CONFLICT PREVENTION POLICIES
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TOWARDS
THE WESTERN BALKANS

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Abstract

During the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s, the European Union (EU) lacked effective mechanisms to resolve these conflicts, and was divided over the region. However, since the end of the Kosovo War of 1999, the EU has taken concrete steps to secure a unified position in this context, and assert a stronger securitizing role in the region. For this reason, it has developed a wide variety of "conflict prevention" mechanisms especially for the Western Balkans, the part that was the most affected by the conflicts. This article aims at analyzing the incentives for and nature of the EU's conflict prevention policies that can be categorized into two categories: "structural prevention" (including economic and political reconstruction) and "operational prevention" (including civilian and military tools).

Key Words: European Union, Western Balkans, Conflict Prevention, Structural Prevention, Operational Prevention

Özet

1990'ların başında Balkanlarda ortaya çıkan çatışmalar, Avrupa Birliği'nin bu çatışmaları durdurmaya yönelik bir çözüm mekanizmasının olmaması ve Birliğin üye devletlerinin çatışmalar konusunda kendi aralarında düştüğü anlaşmazlık yüzünden geniş çaplı bir savaşa yol açabilirdi. Ancak, 1999'da patlak veren Kosova Savaşı sonrasında Avrupalı devletler, Avrupa'nın parçalanma senaryolarını durduracak ve kendi güvenlik rolünü oluşturacak somut adımlar atmaya başladılar. "Çatışma önleme" adı verilen bu çözüm mekanizmaları, özellikle söz konusu çatışmalardan en fazla etkilenen bölgeye, "Batı Balkanlar"a yönelik olarak geliştirilmişti. Bu makalenin

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amacı, AB'nin Batı Balkanlar için oluşturduğu çatışma önleme stratejilerini, hangi sebeplerle ve ne şekilde uyguladığını analiz etmektir. Bu stratejiler, "yapısal" ve "operasyonel" önlemeler olarak iki bölümde incelenebilir. Birincisinde, ekonomik ve siyasi alanlarda yeniden yapılandırmalar gibi çatışmaların temel sebeplerini ortadan kaldıracak çözümler hedeflenmektedir. İkincisi ise, çatışma öncesinde uygulanacak sivil ve askeri alanda geliştirilen araçları kapsamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa Birliği, Batı Balkanlar, Çatışma Önleme, Operasyonel Önleme, Yapısal Önleme

Introduction

Since the mid-1990s the EU has engaged in a wide range of military, political and economic policies towards the Western Balkans[1] that have been progressing steadily. The region has almost become a testing ground for the EU's key security tasks in the field of conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction.[2] There are numerous incentives for the EU involvement in the Western Balkans that can derive mainly from a common sense of consolidation in the foreign and security issues among the member states. In this process, the EU was primarily motivated by its long-term fears and aspirations. We can speak of two major incentives which are closely interlinked.

The first one was the fear of fragmentation that had frequently dragged Europe into instability and conflict in the past. There was still a shared perception that instability and conflict were present in the region and that these could easily spill over the whole European territory.[3] Not only the military conflicts among the regional factions but also different forms of instability including refugee influx, migration and organized crime inflamed insecurity, and consequently created a predicament within Europe. This situation prompted the Member States of the EU to securitize the Western Balkans as a region and handle the conflicts with their own conflict prevention mechanisms. Thus, the EU started to pursue an integrative strategy in order to avoid any possible destructive effects of the Balkan wars over Europe. The region has gradually

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[1] The "Western Balkans" covers the former Yugoslavian countries with the exception of Slovenia (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo) as well as Albania. These are neighboring states affected by the Yugoslavian crises most seriously. The term "Southeastern Europe" is also used instead of "Western Balkans". This is due to the fact that the word "Balkans" is no longer preferred by many scholars since it reminds us the negative terms such as "Balkanization". However, the Western Balkans does not include Greece and Turkey whereas these two countries are considered in Southeastern Europe. Greece, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania are the Member States of the EU and NATO; and Turkey is a *sui generis* case considering Turkey's protracted accession process to the EU. For details see: Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, **Powers and Regions: The Structure of International Security**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 379.

[2] Ettore Greco, "South-Eastern Europe, The Expanding EU Role", in Roland Dannreuther (ed.), **European Union Foreign and Security Policy: Towards a Neighborhood Strategy**, London, Routledge, 2004, p. 62.

[3] **Ibid.**

been transformed from its "Balkanized" form into a "Europeanized" structure demonstrating that the whole European continent is now contained by the European Union's integrative policies towards the war-torn regions.

The second incentive derived from the EU's growing interest and aspiration in promoting its security role in international and regional affairs. This would definitely assert the EU's distinctive identity in the EU's relations with "others".[4] The ability to successfully manage the relations with the countries of the Western Balkans that could be termed "actor capability" has become the EU's major foreign and security concern in the recent decade. Therefore, the dramatic breakup of the Yugoslavian state and the consequences of the fear of fragmentation scenarios all compelled the EU to evaluate its "actorness", to build up new mechanisms, and to act effectively and rapidly in conflicts. As Christopher Hill reminds us, since the early years of the Balkan conflicts, the EU has strengthened its civilian aspects of security policies towards the region while apparently lacking the military capacity.[5] However, since the late 2000s, the external impact of the EU on the Balkan conflicts has provided an empirical foundation for identifying the EU's international role in the military field at international and regional scale.

Particularly, in dealing with the regional security issues, the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU has paved the way for the member states to provide common solutions and convergent approaches and experiences in the security realm.[6] Now, the EU has enhanced its security capabilities to cope with the instabilities and threats in its adjacent areas. It can also be argued that the EU started to use what Gunnar Sjostdet claimed in 1977 as "minimal degree of internal cohesion" in its attempts to create a "conflict prevention culture" and to engage in a number of civilian and military conflict prevention tasks.[7]

This article examines the nature and development of the conflict prevention policies of the EU in the Western Balkans and classifies the areas of preventive activities into two different categories: "operational prevention" and "structural prevention". Conflict prevention, in general, addresses the root-causes of violent conflicts and aims at preventing any possible conflict before it breaks out among ethnic and religious groups, nations or states, and strengthening peace, stability and prosperity in the region in question. In this article, firstly, the EU's incentives for the creation and development of "conflict prevention" mechanisms that were born out of the "fear of fragmentation" and the EU's "security role aspirations" are presented. In the second section, the development of the European conflict prevention culture is scrutinized in terms of policies, notions and values with reference to a number of official documents.

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[4] Karen E. Smith, **European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World,** Cambridge, Polity, 2003, pp. 14-15.
[5] Christopher Hill, "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role", **Journal of Common Market Studies**, Vol. 31, No. 3, 1993.
[6] Susan E. Penksa and Warren L. Mason, **"**EU Security Cooperation and the Transatlantic Relationship", **Cooperation and Conflict**, Vol. 38, No. 3, 2003, p. 256.
[7] Dimitris N Chryssochoou, Michael J Tsinisizelis and Stelios Stavridis, **Theory and Reform in the European Union,** Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2003, p. 186.

The third section concentrates on the implementation of the EU's preventive policies in the Western Balkans including structural and operational conflict prevention policies.

Incentives for the "Conflict Prevention" in the Western Balkans

In their work entitled "Powers and Regions", Barry Buzan and Ole Waever assert that the European integration has two contradictory security concerns: One is the fear of integration, and the other is the fear of fragmentation.[8] Since its inception, the integration at the European level has always threatened to weaken the role of the nation-state.[9] However, it would not be erroneous to emphasize that fear of fragmentation has prevailed over fear of integration so far, as, in particular, evidenced by the Balkans case. For the EU, there was nothing except for fragmentation that might destruct the peace and stability in Europe. Therefore, the European integration should "serve to promote greater regional stability and lesser pressures placed on nation-states" with a strengthened CFSP and an effective actor capability of the EU.[10] The EU's conflict prevention policies towards the Western Balkans are driven by two motivations that are also considered as the EU's long-term "fears and aspirations": the "fear of fragmentation" and the "security role aspirations" in both military and civilian fields.

The Fear of Fragmentation

The Balkan region was an area of tension and historical competition between "Christian-Occidental" and "Islamic Ottoman powers and cultures" from the Middle ages up to the late 20th century.[11] Its conflict-torn nature generated a state of "Balkanization" which denotes the process of fragmentation of states into new smaller states. Balkanization can also be used to mean "fragmentation", an annoying possibility for the member states of the EU.

For Maria Todorova, the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 apparently exemplify the processes of "Balkanization". Likewise, the conflicts that took place in the Balkans since the 19th century after the dissolution of Ottoman State also provoked "Balkanization" that in turn triggered genocide, ethnic cleansing, mass migration and refugee influx.[12] Firstly, nationalistic movements and feelings of national identity played an important role in the process of Balkanization. Secondly, intervention by the great powers[13] in the affairs of smaller countries significantly incited the fragmentation

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[8] Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, **Powers and Regions: The Structure of International Security**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 367.

[9] G. Pinar Tank, "The CFSP and the Nation-State", in Kjell Eliassen (ed.), **Foreign and Security Policy in the European Union,** London, Sage, 1998, p. 13.

[10] **Ibid.**, p. 20.

[11] Mustafa Türkeş and Göksu Gökgöz, "The EU's Strategy Towards the Western Balkans: Exclusion or Integration?", **East European Politics and Societies,** Vol. 20, 2006, p. 659.

[12] Maria Todorova, **Imagining the Balkans**, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 33.

[13] Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, France and Britain were the main actors during the 19th century when small states gained their independence from the Ottoman State, the USA, Britain, Russia, France and Germany throughout the 20th century, in particular, during the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia.

of the region for centuries. Ivo Banac refers to the term "Balkanization" which, for him, typically symbolizes the recent conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. In his opinion, the wars that first broke out in Croatia, and then spilled over into Kosovo in 1999, and lastly spread to Macedonia in 2001[14] should not be deemed as the consequences of certain policies but rather the "aims" of policies implemented by the regional leaders.[15] Therefore we can confirm that the soul of "Balkanization" has survived up to present.

Buzan and Waever argue that the main incentive for the involvement of the EU in the region arouse from the calculations of some negative effects of the conflicts on the EU integration/fragmentation dynamics. More apparently, the wars in the Balkans incited the idea of "war is possible in Europe".[16] In the European Security Strategy Paper (ESS) published in 2003, it was also acknowledged that "Europe still faces security threats and challenges. The outbreak of conflict in the Balkans was a reminder that war has not disappeared from our continent."[17] In the same way, Buzan and Waever brought up John J. Mearsheimer's "fragmentation scenario" claiming that the wars in the Balkans might turn the continent into a power balancing and create an internal great power rivalry area after the Cold War Era.[18] Mearsheimer argues that during the Cold War, the nuclear threat was likely to boost the wars and crises in Europe. For him, in the subsequent era, the characteristics of the new international era such as the absence of a nuclear deterrence, the emergence of a multipolar world system and the revival of the hypernationalism in Europe could have also ignited a "Balkanization of Europe".[19] With the ending of the Cold War threat and the elimination of Communism from the European continent Europeans thus felt safe. However, the lack of the "necessary condition" to respond to any new type of conflict (mainly intrastate, ethnic and nationalistic conflicts) in the Balkans then returned the continent to its fragmented form. In such an environment, West European states saw each other with greater fear and suspicion. For him, meanwhile the East European states could have gone to war since they lacked a strong tradition of democracy.[20] Buzan and Waever describe the security environment as follows: "The Balkans has served as Europe's ghost reminding it of the risks of war, and defining Europe's own identity in terms of no longer being susceptible

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[14] The war was also waged in the name of ethnic cleansing and national homogenization.

[15] Ivo Banac, "The Politics of National Homogeneity", in Brad K. Blitz (ed.), **War and Change in the Balkans: Nationalism, Conflict and Cooperation,** Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 30.

[16] Buzan and Waever, **op cit.**, pp. 556-57.

[17] Javier Solana, "A Secure Europe in a Better World", presented by Javier Solana, **High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy**, European Council, Thessaloniki, 20 June 2003, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/reports/76255.pdf, (11 February 2007), p. 1.

[18] Buzan and Waever, **op.cit.**, p. 356.

[19] He focuses on "powerful and conflicting states": In the new era, Germany and Russia are considered as the two powerful states with their potential. Russia, France and Britain have also kept their nuclear weapons and new nuclear powers such as Germany may emerge too.

[20] John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War", **International Security,** Vol. 15, No. 1, 1990, pp.5-52.

to internecine war".[21] For example, the member states of the EU remained controversial on security and defense matters in particular during the Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union of 1990 and the successive meetings where they were discussing the Balkan conflicts.[22] Since then the EU has been seeking new ways to make wars impossible and taking more concrete steps to build up new military and civilian conflict prevention mechanisms in the region.

European Union's Security Role Aspirations

The outbreak of an armed conflict in the former Yugoslavia prompted a new discourse on "responsibility".[23] However, this discourse resulted in a "tragic failure" in the international society. For instance, in the early years of the conflict, the UN was apparently against the intervention to the conflicts; in the Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar's parlance, the UN had "no role in Yugoslavia." Similarly, the American politicians did not intend to be involved in the conflict. An American senior official argued that "it's not the US' problem, it's a European problem, it is the hour of Europe."[24] However, Europeans' unsuccessful attempts mainly stemmed from the constraints of the EU' capabilities.[25] This was also argued by Christopher Hill who attributed the Europe's failure largely to its "capability-expectations gap" in the former Yugoslavia as such: "The Community is not an effective international actor in terms of both its capability to produce collective decisions and its impact on events." Therefore, the EU could under no circumstances, be identified as an effective actor even at the regional stage.[26]

However, Roy H. Gingsberg argues that successive positive steps towards integration and creation of a common voice through the Treaty of Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and Amsterdam Treaty, namely the launch of the Common Foreign and Security (CFSP) and then the European Security and Defense Policy might narrow such capability-expectation gap. The potential security risks on the boundaries of the EU eventually generated a new "discourse of responsibility" on the positive side. The new circumstances almost pushed the Union to abandon its purely "civilian role" and develop "all the necessary tools" to cope with the crises and conflicts in its near abroad.[27] Heinz Kramer describes the European engagement in the Balkans as follows:

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[21] Buzan and Waever, **op.cit.**, pp. 556-57.
[22] Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, **The European Union as a Global Actor**, New York, Routledge, 2006, p. 195.
[23] **Ibid.**, p. 26.
[24] William J. Durch and James A. Schear, "Faultlines: UN Operations in the Former Yugoslavia", in William J. Durch and James A. Schear (eds.) **UN Peacekeeping, American Politics and the Uncivil Wars of 1990s,** New York, St. Martin's Press, 1996, p. 199; Predrag Simic, "Dynamics of the Yugoslav Crisis", **Security Dialogue**, Vol. 26, No. 2, 1995, p. 163; Bretherton and Vogler, **op.cit.**, p. 26.
[25] Bretherton and Vogler, **Ibid.**
[26] Hill, **op.cit.**, p. 306.
[27] Bretherton and Vogler, **op.cit.**, p. 26.

> The considerable improvement in the EU's engagement in the Balkans has opened a new and daring field for the Union's common foreign and security policy. In the eyes of the European public, it is the ultimate test of the EU's ability to conduct a common foreign and security policy of any meaning at all. However, Brussels' new Balkan policy is more than just a foreign and security policy; it is simultaneously the opening of another chapter in the process of European integration. In the long-term, a successful European Balkan policy will not only bring peace and prosperous stability to the region but also produce another change in the EU's own political and institutional set-up by furthering the integration of another group of European countries into the structures of the Union.[28]

Therefore, the EU's international role could be best understood by its foreign policy behavior and performance that would be tested on a third party as an external involvement. The Agenda 2000 document[29] that was published in 1997 also demonstrated the ambitions of the Union to evolve into a proactive and a global actor:

> The Union must increase its influence in world affairs, promote values such as peace and security, democracy and human rights, provide aid for the least developed countries, defend its social model and establish its presence on the world markets… prevent major damage to the environment and ensure sustainable growth with an optimum use of world resources. Collective action by the European Union is an ever increasing necessity if these interests are to be defended, if full advantage is to be taken of the benefits of globalization and if the constraints it imposes are to be faced successfully. Europe's partners […] expect it to carry out fully its responsibilities.[30]

In the absence of collective security mechanisms, the EU took up a number of innovative tasks and roles as an actor, which were also indicated in the ESS document. In the Strategy Paper included the following: "European interests and the strengthening of mutual solidarity of the EU makes us a more credible and effective actor. Europe should be ready to share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world."[31]   In the new international security environment, in a sense, the Union has

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[28] Heinz Kramer, "The European Union in the Balkans: Another Step Towards European Integration", **Perceptions**, September-November 2000, p. 1.
[29] It is also known as "Agenda 2000: For a Stronger and Wider Europe" which emphasizes the global roles of the EU.
[30] Bretherton and Vogler, **op.cit.**, p. 15.
[31] Javier Solana, "A Secure Europe in a Better World", presented by Javier Solana, **High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy**, European Council, Thessaloniki, 20 June 2003,

grabbed new opportunities for asserting an effective "actor capacity" towards the conflicting areas.

Developing a "Preventive Culture"?

The phenomenon "European integration" itself is a peace project.[32] In the Preamble of the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) of 1951, the six founding members agreed that "the world peace can be safeguarded only by creative efforts commensurate with the dangers that threaten it". The Treaty underlined that "the contribution which an organized and vital Europe can make to civilization is indispensible to the maintenance of peaceful relations." Such an attempt would also "diminish the old rivalries the merging of their essential interests and create the basis for a broader and deeper community among peoples of divided by bloody conflicts."[33] Since the early 1950s, Europe has developed an idea that the old system of balance of powers could no longer secure Europe and offered a new system based on shared sovereignty to resolve the conflicts.[34] The main reason for the creation of the ECSC was to prevent the Western Europe from future conflicts that could break out among the states, in particular, between France and Germany.[35] In the new century, the EU engaged in a further extensive project, that is, the enlargement of the Union throughout the Central and Eastern Europe.[36] The Union indeed succeeded in completing this project. However, it had some difficulties in dealing with the neighboring region outside its borders, in the Balkans.

The conflicts in the Balkans, which were overwhelmingly costly in many aspects, further pushed the Western Europe to dwell on the prevention of conflicts from breaking them out. In fact, even before the Yugoslavian war, conflict prevention policies came to the European agenda within the framework of CSCE (in the Summit of November 1990) and a Conflict Prevention Center was thus created to prevent the interstate conflicts. But, despite the creation of the CFSP and all the relevant activities, the Union was still "lacking an overall conflict prevention strategy".[37] Given the EU's futile attempts in ending the conflicts in the Western Balkans, the international society initially had to take concrete steps within the framework of the UN. New mechanisms such as preventive deployment of the UN forces, post-conflict peace-building and the establishment of peace enforcement units were presented in the Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" of 1992. From the

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http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/reports/76255.pdf, (11 February 2007), p. 1.
[32] Vincent Kronenberger and Jan Wouters (eds.), **The European Union and Conflict Prevention**, The Hague, T.M.C. Asser Press, 2004, p. 4.
[33] Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (Paris, 18 April 1951)
[34] Fraser Cameron, "The European Union and Conflict Prevention", in Albrecht Schnabel and David Carment (eds.), **Conflict Prevention from Rhetoric to Reality,** Vol. 1, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004, p. 210.
[35] Smith, **op.cit.**, p. 147.
[36] Cameron, **op. cit.**, p. 210.
[37] Smith, **op.cit.**, pp. 150-52.

report, it can be understood that the idea of "conflict prevention" was inspired by the concept of "preventive diplomacy" which denotes "diplomatic actions taken for abating tensions and limiting violence before any conflict breaks out."[38]

It was in the early 2000s that the EU voiced the importance of additional and rather robust security mechanisms, and started on a deeper coordination in its foreign and security policy. For example, the High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and the Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten delivered a speech on the necessity of the "effective conflict prevention" during the Nice Summit in December 2000.[39] The report was on "improving the coherence and effectiveness of European Union action in the field of conflict prevention".[40] Consequently, the Commission published a communication in April 2001 where it was argued that:

> *The enormous cost in resources and in human suffering caused by violent conflicts calls for major further efforts in preventing conflicts. This is above all a moral and political imperative, but it also makes economic sense. It is a lot cheaper to channel conflict into dialogue and constructive action than to deal with the consequences once it has degenerated into violent confrontation. Given the importance of the EU on the international scene, its interests and ambitions and the considerable resources it has committed to assistance and co-operation, there is no doubt that the EU should play its part in these efforts.[41]*

Thus, the EU decided to strengthen its conflict prevention capabilities aiming at "preventing the outbreak of violence and address the root/structural causes of conflict as well as ensuring that violent conflicts do not re-emerge in the post-conflict phase."[42] It

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[38] Preventive diplomacy was successfully conducted in Macedonia in 1992.The Security Council passed Resolution 795 of 1992 authorizing the establishment of UNPROFOR Macedonia with a preventive mandate of monitoring and reporting any developments in the border areas that "could undermine confidence and stability in Macedonia and threaten its security" domestically and externally. It was then replaced by an operation called United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), which had the same responsibilities and composition as those of UNPROFOR. **UN Document,** S/24923 of 9 December 1992, para. 3. For details see; Boutros Boutros-Ghali, **An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping Document** A/47/277 - S/241111, 17 June 1992, New York: Department of Public Information, United Nations, 1992, pp. 3-5.

[39] Paul Eavis and Stuart Kefford, "Conflict Prevention and the European Union: A Potential Yet to Be Fully Realized", in Juliette Verhoeven Paul van Tongeren and Hans van de Veen (eds.) **Searching for Peace in Central and South Asia: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities**, Boulder, CO, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002, p. 4.

[40] Smith, **op cit.,** p. 152.

[41] "European Commission, "**Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention**" Brussels, 11 April 2001,   http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/cfsp/news/com2001_211_en.pdf, (11 February 2009).

[42]   **Conflict   Prevention   and   Crisis   Management**, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/cfsp/cpcm/cp.htm, (10 February 2009)

is also inferred from the Communication that the European Commission distinguished between "long-term" and "short-term" conflict prevention mechanisms previously formulated by the Carnegie Commission for Preventing Deadly Conflicts in 1997. The European Commission refers to "structural prevention" to describe "long-term prevention" including the actions to address the root causes of conflict. The Commission defines short-term conflict prevention as "operational prevention" aiming at "reacting rapidly to nascent conflicts and avoiding imminent violence." [43]

The EU officially lists the means of conflict prevention as follows:

> ...*development co-operation and external assistance, trade policy instruments, social and environmental policies, diplomatic instruments and political dialogue, co-operation with international partners and NGOs, as well as the new instruments in the field of crisis management.*[44]

In a Communication published in 2001 by the European Commission the threats that the EU faces are also categorized as follows:

> *Poverty, economic stagnation, uneven distribution of resources, weak social structures, undemocratic governance, systematic discrimination, oppression of the rights of minorities, destabilizing effects of refugee flows, ethnic antagonisms, religious and cultural intolerance, social injustice and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and small arms...*[45]

The Program of Action on conflict prevention that was agreed at the Gothenburg European Council in 2001 was another crucial step in formulating a coherent EU strategy.[46] In the Summit, the European Council endorsed the "EU Program for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts" which would strengthen the EU's capacity to attain a "coherent early warning, analysis and action." Member States of the EU further agreed that:

> *[i]n line with the fundamental values of the EU, the highest political priority will be given to improving the effectiveness and coherence of its external action in the field of conflict prevention.*[47]

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[43] Kronenberger and Wouters, **op cit.**, p. 4. For details see: "Preventing Deadly Conflict", Final Report, Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Carnegie Corporation of New York, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/subsites/ccpdc/pubs/rept97/finfr.htm, (4 February 2009)
[44] The crisis management includes peacekeeping forces, police, strengthening of the rule of law, strengthening civilian administration and civil protection. "Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management", http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/cfsp/cpcm/cp.htm (10 February 2009)
[45] "European Commission, **Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention**", Brussels, 11 April 2001, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/cfsp/news/com2001_211_en.pdf, (11 February 2009)
[46] Smith, **op.cit.**, p. 153.
[47] European Council Gothenburg European Council, **Presidency Conclusions**, http://www.esdp-course.ethz.ch/content/ref/_doc/200106Goeteborg_Extract.pdf, (12 February 2009)

The EU now clearly articulates its objective of preventing conflicts and draws an overall strategy to achieve its goal.[48] In this respect, the Union has implemented its conflict prevention policies through the CFSP and a number of branches that fall under the external relations.

Implementing "Preventive Policies" in the Western Balkans

After a decade of an ill-starred approach pursued by the EU in the Balkans, a new regional framework was manifestly drawn in the Royaumont Process that was first launched in 1995. The process aimed at normalizing of relations among the countries in the region which are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and the Federal Republic of former Yugoslavia.[49] It also had a relatively significant impact on solving the post-conflict structural problems and supporting the regional integration with the EU.[50] The Royaumont process was complemented with a so-called Regional Approach in 1997 with an aim of "creating an area of political stability and economic prosperity by promoting and sustaining democracy and the rule of law respect for human and minority rights and re-launching economic activity." The Regional Approach was also based on a comprehensive strategy towards the region instead of bilateral basis relations among the members.[51] It meant that the EU had taken up a number of tasks to achieve "positive peace" that addresses the root causes of conflict rather than "negative peace" that implied solely the "absence of violence." Therefore, the EU's main objective developed into a "constructive conflict resolution" approach as an overall strategy.[52] In line with its new regionalist thinking, the EU seemed more determined to engage intensely in regional cooperation in the Western Balkans through a number of multilateral civilian and military regional initiatives.[53] Thus, the EU displayed its main security considerations based on the integration with the Western Balkans region declaring that the "unification of Europe [would] be complete only after the accession of all Balkan countries."[54]

The EU's conflict prevention policy can be categorized under "structural prevention" and "operational prevention" mechanisms. The former aims at long-term solutions and addressing the root causes of the conflicts such as development, institution-building, promoting democracy, economic and political reconstruction,

[48] Smith, **op.cit.**, p. 153.

[49] Federal Republic of former Yugoslavia was a federal state that consists of Serbia and Montenegro and existed between 1992 and 2003. Smith, **Ibid.**, pp. 82-83.

[50] Martin Dangerfield**,** "Regional cooperation in the Western Balkans: Stabilisation device or integration policy?", **Perspectives on European Politics and Society**, Vol. 5, No. 2, May 2004, p. 204.

[51] Emil Kirchner and James Sperling, **EU Security Governance,** Manchester University Press, 2007, p. 81.

[52] Johan Galtung*,* **Peace by Peaceful Means**, London, Sage, 1996.

[53] Othon Anastasakis and Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic, **"**Balkan Regional Cooperation & European Integration", **The Hellenic Observatory**, 2002, p. 28.

[54] Ettore Greco, "South-Eastern Europe, The Expanding EU Role", in Roland Dannreuther (ed.), **European Union Foreign and Security Policy: Towards a Neighborhood Strategy**, London, Routledge, 2004, p. 65.

whereas the latter refers to short-term solutions including civilian and military crisis-management tools to be applied in pre-crisis situations.[55]

Structural Prevention

The EU's regional approach towards the Western Balkans was respectively constituted with the Royaumont Process, the establishment of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, and the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) to stabilize the region as a whole. In fact, the EU began to engage in a comprehensive strategy in the region shortly after the Kosovo conflict.[56] As a joint action, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was "the first comprehensive conflict prevention strategy of the international community, aimed at strengthening the efforts of the countries of South Eastern Europe in fostering peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity."[57] The Pact covered the region which was largely devastated by the former Yugoslavian conflicts and where "the issues could only be effectively addressed through a regional approach."[58] The project that became the most effective preventive mechanism for the regional countries would also turn into "a commitment for the prospect of association with and potential membership of the Union."[59] As a framework, the EU additionally adopted the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) that was a long-term commitment to achieve political goals and thus providing financial and human resources. At the Feira Summit in June 2000, the European Council, declared that:

> *The European Council confirms that its objective remains the fullest possible integration of the countries of the region into the political and economic mainstream of Europe through the Stabilization and Association process, political dialogue, liberalization of trade and cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs. All the countries concerned are potential candidates for EU membership. The Union will support the Stabilization and Association process through technical and economic assistance. The Commission has already presented proposals to the Council to streamline and accelerate the procedures for disbursement of*

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[55] "Commission Communication of 11 April 2001 on Conflict Prevention [COM(2001)211 final." http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!DocNumber&lg=en&type_doc=CO Mfinal&an_doc=2001&nu_doc=211, (11 February 2009)

[56] Kirchner and Sperling, **op.cit.**, p. 81.

[57] Stability Pact for the Southeastern Europe, **"About the Stability Pact"** http://www.stabilitypact.org, (3 February 2009) The countries that are involved in the Pact are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Macedonia.

[58] For details see: "Balkans: Stability pact goes into history", **OneWorld**, 17 December 2007, http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi_westernbalkans_reactions_id_12.pdf, (5 February 2009)

[59] **Stability Pact for the Southeastern Europe, "About the Stability Pact"**, http://www.stabilitypact.org, (3 February 2009)

assistance and the early extension of asymmetrical industrial and agricultural trade benefits to the Balkan States.[60]

The SAP that was launched at the Zagreb Summit in 2000 was based on the gradual achievement of a free trade area and reforms planned for the adoption of EU standards "with the aim of moving closer to the EU".[61] The SAP also developed the bilateral relations between the EU and the Western Balkan countries and provides the regional countries with extensive technical assistance and support for enhanced governance, and effectively functioning institutions, democratization, and progress in human rights and economic development.[62] At the Zagreb Summit, the Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization program (CARDS) was also commenced together with the SAP.[63] The objectives and conditions of the CARDS were articulated in the Zagreb Summit Conclusions as follows:

> *...to establish between their countries regional cooperation conventions providing for a political dialogue, a regional free trade area and close cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs, in particular for the reinforcement of justice and the independence thereof, for combating organized crime, corruption, money laundering, illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings and all other forms of trafficking.[64]*

Likewise, there were a number of conflict prevention tasks taken by the EU institutions such as European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) established in 2000 and aiming at:

> *supporting good governance, institution building and the rule of law; the development of market economy; to invest further in critical infrastructure and environmental actions; and to promote the social development and strengthening civil society.[65]*

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[60] Santa Maria da Feira European Council 19 and 20 June 2000, "**Conclusions of the Presidency**", http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/feil.en.htm#V, (3 February 2009)

[61] For details see: "The Western Balkan countries on the road to the European Union" http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/how_does_a_country_jo in_the_eu/sap/history_en.htm, (3 February 2009)

[62] Marie-Janine Calic, "EU Policies Towards the Balkans: Fostering Ownership of Reforms", **International Spectator,** Vol. 3, 2003, p. 113.

[63] The original name of the CARDS is OBNOVA. The aids are "humanitarian and emergency assistance**,** rebuilding infrastructure, and fostering reconciliation and the return of refugees, support for developing government institutions and legislation, and approximation with European norms and eventually harmonization with EU acquis (EU law)**,** reinforcing democracy and the rule of law, human rights, civil society and the media, and the operation of a free market economy**,** generating sustainable economic recovery, and promoting social development and structural reform." For details see: "The CARDS program (2000-2006)" http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r18002.htm, (10 September 2009)

[64] Kirchner and Sperling, **op.cit.**, p. 81

[65] **Ibid.**

The EAR would gather, analyze and communicate information to the Commission on the issues of reconstruction and return of refugees and displaced persons, provide assistance for urgent cases and prepare programs.

Another key component of the SAP was the Stabilization and Association Agreements that would amount to the formal contractual relationships between the EU and the regional countries on the progress of political and economic reform and administrative issues including the perspective of closer integration with the EU.[66] Accordingly, the countries concerned would abide by the conditions to start the Agreement negotiations. Hans-Georg Ehrhart lists these conditions as follows:

> - Rule of law, democracy, compliance with human rights and minority rights;
>
> - Free and fair elections, full implementation of results;
>
> - Absence of discriminatory treatment;
>
> - Implementation of first steps of economic reform;
>
> - Proven readiness of good neighborly relations;
>
> - Compliance with the Dayton Agreement.

These countries also had to make a substantial progress in the achievement of above mentioned political, economic and administrative goals. Thus the Commission prepared regular reports with five countries in order to put into practice the conditionality criteria since 1996.[67]

One of the cornerstones of the EU's regional approach was the EU-Western Balkans Summit of June 2003 held in Thessaloniki. It clearly put an emphasis on the accession of ten new member states which would almost immediately encourage the countries of the Western Balkans for the future membership. At the Summit, the member states of the EU and the countries of the Western Balkans agreed on the need for deeper cooperation between the parties and in reconstruction and rehabilitation and to support political and economic transition, with a view to the eventual goal of EU membership.[68] Except Slovenia, the Western Balkans' opening to the EU membership came with Croatia's and Macedonia's gaining candidacy status in 2004 and 2005 respectively. As a consequence, the EU started to consider all the Western Balkans countries as potential candidate countries.

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[66] **Ibid.**; Hans-Georg Ehrhart, "A Good Idea, but a Rocky Road Ahead: The EU and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe", in Albrecht Schnabel and David Carment (eds.), **Conflict Prevention from Rhetoric to Reality,** Vol. 1, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004, p. 120.
[67] **Ibid.**
[68] For details see: "EU-Western Balkans Summit – Declaration", Thessaloniki, 21 June 2003, 10229/03 (Presse 163), Press release
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/how_does_a_country_jo in_the_eu/sap/thessaloniki_summit_en.htm, (12 September 2009)

The EU has been much more involved in activities related to the European agenda of the Western Balkans targeting at full integration of the region to the Union. Therefore, the EU has used another instrument for the Western Balkan countries as the Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) for the pre-accession process for the period 2007-2013. This assistance has been provided on the basis of European Partnerships of the candidate countries including the Western Balkans countries and Turkey to support them in their efforts in strengthening political infrastructure such as democratic institutions and the rule of law, public administration and to carry out economic reforms. In view of that, they would also respect human rights including minority rights, support gender equality and develop civil society. The Union would back them up financially particularly in some issues such as "regional cooperation, reconciliation and reconstruction, and sustainable development and poverty reduction in these countries". [69]

In its attempts to employ the structural conflict prevention policies, the EU aims at providing peace, stability and prosperity throughout the region while preparing the Western Balkans countries for the membership through institutional and legislative development. [70] Similar to the case of the Central and Eastern European countries, the EU now insists on a wide range of enlargement policies that are powerful tools for the relevant countries that have been undergone considerable structural reforms with the prospect of EU membership. That was best evidenced in the Former Commissioner Chris Patten's words: "Over the past decade, the Union's most successful foreign policy instrument has undeniably been the promise of EU membership." [71] Therefore, the process that goes to the enlargement can be seen as structural conflict prevention aiming at sustainable peace in the long run.

Operational Prevention

"Operational Prevention" is basically formed by military and civilian crisis management tasks under the framework of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). This type of prevention has always been the most controversial part of the EU's policy responsibilities since the EU remained ineffectual in taking military action as well as diplomatic ones during the Balkan conflicts. During the conflicts, without a common strategy, the EU could not produce an adequate post-Cold War defense strategy, and this issue remained under the auspices of NATO. In order to dissipate the concerns over the "fragmented Europe", the EU decided to set up credible military and civilian capabilities to carry out the tasks defined as "Petersberg Tasks". The tasks had been previously outlined at the Western European Union's (WEU) Petersberg Summit of 1992 and briefly depicted as "humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and

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[69] Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_210/l_21020060731en00820093.pdf, (2 February 2009)

[70] Kirchner and Sperling, **op.cit.**, p. 97.

[71] Lucia Montanaro-Jankovski, "The Interconnection between the European Security and Defense Policy and the Balkans", **Journal of Southeast European & Black Sea Studies**, March, 2007, Vol. 7 Issue 1, p. 152.

tasks of combat forces in crisis management including peacekeeping."[72] These Petersberg tasks were then enhanced at the successive summits and the EU Councils. This enhancement was first realized at the Franco-British Summit in Saint-Malo in December 1998, in which Tony Blair, the Prime Minister of Britain and Jacques Chirac, the President of France, ultimately agreed to reconcile their differences and articulated the importance of security and defense policy as the top issue of the European agenda:

> *The European Union needs to be in a position to play its full role on the international stage. This means making a reality of the Treaty of Amsterdam, which will provide the essential basis for action by the Union. It will be important to achieve full and rapid implementation of the Amsterdam provisions on CFSP.*[73]

At the Summit, it was admitted that the Union had to be "backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises."[74] It meant that the EU would be militarily autonomous in conflict zones where the EU decides to take action. At the Cologne Summit in June 1999, where the Saint-Malo spirit was revived, the member states also asserted that crisis management tasks including humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and combat-force tasks including peacemaking become central in the process of strengthening the European common security and defense policy."[75] In December 1999, at the Helsinki summit, the Member States of the EU all declared that they would form their own rapid reaction force of 60,000 troops that would be independent from NATO.[76] Besides the military crisis management tasks, at the Feira European Council of 2000, the Union has also expanded the civilian aspects of crisis management including police, strengthening of the rule of law, strengthening civilian administration and civil protection.[77]

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[72] Christina M. Schweiss, "European Security and Defense Policy: Capabilities for a Complex World", in Janet Adamski, Mary Troy Johnson, Christina M. Schweiss (eds.), **Old Europe New Security: Evolution for a Complex World,** Hampshire, Ashgate, 2006, p. 93. These Petersberg tasks were then incorporated into the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997.
[73] Joint Declaration Issued at the British-French Summit, Saint-Malo, France, 3-4 December 1998, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/French-British%20Summit%20Declaration,%20Saint-Malo,%201998%20-%20EN.pdf, (3 February 2009)
[74] **Ibid.**
[75] Fraser Cameron, **The Foreign and Security Policy of the EU: Past, Present and Future**, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1999, p. 132; "Presidency Conclusions, Cologne European Council" 3 and 4 June 1999,
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/kolnen.htm, (6 February 2009)
[76] **Presidency Conclusions,** Helsinki European Council, 10 and 11 December 1999, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/hel1_en.htm, (6 February 2009)
[77] **Presidency Conclusions**, Santa Maria da Feira European Council 19 and 20 June 2000, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/feil.en.htm#V, (3 February 2009)

Together with other regional operations conducted on three continents, the EU's 22 military operations can be classified as "operational prevention" mechanisms.[78] However, Jolyon Howorth asserts that "the bulk of the operations have been in the Balkans" since the region is "the EU's most urgent priority neighbor."[79] These operations display the unity within the Union which means that the EU is not only conducting military policies at operational level but also taking decisions collectively at decision-making levels on the related issues. Similarly, Emma J. Stewart contends that as indicated in the ESS, the EU is now in search for "its legitimacy outside the civilian sphere." Working with the other multilateral organizations such as NATO, the EU has taken the opportunity to enhance its military role.[80]

The EU's military tasks are embodied within the ESDP as an integral part of the CFSP, and carried out as "joint actions". Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler categorize the EU's forces as "military deployment; police missions; and justice mission".

The first category encompasses a number of military operations ranging from EUFOR in Macedonia (named "Concordia"- from March 2003 to December 2003)[81] and then in Bosnia Herzegovina (named "Althea"- since December 2004).[82] Concordia was the EU's first ever military operation that was definitely a peacekeeping operation in Macedonia handed over from a NATO force. The mission "helped in keeping the peace between the bands of lightly armed irregulars and the Macedonian army."[83] The mission in Macedonia was backed by 14 nations in total, and the number of troops equipped with light weapons was about 357. Howorth argues that this operation was only a political symbol and militarily light. Concordia's importance derives from the fact that the EU tested its all procedures that were commonly agreed by the Member States on a military operation in terms of command and control, use of force, financing, logistics and the testing of the principles of peacekeeping. This was the first time that the "Berlin plus"[84] procedures were implemented as EU force (Concordia) that

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[78] See also: Overview of the Missions and Operations of the European Union, August 2009, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/mapENaugust09.pdf, (23 September 2009)
[79] Howorth, **op.cit.**, 240.
[80] Emma J. Stewart, **The European Union and Conflict Prevention: Policy Evolution and Outcome**, Münster, Lit. Verlag, 2006, p. 77.
[81] For details see: European Council, 2003, Council Joint Action of 27 January 2003 on the European Union military operation in Macedonia 2003/92/CFSP. Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, **The European Union as a Global Actor**, New York, Routledge, 2006, p. 72.
[82] For details see: European Council, 2004, Council Joint Action of 12 July 2004 on the European Union military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. 2004/570/CFSP.
[83] Jolyon Howorth, "The European Security Strategy and Military Capacity: The First Significant Steps", in Sven Biscop, Jan Joel Andersson (eds.), **The EU and the European Security Strategy: Forging a Global Europe,** Routledge Advances in European Politics, 2008, p. 95.
[84] In line with the procedures "the EU and NATO agreed on mutual crisis consultation arrangements that are geared towards an efficient and rapid decision-making in each organization in the presence of a crisis." For details see: "EU-NATO: The Framework for Permanent Relations and Berlin Plus", para. 3,

significantly made use of NATO planning and assets. The EU's second military operation has been Althea that was assumed as the first grand test of the EU's military operation and was transferred from NATO's Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Being composed of 22 member states and 11 non member states and 2011 troops in total, the military forces intend to collect small arms and munitions, detect mines anti-tank rockets and explosives, and monitor and observe the activities, support training activities.[85] Althea's purpose was stated as follows:

> to provide a military presence in order to contribute to the safe and secure environment, deny conditions for a resumption of violence, manage any residual aspect of the General Framework Agreement for Peace and thereby allow all EU and IC actors to carry out their responsibilities.[86]

This operation represents a broader part of the EU's policy towards the Balkans which has political, cultural, economic, and commercial and police aspects at the same time. Thus, such a policy constitutes a ground for the membership of the Western Balkan countries. The key reinforcement tasks of Althea are to support to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)[87] and relevant authorities, and "provide the security environment in which the police [could] act against the organized criminal network." [88] Howorth asserts the difference between NATO and Althea is that the former is a purely military operation in nature whereas the latter has civil-military elements carrying a holistic approach. Althea's innovative side is that it makes a difference in supporting the fight against organized crime activities, cooperating with all the EU agencies and other international and regional authorities in Bosnia.[89]

In the second category, EU police missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM) created in 2003, and in Macedonia (EUPOL-Proxima) established in 2004 and completed in 2005 constitute the main exemplars of the civilian crisis management tasks of the EU. The European Union Police Mission (EUPM)[90] in Bosnia and Herzegovina aims at forming sustainable policing system in line with European and

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http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/03-11-11%20Berlin%20Plus%20press%20note%20BL.pdf, (23 September 2009)

[85] Jolyon Howorth, **Security and Defense Policy in the European Union**, New York, Palgrave McMillan, 2007, pp. 231-238.

[86] "**EU military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina**", http://www.euforbih.org/eufor/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=28, (10 February 2009)

[87] The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) was established as a United Nations court of law which set decisions on genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

[88] **Ibid.**

[89] Howorth, **op cit.**, p. 237.

[90] "European Council, 2002, "**Council Joint Action of 11 March 2002 on the European Union Police Mission**" 2002/210/CFSP, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L: 2002:070:0001:006:EN:PDF, (3 February 2009)

international standards under Bosnia and Herzegovina ownership. EUPM would as a part of rule of law approach establish a sustainable, professional and multi-ethnic police service "through mentoring, monitoring and inspecting and operating in accordance with European and international standards."[91] The EU also established an EU Police Mission in Macedonia EUPOL Proxima, in accordance with the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001. It included a wide range of EU police experts who were "monitoring, mentoring and advising the country's police thus helping to fight organized crime as well as promoting European policing standards."[92]

Additionally, the EU deployed an EU police advisory team (EUPAT)[93] in Macedonia in the framework of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). EUPAT was completed in 2006. EUPAT supported

> the development of an efficient and professional police service based on European standards of policing. Under the guidance of the EU Special Representative and in partnership with the host Government authorities, EU police experts monitor and mentor the country's police on priority issues in the field of border police, public peace and order and accountability, the fight against corruption and organized crime.[94]

The EUPAT was similar to EUPM. However the former rather aimed at supporting the reform measures of the national government.

The third type of operation is the EU Justice Mission. The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) is the largest civilian mission ever implemented under the ESDP and has been in force since 2008. The EULEX forces in Kosovo involve around 3200 persons including civilian polices, judges, custom officers and administrators. The mission supports the Kosovo authorities in the police, judiciary and customs areas as a rule of law area."[95] It would also "monitor, mentor and advise whilst

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[91] "**European Union Police Force, Mandate**", http://www.eupm.org/OurMandate.aspx,
(3 February 2009)
[92] For details see: "Framework Agreement- 13.08.2001",
http://faq.macedonia.org/politics/framework_agreement.pdf#search='Ohrid%20Framework%20A greement', (23 September, 2009); "EUPOL, Proxima",
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=584&lang=EN, (23 September 2009); and see: Council Joint Action 2003/681/CFSP, of 29 September 2003, on the European Union Police Mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (EUPOL "Proxima") http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Council%20Joint%20Action%202003%2068 1%20CFSP.pdf, (23 September 2009)
[93] For details see: European Council, 2005, Council Joint Action of 24 November 2005 on the establishment of an EU Police Advisory Team (EUPAT) in Macedonia, 2005/826/CFSP
[94] Howorth, **op.cit.**, p. 228.
[95] EULEX works under the general framework of United Nations Security Resolution 1244. For details see: "European Council Joint Action of 4 February 2008 on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo", EULEX KOSOVO, 2008/124/CFSP,
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:042:0092:0098:EN:PDF,
(3 February 2009)

retaining a number of limited executive powers."[96] In this operation one of the most promising developments is that the Member States of the EU who do not recognize the independence of Kosovo have also abstained from taking part in the mission but did not block the deployment of it.[97] It means that the member states of the EU, to a large extent, learned lessons from the conflicts in the Balkans that had previously left Europe fragmented.

In a nutshell, the EU has extended the scope and number of its responsibilities considerably to the military operations mixing them with additional civilian elements. When compared to the previous years, it can be argued that handling a great portion of preventive tasks Europe has become the main actor who takes the initiative in the Western Balkans.

Conclusion

The Balkans has conventionally been considered as the scene where the relationships among the regional and European great powers adversely affected the whole European continent and dragged it into several bloody wars. Coming to the current security concerns, it can be said that as an adjacent region of the EU, the western side of the Balkans has become an area where the EU faced new instabilities, risks and conflicts since the early days of the Cold War years. During the Yugoslavian wars in the 1990s, the EU's inadequate conflict management mechanisms and disunity within the EU started to imperil the future of the European security which also prompted "Balkanization" and almost a fragmentation in Europe. Beside the fear of fragmentation among the member states of the EU, the EU was motivated by its growing interest in asserting its role in the region to take the initiative. This was almost a necessity for Europe. It was shortly after the Kosovo War that broke out in 1999, that the EU took concrete actions in military, political and economic fields in the region and developed from an integrating region into a proactive regional/global actor. The EU's preventive policies were first launched to stabilize the region and prevent the conflicts from reoccurring, then inclined to an integration strategy for the Western Balkans region to join the Union. The EU's preventive policies developed into two categories: one was a "long-term prevention policy" including "development, assistance, trade policy, social, economic and political policies", and the other was "short-term prevention policy" including "deployment of peacekeeping and police forces and humanitarian aid." Being a peace project itself, the EU also started to contribute to diminish the old rivalries and create a broader peaceful community. The EU now envisions a new strategy and vision for the Balkans under the "Stabilization and Association Process (SAP)". In line with this new strategy, the Western Balkans are now being transformed from a conflict-torn region to a stable, democratic, adopting

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[96] **"EULEX Kosovo, European Union Rule of Law Mission"**, http://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/?id=2, (11 February 2009)

[97] Barbara Delcourt and Eric Remacle, "Global Governance: A Challenge for Common Foreign and Security Policy and European Security and Defense Policy" in Mario Telo (ed.), **European Union and Global Governance**, London, Routledge, 2009, p. 248.

market economies and the rule of law. The SAP is based on the EU enlargement schedule that was also pursued by other Central and Eastern European countries before their accession.

It can be said that the EU is now becoming a broader and more complicated security complex region penetrating into one of its sub-regions that is the Western Balkans through its preventive and integrative policies. This paves the way for the inclusion of the Western Balkans into a European security community that is likely to emerge in the future.

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