Between Co-operation and Confrontation: the Contradictions in EU-Russia Relations in the Light of the Protracted Conflicts Problem (Transnistria Case)

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Abstract

Based on the Regional Security Complex Theory, the research considers the EU-Russia relations as the competition between two main regional security complexes in Europe. It is focused on the analysis of basic features of these complexes as well as on the development of appropriate integration projects and existing contradictions between them, regarding the issue of conflicts in Europe in the context of the overall European Security system evolution. In this respect the distinctive feature of the Transnistria is its borderline position between EU and Russian security complexes, that determines its contradictory position as "gray" or "buffer" zone of European security. The author makes a conclusion that in the current uncertain situation, contradictions between the EU and Russia on protracted conflicts, and in particular, Transnistria, are more potential than real and largely politicized. At the same time in a situation of the lack of appropriate EU-Russia security dialogue, the Transnistrian conflict has become an independent factor as well as important means of negotiations in the EU-Russia relations on the a wide range of fundamental issues of European security.

Introduction

Every time we begin to study the relationship between the EU and Russia in the field of security, we are once again seize a strange feeling. This feeling is similar to when good partners communicate long and intensive, being confident that the dialogue is based on common understanding and shared core values, but whenever it comes to the implementation of any specific steps, begin to confront, and often reach a deadlock situation.

The problem of protracted (or "frozen") conflicts in Europe, particularly in the former Soviet Union is one of those indicative examples. On the one hand, the parties, including the EU and Russia are involved in conflict resolution, in general, they have similar positions and in many ways agree with each other. On the other hand, the negotiation on these conflicts are very long, if do not seem to be endless, though a certain internal development occurred – periodical improvement or worsening of the situation, the problem in general, do not seem to move from the spot. Quite the contrary, we often gives the impression that the problem is more prolonged and resolution of it is becoming more difficult. Thus, not only conflicts are protracted themselves, but also relations around them protract, that indicates the overall uncertainty and controversy of situation.

Among the different directions of the EU foreign policy, the eastward direction, perhaps, could be called as the most controversial. It depends largely on the development of EU relations with Russia. On the one hand, this area is a priority for both the EU and Russia, that is the largest neighbor of the EU. At the same time Russia together with the EU is a key actor in the post-Soviet space. As a result, protracted conflicts have become a litmus test for the EU-Russia relations, that clearly manifest the problems and contradictions.

The case of this study is the Transnistrian conflict problem, which from the point of view of the author is an illustrative example in relations between Russia and the EU, not only in security but also in other areas, because, it ultimately affects the whole complex of relations between Moscow and Brussels. For more than two decades the protracted character of conflicts and this situation of uncertainty itself has become one of the important factors of European security.

The critical argument that I put forward – is that over a long period of existence of the problem of protracted conflicts in the European security system, the resolution of these conflicts has become not only an independent factor, but also has transformed from the target to the important means with the help of it the main actors of European security communicate and build their relationship. The protracted conflict in Transnistria, especially, is a means of setting relations in the face of uncertainty, filling the existing vacuum in under-developed and under-institutionalized system of relations between Russia and the EU. At the same time, the

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Transnistrian conflict is a space where the actors project their influence and on basis of that they build their own identity.

To uncover the controversy in Russia-EU relations the author suggests considering several aspects, that, in his opinion, will help to understand better the complex sitation, that formed around Transnistria situation.

First, as a theoretical foundation a theory of Regional Security Complexes (RSCT) by Buzan and Weaver is proposed, through which it is possible to review the situation on several levels and identify areas of disagreements, and determine the Transnistrian problem as "gray" or "buffer" zone between the two regional security complexes.

The next part of the study is dedicated to the brief overview of main foreign policy doctrines' purposes of the EU and Russia regarding the protracted conflicts in the border regions. It examines basic agreements between the EU and Russia at the pan-European level (or Eurasian supercomplex by Buzan and Waever) as well as regional security complexes purposes (EU and Russian), both of them proposes the process of regional integration as a means of maintain security and conflict resolution in the post-Soviet space.

Second, in the next part of the study it will provide a brief overview of the formation of the European system of security in post-bipolar period from the point of view of the EU and Russia, based on that it makes the conclusion of the uncompleted process of creating a sustainable security architecture in Europe, that is characterized by instability and inconsistency of the situation.

In the next section an overview of the integration initiatives of Russia and the EU in the post-Soviet space will be given, that mostly determine the current policies of the two actors on Transnistria.

The subject of the final part of the study is devoted to the analysis EU and Russia role in the Transnistrian settlement process of in the context of internationlisation (along with other external actors involvement) and politicisation (along with problem of unrecognized state) problem. The most important initiatives on the Transnistrian settlement – the Kozak Memorandum, the EUBAM Mission and the Meseberg initiative are considered in this context as well.

1. Theoretical framework (Regional Security Complexes Theory)

When considering the Transnistrian conflict in the context of EU-Russia relations it is evident that this problem encompasses the multiple dimensions (at least the domestic and international). So Nadezhda Arbatova identifies three dimensions in the problems of the "frozen"

conflicts - internal, Russia / CIS and international, which are in close dialectical relationship (Arbatova 2009: 57).

However, in our case, placing the relations between the two regional leaders – Russia and the EU in the center of research, the consideration Transnistrian problem at the regional level seems to be more applicable, notably in the framework of Regional Security Complexes Theory (RSCT), an approach that has been proposed by the Copenhagen School scientists Buzan and Waever in the early 2000's. Taking into account the mutual relationship between regionalising and globalising trends we can understand the contradictory position of the Transnistrian problem, that it plays in the relationship between Russia and the EU. The main idea of Buzan and Waever is that "most threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones, security interdependence is normally patterned into regionally based clusters: security complexes" (Buzan and Waever 2003: 4).

The authors emphasize that the regional security complex can take many forms – "conflict formations, security regimes, or security communities, in which the region is defined by a pattern of rivalries, balances, alliances, and / or concerts and friendships" (Buzan and Waever 2003: 55). So the European region is divided into the two main independent security complex – the European (or EU-led) and the post-Soviet (or Russian-led) regional security complex (RSC) (Buzan and Waever 2003: 378).

In addition, this theory also correlates with the concept of securitization, through which RSCs are defined by "durable patterns of amity and enmity taking the form of subglobal, geographically coherent patterns of security interdependence" (Buzan, Waever, de Wilde 1998: 45). In this context, each regional security complex is applying its unique practice of securitization, including the relation to external threats. The specifics of the Transnistrian problem for the EU and Russia in this case is in its border position, the importance of which is raised or weakened form time to time, making the process of securitization a "pendulum" or "flickering" in its nature (Devyatkov 2010: 81).

This theory allows us to consider the Transnistrian problem is not just a conflict at the internal/regional level, but as a conflict between the two whole security complexes. As pointed out by Adler and Crawford, regional security construction based on collective identities of the actors who practice security in cooperation (Adler and Crawford 2006: 15). As a result, it appears that the differences between the European and post-Soviet security complex, are defined by the problem of collective identity, through which the EU and Russia realise their foreign policy and securitization practice in solving the Transnistrian conflict (more details in Chapter 2)**.**

Moreover, as Buzan and Waever point out, Europe is actually hyperinstitutionalised, and it is more likely to say that the cooperation between the leading actors of European security, no less, and perhaps even to a greater extent is determined by the rivalry between them and the competition to establish their own rules of game (Buzan and Waever 2003: 374). In this context, the contradictory position of Transnistria in the competitive system of European security is complicated by the fact. that this region is located between two regional security complexes – the European and the post-Soviet, where at their joint border "gray zones" of security appear, since there are a lot of contradictions between these two complexes, including the approaches to conflict resolution.

At the same time the RSCT fits to analyze other levels of security. So, Buzan and Waever put forward the idea of the existence of a higher level of security complex in Europe – Eurasian (or pan-European) supercomplex, which includes European and post-Soviet systems. On the one hand, this complex was formed recently (after the Cold War) and is still rather loose. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the main institutional expression of the supercomplex covering EU-Europe and the post-Soviet space, which relative weakness indicates no strengthening of this supercomplex (Buzan and Waever 2003: 343, 372, 374). On the other hand, this level is demonstrated to us the possibility of overcoming the existing differences between the two major complexes. Moreover, from the point of view of the RSCT theory at this level differences are smoothed out and an agreement between the EU and Russia on key security issues is more likely to be reached.

The detailed application of this approach regarding the basic documents in the field of security of EU and Russia will be discussed in the next chapter.

2. Analysis of the EU and Russia main foreign policy doctrines' purposes on the protracted conflicts problem

On the basis of RSCT theory, we may assume that the main foreign policy documents reflect the position of not only the EU and Russia on security, but also serve as guidelines for the whole security complexes policy. In this case, we can conclude that the agreements between the EU and Russia as the two centers of regional complexes form the basis for the relationship of a higher level – the common Eurasian security supercomplex. Thus, we can determine at what level contradictions between actors appear to a greater or lesser extent.

Eurasian security supercomplex level. As a basic document in EU-Russia relations in the framework of the Eurasian supercomplex, first of all, we may highlight an agreement within the OSCE as an organization of Pan-European security. Illustrative for this case is the declaration adopted on the results of the last OSCE summit in Astana in December 2010. The Astana

Commemorative Declaration reaffirmed the normative level of agreement of all the OSCE member countries on the fundamental issues of security already achieved in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and fixed in 1990 at the Paris summit of the OSCE. Based on the concept "of comprehensive, co-operative, equal and indivisible security, which relates the maintenance of peace to the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms"[1], member states had to recognize that it is necessary to overcome the "mistrust and divergent security perceptions" and strengthen efforts "to resolve existing conflicts in the OSCE area in a peaceful and negotiated manner, within agreed formats".[2] But the very protracted conflicts problem (including Transnistria) has led to the failure of "Astana Framework for Action", which was a 95% agreed. In this context, it is especially important that the EU and Russia managed to reach an agreement even on this most difficult issue in the negotiations, while the opposition from the U.S., Georgia and Moldova remained (Zellner 2011: 25-26).

As an another fundamental security agreement between the EU and Russia, which is implemented in a single supercomplex framework, the "Road Map for the Common Space of External Security" should be highlighted. "Promoting conflict prevention and settlement through mutual result-oriented cooperation, including through elaboration of possible joint initiatives" by means of regular consultation on "early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management actions and post-conflict rehabilitation" is one of the main goal of this agreement.[3] Moreover "Co-operation in crisis management" is marked as a single priority: strengthening "EU-Russia dialogue on matters of practical co-operation on crisis management" is considered as the basis for possible "joint initiatives, including in support of on-going efforts in agreed formats and resulting from the strengthened EU-Russia dialogue and co-operation on the international scene, in the settlement of regional conflicts, *inter alia in regions adjacent to EU and Russian borders* [italics is mine – Sergey Rastoltsev]". In addition, a number of specific priority areas is listed in document.[4]

Thus, we see that at the level of the Eurasian supercomplex contradictions between Russia and the EU are smoothed out, because here there is a common understanding of priorities and values. Both the basis of interaction and potential, in principle, are clearly stated, and provide enough opportunities for joint action.

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[1] Astana Commemorative Declaration: Towards a Security Community. Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe 3 December 2010. P. 1. http://www.osce.org/cio/74985?download=true (accessed 20 April 2013).

[2] Ibid. Pp. 2,3.

[3] Road Map for the Common Space of External Security. European Action External Service. P. 35. http://eeas.europa.eu/russia/docs/roadmap_economic_en.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

[4] Ibid. Pp. 42-43.

However, if we move to a lower level – regional, we may observe a gradual increase of contradictions. Here the style of foreign policy cooperation becomes apparent in a greater extent, the basis for which is the search for identity in complex modern conditions (between globalization and regionalization trends).

Russian-Post-Soviet regional security complex level. We begin with a brief review of key documents of Russia's foreign policy in the matter of conflict resolution. In accordance with the recently adopted a new 2013 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation "the elimination of existing and prevent the emergence of new sources of tension and conflict in the neighboring regions of the Russian Federation" is one of the main goal for Russian foreign policy[5]. At the same time the "regional and internal conflicts" are highlighted in the concept in the context of new challenges and threats of a transboundary nature[6]. It is noted that in the approaches to conflict Russia "has consistently advocated for reducing the role of the factor of force in international relations, while strengthening the strategic and regional stability" and comes from the fact that "modern conflicts are not resolved by force and their resolution should be sought through the involvement of all parties in dialogue and negotiation, not through isolation of any of them".[7] This may mean that Russia recognizes the internationalization of conflict and even to a certain extent welcomed the involvement of stakeholders in the negotiations.

However, a more detailed approach is indicated in "Regional Priorities" section, where a hierarchy of priorities build quite clearly, according to which Russia has a policy on conflict resolution. First of all, it should be noted that the main priority of Russian foreign policy stands out the development of relations with the CIS countries (as in the 2008 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation)[8], based on "deepening regional cooperation of its members, *which are not only have common historical heritage, but also a broad potential of integration in different areas*" [italics is mine – S. R.][9]. Thus, it is clearly indicated the desire of Russia to develop an integration project in the CIS on the basis of the *already formed common identity*.

In addition, it is stated specifically that "Russia will continue to play an active role in the political and diplomatic settlement of conflicts in the CIS, in particular, will be involved in

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[5] "Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy federatsii" (Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation). Point 4. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation 18.02.2013.

http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/newsline/6D84DDEDEDBF7DA644257B160051BF7F (accessed 20 April 2013).

[6] Ibid. Point 16.

[7] Ibid. Point 32.

[8] "Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy federatsii" (Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation). IV. Regional Priorities. The Kremlin 15.07.2008. http://kremlin.ru/acts/785 (accessed 20 April 2013).

[9] Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (2013). Point 42.

finding solutions to the Transnistrian conflict on the basis of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and neutrality of the Republic of Moldova in the determination of the special status of Transnistria"[10].

It is significant that the development of relations with the West is in the second place after the CIS, as "Russia have, in addition to geography, economy and history, deep civilizational roots" with the Euro-Atlantic region[11]. Interestingly enough, in this case Russia also stresses *common identity with the West*, but in contrast to the CIS is not indicate here the potential for integration. From the point of view of the author, the key position in the relations between Russia and the West is "to achieve unity in the region without dividing lines, through the provision of a *genuine partner cooperation* [italics is mine – S.R.] between Russia, the European Union and the United States" based on the awareness of the "growing need for collective efforts in the face of transnational threats and challenges"[12]. Their eagerness to equal dialogue outlined in paragraph 55, which states that the Russian foreign policy in the Euro-Atlantic direction "is aimed at creating a common space of peace, security and stability, based on the principle of indivisibility of security, equal cooperation and mutual trust"[13]. In this context, Russia also states that will consistently act "for the order in the form of legally binding political declarations of the indivisibility of security, regardless of their membership in any military-political alliances"[14].

Another concept paper – "National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020" emphasizes that preserving strategic stability of Russia is directly linked to *equal strategic partnership*, that "may contribute the presence of troops in the conflict areas of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation on the basis of international law in order to address the political, economic and other tasks by non-military methods"[15]. So Russia acknowledges that the presence of its forces in the troubled region is a stabilizing force, through which conflicts can be resolved peacefully.

Thus, we can conclude that Russia's policy on the unresolved conflicts is based on two basic components: the prospects for integration with CIS countries and maintain stability, particularly in the border regions (and Russia has positioned itself as a stabilizing factor), taking

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[10] Ibid. Point 49.

[11] Ibid. Point 54.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid. Point 55.

[14] Ibid.

[15] "Strategiya natsional'noy bezopasnosti RF do 2020 g." (National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020). Security Council of the Russian Federation 12.05.2009. Point 93. http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/99.html (accessed 20 April 2013).

into account *an equal dialogue and maintenance of the balance of power* with the Western partners with the commitment of a common identity attainment with both the CIS countries and with the countries of the West. *In fact the question is only in the hierarchy of the Russian priorities, that puts first the CIS before the Western countries.*

EU regional security complex level. From the author's point of view the EU main policy document in the field of security is the European Security Strategy (ESS), first published in 2003, on the eve of large-scale wave of the EU enlargement in Eastern Europe. In the original ESS version the problem of unresolved conflicts was singled out in a separate section and it was indirectly touched in all selected key threats (Terrorism, Proliferation of Weapon of Mass Destruction, State Failure (Bad governance) and Organized Crime).[16] Equally important, that the conflicts far from the boundaries of Europe, were also identified as affecting European interests "directly and indirectly, as do conflicts nearer to home".[17]

To ensure the safety of the growing EU, as a result, it was suggested to contribute "to promote a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy close and cooperative relations". Therefore the means to implement this policy should be the spread of "the benefits of economic and political cooperation to our neighbours in the East while tackling political problems there".[18]

The EU global issues priorities and the key threats in the next "Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy" in 2009 have been changed quite dramatically in the direction of a more general nature of future challenges, as a result the conflict settlement problem was not reflected in the list of key threats (WMD, Proliferation, Terrorism and Organized crime, Cyber-security, Energy security, Climate change). However, the emphasis on the problem of protracted conflicts was recorded quite clearly and in detail in the second main section, "Building Stability in Europe and Beyond", devoted to regional aspects of EU security. In particular, it was noted that "the interest of the EU is a good governance in the countries on the EU borders, that the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), launched in 2004, now supports".[19] Growing concern over the so-called "frozen conflicts" in the EU eastern neighbourhood, that emerged with conflict between Russia and Georgia in August 2008, has led the EU to the realization of the need to build regional integration in Eastern Europe and the

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[16] A secure Europe in a better world. European security strategy. Council of European Union, Brussels, 12 December 2003. Pp. 3-5. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

[17] Ibid. P. 4.

[18] Ibid. P. 7.

[19] Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy. Council of European Union, 2009. P. 16. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/librairie/PDF/QC7809568ENC.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

adoption of sustained efforts to address conflicts in the Southern Caucasus, Republic of Moldova. In particular, with respect to Moldova it was specifically noted that "possible settlement to the Transnistrian conflict has gained impetus, through active EU participation in the 5+2 negotiation format, and the EU Border Assistance Mission"[20].

As a result, the vision of security problems from the EU perspective, especially in the neighboring regions of the Union, began to be considered in the context of overall integration processes in Europe. And the launch of the new neighborhood policy from the European Security Strategy point of view was due to not so much by the need to get some benefit from the expansion of new markets, but as a desire to ensure security in unstable regions, which were getting closer to the EU borders as the Union enlarged.

Based on the analysis of key documents of Russia and the EU in the field of security, we can conclude, that the border regions (accordingly protracted conflicts problem in these regions) assumed the supreme importance in external security matters for both Russia (and the CIS region in particular) and the EU. It is indicative that Russia and the EU simultaneously come to the need to form their own regional integration policy in the post-Soviet space in their basic doctrinal documents on foreign policy and security issue. As a result, at the same time, the regional integration policy becomes the basic means for the conflict resolution in the border regions.

The next part of this study will be dedicated to the more detailed analysis of the EU and Russian integration projects.

3. EU and Russia integration projects competition over the post-Soviet space in the context of the European Security System overall evolution

Russian integration project in the post-Soviet space. Russia's participation in the post-Cold War European security system is determined by several key factors that have changed over time. After the Cold War, Russia has had to go through a turbulent, even controversial period in the implementation of its foreign policy. On the one hand, the end of bloc confrontation opened qualitatively new prospects to build a new European space of security, based on shared democratic values, mutual respect and cooperation, as declared in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, which was adopted by the participating States of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE, OSCE since 1995) in 1990[21].

On the other hand, due to the collapse of the huge post-socialist space, that primarily affected the new Russia, the disintegration processes in the Eastern Europe began that led to the

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[20] Ibid. P. 17.

[21] Charter of Paris for New Europe. Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Paris 1990. http://www.osce.org/mc/39516 (accessed 20 April 2013).

intensification of political and economic instability, the emergence of a security vacuum, and in some cases – to serious armed conflicts. Russia as the successor of the Soviet Union was actively involved in the resolution of all major conflicts in the former Soviet republics (including the Transnistria crisis). However for a different reasons, most disputes were not settled completely in the early 1990's and remained in a "frozen" state, with the result that the Russian presence in conflict areas remained.

Similarly, despite the serious socio-economic crisis and the decline of its political influence, Russia has managed to retain ties with its neighbors in the "near abroad" through the creation of umbrella organizations such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty.

Meanwhile, the formation of a new Russian foreign policy in the early period of the 1990's occurred within a broad and positive cooperation with the Western partners and security institutions. In conflict resolution, as well as in the development of its participation in the European security Russia staked on the CSCE . However, the OSCE advisory status and optional execution of its decisions have led to a several failures in the settlement of conflicts in the area of responsibility, whereas the development of Western European integration institutions – the EU and NATO – led to its gradual marginalization in the European security system.

Since the mid-1990's there has been a tendency to cooling relations with the West on security, that was mainly related to the process of NATO Eastward enlargement. In the 1990's Russia focused its attention on the of NATO enlargement problem, and even opposite the EU to the NATO in certain extent. However out of Russian view was the fact that the two processes – the enlargement of the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union – took place almost simultaneously and in many ways complementary (Bordachev 2001: 30-38). By the mid-2000's the conflict between Russia and the NATO / EU intensified in the geopolitical aspect, because after the lage-scale enlargement of the EU and NATO in Eastern Europe in 2004, that, in the opinion of Russia, led to the formation of new dividing lines in Europe, as well as the emergence of new zones with different levels of security. The example of Kaliningrad, which eventually turned into a kind of enclave within the EU, is well demonstrated what a great set of difficulties had to overcome in this regard (Bordachev 2003: 45-56). So Russia and Europe for the first time felt that, despite the ambitious integration agenda, they not only speak different languages but are not ready to accept the internal logic of actions of the partner (Bordachev, Moshes 2004). This process is even more complicated with the overall dissatisfaction on the lack of "inclusion" of Moscow in the formation of a new security architecture in Europe issue due to the transfer of the main issues of European security on the agenda of the enlarged EU / NATO (Dunay 2005: 75).

Thus, with the restoration of its economic and political potential, Russia claimed to the formation of its own integration project, through that it became possible not only to increase its influence in the former Soviet space, but also to balance the growing influence of Western European integration institutions in the former Soviet space, while avoiding criticism from Western countries about the humanitarian issues "East of Vienna" (Peško 2011: 61-63).

Significant steps have been taken by Moscow in several directions. First, a powerful tool to strengthen economic influence of Russia has been the development of the energy sector in other countries, especially in the neighboring countries, where Russian oil and gas companies significantly increased their presence. In the military-political field, Russia has taken the initiative to transform the Collective Security Treaty of 1992, into the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty, which came to be regarded as the eastern alternative to NATO (Danilov, Tuzovskaya 2008: 144-155). In addition, the Asian vector of security was enhanced by creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which joined China in addition to four Central Asian republics of the former Soviet region.

Finally, by the end of the 2000's, after not quite successful attempts to develop a common Eurasian Economic Community, Russia has focused efforts to accelerate integration in the "coalition of the willing" format based on the integration of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia as a single customs union in December 2010 and proclaimed the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union in 2011, which in the long term (by 2015) proposes of achieving a unified political and military space in the CIS region (the Eurasian Union). However, the prospects of entry of new countries into the future Eurasian Union, perhaps, with the exception of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, are still very controversial issue.

The problem also lies in the fact that so far there is no official policy document on the development of non-economic spheres of the future Eurasian Union. However, if we return to aforementioned new Russian Foreign Policy Concept of 2013, we can see that Moscow considers the "common heritage"[22] – i.e. *common values* as the general framework for regional integration, in addition to the economy. Thus, we can conclude that the common heritage is the main impetus for the integration of all countries of the former Soviet Union, including Moldova and Transnistria as its part.

EU integration project in the post-Soviet space. Unlike Russia, the integration logic was initially laid as the basis for the development of the EU as a supranational union. Moreover, the post-Cold War became the fastest and large-scale period in the EU enlargement history. In the

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[22] "Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii" (2013) (2013 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation). Point 42.

1990's – 2000's its membership has more than doubled, mainly due to the accession of new Eastern Europe post-socialist countries.

Such large-scale expansion of the European Union not only marked a change in the external borders of the Union, but also became a great step towards strengthening security in Europe. These circumstances not only opened up new opportunities but also pose new challenges. This enlargement is left, in fact, about 385 million people outside the EU in countries that are close neighbors of the Union. In particular, there was *a threat of new dividing lines in Europe*, as well as the probability that a number of European countries with strong European aspirations may be out of the political and the integration processes taking place within the EU, and out of the benefits that they could expect.

As a result, the "Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A new Framework for Relations with Eastern and Southern Neighbors of the EU" report was presented by the Commission in March 2003, which was the first detailed description of the principles of the new European Neighbourhood Policy and the EU highlighted there the importance of strengthening relations with neighboring countries[23]. It is important that the issue of Transnistria has been mentioned there in the context of the theme "Prosperity and Poverty". In particular, it was emphasized that the "negative effects of conflicts [...] is a danger of spill over [...] Transnistria are a magnet for organised crime and can de-stabilise or throw off course the process of state-building, political consolidation and sustainable development".[24] The EU strongly emphasized that having "a clear interest in ensuring that these common challenges are addressed" should take a more active role to facilitate settlement of the disputes over Palestine, the Western Sahara and Transdniestria (in support of the efforts of the OSCE and other mediators)".[25]

At the same time, the greater EU involvement in crisis management on its border regions would demonstrate the EU's "willingness to assume a greater share of the burden of conflict resolution in the neighbouring countries".[26] Thus, it was emphasized that the aim of the EU's participation in conflict resolution, in this respect, is not so much to obtain benefits or distribution of influence as the responsibility for achieving stability in the neighboring regions.

Thus, the EU 2004/07 enlargement changed significantly the presentation and, mainly, a political approach of the European Union to a new near abroad, or in other words, to their

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[23] Communication from the Commission. Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours. Brussels, 11.3.2003 COM(2003) 104 final.
http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com03_104_en.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

[24] Ibid. P. 9.

[25] Ibid. Pp. 9,12.

[26] Ibid.

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neighbors. This, in turn, seriously affected the prospects of the EU's relations with neighboring countries, many of whom sought to join the EU. According to Vice-Chairman of the European Commission Guenter Verheugen (formerly the Commissioner responsible for the EU enlargement), "there are other opportunities to gain political and economic stability in Europe, other than full membership in the European Union".[27]

Given the different starting positions of its eastern neighbors, partners, and in some cases, strained relations between them, Brussels faced with difficult problems in translating into practice a new approach. Apart from a number of potential candidates for EU membership of Western Balkan countries in East and South-East Europe there was a group of states who become immediate neighbors of the enlarged European Union. In order to avoid the emergence of new dividing lines in Europe, the answer to the new situation was developed and adopted by the European Union in May 2004 a new initiative called "European Neighborhood Policy", or ENP.[28] The significance of this initiative for the EU is determined by the fact that it was adopted in a few days after the entry of new ten Member States (2004).

The main aim of neighborhood policy was the creation of "ring of friendly countries" by promoting the positive features of European systems of governance, economic and social development, modernization and reform through the establishment of new, more intense relationships based on mutual and common interests and values, effective governance, prosperity, stability and security, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, market economy, sustainable development and reform of key sectors.

Thus, the EU policy of integration with respect to its external neighbors was a *logical continuation of integration policies inside the EU*. An extensive program of future reforms, as a result, has become a reflection of the ideal European state projection for the countries neighboring the EU.

In the second half of the 2000's the new ENP Eastern European policy vector began to develop further, that eventually led to the appearance in 2009 of the "Eastern Partnership" (EaP) program designed especially for six post-Soviet countries – Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. So "the creation of the necessary conditions to accelerate political and economic integration between the EU and interested partner countries" was proclaimed as the

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[27] "G. Ferkhoygen vystupayet za sderzhannost' v voprose o rasshirenii ES ("G. Verheugen advocates restraint on the issue of EU enlargement") // RIA - novosti 19.06.2005". http://ria.ru/world/20050619/40546115.html (accessed 20 April 2013).

[28] Communication From The Commission. European Neighbourhood Policy. Strategy Paper. Brussels, 12 May 2004. http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/strategy/strategy_paper_en.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

main purpose of the Prague Declaration, that proclaimed the beginning of EaP.[29] Compared with previous approaches in the ENP it was first supposed to implement the integration process at two levels – bilateral and multilateral.

In addition to the Prague Declaration five EaP "flagship initiatives" were launched, including a special border management program in the context of the Transnistrian conflict settlement process. While the overall objectives of the EaP cover a rather wide range of political, legal and economic cooperation, the problem of conflict resolution was directly mentioned only in these EU "flagship" initiatives.

As for the financial component, the implementation of the EU EaP has planned to allocate a total of 600 million euros for the period 2010-2013. Here we have seen a contradiction between the ambitious objectives that puts the EU in the Eastern Partnership and the apparent underfunding of their implementation. However, it is the "flagship initiative" of the EU Border management, that have been successfully implemented in the regard to the Transnistrian conflict (see more in chapter 4).

The discussion about the "Eastern Partnership". It is significant that the "Eastern Partnership" program has become a stumbling block in relations between Russia and the EU, including directly the Transnistrian settlement issue. Almost immediately after the EaP appearance the Russian foreign policy establishment and several experts formed the view that the new EU program is potentially anti-Russian. On 21 March 2009, i.e. even before the official start of the program, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov expressed concern that the EaP partner countries can get into a situation of confrontation between Russia and the European integration project, so it is necessary "that integration processes in all Soviet space and in the European Union should be compatible, they should not be mutually exclusive they should be mutually supportive".[30]

The report of the Expert Council of the Federation Council Committee for CIS Affairs on "The European Union "Eastern Partnership": implementation issues and implications", held in November 2009, concludes that the EU attempts to "fundamentally change the existing vector of development in the relationship between post-Soviet states space can cause serious damage to existing partnership, leading not to the strengthening of regional security in Europe, but to an

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[29] Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit, 7 May 2009, Prague. Council of the European Union 7 May 2009.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/eastern_partnership/documents/prague_summit_declaration_en.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

[30] Sergey Lavrov – Minister of Foreign Affairs, Russian Federation. Brussels Forum 2009. A conversation with Russia. http://www.gmfus.org/brusselsforum/2009/docs/BFDay2_ConversationRussia.doc (accessed 20 April 2013).

even greater intensification of conflicts in the eastern borders of Europe [...] Finally, it will be for the withdrawal of partner countries from the influence of Russia and the inclusion of them to the EU zone of influence, especially as there are countries that are considered the "Eastern Partnership" as a tool of frank extrusion of Russia".[31]

Thus, between the Russian government and the expert community formed the general view that the EaP is a serious threat to Russia's interests in the former Soviet space, so there is a need to significantly intensify their own resources in the CIS, by deepening the integration process. In particular it was noted that "adequate response" to Eastern Partnership "could be the completion of approval procedures and the ratification of the Customs Union and the creation of a single economic space"[32], which is really the main efforts of the Russian foreign policy in the post-Soviet space now.

In turn, the official Brussels has repeatedly pointed out that the EP is not directed against Russia. In the Prague Declaration 2009 explanatory document was specifically noted: "This is not at all an anti-Russian initiative. We are responding to a desire expressed throughout the countries in our Eastern neighbourhood who want to substantially deepen and widen their relations with the EU. [...] We always stress that the members of the EaP will need good working relations with all their neighbours, including the Russian Federation".[33] In turn, in 2010, the French Minister for European Affairs P. Lellouche told the BBC that the EaP – is "that anything but not a cordon sanitaire against Russia".[34]

According to European experts, the main objectives of the EaP is to build a strong relationship with the partner countries and the establishment of economic and political stability in the EU neighboring countries. It is not about a struggle for influence between Russia and the EU, but about the help in the complex development of the region and its proximity to the EU level through economic, social and political reforms. Thus, realization of the EaP potential

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[31] "Programma Yevropeyskogo soyuza "Vostochnoye partnerstvo": Problemy realizatsii i vozmozhnyye posledstviya". Ekspertnyy sovet Komiteta Soveta Federatsii po delam Sodruzhestva Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv. Sovet Federatsii. Sovet Federatsii. 19 noyabrya 2009 g. ("The European Union's "Eastern Partnership": Implementation Challenges and Possible Consequences". Expert Council of the Federation Council Committee for the Commonwealth of Independent States. Council of the Federation. November 19, 2009). Pp. 33, 34. http://council.gov.ru/media/files/41d44f243fdc22b87385.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

[32] Ibid. P. 35.

[33] Eastern Partnership. Memo/09/217. Brussels. 5 May 2009. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-09-217_en.htm (accessed 20 April 2013).

[34] Pol'sha zovet Rossiyu druzhit' s Vostochnym partnerstvom // Russkaya sluzhba BBC. 25.05.2010. (Poland invites Russia to be friends with the Eastern Partnership // BBC Russian service. 25.05.2010). http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/international/2010/05/100525_poland_friends_partnership.shtml (accessed 20 April 2013).

depends on the readiness and willingness of the country a partner in carrying out internal reforms and to bring them into line with European norms and standards (Peters, Rood, Gromadzki 2009: 2, 4, 21).

Analysis of expert opinion shows that the estimations of both sides – Russia and the EU are mostly quite distinct categorical nature. If the first case is clearly dominated by the negative, even alarmist sentiments, the EU focuses solely on the positive aspects of the EaP, in every way trying to convince Russia that the project has no risks for Russian interests in the former Soviet Union.

All in all the ENP / EaP and the Eurasian Union are a projection of influence over its neighbors by the EU and Russia. These projects represent the vision for the desired future of those countries to which they are directed. If for the EU key indicators are a prosperous and stable neighboring states with strong democratic institutions and the developed market economies, whereas for Russia, in the first place, are more important concept indicators, such as the achievement of a single political, ideological and cultural affinities with Russia.

What's even more interesting we do not find the fundamental dichotomy of the "value (EU) vs. interests (Russia)", which in many experts opinions is a fundamental difference in approach to the security of the EU and Russia. In their integration projects both actors seek to implement as the values as well as the interests in the border areas. The contradiction is not even in their specific content (as a stable and prosperous neighbors are important for Russia as much as for the EU, though Russia is not mentioned it specifically), but only in the way of their implementation and the political discourse, associated with it.

From the German expert on Eastern European countries A. Wittkowski point of view a concept that EaP member states have to choose between Russia and the EU is wrong. In fact, they are able to continue to pursue the dual-track policy of maintaining good relations with the EU and with Russia and often in their own interest. Moreover, because Russia can not alone overcome the technological and economic lag, it is in the Russian interest to be more open to the EU, which means that a positive perception of the EaP in particular (Wittkowski 2010: 15-20).

In this regard, we should rather not talk about the conflict of values / interests between the EU and Russia. The main contradiction appeared at the level of regional security complexes and related integration programs that they project on cross-border post-Soviet space. If we consider the conflict in terms of cooperation in the framework of a single pan-European / Eurasian security complex, it appears that lack of Russian ability to influence the Eastern Partnership program in pan-European context, prevents the realization of their own interests and values in Russia. In this state the Eastern Partnership is a projection of the EU "Wider Europe" concept in the world (where the institutions of the EU unilaterally set the rules) that forms a

special loyalty program to the EU from countries on which it is directed and therefore unacceptable for Russia. In its turn, Russia would like to feel they belong to a "Greater Europe" (and not a "Wider Europe", which is the EU-centric), where its interests and values in the "near abroad" as the projection of Russian identity, could take into account properly and Russia has opportunity to realize their projects on an equal basis (Entin 2009: 346-349; Danilov, Zhurkin 2011: 681-682).

Thus, competition of integration projects between Russia and the EU today is more potential than real, more a matter of the future than the present. The competition is projected by both parties in the future, and there seems to be really intense. In reality, the competition is much more moderate than it is generally thought.

4. EU and Russia role in the Transnistrian settlement in the context of internationalisation and politicisation problem

The role of Russia in the Transnistrian settlement process. Transnistrian problem has been subject to the processes of internationalization from the very beginning. It should be noted that the origins of the conflict in the late 1980's – 1990's largely consisted in the development of the national movement in Moldova towards rapprochement with Romania and while ignoring the interests of other nations, that led to the declaration of independence of Transnistria in 1990 and 1991 (Shumitskaya 2012: 141). It is important that the Transnistria proclaimed its first sovereignty in September 1990 as a part of the USSR, that was a response to the declaration sovereignty of Moldova, thereby Tiraspol emphasized its loyalty toward Moscow at the very beginning of the conflict.

For Moscow, this recognition of the legitimacy of its power, that Transnistria began to support subsequently proved to be very important. Firstly, as a result of the dramatic collapse of the USSR, Moscow is rapidly losing its power in the Soviet republics and Moldova was its former territory, and Tiraspol in contrast from Chisinau, expressed his wish to preserve the old close relationship. Secondly, Russia was engaged in direct settlement of the conflict and the signing of the peace agreement in 1992.

One of the crucial factor for Russia's policy towards Transnistria at the turn of the 2000's was the Memorandum on the normalization of relations between Moldova and Transnistria signed – that is symbolic – in Moscow in 1997. The most important point of this paper is the concept of a "common state within the boundaries of the Moldavian SSR of year 1990", in which the parties agreed to build relations and to resolve any disputes by peaceful means[35].

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[35] "Memorandum ob osnovakh normalizatsii otnosheniy mezhdu Respublikoy Moldova i Pridnestrov'yem". Moskva, 8 maya 1997 goda // Baza Konsul'tant Plyus. (Memorandum on the normalization of relations between Moldova and

To a large extent, on this basis, as well as in the overall improvement of relations with the West context, Russia continued reduction of its military presence, which began as early as 1996 (when Russia unilaterally reduced the number of peacekeepers to 500)[36], for the withdrawal 59 trainloads of ammunition and military equipment in the period from 1999 to 2003[37].

Thus, from the point of view of Russia appropriate conditions were prepared to a real solution to the situation, this project was embodied in the so-called "Kozak Memorandum". Under the plan, a unified Moldova was reintgrated on the basis of federation, and Transnistria could get the right to withdraw from the new federal state "only in case of a decision on joining a Federation to another state and (or) due to the complete loss of the Federation of its sovereignty"[38]. For its part, for adoption of the Memorandum, Russia laid down a mandatory condition of deployment the Russian stabilization peacekeeping force for stability in the transition period but no later than year 2020, and no more than 2000 people. Thus, Russia wanted to maintain the guarantee of its presence in the case of the successful adoption of the settlement conditions.

Eventually, the Kozak Memorandum was not adopted. For Moscow, it was all the more painful that the project was almost approved both by Moldovan and Transnistrian sides but Chishinau suddenly refused to sign it at the very last stage. The exact causes of its failure are still not clear, however, many experts see them in the direct intervention of the EU, that convinced the authorities of Moldova to abandon unilateral draft of Moscow (Trenin 2006: 14; Barbe/Kienzle, 2007: 532). However, it should be remembered that Moscow's efforts to develop its own plan coincided with the "Dutch project" (the Netherlands at this time chaired the OSCE) that at the same time "consider the idea of an eventual EU-led peacekeeping operation in the area" (Zagorski 2005: 72).

Transdniestria. Moscow, May 8, 1997 // Consultant Plus Base)

http://base.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc;base=INT;n=2441 (accessed 20 April 2013).

[36] Konenko G. "Mirotvorcheskaya operatsiya v Pridnestrov'ye - zalog stabil'nosti i mira na beregakh Dnestra. Doklad na mezhdunarodnoy nauchnoy konferentsii "20 let Pridnestrovskoy Moldavskoy Respublike"", 3 sentyabrya 2010 g. ("Konenko G. peacekeeping operation in Transdniestria - the key to stability and peace on the banks of the Dniester. Paper presented at the International Conference "20 years Dniester Moldavian Republic"", September 3, 2010) // Materik.ru . 07.09.2010. www.materik.ru/rubric/detail.php?ID=10640 (accessed 20 April 2013).

[37] Yakovenko A. Mify i real'nost' stambul'skikh dogovorennostey. (Yakovenko A. "Myths and Realities Istanbul accords") // Rossiyskaya Gazeta. Federal issue. No 3738. 06.04.2005. www.rg.ru/2005/04/06/dovse-stambul.html (accessed 20 April 2013).

[38] Memorandum ob osnovnykh printsipakh gosudarstvennogo ustroystva ob"yedinennogo gosudarstva (2003) ("Memorandum on the basic principles of government united states" (2003)) // Regnum. 23.05.2005. http://www.regnum.ru/news/458547.html (accessed 20 April 2013).

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Thus, both of these projects were the expression of tendency of the West and Russia's unilateral diplomacy and the initial attempts at building rival geopolitical projects in Eastern Europe. The West's tough stance on ratification of the Treaty on Conventional Force in Europe (CFE), and then Brussels' persistent pressure on the withdraw of not only of Russian bases from Moldova, but also the replacement of Russian peacekeepers for the European forces led Moscow to the realization that this policy of the West aimed to eliminate Russia from Moldova and the former Soviet Union space. Therefore, the Kozak Memorandum was a response designed to strengthen the Russian presence in Moldova (Devyatkov 2010b: 28-29).

After the failure of the Kozak plan Russia increased its pressure on Moldova by a ban on imports of wine, fruit and vegetables from the Moldovan Republic, which made up a significant part of the Moldovan exports. Furthermore, all official contacts between the two presidents of the two countries were suspended. Relations were resumed again in August 2006 with the Moldovan President Voronin participation in the CIS informal summit. According to A. Tolkacheva, Moldova had to change its foreign policy because of the serious economic dependence on Russia, and because of disappointment in the lack of support from the EU and Ukraine (Tolkacheva 2006: 61).

Russia intensified its efforts to settle the conflict again after the 2008 Caucasus crisis and the improvement of relations with the EU. During this period, the conflict also fit into the context of relations between Russia and the West, at this time directly on the "Unrecognized States" problem. On the example of its position on Transnistria after the recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Russia attempted to show the West that the recognition of the separatist territories, which began with the "Kosovo precedent" is not the best way out of existed conflicts[39]. It should be recognized, in this case, Russia has been quite consistent on this issue. Despite a difficult period in relations with the West in the mid-2000's, Russia limited itself the recognition of the legitimacy of the second referendum on the independence of Transnistria in 2006[40], however, despite the fact that the majority of the unrecognized republic population had voted for annexation to Russia, no further reciprocal steps by Moscow followed.

Nevertheless, the next change of government in Moldova in 2009, and official statements Vladimir Filat, the new prime minister, who called for the withdrawal of Russian troops from

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[39] Lavrov: Kosovo's independence a precedent for 200 regions // Kosovo Compromise. 24.01.2008. http://www.kosovocompromise.com/cms/item/topic/en.html?view=story&id=489&sectionId=1 (original article in Russian http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/russia/newsid_7204000/7204442.stm) (accessed 20 April 2013).

[40] Gosduma RF: referendum v Pridnestrov'ye byl legitimnym i Rossiya dolzhna uchityvat' yego itogi // ("The State Duma of the Russian Federation: the referendum in Transnistria was legitimate and Russia should take into account its results") // Newsru.Com. 06.10.2006. http://www.newsru.com/russia/06oct2006/pmr.html (accessed 20 April 2013).

Transnistria[41] began to threat the Russian-Moldovan relations again. Basically, it is in the interest of Russia, that Moldova and Transnistria to be a single state (Trenin 2006: 17), but, according to L. Kuzmicheva, differences between Russia and the other actors, especially the EU and Ukraine, remain a major obstacle because of which can not find a suitable solution to this conflict (Kuzmicheva 2011: 15).

The absence of a clear line of Russian policy on the Transnistrian conflict can be explained by the general uncertainty of Russia's relations with its main significant "Other" – the West / Europe. If we take the statement that "the main problem of Russia's EU policy is the absence of a strategic vision concerning Russia's place in the pan-European context" (Russia's European Strategy: A New Start 2005) it is clear, why contradictory policy of Russia "makes a pendulum movement from trying to meet European standards to attempts to assert itself on a space of these rules, and sometimes the values" (Devyatkov 2010b: 28-29).

The growing internationalization of the Transnistrian problem in the mid-2000's led to the institutionalization of the EU and U.S. participation in the conflict under a "5+2" formula and to the further politicization of the issue. The politicization process became especially apparent in the relationship between the U.S. and Russia. As the U.S. security interests, unlike the EU, in Transnistria are not vital, Washington appeared to have relations with Moscow through the Transnistrian problem in a more free manner, than the EU.

Thus several fundamental issues of Euro-Atlantic security were linked with the Transnistria problem. First, because of linking the implementation of the new CFE Treaty and the withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria demanded by NATO members the whole area of armed forces reduction in Europe was totally blocked. By the end of the 2000's Transnistria problem actualized again to the debates on the deployment of U.S. missile defense in Eastern Europe, and has become a top priority on the agenda of relationship between Russia and the West. On February 15, 2010 President Igor Smirnov said he was not opposed to the deployment of Russian missiles on the territory of the unrecognized republic[42], and in April 2012 according to reports from unofficial sources, Russia has expressed readiness to place in Tiraspol radar in response to the missile defense in Europe and in opposition to NATO bases in

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[41] "Moldaviya predlagayet zamenit' mirotvortsev v Pridnestrov'ye na missiyu ES" ("Moldova suggests replacing peacekeepers in Transnistria by an EU mission") // RIA Novosti. 28.09.2009. http://rian.ru/world/20090928/186762865.html (accessed 20 April 2013).

[42] "Tiraspol' ne vozrazhayet protiv razmeshcheniya v Pridnestrov'ye rossiyskikh raketnykh kompleksov". (Tiraspol has no objection to placing in the Transnistria Russian missiles") // Interfax. 15.02.2010. http://interfax.ru/world/news.asp?id=123714 (accessed 20 April 2013).

Romania[43]. Here, as in the case of the CFE, Transnistria has again become the subject of special attention to Russia not because of any escalation of the conflict itself, but as a means to say that Russia seeks to preserve the balance of power and equal participation in the system of European security.

The EU role in the Transnistrian settlement process. As for the EU, its participation in the internationalization of the Transnistrian conflict, as noted, has gradually increased with the EU enlargement and the approach of the conflict region to the borders of the Union, and the subsequent development of neighborhood policy toward Moldova. In this respect many authors have noted that Transnistria is for the EU "most fitting conflict" (Transnistria Issue: Moving Beyond the Status-Quo 2012: 6) or "most solvable conflict" (Popescu and Litra 2012: 2) of all the post-Soviet conflicts.

The involvement of the EU in the Transnistrian problem settlement lay in several important achievements in the middle of the 2000's. As the results of 2005 negotiations the EU along with the U.S. was included in an expanded "Permanent Conference of Political Affairs in the Transnistrian settlement process" as an observer. It is important to note that during the negotiations, that took place just a week after the signing of the EU-Russia Road Maps, Russia was the only country, which at the time considered the EU connection to the negotiations as not appropriate. Apparently, from the point of view of Moscow, this was the result of the unilateral EU's approach to the issue of conflict resolution,[44] where the EU has seen the participation of Russia as a third party, and not on the basis of equal partnership in this area (Danilov, 2008: 55)

Meanwhile the leading factor, which determined the policy of the EU in the 2000's on the Transnistrian conflict, was the process of Europeanization. Major achievement in the process of Europeanization of Moldova is in the development of socio-economic programs, such as: the benefits of the GSP (Generalized System of Preferences), GSP+ and Autonomous Trade Preferences (ATP), the recent negotiations on visa facilitation and the conclusion of Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between the EU and Moldova. It should be noted that these large-scale negotiations in March 2013 were under the threat of failure due to the political crisis in Moldova related to the resignation of pro-European government.[45]

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[43] "Moskva mozhet razmestit' v Pridnestrov'ye RLS «Voronezh»" ("Moscow may place "Voronezh" radar in the Transnistria") // Interfax. 17.04.2012. http://interfax.ru/world/news.asp?id=241366 (accessed 20 April 2013).

[44] Report on EU-Russia Relations. European Parliament. Final A6-0135/2005 (04.05.2005). P. 7. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A6-2005-0135&language=EN (accessed 20 April 2013).

[45] Joint Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Fьle on the no-confidence vote taken by the Moldovan Parliament on 5 March 2013. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/135826.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

Among the most successful EU practical steps towards Moldova it is recognized the deployment of EUBAM civilian mission, consisting of 200 people, which is aimed at improving the control of the Ukrainian-moldavian border.[46] That is the conflict in Transnistria, created a poorly controlled "gray zone" in the border area, has led to establishment of the mission, tnanks to it the quality of border control has improved (Dura 2009: 282-283). However, it is the establishment of EUBAM mission can be identified as one of the causes of the "economic blockade" of Transnistria in 2006.

In this regard, some authors see the problem of insufficient involvement of the EU in the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict that Brussels refuses to start any dialogue with the authorities of the unrecognized republic, preferring to ignore the problem of the unrecognized state in the territory. Moreover, Brussels adopts a policy of sanctions against Transnistrian officials occupying top-level positions in the government of the unrecognized state in the form of visa ban[47]. As Hans-Martin Sieg notes, this policy only "reinforced bunker mentalities and, in consequence, strengthened authoritarian regimes and increased their dependence on Russia" (Sieg 2012: 5). However, the blockade of Transnistria could further intensify because of trade barriers, if Moldova join DCFTA with the EU, which could deepen the general division of the country (Sieg 2012: 6).

At the same time, the view that the gradual Europeanization necessarily lead to the unification of Moscow and Transnistria prevailed among European politicians, while Russia will not be able to give this any resistance. Moreover, according to many experts the EU at present is not adequately involved in conflict resolution, and therefore, it is necessary to further strengthen the process of European integration (Devyatkov 2009: 179). In line with this approach, Moldova should try to get closer to the EU, leaving Transnistria aside for the period of democratic and economic reform.

Already then, the Transnistria itself will in a situation when it should show their interest to get closer to the europeanized Moldova, and the interest of Tiraspol to such a success will increasingly grow (Popescu and Litra 2012: 10). However, the negative consequences of this process are discussed less often. In fact, as Hans Sieg notes, as a result of such a policy under the current conditions, "Transnistria may turn out to be the biggest loser of EU-Russian competition over integration in Eastern Europe" (Sieg 2012: 6).

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[46] Joint Action 2005/776/CFSP. Council of the EU. 07.11.2005. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_292/l_29220051108en00130014.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

[47] Council Decision 2010/573/CFSP (OJ L 253, 28.9.2010. P. 54) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:253:0054:0057:EN:PDF (accessed 20 April 2013).

Moreover, the question about the future of the Moldovan membership in the EU, which "displays the highest interest in becoming EU member", is actually not on the agenda: there is no unanimity on enlargement now, and "since this is a unanimity matter, the question is closed, at least for the time being" (Emerson 2011). Thus, the lack of prospects for a full membership in the EU is an important demotivating factor for the EaP countries (Popescu 2011: 11).

In this context, the failure of the Transnistrian settlement, as well as the process of Europeanization of Moldova as a whole, threatens the identity of the European Neighbourhood Policy as a projection of the "Wider Europe", which means the EU itself. And this is the most negative scenario of the situation, which is actually so afraid of Brussels. Thus, we can conclude that the EU policy on the Transnistrian problem is inconsistent mainly due to the vague perspective of the Europeanization policy even the example of such an "Excellent" neighbor as Moldova. In this regard, the remarkable example of such contradictory policy is the sudden decision to cancel just adopted visa ban against Transnistria officials to "encourage progress towards a poltical settlement of the Transnistrian conflict" (Kuzmicheva 2011: 21). As Popescu writes, "it is more and more discussed in relation to the neighbours, to countries outside the EU exposed to EU norms, values and practices". In case the process of Moldova's European integration will lead to a deterioration of the Transnistrian conflict, the entire European Neighbourhood Policy in Eastern Europe will be seriously discredited.

The Meseberg initiative as a model of positive interaction on Transnistria issue. As we can see, the problem of Transnistria has not once been in the centre of attention on key aspects of European security EU-Russia relations. However as a positive example of transmission of Transnistria problem to the pan-European level, it is probably to give only one case – namely the Meseberg initiative. Let us discuss this project in detail in the final part of our investigation.

The Meseberg project appeared in the wake of activation of discussion about a new security architecture in Europe. This was largely due to a new round of conflict between Russia and the West because of the events around the conflict in Georgia, that has allowed experts to conclude that the post-Soviet space has become one of the main arenas of international conflicts and risks to global security (Arbatov 2009: 11). Meseberg initiative was a response from Germany to Moscow's proposal for a new European Security Treaty, the adoption of which was tied to the need of overcoming the negative legacy of the Cold War and unification of the entire

Euro-Atlantic area[48]. So a draft memorandum of possible creation of an EU-Russia Political and Security Committee (ERPSC) at the ministerial level was the result of negotiation between German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Meseberg in June 2010. It is important that the main focus of this short paper was placed on the issue of conflict resolution, proposing to develop "basic principles for joint EU-Russia civil / military operations in crisis management", an "exchange of views and recommendations on specific issues of cooperation, including the various conflicts and crises"[49].

At the same time, it is noteworthy that the implementation of "principle of security of all states in the Euro-Atlantic area", noted in the preamble of this declaration was linked with a specific example – namely, the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. In particular, it stated that "joint actions" between Russia and the EU, based on achieving a"tangible progress in the "5 +2 format" would ensure "a smooth transition from the current situation to the final stage"[50].

As a result, bilateral German-Russia project was simultaneously focused on several levels of interaction: a pan-European (EU-Russia), international (Russia-Germany) and regional / domestic (Transnistria problem). It was emphasized that resolution of Transnistria conflict would be "a test case for cooperation between the EU and Russia and their ability to resolve conflicts" (Meister 2011: 8) and Russia can get its place in "a "soft" institution [ERPS Committee at the Russia-EU – S.R.] in exchange for giving up its "hard" military and political presence in Transnistria" (Popescu and Litra 2012: 7), "but only after Moscow has shown that it is serious about co-operation by producing tangible progress in Transnistria, the least intractable of the regional conflicts" (Barysh 2011: 5-6).

Thus, the success of the movement towards the creation of a new security architecture at the pan-European level was put in dependence on the resolution of internal conflict at the regional level. In all probability, establishment of the relationship between the continental and local levels of security was caused by, firstly, the desire to make Russia mutual concessions in the form of consent to change format of the peacekeeping operation, supposing the withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria. At the same time, perhaps, it was a demonstration of German desire to enhance their own status in the field of security at the EU level, as the resolution of the conflict by peaceful means would be even more effective and attractive in comparison to the

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[48] "Proyekt Dogovora o yevropeyskoy bezopasnosti" // Prezident Rossii. 29 Noyabrya 2009 ("The draft of the Treaty on European Security" // President of Russia. 29 November 2009). http://news.kremlin.ru/news/6152 (accessed 20 April 2013).

[49] Memorandum (Meeting of Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Dmitri Medvedev on 4-5 June 2010 in Meseberg) http://www.russianmission.eu/sites/default/files/user/files/2010-06-05-meseberg-memorandum.pdf (accessed 20 April 2013).

[50] Ibid.

mediation efforts of France to South Ossetia. This fact points to the important role of the factor of competition between Germany and France for the right to play a leading role in the EU (Gorka-Winter, Kumoch 2010: 366) . In many respects, it was the problem of the Meseberg memorandum: being originally nominated at the bilateral level and not at the EU-Russia level the initiative has remained unfulfilled.

However, it is important that the linkage of improvement the EU-Russia relations with the Transnistrian settlement eventually played a quite positive role. Despite the request of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov, stated in February 2010 that the creation of the new ERPS Committee and Transnistrian conflict should be separated[51], Russia has greatly contributed to the return to negotiations on Transnistria in the "5 +2" format, which resumed September 22, 2011, after a long five-year break[52]. Thus, this event can be viewed as not too significant, but still a quite successful practical step that was implemented within the Meseberg process.

Conclusion

During its existence, the problem of protracted conflicts has become a truly pan-European problem. We can see by the example of Transnistria, that this conflict affects a number of other international and security issues – from relations between Moldova/Transnistria and the EU/Russia to the development of integration projects and the role of Russia and the EU in the formation of a new European security architecture.

The analysis of doctrinal documents in the field of foreign and security policy shows that the protracted conflicts in the border areas is one of the most important topics for both the EU and Russia. Both parties in the agreements between themselves at the pan-European level tell about the need to settle these conflicts together. In particular, the EU and Russia agree that Transnistria should be part of Moldova in the future. However, the regional level of security has a greater impact on the problem. In the 2000's, almost simultaneously, both Russia, and the EU began to develop their own integration projects in the post-Soviet space, and Transnistria was in the "gray zone" between the two major regional security complexes in Europe.

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[51] Vladimir Socor. Tiraspol raise preconditions to negotiations on Transnistria conflict (Part Two). The Jamestown Foundation. Eurasian Daily Monitor. 16.02.2011.
http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=37520&tx_ttnews[backPid]=512 (accessed 20 April 2013).

[52] "RF ser'yezno gotovitsya k peregovoram formata 5 +2 po Pridnestrov'yu – MID" ("Russia is seriously preparing for the 5 +2 format negotiations on Transnistria – MFA") // RIA Novosti. 22.11.2011.
http://ria.ru/world/20111122/494898544.html (accessed 20 April 2013).

Today when the EU and Russia are doing the emphasis on the development of their own regional security complexes, the question of their compatibility always appears. The contradictions between integration projects, as well as the contradictory state of protracted conflicts are the result of the ongoing process of the formation of a new security architecture in Europe. A constantly changing dynamic security environment in Europe is unstable itself and under such conditions protracted conflicts can not be resolved. Thus, the uncertain state of conflict reflects the general contradictions in the changing competitive European security system in the post-bipolar world order.

The problem is that as long as Russia and the EU are not just in the transition state of forming their own integration projects, but also pursue their policy by a competition or even confrontation, using dichotomy of the "Other" to each other. Each party now wants to be successful in the development of its own project and get ahead of the opponent's during the integration race.

The growing desire of the EU and Russia to implement their own integration projects in the post-Soviet space, increases the gap between the two actors, in particular, on the question of unresolved conflicts, at least at first glance. It turns out that the conflict in Transnistria is manifested on several levels: as a problem of relations between Chisinau and Tiraspol (internal level), and at the same time as the competition of integration projects between Brussels and Moscow (the level of regional security complexes), as well as at the pan-European level (e.g. Mezeberg initiative to establish a joint EU-Russia security committee). This process of double or multiplying securitization leads to the fact that finding the right way to resolve the conflict is almost impossible, since there is no way to determine exactly what problem in what level need to be solved in order to resolve the situation.

However, in theory (the basic doctrines of security), and in practice (especially if look at the real action of Brussels and Moscow, and not only political statements), controversy over the protracted conflict is much smaller in reality than it appears at first glance. Statements about EU Membership in Moldova have no real grounds, and Moscow despite special relations with Tiraspol and many negative episodes of cooling relations with the West or Chisinau has not recognized the independence of Transnistria. We can see that Russia is beginning to securitize the Transnistria problem every time when there is a need for recognition of their status in the European security system in case of serious problems in relations with the West. Similarly Russian integration project itself is largely aimed at finding a common identity and equal status in the security architecture in Europe. Therefore, the Russian foreign policy concept points to a common identity with their neighbors – countries of the post-Soviet space (at first), but also with

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the countries of the Euro-Atlantic (the second most important priority). Thus, the contradictions are only in the hierarchy – first "near abroad" (CIS), and then other Europe.

For its part, the EU is also always in the process of constructing their identity – as a dynamic institution – within itself, as well was in relation to its neighbors. The contradiction between the large-scale programs of action in the ENP and EaP programs and a lack of funding, coupled with long difficult negotiations with the countries of the former Soviet Union reflect the overall uncertainty of the integration policy of the EU, that is further complicated by the current economic crisis in the EU.

Contradictory policies on the conflict in Transnistria, in Russia and in the EU, and uncertainty about the future implementation of the current policy, as well as mutual distrust to each other in relations between two powers led them to the need to adhere to the policy of the status quo as the best policy towards Transnistria.

At the same time, lacking of appropriate security dialogue between the EU and Russia, the parties often use the Transnistrian conflict to agree on other issues between them. The CFE Treaty, the debates on the deployment of US missile defense, Meseberg initiative are far from complete list of cases where the problem of Transnistria is transmitted to the pan-European level and became a means of negotiations between Russia and the West on the fundamental issues of European security.

However, a more serious problem, it seems, is the dependence on this problem, that appeared by the EU and Russia involved in the Transnistrian settlement. For a long time of its existence in a relatively stable "no war no peace" situation they are used to solve (or not solve) many fundamental problems, by means of the Transnistria problem. Moldova and Transnistria themselves to a certain extent, become a hostage of conflict between Russia and the EU as two independent regional security complexes. As is well-known, getting rid of any dependence requires conscious effort and it is a difficult process, but first of all, the problem of this dependence is necessary to realize. Will Russia and the EU overcome this dependence, time will tell.

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