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**RUSSIA'S APPROACH
TO THE CONFLICTS IN KOSOVO AND CYPRUS:
A COMPARISON STUDY
(PROCEEDINGS)**

INTRODUCTION

It is obvious that the phenomena of ethnic conflicts and states with limited diplomatic recognition as their consequence have a strong effect on the changing world. Russia being permanent member of the UN Security Council and a state aspiring to strengthen its position on the world, to become one of the global powers cannot abstain from processes of conflict management seeing that ethnopolitical and secure issues of international and regional level cannot be positively resolved without it. Conflicts in Serbia and Cyprus are among the nodal issues of the world politics because of concerns of Russia, the USA, the EU coming across in them and, thus, defining the global atmosphere of peace-keeping, conflict settlement and international security configuration in general. Besides, as a target of Russian foreign policy the Balkan region and the Eastern Mediterranean are deliberately combined into a joint political and geographic constant in the research, as both regions, along with the Black Sea Straits and the Adriatic, could serve a security buffer for Russia after the USSR collapse. Therefore, stability in these areas define stability around Russian borders. Also Russia's potential influence in the regions could redress its losses of territories and sea outlets.

The main emphasis of this paper is to put on correlation of Russian settlement principles concept of two ongoing acute European conflicts as well as its approaches to "The Kosovo Republic" and "The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" statuses. Russia's stands towards Kosovo and Cyprus are structured and paralleled with a set

of aspects in order to characterize Russia's approach to the regional issues and helps to estimate general peculiarities of the Russian foreign policy regarding conflict settlement, non-recognized states, international law viability, the UN prospective, international security. This structural analysis reveals general lines in Russian positions towards both conflicts and helps to define Russia's global goals.

THE CONFLICTS IN KOSOVO AND CYPRUS: THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Both of these situations seem to have no parallels at first glance, but it is not like that, though each conflict is unique. On closer examination it is obvious, that Kosovo and Cyprus are ethnopolitical conflicts without strongly marked religious overtone in spite of parties random confessions. Further, the comparison is based on emphasizing of several factors groups: ethnohistoric backgrounds, external aspects and international legal aspects of conflicts development and de facto states generation.

The first group of the aspects is presented by ethnohistoric backgrounds and triggering effects of both conflicts. Doubtless, they appeared at various stages.

The origins of Kosovo and Cyprus conflicts stretch back to the Turkish invasion. The Ottoman Empire became multiconfessional due to its numerous conquests and formed the system of millets – confessional groups where non-Muslims were subjected to their religious leader. This fact led to mutual subtraction of the conflict parties in future. On the one hand it produced tolerance to non-Muslims at the Ottoman territory, on the other – both the Cypriot and the Serbian Orthodox Churches became the centers of their unification, further individualization and, therefore mutual estrangement with the Muslim Cypriot Turks and the Muslim Kosovars correspondingly.

Moreover, as a result of the Turkish conquest Turks started migration from the mainland to Cyprus, Serbs were leaving Kosovo, and the Albanians already turned to Islam began inhabitation of the left territories.

There is a specific concern about self-determination of conflict parties. For example, both Serbs and Albanians turn to historic and ethnic right for Kosovo lands. The former insist that they appeared there in the 4th century and became dominating nation, and the Albanians came in the 18th century with Ottoman reinforcement¹. The latter believe that they are descendants of Illirians – ancient people lived in Kosovo before Slavs moved there². Thus, history has become a hostage of politics and an instrument of rights for territory possession political proof. It is also the base of national self-determination and a cornerstone of national identity. The so called national myths accompanying references to historic right for territory are among main reasons of interethnic irreconcilable contradictions.

At the same time Greek Cypriots and Turk Cypriots do not refer to similar rights as people of Kosovo do. It is obvious for everyone that Hellenes settled on the island, significantly influenced its history and constituted ethnic majority much earlier than Turks started their expansion from the mainland. As distinct from the Kosovo issue none of them claim for a historic keynote of resettlement period. Though, Greeks has always considered themselves Antiquity and Byzantine legatees, the latter account Cyprus as the part of the Ottoman heritage³. The British colonization started in 1878 stimulated both communities different self-identity due to the British policy informally interpreted as the Roman “divide et impera”. London trying to combine imperialistic intentions with its vision of democracy, liberalism and justice set separated education and local authority, Cypriot Greeks were influenced by ideas of unification with Greece (the so-called “enosis”) brought with its system of education, and soon that led to a split between two self-identified communities and future conflict generation.

¹ Malcolm N. Kosovo: A Short History. – New York. 1998. P.34-37

² Vickers M. Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo. - New York.1998. P.7

³ Bahcheli T. Greek-Turkish Relations since 1955. - Westview Press. 1990. P.21.

The next point is about mutual dislike generation. Despite the Turks were conquerors at Cyprus they quite peacefully coexisted with the Greeks for more than 300 years. Their cultures cross fertilized (reach folklore legacy is one of the testimonies), intermarriages were usual and even bi-confession experience took place. They had social contradictions, but not ethnic or religious. Nevertheless, the Greeks and the Turks didn't become assimilated and didn't generate the joint Cypriot identity⁴. This peaceful intercommunal relations finally ended when supporters of Greece and Cyprus unification took up arms in 1955. At once Kosovan Albanians started to rise up an idea of territories populated by Albanians integration already in 19th century, struggling with Ottomans and later with Serbs⁵.

Thus, both conflicts were nourished by the irredentist thoughts. "The Great Serbia" and panserbism was response to the longtime Turkish invasion and re-emerged after Yugoslavia collapsed. "The Great Albania" was an expression of struggle with the Ottoman Empire and afterwards turned to resistance of the Serbian nationalism. The idea of "enosis", meaning unification of Greek populated territories, appeared in 1821 when Greece reached its sovereignty from the Porte. Panturkism in Cyprus revealed as a reaction to "enosis", when the Turk Cypriots started anxiousness about their safety.

These thoughts and plans also became speculative articles of central authorities. For example, when Cyprus was under the British colonization London seriously contemplated of settling naval bases on the Greek territories in return of "enosis". The Yugoslavian dictator I. Tito in his turn striving to create The Balkanian federation versus the USSR was ready to yield Kosovo to Albania in return of its participation in it.

⁴ Бредихин О.Н. Кипрский конфликт: генезис и основные этапы развития. Диссертация на соискание ученой степени кандидата исторических наук. – М. 2006. С.24.

⁵ Смирнова Н. Конфликт в Косово как часть «албанского вопроса» // Косово: международные аспекты кризиса / Под ред. Д. Тренина и Е. Степановой. - М. 1999. С.80.

Further, conflicts in Kosovo and in Cyprus were accompanied by the problem of safety absence as a threat to certain ethnic groups existence. Of course, people were compelled to use violence against violence when their families were under hazard. Consequently, the Turk Cypriots started struggling with the Greek Cypriots because the former just ignored their right to live on independent island. In order to protect the Turk Cypriot community interests Turkey brought its troops to Cyprus.

The problem of security is closely related to migration flows issue – a distinctive aspect of both conflicts. Migration pressure can increase with unfavourable situation, threat of armed encounter and genocide. Problem of refugees and forced migrant issue saving their lives, having no warranty of safety and no living conditions, staying in hostile atmosphere of interethnic discord and negative phycho-emotional climate, is one of the key characteristics of both conflicts. At the same time migration was also exploited by the ethnic groups as an instrument to strengthen their positions. For example, the Turks actively moved to Cyprus from the mainland after the Ottoman invasion. Moreover, both Cypriot communities became almost homogeneous as a result of radical groupings actions intimidating the locals and the Turkish occupation in 1974. Because of this circumstance the Greeks settled down in the southern part of the island, the Turks – in the northern, though before they all lived mixed. After the events of 1974 the mainland the Turks were coming to the northern part of Cyprus from the mainland and obtained left Greek properties. By the way, these people – the new inhabitants – significantly assisted the further processes of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus formation⁶.

The similar situation was in Kosovo. Under pressure of the Ottomans and then of the Kosovar radicals and authorities the Serbs were leaving their homes and lands till the very 2008 for safer parts of Serbia (Yugoslavia). Then they were rapidly

⁶ Stephen M. The Cyprus Question. A Concise Guide to the History, Politics and Law of the Cyprus Question. – London. 2000. P.49.

substituted by the Albanians tending to fortify their positions in Kosovo as a larger ethnic group.

A distinction comes out here, that is artificially formed ethnic homogeneity in Cyprus became a guarantee of ethnic minorities absence whose rights could have been violated by local authorities. At the meantime there are still the Serbian enclaves in Kosovo staying isolated and facing their rights violation.

The next common denominator is a high state involvement into the ethnic groups contradictions and also existence of legally registered politicized ethnic partition into republics and autonomous territories in Yugoslavia and communities in Cyprus. This fact led to ethnic dissociation and ability to pursue certain policy.

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia granted Kosovo a status of an autonomous region, which extended freedom of centrifugal trends for the Kosovars and made them feel closer to independence. To curb their ambitions these rights were taken from them in 1990 and as result this led to conflict aggravation between the Albanians and the central authorities. The Kosovar Albanian civil servants quitted their jobs in state government bodies to demonstrate their protest or were forced to do it. Moreover, Kosovars gained prohibitions to use their language in education and mass media. As a result they generated their own parallel state bodies and education system. Kosovo faced diarchy followed by an illegal Albanian referendum, and the Kosovars voted for independence. As a result Belgrade had to use force to reintegrate the Yugoslavian territory and to protect the Serbs in Kosovo.

Cyprus in its turn was granted a constitution in 1960, which was elaborated by Britain, Greece and Turkey. The document was the legal acknowledgement of two communities existence and was aimed to balance them, but de facto it opposed one community to another and artificially separated them. Both ethnic groups perceived the constitution as an instrument imposing each other own interests. The Turks were afraid that the Greek majority in the state bodies would become a total domination, and the Greeks were anxious about a possibility of the Turkish enclaves emergence, moreover, they didn't want to recognize the Turkish right equal to theirs. The very first intercommunal collision made the Turks leave their positions in state

bodies, and as a result, power appeared to be just in hands of the Greeks tending to fix the situation de jure. The Cypriot Turks set up their own alternative state bodies and moved to the enclaves. Thus, both conflicts can be considered ethnopolitical due to the fact that all the parties explicitly contended for political status.

In that vein we can also underline one more peculiarity of both conflicts: that is active politicization of ethnic processes. For instance, the very ethnic principle became the base for political life organization in Kosovo⁷. Also severe stages of both conflicts were provoked and provided with local terrorist groups activities (“The Kosovo Liberation Army”, “Volkan”, “The Tigers of Arcan”, “The National Organization of the Cypriot Struggle EOKA”, etc.). For instance, many Turkish families had to leave their homes either chased by the Greek Cypriot “EOKA”, or forced by the Turk Cypriot “Volkan”. Extremists from all parties implemented active propaganda and intimidation among their fellowmen who dared to stay in their houses or support intercommunal peace.

“The Kosovo Liberation Army” became the most powerful political grouping in Kosovo in the 90s as the influence of moderate parties was almost nullified and bloody nature of the conflict was defined as a result. The main goal of the Army was to make life of Kosovan Serbs intolerable, so they were killing civilians and destroying their homes and sanctuaries⁸. Activity of the Serbian “Tigers of Arcan” towards civilian Kosovars was equally cruel.

Thus, the trigger effects of the Cypriot and Kosovo conflicts are, first, in shortfall policy of authorities, that provoked and could not foresee interethnic contradictions emergence, and, secondly, in violent activities of radical ethnic groupings. Moreover, severe stages of these conflicts generally started with abuse of the Kosovars’ and the Turk Cypriots’ rights by the Serbian and the Greek Cypriot

⁷ Мартынова М.Ю. Этнический фактор в судьбе Косово / Косово: прошлое, настоящее, будущее. Под ред. С.А.Романенко Б.А.Шмелева. – СПб. 2012. С.82.

⁸ Гуськова Е.Ю. Кризис в Косово. История и современность // Новая и новейшая история. 1999. №5. С.42.

authorities correspondingly. As a result these efforts led to counter measures against civilians.

Also we can underline that there were distinct periods of segregation from metropolies accompanied by armed encounters before declaration of independence by Kosovo (1991-2008) and The Northern Cyprus (1964-1983).

Crucial distinction between the Kosovo and Cypriot cases is in underlying cause of a split between two ethnic groups, their separation and further de facto states emergence. The reasons for the first conflict were the Albanian growing self-identity and the Serbian mentality. Kosovo is the Holy Land for Serbians, where they shed their blood for independence from the Ottomans, where the Serbian nationhood and spiritual culture arose, where their national historic memory is being kept. For Albanians Kosovo is land where their identity was born and where they also struggled for independence. The conflict lies in contradiction between growing national self-identity and a wish to protect territorial integrity. In other words, declaration of independence was a goal in itself for the Albanians. No wonder that this issue is called “territorial conflict of identities”⁹. In case of Cyprus the main cause of Turk Cypriot community segregation and further Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus emergence was to provide its security and unwillingness to become part of Greece. The Turk Cypriot situation is similar with the Kosovo Serbian one. In an attempt to implement right to self-determination the Greek Cypriots and the Kosovars were not planning to take into account the same right of the other ethnic groups, that lived with them on the same territory.

The second group of factors for comparison is made of common law and international law aspects of the conflicts.

Initially, Turk Cypriots had equal rights with Greek Cypriots according to the Constitution of 1960. Kosovars, in their turn, had also quite a long period of privileged status of an autonomous region equal to the other Yugoslavian republics within federation.

⁹ Kostovicova D. Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space. – New York. 2012

Secondly, right to self-determination over principals of territorial integrity and inviolability of borders domination became the common legal platform for both conflicts.

Thirdly, there were several efforts of secession in both cases. “The Turkish Federative Cypriot State” was declared in 1975 and then Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus supported by Ankara emerged on its base in 1983 in order to strengthen the Turk Cypriots community negotiation positions. The Kosovars held a referendum in 1991, declared their independence from Yugoslavia and even elected president and parliament. Serbia partially controlled this territory, though it was entirely lost after the second declaration of independence in 2008.

Fourthly, in both cases declaration of independence was significantly supported externally: by Turkey in Cyprus conflict and by the USA, the EU and NATO in the Kosovo issue. Turkey used its fixed in Cypriot constitution guarantor right to protect the Turk Cypriot community and brought troops to Cyprus. Today Turkey is the single UN-member that recognizes The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and its strong financial supporter as the republic is isolated and its integration into world economic system is impeded¹⁰. Kosovo, in its turn, has gained its pseudo independence with a significant endorsement from the USA and the EU and as a result of western-minded “Ahtisaari Plan”, according to which proposed that “the only viable option for Kosovo is independence, to be supervised for an initial period by the international community”¹¹

Next, a very important thing is that both emerged de facto states possess almost all necessary state characteristics: territories, population, de facto sovereignty, working executive and legislative powers, educational and health

¹⁰ Güray E. The Economy of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus / Isolated Part of Cyprus. Ed. by S.Tkachenko & M.Özsağlam. – St.-Petersburg, 2011. P.80.

¹¹ Letter dated 26 March 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council. Report of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Kosovo’s future status // URL: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/272/23/PDF/N0727223.pdf?OpenElement>

systems, security agencies. Both The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and The Kosovo Republic have positive sovereignty, that means practical self-sufficiency. Kosovo also possesses negative sovereignty because it is acknowledged by more than a half of the UN members, and it makes it de facto partially recognized state, while Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is recognized only by Turkey. This fact also allows us to put Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to the group of partially recognized states. Meanwhile, availability of negative sovereignty is disputable and relative. The very presence of Turkish troops in Cyprus and NATO forces in Kosovo, as well as strong external endorsement makes both de facto states constrained of external intervention and not having entire power on their territories.

Besides, we should also underline that both The Kosovo Republic and The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are relatively stable world political actors. Kosovo has diplomatic relations with states that recognized them, it is a member of some international organizations (such as The World Bank, The International Monetary Fund, The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization etc.)¹². The Northern Cyprus implements political, economic, cultural, trading ties with various actors and interstates regions. For instance, there are its representational offices in Azerbaidjan, Belgium, Great Britain, the UAE, Pakistan and the USA. Turk Cypriot authorities cultivate contacts with the EU, The Council of Europe, The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (having a special status of supervisor in it). There is an office of the Turk Cypriot chamber of commerce in Brussels, and embassy representative offices of Germany, Australia, Great Britain and the USA are opened in the North Cyprus¹³.

Finally, there are complicated systems of conflict settlement including international organizations, regional and outer regional states and powers around the Kosovo and Cyprus conflicts.

¹² Kosova. Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization. // URL: <http://www.unpo.org/members/7889>

¹³ Tkachenko S. The TRNC and the Other States with Limited Recognition: Comparative Analysis / Isolated Part of Cyprus. Ed. by S.Tkachenko & M.Özsağlam. – St.-Petersburg. 2011. P.34.

The clue distinctions within the second group of factors are the following.

First, the Kosovo case has become a de facto precedent for independence declaration by the South Caucasian republics (South Ossetia and Abkhazia) in 2008, and also a precedent of wide-spread recognition of de facto state of such a type (besides Palestine). The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus declaration in 1983 in its turn didn't result into anything similar, moreover, it has no obvious perspectives of it. On the other hand, The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus has more chances to reunite with The Cyprus Republic than Kosovo does with Serbia.

Secondly, the issue is that the Kosovo case is nation self-determination and territory self-determination, the Albanians were claiming for the certain territory with stable limits, whilst the Cypriot Turks were not initially intended to obtain independence. The Northern Cyprus was created artificially and Cyprus was segregated as a result of the Turkish invasion in 1974, which means just territory self-determination.

The third group of comparison aspects is made up of external factors.

First of all, it is needed to underline that wide outer engagement can be explained by special geopolitical significance of both the Balkan and The Eastern Mediterranean regions. Cyprus is situated on a crossroad of three continents, it is a communication center and a corridor to the Middle East and a so-called "NATO's unsinkable aircraft carrier" considering British naval bases on its territory. It has always been thriving and a coveted prize for conquerors such as Mycenaeans, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Romans, Byzantians, Venetians, French, Turks, Brits)¹⁴. Indeed, the geopolitical significance of the island is in large excess over its quite moderate size.

The Balkan region, in its turn, has always been unstable and explosive. Its geopolitical significance can't be overestimated and was marked by Z. Brzeziński, H. Mackinder etc. The simmering conflict in this region poses a risk the entire Europe. Moreover, it is one of the NATO expansion stages on its way to Russian

¹⁴ Касулидис И. Кипр на перекрёстке трёх континентов. // Международная жизнь. 2001. №11. С.59.

borders, whilst the region has also been inside of Russian interests because of huge Orthodox population in it. Besides, the USA engagement can also be explained by two reasons. First, Serbs have historically been traditional allies of Russia and their deliberate weakening can also weaken Russian positions in the Balkans (due to the ongoing geopolitical competition between Russia and the USA). Secondly, endorsing Albanian Muslims the USA presumably planned to obtain energy stability and loyalty of Muslims all over the world.

Therefore, external actors can't abstain of involvement into these conflicts management. That is why a wide range of them is engaged. Besides, both de facto states emerged as results of the conflicts are viable due to strong external support.

Similarity of both cases is also revealed in western double standards referring fundamental principles of international law, new states emergence and separatism, as well as prejudice to conflict parties and using conflicts as instruments of own goals achievement. For instance, Kosovars were openly sustained by NATO and the EU, that provided them with weapons, finance etc., ignored the UN Security Council resolutions necessity, dissembling Kosovo Serbs' rights violation and demonstrating disrespect for Serbia's territorial integrity. Besides, The Kosovo Republic emergence support is an example of the international law situational explanation, whilst The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is not recognized and the Turk Cypriot self-determination right is ignored by international community member that recognize Kosovo. Moreover, Cyprus issue is usually exploited by the EU as an instrument of pressure exertion on Turkey in various cases including its accession. Also, both conflicts reveal and fortify contradictions towards security and general conflicts issues between Russia and the West.

Both conflicts were accompanied by external military intervention: by NATO and Turkey correspondingly. Though, Turkey used its legal right by the Cypriot constitution to protect the Turk Cypriot community, and NATO crudely violated international law having ignored the necessity of the Security Council resolution and being biased towards the conflict parties.

Further, considering the fact that both conflicts are between Orthodox Christians and Muslims, it negatively effects relations between these two confessions in the entire world, creating hostile stereotypes and igniting discord.

Defining differences within the third group of aspects are the following.

First are the reasons for conflict internationalization. Kosovo conflict was internationalized in 1997 for two reasons. First reason was a wish of the USA to change the political situation in the Balkans and to put an end to Slobodan Miloshević's autocratic regime. Besides, Belgrade's position on the world arena was very vulnerable. Second reason was a special and biased pleading of Yugoslavian events by the West, that attracted attention of the international community so that it couldn't stay aside anymore. As a result Contact group on the former Yugoslavia joined the settlement as well as the EU, OSCE and NATO. The Cyprus conflict, in its turn, was internationalized due to inner initiative, because the Cypriot president Makarios didn't want to settle conflict limitedly with NATO imposed assistance, but aspired to include the USSR, the Nonaligned Movement and ex-colonies into the process within the UN.

Secondly, Cyprus conflict is characterized by so called guarantor-states involvement: Greece, Turkey, the UK. These actors are providing security of Cypriot communities and law supremacy according to the constitution. Meanwhile, there are no guarantors in Kosovo, and when Albanian rights are protected by NATO troops and the EU structures, Serbian ones are practically not.

Third are the consequences of interventions. The events in Kosovo in 1999 didn't prevent humanitarian collapse, it only aggravated it due to strong migration pressure, and Serbian rights are still crudely violated. The Cyprus case, in its turn, is an example of positive segregation and homogenization of conflicting communities and ethnic clashes reduction (this was the effect of Turkish invasion in 1974 and the UN security zone communal contacts minimization).

The detailed review reveals and asserts that both conflicts and de facto states have much in common. The basic universal features are the following: different understanding by parties of their historical position, consequence of the post-

Ottoman heritage political arrangement, strong politicization of the ethnic processes and high-level state engagement, serious irredentist ideas influence, powerful two-way migration pressure, forceful external influence, military interventions, acute refugees problems, economic isolation of the Cypriot Turks and the Kosovan Serbs, hefty geopolitical significance of both territories etc. In their turn the clue distinctions between the Kosovo and Cyprus issues are in their present state: the former is ongoing, the latter is frozen.

Thus, the analysis proves that both conflicts and can be considered within a system of regional security and economic development as very similar and claiming a respective consistent approach on a settlement way that in its turn will lead to stability in the Mediterranean. Moreover, The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and The Kosovo Republic as political entities generated during the conflicts can be called states with limited recognition that means political formations claiming for sovereign state status, having certain amount of international activity, unrecognized or partially recognized by the UN members, having relatively effective governance system and absolutely or almost completely controlling their territories.

REASONS OF RUSSIA'S CONCERN

Undoubtedly, both acting and wannabe global powers and power poles base their positions upon national and geopolitical interests while getting involved into conflict settlement and management, where national security issues are the main priorities. Russian approaches are also generated according to external environment challenges, that include current world order, geopolitical conjuncture, level of regional and international security, system game rules etc. Moreover, Russia's involvement into the Kosovo and Cyprus cases settlement are the following.

The UN Security Council permanent membership

Russia cannot abstain from conflict settlement and management due to the process of the Security Council functioning.

Both the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean are the extension of the so called “arc of instability”, effecting security system nearby the very Russian borders.

This “arc” is a part of an axis including Central Asia, the Caucasus and Asia Minor where Russian national interests were historically located. Any power balance change in this axis inevitably leads to alteration in its other parts. At the same time states claiming world hegemony, especially the USA, consider the Balkans as an opportunity to control political and economic processes in Central and South-East Europe as well as to keep western and southern Russian borders in constant tension. Z. Brzezinsky noted in his “Grand Chessboard” that the Balkan region was a potential geopolitical object of claims for European domination, that is why this area provides an opportunity to effect European security in general¹⁵. Within the conditions of the Cold War the Balkans used to be a buffer zone between two power poles, and when this world order collapsed the region became a vacuum zone volatile due to severe interethnic conflicts in the post-Yugoslavian space. Moreover, the correlation of power balance in the triangle “Balkans-Cyprus-Turkey” has a great effect on stability around southern and south-eastern Russian borders as Russia lost huge territories and warm sea outlets after the USSR collapse. These losses could be compensated by fortifying Russia’s positions in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean¹⁶. Moreover, these areas can potentially become a reason for confrontation between Russia and the West in the situation of status struggle for influence.

Self-proclaimed states are potential sources of terrorism from a point of the Russian national security view.

¹⁵ Бжезинский З. Великая шахматная доска. Господство Америки и его геостратегические императивы. – М. 1998. С.52.

¹⁶ Моро Г.И. Дезинтеграционные процессы в Балканском регионе в контексте обеспечения безопасности России. Автореферат диссертации на соискание ученой степени кандидата политических наук. – М. 2001 // URL: <http://www.dissercat.com/content/dezintegratsionnye-protsessy-v-balkanskom-regione-v-kontekste-obespecheniya-bezopasnosti-ros>.

Kosovo is in the center of the so-called “golden crescent” connecting Afghanistan and Pakistan with the European drug market¹⁷. Its village Veliky-Tyrnovac is one of the biggest drug-dealing centers in Europe. It is well known that drug trade is closely connected with criminal and terroristic organizations. There is also a reliable fact (once officially proved by a former president of Kosovo I. Rougova) that Al-Qaeda members were training inside the Kosovo territory in the mid 2000s¹⁸. Regarding Cyprus according to some sources (but not proved officially) it is also known that commercial banks at the territory of the Northern Cyprus are used as one of the funding sources for Chechen terrorist groups as these banks are not controlled internationally. Even a little likelihood of being connected with terroristic activity is not groundless due to the fact of not being subjected to international law and related to the so-called “grey area” of the global politics¹⁹.

One of the latest evidence was recently produced in the Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo in 2017. It was stated that “Violent extremism, radicalization and terrorism continued to pose a threat to security in Kosovo and the region. In November, the authorities apprehended 19 persons suspected of planning terrorist attacks in Kosovo and the region, under the direction of Kosovo militants fighting with the Islamic State. A range of weapons and explosives were confiscated in the course of the arrests. On 30 November, the Court of Appeals confirmed the conviction of nine imams accused of recruiting 70 persons to support the Islamic State in the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. Sentences ranged from 4 to 18 years. In December, two

¹⁷ Яшлавский А.Э. Косово: между Западом, исламом и «Великой Албанией» // Мировая экономика и международные отношения. 2009. №3. С.32-33

¹⁸ Язькова А.А. Процессы трансформации НАТО и балканские кризисы // Актуальные проблемы Европы. – 2004. - №4. – с.6

¹⁹ Добронравин Н.А. Непризнанные государства в «серой зоне»: основы выживания и правила суверенизации. – СПб, 2011. – 56 с.

individuals from Kosovo were arrested by the Belgian authorities for suspected participation in terrorist activities linked to the Islamic State.”²⁰

Moreover, ethnic nationalism has been producing ground for terrorist activity historically (let us recollect the Kosovo-Serbian “Tigers of Arcan”, the Greek Cypriot “EOKA”, the Kosovo-Albanian “Kosovo Liberation Army”, the Turk Cypriot “Turkish Resistance Organization”). Also being a potential source of terrorism does not exclude the possibility of ties with international terrorist organizations.

Settling and managing these conflicts Russia tackles the chance to improve and to consolidate its political weight and significance on the world arena, as well as the UN authority, its unique legitimacy and central coordinating role as the key organization in charge of regulating international relations.

According to “The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation” the UN and its Security Council must be the center of all international matters reconciliation and settlement²¹. This role must be strengthened, though we know it declines and practically is being ignored often. As Russia sees the UN as universal and key instrument to solve international problems, and it needs drawing of attention and strong support to restore the order. Besides, taking active part in conflict resolution and peacekeeping helps Russia to integrate into the international community and to enhance prestige.

²⁰ Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. 6 February 2017 // Mode of access: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/032/36/PDF/N1703236.pdf?OpenElement>

²¹Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016) // URL: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6BZ29/content/id/2542248?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_CptlCk6BZ29&_101_INSTANC E_CptlCk6BZ29_languageId=en_GB

Getting involved in the Kosovo and Cyprus conflicts resolution Russia tends to resist NATO's consolidation in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean, thus, impeding unipolar world order settlement.

According to "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation" Moscow is decisively against NATO expansion to the East (to Russian borders) and it strongly supports multipolar world order, which is more legitimate and just from the point of decision-making and international community involvement.

Both conflict situations are important for the purpose of elaboration of universal and flexible approach to political entities such as The Kosovo Republic and The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

The Kosovo Republic and The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are examples of self-proclaimed and de facto independent territorial entities generated unilaterally and ran out of the states de jure retaining rights for these territories control (Serbia and Cyprus correspondingly). Contemporary international law does not provide any certain norms and rules regarding creation of new state, of how it could be recognized to become legally competent member of the international community and how many diplomatic recognitions it should gain to be considered, independent, sovereign and equal. Besides, it is well known that the international law has inner contradictions such as the collision between territorial integrity, inviolability of borders and self-determination right. Russia? In its turn, Russia does not have yet any elaborated strategy of behavior in case of new potentially unrecognized state emergence. This fact is of great importance due to quite a big amount of such political formations around Russian borders in the post-Soviet space. There are at least six of them (Transdnistria, Nagorny Karabakh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, The Lougansk People's Republic, The Donetsk People's Republic), and this fact enables us to consider this phenomenon acute from a point of Russian national interests and security.

Regional presence both in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean is vital considering Russian energy and economic interests targeted on its control over the key European energy pathways.

First of all, as Russian economic system started its revival in the mid 90s thanks to global oil prices increase, its presence in the Balkans gives Moscow an opportunity to tube oil and gas pipelines through the region. Considering the fact that the region is a “crossroad” of European transportation tracks and paths this presence is vital. A struggle for energy pathways diversification between the pro-Russian “South Stream” and the pro-Western “Nabucco” became one more example and evidence of the geopolitical and energy competition in the region. It is also known that the Russian energy company “Gazprom” holds the majority shares of the biggest Serbian oil company “NIS”²².

Regarding Cyprus it is necessary to underline that supporting stability in the Eastern Mediterranean provides Russia an opportunity to increase as an active member of economic relations in this region. For instance, a high-grade deposit of gas was found on the shelf of Cyprus couple of years ago. Being now one of the biggest gas importers to Europe and not gaining any control over a new energy path in future Russia can find itself in a very disadvantageous position. This is why Moscow is interested in winning tender and active participation in this gas field development and therefore it decisively supports the sovereign right of the Cyprus Republic for the gas-field exploration and exploitation in its exclusive economic zone.

Both situations of Russia’s involvement are stipulated by civilizational aspect and an aspiration to help fraternal people.

Russia is a country traditionally ready to extend a helping-hand to those people who need it. It had been cherishing a dream to set free Christians from the Ottoman Empire for a long time and effectively assisted them, including Serbs and Greeks. Even during economically, politically and socially difficult period after the USSR collapse it couldn’t abstain from conflict settlement and scale down its presence in Transdnistria, Caucasus and Central Asia. Moreover, when Yevgeny

²² Сербия. Сотрудничество в газовой сфере // URL:
<http://www.gazprom.ru/about/production/projects/deposits/serbia/>.

Primakov (known for his tough and pragmatic approach to the Russian foreign policy and a “multipolar alternativeness” concept) became a foreign minister in 1996, Russia started gradually turning to a center of attraction for countries that hadn't got along with the USA, from Bosnian Serbs to Iranians²³. Thus, impact on situation in conflict areas could promote Russia's activation in the global order. The Russian policy was becoming multidimensional, its involvement to the processes of international conflict settlement as a mediator was extending, Russia started the search of its position in the world order as a power.

Besides, Russian government has been voluntary contributing \$2 mln to the UN Peacebuilding Fund each year since 2008²⁴. More than 300 Russian citizens take part in the UN peacekeeping missions in Western Sahara, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo,, South Sudan, Cyprus etc. (in general, it participated in 10 of 16 operations in 2016) and its contribution the UN peacekeeping operations in almost \$331 mln per year²⁵.

Moreover, Russia has always been a part of The Pax Christiana and it inherited an idea of an ecumenical Orthodox power from The Byzantine Empire. The idea of The Pax Christiana had transformed into The Pax Rossica, and Russia became a new center of attraction for the entire orthodox world. This tradition turned into the Russian assistance in struggle for independence of Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians etc. This has become Russia's sacral role²⁶. Nowadays religious affiliation plays less important role (and it even can be considered dangerous in this context), but mutual attraction and sympathy still remain in the relations between Slavs, between Orthodox, defining bilateral relation in a certain way. The Balkans are mainly area

²³ Пушков А. От «доктрины Козырева» - к «доктрине Примакова» // Независимая газета. 24 октября. 1997.

²⁴ The UN Peacebuilding Fund <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/PB000>

²⁵ ОБЗОР МИД РОССИИ. ВНЕШНЕПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ И ДИПЛОМАТИЧЕСКАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ В 2016 ГОДУ <http://www.mid.ru/ru/activity/review>

²⁶ Палеолог М., Штоль В. Православная церковь и истоки ирредентизма в Восточной и Юго-Восточной Европе // Обозреватель-Observer. – 2013. - №7. – с.9

of Slavic states, Serbs are Orthodox as well. Greek Cypriots are Orthodox Christians too.

This fact is also confirmed in the Foreign Policy Concept, as it is stated about necessity of developing inter-state cultural and humanitarian ties between Slavic nations²⁷.

PATTERNS OF RUSSIA'S INVOLVEMENT

Both stances towards particular conflicts are structured and paralleled with a set of specific criteria among which are conceptual, geopolitical, behavioral, management, institutional, humanitarian and economic ones. On the one hand, these groups of contributing aspects conduce to characterization of the Russian stand and its role in the certain regional issues. On the other hand, they help to reveal and estimate general peculiarities of the Russian foreign policy in relation to ethnic conflict settlement, non-recognized states emergence, international law consolidation and advocacy, the UN prospective viability, international and regional security cases. The table below clearly demonstrates similarities and differences between the structures of Russian stands towards the Kosovo and Cyprus conflicts:

²⁷ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016) // URL: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6BZ29/content/id/2542248?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_CptlCk6BZ29&_101_INSTANCE_CptlCk6BZ29_languageId=en_GB

ASPECTS OF THE STAND	KOSOVO CASE	CYPRUS CASE
CONCEPTUAL ASPECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • international law standards and norms compliance • must play the leading role of the UN and its Security Council • political and diplomatic methods of conflict resolution must rely on collective actions and involve all sides • international peacekeeping is an effective tool for settling conflicts 	
GEOPOLITICAL ASPECT	infeasibility of military force usage and NATO and the EU consolidation over the UN	infeasibility of any external compulsion or constrained arbitration
	tough condemnation of the humanitarian intervention in 1999	careful and composed rebuking of the Turkish operation in 1974
BEHAVIORAL ASPECT	explicit condemnation of the Kosovars; loyal to the Serbs	loyal to both parties
	no contacts with the Kosovars	dialogue within the settlement; informal contacts with the Turk Cypriots
	non-recognition of the secessionist entities independence	
HUMANITARIAN AND ECONOMIC ASPECT	problems of the isolated peoples resolution (the Kosovan Serbs and the Turk Cypriots)	

ASPECTS OF THE STAND	KOSOVO CASE	CYPRUS CASE
MANAGEMENT ASPECT	direct negotiations between conflict parties	
	infeasibility of artificial time frames and any unilateral decisions	
	<u>before Feb. 2008:</u> inadmissibility of any externally imposed decision	inadmissibility of any externally imposed decision
	<u>till 2003:</u> Serbia’s territorial integrity and Kosovo’s autonomy <u>2003-2008:</u> “standards before status” excl. Kosovo’s division <u>after Feb. 2008:</u> Serbia’s territorial integrity	demilitarized, bicomunal and bizonal federation with joint legal personality <u>after Apr. 2004:</u> any decision deriving exclusively and directly from the both communities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intercommunal contacts support • consideration of both communities opinions simultaneously
	INSTITUTIONAL ASPECT	the leading role belongs to the UN, the other organizations must be subjected to it
no alterations of the international presence mandate without relevant Security Council resolutions		
the EU aggravates the situation and promotes the UN significance decline		the EU involvement attaches positive dynamics to the settlement

The conceptual aspect of the Russian stand towards the Kosovo and Cyprus conflicts derives from the statutory conditions of the Russian internal and foreign policy – its fundamental documents (primarily, “The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation 2016” etc.), as well as the basic international law documents (the UN Charter etc.). These documents key provisions are applied universally towards any international or intrastate conflicts regardless of their uniqueness. The approaches and stands within the conceptual aspect are the following:

- conflict settlement and resolution must be executed strictly within the framework of international law standards and norms
- the UN and its Security Council must play the leading role in the settlement processes
- political and diplomatic methods of conflict resolution must rely on collective actions of the international community and can only be resolved through inclusive dialogue and negotiations involving all sides rather than by isolating any of them
- international peacekeeping is an effective tool for settling armed conflicts and facilitating post-crisis nation-building²⁸.

A document named “The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020” accepted in 2009 reaffirms importance and effectiveness of peacekeeping²⁹. Russia’s approach to conflict settlement also means understanding that only people themselves define the future of their countries and

²⁸ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016) // URL: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6BZ29/content/id/2542248?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_CptICk6BZ29&_101_INSTANCE_CptICk6BZ29_languageId=en_GB

²⁹ NATIONAL SECURITY CONCEPT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION. Approved by Presidential Decree No. 24 of 10 January 2000 // URL: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6BZ29/content/id/589768

“success in handling crisis situations lies in a collective search for political and diplomatic compromises, substantive and inclusive dialogue”³⁰.

Such a universal and tough stand is explained by Russia’s adherence to multipolar world order and prevention of global chaos, infeasibility of unilateral actions legitimization and fundamental international law principles revision, as well as further UN dismantlement inadmissibility.

The geopolitical aspect of Russian stand towards the Kosovo and Cyprus conflicts is practically formed through the prism of its relations with the USA and NATO.

Russian Federation’s first minister of foreign affairs Andrey Kozyrev started its external political history from choosing “atlanticism” as the main direction. According to his plan Russia was to abandon anything Sovietic and Communistic, leaving political competition and rivalry in the past and integrating to the western community. Moscow started to focus on NATO and other transatlantic structures accession. That is why Russia signed the UN Security Council resolution 757(1992) placing sanctions on Yugoslavia because of its military actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina³¹ and even suspended diplomatic relations with Belgrade.

However, further plans of NATO expansion and possibility of usage of the Balkans as its military base led to disillusionment and failure of trust. Soon President Boris Eltsin declared a new approach in his address to the Federal Assembly in February 1994. He considered the importance of the UN fortification and formally announced that Russia disputed NATO enlargement without it. He noted that Russia was set to continue playing one of the key roles in a process of crisis resolution in Former Yugoslavia using exclusively diplomatic means such as pushing the parties

³⁰ Statement by H.E. Vitaly I. Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, at the UN Security Council meeting on conflict prevention. 23 September 2011 // URL: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/un/-/asset_publisher/U1StPbE8y3al/content/id/194286

³¹ Resolution 757 (1992) of May 1992 // URL: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/757\(1992\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/757(1992))

to peace through a special role of the UN Security Council³². Thus, Moscow started to make political stances differing from acceptable for the Western ones. When Slobodan Miloshević was forced to accept NATO's airborne surveillance over Kosovo Russia considered it as the first step to the Alliance military operation and condemned it. Besides, these measures were not preliminary discussed either within the Contact group or with the conflict parties, so Moscow's approach expressed no alternative to political settlement in Kosovo³³. However, Russia was not considered as a serious obstacle for NATO's goals³⁴.

The very fact of NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999 influenced the Russian foreign policy dramatically, stimulating to a complete rethink of its stands. The new elements of the Russian stand towards conflicts settlement in general were generated as a response to this new reality. They were documented in the Foreign Policy Concept in 2000 by the new president Vladimir Putin and reflected the new experience:

- steadfast implementation of the international law fundamental principles;
- rational reforming of the UN in order to develop its mechanisms of immediate reaction to crisis;
- increase of the UN Security Council effectiveness and universal recognition of its exclusive right to authorize use of force;
- preserving the UN role of international relations central regulator;
- force factor reduction;
- international peace-keeping legal platform consolidation;

³² Послание Президента Российской Федерации Федеральному Собранию. Об укреплении российского государства (Основные направления внутренней и внешней политики) 24 февраля 1994 года // URL: <http://base.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc;base=EXP;n=417720;fld=134;dst=4294967295;rnd=0.8088934997732244> (accessed 14.04.2016)

³³ Статья Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации И.С. Иванова, опубликованная в "Независимой газете" 23 марта 2000 года // URL: http://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/international_safety/conflicts/-/asset_publisher/xIEMTQ3OvzcA/content/id/606312

³⁴ Haas R. What to do with American primacy? // Foreign Affairs. – 1999. – September-October

- Russia's active involvement into peace-keeping operations³⁵.

Moreover, Russia's disillusionment and snapping back to reality thanks to NATO's aggression and unveiling its motives in Kosovo finally led to Moscow's activation in the other vectors and conflicts, including Cyprus. Before that Moscow was mostly focused on the internal problems it faced in economic, political, social spheres, this is why conflicts like in Cyprus were of less importance for it. For instance, Russia vetoed a draft resolution proposing extension of mandatory financing of the UN Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus in 1993³⁶. No wonder it happened like that as it could have become an unwanted financial load for the national budget. Besides, after 1998 the quality of the Russian diplomatic activity was improving, and the economic upturn explained by price increase for energy supplies had built up the home front of the Russian diplomacy³⁷.

As for Cyprus, its significance in the Russian foreign policy goes far back in history of the Cold War. Due to the unique geographic and geopolitical position of the island on a crossroad of the three continents it has always been sufficient both for the USA and the USSR. As it was mentioned earlier it plays the role of "NATO's unsinkable aircraft carrier" with the British naval bases and is the main sea and energy routes intersection. According to an idea of a Turkish researcher Şuhnaz Yilmaz, Moscow's impact on the Greek Cypriots is vital for it as since The Republic of Cyprus is more pro-Russian the island will stay NATO-neutral³⁸. Her colleague

³⁵ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation. Approved by the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin June 28, 2000 // URL: <http://archive.mid.ru/Bl.nsf/arh/1EC8DC08180306614325699C003B5FF0?OpenDocument>.

³⁶ Security Council PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH MEETING Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 11 May 1993, at 4 p.m. S/PV.3211 // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N93/858/22/PDF/N9385822.pdf?OpenElement>

³⁷ Конопатов С. Россия в современной системе международных отношений // Обозреватель-Observer. 2007. №2. С.17.

³⁸ Yilmaz S. Power Politics and Cyprus // URL: <http://www.beykent.edu.tr/WebProjects/Uploads/saityilmaz2-kasim09.pdf>

Meltem Müftüleri-Baç shares this approach and asserts that one of the Russian motives is to acquire a bargaining chip against NATO's eastern enlargement to counterbalance Turkey's influence in the Caucasus area, as Cyprus lies on the crossroads of Europe and the Middle East in a position to affect NATO's presence in the Mediterranean and oil routes to the West. She also states that through its military presence in the Greek Cyprus, Russia would gain access to all the information regarding NATO movements in the Mediterranean³⁹.

The geopolitical criteria reveals the first distinction between the approaches towards Kosovo and Cyprus. Foremost, now Moscow emphasizes infeasibility of military force usage and NATO and the EU consolidation over the UN in Kosovo, whilst it generally talks about infeasibility of any external compulsion or constrained arbitration in Cyprus.

Secondly, in the Kosovo case Russia strongly condemned the humanitarian intervention held in 1999. As for the Turkish operation in Cyprus in 1974 Moscow still rebukes Ankara very composedly and carefully to keep balance in relations with it as one of the most significant partners.

On the whole, the geopolitical aspect reveals vulnerability of the Russian stand due to the fact that it always has to set itself against the West.

The behavioral aspect reveals the Russian attitude to the conflict parties.

As for the stand towards Kosovo it has undergone some changes. Moscow refused to implement the ban on new investment in Serbia, to freeze funds held abroad by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbian Governments, to take steps to ban flights by Yugoslav carriers between the Yugoslavia and the Contact Group countries, suggested during the foreign ministers of the Contact Group

³⁹ Müftüleri-Baç M. The Cyprus debacle: what the future holds // Futures. 1999. № 31. P.568.

meeting in June, 2008⁴⁰. Russia made it clear that the Serbs were not the single aggressors, and sanctions could be targeted both on them and the Albanians. Then Russia condemned use of excessive force both by the Serbian police and terrorist acts on the part of the Kosovar Albanians⁴¹, underlining responsibility of each party.

Further, in the situation, when the western countries selectively and openly supported the Kosovars keeping to a position that some ethnic groups deserve much more compassion than the other one, Moscow had no other path than to sustain the Serbs who had literally remained alone opposing the entire international community, though the reality says that both parties are guilty as well as both people are casualties in the Kosovo conflict. Concerning an outbreak of inter-ethnic violence in Kosovo in 2004 Moscow openly stated that scope of the violence, apparently first perpetrated by the representatives of the Kosovar Albanian community against ethnic minorities and the international presences allowed to speak of targeted actions to squeeze the non-Albanian population out of the region⁴². In spite of the fact that Russia's stand like that was generated as a coercive measure, selective or biased approach is anyways a severe way leading to further tragedies despite of the chosen party.

Thus, Moscow adheres to explicit condemnation of the Kosovars and has no contacts with this party, supplying this fact with no recognition of The Kosovo

⁴⁰ LETTER DATED 24 JUNE 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N98/179/69/PDF/N9817969.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴¹ Security Council 3868th Meeting Tuesday, 31 March 1998, 3.30 p.m. New York. S/PV.3868 // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N98/851/83/PDF/N9885183.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴² Security Council 4928th meeting Thursday, 18 March 2004, 4 p.m. New York. S/PV.4928. // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N04/276/59/PDF/N0427659.pdf?OpenElement>

Republic and underlining its unilateral and illegal nature⁴³. The meeting between the Russian Foreign Ministry's representatives and Ibrahim Rougova as a leader of the Kosovo's Democratic Union in 2000 was one of the rare few exclusions⁴⁴.

In the case of Cyprus Russia is formally loyal to both parties, it continues regular dialogue within the framework of conflict settlement both with the Greek Cypriots and the Turk Cypriots⁴⁵, though it admits just The Cyprus Republic's independence.

As for the contacts between Russia and the Turkish part of the island, they are carried out between the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, in the academic sphere (student exchange programs etc.) and so on. Russia also strongly supports the Turk Cypriots withdrawal from economic isolation.

It is also important to mention that Russian authorities used to refer to factor of civilizational closeness and Slavic fraternity of Russians and Serbs in the 90s, but in the matter of Cyprus it never made any explicit announcements of similar nature, even though Russians and Greeks are of the same confession. Meanwhile, Russia is usually condemned by the international community (including the very Turk

⁴³ Statement by Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, at the UN Security Council Meeting on Kosovo Settlement, New York, July 25, 2008 // URL:

http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/international_safety/conflicts/-/asset_publisher/xIEMTQ3OvzcA/content/id/329784?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_xIEMTQ3OvzcA&_101_INSTANCE_xIEMTQ3OvzcA_languageId=en_GB

⁴⁴ О ПОЕЗДКЕ ПО БАЛКАНСКОМУ РЕГИОНУ СПЕЦПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЯ МИНИСТРА ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РОССИИ ПО БАЛКАНАМ, ДИРЕКТОРА ДОС МИД РОССИИ В.А.ЧИЖОВА И ДИРЕКТОРА 3 ЕВРОПЕЙСКОГО ДЕПАРТАМЕНТА МИД РОССИИ А.А.ТОЛКАЧА // URL:

http://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/international_safety/conflicts/-/asset_publisher/xIEMTQ3OvzcA/content/id/598936?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_xIEMTQ3OvzcA&_101_INSTANCE_xIEMTQ3OvzcA_languageId=ru_RU

⁴⁵ Внешнеполитическая и дипломатическая деятельность Российской Федерации в 2011 году. Обзор МИД России // URL:

http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp_4.nsf/2a660d5e4f620f40c32576b20036eb06/a5d82e99be657e33442579d50026094c!OpenDocument/.

Cypriots) for its biased approach in this context, and this fact reveals vulnerability of the behavioral aspects of its stand.

The humanitarian and economic aspect of the Russian stand is elaborated within a framework of the problems that people usually face in the conflict areas and territories of the self-proclaimed isolated states. It reveals a common denominator in the matters. So, both cases share the claim to resolve the problems of the isolated peoples (the Kosovan Serbs and the Turk Cypriots), though Cyprus does not face humanitarian problems as both communities stay homogeneous and do not resort to violence for a long time.

The international society usually ignores or diminish the problems of non-Albanian minorities (Serbs, Romas, Bosniacs, Turks, Goranis and others) remaining at the territory of the so-called Kosovo Republic, but the problems they face are really severe. At the very beginning of NATO's operation in 1999 Moscow claimed for Kosovan ethnic minorities human rights respect without a delay, refugees return as well as providing humanitarian organizations an unhindered access to the territory. The year 2000 was marked with Russia's protesting against the fact of national minorities left outside this process of municipal elections that took place in Kosovo, and Moscow suggested to hold additional elections for those inhabitants of the province who were kept out⁴⁶. However, the initiative was declined.

No wonder, that the situation has been deteriorating since February, 2008 and the key point is that there are no conditions for co-existence of the Serbs and the Albanians along with strong ethnic tensions in the area. The Serbs are practically isolated from Serbia and from political life in Kosovo. This is why Russia has been also supporting an idea of Serbian municipalities community in Kosovo maintenance⁴⁷. This idea takes on particular significance in relation to "The New

⁴⁶ Security Council 4225th meeting Thursday, 16 November 2000, 10.45 a.m. New York. S/PV.4225 // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N00/750/66/PDF/N0075066.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴⁷ ОБЗОР МИД РОССИИ. ВНЕШНЕПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ И ДИПЛОМАТИЧЕСКАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ В 2016 ГОДУ // URL: <http://www.mid.ru/ru/activity/review>

Strategy for the North of Kosovo” promotion by Kosovar authorities in 2010. The main issue of the Strategy is Kosovo’s territorial integrity consolidation and this directly means Serbian local authorities dismantlement.

The Turk Cypriots living in the territory of the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, in their turn, face low level of integration of their economy into the world one and economic isolation as a result of diplomatic recognition absence, as Ankara is the only formal diplomatic, political and economic partner. According to president Vladimir Putin’s assertion during his meeting with the Turkish Prime-Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in 2005 Russia considers economic isolation to be overcome⁴⁸. The Cypriot matter stand is complemented by the necessity to even the levels of both communities economic development⁴⁹ (the Greek Cypriot and the Turk Cypriot ones) as a prerequisite for further efficient interaction between the communities in their search of solution.

The management aspect is based on direct elaboration of paths and methods of the conflicts in Serbia and Cyprus settlement as well as on impact on the parties. This sphere promotes arising specific Russian interests zone and its particular attention because Russia has similar interethnic conflicts on its own territory and directly near its borders – at the Post-Soviet space. Of course, Moscow has an ambitious experience in ethnic conflicts reconciliation. Russia stands for direct negotiations between conflict parties in both cases, also it encourages intercommunal contacts in Cyprus.

⁴⁸ О встрече Президента России В.В.Путина с Премьер-министром Турции Реджепом Тайипом Эрдоганом, Сочи, 18 июля 2005 года // URL: http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/international_safety/conflicts/-/asset_publisher/xIEMTQ3OvzcA/content/id/432148

⁴⁹ Интервью спецпредставителя Министра иностранных дел России по кипрскому урегулированию Л.Г. Абрамова Кипрскому агентству новостей 11 мая 2005 года // URL: <http://mid.ru/bdcmp/ns-rkonfl.nsf/90be9cb5e6f07180432569e00049b5fb/432569e00034005fc3257003004775aa!OpenDocument>

Russia had been advocating Yugoslavian (and then Serbia and Montenegro's) territorial integrity and the Kosovan autonomy preservation^{50 51} till 2003, and this approach generally coincided with the one of the Western partners. Then, the conflict resolution was defined with a formula "standards before status" proposed by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Harri Holkeri in 2004⁵². Russia was ready to admit any resolution of this situation except the Kosovo division, but the formula of standards for non-Albanian peoples of Kosovo should have been strictly followed.

2006 complemented Russian stand with a specification concerning infeasibility of artificial time frames and any unilateral decisions, as the situation was escalating and "status" before "standards" was obviously being hastened by the impatient supporters of Kosovo's independence. And when the formula was finally violated by a unilateral declaration of the Kosovar's sovereignty proclamation in February 2008, Russia returned to its adherence to Serbia's territorial integrity. Moreover, Moscow adhered to inadmissibility of any externally imposed decision till February 2008. Since then it says nothing about possibility of external decision intrusion in Kosovo issue according to official statements, and that could be explained by the ongoing interethnic tensions and upsurges of violence complicating negotiations and solution search.

As for the situation in Cyprus, already in 1997 Moscow suggested a plan of maintaining a demilitarized state established on a bicomunal and bizonal

⁵⁰ Security Council 3930th Meeting 23 September 1998, 3.30 p.m. New York. S/PV.3930 // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N98/858/58/PDF/N9885858.pdf?OpenElement>

⁵¹ Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации. Утверждена Президентом РФ В.В.Путиным 28 июня 2000 года // URL: <http://www.mid.ru/ns-osndoc.nsf/0e9272befa34209743256c630042d1aa/d2658119bbb357ecc325748800375061?OpenDocument>.

⁵² Security Council 4823rd meeting Friday, 12 September 2003, 11.35 a.m. New York S/PV.4823 // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N03/497/55/PDF/N0349755.pdf?OpenElement>

federation with joint legal personality⁵³. This initiative was based on the agreement between the leaders of Cypriot communities achieved in 1977 and 1979 and the ideas of the Secretary-General proposed in 1992. The initiative was not implemented however its elements were used further in certain Security Council resolutions.

The stand on the Cyprus settlement changed significantly after the referendum in April 2004, when the Greek Cypriots voted for Cyprus joining the EU without the Turkish part. There was a draft resolution suggested by the USA and Great Britain in the UN Security Council the day before the referendum, the main point of which was the following: the island must be reunified regardless of the referendum results. Russia vetoed it as “a precipitous adoption of a draft resolution on the eve of the referendums”⁵⁴. Therefore, Moscow’s position has been including a very important detail since that moment: any decision made for conflict resolution must derive exclusively and directly from the both Cypriot communities. Said differently, it may not be imposed from outside. This stand was generated also because of Russia’s unwillingness to be sidelined by the USA in conflict settlement in general⁵⁵. Besides, Moscow believes, that both communities opinion must be considered simultaneously⁵⁶. This literally means any unilateral decisions are prohibited.

An important common denominator in the management aspect of Russia’s stand centers around its understanding of direct negotiations between conflict parties importance. Regarding the Kosovo case Moscow stands for dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina as a potentially effective instrument of the existing problems

⁵³ КИПРСКОЕ УРЕГУЛИРОВАНИЕ (СПРАВОЧНАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ) // URL: http://www.mid.ru/ru/maps/cy/-/asset_publisher/wslw4pBwxwex/content/id/538270

⁵⁴ Security Council 4947th meeting Wednesday, 21 April 2004, 6.45 p.m. S/PV.4947 // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N04/316/93/PDF/N0431693.pdf?OpenElement>

⁵⁵ Coufoudakis V. Cyprus: A Contemporary Problem in Historical Perspective. – Minneapolis. 2006. P.36.

⁵⁶ ОБЗОР МИД РОССИИ. ВНЕШНЕПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ И ДИПЛОМАТИЧЕСКАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ В 2010 ГОДУ // URL: <http://www.mid.ru/ru/activity/review>

solution⁵⁷ (especially those that incorporate ethnic minorities case). As for Cyprus Moscow also sustains intercommunal contacts and direct negotiations as a way of not imposed from the outside and mutually profitable decisions search. Intercommunal dialogue promotion is seen as the main favorable working environment creator. However, artificial time frames for negotiations on Cyprus are unacceptable⁵⁸, and this is also a response to the efforts to dictate the results of the referendum in 2004.

Finally, **the institutional aspect** reflects Russian views of the role of international organizations in the Cyprus and Kosovo settlement. This aspect of the stand partially crosses with the geopolitical one as both of them incorporate and reflect Russia's and the West's opposing understanding of the key international security issues.

According to Moscow's official position the leading role in the settlement processes must belong to the UN, and the other organizations must be subjected to it in the conflict areas. This principle partially derives from the fact of further NATO and the EU expansion to the Balkan region and the ongoing geopolitical competition there. But mostly Russia appeals to the UN supremacy universally.

As for the EU Russia highly appreciates its concern in the resolution search process in Cyprus and it underlines the fact that its involvement attaches positive dynamics to the settlement. On the contrary, the EU's engagement in the Kosovo matter according to Russia's assessments merely aggravates it and promotes the UN significance decline also given the fact that the EU is biased and obviously supports the Kosovars. For instance, in 2011 Russia accused "Kosovo Forces" (NATO mission) and "The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo" (the EU mission) of violence use against Serbian civilians, however their security is also this

⁵⁷ ОБЗОР МИД РОССИИ. ВНЕШНЕПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ И ДИПЛОМАТИЧЕСКАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ В 2016 ГОДУ // URL: <http://www.mid.ru/ru/activity/review>

⁵⁸ Ibid.

missions' direct responsibility due to the UN resolution 1244⁵⁹. The insecure situation is aggravated also by human trafficking and organ trafficking in Kosovo and proving of the Kosovar authorities' affiliation to these crimes⁶⁰.

Besides, Moscow is totally against any alterations of the international presence mandate (UNMIK and UNFICYP) without relevant Security Council resolutions. That stand was reflected in Russia's objection against a proposal of the UNMIK reconfiguration in favor of the EU. Moscow stated that the Russian Federation entirely understood the EU's aspiration to play a more robust role in Kosovo affairs, but that aspiration must be met not unilaterally and on the basis of resolution 1244⁶¹. However, the UNMIK mandate was discharged soon without any sanction of the Security Council, that is why the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo is now the smallest UN mission in the world. That is a direct result of its sidelining by the EU and NATO and their influence increase in the area.

SUMMARY

This structural analysis reveals general lines in Russian positions towards the Cyprus and Kosovo conflicts.

1) **THE GOALS:** In the former case the emphasis is placed on realization of any decision made by both Cypriot communities regardless of whether it is status-quo preservation or reunification. In the second case Russian efforts are primarily focused on non-Albanian people's in the area of

⁵⁹ Выступление Постоянного представителя Российской Федерации А.В. Келина на заседании Постоянного совета ОБСЕ, 1 декабря 2011 года. 05-12-2011 // URL: <http://www.mid.ru/bdcomp/ns-dos.nsf/4b8edd3adb064e9f432569e70041fc52/e15d8eec3fae10684425795d0046f547!OpenDocument>

⁶⁰ Inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo. Report. Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights. Mr Dick Marty Switzerland Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) // URL: <http://www.assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2010/ajdoc462010prov.pdf>.

⁶¹ Security Council 5944th meeting Friday, 25 July 2008, 10 a.m. New York S/PV.5944 // URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N08/439/33/PDF/N0843933.pdf?OpenElement>

The Kosovo Republic security and rights defense. The significance of these general lines is also confirmed by the content of Russian official statements and papers.

2) THE ROLES: In the Kosovo case Russia places responsibility in the settlement on the UN, that is set to play the decisive role. In the Cyprus case the key role belongs directly to the conflict parties – both Cypriot communities.

Moreover, the stands totally coincide when it comes to general peace-keeping principles as for the UN main regulating role and the international law supremacy.

Taking into account the fact that Russia adheres to the principles both knowingly difficult to implement and make international society follow them (like finding balance between territorial integrity and national self-determination, forcing to international law obedience without any operating system of punishment, seeking for decisions equally suitable for both conflict parties etc.) we can conclude that Moscow's policy is aimed at conflicts status-quo preservation, which could assist it to keep its role of regional regulator and preserve its impact on important partners (like Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Serbia etc.). On the other hand, it is acceptably in similar fashion that total settlement is also profitable for Russia as it becomes more and more problematic for it to retain its status of the international law defender when the world is changing so rapidly as well as opposing the West in almost each issue of global importance.

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