

TURKEY'S KURDISH CONFLICT THROUGH THE LENSES OF CONFLICT  
RESOLUTION

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **TURKEY’S KURDISH CONFLICT THROUGH THE LENSES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

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This thesis aims to analyze Turkey’s Kurdish conflict in historical and current context by using conflict resolution approaches/tools. The goal is first to investigate how conflict resolution approaches may become helpful in understanding and explaining root causes of the Kurdish conflict, and then to search for which conflict resolution tools may be relevant in ending armed struggle between Turkish state and the PKK. We now experience a negative peace phase in this conflict because there is a mutual ceasefire between the conflict parties since the early months of 2013. In other words, most of the direct violence has today ceased. The thesis, however, argues that both structural and cultural violence that underlie direct violence in Kurdish conflict still continue. Therefore, it reveals that focus on only removing direct violence but not taking structural and cultural violence dimension of the conflict into account will no avail. For a stable peace in this three decades of bloody conflict, this study proposes some conflict resolution tools - third party, mediation, problem solving workshops, negotiation and reconciliation –.

**Keywords:** Conflict Resolution, Kurdish Conflict, Basic Needs, Deprivation, Identity.

## ÖZ

### ÇATIŞMA ÇÖZÜMÜ PERSPEKTİFİNDEN TÜRKİYE’NİN KÜRT SORUNU

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Bu çalışma çatışma çözümü yaklaşımları / araçları perspektifinden tarihsel ve güncel bağlamı içerisinde Türkiye’nin Kürt sorununu ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Tezin öncelikli hedefi belirli çatışma çözümü yaklaşımlarının Türkiye – PKK çatışmasının temel nedenlerini anlama ve açıklamada ne derece faydalı olabileceğini tartışma, daha sonra ise taraflar arasındaki silahlı mücadelenin bir daha geri döndürülmemek üzere sona erdirilmesi için hangi çatışma çözümü araçlarının kullanılabilmesine yönelik bir analiz çerçevesi sunmaktır. 30 yıllık çatışma tarihi boyunca ilk kez 2013 yılı başı itibariyle de facto anlamda iki taraflı bir ateşkes durumu sözkonusudur. Doğrudan şiddetin varolmadığı ama yapısal / kültürel şiddetin devam ettiği “negatif barış” dönemi olarak da adlandırılabilir bu dönemin yapısal / kültürel şiddetin de bertaraf edildiği “pozitif barış” ya da “kalıcı barış” dönemine evrilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu tez yapısal/kültürel şiddetin silahlı çatışmanın altında yatan temel gerekçe olduğunu varsaymaktadır. Çalışmanın vardığı sonuç, aktörlerin bu çatışmanın salt doğrudan şiddet/silahlı mücadele boyutu üzerinde durmalarının, fakat yapısal/kültürel şiddeti gözönünde bulunduramamalarının kalıcı barışın önündeki en büyük engellerden biri olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu bağlamda, negatif barışın pozitif barışa dönüştürülebilmesi için üçüncü taraf, müzakere, arabuluculuk, problem çözücü çalıştaylar ve toplumsal mutabakat gibi bazı çatışma çözümü yaklaşımları önerilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çatışma Çözümü, Kürt Sorunu, Temel İhtiyaçlar, Yoksunluk, Kimlik.

*To my daughter, Serra*

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## **LIST of ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AK PARTY</b>	Justice and Development Party (of Turkey)
<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>CHP</b>	Republican People's Party
<b>ELN</b>	National Liberation Army (Colombia)
<b>ECOWAS</b>	the Economic Community of West African States
<b>FARC</b>	the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
<b>HPG</b>	People's Defence Force
<b>ICG</b>	International Crisis Group
<b>IRA</b>	Irish Republican Army
<b>KCK</b>	Group of Communities in Kurdistan
<b>MGK</b>	National Security Council
<b>NATO</b>	the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PACE</b>	Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly
<b>PKK</b>	Kurdistan Workers' Party
<b>PLO</b>	Palestine Liberation Organization
<b>PRIO</b>	Peace Research Institute Oslo
<b>PYD</b>	Democratic Union Party (Syria)
<b>The UN</b>	United Nations
<b>The EU</b>	European Union
<b>TRC</b>	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
<b>UNESCO</b>	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is twofold. The first goal is to develop an understanding of the dynamics of Turkey's Kurdish conflict that is one of the most important causes of political instability in Turkey today and the biggest challenge to the existence of it since its foundation. The second and primary aim of the study is to seek whether a sustainable peace is possible in light of some conflict resolution tools what has not yet been tested properly. The reason why I use conflict resolution to examine this case is that first it identifies root causes of the conflict particularly causes in the form of unmet or threatened needs for identity, security, recognition, autonomy as well as feeling of deprivation, and then develops an understanding of ways in which a violent conflict can be transformed into peaceful processes of social and political change. In other words, conflict resolution puts its focus on the circumstances in which the conflict arises, and thus emphasizes on structural and socio-psychological dimensions of it. However, until very recently, Kurdish conflict has been mainly approached by security-oriented policies in a coordinated with socio-economic development projects, but not addressed by conflict resolution or peacebuilding perspectives. Even its existence was denied for long and instead it was referred as a problem of terrorism.

In the near past, the main argument of Turkey was that the problem was one of terrorism, but not about Kurdish needs and grievances. In this sense, the prevailing view in the government and military circles has so far been that "let us separate Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorist organization from the Kurdish issue and thus the state should not negotiate with the PKK to resolve Kurdish issue". This approach was, however, far from being realistic. It was destined to change and has been changed as well. This was inevitable. Because Turkey's security-oriented policies have already been tested for almost 30 years but no positive result has been achieved. Turkey finally

realized that it is not possible to completely destroy the PKK through military means and to solve Kurdish issue through timid cultural and political reforms, including socio-economic development processes. The PKK, too, which emerged as an illegal organization in the late 1970s claiming a national liberation struggle for the Kurdish nation across the four countries –Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran – understood that it cannot achieve an independent Kurdistan with a revolutionary struggle. Today, therefore, it supports – at least in its discourse - a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish conflict within the framework of the unitary structure of Turkey. In this context, Turkey and the PKK finally initiated official talks between 2009 and 2011 after almost 30 years of bloody internal war through secret meetings that would later be called as “Oslo process”<sup>1</sup>.

Oslo process, however, totally collapsed seemingly because of leak of the secret meetings to the media and the celebrations at the Habur border gate where some Kurdish refugees in Mahmur camp and ex-militants in Kandil Mountains entered in Turkey as a part of the process. After failure of this attempt to resolve the Kurdish conflict, the parties again resorted to violence to achieve their goals. Thus, the conflict has speedily escalated and turned into a full-scale war between 2011 and 2012. According to a report prepared by the ICG (International Crisis Group), Kurdish conflict has become more violent with more than 700 dead only between July 2011 and September 2012, the highest casualties in the last thirteen years<sup>2</sup>. In this period, it may be assumed that Kurdish conflict has reached at a point where further escalation of violence is very costly what is known “mutually hurting stalemate”. Both Turkey and the PKK came to know that they cannot obtain their goals by violence, because it is costly to sustain. The violence has, for this reason, been mutually felt by both parties to be disadvantageous. The parties came to agree on other alternatives than use of force and ultimately have turned to the negotiation table. Because, they have realized that that dialogue is the best and the only way for resolution of this conflict. We are currently going through a peace

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<sup>1</sup> BBC News, “Profile: The PKK”, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-20971100> (21 March 2013).

<sup>2</sup> International Crisis Group (ICG), *Turkey: “The PKK and a Kurdish Settlement”*, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/219-turkey-the-pkk-and-a-kurdish-settlement](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/219-turkey-the-pkk-and-a-kurdish-settlement) (September 2012).



process began with direct talks (open negotiations) called “İmralı or Solution Process” between Abdullah Öcalan – jailed leader of the PKK - and the state officials. We do not yet know where this process will evolve but it is worthwhile to note that the process aimed at ending the decades-old conflict that will not be easy at all.

Given this framework, this study will first investigate how conflict resolution approaches may be used in understanding and explaining root causes of the Kurdish conflict. Then, it will search for which conflict resolution tools may be relevant in ending armed struggle between Turkey and the PKK, and in building positive peace. In this respect, after making introduction in the first chapter, the second chapter begins with providing a context to conceptualize conflict and its nature. It will, later on, elaborate on a theoretical debate of whether conflict is helpful or baneful (constructive or destructive). It basically argues that conflict does not necessarily mean a bad or evil phenomenon or something to be eliminated unconditionally. It may be a necessary stage in progress towards institutional change, human development, social justice as well more equitable distribution of resources<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, conflict makes it possible to explore root causes of a problem and thus may give us an opportunity to examine what to do to resolve it<sup>4</sup>. To put it another way, conflict is a kind of socio-psychological indication like appearance of a disease in the human body and it reminds us that there is something not going well within a society or order. The thesis, however, draws a limit to this explanation of conflict adding the question of - to what extent conflict can be useful in bringing about positive changes -.

This thesis basically claims that conflict can be used to establish a stable peace, unless (direct) violence dominate it. Therefore, it is also discussed how to transform a violent conflict into a non-violent one or a destructive conflict into a constructive one. Because while a destructive (protracted) conflict brings only violence, death and

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<sup>3</sup> Boulding, Kenneth E., *Conflict and Defense: A General Theory*, New York: Harper & Row, 1962, p. 307.

<sup>4</sup> For conflict definitions, see. Burton, John, *Conflict: Resolution and Provention*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990; Galtung, Johan, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, Sidmouth: Pluto Press, 2004.

devastation; a constructive conflict may trigger dynamics of change and social justice<sup>5</sup>. Turkey's Kurdish conflict which is the case study of this thesis, too, will be assessed on the assumption that Turkish public has directly encountered Kurdish issue and become aware of the existence of Kurds after the conflict between Turkey and the PKK emerged. Thus, it is easy to draw conclusion that despite its all detrimental and malignant effects on Turkey's society, Kurdish conflict has rendered possible to think on how to eliminate root causes of Kurdish issue and establish peace. However, it is a fact that this conflict is still under the yoke of violence and how to free it from violence is the urgent case.

Afterwards, in order to properly understand what kind of conflict we're dealing with, some types of conflict – one-sided violence, non-state conflict and state-based conflicts – will be examined<sup>6</sup>. The first two types of conflict are not directly related to the case study of this thesis. State-based conflicts include both inter-state and intra-state conflicts. The focal point, however, will be ethno-political conflict under the section of intra-state conflict, which is directly relevant to the case study of this thesis – Turkey's Kurdish Conflict –. This thesis deems Kurdish conflict as an ethno-political-based one on the grounds that ethnic conflict that frequently hint civil war or clashes between two or more ethnic groups does not explain this conflict properly. Rather, as Ted R. Gurr points out, ethno-political conflicts occur when groups that define themselves using ethnic criteria make claims on behalf of their collective interests against the state, or against other political actors<sup>7</sup>. In other words, ethnicity in itself is not main source of the conflict. It rather plays a motivational role for ethnic identity based groups in their struggle against the repressive state or other dominant groups. Based on this assumption, our study argues that Turkey's Kurdish conflict can also be considered as an ethno-political conflict because Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups did not yet go in

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<sup>5</sup> Deutsch, Morton, *The Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973.

<sup>6</sup> Conflict types were chosen by using 'categorization' made by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program based at Uppsala University, Sweden. See, "Definitions" on the web site <http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/>

<sup>7</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, "Peoples Against States: Ethno-political Conflict and the Changing World System: 1994 Presidential Address" *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 1994, p.348

direct conflict each other, though social tensions sometimes escalate at the community level primarily in the Western cities in Turkey.

Later on, conflict stages which are emergence, escalation, hurting stalemate, de-escalation /negotiation and dispute settlement will be discussed in the second chapter. However, it will be given special emphasis on the concepts of hurting stalemate and ripe moment for the settlement of a conflict on the belief that Kurdish conflict has reached to the point of mutually hurting stalemate. In chapter II, Galtung's theory of conflict will be also examined by going into details of how to transform a violent conflict at least into a non-violent conflict in the light of Conflict Resolution. In this section, types of violence – direct, structural and cultural violence - will be first analyzed in depth. As for the relationship of these types of violence with Kurdish conflict, all of these versions of violence will be assumed to prevail over this case. Though direct violence –armed struggle between the state and the PKK – considered as the most highlighted aspect of the Kurdish conflict, it may be regarded as a consequence of structural and cultural violence over Kurdish population. Thus, unless structural and cultural violence removed, this conflict has always capacity to turn into a direct violence. In other words, even if armed conflict between the parties ceased today or the PKK completely destroyed by the Turkish state, there is no guarantee that this conflict will be totally resolved. Because structural reasons of the conflict are still waiting to be eliminated. In relation to this, peace types - negative and positive peace – will be referred in order to explain the current phase in the Kurdish conflict. We are in a negative peace phase in this conflict because there is a mutual ceasefire between the parties since the early months of 2013.

Key elements in conflict analysis – parties, goals, interests, values and perceptions- will be described in chapter III for a better understanding of conflict dynamics. The fourth chapter will also look through definition of some conflict resolution instruments/tools which can be applied to transform Kurdish conflict, such as third party intervention (mediation), problem solving workshops, negotiation and reconciliation.

The last chapter will first analyse background of the Kurdish conflict. In this part, it is argued that this conflict has deep historical, political and cultural roots that can be traced back to the Ottoman era. In other words, armed conflict between modern Turkey and the PKK is not something new. There were already clashes between Ottoman state forces and Kurdish rebels, though intermittently. Namely, there is a historical chain of this armed conflict which has existed between various Kurdish insurgent groups and Turkish governmental /military institutions, for more than almost a century. This conflict did not start with emergence of the PKK. Some major Kurdish rebellions can be listed as follows;

- Badr Khan Beg rebellion against centralized Ottoman empire in 1845-1847,
- Shaykh Ubayd Allah rebellion driven by desire to establish a truly independent Kurdistan in 1880,
- Kocgiri Rebellion organized by Society for the Rise of Kurdistan in 1921,
- Sheikh Said Rebellion organized by Azadi (Freedom) against the young Turkish Republic in 1925 ( motivated by mix of nationalist and religious reasons),
- Ararat (Ağrı) Rebellion prepared by Xoybûn (Independence) organization in 1930,
- Dersim rebellion (or massacre) in 1937-38.

Despite changing actors or parties on the Kurdish side, the essence of the conflict has still remains to be unchanged. What we are now, however, witnessing in this conflict is the longest and deepest violent phase backed by the PKK since 15 August 1984 with armed attacks on Eruh and Şemdinli. Consequently, as a distinguished Turkish journalist – Cengiz Çandar – specified, conflict between Turkey and the PKK may be summarized as the last Kurdish insurgency, which requires a need of re-identifying the situation as a “Kurdish Insurgency” rather than defining the PKK activities as completely “terrorism” or the PKK as a pure “terrorist organization” and its members as “terrorists”<sup>8</sup>. After giving historical context of the Kurdish conflict in this

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<sup>8</sup> Çandar, Cengiz, *Leaving the Mountain: How may the PKK Lay Down Arms?: Freeing the Kurdish Question from Violence*, Istanbul: TESEV Publications, 2012, p.25.

[http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/1fe2c9c3-fe84-4044-81a1d8a3ab906e5c/12028ENGsilahsizlandirma16\\_03\\_12Rev1.pdf](http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/1fe2c9c3-fe84-4044-81a1d8a3ab906e5c/12028ENGsilahsizlandirma16_03_12Rev1.pdf)

chapter, I will look for answers of the questions: Who are the parties to this conflict? What are goals of the parties? Are their goals legitimate or not? If they have interests and needs, what are they? How do their values and perceptions differ?. This chapter will also explore root causes of the Kurdish conflict through the lenses of some conflict resolution approaches; basic human needs (identity, recognition, autonomy and security), relative deprivation and identity formation. In the last part, focal point of this thesis will revolve around which conflict resolution tools can be applied in transforming this violent conflict and creating a peacebuilding process; third party (mediation), problem solving workshops, negotiation and reconciliation.

## CHAPTER II

### *A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS for CONFLICT RESOLUTION*

#### **2.1. Conceptualizing Conflict**

##### *2.1.1. Definition of Conflict*

Although it remains true that a generally accepted and precise definition of ‘conflict’ is still elusive, the term conflict has particularly been used in conflict resolution and peace studies literature to refer to some other conceptions such as incompatibility of objectives between two or more parties and heterogeneity of values, interests, needs, perceptions, beliefs etc. This emanates in part from the fact that conflicts may arise in different stages and levels as well as in several forms depending upon their own course and dynamics. To put it another way, each conflict seems to be the only one of its kind having unique characteristics and distinguishable features. Thus, an important point to note from the outset is, every conflict requires to be addressed in its own context within which it is embedded. Based on this argument it is claimed that it would be difficult to decipher a conflict without understanding its historical context which involves political, ethical and socio-psychological dimensions. Ho Won Jeong put it thus “the context of conflict can be illustrated in light of historical events or incidents ...the history of a conflict ... constitute the context of an ongoing episode”.<sup>9</sup> As he pointed out, the definition of conflict will be incomplete, if conflict is described only through clashing goals, interests, values and beliefs by neglecting its historical context within which it emerges, escalates, de-escalates and comes to an end peacefully or forcefully.

After emphasizing importance of contextual aspect of conflict, let us now look closely at some definitions of conflict developed by prominent conflict resolution scholars. Kenneth Boulding describes it “as a situation of competition in which the

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<sup>9</sup> Jeong, Ho Won, *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis*, London: SAGE Publications, 2008, p. 38.

parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of the other”<sup>10</sup>. Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall suggest that conflict corresponds to the pursuit of incompatible goals by different individuals or groups<sup>11</sup>. According to Kriesberg, “a conflict arises when two or more persons or groups manifest the belief that they have incompatible objectives”<sup>12</sup>. Johan Galtung, the father of peace studies, portrays conflict as “actors’ pursuing incompatible goals”<sup>13</sup>. Being also a mathematician, Galtung develops a formula that “conflict = attitude + behavior + contradiction”<sup>14</sup>. In his formula, attitudes, behaviors and contradictions of the parties reflect their goals, the pursuit and the incompatibility, respectively. In other words, while adversaries to a conflict determine their attitudes and behaviors in the pursuit of a particular goal, contradiction resulting from this situation leads to incompatibility. As revealed, focal point in defining conflict is incompatibility of goals between the parties on the grounds that there is no struggle, by its very nature, on what is already agreed. Therefore, it would be easy to draw the conclusion that the more incompatibility, the greater the likelihood of giving rise of contention, contradiction or dispute.

To understand the seriousness of what we are going to explore we have to ask ourselves a fundamental question – can incompatibilities in a conflict be overcome by ‘win-lose approach’ or zero-sum game. In his own words, Galtung insists that “conflicts are not a game to be won or lost, but are often a struggle to survive, for well-being, freedom, and identity - all basic human needs”<sup>15</sup>. That is to say, he implies that conflict is a natural phenomenon which comes to exist in the course of time, and the result of

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<sup>10</sup> Boulding, Kenneth E., *Conflict and Defense: A General Theory*, New York: Harper & Row, 1962, p.5.

<sup>11</sup> Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, p.31.

<sup>12</sup> Kriesberg, Louis, *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2007, p.2.

<sup>13</sup> Galtung, Johan, *A Theory of Conflict: Overcoming Direct Violence*, Kolofon Press, 2010, p. 24.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>15</sup> Galtung, Johan, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, Sidmouth: Pluto Press, 2004, (Preface) pp. viii – ix.

conflict does not necessarily always leave clear-cut winners or losers. Although “the dynamics of actions and counteractions in conflict situations inevitably engage attempts to control the other’s behavior often with the intent to injure or destroy”<sup>16</sup>, the words ‘win and lose’, in fact, are not appropriate to describe a conflict.

On the other hand, Galtung elsewhere mentions on sociopsychological dynamics of conflict. For him, conflict is an expression of everything in us, our feelings, our thoughts, then, he goes further by saying that “conflicts demand of us everything we have to offer. If not, our emotions will easily be expressed as violence ... as verbal violence, physical violence, or both”<sup>17</sup>. Vamik Volkan also argues that longevity of conflict may be ascribed to the negative emotions that are often supported by collective memory<sup>18</sup>. In short, being assumed as a social phenomenon which pertains to mankind, conflict addresses our feelings, emotions, thoughts and more so that it can be analyzed and understood. We have so far made clear that there is no agreed meaning of conflict. If conflict, however, to be addressed within its own integrity and context, in order that we can understand incompatibilities between the parties as well as reflections of feelings, emotions etc. of individuals or groups better, it would be easy to decipher ‘conflict’ to the certain extent. Undoubtedly, none of these factors alone suffices to explain and comprehend conflict in all aspects. They require to be taken into consideration all together, for this reason. Let us now move to a brief analysis of the nature of conflict examining the debate of whether conflict is a socially constructed phenomenon or is part of man’s biological makeup and whether it should be avoided or welcomed.

### ***2.1.2. Nature of Conflict***

The importance of gaining insight into the nature of conflict is based on the fact that conflict dates from the beginning of human history and will probably never end.

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<sup>16</sup> Jeong, *op.cit.*, p.5.

<sup>17</sup> Galtung, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, *op.cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Volkan, Vamik, *Killing in the Name of Identity: A Study of Bloody Conflicts*, Charlottesville: Pitchstone Pub., 2006.



Until so far achieved degree of evolution of human society, almost all civilizations and cultures have experienced many wars, upheavals, riots, revolts as well as terrorism. When asked why this is so, Parlevliet replies that “conflict is a normal, natural, and inevitable part of life; it is a social and political phenomenon that is inherent in relations between people with different views, needs, interests, values and resources”<sup>19</sup>. Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall go parallel with this argument and put special emphasis on conflict’s being a universal feature of human society. According to them, conflict takes its origins in economic differentiation, social change, cultural formation, psychological development and political organization – all of which are inherently conflictual.<sup>20</sup>

Galtung, among other things, comes up with the idea that owing to the fact that conflict is inherently unavoidable, “conflict prevention is also meaningless, but violence prevention is extremely meaningful and beneficial”<sup>21</sup>. To put it differently, conflict will always be available by its very nature, what’s important is to insulate it from violence. As Jeong argues, conflict represents the persistent and pervasive nature of inter-group and international competition among disparate interests and values.<sup>22</sup> Thus, one should acknowledge that conflict is the case, so it should be welcomed, not avoided. Wallensteen, too, alleges that conflicts may be expected to be transformed, but not eliminated. He asks the question of whether “it is possible to meet all the needs that humans may have”?... and answers if not, “then conflict resolution becomes a way of managing conflict ... but not ending it”<sup>23</sup>. Since we will elaborate on what conflict resolution precisely means in the second chapter, it suffices here to say that that priority

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<sup>19</sup> Parlevliet, Michelle, “Icebergs and the Impossible – Human Rights and Conflict Resolution in Post settlement Peace Building”, Babbitt, Eileen F. and Ellen Llutz (ed.), *Human rights & conflict resolution in context Colombia, Sierra Leone, Northern Ireland*, Syracuse, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, 2009, p.260.

<sup>20</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, op.cit., p.7.

<sup>21</sup> Galtung, Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work, op.cit., p.2.

<sup>22</sup> Jeong, op.cit., p.5.

<sup>23</sup> Wallensteen, Peter, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System*, London: SAGE Publications, 2002, p.42.

of conflict resolution is to transform violence into non-violence, but not to end a conflict.

P. Wallensteen notes, “conflicts may even be regarded as a challenge to expand our spaces, and to furnish them creatively with new, feasible, realities”<sup>24</sup>. Conflict resolution, therefore, rejects the view that the resistance to any form of a coercive authority is due to degeneration in human nature, or decline in moral values<sup>25</sup>. It does not reflect the truth, it may be forerunner of change, human development as well as social justice, on the contrary. Because, “there has always been a drive toward freedom from oppression, and a struggle for individuality or autonomy ... so we cannot assume that members of contemporary communities have become inherently less socially responsible, less moral, less rational and more violent than their predecessors<sup>26</sup>. In a nutshell, conflict appears to be a point at which transforming of crisis into opportunity.

We now return to the a never-ending debate that the extent to which the conflict /aggression becomes rooted in the social structure, or is innately based on a human instinct. Ted Robert Gurr, in his well-known work “Why Men Rebel” writes; “there are three distinguishable psychological assumptions about the generic sources of human aggression: that aggression is solely instinctive, that it is solely learned, or that it is an innate response activated by frustration<sup>27</sup>. The first two motives behind conflict / aggression are not directly related to our thesis subject. The last factor or frustration, however, will be one of the focal points in explaining underlying reasons of protracted conflicts, for particularly our case study – Turkey’s Kurdish Conflict. A considerable similarity between man and animal suggested by Elton B. McNeil in terms of physiological predisposition for survival among all creatures. He posits that fighting is a natural event among all the important orders of mammals, even though its intensity

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<sup>24</sup> Galtung, Johan, “Peace by Peaceful Conflict Transformation – the Transcend Approach”, Webel, Charles and Johan Galtung (ed.), *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies*, Taylor & Francis, 2007, p.19.

<sup>25</sup> Burton, John, *Conflict: Resolution and Provention*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990, p.153.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p.153.

<sup>27</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 31.

varies according to species as well as within a single species.<sup>28</sup> “Theorists are in general agreement that aggression is a fundamental characteristics of existence and begins as a reflection of the action and vitality of living”<sup>29</sup> McNeil argues. On the contrary, Sevilla Statement on Violence, which was declared by the Spanish National Commission for UNESCO in 1986 and later adopted by UNESCO in 1989, mainly says conflict is not a biological necessity, peace is possible. The statement contains five propositions as follows<sup>30</sup>;

1. *It is scientifically incorrect to say that we have inherited a tendency to make war from our animal ancestors.*
2. *It is scientifically incorrect to say that war or any other violent behaviour is genetically programmed into our human nature.*
3. *It is scientifically incorrect to say that in the course of human evolution there has been a selection for aggressive behaviour more than for other kinds of behaviour.*
4. *It is scientifically incorrect to say that humans have a 'violent brain'.*
5. *It is scientifically incorrect to say that war is caused by 'instinct' or any single motivation.*

As we suggested earlier, what aggression / conflict originates from is a never-ending debate and this thesis is not intended to highlight generic aspects of this impasse. Nonetheless, it is assumed that there is a biologically inherent disposition to respond aggressively in men and animals, especially when they are frustrated. Jeong, too, indicates that “aggression stems from a blocked energy of frustration produced in a diverse social, psychological environment”.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, McNeil traces the bulk of

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<sup>28</sup> McNeil, Elton B., “the Nature of Aggression”, McNeil, Elton B. (ed.), *the Nature of Human Conflict*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965, p.16.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.33.

<sup>30</sup> UNESCO, “Seville Statement on Violence, Spain”, [http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=3247&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3247&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) 1986.

<sup>31</sup> Jeong, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

human aggressiveness back to frustration<sup>32</sup>. J.H. Masserman also claims that “the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression”<sup>33</sup>

What is so striking about conceptualization of frustration is hierarchy of dominance among members of society or system regardless of they are individuals, states etc. To illustrate, once an individual or a group has achieved a position of dominance over other individuals or groups, he/she or it violently resist any effort made to lower his/its status. It is at this very point that J.H. Masserman notes that such a loss of status may result in the most extreme forms of expression of human aggression – murder or suicide<sup>34</sup>. When we draw a parallel to state level, we could see that “the basic character of the national state, which is based on the subordination of all power relations within the society to the single authority structure of the state<sup>35</sup>, appears as one of the main sources of frustration. Johan Galtung also puts the same thing in another way, conflict emerges where efforts by oneself or others to achieve some goals, to fulfill some values, to satisfy some needs as a result of frustration<sup>36</sup>.

### ***2.1.3. Is conflict helpful or baneful?***

Even though conflicts are inclined to have negative connotations, it is fair to say that not every conflict is damaging, if the outcome brings about positive changes and gives individuals or groups the opportunity to achieve their objectives. It means that, conflict is not always negative but goes shuttle between constructive and destructive phases. As it was argued before, conflict resolution basically suggests that conflict does not

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<sup>32</sup> McNeil, *op. cit.*, pp.28-29.

<sup>33</sup> Masserman, Jules H. and Paul W. Seever, *Dominance*, “Neurosis and Aggression: An Experimental Study”, *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol 6, 1946, p.15.

<sup>34</sup> McNeil, *op. cit.*, p.21.

<sup>35</sup> Withey, Stephen and Daniel Katz, “The Social Psychology of Human Conflict”, McNeil, Elton B. (ed.), *the Nature of Human Conflict*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965, p.66

<sup>36</sup> Galtung, Johan, “Institutionalized Conflict Resolution: A Theoretical Paradigm”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1965, p. 349

necessarily amount to a bad or evil phenomenon or something to be eliminated unconditionally. It may be a necessary stage in progress towards institutional change, human development, social justice as well more equitable distribution of resources. Conflict is a sort of socio-psychological indication like appearance of a disease in the human body and it reminds us that there is something not going well within a society or system. Similarly, John Burton claims that after conflict “there might be an analysis of the nature of the problem, and of the options that might be available”<sup>37</sup>. Thus it enables us, first, to explore its root causes, and later, to examine what to do to resolve it.

The pertinent question is to what extent conflict can be called constructive or destructive. Morton Deutsch answers this question like:

“a conflict clearly has destructive consequences if its participants are dissatisfied with the outcomes and feel they have lost as a result of the conflict ... a conflict has productive consequences if the participants all are satisfied with their outcomes and feel that they have gained as a result of the conflict”<sup>38</sup>.

Elsewhere, Deutsch alleges that there is no winner and no loser; both win in a constructive conflict, in destructive conflicts there is usually a winner and a loser, by contrast <sup>39</sup>. Therefore, it is inaccurate to characterize all conflicts as zero-sum game. Our intention here, in fact, is to provide a way to think about the possibility of how to transform a zero-sum game to win-win game or a destructive conflict into a constructive conflict - a violent conflict into non-violent conflict -. I maintain, in this thesis, that as long as violence is controlled, conflict can be utilized to establish a stable peace. Undoubtedly, conflict does not equal to violence which may sometimes dominate it, though. Considered thoroughly, it will be seen that while a destructive conflict brings only violence and devastation, constructive conflicts may have capability to trigger social dynamics of change and justice.

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<sup>37</sup> Burton, *op. cit.*, p.145

<sup>38</sup> Deutsch, Morton, *the Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973, p.17

<sup>39</sup> Deutsch, Morton, Peter T. Coleman and Eric C. Marcus (ed.), *the Handbook of Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006, pp.30 – 31

In this sense, Turkey's Kurdish conflict which is the case study of this thesis, too, will be assessed on the assumption that Turkish public has directly encountered Kurdish issue and become aware of the existence of Kurds after the conflict between Turkish government and the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) emerged. Thus, one could claim that this conflict has rendered possible to think on how to eliminate root causes of Kurdish issue and establish stable peace, despite its all detrimental and malignant effects on Turkey's society. Henry Barkey goes one step further and argues that "the intensification of the war in Southeastern Turkey has led the Turkish public more and more to identify all Kurds with the PKK guerillas, while even assimilated Kurds increasingly see the war as a struggle for survival."<sup>40</sup> This reality, however, should not ignore that the problem of how to free Kurdish conflict from yoke of violence is still a privileged point, which will also be discussed in more details in the coming chapters.

## **2.2. Types of Conflict**

Today, conflicts can take different forms depending on some parameters such as underlying causes of conflict, the prevailing circumstance, the parties involved in conflict, and the environment in which conflict has taken place etc. In this sense, I am intended to highlight generic aspects of contemporary conflict types using 'categorization' made by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program based at Uppsala University, Sweden. According to this data program, armed (violent) conflicts can be primarily divided into three categories: one sided violence, non-state conflict and state based conflict. State-based conflicts include both inter-state and intra-state conflicts. The focal point, however, will be ethnopolitical conflicts under the section of intra-state conflict, which are directly pertinent to the case study of this thesis –Turkey's Kurdish

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<sup>40</sup> Chaim Kauffman, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars", *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1996, p. 141

Conflict<sup>41</sup>, after taking a brief look at the one-sided violence, non-state conflict as well as inter-state conflict.

### ***2.2.1. One-sided violence***

It is defined as “the use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians which results in at least 25 deaths in a year”<sup>42</sup>. To give an example, Sudanese government committed one-sided violence against both civilians and non-state organizations within the country during second Sudanese Civil War.

### ***2.2.2. Non-state Conflict***

Non-state conflict can be described the use of armed force between two organized armed groups, neither of which is the government of a state.<sup>43</sup> The best example to this is Fatah- Hamas conflict in Palestine, which began in 2006 and came to an end by signing of Doha Deal between Mahmud Abbas and Haled Mashaal in 2012. Another case in point is PKK- Kurdish Hizbollah (Party of God)<sup>44</sup> conflict, which severely endured in 1990s leaving many casualties and finally ceased with an unwritten (informal) agreement between the parties, subsequently. At the time of writing this thesis, however, new signs of clashes between the two sides have appeared in the events

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<sup>41</sup> The UCDP (Uppsala Conflict Data Program) describes armed struggle between Turkish government and PKK as an ‘intra-state conflict’ noting that PKK has frequently used one-sided violence against civilians. See details at the website of UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia.  
[http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdata/gpcountry.php?id=158&regionSelect=10-Middle\\_East#](http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdata/gpcountry.php?id=158&regionSelect=10-Middle_East#)

<sup>42</sup> The UCDP, *Definitions*, <http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/>

<sup>43</sup> The UCDP, *Definitions*.

<sup>44</sup> Despite the common name, Kurdish Hizbollah has no direct link with the Iranian-sponsored Lebanese Hizbollah. Hizbollah in Turkey can be referred to as either Turkish Hizbollah or Kurdish Hizbollah. I prefer to use the term ‘Kurdish Hizbollah’ because the organization is predominately based in mainly Kurdish populated provinces of Turkey.

in Turkey's Dicle University, despite a PKK member says "no tension with the Hizbollah"<sup>45</sup>.

### **2.2.3. State Based Conflicts**

#### **2.2.3.1. Interstate Conflict**

A conflict situation which occurs between two or more governments can be considered as inter-state conflict<sup>46</sup>. It was generally accepted, until very recently, that interstate conflicts, are the most destructive form of conflicts on the grounds that they, by definition, are likely to result in a minimum of one thousand battle deaths<sup>47</sup>. In people's minds, there were also bad examples of bloody wars such as Napoleonic Wars, World War I and World War II. When it comes to the present, however, we can observe rarity of inter-state conflicts, while tremendous rise in intra-state conflicts and ethnic or civil wars. Sarkees, Wayman and Singer points out; the number of new states in international system has increased much more than the number of interstate conflicts, the average number of wars per state-system member has declined from a peak of 0.744 war onsets per system member in 1890–1899 to about 0.143 in the 1980s and 0.171 in the 1990s<sup>48</sup>.

As following figures show, inter-state conflict initiations of members in international system have become less frequent in time, and as a result of this, the total

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<sup>45</sup> Hurriyet Daily News, *No Tension with the Hizbullah, says PKK Member*, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/no-tension-with-the-hizbullah-says-pkkmember.aspx?pageID=238&nid=45553> 24 April 2013.

<sup>46</sup> The UCDP, *Definitions*.

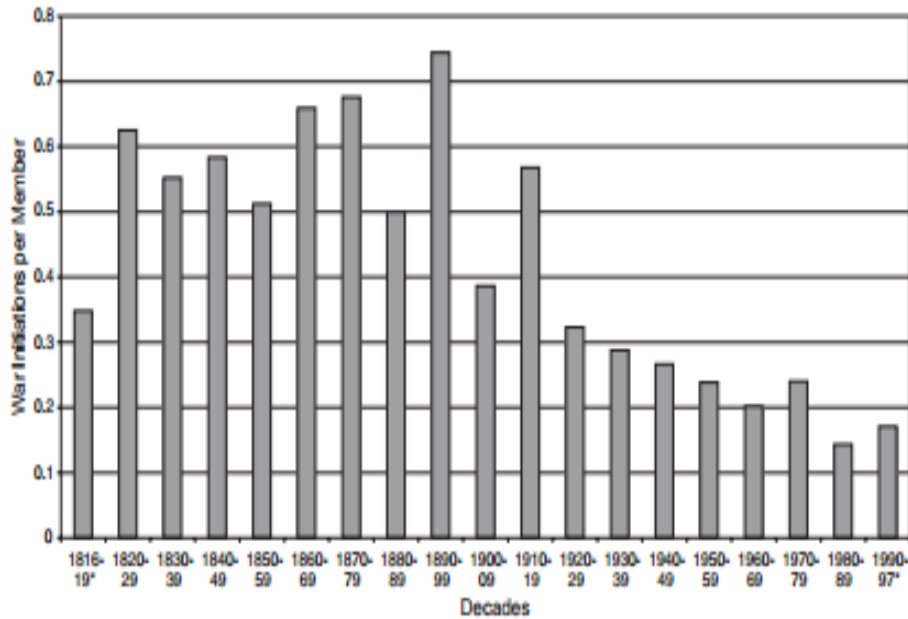
<sup>47</sup> This number, in itself, appears in definition of interstate conflict. For further information about definition of 'interstate conflict' in terms of 'death tolls', see Cashman, Greg and Leonard C. Robinson, *An Introduction to the Causes of War: Patterns of Interstate Conflict from World War I to Iraq* Rowman & Littlefield, 2007; Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War" *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 1, 2003, pp. 75-90.

<sup>48</sup> Sarkees, Meredith Reid, Frankwhelon Wayman and J. David Singer. "Inter-State, Intra-State, and Extra-State Wars: A Comprehensive Look at Their Distribution over Time, 1816–1997", *International Studies Quarterly*, 2003: 47, pp. 62 – 64



number of military and civilian casualties in inter-state wars have also decreased after sharp increases in death tolls in the course of World War I and World War II<sup>49</sup>.

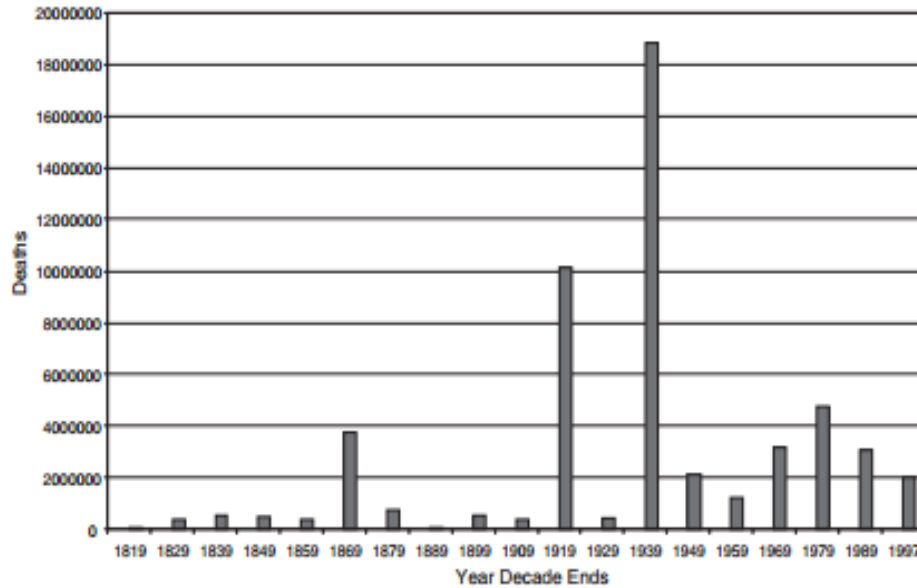
**Figure – 1** Number of War Onsets per System Member per Decade (1816 -19 and 1990-97 data normalized for 10 years)



Number of War Onsets per System Member per Decade (1816-19 and 1990-97 data normalized for 10 years)

<sup>49</sup> Figures were adopted from Sarkees, Meredith Reid, Frankwhelon Wayman and J. David Singer. "Inter-State, Intra-State, and Extra-State Wars: A Comprehensive Look at Their Distribution over Time, 1816–1997", *International Studies Quarterly*, 2003: 47, p.64

**Figure – 2** Total War Deaths per Decade (deaths reported by year in which war began; data for 1819 and 1997 normalized for ten years)



Total War Deaths per Decade (deaths reported by year in which war began; data for 1819 and 1997 normalized for ten years)

### 2.2.3.2. *Intra-state Conflict;*

According to Uppsala Conflict Data Program intra-state conflict can be defined as “a conflict between a government and a non-governmental party, with no interference from other countries”<sup>50</sup>. These conflicts are basically driven by ethnic, racial, tribal, sectarian, religious or ideological incompatible positions that are within the same state boundaries. That is why intrastate conflicts are also often referred to as ethnic conflict or civil war. Since an intra-state conflict in today’s world may, in fact, become part of global conflagration and be exposed to every kind of foreign interference, another conception of intra-state conflict - intra-state conflict with foreign involvement- was developed in order that this distinction would be helpful in understanding and explaining intra-state conflicts. Accordingly, in an armed conflict between a government and a non-government party, if the government side, the opposing side, or both sides, receive troop

<sup>50</sup> The UCDP, *Definitions*.

support from other governments that actively participate in the conflict, it is then called as ‘intra-state conflict with foreign involvement’<sup>51</sup>. Let me give an example. Libyan civil war in 2011, which is also regarded as a part of Arab Awakening, was typically an intra-state conflict taking place between the government forces and the rebels. It became, however, known as intra-state with foreign involvement afterwards, because NATO forces launched offensive attacks over the governmental and the military headquarters in favor of success of the rebels.

To reiterate, most violent conflicts today occur between the armed forces of the government and opposing groups within state borders rather than between states, with or without foreign involvement. For the most part, they are no longer between inter-states. Consequently, there is an extensive academic attention to intra-state and ethnic conflicts including civil wars. As F.de Varennes points out, “it is clear that the vast majority of armed conflicts, which have plagued the world in the last two decades, are within states rather than between states”<sup>52</sup>. M. Van Creveld also underlines that “in the future, war will not be waged by armies but by groups whom today we call terrorists, guerrillas, bandits ... but who will undoubtedly hit upon more formal titles to describe themselves.”<sup>53</sup>. Examining wars since 1945, Kalevi J. Holsti correspondingly maintains this argument by saying that the wars are no longer about foreign policy, security, honor, or status; they are rather about statehood, governance, and the role and status of nations and communities within states<sup>54</sup>. On the other hand, John Paul Lederach, a distinguished scholar on conflict resolution and mediation, acknowledges that most conflicts are intra-state, but adds they involve so sophisticated elements in itself such as

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<sup>51</sup> The UCDP, *Definitions*.

<sup>52</sup> De Varennes, Fernande, “Peace Accords and Ethnic Conflicts: A Comparative Analysis of Content and Approaches”, Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (ed.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp.152-53

<sup>53</sup> Van Creveld, Martin, *The Transformation of War: The Most Radical Reinterpretation of Armed Conflict Since Clausewitz*, New York: Free Press, 1991, p.197.

<sup>54</sup> Holsti, Kalevi Jaakko, *The State, War, and the State of War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p.21.

the abundance of relevant parties, complicatedness of interests and identities etc. that they become internationalized to some degree, at the same time. In his own words;

*Although most conflicts are intranational in primary composition, they internationalize to the degree that some conflictants, particularly opposition movements, inhabit neighboring countries; weapons and money for the conflict flow in from the surrounding region and from more distant locations; and displaced refugee populations cross immediate and distant borders. As such many contemporary conflicts are defined as internal and internationalized.<sup>55</sup>*

The reason of this change in types of conflict somewhat lies at the core of shifting conflict analysis. During the Cold War, conflict analysis was substantially used in order to understand and explain the East – West conflict. Parameters indicating the extent to which local or ethnic conflicts have become rooted in the social structure and had its own dynamics was not taken into account. Because every conflict was already assumed to be a part of ideological polarization of the Cold War. With the end of the Cold War, however, we have observed decline of salience of the East – West ideological conflict, which led to appearance of a surge of ethnic-communal conflicts during the first half of 1990s. As T.R.Gurr indicated, this situation has “prompted much speculation about the broad cultural, economic and political divisions that will shape the emerging conflicts of the early 21st century. Ethnopolitical cleavages figure.. in most of this speculation. All but five of the twenty-three wars being fought in 1994 were based on communal rivalries and ethnic challenges to states”<sup>56</sup>. Thus, our attention now shifts from lenses for looking at general aspects of intra-state conflict to lenses through which we can examine ethno-political conflicts based on casual relationships between ethnic identity and conflict.

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<sup>55</sup> Lederach, John Paul, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997, pp. 11-12.

<sup>56</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, “Peoples Against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System: 1994 Presidential Address”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 1994, p. 350

### 2.2.3.2.1. *Ethnopolitical Conflict*

The purpose of this section is twofold. The first aim is to uncover implication of the notions of ‘ethnic identity’ or ‘ethnicity. The second and primary goal is to develop an understanding of on what basis and the way in which ethnopolitical conflicts emerge. This discussion will be supplemented by some determinants of those conflicts such as issues of discrimination, power-sharing, majority rule etc. Before we proceed further, it is important to note that this thesis chooses to use conception of “ethnopolitical conflict” due to the fact that ethnic conflicts frequently hint civil war or clashes between two or more ethnic groups. By way of contrast, as Ted R. Gurr describes in his very well-known study, “*Peoples against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System*”, ethnopolitical conflicts occur when groups that define themselves using ethnic criteria make claims on behalf of their collective interests against the state, or against other political actors<sup>57</sup>. To put it bluntly, considering many cases of ethnopolitical conflict, ethnicity itself is not main source of the conflict. It rather plays a motivational role for ethnic identity based groups in their struggle against the repressive state or other dominant groups. Based on this assumption, our thesis basically argues that Turkey’s Kurdish conflict can also be considered as an ethnopolitical conflict because Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups did not yet go in direct conflict each other, though social tensions sometimes escalate at the community level primarily in the Western cities in Turkey. Nonetheless, B. Harff and T.R.Gurr give Kurdish conflict as a contemporary example to ethnopolitical conflict<sup>58</sup> and T.R. Gurr elsewhere makes direct reference to the Kurdish conflict in a table of serious and emerging ethnopolitical conflicts in 1993-1994<sup>59</sup>. It suffices here to mention Kurdish conflict, it will be already discussed in more

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p.348.

<sup>58</sup> Harff, Barbara and Ted Robert Gurr, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics*, Westview Press, 2004, p.11.

<sup>59</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, “Peoples against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System: 1994 Presidential Address”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 1994, p.370. On classification of Turkey’s Kurdish conflict as ethnopolitical conflict, see also Chaim Kauffman, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars”, *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1996, pp. 136-175; Ibrahim, Ferhad and Gülistan Gürbey, *The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Obstacles and Chances for Peace and Democracy*, St. Martin’s Press (INC), 2000 ; Çelik, Ayşe Betül, “Ethnopolitical Conflict in Turkey: From the Denial of Kurds to Peaceful Co-existence?”, *Handbook of Ethnic Conflict: International and Cultural Psychology*, 2012, pp. 241-260.

detail in forthcoming chapters. Let us move now to a brief analysis of the term ‘ethnicity or ethnic identity’.

Although there is no social and scholarly consensus upon precise meaning of ethnicity, we require a framework that help us clarify and evaluate ethnic-based conflicts. Otherwise, it would be futile to get involved here in defining what precisely ethnic identity and ethnicity mean. Given C. Kaufmann’s definition, an ethnic group seems as “a body of individuals who purportedly share cultural or racial characteristics, especially common ancestry or territorial origin, which distinguish them from members of other groups”<sup>60</sup>. In other words, ethnicity refers to a group of individuals that share a number of characteristics such as common origin, history, culture, language, territory and identity that set them apart from others. Broadly construed, ethnicity, in recent years, has frequently been analysed in three dimensions; the primordial, the instrumental and the constructivist.

The primordialist approach asserts that ethnic identities are primordial perhaps even genetically based, and therefore more fundamental and persistent than loyalties to larger social units<sup>61</sup>. According to this approach, if someone is French, German or Turk” he/she will invariably and always remain to be so. Correspondingly, ethnic tensions will always be available because cleavages, too, among inter-ethnic communities are already perennial. On the other hand, the instrumentalist view is based on the assumption that “ethnic identities are no more salient than any other kind of identity; they become significant when they are invoked by ... political leaders in the instrumental pursuit of material and political benefits for a group or region.<sup>62</sup> To illustrate, September 11 attacks in 2001 in the US enabled hardline American politicians instrumentalize American identity in order to manipulate the public opinion. The last approach is the

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<sup>60</sup> Chaim Kauffman, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars”, *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1996, p.138

<sup>61</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, *Peoples against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System: 1994 Presidential Address*, *op. cit.*, p.348

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.348

constructivist, which suggests “ethnic groups are not a fact of nature, like species, and cannot be defined by objective physiological attributes... they have been socially constructed throughout history”<sup>63</sup>. Constructivists basically argue that individual and group identities are socially being constructed. That is, all forms of ethnic identity are being made and remade in social discourse. Thus, much can be done to prevent and resolve ethnic-based divisions for both instrumentalist and constructivist approach because cleavages are superficial.

Let us now briefly discuss conditions under which ethnopolitical conflict occurs and extends. At first glance it appears that most member states of the United Nations are multiethnic. A study made in 1993 also indicates that fewer than 20 of the approximately 180 states are ethnically homogeneous, in the sense that ethnic minorities account for less than 5 percent of population<sup>64</sup>. Today the UN has 193 member states, the rate above is supposed to be much the same. As is the case, on the contrary, most states are rarely neutral in ethnic terms. As F.de Varennes pointed out, in the distribution of power within their structures, states almost inevitably reflect and protect the interests of the dominant group within society<sup>65</sup>. In other words, dominant group sets the political agenda and its political, economic, cultural, linguistic or religious claims are made at the expense of others. Turkey, for instance, is not ethnically neutral state, but article 66 in the Constitution of Turkey says “everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk”<sup>66</sup>. This article, in itself, reveals designation of citizenship in ethnic terms, and reflect the political and cultural attributes of the majority, but not totality, of the population in the country.

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<sup>63</sup> Oberschall, Anthony, *Conflict and Peace Building in Divided Societies: Responses to Ethnic Violence*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 4

<sup>64</sup> Welsh, David, “Domestic Politics and Ethnic Conflict”, Brown, Michael E. (ed.), *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 45

<sup>65</sup> De Varennes, op. cit., p.154

<sup>66</sup> 1982 Constitution of Turkey, *Part Two/Fundamental Rights and Duties* (as amended 2007).  
<http://www.constitution.org/cons/turkey/part2.htm>

J. Galtung also confirms that about 180 states are multi-ethnic, but almost all dominated by one ethnic group or nation. For him, it is difficult around the world to recognize a state or country which is multi-national and symmetric, except for Switzerland<sup>67</sup>. The reason for this is historical patterns of conquest, he argues. Similarly, according to John Burton;

boundaries have been drawn as a result of colonialism and conquest, as though the individual can be coerced to accept majority rule which denies ethnic or cultural identity. Majority rule and power sharing are legitimized by the label “democracy”. This is an ideological misinterpretation of the notion of democracy, and such democracy is a source of protracted conflicts in many multi-ethnic societies<sup>68</sup>.

On the other hand, Oberschall, who puts special emphasis on the term ‘nation state’, argues that it is a “frequently misused or loosely used term for states in which a single nationality is dominant”<sup>69</sup>. In one-nation dominated political systems, other individuals or groups who do not belong to the majority find themselves in a dilemma that they feel alienated from the community in which they reside. When we also examine ethnopolitical conflicts, it would seem that the main protagonists are a dominating majority privileged by the state and a minority which is subordinated by the majority or its domination. If the relationships of the dominant group to ethnic minorities are hostile rather than cooperative, the society can be described as ‘divided’ in ethnic ways. Thus, the government must react to minority group’s demands for structural reforms in order to prevent imminent clashes. If minority claims fail what remains is coercion, but it does not necessarily mean violent methods. Non-violent methods may rely on every kind of civil disobedience, -namely- non-violent protests, demonstrations, strikes, boycotts etc. Having undertaken these actions the minority gives the dominant a message that if you do not make concessions on our justified demands we will not stop.

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<sup>67</sup> Galtung, *A Theory of Conflict : Overcoming Direct Violence*, op.cit, p.209

<sup>68</sup> Burton, *op. cit.*, p.40

<sup>69</sup> Oberschall, *op. cit.*, p.1



If the status quo does not change, the outcome is, as Rothman states, that “ethnic groups ... feeling reviled and disregarded by majority groups holding power, react by militating for independent statehood or at least autonomy”<sup>70</sup> because they recognize that they are unable to exercise a considerable amount of political leverage in the political system. In this way, we can also easily understand the logic behind the argument for a separate state or autonomy. In accordance with this argument, F. de Varennes distinguishes between internal conflicts and ethnopolitical conflicts. While the former involve revolutionary groups attempting to overthrow the central government, the latter are mostly ethnonationalist in the sense that there is a minority group fighting for independence or autonomy<sup>71</sup>. If ethnic minority counters with armed resistance, ethnopolitical conflict turns violent as in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which resulted in mass killings of the innocent Muslim population by Serbian regime paramilitaries backed by the army, security forces.

### ***2.3. Conflict Stages***

Let us now continue with analysis of conflict stages taking into account conflict dynamics, because without into such dynamics, conflict analysis lacks an important aspect. First and foremost is the fact that conflicts are inherently dynamic, and they can develop and change in time as a result of the political, economic and social dynamics of societies within which they occur. Therefore, its key elements -parties, goals, needs, interests, values, perceptions- may change at astonishing speed. By quoting Galtung, Ramsbotham & Woodhouse & Miall explicate conflict as a dynamic process in which structure, attitudes and behaviour are constantly changing and influencing one another<sup>72</sup>. As conflicts are constituted by a complex interplay of attitudes and behaviours, the

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<sup>70</sup> Rothman, Jay, *Resolving Identity-Based Conflict in Nations, Organizations and Communities*, San Francisco, California : Jossey-Bass, 1997, p.6

<sup>71</sup> De Varennes, *op. cit.*, p.153

<sup>72</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.11

identity of the conflict parties, the levels at which the conflict is contested, and the issues fought over may vary over time and may themselves be disputed<sup>73</sup>. According to J.P. Lederach conflict is never a static phenomenon since it is “constantly changed by ongoing human interaction, and it continuously changes the people who give it life and the social environment in which it is born, evolves, and perhaps ends”<sup>74</sup>.

Wallensteen, on the other hand, sees conflict as a dynamic phenomenon in terms of the sequence of events. That is, “one actor is reacting to what another actor is doing, which leads to further action. One sequence of events follows another, and it is difficult to decipher which party is more responsible for what happens<sup>75</sup>. A case in point is killings of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi a plane crash in 1994, which is believed to have been caused by rocket fire, sparked ethnic clashes between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups in Rwanda ending up with ethnic cleansing of Tutsi minority. Furthermore, dynamic atmosphere of one conflict sometimes may affect the course of events in another conflict. Difficulties in resolving Israeli – Palestinian conflict, for instance, somewhat stem from conflicting parties’ linkages to other conflicts in the Middle East. The same thing applies to Turkey’s Kurdish conflict. Regional developments, - the formation of an autonomus Kurdish region in Northern Iraq after the US-led war in Iraq in 2003 and Syrian Civil War since 2011, particularly – have complicated the issue.

Let us briefly review different conflict stages, which are shown by a diagram as follows. As seen from the diagram, most conflicts follow a course of development; they become latent, emerge, escalate, come to a deadlock, begin to de-escalate and are settled in one way or another. Each stage may take place in varying degrees of intensity, and regression to previous phases is very likely to happen. Thus, transformation of a

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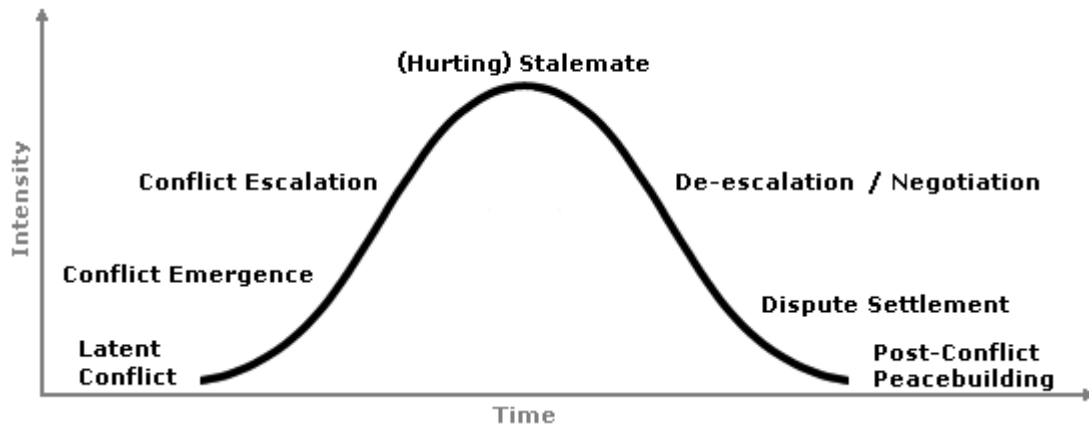
<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8

<sup>74</sup> Lederach, John Paul, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997, p. 13

<sup>75</sup> Wallensteen, Peter, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System*, London: SAGE Publications, 2002, p.34

protracted large-scale conflict is not as easy as it may seem, from some regressions as well as dramatic forward steps<sup>76</sup>.

**Figure – 3 Conflict Stages**



*Brahm, Eric. From "Conflict Stages." Beyond Intractability. Eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: September 2003*

Conflict is, initially, latent. Because people are not yet fully aware of latent conflict, which has still not affected their daily lives to a large extent. J. Burton goes one step further and claims that even after problems are out of control, societies and decision makers have been slow to recognize conflict, and the need to avoid it by adjusting to change quickly and effectively<sup>77</sup>. Particularly in the case of intra-state conflicts, issue of mutual recognition appears as one of main sources of latency of conflict. Because governments are frequently reluctant to recognize an opposition armed group owing to the fact that it regards itself as the only legitimate user of physical force, while it calls the other side as terrorist, bandit or robber. There are many examples to this case; the

<sup>76</sup> Kriesberg, Louis , "Mediation and the Transformation of the Israeli – Palestinian Conflict", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 3, Special issue on Conflict Resolution in Identity-Based Disputes , May - 2001, p. 375

<sup>77</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Provention*, op.cit., p.52

IRA, PLO and ANC were for long considered as terrorist groups by the British, Israeli and South African governments, respectively.

With emergence, conflict comes to surface. It is beginning to be known by all segments of the society and no longer hidden. At this stage, use of violence by one side and a reaction by the other side brings about a mutual escalation in conflict. Nevertheless, the process of conflict escalation is complex and unpredictable, because new issues and parties that can further complicate the situation emerge<sup>78</sup>. In escalation process, each party seeks to get advantage over the opposing side and to reach to an absolute victory by military means. The result, however, is not always as conflict parties hope. On the contrary, conflict becomes protracted and mutually destructive for both parties, with intense escalations. Mutually destruction phase endures as long as each party retains hope of victory. None of adversaries can break military resistance of the other side and reach a clear victory, a stalemate or deadlock occurs.

In Galtung's summarizing; "Conflicts have a tendency to snowball both in space and time: they bring in more people and they broaden in scope as time goes on, which means that much energy is poured into the conflict over time until the point where the resources of the system become gradually exhausted<sup>79</sup>. At this point, both sides realize that they cannot obtain their goals by violence because it is costly to sustain it. William Zartman calls this situation as 'hurting stalemate' which is mutually felt by both parties to be disadvantageous. According to him, "the concept is based on the notion that when the parties find themselves locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them, they seek an alternative policy or way out"<sup>80</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.13

<sup>79</sup> Galtung, Johan, "Institutionalized Conflict Resolution: A Theoretical Paradigm", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1965, p. 349

<sup>80</sup> Zartman, I. William, "The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments" Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (ed.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p.19

This is also definition of ‘ripe moment’ for negotiated settlement of a conflict, at the same time. Mentioning ripeness theory, William Zartman writes; “conflicts are managed best, when they are at the level of a mutually hurting stalemate ... [because] they realize they cannot ignore the conflict and cannot escalate their way unilaterally to victory at an acceptable cost”<sup>81</sup>. Thus, at this stage, none of adversaries can impose a unilateral outcome by winning through coercion alone and they start to talk. Stalemate is regarded as a precondition for a negotiated settlement by other some scholars, anyway. Kriesberg, similarly, asserts that at some point in a de-escalating conflict, negotiations may come to be regarded as an attractive way to conduct and conclude a conflict<sup>82</sup>. On the other side, a Nobel peace laureate, Desmond Tutu tells about clashes in South Africa; “No one won. The apartheid government didn’t win, the liberation movements didn’t win. Stalemate. Hey, how are we going to deal with this? And they struck on this compromise”<sup>83</sup>.

As seen in South African case, too, settlement through negotiation is unavoidable in many instances. Parties to a conflict already know that they will eventually turn to the negotiation table. A last important point to note, here, is that a stalemate alone may not be enough for a negotiated resolution. A hurting stalemate is necessary to do so. In Cyprus issue, for instance, there is no any agreed negotiated settlement since 1974. It can also be regarded as a stalemate situation, but it is apparently not hurting.

## **2.4. Conflict Resolution**

A study of ‘a total of 111 armed conflicts since the end of the Cold war’ made by Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg suggest that contemporary conflicts- most

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<sup>81</sup> Zartman, I. William, “Preventive Diplomacy: Setting the Stage”, Zartman, I. William, *Preventive Negotiation: Avoiding Conflict Escalation*, New York: Carnegie Corporation, 2001, p.4

<sup>82</sup> Kriesberg, op. cit., p. 375

<sup>83</sup> Hopkins, Jeffrey , *The Art of Peace: Nobel Peace Laurates Discuss Human Rights, Conflict and Reconciliation*, New York: Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca,2000, p.99

of which are intrastate<sup>84</sup> rooted in ethnicity, religion, identity or any other factors - are not very likely to end on the battlefield through victory for one of the sides. Although the dataset recorded 22 of these conflicts ended in victory for one side (which also refers to temporary cessation of armed conflict but not resolution of the conflict); 22 were ended by peace agreements, as there were 34 ceasefires and 33 cases where the conflict continued<sup>85</sup>. It is evident from this quantitative study that only 20 percent of conflicts in the post- Cold war period end on the battlefield, whereas 50 percent of those end at the table, with stable peace or at least ceasefire. In the face of this phenomenon, conflict parties have realized that victory is no longer the most likely outcome and that if a successful resolution is not reached in the near future, new cycles of violence will most likely to prevail in the conflict.

In this sense, some conflicts have been successfully transformed for resolution, in recent years. Particularly during 1990s and early years of 2000s, we have witnessed signing of formal peace agreements after launching peace talks in many ethnopolitical conflicts, even in some protracted ones such as those in South Africa, Northern Ireland and Basque Country<sup>86</sup>. Many decades of struggle in these countries ended with the transformation of relationships or clashing goals and interests that are at the core of the conflict structure. Having outlined the general framework for ending violent conflicts, let us now briefly review what the precise meaning of the term ‘conflict resolution’ is in the literature and the way in which it serves as a mechanism in resolving violent and intractable conflicts.

The need for conflict resolution mechanisms has substantially increased in the post-Cold war period with the appearance of many intra-state conflicts – ones

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<sup>84</sup> According to Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg, during the period 1989-2000, there were 111 armed conflicts in 74 locations around the world. Of these, 104 were intra-state conflicts ( 9 of which had external participation by other states) and 7 inter-state conflicts.

<sup>85</sup> Wallensteen, Peter and Margareta Sollenberg, “Armed Conflict, 1989-2000”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 5, p. 634

<sup>86</sup> The primary issues of old decades have revolved around power-sharing between the apartheid regime and black majority, struggles between nationalist Catholic’s desire to be united with Ireland and unionist Protestant’s insistence staying to be part of Great Britain, territorial disagreement between Basque people and Spanish government, in South Africa, Northern Ireland and Spain, respectively.

based on ethnic, religious, linguistic, and regional identities and groups. In addition, as conflict areas proliferate along with rapid rate of population growth and less equitable distribution of income between individuals or groups around the world, sophisticated conflict resolution strategies will be required more than ever. There are, of course, some reasons behind why conflict resolution come into prominence. Unlike other political approaches, conflict resolution looks at conflict as a dynamic interaction process between the parties taking into account space-time and behavioral dimensions. That is to say, it stresses that conflicts must be perceived and examined as dynamic processes, rather than static phenomena. In this way, it gives us an opportunity to develop holistic understanding of conflicts. Another difference of conflict resolution is that it basically searches for solution – oriented methods in resolving conflicts, which means it is ultimately policy making. Before we can proceed further, there is a need to establish a preliminary definition of conflict resolution. Let us look closely at some definitions of conflict resolution in theory and practice. But, let make clear from now on that I will use abbreviation of CR to refer to the term conflict resolution in this section.

CR, among other things, aims to first understand causes of the deep-rooted conflicts, then examine how to address and transform those conflicts through elimination of violence. P. Wallensteen defines conflict resolution as “a situation where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their incompatibilities, accept each other’s continued existence as parties and cease all violent action against each other”<sup>87</sup>. The key words in this definition are very important; incompatibility, mutual recognition and violence. In the first chapter, we have already revolved around the two concepts; we indicated that conflict mainly emerges as a result of incompatibilities of goals and that mutual recognition is a precondition to reach a compromise between the parties. The last factor in CR, for Wallensteen, is to transform the conflict from violent to non-violent through behaviours of the conflict parties. There are also some prominent scholars who attract our attention to ‘incompatibility’ between the parties in CR processes (Burton, 1990; Deutsch, 1973; Fisher, 1990; Kriesberg, 1992). Accordingly,

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<sup>87</sup> Wallensteen, Peter, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System*, London: SAGE Publications, 2002, p.8

CR refers to a political process through which the parties in conflict seek to eliminate the incompatibility of their goals, on one hand; and they create a new situation of compatibility, on the other hand<sup>88</sup>.

Another view is that CR explores the causes of the conflict, particularly causes in the form of unmet or threatened needs for identity, security, recognition, autonomy, and justice<sup>89</sup>. Thus, it mainly seeks solutions responsive to these kind of needs of both conflict parties. John Burton who coined the term ‘basic needs’ lists assumptions of CR related to the needs as follows;

- *Conflict that is protracted and frequently violent is typically a direct consequence of frustration of non-material human needs, especially individual and group recognition and identity.*

- *Human needs, being ontological, cannot, by definition, be traded or satisfied by power bargaining and negotiation, and cannot be contained by deterrence and threat.*

- *Unlike material goods and interests, non-material human needs are not necessarily in short supply.*

- *Conflict arises, not because of scarcity of resources or goal opportunities, but because of the selection of satisfiers or means to achieve goals.<sup>90</sup>*

Some other scholars argue that the aim of CR is not the elimination of conflict, which is also very difficult, because conflict is already inherent in social change. Rather, the aim of conflict resolution is to transform actually or potentially violent conflict into peaceful or non-violent processes of social and political change<sup>91</sup>, which we had already elaborated in details in the first chapter. This notion stems from the idea that conflict does not necessarily amount to a bad and evil phenomenon or

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<sup>88</sup> Bar-Tal, Daniel, “From Intractable Conflict Through Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation: Psychological Analysis”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2000, p. 354

<sup>89</sup> Kelman, Herbert C., “Reconciliation as Identity Change: A Social-Psychological Perspective”, Bar-Siman – Tov, Yaacov (ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p.112

<sup>90</sup> John Burton, *op. cit.*, p.242

<sup>91</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.32



something to be eliminated unconditionally. Correspondingly, Friedrich Hegel and Karl Marx, who are leading dialecticians, consider conflict as a necessary instrument of change and progress, and some others like Georg Simmel and Lewis A. Coser see it as an instrument for social integration<sup>92</sup>. This perspective, at the same time, highlights the fact that CR can bring about benefits for the parties through constructive actions or win-win approach. To put it another way, CR can offer the parties who perceive the conflict situation as zero-sum game (one's gain means other's loss) a win-win option in which both parties may gain and stay better off with the outcome.

A conflict becomes vicious cycle when it turns out to be a mere power struggle for unilateral gains, because each party responds to other's behavior with hostile and retaliatory reactions. As a result of this, conflict spiral based on power struggle renders a mutual gain for both parties impossible on the grounds that they are not, eventually, satisfied with the outcome. Therefore, one of the task of CR is managing conflict by overcoming negative emotions, feelings and psychology among the parties, otherwise the conflict may escalate into a test of strength. In this respect, J. P. Lederach, who also establishes a link between International Relations and Conflict Resolution, and calls them like two brothers – big brother and young sister -, argues; “ CR (young sister) has tended to see the big brother as locked in to power paradigms and unable to reach the root of problems in creative ways<sup>93</sup>.

In other words, CR explores first root causes of a conflict and then uses some assumptions in resolving it, though the fact that “ each conflict is unique and happens in a determined context, any model that would generalize conflict resolution methods risks overlooking the populations' particular needs and fears<sup>94</sup>. Nonetheless, conflict resolution theory and practice seek to uncover some strategies, mechanisms, methods, and conditions that adversaries may employ so as to resolve their conflict peacefully. Some of these, which will be elaborated in details just after analyzing violence and

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<sup>92</sup> Boulding, Kenneth E., *Conflict and Defense: A General Theory*, New York: Harper & Row, 1962 p. 307

<sup>93</sup> Lederach, *op.cit.*, pp. 24-25

<sup>94</sup> Doucey, Marie, “Understanding the Root Causes of Conflicts: Why It Matters for International Crisis Management”, *International Affairs Review*, Volume XX, Number 2, Fall 2001, p.10

peace, are third parties, mediation, problem-solving approach, negotiation as well as reconciliation. These all generate tools for analysis that are important for a complete understanding of intractable conflicts through conflict resolution perspective.

## **2.5. *Galtung's Theory of Conflict: Violence and Peace***

### **2.5.1. *Violence***

It may well have been understood from the beginning that conflict equals violence is a wrong approach. Even though conflict may involve human losses and destruction, it cannot be limited to a mere struggle of violence. It has also different forms of non-violent resistance and struggle like civil disobedience, -namely- non-violent protests, demonstrations, strikes, boycotts etc. Unfortunately, however, violence which is the most observed form in the efforts of individuals or groups to fulfill their goals –needs may sometime dominate the conflict. Of course, men's resort to violence is comprehensible to certain extent, for it does not occur without reason. But the reason is not a justification. Because it is generally acknowledged that violence breeds violence, which means violent behavior brings about another violent behavior. Whatever the origins of violence is, the result is similar in each case: a cycle of violence, state repression and further violence<sup>95</sup>.

In other words, if one party applies force the fact that the opposite side does the same should not come as a surprise, for the force of the opposing side is part of the equation<sup>96</sup>. As a result of tit-for-tat retaliation situation, violence not only ensues conflict but also leads it to take more violent forms. In reply to this, there are also some scholars like T.R. Gurr who claims that “(political) violence is not uniformly and irretrievably

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<sup>95</sup> John Loughlin, “New Context for Political Solutions: Redefining Minority Nationalisms in Northern Ireland, the Basque Country and Corsica”, Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (ed.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p.40

<sup>96</sup> Wallensteen, Peter, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System*, op. cit., p.52

destructive of human well-being. Many groups have resorted to political violence at one stage or another in their historical development<sup>97</sup>. This is another debate that we will not get into it here.

On the other hand, J. Galtung treats five distinct aspects of violence in conflicts;<sup>98</sup>

- It is political, to impose the will of the perpetrator
- It also hurts the non-violent, the innocent, civilians
- It carries in its wake panic, humiliation, terror
- It is unpredictable in its choice of time, space and/or victim
- The perpetrator will try to protect himself from retaliation.

According to these five elements of violence, eventually civilians will suffer the most from it, for both they are more vulnerable and less capable to defend themselves. J. Galtung gives also details about the perpetrators dividing them into two types: those against the state and those for the state: namely, terrorists and state terrorists<sup>99</sup>. He adds that the five points mentioned above can be applied to both kinds of perpetrators. That is to say, no matter the violence takes place as state terrorism from top-down or terrorism from below. Elsewhere, J. Galtung and D. Fischer argue that we should first end state terrorism to end terrorism<sup>100</sup> adducing what happened just after 9/11 in Afghanistan and Iraq. September 11 attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon caused 3,000 civilians killed, but the subsequent attacks of the US on both countries bred the death of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians. This is a clear example to state terrorism. It is unfortunate that violence committed by the state, including the use of dirty tricks by governments and the threat presented by reform of the security apparatus, has attracted

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<sup>97</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 358

<sup>98</sup> Galtung, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.77- 78.

<sup>100</sup> Galtung, Johan and Dietrich Fischer, *To End terrorism, End State Terrorism*, available on the website, [http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2002/09/20\\_galtung\\_end-terrorism.htm](http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2002/09/20_galtung_end-terrorism.htm). September 20, 2002.

less academic attention than violence by militants<sup>101</sup>. J. Galtung lists different types of violence that could roughly be classified in three categories: direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence.

### **2.5.1.1. Direct Violence**

It is the popularly understood meaning of violence referring to physical injuries, shooting, bombing, torture, rape, including killing. In Galtung's own words, "the conflict may have a direct violence phase, before and after structural and cultural violence that may be even more insidious because less visible<sup>102</sup>. Here, the most important point to emphasize is that if direct violence dominates the conflict and the need for security that is essential for survival is under risk, then preventing direct violence phase of the conflict deserves urgent consideration.

### **2.5.1.2. Structural Violence**

In contrast to direct violence, structural violence occurs when certain groups of people are deprived of some certain needs. Especially the needs for political self-determination, economic well-being and self-actualization are systematically denied to certain segments of society<sup>103</sup>. The difference between direct and structural violence is that while an identifiable actor who causes physical harm is present in the former, there are no definite identifiable actors in the latter on the grounds that it is more about

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<sup>101</sup> Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, "Conclusion: Peace Processes, Present and Future", Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 261

<sup>102</sup> Galtung, *A Theory of Conflict : Overcoming Direct Violence*, op. cit., p. 32

<sup>103</sup> Christie, Daniel J., "Reducing Direct and Structural Violence: The Human Needs Theory", *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, Volume 3, Issue 4, 1997, p. 318

historical and structural processes. The lack of political inclusion of a specific group in the society, unavailability of public access to education in mother tongue for certain minority group, unequal distribution of wealth and cultural alienation are some examples to structural violence. One of the hallmark of it is it helps us understand and explain deep causes of systematic inequalities in the distribution of political and economic resources in the society. Intractable conflicts, therefore, are often characterized by the structural nature of violence whether from state or non-state sources, which are subtle and embedded in political and social dynamics<sup>104</sup>.

### 2.5.1.3. Cultural Violence

According to J. Galtung who coins this term, “by 'cultural violence' we mean those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence -exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) -that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence”<sup>105</sup>. For example, forcing the Kurds to speak in Turkish and abandon their mother tongue-Kurdish- for long years in Turkey served as an indication of cultural violence.

To wrap up, direct violence emerges from exploitative and unjust political, economic and social orders in which structural or cultural violence are present. If the roots of violence are built to the very structure of society and cultural institutions, then the remedies would also include structural – cultural changes to overcome the structural-cultural violence that so easily produces direct violence<sup>106</sup>. Thus, it would be easy to draw the conclusion that these three types of violence are interrelated each other; the more structural and cultural violence in a society, the more direct violence with efforts to legitimize the first two.

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<sup>104</sup> Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, *op. cit.*, p.101

<sup>105</sup> Galtung, Johan, “Cultural Violence”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 27, No. 3. , Aug. 1990, p. 291

<sup>106</sup> Galtung, *A Theory of Conflict : Overcoming Direct Violence*, *op. cit.*, p. 41

## 2.5.2. Types of Peace

### 2.5.2.1. *Negative Peace*

It basically refers to the situation in which direct violence does not exist, but structural or cultural violence may continue to exist<sup>107</sup>. Despite cessation of violence in this period, if deep causes of conflict not addressed thoroughly, negative peace may replace violent conflict. Therefore, it is also called a period of fragile. Negative peace that can be coupled with repression, deprivation, exploitation, injustice should not be despised just because negative carries non-positive connotations<sup>108</sup>. On the contrary, it is at least much preferable than the phase of direct violence.

### 2.5.2.2. *Positive Peace*

Positive Peace means the removal of structural or cultural violence beyond the absence of direct violence. The ultimate goal, here, is to transform the systemic conditions that cause violent conflict in a society. In other words, the objective is to establish justice and equality at all different levels, “from unjust economic relations between North and South, through unjust political relations between majority and minority groups within a country, to unjust personal relations between individuals”<sup>109</sup>. Positive peace would not be achieved without mutual development, growth, and the attainment of legitimate goals for the conflict parties.

What we now aim at is to give a general paradigm for understanding implications of peace conceptions within the framework of conflict resolution. Wallensteen defines ‘conflict resolution’ as a bridge between a very narrow

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<sup>107</sup> Both ‘*negative peace*’ and ‘*positive peace*’ conceptions belong to Johan Galtung. For a comprehensive study see, Galtung, Johan, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1969), pp. 167-191.

<sup>108</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.12

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p.12

concept of peace (negative peace) and a very broad one (positive peace)<sup>110</sup>. The first test of conflict resolution in a conflict is a mutual cessation of violence, which means arms are no longer used. Unless an end to armed struggle obtained, violent conflict will always be there and cannot be resolved. Because the ending of direct violence makes conflict resolution possible and a conflict that is surrendered to violence may encourage more violence. For this reason, it is clear that nonviolence is a necessary but not sufficient condition for conflict resolution. Darby and MacGinty have also argued that an ending of major violence from the militant groups in intra-state conflicts is almost always a prerequisite for their inclusion in peace negotiations, but the state is expected to tone down its security measures, too<sup>111</sup>.

In other words, a cease-fire and a process of demilitarization are urgently required in order that the adversaries do not resort to violence to achieve their goals, but enter into a constructive dialogue process for a peaceful resolution. Furthermore, a ceasefire or the state of non-violence does not only reduces tension on the parties and the populations as a whole, but also gives the actors an opportunity to begin to walking on the road to the peace. A ceasefire or truce, however, does not necessarily equal to peace, since peace or peace processes literally means reduction of all types of violences – direct, structural and cultural violence - by handling conflicts emphatically, nonviolently and creatively<sup>112</sup>. This phase may end up with a peace agreement, then comes the implementation of the agreement's fundamental principles. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that although a peace agreement ends armed phase of the conflict, and it does not mean that the peace process has been successfully completed. Agreement is just a beginning for a larger process. As P. Wallensteen pointed out, “a peace agreement ends the direct, physical violence and creates the conditions for addressing

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<sup>110</sup> Wallensteen, Peter, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System*, 2002, op. cit., p.11

<sup>111</sup> Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, *op. cit.*, p.101

<sup>112</sup> Galtung, *A Theory of Conflict : Overcoming Direct Violence*, op. cit., p. 32

the structural violence that was a primary cause of the more visible violence...and outlines what is necessary to change structural factors<sup>113</sup>.

For example, it seems clearly to have been the case that the unilaterally declared cease-fires in Northern Ireland in 1994 made a breakthrough on all sides and opened up a period of de-escalated violence and a space for dialogue, though over the next eighteen months a comprehensive political arrangement could not be reached and top level negotiators could not agree even on a commonly defined and accepted framework for negotiation<sup>114</sup>. Yet, for peace process to complete, we have seen that parties had to wait until signing of final peace agreement ‘*Good Friday Agreement*’ in 2007, after more than a decade of negotiation process.

Let us conclude this section with some words making comparison of the terms ‘*negative peace*’ and ‘*positive peace*’. Policies in ‘negative peace situation’ focus on a present or near future, those in positive peace, on the other hand, aim to establish harmonious relationships between the adversaries. J. Galtung gives some examples to positive peace as follows;<sup>115</sup>

- Presence of cooperation
- Freedom from fear
- Freedom from want
- Economic growth and development
- Absence of exploitation
- Equality
- Justice

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<sup>113</sup> Parlevliet, Michelle, “Icebergs and the Impossible – Human Rights and Conflict Resolution in Post settlement Peace Building”, Babbitt, Eileen F. and Ellen Lutz (ed.), *Human Rights & Conflict Resolution in Context Colombia, Sierra Leone, Northern Ireland*, Syracuse, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, p.257

<sup>114</sup> Lederach, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-116

<sup>115</sup> Galtung, Johan “*Theories of Peace: A Synthetic Approach to Peace Thinking*”, Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, September 1967, p.14. Available on the official website of ‘Transcend International’.

[http://www.transcend.org/files/Galtung\\_Book\\_unpub\\_Theories\\_of\\_Peace\\_A\\_Synthetic\\_Approach\\_to\\_Peace\\_Thinking\\_1967.pdf](http://www.transcend.org/files/Galtung_Book_unpub_Theories_of_Peace_A_Synthetic_Approach_to_Peace_Thinking_1967.pdf)



- Freedom of action
- Pluralism
- Dynamism

All these values are both means and goals of positive peace for individuals and groups. However, it is difficult to create the space and stability for such values to become active, unless negative peace obtained and secured. Because, even though both are equally important for postsettlement peace building, the latter cannot be done without achieving negative peace; the two are inextricably intertwined<sup>116</sup>. In some cases, the things that are done for the cessation of direct violence may not be incompatible with the requirements of positive peace. For example, justice (or reconciliation) in post-apartheid regime of South Africa was sought to be re-established without resorting to Nuremberg-style trials for Nazi crimes during the world war II in order to prevent a new conflict between the black majority and white Afrikaner minority. For peace to be sustainable, transition had to be done in that way. For intra-state conflicts as in the case of South Africa, the state is also placed much emphasis as a key actor in dealing with societal conflict because it is the primary duty holder for the maintenance of law and order and the protection of citizens' rights<sup>117</sup>. The state, therefore, as holding authority, are expected to assume primary role in the transition process from negative to positive peace.

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<sup>116</sup> Parlevliet, Michelle, *op. cit.*, p.288

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p.280

## CHAPTER III

### CONFLICT ANALYSIS

#### *3.1. Identifying a Conflict*

Conflicts are, by their very nature, dynamic phenomena. They are never static phenomena because issues, parties (actors) to the conflict, their goals, interests, needs, values and perceptions may change over time as a consequence of the social, economic and political dynamics of societies<sup>118</sup>. Without insight into such dynamics that are important aspects of conflict analysis, it will be difficult to identify the conflict, the issues fought over, the root causes and background of the conflict, including its current situation. Conflicts essentially involve two parties or multiple parties and can emerge in many contexts, on different levels and over several issues. Issues may, for instance, range from scarce resources, unsatisfied needs, territorial disputes, unequal relations, competing values to group recognition or identity-based contradictions. To illustrate, “the primary issues of decades old conflict in Northern Ireland have revolved around the Catholics’ desire to be united with Southern Ireland and the Protestant’s insistence on staying within the UK”<sup>119</sup>. Yet another significant part of conflict analysis is to explore root causes or structural reasons of the conflict. Because, in some cases, leading motives behind a conflict are not about particular issues or interests that may divide the parties, but in the very structure of who they are and the relationship between them<sup>120</sup>. The only way to resolve such a conflict is to change the structure.

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<sup>118</sup> Raimo, Väyrynen, “To Settle or to Transform? Perspectives on the Resolution of National and International Conflicts”, Väyrynen, Raimo (ed.), *New Directions in Conflict Theory: Conflict Resolution and Conflict*, London: SAGE Publications, 1991, p.4

<sup>119</sup> Jeong, Ho Won, *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis*, London, California, New Delhi, Singapore: SAGE Publications, 2008, p. 16

<sup>120</sup> Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, p. 24

Let us now look at some key elements in analysis of conflict dynamics— parties, goals, interests, values, needs and perceptions –. They all generate tools for a conflict analysis which is important for a better understanding of conflict dynamics. This chapter is aimed to outline how actors in a conflict have different capacity to pursue their salient goals, articulate perceptions and explain interests, on the basis of different values and needs. At the outset, it is useful to articulate that conflict parties must be fleshed out - who are the parties, what their positions are, how they approach issues, what changes they undergo as a consequence of conflict - for understanding dynamics of conflict.

## ***3.2. Key Elements in Conflict Analysis***

### ***3.2.1. Parties***

Parties to a conflict may basically consist of the individuals, groups, organizations, communities (ethnic, religious, sectarian, political or cultural), nations or international camps. Rothman states that “there are often many components of a conflict ... different parties emphasize different components at different times, given their own concerns and priorities”<sup>121</sup>. Because, each party can have its own goals with differing preferences. These differences among parties basically arise from their goal incompatibility, attitudes toward particular issues as well as their clashing interests. Thus, the relationship between parties, in itself, is especially important in determining the terms on which the conflict will be resolved. However, by far the most important challenge frequently encountered at the initial and even escalation stages of conflict, particularly in asymmetric conflicts, that the parties may not be willing to recognize each other. ‘Asymmetric conflict’ was well described by Ramsbotham & Woodhouse & Miall, who write:

conflict may ... arise between dissimilar parties, such as between a majority and a minority, an established government and a group of rebels. These are asymmetric conflicts... the root of the conflict lies not in particular issues or interests that may divide

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<sup>121</sup> Rothman, Jay, *Resolving Identity-Based Conflict in Nations, Organizations and Communities*, San Francisco, California : Jossey-Bass, 1997, p.78

the parties, but in the very structure of who they are and the relationship between them<sup>122</sup>.

Wallensteen, too, emphasizes on the issue of mutual recognition and insists it is a delicate situation in which “one does not regard the other as a legitimate party and, consequently, does not want to enter into an agreement with that party”<sup>123</sup>. In other words, in asymmetric conflict situations the parties involved prefer to dehumanize each other rather than seeing themselves as legitimate actors with whom to negotiate. To give example, IRA (Irish Republican Army), PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) and the ANC (African National Congress) were for long considered as terrorist groups by the British, Israeli and South African governments, respectively. Dramatically, these organizations were also labelled as terrorist in the eyes of international community until initiated negotiations about peace agreements.

At the time of this writing, PKK has also been regarded as a terrorist organization by Turkish government and internationally, including the United States, the European Union and NATO. However, after peace talks between Turkish government and Abdullah Öcalan, the jailed leader of the PKK, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) voted in the favour of change of a sentence which stated that ‘PKK terrorism has claimed over 40,000 victims’ to ‘the conflict between PKK and the Turkish state’.<sup>124</sup> As Ramsbotham & Woodhouse & Miall pointed out, “if the root causes of the conflict lie in the very structure of relationships within which the parties operate ... a transformation of this structure is necessary to resolve conflict... structural transformation entails a change in the relationship between the dominant and weaker party”<sup>125</sup>. Obviously, the only way to resolve the conflict is first to

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<sup>122</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.24

<sup>123</sup> Wallensteen, Peter, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System*, London: SAGE Publications, 2002, p.51

<sup>124</sup> Hurriyet Daily News, *Council of Europe’s Turkey report calls PKK militants ‘activists’, sparking outcry*, 23 April 2013. Available on <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/council-of-europes-turkey-report-calls-pkk-militants-activists-sparking-outcry.aspx?pageID=238&nid=45517>

<sup>125</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.176

acknowledge core issue within structure and, then, to change the structure. Otherwise deadlock is very likely to happen.

Furthermore, conflicts may be characterized as multidimensional involving numerous interactions between many parties. Especially when conflict protracted, it may draw in other parties, deepen and spread to other locations, even give rise to secondary conflicts within the main parties or among outsiders due to the fact that it takes on a life of its own engulfing more actors and pushing them into an ever-increasing struggle. Burton also confirms this by arguing that “the protracted nature of a conflict tends to lead to divisions within each party and to the emergence of rival leadership groups”<sup>126</sup>. Admittedly, conflict may have been initiated by some specific actors, but new parties through several interaction patterns and as well as changing positions may emerge as a result of the evolution of conflict. This applies to notably secondary parties as well, which are “actors who do not directly commit their own troops or other regular military resources to the conflict, but still take sides and (openly or not) support a particular primary party”<sup>127</sup>. They basically provide the primary conflicting parties with physical or moral support, but not involved in the conflict directly. A case in point is that in Sri Lanka, the fact that the Tamils share a culture with the population of the state of Tamil Nadu in India, and the arrival there of Tamil refugees, gave the Indian government the potential to have a particular interest and to be a crucial player in the Sri Lanka conflict<sup>128</sup>.

### **3.2.2. Goals**

As indicated earlier, conflict takes its source from contradiction between goals, which means that parties go to war because they have mutually incompatible goals. Galtung defines conflict largely in the same way many other scholars would “an action-

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<sup>126</sup> Burton, John W., *Conflict Resolution: Its Language and Processes*, Inc. Lanham, London: The Scarecrow Press, 1996, p. 52

<sup>127</sup> Wallensteen, *op. cit.*, p.52

<sup>128</sup> Coakley, John, “Ethnic Conflict Resolution: Routes Towards Settlement”, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Volume 15, Issue 3-4, 2009, p. 474

system is said to be in conflict if the system has two or more incompatible goal-states.”<sup>129</sup>. Galtung, however, has not confined himself to describe conflict over goals, but has also analysed conflict resolution through goals. According to him, conflict resolution refers to a situation in which “the system must no longer have two or more incompatible goal-states”<sup>130</sup>. In Northern Ireland, for instance, the cause of the conflict lies in the incompatibility between the aspirations of the two divided communities – nationalist or Catholic and unionist or Protestants<sup>131</sup>. Thus, it is not difficult to suggest that if there are goals that cannot be compatible or satisfied, a conflict is very likely to occur and to resolve it successfully will be less likely, vice versa.

In other words, where there are goals there will also often be contradictions, inherently. This is the case, due to the fact that goals and life are inseparable. Without a goal life would be lacking of challenge and would be meaningless. For this reason, individuals or groups have engaged in innumerable hostile and somewhat conflictual interactions with each other in pursuit of their goals. Jay Rothman, for example, giving also definition of conflict poses the questions like: the most common way to frame a conflict is to assert the exclusive outcomes disputants seek, therefore, we need to ask who wants what, what does each side most deeply care about in this conflict, why does it matter so much and what are their motivations?<sup>132</sup>. All these questions basically underlie the premise that when conflicting parties’ goals are not mutually exclusive but competitive, then, goal incompatibility is inevitable. If each party’s intentions are not to obtain the same object desired by the other, that is, those intentions are mutually

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<sup>129</sup> Galtung, Johan, “Institutionalized Conflict Resolution: A Theoretical Paradigm”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1965, p. 348. For other definitions of conflict in terms of goals, see Boulding, Kenneth E., “*Conflict and Defense: A General Theory*”, New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1962, p.5; Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, p.31; Kriesberg, Louis, *Constructive Conflicts : From Escalation to Resolution*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2007, p.2

<sup>130</sup> Galtung, Johan, “Institutionalized Conflict Resolution: A Theoretical Paradigm”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1965, p. 351

<sup>131</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.95

<sup>132</sup> Rothman, *op. cit.*, pp.21-35

exclusive, an understanding can be reached to permit each party to accept the fact that they are not actually attempting to achieve the goal believed to be the same.<sup>133</sup>

A relevant illustrative example to goal incompatibility is Israeli – Palestinian conflict in which two adversaries have different attitudes, beliefs and expectations. The Palestinians say Israel has illegally annexed Jerusalem as its own, denying the Palestinian people their legitimate right to self-determination in their own homeland and Jerusalem is the core of their national struggle and must become the capital of the state; the Israelis, on the other hand say that Jerusalem has been and remains the focal point of the Jewish people and their religion, the historic capital of the Jewish nation as well as the vibrant national heartbeat of modern Israel<sup>134</sup>. This case, in itself, implies that long-term dissatisfaction with efforts to attain interrelated goals may result in a protracted conflict extending a long period of time. In this sense, it would be easy to make inference from this particular conflict that a conflict is very likely to last until when each party feels that the outcomes are quite enough to meet their expectations.

After having mapped parties, goals and incompatibilities, let us now briefly review what goals may consist of and under what conditions they are labeled legitimate or illegitimate. In conflict situations, goals generally range from tangible ones such as territorial, political, economic and military purposes to less tangible ones involving prestige, honour, dignity as well as respect. In Sri Lanka ethnic conflict, for example, both political and territorial goals-claims hold sway over the parties in the way that while the Tamil Tigers argue that the rights of Tamils in a predominantly Sinhalese state will never be guaranteed, accordingly, their goal is to create Tamil Eelam – an independent Tamil state –, Sri Lankan government, without exception, defends territorial integrity of Sri Lanka<sup>135</sup>. The result, however, is catastrophe as was the case between Israelis and Palestinians owing to the fact that severe goal incompatibilities

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<sup>133</sup> Jeong, *op. cit.*, p. 11

<sup>134</sup> Rothman, *op. cit.*, p.89

<sup>135</sup> Chalk, Peter, "The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam Insurgency in Sri Lanka", Ganguly, Rajat and Ian Macduff (ed), *Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism in South and Southeast Asia: Causes, Dynamics, Solutions*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003, pp. 128-165.

have been available. Therefore, the goals primarily require to be divided into legitimate and illegitimate in order to search for a prospective compromise.

Some scholars recommend that the concept of basic human needs, which will be elaborated in detail in the forthcoming chapters, to be used to differentiate the legitimate goals from the illegitimate ones<sup>136</sup>. According to this definition, “goals and strategies that violate basic human needs are not legitimate ... goals that need to be achieved in order to make the fulfilment of basic human needs possible need to be supported”<sup>137</sup>. Galtung, too, emphasizes importance of basic needs by arguing “if the realisation of a goal is against basic human needs, then it is illegitimate”<sup>138</sup> What is implied by basic needs are mainly survival- security – wellness - freedom- recognition -identity<sup>139</sup>. It is obvious that the greater goals are related to basic human needs, the more legitimate the conflict is, even if it is also deeper. Thus, goals can be said to appear favourable or unfavourable, something to be pursued or to be avoided, depending on legitimacy – needs context.

The last thing to know about goals is that they are not unchangeable. In different phases of conflict, parties may abandon of some goals pursued earlier when those goals cease to be perceived as attractive. This is well described in Wallensteen’s words: “a party may change its goals, that is, shift its priorities. It is rare that a party will completely change its basic positions, but it can display a shift in what it gives highest priority to”<sup>140</sup>. Goals are condemned to change, because we – the people - are condemned to change. Let us now give two interesting examples to goal change or policy shifts; namely, the PKK and the ANC. The PKK’s main goal was, initially, to

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<sup>136</sup> Graf, Wilfried, Gudrun Kramer and Augustin Nicolescou, “Counselling and Training for Conflict Transformation and Peace Building”, Webel, Charles and Johan Galtung, *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies*, Taylor & Francis, 2007, p. 139

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139

<sup>138</sup> Galtung, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, *op. cit.*, p.82

<sup>139</sup> There is also an ongoing debate on what exactly basic human needs are in the literature, which is to be examined in chapter 4.

<sup>140</sup> Wallensteen, Peter, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System*, London: SAGE Publications, 2002, p.54



establish an independent and socialist Kurdish state within the border of Turkey, extending it through other parts of neighboring countries mainly inhabited by Kurds – Iraq, Syria and Iran -, subsequently. PKK’s redefinition of its fundamental goal appeared in a statement of Abdullah Öcalan to his followers proposing that “struggle was no longer about a separate Kurdistan. The new approach transformed the struggle from a territorial issue to one of participation in the existing Turkish state”<sup>141</sup> but also from Orthodox Marxism – Socialism to a pragmatic ideological agenda. It means that the PKK, under the leadership Öcalan, has significantly changed both its focal point and ideology. The same thing applies to ANC (African National Congress) which launched armed struggle against apartheid regime in the early 1960's. As Ramsbotham & Woodhouse & Miall illustrated, “before 1985, the ANC saw itself as a national liberation movement and expected to establish a socialist government by seizing power after a successful armed struggle. By 1985 it had begun to accept that this goal was unrealistic, and that a compromise was necessary”<sup>142</sup> Playing by the rules of democracy, the ANC has been in power since 1994.

### ***3.2.3. Interests & Needs & Values***

In this section, we will attempt to provide a common evaluation of three elements which are at least as crucial as parties and goals in conflict analysis. Because these elements are mutually related to one another, we would like to examine them in a comparative manner. Before proceeding further, there is a need to establish preliminary definitions of interests, needs and values. Interests may refer to very different things at different levels, but essentially encapsulates; political, economic, military, social, including occupational aspirations of the individual, and of identity groups of individuals within a social system<sup>143</sup>, which are also what the parties are motivated to achieve. Interests, for instance, may involve tangible resources such as land, capital,

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<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p.182

<sup>142</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.191

<sup>143</sup> Burton, John, *Conflict: Resolution and Provention*, New York: St. Martin's Press, p.38

natural resources, military positions or political positions, but also may have intangible ones stretching from the desire to obtain recognition, respect, and restitution to restoration<sup>144</sup>.

It ought to be noted here we have already defined above that conflict arises when there is goal incompatibility between the parties. In addition, if we adapt the word ‘goal’ to ‘interest’ in the same way, we come to conclusion that conflict comes out of clashing interests of two or more parties because each party seeks to assert its interests at the expense of another’s interests. Accordingly, parties to conflict can be said to make attempt to prevent each other from achieving desired objectives owing to perceptions of divergent interests<sup>145</sup>. The pursuit of different interests and divergent objectives of parties substantially leads to numerous conflict areas to emerge. As Ramsbotham & Woodhouse & Miall so aptly described the situation: “If Cai’s interests clash with Abel’s, Cain is inclined to ignore Abel’s interests or actively to damage them ... nations [similarly] are expected to defend the national interest and to defeat the interests of others if they come into conflict”<sup>146</sup>, because interests typically are competitive having a high win-lose characteristics.

Needs, on the other hand, are universal and genetically inherent in the individual, that is, ontological. As Burton has indicated, needs reflect universal motivations being an integral part of the human being.<sup>147</sup> According to Galtung, basic needs consist of four elements; survival, well-being, freedom and identity. He explains as follows: Basic needs mean survival with physical well being – that is, satisfaction of needs biologically –, living a life in freedom –namely, independence/sovereignty, with identity and meaning<sup>148</sup>. Despite the fact that survival appears and will remain the most important goal for human basic needs, psychological needs are, too, at least as important as

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<sup>144</sup> Wallensteen, *op. cit.*, p.53

<sup>145</sup> Jeong, *op. cit.*, p. 5

<sup>146</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.17

<sup>147</sup> Burton, *op. cit.*, p.36

<sup>148</sup> Galtung, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, *op. cit.*, pp.82

biological ones.<sup>149</sup> In parallel with Galtung, Burton primarily adds to this list – recognition, security, control over the environment – and claims that the absence of fulfillment of these basic needs will frequently lead to adaptations that restrict development and perhaps create abnormalities in behavior, or lead to anti-social behaviors<sup>150</sup>. To reinforce his argument, he notes referring to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and some other studies: “Maslow and many others have argued that in addition to the more obvious biological needs of food and shelter [survival], there are basic human needs that relate to growth and development”<sup>151</sup>.

As shown in the tabulation below, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is made up of five distinct categories from down to the top. Physiological needs ( breathing, food, water, shelter, clothing, sleep); safety and security needs ( health, employment, property, family and social stability); love and belonging ( friendship, family, intimacy, sense of connection ); self-esteem needs ( achievement, confidence, respect of others, the need to be a unique individual ); self-actualization needs: ( personal growth, fulfillment, morality, creativity, meaning and inner potential ).

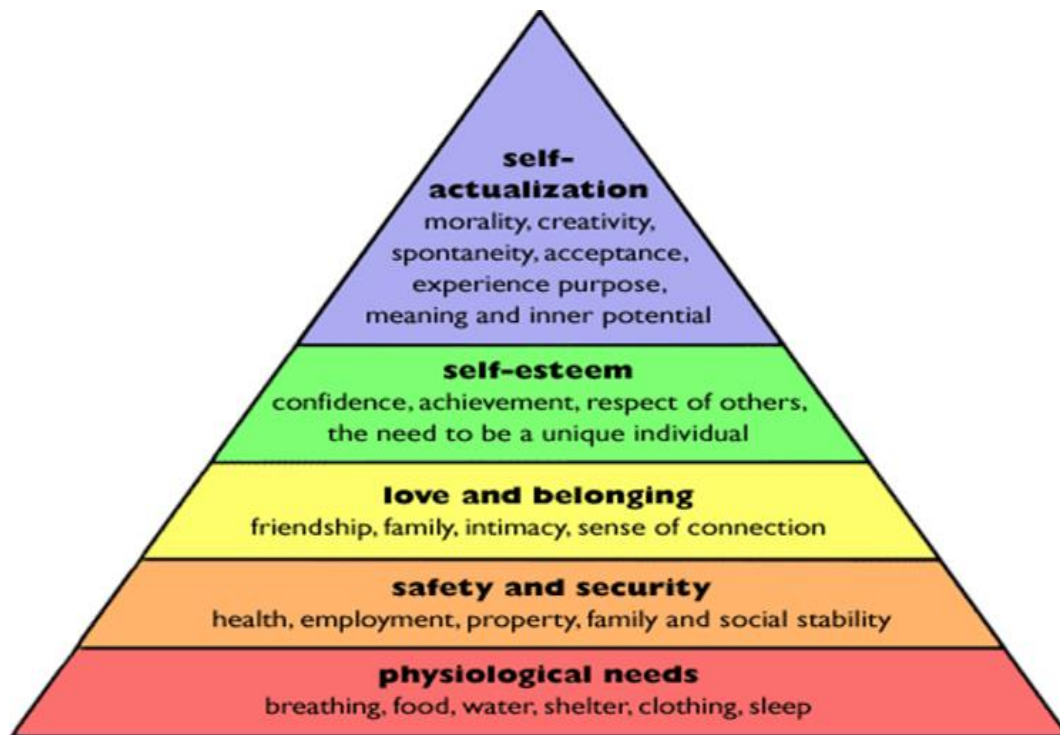
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<sup>149</sup> Survival, ostensibly, seems like a biological need rather than having psychological aspects. However, it does not only refer to subsistence of life but also that of culture, language as well as history.

<sup>150</sup> Burton, *op. cit.*, p.95

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p.36. For Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, see Maslow, A.H., “A Theory of Human Motivation”, *Psychological Review*, 50, pp. 370-396; Maslow, A.H., “Conflict, Frustration, And the Theory of Threat”, *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Vol. 38, 1943, pp. 81-86.

**Table – I** Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs



Adopted from: <http://www.researchhistory.org/2012/06/16/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs/>

Within this theoretical framework, it is worthwhile to note that biological/physiological needs are mainly associated with survival, security etc. on the other side, psychological needs connote growth, autonomy, development, including self-fulfillment. We will already give a special emphasis on deep-rooted human needs down the road on the assumption that many conflicts stem from unsatisfied of basic human needs.

A third element in conflict analysis we would like to discuss is ‘value’. The term ‘values’ refer to ideas, habits, customs and beliefs that are characteristics of particular social communities such as linguistic, religious, class, ethnic or other features that lead to separate cultures and identity groups<sup>152</sup>. Values may divide a community on ethnic, religious, sectarian, political and cultural basis. For example, it seems clearly to have

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<sup>152</sup> Burton, *op. cit.*, p.37

been the case in Syria that a two-year long civil war has turned out to be a sectarian conflict between Alawite and Sunni communities. Value differences may apparently lay the groundwork for a variance in thoughts and attitudes creating a major cleavage in ideology or ways of life. There are, however, some scholars who argue exact opposite. Having acknowledged that values may be at the core of disputing claims, Parlevliet suggests values can also provide the basis for joint problem solving and offers conflicting parties opportunity to integrate or reconcile diverse values or develop new ones that all can support conflict resolution processes<sup>153</sup>. To illustrate, the European Union was established by 1957 Treaty of Rome with the aim of ending the frequent and bloody wars between neighbours, creating new common values in conform with rule of law, peace, democracy, respect of human rights, including protection of minorities.

Finally, let us now briefly discuss how the three elements – interests, needs, and values – interact and differ from each other. To start with, J. Burton have distinguished between human needs, values and interests. He put it thus: “Human needs are universal, therefore held in common ... values may be shared to a large degree in any society. Interests, however, separate members of societies into groupings, frequently in opposition to each other”<sup>154</sup>. J. Galtung affirms that basic needs are deeper than values, even above values because “we can choice our values, and choice is part of our freedom, but you do not choice basic needs; basic needs choose you”<sup>155</sup>. Nonetheless, this thesis assumes values are as much important as basic needs. Although values, unlike basic needs, are not universal, primordial and ontological but are made by man and subject to change, they may sometimes be root causes of intractable conflicts as in the case of Islamic Jihad against West and Western values.

Basic needs are also jointly used by anyone and values are used by some, whereas interests are more like competitive having a win–lose relationship. For example, safety of an individual is supported by that of another one, but interests of one

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<sup>153</sup> Parlevliet, Michelle, “Icebergs and the Impossible – Human Rights and Conflict Resolution in Post settlement Peace Building”, Babbitt, Eileen F. and Ellen Llutz (ed.), *Human Rights & Conflict Resolution in Context Colombia, Sierra Leone, Northern Ireland*, Syracuse, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, p.284

<sup>154</sup> Burton, *op. cit.*, p.42

<sup>155</sup> Galtung, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*”, *op. cit.*, p.2

party is very likely to be incompatible with those of the other. Therefore, we can conclude that the things may be more difficult if the conflict is over needs or values since many protracted conflicts have already stem from denial of needs or values, rather than interests. Oberschall puts the same thing in another way: “ Conflict over basic values [and needs] ... are more intense and contentious than conflicts over resources [interests]”<sup>156</sup> That is to say, compromise through negotiation is more likely in interest-based conflicts than both in value-based or need-based conflicts. Other scholars, similarly, argue that disputes about negotiable interests can be settled by compromise and deep rooted conflicts that involve human needs or values can be resolved only by removing underlying causes<sup>157</sup>.

A feature of interests is that they are negotiable, because interests may change according to time and place. Basic needs, on the other hand, Galtung says, “cannot be negotiated away, if you negotiate away your own or other’s basic needs you are sentencing yourself or others to a life unworthy of human beings”<sup>158</sup>. In brief, settlement through negotiation is possible where interests are concerned. If conflict involves basic needs, which are often non-negotiable, conflict can only be resolved when needs such as identity, survival, security, development etc. are satisfied. Consequently, seeking to bring basic needs and values to the negotiation table in conflict situations would be irrational since the only way to resolve is to respect them. As Burton pointed out; “needs and values are not for trading. Needs ... are inherent drives for survival and development, including identity and recognition. It is not within the free decision making of the individual to trade them”<sup>159</sup>. If something is not for trading, it cannot be suppressed either. To wrap up, in this section we have made a distinction between interests, which can be traded and are negotiable, and values and needs, which are non-negotiable and cannot be traded, suppressed or bargained for, on the other hand.

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<sup>156</sup> Coser, Lewis A., *The functions of social conflict*, Free Press, 1956, quoted in Oberschall, Anthony, *Conflict and Peace Building in Divided Societies: Responses to Ethnic Violence*” New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 38

<sup>157</sup>Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.31

<sup>158</sup> Galtung, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*” *op. cit.*, pp.2-3

<sup>159</sup> Burton, *op. cit.*, pp.39-40

### 3.2.4. Perceptions

Thus far we have focused on five key elements in conflict analysis – parties, goals, interests, needs and values – for understanding dynamics of conflict, the last one will be ‘perceptions’. Why examination of perception is so important is it enables to explore dynamics of conflict, violence, incompatibility, and the like. Perceptions are mainly based on sensations, and therefore, it is a subjective process by its very nature, which means reality can have different forms for different observers. What we perceive may not necessarily be identical to reality, because an individual’s or group’s perceptions are reality to him/her or them. The fact that perceptions may be incompatible with reality was well described by R. Stagner as “competing groups build up and maintain differential images of reality: images so formed that our group is virtuous and free from sin, hence meriting undeviating loyalty, defense, and sacrifice; their groups is bad, aggressive, treacherous, and not quite human”<sup>160</sup>. According to this approach, if someone belongs to one nation /ethnicity / religion / culture or civilization perceives that the other one’s is evil and malevolent, this is very likely to induce behaviour confirming the erroneous perception.

Rothman, similarly, argues that self-perceptions and attributions of the other are often diametrically opposed giving the example of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, which was sustained for decades by each side attributing aggrandizing intentions to the other side<sup>161</sup>. Ralph K. White, who studies Russian American relations in the course of Cold War, also develops ‘mirror image’ phenomenon in which images of different parties mirror each other. As the following tabulation<sup>162</sup> indicates, the two images mirror each other;

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<sup>160</sup> Stagner, Ross, “ The Psychology of Human Conflict” , McNeil, Elton B., *The Nature of Human Conflict*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1965 , p.51

<sup>161</sup> Rothman, *op. cit.*, p.26

<sup>162</sup> Stagner, *op. cit.*, p.47

**Table – II** Comparative Images of the US and the USSR

American Image of USSR	Soviet Image of USA
<p>1. <i>They (the rulers) are bad.</i></p> <p><i>The men in the Kremlin are aggressive, power seeking, brutal in suppressing Hungary, ruthless in dealing with their people.</i></p> <p><i>They are infiltrating the Western Hemisphere to attack us.</i></p> <p><i>They engage in espionage and sabotage otherwise)</i></p> <p><i>To wreck our country.</i></p>	<p>1. <i>They (the rulers) are bad.</i></p> <p><i>The Wall Street bankers, politicians, and militarists want a war because they fear loss of wealth and power in a communist revolution.</i></p> <p><i>They are surrounding us with military bases.</i></p> <p><i>They send spies (in U-2planes and otherwise)</i></p> <p><i>to destroy the workers' fatherland.</i></p>
<p>2. <i>They are imperialistic.</i></p> <p><i>The Communists want to dominate areas, the world.</i></p> <p><i>They rigidly control the satellite puppet Cuba) are governments.</i></p>	<p>2. <i>They are imperialistic.</i></p> <p><i>The capitalist nations dominate colonial keep them in submission.</i></p> <p><i>The Latin- American regimes(except puppets of the USA.</i></p>
<p>3. <i>They exploit their own people.</i></p> <p><i>They hold down consumer goods, keep standard of living low except insecurity,unemployment etc for communist bureaucrats.</i></p>	<p>3. <i>They exploit their own people.</i></p> <p><i>All capitalists live in luxury by exploiting workers, who suffer</i></p>
<p>4. <i>They are against democracy.</i></p> <p><i>Democratic forms are mere pretense; people can vote only for communist candidates.</i></p>	<p>4. <i>They are against democracy.</i></p> <p><i>Democratic forms are mere pretense; people can vote only for capitalist candidates.</i></p>
<p>5. <i>They distort the truth.</i></p> <p><i>They pose as the friend of colonial to peoples to enslave them.</i></p>	<p>5. <i>They distort the truth.</i></p> <p><i>They falsely accuse the USSR of desiring to impose ideology by force.</i></p>



The most striking conclusion of White's study is that 'reality' for different observers is not the same. If what American image of Russia is about reality, then Russian image of the US is about unreality, and vice versa. Thus, it would be easy to draw the conclusion that actions taken with reference to self-perceptions in interpersonal or intercommunity relations can be far from being real / rational and even give rise to violent conflicts. For example, Sri Lanka conflict, which is regarded as a protracted conflict for having lasted for more than 30 years, promotes enemy images and a lack of trust which makes any communication difficult<sup>163</sup>. Hence, one should come up with that perceptions of conflicting parties, individually, occupy an important position in conflict analysis.

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<sup>163</sup> Valenzuela, Pedro, *Meeting Human Needs, Preventing Violence: Applying Human Needs Theory to the Conflict in Sri Lanka*, (unpublished master's thesis), Buenos Aires :Universidad del Salvador, p.13

## CHAPTER IV

### TOOLS for CONFLICT RESOLUTION

As noted earlier, conflict resolution first searches for deep causes of the conflict, then seeks to find the ways in which conflict can be transformed based on mutual compromise of the adversaries. In this way, it gives a chance to understand the nature of the conflict and the needs or positions of the actors involved in the conflict for a durable solution. Furthermore, conflict resolution claims that conflict settlement is most likely to be achieved through some conflict resolution instruments, which will be examined in details in this part of the thesis; third party intervention (soft / hard power), mediation, problem solving workshops (or diplomacy), negotiation between all relevant parties / actors and reconciliation process.

It must be pointed from the beginning, however, that these instruments are available to the conflict parties only when they believe they have no coercive power over each other, which means they come to know that they cannot obtain their goals by violence /conflict, because it is costly to sustain it. William Zartman calls this situation as ‘mutually hurting stalemate’<sup>164</sup> which is mutually felt by both parties to be disadvantageous. In other words, both sides realize that “what is lost is not only the suffering that comes from violence, but equally the absence of joy of full development, both personally and socially. Hence conflicts must be transformed so that the parties can live creatively and non-violently and the violence avoided”<sup>165</sup>. Thus, one could come up with that the conflict may continue until the cost becomes unacceptable and the conflict resolution instrument listed above turn out to be practical.

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<sup>164</sup> Zartman, I. William, “Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond”, Stern, P.C. and D. Druckman (ed.), *International conflict resolution after the Cold War*, Washington DC: National Academy Press, 2000, pp. 225-250

<sup>165</sup> Galtung, Johan, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, Sidmouth: Pluto Press, England, 2004, p.79

Let us move now to a brief analysis of these instruments. Yet, before we proceed further, there is a need to establish a preliminary explanation about the instruments that they do not have to be mutually exclusive or ranked hierarchically. Instead, they represent as constituents of a broad spectrum of solutions to the conflicts. As J. Galtung indicated, - the broader the spectrum of solutions, the more alternatives there are to violence - <sup>166</sup>.

#### ***4.1. Third Party***

Parties to a long-running conflict that is deep-rooted and complicated may be unable to produce their own solutions. In this situation, not destructive but constructive interventions of third parties can have the potential to change dynamics of interaction between adversaries. Particularly, in intra-state conflicts where state sovereignty and recognition of opposition movement issues lie at the heart of the conflict, one of the main challenge is to establish direct communication between the parties in order to initiate a process of pre-negotiation, Crocker & Hampson and Aall argue<sup>167</sup>. The main task of third party is to provide this service, that is, to help establish contact between the parties. J. Galtung puts emphasis on another aspect of third party assuming that the “third party” conception, in itself, is misleading, but should rather be called “outside party” on the grounds that there are not only two parties to a conflict, most conflict formations are very complex and complicated with having more than three or more actors<sup>168</sup>.

There are, in fact, basically two paradigms on what third parties can do and when their intervention is necessary: The structuralist paradigm and the social-psychological approaches. The former treating the causes of conflict as objective suggests that parties

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<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5

<sup>167</sup> Crocker, Chester A., Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, “Multiparty Mediation and the Conflict Cycle”, A. Crocker, Chester, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall (ed.), *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World*, Washington: Unites States Institute of Peace, 1999, pp. 19-45

<sup>168</sup> Galtung, Johan, *A Theory of Conflict : Overcoming Direct Violence*” Kolofon Press, 2010, p. 31

to a conflict which is at a point of mutually hurting stalemate can be led to a settlement through the use of persuasion, incentives, and disincentives; the latter, on the other side, treating causes of conflict as subjective claims that third party ought to seek to change perceptions, attitudes, values and behaviors of the parties through consultative meetings, problem-solving, workshops, conflict-resolution training, and, developing and designing alternative dispute-resolution systems<sup>169</sup>.

In other words, according to structural approach, third party “involves more than just assisting highly motivated parties in reaching a negotiated solution to their disputes” it also includes “the use of various side payments or penalties and sanctions to get the parties to the dispute to change their cost-benefit calculations about the utility of a negotiated settlement”<sup>170</sup>. This is a model of third party with muscle that can employ hard power instruments over the conflict parties. As for social-psychological approach, we see another third party model using of more “moral suasion and symbolic rewards or gestures” when it intervenes in a conflict, so it is also supposed to “play a neutral and essentially facilitating role, enabling and encouraging a mutual learning process rather than guiding or still less influencing and directing the parties to mutually acceptable approaches to problem solving, their involvement is based on their expert or reputational authority<sup>171</sup>. To illustrate, a group of businessman who played a third party role made an important constructive contribution to the conflict in South Africa in 1980s by calling for initiation of negotiations between ANC and the apartheid regime. They succeeded in changing behaviors of the parties, as well. Another example of changing perception and behaviors of the parties in a conflict by a third party is Anwar al Sadat’s, former president of Egypt, visit to Israel in 1977 with the support of the US administration, which shifted the dynamics of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

There have, however, been fierce debates over whether third party intervention should be based on hard power or soft power instruments. This thesis claims that

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<sup>169</sup>Crocker, Hampson and Aall, *op. cit.*, pp. 20 -24

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-24

<sup>171</sup> Hampson, Fen Osler , Chester A. Crocker and Pamela R. Aall, “Negotiation and International Conflict”, Webel, Charles and Johan Galtung (ed.), *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2007, p. 42

although hard-power approaches has always been important in ending violent conflicts during the Cold-war period or until very recently, soft –power tactics, as social-psychological approach argued above, appear to be more attractive and useful than ever in settling conflicts peacefully. Because, while old-fashioned hard power basically requires coercive methods, enforcement or mediation with muscle, which are no longer easy to implement in today’s world; soft power involves non-coercive methods, pure mediation, problem solving diplomacy, good offices etc., on the other hand. Ramsbotham & Woodhouse & Miall, from a different perspective, distinguish between powerful third parties, or “mediators with muscle”, who bring their power resources to bear, and powerless third parties, whose role is confined to communication and facilitation<sup>172</sup>. They argue that pure mediators that have traditionally been seen as powerless are powerful at establishing communication between the conflictants, ironically. Powerful third parties, too, whose entry alters not only the communication structure but also the power balance may change the parties’ behavior as well as their communications by judicious use of the carrot and the stick<sup>173</sup>. These scholars assert that both options should be always on the table when necessary.

Let us return back to our previous argument that a type of third party based on developing mutual understanding between the adversaries to a conflict has a moral superiority over the other choices. According to this approach, the role of a third party that uses soft-power instruments is to establish dialogue among conflicting parties who are seeking to understand their conflict and to find an agreeable resolution, not to mediate in the sense of suggesting seemingly reasonable compromises<sup>174</sup>. The entry of a third party may change the conflict structure and attitudes or behaviours of the parties through conciliatory actions regardless of whether the parties are nations, states, communities, groups or individuals. These actions essentially appear to be “mediation,

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<sup>172</sup> Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, p.23

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22

<sup>174</sup> Burton, John W., *Conflict Resolution: Its Language and Processes* London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. Lanham, Md., 1996, pp. 57-58

fact finding, commissions of inquiry, election monitoring, humanitarian assistance, ceasefire observation, technical support and advice in negotiations, and guarantees for enforcement of peace implementation”<sup>175</sup>. Therefore, if a third party that does not adopt these conciliatory actions it may tend to escalate the conflict and can be called as partisan, on the contrary. A military third party intervention to a conflict rather than being conciliatory may not be the best way to influence each side’s utility of settling now versus continuing on until victory, because use of military instruments is not the only mechanism available to third parties<sup>176</sup>. Fisher and Keashly develops a contingency model of third party intervention, which is “based on the assessment that ... conflict involves a dynamic process in which objective and subjective elements interact over time as the conflict escalates and de-escalates”<sup>177</sup>. It means that different interventions will be appropriate at different stages of the conflict for peaceful conflict intervention considering the parameters of what kind of issues the conflict involves and at which stage it already exists.

#### ***4.1.1. Mediation***

In most cases of conflict resolution since the end of the Cold War, there is an increasingly heightened awareness and interest in mediation in the process leading to a settlement. Mediation, however, has always been used, and will continue to be used, as a means in ending conflicts peacefully in every society, though in diverse ways with respect to different characteristics of the societies. It is defined as a “process in which parties to a dispute attempt to reach a mutually agreeable solution under the auspices

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<sup>175</sup> Oberschall, Anthony, *Conflict and Peace Building in Divided Societies: Responses to Ethnic Violence*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 35

<sup>176</sup> Regan, Patrick M., “Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2002, 46: 55, p.63

<sup>177</sup> Fisher, Ronald J. and Loreleigh Keashly, “The Potential Complementarity of Mediation and Consultation within a Contingency Model of Third Party Intervention”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Special Issue on International Mediation, 1991, pp. 34

of a third party”<sup>178</sup>. Mediation is basically involved in the issues ranging from everyday life to inter-state or global levels, performed through various actors; such as religious men (leaders of the mosque, the priest etc.), opinion leaders, politicians, academics, independent non-governmental groups, nation-states, international organizations or transnational institutions etc. Mediators seek to create an appropriate atmosphere and the conditions for an open dialogue in order to resolve the conflict by helping the adversaries contact each other. As I suggested earlier, the first contact between the parties in a conflict that is violent, protracted and intractable generally begins at a stage when they come to accept that they cannot obtain their goals by conflict because it is costly to sustain it<sup>179</sup>.

Needless to say, parties to a conflict may find themselves in need of the assistance of an intermediary to begin, conduct and conclude a peace process successfully<sup>180</sup>. In this sense, the role of a well functioning mediation is first to gain trust and confidence of the parties, then to set agendas and formulate agreements by arranging meetings, reducing tensions, exploring the interests of the parties<sup>181</sup>. Horowitz draws attention to its role of assuring the parties involved in the conflict freedom of speech and, that is, autonomy in decision making<sup>182</sup>, so that they can make a rational choice in accordance with their goals and interests. Lederach, on the other hand, insists that the job of mediation is “aimed principally at helping to establish and support the

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<sup>178</sup> Jeong, Ho Won, *Peace and Conflict Studies : An Introduction*, Aldershot ; Burlington USA : Ashgate, 2000, p. 181

<sup>179</sup> ‘Ripe moment’ conception was developed by I. William Zartman to explain the optimal time to put an end to a conflict. See, I. William Zartman, “The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments”, *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 2001, pp. 8-18

<sup>180</sup> Mitchell, Christopher, “Mediation and the Ending of Conflicts in Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes”, Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p.77

<sup>181</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *op. cit.*, p.181

<sup>182</sup> Horowitz, Sara, “Mediation”, Webel, Charles and Johan Galtung (ed.), *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies*, London & New York: Routledge, (2007), p. 51

movement from violent confrontation toward negotiation”<sup>183</sup>. Thus, mediation in point of Lederach’s view appears to guide the parties in the process of transition from stage of a conflict into a negotiation process.

Given this framework, some core tasks of mediation can be summarized as follows;

- *to develop trust and cooperation between the parties, so they can share relevant tasks and information.*
- *to improve communication between the parties, or, in other words, to understand the feelings of their counterpart, and share the decision making.*
- *to assure all the relevant parties their perspectives will be heard and therefore, make them feel they are fairly treated,*
- *to reduce tension and conflict, so those who have a close relationship with both parties are not involved in a conflict of loyalties.*
- *to help the parties appreciate relevant information, in order to make decisions based on proper data, after having considered alternative proposals to solve the same issues.*
- *to favour confidentiality while developing a voluntary resolution to the conflict.*
- *to reach a reasonable and fair agreement, unlike what usually happens in court*<sup>184</sup>.

Christopher Mitchell also gives emphasis on the role of mediation during talks or negotiations taking phases of pre-negotiation and post-agreement aside. Accordingly, mediation must have five hallmarks to move the parties to a consensus;

*Facilitator; fulfills functions within meetings to enable a fruitful exchange of versions, aims and visions. –*

*Envisioner; provides new data, ideas, theories and options for adversaries to adapt.*

*Enhancer; provides additional resources to assist in search for positive-sum solution.-*

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<sup>183</sup> Lederach, John Paul, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997, p. 65

<sup>184</sup> Horowitz, op. cit., p. 54



*Guarantor; provides insurance against talks breaking down and offers to guarantee any durable solution.*

*Legitim�er; adds prestige and legitimacy to any agreed solution.<sup>185</sup>*

A mediation mechanism which has include the above qualifications may play a substantial role in the peace processes. For instance, we have already observed well-functioning mediation processes in the cases of South Africa, Northern Ireland, Angola as well as Somalia. At this point, however, the question of appointment of mediation comes into prominence that I would now like to discuss. In other words, it will be useful to explore in details of what type of mediation approach might be the most appropriate to perform mediatory tasks in conflicts that are violent and protracted, given the attributes of the conflict and desires of the parties; internal third party vs. external third party, traditional approach vs. problem solving approach, track I diplomacy or track II diplomacy.

***Internal vs. external;***

J. P. Lederach who coined the term “confianza” argued that in many protracted conflicts, only mediators that can understand cultural nuances of the society and internal dynamics of the conflict can play intermediary role successfully. Confianza (a Spanish word) is equivalent to the word trust in English , but it is something more than simply trust. Lederach examines the Central American societies and comes to conclusion:

Confianza is a key for entry into the problem and into the person with whom we have the problem. From the eyes of everyday experience in Central America, when I have problem with someone, I do not look for an outside professional. Rather I look for someone I trust who also knows the other person and is trusted by them. This kind of person can give orientation and advice. Through this person entry is accomplished.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Mitchell, Christopher, “The Process and Stages of Mediation: Two Sudanese Cases”, Smock, David R. (ed.), *Making War and Waging Peace: Foreign Intervention in Africa*, United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993, p.147

<sup>186</sup> Lederach, John Paul, *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures*, Syracuse University Press, 1995, p. 89

This implies, at the same time, a type of mediator known as insider – even partial – that emerges from the conflict situation itself may give better results in conflicts rather than an outsider – even impartial – one. What we observe is that “confianza” (or trust) is given priority than “neutrality” in this type of mediation. Thus, the most striking conclusion of Lederach’s study is that confianza model, which is essentially based on third party’s personal relationship with the disputants rather than by a secondary role such as external intervener, seems to be more preferable due to the fact that it assures sincerity, reliability, openness, revelation etc<sup>187</sup>. Trust in mediator, of course, is a key element in a mediation process. It is even a sine qua non, because conflict parties do not already trust each other. Thus, they look for a mediator to be trusted who will also be able to listen and give a good feedback in an equal way. According to confianza model, however, intermediary should not only be trustful or reliable but should also have an insight into the background and dynamics of the conflict, no matter how it is neutral or impartial.

Another view is that external third parties, which are unfamiliar with the conflict and the socio-cultural environment where it takes place may play a critical role in mediating between the disputant parties. As Oberschall pointed out, “intermediaries may be external stakeholders, neutral states without direct interest in the conflict, prominent public figures such as retired statesmen and Nobel prize winners, or mediators appointed by international organizations such as the UN and the EU<sup>188</sup>. Paralelly, Burton and Dukes assume that mediator must be an “impartial, and neutral third-party who has no authoritative decision-making power to assist disputing parties in voluntarily reaching their own mutually acceptable settlement of issues in dispute”<sup>189</sup>.

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<sup>187</sup> Wehr, Paul and John Paul Lederach, “ Mediating Conflict in Central America”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Special Issue on International Mediation, 1991, pp. 85-98

<sup>188</sup> Oberschall, *op. cit.*, p. 186

<sup>189</sup> Burton, John and Frank Dukes, *Conflict: Practices in Management, Settlement & Resolution*, St. Martin’s Press, 1990, p. 25

A traditional form in determining an external mediator for intra-state (or inter-state) conflicts is to resort to the United Nations (UN). But, this generally applies to the conflicts in which the adversaries have no direct contact each other, in other words, there is a mutual recognition problem between the parties or they do not agree on appointment of a third party to bring their issues to the negotiation table. If necessary, the UN may assign a third party through its mechanisms like the Secretary General or the UN security Council. To give examples, in East Timor conflict, Angola Crisis and Somalia civil war in 1990s, the UN served as a mediator being instrumental in reaching some substantive conclusions, though partially. The UN was also dominant external actor in Sierra Leone and helped establish a special court jointly with the government to prosecute perpetrators when the violence escalated after an agreement was reached. Nonetheless, sometimes at least one of the parties to a dispute may not agree on the mediation of the UN, too. Colombian government, for example, sought assistance of the UN in its long-running conflict with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) during the presidency of Uribe, but FARC refused the UN mediation in the conflict. As a result, the UN did not have any intermediary role in peace talks since 2000s.

After all, we can come up with that external actors have had a huge impact on conflict resolution processes in some cases such as South Africa, Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone. Intermediaries such as the business community, the churches and academics were active in the first two countries, particularly<sup>190</sup>. Norwegian academics, instance, were also critical in starting Oslo talks between Israel and Palestine as well as in Sri Lanka conflict. As opposed to what Oberschall and Dukes & Burton indicated above that external mediator must be neutral without direct interest in the conflict, we claim that they do not have to be so. A good example to this is the US has served as an outside mediator in protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict for long years, although it is not exactly neutral given the substantial influence on domestic US politics

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<sup>190</sup> Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, *Conclusion: Peace Processes, Present and Future* in Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 257

wielded by the Jewish community in the USA and US – Israeli historical relationships<sup>191</sup>.

Another interesting example to outside mediation existed in Northern Ireland conflict. There, an independent commission was designated so as to have three international prominent figures and one of them was selected jointly by the British and Irish governments who initiated the negotiations. They chose former US Senator George Mitchell who also played a central part in Bosnian conflict, as a representative to the former US president, Bill Clinton. He initially devised and imposed his principles as conditions for entry to talks and punishing paramilitaries from each negotiating party, which will be elaborated in details in the subsequent section - negotiation. Consequently, as an external actor, his efforts eventually proved successful and the final agreement received more support across the political spectrum than any previous attempt<sup>192</sup>. It was not only supported by major parties to the conflict, but also from the other camps in the society.

### ***Traditional approach vs. problem solving approach;***

Intermediary roles may range from the traditional big power, the mediator with muscle, to the problem solving facilitator through non- official or secondary mechanisms. Both approaches have substantially contributed to the conflict resolution processes in many corners of the world. Great powers, at times, have undertaken traditional intermediary efforts particularly in inter-state conflicts such as Serbia's war against Bosnia and Croatia, Arab- Israeli or Palestinian Israeli clashes. Ethnic conflict in Bosnia, which is a good example to a successful traditional mediation, was brought to an end with Dayton agreement under forceful US leadership along with Russian and EU

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<sup>191</sup> Mitchell, Christopher, "Mediation and the Ending of Conflicts in Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes", Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p.81

<sup>192</sup> Wolfsfeld, Gadi, "The Role of the News Media in Peace Negotiations: Variations over time and Circumstance", Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (ed.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p.94

participation<sup>193</sup>. Problem solving mediation, on the other hand, is performed by non-official (but rarely official) actors who typically are representatives of small countries or of international non-governmental organizations that do not have the leverage of a big power. A well-known case to the problem solving mediation is the role played by Senator George Mitchell, former the US president representative to the Bosnian conflict. When he chaired negotiations in Northern Ireland conflict, he had no any political or physical power, he was there just because of his prestige and reputation over the parties.

Furthermore, by acting as facilitating mediators in Israeli – Palestine conflict, Norwegian government officials, for instance, arranged for a secret informal setting encouraging open-ended exploration of options and helped the negotiators hear each other and discuss possible options through several workshops in which members of each side understand the perspective of the other<sup>194</sup>. Israeli- Palestine conflict, in the meantime, is an interesting example to both types of mediation –traditional and problem solving- because as the US has played a traditional mediation role in this conflict, Norwegian government and non-governmental organizations have fulfilled the role of problem solving intermediary. As Louis Kriesberg indicated, therefore, that no single method of mediation is quite effective for every actor in all circumstances, “combinations of approaches are necessary, sometimes simultaneously and sometimes sequentially. This helps ensure that peacemaking is not done only by from the top-down, but laterally and from the bottom up as well”<sup>195</sup>.

### ***Track I Diplomacy and Track II Diplomacy***

Track I diplomacy refers to official governmental or intergovernmental actions, which involves traditional diplomacy, good offices and all other forms of diplomacy at

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<sup>193</sup> Coackley, John, “Ethnic Conflict Resolution: Routes Towards Settlement”, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Special Issue: Pathways from Ethnic Conflict: Institutional Redesign in Divided Societies, Volume 15, Issue 3-4, 2009, Societies, pp. 477

<sup>194</sup> Kriesberg, Louis, “Mediation and the Transformation of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 3, Special Issue on Conflict Resolution in Identity-Based Disputes, May, 2001, pp. 381-387

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388

the state-to-state level. To put it bluntly, it is regarded as an essential “instrument of foreign policy for the establishment and development of peaceful contacts between the governments of different states through the use of intermediaries mutually recognized by the respective parties”<sup>196</sup>. For example, Iran’s a series of negotiations with P 5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom, United States) over concerns about Iran’s nuclear program is a multilateral track-one diplomacy. On the other hand, Joseph Montville who coined the term Track II or citizen diplomacy defines it like; “unofficial, informal interaction among members of adversarial groups or nations with the goals of developing strategies, influencing public opinion, and organizing human and material resources in ways that might resolve the conflict”<sup>197</sup>. Track II is not a substitute for Track I, rather it may be a complementary of a whole official negotiation process in a conflict, bringing people together from each camp. To illustrate, unofficial contacts between influential members of Israeli and Palestinian communities who came together in Norway in 1993 about resolution of Israeli- Palestinian conflict are clear examples to Track II diplomacy.

## ***4.2. Negotiation***

Today, we can give a number of cases where conflicts have been settled by negotiation: examples range from the ending of apartheid regime in South Africa and the troubles in Northern Ireland Conflict to the ending violent intra-state conflicts in Nicaragua, El- Salvador and Angola. Therefore, negotiation occupies an important place in conflict resolution because it is one of the basic tools through which parties to a dispute search for peaceful settlements and aim to settle their differences. As we noted earlier, when violence has reached at a point where further escalation is very costly what is known mutually hurting stalemate, the parties come to accept other alternatives than use of force and may turn to negotiation table. As A. Guelke has already stated that “the

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<sup>196</sup> De Magalhães, José Calvet, “*The Pure Concept of Diplomacy*” New York: Greenwood Press, 1988, p.59

<sup>197</sup> Montville, Joseph V., “Transnationalism and the Role of Track – Two Diplomacy”, Thompson, W.S. (ed.), *Approaches to Peace: An Intellectual Map*, Washington DC: US Institute of Peace, 1992, p. 255.

unwillingness of both parties to the conflict to enter into negotiations in the early stages of a conflict may be explained by the belief of both parties in their ability to achieve their aims through other means, typically physical coercion”<sup>198</sup>. Hence, when a deadlock in the conflict is painful to both sides, one could argue that necessary conditions for initiation of negotiations have just ripened.

In some cases, the conflict parties may not be willing to recognize each other to move towards negotiation until a deadlock takes place. Mutual recognition is, of course, a prerequisite or a must for negotiation process. If there is no mutual recognition between the parties, they seem not yet ready to negotiate. To give an example, Yitzhak Rabin recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and Yasser Arafat recognized Israel’s right to exist in peace and security with the mutual recognition demonstrated by the signing of the Declaration of Principles before initiation of official negotiations<sup>199</sup>. For sure, there could be a de facto recognition during the conflict, but peace agreements require a de jure arrangement for compromise. It is also a highly controversial issue that which parties should have a right to participate in the negotiation process apart from conflict parties. Negotiations, of course, may involve other internal or external (third) parties to the conflict. In Sri Lanka case, for example, some external parties with the intention of assistance – or with an interest to the conflict- were also present at the negotiation table along with internal actors: the UN, the Commonwealth, the Organization of African Unity, the United States, the United Kingdom, and regional states under the umbrella of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), RUF-supporting countries such as Liberia, Burkina Faso, and Libya<sup>200</sup>. Not to mention, despite involvement of third parties in negotiation, ultimate decision making power still belongs to the conflict parties, personally.

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<sup>198</sup> Guelke, Adrian, “Negotiations and Peace Process”, Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (ed.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p.57

<sup>199</sup> Kriesberg, *op. cit.*, p.383

<sup>200</sup> Bartoli, Andrea and Thomas Bundschuh, “*Working Together for Sustainable Peace: Conflict Resolvers and Human Rights Advocates in Sierra Leone*”, Babbitt, Eileen F. and Ellen L. Lutz (ed.), *Human Rights &*

The most obvious importance of negotiation to the settlement and resolution of conflicts is it basically points to the significance of establishing a dialogue between the parties. As J. Galtung indicated “words can be very hard insulting, but they are not lethal”<sup>201</sup>. We can even suggest that the root causes of the conflict sometimes lie in debating culture within the society in which non-dialogue environment do not let human diversity be mirrored in social diversity. Thus, negotiation helps us to transcend the contradiction between the parties through dialogue and empathy. This also comes to known as communication-based approach. According to this approach, negotiation serves as “vehicle or means for changing perceptions in a conflict so that they learn to trust each other to the point where they are prepared to engaged in a reciprocal exchange of concessions”<sup>202</sup>. Nonetheless, the fundamentals for trust and concessions can only be laid through a sustained process of dialogue and communication on the basis of forums for dialogue that allow the parties to treat each other as individuals, break down stereotypes, and identify common goals, interests and needs<sup>203</sup>. Otherwise, disputes would not be settled without dialogue. As Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister and one of the architects of the Oslo Accords Yossi Beilin stated clearly, “we had never really had any contacts with the PLO...we didn’t really know what the PLO really stood for. We knew the propaganda. We did not know the truth”<sup>204</sup>. Legitimizing contact and dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians first broke taboos, then gave rise to emergence of peace movements within both communities.

Furthermore, negotiation is not an issue to be completed overnight, rather it is a long term process as in the case of Northern Ireland and Colombia conflicts. For

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*Conflict Resolution in context: Colombia, Sierra Leone, Northern Ireland*, Syracuse, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, 2009, p.165

<sup>201</sup> Galtung, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, op. cit., pp.178 - 179

<sup>202</sup> Hampson, Fen Osler, Chester A. Crocker and Pamela R. Aall, “Negotiation and International Conflict”, Webel, Charles and Johan Galtung (ed.), *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies*, London & New York: Routledge 2007, p. 40

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45

<sup>204</sup> Elon, Amos, ‘*The Peacemakers*’, *New Yorker*, 20 December 1993, p.82



instance, the negotiations culminated in signing of Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland in 1998, but attempts to consolidate the new political structures were not achieved until a stable government was established in May 2007 elections<sup>205</sup>. In a protracted conflict, there is also a need to develop a framework for a negotiated settlement on the substantive issues, because negotiations must have certainty. The more uncertain an outcome is, the less likely it will be accepted. If a negotiation process do not touch upon the underlying (core) issues in the conflict, peace agreements do not last, either. A case in point is the status of Jerusalem, which both Israeli and Palesitnian sides are devoted to see it as the sacred capital of their state, and thus plays a central role in Israeli – Palestinian negotiations. Unless the status of Jerusalem cannot be solved, a final agreement will also hardly be achieved in the Palestinian – Israeli conflict.

In contrast, the parties may not be able to talk some critical subjects in negotiations such as, what will happen to human rights violations or abuses during escalation stage. These subjects can, however, be highly controversial. Therefore, conflict sides can prefer some issues to leave to the peace implementation process, rather talking face to face. It must be also pointed that a decision to initiate negotiations in some particular instances may be extremely difficult for, at least, one of the parties owing to challenges to the peace process, within and without. What we see when we look at Colombian case, for example, is different segments of the society including the army and the Catholic Church opposed a negotiated peace with the FARC guerillas and did eveything they could to block the peace process, initially<sup>206</sup>. The things are, however, changing in opposite direction over time. Afterwards, most sectors of Colombian society

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<sup>205</sup> Jarman, Neil, "From the Frying Pan to the Fire? Conflict Resolution, Human Rights, and Transitional Violence in Northern Ireland", Babbitt, Eileen F. and Ellen L. Lutz (ed.), *Human Rights & Conflict Resolution in context: Colombia, Sierra Leone, Northern Ireland*, Syracuse, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, 2009, p.188

<sup>206</sup> Gomez, Leonel Narvaez, "Twenty Years of Negotiating Peace", Babbitt, Eileen F. and Ellen Lutz (ed.), *Human Rights & Conflict Resolution in Context Colombia, Sierra Leone, Northern Ireland*, Syracuse, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, 2009, p.49

as well as the armed forces, came to accept that the achievement of sustainable peace was only dependent on political negotiations with the insurgent<sup>207</sup>.

In some cases, both the desire not to accord the legitimacy to the other side and the fear of the reaction of the society at the first stage in a peace process, negotiations may tend to take the form of secret talks between the protagonists<sup>208</sup>. Initial negotiations in South Africa, Northern Ireland and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts all began with secret talks. Darby and MacGinty argue that secret meetings have certain advantages over traditional diplomacy as a preliminary to substantive talks, most importantly, the formal barriers imposed by protocols are dropped in this way<sup>209</sup>. Success of the secret talks depends on the absorptive capacity of the whole of society and the context within which they are implemented. A. Guelke, who reflected the interaction relationship between violence and secret talks, suggests:

*where the public's overriding concern is that there should be an end to violence, there may be a very positive response to the revelation of secret talks since it can be taken for granted that a central objective of talks between the parties will be to establish the terms for an end to the violence. Where ending violence is not quite so high a priority for the whole of the society, fears about the political compromises discussed in secret between the parties may produce a strongly negative action, at least from a section of public opinion<sup>210</sup>.*

In this sense, I would like to give two leading examples to well-functioning secret talks between the adversaries, which served the purpose; Israeli – Palestinian conflict and Apartheid in South African. Israeli –Palestinian Oslo peace accord began with the contacts and discussions that were held in almost complete secrecy between the disputants who did not recognize each other before. As Lederach pointed out, “only a handful of people within the PLO and the Israeli and Norwegian governments were

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<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, p.63

<sup>208</sup> Guelke, *op. cit.*, p.58

<sup>209</sup> Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, “Conclusion: Peace Processes, Present and Future”, Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty, *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 257

<sup>210</sup> Guelke, *op. cit.*, p.58

aware” of the peace process, “even at the time the ultimate agreement was announced, the process and progress of the discussions were virtually unknown and kept carefully out of the public eye”<sup>211</sup>. Eventually, Oslo peace process made a significant contribution to the advancement of peace in this conflict. In South African case, on the other hand, incumbent and the last president of apartheid era, F.W. de Clerk, paid a lot of importance to the secret negotiations with the ANC, at the first stage. The move from secret to open negotiations went through after five years of secret negotiations between Mandela and various state agencies. Following secret talks in early 1990s, without even informing his own party of his plans, de Klerk rescinded the bannings on the African nationalist movements such the African National Congress (ANC) and its allies, and soon after unconditionally released dozens of political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela who served a term of life imprisonment for high treason<sup>212</sup>.

### ***4.3. Problem Solving Workshops***

Problem solving workshop (or approach) is based on creating a common ground bringing members of the opposing sides and all segments of the society together for a peaceful and stable resolution of a conflict in which they are engaged. It is assumed to yield better results particularly for intra-state conflicts. These workshops and meetings firstly enable relevant actors-parties to inform each other and needs of the other side, then set an agenda to discuss the nature and causes of the conflict in every aspects through guidance of a facilitator. A facilitator is someone who is not in a position to set down norms, but helps protagonists to make an analysis of the total situation, including the values and interests of the large society in which the conflict is taking place<sup>213</sup>. The

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<sup>211</sup> Lederach, John Paul, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, p. 32

<sup>212</sup> Gidron, Benjamin, Stanley N. Katz and Yeheskel Hasenfeld (ed.), *Mobilizing for Peace: Conflict Resolution in Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine, and South Africa*, Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 39 - 68; Du Toit, Pierra, “Rules and Procedures for Negotiated Peacemaking”, Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (ed.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003

<sup>213</sup> Burton, John, *Conflict: Resolution and Provention*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990, p.149

facilitator's key tasks, however, are the convening of the parties, facilitating the meeting, and providing expertise on the analysis of conflict and processes of conflict resolution<sup>214</sup>. Problem-solving workshops basically involve, as Christopher R. Mitchell outlines as follows;

*informal, week-long meetings of the representatives of parties in protracted, deep-rooted, and frequently violent conflict in an informal, often academic, setting that permits the re-analysis of their conflict as a shared problem and the generation of some alternative courses of action to continued coercion, together with new options for a generally acceptable and self-sustaining resolution, involving agreement and a new relationship between erstwhile adversaries.*<sup>215</sup>

According to this definition, problem-solving workshop's aim is not to substitute negotiations, but rather it allows for wider participation of all sectors of the society in the peace process resulting positively evolving of the parties' and actors' perceptions toward each other. Thus, it is not expected, by themselves, to lead to the peace process. It is a kind of mechanism that provides feedback over some specific topics and support to official negotiations and negotiants. Louis Kriesberg also defines interactive problem-solving workshops as dialogue groups, back-channel meetings between adversaries, including other official or non-official meetings. All these settings, nonetheless, tend to be particularly useful in preparing (or completing) the ground for official negotiations<sup>216</sup>. Furthermore, Lederach makes it clear on between which sides of the society, problem solving workshops should be conducted. He uses a pyramid in which he identifies three levels of leadership as the appropriate approach to building peace:

- the top leadership (military, political, religious leaders with high visibility);
- the middle range leadership (civil society, the business sector, religious or ethnic leaders, academics / intellectuals etc.)

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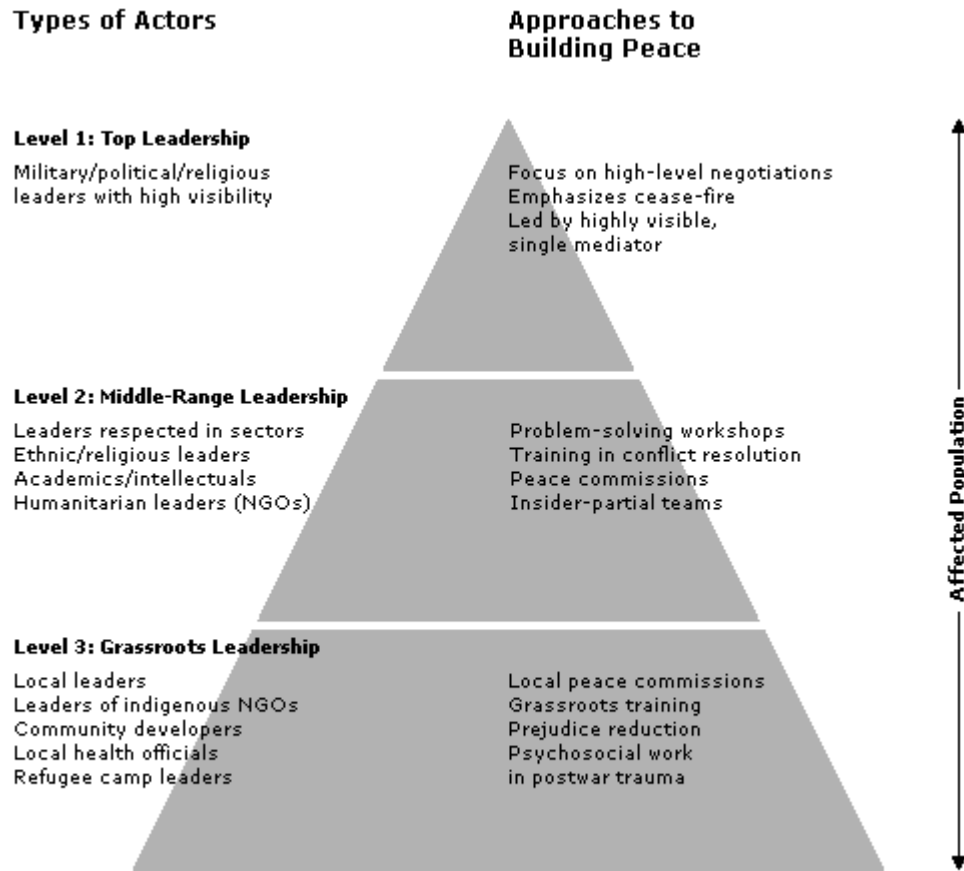
<sup>214</sup> Lederach, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, op. cit., p. 47

<sup>215</sup> Mitchell, Christopher R., "Problem-solving Exercises and Theories of Conflict Resolution", Sandole, Dennis J. D and Hugo Van Der Merwe, *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application*, Manchester University Press, 1993, p. 79

<sup>216</sup> Kriesberg, Louis, "Mediation and the Transformation of the Israeli – Palestinian Conflict", *Journal of Peace Research*, Special Issue on Conflict Resolution in Identity-Based Disputes, Vol. 38, No. 3, 2001, p.380

- grassroots leadership (local leaders, community workers, local officials, so on and so forth)

**Figure: 4** Levels of Leadership



Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 39.

As shown in the tabulation, Lederach mainly argues that problem-solving workshops can be classified as instruments of middle-range peacebuilding. Participants from each side are typically invited to these workshops because of their knowledge of the conflict and their proximity to key decision makers, but top-level actors are not invited<sup>217</sup> perhaps to prevent them from unnecessary challenges. Lederach, eventually, proposes that middle-range actors within the population have the greatest potential for

<sup>217</sup> Lederach, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies, op. cit., p. 47*

constructing an infrastructure for peace, because they have the capacity to impact processes and people at both the top and the grassroots levels”<sup>218</sup>. Problem solving workshops, therefore, may appear to be one of the most effective methods for a long term, sustainable conflict transformation.

#### ***4.4. Reconciliation***

Another tool conflict resolution literature suggests is “reconciliation” during both conflict and post-conflict processes. It essentially involves mechanisms to end violent phase of the conflict, to build mutual trust between erstwhile adversaries and to prevent recurrence of violence for establishing a stable and lasting peace. Thus, it appears that the first requirement for reconciliation is creating an environment in which return to violence has become unlikely. For such an environment to happen, conflicts require to be handled not only by simply managing their destructive aspects but also looking into the underlying sources of hostility, animosity including hatred among rival groups. The way to do this goes through “reconciliation”. Lederach insists that primary goal of reconciliation is to seek innovative ways to create a time and a place, within various levels of affected population from each conflict camp, to address, integrate, and embrace the painful and turbulent past and the shared future as a means of dealing with the violent present <sup>219</sup>. It is mainly because both sides generally claim to be the victims of violence and “both have justified aggression and violence with collective myths of legitimate defense under threat. These myths and sentiments have been promoted by the political leaders and mass media and continue to be spread by them even after the peace settlement” <sup>220</sup>.

Reconciliation is, therefore, also somewhat focused on building new relationships between antagonists. As Louis Kriesberg defines, reconciliation refers to “the processes by which parties that have experienced an oppressive relationship or a

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<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151

<sup>219</sup> Lederach, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, op. cit., p. 35

<sup>220</sup> Oberschall, op. cit., p. 188

destructive conflict with each other move to attain or to restore a relationship that they believe to be minimally acceptable <sup>221</sup>. Until existing relationships have been changed, deep rooted human conflicts are not likely to be resolved <sup>222</sup>. In this sense, we can say reconciliation occupies a central component in dealing with a deep-rooted, protracted and intractable conflict that necessitates structural changes. It is, then, worthwhile to note that as long as structural changes do not occur at political, economic, cultural or social levels after such a conflict, even if a peace agreement already signed; a long term solution to overcome violent struggle and hostile relationships is hardly possible. Because reconciliation, in itself, requires political integration which means the inclusion of all individuals and groups in the political system, economic reconstruction, establishment of structural equality and justice, and the development of human rights with the help of democratic principles. Within this context, Gidron, Katz and Hasenfeld suggest that a peace agreement cannot endure unless a new type of relationship is developed between the conflicting parties, in which new political, economic, cultural-social contracts and institutions-based on values that reflect the new reality- are created <sup>223</sup>. In other words, longstanding conflicts cannot be resolved without creating a peaceful and just relationship among former adversaries.

In addition, reconciliation often takes place within a divided society or within one country because of interethnic, interracial, or interreligious conflicts which tend to be protracted zero sum conflicts, for this reason it is not a requirement to end international conflicts <sup>224</sup>. This could be explained with the fact that nation-states can live side by side, but they do not have to establish reconciliation among themselves, because international system do not necessarily ask for them to have peaceful co-

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<sup>221</sup> Kriesberg, Louis, "Changing Forms of Coexistence", Abu-Nimer, Mohammed (ed.), *Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory and Practice*, Lexington Books, 2001, p.48

<sup>222</sup> Saunders, Harold H, *A Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts*, St. Martin's Press, 1999, p. 31

<sup>223</sup> Gidron, Benjamin, Stanley N. Katz and Yeheskel Hasenfeld (ed.), *Mobilizing for Peace: Conflict Resolution in Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine, and South Africa*, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 8

<sup>224</sup> Bar-Siman-Tov, Yaacov, "Dilaectics Between Stable Peace and Reconciliation", Bar-Siman-Tov, Yaacov (ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 72

existence among themselves. By way of contrast, co-existence is a precondition (sine qua non) in internal conflicts such as intra-state ones for an appropriate reconciliation process. As Kriesberg pointed out, coexistence already refers to an accommodation between members of different communities within a society who live together without one collectivity trying to destroy or severely harm the other <sup>225</sup>. Coexistence, too, is only possible after reaching a stable peace through a mutual reconciliation. Let us move now to a brief analysis of stable peace.

Kenneth E. Boulding who coined the term “stable peace” argues that it is “a situation in which the probability of war is so small that it does not really enter into the calculations of any of the people involved” <sup>226</sup>. This statement also seems to be compatible with the notion that conflict resolution is a requirement but not a sufficient condition for a stable and harmonious peace between former enemies, because even a peace agreement may not be sufficient to establish a durable peace. It is precisely at this point that reconciliation is required since a stable peace requires more than an agreement among the adversaries. Bar-Tal and Bennink go one step further and argue that even peaceful resolution of a conflict may not guarantee a lasting peaceful relations, reconciliation is necessary in order to cement peaceful relations between the rival sides to an intractable conflict <sup>227</sup>. Some other scholars, therefore, assert that reconciliation is a precondition for maintaining and consolidating peaceful relations, and a stable peace follows this process. According to this approach, things go in this order: “first the signing of a formal peace agreement, then reconciliation, then the stabilization of peace” <sup>228</sup>. Accordingly, a stable peace is a consequence of a successful conflict resolution, it comes at the end of a complete peace process lasting many years.

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<sup>225</sup> Kriesberg, *Changing Forms of Coexistence*, op. cit., p.48

<sup>226</sup> Boulding, Kenneth Ewart, *Stable Peace*, University of Texas Press, 1978, p. 13

<sup>227</sup> Bar-Tal, Daniel and Gemma H. Bennink, “The Nature of Reconciliation as an Outcome and as a Process”, Bar-Siman-Tov, Yaacov (ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 36

<sup>228</sup> Hermann, Tamar, “Reconciliation: Reflections on the Theoretical and Practical Utility of the Term”, Bar-Siman-Tov, Yaacov (ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 46- 47



In this sense, it is easy to draw the conclusion that genuine and stable peaceful relations are only achieved through a process of reconciliation, which includes psychological changes of motivations, goals, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions <sup>229</sup>. As Kenneth Boulding indicated, “stable peaceful relations are not the same thing as having a common language, a common religion, a common culture, or even common interests” <sup>230</sup>. To strengthen his argument, he gives the example of Anglo-Saxon Unity at the time 19th century. Seemingly powerful based on common language, common history and similar culture but having no basis for political cooperation, friendship of Great Britain and the United States could not prevent the War of 1812. The same thing can also be applied very well to the situation in which Arab nations have already existed. Despite common language, common history, common values, common culture, customs, manners, lifestyles etc. they fought each other so many times. At the time of this writing, there are almost more than 22 Arab states being members of the Arab League. We, in this way, may easily understand the logic that the greater a stable peace among the communities, the more likely they will have co-existence.

Another important aspect of reconciliation process is the restoration of justice through establishment of policies, institutions and mechanisms. For some, the re-attainment of justice is the primary component of reconciliation, because the sense that the people are suffering injustices is, in itself, what drives the parties in a conflict<sup>231</sup>. Justice is well described by Desmond Tutu, a Nobel Peace prize winner and a leader of the struggle against the system of apartheid in South Africa. When asked the question “what is the purpose of justice?” to him, he responded with the answer “the purpose is ultimately the restoration of a harmony”<sup>232</sup>. Thus, a peace process without justice would be unacceptable for not addressing the issues concerning demands for re-establishment

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<sup>229</sup> Bar-Tal, Daniel and Gemma H. Bennink, *op. cit.*, pp.22-23

<sup>230</sup> Boulding, *Stable Peace*, *op. cit.*, p. 17

<sup>231</sup> Kriesberg, Louis, *Comparing Reconciliation Actions within and between Countries*, in Bar-Siman-Tov, Yaacov (ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p.83

<sup>232</sup> Hopkins, Jeffrey (ed.), *The Art of Peace: Nobel Peace Laurates Discuss Human Rights, Conflict and Reconciliation*, Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2000, p.105

of justice by the victims of the conflict. Re-establishment of justice in conflict and post-conflict countries can be achieved through many institutions or mechanisms, but the most prominent and popular one, of these, is setting up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission whose purpose is to serve as an instrument for establishing justice and to uncover the truth about the past. Surface of the truth is also an important part of reconciliation, since people on different sides to a conflict have different experiences, understandings and perceptions, and they often blame the opposing side for the injuries, pains they have suffered<sup>233</sup>. Thus, one of the main tasks of truth and reconciliation commissions is to disclose the truth, that is, past wrongdoing by both conflict parties. The best known example of such a commission is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa; in recent years, however, similar commissions were set up in Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Uruguay, Rwanda as well as in Guatemala under the name of the official Commission on Historical Clarification.

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<sup>233</sup> Kriesberg, *op. cit.*, p.83

## CHAPTER V

### RECONSIDERING TURKEY'S KURDISH CONFLICT

*Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.*

Albert Einstein

#### 5.1. Analysis of Turkey's Kurdish Conflict

##### 5.1.1. Identifying Kurdish Conflict

Kurdish conflict may be considered as an ethnopolitical /intrastate conflict that occurs between the armed and police forces of Turkey and Kurdish insurgents linked to the PKK within the state borders<sup>234</sup>. The reason why the thesis uses conception of ethnopolitical conflict to describe Kurdish conflict is ethnic difference is not at the core of this conflict. That is to say ethnicity, in itself, is not main source of this conflict. Based on this assumption, one could claim that Kurdish conflict has appeared as an ethnopolitical conflict because ethnic groups -Turks and Kurds - are still willing to peacefully coexist, and they did not yet go in direct conflict each other, though social tensions sometimes escalate at the community level primarily in the Western cities in Turkey. Rather, the term ethnic conflict that frequently hints civil war or clashes between two or more ethnic groups does not qualify Kurdish conflict properly. As Ted

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<sup>234</sup> For definition of Kurdish conflict as an ethnopolitical conflict, see Shahbazi, Hossein A., *Domestic and International Factors Precipitating Kurdish Ethnopolitical Conflict: A Comparative Analysis of Episodes of Rebellion in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey*, University of Maryland, College Park, 1998; Gürbey, Gülistan, "Peaceful Settlement of Turkey's Kurdish Conflict Through Autonomy", Ibrahim, Ferhad and Gülistan Gürbey (ed.), *The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Obstacles and Chances for Peace and Democracy*, St. Martin's Press, 2000; Çelik, Ayşe Betül, "Ethnopolitical Conflict in Turkey: From the Denial of Kurds to Peaceful Co-existence" Landis, D. and R.D. Albert (ed.), *Handbook of Ethnic Conflict: International Perspectives*, Springer, 2012, pp.241-260; Zeytinoğlu, Güneş N., Richard F. Bonnabeau and Rana Eşkinat, "Ethnopolitical Conflict in Turkey", Landis, D. and R.D. Albert, *Handbook of Ethnic Conflict: International Perspectives*, Springer, 2012, pp.261-292. Kaufmann, Chaim, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars", *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 4 Spring, 1996, pp. 136-175

R. Gurr describes in his very well-known study, *“Peoples against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System”*, ethnopolitical conflicts occur when groups that define themselves using ethnic criteria make claims on behalf of their collective interests against the state, or against other political actors<sup>235</sup>. According to this approach, I suggest that Kurdish ethnicity plays a motivational role in their struggle against the repressive state, but not against Turkish ethnicity. Similarly, B. Harff and T.R. Gurr gives Kurdish conflict as a contemporary example to ethnopolitical conflict<sup>236</sup> and T.R. Gurr elsewhere makes direct reference to the Kurdish conflict in a table of serious and emerging ethnopolitical conflicts in 1993-1994<sup>237</sup>. PKK’s particularly using ethnic discrimination as a motivating force for its cause and trying the development of Kurdish ethnic identity reveal that ethnic criteria are important indicators in this conflict.

Furthermore, it appears that Kurdish ethnopolitical conflict with the PKK compelled the Turkish state to confront the reality of the Kurdish problem. President Abdullah Gül, in an interview with Guardian newspaper, said that “some call it terror, some call it the south-east problem, some call it the Kurdish problem - whatever you call it, we will find a solution” because this is the first and foremost important issue of this country<sup>238</sup>. I will already examine what factors have been the most important in driving this conflict in the coming section. Nevertheless, it must be first pointed out that this conflict also gives us an opportunity to explore root causes of the problems within the society and structure, and examine how to do to resolve it, though bloody past. There is a misconception among the public that conflict from whatever reason is totally evil or something to be avoided and eliminated unconditionally. I do not disagree with this

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<sup>235</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, *“Peoples against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System: 1994 Presidential Address”*, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Sep., 1994), p.348

<sup>236</sup> Harff, Barbara and Ted Robert Gurr, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics*, Westview Press, 2004, p. 11

<sup>237</sup> Gurr, op.cit., p.370.

<sup>238</sup> The Guardian, *US must share power in new world order, says Turkey's controversial president*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/aug/16/turkey.usforeignpolicy>, Saturday 16 August 2008;

Radikal (Turkish daily), *Gül: Kürt meselesi Türkiye'nin birinci meselesidir, mutlaka halledilmelidir*, [http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/murat\\_yetkin/gul\\_kurt\\_meselesi\\_turkiyenin\\_birinci\\_meselesidir\\_mutlaka\\_halledilmelidir-935056](http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/murat_yetkin/gul_kurt_meselesi_turkiyenin_birinci_meselesidir_mutlaka_halledilmelidir-935056) 09 May 2009.

categorical definition of conflict. Rather, I argue many conflicts including Kurdish conflict are like appearance of a disease in the human body reminding us that there is something not going well within the society or system, in question. That conflict equals violence is a wrong approach. Even though a conflict may involve human losses and destruction, it cannot be limited to a mere struggle of violence. What's important is what degree of violence is dominant over the conflict; direct, structural or cultural violence.

As Galtung indicated in his theory of conflict - direct violence refers to physical injuries, shooting, bombing, torture, rape, killings etc; structural violence may be attributed to unfulfillment of psychological needs such as lack of political self-determination, oppression over identity etc.; cultural violence means legitimization of direct and structural violence through culture<sup>239</sup>. Direct violence that is a natural result of both structural and cultural violence emerge from exploitative and unjust political, economic and social orders. These three types of violence are interrelated each other, which means that the more structural and cultural violence exists in a society, the greater direct violence with efforts legitimizes the first two. Nonetheless, the main difference between direct and structural – cultural violence is that while an identifiable actor who causes physical harm is present in the former, there seems no definite identifiable actors behind the latter two for they are more about historical, structural and cultural dynamics within the societies.

In regarding Kurdish conflict, this study assumes that direct, structural and cultural violence prevail. As for direct violence aspect of Kurdish conflict; although that an exact figure of how many people have been killed in this conflict is hard to ascertain, it is said that the direct violence has left more than 40.000 deads including PKK members, the Turkish military, and both Kurdish and Turkish civilians, and more than a million forced from their homes<sup>240</sup>. Republican People's Party's (CHP) former deputy Fikri Saglar, then a member of the parliamentary commission formed in 2000 to

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<sup>239</sup> Galtung, Johan, *A Theory of Conflict : Overcoming Direct Violence*, Kolofon Press, 2010

<sup>240</sup> BBC News, *Turkey Kurds: PKK chief Ocalan calls for ceasefire*, 21 March 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-21874427> ; International Crisis Group (ICG), *Turkey: Ending the PKK Insurgency*, 20 September 2011, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/213%20Turkey%20-%20Ending%20the%20PKK%20Insurgency.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/213%20Turkey%20-%20Ending%20the%20PKK%20Insurgency.pdf)

investigate allegations pertaining to the Susurluk incident, revealed that solely a total of 17,547 people have been killed only in unsolved murder cases<sup>241</sup>. When we look at both structural and cultural violence dimension of the conflict, we see the lack of political inclusion of Kurdish identity, unavailability of public access to education and public service in Kurds' mother tongue<sup>242</sup> (Kurmanji-Zazaki) unequal distribution of wealth, inter-regional disparities and cultural alienation as some examples to these kinds of violence. As seen, the roots of Kurdish conflict appear to be built to the very structure of society and cultural institutions, that is why the remedy would also have to include structural – cultural changes to overcome the structural-cultural violence that so easily produces direct violence<sup>243</sup>. In other words, unless structural and cultural violence eliminated, Kurdish conflict has always capacity to turn to the direct violence. Even if direct violence – armed conflict – between the state and rebels ceased today, no guarantee that conflict will be totally resolved. Because structural – cultural violence are still over there. However, regardless of structural – cultural violence if direct violence dominates a protracted conflict like the one in Turkey and the need for security that is essential for survival is under risk, then preventing direct violence phase of the conflict deserves the most urgent consideration. Because direct violence leads to more direct violence bringing more deaths and destruction.

Nevertheless, this thesis presupposes that direct violence phase of the Kurdish conflict has, admittedly, brought the Kurdish issue to the agenda of the country. As I noted earlier, conflict does not necessarily leads to direct violence which may sometimes dominate it, though. In this sense, Turkey's Kurdish conflict, too, may be

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<sup>241</sup>Hurriyet, *Over 17,000 people killed in unsolved murder cases*, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=over-17000-people-killed-in-unsolved-murder-cases-2000-03-09>, 03/09/2000. Another important statement on unsolved murders came from Atilla Kiyat who is a retired vice-Admiral. Today's Zaman, *Unsolved murders in the 1990s were a state policy, Retired admiral: No one believes there are no coup plots in military*, [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=218070](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=218070) 4 August 2010.

<sup>242</sup> Although there is a current debate on division of Kurdish dialects, almost all Kurds in Turkey speak Kurmanji or Zazaki dialects. In the Kurdish-speaking areas of Iraq and Iran, however, other dialects - Sorani and Gorani (or Hewrami) commonly used throughout these two countries.

<sup>243</sup> Galtung, Johan, *A Theory of Conflict : Overcoming Direct Violence*, op. cit., p. 41

assessed on the assumption that Turkish public has directly encountered Kurdish issue and become aware of the existence of Kurds after the violent conflicts between Turkish government and the PKK. Henry Barkey goes one step further and argues that “the intensification of the war in Southeastern Turkey has led the Turkish public more and more to identify all Kurds with the PKK guerillas, while even assimilated Kurds increasingly see the war as a struggle for survival.<sup>244</sup>. Let us think for a moment that if no armed clashes happened, would the denial of Kurdish identity, language and culture through assimilation and repression of Turkish state continue at a great speed? Of course, the opposite argument can also be made that violence bred violence even making the Kurdish issue more complicated and more difficult to solve. Because, the cost of the conflict has come to a point where loss of many civilians, extra-judicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, deteriorating humanitarian situation as well as destruction of infrastructure etc all of which are unacceptable have continued.

In one way or another, however, it would be easy to draw conclusion that this violent and protracted conflict has rendered possible to think over how to eliminate root causes of Kurdish issue and (re)establish peace, despite its all detrimental and malignant effects on Turkey’s society. Thus, this conflict may also give an opportunity to establish a stable peace through both cessation of direct violent activities and elimination of root causes of structural-cultural violence. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize that it is high time to transform this destructive – violent conflict to a constructive – non-violent one. If considered thoroughly, this conflict will likely bring about change, social justice as well as human development for both Turks and Kurds within Turkey’s society. So how? The answer is simple. By establishing negative peace first, and then positive peace. As will be remembered, negative peace implies the absence of direct violence but structural or cultural violence may continue to exist, thus it may also be called as unjust peace. Positive peace, on the other hand, means negative peace plus removal of the structural and cultural violence, which means a just peace. If we accommodate these peace types to the Kurdish conflict there is currently a negative peace process waiting to transform a positive peace situation. In Kurdish conflict, armed clashes between the state forces and Kurdish rebels, which continued since 1984 except for brief intervals

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<sup>244</sup> Kauffman, op. cit., p. 141

that could mainly be divided into two parts; the periods of 1999-2004 and 2013 – to the present (the time of writing this thesis). After his capture, Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), declared a cease-fire in his party's nearly three-decade-long struggle with the Turkish state in 1999<sup>245</sup>. There was a de-escalation of the conflict and some softening attitudes on both sides, but this short-term negative peace period was later replaced by re-escalation of violence ending in June 2004 when PKK began to launch attacks on Turkish Security forces<sup>246</sup>.

This was also a great opportunity missed to establish positive peace at that time. The PKK militants began withdrawing from Turkey into their stronghold in the Qandil mountains that lie where the borders of Iraq, Turkey and Iran. Despite an extended ceasefire declared by the PKK, peaceful solution methods to remove root causes of this conflict were not able to be developed by Turkish authorities. Rather, operations carried out by military forces continued at great speed. In recent years, however, despite a process initiated by the AKP government under the name of "Democratic Opening" or "National Unity and Brotherhood Project" to end long-lasting Kurdish conflict, violent clashes continued due to the fact that no considerable structural changes were made in political, constitutional and legal system to the solution of the conflict. The Kurdish issue, in fact, leads to this violent conflict. To put it another way, conflict did not invent the Kurdish issue, it is only an element of the problem. If fundamental sources of the conflict are eliminated, it will be easier to transform conflict by removing its complications which are linked to its direct violence aspect. We are currently going through a peace process that began with talks between Abdullah Öcalan and state officials that may also be called a second negative peace phase in the Kurdish conflict. Öcalan has once more called for a truce after years of conflict and the military commander of PKK's armed wing - People's Defence Force (HPG - Hêzên Parastina Gel) - in Qandil Mountains, Murat Karayılan, responded by saying the organization

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<sup>245</sup> Larrabee, F. Stephen, "Why Erdogan Wants Peace With the PKK: The End of An Insurgency", *Foreign Affairs*, March 27, 2013, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139081/f-stephen-larrabee/why-erdogan-wants-peace-with-the-pkk>

<sup>246</sup> Blum, Andrew and Ayşe Betül Çelik, "Track II interventions and the Kurdish Question in Turkey: An Analysis Using a Theories of Change Approach", *The International Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol. 12, No.2, December 2007, pp. 51-81.



"very strongly" supported Ocalan's move<sup>247</sup>. Let us move now to a brief analysis of background and transformation of the Kurdish conflict.

### ***5.1.2. Background and Transformation of the Kurdish Conflict***

Turkey's Kurdish Conflict, what has become known as the Kurdish Question among academic circles, has deep historical, political and cultural roots that many trace to the early battles between the state forces and Kurdish rebels during the Ottoman Empire. In other words, we should first note that this conflict did not emerge with the armed clashes between the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) under the leadership of Abdullah Ocalan -the imprisoned Kurdish rebel leader- and Turkish security forces. Obviously, there is a historical chain of this armed conflict which has existed between various Kurdish insurgent groups and Turkish governmental and military institutions, for more than almost a century. Some major rebellions that took place during both the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic are<sup>248</sup>;

- Badr Khan Beg rebellion against centralized Ottoman empire in 1845-1847
- Shaykh Ubayd Allah rebellion driven by desire to establish a truly independent Kurdistan in 1880
- Kocgiri Rebellion organized by Society for the Rise of Kurdistan (Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti) in 1921
- Sheikh Said Rebellion organized by Azadi (Freedom) against the young Turkish Republic in 1925 ( motivated by mix of nationalist and religious reasons)

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<sup>247</sup> BBCNews, *Turkey Kurds: PKK chief Ocalan calls for ceasefire*, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-21874427> 21 March 2013.

<sup>248</sup> For a detailed analysis of Kurdish nationalist movements or rebellions, see McDowall, David, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007 ; Jwaideh, Wadie, *The Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development*, Syracuse University Press, , 2006 ; Romano, David, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Opportunity, Mobilization and Identity*, Cambridge University Press, 2006; Heper, Metin, *The State and Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation*" Palgrave Macmillan, 2007; White, Paul J., *Primitive Rebels Or Revolutionary Modernisers?: The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey*, Zed Books, 2000.

- Ararat (Ağrı) Rebellion prepared by Xoybûn (Independence) organization in 1930
- Dersim rebellion (or massacre) in 1937-38.

A common feature of these incidents is that they outline a broad, integrative framework for understanding current Kurdish conflict through the lense of the past. Therefore, here let me briefly discuss how sources of Kurdish conflict took root during the Ottoman Empire that ruled over a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural society through a citizenship based on Islamic tradition and imperial customs rather than ethnic sentiments, and the newly established Turkey. The Kurdish mirs (princess) and tribal chieftains retained much of their autonomy and had certain privileges until modernization and centralization programme embarked under Sultan Mahmud II in the first half of 18<sup>th</sup> century, which later continued as a state policy. Hence came Kurdish rebellions against the Ottoman provincial administration because centralization was a major challenge to the long-established privileges of local Kurdish notables<sup>249</sup>. All rebellion attempts were suppressed in this period. Centralized administration in the areas densely inhabited by Kurds more consolidated. When it comes to Following World War I and the collapse of Ottoman Empire, allied forces designated an independent Kurdish state for Kurds in the treaty of Sevres in 1920, but never implemented.

With the creation of an independent Turkey from remnants of the old Ottoman Empire in 1923, a program based on top-down nationalism to establish a nation-state rooted in Turkish ethnicity came into effect, in contrast to the multi-ethnic character and experiences of the Ottoman Empire. This time, many Kurds witnessed rise of a state system with ethnicity at its core. Their identity, language, culture and history was categorically denied by Turkish authorities for the sake of construction of a modern Turkish ethnic identity. They rebelled again, but the result was going to be more painful. Because, in order to protect the territorial integrity the young republic with Sevres paranoid which refers to fears that “there are external powers who are trying to challenge the territorial integrity of the Turkish state and implement the provisions of

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<sup>249</sup> Akyol, Mustafa, *The Origin of Turkey's Kurdish Question: An Outcome of the Breakdown of the Ottoman Ancien Régime*, (unpublished master's thesis) İstanbul: Boğaziçi University, p.20

the Sevres Treaty by establishing local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas”<sup>250</sup> implemented harsh policies to suppress the rebellions in 1925, 1930 and 1937. Subsequently, an assimilation program on Kurdish people based upon denial of Kurdish identity carried out through Turkification policies since the Kurds perceived as the greatest threat to creation of a homogenous Turkish nation-state by Turkish authorities. These policies in the early republican era and “otherization” of Kurds have triggered the formation of Kurdish national identity, that is why fueled secessionist movements in 1970s and 80s. The result of this approach is the emergence of the last Kurdish insurgency, which may be considered the most significant political event in the history of the new republic.

As seen in a sum of rebellions list above, these armed clashes that may be called as “Kurdish Conflict” had already occurred between different Kurdish insurgent groups and Turkey, including its predecessor state, the Ottoman Empire. There was no PKK, at that time. It means the conflict existed before PKK. What we are, however, now witnessing in this conflict is the longest and deepest violent phase backed by PKK since 15 August 1984 with armed attacks on Eruh and Şemdinli. As a distinguished Turkish journalist - Cengiz Çandar - pointed out, PKK conflict with Turkey may be summarized as the last Kurdish insurgency, which requires a need of re-identifying the situation as a “Kurdish Insurgency” rather than defining the PKK activities as completely “terrorism” or the PKK as a pure “terrorist organization” and its members as “terrorists”<sup>251</sup>. Similarly, Turkey’s ninth president, Süleyman Demirel has a famous phrase referring to the PKK “this is the 29<sup>th</sup> Kurdish rebellion”. A report prepared by Secreteray General of Presidency in 1993 for the eighth president Turgut Özal also referred to as 38<sup>th</sup> Kurdish revolt<sup>252</sup>. For this reason, this conflict appears as a deep rooted and protracted one. I

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<sup>250</sup> Çelik, Ayşe Betül, “Ethnopolitical Conflict in Turkey: From Denial of Kurds to Peaceful Co-existence?” Landis, Das and Rosita D. Albert, *Handbook of Ethnic Conflict: International Perspectives*, Springer Press, 2012, p. 244

<sup>251</sup> Çandar, Cengiz, *Leaving the Mountain: How may the PKK lay down arms? : Freeing the Kurdish Question from Violence*, İstanbul: TESEV Publications, 2012, p.25.  
[http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/1fe2c9c3-fe84-4044-81a1-d8a3ab906e5c/12028ENGsilahsizlandirma16\\_03\\_12Rev1.pdf](http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/1fe2c9c3-fe84-4044-81a1-d8a3ab906e5c/12028ENGsilahsizlandirma16_03_12Rev1.pdf)

<sup>252</sup> Aksiyon, *Devletin Kasasındaki Üç Kürt Raporu*, 17 April 2006,  
<http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/aksiyon/haber-12104-26-devletin-kasasindaki-uc-kurt-raporu.html>

argue that despite changing Kurdish actors and Turkish governments in course of time, this conflict endures in full course since root causes of the conflict that lie at the very structure of relationships between the parties still not eliminated. Kurds, indeed, have made claims to the state permanently with different actors in different forms and periods for broader political and cultural rights, but no constructive response received. Therefore, this is also an issue of demanding basic human needs for the Kurds such as recognition, identity and autonomy. The result, however, is a bloody conflict.

When it comes to official Turkish state discourse on the conflict with PKK, one could see that even its existence was denied for long years instead it was referred as a problem of terrorism. In this respect, Kurdish conflict, until very recently, has been mainly approached by security-oriented policies along with socio-economic development projects, but not addressed by conflict resolution and peace perspectives. Kurdish issue, defined in the limits drawn by the official ideology, was mainly brought to the agenda by military-bureaucracy alliance as a mere security problem, but its relationship with democratization of Turkey has systematically been ignored. Thus, security-oriented approach to the issue was on the ascendant until a new modality adopted by the ruling AK Party (Justice and Development Party) government of Prime Minister Erdogan and President Abdullah Gül in the summer of 2009, which was Kurdish Opening (or Kurdish Initiative) that has first become known as the Democratic Opening, and then National Unity and Brotherhood Project. It was mainly because that AK Party government and president Gül came to recognize that military solutions to end the last insurgency was a dead end. In the same year, secret talks held in Oslo between Turkish delegation which was led by Hakan Fidan - the head of Turkish Intelligence and attended the meetings as prime minister's special envoy- and some PKK representatives.

These series of meetings would later be called “the Oslo Process” were totally secret, “we committed ourselves not to disclose any details of these meetings until we had reached a solution”, explains Zubeyir Aydar, one of the three Kurdish delegation in the talks<sup>253</sup>. This process, however, failed to develop a positive outcome, leading to a

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<sup>253</sup> Kutschera, Chris, “The Secret Oslo Talks That Might Have Brought Peace to Turkey: Chris Kutschera Reports Exclusively for the Middle East”, *the Middle East*, No: 438, Dec 01, 2012.

new wave of violence in 2011 and 2012. Some attribute failure of the process to what happened at the Habur border gate where some Kurdish refugees in Mahmur camp and ex-militants in Kandil Mountains entered in Turkey as a part of the Oslo process. They welcomed by tens of thousands of Kurds with celebration and joy, which was, however, exaggerated like victory parades and the PKK militants' triumphal arrival by Turkish media. The Turkish public was clearly manipulated with happiness pictures to return home. The secret meetings were simultaneously leaked to the media and thus Oslo process totally collapsed. Apparently, the government failed to manage the incident properly, and it basically meant the end of the Kurdish opening. After failure of the first attempt to resolve this conflict, the government again resorted to the security-based approach to defeat PKK. It is obvious, however, that these methods may have only caused more violence, pains and sufferings, making the conflict bigger, deepened and complicated. ICG (International Crisis Group) reported that Turkey's Kurdish conflict became more violent, with more than 700 dead between July 2011 and September 2012, the highest casualties in thirteen years<sup>254</sup>. The policy of returning to violence under the AK Party government, I think, was tried for the last time. But it was again proved that no positive result could be yielded through violent means, because the root causes of the conflict still remain unaddressed.

By the same token, it is worthwhile to note that the state's social and economic policies (secondary measures after security-based ones) did neither become useful in resolving this intractable conflict. Kurdish conflict, of course, is also an issue with social and economic dimensions, but social and economic reforms on their own have proved inefficient to alleviate the plight of civilians who have become the victims of armed conflict. It was assumed that eliminating economic challenges (underdevelopment and inter-regional disparities) would automatically resolve the Kurdish question<sup>255</sup>. However,

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<sup>254</sup>International Crisis Group (ICG), *Turkey: The PKK and a Kurdish Settlement*, September 2012, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/219-turkey-the-pkk-and-a-kurdish-settlement](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/219-turkey-the-pkk-and-a-kurdish-settlement)

<sup>255</sup> Ensaroğlu, Yılmaz, "Turkey's Kurdish Question and the Peace Process", *Insight Turkey*, Spring 2013, Seta Foundations, p.7.

this expectation did not happen. As Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan finally acknowledged, in a televised interview on March 29 in 2013 by which he introduced the new peace process to the public, that there are not only physical losses, but also moral losses as a result of this conflict. He also said despite investments of 36-37 billions (approximately 20 billions dollars) made in southeast of Turkey in his term, these did not suffice to meet non-physical needs of the people in the region<sup>256</sup>. In other words, he admitted that his governments since 2002 did not succeed in eliminating root causes of the conflict due to the fact that Kurds' needs and feeling of deprivation have had not only socio-economic basis but also psychopolitical motivations. Without a doubt, economic and social reforms to end the conflict are necessary but not sufficient. Because they do not make sense if not implemented with political reforms simultaneously. By way of contrast, the conflict, in itself, has naturally led to a worsening economic situation with rising unemployment and a decrease in social services, because over one third of the annual budget of the central government is spent on the conflict<sup>257</sup>.

### ***5.1.3. Exploring Sources of Kurdish Conflict***

Having outlined a brief definition of the Kurdish conflict, it will be now examined the sources of the conflict in order to address its root causes properly for a long, stable and sustainable peace. H.W. Jeong states that “it is imperative to examine the sources of discontent and animosity, to identify of evolving relationships between adversaries, and to illuminate the escalation of their struggles”<sup>258</sup> in order to understand a conflict. We now apply this to the Kurdish conflict. Kurdish issue was long considered as a terrorism problem and its socio-psychological dimensions was often neglected by Turkish authorities. Sources of discontent of the Kurdish population are left unaddressed, instead it has been focused on fight with the PKK. However, social and psychological

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<sup>256</sup> Kanal D, *Başbakan Çözüm Sürecini Açıklıyor*, 26 March, 2013, <http://www.kanald.com.tr/anahaberbulteni/Video/Basbakan-cozum-surecini-acikliyor/17674>

<sup>257</sup> Atiyas, Nimet Beriker, “The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Issues, Parties and Prospects”, *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 28(4), 1997, pp. 439-452

<sup>258</sup>Jeong, Ho Won, *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis*, London:SAGE Publications Ltd, 2008, p. 4

approaches to the analysis of this violent conflict may have allowed for a better understanding of the leading motives that underlie extreme and irrational violence. It is not too late, though. As we indicated earlier, structural violence that cause direct violence prevails in this conflict because there are structural resources of the conflict. In other words, what we now witness is a challenge of a group of Kurds (not all Kurds)<sup>259</sup> whose needs and expectations are not met within the social structure to the existing relations. Then, the remedy must be structural. In this section, therefore, I am intended to provide a structural analysis of the root causes of the Kurdish conflict through three approaches; basic human needs, relative deprivation and identity formation. According to Louis Kriesberg, four conditions must be minimally present in order for a social conflict to emerge. The first condition is that at least one of the parties to the conflict identify themselves as an entity separate from others they identify as opponents; second, at least one of the parties must feel they have a grievance; third, at least one of the parties must formulate goals to change another group's behaviour so that the grievance will be reduced; fourth, members of the aggrieved party must believe that they can indeed bring about the desired change in the antagonist<sup>260</sup>. The first condition is obviously about identity formation, while the last three are related to relative deprivation. In this thesis, I will add unmet basic human needs to this list, but my purpose here is not to argue for one perspective over another.

### **5.1.3.1. Basic Human Needs**

Human needs theory basically argue that protracted conflicts are caused by unmet human needs. To put it differently, conflicts take place as a result of deprivations of the basic needs of peoples regardless of their ages, race and cultures. According to this approach, sources of an intractable conflict originate in unsatisfied basic needs of a group of people. These people may even be predisposed to the use of violence to claim

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<sup>259</sup> The PKK does not represent all Kurds, but the thesis assumes that it represents majority of the Kurds troubled with the Turkish state.

<sup>260</sup> Kriesberg, Louis, *Constructive Conflicts : From Escalation to Resolution*" Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., , 2007, p.53

their rights and satisfying their unfulfilled psychological needs. In needs-based conflicts, state legitimacy is challenged when traditional authority fails to satisfy basic human needs, therefore such a state tends to be characterized by incompetent, fragile as well as authoritarian. It is precisely for this reason, basic human needs theory can be well applied to intra-state conflicts like the one being fought between the PKK and the Turkish state. Many prominent scholars in conflict resolution such as John W. Burton, Helbert Kelman, Johan Galtung and Edward Azar have also applied human needs theory to current some social and political conflicts. According to Edward Azar, for instance, the underlying reason behind protracted social conflicts such as those that have occurred in Lebanon, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Northern Ireland, Ethiopia, Sudan, Cyprus, or South Africa is “the prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition and acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation”<sup>261</sup>.

Human needs theory serves as a framework to analyse the root causes of a conflict, and thus offers possible resolutions. Coate and Rosati note that “human needs are a powerful source of explanation of human behavior and social interaction. All individuals have needs that they strive to satisfy”, that is why “social systems must be responsive to individual needs, or be subject to instability and forced change (possibly through violence or conflict)”<sup>262</sup>. Furthermore, this theory offers an alternative to the theory of power politics, which is the dominant school of thought in political science, because conflicts can be managed and social justice can be pursued through the satisfaction of human needs<sup>263</sup>. From a human needs perspective a peace based on consensus and consent is more preferable rather than a temporary settlement through coercive means of power politics. Because a final agreement that leaves basic needs unsatisfied might lead to a short term settlement, but it rarely contributes to a long-term

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<sup>261</sup> Azar, Edward, “the Analysis and Management of Protracted Social Conflict”, Volkan, Vamik, J. Montville and D. Julius (ed.), *the Psychodynamics of International Relationships*”, vol. 2, Lexington, Y: D.C. Heath, 1991, p.93

<sup>262</sup> Coate, Roger A. and Jerel A. Rosati, “Preface”, Coate, Roger A. and Jerel A. Rosati (ed.), *The Power of Human Needs in World Society*, ix. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988

<sup>263</sup> Christie, Daniel J., “Reducing Direct and Structural Violence: The Human Needs Theory”, *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, Volume 3, Issue 4, 1997, p. 316



and a sustainable resolution. Human needs theory also explains the reason why the international system based on power-politics and nation-state is in decline; “why former colonial boundaries cannot be maintained; why minority ethnic communities are demanding increasing degrees of autonomy; and why there is widespread and protracted violence wherever nation-state authorities seek to suppress secessionist movements”<sup>264</sup>.

So, what are the basic needs that could give rise to a violent conflict. An important point to note from the outset is that they are not obvious. All human beings, of course, have basic needs which are ontological and essential elements for our subsistence. Some of them are physical, like the need for food, water or shelter, but some other essential needs go beyond these few elements because they cover the psychological sphere.<sup>265</sup> Conflict resolution scholars, however, pay primary attention to such psychological needs as identity, recognition of each group’s language or culture, autonomy, including security<sup>266</sup>. J. Galtung suggests that survival – well being – freedom – identity are basic needs, as J.W. Burton primarily adds to this list – recognition, security or safety, control over the environment, a personal fulfilment or human development -. The denial of these sort of basic needs, that is to say, suppression of human fulfilment caused intractable conflicts in places such as Northern Ireland, Colombia, South Africa, Palestine as well as Sri Lanka. Because these needs are universal and primordial, and they cannot be altered or undermined by authoritarian orders, otherwise conflicts ensue and persist. They are also non-negotiable. They are not up for bargaining. Because negotiation is possible where goals (interests) and values are concerned, but not with basic needs. Basic needs have to be respected; they are deeper than values and interests, above them<sup>267</sup>. Kurdish insurgencies, too, a consequence of psychological exclusion or unmet basic needs. Kurds’ basic needs for identity, recognition, autonomy and security have been denied. Let me briefly clarify.

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<sup>264</sup> Burton, John W., “Conflict Prevention as a Political System”, *International Journal of Peace Studies*, Volume 6, Number 1, 2001, pp.23 -38

<sup>265</sup> Doucey, Marie, “Understanding the Root Causes of Conflicts: Why it Matters for International Crisis Management “ *International Affairs View*, Volume XX, Number 2, Fall 2011, p.4

<sup>266</sup> For more a detailed analysis on what basic human needs are, see section 2.3 of Chapter II.

<sup>267</sup> Galtung, Johan, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, *op. cit.*, 2004, pp.2-3

### 5.1.3.1.1. *Identity*

Identity is one of the most crucial needs identified by the basic needs approach because it is an extremely strong catalyst for a social mobilization within a society<sup>268</sup>. Turkey's Kurds identity, too, were not recognized by the Turkish state for a long period of time. Between 1920 and 1990, Turkish governments and officials categorized Kurds as the "Mountain Turks" which means "there were no Kurds in Turkish homeland – Turkey. This was a result of a project of creating a single nation by Turkish nation state. Suppression and denial of Kurdish identity through assimilation followed this traditional policy, because it was seen as a potential threat to Turkish unity. Cemal Gürsel, leader of 27 May 1960 coup, declared that "there are no Kurds in this country. Whoever says he is a Kurd, I will spit in his face" in a visit to Turkey's largest Kurdish city Diyarbakır<sup>269</sup>. In brief, we can suggest that Turkish nation-state was founded on the denial of the Kurdish identity.

At the same time, Kurdish history was not told in the Turkish history books or it was referred to the Kurdish organizations in the past as separatist groups like Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti (Society for the Rise of Kurdistan). Areas densely inhabited by Kurds were dotted with a racist motto says that "*Happy is the one who calls himself a Turk*". A table written with this slogan can still be seen in one of famous streets of Diyarbakır, let alone the mountains. More importantly, article 66 of the Turkey's 1982 Constitution defines a Turkish civic identity as "everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk". This article, in itself, causes the Kurds feel themselves isolated and not belonging to this country. Because Turkish state defines citizenship through Turkish ethnic identity it automatically denies any other identity apart from Turkishness. In current situation, Turkey seems to have changed its systematic denial approach to the Kurds, but assimilation of the Kurdish identity is still ongoing at full

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<sup>268</sup> Doucey, op. cit., p.5

<sup>269</sup> Muller, Mark, "Nationalism and the Rule of Law in Turkey: The Elimination of Kurdish Representation during the 1990s", Olson, Robert (ed.), *Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s*, Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1996, pp. 173-199.

speed. Kurdish insurgencies, including the PKK, are a consequence of politics of denial and assimilation of Kurdish identity, they did not appear out of the blue. Because if a group feels that their needs for identity are unfulfilled because the state fails to properly address them or perceives a threat those needs, an identity-based violence can emerge<sup>270</sup>.

#### 5.1.3.1.2. *Recognition (Language)*

Here, it will be examined language rights as essential to issues of a group recognition. Language, as an obvious marker of group differences, plays an important role in violent ethnopolitical conflict when a group make demands that their that their language be the states's official language or have a privileged status in the public domain<sup>271</sup>. Kurdish language, too, has served as a symbolic but important focal point in Kurdish conflict involving issues of using language in teaching or education in schools, government services, road signs and even in offices and stores. Until the early 1990s, Kurdish language as an expression of cultural identity was totally banned – “giving children Kurdish names, singing Kurdish songs, and certainly, speaking Kurdish in state offices- was seen as a separatists act”<sup>272</sup>. Kurdish village names were, similarly, renamed with Turkish sounding names. According to a survey conducted by TESEV (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation) in 2011, records reveal that 15.047 regions or villages out of 41.036 were renamed to the Turkish one in 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>273</sup>. Among those languages were Kurdish, Armenian, Circassian, Assyrian, including Arabic. But Kurdish language is said to occupy a large portion of the state's renaming policy.

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<sup>270</sup> Doucey, op. cit., p.4

<sup>271</sup> Ross, Marc Howard, “Ritual and the Politics of Reconciliation”, Bar-Siman – Tov, Yaacov (ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, Oxford University Press, 2004, pp.218-219

<sup>272</sup> Marcus, Aliza, *Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence*, New York: New York University Press, 2007, p.85

<sup>273</sup> Nişanyan, Sevan, “Hayali Coğrafyalar: Cumhuriyet Döneminde Türkiye’de Değiştirilen Yer Adları”, TESEV, 2011, p.50. <http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/07099885-0fa4-47ce-937c-84baf4a75cc2/yeradlari-tumu.pdf>

In recent years, although some positive steps like opening of a state-based Kurdish language television channel called TRT 6 and establishment of Kurdology departments, a considerable progress did not occur. Because, it has been too late and inadequate for resolution of the Kurdish conflict. Today, it is still barred in schools, parliament and other official institutions due to the belief that it would divide the country along ethnic lines. Education in Kurdish language, in particular, continues to be one of the focal points in this conflict. The use of language in mother tongue is a fundamental human right and a basic human need, but persistently violated by Turkish state. The state not only violated universal human rights and needs but also violated Lozan Treaty which is considered as founding principles for independence of the Republic of Turkey. The last two term of the article 39 of the treaty are as follows;

- *No restrictions shall be imposed on the free use by any Turkish national of any language in private intercourse, in commerce, religion, in the press, or in publications of any kind or at public meetings.*
- *Notwithstanding the existence of the official language, adequate facilities shall be given to Turkish nationals of non-Turkish speech for the oral use of their own language before the Courts.*<sup>274</sup>

Even though these two significant terms for language rights for non-Turkic populations in in theory, the violation of language rights by the Turkish state in practice set the stage for a bitter ethnopolitical conflict.

### ***5.1.3.1.3. Autonomy***

Autonomy basically refers to the need of self-determination or self-government meaning that every nation/group has the right to determine its own actions. Autonomy also relates directly to the need for a separate identity on the grounds that control of an ethnic group over a territory is invariably tied to the group's identity. Ethnic groups see autonomy as a secure identity. In reply to this, for most states, autonomy means control

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<sup>274</sup> Treaty of Lausanne - Treaty of Peace with Turkey signed at Lausanne, July 24, 1923.

over a territory which is directly linked to their physical survival, therefore, where “both ethnic groups and states calculate that they need to control the same piece of territory to guarantee their survival, a violent clash is likely to result<sup>275</sup> so territorial control becomes a chief issue of conflict<sup>276</sup>. I do not, however, assume autonomy as only equal control over a territory, it may also involve some kind of non-territorial power sharing formula between the claims of states for territorial integrity and the claims of rebel forces for secession. The solution to Northern Ireland, for example, can be seen in this light because Good Friday agreement has given considerable autonomy to the province, and it has also maintained the territory in the United Kingdom<sup>277</sup>.

To adapt Turkey’s Kurdish conflict, autonomy plays an important role in the possible solution of this conflict. As well known, the PKK initially aimed at to establish a fully independent Kurdistan on belief that only with independence they will have more effective political representation, control and a fair share of the benefits and resources of a particular territory, Kurdistan. Because the Turkish state did not represent Kurds’ needs and interests properly, the Kurdish rebels claimed they must control its own affairs within their dominated territory. The organization, however, has given up its goal of an independent Kurdistan. And in 2007, Abdullah Öcalan, the PKK leader, has introduced the idea of democratic autonomy which was based on power-sharing and an autonomus political structure within the current borders of the Turkish state. But issue of autonomy is still one of the most controversial aspects of the Kurdish conflict. It is one thing to know, autonomy is a basic human need and thus may be considered as a reasonable demand. In Galtung’s own words, “human beings seem to prefer to be ruled by people of their own kind even if their own kind are unkind”<sup>278</sup> on the belief that a homeland provides ultimate security and protection.

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<sup>275</sup> Toft, Monica Duffy, “Indivisible Territory, Geographic Concentration, and Ethnic War”, *Security Studies*, Vol.12:2, 2002, p.84

<sup>276</sup> Cornell, Svante E., “Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective”, *World Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 2, January 2002, pp. 245-276

<sup>277</sup> Wallensteen, op. cit., p.184

<sup>278</sup> Galtung, *Transcend – Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, op. cit., p.73

#### **5.1.3.1.4. Security**

When an ethnic group face not only with direct violence but with structural or cultural violence, the need for security arises. The Kurds in Turkey, too, no longer trust in the Turkish state founded on the Turkishness, and thus do not feel safe. On the other side, the state defines its security understanding through its national integrity and unity. These are clashing paradigms. Turkey's current political structure still do not provide political liberties such as freedom of speech and expression, the right to collective identity for Kurdish people. For example, almost more than 7000 people have been arrested through the so-called KCK operations since 2009, which reveals that the Kurds are not able to do politics and organize freely. In this way, we may easily understand the logic behind the argument for recognition of identity and autonomy of the Kurds, because they all eventually reflect consideration, respect as well as security (or safety).

#### **5.1.3.2. Relative Deprivation**

Another approach we use to analyse root causes of the Kurdish conflict is relative deprivation which was developed by Ted Robert Gurr. He defines relative deprivation as a perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations that are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled and men's value capabilities that are the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining given the social means available to them<sup>279</sup>. To put it simply, the men feel deprived when there is a tension between what they have and what they should have in the future. This feeling of deprivation derived from unfulfilled aspirations for achievable or desirable outcome may cause to individual or collective violence. Gurr elsewhere argues that "the greater the intensity of relative deprivation with respect to welfare, power, status and communal values, the greater the likely

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<sup>279</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1970, pp. 13

decline in ideational coherence”<sup>280</sup> among the communities. In other words, the greater the discrepancy between men’s expectations and capabilities, they are more likely to feel greater discontent. Most notably, when individuals or groups perceive dissatisfaction with a social order they will likely to express widespread discontent. They may even resort to violence as an instrumental means of expressing their feelings of anger, if they do not have another option. By quoting Coser, Wallensteen explicates that “only where there exist open channels of political communication through which all groups can articulate their demands, are the chances high that the political exercise of violence can be successfully minimized”<sup>281</sup> On the other hand, if discontented people have or get constructive means to attain their social and material goals, few will resort to violence; they may be angry but most of them probably prefer peaceful means for the attainment of their goals”<sup>282</sup>, Gurr says. It means that if an ethnic group, for instance, resort to violence it experiences such a degree of deprivation that its members collectively suffer from systematic discriminatory treatment vis-a-vis other groups in the country in which they are inhabited. In this case, they have neither constructive means to express themselves or motivations to obtain their goals in legal ways.

Turkey’s Kurds have, too, political, social and economic grievances against the state on issues such as barriers to freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of press, freedom of association, freedom to participate in the political process for 10 percent electoral threshold, including economic underdevelopment. Kurdish identity and culture categorically excluded from the public-political realm. Until recently, Turkish state has categorized Kurds as the “Mountain Turks” which means “there were no Kurds in Turkish homeland – Turkey”. This is well described in the article 66 of the Turkey’s 1982 Constitution that denies Kurdish identity by saying “everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk”. Kurdish children in schools have to chant everyday: “I am Turk... My existence shall be dedicated to the Turkish existence”. Teaching – education and state service in Kurdish language is still forbidden.

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<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136

<sup>281</sup> Wallensteen, *op. cit.*, p.39

<sup>282</sup> Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, *op. cit.*, pp. 317 -355

Still, the people who do not speak Turkish language have trouble with the Turkish officials in state organizations for the lack of a robust dialogue between them. As Wallensteen pointed out, if a person or group cannot use his or her own language to pursue a particular grievance with official authorities, this person/group is at a distinct disadvantage against those who command it, and thus the person/group is more likely not to receive a fair share of social services or business deals<sup>283</sup>. This is exactly what the Kurds have so far experienced.

Furthermore, most economic indicators show that underdevelopment continues to be a one of the major grievances in the eastern provinces of Turkey which are largely inhabited by Kurds. According to a report made by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), those provinces had the lowest regional share in GDP per capita between 1990 and 2001. The report notes that Turkey's level of inequality is one of the highest among OECD countries, while Kocaeli displays the highest level of GDP per capita, exceeding the national value by 90%, and Agri records the lowest, below 64% of the national value<sup>284</sup>. Consequently, all these political, social and economic grievances has led the Kurds to feel more dissatisfied and deprived with the state they live in as compared to Turkish fellow citizens. These grievances suffered by the Kurdish people, eventually, caused frustration which is the essential motivation behind resorting to the violence.

### **5.1.3.3. Identity Formation**

The preceding sections – basic human needs and relative deprivation – specified the potential for collective violence in Turkey owing to the fact that most of its Kurdish citizens felt sharply deprived with respect to their most deeply desired needs and goals. Let us move now to a brief analysis of the role of another factor in Turkey's Kurdish conflict, namely identity formation. As we indicated earlier, identity is one of the most

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<sup>283</sup> Wallensteen, *op. cit.*, p.176

<sup>284</sup> OECD - Country Notes, *Turkey*, 2011. Available on the official website of OECD, <http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/49077392.pdf>



important basic needs to be considered when analyzing a conflict. A conflict may involve one or more groups who see themselves as distinct and therefore have different collective identities based on ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other communal characteristics<sup>285</sup>. Among those characteristics, ethnic identity appears as the hardest one because it depends on language and culture which are difficult to change. Kaufman gives definition of ethnic identity of Anthony Smith, an ethnic identity includes five key traits: “a group name, a believed common descent (common set of narratives, symbols), common historical memories, elements of shared culture such as language or religion and attachment to a specific territory”<sup>286</sup>.

According to this view, members of an ethnic group share common history, language, beliefs, values, habits, customs, norms, lifestyles, collective heritage, and most importantly, they believe that these attributes distinguish them from other groups. Even though the fact that ethnic identity is not defined by objective physiological attributes and it has been socially constructed throughout history, its being of a product of historical and social construction does not make it arbitrary or less than real in the hearts and minds of their members and for other groups<sup>287</sup>. To illustrate, despite no common political affiliation among the Kurds, who are today scattered across four countries - Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq -, they tend to have a strong collective identity particularly in the context of social and cultural affiliations, loyalties and solidarity. Kurdish identity formation, in general, have played a significant role in the emergence of the Kurdistan Regional government after the US led war in Iraq and appearance of the current situation of Syrian Kurds who seek autonomy after the withdrawal of Syrian government forces from Kurdish-dominated towns along the Syrian-Turkish border

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<sup>285</sup> Kriesberg, Louis, “Mediation and the Transformation of the Israeli – Palestinian Conflict”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Special Issue on Conflict Resolution in Identity-Based Disputes, Vol. 38, No. 3, May 2001, pp. 374-375

<sup>286</sup> Kaufman, Stuart, *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic Wars*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001, p. 16

<sup>287</sup> Oberschall, Anthony, *Conflict and Peace Building in Divided Societies: Responses to Ethnic Violence*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 4

In the case of Turkey, a collective Kurdish identity based on a common language, common history, common symbols, shared values, and traditions has been formed through a social categorization process since the earlier years of the 20th century. It is a result of the pursuit of individual and collective identity needs of the Kurds. It has also been a response to the nation building process in the Turkish republic. Both the state's "turkification politics" in the early republican era and the Kurdish resistance movements, in reply to this, have been influential in the formation of Kurdish national identity. Nevertheless, "it was rare that people would publicly refer to Kurds in reference to an ethnic group in Turkey" until 1990s, "the "Kurd" category was avoided in official documents as well as in the mainstream public-political discourse"<sup>288</sup>. Despite its suppression of Kurdish identity, Turkey has subsequently witnessed a heightened Kurdish ethnic consciousness and politicization.

In this respect, Turkey's Kurdish conflict is an identity driven conflict in which the state's sense of identity has for long years denied reality or legitimacy of the Kurdish identity. If Turkey comprised a single nation almost everyone was supposed to accept and support the state-imposed identity. But this is not the case. As in the definition of "identity of conflicts" of Rothman, Kurdish conflict is, too, rooted "in the articulation of, and the threats or frustrations to", Kurd's "collective need for dignity, recognition, safety, autonomy, purpose, and efficacy"<sup>289</sup>. Then one could easily suggest that we are in a conflict of which identity is one of the primary sources in response to unmet basic needs. As a matter of fact, identity does not only pertain to the Kurdish conflict, almost two-thirds of the armed conflicts in 1990s were defined as identity conflicts, and some estimated that as many as 70 current political conflicts worldwide that involve groups formally organized to promote collective identity issues<sup>290</sup>. The needs of the Kurdish identity continue to be one of the main obstacles in resolving the Kurdish conflict.

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<sup>288</sup> Somer, Murat, "Turkey's Kurdish Conflict: Changing Context, and Domestic and Regional Implications", *The Middle East Journal*, Volume 58, Number 2, April 2004 , p. 246

<sup>289</sup> Rothman, Jay, *Resolving Identity-Based Conflict in Nations, Organizations and Communities*, San Francisco, California : Jossey-Bass, 1997, p.7

<sup>290</sup> Regehr, Ernie, "War After the Cold War: Shaping a Canadian Response Project" *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, Volume 1, Issue 2, 1993, p.8

## ***5.1.4. Dynamics in Kurdish Conflict***

### ***5.1.4.1. Parties***

The primary parties in Turkey's Kurdish conflict appear to be the PKK / KCK (Group of Communities in Kurdistan) and Turkish state that mainly involves successive governments and security bureaucracy including military and police, and the Turkish and Kurdish citizens of Turkey. Ayşe B. Çelik and Andrew Blum argue that Kurdish conflict takes place at three level – between the Turkish state and an ethnic minority, between Turkish state and an insurgent group - the PKK, between Turks and Kurds in the form of social tensions in Turkey's both large and small western cities<sup>291</sup>. Therefore, both Turkish and Kurdish citizens are relevant parties to this conflict. Their civil society organizations, community groups, NGOs, labor unions ranging from the most Turkish nationalist formation to the most Kurdish nationalist formation are also important actors in the conflict. On the Turkish side, in the past decades, the Turkish security forces were a central actor in this conflict, but their significance varied over time depending on the context within which Kurdish question is perceived by the Turkish public<sup>292</sup>. At the present time, one may easily observe that as military domination loses its salience new actors arise by which the conflict is transformed. The current prime minister of Turkey and the chairman of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Parti) Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who removed long-standing military tutelage, has come forward as a prominent actor following his third election victory in 2011. On the Kurdish side, however, the PKK continues to be a major party in Kurdish conflict along with prominent figures in military headquarters in the Kandil Mountains. Nonetheless, Abdullah Öcalan –founder of the PKK- is still the most important political actor who

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<sup>291</sup> Blum, Andrew and Ayşe Betül Çelik, "Track II interventions and the Kurdish Question in Turkey: An Analysis Using a Theories of Change Approach", *The International Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol. 12, No.2, December 2007, p.65

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, p.66

needs to be understood and cared for, though jailed in İmralı Island since 1999. Above all, he is the political and military leader of the last Kurdish insurgency.

On the other hand, as John Paul Lederach indicates that most intra-state conflicts such as Kurdish conflict may involve the abundance of relevant parties that they become internationalized to some degree. In this respect, I suggest that Kurdish conflict which had been primarily seen as an internal matter of the countries affected (Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran – the four neighbours with Kurdish populations) has become internationalized in recent years. Thus, some global and local external powers have embedded in the Kurdish conflict such as the European Union, the United States, Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq and Democratic Union Party in Syria. After Turkey's candidacy for EU membership, the EU has become an important actor on Kurdish issue and has served as a leverage through its pressure on Turkey to implement democratic reforms and improve its human rights record<sup>293</sup>. The US, as a hegemonic power, has already played a major role in the Middle East in general and Turkey in particular since the Second World war, which enables it to be an influential external actor on the regional scene unavoidably. The recent developments also complicated the conflict multiplying relevant parties. Especially in 2003, the US-led war in Iraq drastically altered the dynamic of Kurdish conflict making Kurdistan Regional government, which hosts PKK bases in Iraq's Qandil Mountains, a crucial actor in the Kurdish conflict. Similarly, the withdrawal of Syrian government forces from Kurdish-dominated towns along the Syrian-Turkish border in the wake of a civil war initially inspired by the Arab Spring created a political vacuum that PYD - which has close ties to the PKK -also filled<sup>294</sup>. Therefore, it would be easy to draw the conclusion that Turkey's Kurdish conflict has turned out to be a form of multi-layered, multi-dimensional and multi-actored.

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<sup>293</sup> Ibid., p.67

<sup>294</sup> Larrabee, F. Stephen, "Why Erdogan Wants Peace With the PKK: The End of An Insurgency", *Foreign Affairs*, March 27, 2013. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139081/f-stephen-larrabee/why-erdogan-wants-peace-with-the-pkk>

Furthermore, Kurdish conflict may also be considered as an asymmetric conflict in which the major parties may not be willing to recognize each other because it has emerged between dissimilar parties, between an established government and a group of rebels. Kurdish opposition groups against the state regularly called as terrorists, bandits or guerillas. PKK has also been regarded as a terrorist organization by Turkish government and internationally, including the United States, the European Union and NATO. IRA (Irish Republican Army), PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) and the ANC (African National Congress), in the same vein, were for long considered as terrorist groups by the governments concerned and some other external powers. Although British, Israeli and South African governments said that they would not negotiate with terrorists, all these organizations, however, finally negotiated a final settlement with their interlocutors respectively. Turkish state, too, regularly exercised its views through MGK or Milli Güvenlik Konseyi (National Security Council), which frequently took up the Kurdish issue and PKK under the rubric of terrorism and terrorist activities<sup>295</sup>. The state's inability to eradicate the PKK since 1984, in itself, undermined its argument that the problem was one of terrorism, not Kurdish identity<sup>296</sup>. Hence, Turkish state's official approach to the Kurdish conflict until the current peace process "let us separate PKK terrorist organization from Kurdish issue and we cannot negotiate with PKK to resolve Kurdish issue" was already far from being realistic.

#### **5.1.4.2. Goals**

Conflict, as we defined it earlier, arise from contradiction between goals, which means parties go to war because they have mutually incompatible goals. Thus, goals of both Turkish state and the PKK have an important place in understanding and explaining Kurdish conflict. Primary goal of Turkish state, initially, was to protect unitary structure of Turkish Republic against secessionist PKK organization and wipe

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<sup>295</sup> Marcus, op. cit., p.126

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., p. 249

out Kurdish rebel bases within its borders by military measures. On the other side, The PKK's main goal was, at first, to establish an independent and socialist Kurdish state within the border of Turkey, and then extending it through other parts of neighboring countries mainly inhabited by Kurds – Iraq, Syria and Iran -. In the 1977 party program, the PKK claimed that Kurdistan divided into four regions by the countries above should be independent and united<sup>297</sup>. Similarly, party program in 1995 says that “an end to Turkish colonialism and all forms of imperialist domination over Kurdistan” must be put, and ironically slams “all attempts at special regional status or autonomy which do not aim to break the colonialism of the Turkish Republic, and which in fact are collaborations with colonialism”<sup>298</sup>. When it comes to 2008, however, the aim of the organization would be expressed as “to develop democratic management and unity of Kurdish nation through democratic confederalism, and to achieve a democratic solution to the Kurdish question in countries where Kurds suffer on the basis of an autonomous and democratic Kurdistan”<sup>299</sup>.

PKK's redefinition of its fundamental goal also appeared in a statement of Abdullah Öcalan to his followers proposing that “struggle was no longer about a separate Kurdistan”. The new approach transformed the struggle from a territorial issue to the participation issue within the borders of a democratic Turkey”<sup>300</sup> but also from Orthodox Marxism – Socialism to a pragmatic ideological agenda. It means that the PKK, under the leadership Öcalan, has significantly changed both its focal point and ideology . Because the PKK understood that it cannot achieve an independent Kurdistan with revolutionary struggle. As will be seen, the goals are not unchangeable. Goals are condemned to change, because we – the people - are condemned to change. In different

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<sup>297</sup> Pope, Hugh, *Turkey and the Democratic Opening for the Kurds*, in Bilgin, Fevzi and Ali Sarihan, *Understanding Turkey's Kurdish Question*, Lexington Books, 2013, p. 144

<sup>298</sup> PKK Party Program, Chapter Three, 5th Congress, Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), *The Revolution in Kurdistan: The Characteristics of the Revolution in Kurdistan*, January 24, 1995.

<sup>299</sup> PKK's 10<sup>th</sup> Congress in 2008 (My own translation from Turkish). *PKK Tüzüğü*. Available on the website of <http://www.pkkonline.net/tr/index.php?sys=article&artID=174>

<sup>300</sup> Wallensteen, *op. cit.*, p.182

phases of conflict, parties may abandon of some goals pursued earlier when those goals cease to be perceived as attractive. When conflict parties change their goals or their positions, the conflict is transformed such as in Kurdish conflict.

The same thing applies to Turkish state. Ankara realized that it is not possible to completely eradicate the PKK through military means, security-oriented policy was tested for almost 30 years but no positive result could be achieved. Rather, the PKK expanded its political, military and social bases with each passing day. The prevailing view in government circles that “the state cannot negotiate with PKK terrorist organization to resolve Kurdish issue” seems to change anymore, though slightly. However, we do not yet have sufficient information about clear goals of Turkish state with respect to the Kurdish conflict. But we know that the PKK, which emerged as an illegal organization in the late 1970s claiming a national liberation struggle for the Kurdish nation across the four countries –Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran- has evidently given up its goal of independent Kurdistan. Rather, it states it stands for a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish conflict within the framework of the unitary structure of Turkey. PKK’s leading members have regularly demanded the Turkish state eliminate root causes of Kurdish issue for their laying down the mountain and ending to the armed struggle. In this sense, Abdullah Öcalan had called for withdrawal of the guerillas beyond borders and ending the armed struggle in 1999 just after his capture saying “the PKK is ready to lay down arms completely with a general amnesty and a democratic legal reform ... when this happens, the PKK is ready to add all its assets, including the arms, to Turkey’s forces”<sup>301</sup>, but it has not yet happened.

#### ***5.1.4.3. Interests & Needs & Values***

Interests of adversaries to a conflict involve tangible resources such as land, capital, natural resources, military positions or political positions, but also may have

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<sup>301</sup> Çandar, Cengiz, 2012, *Leaving the Mountain: How may the PKK lay down arms? : Freeing the Kurdish Question from Violence*, İstanbul, TESEV Publications, pp.93-94.

[http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/1fe2c9c3-fe84-4044-81a1-d8a3ab906e5c/12028ENGsilahsizlandirma16\\_03\\_12Rev1.pdf](http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/1fe2c9c3-fe84-4044-81a1-d8a3ab906e5c/12028ENGsilahsizlandirma16_03_12Rev1.pdf)

intangible ones stretching from the desire to obtain recognition, respect to restoration<sup>302</sup>. Values, on the other hand, refer to ideas, habits, customs and beliefs that are a characteristic of particular social communities such as linguistic, religious, class, ethnic or other features that lead to separate cultures and identity groups<sup>303</sup>. Both interests and values may divide a community on ethnic, religious, sectarian, political and cultural basis. In regarding Kurdish conflict, however, I assume that this is not a conflict which derives from interest-based or value-based motivations. Rather, it is a need-based conflict, which will be examined in details in the next section. Turkey, of course, has been a modern, secular, unitary constitutional republic involving both western/eastern, European/Islamic cultural values in itself. And Turkish state defines itself an indivisible entity with its territory and nation as was proclaimed in Turkish Constitution, which is in Turkey's interests.

On the other side, although the PKK's ideology was initially founded on revolutionary Marxism-Socialism and Kurdish nationalism, Öcalan later defended "a post-state-centric, democratic federation/civilization that combines the universal democratic values of the European enlightenment with the deeply rooted cultural values of Middle Eastern societies"<sup>304</sup> for both Kurds and Turks. Therefore, one could claim it is clear that there seems no obvious clashing interests or values since the PKK abandoned its goal of an independent Kurdistan stressing, on the contrary, a peaceful co-existence in a pluralistic-democratic Turkey.

#### **5.1.4.4. *Perceptions***

Perceptions essentially emerge from our sensations or feelings. Therefore, they are based on a subjective process by their very nature, which means reality can have different forms for different observers. What we perceive may not necessarily be

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<sup>302</sup> Wallensteen., op.cit., p.53

<sup>303</sup> Burton, John , *Conflict: Resolution and Provention*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990, p.37

<sup>304</sup> Öcalan, Abdullah, (reviewed by Gunter, Michael M. - author of Historical Dictionary of the Kurds- ), *Prison Writings: The PKK and the Kurdish Question in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 2nd ed., Tennessee Technological University, Scarecrow Press, 2011.



identical to reality, because an individual's or group's perceptions are reality to him/her or them. A protracted conflict like the Kurdish conflict, too, having lasted more than 30 years has inherently promoted enemy images and a lack of trust among the conflict parties, including Turkish and Kurdish communities, which makes any communication difficult. In particular, during the time the conflict has escalated, Kurdish or Turkish populations have come increasingly to hold enemy images of the other group. On the Turkish side, perception of the Kurdish issue has continued in the same way. Turkish state regularly took up the issue under the rubric of terrorism. It was thought, for long years, that solution of the issue was only possible as long as the state was able to destroy the PKK terrorists and drain the swamp. Political and military strategies applied accordingly. Because there has been a durable belief among the Turkish authorities that Kurdish issue is, in fact, a result of the actions of foreign powers, including the Western powers, Greece, Syria and Iran. This belief is widely known as Sevres Paranoia, which refers to fears that "there are external powers who are trying to challenge the territorial integrity of the Turkish state and implement the provisions of the Sevres Treaty of 1920 by establishing local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas"<sup>305</sup>. The prevailing perception among Turkish citizens, too, is that the foreign powers seek to undermine Turkey and aspire to revive the terms of the Sevres Treaty. When it comes to the present moment, we observe the things have not changed much. A survey called "Public Perception of the Kurdish Question" conducted by the Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) and Pollmark revealed that majority of the Turkish citizens (64.4%) still believe that the Kurds want to establish an independent state, while 59% of the Kurdish respondents think that Kurds have no demand for a separate state<sup>306</sup>. This is a clear misperception on the Kurdish issue among the general Turkish population. Nonetheless, the perception of something unreal as it is real is a result of instability created by the conflict.

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<sup>305</sup> Çelik, Ayşe Betül, "Ethnopolitical Conflict in Turkey: From Denial of Kurds to Peaceful Co-existence?" , Landis, Das and Rosita D. Albert, *Handbook of Ethnic Conflict: International Perspectives*, Springer Press, 2012, p. 244

<sup>306</sup> Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) and Pollmark, "Public Perception of the Kurdish Question", 2009.  
[http://www.setadc.org/pdfs/SETA\\_Research\\_Report\\_Public\\_Perception\\_Kurdish\\_Question.pdf](http://www.setadc.org/pdfs/SETA_Research_Report_Public_Perception_Kurdish_Question.pdf)

## **5.2. From Negative Peace to Positive Peace**

We are currently going through a peace process began with talks between Abdullah Öcalan – jailed leader of the PKK - and state officials that may also be called second negative peace phase in Turkey’s Kurdish conflict. After his capture in 1999, Öcalan had called for withdrawal of the PKK militants beyond borders and ending the armed struggle. The PKK followed its leader’s call and declared a unilateral ceasefire with Turkish security forces in the same year. It was a de-escalation of the conflict and thus may be regarded the first period of negative peace in the conflict, though based on one-sided ceasefire. This negative peace period, however, was later replaced by re-escalation of violence when PKK renounced its self-imposed ceasefire in the summer of 2004 on the grounds that the state did not eliminate root causes of the Kurdish conflict. On the contrary, Kurdish issue which is defined in the limits drawn by the official ideology regularly was brought to the agenda by military-bureaucracy alliance as a mere security problem, but its relationship with democratization of Turkey has systematically been ignored. The prevailing view in government and military circles also depend the fact that “the state could not negotiate with PKK terrorist organization to resolve Kurdish issue”. Therefore, the conflict has once again speedily escalated and turned into a full-scale war after 2004.

Security-oriented approach to the Kurdish issue was, this time, adopted by the ruling AKP (Justice and Development Party) government with only a difference as compared to the past. Security-oriented policies were implemented coordinately with socio-economic development projects in mainly Kurdish populated provinces of Turkey. This also did not work for resolution of the conflict. Turkish state finally realized that it is not possible to completely eradicate the PKK through military means because security-based understanding was already tested for almost 30 years but no positive result could be achieved. Rather, the PKK expanded its political, military and social bases with each passing day. Turkey’s political leaders - President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan- came to recognize that military solutions to end the last insurgency was a dead end. It was for this reason that a new modality was

adopted in the summer of 2009, which was called as the Kurdish Opening (or Kurdish Initiative) that has first become known as the Democratic Opening, and then National Unity and Brotherhood Project. In this context, secret talks held in Oslo between Turkish delegation which was led by Hakan Fidan - the head of Turkish Intelligence, but he attended the meetings as prime minister's special envoy- and some PKK representatives. These meetings would later be called as “the Oslo process”.

It, however, failed to develop a positive outcome. A new wave of violence occurred in the years of 2011 and 2012. After failure of the first attempt to resolve this conflict, the government again resorted to the security-based approach to defeat PKK. It was obvious, however, that these methods may only caused more violence, pains and sufferings, making the conflict bigger, deepened and complicated. The policy of returning to violence under the AKP government, I think, was tried for the last time. But it was again proved that no positive result could be yielded through violent means, because the root causes of the conflict still remain unaddressed. In the late 2012, both parties realized that they cannot obtain their goals by violence because it is costly to sustain it. This situation, as William Zartman called, can be attributed to ‘hurting stalemate’ which is mutually felt by both parties to be disadvantageous. The concept is essentially based on the notion that “when the parties find themselves locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them, they seek an alternative policy or way out”<sup>307</sup>. Thus, at this stage, none of adversaries can impose a unilateral outcome by winning through coercion alone and they start to talk. Stalemate is regarded as a precondition for a negotiated settlement by other some scholars, anyway. Kriesberg, similarly, asserts that at some point in a de-escalating conflict, negotiations may come to be regarded as an attractive way to conduct and conclude a conflict<sup>308</sup>.

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<sup>307</sup> Zartman, I. William, “The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments”, Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (ed.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p.19

<sup>308</sup> Kriesberg, Louis, “Mediation and the Transformation of the Israeli – Palestinian Conflict”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Special Issue on Conflict Resolution in Identity-Based Disputes, Vol. 38, No. 3, May 2001, pp. 375

In Kurdish conflict, negotiations through secret talks between Öcalan and the state officials began in İmralı Island. Turkish government initially did not make the talks public, but has later openly admitted that the talks are underway between Öcalan and intelligence officers. The parties finally agreed on a mutual ceasefire in these talks. And Öcalan has once more called for a truce and also urged the PKK fighters to withdraw from Turkey's borders. Öcalan said in a statement read by Kurdish politicians at Newroz (Kurdish New Year) celebrations on 21st March of 2013 in Diyarbakir "a new phase in our struggle is beginning, now a door is opening to a phase where we are moving from armed resistance to an era of democratic political struggle"<sup>309</sup>. The statement is important in two ways. First, it is a document of a long-term mutual ceasefire that has been reached for the first time since this 30-years conflict began. Second, Öcalan gives the PKK a clear message to halt its violent activities or direct violence phase of the Kurdish conflict, instead to upgrade its political struggle. To put it differently, the current negotiation process between Öcalan and the Turkish state, called İmralı process, is also a major step toward ending this bloody conflict in general and disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating of the PKK in particular.

The first test of conflict resolution that arms are no longer used has been now put into practice in Kurdish conflict. Because the ending of direct violence makes conflict resolution possible, and more importantly, a conflict that is surrendered to violence encourages more violence. Unless an end to armed struggle achieved, violent conflict will be more likely continue and less likely to be resolved. Thus, the agreement of the Turkish state and Öcalan on mutual ceasefire marks end of armed phase of the conflict and the beginning of something new, though it does not reveal that peace process is over. Because it is only a phase of a larger peace process. For this reason, it is possible to argue that nonviolence is a necessary but not sufficient condition for conflict resolution. De-escalation of the Kurdish conflict, of course, may imply the absence of direct violence but structural or cultural violence may continue to exist. Therefore, main task of the parties must urgently be to question how to transform the systemic conditions

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<sup>309</sup> BBCNews, *Turkey Kurds: PKK chief Ocalan calls for ceasefire*, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-21874427> 21 March 2013.

that cause this violent conflict, in other words, how to transform negative peace into positive peace that means the removal of structural or cultural violence beyond the absence of direct violence. The roots of Kurdish conflict appear to be built to the very structure of the society and cultural institutions, that is why the remedy would also have to include structural – cultural changes to overcome the structural-cultural violence that so easily produces direct violence<sup>310</sup>. Unless structural and cultural violence eliminated, Kurdish conflict has always capacity to turn to the direct violence. Because structural – cultural violence is still over there. We will now discuss the current peace process in light of some conflict resolution instruments; third party, mediation, problem solving workshops, negotiation, as well as reconciliation process during both conflict and post-conflict era.

### ***5.2.1. Third Party***

Parties to the Kurdish conflict which is a deep-rooted and complicated one have been unable to produce their own solutions. For this situation, conflict resolution emphasizes understanding of the issue and finding solutions through constructive interventions of a third party that can have the potential to change dynamics of interaction between adversaries. I suggest that social-psychological approach as a third party model can be applied to the Kurdish conflict. According to this approach, a third party uses “moral suasion and symbolic rewards or gestures” when it intervenes in a conflict. It is also supposed to “play a neutral and essentially facilitating role, enabling and encouraging a mutual learning process rather than guiding or still less influencing and directing the parties to mutually acceptable approaches to problem solving”<sup>311</sup>. Because their involvement is based on their expert or reputational authority rather than hard power instruments. Although this kind of mediator has traditionally been seen as

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<sup>310</sup> Galtung, Johan, *A Theory of Conflict : Overcoming Direct Violence*, Kolofon Press, 2010, p. 41

<sup>311</sup> Hampson, Fen Osler, Chester A. Crocker and Pamela R. Aall, “Negotiation and International Conflict”, Webel, Charles and Johan Galtung (ed.), *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2007, p. 42

powerless, it may be more powerful and influential at establishing communication between the conflict parties, ironically.

One of the mechanisms that can fulfill this task, for instance, may be the European Union. During the past 20 years, the EU has somewhat served as a leverage for transform of the Kurdish conflict in the context of democratization and political reforms through Copenhagen criteria. As A. B. Çelik argues, “the accession negotiations with the EU have lent credence to an approach that focuses on legal reform and policy instruments to manage the conflict”<sup>312</sup>. In line with EU requirements, Turkish parliament passed a series of laws that has weakened military – bureaucratic tutelage over civilian governments, strengthened civilian control on the military, introduced substantial human rights for Kurdish culture, language, education and broadcasting. Though the governmental institutions have been reluctant to implement these reforms, it is easy to draw the conclusion that the accession process of Turkey to the EU has been an important milestone in transforming the Kurdish conflict. The EU as a third party, however, may be more helpful in ending this conflict peacefully, because it has capacity to change the conflict structure and attitudes or behaviours of the parties through its conciliatory actions.

#### ***5.2.1.1. Mediation***

Parties to a conflict may find themselves in need of the assistance of an intermediary to begin, conduct and conclude a peace process successfully<sup>313</sup>. A mediator is first supposed to gain trust and confidence of the parties, then to set agendas and formulate agreements by arranging meetings, reducing tensions, exploring the interests

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<sup>312</sup> Blum and Çelik, op. cit., p.66

<sup>313</sup> Mitchell, Christopher, “Mediation and the Ending of Conflicts in Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes”, Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (ed)., *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p.77

of the parties<sup>314</sup>. Trust is a key element in a mediation process, because conflict parties do not trust each other. Otherwise, they could already transform the conflict and find a solution. Thus the mediator's main task is to build trust among the parties. In order to achieve that "he/she must be an upright and honourable person or institution who will be able to be a good communicator, able to listen and give good feedback, capable of following the parties' thoughts and, especially important, patient"<sup>315</sup>. Turkish state and PKK, however, have so far no agreed on the possible role of a mediator in resolution of the Kurdish conflict. Though it is claimed by some Turkish journalists that British intelligence organization mediated between the Turkish state and the PKK to launch secret talks<sup>316</sup> -called Oslo talks- in 2011, the mediator's role there did not go beyond being only a facilitator. In İmralı talks, contrary to Oslo talks, the government categorically opposed for the any kind of mediation. Therefore, in current peace process, there is neither a national nor an international actor who will be able to play the role of mediator in Kurdish conflict. The PKK, on the other hand, tends to see a mediator to engage the conflict regardless of being national or international. It can, at least, be an internal mediator that can understand cultural nuances of the society and internal dynamics of the conflict to monitor the peace process. Or an external mediation mechanism based on problem-solving model which is performed by non-official (but rarely official) actors who typically are representatives of small countries or of international non- governmental organizations that do not have the leverage of a big power can be well applied to the Kurdish conflict. A well-known case to this is the role played by Senator George Mitchell in Northern Ireland conflict. When he chaired negotiations there, he had no any political or physical power, he was there just because of his prestige and reputation over the parties.

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<sup>314</sup> Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, pp. 181

<sup>315</sup> Horowitz, Sara, "Mediation", Webel, Charles and Johan Galtung, *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2011, p. 53

<sup>316</sup> Today's Zaman, *British intelligence played mediator role for Oslo talks*, 18 June 2012. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-283920-british-intelligence-played-mediator-role-for-oslo-talks.html>

### ***5.2.2. Problem- solving workshops***

The main aim of the problem solving workshops is to create a common ground between members of the conflicting parties for a peaceful and stable resolution of a conflict in which they are engaged. These workshops first enable the parties to know needs of the other side, then set an agenda to discuss root causes of the conflict through guidance of a facilitator who is not in a position to set down norms but helps the parties understand each other. As Kriesberg defines, inter-active problem solving workshops involve dialogue groups, back-channel meetings, other official or non-official meetings between the adversaries<sup>317</sup>. All these settings provide basis for official negotiations. The transition from a violent intra-state conflict to official negotiations require the creation of a new type of relationship on several levels within the community. According to Lederach, there should be pre-negotiations in three levels; the top leadership (military,political,religious leaders with high visibility); the middle range leadership (civil society, the business sector, religious or ethnic leaders, academics / intellectuals etc.); grassroots leadership (local leaders, community workers, local officials, so on and so forth). The PSWs, however, may give better results if conducted among middle-range actors. Because they have the greatest potential for peacebuilding, because they have the capacity to impact processes and people at both the top and the grassrots levels”<sup>318</sup>. In regarding Kurdish conflict, a group of Turkish and Kurdish citizens held problem-solving workshops under the auspices of the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) and European Center for Common Ground (ECCG) in 1996 in order to find a peaceful solution to the Kurdish conflict<sup>319</sup>. In the wake of intensive, informal, and interactive discussions, they agreed on three basic premises: “First democracy is desirable; second, violence is counterproductive; third, any solution must safeguard the territorial integrity

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<sup>317</sup> Kriesberg, *op. cit.*,p.380

<sup>318</sup> Lederach, John Paul, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997, p. 151

<sup>319</sup> Özçelik, Sezai, “Theories, Practices, and Research in Conflict Resolution and Low-Intensity Conflicts:The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey”, *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol 26, No 2, 2006, pp.133-153



of Turkey”<sup>320</sup>. These workshops indicated that attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours of both Turkish and Kurdish citizens could be harmonized, though there is now, however, no attempt to transform the conflict among middle-range actors within Turkey’s society.

### ***5.2.3. Negotiation***

Negotiation plays an important role in conflict resolution because it is one of the basic tools through which parties to a conflict search for peaceful settlements and aim to settle their differences. In recent years, we have witnessed an evolving culture of negotiation particularly in intra-state conflicts. Negotiations between Colombian government and National Liberation Army (ELN) and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), between nationalists and unionists in Northern Ireland, between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement after years of conflict can be given as some examples to those intra-state conflicts. In Turkey’s Kurdish conflict, too, official negotiations between jailed PKK leader Öcalan and the state officials began in İmralı Island in the late 2012. The prevailing view in government and military circles that “the state could not negotiate with PKK terrorist organization to resolve Kurdish issue” began to change. This was inevitable, too. Turkish state finally realized that it is not possible to completely eradicate the PKK through military means. Security-oriented policy was already tested for almost 30 years but no positive result could be achieved. Rather, it is an issue of demanding basic human needs for the Kurds such as recognition, identity and autonomy.

Today, Kurdish conflict has reached at a point where further escalation of violence is very costly what is known mutually hurting stalemate. Thus, the parties have come to accept other alternatives than use of force and turned to negotiation table. As John Burton indicated that bargaining, negotiation, mediation, or any other such process is indispensable to the conflict parties when they believe they have no coercive power

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<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.133-153

over one another<sup>321</sup>. To adapt this to the Kurdish conflict, it is easy to argue that both Turkish state and the PKK have come to know that they cannot obtain their goals by violence /conflict, because it is costly to sustain it. Dialogue is, therefore, the best and only way for resolution of the conflict. After 30 years of a bloody conflict, both parties well know that they eventually will turn to the negotiation table to solve the conflict on the basis of mutual respect. And they did so in the end. Because Kurdish issue is not a mere security / terrorism problem, but rather an issue with political, social, psychological, cultural and economic dimensions. For building a sustainable peace in this sort of conflict, the parties must engage in the negotiation process with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable agreement.

#### ***5.2.4. Reconciliation***

Reconciliation is the ultimate goal of a peace process through new relationships between the adversaries based on mutual trust. It basically involves mechanisms to end violent phase of a conflict, then aims to build mutual trust between erstwhile adversaries and to prevent recurrence of violence for a stable peace. Hence, the first requirement for reconciliation is to create an environment in which return to violence has become unlikely due to the fact that violence creates an inhospitable environment for negotiation, and thus is a major obstacle toward reconciliation. The most important task of reconciliation, however, is shifting the situation of negative peace toward the positive peace. As we specified earlier, negative peace is a requirement but not a sufficient condition for a stable and harmonious peace between former enemies, because even a peace agreement may not be enough to establish a durable peace. It is, therefore, possible to suggest<sup>321</sup> that reconciliation is a prerequisite for maintaining peace. When we

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<sup>321</sup> Burton, John, *Conflict: Resolution and Provention*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990, p.218

look at the current peace process what is known as “the solution process” in the Kurdish conflict, we see it has three implied phases by Turkish authorities<sup>322</sup>

1. *Silencing the guns, withdrawal of the PKK armed elements from Turkey and moving to Iraqi Kurdistan;*
2. *With the changes to be made in the constitution and laws opening the way to a political settlement of the Kurdish issue, and defining the legal framework of solution;*
3. *Normalization that is the PKK’s reaching the point of dissolving itself and burying its guns eternally and the PKK’s integration to Turkish politics with an amnesty and similar moves.*

According to this roadmap for the solution of the Kurdish conflict, these three phases which involve laying down of arms and integration of PKK militants into legal-legitimate politics represent reconciliation process. Nonetheless, this process not only requires political integration that means the inclusion of all individuals and groups in the political system, but also establishment of structural equality and justice, the development of human rights in line with universal principles of democracy as well as economic reconstruction. In this sense, it is easy to draw the conclusion that genuine and stable peaceful relations between Turks and Kurds may only be achieved through a process of reconciliation.

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<sup>322</sup> Çandar, Cengiz, “Erdogan, Taksim Square and the Kurdish Peace”, *Al-Monitor Turkey Pulse*, June 24 2013 <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/06/erdogan-taksim-gezi-protests-brutality-akp-eu-membership.html>

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Most violent conflicts today occur between the armed forces of the government and opposing groups within state borders rather than between states. For the most part, they are no longer between inter-states. Rather, they are intra-state conflicts driven by ethnic, racial, tribal, sectarian, religious or ideological incompatible positions that are within the same state boundaries. Kurdish conflict is, too, an intra-state conflict based on ethnic motivations. But it is not an ethnic conflict or civil war between Turks and Kurds. Kurdish conflict may be considered as an ethnopolitical conflict because Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups did not yet go in direct conflict each other, though social tensions sometimes escalate at the community level primarily in the Western cities in Turkey. There are two sides in this conflict. One is a Kurdish insurgent group that define itself using ethnic criteria and make claims on behalf of its collective interests. The other is the Turkish state or dominant political actors in Turkish politics. To properly address the Kurdish conflict and contribute to its solution, there must be a clear understanding of the concepts and approaches that deal with conflict resolution. This is what this thesis is about.

Kurdish question that is the most important problem of Turkey<sup>323</sup> waits for an urgent political solution. Because Turkey's security- oriented approaches to the Kurdish issue has failed to address the underlying causes of the current conflict. Much efforts has so far been made by successive Turkish governments through military capabilities to destroy the Kurdish insurgencies using security tools. But no positive result has yielded through violent means, because the root causes of the conflict still remain unaddressed. Therefore, this thesis mainly sought to discuss the root causes of (direct) violence in this conflict that are also built to the very structure of society and cultural institutions in

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<sup>323</sup> Today's Zaman, "Gül: Kurdish problem is the most important problem of Turkey", <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-174922-gul-kurdish-problem-is-the-most-important-problem-of-turkey.html>, 11 May 2009.

Turkey. It was argued that structural and cultural violence on Turkey's Kurdish population are primary causes of the more visible (direct) violence. Then, the remedy to this conflict would have to include structural and institutional changes within Turkey's society. Therefore, it was suggested that focusing only on removing direct violence dimension of this conflict and leaving its structural and cultural dimension out might be waste of time. Unless leading motives behind direct violence eliminated or until basic needs of the Kurdish people are satisfied and their deprivation are removed, Kurdish conflict can ever be under the risk of emerging new waves of direct violence.

This study comes to conclusion that conflict resolution approaches and models may be useful in understanding root causes of this decades old conflict and ending armed struggle between the PKK and the state, if implemented thoroughly. Hence, it was provided a structural analysis of the root causes of the Kurdish conflict through three conflict resolution approaches; basic human needs, relative deprivation and identity formation. This thesis supposed Kurdish insurgencies as a consequence of psychological exclusion or unmet basic needs. It was mainly because Kurds' basic needs for identity, recognition, autonomy and security have been constantly denied. Turkey's Kurds have also suffered from political, social and economic grievances such as barriers to freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of press, freedom of association, freedom to participate in the political process for 10 percent electoral threshold as well as economic underdevelopment. These also paved the way for feeling of relative deprivation among Turkey's Kurds. Finally, identity formation approach enabled better understanding of a collective Kurdish identity based on a common language, common history, common symbols, shared values, and traditions. Kurds' identity has been formed through a social categorization process since the earlier years of the 20th century. It is a result of the pursuit of individual and collective identity needs of the Kurds. It has also been a response to the nation building process in the Turkish republic. Both the state's "turkification politics" in the early republican era and the Kurdish resistance movements, in reply to this, have been influential in the formation of Kurdish national identity.

In the last part, it was discussed the way in which conflict transformation appears to be possible through some conflict resolution tools; third party, mediation, problem solving workshops, negotiation and reconciliation. The focal point, however, mainly revolved around negotiation and mediation due to its relation to the current process in Kurdish conflict. It was basically argued that a long-term solution to this violent conflict can only be achieved through mutual dialogue. Dialogue is the keyword. And the method to do so is to negotiate. However, it is particularly recommended a transparent negotiation process under the auspices of a credible and an influential third party/mediation for the resolution of the conflict. Because there is a deep distrust which minimizes capabilities of the parties for commitment and responsibility to the peace process between the state and the PKK. Parties to the Kurdish conflict already witnessed a failing process in Oslo in 2009. For this reason, this thesis offers a type of mediator that should not only serve as facilitator in negotiation process, but also should witness and intervene in - if necessary –the process. It is necessary for the mediator to have a constructive role to change dynamics of this conflict. In this way, negotiating parties will also have to adhere to promises kept or agreements reached by themselves. Of course, there could be debate on what kind of third party/mediator should play this role. It may range from an internal commission to be set up by civil society organizations including local people to the international organizations such as Crisis Group, Amnesty International, former senior statesmen or diplomats, peace activists etc.

It should be also noted that negotiation must be shaped where goals, interests and values are concerned, but not with basic needs, since basic needs are ontological and have to be respected. Basic needs are non-negotiable. They are not up for bargaining. Thus, Kurds' needs of identity, recognition, autonomy or security are basically non-negotiable. To illustrate, public access to education and public service in Kurds' mother tongue, giving legal status to Kurdish identity and culture or Kurds' having any form of autonomy are not up for bargaining. Because they are universal needs. But the goals, interests and values of the conflict parties are completely open to negotiate. These are condemned to change, because we – the people - are condemned to change. Consequently, both mediation and negotiation works better when the parties are more committed to the current peace process. If the current peace process is expected to go

forward, the conflict parties – Turkey and the PKK – must commit themselves to a process of peaceful settlement. In conclusion, it must be pointed out that a peace process that fail to address the underlying causes of the conflict cannot be considered as completed.

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