

EVALUATING THIRD PARTY INTERVENTION IN ESTONIA, MOLDOVA AND
UKRAINE: THE CASE FOR MULTIDIMENSIONAL PREVENTION

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty

Of

The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy

By

ANGELA KACHUYEVSKI

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

December 2005

Dissertation Committee
DR. EILEEN BABBITT, Chair
DR. RICHARD SHULTZ
DR. JEFFREY TALIAFERRO

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Angela Kachuyevski
7620 Mountain Avenue
Elkins Park, PA 19027
215-774-1452
kachuyevski@comcast.net

EDUCATION

The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University

Ph.D. February 2006; M.A.L.D. May 1998

Dissertation: Evaluating Third Party Intervention in Estonia, Moldova and Ukraine: The Case for Multidimensional Prevention.

Directing Committee: Dr. Eileen Babbitt, chair; Dr. Richard Shultz, Dr. Jeffrey Taliaferro.

The Ohio State University, BA June 1992

Majors: International Relations, Eastern Europe concentration; Russian Language and Literature

Moscow State Linguistics University, August-December 1991

Intensive immersion program in Russian language

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Tufts University, Department of Political Science, Medford, Massachusetts

Fall 2000-Spring 2005

Courses: International Conflict Management, Soviet and Russian Foreign Policy, US Foreign Policy

- Developed three courses on foreign policy and conflict management; organized active learning assignments, including crisis simulations and debates; selected readings and put together syllabus.
- Created and maintained webpage for each course, including on-line assignments, discussion forums and access to grades.
- Supervised teaching assistants.
- Worked closely with students to develop and improve critical thinking and analytical writing skills, and assisted them in mastering the major philosophical and theoretical approaches to the study of international relations.

Boston College, Department of Political Science, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

Spring 2002-2004

Courses: International Conflict Management, International Security Studies, European Security

- Developed three courses on international security and conflict management; organized active learning assignments, including crisis simulations and debates; selected readings and put together syllabus.
- Created and maintained webpage for each course, including on-line assignments, discussion forums and access to grades.

- Worked closely with students to assist them in developing and refining analytical skills, improving critical writing and thinking skills, and in mastering the theoretical models that seek to explain the causes of war and peace, and the prospect for conflict and cooperation in international relations.

Tufts University, European Center, Talloires, France

Summer 2002-2005

International Relations in a Changing World

- Developed and taught an intensive introductory course in international relations.
- Worked closely with students to improve study skills, writing skills, and critical analysis skills.
- Developed two crisis simulations to engage students in an extended exercise to apply the theories and lessons of history acquired in class to the management of real-world challenges.

Tufts University, Department of Political Science, Medford Massachusetts

September 1999- 2002

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Introduction to International Relations, US Foreign Policy, Introduction to American Politics, Force, Strategy and Arms Control

- Promoted discussion of material covered in lecture and organized informal policy debates.
- Worked closely with students to improve study skills, writing skills, and critical analytical skills.
- Maintained web page for the course.
- Organized and conducted review sessions.
- Graded written assignments and exams.

Summer Institute on College Teaching, Center for Teaching Excellence, Tufts University

June-August 2000

Institute Fellow

- Completed an intensive program focused on improving skills for effective teaching.
- Mastered a variety of techniques to incorporate the use of technology in the classroom.
- Acquired a range of strategies to improve students' writing skills, and to increase the use of writing as a learning tool in the classroom.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Conflict Management Group, February-December 2000, Cambridge Massachusetts
Research Assistant**

- Produced a literature review for a study on intractable conflict.
- Produced a comparative analysis of peace processes and models of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconciliation.
- Produced a literature review for a study on coexistence.

The Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, June 1997-August 1999, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Earhart Fellow

- Researched and wrote a case study examining the conflict prevention role of the OSCE in Latvia and Estonia.
- Produced policy reports on Russian-Baltic relations.
- Contributed to a study on European Security Institutions.

Tufts University, Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations, September 2000-May 2001

Graduate Research Assistant

- Identified foundation and corporate sources of support for university research initiatives.
- Prepared grant proposals and edited project reports to grant-makers

INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Arthur Andersen, LLP, April 1994-July 1995, Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia

Administrative Officer

- Coordinated the curriculum development, supervised the translation staff, and tracked the consistency and quality of translations of academic materials for a professional training institute.
- Produced weekly reports for US and Russian government agencies.

American Council of Teachers of Russian

Moscow Director, Freedom Support Act Secondary School Program, August 1993-April 1994, Russia

- Managed an academic exchange program in Moscow and northwestern Russia.
- Supervised a staff of four American recruiters and four Russian assistants.
- Coordinated publicity and press relations for the Moscow area and maintained relations with the Ministry of Education.

Recruiter, Freedom Support Act Secondary School Program, January- August 1993, Moscow, Russia

- Recruited students to participate in an academic exchange program.
- Gave lectures to program candidates and their families about the U.S. system of education.
- Administered standardized language exams and conducted personal interviews with candidates.

Resident Director, High School Exchange Program, July 1992, Volgograd, Russia

- Led twenty American high school students on a one-month academic exchange.
- Worked closely with the administration of the host institution on academic and cultural programs.

PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

“The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and its Role in Preventive Diplomacy” in *European Security Institutions: Ready for the 21st Century?* (Dulles, VA: Brassey’s) 2000.

“US Foreign Policy in the Persian Gulf: Options in Iraq and Global Consequences”, presentation at Arlington High School, January 2003.

LANGUAGES

Native English, fluent Russian, intermediate French

ABSTRACT

Why do some efforts to contain the escalation of internal conflict succeed, while others fail? What, if any, steps may be taken by a third party to prevent violent conflict? This study addresses these questions and offers new insight into how third parties can effectively intervene in internal conflicts to prevent the outbreak of violence.

Three cases of internal conflict, Estonia, Moldova and Ukraine, occur in the same time frame, in roughly the same geopolitical space with many of the same demographic and socio-political characteristics, yet nonetheless vary dramatically in their outcomes. I argue this variation is due to the differences in third party action in each case, and propose a theory of multidimensional prevention to explain why third party efforts to prevent the escalation of violent conflict fail or succeed. This theory builds upon the existing preventive diplomacy literature in two ways. First, it overcomes the shortcomings of current theory, unable, in these three cases, to account for the decisions taken by the rebelling group by recognizing that effective policy requires efforts that focus on a dual track of increasing available alternatives to violence and on removing opportunities to use force. In all three of the case studies, it was the removal of the opportunity to use force that was decisive in determining whether or not the rebelling group would pursue armed rebellion, even when this was not the most important criteria for winning government cooperation.

Second, the theory of multidimensional prevention goes beyond the traditional view of conflict management that foresees a greater mix of incentives at lower levels of tension, and a greater mix of sanctions as conflicts escalate to the level of crisis or war.

Multidimensional prevention argues that, in creating alternative political processes while simultaneously removing the opportunities available to reject those processes, the third party must focus on both incentives and on sanctions throughout the intervention, whether tensions are relatively low or on the brink of war. This study concludes that applying a multidimensional prevention model to an escalating conflict produces a wider range of policy prescriptions that, ultimately, are more likely to succeed.

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I. RESEARCH DESIGN

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Prevention of Violent Conflict: Promises and Challenges

Since the end of the Cold War, the international community has increasingly been called upon to intervene to contain, manage or provide humanitarian relief in a growing number of violent internal conflicts. The cost in resources, human and material, is high, but the cost of inaction is likely to be much higher. As detailed in the Bush Administration's National Security Strategy, failing states that used to be considered "peripheral" to US security interests have gained new urgency in the global struggle with terrorism.¹

A study by the Rand Corporation on the role of the United States in nation-building since WWII concludes that such operations are the "inescapable" responsibility of the US military.² The costs of successful nation-building, which involves profound political, social and economic transformation of societies, are staggering. The goal is to create a functioning state that exhibits both strong democratization and economic growth. This can only be achieved by expending a great deal of time and resources. Most notably, the Rand study notes that the largest successes have been ones where massive inputs of resources accompanied a long-term foreign military presence: post-war Germany and Japan, and Bosnia.

¹ *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington: The White House, September 2002).

² James Dobbins, John G. McGinn, Keith Crane, Seth G. Jones, Rollie Lal, Andrew Rathmell, Rachel Swanger, and Anga Timilsina, *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2003).

Conflict prevention has emerged as an attractive alternative to costly military intervention and lengthy exercises in nation-building. Although conflict prevention is an umbrella term that covers a wide variety of diplomatic and economic development activities, it generally refers to action taken by a third party to prevent the outbreak of violence between disputing parties. This may encompass long-term activities that seek to eradicate the root causes of conflict, or a more immediate intervention to contain an escalating crisis, action often referred to as preventive diplomacy. Conflict prevention is attractive because intervening early, before violence breaks out, is much less costly, and potentially much more successful, than intervening in ongoing active hostilities. Parties may have hardened positions after fighting breaks out, and thus be less willing to sit at the negotiating table. Some parties may have vested interests in continuing the fighting, and therefore may act as spoilers. Further, there may be a lack of political will to provide an international force during ongoing hostilities due to risks and associated costs. Early intervention, however, may be able to avoid all of these challenges. Most importantly, democratization, institution building, and the promotion of civil society and the rule of law are less difficult to achieve before the war occurs than in its aftermath.

Conflict prevention can take on a variety of forms that cover a range of activities, from disarmament and confidence-building measures to intensive mediation. These activities, discussed in greater detail below, are often carried out by multilateral organizations, especially the United Nations. Indeed, engaging in prevention activities is one of the fundamental tasks of the United Nations as defined in its Charter. Other regional organizations also possess mechanisms to engage in preventive action, with

some organizations possessing robust mechanisms for substantive intervention. These mechanisms, both at the regional and the global level, were crafted by the organizations' member states in order to prevent to the greatest extent possible future destruction resulting from major wars.

Although conflict prevention as a concept appears very promising, in practice it has had mixed results. The need for greater understanding is particularly acute and pressing in the case of violent internal conflict since internal wars cause tremendous suffering, weaken state capacity and create enormous costs for the international community, but they are also the very type of conflict for which our international and regional organizations, created to manage inter-state relations on the basis of sovereign equality, are least well prepared. In order to further our abilities to effectively prevent violent conflict, we must begin to understand why some efforts to contain the escalation of violent conflict succeed, while others fail. Are failures due to inappropriate policy choices, or was there no available option that could have been more effective? In other words, what steps, if any, may be taken by a third party to prevent violent conflict? These questions have engaged analysts and policy makers alike as the struggle to effectively manage internal conflict has produced both tragic failures and remarkable successes. What sets the success stories apart from the failures? What types of third party actions are most effective in preventing violent conflict?

This study addresses these questions and offers new insight into how third parties can effectively intervene in internal conflicts to prevent the outbreak of violence. It is

divided into three sections. The first section considers the existing literature in two fields. First, since a clear understanding of successful conflict prevention relies upon a clear understanding of the causes of conflict, I will cover the literature on the causes of violent conflict. Second, I will consider the existing literature on conflict prevention and its strengths and shortcomings in explaining effective third party intervention. Next, a consideration of case selection and a methodological framework are outlined.

The second section of the study focuses on the three case studies: Estonia, Moldova and Ukraine. These three cases are strikingly similar in many aspects, particularly with respect to the variables identified in the literature, discussed below, as contributing heavily to violent confrontation. Nonetheless, these three cases differ markedly with respect to outcome. While violence was avoided in Estonia, and was sporadic and limited in Ukraine, Moldova suffered a full-scale civil war that resulted in the partition of the country. In an attempt to determine why the cases differ so widely in outcome, each case study offers an in-depth historical account of the conflict, and carefully considers the prevention efforts of the intervening third party. An analysis of each case follows, including a consideration of how well existing theory can account for the outcome. Remaining questions are identified and assessed, and point to a general finding: the current approach to the study of preventive diplomacy, utilizing a fairly limited model, is not able to account for both the actions of the government and the actions of the rebelling group in each of the case studies. While current thinking in preventive diplomacy would explain the success in Estonia by pointing to the early timing and robust nature of the intervention, and the failure in Moldova by pointing to the

late and tepid response, this explanation only tells half of the story, and is completely lacking in its account of the rebelling group's actions and preferences. Thus, data drawn from the case studies call into question the appropriateness of the current approach to the study of preventive diplomacy.

The third section of the study focuses on presenting a new theory of preventive diplomacy, the theory of multidimensional prevention. This theory builds upon the existing literature on preventive diplomacy in two ways. First, it overcomes the shortcomings of current thinking that was unable, in these three case studies, to account for the decisions taken by the rebelling group. It does so by recognizing that effective policy requires efforts that focus on a dual track of increasing available alternatives to violence and on removing opportunities to use force. In all three of the case studies, it was the removal of the opportunity to use force that was decisive in determining whether or not the rebelling group would pursue armed rebellion, even when this was not the most important criteria for winning government cooperation. Second, the theory of multidimensional prevention goes beyond the traditional view of conflict management that foresees a greater mix of incentives (“carrots”) at lower levels of tension, and a greater mix of sanctions (“sticks”) as conflicts escalate to the level of crisis or war. Multidimensional prevention argues that, in creating alternative political processes while simultaneously removing the opportunities available to reject those processes, the third party must focus on both incentives and on sanctions throughout the intervention, whether tensions are relatively low or on the brink of war. This study concludes that applying a multidimensional prevention model to an escalating conflict produces a wider

range of policy prescriptions that, ultimately, are more likely to succeed. A set of findings and recommendations concludes the study.

Review of the Existing Literature

Causes of Conflict

One of the most challenging aspects of the study of conflict prevention is identifying a clear causal connection between the efforts of the intervening party and the successful prevention of a *potential* conflict. Is it possible to prove that an outbreak of violent conflict would have occurred had the third party not addressed the proper factors, or had the third party failed to intervene at all? How can a compelling argument be made that the steps taken by the third party were responsible for preventing a war? Proving that something *didn't* happen for a specific set of reasons is a daunting challenge.

One way to approach this dilemma is to incorporate a broad consideration of the causes of the conflict that third parties seek to manage. In this way, we can identify the factors that would lead us to expect the outbreak of violence in cases of acute conflict. In other words, it is necessary to establish that a tangible threat of violent conflict existed in order to persuasively argue that third party action successfully prevented a violent confrontation. The literature on the causes of conflict provides the criteria necessary to accomplish this task. In the interest of greater analytic clarity, I have divided the broad range of ethnic conflict studies into three general categories of variables: structural, political/governance, and economic/social.

Structural

Analysts who study how structural variables impact internal conflict focus on the importance of geo-political variables, the strength of the state and geo-demographic factors such as minority concentration.

David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild argue that intense ethnic conflict is most often caused by collective fears of the future.³ In cases where weak states are no longer able to provide protection for the interests of minorities, and where competition for resources along ethnic lines is a problem, vulnerable groups may experience collective fears for their future security. Insecurity and group competition is not sufficient, however, for violence to arise. Groups usually resolve differences through negotiations, sometimes with the assistance of outside parties. For negotiations to fail, and violence to erupt, at least one of three strategic dilemmas must exist: information failures, problems of credible commitment, or the security dilemma. Although any one of these dilemmas is alone sufficient to produce violent conflict, they usually appear in clusters and are mutually reinforcing.

Information failures occur when one side possesses private information that could, if shared, contribute to successful negotiations, but, for various reasons, that side faces incentives to misrepresent the information. These incentives arise from a variety of causes, but often “occur when groups are bargaining over a set of issues and believe they

³ David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, “Spreading Fear: The Genesis of Transnational Ethnic Conflict” in *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion and Escalation*, David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, eds. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 3-32.

can gain by bluffing.”⁴ Sometimes it is necessary to make use of a third party mediator, who can probe the true preferences of the groups and communicate them to others. This process is an important part of creating and maintaining cooperative ethnic relations. If the state is party to the conflict, then an outside party will need to play the role of mediator.

Problems of credible commitment arise because “groups cannot credibly commit themselves to uphold mutually beneficial agreements they might reach.”⁵ Groups that are engaged in intense competition for scarce resources, or are otherwise vulnerable to exploitation by their adversary, find trust very difficult to establish, and often dangerous to maintain. Since you can never be sure that today’s partner won’t become tomorrow’s enemy, assurances of goodwill may not be sufficiently credible to allow groups to cooperate. Peaceful and stable ethnic relations must, therefore, be based upon a mutual understanding that may be institutionalized. Political checks and balances, power-sharing and guaranteed representation also serve to stabilize group relations and ensure that no group can exploit the other. Such institutionalization makes reciprocal trust easier to maintain.

Concerned that the balance of power may change, or that the other group has hostile intentions, groups worry that agreements made today will not be honored tomorrow. In some cases, parties may face incentives to resort to the preemptive use of force through what is known as the “security dilemma”. The security dilemma exists

⁴ Ibid., 12.

⁵ Ibid., 13.

when one party is not able to increase their own security without simultaneously decreasing the security of their adversary. This occurs because parties are not sure about the intentions of the adversary, and may view benign efforts to prepare for adequate self-defense as efforts to prepare for offensive action. As each side seeks to meet perceived threats, they may act in ways that increase their adversary's perception of threat. This can unleash a vicious cycle where two sides are defensively oriented, but nonetheless may feel compelled to launch a preemptive attack in order to protect their security.

Lake and Rothchild point out that, while many analysts focus on social polarization and the role of ethnic activists and political entrepreneurs in fomenting violence, social polarization does not by itself lead to violence. Rather, under conditions of actual or potential state weakness, when the strategic dilemmas identified above begin to take hold, ethno-political entrepreneurs are able to use this to their advantage and can produce rapid and profound polarization.

Examining similar phenomena, Michael E. Brown identifies a range of factors leading to ethnic conflict.⁶ The structural factors that figure most prominently are weak states, intra-state security concerns, and ethnic geography. Weak states often add to the propensity for ethnic conflict to turn violent since there is no overarching structure to impose order and regulate group relations, creating an environment where groups seek to acquire adequate power to protect their interests. Just as the analogous "anarchic" system in international relations creates a "self-help" system where states compete fiercely over

⁶ Michael E. Brown, "The Causes of Internal Conflict," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael E. Brown (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 3-25.

power and influence in a bid to achieve security, weak states create a power vacuum that creates insecurity and competition among groups hoping to protect their welfare. When groups act to fill the power vacuum created by weak central authority, intra-state security concerns arise. There may be power struggles among the elite, and individual groups within the state may feel compelled to provide for their own defense. By taking steps to defend themselves, groups often threaten the security of others, the phenomenon of the “security dilemma” discussed above. Finally, ethnic geography impacts the propensity for ethnic conflict to turn violent by either creating an enabling environment or by making violent confrontation more difficult. For example, while all states with ethnic minorities are more prone to conflict, countries with highly intermingled populations are less likely to face secessionist demands because ethnic groups are not distributed in ways that lend themselves to partition. The inverse holds as well: states with a concentrated minority population are more likely to face a concerted secessionist movement should the disaffected minority mobilize.

Brown finds that states are especially prone to violence if state structures are collapsing due to external developments, internal problems, or some combination of the two. When state structures weaken, groups have a heightened concern for their personal security. They may take measures to protect themselves that, in turn, are more likely to generate fears in other groups. This holds not only for weakening states, but also for the creation of new states from the rubble of a larger collapsed regime. Brown further posits that political transitions brought about by the collapse of authoritarian rule, democratization or political reforms also make states particularly prone to violence since

these transitions create at least a temporary power vacuum as the collapse of the old regime is complete before a fully functioning replacement order can be put into place. During this “window of opportunity” groups often seek to maximize their position in the new order. In the absence of a strong central authority, the competition between groups for a share of power in the new regime is fierce, and may result in bloodshed. Finally, states are especially prone to violence if discrimination against minorities intensifies, or if politicians begin to blame some ethnic groups for whatever political and economic problems their country may be experiencing.

Building on this discussion, Brown proposes a categorization of internal conflict, based upon whether they are triggered by elite-level or mass-level factors, and whether they are triggered by internal or external developments. This categorization allows him to develop a matrix, and to offer four models of internal conflict. Mass-triggered conflicts that arise due to internal factors are conflicts due to “bad domestic problems”. These are problems that are directly connected to the internal order of the state that cause widespread disaffection in the general population, such as rapid economic transition or political and economic discrimination. Mass-triggered conflicts that arise due to external factors are conflicts due to “bad neighborhoods”, and include spillover violence from neighboring states. Elite-triggered conflicts that arise due to internal factors are conflicts due to “bad leaders”. Some of the driving forces include ideological or power struggles among the elite over control of the future direction of the state. Finally, elite-triggered conflicts that arise due to external factors are conflicts due to “bad neighbors”, where the

elite of one state deliberately triggers a violent conflict in a neighboring state to serve their own political, economic or ideological purposes.

In an analysis that merges several discrete variables, Stuart J. Kaufman identifies three factors that must all be present for ethnic war to result: hostile masses, belligerent leaders, and inter-ethnic security dilemmas.⁷ Although these factors have been studied individually, Kaufman argues that an accurate explanation requires that all three be integrated into the explanatory framework. Kaufman finds these three factors to be mutually reinforcing and escalatory as they work together to intensify the forces leading to violence: “belligerent leaders stoke mass hostility; hostile masses support belligerent leaders; and both together threaten other groups, creating a security dilemma which in turn encourages even more mass hostility and leadership belligerence.”⁸

According to Kaufman, certain preconditions must be present in order for these three factors to emerge. The preconditions for mass hostility are a clear set of grievances defined in ethnic terms, negative ethnic stereotypes, and disputes over cultural symbols. For hostility to be serious enough to motivate ethnic war, there must also be fear for the group’s physical security. When this fear is mutual, a security dilemma emerges that has the potential to escalate into a dangerous spiral, as described above. Belligerent leaders contribute to the outbreak of ethnic conflict through a process of “outbidding”, in which they try to differentiate themselves from competitors by taking on increasingly extreme nationalist positions. For this to be possible there must be adequate political space,

⁷ Stuart J. Kaufman, “Spiraling to Ethnic War: Elites, Masses, and Moscow in Moldova’s Civil War,” *International Security* 21 no. 2 (1996): 108-138.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 109.

meaning there must be the freedom to engage in outbidding, and, the preconditions for mass hostility must be present for the increasingly extreme positions to be politically profitable.

Kaufman argues that, because the three proximate causes of ethnic war are linked and interdependent, there are different paths to ethnic war. Thus, conflicts may be either mass-led or elite-led. *Mass-led conflicts* begin with mass hostility, where the masses choose belligerent leaders that support their grievances, and then engage in behavior that creates a security dilemma. This dilemma quickly escalates, and may develop into a self-perpetuating spiral of hostility and insecurity that could result in war. *Elite-led conflicts* begin with belligerent leaders who come to power when mass hostility is low. The leaders use their position to encourage the growth of mass hostility, including their influence over the media. This provokes a security dilemma and eventually leads to war. Conflicts can be further distinguished according to the dominant or subordinate status of the group initiating the conflict. This distinction allows Kaufman to create a matrix, and identify four types of internal conflict.⁹ First, mass-led conflicts initiated by subordinate groups are *mass insurgencies*, and are driven primarily by fears of extinction. Mass-led conflicts initiated by dominant groups are cases of *popular chauvinism*, driven primarily by mass hostility. Elite-led conflicts initiated by dominant groups are cases of *government jingoism*, and are driven by elite outbidding. Finally, elite led conflicts initiated by subordinate groups are cases of *elite conspiracy*. Also driven by outbidding, in these cases the subordinate group is usually dependent on aid from foreign patrons.

⁹ Ibid., 110.

The literature on the structural causes of ethnic violence is rich and comprehensive. Drawing heavily from the well-established realist school of thought in international relations, the literature offers compelling arguments for the importance of several factors in determining the security environment. Most frequently cited is the presence of a weak or collapsing state. The lack of a strong central authority breeds competition and conflict, often violent, in the domestic arena just as in the international arena. An additional important factor is a concentrated minority population. Without demographic density, even substantial grievances may not result in mobilization since the minority group is weakened through dispersal throughout the state. Particularly important in conflicts that may involve elites in neighboring states, the legitimacy of borders is also a key structural variable. Finally, intra-state security concerns, where minority groups may fear for their physical safety, is an additional important structural variable.

Less well established is the specific role that political elites may play in instigating violent confrontation. As Brown argues, the literature is weak in its understanding of the roles played by leaders and other elites in instigating violence. This is a critical shortcoming because, although mass-level factors are very important, as is the role of neighboring states, the decisions and actions of domestic elites often determine whether political disputes move toward violence or negotiation.

Political/Governance

Many analysts have considered the importance of political and governance factors in triggering conflict between ethnic groups. They consider the societal aspects of violent

conflict, including a history of grievances, exclusionary politics, and the ability of domestic institutions to manage the resulting conflicts.

Paul Brass argues that ethnicity and ethnonationalism are social and political constructions created by the centralized modern state.¹⁰ Brass argues that, in multiethnic societies, ethnic identities are continually evolving and, thus, are not the root cause of inter-group conflict. He argues, rather, that inter-group relations are competitive, and conflicts are most often caused by a struggle between elites for control over resources and power.

Ted Gurr stresses the importance of the collective identities and interests of minority groups that are most at variance with the available resources of the state in which they live. Addressing this issue is the focus of his book, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts*.¹¹ His model supports the argument that political factors, including the competition over power and status in the new political system following independence, are fundamental to the emergence of conflict. In *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts*, Gurr argues that both approaches stressing the defense of ethnic identity and approaches stressing the pursuit of group political and material interests are necessary to a comprehensive understanding of ethnic conflict. In his view, ethnic groups are more likely to mobilize if they have a strong sense of ethnic group identity *and* some level of imposed disadvantages in comparison to

¹⁰ Paul R. Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1991).

¹¹ Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington: US Institute for Peace, 1993).

the majority group. This approach helps clarify how parties to a conflict could display strong group identification and cohesion based almost entirely upon ethnicity, even as the reasons underlying group mobilization have to do with political and material concerns.

In *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*,¹² Donald Horowitz engages in a comparative study of the political aspects of ethnic conflict in a wide range of cases. He hopes to disprove the notion that increased political consciousness will destroy the cohesive fabric of states with diverse populations. He concludes that democracy can only be maintained, and therefore ethnic conflict limited, by avoiding a bifurcation of society along ethnic lines. He, like Gurr, recommends creating ways for minority groups to channel their grievances through political engagement. Three helpful methods for reducing ethnic conflict include diffusing power throughout state and federal structures, creating incentives for interethnic cooperation, and reducing inequalities between groups.

Other authors have devoted attention to how the structure of the political regime can exacerbate or placate ethnic tensions. In *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts*,¹³ Timothy Sisk offers an interesting discussion of how to manage ethnic conflict by channeling the competing claims of different ethnic groups into a democratic framework. Through the formulation of an adequate institutional infrastructure, it is possible to reconcile unity and diversity within a multiethnic state. Through effective power sharing, both groups can moderate their positions and engage in

¹² Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985).

¹³ Timothy D. Sisk, *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts* (Washington: USIP Press, 1996).

cooperative, rather than confrontational, behavior. Sisk argues for the importance of third party mediation, as well as for preventive activity.

Other analyses of the impact of political power-sharing and the management of ethnic relations also provide valuable insight, although several pieces raise important questions. David Welsh argues that ethnicity and democracy are linked because democracy means “the people shall rule” and it is, therefore, necessary to determine who are “the people”.¹⁴ Ethnicity is an issue in democracy because it is necessary to determine who shall be a citizen and, thus, be entitled to vote. Welsh argues that it is exceedingly difficult to establish and sustain democratic government in ethnically divided societies. Even successful cases, such as Belgium, Canada and India, face difficulties because the integrity of the state is in doubt. Political accommodation, however, is essential to democratic stability. Broad-based coalition government is a crucial conflict-regulating device. Thus, an important lesson for the management of ethnic conflict is that no salient group should be prohibited from a share of effective power. Political institutions should be designed to ensure that minorities are proportionately represented in parliaments and bureaucracies, and that their political, economic and cultural interests are protected.

Jack Snyder defines nationalism as the doctrine in which the most important line of cleavage for establishing membership in a conflict group is nationality.¹⁵ Nationalism

¹⁴ David Welsh, “Domestic Politics and Ethnic Conflict,” in *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, ed. Michael E. Brown (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 43-60.

¹⁵ Jack Snyder, “Nationalism and the Crisis of the Post-Soviet State,” in *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, ed. Michael E. Brown (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 79-101.

can be defined in either ethnic or civic terms. Civic nationality is inclusive within a territory, offering membership in the national group to everyone born or otherwise permanently residing in the national territory. Ethnic nationality, in contrast, is based on nationality, limited to the national group that shares a common identity, rooted in a shared culture and a belief in common ancestry. Civic nationalism is based on equal and universal citizenship rights within a territory. Since this model depends on a supporting framework of laws and institutions to guarantee those rights, civic nationalism usually appears in well-institutionalized democracies. Ethnic nationalism doesn't depend on institutions or laws, but on culture. It predominates, therefore, when institutions collapse or fail to satisfy people's basic needs. Ethnic nationalism appears spontaneously when an institutional vacuum occurs, such as in the collapse of the regime.

Renee de Nevers identifies conditions under which democratization is likely to temper or exacerbate conflict.¹⁶ She argues that, under certain conditions, democratization may either exacerbate or temper ethnic conflict. It is possible to dampen or even prevent ethnic conflicts if the democratization process seizes the opportunity to fairly accommodate the interests of the different ethnic groups in the society. De Nevers identifies two alternative types of solutions for reducing ethnic tension: electoral and territorial. Electoral systems that are designed to share power among different ethnic groups help to avoid or mitigate ethnic tension. In these cases, the parliamentary model is more effective than the presidential, since it relies less on a "winner takes all" model. Territorial solutions, in contrast, often involve arrangements for regional autonomy,

¹⁶ Renee de Nevers, "Democratization and Ethnic Conflict," in *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, ed. Michael E. Brown (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 61-78.

including greater self-government at the local level. Since democratization usually includes a negotiating phase, it offers an opportunity to address issues raised by ethnic tensions, particularly during the development of the states fundamental laws, codified in a national constitution. In this critical stage, all ethnic groups must be included in order for the democratization process to reduce ethnic tension.

De Nevers also points to three models identified by Huntington to explain the democratization process. The first model is one of transformation. In transformations, the elite of an authoritarian regime initiates reform from above. In these cases, democratic reformers come to power and unleash a program of liberalization. In an effort to gain support for their efforts, these elites begin negotiating with moderate opposition leaders, creating a process of negotiation that leads to democratization. Although the regime remains more powerful than the opposition, the elite's desire for widespread support for their reforms requires them to cooperate, leading to a more democratic form of governance.

The second model is one of replacement. In this model, rather than being peacefully transformed from one regime to another, the authoritarian regime collapses or is overthrown by popular revolt. In these cases, negotiations on the new political order occur during or just after the collapse of the regime, which often leaves the regime weaker than the opposition. Given the lack of influence the regime has, in its weakened state, over the negotiation process, democratization is not assured as there may be no incentive for opposition parties to compromise and agree to share power. When the old

regime is replaced, rather than transformed, it is just as likely to be replaced with a new authoritarian order as with a more liberal representative one.

The third model is one of transplacement. In contrast to the previous two models, in these cases the regime and the opposition are of roughly equal strength. Thus, the elite and the opposition leaders recognize that neither of them is strong enough to determine the country's political future individually. They therefore recognize and accept the necessity of a negotiated settlement on the future political order.

De Nevers argues that, because of the importance of negotiating adequate power-sharing arrangements, transformations and transplacements may provide a greater opportunity than regime replacement to address ethnic problems early. Both of these models rely on negotiation in the creation of new political structures, which means that the mechanisms for addressing possible ethnic conflicts are in place prior to the collapse of the previous regime. Replacement processes, however, do not provide great opportunities to take account of ethnic concerns in the creation of new governments. Because replacements generally result from the collapse of the previous regime, negotiations in replacement situations are more likely to encourage power struggles among the opposition groups involved, due to the power vacuum. De Nevers finds that the replacement model is less able to deal with ethnic issues effectively, and increases the probability for ethnic conflict to emerge.

In addition to his work on structural causes of violent ethnic conflict, Michael Brown points to four main political factors that impact internal conflict: discriminatory political institutions; exclusionary national ideologies; inter-group politics; and elite politics.¹⁷ Many scholars argue that the prospects for conflict in a country depend to a significant degree on the type and fairness of its political system. Internal conflict is especially likely if oppression or violence is commonly employed by the state, or if a political transition is under way. Second, scholars argue that much depends on the national ideology. In countries where nationality is defined in ethnic terms rather than civic terms, conflict is more likely. Third, many argue that the prospects for violence depend on the dynamics of domestic inter-group politics. The prospects for violence are great if groups have ambitious objectives, strong senses of identity, and confrontational strategies. Conflict is especially likely if objectives are incompatible, groups are strong and determined, action is feasible, success is possible, and if there are fears and anxieties about potential domination. Finally, some scholars have emphasized elite politics, especially the tactics employed by desperate and opportunistic politicians in times of political and economic turmoil.

These studies have findings that point to a clear set of factors that contribute to violent conflict. First, the presence of discriminatory political institutions is a variable that runs through the work of many analysts, as is exclusionary national ideologies. Both of these variables shape the identity of the state in ways hostile to minorities, and deny minorities equal political (and thus economic and cultural) power. Also important is a

¹⁷ Michael E. Brown, "The Causes of Internal Conflict", 8.

history of past crimes, and the presence of belligerent leaders, both of which can manipulate domestic factors in ways that contribute to conflict escalation. These two factors also contribute to the structural variables discussed above, illustrating the intersection of domestic and structural influences on conflict dynamics.

Some of the findings of this research have interesting implications for the study undertaken here. For example, in Estonia significant portions of the population were not included in the negotiation phase following the Soviet collapse, and their interests were not protected. According to de Nevers, this would lead to an increased probability of conflict, yet Estonia escaped ethnic violence. Indeed, of the three cases, Estonia would seem to be the most conflict prone, given the discriminatory nature of the political institutions and the national identity. How, the Estonian government was able, without offering any real concessions to the Russian population, to avoid armed confrontation is an even more striking puzzle given the compelling findings of this literature.

Social/Economic

Analysts focusing on the impact economic and social factors have on internal conflict generally fall into two categories: those who focus on how economic greed causes and sustains violent conflict, and those who focus on how grievances, perhaps rooted in economic factors, drive groups to violence.

Within the first group, those focusing on how economic factors may, through greed or increased opportunity, initiate violent conflict, Paul Collier has written the best

known and most widely read and influential studies. Collier examines all civil wars for which adequate data exist that occurred since 1965 and, using a statistical analysis, attempts to determine which factors were most salient to the outbreak of violence. He details the cumulative findings of a series of studies, funded by the World Bank, in the highly influential edited volume *Greed and Grievance*.¹⁸ He identifies several variables that, if present, support his position that economic motivations are more important than grievances in inciting violent conflict.

The first variable is the importance of primary commodity exports, measured by the share they hold of a nation's GDP. Collier argues that, "Primary commodity exports are likely to be a good proxy for the availability of 'lootable' resources".¹⁹ Warring parties are able to cash in on this important sector of the economy, either through predatory taxation along the trade route (as the goods are sent from the area of production to the area of export), or by extracting taxation "in kind" by accepting payment in the commodity. The second important variable pointing to an economic agenda is the proportion of young men in society. The higher the proportion of young men, the more likely it is that rebel groups will be able to attract sufficient recruits to launch a rebellion. Finally, Collier points to the importance of education as a measure of economic opportunity. In areas where the overall average level of education is low, it is unlikely that young men will have many lucrative employment options. According to Collier, this makes joining a rebel group more attractive as the rebels are able to gain forcible access to valuable resources.

¹⁸ Paul Collier, "Doing Well Out of War," in *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, eds. Mats Berdal and David M. Malone (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 91-111.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 93

There are several areas for criticism of Collier's approach. First, he ignores the claims of rebel groups to be fighting for reasons that are consistent with "grievance" (identified by him in his studies as ethnic or religious hatred, economic inequality, lack of political rights, and government incompetence). He argues that it is important to observe patterns of behavior rather than listen to what warring parties say motivates their behavior, "since both greed-motivated and grievance-motivated rebel organizations will embed their behavior in a narrative of grievance, the observation of that narrative provides no informational content to the researcher as to the true motivation for rebellion".²⁰ Failing to consider a range of potential explanations weakens Collier's model and, ultimately, his argument.

Other analysts also question Collier's conclusions, arguing that statistical analysis can at best point to broad generalizations, and cannot offer an accurate picture of how economic factors interact with political and other social factors to incite, sustain or drive conflict.²¹ Indeed, careful comparative empirical analysis of a range of cases supports the "grievance" argument that economic incentives are not the primary *cause* of conflict, although they may have some impact on *how* the conflict develops and is sustained. Karen Ballentine notes that a series of studies undertaken in an effort to test and qualify the work of Paul Collier stress the importance of political and socio-economic objectives of rebel groups. In all of the cases contained in the study, insurgent groups used economic resources to finance their military campaigns that were being fought for

²⁰ Ibid., 92

²¹ Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman, introduction to *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 1-15.

political reasons.²² The importance of economic factors seems to depend upon the existence, or perception, of inequitable distribution or exclusion. Thus, deprivation rather than greed seems to drive groups into conflict. These same studies, however, do support portions of Collier's findings on how violent conflict can provide opportunity for some groups to thrive, and thus economic factors can to some degree influence the outbreak of violence. Ballentine argues that empirical evidence supports the importance of opportunity, but only in conjunction with other political, structural and psychological factors.²³

These findings are consistent with the work of other analysts of ethnic conflict who focus more broadly on socio-economic factors. Michael E. Brown²⁴ identifies three broad economic and social factors that have been identified as potential sources of internal conflict: economic hardship; discriminatory economic systems; and the trials and tribulations of economic development and modernization. Economic hardship contributes to intra-state tensions, and can be deeply destabilizing. Discriminatory economic systems, based either on class or ethnicity, can generate feelings of resentment and levels of frustration that might generate violence. And, finally, economic development and modernization can be taproots of instability and internal conflict.

²² Karen Ballentine, "Beyond Greed and Grievance: Reconsidering the Economic Dynamics of Armed Conflict," in *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance*, eds. Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 259-283.

²³ *Ibid.*, 262-266

²⁴ Michael E. Brown, "The Causes of Internal Conflict", 10.

Given the weaknesses in Collier's work, and the persuasive arguments presented by Ballentine and Brown, two main economic and social variables emerge as salient factors contributing to violent conflict: discriminatory economic systems, and hardship associated with economic transition or development. Both of these factors contribute to the overall atmosphere of group competition, and point to the important factor of resource scarcity. When one group feels they are unfairly being denied equal access, this competition, particularly if physical survival and well-being are threatened, can contribute heavily to group mobilization.

Conflict Prevention

The literature on conflict prevention is directly focused on explaining how third parties might seek to prevent the outbreak of violent conflict in divided societies. This literature focuses on a range of questions, such as available tools, reliable early warning, and the need for a "culture of prevention"²⁵ that will strengthen the political will to engage in effective early action. The types of activities covered are quite broad, creating some confusion as to the scope and role of prevention. For example, some analysts view prevention in very broad terms, and include all action that aims to remove the underlying causes of violent conflict such as poverty or lack of representative political institutions. Other analysts argue that this approach collapses customary diplomacy and development work into more concerted efforts to contain an escalating crisis. Irrespective of disagreements on definitions and analytical scope, this growing body of literature has made great progress over the last decade in defining helpful tools and approaches to the prevention of violent conflict.

²⁵ See especially the work and publications of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict; available from <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/subsites/ccpdc/frpub.htm>.

UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali made one of the first post-Cold War efforts to bring conflict prevention to the forefront of international attention and commitment. In his widely read *Agenda for Peace*²⁶ he articulated his vision for how to strengthen the UN's capacity to manage international peace and security. He identified four core areas in which the UN may act: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. His bold and ambitious vision for the UN elevated the profile of preventive diplomacy, and articulated specific ways in which the UN might engage in preventive action, including through early warning and fact-finding missions, through the use of good offices and mediation, through facilitating negotiation, and by facilitating confidence building. His concept of preventive diplomacy was quite broad, encompassing action from dispute prevention to conflict escalation and containment. Defining preventive diplomacy as "action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur,"²⁷ he set out for the United Nations an ambitious role as a proactive third party, vigorously involved in all stages of conflict.

While Boutros-Ghali's *Agenda* can be credited with elevating preventive action, and thus spurring additional discussion and debate, his definition of preventive diplomacy was too broad to offer itself to rigorous analysis. Conflating prevention with crisis management and regional conflict containment made it difficult to craft targeted

²⁶ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (New York: United Nations Publications, 1992).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3

preventive policies. Successive analysts have, therefore, refined the definition of preventive diplomacy to focus more narrowly on preventing the emergence of violent conflict. In one of the best known and widely respected works on the prevention of violent conflict, Michael Lund defines preventive diplomacy as “action taken in vulnerable places and times to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion by states or groups to settle the political disputes that can arise from the destabilizing effects of economic, social, political and international change.”²⁸ Recognizing that this still allows for a wide range of threats as well as policy responses, he further divides preventive diplomacy into three distinct sub-types that vary in tasks, timeframes, tools and agents given the variation of hostility among the parties and the level of threat that violent conflict will erupt. The three sub-types are pre-conflict peacebuilding, preemptive engagement and crisis prevention.

Pre-conflict peacebuilding operates at the lowest level of tension between the groups, where there is an environment of political instability, and a lack of trust between the parties, creating uncertainty and anxiety. Here, the third party tries to prevent the escalation of tensions by creating channels for dispute resolution, building political institutions, defining norms and changing attitudes in order to reduce the sources of conflict to avoid the outbreak of violence. By creating a political process for resolving differences, and creating the institutions and norms that provide a dependable source of rights protection, the third party is able to help the parties put into place the foundation for a more stable relationship.

²⁸ Michael S. Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy* (Washington: US Institute of Peace, 1996), 37.

While pre-conflict peacebuilding seeks to create the basis of stability before lack of trust can transform political instability into active hostilities, preemptive engagement, in contrast, operates during low levels of conflict, where the parties already have specific issues in dispute. The dispute is causing tensions to rise, leading to the polarization of the parties. In this case, the third party must act more quickly to assist the parties to address the specific disputes at hand. Rather than focusing on institution building, the third party should directly engage the parties and create a mechanism to channel their grievances into series of negotiations.

Finally, crisis prevention seeks to manage a near crisis, where there are low levels of violent acts, threats and taking up of arms. This requires the third party to act very quickly and substantively to prevent the outbreak of widespread organized violence. In these cases the priority must be to contain and de-escalate the conflict. The third party, therefore, will seek to block violent acts through the application of coercive diplomacy and deterrence. Together, pre-conflict peacebuilding, preemptive engagement and crisis prevention encompass the activities that third parties might engage in during unstable peace, when political instability and rising tensions intensify, risking armed confrontation.

While these sub-types delineate targeted third party action based upon the level of tension between the parties, Lund argues they are all part of preventive diplomacy and, therefore, generally succeed or fail based upon the same five factors. The first of these is

third party timing. Lund finds, in the cases he covered,²⁹ that peaceful outcomes are more likely the earlier the third party intervenes. It is particularly important to initiate a process of peaceful resolution before one or the other parties mobilize their constituencies, or engage in force deployment or coercive tactics. The further the parties move toward confrontation, the more difficult it is for the third party to bring them back toward a process based upon compromise and consensus.

The second factor impacting success is the application by the third party of multi-faceted action. Here, Lund finds that success results not simply from a strong combination of carrots and sticks, but from the use of a variety of actions and tools to address the range of variables contributing to the conflict. Lund argues that tasks and methods should be tailored to suit the particular circumstances of the conflict at hand. Six factors determine whether or not a conflict will become violent: restraints on violence, availability of a political process, adequate material resources, satisfactory solutions to the dispute, incentives to compromise, and trust. If any of these factors are missing or weak, the intervention should seek to augment or create them in order to craft an appropriate and effective intervention.

The third factor Lund identifies is support from major players. He argues that support by major powers, regional powers, and/or neighboring states is critical to preventive success. If neighboring states are supportive of the intervention, chances for

²⁹ He groups his case studies into three categories: 1) Ethnopolitical “kingroup” conflicts in the Former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe (including Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia; Macedonia, Serbia and Albania; Hungary, Serbia, Slovakia and Romania; and Estonia and Russia); 2) Democratizing “transition conflicts” in sub-Saharan Africa (including Zaire, Congo, Rwanda and Burundi); and 3) “New democracy” conflicts in Latin America (including Haiti, Peru, and Guatemala).

success are greatly enhanced, particularly if they use their influence to encourage the parties to cooperate. Alternatively, major powers, be they large powerful states or small states with regional influence, can easily sabotage preventive efforts either by making it impossible for regional organizations to become involved (perhaps through the use of veto privileges), or by direct or covert support for armed action by one of the parties. The participation of the United States or a regional organization can mitigate the negative influence that regional powers have in the conflict by outweighing their influence, and leveraging the power of the US and regional organizations in support of the intervention increases the chances for success.

The fourth factor impacting success is moderate leadership. In the cases he covers, Lund finds that peaceful outcomes are more likely when the leadership of both disputant parties is moderate in its rhetoric and action. Moderate leaders are more willing to seek negotiations, engage in confidence building through good-faith gestures, and accept the involvement of outside parties. This disposition facilitates third party efforts to channel grievances into a political process of conflict resolution.

Finally, Lund argues that preventive efforts are more successful when states involved in the dispute are autonomous from one or another party to the dispute. By this he means that efforts to prevent violent conflict are more likely to be successful if there are institutional mechanisms available to assist with dispute resolution. If there is a functioning rule of law, court system, and there are representative institutions that operate in the service of the state, rather than in the more narrow parochial interests of one or the

other parties to the conflict, it is more likely that efforts to manage the conflict will be successful. It is important to possess the institutional capacity to either channel disputes into peaceful political resolutions, or at the very least deny one of the warring parties the ability to control the coercive capabilities of the state.

Lund's work is an incredibly valuable contribution to the study of preventive diplomacy. One of his major contributions is the creation of a preventive diplomacy toolbox that provides policy makers with a range of options to enhance the potency of intervention activities. Through greater attention to refined definitions and, subsequently, a more categorical consideration of the practical tasks and tactics of preventive diplomacy, Lund enhances analytical clarity in an often murky field. Additionally, his division of preventive diplomacy into the three sub-types of pre-conflict peacebuilding, preemptive engagement and crisis prevention sharpens the distinctions among the range of conflicts that exist in a somewhat latent phase. By identifying the importance of very early action, and distinguishing what types of activities are most likely to be effective at what times, Lund provides a useful framework for thinking about conflict prevention. Particularly useful is his introduction of the use of coercive measures as a critical tool for preventive diplomacy: third party action in crisis prevention consists primarily of deterrence, sanctions and coercive diplomacy. As Lund seems to limit coercive action, however, to cases of crisis prevention, where the third party is working quickly to stop sporadic acts of violence that have already begun, it remains unclear how policymakers might incorporate proactive coercive strategies into their planning for a substantive preventive diplomacy framework.

Another critically important step was taken by the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, established in 1994 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York to examine growing threats to global security posed by violent internal conflict, and to propose new ideas for its prevention and resolution. In their *Final Report*,³⁰ the Carnegie Commission found that effective prevention strategies rest on three principles: early reaction to signs of trouble; a comprehensive, balanced approach to alleviate the pressures that trigger violent conflict; and, an extended effort to resolve the underlying, root causes of violence.

While some studies examine both longer-term strategies to prevent violent conflict through effective treatment of its underlying causes, such as poverty, others focus on more immediate measures taken to prevent an imminent threat of violence. The Carnegie Commission distinguishes between these two types of prevention, terming the longer-term strategies “structural prevention” and the more immediate strategies “operational prevention”. Such a distinction is useful because it allows for the important consideration of how underlying structural factors make conflict possible, or even more likely, without clouding more focused efforts to prevent or contain further escalation of a potentially violent conflict.

Structural prevention, also termed peacebuilding by the Commission, seeks to implement strategies to address the root causes of deadly conflict. These include the

³⁰ Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Final Report* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1997).

building and strengthening of the international and domestic rule of law, increasing the economic, social and political security of vulnerable people, and the careful reconstruction of post-conflict societies. The Commission argues that, “whatever model of self-government societies ultimately choose, and whatever path they follow to that end, they must meet the three core needs of security, well-being and justice”³¹ since to do so will give people a stake in the political system and, in so doing, will lower the likelihood of violent rebellion against that system.

While structural prevention takes a longer-term view of dealing with underlying threats to peace and stability, operational prevention seeks to implement strategies to prevent violence in the face of a crisis. Early warning is clearly essential, but much more important is early and substantive engagement to create the conditions conducive to success. Working with the same group of conflict risk factors as most other analysts, discussed in detail above, the Commission argues that the key contributing factor to the outbreak of violence is an explicit decision on the part of leaders to choose violence as a preferable option. Further, “their judgments are usually strongly influenced by two calculations: whether they think that violence will achieve their aims, and whether they think they must use violence to survive.”³² Together with a mobilized population willing to heed leadership’s call to arms, this is one of the most critically important ingredients for violent conflict.

³¹ Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Final Report* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1997) 70.

³² Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Final Report* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1997) 30.

Preventive measures recommended by the Commission include preventive diplomacy, economic measures and forceful measures. Preventive diplomacy goes beyond traditional diplomatic activity in times of crisis, either through official governmental or through non-official actors. Recognizing the “complex web of economic and social relationships that span the globe”³³ that, in an era of globalization, means conflicts have a greater capacity to harm others, preventive diplomacy should be proactive and creative and draw upon the strengths and abilities of the private sector and NGOs, as well as upon the United Nations and its Secretary-General.

Factors that strengthen prospects for success in preventing violent conflict include 1) a leader (organization, country or prominent individual) to mobilize international, regional and local actors, and around which efforts can converge; 2) a coherent political-military approach that is able to stop any violence and contain further escalation, manage the political and military aspects of the conflict and meet the humanitarian needs of the population; 3) adequate resources to support the range of preventive activities; and 4) a plan for the restoration of sovereign authority in the affected country.

The *Final Report* of the Commission is a useful contribution to the field. It expands our understanding of the scope of the problem by focusing both on long-term structural challenges as well as shorter-term crisis management strategies. It is helpful in articulating a larger policy challenge, but less helpful in providing empirically grounded and analytically rigorous frameworks for preventive action. These frameworks require grounding in the experience of a variety and range of preventive efforts, which requires

³³ Ibid., 49.

drawing upon rich detail provided by case studies to inform policymaking. Several studies published by the Commission seek to fill this gap. In one of the most comprehensive, *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World*,³⁴ Bruce Jentleson builds upon and contributes to the work of the Commission by compiling a comparative study of several cases of preventive diplomacy.³⁵ Going into much greater detail in his case studies than Lund, Jentleson seeks to address why some post- Cold War conflicts have been prevented while others have not, in essence why have some opportunities been missed while others have been seized?

He argues that preventive diplomacy succeeds by impacting the cost/benefit analysis of the parties and, thus, influencing the process. Because of what he calls the “Rubicon Problem”, he points to the critical need to intervene as early as possible: “as difficult as preventive diplomacy is, the onset of mass violence transforms the nature of a conflict. A “Rubicon” gets crossed, on the other side of which resolution and even limitation of the conflict become much more difficult.”³⁶ In addition to early action, he finds that successful preventive action requires “mixed strategies” that combine coercive elements, in order to pose a credible deterrent, with positive inducements to produce incentives to cooperate. This goes beyond Lund’s sequential sub-types that focus on

³⁴ Bruce W. Jentleson, ed., *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000).

³⁵ His edited volume contains contributions from scholars and practitioners who examine preventive diplomacy success and failure in the Soviet Union (including Estonia and Latvia, Ukraine, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Chechnya), Yugoslavia (including Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia), Korea and Africa (including Somalia, Rwanda, and Congo).

³⁶ Bruce W. Jentleson, “Preventive Diplomacy: Analytical Conclusions and Policy Lessons,” in *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World*, Bruce W. Jentleson, ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000) 330.

either positive inducements or coercive strategies, and takes a clear step toward refining the requirements of the multifaceted action that both Lund and the Commission argue is critical. It falls short, however, of defining exactly how coercive measures can be effectively combined with incentives to manage the range of conflicts that fall under preventive diplomacy.

While former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali contributed heavily to the opening of this debate on the scope and content of preventive diplomacy, and on the UN's role in prevention, current UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has broadened the debate to incorporate the challenges facing the international community in the opening of the 21st century. In his report, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All*, Secretary-General Annan lays out his case for bold reforms within the United Nations to better equip the organization to meet the calling of its founders, and thus the promise held in its Charter, to prevent future wars through the promotion of "larger freedom" based upon justice and the rule of law, respect for human rights, and equitable social progress and improvement in living standards. Since, Annan argues, development, human rights and security are all interdependent and mutually reinforcing, efforts to increase security must give equal effort to promoting human rights and global development. In other words, "freedom from fear" cannot be achieved without eliminating "freedom from want" and strengthening the world's people's "freedom to live in dignity".³⁷ Achieving this ambitious agenda requires

³⁷ Kofi Annan, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* (New York: United Nations Publications, 2005).

commitment by UN member states to engage in collective action to respond to the myriad of threats and challenges to progress on these three fronts.

Secretary-General Annan's recommendations for strengthening the UN's collective security system, and the international rule of law that it supports, are based upon the findings of a distinguished panel of experts that assessed threats to international peace and security and the institutional capacity to manage those threats. An important finding of the panel, strongly supported by Secretary-General Annan, is the interconnected nature of threats to security. The panel had a very broad understanding of what constitutes a threat to international security: "any event or process that leads to large-scale death or lessening of life chances and undermines States as the basic unit of the international system".³⁸ They then divide this expansive view into more discrete "clusters" of threats. These include economic and social threats such as poverty, disease and environmental degradation, inter-state conflict, internal conflict, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, and transnational organized crime.

The panel stresses the connectedness of the six clusters, arguing that poverty and disease weaken state capacity, thus enabling an environment where terrorism and organized crime can thrive, ultimately weakening the stability of the sovereign state system. Thus, it is important to focus on development as part of international security since it "is vital in helping States prevent or reverse the erosion of State capacity, which

³⁸ High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility* (New York: United Nations Publications, 2004), 2.

is crucial for meeting almost every class of threat.”³⁹ Rather than positing a distinction between operational and structural prevention, they see them as part of an integrated strategy because structural prevention “is part of a long-term strategy for preventing civil war, and for addressing the environments in which both terrorism and organized crime flourish.”⁴⁰

In addition to the important development work undertaken as a preventative strategy to eradicate the root causes of conflict, the panel does make several recommendations on how to more immediately prevent an outbreak of violence. First, much more effort must be devoted to strengthening the international regimes and norms that govern the sources of conflict. These include strengthening the international rule of law, particularly the International Criminal Court, to deter would-be aggressors from taking action in violation of international law. The arms control and disarmament regime must also be strengthened. Given that small arms and light weapons are the weapons of choice in most internal conflicts, much effort needs to be devoted to limit easy access to these weapons. Resource regulation is an additional priority to remove a resource base that may actually encourage perpetuation of the conflict, such as “conflict diamonds” in Africa.⁴¹ Finally, utilizing more fully regional organizations, which “have gone further

³⁹ High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility* (New York: United Nations Publications, 2004), 23.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ This is discussed more fully in the previous section. See especially Paul Collier, “Doing Well Out of War,” in *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, eds. Mats Berdal and David M. Malone (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 91-111.

than the United Nations in setting normative standards that can guide preventive efforts,”⁴² will also help strengthen preventive efforts.

The second recommendation is to gain access to better early warning and more effective and accurate analysis to better inform decision-making. The United Nations should seek to create a centralized location for the coordination of early warning data and the dissemination of solid analysis. Access to local information and expertise will also strengthen the quality of analysis of early warning data. These steps will make it easier for policy makers to determine appropriate action and might make it easier to overcome what Alexander George and Jane Holl have identified as the “warning-response problem,”⁴³ that is, the gap between knowing that a crisis is building and knowing what to do to stop it.

The panel’s third recommendation centers on preventive diplomacy and mediation. They took a much narrower view of preventive diplomacy than did other analysts, perhaps in part due to their broader concept of comprehensive security and the need to integrate human rights and development into more traditional security strategies. The main vehicle for United Nations involvement in preventive diplomacy is competent and skilled mediators and special representatives. To improve upon the UN’s rather modest record on preventing violence in internal conflicts, the panel suggests increasing the support for mediators, both in resources and in training, and greater integration with

⁴² High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility* (New York: United Nations Publications, 2004), 36.

⁴³ Alexander L. George and Jane E. Holl, “The Warning Response Problem and Missed Opportunities in Preventive Diplomacy,” in *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World*, ed. Bruce W. Jentleson (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 21-36.

local and regional actors, including civil society. The panel's fourth and final recommendation is to increase the use of preventive deployments in cases of mounting tensions. These deployments should be part of a wider negotiation process, and planning for peace operations should be integrated into ongoing mediation efforts. In this way, the United Nations can contribute positively to conflict prevention through confidence building and by providing additional capacity.

All of these recommendations point to a well-coordinated and substantial role for the United Nations, but have a narrow vision of preventive diplomacy that is a small part of a broad and integrated conflict prevention framework. Perhaps due in part to the member States' unwillingness to invite intrusive involvement in what might be considered domestic affairs, the UN seems focused on voluntary engagement and consensus building within a strengthened system of regulation and cooperation. Coercive measures, including sanctions and the potential use of force, are reserved as a response to violations of international rules and norms, and are subject to oversight and management by the international community. The use of force, in particular, is subjected to rigorous criteria in order to establish legitimacy. In cases of internal violence, international intervention is permissible under the criteria of the "responsibility to protect", meaning military force may be used to stop widespread killing, ethnic cleansing or acts of genocide, under authorization by the Security Council. While this particular recommendation does try to resolve the dilemma between the non-intervention norm contained in the Charter and the fundamental human rights also contained in the Charter, it does so in a manner sufficiently limited to encourage consensus and thus avoids a real

or perceived weakening of the sovereign state system. What this recommendation does not do, however, is suggest how coercive measures might be used *before* widespread violations occur in order to prevent the violence from occurring. In short, it does nothing to explain how the UN might, aside from longer-term development programs and shorter-term mediation, seek to prevent violence rather than respond to it in the hope of stopping it from further escalating. As we see from Jentleson's "Rubicon Problem", this can be very difficult to do.

Remaining Questions

This literature covers a very broad field that spans the impact that economic and political development and respect for human rights have on mitigating conflict, and includes consideration of more immediate efforts to contain an escalating crisis. These works represent enormous progress in recognizing the various categories of third party action that fall within the umbrella of conflict prevention. They also substantially clarify what third parties need to do to address the wide range of factors that contribute to conflict, as well as how all of these activities fit together.

Much more needs to be done, however, to further clarify and refine our understanding of preventive diplomacy, or that subset of conflict prevention that seeks to quell escalating tension that threatens to erupt into violent confrontation. This need is especially pressing with respect to internal conflict, since our international regimes are not well suited to the regulation of domestic affairs. While development and human rights work can go a long way to removing the underlying causes of violent conflict,

many devastating civil wars have erupted in places where most of the problems identified in the literature on “structural prevention” and the “freedom from want” do not exist to a significant degree. We need to have better articulated policy options to deal with these challenges. In short, the international community needs a stronger and more effective framework for successful preventive diplomacy.

The above analysts have identified several factors of critical importance: timing of intervention, flexible and committed leadership, leverage at the disposal of the intervening third party, and the use of a multi-faceted approach. This has done a great deal to help identify which factors are associated with success. More questions, however, remain. In particular, more needs to be done to identify how specifically to craft a multi-faceted approach. Several analysts have pointed to the need to craft a multi-faceted strategy, or to shape the intervention to match the needs, but little specific analysis has been done to refine these findings. This leaves policy-makers without a clear sense of how to put together a comprehensive preventive strategy that is likely to successfully contain and ultimately avoid violent conflict.

Additionally, both the Carnegie Commission and the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change discuss the need to better regulate light arms as part of a broad conflict prevention program since these weapons are often used in violent civil conflicts. Further, Jentleson persuasively argues for greater attention to “mixed strategies” that include both coercive measures and positive inducements. But none of these studies establishes clear guidelines for incorporating disarmament into preventive

diplomacy, or for including a greater mix of coercive measures to compel cooperation. Given the potential benefits of successful prevention discussed above, it is important to understand how to effectively incorporate more coercive measures into a comprehensive framework for preventing violent conflict.

This study begins to fill this void. I begin by examining three highly similar cases that share all of the major conflict risk factors, yet vary considerably with respect to outcome. Addressing my central question of why, given the striking similarities among these cases, the outcomes were so different, I argue that third party action in each case can account for this variation. Through an in-depth analysis of each case, I seek to clarify how third party action contributed to successful, or failed, prevention. While current thinking about preventive diplomacy can persuasively account for the actions taken in each case by the government, and their reaction to third party involvement, it does not explain the actions of the rebelling group in each case. Based upon these findings, I propose a theory of multidimensional prevention that clarifies how sanctions and inducements impact the cost benefit calculations of both the rebelling group and the government in question. This framework then provides a richer variety of policy options that, by focusing both on creating political alternatives to violence and on removing opportunities to use force, is much more likely to successfully prevent violent confrontation.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

Research Method

The method of analysis employed in this study is controlled comparison. The comparison is to be “structured” and “focused”, following the model articulated by Alexander George.¹ Studies that seek to contribute to theory development through an intensive study of a small number of cases face the difficulty of having many more variables to consider than cases included in the study. This makes it difficult for the researcher to control for the range of variables that would allow for an isolation of the causal factors. The structured and focused approach minimizes the negative aspects of having a small set of cases involved in the comparison by ensuring that the data retrieved from each of the case studies is indeed comparable. It allows for the intensive study of a few cases to contribute to theory development by articulating a set of general questions that are to be applied to each case. In this way, the answers to these questions can be reliably compared. Ensuring that the questions asked of each case are theoretically grounded helps ensure that the answers contribute to a further refining and development of the theory. This method divides a study into three phases. The first phase focuses on research design. The second phase focuses on the case studies. The third and final phase draws upon the results of the case studies in order to refine the theoretical explanation employed.

¹ Alexander George, “Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison,” in *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory and Policy*, ed. Paul Gordon Lauren (New York: The Free Press, 1979), 43-68.

The requirements for phase one, the research design, can be further divided into five tasks. The first of these tasks is to specify the research problem and the objectives of the study, as well as to identify the existing literature and the shortcomings in the literature that the study hopes to address. The second task involves the specification of the dependent, independent and intervening variables of the study, and the preliminary assessment as to how they fit together. The third task involves the selection of cases appropriate to a controlled comparison, given the research problem and variables that are subjected to study. It is essential to select cases that are all instances of the same class of event to ensure that comparisons are valid. The researcher should, however, seek to include cases that, although members of the same class of events, differ from each other in potentially important ways. Examining these differences may allow the researcher to refine current theoretical explanations for the class of event under examination. The fourth task considers how to determine the proper value to assign the dependent and independent variables in order to further theory development. Finally, task five focuses on the formulation of the general questions to be asked in each case. The questions should be designed to incorporate the variables under examination. In order to contribute to theory development, these general questions should link the starting theory with the research objectives of the study.

The second phase focuses on the case studies. Each of the cases in a controlled comparison is studied according to standard procedures and is based on the set of general questions identified in the research design. As noted above, these questions seek to structure the investigation to identify the variables of theoretical importance to the study.

The method of explanation in a controlled comparison is causal imputation. The causal explanation developed for each case study is strengthened if it is consistent with the available data, and if the explanation is supported by relevant and valid generalizations. An explanation is more plausible if alternative explanations are considered and found to be less consistent with the data, or if the alternative explanation is not supported by available generalizations.

The third and final phase of the study considers the theoretical implications of the case studies. The controlled comparison method is particularly useful in the effort to refine and sharpen existing theories to offer a fuller explanation of the role the independent and intervening variables play in influencing variation in the outcome of the dependent variable.

Phase one, the research design, is covered in Chapters 1 and 2 of this study. The first task, the identification of the research problem and objectives of the study, together with a consideration of the existing literature and its shortcomings, is covered in the introductory chapter. The remaining four tasks, (identification and definition of variables, case selection, assigning value to the variables, and the formulation of general questions to ask of each case) are covered in this chapter.

The results of phase two, the case studies, are presented in detail in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. The third and final phase calls for a consideration of the theoretical implications of the case studies. As the method of controlled comparison is well suited to efforts to

further theoretical understanding of important policy problems, in this study a further refinement of preventive diplomacy theory follows an intensive study of prevention efforts in the three selected cases. The results of this phase are presented in Chapter 6.

Identification of Variables and Definitions

After examining the scholarly literature on conflict prevention, reviewed above, I was able to identify several factors that contribute to the likelihood of prevention success. These variables, identified and defined below, are consistently linked to the success or failure of third party efforts to intervene to prevent the outbreak of violence in cases of domestic strife.

Timing: Early and robust third party intervention, before the positions of the parties have hardened and tensions have escalated.

Leadership: Moderate national leadership willing to work with the international community; involvement and commitment of major international parties.

Leverage: Capacity of the third party to provide rewards and offer credible threats sufficient to ensure compliance.

Multifaceted Action: The action taken addresses the range of variables contributing to the escalation of conflict.

In turn, I was able to identify several conditions that, when present, make violent ethnic conflict more likely. These variables, drawn from the literature on ethnic conflict and identified and defined below, are consistently linked with a propensity for violence to break out in cases of internal conflict. For purposes of analytic clarity, I have grouped these factors according to type, classifying them as structural, political and governance, or economic and social.

Structural factors

Weak or collapsing states: the governing institutions of the state are insufficiently sturdy to manage societal needs, or these institutions are in a state of collapse.

Concentration of minority population: the minority group constitutes more than 50% of the population in a geographically distinct area.

Legitimacy of borders: all parties do not accept currently recognized territorial borders.

Intra-state security concerns: parties to the conflict are concerned about their physical security.

Political and Governance Factors

Discriminatory political institutions: there is discrimination against minority participation in the political process.

Exclusionary national ideologies: the identity of the state espoused by the majority group is ethnically based and excludes a meaningful role for the minority.

A history of past crimes: the groups have engaged in violent conflict in the past.

Belligerent leaders: group leaders are uninterested in accommodation or compromise and seem committed to achieving their own objectives through any means necessary.

Economic and Social Factors

Discriminatory economic systems: the economic system discriminates against equal minority participation.

Hardship associated with economic development: the process of economic transition or development creates economic scarcity and insecurity.

These variables will be utilized in a variety of ways. The conflict escalation variables will first be used in informing case selection. By selecting only cases where the preconditions for violent conflict exist, as expressed in the presence of the variables that lead to conflict escalation, it is possible to ensure that the cases are comparable. After cases have been selected for inclusion in this study, both the conflict escalation variables and the prevention variables will be used as criteria in order to craft a system for interpreting the results of the case studies. Finally, the variables are used to articulate a set of questions to apply to each case study, in accordance with the controlled comparison method. These steps are each outlined in subsequent sections.

Case Selection

The break-up of the Soviet Union provides ample material for the study of conflict escalation and management. During the late 1980s the highly centralized power of the government of the Soviet Union weakened considerably, collapsing altogether in

1991. This decline in centralized power allowed national groups in the various constituent republics of the USSR to act on longstanding grievances and mobilize for independence. The mobilization process often brought the ethnic identities and aspirations of different groups into sharp conflict as competing goals for the future organization of the state divided the population in many of the member republics of the USSR. In many cases, the population disagreed on whether the republic should remain part of a reformed USSR that allowed greater regional autonomy and political and economic liberalization, or whether the republic should push for full independence. The regional elites often preferred independence, while many resident ethnic Russians hoped to retain ties with the Russian Federation. This nationalization of the independence movement in several republics exacerbated inter-group tensions by equating democratization with de-Sovietization. This, in effect, meant the de-Russification of the country, through which the Russian language and culture lost their dominant status. In many cases, new language laws were passed, ensuring the use of the national language in all official capacities, including most places of employment. These changes threatened the economic security and the political power of the resident Russian community.

Many millions of Russians were left living outside of Russia's borders after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and thus were affected by the "nationalization" of the Soviet republics. Accordingly, many did not support the independence of their country of residence from the USSR, and most did not support the subjugation of Russian language and culture that has followed the Soviet collapse. This led to organized opposition to the new state, and the potential for violent confrontation in several cases.

Occurring in the same time frame, in roughly the same geopolitical space, with many of the same demographic and socio-political characteristics, the many internal conflicts that erupted after the Soviet collapse nonetheless vary dramatically in outcome. In some cases, resistance to the newly dominant ethnic group escalated to the outbreak of civil war while other conflicts were successfully contained. Focusing only on these cases that share the major factors that lead to violence, yet differ in outcome, allows us to more accurately determine why some of these conflicts were contained while others erupted into violence.

In determining which cases to include in this study, I began by considering all of the cases in the former Soviet Union in which a resident Russian minority was in conflict with the government of the newly independent state. The focus is on conflicts involving large Russian populations for two reasons. First, the literature on ethnic conflict indicates that large neighboring states can sometimes play an important role in the emergence of conflict, especially if their co-ethnics are a party to the conflict and the interests of their own country may be at stake. Michael Brown refers to these conflicts as springing from “bad neighbors”² since elites sometimes trigger violent conflict in neighboring states by pursuing their own political interests. Focusing only on those conflicts in Soviet successor states that involve large Russian populations allows us to control for this often important variable, since Russia’s interests and ethnic ties were present in all cases even as the outcome of the cases differ markedly.

² Michael E. Brown, “The Causes of Internal Conflict,” in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael E. Brown (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 3-25.

Second, conflicts involving Russians present special challenges given the collapse of the Soviet Union, and their transformation from majority group to minority group. Their loss of status and the subjugation of the Russian language and Russian culture contribute to the incentives for resistance to the new state. In most cases Russians suffered increased economic insecurity through increased discrimination in places of employment and the loss of important elite positions in government, business, and higher education. “De-Russification” clearly had a negative impact on Russians, as the purpose of the process was to limit the influence of Moscow by erasing, to the greatest extent possible, the evidence of past Russian domination. This led to changes in employment, education, and social policies aimed at altering the balance of power away from the Russians toward the titular nation. These conflicts, therefore, had great potential for escalation and violent rebellion. Focusing on these conflicts allows us to more accurately determine which factors more directly lead to the outbreak of violence, as all of the cases considered share these important characteristics, yet vary considerably with respect to the level of violence experienced.

Since I wish to explore why some conflict-prone states erupt into violence while others do not, I only examined cases of conflict-prone states. I utilized the variables, drawn from the ethnic conflict literature above, to determine which cases were, according to the literature, prone to violent conflict. I further drew upon these criteria to determine which cases best provide the basis for valid comparison. In order to explore the reasons behind the differing outcomes, it is necessary to control for as many variables as possible. Excluding cases that did not exhibit the structural, political and governance and economic

factors that lead to conflict escalation allowed me to control for a wide range of phenomena.

All of the cases considered for inclusion in this study exhibit the relevant structural variables outlined above as the central state, the USSR, was collapsing, and the new state structures were still very weak. In some, the concentration of minority populations in distinct geographic areas increased incentives to request autonomy. In several, the legitimacy of the borders of the new state was in question. Several of the cases that I considered for inclusion in this study exhibit the political and governance variables outlined above, including discriminatory political institutions and exclusionary national ideologies. Several cases also indicate a history of past crimes, and the presence of belligerent leaders. As for the economic and social variables outlined above, all of the cases indicate economic hardship was a serious problem. Several cases point to discriminatory economic systems as well.

Thus, those cases that exhibit the factors identified in the literature as contributing to violent conflict were identified as potentially appropriate for inclusion in this comparative study. Table 1 outlines which cases possess the preconditions for ethnic conflict.

Table 1: Causes of Ethnic Conflict

Table 1a: Structural Variables

STATE	WEAK STATE	LEGITIMATE BORDERS	MINORITY CONCENTRATION
Ukraine	Yes	Crimea in question	Yes Crimea & East
Belarus	Yes	Yes	No
Moldova	Yes	Transdnistria in question	Yes Transdnistria
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	No
Latvia	Yes	Yes	No
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes, Eastern part of the country

Table 1b: Political/Governance Variables

STATE	DISCRIMINATORY INSTITUTIONS/ EXCLUSIONARY IDEOLOGY	WEAK INSTITUTIONS/ COLLAPSE OF AUTHORITARIAN RULE	BELLIGERENT LEADERS	HISTORICAL GRIEVANCES
Ukraine	No - civic nationality	Yes	Yes, Crimea, No Central Govt.	Yes
Belarus	No	Yes	No	Yes
Moldova	Yes - language and culture	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lithuania	No	Yes	No	Yes
Latvia	Yes	Yes	Not in Central Govt.	Yes
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Not in Central Govt.	Yes

Table 1c: Economic/Social Variables

STATE	ECONOMIC PROBLEMS	DISCRIMINATORY ECONOMIC SYSTEM	HARDSHIP FROM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Ukraine	Yes	No	Yes
Belarus	Yes	No	Yes
Moldova	Yes	No	Yes
Lithuania	Yes	No	Yes
Latvia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes

The above information indicates that Belarus and Lithuania do not exhibit the necessary preconditions for the emergence of violent conflict. There was no significant discrimination against minorities, the model of nationality adopted was a civic one, and

national institutions were not exclusionary. Further, neither country has a significant minority, and there has not been any mass hostility between ethnic groups. Since Belarus and Lithuania do not share the characteristics of conflict prone states, they were not included in the study.

Of the remaining four cases, three seem to be a good match for a controlled comparison. Table 1a indicates that Latvia differs in potentially important terms demographically from Ukraine, Estonia and Moldova. Namely, Latvia does not have a concentrated minority population. The lack of demographic density impacts the viability of any move for autonomy or secession, and is an important structural variable. A dispersed minority is not likely to mobilize or launch a violent resistance or move for secession. The lack of a concentrated minority renders Latvia an inappropriate case for comparison. Latvia was, therefore, not included in this study.

Estonia, Moldova and Ukraine each exhibit the conditions for the outbreak of violent ethnic conflict. In all three cases, the states under consideration were undergoing a political transition brought about by the collapse of Soviet rule. The Soviet collapse was brought on by enormous internal problems. At the time of establishing independence, discrimination against Russians, now a minority in the new state, intensified in all cases. These cases provide an ideal basis to explore my research puzzle: Why, given the striking similarity between these three cases was the level of violence experienced so varied? The literature on ethnic conflict would lead us to expect

violence in all of these cases. Addressing the variation in the level of violence is the focus of this study.

In sum, as demonstrated above, in connection with the Soviet collapse in 1990-1991, there were four cases of conflict between a sizable Russian minority and the titular population that followed the former republic's establishment of independence. Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine and Moldova all experienced some level of conflict between the ethnic Russians residing in the respective states and the titular population upon the establishment of independence. As the Latvian experience differs in potentially important ways from the other three cases, namely in the lack of a concentrated Russian population and, subsequently, a low likelihood of violent rebellion, Latvia is not included in the comparative study.

The remaining three cases share important characteristics. All three have a concentrated Russian population that has made at least some moves toward secession. All three experienced the escalation of conflict within the same time frame of 1990-1995, and within the same rough geo-strategic space. Each of the three cases experienced conflict between the titular population and ethnic Russians, particularly between the ethnic Russians and the political elite of the new state. Each of the three attempted to manage this conflict within the same political and economic turmoil associated with the downfall of communism and the dissolution of the USSR. Finally, each of the three attempted to establish their independence and began the process of state building during the time of the conflict. Although there are striking similarities between the three cases,

there is substantial variation in the level of violent conflict. These three cases were selected for further study to explore what variables might account for the differing outcomes.

Interpreting Results

I. Factors Leading to Conflict

The following table provides a framework for interpreting the results of the comparative analysis of the three cases covered in this study, and illustrates how to determine if there is a high or a low risk that the conflict will lead to violence.

Table 2: Intensity of Variables Contributing to Conflict

	LOW ←	→ HIGH
Structural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ strong central institutions ▪ legitimate borders ▪ widely dispersed minority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ weak central authority ▪ borders under question ▪ concentrated minority
Political/ Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ civic definition of nationality ▪ lack of discriminatory institutions ▪ moderate national leaders ▪ no salient historical grievances ▪ not under transition of political order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ nationality defined in ethnic terms ▪ institutions discriminate against full minority participation ▪ belligerent national leaders ▪ clear, salient historical grievances ▪ collapse of authoritarian rule
Economic/ Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ stable economy ▪ widespread participation in the economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ acute economic instability ▪ discrimination against minority participation in the economy

II. Preventive Diplomacy

Table 3 builds on the analysis of the conflict, and offers a framework for interpreting the results of the comparative analysis of the third party intervention in each of the three cases covered in this study. Variables are broken down into four categories: timing, leadership, leverage and multifaceted action. The criteria for measuring the likelihood of preventive diplomacy success determine whether a state has high or low levels of these variables.

Table 3: Likelihood of Preventive Diplomacy Success

	LOW ←	HIGH →
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party intervention after positions have already hardened and tensions have escalated ▪ third party actions not beyond normal diplomatic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party intervention before positions have hardened and tensions have escalated ▪ robust third party actions, going beyond normal diplomatic activity
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ major international players not involved or committed to the intervention. ▪ belligerent national leadership in the targeted country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ major international players involved and committed to the intervention ▪ moderate national leadership in the targeted country
Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party not able to offer credible threats ▪ third party with no ability to offer attractive incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party with the capacity to provide rewards sufficient to ensure compliance ▪ third party with the capacity to offer credible threats sufficient to ensure compliance
Multi-faceted Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ limited action taken ▪ action does not address the range of factors contributing to conflict escalation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ multi-faceted action taken ▪ action taken addresses the range of factors contributing to conflict escalation

Questions

This study analyzes the relationship between the characteristics of the conflict in each of these three cases, the efforts of the third party to contain or prevent the escalation of the conflict, and the outcome in each case.

In accordance with the “focused comparison” method being employed in this research, I articulate a set of questions for application to each case. The first set of questions addresses the characteristics of the conflict, and leads to an assessment, based upon the variables drawn from the literature on ethnic conflict, of the intensity of the conditions leading to the outbreak of violence in each case. Although I only included conflict prone states in this study, applying a set of specific questions that explore in detail the factors leading to conflict escalation will probe more deeply into the conflict dynamic and allow for more precise analysis. Thus, there is value in additional consideration of the variables that lead to conflict escalation.

The second set of questions addresses the characteristics of the third party intervention in each case, and leads to an assessment of the appropriateness of the intervention, based upon the criteria for success drawn from the literature on the prevention of violent conflict.

I. Factors Leading to Conflict

The literature outlined above points to key variables that lead to the escalation of conflict. These variables fall into one of three categories: structural, political/governance,

or economic/social. Each of these three categories is carefully considered below, as questions to be applied to each case are articulated.

Structural

Structural variables reflect the underlying geo-political factors contributing to the conflict. They include secure borders, strong central state authority, and low potential for minority mobilization.

Weak state: Are there strong central institutions? Or, is there weak central authority?

Legitimate borders: Are the state's borders widely recognized as legitimate, and not questioned by neighboring states? Or, are they under question?

Minority concentration: Is the minority group widely dispersed throughout the country? Or, does the minority live in concentrated enclaves?

Political/Governance

Political/governance variables reflect the societal aspects of the conflict, such as a history of violence between the groups or an exclusionary national identity, as well as the domestic capacity for managing inter-ethnic relations.

Discriminatory institutions/exclusionary ideology: Do institutions discriminate against full and equal participation of the minority, and national identity is ethnically based? Or, is there a civic definition of nationality, and a lack of discriminatory institutions?

Belligerent leaders: Are national and regional leaders moderate? Or, is the leadership either led by belligerent forces or under pressure from belligerent forces in government?

Historical grievances: Do the parties have an identifiable, salient historical grievance toward each other? Or, are there no identifiable events in the past that continue to be part of the groups' collective conscious?

Weak institutions/Collapse of authoritarian rule: Has there been a collapse of authoritarian rule, not yet replaced with a clear and functioning order? Or, is the state not in a period of transition?

Economic and Social

Economic/Social variables reflect the impact of the domestic economy on inter-ethnic competition and conflict.

Economic instability: Is there a stable economy with widespread participation? Or, is there acute economic instability?

Discriminatory economic system resulting in hardship: Does the economic system discriminate against any one group? Or, is there widespread economic opportunity?

II. Preventive Diplomacy

The literature on conflict prevention identifies four sets of variables that are critical to the success of third party effort to contain or prevent the escalation of conflict. These variables consider the timing of the intervention, the leadership of the intervention

effort, the leverage held by the third party and the range of activities undertaken. Each of these factors is considered below, as questions to be applied to each case are articulated.

Timing: Is the third party intervention robust and early, before the positions of the parties have hardened and tensions have escalated? Or, does the third party intervene after violence has broken out?

Leadership: Is the national leadership willing to work with the international community? Does the intervention have the involvement and commitment of major international parties? Or, is the third party insufficiently committed or lacking in appropriate power?

Leverage: Does the third party have the capacity to provide rewards and offer credible threats sufficient to ensure compliance? Or, is the third party lacking in ability to offer attractive incentives for compliance and effective threats to prevent non-compliance?

Multifaceted Action: Does the action taken address the range of variables contributing to the escalation of conflict? Or, is the action taken mismatched to the needs of the parties?

II. CASE STUDIES

Geopolitical Context

On December 8, 1991 Russian President Yeltsin, Ukrainian President Kravchuk and Belorussian President Shushkevich met in secret to reach agreement on dismantling the Soviet Union. Seeking greater political and economic autonomy for their respective republics, the three leaders designed a loose union of independent states to replace the highly centralized USSR. This arrangement, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), provided for economic cooperation and joint control over strategic forces, but removed the central political structure headed at that time by Mikhail Gorbachev. The Soviet Union officially ceased to exist on December 31, 1991.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union was the result of a number of important social and economic forces, not the least of which were Yeltsin's determined efforts to maximize Russia's sovereignty and material interests. The Soviet demise, however, soon proved to be a major challenge for Russia. The most immediate concerns had to do with loss of territory, much of it strategically important. The future status of Soviet forces and bases in these neighboring states also proved to be a daunting challenge. Both of these factors combined to create strong incentives for continued exercise of Russian influence in what came to be known as the 'near abroad'. All of this was further exacerbated by the presence of large Russian minorities¹ living in these newly independent states.

¹ Approximately 25 million Russians were living in the Soviet Union, but outside the borders of current day Russia upon the collapse of the USSR.

The three cases examined in this study have many important characteristics in common, even as they differ in important ways as to outcome. All three cases involved a concentrated Russian population that, fearing negative consequences associated with being a minority group in a newly independent post-Soviet state, decided to organize resistance to the new government. All looked to Russia for support, both moral and material. Russian interests in each case were vital, and Russia played an important role in conflict escalation as well as conflict management. The nature and degree of Russian involvement in each of these conflicts differed substantially, and is examined in detail in each case study.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

As the primary institution tasked with preventive diplomacy in Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has engaged in the most intensive and sustained preventive action in all three cases included in this study. As the primary third party, the OSCE has had a powerful impact on relations between the central government and the disaffected minority in all three cases. A clear understanding of the background and institutional characteristics of the OSCE will contribute to increased knowledge of how and why preventive action in the case studies succeeded or failed.

The OSCE began as the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE) in Europe, holding its first meeting in Helsinki in July 1973. The objective was to bring countries of the eastern and western blocs together in an ongoing dialogue on issues of common concern pertaining to European security. The Helsinki Final Act was signed in

August 1975, after undergoing intense negotiations regarding the proper role of the organization. The Final Act is not a treaty, but rather a politically binding statement of principles and commitments by states regarding their political behavior toward each other, and toward their own citizens. The Final Act covered three baskets of issues: principles, and confidence building measures (CBMs) and disarmament; cooperation in economics, technology and the environment, and security in the Mediterranean; and the human dimension.

The CSCE was not an institution, rather a process, allowing the flexibility necessary to productive dialogue during the Cold War. The process offered a forum through which states could discuss their concerns. More importantly for the west, the Final Act allowed discussion of human rights in an open and forthright manner because the parties had explicitly agreed upon the inter-relationship of security in the political-military, economic, and human rights spheres. Dialogue and cooperation were the key to progress, and agreement in one area might depend upon agreement in the others. This was a weakness insofar as it often caused the negotiating process to be protracted, but a strength insofar as it made all aspects of security equally important. Of particular importance was the linkage of human rights to general security and cooperation. The CSCE established the principle that a country systematically violating the fundamental rights of its citizens could not be trusted to behave responsibly in the international sphere, and indeed should be considered as a potential threat to regional security.

This focus on the “human dimension” of security has been strengthened since the end of the Cold War. The 1991 Moscow Document clearly articulates the principle that human rights are everyone’s concern, “Commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension of the CSCE are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating states and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the state concerned”.² This particular provision of the Moscow Document makes clear the consensus within the organization that internal problems involving national minorities affect not only individuals, but also the stability of their countries of residence as well as regional security. This provision allows for outside intervention in cases where human rights are being violated, and provides the ideological justification for the offices of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) and the long-term in-country missions. These offices were further strengthened through the institutionalization of the CSCE that occurred in Budapest in 1994 when the CSCE was transformed into the OSCE.

The OSCE has developed an alternative strategy for preventive diplomacy that has proven effective in preventing the escalation of regional tensions. Rather than focusing on traditional political-military concepts of diplomacy, which emphasize reaching settlement and providing the basis for enforcement, the OSCE looks to cooperative management and dialogue as the framework for intervention and the means

² Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Third Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, *Document of the Moscow Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE*, October 3, 1991.

for preventing escalation and violence.³ A focus on settlement may be appropriate for traditional political-military disputes where tangible issues are at stake. It is less well suited, however, to intervention in the internal conflicts characteristic of the post-Cold War period that often include elements of ethnic nationalism. Further, the settlement model does not provide a mechanism for preventive action.⁴ The alternative model developed by the OSCE is that of the ‘insider third party’, which may be “the most important and innovative contribution of the OSCE to the theory and practice of preventive diplomacy”.⁵ This model places the OSCE in the role of both an objective and impartial third party, and in the role of an insider with special knowledge and understanding of the situation and the involved parties.

The OSCE was most actively involved in these cases through the office of the HCNM and through the establishment of long-term in-country missions. The office of the HCNM was established by the CSCE in December 1992. The first Commissioner, Max van der Stoep, took office in January 1993, and remained in office until his successor Rolf Ekeus was named in 2001. As a tool of preventive action, the HCNM enjoys particular freedom of movement, as his mandate allows him to intervene in a potential conflict without first securing approval from the governing bodies of the organization. Although he is dependent upon the political support of the member states for the overall success of his work, since ultimately the states will need to support any policy changes, his mandate

³ Diana Chigas, “Preventive Diplomacy and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe: Creating Incentives for Dialogue and Cooperation,” in *Preventing Conflict in the Post-Communist World: Mobilizing International and Regional Organization*, eds. Abram Chayes and Antonia Handler Chayes (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1996).

⁴ *Ibid.*, 26

⁵ *Ibid.*, 49

allows him considerable discretion and independence of action. This allows the HCNM to carry out his duties with minimal political interference. The HCNM is tasked with a two-fold mission encompassing both early warning and early action. According to the mandate, the HCNM must “first to try to contain and de-escalate tensions and, second, to act as a 'tripwire,' meaning that he is responsible for alerting the OSCE whenever such tensions threaten to develop to a level at which he cannot contain them with the means at his disposal.”⁶

Several institutional characteristics of the OSCE contribute to its success in preventive diplomacy. First, one of the major strengths of the OSCE in managing sensitive regional tensions is its inclusive membership. The OSCE is, with the possible exception of the Council of Europe, the only truly pan-European organization, allowing for full participation on an equal level for all interested parties. The ability of all parties to participate in the conflict resolution process on the basis of equality is essential to conflict prevention success. In all three of the cases included in this study, the inclusiveness of the OSCE was doubly important as this allowed Russia’s full participation. Given the sensitive nature of the disputes, and Russia’s direct role and interests in the conflict, the political channel opened by the OSCE was critical to preventing the escalation of violent conflict.

The second institutional characteristic is the principle of consensus rule. In the OSCE, decisions are made on the basis of dialogue and consensus. While this principle

⁶ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *Mandate: High Commissioner on National Minorities*; available from <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/mandate/>.

often complicates the decision-making process and increases the cumbersome nature of the bureaucracy, it contributes heavily to the OSCE's success. Indeed, the consensus rule may be the driving force behind the success of the OSCE's preventive diplomacy efforts. Consensus is central to how states operate when it comes to sensitive issues such as citizenship, naturalization, the allocation of political and economic power, and the rights of minorities. By accepting the principle of consensus, the OSCE assumes that coercive enforcement strategies are generally ineffective, and are too costly. The likelihood that states would accept any process that imposes binding decisions upon them, particularly on matters that concern sovereignty, national and cultural identity, is very low.⁷ Accepting the consensus rule makes it possible to entice states to discuss sensitive issues such as the rights of national minorities, as states are not under any predetermined obligations. In this way the OSCE is able to offer a unique political forum within which diplomatic persuasion, issue linkage and other non-coercive methods form effective components of a preventive diplomacy strategy.

A third institutional characteristic contributing to the success of the OSCE in preventive diplomacy is found in the office of the HCNM. Four factors have made the office of the HCNM highly effective in resolving contentious minority disputes. First, the broad scope of independence enjoyed by the Commissioner and his limited accountability to the political bodies of the OSCE make it possible for the organization to supervise his actions without setting political limitations on his freedom of action. Second, the Commissioner, who acts in the interests of the parties concerned, is impartial. Lacking any political agenda of his own, he has no interest in pushing for a particular

⁷ Diana Chigas, "Preventive Diplomacy and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe", 41.

outcome. Third, the confidentiality under which the Commissioner operates allows him to hold sensitive discussions and assist in the decision-making process away from the public spotlight. Finally, the absence of a specific definition of national minority allows the HCNM to intervene in virtually any conflict that involves a minority population, according to his mandate and personal judgment.⁸

The fourth institutional characteristic that has contributed to the success of the OSCE in preventive diplomacy is the use of long-term in-country missions. These missions provide a continuous presence in the country, and thus are able to keep abreast of all relevant developments in the country. The purpose of the long-term missions is to act as the "eyes and ears" of the OSCE political bodies, keeping them advised of political developments in the country, and alerting them as to potential conflict in the area. The missions are also designed to act as a third party mediator/facilitator. In this vein, the missions offer informal assistance and advice on governmental initiatives and decisions, particularly those that affect relations between political groups, including ethnic minorities.⁹ The missions help provide a moderating influence on legislation, both through direct consultation with the governments, and by keeping the HCNM informed of the situation in-country. Often the missions are able to operate as a clearinghouse of information. In the early, somewhat chaotic period of state-building, access to impartial and accurate information can alleviate anxiety and defuse intergroup tensions, as well as

⁸ The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, *The Role of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in OSCE Conflict Prevention* (The Hague: June 1997), 20-23.

⁹ Konrad Huber, "The CSCE's New Role in the East: Conflict Prevention," *RFE/RL Research Report* 3, no. 31 (1994): 26.

provide the government with information on problems encountered by the minority population.

Organization of the Case Studies

Each of the following case studies begins with a consideration of the historical background to the conflict, providing a deeper understanding of the social, economic and political roots of the conflict. A detailed examination of the escalation of the conflict follows this background. Having laid out the substance and context of the dispute, I examine the third party preventive action taken. I then analyze both the conflict and the intervention utilizing the analytic framework developed and presented in Chapter 2. This framework allows for meaningful comparisons between the cases by focusing on a consistent set of variables, and provides clear criteria for interpreting the results of the analysis.

Each case study concludes by identifying and discussing questions that remain following the analysis. These remaining questions are further explored in the theory chapter that follows the case studies, where I develop a theory of multidimensional prevention that provides a more accurate explanation for the outcomes of the cases than the existing formulations.

CHAPTER THREE: ESTONIA



Map 1: Estonia¹

¹ From the CIA World Fact Book; available online at <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/en.html>

Introduction

Estonia is located on the Baltic Sea, neighboring Latvia to the south and Russia to the east. Estonia had been part of the Russian Empire from the early 1700s until the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. Estonia enjoyed independent statehood for 19 years until it was retaken by Soviet forces in 1939. The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (ESSR) was part of the Soviet Union from 1940 until 1991. Upon the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, Estonia regained its independence, and faced an array of challenges in transitioning from Soviet rule. In addition to the need to reform and restructure the economy as a market based, rather than centrally planned, economy Estonia faced numerous political and social difficulties. Most important among these was the need to build a functioning democracy to replace the authoritarian control exercised by the Soviet center.

Complicating these efforts was the presence of a large non-Estonian population: approximately one half million Russians and other non-Balts were residing on a permanent and legal basis in the Baltic republic of Estonia at the time of the Soviet collapse. Comprising nearly one third of the population, these primarily Russian-speaking inhabitants held USSR citizenship, and had residence permits registering them as residents of the ESSR, but their status in a newly independent Estonia was a matter of dispute.

Upon the restoration of Estonian independence, the Estonian government decided to restrict citizenship of the new state to those who could trace their roots to pre-Soviet Estonia. This effectively excluded the Russian population from participating in a political and legislative process that established the legal basis of Estonian statehood, as

virtually all non-Estonians lost their citizenship and corresponding political rights.

Tensions were highest in the northeast of Estonia, an area bordering Russia and populated by a majority of Russians. Political leaders in this part of Estonia organized a referendum on political autonomy in 1993, and were entertaining plans for secession. The tensions between the Russians and Estonians during this period could have easily erupted into violence, but intensive preventive measures were taken that successfully avoided the outbreak of war.

Historical Background

The Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia were part of the Russian Empire for approximately 200 years before achieving independence in the wake of the Bolshevik revolution. These territories were surrendered by the new Bolshevik regime to Germany and Austria under terms set by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk,² which ended Russian participation in WWI. After Germany's defeat, Estonia declared independence and repelled Soviet attempts to reincorporate the territory into Soviet Russia. The 1920 Treaty of Tartu established peace between Estonia and Soviet Russia, and secured Soviet recognition of Estonian independence. The loss of the strategically valuable Baltic territories was a real blow to the Bolshevik regime, and a clear reflection of their relative weakness coming out of WWI and the revolution. Embroiled in a protracted civil war for control of the country, they had no choice but to accept, however grudgingly, this loss. Then Commissar of Foreign Affairs Leon Trotsky lamented this devastating loss that handed to the Germans a third of Russia's population, cultivated land and developed

² The surrendered territories included not only the three Baltic states, but also large portions of today's Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine.

industry.³ He argued that they had signed the Brest-Litovsk peace “clenching our teeth, conscious of our weakness....Yes we are weak, and this is our greatest historical crime, because in history one must not be weak”.⁴

Rectifying this weakness became the central focus of the Soviet leadership as they sought to preserve and promote the socialist revolution through the protection and strengthening of Soviet national power. As the Soviet Union began to recover from the losses of WWI and the Civil War in the 1930s, they were faced with a rising threat in Hitler’s Germany. In an effort to buy time for the Soviet Union, and to regain the strategic buffer provided by the lands lost under Brest-Litovsk, Stalin sought accommodation with the Nazis. Included in the non-aggression agreement known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, signed in 1939 by the foreign ministers of the USSR and Germany, was a “secret protocol” that laid the foundation for the recovery of these lost territories. Thus, after enjoying independent statehood for nearly twenty years, Estonia was forcibly integrated into the USSR in 1940.

During the Soviet period Estonia experienced a severe demographic transition that resulted in a massive increase in the numbers of non-Balts living in the country on a permanent basis. These non-Balts emigrated from other Soviet republics in accordance with the laws in force at the time, laws determined by the central Soviet government in Moscow. In 1991 Baltic Russians comprised approximately 30 percent of the Estonian

³ Nicolai N. Petro, and Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York: Longman, 1997), 20.

⁴ R. Craig Nation, *Black Earth Red Star: A History of Soviet Security Policy, 1917-1991* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 15.

population, a significant increase from the 8 percent share of the population they held in 1940. The demographic shift was due to several factors, including deportations of ethnic Balts under Stalin and higher birthrates among non-Balts. The most influential factor, however, was the high level of immigration during the Soviet period. The most common factor influencing massive immigration was the need for additional industrial labor to staff the Soviet industrialization drive. During the Soviet period, Baltic natural industries were abandoned for ones that fit Moscow's program, causing a shortage of labor in the heavy industry sector that, in turn, necessitated an import of labor on a large scale. Most of the labor imported was Russian, although many Ukrainians, Jews and Belorussians immigrated as well. The immigrant workers were all Russian speakers and are today generally referred to as one group, the "Russian" minority.

The industrialization program was more than economic policy designed to aid Soviet economic development and growth. There were clear political priorities as well. The industrialization program created economic dependence upon the central government, and opened opportunities for an influx of populations considered more loyal to Moscow. An additional core policy of the central Soviet government designed to establish control over non-Russian areas was the policy of "Russification". This policy promoted Russian as the common language of Soviet peoples. Russian-language schools were created in all Soviet republics, and even national schools that were allowed to continue educating children in the national language were required to offer significant instruction in the Russian language. The policy of Russification effectively negated any cultural and linguistic autonomy in the various non-Russian republics of the USSR.

Together these two factors, combined with the psychological effects of Stalin's policies of terror, had a great impact upon the mindset of some in the newly independent Baltic states as they set about considering citizenship and language laws. This, coupled with the significant decrease in the share of the population held by the indigenous ethnic group in Estonia, contributed to various calls to deny non-indigenous Soviet citizens citizenship in the newly independent states, and for highly restrictive policies with respect to the potential for their naturalization.

Escalation of the Conflict

During the late 1980s, there were organized efforts to secure autonomy for the Estonian SSR, in the hope of gaining more local control of the economy, as well as opportunities for greater cultural expression. By late 1989 this movement developed into a more concerted effort. What had seemed a distant goal in 1987 became an urgent undertaking in 1989 as Balts sought "to become part of the Central European chain reaction before it petered out".⁵ Elections in Estonia resulted in a popular front government, and thus the end of communist domination. The Popular Front of Estonia (PFE) was a moderate movement that "was the organized expression of [the] reformist political center"⁶, originally named the Popular Front for the Support of Perestroika. The goal of the PFE was gradual progress toward autonomy, but by October 1989 pressure from the more radical Estonian national groups encouraged the PFE to clearly indicate that independence was the ultimate goal of the Estonian people.

⁵ Rein Taagepera, *Estonia: Return to Independence* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 169.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 134

Throughout 1990 and 1991, internal political tensions increased markedly. There were strong disagreements as to strategy for achieving greater freedom from central control, as well as to whether or not Estonia should seek independence. Parallel political processes exacerbated these tensions by setting up competing parallel political institutions. Ultimately the result was two separately elected representative bodies: the Estonian Congress and the Supreme Council. Only residents who qualified as pre-1941 Republic of Estonia citizens (and their descendents) were allowed to vote in the elections to the Estonian Congress. All legal residents of the Estonian SSR were eligible to vote for candidates to the Supreme Council. The Supreme Council operated as the official representative body. During this period, tensions were reasonably low between ethnic Russians and Estonians, as no steps had yet been taken to disallow the Russians' political participation. The turning point came with the August 1991 coup in Moscow, in which reactionary forces opposed to Gorbachev's reforms and plans for a new Union Treaty sought to remove him from power and end the reform process.

On the second day of the coup, the 20th of August, the Estonian Supreme Council adopted a "Resolution on the National Independence of Estonia". This declaration was, in essence, a truce between the Supreme Council and the Estonian Congress as it stressed the continuation of the independence declared in 1918. The resolution was an attempt to put some legal space between Estonia and the USSR, in case the reactionary coup succeeded.⁷ With the collapse of the coup under Boris Yeltsin's resistance effort, the resolution made it possible to take advantage of the changing politics in Moscow and

⁷ Ibid., 202

move more forcefully toward independence. As the Soviet Union was unraveling, and with the rise to power of Yeltsin, a supporter of democratic reform as well as Baltic independence, Estonia was able to take advantage of Moscow's self-absorption and gain international recognition of its independence.

Upon regaining independence in 1991, Estonia was faced with challenging demographic realities. Russian-speakers comprised nearly 30% of the population. Further, they tended to reside in Russian-speaking enclaves in the northeast, and in large cities such as Tallinn. In the northeast Baltic Russians comprise a significant majority, often more than 80 percent of the population, and they comprise at least 50 percent of the population of many large cities, including the capital Tallinn. These factors presented a challenge to the Estonian government's efforts to unify the Estonian State around a national, Estonian identity, using the Estonian language as the basis of communication.

In response, the government did not opt to offer all permanent residents who were born in the republic automatic citizenship. Additionally, the Estonian government did not enact special naturalization terms applicable to those legal permanent residents who did not qualify for automatic citizenship. The citizenship legislation was applied retroactively to cover the Soviet period, meaning that those who were citizens of the USSR and residents of the Estonian SSR were subject to the terms of new citizenship legislation. This, in effect, meant that all legal residents who were not granted automatic citizenship upon the re-establishment of independence would need to fulfill the same naturalization requirements that any new immigrants would need to meet in the future.

This affected all those who were either born in Estonia or arrived in Estonia during the Soviet period. Until naturalized, anyone who could not show roots in Estonia back to 16 June 1940 or earlier was considered a foreigner, irrespective of length of residence, or birth in the country. This legislation led to severe tensions between the Estonian government and the Baltic Russians in the spring of 1992. The Baltic Russian leaders were particularly upset given that they had been explicitly promised that no legislation would be passed that carried retroactive force, a factor in mitigating earlier tensions associated with the independence movement.

Tensions further increased in June 1993 with the passage of the law on aliens. Both the original version of the citizenship law and the law on aliens received a great deal of criticism from the international community, particularly as no guarantees against forced deportation were offered. The OSCE, through the involvement of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, succeeded both in winning some changes to the legislation and in calming the Baltic Russian reaction to their changed status. Nonetheless, non-Estonians have not embraced the laws governing citizenship and naturalization. Indeed, there is a wide divergence of views between the Russian-speaking minority and the Estonian government on the citizenship issue. The Russian minority believes that the laws on naturalization will create a segregated society and restrict the civil rights of 30 percent of Estonia's current residents permanently. This is particularly true since non-citizens lost more than their citizenship in 1991; they lost significant political rights. Permanent residents are allowed to vote in local elections, but not in national ones. Also, non-citizens cannot hold national or political office or join political

parties, thus diluting what little political power non-citizens could hold at the local level. Thus, former Soviet citizens who did not automatically qualify for Estonian citizenship in 1991 were allowed essentially no voice in matters directly affecting their interests during the important early period of state-building.

The Estonian government feels that the majority of Russians was opposed to independence and, accordingly, cannot automatically be assumed to be loyal to the Estonian state. The government would like the Russians to be citizens, but feels strongly that it is necessary for the Russians to earn their right to citizenship by learning the Estonian language, by integrating into Estonian society, and by demonstrating knowledge of Estonian laws and institutions.⁸ This position has been criticized as being unrealistic. The non-citizen population has no connection with the state, and, thus, it will be very difficult to integrate these people.⁹ The government feels that the restrictions placed upon citizenship are not unreasonable, defending the naturalization process in Estonia as extremely liberal by international standards. It would seem, nonetheless, that naturalization procedures that would be considered liberal for a continuing state do not appear to be so for a state that has experienced 50 years as part of another state. Indeed, Estonian citizenship legislation, applied retroactively to cover the Soviet period, has resulted in a large number of “stateless” people resident in the republic who hold only the citizenship of the USSR, a country that no longer exists.

⁸ Mart Murdvee (Counselor to the Minister of Ethnic Affairs, Estonia), interviewed by the author in Tallinn, November 1998.

⁹ Sergei Ivanov (Member of Parliament, Estonia), interviewed by the author in Tallinn, November 1998.

Regional Dynamics

The plight of ethnic Russians residing in Estonia and Latvia has received a good deal of international attention, due in great part to the vociferous complaints lodged by Russia on behalf of its compatriots. Russia feels that the Baltic Russians are being unfairly treated. This is particularly true given that agreements signed in 1991, before the dissolution of the USSR, by Yeltsin and the Baltic leaders guaranteed all citizens of the former Soviet Union the right to choose citizenship of either the republic in which they were resident, or of Russia, “on the basis of free will”.¹⁰ Yeltsin took this agreement to mean that the Baltic leaders had agreed to offer all legal residents of the Soviet Baltic republics the option to take the citizenship of the Baltic republic of their residence. Further, based upon this agreement, Yeltsin, as the leader of the Russian SFSR, offered his support for the independence of the Baltic states, possibly obstructing further violent repression from the central Soviet authorities. Thus, Yeltsin and other liberals in the Russian policy-making establishment felt betrayed by the Baltic leaders when, after achieving independence, they chose not to grant automatic citizenship to Baltic Russians.

Russian liberals suffered more than humiliation and a sense of betrayal pursuant to Baltic citizenship and language policy decisions: they lost considerable credibility at home. Coupled with the disastrous effects of economic reform, the effects of the pro-Western liberal foreign policy on Russian national interests were highly unattractive to a solid majority of Russians. These weaknesses, in economic and foreign policy, were

¹⁰ Alexander Yusupovsky, “Latvia: Discrimination, International Organizations and Stabilization,” in *Managing Ethnic Conflict in the Former Soviet Union: Russian and American Perspectives*, eds. Alexei Arbatov, Abram Chayes, Antonia Handler Chayes and Lara Olsen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 242.

exploited by the opposition and created substantial pressure on the Yeltsin administration to craft a foreign policy designed to protect Russian interests. One of the most important aspects of this shift in policy was a greater focus on the perceived need to protect the interests of Russians living in newly independent neighboring states. Protecting the interests of ethnic Russians in the “near abroad” was a point upon which the conservatives and the liberals, caught up in a power struggle in 1992-1993, could agree. The liberals in power sought to weaken the potency of attacks from the conservative opposition by acting forcefully on this issue, while at the same time protecting their own goals of strong relations with the West. They were able to do this by choosing to act as much as possible through multilateral regional institutions. In the Estonian case, the Russians have turned to the OSCE as a forum for resolving the Baltic Russian minority issue. By alleging human rights violations, Russia angered the Baltic governments concerned, but succeeded in winning some improvement in the lives of Baltic Russians.

Third Party Action Taken

The two mechanisms through which the OSCE has been actively involved in preventive diplomacy in Estonia are the office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), and the establishment of long-term in-country missions. Formal CSCE involvement in Estonia began in September 1992 when, in part as a response to Russian allegations of human rights violations, Estonia invited a CSCE mission of experts to study their legislation, and compare it and its implementation with universally accepted human rights norms. The mission first visited Estonia 2-5 December 1992. The

mission report cleared Estonia of any human rights violations, but did note the unique status of Estonia's "non-citizens", which was unforeseen in international law.

HCNM van der Stoel has issued numerous recommendations to the Estonian government regarding citizenship and other legislation related to national minorities. These recommendations have attempted to assist the Estonian government in bringing their legislation into accordance with European norms, and most have been implemented. This has resulted in a direct improvement in the everyday lives of the Baltic Russians with respect to religious, economic and social freedom. His involvement, by easing tensions within the Baltic states, has helped ease regional tensions between Russia and Estonia as well. He has also managed, through personal and active involvement, to keep the issue in the international diplomatic spotlight, which, in turn, has resulted in reforms.

HCNM Max van der Stoel first became involved in Estonia in early 1993, when tensions between the Russians in the northeast of Estonia and the government in Tallinn were highest.¹¹ Already upset by the citizenship legislation passed the previous spring, the Baltic Russians were seriously angered by the terms of the Law on Aliens. The initial legislation seemed to treat everyone who did not receive automatic citizenship as foreigners, with the same status as immigrants just arriving in Estonia. There were no guarantees of residence, and the possibility of deportation was left open. This law applied to nearly 30 percent of the resident population, irrespective of length of residence or birth in the country. The passage of the law brought on the first show of support from

¹¹ G.E. Edwards, "Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy: The Role of the High Commissioner on National Minorities," *RUSI Journal* 141, no. 5 (1996): 44.

the West for the Baltic Russian population, as Western governments protested the terms of the law to the Estonian government.¹²

As the Russian Federation began to become more actively involved on the side of the ethnic Russians, the potential for conflict grew rapidly. Commissioner van der Stoel was able, through active mediation, to ease the immediate tensions, and to begin to recommend ways to avoid such conflict in the future.¹³ Through intensive shuttle diplomacy in July 1993, he was able to calm a crisis sparked by a call by the Narva and Sillamae city councils for a referendum on territorial autonomy, and to secure assurances from both sides that they would engage in dialogue to resolve their differences.¹⁴ He was able to persuade the president of Estonia to submit the Law on Aliens to the Council of Europe and the OSCE for review before promulgation. He was also able to persuade the political leaders in northeast Estonia to postpone a referendum on autonomy until the National Court had ruled on its constitutionality. The leaders additionally agreed to abide by whatever decision the court reached. Experts from the OSCE and the Council of Europe recommended a number of amendments to the Law on Aliens, which were adopted, and the National Court's decision that a referendum would be unconstitutional was respected.¹⁵

¹² Alexei Semjonov (Director, Legal Information Center for Human Rights), interviewed by the author, Tallinn, Estonia, 1998.

¹³ Konrad Huber, "The CSCE's New Role in the East: Conflict Prevention," *RFE/RL Research Report* 3, no. 31 (1994): 26.

¹⁴ Walter A. Kemp, ed., *Quiet Diplomacy in Action: The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities* (Boston, MA: Kluwer Law International, 2001), 67.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 143

Following the crisis, Commissioner van der Stoel remained actively and substantively engaged in the effort to ease tensions between the Estonian government and Russian-speaking residents. He has actively offered recommendations to the Estonian government regarding national legislation and national minority policy. There is widespread agreement among the diplomatic, governmental and NGO communities in Estonia that the personal involvement of the HCNM was very helpful in improving the situation of the Baltic Russians, since his recommendations resulted in legislative reforms. These recommendations also assisted the Baltic governments by explicitly defining the criteria for integration with Europe, providing an important compass in the early days of state-building. Most of the Commissioner's recommendations have been honored by the Estonian government.

In addition to the work done in country by the HCNM, a long-term, in-country mission was established in Estonia in February 1993. The mission both provided informational and logistical support to the work of the HCNM. It also served as an informal sounding board for the Baltic Russians, providing them with an impartial party to whom they could express their complaints and voice their concerns. Both of these roles served important prevention functions by providing greater transparency and access to information, as well as offering some forum within which to address grievances. Perhaps the most useful role the missions have been able to play is that of an information clearinghouse. They have gathered information to be disseminated to the Baltic governments, the HCNM and the governments of OSCE states, but they also provide the public with important information on legislation and other matters affecting the status of

non-citizens. Although it is inconvenient that information gathered in-country is not made available to the wider general public, such secrecy serves the higher international purpose of the OSCE, which is keeping the international diplomatic community informed of the situation on the ground.¹⁶ This allows OSCE states to lobby together and encourage reform without pressuring the Baltic governments.

Analysis

In this section I will ask a standard set of questions, as outlined in Chapter 2, of this case in order to generate comparable data between this and the two following cases. The conflict analysis first establishes the likelihood of violent conflict during the timeframe under consideration, and then the intervention analysis considers the effectiveness of third party efforts to prevent the escalation of conflict in this case.

Conflict Analysis

As illustrated in Table 4, below, Estonia had high levels of structural, political and governance, and economic and social factors that contribute to conflict escalation. Each of these is considered in greater detail below.

¹⁶ Artis Pabriks (political scientist and advisor on minority issues), interviewed by the author, Riga, Latvia, 1998.

Table 4: Intensity of Conflict Variables in Estonia

LOW ←————→ HIGH	
Structural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ weak central authority ▪ borders under question ▪ concentrated minority
Political/ Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ moderate national leaders ▪ nationality defined in ethnic terms ▪ institutions discriminate against full minority participation ▪ clear, salient historical grievances ▪ collapse of authoritarian rule
Economic/ Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ acute economic instability ▪ discrimination against minority participation in the economy

Estonia at the time of the escalating conflict between the central government and the ethnic Russian minority was a weak state transitioning from authoritarian, external rule. The central government had very limited authority, and exercised only weak control over political developments. The institutions critical to a functioning state operating under the rule of law were not yet in place as they were in the process of being established. Further adding to the structural instability of the state, Estonia’s borders had not yet been codified in a formal agreement with Russia. The internal Soviet border did not correspond to the 1920 border agreement between the Bolsheviks and the newly independent Estonian Republic. Unhopeful they would be able to gain that territory back, the Estonian government seemed primarily concerned that Russia would seek further revision, particularly given the concentration of Russian speakers living in the northeast of the country along the disputed border with Russia. It was in this enclave that Estonia

faced intense resistance to its national revival program, further adding to the intensity of structural factors contributing to the likelihood of violent conflict.

Political and governance factors also contributed heavily to the escalation of conflict in this case. Estonia engaged in a strong effort at nation-building that sought to overcome the “Russification” effort of the Soviet period. As such, Estonian institutions were closely identified with Estonian ethnic identity. Estonia chose to define nationality primarily in ethnic terms, and set up barriers to full participation in the economic and political life of the country by minorities.

Although national leaders were moderate, not belligerent, and were willing to seek some degree of accommodation with the Russian-speaking minority, they were under intense pressure from nationalist forces in the parliament. Further, historical grievances were strong, as Estonia had suffered brutal repression under Stalin, and systematic efforts to assimilate Estonian culture into mainstream Russian culture continued throughout the Soviet period. Finally, Estonia had suffered the collapse of authoritarian rule, and was transitioning to democracy in the midst of the Soviet collapse. During this tumultuous and chaotic time, Estonia had only weak institutions available to help with the transition to democracy.

Finally, economic and social factors also contributed heavily in this case to conflict escalation. Estonia suffered from severe economic instability during the period of conflict escalation as the country transitioned from communism to a market economy, and from occupation to independence. The economic system that replaced Soviet

communism during the conflict escalation phase was geared toward re-nationalizing Estonian assets by shifting economic power from the Soviet government to ethnic Estonians. The acute economic insecurity that was unleashed with this fundamental shift in the economic balance of power was further exacerbated by the discrimination against full minority participation in the economy.

Estonia exhibited high levels of structural, political/governance and economic/social variables that contribute to the outbreak of violent conflict. This presents a very clear and compelling case for conflict escalation in Estonia as almost all of the factors that lead to violent conflict were present in high levels in this case.

Third Party Intervention Analysis

As illustrated in Table 5, Estonia had a very high likelihood of prevention success based upon robust and early action, committed international involvement and cooperative national leadership, strong leverage at the disposal of the third party, and appropriate multifaceted action taken that addressed the factors contributing to the conflict. These factors combine to offer a nearly perfect case for how to effectively intervene and prevent a potentially serious conflict from erupting into violence.

Table 5: Likelihood of Preventive Diplomacy Success in Estonia

	LOW ←————→ HIGH
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party intervention before positions have hardened and tensions have escalated ▪ robust third party actions, going beyond normal diplomatic activity
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ major international players involved and committed to the intervention ▪ moderate national leadership in the targeted country
Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party with the capacity to provide rewards sufficient to ensure compliance. ▪ Third party with the capacity to offer credible threats sufficient to ensure compliance
Multi-faceted Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ multi-faceted action taken ▪ action taken addresses the range of factors contributing to conflict escalation

The timing in this case was critical. The High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Max van der Stoel intervened very early in this case, contributing substantially to his

ultimate success. Although tensions were already very high, he was able to establish a relationship with both sides before specific disputes escalated beyond the parties' control. His ability to offer a political framework for dispute management *before* more confrontational policies had been enacted was a critical factor determining the outcome in this case.

Further, both national and international leadership in this case were conducive to preventive diplomacy success. The Estonian leadership was willing to work with the international community, as evidenced by their willingness to extend invitations to the HCNM as well as accept long-term OSCE missions, and by their willingness to alter national legislation to bring their laws into line with OSCE and Council of Europe recommendations. Further, the international community was substantially engaged. The United States and major European powers were actively involved, primarily through the OSCE, in bringing about a peaceful resolution. Serious concern that a dispute in Estonia between the government and the ethnic Russian community could escalate into a Yugoslavia-type scenario, ultimately involving Russia, was sufficient to motivate major powers to devote the resources necessary to successfully manage this conflict.

Access by the third party to appropriate leverage was also highly conducive to success. This case was fortunately unique in the sense that Estonia faced competing national priorities that created the leverage needed by the third party to elicit cooperation. These priorities were, first, rebuilding the Estonian state after years of Soviet domination. This required a nation-building strategy that encouraged 'de-Russification' and was based

upon an ethnic rather than civic identity. The second priority, closely connected to the first, was the commitment to 'return to Europe'. Since integration into Europe was a core national priority, and one that in many ways ensured the very survival of an independent Estonia, it was possible to subordinate to a certain degree the national rebirth to the integration program. Because major European powers required a peaceful resolution to all internal disputes as a prerequisite for joining European and transatlantic institutions, Estonia had major incentives to cooperate with the OSCE. Thus, the OSCE was able to provide a seal of approval for Estonia that made possible Estonia's integration into Europe. Based upon the criteria in Table 3, Estonia had a high likelihood of success as the third party had sufficient incentives to induce cooperation and sufficient sanctions to ensure compliance.

Finally, the action taken in this case was very broad and multifaceted. It was also carefully targeted to match the needs of the conflict. The OSCE was able to effectively mitigate the negative consequences created by the structural forces contributing to conflict escalation. The most important factors pushing Estonia toward confrontation were the weakness of the authority of the central government, and the concentration of a disillusioned minority in one geographic region of the country. Because the OSCE is a norms/rules-based regional organization that operates on the basis of consensus and shared commitment to mutual security, it was able to actively assist the Estonian government with some of its governing functions, such as crafting legislation that promotes national unity in ways respectful of minority rights. The OSCE was able to legitimize the Estonian government's actions by holding out objective standards clearly

articulated in European regional agreements on human rights, democratic governance and minority rights. In this way the OSCE was able to partially compensate for the weakness of the central government. Legitimacy of borders was strengthened in this way as well, since the Helsinki Final Act, the governing document of the OSCE, requires recognized borders to be respected by all member states. This legitimized the Soviet borders, and made any adjustment contingent upon political dialogue and mutual agreement. The use of force to alter borders would not result in recognized and respected territorial changes, a fact made abundantly clear by the OSCE on numerous occasions. Since all regional powers, great and small, are members of the OSCE, the organization's insistence on respect for this norm provided a powerful deterrent to the use of force in northeastern Estonia.

The OSCE was enormously effective in helping Estonia manage the political and governance factors that contributed heavily to the escalation of conflict in the northeast. Policies designed to overcome the "Russification" of the Soviet period and lay the foundation for the rebirth of the Estonian nation were perceived as exclusionary and discriminatory based upon ethnicity. Although the national Estonian leadership was relatively moderate, and willing to seek compromise on language and citizenship issues, they were under tremendous pressure from more nationalistic parties in the parliament, and from widespread sympathy in the Estonian population for many of the nationalists' positions. The OSCE was able to induce cooperation on the part of the Estonian government without fatally weakening the moderate coalition. By giving the moderate forces a "bad guy" to blame for unwelcome changes to language and citizenship

legislation, the OSCE made it possible for those moderate forces to take steps they otherwise would not have been able to take. Since integration with Europe was a critical goal for all Estonian parties, and cooperation with the OSCE was an important prerequisite, the OSCE was able to put into place several legislative reforms that eased tensions with the Baltic Russians without generating a nationalist backlash. In addition, by pushing for guarantees for minority rights and an inclusive program of integration, the OSCE was able to mitigate some of the negative effects of Estonia's nation building model.

The economic and social factors contributing to the escalation of conflict in Estonia included the acute economic instability created by the collapse of communism and the insecurity unleashed during the swift transition to a market economy. Discriminatory economic institutions exacerbated the acute economic insecurity by not allowing full minority participation in the new economy. Non-citizens (primarily Russian speakers who were either born in or moved to Estonia during the Soviet period) were not allowed to privatize residential property in many cases, and access to employment was also connected to language abilities and immigration status.

Since cooperation with the OSCE in resolving the dispute with their resident Russians helped with European integration, the OSCE was able to contribute heavily to alleviating economic instability in Estonia. European economic integration ultimately held the promise of economic growth and prosperity in the medium to long term, an important incentive for the Estonian government to cooperate. In the short run,

cooperation with the OSCE increased European and American support for Estonian independence and their willingness to provide economic aid to assist Estonia's transition to a market economy.

Remaining Questions

Preventive diplomacy theory would argue in this case that there was a high likelihood for prevention success based upon the timing of the intervention, an appropriate exercise of leadership, the access of the third party to salient leverage, and the application of multi-faceted action that addressed the underlying causes of the conflict. Although preventive diplomacy theory seems to present a compelling explanation for success in this case, a closer examination of events raises important questions regarding the actions of the Russians in the northeast. The most compelling question that remains unanswered is why the Russians in the northeast of Estonia did not pursue a more aggressive strategy. Estonia only partially accepted a program of minority protection, limited in the legal sense to those national minorities who were also citizens of Estonia. This left the Russians faced with a national revival that posited ethnic identity as the primary prerequisite for participation in the economic and political life of the state. This ideological and institutional discrimination threatened the political power and economic security of Russians in Estonia.

It would seem, therefore, that preventive diplomacy theory offers a strong account of the Estonian government's actions, but cannot fully account for the Baltic Russian decision to cooperate. Given the lack of benefits the Russian minority received for their

cooperation, it does not seem plausible that they were responding to either the offer of incentives, or to the threat of sanctions. Indeed, even as Estonia had the most peaceful outcome of the three cases, the Russian minority in this case clearly received the least favorable accommodation: after the intervention and resulting legislative reforms, they remained without citizenship and the corresponding economic and political rights. Thus, all of the potential benefits of European integration that provided a powerful incentive for the Estonian government to cooperate with the OSCE cannot explain Baltic Russian action since they did not, as non-citizens, stand to fully share in these benefits.

I argue that it was not the attractiveness or acceptability of the political process, or fear of punitive measures, that induced Baltic Russian cooperation. It was a complete lack of alternatives. Russia was at the time balancing a foreign policy program of support for Russian rights in the 'near abroad' with their vital interest in maintaining good relations with the West. This meant that, while Russia was willing to support the Baltic Russian cause in regional organizations, they were not willing to engage in direct support for any violent rebellion. Thus, in Estonia, the lack of available alternatives to the political process created by the third party is clearly the main reason why Baltic Russians chose to comply with that process.

CHAPTER FOUR: MOLDOVA



Map 2: Moldova¹

¹ From the CIA World Fact Book; available online at <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/md.html>.

Introduction

Moldova lies between Ukraine to the east and Romania to the west. Until 1940, the territory of present day Moldova was divided between the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) and Romania. The area east of the Dniester River², the left bank, constituted an autonomous area within Ukraine, and the area west of the Dniester, the right bank, was part of Romania. The Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) was formed as a constituent republic of the USSR after WWII, following the Soviet annexation of the right bank of current day Moldova. This territory was united with the Moldovan autonomous region of Ukraine, forming the current borders of Moldova.

The conflict in Moldova can be traced to the late 1980s as the republican government began moving toward independence from the USSR. On the left bank, the population became increasingly concerned about the character of Moldovan national revival as it began to take shape, similar to many other Soviet republics, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Soviet citizens, primarily ethnic Russians and Ukrainians, living in the territories east of the Dniester River, fearing increasing Moldovan nationalism, established an autonomous region, which they proclaimed as the Dniester Moldovan SSR³ on September 2, 1990. This move was designed to ensure that the left bank would remain part of the Soviet Union in the event that Moldova continued to move away from the Soviet center.

² Due to differences in local spelling and transliteration rules, Dniester also appears as Dniestr.

³ In Russian *Pridnestrovskaya Moldavskaya Respublika* (PMR)

This move for autonomy was driven by the real fear that the Moldovan national front was in fact seeking reunification with Romania. These fears were exacerbated by several pieces of legislation that were intended to support the process of national revival. The two most contentious issues were the language laws, passed in 1989, and the adoption of the Romanian tricolor as the state flag of the Moldovan SSR. The language laws established Moldovan as the state language, and required all professionals to master the Moldovan language within a span of a few years in order to continue in their jobs. This created acute insecurity among the Russian-speaking population, and contributed heavily to the opposition to increased Moldovan sovereignty within the USSR.

Historical Background

The western areas of Moldova had been part of Romania only during the inter-war period, 1918-1940. The attachment of Moldovans to Romania is, however, much more enduring. The Moldovan language and culture are very similar to Romanian. In fact, if Moldovan is written in the Latin script rather than the Cyrillic, it is essentially Romanian. In the eastern region of Moldova, formerly the Moldovan autonomous area within Ukraine, opposition to increasing “Romanianization” in the early 1990s was very strong. Equally strong was the attachment of a large portion of the population to the Soviet Union. It was in this region, never part of Romania and determined never to be, that the Dniester republic was formed.⁴

⁴ Although the region has never been officially recognized as an independent state, it was referred to in English as the Dniestr (or Dniester) Moldovan Republic (DMR) and in Russian as the *Pridnestrovskaya Moldovskaya Respublika* (PMR) throughout the early 1990s. Today the region is referred to as Transdnistria in English and *Pridnestrov'e* in Russian.

In 1990 the Moldavian Supreme Soviet adopted a tricolor flag resembling the Romanian flag as the state flag. In response, local authorities throughout the Dniester region refused to recognize the flag and continued to fly the Soviet flag. Later the same year, the Moldovan Supreme Soviet declared sovereignty, sparking an organized protest among the local authorities from the left bank. A gathering of People's Deputies, representatives to the local Soviets, from the cities and districts of the left bank met to discuss their concern about developments in Moldova. The Deputies accused the leadership of the Moldovan SSR of following a nationalist strategy, one favored by the People's Front, that sought to remove Soviet authority and influence from Moldova, and return the land to Romanian rule.⁵ Specific points of contention included the choice of the Romanian tricolor as the state flag and the nature of the Moldovan declaration of sovereignty, which failed to acknowledge Moldova as part of the USSR, and thus did not guarantee the supremacy of Soviet laws and institutions. The biggest points of contention, however, were the language law, which they feared would result in the emigration of a large number of trained specialists, and the nationalization of Union enterprises, which they believed should remain under Union administration.⁶ Declaring the area east of the Dniester River the "Dniester Soviet Socialist Republic", they announced their intention to secede from Moldova and requested Gorbachev to formally admit them into the Soviet Union.

⁵ Eduard Kondratorv, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (3 September 1990) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 42, no. 35 (3 October 1990): 27.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Escalation of the Conflict

The laws on language and on state sovereignty sparked massive protest by non-Moldovans and counter-demonstrations by ethnic Moldovans eager to establish a national identity. After 1990 armed clashes began to occur on the left bank of the Dniester River. Organized political forces in the region refused to recognize the authority of the government of Moldova, having declared the Dniester SSR as an independent entity. The inhabitants of the Dniester SSR were closely connected to Moscow, and thus for a variety of reasons rejected separation from the Soviet center. The identity, careers, and economic interests of the Dniester SSR depended upon the Soviet Communist Party, strategic industrial enterprises and the Soviet military.⁷ The authorities, therefore, possessed strong incentives to reject Moldovan moves toward autonomy. Parallel political and judicial institutions were established in the eastern area throughout 1990 as part of a concerted effort to minimize Moldovan control and substantially realize independent governance. These moves caused grave concern in the Moldovan capital of Kishinev⁸ as the republican government grappled with how to restore order and sovereignty over the left bank.

Referenda on sovereignty and on independence throughout 1990 were declared unconstitutional by the central Moldovan authorities, but did proceed as the central government possessed inadequate means to prevent the polls from being carried out. In these polls, an absolute majority of the left bank population consistently voted for substantial autonomy, reflecting their concerns about the republican government's moves

⁷ Charles King, *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2000), 184.

⁸ Chisinau in Moldovan

away from the Soviet central government.⁹ During this period, workers began arming themselves with weapons taken from Soviet stockpiles, and began systematically to take over police stations and governmental institutions on the left bank.¹⁰ In November 1990 the first armed clashes occurred between the central government authorities and the militia created by the Dniester authorities. The conflict began as Dniester militiamen seized control of government buildings in Dubossary, a city on the left bank. The militiamen threw officials out of all government buildings in order to take control of the premises before the upcoming election.¹¹ Citizens of Dubossary blocked the bridge crossing the Dniester to prevent Moldovan authorities from entering the city. Special police forces sent from Kishinev were able to break through the barriers, and entered the city as forces of volunteers and militia amassed on both sides. The police denied shooting at civilians,¹² but the result of the clash was three citizens killed and sixteen injured.¹³

Following this tragedy, the government of the Moldovan SSR, determined to maintain the territorial integrity of Moldova and recognizing this was most likely to be achieved through peaceful means, agreed to pursue a reconciliation process that would strengthen the unity of the state while maintaining sensitivity to the needs of national minorities. The Moldovan parliament agreed to renounce its intention to merge with

⁹ Eduard Kondratov, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (2 August 1990) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 42, no. 31 (5 September 1990): 25.

¹⁰ Charles King, *The Moldovans*, 189.

¹¹ Eduard Kondratov, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (3 November 1990) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 42, no. 43 (28 November 1990): 6.

¹² A. Pasechnik, (condensed text). *Pravda* (4 November 1990) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 42, no. 43 (Nov. 28, 1990): 6.

¹³ Eduard Kondratov, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (3 November 1990) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 42, no. 43 (28 November 1990): 6.

Romania, and committed itself to participate in the negotiations on a new Union treaty that would reshape the distribution of power between the central government in Moscow and the Soviet republics. The parliament asked Soviet President Gorbachev to come to Moldova as a peacemaker to help prevent civil war.¹⁴

These efforts were not enough, however, to reverse events on the ground. Dniester forces continued to consolidate their hold over the left bank, and by early 1991 Kishinev had essentially lost control of the territory.¹⁵ By the summer all of the major left bank city councils had declared allegiance to the Dniester republic, effectively cutting Moldova off from the rest of the Union as all major rail and roadways ran through these cities.¹⁶ In the wake of the failed coup against Gorbachev by reactionary forces in the central Soviet government, the Moldovan Supreme Soviet declared independence from the Soviet Union on August 27, 1991. This development sharply increased tensions between the Dniester region and the Moldovan authorities. The Dniester leadership was accused of supporting the coup leaders in Moscow, and the Moldovan government appeared determined to do away with the Dniester regional power structures. Moldovan security officials arrested the Dniester-Russian leader Igor Smirnov in Kiev, sharply increasing tensions.¹⁷ Smirnov was arrested on a warrant that charged him with complicity in the August coup in Moscow, and was brought from Kiev to the Moldovan capital Kishinev to face charges.

¹⁴ Eduard Kondratov, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (15 November 1990) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 42, no. 46 (19 December 1990): 24.

¹⁵ Charles King, *The Moldovans*, 189.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Pravda* (complete text; 31 August 1991). Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 43, no. 35 (2 October 1991): 15.

In response to the Moldovan declaration of independence and the arrest of Smirnov, Slavs throughout the Dniester region blocked roads and railways in protest. Dniester authorities threatened to cut off gas and electricity supplies to the rest of Moldova. Since the right bank was completely dependent upon the left bank for energy supplies, the Moldovan authorities were forced to release Smirnov.¹⁸ On September 2, 1991 Dniester officials further underlined their estrangement with the central Moldovan authorities by rejecting the independence declared by Kishinev in August. The Supreme Soviet of the Dniester SSR voted to join the USSR. At this point, the militia began to take over any government buildings such as police stations, radio stations and newspapers that remained loyal to the Kishinev government.¹⁹ Also at this time, existing informally constituted volunteer militia began to be transformed into a proper defense force: the Republican Guard.²⁰

In December 1991 parallel presidential elections were held in the Dniester region amid high ethnic tensions. The Moldovan elections were boycotted in the Dniester region, and Dniester guardsmen patrols shut down the Moldovan polling stations in the region, replacing them with Dniester government polling stations. The elections in the Dniester region included a referendum question as well, with the result that 76% of voters supported independence.²¹ Igor Smirnov, released by Moldovan authorities, was elected President of the Dniester Moldovan Republic (DMR).

¹⁸ Charles King, *The Moldovans*, 191.

¹⁹ Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Transdnestrian Conflict: Origins and Main Issues," p. 2 (Vienna: CSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, 1994); available online at <http://www.osce.org/moldova/13173.html>.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Igor Ratar, (condensed text). *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (17 December 1991) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 43, no. 50 (15 January 1992): 29.

Fighting between Dniester and Moldovan government forces broke out in December following the elections, claiming dozens of lives during the winter of 1991-92. According to Moldovan sources, a group of special police forces went into Dubossary on the night of December 12, 1991 to rescue some 200 colleagues who were under siege in the Republic of Moldova's police department in Dubossary. As a result, a forty-minute battle erupted that ended with casualties on both sides. Armed clashes broke out again in March of the following year in Dubossary between members of the district police department (under Moldovan jurisdiction) and the city police together with the Dniester region guards (both under DMR jurisdiction).²² Dniester guards, together with detachments of Cossack volunteers, surrounded the building housing the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs. They had armored personnel carriers at their disposal, which they used to surround the building. The building was seized and the Moldovan police were disarmed and arrested. Afterwards, the bridges across the Dniester and other roads leading into Dubossary were blocked and armed guards were set up.²³

Fighting intensified between the DMR separatists and Moldovan forces in May 1992. The Russian 14th Army, stationed on the left bank as part of CIS security forces and officially neutral in the dispute between the DMR and the Moldovan government, issued several complaints that it was coming under fire by Moldovan forces. At this time the Military Council of the 14th Army adopted an appeal that was addressed to the leaders and people of Moldova, Ukraine, Russia and Romania in which the army command warned that, if military installations continue to be fired upon, the army reserved the right

²² Eduard Kondratov, (complete text). *Izvestia* (2 March 1992) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 44, no. 9 (1 April 1992): 21.

²³ *Ibid.*

to return fire.²⁴ In June, in response to repeated efforts by Dniester forces to seize control of the police headquarters, Moldovan forces launched an attack on the city of Bendery, technically on the right bank but claimed by the DMR. The intensity of the attack, involving heavy arms and including air raids by the Moldovan air force,²⁵ was unprecedented in the struggle between Tiraspol and Kishinev. In the heavy fighting that occurred from June 19-21, there were hundreds of casualties, and thousands of refugees fled to Odessa in Ukraine. Some reports place the number of refugees above 100,000.²⁶ There were reports that the Russian 14th Army violated its neutrality and entered the fighting in Bendery to protect and support the DMR forces. Perhaps together with this support, the DMR forces were able to repel the Moldovan advance.

Under the new leadership of General Aleksandr Lebed, who took over as Commander of the 14th Army after the fighting in Bendery ceased, there was a clear and distinct change in the relationship of the Russian army to the conflict in Moldova. At his first interview with journalists, held in Tiraspol, he clarified the status of the 14th Army in Moldova: “The army will continue to maintain neutrality, but the quality of this neutrality will change. It will be armed neutrality...It is not in the traditions or the nature of Russian citizens to look on indifferently as civilians are killed, wounded and maimed before their very eyes. We do not intend to reconcile ourselves to this, just as we do not

²⁴ Valery Vyzhutovich, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (27 May 1992) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 44, no. 21 (24 June 1992): 22.

²⁵ Alexander Tago, (condensed text). *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (25 June 1992) pp. 1, 3. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 44, no. 25 (22 July 1992): 4.

²⁶ Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Transdniestrian Conflict: Origins and Main Issues," p. 2 (Vienna: CSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, 1994); available online at <http://www.osce.org/moldova/13173.html>.

intend to reconcile ourselves to the genocide that took place here on June 19-22.”²⁷

Although there had been earlier reports of material and indirect support for the DMR separatists, under Lebed it seemed that the 14th Army’s role would become more directly protective.

As the 14th Army had assumed a “peacekeeping” role on the left bank, and as continued disagreements over the future political status of the Dniester region made direct talks between the DMR separatists and the Moldovan government difficult, negotiations on a cease-fire were held between the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation, culminating in July 1992 with a peace agreement. The agreement laid out the principles of a peaceful solution to the conflict, and provided the Dniester region, now also known as Transdnistria, with special status in Moldova. The agreement granted Transdnistria the right to self-determination if Moldova moved to unite with Romania. The agreement also stipulated the procedures for implementing and monitoring the ceasefire, including the introduction of peacekeepers from Moldova, Russia and Transdnistria. These forces would be comprised of three battalions from Moldova, two from Transdnistria and five from Russia, and would be the only forces present in the conflict zone.²⁸ The 14th Army would maintain neutrality and refrain from intervening in any renewed fighting.

²⁷ Viktor Litovkin, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (29 June 1992) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 44, no. 26 (29 July 1992): 16.

²⁸ *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (complete text; 30 July 1992) pp. 1, 3. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 44, no. 30 (26 August 1992): 20.

Although there have been no renewed armed clashes since July 1992, the conflict is far from resolved. Today, the country is essentially divided, with Transdniestria essentially existing in a state of *de facto* independence, albeit an unrecognized one. The peacekeeping forces have been relatively successful at preventing renewed hostilities, but the political process of reconciliation and reintegration has been less fruitful.

Regional Dynamics

Moldova's direct neighbors have, in general, played a limited role in this conflict for a variety of reasons. Romania, sympathetic to the Moldovan government, was too concerned about its relations with Russia and with European nations to support the Moldovan government with overt military and other material aid. Ukraine, sympathetic to the plight of the Slavs in its own former territory, now Transdniestria, nonetheless was very reluctant to support separatism due to its own complicated relations with Crimea. Thus, both Ukraine and Romania were cautious in managing the conflict in Moldova, and limited their actions to diplomatic means.

Russia's role in encouraging, enabling and sustaining the conflict in Moldova, in contrast, was key. Although officially the Yeltsin administration spoke against separatism and the use of military force, and encouraged a peaceful resolution to the dispute, Russia's support on a variety of levels wielded great influence over the development of events in Moldova. The three principle sources of influence were prominent Russian politicians, large numbers of armed volunteers, primarily Cossacks,

and the Russian 14th Army. Each in its own way has influenced the development of events in the Dniester region.

Prominent Russian politicians were involved in the developments in the Dniester region from the onset of tensions in the late 1980s, and were pivotal in increasing distrust and insecurity on the part of the Moldovan government as the conflict escalated into violence in 1990-1992. Through their overt support for the Dniester “cause” they likely contributed to the commitment of Transdniestria to resist the re-establishment of control by Chisinau in the region. The most inflammatory and damaging statements were given by Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoi. He spoke often of the need to support the right of Transdniestria to self-determination, and was an open advocate of using the 14th Army to bring an end to the conflict. Sympathetic to the predicament of the Army in maintaining official neutrality, he often pointed to the tens of thousands of family members of servicemen who resided in the region and thus were directly threatened by the fighting. Other less prominent politicians were also vocal in their support of the Dniester rebellion, diluting whatever credibility the Yeltsin administration had in its official condemnation of violence, separatism and intervention by Russian forces.

The role of volunteers from Russia cannot be underestimated in this case as well. During the time of conflict escalation, hundreds of Cossack volunteers entered the DMR to “protect Russian people” and allow them to defend themselves. These Cossacks were often involved in raids on military weapons depots that resulted in increased weapons

being available to the separatist forces. They also provided a sort of guerilla force to support the armed struggle against the Moldovan government.

Perhaps the most striking source of influence was the Russian 14th Army. The 14th Army was one of the most prized elements of the Soviet military, containing the elite 59th Guards Motorized Rifle Division that was to be the lead force through southeastern Europe into Greece and Italy in the event of a military clash with NATO.²⁹ The 14th Army influenced the conflict in Moldova in three ways. First, the presence of the 14th Army to some degree offered protection for the Dniester leadership, and thus may have contributed to the willingness of the DMR to openly challenge Moldovan sovereignty on the left bank. Indeed, numerous provocations took place in which militia, Cossacks and volunteer detachments seized control over government buildings, strategic crossroads, bridges and rail lines. In many cases the Moldovan authorities were unsure if a military response to these provocations would be met with direct military intervention, and thus may have been deterred from taking stronger action.

A second way in which the 14th Army influenced the conflict in Moldova was through the direct and indirect transfer of arms to the newly formed Dniester Guard. These transfers allowed the Guard to establish military control over the left bank. The Guard was able to seize arms from poorly guarded stores,³⁰ and often received arms from 14th Army officers sympathetic to their cause. Although the 14th Army did not provide sufficient weaponry to allow the Dniester Guard to overwhelm the Moldovan forces, an

²⁹ Charles King, *The Moldovans*, 184.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 192

examination of Dniester capabilities at successive points in time is quite illustrative. In August 1991 the Dniester Guard was equipped with heavy machine guns and grenade throwers. This made it possible for the Dniester Guard to seize Moldovan governmental buildings, evicting police and other officials loyal to the government in Chisinau without substantial fighting. By the winter of 1991-1992, as the Moldovan forces acquired machine guns, the Dniester Guard was equipped with mortars and armored personnel carriers (APCs). By May 1992, as widespread hostilities broke out, the Moldovan forces had acquired APCs and light artillery. The Dniester Guard was armed with T-64 tanks and heavy artillery, including rocket launchers.³¹

Arms transfers took on three forms. There were organized deliveries of weapons and equipment, carried out with the knowledge and approval of the command. There were also spontaneous transfers by base commanders, conducted without formal authority. On several occasions, members of the western press viewed sympathetic officers handing over weapons, ammunition and light artillery to Dniester Guardsmen. Finally, there were many instances of unopposed raids in which Dniester forces raided 14th Army stockpiles without any genuine effort on the part of the army to halt their activities.³² In addition to arms transfers, the 14th Army supplied well-trained officers to the Dniester Guard as many defected to the DMR forces.

Finally, the 14th Army was a participant in the conflict at a critical time. Although the 14th Army maintained official neutrality, they did become directly involved in the

³¹ Vladimir Socor, "Russia's 14th Army and the Insurgency in Eastern Moldova," *RFE/RL Research Report* 1, no. 36 (1992): 42.

³² *Ibid.*, 43

fighting in Bendery on June 20-21, 1992 as they fought side by side with the Dniester Guard against Moldovan forces. Although Russian officials insisted that direct involvement was necessitated by the wholesale civilian suffering in Bendery,³³ it is possible that the 14th Army was acting to protect Russian interests that would be threatened in the event that developments on the battlefield began to favor the Moldovan forces. Given Bendery's strategic importance as a major arms repository, and astride the sole remaining road and rail access from Chisinau to the other former Soviet republics,³⁴ Moldovan forces would gain substantial military and economic advantage by gaining control of the city. The direct involvement of the 14th Army ensured that this would not happen, perpetuating the DMR's strategic advantage. Indeed, the defeat of the Moldovan forces at Bendery signified a turning point in the conflict, and resulted in a formal cease-fire followed by the deployment of a regional peacekeeping force.

Third Party Action Taken

A variety of actors were involved in seeking to contain the escalating conflict in Moldova and prevent the outbreak of widespread violence. The earliest diplomatic efforts were internal, involving mediation efforts by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Responding to calls by the Moldovan republic leadership for assistance in halting separatism in the Dniester region, Gorbachev put together a set of principles to guide future talks. His "Decree of the President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: On

³³ Ibid., 194

³⁴ Charles King, *The Moldovans*, 194.

Measures to Normalize the Situation in the Moldovan SSR” articulated nine specific points.³⁵

First, he made clear that in all cases the law of the USSR must be followed. This sought to derail republican efforts to install legislation that would supercede and circumvent Soviet law. His second point required the Moldovan parliament to review the law on language to make sure that the interests of all nationalities in Moldova are protected. Third, he invalidated the Moldovan Decree on the Soviet-Nazi Pact of 1939. This decree had sought to remove the legal basis for the inclusion of Moldova in the USSR in 1940 by connecting this act with the secret protocol in which Hitler and Stalin had divided up territories between Germany and Russia. Fourth, Gorbachev invalidated the Gagauz and Dniester claims to autonomy, arguing that any arrangements must go through accepted political and legal channels.

Fifth, he suggested that the Moldovan parliament should adopt legislation to ensure equal rights of all nationalities, in order to preserve the integrity of the Moldovan SSR, as a constituent part of the USSR. In this way Gorbachev believed it would be possible to address the motivating factors behind the nationalist autonomy movements, both by guaranteeing rights and by reiterating Moldova’s status as a constituent part of the USSR. Sixth, Gorbachev argued that all Moldovan authorities must work toward normalizing the situation in the country, clearly criticizing the nationalist forces in Moldova for their divisive policies. Seventh, the Moldovan government must disband all

³⁵ “Decree of the President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: On Measures to Normalize the Situation in the Moldovan SSR,” (complete text). *Pravda and Izvestia* (23 December 1990) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 42, no. 51 (23 January 1991): 24.

volunteer detachments. These informal groups of civilians had taken active part in the early hostilities both in the Gaugaz region and in the November clashes in the Dniester. Eighth, the Moldovan parliament must rescind the November 1990 order on the creation of a Moldovan Guard, and must guarantee housing and social provisions for the Soviet 14th Army, stationed in Moldova. Finally, the ninth point gave the republican leadership ten days to respond with a report on the measures they were taking to implement this program.

In this case, Gorbachev was not acting as an impartial third party, or even as an external actor. He was acting in his capacity as President of the USSR in seeking a resolution to a dispute occurring in one of the republics of the USSR. Thus, rather than acting as an outside mediator, he sought to preserve the status quo of the Soviet period by forbidding either territorial changes within the republics, or a diminishment of central Soviet authority in regulatig legislation. He met with mixed success. Moldova's parliament immediately agreed to three of his nine points. First, point four invalidating the establishment of autonomous regions in Dniester and in the Gaugaz regions was enthusiastically welcomed. Points seven and eight, requiring the disbanding of volunteer detachments and the rescinding of the law creating a separate Moldovan Guard, were also accepted.

The Moldovan parliament also agreed to review the law on language, but made no commitment to relax efforts to instill the Moldovan language as the state language. Further, the parliament refused to change their decree on the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Like the

Baltic states, they had used this decree to argue that the Soviet annexation in 1940 was illegal. As a gesture, they agreed to set up a commission to review the archives in order to determine whether or not their decree was appropriate. Gorbachev's efforts were successful in containing the escalation of the conflict, and made space for political compromise. This space was lost, however, in the increased tensions that followed the failed August 1991 coup.

The leadership in Transdnistria supported the coup against Gorbachev, clearly having little confidence in Gorbachev's ability to hold the Soviet Union together and, thus, protect their interests. In contrast, the Moldovan republican leadership condemned the coup, standing together with Yeltsin in opposition. As the coup collapsed and Russia moved toward consolidating its sovereignty, Moldova followed many Soviet republics by declaring independence. The tensions that began to build and the sporadic clashes throughout the winter of 1991-1992 were a cause for alarm in the region. One result was the creation of a multilateral effort to contain the developing conflict in Moldova.

On March 23, 1992 the Foreign Ministers of Moldova, Russia, Romania and Ukraine met in Helsinki, in conjunction with an OSCE meeting. At this meeting the four Ministers adopted a declaration wherein they outlined principles for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Moldova. They agreed at this time to create a mechanism to coordinate their efforts. Follow-on meetings in Chisinau in April and May led to an agreement to establish a Quadripartite Commission. This Commission designated five military observers from each of the four countries to monitor the cease-fire they hoped to

negotiate. This effort was not ultimately successful. Both Ukraine and Romania were preoccupied by internal developments, and torn between an interest in preventing the escalation of conflict on the one hand, and conflicting views on what exactly to do. Ukraine, in particular, was in a difficult bind as it wanted to avoid any precedent that might embolden Crimean separatists, yet had an interest in protecting the interests of Ukrainians living in the Dniester region. For this reason, diplomatic efforts were not sufficiently robust to influence events on the ground.

The lack of participation by the Dniester authorities in the quadripartite commission was even more decisive, as not all parties to the conflict were represented in the negotiations. Although Russia theoretically represented the interests of the Dniester region and of the 14th Army, in fact the Yeltsin administration had conflicting interests with the Dniester authorities. Thus, Russian participation did not necessarily protect the interests of Transdniestria.

The most sustained action was in this case, as in Estonia and Ukraine, taken by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Unlike in Estonia and Ukraine, however, the OSCE did not intervene until after hostilities had escalated significantly. Indeed, casualties had occurred on both sides in sporadic clashes in 1990 and 1991 before the first OSCE fact-finding mission visited Moldova in March 1992. Although the mission warned of mounting tensions in Transdniestria, the chairman-in-office decided to keep the situation under review rather than act more decisively. Direct involvement only occurred after the active hostilities of 1992 were over. After the

fighting in May-June 1992 ended with the signing of a cease-fire in July 1992, the chairman-in-office of the OSCE named a personal representative in August to travel to Moldova to examine the situation on the ground and prepare a report. Based upon this report, the Committee of Senior Officials of the OSCE decided in February 1993 to establish a long-term mission to Moldova.³⁶ Although this in-country presence occurred after the cease-fire, and thus was not able to prevent the violence, the Mission was able to substantially improve the security situation by transforming the conflict into a series of negotiations.³⁷ For example, the Mission has, since 1993, played a direct role in facilitating and mediating regular meetings between the parties. These meetings have built a framework for political settlement. Acting as a co-mediator, together with Russia and Ukraine, the Mission has actively participated in a five-sided negotiation process that has put together agreements on confidence building measures, on the basis of relations between Transdnistria and the Moldovan government, and has supported the creation of a Joint Constitutional Commission to put together a new Constitution for a united, federal state. Although no final settlement has been reached, it is clear that the OSCE mission to Moldova has played a positive role in avoiding the return of violent conflict.

The Mission's presence also helped internationalize the conflict management process, and brought major power support to bear on the negotiation process. More importantly, the OSCE principle of territorial integrity and peaceful conflict resolution made clear the international commitment to Moldova's sovereignty and territorial

³⁶ Claus Neukirch, "Russia and the OSCE: The Influence of Interested Third and Disinterested Fourth Parties on the Conflicts in Estonia and Moldova," in *National Integration and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Societies: The Cases of Estonia and Moldova*, ed. Pal Kolsto (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 238.

³⁷ Ibid.

integrity, as well as to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Transdniestria.³⁸ The Mission offered a substantial contribution to the resolution of the conflict in November 1993 with its *Report 13*,³⁹ a proposal for a special status for Transdniestria. This report laid the basis for a special status for Transdniestria based upon linguistic and cultural preferences, but made clear that Transdniestria would remain part of a sovereign Moldova.

The OSCE has also been involved in Moldova through the office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM). Commissioner van der Stoep first visited Moldova in December 1994 in order to assess the inter-ethnic situation in the republic. Although his visit occurred some time after military hostilities had ceased, the situation in Moldova remained tense and a resumption of clashes could not be ruled out. His efforts met with only minimal success.⁴⁰ Recommendations made to both sides were not acted upon, and little resolve existed to take the necessary steps in legislative reform to adequately protect the rights of national minorities and thus, in the Commissioner's view, lower the chances of renewed violence. The Commissioner has remained active in Moldova, making recommendations to the government on how to manage minority issues in a manner consistent with Moldova's international obligations. He also initiated a language training project in order to support inclusive integration and diversity.⁴¹ These

³⁸ Charles King, *The Moldovans*, 198.

³⁹ Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, CSCE Mission to Moldova, Report 13, November 13, 1993; available online at http://www.osce.org/documents/mm/1993/11/454_en.pdf.

⁴⁰ Walter A. Kemp, *Quiet Diplomacy in Action: The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities*, (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2001), 232.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 234

efforts have not resulted in major changes in either Transdniestria or in the right bank, but his persistent efforts have contributed to a reduction in ethnic tensions.

Analysis

Here, as outlined in Chapter 2, I will assess the likelihood of violent conflict in this case, as well as the likelihood of preventive diplomacy success, by drawing upon the standard set of questions created in order to ensure comparability between the cases.

Conflict Analysis

Table 6 illustrates the intensity of the conflict in Moldova of structural, political and governance, and economic and social factors.

Table 6: Intensity of Conflict Variables in Moldova

LOW ←————→ HIGH	
Structural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ weak central authority ▪ borders under question ▪ concentrated minority
Political/ Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ lack of discriminatory institutions ▪ nationality defined in ethnic terms ▪ belligerent national leaders ▪ clear, salient historical grievances ▪ collapse of authoritarian rule
Economic/ Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ widespread participation in the economy ▪ acute economic instability

Structural factors contributed heavily to the escalation of conflict in this case. All of the structural variables identified as contributing to the likelihood of violence existed at high levels in Moldova. The minority population lived in a concentrated geographic area, indeed one that had historically been part of a neighboring Slavic country, Ukraine. The legitimacy of independent Moldova's borders was, therefore, weak in the eyes of Transdnistrians, who did not want to separate from their Soviet homeland. Other states in the region did not question the legitimacy of Moldovan borders, but did argue for a special status for Transdnistria based upon its history and culture. Both of these perspectives were threatening to the new Moldovan government, which felt Moldova's territorial integrity was under threat. Finally, central governmental authority was extremely weak in Moldova. Just as the government was seeking to establish itself as a functioning institution, it was acting after many governmental functions in Transdnistria had been taken over by the local authorities, who firmly rejected the legitimacy of the central government in Chisinau. The Moldovan government was, therefore, faced with a crisis of effectiveness and legitimacy.

Political and governance factors were more mixed, but also contributed heavily to the escalation of conflict in this case. Political institutions did not discriminate against participation by national minorities. This did offer a political channel through which to address the interests and demands of Transdnistria. This was not, however, enough to overcome the other weaknesses in the political system. Most importantly, newly independent Moldova defined nationality in primarily ethnic terms. The program of national revival focused on placing Moldovan language and culture in a dominant

position in the political, social and economic life of the state. Reunification with Romania was an openly stated goal of the ruling party, further intensifying the dissolution of ties with Moldova's Slavic neighbors to the east. This created a real threat to the livelihoods and identity of thousands in Transdnistria.

This sense of threat and insecurity was complicated by three additional factors. First, the history of relations between the left and right bank in Moldova was complex. There were clear, salient grievances toward the Soviet authorities who had imposed Russian language and culture upon the ethnic Moldovan majority throughout the Soviet period. There were also grievances on the part of the Slav population toward Romanian (including Moldovan) activities in WWII, when Romania had been allied with Nazi Germany and involved in brutal atrocities in occupying parts of the Soviet Union. This historical context has complicated each side's willingness to pursue a unified political solution. Second, the conflict in Moldova intensified during the collapse of external authoritarian rule, weakening the capacity of the state to manage escalating tensions. Finally, pursuing a political solution was made even more difficult due to the belligerency of local leaders on both sides of the conflict. Both sides were committed to mutually exclusive goals and were willing to use force to achieve their aims.

Economic and social factors had a mixed impact on the conflict in Moldova. While acute economic instability did increase the insecurity of the population, there was no discrimination against full participation in the economy. Indeed, Transdnistria was in a favorable economic position relative to the central government as most of Moldova's

industry and energy production were located on the left bank. Together with their ability to sever the right bank's access to the rest of the CIS, this created substantial dependency upon Transdniestria. Thus, even as economic and social factors did not affect the minority's motivation to rebel, they did contribute to the overall insecurity of the central government and to their motivation to secure governmental control over the Dniester region.

Based upon the findings presented in Table 6, structural and political/governance variables that contribute to violent conflict were of high intensity, while social/economic variables that contribute to violent conflict were of mixed intensity. Given this information, it is perhaps not a surprise that the conflict in Moldova did indeed escalate to the level of civil war.

Third Party Intervention Analysis

Table 7 outlines the impact of timing, leadership, available leverage and multi-faceted action taken by the third party on the conflict in Moldova.

Table 7: Likelihood of Preventive Diplomacy Success in Moldova

LOW ←————→ HIGH	
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party intervention after positions have already hardened and tensions have escalated ▪ third party actions not beyond normal diplomatic activity
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ major international players involved and committed to the intervention ▪ moderate national leadership in the targeted country
Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party without the capacity to provide rewards sufficient to ensure compliance. ▪ third party not able to offer credible threats
Multi-faceted Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ action taken does not address the range of factors contributing to conflict escalation

Based upon the findings presented in Table 7, there are mixed expectations for prevention success in Moldova. On the positive side, major powers are involved and committed to the intervention. Russia and Ukraine play a particularly active role,

together with the OSCE, as external mediators. It is in the clear interest of Ukraine in particular to avoid a reignition of violent conflict in Transdnistria, given the inflow of refugees, and flow of volunteer fighters from Russia across Ukrainian territory into Transdnistria that occurred during the 1992 hostilities. Additionally, the leadership of Moldova is moderate in nature and willing to work with the OSCE and with Russia and Ukraine to find a stable resolution to this conflict that utilizes only political means.

Unfortunately factors that point to failure outweigh these positive factors. There are three striking shortcomings in the prevention efforts in Moldova. First, timing is perhaps the most important source of failure in this case. Early efforts to manage this conflict, whether by Gorbachev or by the Quadripartite Commission, were simply insufficiently robust to prevent the widespread violence that subsequently occurred. Given that these efforts commenced after sporadic clashes had already resulted in casualties on both sides, and had resulted in the de facto seizure of governmental control by Dniester authorities on the left bank, a much more rigorous and forceful response was needed to avoid further escalation. Much more comprehensive steps were taken by the OSCE, but only after the cessation of widespread hostilities that resulted in large numbers of casualties, refugee flows and the de facto partition of the state. Timing in this case could not have been worse: not only had positions hardened, but the rebelling group had already achieved its aims on the battlefield.

This last point also speaks to the second shortcoming of preventive efforts in this case. The intervening parties lack sufficient leverage to undo what has already been

achieved through military means. While sufficient leverage may have existed to compel the Moldovan government not to use force in this case, it was not applied. Currently, the international community can only compel a continuation of the status quo and encourage political talks to resolve the future status of Transdnistria. This may avoid future clashes, but was insufficiently applied to avoid earlier bloodshed.

The third and final shortcoming of prevention efforts in this case has to do with the action taken. Compounded by the failure to intervene sufficiently early, the action taken by the various external actors in their capacity as a third party was insufficiently robust to contain the escalation of violence in Moldova. Although the action taken might have been effective had it come early enough, intervening after tensions have substantially escalated requires significantly more effort to succeed. This is Bruce Jentleson's "Rubicon Problem",⁴² discussed more fully in Chapter 1, that argues that the dynamic of a conflict creates a "Rubicon" that, once crossed, makes resolution, or even limitation, of the conflict much more difficult.

Overall, the findings presented in Table 7 lead to a low expectation for preventive diplomacy success. Although major regional players have an interest in the peaceful management of this dispute, and have been involved in numerous efforts to seek a political solution, the intervention was too little, too late. There was little effort made by any external party until violence had already broken out. Sustained efforts to manage the conflict occurred only after major hostilities had ended. Current efforts lack sufficient

⁴² Bruce W. Jentleson, *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 330.

leverage to compel the parties to accept the sort of multi-faceted solution necessary to a sustained resolution of the conflict.

Remaining Questions

Preventive diplomacy theory offers a fairly compelling explanation for failure in this case: the lack of robust and early action is to blame for the outbreak of violence. Further, the available leverage, as well as the type of action taken, was not conducive to success. First, timing was critically flawed. Although President Gorbachev did intervene early on, positions had already begun to tighten on each side. In addition, he made only minimal efforts to force maintenance of the status quo, and did not address the underlying issues to any significant degree. His agenda was to maintain the territorial integrity of the USSR. Since this goal was not compatible with the interests of either of the parties to the conflict in Moldova, his efforts were only minimally helpful. Later interventions by regional powers did too little to change the course of events, and involvement by major outside powers through the OSCE did not occur until after the fighting had ended.

Additionally, none of the parties that intervened, whether early or late, had access to sufficient leverage to force acceptance on the part of the parties of any political process. Had an earlier effort been made not by regional actors, but by major European powers, it might have been possible to put together sufficient incentives to impact the behavior of the Moldovan government. Moldova's immediate neighbors, however, had insufficient leverage available. Finally, the action taken by the various outside parties did not fully address the range of issues contributing to the conflict. Most importantly, the

relationship between the central government and Transdniestria was never clarified, and the nationality-based identity of the state was never addressed. Thus, even as major regional powers were involved and committed to the intervention, they were unable to prevent the tragic outbreak of violent clashes.

As in Estonia, this explanation is compelling, but more accurately captures the impact of the third party on the central government, and does a fairly poor job accounting for the actions of the rebelling minority group. Most importantly, the focus on leverage and timing assumes a willingness to negotiate a political solution. This approach appears more appropriate when dealing with a recognized government than with a rebelling group. Rewards and sanctions were in this case only effective against the government. The external third party had little or no influence, or leverage, over the rebelling group. While earlier, more robust action might have convinced the Moldovan government not to use force in Transdniestria, it is not at all clear that this would also have deterred the Dniester authorities from seizing control of government buildings and setting up their own parallel institutions.

In fact, nothing in the decisions or behavior of the Dniester authorities supports the idea that earlier intervention and more powerful leverage would have made a difference. This is clearly demonstrated by the very early commitment of Transdniestria to independence and their almost immediate effort to stockpile as many weapons as possible to protect that independence. Indeed, had the Dniester authorities been interested in any political process, any compromise that would protect their general

interests but fall short of full independence, they would not have refused to engage with the Moldovan government after the 1990 clashes. At this point the Moldovan government, hoping to avoid further bloodshed, offered to renounce the nationalist agenda and to embark on a policy more accommodating to national minorities. Their refusal to enter into talks at that point clearly demonstrates that the Dniester authorities were not rebelling because no one had offered them an alternative political process, or had applied sufficient incentives or sanctions to persuade them to accept that process. They were rebelling because they had the means to do so. Given their relative military superiority over the Moldovan governmental forces, no political alternative could be more attractive than what they would be likely to achieve through rebellion. The intervention in Moldova was, therefore, a failure not because an external party failed to create an alternative political process in a timely manner, but because an external party failed to remove the capacity of the Dniester authorities to use violence to achieve their objectives.

CHAPTER FIVE: UKRAINE



Map 3: Ukraine¹

¹ From the CIA World Fact Book; available online at <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/maps/up-map.gif>.

Introduction

Crimea is a peninsula off the southern Black Sea coast of Ukraine. In 1954 administrative control of Crimea was transferred from the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic as a gesture commemorating three hundred years of Russian-Ukrainian unity. During the Soviet period, this transfer was essentially a technical matter, but as Ukraine moved in 1991 toward independence from Moscow, the political elite in Crimea faced the real possibility of separation from Russia.

Russian-speaking residents of Crimea unhappy with their status as a minority in a newly independent Ukraine, in connection with the local government in Crimea, moved toward independence. From 1991-1995 a concerted separatist movement led by the regional elite in Crimea's capital of Simferopol threatened the stability of Crimea, of Ukraine in general and of the region as a whole.

Occurring during the collapse of the Soviet Union and the consolidation of Ukrainian independent statehood, the conflict was primarily fueled by a desire of the former Communist elite to maintain their status. Equally important was the desire of the many resident military personnel, retired and active, to see Crimea maintain its historic role as a center of Russian naval power. The base of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet is in Crimea, in the historically significant city of Sevastopol. Speaking in October 1991, the chairman of the Sevastopol City Soviet Col. I. Yermakov said, "Sevastopol has its own unique history. A naval stronghold of Russia that was established back in 1783, it was

and still is a city of Russian glory. Not Ukrainian glory, mind you, and not Soviet, but Russian”.² The status of the Fleet, and of Crimea in general, was, therefore, a matter of vital interest to Russia. The clash of Russian and Ukrainian interests further complicated the political developments in Crimea, and made the prospect for violent conflict much more dangerous.

Historical Background

The conflict in Crimea began during the later years of Soviet rule. Ukrainian nationalists began to make serious moves to secure the independence of Ukraine, and experienced increasing popular support of their movement. These political developments were a cause for alarm in Crimea, populated by a Russian majority with heavy representation of pro-Moscow active and retired military and security services. In 1989-1990 Nikolai Bagrov, First Secretary of the Crimean Communist Party, led a Crimean autonomy movement in reaction to growing Ukrainian nationalism that he feared would lead to a declaration of independence from the USSR. Crimea had historically held an autonomous status, but the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (Crimean ASSR) had been abolished in 1945, when Crimea was part of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). Since transfer of control from the RSFSR to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR) under Krushchev in 1954, Crimea held the status of *oblast*³ within Ukraine. The first step designed to protect Crimea from

² Eduard Kondratov and Viktor Filippov, “Crimea: Should it Stay in the Ukraine?” (condensed text). *Izvestia* (16 October 1991) p. 3. Reported in the *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 43, no. 42 (20 November 1991): 9.

³ Roughly equivalent to county or province

growing Ukrainian nationalism and separatism was the reinstatement of Crimea's autonomy.

On January 20, 1991, 93% of Crimean residents participating in a poll voted for the revival of the Crimean ASSR within Ukraine, as long as Ukraine remained a member of the USSR.⁴ This move was designed to reinstate Crimean autonomy, with the eventual threat of Crimean independence should Ukraine leave the Union. An additional referendum was held in Sevastopol to poll residents on their preferred status. More than 90% of the residents and servicemen voted to give Sevastopol a special status as a city under Union jurisdiction. This was an attempt to solidify Moscow's claim to the city, and was motivated by "a concern over the insistent attempts to pull the Armed Forces apart into 'national compartments'," ⁵ meaning persistent attempts by the Ukrainian government to differentiate between Ukrainian and Russian forces by dividing former Soviet forces into national units.

Escalation of the Conflict

In the aftermath of the failed coup by Soviet reactionary forces against Gorbachev and his reform program, Ukraine declared independence from the USSR on August 24, 1991. A referendum held on December 1, 1991 confirmed overwhelming public support for this move. In Crimea, support was more muted, but reflected a weak consensus in favor of Ukrainian independence as 54% of voters supported independent statehood. This may have been due at the time to the relatively favorable economic conditions and

⁴ Kondratov and Filippov, 9.

⁵ Ibid.

potential of Ukraine, combined with concerns over the political future of Moscow in the midst of a showdown between reformist and reactionary forces.

In 1992, however, support in Crimea for remaining within an independent Ukraine began to wane. This was likely due to several factors. First, with the dissolution of the USSR and ascendance of Yeltsin's government in Moscow there was no longer any danger of a reversion to more conservative and concentrated political rule. Second, the Ukrainian government was ambivalent about full participation in the Commonwealth of Independent States, and had already rejected close integration in economic and security matters. At the time of the 1991 referendum it was not clear that Ukraine would move as decisively away from Moscow by refusing to participate in institutions dominated by Russia. Finally, economic conditions in Ukraine began to seriously deteriorate, possibly causing many to reconsider the relative benefits of independence from Moscow.

In response to the above developments, the Ukrainian government sought to prevent instability in Crimea by acceding to many Crimean demands for self-rule. In this way, Kiev hoped to placate all moderate forces and thus weaken the extreme parties pushing for reunification of Crimea with Russia. On April 30, 1992 the "Law of Ukraine on the Status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" was passed in Kiev, confirming the autonomous status of Crimea and assigning it jurisdiction over certain powers to be determined by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine. This law made clear that Crimea, allocated certain limited powers as an autonomous region, was nonetheless part of

Ukraine and subject to the central government in Kiev. Dissatisfied with the terms set by Kiev, Crimea declared independence on May 5, 1992, and released its Constitution on May 6, 1992. Following months of political struggle, a compromise was seemingly reached in September. The Crimean Supreme Council amended the May 1992 Constitution to bring it in line with the Ukrainian Constitution, mainly by making clear that Crimea is part of Ukraine and has limited powers as a region of a state.

Perhaps as a reflection of the Crimean population's lack of support for continuing autonomy within Ukraine, Yuri Meshkov of the Russia Bloc was elected in February 1994 to the post of President of Crimea. 75% of registered voters turned out to the polls, and 72.92% supported Meshkov and his platform. Although many pro-Ukrainian voters supported Meshkov due to his promises for change, they were primarily voting against his opponent, Nikolai Bgrov, who was closely identified with the *nomenklatura* of the Communist Party.⁶ Nonetheless, votes against the stagnant status quo resulted in support for a solidly pro-Russian leader who supported Crimean independence. This move clearly threatened to escalate the conflict between Kiev and Simferopol, endangering the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the jurisdiction of Kiev over Crimea.

On February 24, 1994 the Ukrainian Parliament in Kiev passed a resolution "On the Status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in Accordance with the Constitution and Laws of Ukraine", which made clear that Crimea is an autonomous republic within Ukraine and does not possess state sovereignty. The resolution laid out restrictions on

⁶ Konstantin Parishkura, (condensed text). *Sevodnya* (1 February 1994) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46 no. 5 (2 March 1994): 6.

Crimean actions and gave the Crimean authorities one month to bring their Constitution into line with the Ukrainian Constitution.⁷ Meshkov was determined to continue the political struggle, and in March 1994 proceeded with his plans to poll the Crimean population, as provided for in the Declaration of Independence of May 5, 1992. Three questions were to appear on the poll. The first questioned the public on their support for reviving the 1992 Constitution, the second concerned support for dual citizenship for Crimean residents, and the third asked the public to approve allocating the force of law to Presidential decrees on matters not regulated by Crimean legislation.⁸ On March 16, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk formally revoked two of the three points scheduled for the March 27 referendum: the question on restoring the 1992 Constitution, as well as the question on dual citizenship for residents of Crimea.⁹ Despite the Ukrainian government's insistence on its illegality, the poll went forward as scheduled, with more than 60% of Crimean residents participating. 80% of voters supported all three points, and a solid two-thirds majority voted for the Russia Bloc in the elections to the Crimean Supreme Soviet.¹⁰

In May 1994 tensions between the Crimean and Ukrainian authorities further escalated. On May 18 President Kravchuk issued a decree, "On the Ukraine Ministry of Internal Affairs' Chief Administration in Crimea" which placed the Crimean Ministry of the Interior under control of the Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior, cutting the Crimean

⁷ Vladimir Skachko, (excerpts). *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (26 February 1994) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 8 (23 March 1994): 28.

⁸ Nikolai Semena, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (17 March 1994) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 11 (13 April 1994): 25.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Maksim Yusin, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (30 March 1994) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 13 (27 April 1994): 7.

President and Parliament out of the power hierarchy.¹¹ Meeting to discuss this move, the Crimean Parliament decided to move forward with its own appointments to the Ministry, essentially nullifying President Kravchuk's decree. In addition, they reinstated the Crimean Constitution, selecting the May 1992 version. This version did not include the amendments made in September of 1992 that openly declared Crimea to be part of Ukraine, so choosing to reinstate the May version amounted to a declaration of independence. This move not only intensified the battle of laws, but also contributed to growing tension on the ground. Writing in the Russian newspaper *Izvestia*, correspondent Nikolai Semena noted that, although the widespread rumors of substantial Ukrainian troop movements that were beginning to circulate appeared to be false, "Nonetheless one should not oversimplify the situation. There are now enough Ukrainian power structures in Crimea for a serious struggle. Crimea has some forces at its disposal too. It would only take a spark for a fire to flare up."¹²

Amid reports of Cossack mobilization across the Kerch straits and increasing efforts by Crimean President Meshkov to induce involvement by the Russian Federation,¹³ the parliaments of Crimea and of Ukraine initiated a dialogue that aimed to resolve the impasse through political means. As Kiev maintained a firm stance, emboldened by assurances of support from the West,¹⁴ Crimea fell into a struggle for power and influence between the president and the parliament. Responding to an effort

¹¹ Alexandr Pilat, (condensed text). *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (20 May 1994) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 20 (15 June 1994): 1.

¹² Nikolai Semena, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (21 May 1994) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 20 (15 June 1994): 1.

¹³ Nikolai Semena, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (24 May 1994) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 21 (22 June 1994): 5.

¹⁴ Sergei Tikhy, (condensed text). *Moskovskiye Novosti* (12-19 June 1994) p. A10. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 23 (6 July 1994): 16.

by the Crimean Supreme Soviet to diminish the power of the presidency, Meshkov suspended the activity of the Crimean Supreme Soviet on Sept. 11, 1994. He set up a constitutional council, and charged it with presenting the draft of a new constitution no later than December 9, 1994. Until elections could be held, no later than July 1995, the President would exercise full power. In the midst of this power struggle, the Ukrainian parliament issued an ultimatum to the Crimean parliament: bring their regional legislation into line with national laws by November 1, 1994 or suffer the constitutional consequences, potentially including the dismissal of parliament and the abolition of the post of president.¹⁵ In November, following the failure of the Crimean authorities to effectively respond to their demands, the Ukrainian parliament began to nullify Crimean legislation that did not conform to Ukrainian national legislation. Additionally, regional organizations in Crimea that did not conform to Ukrainian national laws would not receive financial support from the central government. This created a potentially serious economic hardship for Crimea.¹⁶

After continued failure of Crimea to enact laws in line with the law of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Parliament, together with newly elected Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, abolished the Crimean Constitution, other laws of Crimea and the post of President of Crimea on March 17, 1995. This decision was made following a contentious meeting between the Ukrainian President, Cabinet of Ministers and Supreme Soviet, and

¹⁵ Yanina Sokolovskaya, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (24 September 1994) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 38 (19 October 1994): 24.

¹⁶ Yanina Sokolovskaya, (condensed text). *Izvestia* (19 November 1994) p. 2. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 46 (14 December 1994): 27.

the Chairman of the Crimean Supreme Soviet together with several Crimean Deputies.¹⁷ The result of this decision was that, pending the adoption in Crimea of a basic law that was consistent with the Ukrainian Constitution, the Crimean Supreme Soviet would operate under the Constitution and laws of Ukraine. The post of President of Crimea was provided for in the Crimean legislation that was rescinded at the March meeting, so it was in effect abolished. On April 5, President Kuchma placed the government of Crimea under direct control of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. Thereafter, the President of Ukraine would appoint the Prime Minister of Crimea, and other members of the Crimean government would be appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers upon recommendation by the Prime Minister.

In the absence of Russian support, the balance of power in Crimea began to shift toward more pro-Ukrainian forces. In July the last remaining champion of Crimean independence, Chairman of the Crimean Supreme Soviet Sergei Tsekov, was ousted by the Crimean parliament and replaced with Yevgeny Suprunyuk, a more moderate leader interested in resolving the conflict with Kiev. Experts at the time characterized this move as a final defeat of the Russia Bloc, and the “start of a new course”.¹⁸

In March of the following year, President Kuchma further solidified Ukrainian control over Crimea by providing the Ukrainian Presidential Representative in Crimea with very broad powers, including the power to issue directives binding on the Crimean

¹⁷ Konstantin Parishkura, (condensed text). *Sveodnya* (18 March 1995) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 47, no. 11 (12 April 1995): 24.

¹⁸ Leonid Terentyev, (condensed text). *Kommersant-Daily* (7 July 1995) p. 4. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 47, no. 27 (2 August 1995): 22.

executive branch. Visiting Kiev in April, the speaker of the Crimean parliament Yevgeny Suprunyuk urged the Ukrainian parliament to approve Crimea's draft constitution. This new constitution sought to comply with the demands made a year earlier to bring Crimea's laws into line with the laws of Ukraine. Following guidelines and specific recommendations provided by the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the draft constitution provided a reasonable basis for negotiations. At the April meeting in Kiev, Speaker Suprunyuk stressed the Crimean parliament's willingness to work within the Ukrainian legal system and to address the concerns of the Ukrainian parliament. In order to make progress, however, the constitution needed to be approved: "in order for us to be able to change or add anything, we need a finished, approved document".¹⁹ The Ukrainian parliament approved the Crimean constitution, with the exception of a few articles, and gave time for the Crimean parliament to amend the articles in question.

In June, 1996 the Ukrainian parliament finally approved the Ukrainian Constitution, formally codifying the autonomous status of Crimea. With this act, and the signing of the "Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Russia and Ukraine" and the agreement on the Black Sea Fleet, both signed in May, 1997, the dispute over Crimea's status seemed to be put to rest. The importance of the Black Sea Fleet and the impact of Russian-Ukrainian relations on the resolution of this conflict are discussed below.

¹⁹ Vladimir Skachko, (complete text). *Sevodnya* (5 April 1996) p. 8. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 48, no. 14 (1 May 1996): 22.

Regional Dynamics

The conflict in Crimea in many ways was a product of clashing Russian and Ukrainian interests in the region. Efforts to manage this conflict have had a clear influence on the dynamics in Crimea, and have in turn been impacted by the political developments on the peninsula. The two issues contributing most to tensions between the two groups were the status of Crimea and the status of the Black Sea Fleet. The two issues are intertwined since the status of the Fleet in many respects depended upon the status of Crimea itself. Sovereignty over Crimea was transferred in 1954 from the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, as detailed above. The transfer was a matter of internal administrative authority, and many Russians did not believe that independent Ukraine had the right to claim sovereignty over what was historically Russian land. Russians make up a majority of the population of Crimea and, given that the Black Sea Fleet is based in Crimea, hold positions of power throughout the peninsula.

Negotiations on the future of the Fleet began after the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the geopolitical entity that replaced the USSR. Immediately after the dissolution of the USSR in late 1991, it became clear that Russia and Ukraine had different views on the appropriate role of the CIS. Ukraine saw the dissolution of the USSR as necessitating a distribution of the assets and liabilities of the former union among the separate, independent and equal successor states. Ukraine saw the CIS as a temporary structure, designed mainly to facilitate the allocation of the resources of the Soviet Union. Ukraine did not view Russia as the necessary heir to the

Soviet Union. Russia, on the other hand, did see itself as the heir apparent of the Soviet Union. Many of the former Soviet republics represented lands that were under control of Imperial Russia long before the Bolshevik revolution. Russia envisioned the CIS as a permanent structure. A voluntary union based on democratic principles and committed to market reform, it would nonetheless be dominated by Russia much as the Soviet Union had been.

These differing views on the appropriate role for the CIS clouded attempts to reach agreement on the status of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet. Russia tends to view the Fleet as Russian, namely because it was developed at a time when Crimea, indeed all of Ukraine, were part of the Russian empire. It was during the imperial period that the Tsars founded and developed the Russian navy, including the bases in Crimea on the Black Sea. The city of Sevastopol holds a special place in the hearts of many Russians due to the role played by this city during both the Crimean War and WWII. As noted above, Sevastopol, and all of Crimea, were part of Russia for about 200 years before Crimea was ceded from Russia to Ukraine by Nikita Khrushchev in 1954, a gesture commemorating 300 years of Russian and Ukrainian unity. Many Russians continue to view Crimea as legitimately belonging to Russia, including many of the Russians residing in Crimea itself. These circumstances made it difficult for Ukraine to take an accommodating position with respect to the Fleet, particularly given Ukraine's need to consolidate its independence. The Ukrainian position was that it cannot allow foreign troops to be based permanently on its soil. Russia, on the other hand, hopes to maintain a presence in Crimea, and control over the bases and infrastructure of the Black Sea Fleet.

Tension between Russia and Ukraine has been high since 1991. This tension has been greatly exacerbated by the involvement of Russian nationalists, including then Russian Vice President Alexander Rutskoi, the mayor of Moscow Yuri Luzhkov , and some Russian Members of Parliament in highly controversial activities in Crimea. These individuals, part of the Russian government, were involved in encouraging separatist movements, although officially the Yeltsin administration never supported these actions. For example, visiting Sevastopol in April 1992, Russian Vice President Rutskoi publicly expressed clear support for an independent Crimea that he hoped would eventually join Russia.²⁰ In addition, during the same timeframe, the Russian parliament openly questioned the legality of the 1954 transfer by Nikita Krushchev of the Crimean peninsula from Russia to Ukraine.²¹ Regular visits by members of the Russian *Duma*, suspended by Yeltsin in 1993, inflamed local passions and emboldened separatist leaders by offering support for their activities. Several visits aimed to encourage and facilitate the acquisition of Russian citizenship by setting up public registration facilities where interested Crimean residents could apply for Russian citizenship. Encouraged by signs of support within Russia, many of the ethnic Russians living on the Crimean peninsula made it clear that they would like to see Crimea reintegrated into Russia. Officially, the Yeltsin government supported the territorial integrity of Ukraine. In May 1994, as tensions were escalating between Kiev and Simferopol, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that Russia holds no territorial claims on Ukraine, and recognized Crimea is an

²⁰ Alexander Pilat, (excerpts). *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (7 April 1992) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 44, no.14 (6 May 1992): 13.

²¹ *Ibid.*

integral part of Ukraine.²² Nonetheless, excessive involvement in Crimea by Russian officials, and Yeltsin's own "frank" words with Ukrainian President Kravchuk, warning him not to use force in Crimea,²³ clearly exacerbated tensions. Indeed, these factors placed the territorial integrity of Ukraine in a precarious position, and called into question the stability of Crimea.

Third Party Action Taken

The two mechanisms through which the OSCE has been involved in preventive diplomacy in Ukraine are the office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) and long-term in-country missions. The OSCE first became involved in Ukraine in February 1994 through the office of HCNM Max van der Stoel, who came to Ukraine at the invitation of the government, at a time when support in Crimea was growing for closer relations with Russia and a weakening of ties to Kiev.²⁴ The HCNM focused on three issues: the status of Crimea within Ukraine; resettlement of Crimean Tatars; and, relations between Russian minority and the Ukrainian majority. After visiting Crimea, he made note of his assessment of the conflict in Crimea: the roots of the conflict were, in the main, economic in nature. Thus, Crimea was in need of economic aid. In order to effectively assist Ukraine in its transition, while promoting stability, international support should be tied to maintaining the territorial integrity of Ukraine. This would provide relief and offer incentives for cooperation.²⁵

²² Maksim Yusin, (excerpts). *Izvestia* (21 May 1994) p. 3. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 20 (15 June 1994): 4.

²³ Ilya Bulavinov and Viktor Zubanyuk, *Kommersant-Daily* (21 May 1994) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 46, no. 20 (15 June 1994): 4.

²⁴ Walter A. Kemp, ed. *Quiet Diplomacy in Action: The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities* (Boston, MA: Kluwer Law International, 2001), 218.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 219

As the crisis in relations between Kiev and Simferopol escalated in the spring of 1994, the HCNM continued his mediation efforts, and moved forward with efforts to put together an in-country mission. First a group of constitutional and economic experts were sent to Ukraine to facilitate the dialogue between Kiev and Simferopol. These experts assessed the situation on the ground and issued specific recommendations to the parties as well as to OSCE officials. Following this important work, a long-term in-country mission was established. As was the case in Estonia, the purpose of the in-country mission was two-fold: to act as the “eyes and ears” of the HCNM and the wider OSCE community, and to operate as a mediator/facilitator in producing specific recommendations to move the political process of conflict resolution along.

As noted above, the crisis reached a breaking point in March 1995 when Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma abandoned negotiations and issued a decree placing the Crimean government directly under the control of Kiev. In addition, the Ukrainian parliament, the *Verkhovna Rada*, abolished the Crimean Constitution, replacing it with the Ukrainian "Law on the Autonomous Republic of Crimea".²⁶ In response, the *Verkhova Rada* of Crimea announced a referendum on reinstating their 1992 constitution.

The HCNM proposed to meet with representatives of both sides to seek a political solution. He organized a roundtable to be held in Locarno, Switzerland on May 11-14, 1995. This roundtable successfully broke the impasse between the two sides by allowing for a confidential supportive environment within which potential solutions were explored:

²⁶ Kemp, *Quiet Diplomacy*, 221.

the “meeting provided an important forum for open, face-to-face communication in a confidential setting and led to a breakthrough on a number of substantive points”.²⁷ At this roundtable, the HCNM was able to convince the Ukrainian *Verkhovna Rada* not to dissolve the Crimean parliament. In exchange, the Crimean parliament agreed to drop its referendum plans. Additionally, both sides agreed to use the 1992 “Law on the Demarcation of Powers Between Ukraine and Crimea” as the basis for their negotiations.²⁸

These points were critical in ultimately resolving the crisis. In May the Ukrainian parliament formally issued an offer to bring back the 1992 law in exchange for the cancellation of the Crimean referendum planned for June.²⁹ After the Crimean parliament agreed to rescind the referendum, the head of the OSCE mission to Ukraine, created to support the work of the HCNM, announced his confidence in the progress of the political process. He also announced the beginning of work, supported by the OSCE, on a new constitution that would comply with Kiev’s demands.³⁰ The new constitution would not have provisions for a presidency, and would make clear the limits of Crimea’s powers as an autonomous region of sovereign Ukraine.

In follow-on visits in September, HCNM Van der Stoel was able to assist the parties on constitutional issues, particularly the sensitive questions surrounding the

²⁷ Ibid., 221

²⁸ Ibid., 221

²⁹ Viktor Yadukha, (complete text). *Sevodnya* (27 May 1995) p. 4. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 47, no. 21 (21 June 1995): 20.

³⁰ Viktor Yadukha, (excerpt). *Sevodnya* (1 June 1995) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 47, no. 22 (28 June 1995): 23.

demarcation of powers, citizenship and the status of Sevastopol. Building upon these discussions, the Crimean authorities adopted a new draft constitution on November 1, 1995. Van der Stoel organized another roundtable held in Noordwijk, in the Netherlands from March 14-17, 1996. Leaders of the government and the parliament of both sides took part. At this meeting Van der Stoel determined that differences between the sides had substantially narrowed.³¹ He encouraged the Ukrainian parliament to approve the Crimean constitution as quickly as possible, allowing the constitution to enter into force, excepting those articles that remained in dispute.³² This was done, as detailed above, on April 4, 1996.

Analysis

As in the previous two cases, I will analyze this case using the framework outlined in Chapter 2. This framework applies a standard set of questions to the case to ensure comparability between the cases with respect to the likelihood of conflict escalation and of preventive diplomacy success.

³¹ Kemp, *Quiet Diplomacy*, 224.

³² *Ibid.*, 225

Conflict Analysis

Table 8 outlines the impact of structural, political and governance, and economic and social factors contributing to conflict escalation on the conflict in Ukraine.

Table 8: Intensity of Conflict Variables in Ukraine

LOW		←————→	HIGH	
Structural				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ weak central authority ▪ borders under question ▪ concentrated minority
Political/ Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ civic definition of nationality ▪ lack of discriminatory institutions 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ belligerent national leaders ▪ clear, salient historical grievances ▪ collapse of authoritarian rule
Economic/ Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ widespread participation in the economy 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ acute economic instability

Structural factors contributed heavily to the conflict escalation in this case. As the conflict between the regional authorities in Crimea and the central government in Kiev began to escalate, Ukraine's central institutions were weak, developing and sometimes lacking in legitimacy. Emerging from a highly centralized authoritarian system, existing Ukrainian institutions were not structured to run a functioning independent state. Further, there were very serious questions raised about the Soviet-era border of Ukraine. Indeed, the legitimacy of Ukraine's borders was under attack from the Russian political and military establishment, and from pro-Soviet/CIS domestic constituencies. The Russian parliament had, in fact, openly declared the transfer of Crimea from Russia to Ukraine in

1954 an illegal act in May 1992. Numerous senior Russian political figures interfered openly in Crimea throughout the acute period of conflict escalation, consistently questioning the legitimacy of Ukrainian sovereignty over the peninsula. Ukraine's existing institutions were not sufficiently well established to effectively manage these challenges without outside assistance.

Minority concentration was an important structural factor as well, as the Russian minority in Crimea actually constitutes a substantial majority in the region. Crimea is a peninsula with clearly demarcated territorial borders. Russians comprise approximately 67% of the resident population. Thus, Crimea is a clearly concentrated enclave, indeed one with a history of autonomy. The fact that this region had in recent history been part of a neighboring state that constitutes the ethnic homeland of the resident population only further intensifies the structural forces pushing for resistance to Ukrainian rule. The concentrated Russian minority in Crimea, together with questions about the legitimacy of Ukraine's borders and the lack of effective, strong central authority in Ukraine, combine to create very high levels of structural factors contributing to conflict escalation.

Political and governance factors were more mixed in their impact on the conflict in Ukraine. In Crimea institutions were not discriminatory in nature. In fact, Ukraine had taken pains to adopt a civic model of nationality. All persons who were legal residents of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic were eligible for automatic citizenship upon the establishment of Ukrainian independence in 1991. Russian was accepted as a recognized state language, and there was no discrimination against ethnic

Russians participating in the economic and political life of the country. All legal residents eligible for automatic citizenship, regardless of ethnicity, were guaranteed equal political, constitutional and economic rights in the new state.

Other political/governance factors worked against stability, however. First, the regional leadership in Crimea could easily be characterized as belligerent as they openly worked toward independence from Ukraine. Many of the people in power in Crimea were hostile to rule from Kiev, and a good number felt comfortable forging alliances with nationalists in the Russian political elite. Further, given the relatively recent change in Crimea's status, it is clear that grievances existed even if there was no history of violence between the two groups. Many in Crimea were intensely opposed to living outside Russia. The fact that Crimea was technically part of Ukraine for 47 years wasn't important as long as Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union. After Ukrainian independence, however, a sense of being torn from the fatherland became much more salient for a large number of Crimean residents.

Finally, the dispute of Crimea's status escalated in a time when Ukraine was recovering from authoritarian rule, and had only weak and developing institutions to manage the conflict. Based upon the information presented in Table 8, there are mixed expectations for violent conflict in Ukraine based on political/governance variables. Although nationality was defined in inclusive, civic terms and national institutions did not discriminate against full minority participation, regional leaders were openly

belligerent and there were clear historical grievances between the parties. Further, the state had recently experienced a collapse of authoritarian rule.

Economic and Social factors also had mixed influence on developments in Crimea. In Ukraine during the period of conflict escalation, there was widespread acute economic instability. In Crimea, the economic uncertainty and volatility were particularly strong. The instability and volatility, combined with Crimea's incredible economic and tourism potential, created an endemic struggle for economic power. Institutions did not, however, discriminate against any one particular group. There was no liberal, functioning market economy that offered widespread economic opportunity, however, so the lack of discrimination may have had little mollifying effect on the general atmosphere of instability. Thus, there is a mixed expectation for violent conflict in Ukraine based on economic/social variables, as there was acute economic instability but no widespread discrimination against full minority participation in the economy.

As illustrated in Table 8, Ukraine exhibited high levels of intensity of structural, and mixed levels of political/governance and economic/social, variables that contribute to the outbreak of violent conflict.

Third Party Intervention Analysis

Table 9 demonstrates the likelihood of preventive diplomacy success in Ukraine by examining third party efforts with respect to timing, leadership, leverage and multifaceted action.

Table 9: Likelihood of Preventive Diplomacy Success in Ukraine

	LOW ←	→ HIGH
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party actions not beyond normal diplomatic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party intervention before positions have hardened and tensions have escalated
Leadership		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ major international players involved and committed to the intervention ▪ moderate national leadership in the targeted country
Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party not able to offer credible threats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ third party with the capacity to provide rewards sufficient to ensure compliance
Multi-faceted Action		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ multi-faceted action taken ▪ action taken addresses the range of factors contributing to conflict escalation

Based upon the findings presented in Table 9, there are mixed expectations for success in Ukraine. Expectations are high with respect to leadership and appropriate multifaceted action, but mixed with respect to leverage and timing as the OSCE

intervened early, but in a more limited manner, and did not have any credible threats to coerce compliance. These points are examined in greater detail below.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Max van der Stoel intervened fairly early in this case, about a year before the most acute phase in March 1995. It was in March 1995 that the Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, together with the Ukrainian parliament the *Verkhovna Rada*, abolished the Crimean Constitution and placed the Crimean government directly under the control of the government in Kiev. Although tensions were already very high in February 1994 when HCNM van der Stoel first intervened, and specific disputes had already been articulated and, indeed, at least in part acted upon, he was able to establish a positive working relationship with both sides. Based upon the findings presented in Table 9, Ukraine had a mixed chance for preventive diplomacy success as the third party intervened before the parties' positions had significantly hardened, but the intervention itself was not much more robust than typical diplomatic activity since it lacked any substantive action beyond voluntary participation in discussions on improving the clarity of the legal relationship between Crimea and the national government in Kiev.

Both national and international leadership in this case were conducive to preventive diplomacy success. The central Ukrainian government was willing to work with the international community, as evidenced by their willingness to extend invitations to the HCNM as well as accept long-term OSCE missions, and by their willingness work

within their obligations to European and international organizations such as the Council of Europe. The international community was engaged as well. The United States and major European powers were supportive of the work being done by the OSCE to bring about a peaceful resolution. Serious concern that continued disputes in Crimea could complicate US efforts to promote Ukrainian disarmament caused the US to become more actively involved in assuaging Ukrainian security concerns. The ultimate decision by the Clinton Administration to offer Ukraine a formal security guarantee, limited though it might have been, was still important as this move involved both the United States and Russia in publicly recognizing Ukraine's sovereignty. This ultimately helped Ukraine feel more comfortable in working with Russia to reach agreement on the Black Sea Fleet, and thus in working out arrangements with Crimea. Thus, the findings presented in Table 9 indicate that Ukraine had a high likelihood of preventive diplomacy success due to leadership as major powers were involved in the intervention and committed to its success, and the leadership of the country was moderate.

Ukraine's highest priority during the early to mid-1990s was to consolidate its independence and secure international support for Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity. The OSCE was able to offer Ukraine support in resolving its crisis in Crimea by helping to identify power-sharing arrangements that would make clear that Crimea was part of a sovereign Ukraine, and in a way that would ensure international support for Ukraine. Cooperation with the OSCE, therefore, brought significant benefits to Ukraine. The OSCE was able to offer important rewards for cooperation in pursuing a political solution to the crisis in Crimea.

The OSCE had limited sanctions, however, at their disposal. The only real threats available to the OSCE were to withdraw support and thus weaken international support for Ukraine in its struggle with Crimea. Failure to cooperate with the OSCE would complicate Ukraine's efforts to join important European institutions to further bolster the strength of their independence, such as the Council of Europe and NATO's Partnership for Peace. Further, failure to cooperate with the OSCE could endanger economic aid to support Ukraine's transition to a market economy as most of the major donor countries were members of the OSCE. Given the fact, however, that Ukraine was very concerned about its security, and somewhat ambivalent about giving up the nuclear weapons remaining on its territory after the collapse of the USSR, OSCE member states had few attractive options to coerce compliance. Pushing Ukraine too hard could easily have backfired, leading to a more isolated Ukrainian leadership at loggerheads with Russia over the status of Crimea. Thus, the findings presented in Table 9 illustrate a mixed likelihood of preventive success in Ukraine due to leverage. Although the third party did have somewhat substantial rewards to offer to induce cooperation by the national authorities, they possessed only limited potential to impose credible threats as concerns about the fragility of Ukraine's situation would have complicated any coercive effort.

The OSCE engaged in multifaceted action in Ukraine that ultimately addressed the factors contributing to conflict escalation in a way that alleviated much of the structural, political and economic pressures. As in Estonia, due to its character as a norms/rules-based regional organization, the OSCE was able to operationalize its shared

commitment to mutual security by assisting the Ukrainian government with some of its governing functions. This helped alleviate some of the negative consequences associated with transitioning states, namely the lack of strong, centralized and legitimate authority. Additionally, working through the OSCE helped increase the legitimacy of Ukraine's borders as the principles of the Helsinki Final Act on the inviolability of borders formed a baseline assumption in all negotiations. Finally, the incentives for mobilization created by the presence of a concentrated minority population were also effectively managed as the OSCE worked together with the parties to sketch out appropriate measures of local autonomy that met local demands for self-rule without weakening the authority of the central government in Kiev.

Ukraine was plagued with acute economic instability, exacerbated by its critical dependence on Russia, particularly for energy supplies. Although there was no economic discrimination in the sense that the minority group was precluded from full participation in the economy, as in Estonia, the intensity of Ukraine's economic vulnerability was felt by minority and majority groups alike. Cooperation with Russia to alleviate increasing economic hardship meant compromising Ukrainian national sovereignty and territorial integrity, ultimately weakening the strength of the Ukrainian state. The OSCE was able to alleviate this by offering a benchmark for Western support: by fully cooperating with the OSCE, Ukraine was able to demonstrate goodwill and thus secure Western aid. This helped Ukraine to overcome some of the insecurity associated with massive economic transition.

Although Ukraine did not have an ethnic-based definition of nationality, but a civic one, and did not discriminate against full participation by minorities, the belligerent leadership in Crimea, together with the presence of historical grievances amidst the chaos occurring after the collapse of authoritarian rule created serious challenges to stability in Crimea. The OSCE was able to effectively assist Ukraine in managing these challenges. They were able to help overcome the mistrust and hostility associated with historical grievances by working out differences through the roundtable. Having a rules/norms-based framework to work out differences helped the parties to overcome their fears and sense of mistrust, and come together to reach a mutually acceptable (even if sub-optimal) solution. The OSCE was also able to assuage some of the problems associated with the collapse of authoritarian rule by providing a substitute political structure that provided objective standards for peaceful dispute resolution.

Based upon findings presented in Table 9, Ukraine had a high likelihood of success due to the application of multifaceted action by the third party. The action taken addressed most of the structural factors contributing to conflict, including questionable borders, a concentrated minority population, and a weak central authority. The third party was also able to deal with most of the political/governance factors contributing to conflict, including the weakness of available political structures to manage conflict given the recent collapse of authoritarian rule. The OSCE was also able to somewhat overcome historical grievances between the parties by working out an autonomy arrangement. Finally, the acute economic instability Ukraine suffered after the Soviet collapse was somewhat mitigated by OSCE involvement in resolving the Crimean crisis. Due to

Ukraine's willingness to pursue a political solution consistent with the rules and norms of the OSCE, Western states were more supportive of Ukrainian independence and more willing to offer economic aid to facilitate the transition to a market economy.

Overall, there was a mixed expectation for preventive diplomacy success due to third party leverage and timing, and high likelihood of success due to leadership and appropriate multifaceted action taken.

Remaining Questions

Preventive diplomacy theory offers a fairly good explanation for the success in avoiding violent conflict between the central Ukrainian government in Kiev and the regional Crimean government in Simferopol. Based upon the conflict analysis, one would have moderate expectations that a violent conflict would erupt in Ukraine, due to high structural factors, and mixed political/governance and economic/social factors. Current thinking on preventive diplomacy would lead us to have optimistic expectations for successful prevention of this conflict given the relatively strong leadership, and appropriate multi-faceted action taken. The timing and available leverage, while not optimal, were in general conducive to success.

As in the cases of Estonia and Moldova, however, this explanation more accurately accounts for the impact the third party had on the central government, and cannot fully account for the actions of the minority. Early intervention, for example, benefited the central government in Kiev much more than the Crimean authorities. The

fact that the intervention occurred before the government had publicly presented hardened positions made it possible to pursue a compromise solution, but the compromise ultimately benefited the government in Kiev much more than the Crimean authorities. For example, the OSCE's commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine as the baseline for negotiations challenged Crimea's goal of weaker relations with Kiev and closer relations with Moscow. Early intervention by the OSCE did not alter this fundamental conflict of interests; therefore, the timing of the intervention did not influence the Crimean government to the same degree that it did the central government in Kiev.

Similarly, international leadership contributed to success in this case by creating a solid base of support for Ukrainian sovereignty. Major power commitment to Ukraine allowed the central government in Kiev to allow autonomy for Crimea without fear for the viability of the Ukrainian state. This commitment did not, however, impact the calculations of the openly belligerent Crimean leadership. Since the international community's support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine precluded Crimea's objective of greater independence, the exercise of international leadership benefited the central government much more than the regional government in Simferopol.

Given the fairly limited benefits the Russian-dominated Crimean government received for their cooperation, it would seem that they were not responding to persuasion, or the offer of incentives. Since the process created by the OSCE clearly subordinated the regional government to the central government in Kiev, Crimea was left completely

dependent upon Kiev. Indeed, any incentives that could be offered or potential benefits that might accrue would all be channeled through Kiev. There were no real direct incentives that were salient for the Crimean government. Since the negotiation process made clear that Crimea was part of Ukraine, and had only limited powers as an autonomous region, their central goal of greater independence and closer relations with Russia was not achieved.

It seems clear, therefore, that the Crimean authorities decided to cooperate not because the political process created by the OSCE was particularly attractive or productive. They decided to accept the political process because they had absolutely no viable alternatives. Russia, having recently embarked on a military campaign to resolve Chechen separatism, was quickly becoming distracted from regional affairs as the military situation deteriorated. Further, criticism of Ukraine for using a political/legal process for resolving separatism in Crimea would not seem a viable policy, given that Russia had decided to use military force in Chechnya for the same ends. Russia, therefore, abandoned its longstanding support for the Russian 'cause' in Crimea, and publicly acknowledged the conflict as a Ukrainian 'internal matter'. Having lost support in Moscow for their separatist agenda, the Crimean authorities had no choice but to try to achieve the best deal possible through the political process sponsored by the OSCE. Thus, in Ukraine, the lack of available alternatives to the political process created by the third party is clearly the main reason why Crimean Russians chose to comply with that process.

III. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

CHAPTER SIX: THE THEORY OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL PREVENTION

This study has examined three cases of internal conflict, Estonia, Moldova and Ukraine, that share many of the major characteristics that, according to theoretical prediction, increase the likelihood that existing inter-group conflicts will escalate, perhaps leading to violence. For example, all three have a concentrated Russian population that made at least some moves toward secession. All three experienced the escalation of conflict within the same time frame of 1990-1995, and within the same rough geo-strategic space. Each of the three cases experienced conflict between the titular population and ethnic Russians, particularly between the ethnic Russians and the political elite of the new state. Each of the three attempted to manage this conflict within the same political and economic turmoil associated with the downfall of communism and the dissolution of the USSR. Finally, each of the three attempted to establish their independence and began the process of state building during the time of the conflict when the central authority of the new state was weak, and territorial borders were in dispute with neighboring countries, particularly Russia. Although these three cases were strikingly similar in terms of the preconditions for conflict, they experienced dramatically different outcomes. While the conflict in Estonia was contained before violence broke out, there were sporadic clashes in Ukraine, and a full-scale war in Moldova.

My hypothesis upon beginning this study was that the differing third party actions taken in each case account for the differing outcomes. While the international community, particularly the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) intervened early and decisively in Estonia, and engaged in robust and

multifaceted action, intervention in Ukraine occurred after the conflict had escalated nearly to a crisis, compromising the ultimate effectiveness of the mission. In Moldova, there was no concerted international intervention until after active military hostilities ceased. The timing of the intervention and the type of action taken, therefore, would explain the outcomes in these cases: early and robust action was successful, and too little action taken too late resulted in failure.

While the case studies in general supported this hypothesis, they did so in ways different from what the current literature would lead us to expect: while timing, leadership, leverage and multi-faceted action did impact the government in ways consistent with theoretical prediction, these factors had only limited influence over the rebelling minority in the three cases covered. In this chapter I will examine in detail how these factors influenced the outcome of the cases. Next, I will illustrate how current prevention theory fails to explain the behavior of the minority group in each of the case studies. I will then examine the conceptual framework that informs current thinking about preventive diplomacy, and identify how this model has been utilized in policy making to craft conflict management strategies that rely primarily upon diplomacy and persuasion at low levels of tension and increasingly upon sanctions and coercion at higher levels of tension. The shortcomings of this approach in crafting policy are explored, based upon one of the core findings of the case studies that this phased approach is only helpful in dealing with official state actors.

Finally, I will present an alternative framework. I propose a theory of multidimensional prevention that overcomes the shortcomings of existing theory by incorporating the lessons of the case studies into a comprehensive preventive strategy. This comprehensive strategy builds upon existing concepts that focus on creating a political process for conflict resolution, then utilizing available incentives and sanctions to either persuade or coerce parties into compliance. It does so by considering the necessary parallel action: in addition to focusing on creating a political process as an alternative to violence, it is absolutely essential to remove opportunities to reject that process and resort to the use of force. This is especially critical when dealing with a mobilized minority group. If the political process does not fully meet their needs or objectives, then the incentives and sanctions put together by the third party will most likely be ineffective at best in persuading or coercing them to accept that process. Success in these cases depends equally upon creating an alternative political process and upon removing opportunities to use violence. After presenting my alternative framework for prevention, I consider how this conceptual model offers a stronger explanation for the outcome in the three case studies than does the existing literature on preventive diplomacy.

Successful Preventive Diplomacy

The preventive diplomacy literature has identified several factors that, when present, substantially improve chances for successful conflict prevention. These factors are timing, leadership, leverage and multi-faceted action. Below, I consider how each of these factors influenced the course of events in Estonia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Timing

The literature finds that the earlier an intervention occurs, the more likely it is to be successful. The cases studies generally support this finding, as timing still appears to be critical to the overall success or failure of an intervention. When the third party intervenes early and substantively, it is much more likely that the third party will have greater influence on the course of events. The case studies demonstrate, however, that early intervention is much more influential on the calculations and decisions of the central government. By intervening early on, before positions have been publicly stated, the third party may be able to put together a mix of incentives that will induce the government to cooperate. This may or may not, however, have a strong impact on the rebelling minority group if that group is seeking more than general political accommodation, and if the group has alternative means to achieve their objectives.

Leverage

Leverage refers to the capacity of the third party to provide sufficient rewards and sanctions to ensure the parties comply with the political process of dispute resolution. To the extent the third party possesses adequate leverage, chances for conflict prevention success are enhanced. The case studies also support this argument and demonstrate that the ability of the OSCE to offer sufficiently attractive incentives was critical in creating consensus within the government to cooperate with the political process being proposed. This is most clearly supported by the experience in Estonia, where a moderate coalition was able to push through modest legislative reforms to ensure some minority rights

without substantial resistance from more nationalist elements. Although they were strongly opposed to the legislative changes, the nationalists were more strongly interested in European integration. Since the OSCE was able to clear the way for Estonia's entry to Europe, all sides agreed to cooperate with the High Commissioner. The leverage in this case was perhaps uniquely powerful, but all of the cases support the argument that access of the third party to salient leverage had a strong impact on the government's actions and decisions. It is less clear, however, that the third party had access in any of the cases to leverage that was at all influential in the decision-making of the minority group. Thus, it would appear that strong leverage is more suited to influencing the behavior of governments than to influencing the behavior of a mobilized minority.

Leadership

In each of the case studies, the exercise of leadership was critical to success or failure, but not in ways that current theory would necessarily lead us to expect. Current theory focuses on the importance of a moderate national leadership that is willing to work with the international community and pursue a political solution to their internal conflicts, and on the importance of the involvement in and commitment of major international parties to the political process. This perspective focuses on creating support for a political process that can act as an alternative to the use of violence to resolve an internal dispute.

The case studies support the argument that leadership is critically important, but for different reasons. In each of the case studies, strong international involvement and

commitment was important not because of the creation of or support for a political process, but because this commitment deterred other regional actors from providing the mobilized minority with the means for rebellion. Leadership was critical, therefore, not to create adequate incentives to persuade the parties to accept a political process, but rather was critical in deterring Russia from offering more direct support for its ethnic kin mobilizing in neighboring states for rebellion.

The case studies also suggest that international leadership is most effectively exercised in support of a regional process. In this way, major powers can wield influence over the course of events in internal conflicts in support of regional security, rather than in support of their own more narrow national interests. In the three case studies, leadership exercised through a regional organization was accepted as more legitimate and was, therefore, more effective.

Multi-faceted Action

The application of multi-faceted action, as defined in this study as a matching of third party action to the structural, political/governance and economic/social causes of conflict, clearly helps mitigate the effect these factors have on the escalation of conflict. The case studies support the argument that carefully tailoring the third party response can reap significant rewards and in this way substantially contribute to success. As in the case of the other major factors, however, this seems more applicable to the central government than to the disaffected minority. Any benefits that might accrue to the

minority would be channeled through the central government, perhaps exacerbating the dependency and insecurity of the already disaffected minority group.

The ability of early timing, salient leverage, moderate leadership and appropriate multi-faceted action to account for the outcome of the cases is compromised by the fact that each of these factors did not influence the process in ways the existing literature would expect. How each of these factors impacted the government and the rebelling group in different ways is illustrated below.

Estonia: Robust and Timely Intervention?

Estonia is a clear success story for the OSCE and its model of preventive diplomacy. Intensive mediation by the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) of the OSCE headed off an acute crisis, and his ongoing involvement, together with the efforts of the experts staffing the in-country mission, facilitated the basis for a long-term resolution. Current literature on preventive diplomacy offers a fairly compelling explanation for success in this case: the intervention occurred early in the conflict, before the parties had fully mobilized; the intervening party had uniquely powerful leverage over the government; the international community was actively engaged; and the approach was multi-faceted and appropriate in that the intervention resolved many of the factors that were contributing to the rising tension and increasing intensity of the conflict. A careful examination of how each of these variables impacted the conflict in Estonia will, however, support the argument that the intervention effort was more decisive in altering the cost-benefit analysis of the Estonian government, and

thus their behavior, than in impacting similar calculations on the part of the regional governments in the northeast.

The timing in this case was critical to the overall success of the mission. HCNM van der Stoel was able to establish a relationship with both sides at a time when tensions were very high. The Russian community was outraged by successive legislative acts, passed by a legislative body to which the vast majority of them had not been allowed to elect representatives, that seriously threatened the political, economic and social security of the Russian community. Despite the clearly defined grievances, and widespread disaffection, no concerted efforts to mobilize had yet been fully organized when Commissioner van der Stoel began his intensive mediation effort. This early action made it possible for each side to embrace a political solution. Most importantly, by intervening early and creating a political process, Commissioner van der Stoel derailed the escalating crisis over the proposed autonomy referendum in Narva that would certainly have resulted in an acute confrontation between the regional and central governments.

By creating a political process that was supported and sanctioned by major benefactors and supporters of Estonian independence, the HCNM prevented a crisis in which the Estonian government would feel compelled to stand down a threat to the viability of the Estonian state, as expressed in a movement for autonomy in the northeast. Given the weakness of the central governmental authorities, they would have had no choice but to respond decisively to any threat to Estonian sovereignty and territorial

integrity. Van der Stoel's early intervention removed this pressure from the Estonian government, and made it possible to pursue a measured, political solution.

The timing was less decisive, however, in the calculations of the regional governments in the northeast. While they agreed to abide by the decision of the Estonian Constitutional Court as to the legitimacy and legal permissibility of their proposed referendum, they did so not so much because van der Stoel persuaded them at a very early stage, but rather due to their lack of alternatives. Particularly early in the conflict, Russia sought to pursue a reasonable solution via regional organizations such as the OSCE, and was not enthusiastic about direct support for any secessionist movement in Estonia. Further, the former Soviet, and then Russian, troops stationed in Estonia were not based in the areas populated by a majority of Russians that were considering autonomy or secession. These troops were not tied to the local population, and it would seem highly unlikely they would become involved without a direct order from Moscow. Given these two factors, the regional leadership in the northeast of Estonia had few alternatives to the process proposed by the OSCE, even as many of their leaders and activists decried the injustice being done to Russian speakers.

The leverage available to the OSCE in this case was uniquely powerful. Estonia's core national security strategy and its core program of national revival both were built on the foundation of a "return to Europe". Full integration into European security, economic, political and social institutions was a matter of vital national interest, and a matter of consensus among conservative nationalists and more moderate pragmatists.

Admission to these institutions, however, is conditional. States must meet certain criteria: political, economic and social. Domestic stability, a commitment to human rights, and an absence of grievances with neighboring states are considered the minimum criteria for consideration for admission. The Estonian government, therefore, did face incredibly powerful incentives to cooperate with the OSCE to resolve its domestic unrest as well as its complicated relations with Russia.

Leverage against the regional governments in the northeast, however, was minimal at best. By securing their agreement to abide by the decision of the Estonian Constitutional Court as to the legality of the referendum, van der Stoel could only have promised continued engagement on the part of the international community, and rather weak assurances that the international community would not stand by and allow mass deportations to occur. These promises are extremely limited and do not seem sufficient to induce cooperation. To Russians in Narva in early 1993, promises not to be deported would not seem sufficient to overcome the insecurity created by the language laws, through which the government would have the right to dismiss any workers who could not meet language requirements. Whether or not the government would actually have the resources or desire to enforce this law seems less salient than the economic insecurity created by the existence of a legal possibility to do so. Further, given that the Baltic Russians had no political rights and no representation in the Estonian government, assurances by an external party seems insufficient to overcome their concerns.

International engagement was, in this case, highly conducive to success. All major regional actors were substantially involved through diplomatic, political and economic support. This involvement was decisive for two reasons. First, the commitment of major European players, as well as the US, further increased the leverage available to the OSCE to induce cooperation on the part of the Estonian government. With all of Estonia's supporters and potential allies involved in creating a political solution to the conflict, there were strong incentives for the Estonian government to work with these international actors.

Second, the intense interest and commitment of the United States and major Western European powers strongly affected Russia's calculations as to how to most effectively pursue a resolution of the conflict. Russia itself was interested, at this point in time, in pursuing a close partnership with the West in an effort to integrate as much as possible into the European mainstream. Given the committed engagement of the West in Estonia, and their open commitment to Estonia's territorial integrity and the peaceful withdrawal of former Soviet forces from Estonian territory, and Russia's increasing economic dependence upon the West, pursuing a political resolution was in the best interest of Russia.

While the international engagement offered positive incentives for the Estonian government to cooperate, and created a politically viable forum for the Russians to pursue domestically important priorities such as protection of Russian rights in the 'near abroad', the impact on the Baltic Russians was somewhat different. For them,

international engagement did not so much offer them a political alternative as it removed from them potential direct Russian support for rebellion and/or secession. In this sense, engagement did not perform the expected role by creating a political forum, but rather served to remove more overt and direct external support for intensified rebellion.

Finally, the action taken in this case was multi-faceted and carefully targeted to match the needs of the conflict. The OSCE was able to mitigate the structural factors contributing to conflict in this case by assisting the central government with some of its governing functions by providing assistance on legislation and institution building, helping to overcome somewhat the weakness of the central government. The OSCE was also able to legitimize the Estonian borders, as the Helsinki Final Act requires respect for territorial integrity, and allows border changes only through dialogue, cooperation, and political means. Political and governance factors contributing to conflict escalation were also managed fairly effectively. By playing the “bad guy” the HCNM was able to secure modest legislative reforms without fatally weakening the moderate coalition in power. This made it possible for the moderates to make certain changes in proposed legislation seen as favorable to the Baltic Russians without falling prey to attacks from more nationalist elements in the parliament, since these changes were a prerequisite for further European integration, a core national goal that conservatives and moderates shared. Economic factors contributing to the conflict were managed as well. Since cooperation with the OSCE was seen as part of the process of European integration, the third party was able to hold out the promise of economic growth and prosperity as an incentive, and was able to secure immediate economic aid from North America and Western Europe.

All of these steps, however, seem to have benefited the Estonian government rather than both parties. Winning acceptance of the legitimacy of their borders, support for their economic and political development, and a “ticket to Europe,” clearly benefited the government. The Baltic Russians, in contrast, received essentially nothing for their cooperation. Although the OSCE tried to overcome the exclusionary nature of Estonian political institutions, and was able to win some improvement in the daily lives of Baltic Russians, the ultimate ability of Estonia to refuse citizenship, and thus political rights, to nearly a third of its resident population was not challenged by the international community. Therefore, while some modest improvements were realized, the Russians in this case did not achieve anything close to what they were seeking in 1993: political and cultural equality.

What van der Stoel did achieve through intensive mediation in 1993 was a series of changes to proposed language, citizenship and residency legislation. These changes removed the threat of deportation for the more than 500,000 Russian-speaking residents who found themselves “stateless” after the Soviet collapse. Social guarantees were clarified as well, easing concerns generated by the acute economic insecurity unleashed with the economic transition. These changes did ease tensions and did improve the lives of Baltic Russians, but did not fundamentally resolve what they found to be a moral and ethical affront: the stripping of full political and economic rights as citizens of society.

Moldova: Too Little, Too Late?

In striking contrast to Estonia, Moldova is a clear case of preventive failure, as little was done to contain or manage this conflict until military hostilities had essentially ceased. Current thinking on preventive diplomacy offers a fairly good explanation for the outcome in this case: the lack of robust and early action is to blame for the outbreak of violence. This explanation is, however, simplistic and flawed as it assumes a willingness to negotiate a political solution on the part of both parties. While earlier, more robust action might have convinced the Moldovan government not to use force in Transdnistria, it is not at all clear that this would also have deterred the Dniester authorities from seizing control of government buildings and setting up their own parallel institutions. A consideration of the importance of timing, leverage, leadership and multi-faceted action will support the argument that the true reason behind the failure in Moldova was the inability to remove opportunities to use force on the part of the Dniester authorities. It was their ability to effectively use force that fueled their drive for autonomy as well as their relative unwillingness to compromise with the central government. Most importantly, the capacity of the Dniester authorities to use force, and their demonstrated willingness to do so, compelled the central government to respond militarily, igniting a full-scale armed conflict.

The timing of third party intervention in Moldova simply could not have been worse. No external party crafted a substantial intervention until after military hostilities had ceased. Thus, there was no sustained or serious effort to resolve the crisis until fighting had already ended, essentially with a victory for Transdnistria. Given that the

rebelling group on the left bank achieved their aims on the battlefield, the failure to intervene before fighting broke out was critical. A third party such as the OSCE could have been effective in managing the response of the Moldovan government to developments in Dniester on a number of occasions. For example, the OSCE mission to Moldova, established after active military hostilities had ceased, was nevertheless very successful in channeling the dispute between the Dniester authorities and the Moldovan government into a series of negotiations. Had this mission been established earlier, it could have made a substantial difference. Indeed, the OSCE fact finding mission organized before the onset of widespread military hostilities warned of the potential for violence. Had the Chairman-in-Office taken more decisive and direct action at that time, it is possible that these negotiations could have begun much earlier.

Nonetheless, even if a serious effort had been made to prevent the military clashes, it is not at all clear that intervening early on would have made much of a difference. Although it might have been possible to impact the calculations of the Moldovan government, and therefore convince them not to respond to Dniester provocations with force, it seems unlikely that intervening earlier would have influenced the Dniester authorities. Given that they had first declared their autonomy in 1990, more than a year before the Soviet collapse and subsequent independence of Moldova, and had almost immediately begun stockpiling weapons, their commitment to self-rule was well established from the very onset of the crisis. Further, the Dniester authorities have often failed to cooperate with the OSCE presence in Moldova, casting even greater doubt on the importance of timing to Dniester calculations.

In contrast to poor timing, international leadership was, in principle, conducive to success in this case. Major regional powers, including Ukraine and Romania, were committed to a political solution. Their engagement, however, came at a point where the escalation of conflict required a much more robust response than they were willing, or able, to offer. Substantial international interest was able to moderate Russian actions, but insufficient to compel members of the Russian 14th Army to refrain from direct involvement given the personal interest of so many of the officers and enlisted men who were local residents. Further, while the national leadership was somewhat moderate and willing to cooperate with an external third party, the Dniester leadership had no interest whatsoever in cooperation. Again, since they were able to achieve most of their aims through military action, and had succeeded in gaining full control over the left bank and setting up a *de facto* independent state, they were unenthusiastic about participating in negotiations to resolve the future status of Transdnistria. They were only willing to enter talks where potential outcomes would be conducive to their interests. Indeed, even as the national leadership of Moldova could be described as moderate, the regional leadership was clearly belligerent, outweighing the positive influence of leadership in managing this conflict.

The leverage available to the third party in this case was weak. Before active hostilities broke out, the main actors involved were the central Soviet government headed by Mikhail Gorbachev, and the quadripartite group comprising of Ukraine, Moldova, Russia and Romania. Neither of these actors possessed adequate capacity to provide

rewards sufficient to ensure compliance, nor did they possess the capacity to offer credible threats. Through ongoing diplomacy they sought to resolve the Dniester crisis by persuading Moldova to offer a special status to Transdniestria, and pledged not to become directly involved by supporting a Dniester rebellion. They were not, however, able to offer benefits sufficient to overcome Moldova's security interests in this case, nor were they able to coerce the Moldovan government into staying out of the increasingly alarming developments in Transdniestria. Given the threat to the unity of the state of Moldova, and the economic dependence of the central government upon Transdniestria, much stronger leverage was needed to influence the Moldovan leadership not to react forcibly to Dniester separatism.

While leverage against the Moldovan government was weak, it was virtually nonexistent against the Dniester authorities. Economic aid and political support did afford international actors some influence over the Moldovan government, but there were no potential benefits available that were more attractive to the Dniester authorities than the self-rule they were confident in achieving through military means. Likewise, any threats against the Dniester authorities were not credible, given the presence of the 14th Army and the tacit political support they received from Russia and, to a lesser extent, from Ukraine. This made it very difficult to persuade the Dniester authorities to refrain from provocative acts, including the takeover of Moldovan governmental buildings on the left bank. Had there been an earlier effort to apply the available leverage to the greatest extent possible against the Moldovan government, it might have been possible to persuade them to both respond to Dniester provocations with measured moderation, and

to consider adapting the language laws to reflect the interests of non-Moldovan speakers. This might have avoided bloodshed, but would not likely have made any difference in the ultimate division of the country as third parties simply did not possess adequate leverage against the Dniester authorities to prevent their take-over of the left bank.

Finally, the action taken by the third parties in this case was helpful in alleviating many of the underlying causes of conflict, but as in the above examples, in ways that were more beneficial to the Moldovan government than to the Dniester authorities. For example, action taken by the OSCE was able to legitimize Moldovan borders, as the Helsinki Final Act requires respect for territorial integrity, and allows border changes only through dialogue, cooperation, and political means. Cooperation with outside parties also resulted in political support and economic aid, helping to alleviate the weak economy and increase the legitimacy and stature of the Moldovan government. Had these actions been taken earlier, it might have been possible to alleviate Moldovan insecurity and, therefore, made it possible for the government to take a more measured response to the crisis in Transdniestria.

The factors most salient to the Dniester authorities, however, were not addressed: the nationality or ethnic based identity of the state and the relationship between the central and regional governmental powers. Their desire to maintain a Soviet identity, including ensuring the dominance of the Russian language, and to create a federal system that would allow for self-government in most local affairs was not acceptable to the Moldovan government.

Yet, without a resolution of these two factors, it is unlikely that the Dniester authorities would have been willing to pursue a political solution. Now that they have achieved *de facto*, albeit unrecognized, independence, resolution of these factors may no longer be sufficient to persuade the Dniester authorities to seek a final, political solution to the conflict in Moldova.

Ukraine: Crisis Averted?

While Estonia is a clear case of preventive diplomacy success, and Moldova is a clear case of failure, the case of Ukraine is more nuanced and complex. While there was no discrimination against national minorities, the history of the region, acute economic instability and weak governmental authority contributed heavily to the escalation of conflict in Crimea. As in the other two cases, preventive diplomacy theory offers a fairly good explanation for the success in avoiding violent conflict between the central Ukrainian government in Kiev and the regional Crimean government in Simferopol: fairly early intervention by a committed third party that was supported by all major players was able to avert an impending crisis through appropriate multi-faceted action. This explanation, again as in the other two cases, is flawed as it ignores the calculations of the Crimean leadership. An examination of the influence of timing, leadership, leverage and multi-faceted action will support the argument that the true reason for success in this case was the inability of the Crimean leadership to procure the necessary economic and military resources, and political support, for continued resistance against Kiev.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) of the OSCE Max van der Stoep intervened in this case after tensions had significantly escalated, but about a year before the most acute phase of the conflict. The timing of his intervention was, therefore, conducive to success, as he was able to establish a relationship with both sides before the March 1995 showdown between Kiev and Simferopol. His early intervention was most successful in establishing a relationship with the central government in Kiev. As he took the territorial integrity of Ukraine as an official starting point, he had the full support of the government in Kiev. His official view that economic aid for Crimea be tied to Ukrainian territorial integrity further underscores the importance he placed on this issue.

By creating a process through which Crimean interests could be served while Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity were preserved, van der Stoep was committed to only a few of the most basic Crimean interests: economic and cultural autonomy. Their more substantial interests in greater independence, weaker relations with Kiev and closer relations with Russia were not consistent with the principle of territorial integrity and, thus, were not seriously considered in negotiations. Early intervention, therefore, was helpful in creating a political process through which relations between Kiev and Simferopol could be negotiated, but this achievement benefited the central government much more than the regional government in Crimea.

Leadership was conducive to success in this case as well. Major powers such as Germany, Poland and the United States viewed a democratic, independent and secure

Ukraine as in their vital interests. Making sure the crisis in Crimea was resolved peacefully was critical to the overall management of Ukraine's relations with Russia and, thus, stability in the region. The United States and major European allies had a strong interest, therefore, in a peaceful resolution of the crisis between Kiev and Simferopol, as well as an interest to avoid direct confrontation between Kiev and Moscow. This created a solid base of support for Ukrainian efforts to manage the crisis in Crimea. Major power commitment to Ukraine was critical to success in this case as it offered Ukraine the support necessary to allow some autonomy for Crimea without fear as to the viability of the Ukrainian state. The central government's willingness to engage with the international community and to cooperate with the OSCE also contributed heavily to success in this case.

The Crimean authorities, in contrast, were openly belligerent at important points during the confrontation. Persons in positions of power in Crimea openly rallied for severing ties with Kiev and either establishing independence or reunifying with Russia. The engagement of the international community, and their commitment to support the political process of conflict management, did not serve the interests of these pro-independence forces and, therefore, probably did not influence their actions.

The OSCE had a good deal of leverage at its disposal in this case, but this leverage, again, was more salient for the central government than for the Crimean leadership. Cooperation with the OSCE brought significant benefits to Ukraine. As Ukraine's highest priority at this point in time was the consolidation of its independence,

international support for Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity was a matter of vital interest. Working with the HCNM to peacefully resolve the crisis in Crimea made it possible for Ukraine to achieve both goals at the same time: resolving Crimea's status would strengthen the power and legitimacy of the central government; resolving the crisis in a manner sanctioned by the OSCE would ensure international and regional support for the process and for Ukrainian sovereignty. In contrast, the OSCE did not have any real incentives to offer, or sanctions with which to threaten the Crimean leadership. Leverage, therefore, against the Crimean leadership was very limited even as it may have contributed to the central government in Kiev's decision to cooperate with the OSCE.

Finally, the OSCE took multi-faceted action appropriately tailored to effectively alleviate the factors contributing to the conflict between Crimea and the central government in Kiev. The OSCE was able to manage most of the structural, political/governance and economic/social factors contributing to the escalation of conflict in this case by legitimizing Ukraine's post-Soviet borders, assisting the central government in Kiev with some of its governing functions, articulating an autonomy arrangement for Crimea, and clearing the way for Western economic aid and political support. This action served the interests of the central government in Kiev, however, to a much greater extent than the interests of the Crimean leadership. As the starting point of negotiations was the baseline of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the legitimacy of Kiev's rule over Crimea, the Crimean leadership had limited expectations of the political process sponsored by the OSCE. Their willingness to cooperate was less a function of their sincere engagement in the process than a reflection of their lack of alternatives.

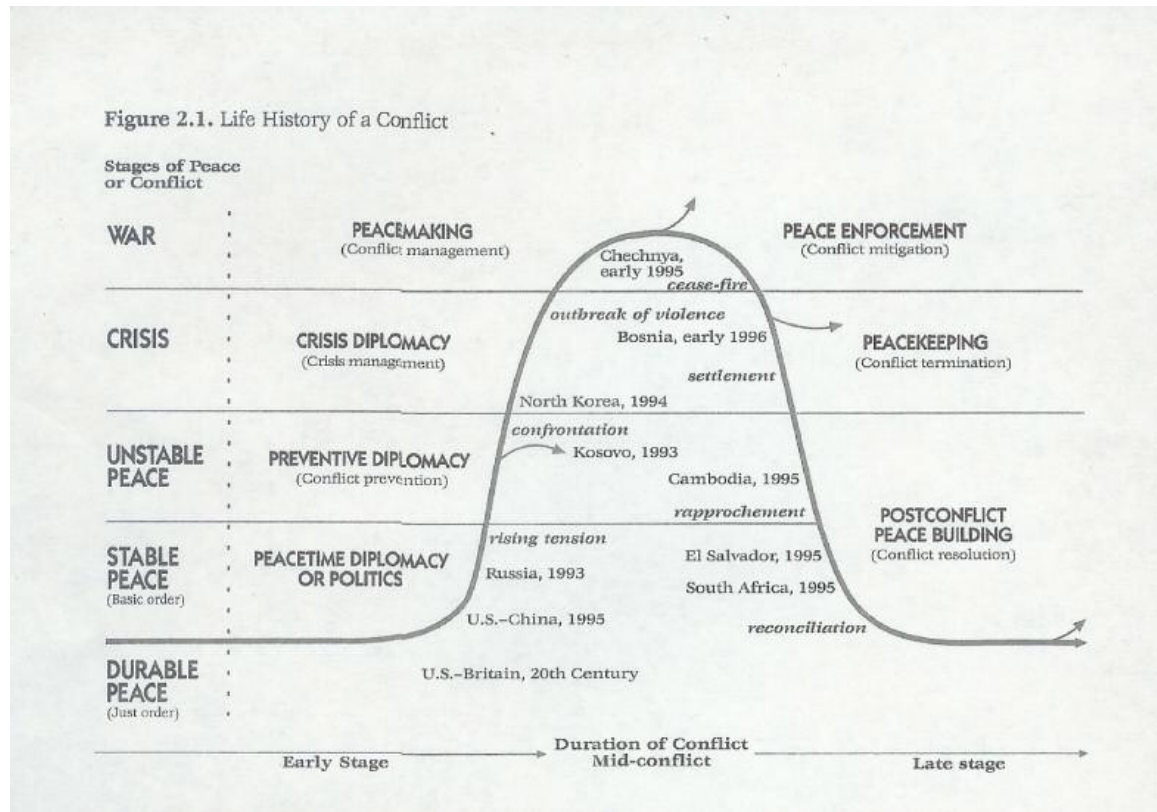
Preventive Diplomacy and the Conflict Cycle

In each of these cases, current thinking about preventive diplomacy does a good job explaining the motivations and actions of the government in the country concerned, but cannot account for the motivations and actions of the rebelling group seeking autonomy or secession. It would seem, therefore, that existing theoretical frameworks are better suited to explain the actions, calculations and motivations of recognized states. These existing frameworks do not, based upon the findings of the case studies, always explain how or why minority groups decide to take up arms or, alternatively, decide to settle for whatever political solution they are able to achieve. They do not, therefore, adequately address how to prevent minority group violence in internal conflict.

Based upon the results of the case studies, it does not seem possible to deter or induce the cooperation of rebelling separatist groups if the political process cannot achieve the results they are seeking, *and* if the group has other options. This is true because, in the course of negotiations, it isn't always possible to give the minority group what they want, while at the same time supporting and protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state. Since regional and international multilateral institutions of international security are based solidly upon respect and protection of state sovereignty and territorial integrity, existing conflict management frameworks may not be well suited to the management of internal conflicts.

In order to better understand why existing literature on preventive diplomacy is better suited to explaining official state behavior, as opposed to that of non-state actors, it is necessary to consider this literature's conceptual foundation and the subsequent policy options that flow from that foundation. Current thinking about preventive diplomacy is grounded in a conceptual framework that sees conflicts developing and escalating along a clearly defined cycle. In this model, the necessary approach to managing the conflict is determined by the level of tension or violence: at low levels of tension, there is greater focus on diplomacy, and at higher levels of tension and/or violence, the intervening party must be prepared to undertake military action to contain the conflict. This model is illustrated in Figure 1, which portrays the life cycle of a conflict. Created by Michael Lund, it provides the conceptual foundation for understanding how to manage escalating conflicts.

Figure 1: Lund's Conflict Cycle



From *Preventing Violent Conflicts*, reprinted with permission of the Endowment of the United States Institute for Peace.

Preventive diplomacy is, in this model, operable at the level of unstable peace. At this stage a potential or actual conflict is materializing or escalating, but no violence has yet occurred. To better analyze this somewhat broad phase, Lund created three sub-types: pre-conflict peace-building, preemptive engagement and crisis prevention.¹ A brief review of these sub-types will clarify how increasing levels of tension require increasing reliance by the third party on more coercive measures to contain the escalation of the conflict.

¹ Michael S. Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy* (Washington: US Institute of Peace, 1996), 46-47.

Pre-conflict peacebuilding operates at the lowest level of tension between the groups, where there is uncertainty and a lack of trust in an environment of political instability. Here, the third party tries to focus on creating channels for dispute resolution, building political institutions, defining norms and changing attitudes in order to reduce the sources of conflict to avoid the outbreak of violence. Lund identifies several appropriate techniques, such as problem-solving workshops, arms control regimes, human rights standards and collective security. These techniques focus primarily on developing institutions and regimes to contribute to political and economic stability. In this way, potential conflicts can be averted by establishing voluntary standards of political and human rights behavior, and by creating mechanisms for peaceful dispute resolution. Specific examples of pre conflict peacebuilding include the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and the articulation of CSCE/OSCE standards for human rights and governance, both of which have contributed greatly to regional and global security through voluntary cooperation and consensus based governance.

Preemptive engagement operates during low levels of conflict, where particular issues are in dispute, tensions are rising and the parties are polarized. At this point there is greater concern that the conflict will escalate to confrontation as the issues at hand have already divided the groups and increased tensions. In these cases, the third party focuses on addressing the specific disputes at hand, engaging the parties and channeling their grievances into negotiations. This generally requires a concerted effort to persuade the parties to accept direct third party involvement, as well as the creation of an appropriate

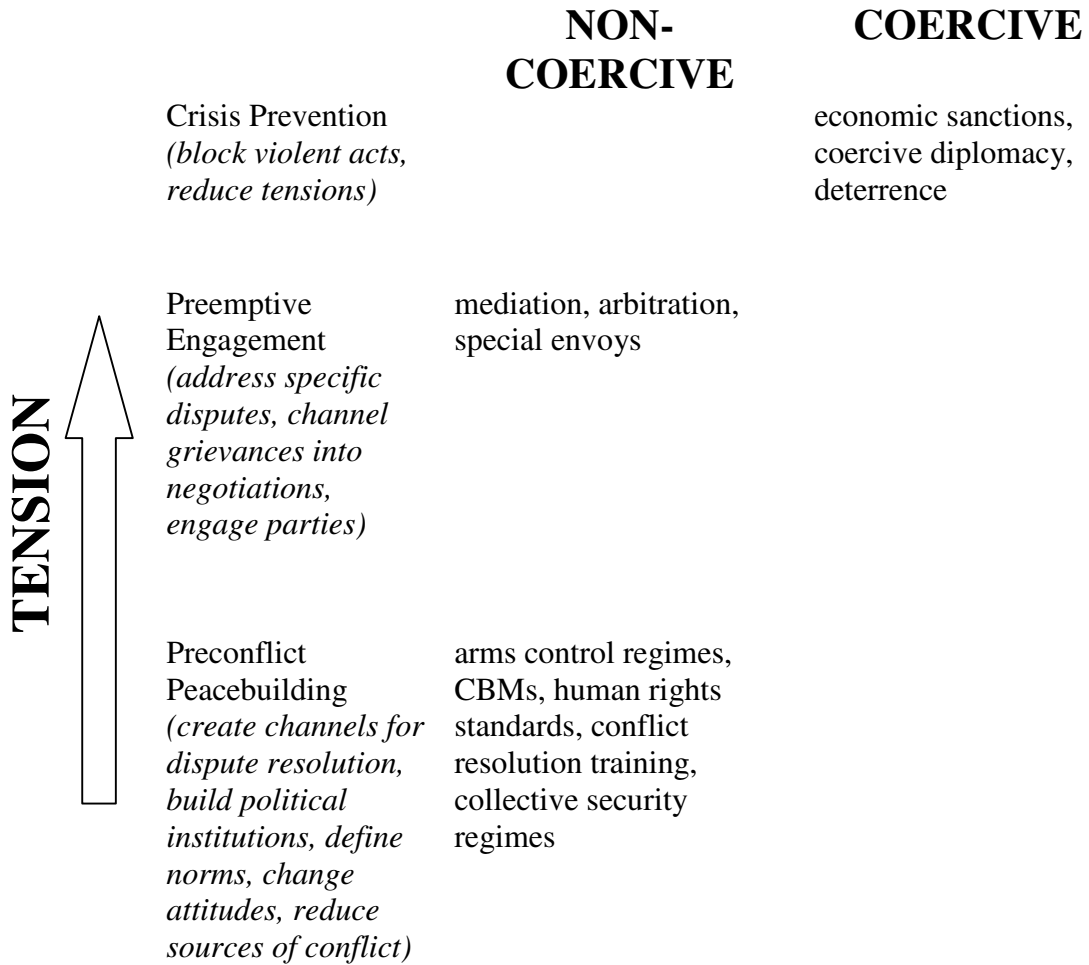
and acceptable forum for pursuing a political resolution to the conflict. Appropriate techniques include the use of special envoys to encourage dialogue and cooperation, mediation and arbitration. This type of intervention is reflected in the work of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, and in the work of observer missions.

Finally, crisis prevention seeks to manage a near crisis, where there are low levels of violent acts, threats and taking up of arms. At this stage third party efforts may intensify and include a greater range of coercive measures as the third party seeks to contain a conflict that is beginning to spiral out of control. For example, the third party may seek to block violent acts through the application of coercive diplomacy, deterrence and the threat of economic sanctions, or may organize a preventive military deployment to contain the spread of regional clashes. Specific examples of this type of preventive action include the nuclear negotiations with North Korea and the preventive peacekeeping mission in Macedonia.

Persuasion and Coercion in Preventive Diplomacy

Lund's conceptual framework calls for greater focus on non-coercive means, including diplomacy and persuasion, at lower levels of tension, and for more coercive means as the conflict develops into a crisis. In other words, it relies more heavily upon "carrots" or incentives at lower levels of conflict, and more heavily upon "sticks" or sanctions at higher levels of conflict. Figure 2 takes Lund's framework and illustrates how the measures called for in each sub-type of preventive diplomacy are categorized as either coercive or non-coercive.

Figure 2: Coercive and Non-coercive Measures in Preventive Diplomacy



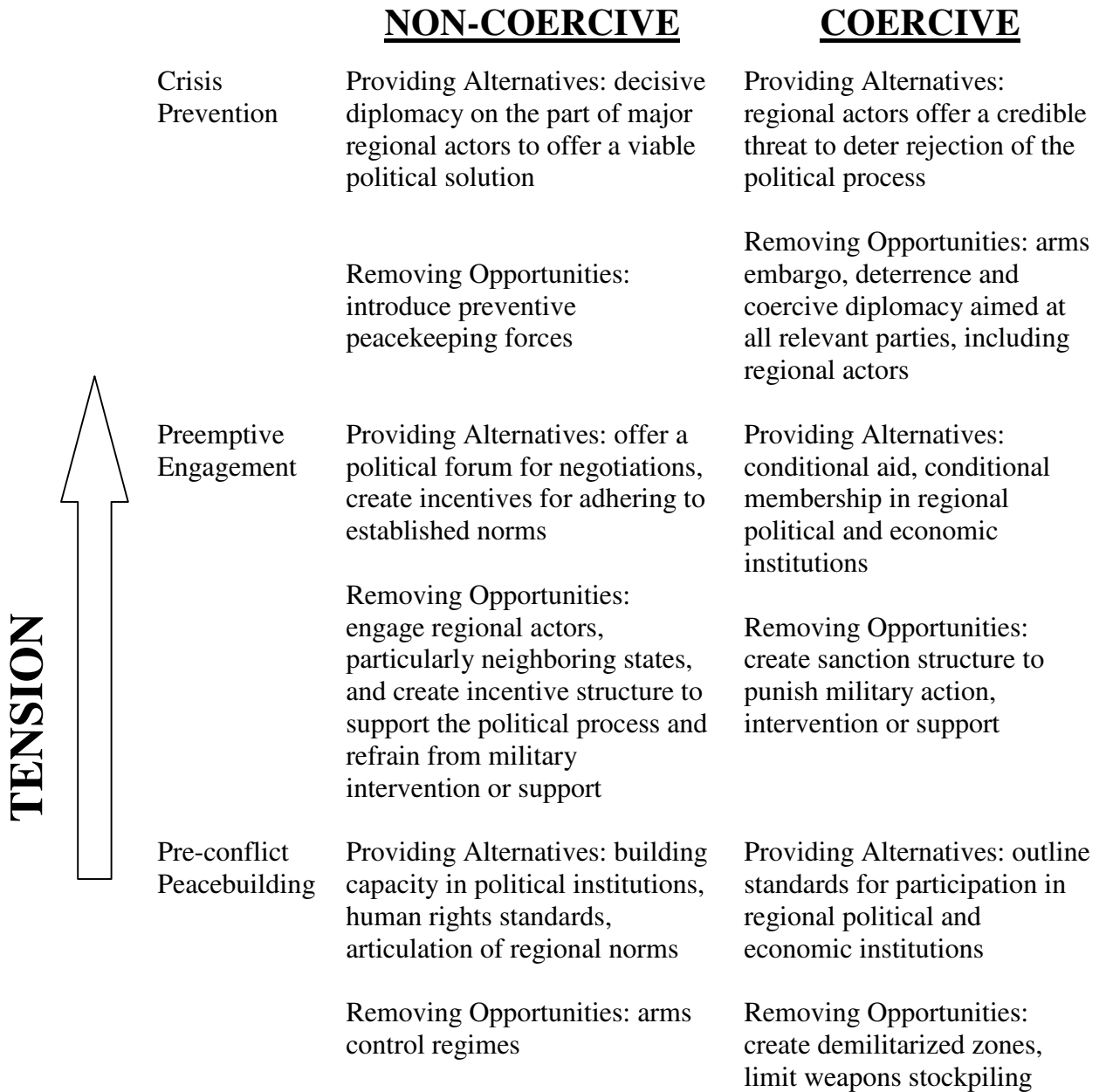
This framework is focused on voluntary cooperation, and primarily on the process of creating alternatives to the use of force. As tensions escalate toward crisis, the third party can raise the costs of choosing violence by incorporating deterrence and coercive diplomacy into the diplomatic response. Focusing primarily upon incentives at low levels of tension and on sanctions at higher levels of tension is a common approach to conflict management. The findings of the above three case studies, however, suggest that it is a flawed approach since the rebelling group in each of the three cases was only marginally

affected by the diplomatic efforts made by the third party. A much more important factor in their decision to refrain from violent protest, or to take up arms, was their relative ability to access the resources to fuel their secession. Often, third parties fail to recognize the differing interests and goals of governments and minority groups. What is needed is a clear set of policy options that will provide adequate tools to manage potentially violent internal conflicts.

Multidimensional Prevention

An alternative framework would focus on two parallel and interconnected processes. First, the current paradigm should be expanded to include incentives to induce cooperation and sanctions to ensure compliance. This will increase the scope of policy prescriptions for all varieties of internal conflict. Second, an additional process should be added to this framework, that of removing opportunities to use force. This second process is drawn directly from the lessons of the case studies. Including both processes will greatly increase the effectiveness of prevention activities. Figure 3 illustrates how this framework would expand the scope of policy prescriptions in preventive diplomacy.

Figure 3: Multidimensional Prevention



As illustrated above, the current paradigm of preventive diplomacy looks at the use of persuasion at low levels of tension, and focuses primarily upon sanctions or other coercive measures at higher levels of tension. Within this existing policy prescriptive framework, success is seen as primarily a function of timing, the strength of leadership,

the salience of the leverage available to induce cooperation, and the tailoring of the action taken to the needs of the conflict. Multidimensional prevention improves upon this paradigm in two ways. First, multidimensional prevention considers both coercive and non-coercive action to be of equal importance throughout the conflict cycle. Several important analyses in the conflict prevention literature call for such “mixed strategies”. Notably, Bruce Jentleson argues “the tendency in much of the preventive diplomacy literature to focus more on the inducement-cooperation dimension than on the coercive-deterrence one is the mirror image of the over emphasis on the latter and often the exclusion of the former in the Cold War-era deterrence literature”.² Just as the deterrence literature has been greatly enriched through greater consideration of the power of positive inducements to positively impact the adversary’s behavior,³ and thus ultimately contribute to successful deterrence, the preventive diplomacy literature needs to incorporate greater consideration of coercion. Jentleson proposes a combination of coercive elements sufficient to craft a credible deterrent and inducements sufficiently attractive to create incentives for cooperation. Multidimensional prevention answers this challenge by detailing how such coercive and persuasive elements can be effectively combined at various stages to prevent the outbreak of violent conflict.

Further, multidimensional prevention is able to distinguish between the creation of a political process and the removal of opportunities to reject that process. This distinction was key to the outcome in each of the three case studies, and thus is a critical

² Bruce W. Jentleson, *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000) 13.

³ See especially Alexander George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974).

component of any successful intervention strategy. A brief review of how the opportunity, or lack thereof, to fuel their resistance, was the key factor influencing minority group behavior in each case study illustrates how multidimensional prevention offers a stronger explanation for internal conflict than current preventive diplomacy theory.

In Estonia, existing theoretical frameworks would regard preventive diplomacy efforts as a success due to an early and robust intervention, strong commitment by the international community and willingness to cooperate by the national leadership, powerful leverage on the part of the third party to induce cooperation, and multi-faceted action taken that addressed to a large degree the factors contributing to the conflict. This cannot, however explain the willingness of the Russian minority in Estonia to cooperate, given the lack of benefits the Russian community received for their cooperation. Indeed, while the outcome in Estonia was the most peaceful of the three case studies, the Russian minority in Estonia clearly received the least favorable accommodations: they remained without citizenship and the corresponding political and economic rights. It was not, therefore, the attractiveness or acceptability of the political process that was able to win over Baltic Russian cooperation, but rather a complete lack of alternatives. Russia was not willing to support them in any direct physical conflict, and they did not have the independent means to do more than launch a series of protests. Given the widespread disaffection of the Russian population, their almost complete political disenfranchisement, and the rhetoric of political leaders in the northeast, it seems clear

that the lack of alternatives was the main factor in determining the overall weakness of their opposition to Estonian state building.

In Moldova, current theory would regard preventive efforts a failure due to the lack of third party involvement before active military hostilities ceased. This perspective, however, assumes that both parties were open to a negotiated political settlement. Very early actions taken by the Dniester authorities do not seem consistent with this assumption, as they both sought self-government and procured the military means necessary for defense at least a year before Moldova achieved independence. Massive stockpiling of weapons, and the personal attachment of many of the enlisted men and junior officers of the 14th Army to the Dniester region offered the Dniester authorities a clear alternative to accepting a diminished role inside an increasing nationalistic Moldova: independence. Their accumulated military expertise and weapons stockpiles consistently provided the Dniester authorities with relatively greater military power than the national government in Chisinau. This power imbalance made the Dniester authorities more willing to undertake risky and provocative actions, such as the seizure of all governmental buildings and assets on the left bank. Once they began down the path of secession, the central government in Moldova was compelled to respond given their economic dependence upon the left bank and their desperate need to consolidate the independence, sovereignty and viability of an independent Moldova. While it is true that earlier intervention by an external party might have impacted the Moldovan government's actions in this case, and this might have prevented bloodshed, such action would probably not have prevented the division of the country given the very early and

quite decisive Dniester moves toward independence. It was not, therefore, the lack of an early and robust intervention that led to failure in Moldova, it was the ability of the Dniester authorities to chose a different option, one that more fully met their interests.

In Ukraine, theory would argue that a fairly early intervention that capitalized upon major power support, and utilized an effective multi-faceted conflict management approach, was able to avert a major escalating crisis. This explanation is, however, incomplete. Although the intervention was able to address many of the factors contributing to the escalating conflict, it did not respond to those aspects most salient to the Crimean leadership. Indeed, the intervention did not meet most of the Crimean demands with respect to self-governance and ability to forge closer relations with Russia. After Ukrainian President Kuchma, together with the Ukrainian parliament, abrogated the Crimean Constitution and abolished the post of the President of Crimea in March 1995, the situation was at a critical turning point. While it would appear that the direct involvement of the OSCE HCNM in mediating a resolution at a roundtable he organized in Locarno, Switzerland in May was the decisive factor in the subsequent agreement between the two sides to pursue a political solution, the lack of Russian support for the pro-Russian bloc in Crimea was at least as decisive.

This is clearly demonstrated by the continued appeal for Russian support that the Crimean leadership made at the same time as the OSCE process was underway. For example, the pro-Russian Chairman of the Crimean Supreme Soviet Sergei Tsekov spoke on April 14, 1995 at a plenary meeting of the Russian Federation State Duma, where he

pleaded for Russia's help and support for Crimea's drive for greater autonomy saying "we won't be able to make it without Russia."⁴ Help was not, however, forthcoming, even from the previously supportive *Duma*.

Press reports at the time pointed to Chechnya as an explanation for Russia's change of heart with respect to Crimea.⁵ Since Russia had determined to use force against separatism in Chechnya, it couldn't realistically protest Ukraine's use of the legal system to accomplish the same goal in Crimea. Further, the conflict in Chechnya was not going as well as had been planned, bogging Russia down and distracting the Yeltsin administration's attention away from its earlier goal of supporting Russian rights in the 'near abroad'. It is also clear that international pressure on Russia not to become involved, and Russia's dependence at the time upon Western aid, were also critical to its decision to refrain from supporting deposed Crimean President Meshkov. Whatever the reasons for Russia's decision not to become directly involved, it is clear that their withdrawal of support for the pro-Russian, pro independence Crimean leadership was a major factor pushing Crimea to the negotiating table. No longer able to pursue their objectives outside of the political process created by the OSCE, they had no choice but to get the best deal possible at Locarno.

⁴ Pyotr Zhuravlyov, (condensed text). *Sevodnya* (15 April 1995) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 47, no. 15 (10 May 1995): 21.

⁵ Vasily Kononenko, Sergei Chugayev and Maxim Yusin, "Moscow Can't be Bothered with Crimea These Days; it's too Bugged Down in Chechnya", (condensed text). *Izvestiya* (21 March 1995) p. 1. Translation *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 47, no. 12 (19 April 1995): 1.

This review of minority group action in each of the three case studies supports the argument that successful prevention in these cases was dependent upon *both* the creation of a political process as an alternative to violent resistance, *and* the removal of opportunities to reject that process and pursue objectives through alternate means. By expanding the existing theoretical framework to examine these two related, yet distinct, parallel processes the theory of multidimensional prevention improves our understanding of how and why some efforts to prevent the escalation of internal conflict succeed and others fail. It also provides the basis for a richer range of policy prescriptions that, through their incorporation of both alternative processes and removal of opportunities to reject those processes, are much more likely to result in successful interventions.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

The management of internal conflict continues to pose major challenges to the international security order put in place after World War II. Although this system was adapted and revised throughout the Cold War to more effectively prevent the outbreak of a major great power war, it remains weak in its ability to regulate internal conflicts and non-state actors. This study began by questioning how the international community might improve upon the current system of international security to more effectively prevent the outbreak of violent internal conflict. Its findings allow for some answers to this question that have important implications for dealing with non-state actors.

I began this study by selecting three cases of internal conflict that share many of the factors that generate conflict escalation. Estonia, Moldova and Ukraine all came out of the collapse of an authoritarian state, the Soviet Union. From 1990-1995, when these states were first undergoing greater republican autonomy, and then achieved independent statehood, they each faced organized resistance on the part of a substantial resident Russian minority to the political, cultural and economic restructuring of the state. The central authority of the state was, during this time period, quite weak as the newly independent state sought to replace the old authoritarian structures with a functioning democratic system. The character of the new state was often defined in national terms as the government sought to counteract decades of “Sovietization” with a program of national revival. In some cases this led to political and economic discrimination against ethnic Russians. In addition, these very destabilizing forces were unleashed at the same

time as the economic transition from communism to capitalism generated serious insecurity.

Despite all of these similarities, the outcome in each case differed substantially. In Estonia, where interestingly the Russian minority underwent the strongest discrimination and exclusion from participation in the new order, there was the lowest level of armed resistance to the new state. In Ukraine, a concerted effort in Crimea to weaken ties with the central government in Kiev and strengthen ties with Moscow, expressed in repeated efforts to gain independence for the peninsula, generated a number of clashes. Nonetheless, these clashes did not spread in scope or intensity and were ultimately contained. In Moldova, a full-scale mobilization in Transdnistria culminated in major fighting between forces loyal to the central government and militia loyal to the separatist regime on the left bank. These clashes involved heavy weapons and brought in forces of Russia's 14th Army, which resulted in the division of Moldova, essentially a victory for Transdnistria.

My hypothesis upon beginning this study was that the differing actions taken by an intervening third party account for the dramatic variation in outcome. While the OSCE intervened very early in Estonia, and engaged in intensive mediation that was supported by major regional actors and involved all interested parties, efforts to contain the crisis in Moldova were very weak until after the fighting had already subsided. In Ukraine, the OSCE intervention created a process that made a negotiated settlement of Crimea's status within Ukraine possible, containing potential further clashes.

The case studies in general support this hypothesis, but in ways different from what current theory on preventive diplomacy would lead us to expect: in each of the cases studied, the actions of the third party were minimally influential in determining the behavior of the rebelling minority group, even as they may have been decisive in shaping the actions of the national government. Current thinking about preventive diplomacy would argue that, at relatively low levels of tension, it is appropriate to focus primarily upon persuasion and diplomatic engagement, and that the timing, the exercise of leadership, the leverage available and the application of multi-faceted action determine the success or failure of an intervention. These factors all aim to create a political process of dispute resolution. The case studies, however, suggest that success depends upon *both* the creation of a viable political process that offers an alternative to violence, *and* the removal of opportunities to reject that process. In fact, the removal of opportunities to engage in rebellion was the decisive factor explaining the minority group's preferences and actions in each case.

Drawing upon the findings of the case studies, I proposed a theory of multidimensional prevention that, by capturing the above requirement to provide alternatives to violence and to remove opportunities to engage in armed struggle, offers a much fuller and more accurate explanation of prevention success or failure. In addition, policy prescriptions drawn from this theory have a much broader and richer foundation from which to draw their recommendations. The theory of multidimensional prevention, by considering both the importance of the creation of a political process, and the removal

of opportunities to reject that process, improves upon the current paradigm of preventive diplomacy.

An ideal preventive diplomacy strategy will draw upon both regional norms and upon regional enforcement to focus upon creating viable political alternatives to violence, and upon removing opportunities to reject the political process and move forward with armed rebellion. Early intervention will focus not just upon persuading the central government to engage in dialogue, but will also seek to deter outside actors from supporting any potential rebellion by the mobilizing minority. Such a strategy will encompass both coercive and non-coercive measures as it seeks to impact the decision-making of both the central government and the disaffected minority. By capturing these parallel yet distinct processes, a strategy grounded in multidimensional prevention is more firmly on the path to conflict prevention success.

Implications of the Research Findings

These findings generate several implications important for conflict prevention, and, more generally, for the international security system. These implications concern the inherent difficulties in influencing non-state actors, given the characteristics of the current security system and its grounding in the sovereign equality of states. They also concern the importance of regional action, and the desired characteristics of an intervening third party.

Influencing Minority Group Behavior

The case studies suggest that a mobilized minority may not be susceptible to the range of incentives and sanctions available to the third party to induce or compel cooperation. Since the minority group is subordinate to the central government, any action taken by international actors will be filtered through the state. In cases where a disaffected minority is seeking either substantial autonomy or outright independence, their relationship with the central government is most likely lacking in trust. This leads to the problem of “credible commitment”, identified by David Lake and Donald Rothchild¹ as one of the strategic dilemmas that makes it so difficult for minority and majority groups to cooperate. Because the disaffected minority feels vulnerable to the government, their resulting insecurity makes it difficult for them to believe that the government will deliver promised benefits on a consistent basis over time. Third party efforts to offer positive incentives, therefore, may be compromised by the minority group’s inability to trust the government. Further, it may not be possible to threaten sanctions against a minority group that do not affect the state at large. The most obvious threat a third party could make would be to withdraw, leaving the minority group on their own in negotiations (or lack thereof) with the government. This may not be sufficient to force the minority to comply, particularly if they feel they possess alternative means to better provide for their group.

¹ David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, “Spreading Fear: The Genesis of Transnational Ethnic Conflict” in *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion and Escalation*, David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, eds. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 3-32.

Thus, because offers of positive inducements and threats of sanctions against minority groups must be filtered through the state, neither may be credible. This weakens third party leverage against the minority group considerably. Since it isn't possible to simply create a political process and use available incentives and sanctions to persuade the minority group to cooperate with this process, it is necessary to take the additional step of removing opportunities to reject the political process. In all three case studies, it was the lack of opportunity to reject the political process that brought the minority group to the negotiating table.

An equally important and related point deals with the focus of the current system of international security. The current system, based upon the order created at Westphalia, places respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity at the heart of global stability. While the Westphalian system has been under attack in recent years through increasing willingness to intervene militarily in internal conflicts, and indeed may not be fully compatible with a global economy and increasing economic integration, it remains the organizing principle of international relations. The case studies indicate that, unfortunately, protecting the interests of mobilized minorities may not be compatible with supporting this system, which seems to assume, by default, that the state is always right, unless they rise to the level of abuse sufficient to trigger an intervention through the "responsibility to protect". If international actors continue to insist upon the supremacy of the central government, and the subordination of local and regional governments to the state, it may not be possible for the minority groups to achieve even their most basic

objectives through the political process. In these cases, they may accept autonomy only if independence is not an option.

Regional Action

The case studies strongly support the critical importance of the engagement of regional actors. The engagement of regional actors was most often the most important factor in removing opportunities for the minority group to pursue rebellion. This engagement, therefore, was at the heart of the minority group's decision on whether to accept the political process being presented by the third party, or to pursue other means to achieve their objectives. Indeed, the most successful cases exercised great power leadership in support of regional actors, creating a powerful deterrent against pursuing a unilateral military option.

Regional norms play an important role in regional action. In fact, regional norms play the most powerful role in creating a legitimate political process. A process that is grounded in norms that have been embraced by the community has increased legitimacy, therefore it enjoys increased incentives for compliance and cooperation. In particular, the ability of the OSCE to use European norms as a benchmark for both the Ukrainian and Estonian governments made it possible to establish that each was deserving of Western political and financial support. This support both made it easier for these two governments to cooperate, and made it more difficult for Russia to wield negative influence. The focus on norms also shields the third party, to some degree, from charges

of bias by providing clear and objective criteria by which to judge the state's compliance with community standards for democratic governance.

The Third Party

The cases suggest that different third parties are ideally suited for the action needed to successfully contain or prevent violent internal conflict. Multidimensional prevention argues that, rather than focusing on persuasive, non-coercive measures at low levels of tension, and on coercive measures at higher levels of tension, it is necessary to devote attention to both coercive and non-coercive measures at both low and high levels of tension.

Regional organizations are the best third party for this task, since they reflect the values and interests of their member states, and therefore enjoy enhanced legitimacy and the support of major actors. They are also ideal because they can be structured, as is the OSCE, to allow for fairly intrusive action to monitor member states' compliance with regional norms governing domestic affairs, without surrendering control and authority to actors external to the region. Their mandate often involves consistent and persistent engagement over time, which makes it possible to be involved in any potential dispute very early, before tensions have substantially escalated. Additionally, since states are unlikely on their own to be substantively involved in their neighbors' domestic affairs, engagement through regional organizations may be the only way to resolve problems before they emerge and become sufficiently serious to warrant outside interest.

Regional organizations may need, however, to work together in a coordinated fashion to achieve the best results, as different kinds of organizations are inherently better suited to different tasks. It would seem, for example, to make sense to assign responsibility for coercive and non-coercive action to different actors. Coercive measures include articulating standards, and creating the capacity for enforcing those standards. The ideal third party to engage in these activities is a regional security organization. These organizations are able to craft clear standards as a legitimate basis for evaluating state behavior, and are able to generate an enforcement capability in support of these standards. Non-coercive measures include the articulation of human rights and other norms. The ideal third party to engage in these activities is a regional norms-based organization. Since these organizations generally operate on a consensus basis, they are able to persuade states to undertake action that is ultimately conducive to domestic and regional security. This focus on consensus and voluntary cooperation, however, weakens the organization's ability to put together the enforcement capability necessary to craft a credible deterrent to violating standards of behavior.

Areas for Further Research

These three points clarify the challenges ahead in crafting a workable system of conflict prevention. First, it is imperative that the international community develop more effective mechanisms to influence minority group behavior. This is closely connected to the second challenge, the need to overcome the limitations of the Westphalian system.

Because our current system of international security sees sovereign equality as the basis for order and stability, the interests of the state are valued more highly than the

interests of domestic groups in most cases. The debate over humanitarian intervention questions the circumstances under which it is appropriate to limit state sovereignty. The emerging consensus, reflected in the debate over the “responsibility to protect”, is that only serious infractions of human rights warrant a military intervention;² all other violations should be subject to more limited efforts to influence state behavior through the use of incentives and sanctions.

This system does help ensure that all states, big or small, weak or powerful, will enjoy sovereign equality, and therefore makes it easier for states to engage in voluntary cooperation on human rights and governance issues since they know they will not be forced to undertake action they deem not in their national interest. In this way, maintaining a system of state sovereignty that can only be limited in exceptional circumstances contributes to international stability. This system, however, seriously constrains the international community’s ability to engage in effective conflict prevention, particularly that sub-set known as preventive diplomacy, in two ways.

First, this system allows states to manage most of their internal affairs without serious international ramifications. Unless domestic conflicts rise to a level where outside parties gain an interest in resolving the dispute, it is unlikely that anyone will question the state’s actions. This makes it more difficult to intervene early, before tensions have significantly escalated and positions have hardened. Second, because the system values the interests of states more than the interests of individuals, any benefits

² International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect*, (Ottawa, ON, Canada: International Development Research Centre, 2001).

offered to minority groups for cooperation will be funneled through the state. Given the vulnerability and insecurity of disaffected minority groups, and their subsequent inability to trust the government, this is a serious shortcoming.

It is therefore imperative that the international security system develop mechanisms that allow for more influence over minority groups and other sub-state actors. If the third party's leverage is severely compromised because the minority group does not find offers of benefits credible, given their inability to trust the state through which the benefits would be channeled, they may be willing to call the international community's bluff with respect to any threatened sanctions. If they have any opportunity, however limited, to secure their interests outside of the process advocated by the third party, taking that path may be much more beneficial than pursuing negotiations that have limited capacity to ultimately address the group's security and well-being.

In the three case studies, these challenges were overcome because of the characteristics of the European security system. Because member states have, to a certain degree, agreed in advance to allow the OSCE to be involved in any potential dispute, through the office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the regional security system in Europe suffers less from the constraints of the Westphalian system. All member states have agreed that human rights issues, especially those involving national minorities, are not a matter of domestic jurisdiction, but a matter of regional security that must be dealt with openly and collaboratively by the community.

In addition, those rebelling minority groups that have ethnic kin in neighboring states may be influenced through more traditional diplomatic channels due to the high level of interdependence among European states. In all three case studies, influencing Russia was key to influencing the rebelling minority.

This leads to two serious questions that must be addressed through further research and analysis. First, given the high levels of interdependence in Europe, and the clear limitations on state sovereignty created through European integration, it may be the case that Europe is unique in its ability to effectively deal with internal conflict. It may be the case that no other regional security system possesses the institutional or politico-cultural capacity to engage in substantive, long-term engagement in the internal affairs of its members. More work needs to be done to identify those characteristics of the European system that positively contribute to success in conflict prevention, in order to determine how, if it is possible to do so, to replicate this in other areas of the world.

Second, all three of the cases covered in this study involved a great power that acted, to some degree, as protector for its ethnic kin mobilizing in neighboring states. Whether through concerted effort, as in Estonia, or practically by accident, as in Ukraine, the ability of the international community to influence Russia's decision not to support an armed rebellion was key in determining whether or not the minority would agree to accept the political process created by the OSCE. More work needs to be done to determine how the international community might remove opportunities to use violence

in cases where the capacity to rebel does not rely upon the patronage of a recognized state, vulnerable as that state is to diplomatic pressure by the community.

The findings of this study point to the importance of engaging in a multidimensional preventive strategy to effectively impact both the government and the disaffected minority in cases of internal conflict in order to prevent the outbreak of violence. Drawing upon the lessons of the case studies, I was able to identify *what* needs to be done to strengthen the current approach to preventive diplomacy. Addressing the question of the replicability of the European security system, and clarifying how it may be possible to influence sub-state actors who do not rely on ethnic kin patronage in neighboring states for resources to fuel their rebellion, will go a long way toward establishing *how* this may be put into practice on a global scale.

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