Strategies in "Ethnic" Conflict

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(Editor: Though the term "ethnic" is used throughout this essay, we regard this practice as somewhat misleading though it is sure the author does not intend to mislead. The term arises from a twentieth century ethos that does not accurately inform in the twenty-first century. The Fourth World Journal applies the term "nation" as a matter of practice, but we have chosen to leave the article in tact so the reader has the full benefit of the author's original intent.)

Violent ethnic conflict becomes one of the most significant threats to global peace (Gurr, 1993; Gurr & Hurff, 1994; Ryan, 1995; van den Berghe, 1990; Cozic, 1994). After the collapse of the USSR, a number of violent ethnic conflicts occurred, and the probability that this trend will continue worries many academics and policy-makers (Kaldor, 1994; Soros, 1992; Eagleburger, 1994; Dobos, 1994; Mason, 1996). In this paper, I examine the most general strategies of the major structural actors in ethnic conflict. I understand ethnic conflict as a conflict between two or more ethnic groups, one of which possesses the actual state power, therefore it is referred to in this paper as state. State is the actor who possesses the legitimate monopoly on violence in the society. This legitimate monopoly is contested by ethnic groups. While types of ethnic conflicts are diverse, I am interested in the most overtly violent ones: the conflict of secession (when an ethnic group wants to secede and create its own state from a part of the territory of the home state--the irredenta conflicts are structurally the same because whether or not the ethnic group creates an independent state or unites with another state, in both cases the home state loses a territory, which remains one of the major indices of the state power), and the conflict of replacement (when an ethnic group wants to replace another ethnic group at the power top of the same state). In the cases where ethnic conflict is between the state and a group whose demand is not independence or the highest power office (i.e., if there is no affiliation between an ethnic group and a territory), the probability of genocide increases. That is why the attention of international community is focused on these cases. One can say that an international global regime of protection against genocide is currently emerging. On the other hand, if there is an affiliation of a group with a territory, the probability of a violent war increases (because groups who "possess" land are able to mobilize, organize and resist to the state attempts to crash them). These cases are at the threshold to be taken seriously by the international system: whether or not the law of self-determination applies to ethnic groups is one of the central issues of the controversy which surrounds ethnic conflict (Tomuschat, 1993); and the political international organs, as the UN, are at the stage of developing mechanisms to intervene or mediate in this type of conflicts.

The eventual aim of all the actors in conflict is peace. Some of them, however, often conceptualize the eventual peace as the result of their victory, and pursue peace by violent means. In this essay the actors are classified in four groups: states, ethnic groups, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental actors. Because ethnic conflict is an asymmetric conflict, states and intergovernmental organizations often regard the achievement of peace differently than non-governmental actors and ethnic groups. Strategy of confrontation sometimes used by states to bring an end to a developing conflict, even though used in order to achieve peace, often have the opposite result. Even if peace is achieved after a confrontational stage, it is likely that

peace is achieved through utilization of violent methods. The memory of violence suffered by ethnic group continues to affect the relationships within and outside the polity. The conflict does not disappear, although it can switch to a latent form once again. But some time in future it may surface. Ethnic conflicts in the territory of the former USSR were extinguished by force after the Bolshevik revolution and the imposition of the Soviet rule. After the collapse of the USSR, they started anew (Karabakh, Chechnya, Abkhazia, etc.). Other conflicts were extinguished with the end of the Second World War (in Moldova, Ukraine, Poland, Yugoslavia). They started anew after forty years of latent survival. By contrast, such conflicts as South Tyrol, Triest or the Aaland islands were resolved through compromise: some of the groups' demands were accommodated. As a result, these conflicts do not reappear or, if they do, they are not likely to reach the violent stage.

Strategies in ethnic conflict are interdependent, i.e., one actor's move (or its expectation) determines the other actor's move. If the first actor's move is (or is expected to be) in the direction of increasing violence, the second's move is also likely to be in that direction. After presentation of each strategy, an inference is made whether or not it contributes to the achievement of long-lasting peace and viable order. The resulting picture will suggest that it is unlikely that any of the existing strategies, taken separately, work successfully in every case. In other words, there is no single successful strategy in ethnic conflict resolution among the existing ones. This understanding has two implications. First, this explains why different strategies are used simultaneously and/or sequentially. Second, this explains the necessity of breaking status boundaries between state and non-state actors, and developing new types of relationships between state and non-state actors, an aim continually stressed by several researchers (see, for instance, Elias & Turpin, 1994), and realized to a limited degree by intergovernmental organizations (OSCE Newsletter).

State Strategies

State strategies can be classified into two types: strategies of confrontation and strategies of accommodation.

Confrontation

According to the ideal one nation-one state, states engage in active nation-building: they try to implement the idea of one nation-one state. In the process of nation-building states try to coerce ethnic groups. Ethnic groups become victimized. States adopt the language of the dominant group as the state language. Sometimes they prohibit the use of other languages. They do not allow existence of educational and other institutions based on other ethnic groups' languages and values. This is, however, the least violent policy among state's options. It is identified as the assimilationist policy. If this policy does not succeed in either assimilating ethnic groups or making them invisible on the societal surface, other, more violent policies are used. Assimilation can be a result of deliberate state policy as well as a result of structural inequality in the positions between the dominant and marginalized ethnic groups. In the latter case, there exists a system of incentives and opportunities which makes ethnic groups interested in losing their identity or in acquiring the identity of the dominant group to a degree where they would be apparently non-distinguishable from the dominant group. This does not mean that the members of the group necessarily lose their group identity. They may develop, instead, a double or a complex identity. However, the undermining of boundaries between two identities may be perceived as a threat and contribute to group mobilization.

In the past it was believed that assimilation is, to some extent, a justified policy, because it brings about acculturation--inclusion of ethnic groups previously excluded from the mainstream of progress and civilization. This was the underlying justification of the colonization era, exemplified in the

ideology of mission civilisatrice. It becomes increasingly clear, however, that if the intervening factors are absent, mere interaction between two ethnies does not necessarily lead to acculturation (in the sense of voluntary abandonment of its values by the marginalized group and adoption of the values of the dominant group) (Ryan, 1995, p. 21).

When acculturation or soft assimilation fail to produce expected results, states resort to forced assimilation. Ethnic groups appear in a situation where it is illegal to be themselves. In Franco's Spain, Basques were banned. Eskedun language was prohibited in public. In Albania a similar condition existed for the Greek minority. In Turkey Kurds were arrested for calling themselves Kurd in the census (Ryan, 1995, p. 10). In the 1987 Bulgaria it was prohibited to be a Turk.

The most violent state policy is genocide, which is murder of the most significant part or all of an ethnic group in order to achieve a Final Solution to the problem of ethnic diversity, and to the power and demands of ethnic groups. The term genocide is introduced by a Polish academic Raphael Lemkin in an attempt to characterize Hitler's policy concerning the Jews. Lemkin referred to the genocide of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and the Caucasus, which culminated in 1915, as a result of which 1.8 million Armenians were killed and an equal amount dispersed throughout the world. Once, introducing his idea of the resolution of Jewish question, Hitler has declared: "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians" (quoted from Ryan, 1995, p. 13). The most well-known case of genocide in the twentieth century is the Holocaust. In the Soviet Union, Chechens, Tatars and other nationalities were subject to genocide policies after the Second World War for their alleged collaboration with the Nazis. It is, however, possible to regard the Stalin era as a time of perpetual genocide executed by all Soviet nationalities upon themselves and each other: forty to sixty million people were murdered during Stalin's rule.

In China, a genocide occurred in Tibet. In 1971, during the war which eventually resulted in the secession of Bangladesh, 1.2 to 3 million Bengalis were killed by the West Pakistani army. In 1972, about 200,000 Hutus were killed by Tutsis in what is one of the fastest genocides occurred in the world. Since Indonesia occupied East Timor in 1975, it has killed, according to some sources, up to 200, 000 people (see Ryan, 1995, p.13).

Genocide is a deliberate state policy, organized and implemented from top downward, and executed by the militarized units (army, police, special forces) or by provoked majority population (the "mob"), usually via utilization of modern technological achievements, such as concentration camps and detention centers, death rooms, gas chambers, by spreading poisoned gas, using surveillance and control technique, as well as weapons of mass destruction against the civilian population, including men, women, elderly, children, and handicapped. To be successful, the perpetrator group shall have at its disposal an efficient organization and at least moderately developed technology and infrastructure; other conditions for a genocide to be attempted are communicative isolation of the site from the international community and confidence in good chances that the international community will not be notified early about the events in the area. A genocide's success, therefore, is evaluated by its perpetrators according to two variables: whether or not the whole or the majority of an ethnic group was effectively annihilated, and whether or not it was done in as short as possible time as secretly as possible.

In between the two extremes identified as the softest policies of confrontation (acculturation-assimilation) and the most violent one (genocide), there are several types of mixed or modified policies: cultural genocide (white genocide); forced migration (deportation, or expulsion); ethnic cleansing; relocation (internal displacement); and replacement.

Cultural genocide is a specific policy of destroying the culture of the

marginalized ethnic group, especially material evidence (homes, cemeteries, churches, and other architectural monuments, manuscripts, and other artifacts) indicating affiliation of a certain ethnic group with a certain territory. In its pure form, cultural genocide is exercised after physical genocide has been accomplished, in order to destroy evidence which would allow the suffered group to appeal for retribution. A form of cultural genocide is renaming of the indigenous locations within the habitat of an ethnic group by the names of the dominant culture, and rewriting the history of the territory and of ethnic groups in order to cut off a historical connection between an ethnic group and a territory and to reinforce the historical connection of the dominant group with the territory.

Forced migration is a mild form of ethnic cleansing or a part of the genocide policy. In 1987, about one million of Turks of Bulgaria were forced to migrate to Turkey (this policy was changed in 1989, and the Turks received an opportunity to return). In 1972, 74,000 Asinas were ejected from Uganda. After the Second World War, 9 million Germans were expelled from different states of Europe (Ryan, 1995, p. 12).

The aim of forced relocation is to remove an ethnic group from structurally or strategically valuable or central place of its residence to less valuable and peripheral location within the same polity. The secondary aim of forced relocation is that of cultural genocide--to exclude any future affiliation of a certain ethnie with a certain territory. Ethiopia moved Amhars into Ogaden region, and Javanese in East Timor were relocated by Indonesia. Saddam Hussein moved Iraqi Kurds from isolated mountains to large lowland housing complexes.

Ethnic cleansing is a subtle form of genocide, where forced relocation and migration are accompanied by a cultural genocide--destruction of cultural habitat and monuments. Physical genocide can accompany ethnic cleansing, as the example of Yugoslavia demonstrates. As a result of ethnic cleansing, there appeared 2.2 million refugees from the former Yugoslavia.

Replacement usually accompanies or follows the above-mentioned strategies: it is a policy of moving groups of dominant or loyal population into the area of former residence of a removed ethnic group. After Bangladesh achieved independence, 400,000 Bengalis moved into the tribal areas cleansed from the previous population.

State strategies of confrontation are directed toward resolution of conflict via the removal of one of the parties. Not only this is unjustifiable on ethical grounds and has resulted in the most horrible crimes against humanity; as practice demonstrates, it is also inefficient: usually genocide perpetrators fall short of perfection. They are unable either to annihilate the ethnie absolutely, or to do that quickly and secretly. If the ethnic groups realize the danger in time, they confront the state attempts, and a civil war starts. If the genocide eventually succeeds, the residues of the crucified ethnic group, its generations and international community engage in attempts to achieve retribution. Cultural genocides do not absolutely remove the evidence about the ethnic group. They only add ambiguity to scholarly opinions about whether or not the ethnic group's claim to a certain territory with the remnants of cultural monuments is justified. In addition, suffering ethnic groups develop strong nationalist ideologies based on the idea of historical revanchism (sometimes refered to as "atavistic revanchism", because the members of the group do not have any personal reason to hate the members of another group: the hatred and enemy image are projected through the myths of past massacres). In the future stages of conflict, they may engage in violence against the groups whom they consider collectively (one may say, "primordially") guilty of their past sufferings, or even against other groups with whom they compete at the current stage. The conflict does not disappear, it remains highly politicized, it adds international dimensions, and it becomes even less manageable than it could be otherwise. The classical example is the conflict

between Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks. The Bosnian Serbs justify their violence against the Croats through references to massacres organized by the ustashi during the Second World War, and they regard the Muslims as a substitute of their ancient enemy--Turks (Thomas, 1994). The allegedly fastest and most effective way of resolving ethnic conflict envisioned by elites and leaders of authoritarian states and dictatorships in their endeavor of nation-building (according to which to build one's nation is to destroy the other's) does not work.

Accommodation

Accommodation is a comparatively rare strategy in state's responses to the demands or mere existence of ethnic groups within its borders. This is so because from the times of Enlightenment, when the ideology one nation-one state was crystallizing, statesmen and scholars assumed that multinational states are inherently weak. Nationalists made that assumption based on the Hobbesian theory of realism and effectiveness of governance, and their response was to resort to the strategies of confrontation. Liberals, on the other hand, made that assumption based not only on the requirements of effective governance, where nationalist ideology would provide a glue to fill up gaps in the fabric of general will or social contract, but also precisely because they would entitle each nation to a right to statehood. The difference was that according to nationalists only strong nations would have states whereas weak nations would concede and eventually dissolve, meanwhile according to liberals, all nations were ideally entitled to statehood. Even such a classical liberal as J.S. Mill did not believe in the viability of multinational states. Moreover, he doubted the possibility of achieving a liberal polity in a multinational state (see Ryan, 1995, p. 30). The history of the USSR and former Yugoslavia supports the assumption that the type of pluralism where territorial unit corresponds to ethnic unit is possible only under tyrannical regimes. If a regime democratizes, chaotic associations between ethnic groups of higher status directed against federal authorities and against ethnic groups of lower status result in a tendency of the former to grasp the state power and impose a unitary rule, and of the latter to preserve the status quo in alliance with the existing system. As a result, initiated political conflict assumes ethnic form with the perspective of eventual breakdown.

On the other hand, there are some cases of ethnically plural societies, where governance is based on the principle of power sharing among several ethnic groups. These are first of all Switzerland, Canada, Malaya, Belgium, Austria, and the Netherlands. Recently, Lijphart (1996) argued that even India belonged to this type. He distinguishes four characteristics of consociational democracy: grand coalition of political leaders that represent all the significant communities and allow elite cooperation to develop; veto power for all communities on legislation that affects their vital interests; a system of proportionality in parliament, civil service, and governmental agencies; and a high degree of segmental autonomy so that each community has a desirable degree of freedom to run its own internal affairs (Lijphart, 1996, p. 258). Lijphart's argument is that India better approximated these characteristics during the first two decades of its independence. When it deviated from these characteristics, ethnic conflicts within India escalated.

Consociational arrangements are successful, according to their defenders, because they secure balance of power within the divided society. They are more successful in small states where group elites can know each other personally and develop cooperative contacts (Kimminich, 1993, p. 87). There is no dominant ethnic group which would possess exclusive power of majority in consociations. They also provide a legal framework to de-politicize the emerging conflictual problems and to resolve them through legal means (Ryan, 1995, p. 45).

There exists, however, also a well-developed criticism concerning consociations. First, there are very few consociations in the world, and some

of them have recently collapsed (the USSR, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia). These were ethnic federations comprised of quasi-nation-states, organized by the principle "one ethnic group-one political unit" (constituent republic, autonomous republic, or cultural autonomy). The other two have failed (Cyprus and Lebanon). These were consociations with mostly mixed population. In Cyprus the failure of consociation resulted in territorial polarization of two groups and division of territory, which was supported by the Turkish army. Another consociation is at the verge of collapse, though through peaceful legal procedures (Canada). If India is consociation, it is not spared of deep ethnic and religious conflicts. These factors are interpreted as impossibility to use consociations as exemplary cases for resolution of ethnic conflicts. Each consociation is, rather, a unique case, a result of specific historical circumstances. It is impossible for such a unique experience to be repeated by another state, just as it is impossible to mimic the United States' model of 'melting pot.'

Another argument against consociations says that they tend to freeze ethnic divisions, making them the basis of political life and structure. Political activity becomes more inflexible, it is channeled along the lines of involuntary association (ethnicity, religious affiliation, etc.) rather than free choice. It is an inferior form of democracy (Eide, 1993, p. 174). Consociations are also unwilling to adapt to changing circumstances and demographic patterns: the "frozen quota pitfall," actually, encourages conflict (Ryan, 1995, p. 45). This is what happened, for instance, in Lebanon, which beforehand had been considered to be one of the most successful and stable consociations.

The critics of direct consociationalism, or quota-consociationalism, suggest creation of political parties on the basis of group identity and, as a second stage, free competition among these political parties for participation in governance (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 16). This, however, may result in a final victory and establishment of a unitary governance by the most powerful ethnic group. In such a situation, other groups will appear in an even less favorable condition than ethnic groups in unitary states which enjoy special rights, because non-discrimination is a pillar of consociationalism, and therefore, if non-discrimination is promoted by a unitary government, it will result in tacit discrimination of all non-dominant ethnic groups. In other words, absence of special legislation makes indirect consociationalism a non-viable option.

Direct consociation may be criticized also as resulting in inefficient government based on slow decision-making. However, other factors being equal, slow government is better than violent conflict.

There exist states which are not consociational but which are so weak that they lack capacity to impose unitary solutions on all ethnic groups. In such states central government is an organ of mediation and facilitation as well as, simultaneously, an autonomous actor, whereas ethnic groups are semi-autonomous. However, they possess a capacity to decline the solutions they consider inappropriate, and the central government provides them with the possibility to bargain with each other. Ryan (1995) considers the Unity agreement signed in Zimbabwe at the end of 1987 such kind of arrangement. He mentions in this context also post-civil war Nigeria, Mauritius, Togo, Ivory Coast, Zambia, and Kenya (p. 48).

Accommodation, if it is possible to achieve in a form of federation or consociation, is a solution. However, the cases of accommodation are rare, and there is no guarantee that accommodation in a society divided by ethnic conflict will result in a long-lasting peace. Moreover, state elites are reluctant to consider accommodation as an option because they believe that a federative arrangement would give ethnic groups an even more legitimate opportunity to break away. This happened in Czechoslovakia. Before 1992, it was only nominally federation. In the 1992 Constitution, it was re-named Czecho-Slovakia, and the federation comprised of two equal republics was

constituted. In less than a year Slovakia seceded. This was the only case of indeed peaceful ('velvet') divorce in the post-Soviet space. All other post-Soviet states, except for Russia and Romania, rather than enhancing the status of their ethnic groups have nominally discarded even the existing political autonomies (in the best case substituting them by a vague cultural autonomy), which, in turn, has become a cause for ethnic conflict escalation (Naumkin, 1994). If states are not liberal by their ideology, if they are not economically secure and politically well-established democracies, they tend to reject the option of accommodation to the demands of ethnic groups.

International Organizations

The United Nations

Boutros-Ghali (1992) distinguished peace-keeping, peace-making, and peace-building. Peace-making in the narrow sense is the process of organizing negotiations between the belligerent parties and participating in the negotiations in order to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Peace-keeping is military intervention by the community of states into the territory in conflict in order to disrupt the war or to help the sides to preserve a cease-fire. Peace-building is the activity of participating in building civil institutions in the societies after the conflict has ended, as well as of establishing a mechanism to make sure that there will not be any new outburst of violent conflict (at least because of the same issue, or between the same actors). Preventive diplomacy is "action to prevent conflict from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes escalating into conflicts and to limit spread of the latter when they occur" (Ghali, 1992, p. 6).

Ratner (1995) distinguishes the first generation peace-keeping operations from the second generation operations according to the criterion whether they pursue a limited or an expanded purpose. If they adhere to the classical principle of impartiality and of not imposing solutions on the sides, and if they have a limited mandate of strictly monitoring the cease-fire, the operations are grouped under the heading of "first generation." If they, however, have a mandate which allows them to enforce peace under specific circumstances, and if they actively participate not only in monitoring cease-fire but also in reaching a substantial resolution to the conflict in the process of negotiations (peace-making in the narrow sense), and in building new civil institutions in the society, they are of the "second generation." In short, the second generation missions combine peace-making, peace-keeping, and peace-building with peace-enforcement.

Participation of the UN in any of these aspects of the peace process in an ethnic conflict is difficult because of the requirement to have the consent of the parties involved. In the case of a dyad of states the consent of parties is the matter of their agreement over whether or not they want the help of the international community to achieve an end to the conflict. In the case of an ethnic group and a state, the ethnic group does not possess legitimacy necessary in order to provide consent. States refuse to invite international organizations to be involved in ethnic conflicts, because these are traditionally considered to be an internal affair of the states. Today, however, with the proliferation of ethnic conflicts, the requirement of consent may be applied in a soft form: a state may be persuaded to accept the UN mission. Nevertheless, there is no case that a state would be persuaded to accept the UN military forces with an expanded mandate if the ethnic group demands secession and if the state disagrees to grant this right to the ethnic group. The UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), merely observes the cease-fire between the Georgian government and Abkhazian separatist forces. The UN Observer Mission to Verify the Referendum in Eritrea (UNOVER), arrived there only after all legal problems of granting independence to Eritrea were already resolved. Both of these missions do not include UN military troops.

After the Gulf War, which was the best precedent of preferring the doctrine of

collective security against aggression to the consent doctrine, there exists a probability that if the international community will consider a matter worth of intrusion, it will disregard the requirement of consent. This is one of the ideas underlying the words 'new world order.' In the case of ethnic conflict, however, collective security doctrine in its conventional from does not work (unless the conflict involves the second state, as in Cyprus); instead, state sovereignty is weakened by a possibility for humanitarian intervention. For humanitarian intervention consent is not required. However, the mandate of humanitarian intervention does not include peace-making in the narrow sense. Humanitarian intervention is about providing relief from suffering rather than about finding a solution to the problem. Nevertheless, in several recent cases humanitarian intervention was combined with peace-enforcement and peace-building (in Somalia, Rwanda, Cambodia, Liberia, and former Yugoslavia). Peace-enforcement usually applies to operations aimed to disarm non-governmental military units.

All these cases concern the situations of entrenched and protracted conflicts. The morale is that before a conflict deteriorates, the violation of the consent doctrine as well as peace-enforcement actions are improbable. This is especially true for ethnic conflicts, because ethnic groups' right to provide consent is disregarded. Instead of ethnic groups, either government or the second interested state (as Russia in the case of Abkhazia) provides consent. This may result in the situation where not only the state is not pleased with international involvement, but even the ethnic group, which is supposed to benefit from the involvement, is against that. Insofar as these operations merely supervise implementation of already signed accords or cease-fire, this is not a crucial issue. But if the mission involves peace-enforcement and/or peace-making (organizing negotiations concerning the substantive issues of the conflict), the fact that ethnic group lacks status becomes a major hindrance for the resolution of the conflict. Even though the Karabakh conflict belongs to another group, where a regional organization (OSCE) rather than the UN plays a mediating role, this is a case in point: after several years of fighting, Azerbaijan eventually accepted the Karabakh leadership as a de facto side in conflict, and the cease-fire accord was signed by three sides: Azerbaijan, Armenia, and the Military Command of the Nagorno-Karabakh forces. However, after that step the Azerbaijani leadership denies any possibility to negotiate directly with the Karabakh authorities the status of the enclave. Because of that, the mediating group (the OSCE Minsk group) uses the tactics of shuttle-diplomacy. This does not bear fruits insofar as the actual sides in the conflict do not come face-to-face in order to sign an agreement. This issue is one of the most important issues in the UN peace-making, because the selection of correct sides in the conflict determines whether the agreements signed on the paper will be implemented or not. Ethnic groups who demand secession usually possess sufficient power to ruin any agreement where they do not participate as an equal side. On the other hand, the system of authorities of ethnic groups in conflict is complex and ill-defined: their unity, as in the case of all mass movements, is limited to the unity against and does not include the unity for. In common struggle, different subgroups are united, but when the major positive political decision must be made, groups sometimes do not possess enough overall unity to accept them. The same is true for new and/or weakened states.

The UN is involved only in few conflicts which resulted in major disasters. Economic, financial, and other technical difficulties aside, the UN involvement requires clarification of sides in the conflict, solution to the matters of consent, and implementation of achieved accords. All these factors undermine the UN capabilities to influence the actual process of conflict at its violent stage. They make the UN missions, as they exist today, especially suitable for peace-building and peace-keeping. Peace-making in the narrow sense (organizing negotiations and achieving results) in ethnic conflict is so far almost absent from the UN practice.

Regional Organizations

In order to help the UN and to at least partially share its burden of peace-making, regional organizations become more and more active in conflict resolution, especially in Europe and Eurasia. Through combination of several efforts at different levels, the UN and regional organizations try to create an international regime of conflict resolution. Most important European organizations in this respect are the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, formerly CSCE), the Council of Europe (CoE), the European Union (EU), and NATO. Of these, I will briefly discuss the major achievements of the OSCE, because this is the organization which represents all the states of Europe and Eurasia as well as the US and Canada, and therefore it is the most representative. Also, the OSCE has worked toward a development of specialization in conflict resolution in the areas which fall outside NATO's competence. NATO's Partnership for Peace program may become, in the future, an additional framework for peace-making in ethnic conflict. Currently, however, this is not the case.

The OSCE is the only organization which includes the states of Eurasia and which explicitly requires from the participating states to have democratic type of governance. While other organizations may be based on an implicit or explicit assumption that this is the case (as the CoE and the institutions of EU), the OSCE documents make that requirement binding upon the participants. Some scholars dispute whether these documents are indeed mandatory and argue that they are less mandatory than direct treaties (see the Atlantic Council of the United States, 1995).

The adoption of this requirement, however, implies that in principle, recognition of new states is not discretionary. The result of this requirement was that the newly independent states declared that they were democratic, adopted the formal attributes of democracy, and preserved many or most of their autocratic traits. Even those states which did not adopt these principles and elected life-long presidents, as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, became full-fledged members of the OSCE. The requirement of democracy presupposes a possibility of intervention to put an end to a wrong regime, but hardly can one expect an intervention in Uzbekistan merely because the regime there is not democratic. The approach of the OSCE is to adopt non-democratic states as full-fledged members and to put a pressure on them, reforming their regime incrementally (see Salmon, 1993, p. 270). The second important principle which is designed to facilitate influence of the community on its members is the principle of transparency: the member states must allow presence of international observers and free circulation of information concerning the issues of human rights violations, armaments production, and the rule of law. The OSCE itself, however, does not offer sufficient incentives to the member-states to follow these rules. Its influence would be limited if it would not function in cooperation with other institutions, such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the European Union. The latter use recommendations of the OSCE in offering loans and financing projects. A good record with the OSCE facilitates also entrance of new states in the Partnership for Peace (which is so far important for the Central European states who feel insecure without being protected from possible future offensive of Russia) and in the European institutions (primarily for the states of the Visegrad group: the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia).

Besides adopting the international human rights law, the OSCE has adopted specific regional measures for ethnic conflict prevention such as the Declaration on the Rights of Minorities (1991) and creation of a post of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (1992). Since the establishment of this office the High Commissioner has been active in efforts to cool some of the ethnic hot-spots in Slovakia, Romania, the Baltic states, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, and Ukraine. Since these conflicts have not become violent, one may assume that the High Commissioner's preventive work,

combined with the incentives in European partnership and financial help by other organizations, has been so far successful.

The OSCE approach, however, is to regard ethnic groups strictly as minorities. The High Commissioner's efforts are directed toward facilitating signing of binding treaties among the dyad and/or triad states some of which host as minority the nation of another state. The most well-known initiative of this kind was the Balladur Plan, called after France's then Prime Minister, endorsed by the OSCE, the EU, and the CoE, to conclude bilateral treaties and to make the boundaries in Europe final (The Atlantic Council of the United States, 1995). Several treaties were concluded, among the most important being Slovakian-Hungarian and Romanian-Hungarian (which is not yet ratified in Romania) ones, concerning significant Hungarian minorities in those countries. These treaties are legally binding, and their implementation is monitored by the OSCE.

The efforts of the OSCE and other European institutions are promising. They have, however, obvious limitations. The OSCE has no peace-keeping forces. Its success is determined by the incentives provided by other European institutions to the states of Eurasia. These incentives are membership or financing. If the Central European states go straightforwardly in the direction of becoming full-fledged members of other European institutions, the states in Eurasia can realistically expect only guest status and financial aid. Even Southern European states, such as Romania and Bulgaria, are declined from the full-fledged membership in the observable future. This weakens the incentive to abide by the OSCE rules. Finally, the OSCE and other European institutions have failed to resolve those conflicts which have reached a violent stage (Yugoslavia, Nagorny Karabakh, Georgia, and Chechnya).

Non-Governmental Actors

Non-governmental actors are Humanitarian Organizations and Movements, Trans-National Corporations (TNC), and prominent individual actors. In this section the activities of international Humanitarian and Human Rights Organizations and Trans-National Corporations will be briefly outlined.

The international Humanitarian and Human Rights Organizations usually work in close cooperation with intergovernmental organizations. They make an important work collecting and distributing humanitarian aid to the populations in disastrous areas, to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP). They monitor human rights record in the sites in conflict, collect information on the prisoners of war (POW), send fact-finding missions, and organize exchange missions. They cooperate with the national NGOs and objectively work on strengthening the civil society institutions, thereby indirectly decreasing the probability of further conflict. This type of organizations is represented by Amnesty International, International Red Cross, Human Rights and Human Rights Watch, Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Care Canada, and numerous other non-profit organizations. Although these measures contribute to eventual resolution of conflict, they do not include attempts at peace-making, i.e., at finding solutions to the conflict (Oberg, 1994). The very opportunity which they receive from governments to work on humanitarian issues in a site in conflict is conditioned upon governments' explicit requirement from them not to take sides and not to get involved in political matters, such as conflict resolution. There are, however, certain non-governmental organizations which try to pursue that aim. One can mention in this context the Quaker mediation, Jan Oberg's conflict mitigation group (Oberg, 1994, p. 144), and the Caux Peace-Making Center in Switzerland. Members of these organizations utilize their personal contacts with the elites of states and ethnic groups in conflict and try to propose their visions of conflict resolution. They simultaneously work at the grassroots levels organizing conferences, seminars, simulations, and working directly on field with those who are engaged in a violent conflict. These organizations have so far failed to achieve a visible success in direct involvement in conflict resolution at the level of elites. However, their work at

the grassroots level, in cooperation with the specialized agencies and organs of the international organizations, have made an important contribution to the development of a comprehensive peace strategy. Helsinki Citizens Assembly, for instance, is the only organization today where representatives of civic groups of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Nagorny Karabakh cooperate in their efforts to make the early warning system in the conflict zone a well-functioning mechanism for extinguishing possible provocative actions from each side. The Quaker mediation has played a considerable role in bridging Georgian and Abkhazian communities and developing relations between the intellectuals, women, children, and elderly in both sides.

One of the difficulties these organizations face is caused by their ideological restrictions: their mission is based on the tenet that peace is the highest fundamental value, and they try to disseminate this tenet among the populations in conflict. The result is that they sometimes are trapped in the necessity of justifying peace which is perceived as unjust--and therefore violent--by this or that side. Their tenet of impartiality does not allow them to consistently argue in favor or against the policies of either side. Without offering any guarantees, they ask ethnic groups and states to stop violence merely on the basis of the ideology of nonviolence. Ethnic groups object on the ground that if they concede and adopt a nonviolent ideology, states would easily defeat them.

In order to achieve cooperation with both sides, the NGOs are forced to balance the situation even in those cases where there is a considerable disbalance. For instance, there are more Azeri refugees in Azerbaijan than Armenian refugees in Nagorny Karabakh and Armenia, partly because some groups of Armenian refugees have left for Russia and other countries, and partly because of the demographic pattern (the ratio of Armenians to Azeris in the Transcaucasus is one to three). On the other hand, there are more Armenian prisoners of war in the Azeri jails than the Azeri prisoners in the jails of Armenia and Nagorny Karabakh. In order to remain impartial, public international organizations involved in the conflict organize exchange of exact amounts of prisoners from both sides, and provide humanitarian aid to approximately similar amount of refugees from both sides. As a result, the Azeris complain that they received "less" aid than the Armenians, and the Armenians complain that they received "less" prisoners than the Azeris (because the Azeris received all of their prisoners, and the Armenians only part of them; the 'all-to-all' proposition is usually rejected by the side who possesses more POWs at the moment).

The final problem is the communication of these organizations with the power elites. While they enjoy at least moderately positive attitude from intergovernmental organizations and ethnic groups, which allows them to develop cooperation with these actors, their efforts are usually overtly or covertly resisted by the governments who see their activities in light of intrusion in the sovereign matters. Even worse, these organizations are under the constant threat of being accused in espionage, because their activities develop in the times of war and/or emergency. This severely limits their abilities to have a decisive influence over the process of conflict resolution, and the necessity to find a compromise with the governments corrupts the purity of their purposes (Oberg, 1994; Alger, 1994).

The role of Trans-National Corporations (TNC) in ethnic conflict is an intriguing topic. A well-known example is the Royal Dutch Shell's infamous involvement in the conflict between the Ogoni and the Nigerian government (Lewis, 1996). As a result of this involvement, the company appeared in a situation of helping the military (and therefore, lacking civilian legitimacy) government to violate the group and individual rights of the ethnic group.

Another example of the involvement of TNCs in ethnic conflict is the Caspian Oil Pipeline Project, developed by a Consortium of TNCs under the leadership of British Petroleum and Amoco to export the Caspian oil (Goble, 1996). A

precondition for the implementation of this project is peace in Nagorny Karabakh and stability in the Transcaucasus. The involvement of TNC in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict was supposed to provide an additional incentive to the sides to find a fast resolution to the conflict. The evidence, however, demonstrates that so far the TNCs have been unable to influence the stalemate. Moreover, some analysts conclude that the involvement of the Consortium actually hinders rather than facilitates the resolution (Goble, 1996). First, this project threatens the geopolitical interests of Russia in the Transcaucasus. Russia does not want to merely participate in the Consortium, even with a significant share in the future profits (from twelve to sixteen per cent). She proposes her own route for the pipe-line, which would lie through Northern Caucasus to the Northern part of the Black Sea (Novorossiysk). In this way, Russia would be able to control the pipe-line. Perhaps even the Russian decision to start the war in Chechnya was partly motivated by the desire to control the part of the pipe-line which goes through Chechnya. Insofar as the projects remain on the paper, and the Consortium does not accept Russia's demands, Russia is interested in the protraction of conflict in Nagorny Karabakh, in a regime of "stable instability" (Goble, 1996, p.5).

Turkey, whose oil companies are some of the most active participants in the Consortium, argues that the Black sea straits would not be able to bear the burden of oil transportation, primarily because of ecological and environmental reasons. It proposes another route, one which lies through the Southern part of the Transcaucasus, through Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey to the Mediterranean.

Armenia realizes that the development of this project would result in Azerbaijan's becoming an oil republic and considerably gaining in power and influence. Armenia, therefore, proposes to lay the pipeline through Armenia rather than Georgia, in order to become one of the full-fledged participants in the project. This offer is not studied seriously. This means that Armenia has additional reasons to block the final resolution to the Karabakh conflict until her offer is not reconsidered.

This discussion illustrates that non-governmental actors play a limited role in conflict resolution. If non-profit organizations contribute to mitigation of at least some aspects of the conflict, the activities of TNCs may even become an obstacle in the development of the peace process.

Ethnic Groups

Ethnic groups have two options: to comply with the pressure of states or to resist.

If the pressure is strong, they become resilient and resist stronger. When they resist, they usually demand enhancement of their status. The final level of the enhancement of status is the achievement of independent statehood. There are very few cases of ethnic groups who achieve recognition of their right to statehood. Some ethnic groups declare self-proclaimed states (sometimes as a half-way solution toward eventual unification with the mother nation-state). Since the level of mobilization of ethnic groups in a violent conflict is high, their leadership is able to organize referenda and elections and to achieve the declaration of independence and creation of primary state institutions in a legitimate way (of course, this way is not legitimate from the perspective of states). Moreover they find supporters among the parts of majority population which resides dispersed into the ethnic group, in order to legitimize their claim to statehood as a claim made by the whole region rather than only by one ethnicity of the region.

Zunes (1994) argues that some of the African insurgent movements develop democratic governance. He compares the PoLiSaRio movement in the Western Sahara with Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and comes to a conclusion that both have several characteristics of democratic governance.

However, the former is a decentralized democracy and the latter is based on strong centralization. It seems that these organizations have the traits of militarized egalitarian systems which can resemble the Spartan republic or Trotsky's "war communism" in Russia. Their limited democratic traits are unstable, as Zunes agrees discussing changes in the EPLF policy after Eritrea achieved independence.

One of the most well-known self-proclaimed states is the Turkish Cypriot Federative State (TCFS), led by its President Rauf Denktas, and overtly sponsored and officially recognized exclusively by Turkey (Sowerwine, 1994). In the Caucasus one can see at least three cases of declaration of self-proclaimed states after the collapse of the USSR: the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), the Republic of Chechnya, and the Republic of Abkhazia. It is interesting to mention that Chechnya started as an exemplary majoritarian unitary democracy--through a referendum for independence, where the overwhelming majority of the population voted for independence, and through the election of General Dzhokhar Dudayev as a President. They elected also a Parliament, and created other state institutions, in particular military force. However, gradually the contradictions between Dudayev and the Parliament surfaced, and eventually Dudayev dissolved the Parliament by force in 1994. The Russian attack on Grozny in the late 1994 proved once more that the conflicts of secession between a state and an ethnic group are irresolvable by force: the result of this bitter 21 month-long-war was more than 10,000 dead from both sides. However, after Yeltsin's reelection and the appointment of General Lebed as a senior responsible for achieving peace in Chechnya, the sides negotiated a settlement which actually leaves a clear possibility for Chechnya to secede. The most important point of the settlement is that the Russian troops withdraw from Chechnya, and a five-year-long cease-fire starts. At the end of this period, another referendum will be conducted in Chechnya, region by region, and if the majority of the population vote for independence, Chechnya is free to go. Another self-proclaimed state or states exist in the proximity to the Transcaucasian borders--that of the Kurds in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran. The PKK movement in Turkey, led by Abdullah Ojalan, is not even recognized, while the de facto autonomy of the Iraqi Kurds in Northern Iraq is sponsored, at least at the surface, by the US.

Ethnic groups often use the strategy of guerrilla war against the state armies. This allows them to resist to states for decades. In addition, they use international terrorism to focus the attention of the international community on their cause. Finally, they can use the methods of genocide and ethnic cleansing in the areas of mixed or majority population if they believe that eventually these territories can be preserved by them for their own state (the Bosnian Serbs). They can also occupy territories outside the borders of their self-proclaimed state in order to use those territories as a bargaining chip (the Armenians in Nagorny Karabakh).These factors, multiplied by the efforts of state propaganda machines to create an abhorring image of ethnic groups, have contributed to viewing them as irrational adherers to the values of xenophobic nationalism, and resulted in their additional isolation. It is understandable, however, that their use of violent strategies is determined to a certain extent by the very isolation in which they appear. With few exceptions, they mostly do not have access to global communication systems. Having access to communication systems would allow them to influence the behavior of their home states through early warning to the international community, therefore reducing the probability of state violence and increasing the probability of success of non-violent methods of resistance to state violence. They are not members of international organizations, and until recently their leaders were rarely officially invited to express their views in international fora or to communicate with leaders of other states. They have not developed networks of personal connections with elites of other nations, unless these nations represent the same ethnie. The only official communication with ethnic groups is possible through the state channels. If the groups are in a conflict with the states, the states blockade these

channels. As a result, violence (as terrorist actions) becomes a possible symbolic means of communication. Simply put, in order for their statehood to be recognized, ethnic groups start to behave as cruelly as, they believe, behave the recognized states.

International organizations or disinterested states become involved in these conflicts if a conflict has resulted in an involvement of another state, and therefore its issue of self-determination is or may be substituted by the issue of territorial dispute. It is due to involvement of Russia in Abkhazia that the UN had a legitimate reason to satisfy Shevardnadze's request and to send a mission to Georgia; due to involvement of Armenia in the Karabakh conflict the OSCE Minsk group was created; by contrast, the PKK (Kurdish Workers' Party) in Turkey has not yet been able to achieve a participation of the international community in the peace-making efforts at a level other than mere declarations and warnings to Turkey to follow the Human Rights Law, inspite of 20,000 dead in the 12 years of conflict with the Turkish authorities (Bezanis, 1996).

Recently, ethnic groups (particularly self-proclaimed states) started to establish contacts with each other. The neutral states are mostly reluctant to host conferences or representations of non-recognized entities. The leaders of ethnic groups, however, succeed in establishing their unofficial embassies in some liberal states.

New possibilities for the development of cooperation between ethnic groups in conflict are opened through the Internet worldwide communication systems, insofar as the Internet communications are not censored by the state authorities. In many countries, however, such a censorship (either political, or economic, or both) exists, as for instance in all the newly independent states of Eurasia.

An additional difficulty of making alliances and developing a common front for ethnic groups is that their interests are often in a direct contradiction with each other. Both Northern Cyprus and Nagorny Karabakh are self-proclaimed states, and certainly their leadership would have common problems to discuss. However, the Northern Cyprus is a Turkish group, and Nagorny Karabakh is in a conflict with the state which represents the same ethnie--the Azeri Turks. Therefore, instead of creating a common front, these entities would work against each other provided an opportunity arises. For another example, the Chechens are Muslims in a conflict with the Christians, and Nagorny Karabakh is a Christian entity in a conflict with the Muslims. Again, cooperation is too difficult to develop. The Chechens are structurally in the same situation as the Bosnian Serbs: both fight for their independence; but culturally they are opposed to each other. Russia is an ally for one and a foe for another. If there is no cultural inconsistency between the groups, there are other intervening reasons hindering cooperation. Self-proclaimed states have an inclination to adopt the state-centric approach on international issues so that to get accepted, by their behavior, by the international community. Also, they realize that their acceptance would be a complicated process running in contradiction with the tendencies to stabilize the amount of existing states. If too many states apply for recognition, chances of individual states to be accepted in the club are reduced. Therefore, the self-proclaimed states tend to overemphasize the exclusive characteristics of their case which would make them to sound more fit for recognition, and underemphasize similarities between their case and other cases. They demonstrate a tendency to ideologically denigrate the efforts of other self-proclaimed states or ethnic groups. Their efforts to convince their adversaries (states) that they are capable of independence distract their friends, because the only means they possess for the achievement of their aims is demonstration of power, and violence is the most straightforward way for demonstration of power. This makes the external policy of ethnic groups inconsistent and floating: while internally they are seemingly able to secure a system of governance in the form of a viable

polity, externally they exist in an even more perfect state of nature than states, because states at least have status and can develop bilateral relations, whereas ethnic groups do not have any external status.

However, even their behavior can be rationalized within the framework of the theory of marginal utility (Plous, 1993, p. 80), which states that if somebody has a million dollars and afterwards receives a hundred dollars, the utility of the sum of a hundred dollars is subjectively less than the utility of the same hundred dollars in a condition of not having previously one million dollars. Ethnic groups are not numerous in numbers, and the life of every member of the community is therefore considered more valuable than the life of the members of the major communities. On the other hand, ethnic groups adhere to group values rather than to individual values, they pursue a group cause, therefore their members are more capable to a voluntary self-sacrifice for the group cause than the members of the majority community. In our example, they believe that if they lose a hundred dollars, they lose more than the same hundred dollars lost by a member of a major community; if they gain a hundred dollars, they believe that they gain more than the same hundred dollars gained by a member of the major community--therefore they are prepared to take more risks than the members of the major community for gains which would be considered relatively moderate from the perspective of the members of the major community, and simultaneously they are reluctant to accept compromise solutions which would be viewed as justified from the perspective of the major community.

Major strategies directed toward achieving peace in ethnic conflict either by means of force or coercion or by means of negotiations have several deficiencies. One deficiency, however, is universal for all of them: ethnic groups are excluded from international relations. They cannot be directly addressed by the appeals of international organizations. They do not have a status to participate in conflict resolution where the issue is their fate, and even less to formally, officially, and overtly participate in the world or regional processes at large.

The Causes of Failures

On the basis of the discussion above, some of the major causes of failures in ethnic conflict resolution are identified below (in no particular order).

Non-recognition and concealment of conflict at the latent stage, where there is no overt violence, is one of the causes of failures. The Chechen Republic was declared even before the collapse of the USSR, in 1991. However, the Russian authorities did not make any significant effort to reconciliation up until the large-scale military attack in late 1994.

States choose the path of confrontation instead of trying to accommodate demands of ethnic groups. The confrontational strategies lead to escalation of conflict, because ethnic groups react by even further mobilization and adopt violence as a means to compete with the state.

States do not request help from international organizations. They try to cope with the conflict alone because of the possible damage to their respectability and sovereignty if other actors will be involved in the conflict resolution and, moreover, if they by any chance succeed.

International organizations intervene only after the conflict becomes extremely violent, deteriorates, and there appears a pretext (victims of conflict) to provide humanitarian relief; or, they become involved if the effect of spillover occurs and other states take a side in the conflict. This delay becomes an additional cause which hinders conflict resolution. In this respect, the first-generation UN operations are most remarkable. Usually they develop along the following path: the UN issues one or several resolutions with a call to cease fire and start negotiations. The conflicting sides continue to fight until

they are exhausted or nearly exhausted. Then they accept the call (i.e., the state authorities accept the call), and after the violent stage is over, peace-keeping forces arrive to monitor the preservation of the cease-fire. The cease-fire may continue indefinitely without any legal resolution.

If there is another state involved (the irredenta cases), international organizations are able to intervene earlier and with a more powerful mandate; however, in these cases there exists a consistent pattern of replacing demands of the ethnic group by the demands of the second state. It was due to Turkey's involvement in the Cyprus conflict that the UN missions were relatively quickly dispatched to the island. But Cyprus and Greece claim today that any final decision to the conflict would be illegitimate because it would be dictated by Turkey's influence rather than pure self-determination of Turkish the population of the island. Azerbaijan claims that it is actually Armenia who wages the war rather than the forces of Nagorny Karabakh, therefore the decision depends on Armenia rather than on the leadership of Karabakh. The same pattern is obvious in the case of Bosnian Serbs and Croats: during the Dayton negotiations, these groups were not officially represented. The representatives of Serbia and Croatia were playing double representation--for their states and for their respective ethnic communities.

Until recently, peace-keeping remained the major aim of international organizations; they tended to contain the ethnic conflict rather than to become actively involved in peace-making. Even though certain efforts are made to overcome this outdated approach, international organizations of the traditional type still do not possess sufficient mechanisms to situate the representatives of states and ethnic groups within the framework of the peace process.

States are obligated to supervise the implementation of their own obligations (Tomasevski, 1994). Ethnic groups are doubtful that after the conflict is over, states will implement a fair arrangement; they therefore block the possibility of any final arrangement, and the conflict continues as a low-intensity protracted conflict.

Hasty recognition of non-viable entities becomes another cause of ethnic conflicts and hinders the possibility of resolving them. As the experience of the chain-recognition of the former USSR and Yugoslav republics demonstrates, recognition of new states without solid preparatory work results in ethnic conflict.

Non-recognition of status of ethnic groups, apparent in almost all strategies except for the strategies of accommodation of individual states, becomes a major obstacle to the possibility of resolving ethnic conflicts. International organizations are reluctant to suggest to states enhancement of status of their ethnic groups. Instead, they prefer to require from states to follow the human rights and minority treatment international standards. However, without the ultimate security of being recognized as at least an autonomy, ethnic groups with compact residence do not consider these measures sufficient.

Individual states become more involved in the conflict than international organizations, thereby pushing the resolution toward scenarios beneficial for themselves rather than toward scenarios which would result in a long-lasting peace. International organizations recognize the right of certain states, especially regional powers, to have special interests in an ethnic conflict in another state. For instance, Russia plays a prominent role of a peace-maker in the conflicts in Georgia and Karabakh. However, it is in the interest of Russia to postpone any long-lasting resolution to these conflicts in order to preserve its influence over the states in conflict.

Belief in irrational substance of ethnic nationalism justifies coercion and force in ethnic conflict resolution and undermines necessity in elaborating legal procedures. The propaganda of this belief contributes to further justification of

non-intervention doctrine, on one hand, and of state's having a carte-blanche to suppress the ethnic insurgency, on the other hand. The myth of violent nature of the Chechen people and of terrorist nature of the Kurd people have contributed to the fact that so far international organizations have not tried to intervene in these conflicts except in the form of appeals and few human rights monitoring missions. As the recent research demonstrates (Kriesberg, 1994; Goldstein, 1994), violence, including ethnic violence, has no irrational psychological causes, and is usually motivated by the underlying interests of the aggressors or of the organizers among the groups of aggressors.

There are also secondary causes which restrain the capabilities of peace-makers rather than directly contribute to failures, such as material and financial constraints; the gap between achieved accord and its implementation; protraction and establishment of a tradition of conflict, or "entrapment"; and low speed of collective decision-making in international organizations in less-than-emergency situations.

Some of these causes could probably be removed through the development of non-traditional ways of conflict resolution, as preventive diplomacy, early warning systems, track-two diplomacy, peace-building, peace-enforcement, and others discussed in this paper. It will remain, however, as difficult as it is to prevent ethnic conflicts from occurring and deteriorating as well as to resolve the ongoing ones, unless some of these causes are removed through necessary changes in conceptualization, normative support, and practice of ethnic conflict resolution. For this, a combined systematic effort of international organizations, states, non-governmental actors, and ethnic groups is necessary. Such an effort will result in the development of a comprehensive peace strategy in ethnic conflict resolution. The major rejoinder to my argument, however, remains valid: it states that the very possibility for ethnic groups to legally have an access to international dimension, may in fact drive states to more violent practices. Therefore, the peace strategy being proposed must obviate the need of ethnic groups to struggle for state independence. The proposals must provide an institutional framework for the states to have guarantees that ethnic groups would not secede and for the ethnic groups to have guarantees that their sovereign rights to their culture, land, and development would not be violated by their home states. As a concluding section to this essay, I will present how such a change could be organized in practice in one of the world regions where ethnic conflicts are intense.

A Mechanism for Ethnic Conflict Resolution

in the Caucasus

This proposal is based on the proposition that ethnic conflicts must be dealt with systematically. Because they are interconnected and the probability of their mutual influence is high (Vasquez, 1992), the most suitable framework for peace-making are well-defined geopolitical regions rather than particular states where conflicts develop. An example of such a region is the Caucasus. The Caucasus is a jigsaw puzzle of ethnic groups. There are about forty ethnic groups here with the population more than 10,000 (see Naumkin, 1994). After the collapse of the USSR, in the Caucasus developed numerous ethnic conflicts. Most of them are discussed in Raymond & Hofman (1994). The Soviet successor states are less inclined to respect demands of ethnic groups than a federative empire, which the USSR was. Discriminated ethnic groups demand enhancement of their collective rights and recognition of their autonomy and even sovereignty. Some of them demand independent statehood. The successor states try to oppress ethnic movements by coercion or, when this approach fails, by force. Ethnic groups resist. States send their armies. Both sides resort to violence. Conflicts escalate into full-scale civil wars. In some instances they involve the neighboring states and erupt in international wars. The leading centers of conflict by the levels of violence and protraction are Nagorny Karabakh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Chechnya. In

the neighboring Turkey there is a similar conflict between the governmental army and the military movement of Kurds. In addition, each ethnic group with compact residence is a "security hostage"--a lever of influence or a buffer zone for one of the neighboring states.

All states in the Caucasus fail to recognize the rights of their ethnic groups and to provide them with the opportunity to pursue their aims in a legal constitutional way, which would ameliorate their drive to independence. All sides are already tired of conflicts which proved to be irresolvable by force. Ethnic nationalism and the ideology one nation-one state proved to be extremely costly from the national security and national interest perspectives. It is only a matter of courage to recognize this state of affairs, overcome the bias of xenophobic nationalist ideology, and find a compromise solution which would be new (thus there would be no resistance of past memories and historical hostilities) and would be systematically beneficial for the whole of the Caucasus. The newly recognized states with low level of legitimacy of their rulers will never be able to develop individually, in isolation from each other, both politically and economically, if locked in the continuing ethnic wars. They will never become democratic and wealthy enough in isolation from each other to be able to provide their ethnic groups with sufficient incentives to enhance their loyalties toward the home states. The only way out is the development of a new type of international organization, where states will be represented along with ethnic groups.

This is a challenging proposition, because the international community is decisively against creation of new international organizations and consistently works for the enhancement of the efficiency of the existing ones (The Atlantic Council..., 1995). The Eastern and Central European states have a good chance to be incorporated in the European integration process. This perspective provides them with the incentive to accommodate at least some of the demands of their ethnic groups. In addition, they are more prosperous, and their ethnic groups have an incentive to accept the rules of the game rather than to engage in a costly conflict. For the states of European periphery, however, this chance is remote. It does not provide an incentive to accommodate the demands of ethnic groups. Therefore, if for the Eastern and Central Europe the existing international institutional arrangements could be considered sufficient, this is not so for the Caucasus.

Take, for instance, the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. One of the causes that it remains unresolved is that the ethnic group (a self-proclaimed state) seeks very strong security guarantees. It does not believe in the assertions of the Azeri authorities that Azerbaijan and Armenia could conclude an agreement and Karabakh would be secured if it would step back from its independence demand and disarm. The Azeri leadership failed to recognize Karabakh as a side in the conflict for a very long time. It even abolished the autonomous status which Karabakh enjoyed during the Soviet times, and declared Azerbaijan a unitary state. Since Armenia was helping the Armenians in Karabakh, Azerbaijan declared the Karabakh movement an aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. However, the new Azeri President Heidar Aliev made the first step toward recognition of reality, and a common working document on the cease-fire was signed by three sides: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Karabakh, under the pressure from Russia. But after that step Heidar Aliev has been reluctant to go one step further and to recognize the Karabakh authorities as a side in negotiations over the status of this enclave, since this would be an indirect recognition of justifiability of their aspiration to independence.

The OSCE, which mediates in this conflict, is an organization of sovereign states. These states do not agree to accept full participation of the Karabakh authorities in the negotiations over the destiny of this enclave. Unlike the case of the Aaland islands, where both home state (Finland) and the contending state (Sweden) agreed to a special status for the inhabitants of the islands,

Azerbaijan is extremely inflexible and considers all the possible arrangements of this type threats to its territorial integrity. The framework of the OSCE is not suitable to persuade Azerbaijan to partly concede to the demands of the Karabakh Armenians and to agree to a special arrangement. If there would be created another type of international organization, where by the very intent of the organization independent state governments would be represented with an equal status with the leadership of ethnic groups, some of these difficulties would be overcome. Such an organization, an "Organization of Transcaucasian Nations," could be composed of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Security Council could be composed of five or six major states in the region, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkey, and possibly Iran, as permanent members, and of one or two ethnic groups as rotating members. Each nation and ethnic group would be equally represented in the General Assembly, regardless of possessing or not possessing a recognized political configuration (cultural or political autonomy, status of federative unit or independent statehood). Ethnic groups would have the opportunity to express their grievances against states within the borders of which they are included and to seek common systematic solutions to their problems. Ethnic groups would increase their bargaining power: they would be able to make coalitions both among themselves and with the states. At the same time, this arrangement would placate their strive to independent statehood, since they would be fully recognized decision-making sides in a respectful organization, within the framework of which they propose and implement solutions to their problems. The Security Council would initiate acts, and the General Assembly ratify them. Ethnic groups currently member to the Security Council would have special opportunities to greatly influence decisions of the states. States would be less embarrassed being represented equally with ethnic groups, since they would not be alone vis-a-vis their ethnic groups. They would be in a multilateral environment, where every state is represented equally with every minority within or outside that state in the Caucasian region. Such an organization would complement rather than alter the existing international arrangements, and eventually it would develop in an institution of cooperation for all the nations in the region.

The major obstacle to this scenario is the necessity to change the value systems of the states in the region: the state leaders of the region think that by such a concession they would compromise the sovereignty of their states, and as a result they would lose power. In fact, such an arrangement would require concessions from all sides: ethnic groups would cease their movement for independent statehood in exchange for the opportunity to become recognized as sovereign members of the Organization, with relatively stable population and internal territorial borders assigned to them. Any attempt of a state to alter the recognized borders of an ethnic group's residence would be precluded by the system of collective security which would work within the framework of the Organization. The Organization would provide the necessary level of transparency to monitor the ethnic processes in every state. It would become a major tool of preventive diplomacy and an early warning system, being an open channel of communication with the outside world for the ethnic groups, and a mechanism for participation of all ethnic groups in the regional political and economic processes.

Such an organization is possible since there are common interests which all the actors in the Caucasus share. Besides the negative interest--to bring an end to violence, there exists also a system of positive interests--to develop industry, trade, and cooperation.

Such a solution would become plausible, however, only if certain changes in the international law are finalized. It is necessary, for instance, to recognize right of ethnic groups to self-determination, which means at least recognition of sovereignty of ethnic groups concerning the aspects of their culture, history, territory, education, and the like. In the cases where these aspects of their sovereignty become politicized, their limited political sovereignty ought

to be recognized. But sovereignty would not coincide with formal state independence, unless the group is threatened by genocide. Ethnic groups want recognition of their status as relatively independent cultural and political entities. They would receive such a recognition through participation in the organizations like one proposed here as the Organization of Transcaucasian Nations. States are concerned with their territorial integrity. In exchange for recognition of their ethnic groups with the exact territorial boundaries, states would receive a guarantee that external borders among the existing states would remain intact. The Organization would provide an international environment and collectively worked out principles to decide the particulars of interactions of ethnic groups with states where they are included, such as an ethnic group's participation in the state governance in exchange for taxation and for the obligation to provide members of ethnic groups for the conscription purposes.

The creation of such an Organization would become plausible if the international community and civil organizations within the states would pressure the states in the region to adopt such an arrangement. The international organizations such as OSCE could regard this Organization as another tool in their track-two diplomacy efforts and could provide their guidance, consultation, and surveillance to secure that the Organization develops in order to serve its declared purposes and to balance the interests of different actors in the region rather than as an umbrella for a regional superpower to exclude alternatives to its hegemony. This possibility could be avoided through the inclusion in the Organization of Russia, Turkey, and Iran, who would balance each other's influence. The advantage of this project over any other from the perspective of the existing international organizations is that if such an Organization would start to function, the need in expensive military assistance of peace-keeping forces for an unspecified time would be likely to decrease. Instead, the intergovernmental organizations would be asked to provide only limited help for professional expertise and monitoring.

Such an organization, as a collective decision-making body, would make decision-making in the region "less effective" (i.e., slower). This would mean, however, the enhancement of the overall sovereignty of the region concerning its relations with other states and international actors. Giving up a part of their sovereignty individually, the states would enhance the level of their "collective sovereignty." Such a process could become an epicenter of stabilization, another example of integration side-by-side with the European Union, which would influence even the remote conflictual processes in other global regions.

As the discussion of the strategies of states, ethnic groups, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental actors demonstrates, even the best strategies are likely to succeed only if they are applied in combination rather than in isolation. In order to help the international community in its efforts of conflict prevention and peace-building, the assumptions that there is no need in a new type of international organizations, and that there is no need in providing a legal loophole for ethnic groups striving for self-determination, must be revised. By combining the efforts of governmental and non-governmental actors it is possible to modify these assumptions so that, perhaps, through development of new types of international organizations ethnic groups would less demand secession.

Conclusion

States alone rarely have incentives to accommodate demands of ethnic groups. The existing patterns of accommodation of individual states depend on the goodwill of the governments. States must be provided with new incentives to accommodate the demands of ethnic groups, and such incentives are easier to be found in the external influence of international organizations and powerful international actors than inside the states, if the latter have not yet developed domestic liberal democratic regimes and healthy and wealthy

economies.

Ethnic groups' demands to enhance their status are not merely a result of irrational proliferation of the ideology of nationalism; rather they are a reaction to the inability and inflexibility of the nation-states' framework in guaranteeing a fair distribution of power and rights among all the significant group actors within the states.

Intergovernmental organizations are able to intervene in ethnic conflicts mostly after the conflicts become violent. A comprehensive peace strategy requires the development of mechanisms which would preclude the escalation of ethnic conflicts. These mechanisms require cooperation of non-governmental actors with intergovernmental organizations, to a certain extent at the expense of the narrowly defined interests of individual states. If, however, such a cooperation develops successfully, the overall sovereignty and viability of resulting international arrangement would increase rather than decrease. By thoroughly dividing functions and powers among intergovernmental organizations, states and ethnic groups while resolving or preventing ethnic conflicts, long-lasting arrangements can result. Their dynamism in reacting to changing circumstances could contribute to the increase in regional stability. Therefore the effective power of all the actors, including states, would actually increase rather than decrease. An example of the possible way of such a regional arrangement is an organization where states and ethnic groups are represented with equal status.

Ethnic groups must be recognized as legitimate actors at the international level. For this, it is more realistic to give their representatives an opportunity to directly express their concerns in the international fora rather than to require from their home states to satisfy their demands and to negotiate compromises with them in isolation, insofar as their home states are not well-functioning liberal democracies.

The international recognition of ethnic groups within the states as cultural and political entities with exact territory and population which cannot be altered without mutual consent of the ethnic group and the state can become a major principle which would allow to prevent ethnic conflicts from deteriorating and reaching the level of violent clash.

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