are likely to exacerbate the sense of grievance and accelerate vulnerability and recruitment into extremist groups (UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa, 2017:92). This includes the use of excessive force and human rights abuses by state security actors in enforcing measures such as lockdowns, curfews and other restrictions of movement aimed at controlling the spread of the pandemic as discussed in the foregoing (Mohamed, Shajkovci, McDowell-Smith, & Ahmed, 2020).

In some cases, law enforcement violence and abuses have disproportionately targeted vulnerable and disadvantaged youth especially in areas where ongoing counter-terrorism efforts have intersected with efforts to control the spread of the pandemic. This combined with the economic recession due to the pandemic and the disruption of services such as education, shutdown of leisure activities and other platforms that have been used to counter extremism or deradicalize youth such as places of worship have created opportunities for VEOs to exploit the vulnerabilities of youth in their recruitment drives (AU, 2020; UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa., 2017:41).

The pandemic has also pushed large numbers of youth to relocate from urban to rural areas due to shrinking economic opportunities and income while others remain dormant in urban areas where they spend more time online (Mohamed et al., 2020). This combination of factors is favorable for recruitment by groups such as Al-Shabaab in areas such as Kenya's Northern Frontier Districts and border towns as well as the restive Tillaberi region in the tri-border area where the porous borders of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso converge (Campbell, 2020).

Diversion of Resources Committed to Countering Violent Extremism

COVID-19 has slowed the momentum of counter terrorism initiatives across Africa. Governments and counter-terrorism partners have redeployed their resources from fighting VEOs to strengthening their healthcare systems. Security operations between international and African forces including capacity building of local security forces has also been affected as countries providing support for these missions shift their resources to address their own domestic needs (Columbo & Harris, 2020).

The United States is one of the key counter-terrorism partners that has either scaled down or withdrawn troops or special forces providing support and expertise for counter-terrorism operations (Gibbons-Neff & Schmitt, 2020). Militaries such as Nigeria's have also been forced to scale back operations against Boko Haram to support COVID-19 relief efforts and to prevent outbreaks of infections that could potentially decimate security forces while regional efforts such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin have suffered from claims of lack of cooperation among partners (Iweze, 2020).

4. Impact on Peacebuilding Efforts

Temporary Ceasefires

The outbreak of the pandemic coincided with the AU theme of the year *Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development* by 2020. The African Union Commission Chairperson Mahamat Faki echoed the UN Secretary General's call for belligerents to stop fighting and ensure cessation of hostilities (AU, 2020), as well as the humanitarian obligation for all warring parties to immediately stop fighting in order to facilitate humanitarian interventions to stop the spread of the virus (Guterres, 2020). Parties to ongoing conflicts in several African countries responded to the call for a ceasefire by making commitments to cessation of hostilities. However, while there were demonstrations of varying degrees of commitment to cease fighting, the ceasefires did not translate into sustainable peace in a majority of the cases as fighting would resume shortly after commitments were made and in some the intensity of the fighting would even increase (Prah & Govender 2020).

In Libya, the Government of National Accord, the UN-supported interim government, requested for a pause on the conflict and the same was reciprocated by its opposition group, the Libyan National Army. However, the truce was short lived as violence continued unabated (United Nations Support Mission in Libya, 2020:1). In Cameroon, Angola and the Central African Republic, separatist militias and armed groups fighting against their governments unilaterally declared ceasefires in response to the UN Secretary General's call. These were short-lived as fighting continued shortly after in each case. Notably, governments such as Cameroon did not reciprocate the ceasefire (Prah & Govender, 2020).

In South Sudan, both the government and opposition groups reiterated their commitment to the cessation of hostilities within the framework of implementation of the peace agreement citing the need for a common response to COVID-19 (United Nations, 2020:4). However, reports from the ground showed an increase in intercommunal violence but the restrictions on movement due to the pandemic made it difficult to verify reports of violations of the peace agreement. Agricultural and livestock communities in Nigeria and Senegal also reached multilateral peace agreements to support efforts in containing the spread of the pandemic but many of these agreements have since unraveled (The University of Edinburgh et al., 2021.)

Disruption of Conflict Resolution Mechanisms, Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping

The pandemic has disrupted conflict management and peacebuilding efforts in many African countries. The most severe effect has been the stalling of political processes in conflict situations. In Libya, the interruption of UN-led peace talks between the Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army led to an intensification of fighting with each party seeking to advance their position in the conflict while receiving foreign support from countries such as Russia, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey (MacKinnon, 2021). The pandemic also emerged within a fragile post-conflict context in South Sudan with mediating body IGAD warning of the negative impact of the spread of the virus on the implementation of the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (Oluoch, 2020).

Peace summits have also been called off due to the pandemic. President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya called off a summit with his counterparts from Somalia and Ethiopia whose aim was to defuse tensions that were escalating dangerously between Nairobi and Mogadishu, the need to focus on efforts to curb the virus' potential spread was cited as the excuse (International Crisis Group, 2020:6). A summit between leaders of the EU and the "G5 Sahel countries" (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger) was also cancelled, dealing a blow to efforts to boost counter-terrorism operations in the region (International Crisis Group, 2020:6).

The pandemic has also significantly disrupted peace operations in Africa. Restrictions imposed to curb the spread of the virus have affected the role of peacekeeping missions in peacebuilding efforts aimed at preventing and countering the spread of radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism. Activities have been reduced to the most critical in most situations, rotations have been frozen and most staff on peace missions are working remotely (de Coning, n.d.). For instance, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) required non-essential civilian staff to work remotely in addition to suspending scheduled rotations and new deployments. Furthermore, the cooperation between AMISOM and the Somali security forces will also most likely be impacted as the national security forces tasked with crucial counter-terrorism measures are redeployed to enforce government pandemic measures such as lockdowns, curfews and border security (Maalim, 2020).

Peacekeeping in Africa is also likely to suffer in future due to the global economic recession as a side effect of the pandemic. The largest financial contributors to peacekeeping missions such as the United States and the

UK have been severely affected by the economic contraction due to the pandemic and are likely to reduce their contributions. Troop-contributing countries such as Rwanda, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, India and Senegal are also likely to be pressured domestically to reduce troop numbers for COVID-19 related risks or financial reasons (de Coning, 2020b).

Peacebuilding processes supported by the international community have also stalled due to the pandemic. The restrictions on movement and access have led to disruptions, delays and even cancellation of initiatives funded and implemented by international NGOs. The staff of diplomatic missions, international NGOs, donor agencies and other professionals working in the field of peacebuilding have faced restrictions on travel and access to areas affected by conflict with little choice but to return to their home countries (Clark & Alberti, 2020). While this may have adversely impacted such initiatives, it has also created an opportunity to change the relationship between local and international actors in shaping peacebuilding initiatives by offering an opportunity for significant investment in local capacity with the support of international actors that will enable genuine local ownership of peacebuilding processes (Clark & Alberti, 2020).

Impact on Ways of Working

The pandemic has also changed the ways of working of diplomats, mediators and other actors engaged in peacebuilding initiatives. Meetings and conferences have been suspended or cancelled due to the inability of participants to travel. Further analysis is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of "Zoomplomacy" or Zoom Diplomacy in conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Lee & Wehrli, 2020).

Some of the likely issues anticipated include the difficulty in conducting real negotiations, striking compromise, understanding body language, side conversations or meetings on the margins of summits, or the increased propensity for misperception and misunderstanding with no opportunities for clarifications. Technical barriers such as connectivity, differences in time zones and comfort using technology may also work against participation in mediations and negotiations by the protagonists in conflict situations.

Opportunity to Shift to Local Peacebuilding

While the pandemic may have undermined ongoing peacebuilding efforts in Africa, it has the potential to provide the necessary environment for

advancing peacebuilding processes in local communities (Ebiede, 2020b). The pandemic could force peacebuilding to adapt and pivot to what peacebuilding should look like in the future.

Ebiede (2020) and Clarke & Alberti (2020) argue the case for using the pandemic as a window of opportunity to significantly increase investment in local capacities. They argue for a move beyond rhetoric to design and implement peacebuilding processes that have genuine local ownership and will be sustained by local actors embedded in communities impacted by conflict even when career or professional peacebuilders are unable to gain access to these communities in the face of lockdowns and restricted movements.

However, there has not been enough evidence to demonstrate that this opportunity has been used to positive effect.

5. Gender Perspectives

Women and girls were already disadvantaged in conflict situations, even prior to COVID-19 and the pandemic only exacerbated these inequalities (Ismael, 2021). This is because it has been reported that VEOs have launched additional attacks targeting women and girls (United Nations Security Council, 2020). On the other hand, women also play an active role in recruiting and radicalizing new members and they may also be agents in the communication system of the violent extremist groups.

The shadow pandemic this is because it has been reported that VEOs have launched additional attacks targeting women and girls creating a situation that the UN has labelled a shadow pandemic (United Nations Security Council 2020; Young & Aref Adib, 2020) has evidenced that women and girls are at risk of increased violence, they face challenges in accessing economic & food security, access to services like education and healthcare, legal protection and access to information. They may additionally be disadvantaged due to their limited participation in COVID-19-related decision-making.

The differentiated impact of the crisis on women and men necessitates the application of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda as envisioned in the UN Resolution 1325. To this end, one of the pillars of the WPS Agenda is *participation* of women in peace and security efforts and discussions therein (United States Institute of Peace, n.d.).

Participation in the context of COVID-19 entails having women represented in decision-making on prevention and response at all levels of

organizations and positions, and across all sectors, including formal and high-level mediation, involvement of women's civil society organizations, among other modalities. The aim is to enable a better understanding and response to the actual needs of women and their families by tapping into female leadership traits and gendered expertise and experiences. This participation should be full, equal and meaningful, and should extend to conflict prevention and peacemaking efforts during and after the pandemic.

The advantages of their participation have been shown to include the likelihood of addressing the root causes of conflicts, building the community buy-in processes and outcomes, preventing recruitment into armed groups, sustained reintegration, and enhanced community resilience (DPPA, UN Women, 2020).

Increase in Gender-Based Violence

The pandemic has resulted in an increase in gender-based violence in Africa (UNFPA, 2020). The increase has been attributed to the lockdowns and restrictions on movement imposed by governments to control the spread of the virus (UN Women 2020). This has in turn led to the loss of livelihoods, rising poverty and economic uncertainties, food insecurity and mental health issues. Societal and economic pressures have been worsened by the pandemic, triggering violent responses from men towards women, or from parents towards children, especially girls (Laruni & Nuckhir, 2020). The loss of livelihoods due to the economic recession caused by the pandemic may also increase women's exposure to sexual exploitation and abuse (Young & Aref-Adib, 2020). It has been observed that the rise in domestic violence rates may persist even after the health crisis due to the lingering economic impact of the pandemic (Davies et al., 2020).

Other forms of GBV such as Female Genital Mutilation and attacks against female health workers were projected to spike (UNFPA, 2020). Forced and early marriages have also increased with the hampered government ability to monitor and respond to such cases as they would have before the pandemic (Plan International & Girls Not Brides, 2020). Programs and interventions aimed at tackling key GBV areas have been interrupted and are likely to be constrained due to diversion of government and donor funding towards COVID-19 relief efforts. This has compounded socioeconomic and cultural root causes such as family poverty, school closures, breakdown of social networks, and cultural taboos (Plan International & Girls Not Brides, 2020).

The potential for violence has also been linked to a waning trust in public institution transparency and effectiveness in the COVID-19 response, compounding existing grievances and vulnerabilities (UNSC, 2020). Resulting limitations include reduced survivor access to reporting and psychological support services or shelter, under-reporting, or failure to receive quality response services. Some notable efforts in favor of women are provision of supplies, establishment of confidential spaces and telephone helplines or texting services. Prevailing prevention gaps include the reduced number of humanitarian personnel, scarcity of personal protective supplies so as to better respond to women and girls' needs, physical distancing and bans on indoor activities. Sexual assault referral centers were also affected by increased operational costs, restricted staff movement, redeployment of staff, and staff isolation due to contact with COVID-infected persons.

The Impact of COVID-19 on Women Peacebuilders: the Example of South Sudan

Owing to COVID-19 and its mitigation strategies leading to the fueling of existing conflict dynamics, peacebuilding is now more crucial than ever. However, as discussed above, peacebuilding work has been especially difficult to carry out because of the pandemic, more so for women peacebuilders. The pandemic has had various impacts on women peacebuilders (Kamilo & Valentino, 2020).

First, women peacebuilders have been affected by the shadow pandemic. For instance, in South Sudan, women peacebuilders have faced such typologies of GBV as physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse (Kamilo & Valentino, 2020). This can in part be attributed to the fact that their work challenges existing patriarchal power structures in the areas they work in (Rahmaty & Jaghab, 2020:6).

Secondly, their work has been interrupted or frustrated by COVID-19 mitigation strategies. For instance, despite the rise in GBV cases within refugee communities, it became increasingly difficult for women peacebuilders to assist due to restrictive measures on social gathering. Moreover, the entrenched technological gap within South Sudan has hindered them from carrying out their work. Most peacebuilding work is carried out in remote areas, facing ongoing conflicts and limited technology and internet coverage. The pandemic has meant greater reliance on technology and the internet despite many women peacebuilders not being able to afford these services.

Third, some women peacebuilders double-up as health personnel and so are especially prone to contracting COVID-19. In South Sudan, for instance, some of them can barely afford the World Health Organization's recommended personal protective health equipment (Kamilo & Valentino, 2020:7).

Fourth, women peacebuilders are finding it especially tasking to sustain their work due to a reduction of financial support from donors (Conducive Space for Peace, Humanity United, & Peace Direct, 2020:2). Donors may not recognize that women peacebuilders play a crucial part in ensuring peace and security, as well as in the response to the pandemic (Rahmaty & Jaghab, 2020:8).

Although the pandemic reversed gains for women peacebuilders, it is not all doom-and-gloom. Within South Sudan in August 2020, several women represented the armed groups that signed eight protocols - towards a peace agreement- with the Government of Sudan. Further, several of these women were signatories to four of those protocols (United Nations Security Council, 2020:18). Additionally, in the DRC, The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) advocated for funding for women's organizations', recognizing the need of a gender analysis of the pandemic and for funding specifically for women (Kinyanjui & Olsson, 2020).

6. Conclusion

The assessment made by the World Health Organization in March 2020 that COVID-19 would be characterized as a pandemic placed the onus on all countries to implement a comprehensive strategy to prevent infections, save lives, and consequently minimize impact. Key measures by governments were movement and travel restrictions, curtailment of public gatherings, curfews, and increased border security. These were to be applied while striking a balance between protecting health and respecting human rights while minimizing economic and social disruption.

The effects of these COVID-related restrictions on peace and security efforts have been predominantly negative, albeit with some positive effects. Some of the positive consequences include the opportunity for the military to step up campaigns against VEOs. The restrictions also denied extremist groups access to civilian populations (although this led to greater casualties among the security forces). VEOs had limited possibilities of attracting or recruiting new members, to provide services or raise resources. Some commitment was shown, albeit variedly, to cease fighting and end hostilities and instead focus on defeating the coronavirus. Opportunities

for local actors to own and drive peacebuilding efforts have been enhanced by the limited mobility of international experts.

Setbacks include increased activity by VEOs, for instance by the Al Shabaab in the Mandera Triangle; and, abductions, violent push-back of refugees and asylum seekers, thus violating the principle of non-refoulement. These were mainly caused by the shifted attention to fight the virus, heavy-handed approaches by government, the ensuing security or resource vacuum, as well as the heightened social instability, increased poverty, scarcity of amenities, disrupted services, diverted government or donor resources, economic recession, and reduction or withdrawal of troops. Peacekeeping efforts were also affected by reduced mobility of the parties involved, with the ensuing difficultly of building trust on virtual platforms. Moreover, reports of violations could not be immediately monitored or verified, while some peace summits were also called off.

This prevailing situation provided extremist organizations with more chances to radicalize and recruit new members and to spread falsehoods about the pandemic, in addition to fronting themselves as alternative service providers, thereby undermining government efforts. There was increased violence across borders, with more attacks and a greater number of casualties. Where peacebuilding efforts were interrupted, this, in some occasions led to an escalation of conflict. All in all, the humanitarian situation worsened in practically all reported cases, with few or no reported positive outcomes.

The specific impact of the pandemic on women, peace and security is most evident in increased cases of violence against women, which should nevertheless be seen against their role as perpetrators in some situations of violent extremism. This reality further reiterates their indispensable role in peacekeeping efforts.

The COVID-19 pandemic has mostly derailed efforts to restore or sustain peace on the continent. While all reasonable measures should be taken to curb the further spread of the virus, any opportunity at peacebuilding must be discerned and seized, for the sake of effective and sustained peacekeeping efforts across the continent both during and after the pandemic.

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Interstate relations develop at many different levels, from cooperation to war. Crisis, conflict and war are the most fundamental problems of international relations. Although problems have always experienced in history, the types, parties and dynamics of the conflicts differ based on time and region. Until the Cold War, the parties to the conflicts were the states. Regulations made by organizations such as the United Nations to maintain international peace and security in this period also included measures to be taken in case of conflict and war between states. If we look at the conflicts and wars that took place during the Cold War, if we do not count the decolonization struggles at the beginning of the Cold War, the majority of conflicts within and between states in this period are ideological conflicts affected by the bipolar structure of the international system. As a reflection of the rivalry between the USA and the USSR, conflicts occurred in many countries between the parties supported by the USA and the USSR during Cold War. As Francis Fukuyama stated, with the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the USSR, which was seen as the primary source of instability and threat during the Cold War, there was a perception that there would be no more wars. However, internal ethnic conflicts and democratic values started to rise after the Cold War. In addition to these dynamics, as Samuel Huntington stated, conflicts between different civilizations and cultures began to occur instead of economic and ideological conflicts in the post-Cold War period. If we look at the conflicts experienced in terms of the parties to the conflict, it is seen that non-state actors are also parties to the conflict in addition to the states in the Cold War period and the post-Cold War period. The conflict between states is inevitable as states are in a constant struggle to increase their capacities and maximize their interests. So, the critical point here is that conflicts can be prevented before they turn into armed conflicts and cause deaths. Therefore, it is necessary to understand and analyze the dynamics of conflicts correctly to prevent them from escalating and reaching a level that threatens international and regional peace and stability. For this reason, this book examines the conflicts in various parts of the world in line with international and regional dynamics.

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