Assessing the Conflict Resolution Potential of the EU: The Cyprus Conflict and Accession Negotiations

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This article treats conflict prevention and conflict transformation as foreign policy tools that are available to international actors alongside classical security-based foreign policy measures. It investigates the conflict resolution role of the EU on the Cyprus conflict in the context of EU accession negotiations. For this purpose, the article: (a) depicts the changes in the roles the EU has played on the island within the context of the accession negotiations; (b) illustrates the nature of structural prevention measures that the EU has taken; and (c) describes the consequences of the EU involvement on UN-led negotiation efforts. The results suggest that the EU has treated the enlargement process as a structural prevention mechanism to change the incentive systems of the conflicting parties - neglecting the conflict-transformation aspects of foreign policymaking. Thus far, this has produced inefficient policies and resulted in the EU bringing an aged conflict into its own jurisdiction. Vision-building, capacity-building, and synergy-building are the three strategies that may help the EU to expand its foreign policy toolbox and to become an influential player in world politics.

Keywords Conflict resolution • foreign policy strategies • EU foreign policy • Cyprus dispute • EU accession negotiations

AT THE TURN OF THE MILLENIUM, the European Union is striving to become a global political entity. One of the main objectives of such an entity is building and following a structured and effective foreign policy with respect to emerging and ongoing conflicts, within both its own region and its periphery. However, the EU currently seems to lack the flexible foreign policy tools that are needed within a conflictual environment that is itself in continuous flux. The last fifteen years or so have given rise to many conflicts within Europe and its periphery. Inter-ethnic, inter-
communal disputes - such as conflicts within the borders of former Yugoslavia, in Somalia, Rwanda, Chechnya, and Nagorno-Karabakh - and interstate clashes, such as the conflicts with Iraq, are some of the landmarks of this era. The foreign policy of the European Union has not been able to respond efficiently vis-a-vis the challenges of these new conflicts. The conflicts within the borders of former Yugoslavia, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Cyprus conflict, and the recent crisis with Iraq have challenged the conflict-resolution potential of the post-Maastricht European Union. In all of these cases, the USA has had an upper hand in initiating and shaping political processes. This, in turn, has started a discussion within the EU on how to promote the Union from being a 'principled' bystander to an engaged actor in world politics.

Structural Prevention and Conflict Transformation as Foreign Policy Strategies

Especially in the post-Cold War era (specifically in the pre-9/11 period), conflict resolution - that is, structural prevention and conflict transformation -became an effective tool in the foreign policymaking of the major international actors, alongside conventional security-oriented policy measures. In other words, structural prevention and conflict transformation became two distinct tasks of foreign policy, and thus parts of foreign policy strategy-making together with power-based traditional diplomacy. This development was due to the changing nature of the international environment. The end of bipolar tension and the rise of identity-based inter-communal conflicts required international actors to employ different tools of involvement. During this period, the United States attempted to incorporate the tools of conflict resolution into its foreign policy by engaging in structural preventions and conflict-transformation activities (Stern & Druckman, 2000). Structural prevention-related foreign policy activities of the USA involved creating organizations or institutionalized systems of laws and rules that establish and strengthen nonviolent channels for accommodating conflicting interests, and transforming conflicts by finding common ground (Stern & Druckman, 2000).

The major assumption of these practices is that 'the propensity for violence is diminished by democratization, demilitarization, de-alignment, socioeconomic development, and expansion of human rights, humanitarian law, and sociocultural openness' (Clements, 2002: 83). Actions related to structural prevention are designed to change the incentive structure of the disputing parties, with an expectation that this will lead the parties to change their conflict behavior. Issuing rewards and promises, investing in socio-economic development, institution-building, and socio-
cultural openness are forms of structural prevention. Similarly, holding and withdrawing rewards, imposing embargoes, and issuing threats and commitments are punitive forms of structural prevention.

Actions related to structural prevention generally require an actor to adopt a partisan role in formulating and executing its foreign policies. In other words, in this approach, the actor, in evaluating political developments within its environment, makes a judgment about who is right and who is wrong and what the nature of the desired outcome is.

Conflict transformation has been another instrument of engagement in world politics during the recent era. At the conceptual level, conflict transformation is defined as 'the effort to reach accommodation between parties in conflict through interactive processes that lead to reconciling tensions, redefining interests, or finding common ground' (Stern & Druckman, 2000: 5). Conflict-transformation activities involve mechanisms used to transform dysfunctional relationships among parties to a conflict and aim at creating common intellectual and value space among those parties. The creation of common intellectual and value space requires mechanisms other than structural measures to deal with the complexities of deep-rooted conflicts. In this context, third-party involvements in the form of mediation/facilitation, problem-solving workshops (Track Two diplomacy), and training in conflict resolution are the tools available for international actors. These initiatives require a non-partisan relationship to the conflicts, and they are designed to deal with trust- and perception-related matters that cripple the relationships between conflicting parties. The type of intervention (or combination of interventions) to conduct and in which phase of the conflict it is to be introduced are strategic decisions for an effective foreign policy (Lund, 1996; Fisher, 1997).

This article analyzes the conflict-resolution role of the EU in the Cyprus conflict in the context of EU accession negotiations. The basic premise is that the EU has treated the enlargement process as a structural prevention mechanism - using threats and rewards to change the incentive systems of the conflicting parties - and has adopted an interested secondary-party role in relation to the conflict, neglecting the conflict-transformation aspect. However, as an emerging political actor, the EU needs to enlarge its foreign policy toolbox to deal with the conflicts that emerge in its territories and abroad. Therefore, this article aims to: (a) depict changes in the roles the EU has played on the island within the context of accession negotiations; (b) illustrate the nature of structural prevention measures that the EU has taken during the accession negotiations; and (c) describe the consequences of the EU involvement on the UN-led negotiation efforts.

It is within this context that the next section offers a brief background of the history of the Cyprus conflict. A subsequent section presents an account of the EU involvement in Cyprus through the accession negotiations. A final
section derives conclusions and makes recommendations for the incorporation of conflict-transformation roles within EU foreign policy along with the already existing structural prevention practices and conventional security measures.

The Cyprus Conflict and EU Enlargement

The Republic of Cyprus was established by the signing of the London and Zurich Treaties (1959) and the Treaty of Guarantee (1960), which designated Great Britain, Greece, and Turkey as guarantors of the island in the event of violation of the new republic's constitution. The subsequent decade, however, witnessed increasing violence between Greek and Turkish communities on the island.

In July 1974, an attempted coup d'etat lasting eight days was mounted against the government of Archbishop Makarios, then president of Cyprus, by a group of extremist Greek Cypriots. Turkey responded by intervening militarily, using its rights as a guarantor of the republic, and Turkish armed forces have maintained troops on the northern part of the island ever since. In 1976, two years after the coup attempt and the subsequent Turkish intervention, the Turkish-controlled north was named the Turkish Cypriot Federal State. This was followed by the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983. Until now, Turkey has been the only country that has recognized the breakaway state, and it has concluded a number of agreements with the country. The Greek part of the island is recognized as the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) in the international arena and continues to act in the name of the entire island. Since 1974, several attempts at mediation by the UN and the USA to achieve a reunified state on the island have failed (Guney, 2004; Fisher, 2001). On 24 April 2004, referenda were held in both the north and the south of the island to determine whether the islanders endorsed the Comprehensive Settlement Plan that was proposed by the UN in 2002 and finalized in March 2004. The referenda results showed that 65% of Turkish Cypriots approved the so-called Annan Plan, while 76% of Greek Cypriots rejected it. On 1 May 2004, the Republic of Cyprus became a member of the European Union as part of the EU's most recent wave of enlargement.

Following its creation by an initial six founding members, the EU has undergone four successive enlargements. The last wave of enlargement embraced the ten countries of Central and Eastern Europe, plus the islands of Cyprus and Malta. The EU considers the enlargement process as an opportunity to unite Europe after generations of conflict. Enlargement - by consolidating the political and economic transitions that have taken place in
the region - will contribute to stability and prosperity and enhance the security of all countries. As a result, the EU as a whole will be able to enjoy a greater likelihood of peace and prosperity. Hence, for the EU, the enlargement project by definition is a peace and conflict-resolution project.

One of the fault lines defining the friction between the enlargement project and the foreign policy of the EU is the island of Cyprus and the conflict that has defined the island for the last 40 years. During the accession negotiations with Cyprus, the European Union opted to follow a procedural policy that identified the RoC as 'the' representative of the island. With the continuation of this policy, the EU hoped to maintain the internal consensus of the Union on the issue of eastern enlargement and expected that the enlargement project - as a peace project - would have a catalytic effect on reinitiating bi-communal talks. However, so far, the incentives and pressures of the enlargement process have failed to persuade the parties to reach an agreement.

### Accession Negotiations

This section analyzes the various phases of accession negotiations. The phases are determined according to the positioning of the EU vis-a-vis the Cyprus issue at its major summits. One of the aims of this section is to depict the EU's roles in terms of their varying distances to the parties directly involved in the dispute. In other words, the EU's roles are evaluated along a spectrum ranging from a disinterested third-party position (non-partisan role) to an interested secondary-party (partisan) role. In any negotiation context, the primary parties are those who are directly affected by the issues under dispute (Rubin & Rubin, 1989). Interested secondary parties are those who have an indirect interest in the outcome of the dispute but prefer to support one of the disputants instead of adopting a third-party role. Interested third parties, on the other hand, are those who have an interest in the successful resolution of the conflict and engage in active settlement efforts (Wilmot & Hocker, 2001). Finally, disinterested third parties are those who have an interest in a successful solution, but do not necessarily take an active part in the settlement efforts. A further aim of this section is to illustrate the nature of structural prevention measures that the EU has initiated during the accession negotiations, and to describe the consequences of the EU involvement on the UN-led negotiation efforts.

In the following subsections, the accession negotiations in relation to Cyprus are evaluated in terms of seven phases. The first phase is the period between 1990 and 1994, the timeline between the application by the Greek Cypriots to the European Council in July 1990 and the EU summit at Corfu.
in July 1994, when the EU announced that it would include Cyprus in the next round of its enlargement. The second phase is the period between the end of 1994 and the July 1997 summit that set out Agenda 2000, the communication presented by the European Commission (1997) outlining the overall prospects for the development of the European Union and its policies, for the first seven years of the new millennium, in the context of an enlarged Union. The third phase is the period between July 1997 and the December 1999 EU summit at Helsinki. The fourth phase covers the involvement of the EU from the Helsinki Summit until the bi-communal talks in December 2001. The fifth phase is the timeline between December 2001 and April 2003, when Cyprus, together with nine other countries, signed the Accession Treaty. The sixth phase is the period between April 2003 and May 2004, between the signing of the Accession Treaty and the start of Cyprus's membership of the European Union. From May 2004 to the present is considered a seventh period for this analysis.

The First Phase (July 1990-June 1994)

On 4 July 1990, an application for membership of the European Union by Greek Cypriots acting on behalf of the Republic of Cyprus was presented to the European Council by Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis, who was then president of the Council. The Council accepted the application and forwarded it to the European Commission for consideration on 17 September 1990. The Commission, in its opinion on the application issued on 30 June 1993 and endorsed by the Council on 17 October later that year, considered Cyprus eligible for membership and, in expectation of progress on the political front, confirmed that the European Union was ready to start the process with Cyprus that should lead to its eventual accession. The European Council summits at Corfu in June 1994 and Essen in December 1994 confirmed that the next round of European Union enlargement would involve Cyprus and Malta.

The issue of EU membership and a possible settlement of the Cyprus conflict were closely linked, as far as the various parties were concerned. Therefore, the European Community had to make a number of important decisions at this point. A crucial decision was whether to accept the application made by the Greek-Cypriot authorities of the Republic of Cyprus on behalf of the whole island. The legitimacy of the application had already been questioned by the Turkish-Cypriot authorities in the TRNC on the grounds that the de facto Greek government did not represent the Republic of Cyprus.

Three years later, on 30 June 1993, the European Commission announced its opinion on the Greek-Cypriot application, declaring the Republic of Cyprus eligible for EU membership. The opinion suggested that:
Cyprus' integration with the Community implies a peaceful, balanced and a lasting settlement of the Cyprus conflict - a settlement that will make it possible for the two communities to be reconciled, for confidence to be re-established and for their respective leaders to work together.¹

On the other hand, the Commission indicated certain reservations with regard to the initiation of accession negotiations, saying that the negotiations would start 'as soon as the prospect of a settlement is surer' (Commission of the European Communities, 1993). At this point, the European Commission, although welcoming the future membership of the island of Cyprus, still regarded the positions of the primary parties as an essential part of the EU process. The Commission even set a date for reconsidering the question of the accession of Cyprus in January 1995. This permitted a sensible schedule for the Cypriot negotiations.

In this phase, the disinterested third-party position of the European Union was the result of a policy that viewed the possible accession of the island of Cyprus into the EU as closely related to a settlement of the conflict. Therefore, in this period, the EU kept an equal distance to the various parties and acted as a disinterested third party to the conflict.

**The Second Phase (June 1994–July 1997)**

At its Corfu Summit, the European Council announced that Cyprus and Malta would be involved in the next phase of enlargement of the European Union. This was the first time that the necessity of reaching a settlement to the Cyprus conflict and the accession process were separated. Conclusions reached at the summit did not refer to the need for a settlement before accession took place (European Council, 1994a). In the meantime, the European Court of Justice issued a ruling, in July 1994, against the import of Turkish-Cypriot potatoes and citrus fruit without RoC health and transport certificates (Tocci, 2001). In August 1994, the TRNC Assembly revoked all past commitments to a federal solution that it had put forward during the negotiations.

With the Essen Summit in December 1994, the European Council (1994b) reiterated the Corfu decision in favor of the initiation of talks with the RoC. On 6 March 1995, the General Affairs Council Conclusion confirmed the RoC's suitability for membership and established that accession negotiations with the RoC would start six months after the conclusion of the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference: 'The Council of Ministers . . . reaffirms the suitability of Cyprus for accession to the European Union and confirms the European Union's will to incorporate Cyprus in the next stage of its development' (General Affairs Council, 1995).²

² The decision of the Council was the result of a 'compromise' through which Greece was forced to lift its veto against the signing of the customs union agreement with Turkey.
In June 1995, the EC-Cyprus Association Council (1995) adopted a common resolution on the establishment of a structured dialogue between the EU and the RoC, and on laying out a roadmap on how to start the accession negotiations. The Association Council added that the RoC's membership in the Union aimed at bringing benefits to both communities on the island and contributing to peace and conciliation. In response to this, the TRNC leadership introduced preconditions to direct negotiations. Direct negotiations would only be resumed if conducted on a state-to-state basis. Following the March 1995 decision, Turkey and the TRNC declared their intention of partial integration in December 1995. This was followed by the Joint Declaration between Turkey and TRNC, which was signed in January 1997.3

In July 1997, Agenda 2000 set out the guidelines for the future of the European Union in the 21st century. The Agenda 2000 decision considered the start of the accession negotiations with the Republic of Cyprus in the name of the whole island. As a response to the decision, TRNC President Rauf Denktash blocked the ongoing talks in Glion and demanded an immediate halt to the accession negotiations between the RoC and the EU.

With the Corfu decision of June 1994, the European Union for the first time showed its determination to involve Cyprus in its next phase of enlargement without making the settlement of the Cyprus conflict a precondition for the start of accession negotiations, thus delinking the two issues. The higher-level goals of the Union urged the European Commission to be considerate in order to maintain unanimity among its members on the issues of enlargement and deepening. However, Greece, as a member-country, threatened the expansion to the Central and Eastern European countries by making a connection between membership of the RoC in the EU and its own veto power.4 In this period, the position of the Union shifted from being that of a disinterested third party to that of an interested secondary party.

**The Third Phase (July 1997-December 1999)**

In relation to the EU accession process, 1997 was an important year for the Cyprus conflict. In the summer of 1997, the UN-sponsored peace talks faltered on the EU issue when the European Commission (1997) - in its communication to the European Parliament and the European Council on the future development of the Union, Agenda 2000 - recommended the initiation of accession negotiations with Cyprus even in the absence of progress on the island's longstanding conflict. Agenda 2000 suggested that the prospect of accession could in itself provide an incentive for peace on the

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1 The Joint Declaration signed between Turkey and TRNC in January 1997 included economic and financial integration and partial foreign, defense, and security policy integration. 2 See 'Greek Memorandum on EU-Turkish Relations', in Greece, a news review from the embassy of Greece; available at [http://www.greekembassy.org/press/bulletin/nov98.html](http://www.greekembassy.org/press/bulletin/nov98.html) (accessed 11 March 2005).
island, and made it clear that if a settlement were not reached before EU accession negotiations were due to begin, they should be opened with the Greek Cypriots - the 'Republic of Cyprus' being the only internationally recognized authority on the island.

Following the announcement of Agenda 2000, the Greek Cypriots refused to discuss issues related to the EU within the ongoing UN talks, referring to the matter as 'governmental' (Pillai, 1999). The Turkish Cypriots responded by withdrawing from the UN negotiations, demanding recognition of the TRNC by the international community and suspension of the EU accession talks with the Greek Cypriots. The final blow to the peace process came with the December 1997 Luxembourg Council Summit: here, a date was given to the Greek Cypriots to begin accession negotiations with the EU, while Turkey was turned down in its sought-for candidate status (European Council, 1997). Turkey decided to freeze its political dialogue with the EU capital, Brussels, and began to take steps aimed at building economic integration between Turkey and the TRNC as a response to the developing integration between the RoC and the EU (Jakobsson-Hatay, 2001). When the accession negotiations were initiated between the Greek Cypriots and the EU in March 1998, Turkey established a joint economic zone with the TRNC. On 23 April 1998, Turkey and the TRNC jointly declared inter alia that:

the EU has disregarded international law and the 1959-1960 Agreements on Cyprus by deciding to open negotiations with the Greek Cypriot administration of Southern Cyprus, and has dealt a blow to the efforts for a solution. Currently, any negotiation process aimed at finding a solution to the Cyprus question can have a chance of success only if it is conducted between two sovereign equals.

Agenda 2000 recommended the initiation of accession negotiations even in the absence of progress in efforts aimed at reaching a settlement to the Cyprus conflict, while expressing a hope that the EU factor would have a positive effect on the conflict. It can be inferred that, with the Luxembourg Summit, the European Union's Cyprus policy coincided with its enlargement project. For the next seven years, the EU continued accession negotiations with the Greek Cypriots as scheduled. The Turkish Cypriots, struck first by an EU embargo on the export of citrus fruits and then by a financial crisis in mid-1997, suffered economic destabilization and relative economic deprivation, along with increasing integration with Turkey. Turkey was denied the status of a candidate country at the Luxembourg Summit. In this period, the EU continued to be an interested secondary party to the conflict by delinking the membership issue and the question of achieving a peaceful resolution to the conflict on the island.

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5 Although Turkey has frozen its political dialogue with Brussels, relations on other areas of cooperation have continued, as in the example of the customs union.

The Fourth Phase (December 1999-December 2001)

The Helsinki Summit in December 1999 was a turning point in EU-Cyprus relations. The summit had important overtones regarding the Cyprus conflict. A clause declaring that the Republic of Cyprus was a future member of the European Union confirmed the EU policy of delinking membership and requirements for a settlement to the conflict. The statement of the Council regarding the issue was as follows:

If no settlement has been reached by the completion of the accession negotiations, the Council’s decision on accession will be made without the above being a precondition. In this Council will take account of all the relevant factors. (European Council, 1999)

In addition, at the Helsinki Summit the European Union promised conditional membership to Turkey at some unspecified point in the future and offered a space in which to communicate ways of enhancing the relationship between the two parties. The decisions set out at the Helsinki Summit reveal that the European Council was trying to create a new platform with Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots. The granting of candidacy status to Turkey as a gesture to restart the suspended communication between the two sides provided a new platform within EU-Turkey relations, while the statement regarding the Cyprus conflict and the accession of the RoC into the Union was presented as a vital element of this new platform. New efforts to bring about a settlement of the Cyprus conflict were depicted as being one of the most important channels for rebuilding trust between Turkey and the EU.

While the Republic of Cyprus had been making rapid progress in the accession negotiations, the conflict-settlement efforts were not moving forward. The European Union responded negatively to Turkish-Cypriot demands and requests, such as recognition by the international community and the removal of the trade embargo on the TRNC. The European Union promised to respond with incentives, including a small amount of annual financial aid, in return for a settlement that was favorable to the European Union’s enlargement project. In the UN-sponsored process, Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash twice walked away from the negotiations. On November 2001, Turkey threatened to annex the TRNC if the RoC joined the member-states of the EU. In this period, the EU also joined in the escalation of tension, making continuous demands for concessions by the TRNC and Turkey, and backing these demands up with threats.

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7 Turkey still has to fulfill the Copenhagen Criteria, which stand as the biggest obstacle to starting accession negotiations with the EU.

8 According to a report in the Financial Times on 27 September 2002, the amount of financial aid to be given to Northern Cyprus would be determined according to the results of the bi-communal talks. Northern Cyprus, being under the EU’s financial aid program for the first time, was planned to receive 39 million euros for 2004, and this amount could be increased to up to 100 million euros in the following two years.

9 In a speech in Athens, Gunther Verheugen, Chief of Enlargement of the EU Commission, threatened Turkey’s application for EU membership in the event of a Turkish threat to the membership of the RoC; see NTV/MSNBC Online (2002).
The proximity talks under the observation of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, aimed at restarting the negotiations between the two communities, failed during 2000. Until the initiation of talks between the two communities in December 2001, the conflict reached a standstill with regard to the upcoming final decision on whether to include the RoC within the EU. During this period, the interested secondary-party role of the EU continued. As for structural prevention mechanisms, some rewards and punishments were implemented, though overall without having a constructive impact on the parties concerned.

**The Fifth Phase (December 2001-April 2003)**

In late December 2001, Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash came with an offer to RoC President Glafcos Klerides to restart bilateral negotiations between the Turkish- and Greek-Cypriot communities. The two leaders began to meet at least twice a week to discuss the current situation of the conflict. The UN was involved in these negotiations, with Alvaro De Soto, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus, taking part as a 'notetaker'. After several rounds of talks, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who had been working on the ideas generated in the bi-communal meetings, presented a 137-page plan to the two Cypriot communities and the guarantor states Greece, Turkey, and the UK on 11 November 2002. The signing of this plan was to take place prior to the upcoming European Council meeting in Copenhagen (12-13 December). The final agreement would then be signed by the leaders 'not later than 28 February 2003', and be put to simultaneous referenda on both sides on 30 March 2003.

In the meantime, Gunther Verheugen, Chief of Enlargement of the EU Commission, gave new assurances that the RoC would be accepted as a member of the EU by May 2004, even in the event that no solution to the Cyprus conflict were found, adding that the EU supported the Annan Plan. The EU schedule proposed that the treaty of accession be signed between the EU and the RoC by 16 April, with or without a settlement to the conflict.

On 16 April 2003, Cyprus, together with the other nine countries, signed the Accession Treaty to the European Union in Athens. The treaty, which was signed by the new president of the Republic of Cyprus, Tassos Papadopoulos, enabled the RoC to become a full member of the European Union as of 1 May 2004. Moreover, Jean Christophe Filori, a spokesman for EU Enlargement Commissioner Gunter Verheugen, said in a statement to the Cyprus News Agency on 16 April 2003 that the European Union still considered a solution to the Cyprus problem possible even after the accession of

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8 EU Commissioner Verheugen's address to the UK House of Commons on the issue of EU enlargement; see *NTVMSNBC Online* (2003).
Cyprus to the European Union and that, for this reason, in the Protocol on Cyprus there was a provision that, in the event of a Cyprus settlement, the suspension of the application of the acquis communautaire in the Turkish-occupied areas would be lifted. Filori concluded that the EU recognized only one state and that the whole island would accede to the EU, but that acquis communautaire would not apply to the TRNC until a solution had been found (Cyprus News Agency, 2003).

It may well be argued that the time pressure created by the EU accession schedule aided the UN in its efforts, enabling it to come up with a plan that both the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot leaders agreed on in principle as being 'workable'. However, the EU did not provide any flexibility after the initiation of the plan on its timetable, but rather offered financial assistance to the TRNC in the event of unification with the RoC. It is possible to conclude that in this phase the EU continued to be an interested secondary party to the conflict, keeping to its carrot-and-stick policies with regard to the impasse on the island.

The Sixth Phase (April 2003 and May 2004)

During this period, as the countdown to the RoC's accession continued, important changes took place in the domestic affairs of major players. On February 2003, Tassos Papadopoulos won the presidential elections and became the new president of the RoC. Following the TRNC's decision on easing of border restrictions for communal visits, on April 2003 the EU promised 15 million euros to the TRNC for easing trade between the EU and the TRNC and enhancing bi-communal projects.

Another major change in domestic politics occurred in Turkey. On November 2003, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) won the parliamentary elections and formed a majority government. Similarly, on 14 December, election results indicated an end to the legacy of the pro-status quo parties in the TRNC. As a result, a new coalition government was formed under the leadership of Mehmet Ali Talat, a pro-change leader.

This timeline was also marked by international community pressure on the RoC and Turkey to play a constructive role in the settlement of the dispute. On February 2004, a summit was held between the RoC and the TRNC at the United Nations headquarters in New York. At the summit, the parties agreed to have talks on a finalized text and to hold further referenda on the revised Annan text before 1 May 2004. On March 2004, the final text of the Annan Plan was prepared. The same month, the European Parliament urged Cypriots to accept the plan, saying that the choice was between saying yes and saying no to a solution on the island. The European Parliament adopted

See Reilly (2002).
a text specifying progress in Cyprus as a condition of progress for Turkey's entry into the EU.

The referenda took place on 24 April 2004. The TRNC accepted the plan by 65%, while only 24% of the Republic of Cyprus said yes. On 1 May, 'Cyprus' became a member of the EU. That meant that while officially the whole of Cyprus entered the European Union on 1 May 2004, the de facto EU border runs along the Green Line, dividing the country between its Greek and Turkish parts. The European Commission responded to the referenda results by voicing its regret over the negative outcome and its respect for the democratic decision of the people of the island.12

The European Union has promised to deliver 259 million euros in economic aid to the TRNC after the RoC declined the Annan Plan.13 At the end of this period, Cyprus signed the Accession Treaty together with nine other countries. In this phase, the EU became a primary party to the Cyprus conflict, bringing the conflict within its own jurisdiction.

The Seventh Phase (May 2004 to Present)

On 17 December 2004, at the European Council summit in Brussels, it was announced that Turkey would start accession negotiations by the end of October 2005 (European Council, 2004). The announcement stated that accession talks between Ankara and Brussels would be 'open-ended', with no guarantee of membership. The European Council issued a reminder for Turkey, specifying that Turkey needed to expand the Ankara agreement to include the ten new members of the European Union, including the Republic of Cyprus, within its customs union. Turkish officials declared that this did not mean official recognition of the Republic of Cyprus.14 In the meantime, another deadline for the solution of the conflict appeared: 3 October 2005 was announced by the EU as a new target date for resolving the problem. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan reiterated his government's continuing support of the UN plan. On 25 January 2005, Turkish army commander General Yasar Buyukanit said that Turkey would not withdraw even a single soldier from Cyprus without a permanent solution. In this phase, the primary party role of the EU is ongoing.

Conclusion

For the EU, the enlargement project, by definition, is a peace and conflict-resolution project. It may be the case that this assumption made the EU too

14 See European Council (2004).
dependent on the catalytic effect of the membership negotiations on the resolution of the Cyprus negotiations. At a practical level, this assumption has thus far proved inefficient. On 1 May 2004, the European Union brought into its political domain a protracted ethnic conflict.

The analysis in the previous section showed EU interventions in the conflict to be mostly in the form of structural prevention, consisting of a set of punishments and rewards. The punitive measures took the form of issuing threats, withdrawing rewards or membership prospects, or imposing embargoes. Rewards, on the other hand, were in the form of financial assistance. Overall, the impact of these interventions has not been constructive vis-a-vis UN-sponsored settlement efforts. In retrospect, their use contributed to the hardening of the negotiating positions of the TRNC and Turkey, and resulted in deadlocks in the UN-led settlement efforts. The analysis also illustrates that the EU adopted different partisan roles during the accession process. By delinking membership and requirements for a settlement of the dispute, the EU abandoned its 'disinterested third party' role and became an 'interested secondary party' to the conflict. With the membership of the RoC, the EU became 'a primary party' to the dispute. With such partisan roles, one can argue that the impact of the EU's punitive and integrative policies has been suboptimal, since the RoC and Turkey perceived the EU as taking sides.

That said, one might argue that there could be different explanations for the failure of the settlement efforts. The Cyprus conflict, after all, is an aged and complex dispute involving multiple parties, a range of resolution efforts, and various interlocking processes. Although the UN-sponsored negotiations targeted mainly the leaders of the two communities, Turkey's membership negotiations with the EU, the RoC's accession negotiations, the EU's internal negotiations on the eastern enlargement, Turkish-Greek relations, and US-EU relations are the crucial subtexts - in some instances the main texts of the same events. The present article, bearing the complexities of the issue in mind, highlights one additional aspect of the big picture. This is that the EU enlargement, as a peace policy, did not create the expected change in the incentive structures of the parties to the Cyprus conflict. This failure might be partly due to the complexities mentioned above. Another explanation is that structural prevention mechanisms correspond to a very rigid and limited set of foreign policy actions, whereas the nature of the dispute required a more sophisticated and complex approach to foreign policy. Within such an approach, in addition to the existing policies, the EU could have generated, from within, some new actors - official, semi-official, or even non-official - in order to enable engagement in conflict-transformation activities. These activities could have had complementary missions to the UN initiatives. This would have helped the parties - especially the TRNC and Turkey - to perceive the EU as an engaged and constructive player.

A quick analysis of the conflict-transformation efforts on the island indi-
cates that such activities as mediation, facilitation, track two diplomacy, dialogue groups, and conflict-resolution workshops are predominantly conducted by the USA and the UN (Fisher, 2001; Broome, 1998). Only recently has the EU showed some presence in these domains, and it appears that there have been few efforts to coordinate such activities with the official initiatives (Fisher, 2001).

International politics consists of a range of different activities. In addition to classical security measures, conflict prevention and conflict transformation-related policy actions are part and parcel of foreign policy outputs. Each foreign policy action is an intervention in an already existing state of affairs. Given the dynamic nature of the social interactions involved, the timing of an intervention, the nature and sequence of the involvement, and the purpose behind it are among the crucial parameters to be considered before any policy action is taken.

Conflicts have their own lifetime. They are never static events. They start, evolve, change, and - many times - end. Different types of involvements are needed at different stages of conflict development (Kriesberg, 1991; Fisher, 1997; Lederach, 1997). Especially in pre-conflict and post-conflict environments, investing in socio-economic development and expansion of human rights, humanitarian law, and democratization are effective measures to be taken to build peace and prevent conflicts. In this context, early warning and conflict prevention are two important policy tools, and the EU has begun to demonstrate noteworthy performance in this domain (see Van Tongeren, Van de Veen & Verhoeven, 2002; Ackerman, 2003). In continuing conflicts, however, there is a glaring absence of EU progress in the area of conflict transformation. The EU’s mediation potential has been limited in the Cyprus conflict, in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and during the current crisis in Iraq.

Deciding on the type of intervention (or combination of interventions) is a strategic decision for an effective foreign policy. In conflict-resolution situations, the most productive outcomes are generally achieved when the two main approaches are used as complementary strategies (Lund, 1996; Fisher, 2001; Lederach, 1997). This necessitates carefully planned conflict-management system designs (a systematic analysis of parties, issues, interests, existing processes) and an action plan for multiple interventions (which tools, at what level, when, in which combination, and for what purpose?).

The European Union has described itself as a political entity that implements global policies promoting the liberal principles of peace, stability, and prosperity. This philosophy or set of principles needs a sturdy operational backup. A skillful inclusion of conflict-transformation strategies in the EU’s foreign policy could be an important step towards the achievement of this goal. This would free the EU from its reliance on rigid carrot-and-stick policies and help in the formulation of creative and flexible foreign policies, especially in cases of continuing conflict.
To achieve this vision, the EU has to invest in capacity-building and institutionalization. Conflict-resolution process specialists could be included in existing decisionmaking teams, alongside issue experts. University-based centers and non-profit or semi-governmental think-tanks could be employed to prepare conflict-management system designs and constructive and creative intervention strategies. Training for professional scholar-practitioners, policymakers, NGOs, and diplomats offers other forms of capacity enhancement. Lastly, a coordination unit could be formed to orchestrate different complementary intervention activities, and to monitor and evaluate such involvements. The existing institutions of the EU - its Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit, for example - could be an option for coordination and evaluation efforts.

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References

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