

T.C.
TURKISH-GERMAN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

**THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN CONFLICT
RESOLUTION: THE CASES OF NORTHERN IRELAND AND
NORTH MACEDONIA**

MASTER'S THESIS

Asiye Bilge KIRCA

ADVISOR
Prof. Dr. Wolfgang WESSELS

ISTANBUL, June 2020

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I hereby declare that this thesis is an original work. I also declare that, I have acted in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct at all stages of the work including preparation, data collection and analysis. I have cited and referenced all the information that is not original to this work.

Name -Surname

Asiye Bilge Kırca

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I would like to dedicate this study to all the peace lovers in the world.

ÖZET

Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde Avrupa Birliği'nin çatışma çözümündeki arabulucu rolü ivme kazanmıştır. Ortak Dış ve Güvenlik Politikası ve Ortak Güvenlik ve Savunma Politikası'nın kurulmasıyla, AB'nin bu iki dış politika aracı kapsamındaki olanaklarına uygun olarak barış süreçlerine müdahale edebileceği anlaşılmıştır. AB'nin kuruluşu barışçıl bir çözümün simgesi olarak görüldüğünden, AB'nin çatışma çözümündeki rolü varoluşsal bir davranış olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Bu doğrultuda AB, çatışan tarafların AB üyesi olduğu İrlanda çatışmasının çözüm sürecine müdahil olmuştur. Bu çatışmanın çözümünde kullanılan AB araçları, o dönemde sahip olunan kapasiteye bağlı olarak çeşitlenmiştir. Yeni dış politika araçlarının kurulmasından hemen sonraki dönemde AB, Makedonya 'daki çatışmanın çözümünde de arabulucu olarak yer almıştır. Bu çalışmada, AB'nin neden çatışma çözümünde yer alma gereksinimi duyduğu ve müdahalelerinde neden farklılaşmalar olduğuna dair etkili bir cevap bulmak için iki bağımsız vaka analiz edilecektir. Literatürde, AB'nin güvenlik endişeleri nedeniyle çatışma çözümünde rol aldığı ve buna bağlı olarak müdahale derecesinin değiştiği iddia edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, AB'nin çatışma çözüm süreçlerine katılımının, çatışan tarafların çıkarlarına ve AB'nin barış süreci üzerindeki politikalarının nüfuzuna göre değiştiği incelenmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Avrupa Birliği, Çatışma Çözümü, ODGP / OGSP, Kuzey İrlanda, Kuzey Makedonya.

ABSTRACT

In the post-Cold War era the EU's role as a mediator in conflict resolution has gained a strong momentum. The establishments of Common Foreign and Security Policy and Common Security and Defence Policy have meant that the EU may intervene in peace processes in accordance with its capabilities under these two foreign policy instruments. The EU has a role in the resolution process of conflicts since it is an existential behavior of the EU as its creation represents an embodiment of a peaceful resolution. The EU has intervened in the resolution of Irish conflict in which the conflicting parties are members of the EU. The incentives of the EU in the resolution of the Irish conflict have diversified due to the abilities of it at that time. Right after the establishment of new foreign policy tools, the EU has involved in the resolution of the conflict in Macedonia and acted as a mediator in the region. These two distant cases will be analyzed in this study to find a sufficient answer on why the EU involves in conflict resolution and why its involvement's varies. In literature, it has been asserted that the EU is present in conflict resolution due to its security concerns and depending on EU's security perceptions, its degree of involvement varies. This study analyzes the involvement of the EU in conflict resolution processes and their changes according to the interests of the conflicting parties and EU's leverage on the peace processes.

Keywords: European Union, Conflict Resolution, CFSP/CSDP, Northern Ireland, North Macedonia.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CFSP: Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP: Common Security and Defence Policy
ECC: European Economic Community
EC: European Community
EEAS: European External Action Service
ESDP: European Security and Defence Policy
EU: European Union
EUPAT: European Union Police Advisory Team
EUPOL: European Union Police Mission
FYRM: Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GFA: Good Friday Agreement
IPA: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IRA: Irish Republican Army
IT: Information Technology
JNA: Yugoslav People's Army
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO: Non-governmental Organization
NI: Northern Ireland
NLA: National Liberation Army
OFA: Ohrid Framework Agreement
OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PbCRC: Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre
SAA: Stabilization and Association Agreement
SAP: Stabilization and Association Process
SFRY: Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
UDA: Ulster Defence Association
UK: United Kingdom
UN: United Nations
USA: United States of America
UVF: Ulster Volunteer Force

WEU: Western European Union

WWII: World War II



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Figure 1. Geopolitical Location of Northern Ireland

Figure 2. Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as of January 1991



1. CHAPTER: INTRODUCTION

Conflict is a natural part of the human life. In almost every dimension of the social life, there are conflictual situations as the human being's interests, ideas, perceptions may vary from one to another and when there is a clash amongst these factors, conflict happens. In the international political system, conflicts occur as a result of the diverging interests of the states. Regardless the type of the conflict whether intrastate or interstate, every conflict has a possibility to be transformed from violent into a nonviolent form, especially when counting on the different methods of resolution process. The aim of the conflict resolution in the international political system is not to overcome conflict, since conflict is unavoidable. Thereof, the main target of the conflict resolution in the international political system is to transform the actual or potential violent nature of the conflict into a more stable and non-violent sphere (Ramsbotham, 2010, p.51). Due to the inevitability of conflicts in social life it is important that the reactions to the conflicts are constructive and the causes are comprehensively understood. In conflict resolution studies, there have been experienced channels for the process. Mediation is one of the traditional methods of conflict resolution through that third parties seek to facilitate a peaceful settlement to end a violent conflict. Mediation is an instrument of international conflict resolution in which third parties offer incentives and guarantees and provide a face-saving mechanism to reach a peaceful resolution for conflicts. Conflict resolution, at this point, facilitates an avenue to agree with others' perspectives and situations, allows to understand with tolerance and empathy. If the conflicting parties are aware of the capabilities of themselves and transform their reactive and selfish actions to become open and cooperative with each other then the mediation process maintains effectively. In international relations, states are attributed as the dominant providers of mediation as they are mostly "the actors" in the international political system. However, there has been an increasing tendency for international organizations and persons to be a mediator in the resolution process of a conflict.

In the last two centuries the European continent witnessed dozens of violent conflicts that forced some European countries to seek solutions on this conflict-ridden environment on the region. After the two World Wars, the European states observed that this continent suffered more from conflicts resulting with magnificent casualties than the any other part of the world. Hence, the establishment of the European Community in 1957 was

an outcome of the endeavors of European countries for making peace on the European continent. In the post-Cold War era the European Union (EU) has regarded that its steps for political integration were not adequate for constituting a uniform foreign policy to be active in the international system especially in conflictual matters. Inadequate interventions in solving the conflicts occurred right after the dissolution of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) that have made the EU learn lessons from those crisis situations. Thus, the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 has made a turning point for the EU in the context of granting Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as one of the three pillars of the Treaty. The CFSP has ensured more active external relations to the EU especially in combating with crisis and tackling them at their roots. By 1999 after the Cologne Summit, the EU leaders declared the creation of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) as a part of the CFSP ensuring the Union to take a leading role in peacemaking, conflict resolution and in the strengthening of the international security. These developments made the EU to be active in peace processes. In particular cases the EU plays the mediator in resolution process of conflicts while maintaining this role, it also sustains its transformative power to turn the violence into a more peaceful situation. In this study, the cases of Northern Ireland conflict and the conflict in the Republic of North Macedonia (then Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) will be examined in accordance with the EU's role throughout the resolutions of these conflicts to answer the research question given below.

In 1973, Ireland joined the then European Economic Community (EEC) in the same year as the Britain and since then it has been treated equally with Britain inside the Community. The both countries' relations have changed from Ireland being dependent on Britain historically to more equal relations. The membership within the EEC was a milestone in the equal relationship between the Republic of Ireland and Britain not only because Ireland gained a similar place like Britain here. It was also within the EEC that the Northern Ireland conflict could be discussed by the two involved parties in a neutral environment. Based on EU financial aids, cooperation between both parts on the Northern Ireland issue has been an instrument of diminishing the contests of sovereignty that characterized North-South relations on the Irish island. As an outcome of this membership, Ireland and Britain agreed to settle a peace process in the Northern Ireland

conflict which, so far, had caused thousands of casualties. Hence, this study asserts that the EU has been a key actor playing the role of the mediator in the progress of conflict resolution in Northern Ireland although its intervention has been prominently based on becoming an economic agent.

In the time of the institutional establishments of the EU's foreign policy instruments, repercussions of new crisis were seen in the near vicinity of the EU, namely in the Western Balkans. In the case chosen for this paper, the conflict occurred in the Republic of North Macedonia (then Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and lasted for six months. The resolution of this particular conflict has been regarded as the test for the newly established EU tools. As a result of the improvements in its foreign policy instruments, the EU was capable to intervene in the conflict in Macedonia in which it had significant role as a mediator. Regarding the EU's mediation effort, the conflict was terminated in Macedonia with the Ohrid Framework Agreement signed in 2001. That success was one of the results of the establishment of ESDP which led the first EU military operation named Concordia carried out in Macedonia in 2003. After a while, it was replaced by other missions of the EU to maintain the peace process in post-conflict situation. In today's world, the EU is playing a major role in ensuring the peace and security in the international environment. For the accomplishment of its role, it leans on a unique approach which brings together a range of instruments from traditional foreign policy tool such as supports for institutional building, humanitarian aid and financial assistance to traditional diplomatic approaches, for example, mediation and political dialogue. In the time of pursuing a peace dialogue with conflicting parties, the EU explicitly attempts to promote its values and common culture such as democracy, rule of law, human rights and good governance. While promoting such values, the EU utilizes different methods as mediator or/and provider of economic programmes or any technical supports throughout the peace process (Hussain, 2017, p.21). Thus, the EU can play a constructive and transformative role as a mediator in conflict resolution while offering different methods to conflicting parties from accession process to different scale of partnerships (Tocci, 2007, p.96). Regardless of whether conflicts are frozen or continuous, the absence of agreed settlements threatens the stability and security of the EU due to its vicinity to the conflict zones (European Council, 2003, p.5). When involving into a

conflict resolution process, the EU might provide economic and political cross-border cooperation to shape bi-national agreements and institutional structures in a way that expressing the role of the EU.

1.1. RESEARCH QUESTION

Regarding the improvements in the EU's foreign policy instruments, the departing point of this study is to seek an answer to this question; "Why is the European Union active in conflict resolution and why it is more involved in the resolution of the conflict in Macedonia than in the resolution of the Irish conflict?" To answer this question these hypotheses are going to be tested;

1. The interest of the conflicting parties to cooperate with the EU determines the EU's involvement in the resolution of the conflict.
2. The role of the EU in conflict resolution is efficient if the EU's foreign policy instruments are established accordingly.
3. If the effectiveness of the EU's culture, values and "way of doings" are more then the EU's involvement in peace process will be more.

For testing these hypotheses, the applied instruments by the EU will be examined in two cases, each from the viewpoint of the EU and from the viewpoint of the conflicting parties.

1.2. RESEARCH METHOD AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This research is based on qualitative content analysis and secondary data analysis while having the opportunity to use multiple case study for emphasizing the exploratory feature of the research. The qualitative content analysis provides ways to the researcher in understanding the general trends and debates in detail on specified process (Neuendorf, 2012, p.7). Moreover, qualitative content analysis is a method that analyzes the documents and texts in a systematic way in which researchers make inferences objectively and specify the messages of the content (Bryman, 2012, p.219). As Bryman defines " the analysis of data by researchers who will probably not have been involved in the collection of those data, for purposes that in all likelihood were not envisaged by those

responsible for the data collection” the secondary data analysis certainly meets with the need of the researcher throughout the research process (Bryman, 2012, p.212). Infact, secondary data analysis is regarded as a very appropriate method for case studies (Yin, 2002, p.12).

The research is designed as a case study as this allows researcher to gather the real life events i.e. organizational and managerial processes, international relations (Yin, 2002, p.4). Moreover, case studies are the most preferred strategy if the main question(s) are composed with “how” or “why” questions and it is beneficial due to the limited control of the investigator over the events especially when the target is in the context of real life (Yin, 2002, p.4). Case studies may include a single case or a number of cases enabling the researcher to emphasize the differences and similarities. Hence, a most distance case study is applied in this research to examine a set of features of the cases in detail and to have the same outcome on the role of the EU in conflict resolution. The overall aim of this study is to provide an analytical explanation on EU’s role as a mediator in conflict resolution. Thus, the main reason to choose the Northern Ireland and North Macedonia cases is to ensure an understanding on the role of the EU in context of its capabilities that have been used in resolution processes. The Northern Ireland case is chosen mostly because the parties of the conflict have been members of the EU. Thus the aim is to analyze EU’s involvement in a conflict which has occurred between its member states, namely, the UK and the Republic of Ireland. The conflict in Republic of North Macedonia is analyzed due to its vicinity to EU and its feature for being a non-member state. These two conflicts are going to be analyzed because the parts of one of the conflicts are EU member states while the parts of the other are not. Thus these distant cases will provide a detailed understanding on EU’s involvement and the degree of the involvement while answering the research question simultaneously.

This study has gathered a variety of resources. Primary and secondary data sources has been utilized in this research. As primary sources, peace agreements as well as official reports have been used and books, journals, articles, and newspapers have been used as secondary sources.

1.3. OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS

This study consists of six chapters. In the first introduction chapter, definition on the topic and research question as well as the methodology used in data collection are given. The second chapter includes the theoretical framework of the topic that is applied to research. In the third chapter, policy tools which enable the European Union to involve in resolution of a conflict are analyzed. The fourth chapter concisely gives information on the Northern Ireland conflict and afterwards the researcher scrutinizes the peace process of the conflict regarding the EU's involvement with its related instruments. The fifth chapter gives precise information on the conflict in North Macedonia while pointing out the role and the instruments of the EU in the resolution of this particular conflict. Finally, in the conclusion part the researcher reflects on the results of the whole research.

1.4. LIMITATIONS ON THE RESEARCH

Due to the floating surface feature of the social sciences, occasions, issues even political spheres have an imponderable side. Thus, empirical analysis on the Northern Ireland case after the Brexit has been subject to limitations as arguments on the post-Brexit situation of Northern Ireland border have been still ongoing in the time of the writing. Furthermore, due to the unexpected outbreak of Cov-19 pandemia, the agenda of all states and organizations have been changed in a way that all subjects have turned out to be internal to cope with the pandemia. Hence, the accession talks of North Macedonia to the EU and the negotiations on the situation of Northern Ireland border after the Brexit have been delayed. Needless to claim, this is the another limitation the researcher has faced because there has been no efficient process currently held on the two cases.

2. CHAPTER: CONFLICT MEDIATION AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

2.1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

“We believe that the human participants in conflict situations are compulsively struggling in their respective institutional environments at all social levels to satisfy primordial and universal needs - needs such as security, identity, recognition, and development. They strive increasingly to gain the control of their environment that is necessary to ensure the satisfaction of these needs. This struggle cannot be curbed; it is primordial.” (Burton, 1991, pg.83)

First of all, it is useful to bear in mind that the conflict resolution is applied in different disciplines gathering the contributions of scholars from sociology to economy. Without having a cooperation from another discipline it would not be efficient to explain what conflict is. Therefore, both in theory and practice conflict resolution is not a monolithic but eclectic and homogenous field of science which makes its definition open-ended (Mitchell, 1994, p.181). In social life conflicts take place when one or more people's wishes, interests, values, beliefs or needs are different or contradictory. To put it into another definition, conflict is described as the clashing of interests around values and issues. Thus, conflict expresses explicit and coercive interactions in which conflicting parties look to insist their own will on the other (Deutsch et al., 2006, p.28). Conflict is consisted of various dimensions of human life as it is the case when a conflict emerges, considerations of differentiated natures of both side come to the agenda. In this regard, as a socialized behavior conflict is characterized by a certain set of behaviors, and the overall process of conflict implies a level of interdependence (Bercovitch and Gartner, 2006, p.821). Hence, this reciprocal interaction between the conflicting parties brings dynamism to their conflictual relationship. In this sense, it is clear that conflict has objective causes. On the other hand, in some cases perceptions can also be regarded as causes for a conflict in which it is perceived that the parties have incompatible goals (Fisher, 1990, p.6). According to John Burton's expression of conflict above, there is a convergence between objective and subjective ingredients of conflicts mostly stemming from the interests and needs. From his point of view, conflicts happen due to the basic needs of human which shall be fulfilled to have stable societies (Burton, 1991, p.80).

Beside the mentioned causes of the conflict, another important factor in this is the difficulties in communication or even an absence of communication. Particularly in social science, it is predominantly suggested that groups with very divergent cultural backgrounds and lifestyles get into conflicts due to the inabilities of parties to have effective communication (Fisher, 1990, p.31).

It is generally accepted that there are two main ways to end conflicts; one is reaching a settlement while the other one is achieving a resolution. In the course of settlement, making the resources available for conflicting parties and enlarging the pie to distribute equally, creating an avenue for expression of feelings which is not with hostile approaches and creating new choices for the end of the conflict are applied (Deutsch et al., 2006, p.202). In this case, after the settlement of specific matters, there might still be unsatisfied party because of the lack of changes in the conflictual relationship which might be the main source of the conflict. This needs call for the application of conflict resolution since resolution necessitates main alterations in the social, political as well as cultural environments of conflicting parties. In this sense, the very first goal of conflict resolution lies in its capabilities to help to parties in analyzing the reasons of the conflict and develop methods for changes in the conflictual environment (Deutsch et al., 2006, p.203). When it comes to the responses to conflicts, it should be taken into consideration that those resolutions can have devastating or constructive consequences since the ways of resolving conflicts can be a driving force for development and social change (Deutsch et al., 2006, p.204). Thus, it would be beneficial to use the Best's definition for conflict resolution in case to make the process more clear;

"[...]in principle, conflict resolution connotes a sense of finality, where the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense of it" (Best, 2005, p. 94).

As it is the case with the definition of it, conflict resolution in practice is also open-ended regarding the length of the process which involves both pre- and post-settlement tasks, beside aiming to reach a signed agreement (Ross, 2000, p.30). That means that conflict resolution by its very nature is a never ending task. To put it another word, as Ramsbotham pointed out, conflict resolution approaches aim to transform conflict into a

nonviolent social and political change process rather than try to eliminate the conflict within a short time (Ramsbotham, 2010, p.15). In this context, resolution techniques lead to more plausible solutions once the root cause is understood. For instance, in the case of a deep-rooted conflict including intensive hostilities, it is necessary to figure out the mutual perceptions, values and needs of the parties. Therefore, parties should be informed efficiently on the costs of conflict and benefits of resolution which is supposed to be on the process (Ross, 2000, p.43). In contrast with conflicts on material interest, clashes over values such as group identity, autonomy and freedom can not be compromised easily. In this sense it is a necessity to realize and recognize human dignity and self-fulfilment comprehensively (Best, 2005, p.96). Regarding the incapability of parties to act in this way in conflict time, scholars in the conflict resolution studies emphasize the importance of negotiation and mediation in creating an environment for resolution. With these techniques, the parties have the utility of going beyond arguing about positions by searching for underlying interests of each conflicting parties (Ury et al., 2009, p.44). Moreover, those cooperative processes rather than power bargaining can help discover the options that bring advantages to the parties. The main motivation here is to broadly understand the causal problems to collaborate and prevent the happening of same kind of conflict by eliminating the reasons without any usage of coercion (Ury et al., 2009, p.45). Otherwise it would be difficult to assert that the resolution for the particular conflict is successful. Because as Schelling emphasizes, there is an inherited interdependence among conflict, competition and cooperation thus, conflict takes place when conflicting groups' aims, needs and values clash although violence is not necessarily a prominent result (Schelling, 1980, p.86).

From the point of material needs, it would not be so wrong to state that a conflict is resolved when the shortages of parties are eliminated accordingly and their hostile approaches are vanished. On the other hand, according to Best, for resolutions of conflicts over values “they can at best be transformed, regulated or managed” (Best, 2005, pg.95). Broadly, this approach of Best leads the paper to be based on EU's role in conflict resolution that is going to be analyzed in the following chapters. But before that, after providing a definition on conflict resolution, it would be necessary to give definition to the one of the way of conflict resolution which is conflict mediation. Amongst the

alternative conflict resolution methods which are negotiation, arbitration and mediation, the latter one is chosen as a most used way of EU in conflict resolution. In this context, the role of a third party as a mediator should be analyzed since the mediation is regarded as a widely utilized tool in this field.

2.2. CONFLICT MEDIATION

Mediation might be defined as activities taken over by a party exterior to the related conflict between the incompatible goals of the two or more parties and it is designed to conduct or resolve the conflict by peaceful means (Terris and Maoz, 2005, p. 565). The mediator might be a person, an NGO or a state. In international conflicts, mostly states are accepted to be the one prominent actor of mediator. While states are the ascendant and most continual suppliers of mediation, international organizations are also regarded as an actor in mediation. Mediation is a communication process in which the conflicting parties try to reach a solution by producing choices for the resolution of their conflict with the help of a third party in accordance with a concrete plan (Terris and Maoz, 2005, p.566). Thus, mediation is a mean of conflict management in which third parties search to offer incentives, guarantees, and provide a face-saving mechanism to reach a peaceful resolution for conflicts. In this sense, it means that mediation is an involvement that rests on a multi partial acceptance in the conflict. This enables conflicting parties to look at the problem through the eyes of the other, listen and understand each other. This is a chance for relationships to develop helping to increase the self-confidence of the parties and the development of conflict resolution skills. Moreover, conflicting parties can also be more prone to apply to mediation process when the conflicts turn out to be incrementally complicated and especially forcible (Bercovitch and Diehl, 1997, p.315). The application of mediation is determined by complicated interplay of both abilities and inducements for attendance of all parties to negotiate towards a possible settlement. Additionally, it is also important to realize that mediation may occur for many different reasons. The parties may, for instance, engage in mediation process to achieve some goals such as gaining time to regroup and rearm, to enhance their relationship with the third party, or to have an international recognition (Bercovitch and Diehl, 1997, p.317). Consent is one of the prominent feature of mediation as well as willingness. Additionally, impartiality is as important as those features for the mediators (Magnus and Lundgren, 2018, p.276).

Mediators by understanding the parties, expressing and revealing the problem, enable the communication process to work in order to resolve the conflicts and help the parties to reach suitable, practical and fair agreements for themselves (Wallensteen and Svensson, 2014, p.320). Those abilities of the mediator do not provide it a position to tell the parties what to do, to decide who is right and who is wrong. As such, it does not discuss what to do in conflict situations. Mediators are facilitators who do not exert enforcement powers on the conflicting parties (Magnus and Lundgren, 2018, p.277). As Wallensteen and Svensson explained clearly, mediators utilize a wide range of techniques including transferring data among the parties, arranging meetings, proposing solutions and side-payments to the parties in exchange for concessions, offering to guarantee agreements and some other tools depending on the dynamics of the conflict (Wallensteen and Svensson, 2014, p.324). Regarding the conflict with their own knowledge, experience, perspective, and of course, their own power and leverage, mediators make previously unconsidered options visible and plausible. This brings the point that the mediation can be best performed by a third party with the leverage that can credibly threaten to do so in the future especially when the parties are about to give up on the agreed resolution due to emotional reflections. Nevertheless, mediation states an apparent assumption of peaceful intervention, in which the third party would never intend to the use of armed force (Magnus and Lundgren, 2018, 280).

Another significant view in the study of mediation is that mediation occurs at the point where the conflicting parties escalate the conflict to the point where further escalation has become too costly in a political, economic, social and material base (Zartman, 2001, p.11). In this ripeness situation, the mediator can be one of the few actors to reshape the relationships between the parties and when the cost of the stalemate reaches an irresistible point, the conflicting parties have the tendency to welcome the mediation process. Thus, stalemates are usually acknowledged as a precondition for the conflicting parties' re-evaluation on their strategies, and their willingness to collaborate approaches in resolution of the conflict (Zartman, 2001, p.12). Accordingly, conflict mediation is especially applicable when a conflict has proceeded for some time until the above mentioned ripeness period and when none of the party is ready to cover the costs or prevent escalation of the conflict (Greig, 2005, p.254).

Mediation has been the most used method of peaceful third-party involvement in international conflicts mostly because it is based on the need to supply conflict resolution and/or management rather than to substitute the parties' own wishes. Another significant feature of mediation is that it is a process where reciprocity is applied. It affects and in turn is affected by the parties, matters, background and environment of the related dispute and all these factors form and effect the overall process and outcome of mediation (Gartner and Bercovitch, 2006, p.842). As it is stated, conflict mediation is a problem-solver process and is shaped and influenced by the interplay of divergent factors. Beside being affected by some internal and external aspects, it is also affected by some possible or plausible mediation strategies, by the identity of the mediator which might be a person or an organization and by the nature of the conflict that might be interstate or intrastate (Bercovitch, 1992, p.9). Addition to the features of conflict mediation, it might be enlightened to touch upon the ways that make the mediation process successful. As Wallensteen and Svensson identified, there have been four basic ways of a successful mediation process which are;

1. Recognition of the mediator by the conflicting parties which means that a mediation initiative is successful if it is applied,
2. The effect of the mediator on violent behavior whether violence decreases or ends following the attempt of mediator,
3. The signing of a peace agreement that is described as the most accepted expression of success, partly because the mediator's presence is mostly stated by an objective "to reach a peace agreement",
4. More extensive measures of accomplishment, which included evaluation of short and long-term outcomes for parties, measuring success against disaggregated categories of peace agreement such as truce and security agreements, power-sharing and territorial deals or transitional justice agreements (Wallensteen and Svensson, 2014, p.325).

Beside of those indicators for a successful mediation process, another important reason for the successful mediation is that the parties who have conflicts in the process get stronger by recognizing themselves with facing each other and enabling them to solve their own conflicts (Greig, 2005, p.260). When emphasizing the outcomes of the

mediation, it should be also noted that the degrees of settlement are clear indicators in which disputant satisfaction gains a great amount of importance. Eventually, the nature of the agreed settlement is always in the core interest, as mediation by its nature often asserts to achieve a compromise with an egalitarian approach providing equal sharing of resources than only doomed procedures (Fisher, 1990, p.165). Last but not least, there are different ways of mediation which are going to be analyzed briefly in the next sub-titles in accordance with the overall topic of the paper which is EU's involvement as a mediator to the conflict resolution.

2.2.1. Problem-solving mediation

Problem-solving mediation is basically a method-oriented form of mediation which is the common feature of the mediation methods. The autonomy of the third party is in the first stage of this method of mediation. Rather than being based on a prominent interest, this mediation method focuses on positions of the parties stemming from the claims and assertions of both sides (Nadja, 2008, p.99). The main task of the mediator is still the same which is being responsible for conducting negotiations between the parties in accordance with promoting solution and agreement. However, this encouragement may quickly turn into an enforcement for parties to give concessions (Nadja, 2008, p.112). In this point, the third party should be cautious on the process of resolution to not leave an open room for discontent. Although problem-solving is method oriented, third parties are applied because of their legal and technical knowledge as well as their experience. Conflicting parties may feel pleasant because of the trust that they have to the third party's knowledge which comforts them at the beginning.

The general tendency in the problem-solving mediation is to separate parties' arguments from each other and later on to bring the parties together (Nadja, 2008, p.112). Hence, the third-party operates a shuttle diplomacy between the conflicting parties to deliver resolutions, counter-offers, concessions, drafts as well as agreements. Problem-solving mediation's aim is to have a resolution rather than providing the continuation of relationships. Thus it might not be helpful in the resolution of conflicts where the interest-based bargaining process is in the very first agenda. Nevertheless, this model can be useful when the reason of the conflict is on single subject. On the other hand, there are

some drawbacks that this model has. In problem-solving mediation, as it is stated above, the interests of the parties are not taken into consideration and therefore the result might be for the advantage of the experienced or more dominant party (Nadja, 2008, p.115). In the end, this mediation model does not acquire a mission on the development of the future relations of conflicting parties. Thus, it would not be wrong to claim that by its nature, problem-solving mediation is a clear-cut form of conflict mediation which makes it resolution oriented.

2.2.2. Transformative Mediation

This mediation form is based on the value of empowering the conflicting parties to identify each other's needs, interests, values and arguments (Hanna, 2003, p.66). By providing the application of both willpower and tolerance to the conflicting parties, the third party aims to transform the relations between the parties during the mediation process by meeting with the parties. From this point, the conflicting parties shape both the mediation process and the outcome of this process by transformative effect of the whole process (Hanna, 2003, p.67).

In this mediation model, it is argued that conflicts should not be seen as problems that need to be resolved immediately. Conflicts arising from the basic concerns, dissatisfaction and interpersonal or relational tensions of people are regarded as an opportunity for human development and transformation (Folger and Bush, 1994, p.9). According to the transformative understanding, conflict is a potential opportunity for the development of two important points of humankind; empowerment and recognition. The empowerment here emphasizes that realizing and developing the individual's ability to face and fight with negative situations are necessary (Hanna, 2003, p.72). Because conflict allows people to experience free will and to trust themselves when deciding to address challenges and making decisions. Recognition is the development of the person ensuring that they experience and express their concerns individually and in particular strengthen the ability to respect the one that is in different situation or in different idea (Folger and Bush, 1994, p.11). Conflict, at this point, facilitates an avenue to agree with others' perspectives and situations, allows to understand with tolerance and empathy. If the conflicting parties are aware of the capabilities of themselves and transform their reactive and selfish actions to

become open and cooperative with self-confident then the mediation process maintains effectively. As a result, the situation might become transformed from a weak and dubious ceasefire among enemies to a friendly atmosphere. In this way, even if a consensus cannot be reached at that moment, it can be ensured that conflicting parties can better tackle with problems that may arise in the future (Friedman and Himmelstein, 2006, p.535). Transformative mediation provides a micro role for the third party in the evaluation of the process. Every argument, problem, question is regarded as a possibility for transformation by the conflicting parties and to make the transformation happen the third-party plays a supporting role. Therefore, the third party which keeps the empowerment at the center of the process, clarifies the options of the parties and encourages them to have an interactive action. It is expected from the conflicting parties to grasp the outcome of their choices which will be the basis for reaching the agreement or entering into a deadlock (Friedman and Himmelstein, 2006, p.536).

To the contrary of the problem-solving mediation, shaping issues and values, offers, conditions of compromise are consciously avoided by the third party (Hanna, 2003, p.73). Each speech is seen as an opportunity for the parties to understand the other's circumstances, position, and self-cognition. It is important for the parties to interpret the past events differently, in order to look at the common events from other party's position (Folger and Bush, 1994, p.13). Therefore, the past is more concerned than future-oriented problem solving methods. In addition, the concept of success is wider than the problem-solving method. Once explicit misunderstandings are eliminated in the process by realizing the alternative views and learning the unknown sides of the conflicts this method may be sufficient for the sustaining success.

2.2.3. Facilitative Mediation

Facilitative mediation is more method-oriented and complementary. The third-party is held responsible for executing the method and it does not need to be an expert in conflict (Hanna, 2003, p.65). This method of mediation is applied because of the conflict rather than the need for an expertise. The very prominent feature of the third-party here is the communication skills due to the fact that it is chosen because of the lack of connection between the conflicting parties (Nadja, 2008, p.117). According to this mediation model,

significant interests often lie under the circumstances claimed by the parties (Hanna, 2003, p.65). Thus, the third-party should assist the conflicting parties to understand these interests and to do what is necessary. It is in charge of the third-party to create a suitable negotiating environment for the parties and helping them negotiate and face with each other. Facilitating mediators try to concentrate the mediation process to increase the involvement of the conflicting parties and reduce the participation of itself. Because the conflicting parties are aware of their positions and priorities hence, they can evaluate the situation better than the mediator (Nadja, 2008, p.118). The third party follows the communication between the parties in a motivating and enlightening way. It should refrain from doing comments because this both damages its impartiality and sufficient information if not, it might mislead the parties (Hanna, 2003, p.63).

The third party does not advise the parties and is not expected to provide legal information to them (Riskin, 2006, p.117). It hardly intervenes in the negotiation but directs the process more. So, the facilitative mediation consists of efforts in which the parties make their own decisions and the mediator ensures this in a neutral way. For the parties, if it is a priority for the relations between them to continue in the future, facilitative mediation should be preferred. Additionally, if there are creative and future-oriented solutions, this model might be considered to apply. However, facilitating mediation involves some drawbacks. If mediation fails to result in an agreement, there is a risk that shared information or thoughts are then used against those who disclose them, although a privacy policy exists (Riskin, 2006, p.117). As each party gathers new information throughout the process, at least the intellectual and psychological balance between the parties can change. In other respects, it is important to note that facilitative mediation model can take time or even may have an open ended process as a whole.

3. CHAPTER: THE POLICY INSTRUMENTS OF THE EU FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION: AN INTERGOVERNMENTALIST APPROACH

In the aftermath of the Cold War with the spread of globalization, new security concepts have brought new security policies in international system. From the point of modern history, the presence of European-based World Wars consolidated the security issues on the agenda of Europe. Especially after the World War II, Europe transferred the security leadership to the USA in the international arena. In order to have a voice in the system, Europe entered into integration efforts and as a result, the ways for today's European Union were paved. The EU, which initially targeted at unification in the economy, later engaged in integration efforts in some other fields such as foreign policy and security issues. In the aftermath of the Cold War, the EU conceived that in order to become an important actor in the new international system, it should adapt itself to global changes and develop policies independent from the USA and try to change its structure accordingly. In this sense, the EU which has made a very important path towards integration after World War II and focused on economic issues so far, has gone to a new structure including foreign policy and security areas and instead of transferring its security initiatives to US-based NATO, it has established its own security and defence systems. Although the EU entered in search of common security and defence in the Cold War period, institutionalization efforts and its legal grounding were made mostly in the following period. Currently, the EU has a key role in the international arena, ranging from global warming to the Middle Eastern peace processes. Proceeding on the basis of diplomacy, the Union's foreign policy tools are supported with a number of means in the fields of trade, aid, security and defense, if necessary, in line with the resolution of harsh conflicts and the development of a common understanding (White et al., 2004, p.13). In the shadow of the new international environment right after the Cold War, the EU introduced the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) with the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 in order to tackle with the internal and external security of the Union. The other prominent integral part of this policy is the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) which ensures the CFSP military capabilities, with relatively limited utilities when comparing with the other actors in the system (Açıkmeşe, 2004, p.137).

Emerging in the post-Cold War era, the CFSP and the CSDP are attributed as young establishments. Thus, it would not be so wrong to claim that the statements on the security and defence issues of the EU is also quite recent. Hence, in this chapter the EU's security and defense policies will be analyzed in order to provide a systematic understanding for its role in conflicts as a mediator/third party.

3.1. COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

The new conditions that emerged after the Cold War including the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the change in the understanding of security have provided a different approach to the EU especially in the framework of security and defence (White et al., 2004, p.15). The very first significant step in this matter was taken in 1992 with the Maastricht Treaty (came into force in 1993 and also known as the Treaty on European Union) and with the adoption of common institutions between the member states on foreign policy and security issues (White et al., 2004, p.16). Thus, the Common Foreign and Security Policy within the EU was defined as a structure based on three pillars which established with the Maastricht Treaty. Here, the EU has been transformed into a three column structure consisting of ; European Communities that encompasses economical, social and environmental issues, Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) which includes foreign policy and militaristic aspects and Justice and Home Affairs involving to act together in crimes (Maastricht Treaty, 1993, p.1). While having these three columns, three kinds of tools are also envisaged in the Maastricht Treaty which are; cooperation, common attitude and common action in order to achieve the CFSP goals (Akdemir, 2018, p.117). Cooperation simply means that the foreign policy of the member states and the foreign policy developed within the Union are compatible and complementary. The common attitude means that the member states are obliged to pursue their foreign policies in line with when the EU determines a common attitude in foreign policy issues (Akdemir, 2018, p.118). In addition, in order to achieve the international political activity targeted by the EU, common action areas have been identified. These fields can be summarized as follows;

- Problems subject to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons,
- Disarmament and control of weapons in Europe including the ones used for security measures,

- Economic dimension of security,
- Control of military technology transfers to third countries,
- Control of arms export (Akdemir, 2018, p.119-120).

The Maastricht Treaty has played a stimulating role within the EU member states to actively support the foreign policies of the EU and to avoid acts contrary to the EU's attitudes and actions (Dehousse et al., 1992, p.360). Within this framework, the CFSP has been regarded as an avenue where member states are at the forefront thus, as Article J.8 stated clearly, the decision-making method is based on unanimity (TEU, 1992, p.128). In the process of creation of CFSP, it was thought to determine common principles and guidelines, develop common diplomatic approaches and implement common actions in international arena. Hence, unanimity has been regarded as the way for decision making to be certain on the unity of a decision to be taken. Clearly, CFSP has been created as a structure based tool on intergovernmental cooperation and it has taken its power from the 5th Section of the Maastricht Treaty (Kızılkaya and Kaya, 2005, p.208). In article J.1 of this section, the aim of CFSP is formulated as protecting the independence of the Union, its common interests and common values, strengthening the security of the Union and its member states, strengthening and developing democracy, respecting human rights, complying with legal rules (TEU, 1992, p.123). Article J.3 has stated that, common actions and attitudes can be realized within the scope of CFSP. In addition, article J.4 has formulated that, extension of the CFSP can be provided with all questions related to security, including joint defence and change of a common defence policy (TEU, 1992, p.125-126). With this establishment, the extent of integration in foreign policy has been widened for the first time including defence matters and the way has been opened for the initiation of a new security action beyond the civilian power identity of the EU (Kızılkaya and Kaya, 2005, p. 210). Being conceived as intergovernmental, the CFSP has special characteristics which is not communitarized amongst the member states. As it is stated, the member states enact unanimously on CFSP issues and the Union's position on foreign and security policy. In the end, the CFSP exists due to the foreign policies of the individual member states however, as Article 24 clearly indicates that they are not allowed to act in a contrary way to the Union and are expected to support the CFSP accordingly (Consolidated version of TEU, 2012, p.30). The CFSP has been adopted by

the fundamental values of the Union which are; democracy, the rule of law, the universality and impartiality of human rights, respect for human dignity, fundamental freedoms, the principles of equality and solidarity as well as the respect for the principles of the UN Charter and International Law. All those values have been formed in the Article 21 of CFSP which are as follows;

- Promoting and protecting the Union's values, security, independence, integrity and fundamental interests,
- Consolidating the above mentioned values,
- Preserving peace, inhibiting conflicts and strengthening international security in compliance with United Nations (UN) Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris that also cover external borders of the Union,
- Inducing sustainable economic, social and environmental development with the aim of reducing the poverty,
- Encouraging the decremental process of the restrictions in international trade and fostering the association of the countries into the world economy,
- Consolidating the international measures to preserve the environment and to utilize the natural sources in a sustainable way,
- Assisting the countries when challenging with disasters,
- Supporting an international system based on multilateral cooperation and global governance (TEU, 2012, p.28).

As it can be seen from those statements of CFSP, it clearly includes all areas of foreign and security policy therefore, fair to assert that the civilian and military contents of CFSP are at Union's disposal. Thus, regarding the third provision above it is clear that CFSP has concerned with preserving peace and dealing with crisis. On the other hand, as there is no specific way to involve in peace process, it might mean that CFSP's agenda is not easily predictable especially when being strongly based on current foreign policy matters. Beside, it is also clearly seen that the policy areas of CFSP are extensive, almost all the world's foreign and security policy issues are dealt within the framework of the CFSP. From a militaristic point, within the framework of the institutionalization of CFSP in the EU, Eurocorps was established in 1992 and it was envisaged to create a power of 50000 soldiers in it, which started its activities in 1995 (Eurocorps History, 1992). It was part of

the forces responsible for Western European Union and aimed to consolidate to the humanitarian missions established within the UN and the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and to the peace operations. Eurocorps which currently has 1000 persons, is located in Strasbourg (Eurocorps, Organization). Addition to that, within the scope of the CFSP, another security unit named EUROPOL was created in 1995, which was based on sharing intelligence from member states on drugs, organized crime, terrorism and smuggling and it has been operating since then on the related issues (EUROPOL, History).

The military aspect of security, which took the form of a part of the CFSP, was accomplished by the abovementioned treaty which is clearly stated in its Article B as; *"[...] to assert its identity on the international scene, in particular through the implementation of a common foreign and security policy including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence."* (TEU, 1992, p.8). In this process, by giving Western European Union (WEU) the task of preparing and implementing decisions on defence matters it is foreseen that WEU will serve as the defence unit of the Union until the common defence policy referred to be implemented. However, WEU lacked the necessary command structures, military or planning skills to play this role. Therefore, the WEU Council of Ministers, which convened in Petersberg in 1992, has set some tasks to make WEU work called "Petersberg Tasks" (WEU, Petersberg Declaration, 1992). These tasks were basically low-intensity and out-of-field duties such as; crisis management issues, humanitarian missions, rescue missions as well as peacekeeping missions (Petersberg Tasks, 1992, p.6). Under this conditions, with the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999, these tasks were integrated in the Union with the creation of a special unit called "High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy" that is to speak with one face and one voice on foreign policy matters in international arena (Bretherton and Vogler, 1999 p.188). The High Representative's duties are to assist the Council on CFSP issues, contribute to the creation, preparation and implementation of the conducting political dialogue with third parties on behalf of the Union (General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, 2009). It is fair to claim that an important innovation brought by the Amsterdam Treaty was the ability of the Union to express its identity in foreign policy (Bretherton and Vogler, 1999, p.189).

In 1998, at the end of the St. Malo Summit, it was declared that the Union reached an agreement on the following points; the rapid implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy included in the Amsterdam Treaty, the need of the EU to have a capacity to intervene in international crises, take independent actions and support it with sufficient military force, it should have an appropriate structure and military capacity to involve the crises area where NATO does not engage and the EU needs reinforce the arm industry which should be consolidated by a competitive defence industry (Joint Declaration on European Defence, Saint Malo 1998, p.135).

After the Amsterdam Treaty, addition to the CFSP of the Union the steps towards militaristic implementations were accelerated. In this respect, at the Cologne summit in June 1999, the Union's need for a determined common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) implementation was expressed. Officially, the ESDP project was declared to be implemented. At this summit, a common defence policy framework has been detailed to put forward its development and future EU military decision making mechanisms required in operations and crisis management have been created by member states on political ground (Presidency Conclusions, Cologne, 1999). By 1999 at the Helsinki Summit, the structure of crisis management among EU member states was tried to be shaped. In final declaration, it was decided to establish an Intervention Unit and to establish a Temporary Military Committee, which will be responsible for the political and security committee to carry out military actions within the EU. Moreover, the establishment of the Emergency Response Force, which could be deployed within 2 months of 60,000 soldiers, with the contribution of the Member States until 2003, was among the decisions (Presidency Conclusions, Helsinki, 1999). In this summit, the aim of ESDP was regarded as "a decision for ability to make decisions on its own and intervene in international crises without NATO participation" (Presidency Conclusions, Helsinki, 1999). As it has been stated, CFSP has been developed to determine common principles and guiding principles on foreign policy and security issues, to develop common diplomatic approaches and to implement joint actions. Therefore, CFSP has kept playing a key role in the EU's external action with the Lisbon Treaty entering into force in 2009. With the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU's diplomatic service to support the High Representative called "The European External Action Service" was created to increase the

effectiveness of the CFSP and enable the EU to act as a more consistent actor in the field of foreign policy. On the other hand, EEAS supports the protection and promotion of the interests of the EU with its offices and representatives located in third countries (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007, Art.9B). Importantly, with this Treaty the Union has formed its strategic concept on mediation. The Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities demonstrated EU's incremental experience as a mediator and expressed the EU's eagerness to adopt more systematic approach to mediation (Council of the EU, 2009).

3.2. COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The Common Security and Defence Policy as a part of the CFSP, which was brought to legal ground with the Maastricht Treaty had a very slow process to have an embodiment. In this process, the English-French summit held in St. Malo in December 1998 is extremely important. In the first step towards an autonomous CSDP (then ESDP), it has been shown that it is effective to give up the insistence of Britain not to go to a security structure independent from NATO. After this attitude of Britain at the summit, decisions were taken to improve the defence structure and security capabilities of the Union. As the next step, the "St. Malo Declaration", which draws the road map of CSDP was revealed. Firstly, the practice of the provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam included the decision of the European Council to establish the common defence policy for the Union to play an efficient role in the international arena (Joint Declaration on European Defence, Saint Malo, 1998) was decided. Secondly, it was expressed that the Union should have the autonomous action and capacity supported by adequate and reliable military forces capable of responding to global crises and should have the necessary decision-making systems as well as the equipments to use these forces (Joint Declaration on European Defence, Saint Malo, 1998). On the other hand, Kosovo crisis has created an opportunity to question the EU's military effectiveness, as well as the increasing military gap between the USA and the EU in conflicts. Thus, the main problem has been the inadequacy of decision-making mechanisms among the EU member states therefore, it was necessary to accelerate the decision-making period and make it effective to serve an efficient structure and common goals when an action is needed. Thirdly, as the military capability required by the EU, the "separable but not separate military capabilities" within

the framework of NATO's European wing, and "national military capabilities" outside the NATO framework were stated clearly (Joint Declaration on European Defence, Saint Malo, 1998). These decisions, which constitute the infrastructure of an autonomous defence policy in Europe and envisage the enhancement of the capabilities of the EU as a security actor under the CFSP, have signaled that the traditional role of the EU as a civil actor will change. As the EU develops its own defence capabilities, an opportunity was seen to be created for NATO to intervene in crisis outside of the Europe. At this point, the importance of burden sharing becomes evident in order to develop the security and defence capabilities of the EU. That was made clear with the St. Malo Declaration emphasizing the "autonomous capacity of Europe to act" while building and developing military capabilities within the EU (Açıkmeşe, 2004, p.126). Besides, the EU has been considered to be the most suitable platform for ensuring transatlantic solidarity and enhancing the EU's political effectiveness (Açıkmeşe, 2004, p.135).

In June 1999 Cologne and in December 1999 at Helsinki European Councils, the autonomous action capacity of the EU from NATO in international crisis management has been embodied. Especially in Cologne Summit, the main principles and institutional processes of forming then ESDP was on the front page (Howorth, 2000, p.21). Moreover, the leaders explained their support and will for the embodiment of ESDP in accordance with the declaration of St. Malo Summit that separates EU forces from NATO (Presidency Conclusions, Cologne 1999, p.40). Additionally, it was aimed to move the functions of WEU, which will be needed to fulfill its obligations to the EU by the end of 2000 (Presidency Conclusions, Cologne 1999, p.41). At the Helsinki Summit in December 1999, the structure of crisis management among EU member states was attempted. The ESDP project has been further developed based on the general principles adopted at the Cologne Summit and the main features of the ESDP have been identified. The EU leaders once again clearly stated their determination to launch military operations, improve their implementation mechanisms and make independent decisions in international crisis, where NATO is not involved (Howorth, 2000, p.23). Hence, at the Helsinki Summit, the EU's commitment to the development of an autonomous capacity with the creation of a power of 50-60 thousand people with a capacity to stay until 2003 was expressed (Helsinki Presidency Conclusions, 1999). Thus, EU could involve in

international crisis which NATO did not fully participate in and the military force could meet within 60 days to carry out the operations within the scope of the Petersberg Missions and within the scope of the task area (Helsinki Presidency Conclusions, 1999). By June 2000 at Feira Summit, the EU leaders decided upon the operational and tactical level principles, from the definition of the structures and possibilities required for the resolution of military and civilian aspects, to their objectives, to the options to be applied in different stages of crisis management and solution (Feira Presidency Conclusions, 2000). Meanwhile, issues such as separation of conflicting parties, conflict prevention, humanitarian aid, and the evacuation of EU citizens from war-zones have been decided to be developed within the scope of various scenarios (Feira Presidency Conclusions, 2000).

At the Nice Summit in December 1999, arrangements were made for the establishment of an "Emergency Response Force." It was envisaged to transfer the operational activities of WEU to the EU and the concept of "strengthened cooperation" was adopted in the field of CFSP (Nice Presidency Conclusions, 2000). Other significant point that reached at this summit was that processes will be carried out under the leadership of the EU to evaluate the majority of WEU's resources and services within the scope of EU activities, to consolidate the new structures in the Council, to strengthen, deepen and regularize the dialogue between NATO and the EU (Nice Presidency Conclusions, 2000). Another prominent step towards to strengthen the ESDP was taken in the EU Summit held in Seville in June 2002. Here, it was expressed that the EU is in a position to undertake crisis management tasks to prevent conflicts in the long term, to develop dialogue with third countries within the scope of the fight against terrorism, control of arms and the prevention of spread and to increase their capacity to respond effectively to terrorist threats (Seville Presidency Conclusions, 2002). One year later, at the Thessaloniki Summit in 2003, the subjects of preventing conflicts, spreading justice, protecting stability and peace were involved among the priorities of the European Union and a "European Union Security Strategy" was foreseen to be created until the end of 2003 (Thessaloniki Presidency Conclusions, 2003). Importantly, as envisaged, the idea of establishing a "European Defence Agency" to strengthen technological and industrial cooperation in the scope of military readiness was brought to the agenda and as of the end of 2004, the agency was established (Thessaloniki Presidency Conclusions, 2003). In accordance with

the case studies in following chapters, it is significant to note that in this summit, EU leaders agreed upon the importance on the Western Balkans in terms of its closeness. It is clearly stated that “the future of the Western Balkans is within the EU” (Thessaloniki Presidency Conclusions, 2003).

In other respect, the EU members did not have a certain attitude in the context of ESDP in 1999 when the Kosovo crisis peaked, since 2003 they had the opportunity to organize military and civilian operations within the framework of the ESDP in the Balkans and outside the European continent. With the 2007 Lisbon (Reform) Agreement, the provisions related to ESDP were included in the Union treaties for the first time and the institutional structure, decision-making method and the ability to carry out operations have been completed to a great extent until 2008 (Zhussipbek, 2009, p.72). With the Lisbon Treaty, it was aimed to accelerate the political cooperation of the EU and to transform it into common security in the future, with the efforts of structuring ESDP in the light of new threats and subsequently transforming the ESDP into the CSDP (Zhussipbek, 2009, p.74). The dimensions of the EU's understanding of security have been recorded under official terms and the provisions related to common defence policies are included for the first time within the framework of this EU reform treaty (Schmidt, 2009, p.240).

The Lisbon (Reform) Treaty is related to how the EU will define itself in the future. In addition to developments in the institutional structure of the EU, the Lisbon Treaty brought some innovations needed for the Union to become a prominent security actor. At the summit held in Lisbon, it is seen that the EU, which has a dynamic structure, has entered a new process. The important changes of this treaty which resulted with it to be named as “reform” and helped the Union on its future to become a global actor are as follows; the agreement will not qualify as a “constitutional”, there will be no symbols such as state connotative flags, anthems in the agreement, national veto power will be protected in the fields of foreign affairs, defence, financial issues, social security and culture, the EU President will be elected for two and a half years and will replace the term president and the High Representative Office of Security Policy will be established, the EU Commission will shrink as of 2014, its members will be selected by rotation and

indirect reference to the Copenhagen Criteria will be ensured in the text (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007). Important to note that, the CSDP could turn into a common defence if the EU summit decides unanimously. In this case, the summit advises member states to adopt a resolution to this effect in accordance with their own constitutional rules (Akdemir, 2012, p.55).

Other significant changes for CSDP in Lisbon Treaty:

- Extension of Petersberg Missions
- Condition of Solidarity
- Mutual Aid Policy Among Member States
- Strengthened Cooperation Principle
- Permanent Structured Cooperation Principle
- European Defence Agency (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007).

The developments brought by the Lisbon Treaty affected CSDP in two main dimensions. The first is the overall alignment of the institutional structure (facilitating the relations between the Council and the Commission in terms of crisis management issues). The second one is the provisions of the Treaty that design the development of CSDP (Özdal, 2013, p.187). Therefore, it is clear that the EU's institutionalization efforts, which started with Lisbon, continued later and took important steps by developing new security policies. The new CSDP created by the Lisbon Treaty, provides the EU the capacity to make collective decisions with regional security including the use of military force to organize crisis management, peacekeeping and peace-building operations if necessary and as a project that relies on the consultation mechanism with non-member European states and as a structure with special contribution from the EU to the security alliances (Zhussipbek, 2009, p.73). The Union might use these opportunities in missions external the Union to ensure peace in a harmony with the principles contained in the UN Charter, to prevent conflicts and to strengthen international security. In the Article 42 it is stated that *"the Union may use military and civilian facilities during the execution of these duties; joint disarmament operations, humanitarian missions and rescue missions, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peacekeeping duties in conflict with peace in the aftermath of the re- establishment of stability for measures and*

operations, including tasks of combat forces in crisis management” (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007).

From another point of view, the 11 September terrorist attacks in USA also have revealed the idea that the EU should ensure the security of Europe independent from NATO and the United States (Efe, 2007, p.18). These thought-based security policies were mainly developed by the summit decisions as stated above. After establishing tools for intervening in conflicts, the EU started to contribute to both regional and global security by its police mission firstly in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2003 (Efe, 2007, p.19). The very first military operation of the CSDP, with NATO taking on the peacekeeping mission, was in Macedonia and the Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was entirely within EU means (Efe, 2007, p.20). However, the EU's biggest problem with operating new security policies for new threats is that it does not have a strong shared security understanding in militaristic terms. In this context, it is observed that the EU has re-articulated its discussions on adopting an army in recent years. As the European security concept, prepared by then High Representative Javier Solana, has indicated, *“we need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention. We should think particularly of operations involving both military and civilian capabilities. This is an area where we could add particular value.”* (Barnier, 2005, p.7).

The reason that pushed the EU to seek new security policies is its closeness to crisis regions and the desire to have a more active role in these regions. Because the Balkans, which have returned to a complete crisis with the dissolution of Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe, whose future remains uncertain under political instability, is in the middle of the Europe. These regions contains many security problems including hot conflicts right after the end of the Cold War. The EU's inability to integrate effectively in the Kosovo Crisis, and its inability to interfere with humanitarian aims in the post-Kosovo period pushed the EU leaders to act considerably on the CSDP (Clément, 2001, p.290). From now on, the defence and militaristic matters have started to be seen on the agenda of the EU. As it is well known, the EU does not have an army. Under the CSDP, ad hoc forces has been created for joint disarmament and rescue operations, military assistance, conflict

resolution, crisis intervention, peace establishment and post-conflict stability to make the EU to play an active role in conflict resolution. Accordingly, in the following chapter the EU's role in Northern Ireland peace process will be analyzed to provide a concrete example for its role as a third party in the resolution process of this particular conflict.



4. CHAPTER: THE NORTHERN IRELAND CASE AND THE ROLE OF THE EU IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT

4.1. BACKGROUND OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONFLICT

Figure 1. Geopolitical Location of Northern Ireland



Source: European Commission; Northern Ireland Statistic and Research Agency

The Northern Ireland conflict stemmed from the political and ethnic incompatibilities between the Roman Catholics and Protestants which divided the land of Ireland in two parts as seen on the map above (Kennedy, 2000, p.152). Although there has been some blurred sources on the time of the beginning of the conflict, it is highly accepted that the conflict dates back to the earliest 17th century. The territory of the island was filled with British colonists and the first step of the Ulster Plantation (an organized colonization of the place called Ulster by people from Great Britain) was taken (Neumann, 2003, p.10). Thus, a group with a different culture and understanding from the people of the island started to live in the occupied lands. The radicalization of these groups surrounded by Catholics and the tension between them was inevitable. Dating back to the accepted roots of the conflict, the British Protestants gave throne to the Dutch Protestant King William of Orange to rule England and Scotland in the late 17th century (Neumann, 2003, p.11). When William III came to Britain, Catholic King James II was proscribed and then fled to Ireland. King William III prevailed against James II at the Battle of Boyne (1690) in

Ireland and since then protestant rulers have become dominant in Britain which means a clear disadvantage to the Catholics. By 18th century, the Irish Parliament was abrogated by the Act of Union in 1801 and the whole of Ireland became a part of the Kingdom (Neumann, 2003, p.12). In earliest 19th century, on the way of seeking for a voice in political system in the Kingdom, Catholics have established the political party Sinn Féin aiming to establish an independent Ireland (Smithey, 2011, p.8). The British wanted to keep Ireland under British rule in the economic and political fields by positioning the Protestants on the island. It was also aimed to assimilate the people in the Catholic sect to spread the Protestant sect. In the studies carried out for these purposes, the Protestants were privileged enriched in the fertile and large soils they obtained (Neumann, 2003, p.15). Catholics, on the other hand, started to become poorer over time. In addition to Catholic's socio-economic losses, Catholics were also removed from the parliament. Furthermore, it was not easy for them to work in public institutions due to the structural discrimination (Laçiner, 2001, p. 8).

The problem in Ireland has caused great repercussions in Britain, which has become a world empire at that time. Different ways to solve the problem have started to be sought. The Liberal Party, which was in power in 1886, adopted a new law (Neumann, 2003, p.20). Accordingly, Ireland has become autonomous in domestic affairs but it continued to depend on the United Kingdom (UK) on matters affecting its security and relations with other countries. The Irish people accepted these developments as a betrayal towards them (Laçiner, 2001, p.9). They started anti-British armed struggle with the Irish Citizen Army and Irish Republican Brotherhood organizations (Smithey, 2011, p.54). It was quite violent and brutal for the British to suppress nationalists revolts at that time. One of the most known suppress happened in the Easter of 1916 that Irish nationalists were severely defeated (Laçiner, 2001, p.10). As a result, public support for radical organizations has increased. Individuals who felt threatened wanted to find a branch to hold on to. As a result of the increasing tendency of violence and search of the Catholics to lean on, Sinn Fein took a more radical appearance and continued its work only on the road of Irish domination. The establishment of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) also coincides with this period namely 1910s (Smithey, 2011, p.55). As a counter action, protestants have also been armed against the Catholics and took action for unity with England under the

name of Protestant Ulster Volunteer Force (Laçiner, 2001, p.13). For these reasons, tensions and conflicts between Catholics and Protestants that will last for many years have become inevitable. In this way, the British made Ireland colonial and these pressures gave birth to Irish nationalism on the island. Since then, nationalists seeing themselves as Irish-Roman Catholic have been seeking a way out of being a part of UK. As a counter-attack to nationalist, the British-Protestants also regarding themselves unionists have been supporting the stay as a part of the UK. After having such a clear socio-political division on the same land tensions resulting with casualties were foreseeable to a great extent (Neumann, 2003, p.14).

Nationalists or Republicans, who see themselves as Irish and Roman Catholic, want to secede from the UK while the Unionists or Loyalists, who see themselves as British and Protestant, prefer to stay as a part of the UK (Smithey, 2011, p.56). Having several tensions both in militaristic and political terms, Ireland was divided into two parts with the Government of Ireland Act in 1920 that resulted as six Protestant Ulster provinces that established the Northern Ireland and 26 Catholic provinces that constructed the Southern part of the Ireland (Government of Ireland Act, 1920). This partition confirmed by the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921 which gave a legal ground for Irish to have self-government. Right after this treaty, the Irish Free State was created in 1922 and then it became the Republic of Ireland in 1948 (Smithey, 2011, p.56). When it became the Republic of Ireland in 1949, Ireland abandoned the Commonwealth. Thus the British Kings' power over Ireland, even on paper, has ended. After this date, the parliament in Northern Ireland was totally subject to the control of the Protestants and a conflict between the Catholics/Nationalists and Protestants /Unionists remained in the North (Smithey, 2011, p.56). Since Protestants have a small majority and are supported by London, it was not possible to distribute the sources fairly in the economy and other areas of life, which further increased the tension and the causes of conflict between the two communities (Gillespie, 2009, p. 230). In fact, after Southern Ireland broke all ties with Britain in 1949, a new period of struggle began in the Irish issue and turned into a challenge that under the leadership of IRA which was also under the shadow of Sinn Fein advocating the independence of Northern Ireland as well as the unity of it with the Republic of Ireland in the South. The fact that the organization having an armed structure

made it compulsory to cooperate with a legal organization when it sought support in social matters. The most suitable option for this was Sinn Fein.

By 1960s, the rising civil right movements of Catholics started to have the full agenda of both sides. The reactions to those movements were sometimes violent and harsh made by Protestants. After experiencing the failure of trying most of the ways for having equal rights, Catholics started to believe that equality under the current circumstances is impossible and the only way left to have equality shall be under the government of united Ireland (Smithey, 2011, p.62). As the Catholics had a party (Sinn Fein) in political scenes as a representative, they also had the major supporter of the use of violence (IRA) for uniting with Ireland. After the rising of the amounts of public demonstration of Catholics, more people needed IRA to protect themselves from violent interventions of Protestants. In fact, both the Unionists and the Nationalists had paramilitary organizations. The IRA's counter-attack movements were under its Unionists counterparts which were the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) (Gillespie, 2009, p. 200). It had been IRA confronting with the British troops when they arrived to demonstration to suppress it. These hard tensions turned out to be more bloody by the 1970s and those times called "Troubles" until the eventual agreement in 1998 (Gillespie, 2009, p.37). One of the well-known of these bloody tensions is called "Bloody Sunday" when 13 unarmed Catholic men were killed during a public demonstration in 1972 in Derry a city in Northern Ireland and with this occasion international community started to give attention to Northern Ireland matter (Neumann, 2003, p.24). Moreover that attention was accelerated after one year by the joining of Ireland and UK into the European Economic Community. Having more international relations by time, the British side started to take external initiatives into consideration because of the existence of the violence. As a result of these external initiatives the British and Irish governments signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 which was also supported by the United Nations (Gillespie, 2009, p.22). It was accepted that any possible change in the status of Northern Ireland could only happen with the approval of the majority of the people in Northern Ireland (Smithey, 2011, p.60). In the end, although the agreement was supported by UK and Republic of Ireland, it was refused by the Unionists claiming that this agreement would be an obvious acceptance of the partition. As a matter of fact, this agreement had been regarded as a

promising development towards a solution to the conflict. In 1993, the British government accompanied by the EU support, was having shuttle diplomacy with Sinn Fein/IRA on the possible ways to end the violence (Hussain, 2013, p.43). As an outcome of this diplomacy, Irish and British authorities agreed to the Downing Street Declaration. Here, the governments dealt on that a decision on the future of the possible Union have to be ratified by referenda which should be held both in north and south and the eventual result may be the self-determination of the people of the island (Cox et al., 2006, p.190).

On the other hand, the British government made significant undertakings to Sinn Fein including constabulary reform, worker's equality, transfer of Unionist prisoners from England to the Republic of Ireland (The Downing Street Declaration, 1993). By the middle of 1994, IRA agreed upon a ceasefire after being convinced by British commitments stating that; *"Recognizing the potential of the current situation and in order to enhance the democratic process and underlying our definitive commitment to its success, the leadership of the IRA have decided that as of midnight August 31, there will be a complete cessation of military operations. All our units have been instructed accordingly."* (IRA Ceasefire Statement, 1994). After this ceasefire, negotiations continued until to reach a satisfying agreement. Thus, on 10 April 1998 after 48 hours of hectic negotiations, parties eventually signed the Good Friday Agreement which is also called as Belfast Agreement (Neumann, 2003, p.162). As it was already accepted in Downing Street Declaration, the people decided to accept the agreement by referenda. Despite the reluctance of many Unionists who saw the agreement as an ignorance to terrorism and the reluctance of some Republicans believing that their goals of a united Ireland would be slowly paralyzed, the people in Northern Ireland with a percentage of 71% and Republic of Ireland 94% voted for "yes" to the agreement (Cox et al., 2006, p.110). Thus, it would not be so wrong to claim that the armed period has ended and the peace process has begun on the island from then on.

4.2. THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

Signed by the British and Irish authorities on 10 April 1998, the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) has provided a scope for settlement in Northern Ireland on the base of power sharing mechanism between Unionists and Nationalists. Hence it has been

representing a culmination of peace process on the island (Cox et al., 2006, p.115). The Agreement has been based on a mixed power-sharing mechanism between Protestants and Catholics consisting of three main parts. In the first strand, which is on democratic institutions in Northern Ireland, items compiling the interaction and management style of the communities in Northern Ireland was stressed. Here, the Agreement categorizes the conflict in terms of a division between Unionist and Nationalist identities. This is an obvious evident in the Northern Ireland Assembly where all the parties identify themselves as either Unionist or Nationalist to have full voting privileges (GFA, 1998, Strand 1). This strand aimed to establish a parliament in Northern Ireland and to transfer the legislature and executive on the island. It was aimed to include the Prime Minister and one of his deputies to be from each side. One of the issues in the first column was the operation of equalizing representation of two groups in the public and private fields within the channels where the executive was provided (GFA, 1998, Strand 1). In the second part which is on North/South Ministerial Council (which concerns relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland) there were items compelling the direct relations between Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland (GFA, 1998, Strand 2). The main task of this Council is to establish and develop the relations between the North and South of the Irish island however, the most striking feature of this institution is that the two are mutually dependent with the Northern Irish Assembly (GFA, 1998, Strand 2). As long as one is active, the other will be able to operate as well. In the part of British - Irish Council and British - Irish Intergovernmental Conference, which is the last section, there are tools constructing the Northern Ireland-Britain relationship network (GFA, 1998, Strand 3). It relates the establishment and maintenance of mutual relations between Ireland and Northern Ireland. Britain and Ireland have established this council with the guarantee of cooperation in all areas and also launched the Intergovernmental Cooperation Conference to be based on solidarity in related affairs (GFA, 1998, Strand 3).

The first principal of the Agreement on internal regulation has been veto power. Every congregation reserves the right to veto the issues decided within the authority of the executive, so that the policies to be implemented in the region will be taken unanimously and cooperation has made compulsory (GFA, 1998, Strand 1). The second envisaged principle has been the proportionality. This principle requires representation of

communities both in public and private by being based on the principle of respect for equality and diversity and the same principle regulates the electoral system (GFA, 1998, Strand 1). And the third principle the Agreement was based on has been the joint responsibility. The aim here was to integrate the two communities throughout shared responsibility. To perform this principle, authority sharing was to be established for both communities at the head of the government representing a regional Prime Minister (first minister) and a regional Prime Minister assistant (deputy of first minister) with the condition of each one shall be from different community (GFA, 1998, Strand 1). Having all these principles, the Good Friday Agreement has provided an acceptance and avenue of different national and cultural identities on the same land rather than promoting their dismissal from the social, economic and political life. Thus, the Agreement has constructed a new constitutional and institutional context in which the border is not regarded as a concrete partition between British and Irish but rather a symbolic division between Unionist and Nationalist groups. The two groups in Northern Ireland have been attributed with either Irish or British nationality and the settlement has been targeted with collaboration between the Irish and British states. Importantly, in the Good Friday Agreement the British and Irish governments acknowledged the recognition of the majority decision in Northern Ireland about the status of Northern Ireland which would require the consent of the citizens, as this decision is closely related to either to union with South or loyalty to the Britain (GFA, 1998, Strand 1). Regardless of the way the majority uses the right to self-determination, the government in power in the region will respect the equality of the identities and traditions, its civil, social, economic, political and cultural rights, and there shall not be discrimination among citizens (GFA, 1998, Strand 1). Thus, the agreement gave the authority to people to direct the fate of themselves in Northern Ireland. That means that Northern Irish people could decide whether to continue loyalty to the UK or to unite with the Republic of Ireland.

Apart from these institutional and constitutional premises, the Agreement also involved the disarmament of all paramilitary arms within two years and had provisions for policing and justice, human rights, British Government security normalization and the emancipation of prisoners within two year (GFA, 1998). Therefore freedom of thought, freedom of religion and worship, demanding constitutional changes through peaceful and

legal means, freedom of abode, ensuring equal opportunities in all social and economic activities, prohibition of sectarian harassment, regardless of disability and the full and equal participation of women in politics have been also specifically expressed (Deutsch et al., 2006, p.8). All parties accepted these civil rights of each congregation member with mutual respect. Moreover, the Agreement included the principle of respect for the autonomy and cultural equality of each community and prepared the ground for protecting and maintaining the cultural structure of each community. In the end, one of the most prominent features of the Good Friday Agreement is that Northern Ireland's status is based on the consent of the people of the Irish island on the basis of the principle of consent (Deutsch et al., 2006, p.10). Although this principle has been adopted by Britain since 1970s, the international recognition of GFA is an important feature in terms of international sovereignty debates on the island (Cox et al., 2006, p.187). Thus, it is clearly seen that, the acceptance of border changes has not only been with the consent of the states but also with the consent of the citizens. In the aftermath of the Agreement, there were some low intensity conflicts. For instance, although the negotiations started, the Northern Irish Assembly was suspended in 2000, due to the noncompliance of IRA with its disarmament statements and this was accepted as an obstacle by the Unionists (Gillespie, 2009, p.44). Although IRA started to clarify his stance in releasing arms in his relations with the disarmament commission after the 2001 elections, its failure to explain its disarmament in political terms in Northern Ireland was seen far from becoming clear. This ambiguity was stated by then Prime Minister of England Tony Blair as follows; *"Sometimes [...] they can end up being an obstacle to progress. But I think everybody knows what we are saying [...] That the process of transition is over. We can not any longer have a situation where people are half-in and half-out [...]"* (The Irish Times, 2002).

On the other hand, violent actions on the island decreased relatively after the GFA comparing with the past. Despite all the disruptions in this period, efforts by both local and central authorities to rebuild trust between the two communities were important steps in reforming Northern Irish policy. As an example to that, human rights developments especially in which more concrete steps have been taken to restore trust between the two communities, were remarkable. Eventually, IRA announced that it released arms in July

2005 and had the expected step on disarmament (Gillespie, 2009, p.48). An important reason behind the inability of IRA to gradually disarm after the Agreement but not to make this decision until 2005, was the idea that disarmament would be accepted as a defeat for the Republicans (Deutsch et al., 2006, p.11). Although IRA did not achieve its main objectives, it left the weapon by accepting to achieve these objectives peacefully and emphasizing that this was a demand coming from the inside of the community provided by the Agreement. This has been regarded as an extremely important historical step for Irish people. On the other hand, withdrawing the British army from the region in August 2007 also made a significant contribution to the conflict resolution process in Northern Ireland (Smithey, 2011, p.66).

From one point, it has been claimed that, the Good Friday Agreement has not been accomplished in a way that completely eliminating the core problems of Northern Ireland issue. One can see this in Sinn Fein's party manifesto demanding the integration of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland (Sinn Fein Manifesto, 2020, p.11). The Ulster Unionists Party, on the contrary, set a political path for Northern Ireland to be linked to Britain (Ulster Unionist Party Manifesto, 2019, p.4). Considering the new administrative mechanism established in Strand 1 by the Agreement, from the perspective of the Nationalists, it provides a far more advantageous framework than the regime before 1972, meaning that the Unionists are completely disengaged from the majority regime. On the other hand, the Agreement includes the article that Ireland will give up its territorial claims on Northern Ireland and reflect this principle in its constitution. Although the aim for united Ireland does not eliminate its purpose with this change, it will aim to achieve this goal through consent and peace-centered means (Morgan, 2000, p.25). While this change shows that Ireland accepts Northern Ireland's existing status based on the approval of the majority, on the other hand it will be an important step taken to eliminate the doubts of the Unionists and ensure mutual trust. The signing of the Agreement by the Northern Irish Nationalists also showed that although the goal of the United Ireland was not abandoned, the Nationalists agreed to achieve this goal through peaceful means and accepted the new Northern Irish institutions to be established with the existing status. Broadly speaking, the signing of the Good Friday Agreement has been a historical day for Northern Ireland. While the British and Irish Prime Ministers at the

time were shaking hands, Northern Irish Protestants and Catholics were opening a new page after the 30 years long conflict that costed thousands of lives. With this Agreement, the parties agreed that the people of Northern Ireland would decide on the future of Northern Ireland. Northern Irish people would have the opportunity to carry passports, including British, Irish or both. The Republic of Ireland would also give up its demand for land from Northern Ireland. In contrast, the treaty included the right of Northern Ireland to unite with the Republic of Ireland with the approval of the people. In Britain, the right “Self Determination” was recognized across the Irish island and that would pave the way for the federal government for the Republic of Ireland (Morgan, 2000, p.115). The Agreement has openly stressed the issues on power sharing in management, proportion in elections, social autonomy, equality, minority rights as well as veto power of the parties. At the end it has been accepted that the line of inclusion and exclusion drawn in a territorial border has symbolic, social and economic as well as political importance (Kennedy, 1999, p.18).

4.3. NORTHERN IRELAND’S POLITICAL APPEARANCE and PEACE PROCESS AFTER THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

Right after the referendums in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in 1998, the UK Parliament assigned a bunch of political powers to national parliaments of Northern Ireland. In the application of GFA, the term “devolution” has been based on the British involvements of the Northern Ireland’s political matters (UK Government, 1998). Basically, it means that local politicians have important decisions on how Northern Ireland is governed which leads another meaning that it as a process of decentralization in which local elements are better recognized in decision making. In accordance with it, the policy areas in Northern Ireland has been separated in three categories as transferred matters, reserved matters and excepted matters (UK Government, 1998).

As it was the statement in GFA, there have been the Northern Ireland Office which is responsible for viewing the Northern Ireland devolution process. Besides, one of the prominent duty of the Office is to represent Northern Ireland’s interests at UK government and vice versa (UK Government, 1998). On the other hand, there is the Northern Ireland Assembly that is regarded as a significant institution of the devolved Northern Ireland

government. Here, the representatives negotiate and enact laws on important issues that affect people in Northern Ireland (UK Government, Overview on Northern Ireland). Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) consists of 90 people having backgrounds in different political parties and a small number of independent MLAs. (UK Government , Overview on Northern Ireland). As it is mentioned above, each MLA must express him/herself as 'Unionist', 'Nationalist' or 'Other'. The Northern Ireland Assembly has full legislative powers also called as “transferred matter” some economic and social matters can be given as an example such as housing, local government, economic development, pensions and child support (UK Government , Overview on Northern Ireland). In theory, the Assembly may also legislate in terms of “reserved” category issues such as broadcasting, import and export controls, financial services, firearms and explosives. These are some of the issues where legislative authority generally stays with Westminster, but also the Northern Ireland Assembly can legislate with the consent of the Secretary of State (UK Government, Overview on Northern Ireland). And the ”excepted” matters which are only in the hand of UK government due to the national importance as follows; royal succession, international relations, defence and armed forces, nationality, immigration and asylum, elections and national security (UK Government, Overview on Northern Ireland). In normal cases, these issues are subject to national importance of UK in Northern Ireland and remain the responsibility of UK government and the Northern Ireland Assembly does not have right to legislate on these matters. And the last but not least, there have been the Northern Ireland Executive branch running the devolved government in Northern Ireland for the sake of the Assembly.

Regarding the brief information above mentioned on the Northern Ireland domestic political implications, it is fair to claim that the Northern Ireland issue has gained a striking importance for both Ireland and UK. From one hand, there is the cooperation of these two states on inner political institutions of Northern Ireland while there have been the questions on the sovereignty of Northern Ireland regarding the contradictions of what might be the political stance of it in international avenue either a free and sovereign state or an autonomous state linked to another state in practice. Between these two choices, the international relations scholars have tendency to support the latter one taking the UK’s governance inside of Northern Ireland into consideration.

For the implementations of peace process on the basis of society, the point reached with the peace process is the best possible one amongst the other choices for many scholars. The implementation of peace at the agreement level, is a good start for organizing negotiations without conflict. Above all, the GFA has joint oversight by the British and Irish governments, including political parties that have been active in the conflict. Another important point for the agreement is that it has been based on a political and constitutional structure through a detailed implementation process. This agreement includes an extensive delegation of powers through the formation of a comprehensive and power-sharing Northern Irish parliament. Accordingly, the constitutional situation of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom has been reaffirmed and the constitution of the Irish Republic has been regulated by the exclusion of its regional demand on Northern Ireland (Fitzduff and Williams, 2007, p.12). As it is stated above, British and Irish Council and North-South Ministerial Council enable to make cooperation between the British-Irish governments. Infact, this institutional ground for the relation has consolidated the peace settlement to a certain extent. On the other hand, the durability of this agreement stems from the broad public support (Fitzduff and Williams, 2009, p.14). Along with the peace process, there is a significant decrease in activities involving sectarian violence. It was observed that communication between people from different backgrounds increased while their anxiety and fear decreased. It is noteworthy that, despite the actions that interrupted the process, the violence events did not erupt on a large scale and that both sides did not go to war. Despite the ongoing challenges, the peace process in Northern Ireland has restored the sense of peace and regularity that has been missed by the region (Neumann, 2003, p.162).

Contrary to these optimistic views on the peace process, there have been some scholars claiming that the phenomenon of peace in Northern Ireland is fragile and contains risks (Fitzduff and Williams, 2009, p.25). These above mentioned improvements in the security situation within the peace process involves difficulties in the full implementation of the agreement. Although it is sometimes invisible, there is the danger that the established structural, traditional and cultural distinctions that cause the conflicts will continue and strengthen the existing social distances (Kennedy, 1999, p.122). The divisions between the Protestant and Catholic community can be seen in various examples from individuals

of these communities when attending different schools and worshipping in different churches. This separation between the two communities causes the borders to be drawn accompanied with physical and emotional distances (Smithey, 2011, p.65). In this case, one of the biggest mistakes is that the perception on that the peace process was built from top to bottom. Therefore, fair to assert that the peace process can only succeed by creating a common understanding of culture and history without excluding any part of the society. In order to overcome the factors that can disrupt the process, the Northern Irish parliament must cope with these differentiated weaknesses in the society. Additionally, framing Northern Ireland situation as a border conflict has also meant that the resolution of this conflict must be multidimensional. Clearly, both states Ireland and Britain as well as both communities Unionist and Nationalists must integrate with the peace process.

From the international aspect of the conflict, the EU's approach to this conflict gained a momentum right after the memberships of the conflicting parties in the EEC in 1973. From then, the EU's support has been based on bilateral cooperation of British and Irish people and politics as well as its other peaceful means such as the application of the third party/mediator to the conflict. In the following chapter the EU's role as a mediator in the peace process of Northern Ireland will be analyzed in a broad sense.

4.4. THE EU'S INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE PROCESS

In 1973, when the Republic of Ireland and Britain has become members of the then European Economic Community, the Community's involvement in Northern Ireland issue has started to gain a momentum. Due to this membership, the Unionists and Protestants had another option to identify themselves which is "European" gathering the two communities under the same identity rather than the two separatists one caused conflicts on the island (Carlsnaes et al., 2004, p.205). In the aftermath of the membership of these two states, the Community started to be seen as an example of reconciliation amongst conflicted parties. As the Northern Irish politician John Hume describes; *"I believe that in the context of a new Europe in which sovereignty has changed its meaning and whose very existence is a proclamation that independent nation state is out of date, it should be easier for us to resolve our differences"* (Hume, 2000, p.148). Clear from these

statements that the EU's contributions to this peace process might be regarded as an existential example of itself. With the membership of Ireland, the EU aimed to build an order in Ireland on common identity, employment and economic infrastructure (Hayward, 2012, p.440). Therefore, it can be stated that the Republic of Ireland has become a country that keeps up with globalization with that membership.

As a result of the Union's relations with the Republic of Ireland, it has become easier to take a positive initiative in the solution of the problem. For doing this, the EU tried to open communication channels between the parties for the solution of the conflict from societal environment to the political sphere. While dealing with this problem, the EU gave importance to not interfere with the UK's internal affairs. Having a strong voice in this conflict resolution, the creation of financial resources of the Union evolved into the negotiation process and this has strengthened reforms (Hayward, 2012, p.441). Especially, thanks to the opportunities provided by the Maastricht Treaty, the possibility of the EU to respond more actively to the Northern Ireland issue emerged more profoundly. But before gaining momentum in 1990s, the EU's involvement started in late 1970s right after the membership of the conflicted parties. In this context, the very well-known of the EU'S earliest involvement in the Northern Ireland issue was made by the European Parliament's work on Haagerup Report in 1984. The report regarded the conflict as a clash of national identities and stated the EU's role as advocating the UK and Ireland in their endeavors to have peaceful initiatives in Northern Ireland (Haagerup Report, 1984).

4.4.1. The Haagerup Report

The Haagerup Report is the very first initiative of the EU in the resolution of Northern Ireland conflict. It was commissioned by the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament (Haagerup Report, 1984, p.3). The Haagerup Report has been based on the importance of collaboration between the Irish and British people accompanied with an influence in the constitutional position of Northern Ireland (Haagerup Report, 2012, p.7). It was stated in the report that the root causes of the situation were the contending national identities which is on two nations that do not trust each other. The Union's approach to the conflict has been built upon the understanding that, the conflict caused by the

historical enmity between British and Irish identities as it is stated ; [...] *aware that the conflict, deeply rooted in British-Irish history, is less one of religious strife than of conflicting national identities in Northern Ireland* (Haagerup Report, 1984, p.7). Accordingly, it was also stated that the conflict of these two national identities as well as culture shows that the history of Irish and British on the island has constructed upon Irish rebellion in one hand and the British suppression in the other (Haagerup Report, 1984, p.18). As a start to make an end to this historical challenges, the report envisaged that the British and Irish governments must use their authority on the two groups in Northern Ireland to create a political system that will hold the identity of the two communities and share the responsibilities of governments equally, thereby supporting ideals and the concept and tolerance to minorities on the island which could be supported (Haagerup Report, 1984, p.9). While having such cooperation, the report has given importance to the way of the cooperation that should be built by intergovernmental agreement as well as with the consent of the people in Northern Ireland (Haagerup Report, 1984, p.72). As an application of this recommendation, the political system of the Northern Ireland was made in a cooperative way as stated in the previous subtitle.

The EU has seen the resolution of the conflict in Northern Ireland as affiliated on the peaceful and democratic expression of the national identities which are the core factors in peace process (Hume, 2000, p.63). Being as an embodiment of a peace project, the EU stressed on the report that the tolerance on diversity must be applicable as it states (Haagerup Report, 1984, p.74). What the EU could contribute was to diminish the conflictual nature of national differences which can be relatively easier regarding the shared economic needs and political interests as the EU itself is a living example of mutual understanding and toleration (Hayward, 2004, p.10). For instance, GFA's three strands model, with its multidimensional political institutions in Northern Ireland, on the island of Ireland, and between Ireland and the United Kingdom was to a significant degree inspired by the context of European integration (Hayward, 2004, p.12). In accordance with that perspective of the Union, it was also advised in the report the integrity of the clashing national identities and an establishment of a situation where it is helpful to express these differentiated factors would be a consolidating factor. Besides, the adoption of the Northern Irish Assembly's European Parliament style decision-making method also

helped to reduce the concerns of Northern Irish nationalists they had on representation of themselves in the parliament (Hayward, 2004, p.10).

From another point, regarding the institutional recognition of cross-border cooperation and the Republic's significance, the "strands" model of GFA represents carrying out the Haagerup's advice for the creation of joint British-Irish cooperation in specific fields from politics to society. Moreover, the report continued to foresee some profound developments such as common responsibilities to the Irish people, joint denouncement of all terrorist activities by both governments, the rapid withdrawal of British military forces, the considerable decrease of police forces and the resumption of normal judicial procedures (Haagerup Report, 1984, p.74). The Union perceived the solution of the problem in Northern Ireland not as the formatting of a European identity or the formatting of a Northern Irish identity, but as the formatting of new regulations that contain different national identities.

Briefly, the suggestions made in the Haagerup Report were, to be prepared to take more burden for the economic and social development of Northern Ireland, an integrated plan for the development of Northern Ireland in line with general EU objectives, to promote EU funding for the projects in Northern Ireland to make sure that both communities can be aware of the benefits of the membership, to cooperate in between the authorities, to support and appreciate of the work exercised by the British-Irish Intergovernmental Council, to consolidate more British-Irish relation in using resources on both sides of the border to create employment, to give importance to the Economic and Social Committee work for border cooperation projects, to encourage more balanced trade between the two regions of Ireland and promote the existing Republic of Ireland - Britain cooperation in the fight against terrorism (Haagerup Report, 1984).

The EU's effort for the conflict in Northern Ireland has been undergone by mostly its normative power. Especially after the membership of these two conflicting parties to the Union, the EU's attention and action has increased constantly. With the capabilities of the EU at that time it used all the utilities it had rather than refraining from any initiative. By time, as the EU has developed its competencies with some prominent deepening policies

as CFSP, its involvement to the Northern Ireland peace process as a mediator has deepened simultaneously. In this context, the instruments of the EU in this peace process should be analyzed to contribute a clear sense to this chapter.

4.4.2. PEACE Programmes of the EU in Northern Ireland

By the end of 1994, the European Commission as a body promoting the EU's interest by proposing policies, started to seek for practical ways for the EU to consolidate the transition of the region to a more peaceful as well as stable one. After a wide consultation of conflicting parties both in region and among European institutions, the Commission adopted Guidelines for the Initiative in May 1995 and established the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland in July 1995 with an agreement with the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland (EU Operational Programme, 2000, p.5). The first period of this programme was set up for 5 years between 1995-1999 as a PEACE I Programme. With this programme, a bottom-up approach was applied by providing utilities for people to attend in decision making process in Northern Ireland. This approach was built upon to a range of projects supporting victims of the conflicts, young people, urban projects and embracing the ethnic diversity of society (EU Operational Programme, 2000, p.4). Therefore as a first materialistic involvement of the Union, the PEACE I Programme has been attributed as a unique approach gathering groups under the shelter of European funding (EU Operational Programme, 2000, p.6). Due to the one of the results of the conflicts, the communities isolated themselves from their natural environment. Here, this programme succeed to reverse this situation by providing recreative utilities to the border towns as well as villages. This programme was important also in establishing an expertise for the delivery of the Fund for the effective usage of it in cross border cooperation (EU Operational Programme, 2000, p.10) Speaking on the cooperation, this programme especially gave importance to the youth sector and schools believing that the reconciliation throughout the cross border relation between young people of the both communities would be successful investment for the future of the region. It was argued that there was a necessity to prioritize to school and youth sector activities as these groups are at risk of social exclusion. In the end, it has been always the schools playing a key role in mutual understanding and tolerance. Thus, the promotion of knowledge based

society would help to reduce this alienation feeling and every member of the society participate in the all dimensions of the life from economy to the politics (EU Operational Programme, 2000, p.13).

From the economic dimension of the PEACE I Programme, one of the main outcomes of peace is the growth in the economy and consequent increase in the demand for qualified labor force which decreases the unemployment rate at the same time. However, the Labor Market Assessment emphasized that a quarter of the adult population had the lowest literacy level, and the highest levels of such a deficiency often occur in the most disadvantaged areas where the conflicts happened. (EU Operational Programme, 2000). Therefore, the funds of this programme has consolidated these deficiencies of the victims of the conflicts. The aims of this Structural Funds Programme can be also counted as providing a political atmosphere for peace building in the region. Thus, it was aimed to create for a period in Northern Ireland that would allow the conflict to be transformed to a more peaceful and non-violent situation. In accordance to that, the program has focused on certain problems in Northern Ireland. One of the prominent one was to create a new generation that was economically strengthened. Thus, it was foreseen that if the program would be successful, then the consensus on the constant peace would be achieved between the communities. Having seen the positive outcomes of the programme, in March 1999, it was decided to be implemented for another five years from 2000 to 2006 allocating 500 million Euros to the PEACE II Program. This programme has similarities with the previous one undoubtedly but it had more detailed aims than the first one.

The Peace Programme II had a range of fields to contribute from culture to economy which was the case with the previous programme. This programme foreseen an economic regeneration including entrepreneurship, diversification of agricultural products, support of technology as well as encouraging the education on agriculture (EU Operational Programme, 2000/2006). Clear from these fields that the programme specificised the on economical basis to make the contribution more clear and accessible to the people whose interest might be diverse in the context of economy. Social involvements of the communities were the other prominent field of the PEACE II Programme which covers the child care, active citizenship and renewal of villages. This field was consolidated with

cross-border cooperation that entails the school and youth cooperation, reconciliation and mutual understanding on human sources, some marine policies on fisheries and development of cooperation on human sources (EU Peace Programme 2000/2006). Besides, local development strategies were also given significance which directly supports the rural community and its integration to the whole society. Another field the programme targeted to develop was the outward-oriented understanding of the region meaning that the creation of an interactive network with Europe especially in the context of marketing and tourism (EU Operational Programme, 2000). In the end of the PEACE II Programme, it was decided to have the next one in the following years which was PEACE III Programme for the period of 2007-2013 with a total budget of around 333 million Euros (EU Operational Programme, 2007/2014). The program also has continued the uniqueness of the EU Structural Fund Program aiming to strengthening a peaceful and stable society by reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. It aimed to improve social and economic stability in the region by promoting actions that support harmony between communities. This programme emphasized the important dimensions of previous peace programs and has had a continuous and renewed emphasize on reconciliation. Its priorities were to reconcile communities and contribute to a joint society. Moreover, this programme focused on the behaviors towards sectarianism and racism to analyze the societies and accordingly promote conflict resolution and mediation in the society. For consolidating the resolution, it aimed to build meaningful cross-border initiatives that would increase trust and reduce sectarianism and racism (EU Operational Programme, 2007/2013).

It is possible to categorize this programme in three objectives, reconciling communities, contributing to a shared society and technical assistance. In addition, activities under these priorities provide counseling and victim support services to relatives of victims. Especially, this service had a comprehensive support aiming to improve the conflict resolution accessibility by counseling, friendship and other society-based services (EU Operational Programme, 2007/2013). Importantly, it was decided to create a Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre (PbCRC) which facilitates international exchange meaning that helping the conflict areas by their experience, education and research that provides studies, workshops, conferences and other related research utilities,

exhibition space, archive and space for organising peace studies and it has been planned to establish this project with the last PEACE Programme (EU Operational Programme, 2007/2013).

In 2014, PEACE IV Program came into force with a total value of 269 million Euros aiming to function between 2014-2020 (EU Operational Programme, 2014/2020). This program has been carried out as a cross-border cooperation between Ireland and the UK and has two main objectives. The first is the harmony between societies participating in the conflict in Northern Ireland and the border regions of Ireland. The second aim is the economic and social stability of the communities (EU Operational Programme, 2014/2020). This program has promoted utilities for attendance and dialogue and brought closer the decision makers and high-ranked responsibilities to people for community development. It has funded a variety of projects that were to support victims and survivors, youth and schools, infrastructure and urban transformation and support immigrants and celebrate the ethnic diversity of the all society (EU Operational Programme, 2014/2020).

The overall aim of these programmes are to transform these conflict areas into a common and peaceful ones. They funded thousands of projects which have involved many people from different communities on the region. Consolidating to abolish of otherization, promote trust and tolerance and create a tool for the EU in supporting the reconciliation across the region, all of these programmes helped the every participants of the programmes. While having a supporting feature, these interventions of EU to this conflict basically seeks to address sectarianism, racism and prejudice by promoting an understanding of shared welfare and the progress of physical environments that are not created by symbols that identify it as a region. In order to ensure the fullest local applications of funds delivery of the measures will be implemented through the use of intermediary bodies. More than half of the Programme for the border counties will be delivered by a single Monitoring Committee being responsible for administering the Programme (EU Operational Programme, 2014/2020). There is no doubt that Northern Ireland has had significant benefits from these EU funds. Hence, although the Brexit, the EU will continue to provide finance for shared public spaces and help to address physical

decomposition problems until the end of 2020 (EU Operational Programme, 2014). The desire and success of peace and reconciliation of the EU on the island has been in line with its deep-rooted goals and principles, in particular ensuring that Member States jointly use their countries' economic and social advances. Clearly the other prominent reason of these programmes is to make sure the economic and social improvement of the countries by joint attitude to break the walls dividing Europe (Mars et al., 2018, p.17).

4.4.3. Northern Ireland Task Force

In addition to support the peace process through the funds, a special Task Force was set up by the Commission in autumn of 1994 aiming to search further ways of providing functional assistance to Northern Ireland and the Border Regions of Ireland (Mars et al., 2018, p.28). The Task Force has been addressing the ways that the EU could attend actively in the peace process of Northern Ireland. One of the prominent tools that the Force advised was an open consultation process including inputs not only at the EU level but also from the people of the conflicting societies consisting of decision-makers, business environment, voluntary organizations and women's group that can make suggestions (Northern Ireland Task Force, 2007). This collaborative process has helped to uncover the value of a new side for the EU for the future work of its initiatives, namely bringing people together in their own fields and trying to find solutions to their problems. The result of the extremely fast and decisive political response was the above mentioned Peace and Reconciliation Special Support Programmes in Northern Ireland and Border Regions of Ireland. By 2007, the The Task Force has been reiterated by the proposal of then Commission President Barroso who claimed that the region carries a trace of conflict in its low investment in research, in its dependence on public sector and these features isolated the region from the world (NI Task Force, 2007). Thus, on the importance of the Task Force he continued by saying, *[...] on helping the region to generate more growth and jobs, and in that way to create more economic opportunities for its people in order to underpin the peace process"* (NI Task Force, 2007).

The very basic aim of this Task Force has been to be active in fostering socio-economic development in every field including agriculture, home affairs, justice, urban policy, taxation as well as customs union and many other specific brunch of the society

(NI Task Force, 2007). As it is clear from these fields of funds, the Task Force represents the results of the partnership between the Union and the authorities in the region for the supply of new utilities for multidimensional development of the society. To follow the progress the Commission reports the developments under the Task Force. The last report has been published in 2014 attesting to a period of integration over the past 7 years of Northern Ireland into the European Union's main policies, programmes and projects (Report of the European Commission, 2014, p.30). Additionally, this report has shown the possibility of conflicting communities to cooperate although they are cross-border communities and they can adopt themselves on European projects in an expected way. From the European perspective, it is clearly seen that the European Union has a clear interest and key role to play in the implementation of the process for peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and its involvement has gained more meaning in every step of it towards the process.

The first and foremost aims of conflict resolution of the European Union are the transformation of the conflict and the eradication of violence (Ramsbotham, 2010, p.45). Thus, the EU has had a key role in Northern Ireland peace process having these two aims in front of its agenda. In other respects, the Northern Ireland conflict is regarded as an intrastate conflict due to its location under a state and inside of an organization. Apart from interstate conflicts, intrastate conflicts need more endurance, indulgence and more importantly, solution-oriented approaches throughout the conflict resolution process (Wallensteen and Joshi, 2018, p.37). Due to the fact that the intrastate conflicts have emerged lately, the international society has limited capacity and instruments to cope with internal conflicts. Therefore, when starting a process of resolution of intrastate conflicts, usually different version of resolution methods are applied upon the disputes. In the Northern Ireland case, the EU has applied different sort of mechanisms to make a peace on the island. For doing that, the EU has made sure the participation of parties in the political system, the freedom of association and transformation of armed violence to the non-violence. In addition, the human rights and democratization process are the other significant tools of conflict resolution and prevention (Wallensteen and Joshi, 2018, p.45). In this sense, it has been stated that the EU provided the basis for having these prominent tools throughout the resolution of the Northern Ireland conflict. Moreover, as a mediator,

the EU consolidate the process of cooperation of the two conflicted societies which is by nature regarded as a fragile and risky situation. On the other hand, the states have acknowledged the fact that it is vital to negotiate with the enemy if the desire is to resolve the conflict. Having in mind that the peaceful settlements are easier through negotiations and every conflicts have solvable features with solution-oriented instruments, the EU has showed a great patience throughout the slow and gradual process and these involvements gained achievements regarding the reality that the IRA and Sinn Fein recognized that the strategic goal of a united Ireland would accomplished by non-violent means thus, in a political ground (Ramsbotham, 2010, p.118).

4.4.4. The current Arguments on Northern Ireland Border Issue after Brexit

The word “Brexit” is derived from the combination of “British” and “exit” in English indicating a meaning to leave the European Union (BBC, 2018). The Brexit referendum in UK was held in June 2016. As a result of the referendum, the decision was made to leave the EU with a voting rate as ; leaving the EU 51.9% and staying in the EU 48.1%. (BBC, 2016). Brexit might be regarded as a turning point for the relations of the EU and UK not only because the economical issues but also the status of Northern Ireland. Clearly seen from the Figure 1. in the beginning of the chapter, Northern Ireland is a part of the Ireland while being dependent to UK. Thus, Brexit brings a distinctive border issue between the Ireland and Northern Ireland as Ireland will be staying as an EU member while Northern Ireland will be out with UK. There is a transition period until 31 December 2020 and an expectation for a satisfying solution for the parties (UK Government, 2020).

As it is known, the EU consists of a customs union with a common customs territory and a security zone binding all the members with their approvals. Naturally, all these three strands changes in a case that a Member State leaves the Union (Euronews, 2018). From this point, it is obvious that control of borders, freedom of movement and access to foreign markets have been significant matters for Northern Ireland within the Brexit process as well as the rights that GFA ensures to the people on the island such as equality rights. Importantly, Brexit does not breach the GFA but it alters the certain economical issues shared with the EU. In addition, the power-sharing mechanism is open to be digged down as a result of UK’s leave from the common frameworks of the Union. (Mars et al., 2018,

p.6). Besides, Brexit can be seen as a chance for Nationalists and Loyalists for their own aim which were frozen by GFA in 1998.

On the matter of the freedom of movement on the island, the both sides' nationals are regarded equivalent due to the outcome of a Common Travel Area dating back to independence of Ireland in 1922 (Mars et al., 2018, p.16). Therefore, none of the parts ask passports for the travelling of those nationals across the border. On the access to foreign market, there has been an ongoing debate since three years that neither UK nor EU has found a compromise satisfying for each other until the writing time of the paper. In some ways, the EU is leaving an open door for UK to follow the European Economic Area Membership and a differentiated Customs Union however, UK rejected these options which left the case to the UK. Then the UK set a range of essential criteria for the possible solution which are ;

- There shall not be a border substructure at the Northern Ireland border which may be a cause for politic, social and cultural division on the island,
 - There shall not be a concrete border between Ireland and Northern Ireland,
 - There shall not be a concrete border between Northern Ireland and UK
- (Mars et al., 2018, p.42).

Clear from those conditions, UK is completely opponent to hard border on the island which is also the new external front of the EU that would be undesirable. UK brought some alternatives to table such as Maximum Facilitation customs arrangement and Customs Partnership (UK Government, 2018, p.4). This time, there is no solution for avoiding a physical border as the UK will be out of the regular EU ways of making. From the EU's perspective Commission's statements on this matter is clear as follows; *"The Union is committed to continuing to support peace, stability and reconciliation on the island of Ireland. Nothing in the Agreement should undermine the objectives and commitments set out in the Good Friday Agreement in all its parts and its related implementing agreements; the unique circumstances and challenges on the island of Ireland will require flexible and imaginative solutions. Negotiations should in particular aim to avoid the creation of a hard border on the island of Ireland, while respecting the integrity of the Union legal order."* (European Commission, 2018).

In December 2017, Joint Report from the EU and UK prevailed possible three scenarios: First, a solution to avoid a concrete border to trade in goods on the island of Ireland and any physical border substructure in the context of the future EU-UK relationship. Second, if the previous scenario is seen unfeasible, the UK would propose specific solutions for Northern Ireland. Third, if there is a disagreement on these matters, the UK accepted to full alignment of those rules of the internal market and the customs union which now or in the future support North-South cooperation, the all island economy and the protection of the 1998 Agreement which leads back to the backstop formula (European Commission, 2017, p.8). In the white book of the UK in 2019, the UK government stated that it will remain loyal to the Agreement as well as the Common Travel Area and it will avoid the customs control creating a hard border. Besides that, the EU-maintained PEACE program will continue until it is presumed deadline (UK Government, 2019, p.26). In the current debates, it is seen that the UK holds a position to have a “comprehensive free trade agreement” which is alike to deals that EU has with Canada, Japan and South Korea. This model removes tariffs on trade and does not oblige the parts to stick to EU rules (UK Government, 2020, p.5). The UK seeks settlement arrangements that is “appropriate to a relationship of sovereign equals”. Moreover, if there is no agreed regulation at the end of the transition period the UK indicated that it is ready for “no deal” situation (Euronews, 2020).

Needless to claim, the immense effect of Brexit on the Northern Ireland is due to the potential of creating a visible border between the two parts of Ireland regarding the frozen extremist nationalism in Northern Ireland. The physical border creates a concrete division leading to inevitable conflict which was seen for 30 years in the history of the island. Thus, one of the success of the Peace Process is the invisible border on the island. The EU, UK and Ireland have expressed their commitment to avoid a concrete border between Ireland and Northern Ireland and to sustain the Common Travel Area and Good Friday Agreement (Commission, 2017, p.3). In line with these statements, the UK government stated that Irish citizens should enjoy, exercise and have access to rights stemming from EU citizenship. And on the movement of the goods, no customs duties shall be applied for a good transported into Northern Ireland from the United Kingdom (UK Government, 2019, p.17-82).

From another scenario on the bringing of Brexit, the European Council stated that in a case of a united Ireland, Northern Ireland could rejoin the EU under the current membership of Ireland (European Parliament, 2017). Important to note that, this right for unification is in the consent of the people by virtue of the Good Friday Agreement. This statement has had some repercussions in Northern Ireland. For example, Martina Anderson the member of European Parliament and Sinn Fein from Northern Ireland called for a referendum for the reunification of Northern Ireland with the Ireland soon after the Brexit, claiming that Northern Irish people chose the stay in the EU in the referendum in 2016 (Deutsche Welle, 2020).

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's currently approved regulation on the matter is that Northern Ireland will be remaining as a part of the UK's new customs union while at the same time being obliged with the EU regulatory framework. That means goods transported between Northern Ireland and UK shall be checked in the Irish sea means an establishment of an obvious division between the two parts of the UK. This time, the Unionists are opposing it with some events stating that the new deal is betrayal to themselves. Having historical background on political tensions on the Northern Ireland, such activities of Unionists are seen as a threat to political stability as the loyalist paramilitaries have tendencies to act violently (Foreign Policy, 2020).

As of writing the paper, what is clear currently is that after the transition period, Northern Ireland will stay as the part of the UK having a land border with a EU Member State. This situation is invisible for the time being and there might be an external EU border. The both sides of the negotiation have accepted the speciality of Northern Ireland and to avoid the establishment of a hard border on the island as well as staying loyal to Good Friday Agreement. The current situations on trade and travel between UK and EU will continue until the end of the transition period.

5. CHAPTER: THE NORTH MACEDONIAN CASE: ESTABLISHING A EUROPEAN NEIGHBOR

In this chapter, the conflictual developments in the Republic of North Macedonia after the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in early 1990s will be examined as a case for the EU's role in as a mediator. After the disintegration, serious conflicts began due to results of the problems between the Slavic Macedonian majority and the Albanian minority. While intervening the conflict, the role and success of the foreign policy instruments used by the European Union will be analyzed in order to solve the conflict in Macedonia to make the region more stable.

5.1. THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOCIALIST FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA (SFRY)

Figure 1. Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as of January 1991



Source: UN International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

As it is shown on the map, the SFRY was a federal state located in Central and Southeastern Europe that established after WWII and existed until the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1992. The Yugoslavia was mainly consisted of Serbs, Croatian and Slovenian but as a minority there were different ethnicities such as Bosnian and

Macedonian. Therefore, in order to block the way of the dominant nation, the framework of the state organization was determined as federalism (Kut, 2005, p.22). This federative state understanding, which envisages decentralization, has been met by the Serbs, who constitute a relative majority in terms of population. The federal structure prevented the numerical majority of Serbs from being reflected in the representation mechanism. Therefore, in Yugoslavia, Serbian nationalism was based on anti-understanding, which prevented the Serbs of the state mechanism from being represented by their real power, and dissatisfaction with the actual situation of Serbian nationalism (Koneska, 2014, p.42). By 1980s, especially after the decease of the communist president Josip Broz Tito, severe economic problems started to rise in Yugoslavia accompanied with the rise of nationalism. These were the very prominent signals of the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In particular, the rise in Serbian nationalism, which was oppressed within the framework of the Yugoslav identity during the Tito period, had a vital role in the dissolution of the SFRY (Kut, 2005, p.47).

In 1990, the Yugoslav Communists League which was the main Communist Party decided to apply market economy and multi-party political system was decided to adopt (Kut, 2005, p.48). In the elections held in September 1990, nationalist parties take power in all republics except Serbia and Montenegro (Koneska, 2014, p.65). Right after, Serbia abolished the autonomies of Kosovo and Vojvodina regions their pressure on Albanians in Kosovo increased simultaneously. Additionally, the increasing disputes of Serbs with Croatian and Slovenian governments were the signs of the dissolution (Finlan, 2004, p.14). The preservation of Serbian nationalist increased more after the election of Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia in 1990 that also increased the concerns of other republics in the Yugoslavia. The aim of the Serbia was the strengthening the territorial integrity of the Yugoslavia under the guidance of itself while Slovenia, Croatia and the relatively poorest republics, Macedonia and Bosnia that favored the continuation of federation but in a way of loose federation mostly due to the fear of Serb suppression in the federation (Finlan, 2004, p.14). Under this circumstances, Croatian and Slovenian President have agreed on that Yugoslavia can only exist as a union of independent republics and they decided to have an agreement to have necessary constitutional amendments in June 1991. However, the two state could not reach an agreed constitution for Yugoslavia and on 25

June 1991 they declared their independence (Finlan, 2004, p.15). In the following years, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence. Thereupon, the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) attacked and captured some part of Croatia (Koneska, 2014, p.70). Then it was time for Bosnia-Herzegovina when Milosevic and Croatian president Tudjman decided to share Bosnia and Herzegovina between themselves, and in the spring of 1992, JNA attacked Bosnia (Koneska, 2014, p.70). Meantime, Bosnian government had an independence decision by referendum in 1992 however, Serbs captured a large part of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992 (Finlan, 2004, p.16). After these occasions Serbia and Montenegro announced the new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and that ended the era of the SFRY in April 1992 (Finlan, 2004, p.18).

5.2. THE CONFLICT IN MACEDONIA

In the meantime of the dissolution of the SFRY, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRM) declared its independence on 8 September 1991 and thereafter, problems between ethnic Macedonians and Albanians began (Pettifer, 2001, p.140). Albanians have had privileges since the Ottoman era and again, within the multicultural structure of the Yugoslav administration, various nations have benefited from privileges and they had relative autonomy (Koneska, 2014, p.60). For this reason, Albanians were afraid that they can not enjoy equal rights under the newly established free Macedonian state. The discomfort of the Albanians started with pressure on not having equal status in the newly-established state after the independence of Macedonia in the late era of Yugoslavia. From then until the resolution, the main political agenda of the Macedonia was shaped by the problems among the Slav Macedonian majority and the Albanian minority demanding political rights. As an embodiment of the fear of Albanians on their political status, the new constitution regulated by the Macedonian Parliament stated that "Macedonia is the national state of the Macedonian people" which made Albanians oppose to this situation and argue that they shall be included in the constitution with the status of founding nation (Pettifer, 2001, p.144). From this time until the agreement, Albanians thought they were not represented politically enough.

Disagreements amongst the Albanian minority and the Slavic Macedonian majority on population rates and the lack of employment of Albanians in the public sector, the

problem of constitutional status, the establishment of a Albanian-educated university, and the imbalance between ethnic groups in the sharing of resources were the reasons prevented the establishment of a stable and strong state in Macedonia (Koneska, 2014, p.69). Therefore, disagreements between ethnic Macedonians and Albanians were mainly because of the lack of social cohesion, cultural and religious differences, economic status and social and educational level differences, as they live in different geographical parts of the country. For this reason, the primary demands of the Albanians included the lack of education in the mother tongue, which was cited as the reason for the difference. As the private sector has not developed much, they expected an improvement in their economic situation with a quota to be applied to Albanians in public positions (Clement, 2001, p.286). In 1998, led by Milosevic, Serbia launched an ethnic cleansing operation against the Kosovo Albanians and this attack in Kosovo have had a negative influence on the already fragile politics and inter ethnical relations in Macedonia and there has been a wide risk of regional conflict in the Balkans (Clement, 2001, p.287). Clearly, the Kosovo War changed the situation in Macedonia when the ethnic Albanians increased their support for radical elements due to the dissatisfaction caused by the lack of solutions to the problems in the system during the 90s.

In mid 2001, the Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA), which made more representation for the civil rights for ethnic Albanians started armed activities. Participating in the Kosovo war, Albanians then continued to struggle for regional liberation (Pettifer, 2001, p.145). In January 2001, the NLA attacked the police station in Tetovo a city in Macedonia. In the statement released for the attack in the following day, the NLA said the attack was a warning against Macedonian invaders and their Albanian collaborators and attacks on Macedonian invaders will continue until the Albanians are rescued (Koneska, 2014, p.70). Seeing that any political process did not start to negotiate, NLA launched new attacks in the following month. Macedonian army's counter attack also began a week later and therefore, the real clash officially started between Macedonian forces and NLA resulted with over 200 deaths and thousands of integral migration (Pettifer, 2001, p.147). In this period, the ethnic tension in Macedonia has escalated and radicalization has been observed on both sides. For instance, ethnic cleansing against Slav Macedonians in villages captured by NLA resulted in casualties. Mostly because of the

mentality of NLA expressing their threat explicitly in a way that the war only happened the Albanians so far and that this damage should be shared (Pettifer, 2001, p.147). In accordance with that expression of NLA, the Macedonian army counter attacked to the villages captured by NLA with air strikes making the situation a vicious cycle in a short time of period within a narrow region. Under the influence of the previous events such as the dissolution of SFRY and several conflicts in the Balkans the international community has approached Macedonian events more carefully and precisely. When the illegal Albanian organization occupied an area in the west of Skopje, the US and the EU engaged their mediators to end the conflict. Due to the international pressure, the parties were brought together to sit at the negotiating table, and after the conflict lasted eight months, the process for the Ohrid Framework Agreement was kicked off by the help of the international mediators.

5.3. THE OHRID FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

After two weeks of negotiations, the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) was signed on 13 August 2001 and a road map was prepared for the changes to be made in the constitution with a structure that designed in favor of the Albanians including a schedule for changes in the constitution, changes in the laws and abolishment of the long standing enmity between the sides (Koneska, 2014, p.70). With this change, the perception of community-based formations was attempted instead of the understanding of ethnicity-based formation of the states in accordance with the EU practices. Accordingly, an understanding far from ethnicity and ethnic nationalism was prevailed to be implemented (Koyuncu and Yılmaz, 2018, p.165). As an embodiment of this standpoint, the agreement stated that the Macedonian government supports the peaceful and harmonious improvement of civil society while regarding the interests and ethnic identities of all Macedonian citizens (Ohrid Framework Agreement, 2001). With this approach, the agreement aimed to transition from an ethnic-based state to a citizen-based one. In its basic principles, it rejected the use of violence for political purposes and regional solutions in ethnic problems, thereby blocking the way of independence for ethnic Albanians. The Agreement has been described as a framework for international assistance, reforms and for peace in the post-conflict period (Koyuncu and Yılmaz, 2018, p.165). It consists of four parts which are; changes to be made in the constitution, legal

regulations, a plan to end conflicts and a calendar for the implementation of the Agreement (Ohrid Framework Agreement, 2001). In overall, it sets out five principles;

1. Using violence for political purposes is unconditionally rejected.
2. Macedonia's sovereignty and the unitary of the State character can not be violated.
3. The multi-ethnic structure of Macedonian society should be protected .
4. The state's constitution must meet the needs of all its citizens and ensure the high level of international standards.
5. Improvement of local governments is necessary to encourage citizen in attendance in democratic life and to respect the identity of communities (Ohrid Framework Agreement, 2001, p.1).

First of all, the Agreement introduced a concept based on citizenship bond rather than a state concept on an ethnic basis. Considering the language used in the Constitutional Amendments the concept of “nationalities” is replaced by the concept of “communities” (OFA, 2001, p.2). Strengthening local governments was one of the key points of the agreement. Therefore, while the roles of local governments and municipalities have been increased, their powers have been extended in many areas such as public services, environmental protection, culture, education, social welfare and health services (OFA, 2001, p.8). One of the changes made by the Agreement was on ethnic Macedonian domination in police force which were to become within a multi-communal structure in which police forces shall be created from minorities to operate in the region where their population is dense (OFA, 2001, p.2). In addition, the financial, technical and educational assistance to these police forces were sponsored by US, EU and OSCE. It also proposes constitutional amendments and local government to guarantee the multi-ethnic character of the state. Moreover, specific measures have been taken to protect the representation of minorities in the central government. The majority principle in voting system has been introduced, that is, with the majority of the total number of Parliament, which can be a simple or qualified majority, depending on the nature of the decision (OFA, 2001, p.2). The majority should be provided both in Parliament and in the votes of minority representatives. In order for the bill to be enacted, it must be approved by two thirds of minority representatives. In addition, the principle of seeking a majority in minority votes

on culture, language, education, personal documents, the use of symbols, local finance, elections, borders of Skopje and municipalities was also applied (OFA, 2001, p.7). Thus, with the new constitutional arrangements, the chance of cultural autonomy and even a degree of political autonomy has emerged in the cities where Albanians are the majority. In accordance with the demands of Albanians, minorities in education gained the right to education in their own language, state support for education at university level and positive privileges for them in entering public universities. While the official language of the state remains Macedonian, any language spoken by 20% of the population is also acknowledged as of the official languages of the state but this applies only to Macedonia's internal institutions meaning that any language other than Macedonian is not valid in international relations (OFA, 2001, p.3). To regulate the inter-communal relations, a Committee for Inter-Community Relation was envisaged. It was decided to be consisted of seven members each from every community namely, Macedonians, Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romanies and two other communities (OFA, 2001, P.7). This shows that each ethnic community will be participants together with the others in a representative institution.

In the end, with the Ohrid Framework Agreement many issues that Albanians complained about and which were mainly the cause of conflicts were resolved to a certain extent. A power-sharing mechanism has been built with this Agreement. For instance, in regions where more than 20% of the population are Albanians, the acceptance of Albanian as the official language and the introduction of new powers to local governments in many areas were the demanded rights that Albanians asked for in 1990s. More importantly, the agreement brought the principle of not resorting to arms when demanding a right and that paved the way for the parties to resolve their future disputes through negotiation.

5.4. THE ROLE OF THE EU IN THE CONFLICT IN MACEDONIA

"We must continue to do the utmost to avoid war in Macedonia. This is a crucial week [...] We hope we will be able to resolve these constitutional difficulties." (Solana, Macedonian Peace Talks, 2001).

The international community has made an intense effort to end conflicts in Macedonia aiming to make Macedonia a stable country. The EU also has had a key role with NATO in resolving this conflict on the continent by introducing several policy instruments to stabilize the country. These tools were within the framework of the EU membership perspective and foreign aid, which were used as a very important political leverage of the EU in international relations as a result of CFSP. From the beginning of the conflict, the EU has been successfully engaged in the matters with NATO to prevent the wide ranged of casualties and to make an end to the conflicts (Mircev, 2001, p.109). In March and April 2001, the EU diplomats carried out a very intense shuttle diplomacy between Brussels and Skopje in order to end armed conflicts in Macedonia without escalation (Schneckener, 2002, p.30). During this period, the involvement of the EU towards the Macedonian crisis was maintained under the leadership of High Representative Javier Solana who visited the area many times during the clashes that began in Tetovo in March and sent permanent contact staff to region for monitoring occasions in Macedonia (Schneckener, 2002, p.31). At the same time, the Union submitted a set of measures to consolidate Macedonian authority on the matters of border control, promotion of inter-communal relations, refugee support, local government and judicial reform with minority rights (Schneckener, 2002, p.32).

The EU decided to improve a regional approach policy to the Western Balkans in the 1990s, in order to facilitate the implementation of the peace arrangements that were made in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s and as a result the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) launched in June 1999 (Kaminski and Rocha, 2003, p.3). As part of this process, Stabilization and Association Agreements (SAA) have been signed among the EU and the Western Balkan states. The SAP process also involves EU financial assistance to the Western Balkan states and their duty-free entry into the EU market (Stabilization and Association Process, 1999). Importantly, SAP process within the scope of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) has first signed with Macedonia in 2001 and came into force in April 2004 (Kaminski and Rocha, 2003, p.5). Indeed, with the SAA, temporary and easy-to-reach targets could be determined to make Macedonia feel confident on the way to EU membership (Mircev, 2001, p.209). Beside, instead of short-term crisis management, the SAA could enter the economic and political development

process based on its long-term EU membership target. As mentioned above, while clashes continued in 2001, Macedonia was the first Western Balkan state to sign an SAA with the EU. This development gave the EU a significant instrument to put pressure on Slav Macedonian and ethnic Albanian parties to sit on the negotiation table. Regarding all those developments, it is clear to state that SAA has given Macedonia a potential candidate status for EU membership and created a vision for a possible membership (Mircev, 2001, p.210).

5.4.1. The Operation Concordia

Throughout the peace process of Macedonia, the EU-NATO partnership was an intense cooperation. For instance, in order to represent their common attitudes towards crisis management in the region, the Union and NATO agreed upon an harmonious approach to the outline of the common strategy to be followed in consolidating peace in the Western Balkans (Piana, 2002, p.210). In this regard, the EU needed NATO as a deterrent military force in its efforts to resolve the crisis due to the lack of operational position of CFSP at that time (Efe, 2007, p.6). In this task, the EU advantaged NATO facilities under Berlin-plus regulations which makes it as a test for its mission for the strategic crisis management. Eventually, the EU launched its first military operation, Concordia in Macedonia in March 2003 under the CFSP (Piana, 2002, p.214). The operation represents three important issues: First, it was the symbol of a new era when the EU emerged as a security actor. Second, it has strengthened the link between transatlantic partners since it is a transfer of duties from NATO to the EU. Third, the EU has shown that, together with Concordia, it will abide by its adherence to the maintenance of the Ohrid Framework Agreement in Macedonia (Piana, 2002, p.215).

At first, the mission was for six months period and then the European Council decided to extend the operation until December 2003 with the application of Macedonian officials in order to consolidate the stability in the region (Portero, 2012, p.67). The mission of the EU, initiated by taking over the NATO peacekeeping force in Macedonia was to ensure the maintenance of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and a stable and peaceful environment in the region (Schneckener, 2002 p.45). Importantly, Concordia Mission was requested by Macedonia and gained international legitimacy with the UN

Security Council Resolution 1371 (Portero, 2012, p.68). For this operation, EU member states sent 308 staff members to Concordia with third countries contribution totally with 49 staff and two regional headquarters in Kumanovo and Tetovo and the main headquarters in Skopje were established to carry out activities. (Portero, 2012, p.68). Besides, the mission included 22 Light Field Liaison Teams and 8 Heavy Field Liaison Teams in the process providing information on the current situation in the former crisis areas. In addition, two heavy placards from France and Italy were used in information gathering and disarmament activities together with the establishment of 34 weapons collection points (Portero, 2012, p.69). According to the operation plan, the duties of Concordia were as follows;

- Conducting information gathering activities to keep patrols and evaluate the security situation,
- Exploring and searching the network and other areas with helicopters and vehicles,
- Carrying out surveillance and continuous patrols,
- Arranging regular meetings with civil and military authorities, international organizations, local communities, members of parliament and many non-governmental organizations (Portero, 2012, p.69).

From another point, Concordia Operation aimed to close the governance gaps in Macedonia when coping with the conflict with its micro-mechanisms (Mace, 2007, p.475). The nine month Concordia military mission has performed a number of tasks, including deterrent patrols, reconnaissance activities, reporting on the current situation, gathering and informing international organizations, civil society actors, and the function of establishing liaison between military and civilian authorities. Following NATO's disarmament operation, Concordia, along with other international actors in the field, has been observing as part of the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement in the delivery and destruction of illegal weapons and the registration of legal weapons (Mace, 2007, p.478). Since its inception, the vision of the operation has been within the scope of uncovering the reasons of the conflict, crisis management and adopting the necessary reforms towards the EU membership. In this sense, it is fair to claim that the Concordia contributed to the road dependency of Macedonia on its full membership goal, indicating

that the interests of the actors are shaped on this road dependency (Portero, 2012, p.69). With the start of the Concordia military operation, the EU was fulfilling its commitment to the Republic of Macedonia and to its people. Moreover, along with Concordia, the military capacity of the Union, which has been seen only as a discourse and defined by ineffectiveness, has been demonstrated its reliability. In this context, it had a strong psychological effect on the civilian population by its visible implementation of activities and deterrent effects on the conflict. These activities has created a reliable profile regarding the EU in the mind of the civilians. The success of tangibility and visibility of military assets of the Union in developing dialogue between the conflicting parties has brought the positive normative character of the EU to a higher level. Moreover, the constant distance communication between the personnel involved in the operation and all ethnic groups played an important role in ensuring public trust. The country, which has the EU membership on its agenda for the future, has prepared a suitable ground for processes such as civil EU programmes and the development of diplomatic relations.

5.4.2. The EUPOL Proxima and EUPAT (EU Police Advisory Team)

Political actors in the Republic of Macedonia have found the contribution of the EU indispensable to strengthen the self-supporting structure of the new state model which was laid with the Ohrid Framework Agreement (Portero, 2012, p.67). Hence, the Operation Proxima started in December 2003 and replaced the military operation Concordia showing that how effective the actors' behavior is in the continuation of gradual transformations. It means that, the transition from a military operation to a civil operation meant a reflection of an alteration in the nature of the security threat which is indeed a positive development in the region. The transition from a military mission to a civil political mission has also been a political tendency (Kostovicova, 2006, p.49). The Republic of Macedonia intended to become a member of the EU at that time and the presence of a foreign military in the country was incompatible for a candidate state profile. Therefore, in September 2003, officials of the Republic of Macedonia made an official invitation to the EU to take responsibility for a role that would support the maintenance of the police arrangements of the Ohrid Framework Agreement which indicated the EU Police Mission Proxima (Kostovicova, 2006, p.49). The missions consisted about 200 personnel including police experts and 30 personnel armed with light weapons that can

take action in exceptional cases (EUPOL, Fact Sheet, 2003). Its primary aim was to help the local police service to reach a professional level and to facilitate the reduction of cross-border crime. During the planning phase of the Proxima the European Union worked with the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council to assess the current situation and the police sector, before deploying its staff to the country (Ioannides, 2006, p.77).

Broadly, Proxima's object can be summarized as follows;

- Promoting of the consolidation of law and order in the old crisis regions,
- Assisting to implementation of comprehensive regulations on the police unit under the Ministry of Interior Affairs,
- Improving the overall performance of the police unit in the country through surveillance, consultation and advice mechanisms,
- Supporting the meeting of European political standards and to strengthen the governance of the internal borders,
- Consolidating the efforts of the local police service in the process of building trust between the police and the public (EUPOL Factsheet, 2003).

Proxima is an extension of a commitment by the Republic of Macedonia to assist efforts to further bring the EU integration goal closer to the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. As a counter action, the European Union has been involved in the reform process in the Republic of Macedonia in areas such as justice, crime, internal border governance, customs, asylum, migration and organized crime through Proxima (Ioannides, 2006, p.110). Despite its relatively short life, the mission aimed to support long-term political-strategic development between civilians and the police and to build trust through public policies. Trainings on working methods organized in compliance with European Union standards and approaches, seminars on organized crime and legal issues about the police service were amongst the mission's activities (EUPOL, Factsheet, 2003). Another important aspect of the Proxima mission was to improve cooperation between the police and judicial authorities through law enforcement. Proxima has also participated in planning preparations to maintain peace and order in the April 2004 Presidential elections, in cooperation with the State Election Commission and the Ministry of Interior (Ioannides, 2006, p.112). Therefore, fair to claim that the Proxima mission directly

influenced the transformation in the Republic of Macedonia through the micro-mechanisms it has implemented and has made a great contribution to the self-supporting structure of Macedonia by bringing the actors' interests closer. After the end of its time, EUPOL sent the letter of proposal, which envisaged Proxima to be extended for one year more (Portero, 2012, p.70). Since Macedonia has had the aim of full membership in the EU, the extended mission was presented by the government as a police reform mission, not as a crisis management mission. Later on, Proxima was extended with new powers, including public order and peace, organized crime and border police (Council Joint Action, 2004). The mission continued to support this process through monitoring, consultation and advice from the development of a professional police service. In the extended period, the number of staff was reduced taking into account the political sensitivities of the government of Macedonia, which had reservations against a crisis management mission that could jeopardize EU candidacy status.

Following the end of the Proxima mission, negotiations among the government of the Republic of Macedonia and the European Union have resulted in an agreement for the deployment of the European Union Police Advisory Team (EUPAT) to the country (Council Joint Action, 2005). This program targeted to promote technical support to the local police and consolidate the government in issues such as border policies, protection of social peace and order, corruption and organized crime in order to support the continuity of an effective police service that meets with the EU standards. EUPAT, which was authorized for a period of 6 months until June 2006, was a much smaller mission compared to Proxima (Portero, 2012, p.72). Only 30 police officers were made up of consultants and in harmony with the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the mission has focused on the goal of developing a professional and highly effective police service based on EU political standards. Issues such as monitoring and consulting activities of the local police in the country, border policies, public order and peace, fight against corruption and organized crime were within mission (Council Joint Action, 2005). With this mechanism, it was aimed to create greater transparency between the European Union and the government of Macedonia to clarify where the reforms should be implemented. With these operations of the EU, it has emerged as an actor that has established peace and security in the Balkans and that directly increased confidence in the EU. After the

mentioned stages, the desire of the Republic of Macedonia to integrate with Western institutions has gained momentum. Regarding Macedonian's future relations, EUPOL Proxima and EUPAT were founded not as a military mission but as a police mission regarding the sensitivities of the political actors in Macedonia (Portero, 2012, p.78). These missions helped realize the reforms envisaged by the Ohrid Framework Agreement and guided the institutional transformation in the Republic of Macedonia. Since the beginning of the Macedonian crisis, the EU has actively engaged in the conflict due to its facilities created under CFSP and CSDP. From one point of view, it can be said that the possibilities-expectations gap, which was widely questioned on the CFSP in the 1990s, was not as great as during the Macedonian conflict due to the outcomes of certain progress made within CFSP and CSDP.

5.4.3. North Macedonia's Stance on the Path to the EU Membership

As a result of the SAP which is long-term based approach of the Union, Macedonia maintained its EU perspective and applied for EU membership in March 2004 (European Council, 2005). The European Commission has taken a positive attitude towards Macedonia's application in its opinion announced on in November 2005 stating that Macedonia has a functioning democratic system and is on track to meet the Copenhagen criteria beside, the country has also taken important steps towards becoming a functioning market economy. Thus, Macedonia is able to be competent to meet the liabilities arising from membership in the medium term (Pond, 2006, p.172). In addition, the Commission recommended that the Council shall grant Macedonia a candidate status and open membership negotiations when Macedonia reaches a sufficient level, taking into account Macedonia's will to implement its Ohrid Framework Agreement and SAA obligations (Analytical Report, 2005, p.14-15). Following this, the European Council has granted candidacy status to Macedonia in December 2005 and again referred to the success in the maintenance of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and the SAA (European Council, 2005). Beside, having such normative support, from a materialistic perspective, since January 2007 Macedonia has been benefiting from the IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) program that brings together all financial aid programs implemented in the past (European Commission, IPA, 2007). The EU having a transformative role for the states that desires to join, determines the rules for those states and demands that the

candidates must carry out a conditional transformation in its internal and external structure. Here, Grabbe's approach is remarkable which states that the EU, as a dynamism for countries, has a transformative role because there is an asymmetrical power relationship between the EU and the applicant parties (Grabbe, 2006, p.5). The EU membership view of North Macedonia is actually taken up with this framework. In accordance with that, right after reaching the Ohrid Peace Agreement, Macedonia has been the first country invited by the EU to begin Stability and Accession Process in 2001 as mentioned above.

In order to become a member, after having the candidate status, the “Progress Reports” are prepared by the Commission to observe closely the candidate’s improvements to check whether the candidate is in harmony with the EU criteria. The first progress report of the Macedonia was revealed in 2005 mostly involving positive aspects and made Macedonia have candidate status (European Commission, Analytical Report, 2005). As an outcome of the report, in 2006 Macedonia was included in the European Partnership, which was created to develop political and economic relations between the Western Balkan states and as of 2009, visa exemption process started to be applied with the EU (European Commission, 2009). An important breaking point in North Macedonia-EU relations in 2009 was the Commission's recommendation to the Council to start accession dialogue with Macedonia. By time, the mutual steps have started to gain momentum in accordance with their wills. For instance, the Commission has launched the Higher Level Dialogue with Macedonia to stimulate accession negotiations in October 2012 (European Commission, 2019). Despite some ups and downs in the relations for accession in last decade, the starting of accession negotiations with North Macedonia has been approved by the EU in March 2020 and association process was formally adopted by written procedure as well (European Council, The Republic of North Macedonia, 2020).

The possibility of EU membership has served as a catalyst in terms of economic, social and political transformation of North Macedonia since the official beginning of their relationship. Needless to emphasize that the structural and economic supports as well as concrete incentives of EU from the beginning have accelerated North Macedonia’s path towards to membership. At the end, the EU for North Macedonia has

been at the center of values such as human rights, the rule of law, liberal democracy and minority rights which are regarded as core elements of resolving violent conflicts. In this sense, what is clear that the EU has been a transformative external factor for North Macedonia hence, if the membership talks would not come to this stage, the welfare rhetoric of the EU would be regarded as insufficient and deceptive in Western Balkans where the SAP aimed to cooperate with. The aim of this process was to inhibit the Balkans from becoming a war and instability zone. Therefore, the EU has assured membership in the Western Balkan countries when launched the SAP focusing on regional cooperation, democratization, development of civil society and the establishment of state institutions (Kaminski and Rocha, 2003, p.4). Important to note that, the value of the accession process or the SAP has seen in a positive way due to the long term and indivisible nature of the benefits that might decrease the potential of the escalation of the conflict (Tocci, 2007, p.176). Thereof, it would be fair to assert that the understanding of “stabilization through integration” of the EU has seen on the front agenda of both parts in this case obviously. Regarding all the efforts it is also fair to claim that the European Union, which is attributed as a normative and transformative power and wants to consolidate this appearance in international system, spreads its values around it and forms its own area like a water wave.

6. CHAPTER: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EU'S ROLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND NORTH MACEDONIAN CASES

Since the EU is an embodiment of a peaceful resolution of the past violent conflicts on the continent, it has assigned itself a role to play in conflict resolution process. Thus, the EU plays the mediator in the resolution process of conflicts and in the time of having this effort, it also sustains its transformative power to turn the violence into a non-violent form. Currently, the EU has been trying to have a strong voice in ensuring the peace and security in the international sphere. For the accomplishment of its peaceful role, the EU has developed a unique approach which brings a range of instruments together from military to economy to be applied in the resolution processes (Hussain, 2017, p.20). In the cases of Northern Ireland and North Macedonia, the EU has not refrained from using its multidimensional approach throughout the resolution processes of the two conflicts. Due to the differences of the conflicts and the status of the conflicting parties within the Union, the EU has meticulously differentiated its steps to resolution processes of these conflicts.

When the Republic of Ireland and Britain has become members of the then European Economic Community in 1973, the Community started to pay a great attention to this conflict between the Catholics/Nationalists and Protestants/Loyalists on the island. After the membership of the conflicting parties to the Community, the people had another option to identify themselves rather than being based on either religion or ethnic identification. The “European” identity has provided a third and comprehensive understanding on identification matters on the island (Fitzduff and Williams, 2007, p.18). Seemingly, the EU applied a unique policy tool in the resolution process of the Irish conflict which provided positively to the peace process to a great extent. The usage of the “European identity” as an instrument in peace process can also be seen in the resolution of the conflict in Macedoni. Although North Macedonia is not a member of the EU, due to its valuable incentives for the peace process the Macedonian government has chosen to follow the European way throughout the resolution of the conflict. As a result of the Macedonia's devotion to the EU along the process, the opening of accession negotiations for the North Macedonia is on the agenda of the EU (European Council, The

Republic of North Macedonia, 2020). As it is a prominent task of a mediator, the EU has tried to open communication channels between the conflicting parties of the two cases. While providing a neutral environment for dialogue, the EU explicitly refrained from interfering the related states' internal affairs. In both cases, the EU has seen the resolution of the conflicts as affiliated on the peaceful and democratic expression of the national identities which are the vital factors in peace process (Morgan, 2000, p.54). In this regard, the EU contributed in elimination of the conflictual nature of national differences of the two conflicts by sharing the sources, making the economy and political interest common.

From another point, it is seen from the both cases that the EU provided institutional and constitutional cooperation between the parties and the people subject to conflict. For instance, in the Good Friday Agreement a cross-border cooperation between the governments has seen essential (Good Friday Agreement, 1998). This approach was a result of the EU's Haagerup Report. In accordance with this understanding, as it is given in detail above, a British-Irish Intergovernmental Council was established regarding the institutional recognition of cross-border cooperation in specific fields from politics to society. In addition, being aware of the fact that most of the conflicts stem from economic inequalities, the EU has funded dozens of projects both in Northern Ireland and Macedonia. The main task of EU's funds was to make sure that each communities might be aware of the benefits of cooperation with the EU. Clear from the PEACE Programmes in Northern Ireland, the EU is still after the developments on the island with an intense support under the Brexit pressure. The similar funds can be seen in Macedonia as well. The IPA funds have been assisting to the country in their post-conflict environment to renew the economic-social spheres to make sure the welfare of the communities (European Commission, IPA, 2007).

Abolishment of otherization, promote trust and tolerance have been the main duties of the EU in both cases. As a result of support in these understandings, the EU paved the way of reconciliation across the regions in the related cases. While having a supporting feature, any intervention of the EU in resolution processes basically seeks to eliminate sectarianism, racism and prejudice by promoting an understanding of shared welfare that is not hindered by a concrete identification (Deutsch et al., 2006, p.12).

One of the prominent tasks the EU played in Northern Ireland and Macedonia cases that it created open consultation process including participants not only at the EU level but also from the people of the conflicting societies including decision-makers, business environment, voluntary organizations and some other representative communities (Zhussipbek, 2009, p.72). The main aim of such consultation process is to close the gap between the high ranked people and civil society especially for the benefit of the resolution process. It is seen from the result of the consultation processes of the two cases that the perception of community-based formations was attempted instead of the understanding of ethnicity-based formation of the states in accordance with the EU practices (Koneska, 2014, p.72). In the end, an understanding far from ethnicity and ethnic nationalism was prevailed to be implemented in both states' domestic institutional as well as constitutional establishments. In this regard, some prominent measures have been taken to protect the representation of minorities in the central governments.

Important to point that the EU did not only provide economical assistance to resolution processes of both cases. As it is abovementioned, the EU launched its first military operation, Concordia in Macedonia in 2003. This military mission came out when the EU became determined on being a global actor in security matters. Here, the EU has proven that it will abide by its adherence to the maintenance of the Ohrid Framework Agreement in Macedonia within the capabilities of it (Piana, 2002, p.214). The tasks of Concordia were mainly to reveal the reasons of the conflict, crisis management and consolidating the necessary reforms towards EU membership. On the other hand, the EU can not be seen with its militaristic tools in Northern Ireland case. It is not because it is unable to deploy mission there but because of the sovereignty concerns of the Ireland and to some extent of the UK. As a mediator, the EU can not force parties to have something they are not willing to. In Macedonia, it was the government asked the help of the EU to sustain the Agreement peacefully. In Northern Ireland case, the EU could not have a concrete foreign policy tool in militaristic base at the time of the resolution process. Thus, the Macedonia reflects a prominent example of how a foreign policy tool of the EU can be effective. Overall, within the capabilities of it, the EU explicitly involved in the resolution processes of the two cases and has made visible accomplishments.

7. CHAPTER: CONCLUSION

This study has searched an appropriate answer to the question “Why is the European Union active in conflict resolutions and why it is more involved in the resolution of the conflict in Macedonia than the resolution of the Irish conflict?” In literature, there have been answers to the reason of the involvement of the EU in conflict resolution. It is accepted that, due to its normative stance in the international avenue, the EU is mostly attributed as a peaceful organization and thus it is a mission for it to have a role throughout the resolution of a conflict. Nevertheless, it has been found out that there is a need in the literature to analyze the degree of the EU’s involvement in conflict resolution which changes in accordance with its ability and the behavior of the conflicting parties to welcome the EU in the peace process. Therefore, to close this gap this study has used to data analysis method applied to distant cases to have the same conclusion; the EU plays an active role as a mediator in conflict resolutions if the conflicting parties have interest to accept EU’s engagement in the process. This mutual action is in correlation with the level of perceived attractiveness of the EU. In accordance with that, the EU can be effective to a great extent if its foreign policy instruments are established to make it enable to intervene in conflict resolutions. These hypotheses have been analyzed in the two cases respectively.

As a matter of social fact conflict is inevitable yet violence is not. Hence, throughout the initiatives for the peace, the conflicting parties should be informed efficiently on the costs of conflict and benefits of resolution on the way of negotiation and mediation which create an environment for the agreed resolution. With these techniques, the parties have the utility of going beyond arguing about positions by searching for underlying interests of each other. At this point, conflict facilitates an avenue to agree with others' perspectives and situations, allows to understand the importance of tolerance and empathy. Thus, conflict is transformed into a stable sphere when the shortages of parties are eliminated accordingly and their fears as well as hostile approaches are vanished. Especially conflicts on values should be transformed very carefully not to re-escalate in the future. If the conflicting parties are aware of the capabilities of themselves and transform their reactive and selfish actions to become open and cooperative, then the mediation process maintains effectively. These factors are realized efficiently by the EU and it mediates according to

the gatherings of the process which is prominent in examined cases. In the aftermath of the Good Friday Agreement there has not been an alienation in Ireland since the parties have their rights both in political and socio-economic matters.

The EU has contributed to diminish the conflictual nature of differences which can be relatively easier regarding the shared economic needs and political interests as the EU itself is a living example of mutual understanding and toleration. Due to the one of the results of the conflicts, the communities isolated themselves from their natural environment. In Northern Ireland case, the EU programmes succeed to reverse this situation by providing recreative utilities to the border towns as well as villages. As it is stated, this programmes have been maintained as a cross-border cooperation between Ireland and the UK and had two main objectives. The first was the harmony between communities participating in the conflict. The second aim was the economic and social stability of the communities. These programmes have provided utilities for participation and dialogue and brought the decision makers and high-ranked responsibilities closer to people for the development of the community. The socio-politic hostility between North and South was an obstacle on economic cooperation between the two parts of the island for decades. Under the EU shelter, the relationships between political elites improved and this has created positive outcome for an agreement on economic activities on the island in context of the Good Friday Agreement. In this sense, the EU ensured dozens of cooperative projects to the parties to pave their ways along with providing a forum for them to debate and cooperate on the every dimension of the Anglo-Irish relations. With the aim of consolidating to abolish of otherization, promote trust and tolerance and create a tool for the EU in supporting the reconciliation across the region, all of these programmes helped every participants of the programmes from bottom to the top. On the political side of the EU's role, the adoption of the Northern Irish Assembly's European Parliament decision-making method also helped to reduce the concerns of Northern Irish Nationalists they had on the representation of themselves in the parliament. From the European perspective it is clearly seen that the EU has had a clear interest and vital role to play in maintaining the momentum for peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and its involvement has gained more meaning in every step of it towards the process. When starting a process of resolution of intrastate conflicts, usually different version of

resolution methods are applied upon the disputes. In the Northern Ireland case, the EU has applied different sort of mechanisms to make a peace on the island. On the other hand, in this case the authorities have acknowledged the fact that it is vital to negotiate with the enemy if the desire is to resolve the conflict.

Conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s triggered a willingness by the EU to participate in conflict resolution. These conflicts have made the EU realize that it can not deal with any security challenges within then foreign policy instruments. Therefore, the EU has had steps subsequently towards to establish adequate foreign policy tools. In accordance with this understanding, the first civilian and military capacity and mechanisms of the EU have been launched by the European Security and Defense Policy in 1999 which gives the Union to play a functional role and capacity to run operations abroad to maintain peace, prevent and resolve the conflicts. Right after the establishment of the ESDP, the disagreements between ethnic Macedonians and Albanians started mainly due to the lack of social cohesion which had repercussions on social, cultural and economic dimensions of the life in the country. For the resolution of this conflict in Macedonia, there were two options for the government which were either to continue to violence and have a civil war or have the compromise for the peace. By choosing the latter one, the Macedonian government had the best option which brought assistances from international environment in the process tracing the peace agreement signed in 2001. In this case, the EU's mediation has positively effected the process in the conflict in North Macedonia case. In correlation with the citizenship based understanding of the EU, the Ohrid Framework Agreement aimed to have a transition from an ethnic-based state to a citizen-based one. Addition to that, in its basic principles, the parties rejected the use of violence for political purposes. In another respects, to test the efficiency of the ESDP, the Operation Concordia should be highlighted as the first military mission undertaken by the the EU flag. Although while maintaining this operation the EU utilized NATO's assets and capabilities, Concordia was an accomplished test of the EU's infant foreign policy instrument to undertake military operations when considering its non-experienced background on military matters. It achieved its commitment on the settlement of peace which is an outcome of the maintenance of Ohrid Framework Agreement. This success was a result of the collaboration of the local authorities with the EU in context of their

interest to have the EU support on their path towards the membership. The Macedonian case shows the power of the EU as a mediator where the EU membership serves as an incentive for resolutions. In this sense, Concordia contributed to the road dependency of Macedonia on its full membership goal, indicating that the interests of the actors are shaped on this road dependency. It is obvious from the fact that the officials of the Republic of Macedonia made an official invitation to the EU to take responsibility for a role that would support the implementation of the police arrangements of the Agreement. Thus, the EU was able to implement a variety of policy tools in Macedonia from economic aids to military deployment. Addition to that, this mission had a positive impact on EU's increasing role in international security matters illustrating the readiness of the EU to take further security steps when needed.

Based on the empirical and theoretical explanations, one of the main conclusions of this study is that the EU's role as a mediator in conflict resolution is positive and stabilizing. The EU has a lot to offer for incentives as a mediator to transform the violent nature of the conflict into a peaceful direction. In the end, the EU causes plus value and creates new initiatives in peace processes through its political and financial leverage under the shelter of CFSP/CSDP. Mediation processes and the implementation of peace agreements have continued and seemingly, will continue through the range of civilian and military instruments as well as trade and any other development tools applicable to the EU. The EU does not refrain from playing a visible role in mediation activities. Clear from the cases analyzed above, it is possible to see the EU while it is supporting stabilization and conciliation processes, contributing to negotiation and implementation of peace agreements and facilitating close contacts with the parties.

Given the empirical evidence collected throughout the data analysis on both cases, it is concluded that the EU's involvement in the conflict resolution is more if there is an interest of conflicting parties to cooperate with the EU. In addition to that, the more attractiveness of the EU's culture, values and "way of doings", the more its involvement as a mediator in the peace process. Besides, it is observed that the role of the EU in conflict resolution will be more if the EU's foreign policy instruments are established accordingly. These hypotheses have been tested by applying the distant case studies on the conflicts in Northern Ireland and North Macedonia. Moreover, regarding the EU's involvement in

peace processes, it is fair to assert that it is an existential behavior of the EU to have a role in peace processes and its involvement changes from conflict to conflict as a result of the interest of the conflicting parties to approve the EU's involvement. As it was the case for the Macedonia, if the EU improves its foreign policy tools to engage in the resolution of conflicts, then it can play the mediator successfully. Therefore, having in mind that the peaceful settlements are easier through negotiations and mediation and every conflicts have solvable features with solution-oriented instruments, it is revealed that the EU has made great efforts on the resolution of the both conflicts.

The instruments of the EU in the resolution of the conflict in Macedonia provided positive outcome which is clearly seen in the transformation of the conflict. This positive outcome is due to the EU's attractiveness in the eyes of Macedonia it has since the beginning of their mutual relation. Nevertheless, in the case of Irish issue the same instruments of the EU are seen far from being successful when regarding the Brexit effect on the relations. Taking into account the current improvements on the Brexit issue, there is seen one way for the EU to be successful in the Irish matter which is to provide its foreign policy instruments to Northern Ireland to make it ready for EU membership under the shelter of the Republic of Ireland. From this perspective, the hypothesis on EU's attractiveness gives positive outcome. However, this scenario may be regarded as a double-edged sword. Because the way to the United Ireland will not be an easy task for the both parts especially taking the Loyalists/Protestants stance on the possibility of a United Ireland. On the other hand, as it is mentioned, voices both in Northern Ireland and European Parliament has been increasing for the unification of Ireland. Thus, for EU to be successful in Irish border matter as it was in North Macedonia case, Ireland but mostly UK should open a door for EU to be a more prominent mediator. Thus, there may be some limits to what the EU is able to achieve throughout the peace process however, this does not necessarily mean that the EU is not capable to combat the issue. In this context, it is fair to claim that the EU's capacity was limited in Northern Ireland case and the interest of the parties were not as much as the parties in Macedonia to have EU's incentives because the parties of the Northern Ireland conflict were already a member in the EU.

It is fair to state that EU's mediation has a positive effect on conflict dynamics and it significantly increases the chances of resolving conflicts in a peaceful way. Despite the relative success of the EU in resolving conflicts in the above mentioned cases, the impact of EU mediation appears to be significant in terms of stabilizing conflicts, making renewed escalation less likely and including conflicting parties in a process towards a negotiated solution. Additionally, the EU's involvement provides rewards for fulfilment of peace process which can be seen in its efforts when improving common market, eliminate trade barriers, providing financial and technical assistance, cooperating in education, research, technology, creating infrastructure, maintaining political assistance and dialogue between the conflicting parties. In other respects, the potential of the EU's security policy to coordinate economic, political and military tools makes the EU one of the most important actors in the international system. Last but not least, in the two cases, it is observed that the EU's role has created another dimension of conflict resolution when it has fostered a sense of common European identity across the borders of the states. This dimension of the EU identity has regarded as another instrument of the EU in its involvement in conflicts which is in accordance with the perceived attractiveness of the EU. Thus, the EU plays a role in conflict resolution by utilizing different sort of foreign policy instruments.

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