


Chapter 15

Kosovo as European Union Rubik's Cube: Managing Regional Conflicts in the New International Context

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ABSTRACT

Regional conflicts with global consequences pose significant challenges to international peace and security due to their intricate nature, involving diverse stakeholders with conflicting interests. The Kosovo case serves as a prime example, testing the international community's capabilities. This chapter explores the multifaceted aspects of addressing such conflicts and their relevance to Kosovo. The research utilizes a methodological framework, including historical, descriptive, comparative, and content analysis, to unravel the intricate dynamics involved. The lessons drawn aim to enhance our understanding of addressing regional conflicts with global implications, ultimately contributing to global peace and security.

INTRODUCTION

Unfortunately, nowadays, many regions in the world are caught up in the whirlwind of war. Also, many regions and spots have a very high risk and potential for starting a war. Geographically, they are placed worldwide, starting from the Russia-Ukraine region and finishing with the China-Taiwan conflict.

We can categorize the Kosovo-Serbia conflict in the second group, i.e., in the regions which fortunately are not still officially a war, but at the same time with a very high tendency and potential for ‘igniting the sparks’.

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The Kosovo conflict arose in the late 1990s and early 2000s as a result of tensions between the ethnic Albanian majority and the Serbian minority in the region. The conflict was marked by acts of violence and repression on both sides, with the Serbian Government using military force to suppress the Albanian separatist movement. The conflict escalated into a full-blown war, resulting in thousands of deaths and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people.

The international community, led by the United Nations, intervened in the conflict to bring about a peaceful resolution. Diplomatic efforts were made to broker a ceasefire and negotiate a settlement between the warring parties. Eventually, NATO intervened militarily, launching a bombing campaign against Serbian targets to force them to withdraw their forces from Kosovo.

The conflict was eventually resolved through the international community's intervention, and Kosovo was granted independence in 2008. However, the conflict has had lasting effects on the region, with tensions between Serbia and Kosovo continuing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is dedicated to readers with an interest in exploring international politics and relations, particularly those focusing on political, economic, and security challenges within the Western Balkan countries, with a specific emphasis on Serbia-Kosovo relations. It is designed for use across various academic fields, including Political Science, Diplomacy, International Relations, Public Administration, Cultural Heritage, and more. The chapter represents a valuable contribution, offering a successful examination of all relevant aspects within these academic disciplines, with a specific focus on the concrete issue of Serbia-Kosovo relations.

The primary sources of information and data utilized for this chapter are derived from scientific papers, primarily published in reputable international journals, notably those associated with the *Journal of Liberty and International Relations*. Secondary sources include reports, analyses, policy studies, notes, and articles generated by European Union institutions, services, bodies, and agencies. Tertiary sources, the final tier of information, consist of specialized papers addressing cultural heritage issues in Kosovo. These papers have been published in international scientific journals and have also been presented at scientific conferences, subsequently being published as conference proceedings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The investigation into “Kosovo as the European Union Rubik's Cube: Managing Regional Conflicts in the New International Context” employed a multifaceted and comprehensive methodological approach to systematically address the complex dynamics inherent in the regional conflicts within Kosovo. The methodology was crafted to capture the intricacies of political, historical, and socio-economic dimensions, aiming to provide a holistic understanding of the subject matter. The following key methods were utilized:

- **Historical Analysis:** Conducted an in-depth examination of historical events and developments related to Kosovo, tracing the evolution of conflicts and their impact on regional dynamics. This historical context provided a foundation for understanding the roots and trajectories of current issues.

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