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Conflict Prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan

Diploma thesis

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Statutory Declaration

I declare that the presented master thesis has been carried out in self dependent work and only with the stated tools and literature.

Prague, January 14, 2011

Zuzana Zalánová

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Acknowledgment

This diploma thesis has had a long gestation. The idea to write a paper on conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan took root in my mind almost three years ago and reflected my long-term interest in Central Asia. Therefore I want to thank all of those without whom this work would not have overcome its vague and very ambiguous beginnings. First and foremost, I am very grateful to my supervisor PhDr. Martina Klimešová for her patience, useful guidance and valuable advice during the whole time of my thesis preparation and writing. Among others, I would especially thank to Leora Moreno, Devin Laedke and Michal Bornstein, who proofread the English text of my thesis, and to Mrs Jiřina Popovová, who has literally saved my academic life at Charles University for countless times. Last but not least, I am the most grateful to my family and friends who have provided me with material and psychological support during all my studies.

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Abstract

This diploma thesis deals with conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Its aim was to compare its relevance and results in the both countries. In doing so, the first theoretical section outlined the way of assessing conflict potential, which conditions and justifies applying preventative measures. This was examined in terms of Copenhagen school and its broaden meaning of security, whereas the paper focused on the political, economic and societal dimension. Then the notion of conflict prevention was framed within terminological and historical context and considered in terms of its trends and current challenges. At the end of the theoretical section, the concepts if security dimensions and conflict prevention were discussed in terms of their applicability for the case studies of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Afterwards, the empirical section researched the conflict potential and preventive actions of international organisations, states and non-state actors in the both countries. Analytical part evaluated the empirical data in order to assess conflict prevention in the both states. In doing so, I used SWOT analysis, which defined strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. The results can be summarised as follows:

- The character of conflict prevention in both countries is almost identical. Common concept / guidelines for similar cases should be hence discussed.
- External actors are usually skilled, well equipped, and institutionally strong.
- The preventive actions in the countries have been diminished due to the limited presence of actors as well as because of the lack of tools, information, motivation and reliable local partners.
- Despite their global emergence, the contribution of non-state actors to conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan is very limited.

- Preventive actions should be long-term, better targeted, more appealing and compatible with each other.
- Grass-roots projects together with educational and training programmes are most likely to create sustainable and fruitful preventive actions.
- Small grants can result in better targeted, efficient and transparent projects.
- The recent seemingly positive shift in Turkmenistan's foreign policy should be carefully considered and subsequently used for the local promotion of conflict prevention.
- As regards preventive strategies, their manageability (due to repressive character of the states) and transparency (due to highly corruptive environment) should be emphasised.
- The short-sighted projection of Western values without consideration of local particularities might be counterproductive.

Anotácia

Diplomová práca sa zaoberá prevenciou konfliktov v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku, pričom jej cieľom bolo porovnať jej význam a výsledky v oboch krajinách. K naplneniu tohto cieľa sa pristupovalo nasledovne: teoretická časť najskôr predstavila spôsob zisťovania konfliktného potenciálu, ktorý je predpokladom pre použitie prostriedkov prevencie konfliktov. Ten bol v práci skúmaný z pohľadu Kodanskej školy a jej rozšíreného konceptu bezpečnosti, z ktorého bol pre potreby práce vybrané politická, ekonomická a sociálna dimenzia. Následne sa pristúpilo k samotnému pojmu „prevencia konfliktov“, ktorý bol zasadený do terminologického a historického kontextu a zároveň boli predstavené jeho trendy a problémy. V závere teoretickej časti bolo ukázané, v akom zmysle sa koncept dimenzií bezpečnosti a prevencie konfliktov môže vzťahovať na prípadové štúdie Uzbekistanu a Turkménska. Potom sa pristúpilo k empirickej časti, kde sa najskôr dokázal konfliktný potenciál a potom sa popísali prostriedky prevencie konfliktov z pohľadu medzinárodných organizácií, štátov a neštátnych aktérov. V analytickej časti sa potom na základe empirických údajov analyzovala prevencia konfliktov v oboch krajinách. Pri analýze bola použitá SWOT analýza, ktorá zrovnávala slabé a silné stránky, príležitosti a hrozby prevencie konfliktov v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku. Výsledky sa dajú zhrnúť v niekoľkých bodoch:

- Charakter prevencie konfliktov v oboch krajinách je takmer identický, preto je možné uvažovať o spoločnom postupe, resp. pokynoch pre podobné príklady.
- Výhodou externých aktérov sú ich schopnosti, dobré vybavenie a inštitucionálne zakotvenie.
- Preventívne akcie v krajinách boli oslabené kvôli limitovanej prítomnosti aktérov, a nedostatku prostriedkov, informácií, motivácie a spoľahlivých lokálnych partnerov.
- Napriek ich globálnemu vzostupu, príspevok neštátnych aktérov k prevencii konfliktov v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku je veľmi limitovaný.
- Preventívne akcie by mali byť dlhodobé, lepšie zamerané, vhodné pre lokálne prostredie a mali by sa navzájom sa dopĺňovať.
- Najväčšia šanca udržateľné a úspešné preventívne projekty je v prípade komunitných a vzdelávacích programov a tréningov.
- Malé granty môžu vyústiť v lepšie zamerané, efektívne a transparentné projekty.
- Nedávno pozorovaný pozitívny posun v zahraničnej politike Turkménska by sa mal pozorne preskúmať a následne využiť pre kvantitatívne a kvalitatívne zintenzívnenie prevencie konfliktov v krajine.
- Pri preventívnych stratégiách by sa mal klásť dôraz na realizovateľnosť a transparentnosť.
- Krátkozrakosť pri automatickom aplikovaní západných hodnôt bez zváženía lokálnych špecifik by mohla byť kontraproduktívna.

Keywords

Conflict prevention, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, threats of national security, preventive actions, Central Asia, preventive diplomacy

Kľúčové slová

Prevencia konfliktov, Uzbekistan, Turkménsko, hrozby národnej bezpečnosti, preventívne akcie, stredná Ázia, preventívna diplomacia.

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Acronyms

ABA	American Bar Association
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organisation
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMU	Islamic Movement for Uzbekistan
INGOs	International non-governmental organisations
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SMEs	small and medium enterprises
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRCCA	United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

1 Introduction

1.1 Thematic framework

1.1.1 Intrastate conflicts and their prevention

History has taught us that conflict is an inseparable part of international relations, a variable that inherently contributes to creating their very nature. So far the biggest conflicts, the First and the Second World Wars, completely altered world order, causing the creation of international rules, procedures, and institutional framework, which are key elements in modern international relations. Today we see the changing character of conflict; the main emphasis is moving from interstate to intrastate conflicts. (Conflict Barometer , 2010) This development reflects the role and position of states, which has changed since the Peace of Westphalia. Our era welcomed significantly weaker states, creating alternative sources of power and authority. Consequently, globalisation has allowed for deteriorative factors to spread more easily. Marked by this fragility, states today face a number of external enemies. These threats exist not only from other states, but also from other international actors such as multinational corporations. More importantly, states are endangered internally; by domestic actors, including political opposition, economic and military interest groups, or those who attempt to exploit social, religion or other inequalities. The combination of the above-mentioned issues creates asymmetric threats that can significantly destabilise states' domestic situation and result in intrastate conflicts. Still, this is often not the final stage because intrastate conflicts tend to spill over beyond state territory, hand in hand with increasingly important non-state actors who are able to operate independently from state structures. This threat causes the international community to take steps to prevent conflicts from escalating. Such efforts, generally called “preventive diplomacy” or “conflict prevention”, represent a long-term and often intractable process.¹ In intrastate conflicts, details and nuances matter significantly, due to the conflicts' internal complexity and apparent external invisibility. Therefore, preventive actions are often unwelcome by the target state so their purpose can be negatively affected by national interests, and many times they do not meet success because of their inefficiency. On the other hand, recently preventive efforts are advisable and increasingly relevant especially in academic (e.g. Lund, Crocker) as well as in high

¹ As explained later, the use of the latter notion will be preferred in this work.

politics sphere (for example, establishment of the OSCE, “Agenda for Peace” introduced at UN General Assembly meeting in 1992). All of this has contributed to establishing conflict prevention as a key element of conflict resolution and, indeed, of international relations and security studies in general.

1.1.2 Authoritarian regimes with incomplete transition

The setting and means of taking preventive actions can get complex, namely in the case of isolated authoritarian states. Such regimes are characterised by strict repressions and everyday state control; there are many interests that go unheard or even brutally suppressed. Additionally authoritarian regimes do not tend to foster institutions- or capacity-building, seeing them potential centres of opposition or channels of alternative power. This is particularly visible in states experiencing transition, whereas many of them historically have no previous experience with normal state structures. Consequently, under these circumstances institutions are weak, existing only as a means of creating the illusion of a normally functioning state.² Politically, excessively strengthened executive is not formed on representation-based principles, there is (almost) no opposition, judiciary is biased, legislative framework inefficient and toothless, media non-free and strictly censored, and dysfunctional civil society cannot serve the real needs of citizens. Economically, there are few property rights guarantees and unjust distribution of state income, fiscal and monetary policy is controlled by a tiny group of pro-regime orientated people, and the whole state corroded by corruption. In such a tense environment, the conflict potential is very high. This situation calls for some preventive actions which will nevertheless be accompanied by plenty of questions to be thoroughly considered first: “Intervene or not? If yes, when, where and how to do so?” The successful timing and the means of intervention must be based on a careful examination of the given situation. However, authoritative regimes routinely use censorship to filter unwanted information internally while their external isolation does not allow transparent monitoring from abroad. As a result of this, blurred picture presented by institutionally inconsistent political system causes any preventive strategy to fail. Moreover, it is highly probable that the complexity of such cases will affect motivation of the external actors to take some steps at all. Because of these reasons, there is a need to tackle this especially strenuous

² Institutions are here understood in a broad sense, as all the elements inevitable for a healthy functioning state.

issue and at least try to examine what mode of preventive behaviour and action can be the most appropriately applied on authoritarian regimes suffering from undeveloped institutions.

1.1.3 Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as case studies

Keeping the previous discussion in mind, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan represent interesting cases for the conflict prevention analysis. These post-Soviet states, independent since 1991, are characterised by extremely repressive regimes with both extensive external isolation and many internal tensions temporarily leashed by the state's suppression. Since their transition has not advanced to a consolidation stage, their institutions and other preconditions for a healthy functioning state remain undeveloped. At the same time, both of these states face many unsolved problems stemming from their historic, politic, and socio-economic issues. Historically, countries try to (re)create their new identity while facing increasing nationalism and ethnicisation of society. Politically, the rigidity and repressions of these regimes have a significantly negative impact on civic society and human rights issues. A big question mark is also linked to the rise of radical Islam, an issue which is even more pertinent because both these states have a majority Muslim population with regionally strong terrorist networks and thus can turn into a severe threat. Economically, despite rich natural resources, Uzbek and Turkmen economies are found in a desolate state. Mismanaged economic transition has caused countries' shrinking production encounters difficulties that were already worsened by the sharp competition in the world market. Furthermore, their macroeconomic sustainability is under dispute; recently it has been shaken by alarmingly rising poverty and unemployment rates and so far unsuccessful attempts at product diversification beyond the energy sector. In terms of risk potential, this has been steadily increasing in the whole Central Asian region since the collapse of the Soviet Union which introduced the states into their deepest crisis within past 50 years- economically, socially and culturally. Additionally, in view of the democratic movements that have recently resulted in regime change in several neighbouring states, it is logical to expect similar events in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in a perspective of several years. Such changes yet can dramatically destabilise the complex current domestic situation within each country and, in the worst case, lead to violent conflicts and wars. In consideration of this threat, there is a need for the type of preventive diplomacy that could prevent these tensions from escalating into

violence. The ability to prevent conflicts in the both countries will obviously depend on a multiplicity of key actors and their collective actions which, given the countries' domestic situation, should be to a big extent initiated externally.

1.2 Thesis objectives, hypothesis and research questions

1.2.1 Research review

As far as academic research is concerned, terms “conflict prevention” or “preventive diplomacy” have been already established and developed in many works concerning international relations or security studies (Swanström & Weissmann 2005, Lund 1996, Wallensteen & Möller 2003) and have been acknowledged by high politics actors (initiatives of UN secretary-general Kofi Annan (2001) and his predecessor Boutros-Boutros Ghali (1992)). This reflects the increasing importance of such activities in practise. Focus on prevention has been accommodated in agenda of the UN, OSCE and many other international actors as well as in states' decision-making processes. Rising significance of intrastate conflicts is also reflected by a number of academic works and research studies which, in a special regard to regime transition, also deal with weak state structures and institutions (Diamond 1999, Diamond and McDonald 2006, Carothers 2006, 2009, Gleditsch and Ward 1997, Gerschman and Allen 2006, Mawlawi 2002, Mansfield and Snyder 2002, Peceny and Butler 2004, Way 2008, Starr 1999). When focusing on Central Asia, there is sound coverage of topics related to transition including issues such as authoritative regimes and human rights, Islam threat and terrorism or regional security complex in general (Collins 2006, Chernykh and Burnashev 2005, Dadabaev 2007, Katz 2007, Khalid 2007, Luong 2002, Brill Olcot 2005, Naumkin 2002, Roy 2005, Rumer 2005, Starr 2006). These topics are also regularly discussed by many think-tanks and international non-state organisations (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, National Endowment for Democracy, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, Transparency International, Open Society Institute and Soros Foundations Network, International Crisis Group, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Institute for Security and Development Policy, Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Chatham House, RAND, Conflict Studies Research Centre, Transitions Online, Jamestown Foundation,...). However, there is still potential to develop some ideas further. Only a few works combine conflict prevention

principles with those concerning institutional weakness resulted from imperfect transition of authoritarian regimes. Even fewer studies can be found in regard of Central Asian region, which is due to its geopolitical pettiness often overseen or ignored.³

1.2.2 Hypothesis, objectives and research questions

The aim of conflict prevention is to eliminate conflict potential and prevent it from escalating. Given that conflicts pass through a number of stages, conflict prevention ought to be applied in the first, latent one.⁴ Indeed, appropriately chosen set of preventive tools can significantly mitigate the tension and contribute to successful conflict resolution. However, this ambitious task is often thwarted by rigid states which do not allow any (mostly external) intervention to their domestic affairs. This is especially evident in intrastate conflicts where capacity- or institutions-building efforts coming from abroad are markedly limited. Due to such unfavourable conditions, one should carefully look for the right preventive actions which could bring about at least modest success. Strictly discussing the authoritative and risk-potential cases of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, I will try to examine preventive actions implemented there, whether they have succeeded or back fired. From this observation, I hope to derive some factors that can serve as variables for potential success/ failure of conflict prevention in such seemingly intractable cases. *My hypothesis* is thus based on the assumption that, in the selected countries, preventive actions have not met success and the regimes, despite their ostensible stability, will sooner or later face increasing tension due to internal instabilities. Accordingly, *the main objective* of this thesis is to find preventive actions in the given countries and analyse the means that have been applied there. In my research, I will try to answer these *questions*: “*What is the conflict potential of the selected countries like? How have been preventive activities implemented there? What are the key determinants of their failure and inefficiency?*”

1.3 Methodology and structure

This thesis will try to examine conflict prevention in the authoritarian states that struggle with incomplete or unsuccessful transition. This in addition to other factors affects their structures, namely institutions, which are not strong enough to cope with a

³ Nonetheless, this has been changed partly due to escalating terrorist threats in the region and war in neighbouring Afghanistan and partly because of rich oil and gas resources there.

⁴ This concept will be more discussed in the theoretical part.

potential conflict. As already explained, this description fits both Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, which were consequently chosen for my case studies. Challenging ostensible stability of their regimes, I will try to put emphasis on a local risk potential and explain why prevention is needed in these cases. Then I will focus on preventive actions which have been (un)successfully implemented in the both states. Given the little progress in this field, I will concentrate on the factors that have contributed to failure of preventive initiatives and the current passivity of such efforts. Despite many common features and seemingly identical nature of the regimes, it may be shown that each state should be considered separately, which may also result in their different preventive strategies. In writing, I will employ three methodological tools: description, mostly used in particular case studies (concerning conflict potential and preventive actions); comparison, which will result from purposely chosen issues to be described, identical for the each case study; and finally analysis, reflecting on the facts gained from the case studies with respect to the given theoretical framework and preconditions.

When examining how effective the particular preventive policies were in the end, I will use SWOT analysis. The SWOT assessment provides a two-fold perspective: external (threats and opportunities) and internal one (strengths and weaknesses). *Strengths* are resources or capacities the subjects can use effectively to achieve their objectives. *Weaknesses* regard limitations, faults or defects of the subjects that will keep them from achieving their objectives. *Opportunities* represent any favourable situation in the subjects' environment. *Threats* stem from any unfavourable situation in the subjects' environment that is potentially damaging to their strategy. Considering this, a successful strategy should build on strengths, eliminate weaknesses, exploit opportunities, and mitigate the effect of threats. (Karppi, Kokkonen, & Lähteenmäki-Smith, 2001, p. 16) This method is a core part for strategy planning of every business plan. Nevertheless, its well-arranged and simple structure renders it useful in other areas as well. In our case, the SWOT analysis is supposed to result in some guidelines helpful for the future efforts in this field and could ideally lead to better implication of conflict prevention policies. To reach this aim, I will seek to derive internal characteristics (of the preventative actors) and external conditions (of the domestic environment in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) which influence the success/ failure of conflict prevention. The final scheme will put together internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats. Combined

in one scheme, the confrontation between particular factors will be more obvious so that the final evaluation can be made much easier.

As far as the structure is concerned, this paper consists of five main sections. The first, introduction explains the context and methodology of the paper. The second, theoretical framework outlines the most relevant approaches and concepts of conflict prevention. The third, case studies describe the conflict potential in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and the preventive actions implemented there. The fourth, analysis evaluates conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, with the help of relevant factors of SWOT analysis. Finally, the fifth section provides conclusion resulting from the comparison, in regard to the hypothesis and research questions.

2 Theoretical framework

This section will provide a theoretical framework for the case studies I will introduce later. The two notions to deal with are threats of national security and conflict prevention. As claimed by Swanström & Weissmann, the perception of threat is necessary for the initiation of conflict prevention or management measures. (Swanström & Weissmann, 2005, p. 7) Thus, first I will briefly discuss threats of national security. Their classification will be based on the concept of broader security that was firstly coined by the Copenhagen school. The five dimensions of security will here be limited to the three (political, economic and societal) that are the most relevant for intrastate conflicts. The emphasis of this section will, however, be the concept of conflict prevention. Along with its terminological and historical introduction, I will also outline some new trends and challenges that might affect the further development of the concept. The final part is devoted to operationalisation, and will show how the concept of conflict prevention can apply to the selected case studies.

2.1 Threats of national security

2.1.1 Conceptualisation

The present-day world is facing the rising emergence of intrastate conflicts. State has become to be viewed not only as a subject but also as an object of security. (Buzan, 1983, p. 36) This is also proved statistically: in its annual assessment of major armed conflicts, Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI) states that over the decade 2000–2009, only 3 of the total of 30 major armed conflicts have been interstate. (Appendix 2A. Patterns of major armed conflicts, 2000–2009, 2010) This shift also correlates with the change of the concept of security, which has become much more multifaceted and complex. In the post-Cold War era, the realist understanding of security as a “pursuit of power” has become too narrow to explain the multitude and variety of threats. (Buzan, 1983, p. 7) Referring to a constructivist approach, the Copenhagen school thus offered a “broader framework of security”, incorporating concepts that had not been previously considered to be part of the security puzzle. Accordingly, the former realist understanding of security in political and military terms has been broadened to five sectors: military, political, societal, economic and environmental. At the same time, insecurity, threats and vulnerabilities regarding each of the sectors have been defined.

Like the members of the Copenhagen school, other scholars have also recognised other factors of threats. In his comprehensive study for the Clingendael Institute, Douma suggests that political conditions serve as triggers for the outbreak of violent conflict, while economic and social indicators reflect the societal background conditions that encourage discontent and political mobilisation. (Douma, 2003, pp. 204-205) Among socio-economic factors, he concentrates on poverty and economic stagnation, socio-economic inequality (income and inter-regional) resources-related conflicts, regional pricing mechanisms and trade regulations, and economic growth. (Douma, 2003, pp. 48-90) In terms of political factors, he includes historical legacies, institutional capacity (weak states, secessionism, federalism and nation building), power sharing, and power transition. (Douma, 2003, pp. 92-146) Another view presented by Lund and Garner distinguishes three groups of factors that can destabilise the state: structural, political-institutional and “triggers”. The first category mainly regards socio-economic clashes that can be a result of competing needs and interests or reflect society’s composition and inter-communal relations. The second group represents the level of mobilisation of identity groups, the state of governing institutions and processes unilateral/multilateral interactions between political leaders, and international integration. Finally “triggers” involve events or immediate acts that can influence the course of events in a specific situation. As such they relate to ideology, leaders’ mindsets, rhetoric and behaviour. (Lund & Garner, 2001, pp. 31-32)

2.1.2 Categories of threats

As stated before, the main focus of this work is on intrastate conflicts. Thus, this section will seek to find factors that are conflict-prone with respect to domestic regimes. In accordance with the Copenhagen school, I will use their concept of broader security to outline the main factors contributing to conflict-proneness. However, rather than incorporating all five dimensions, I will focus on the political, economic and societal only. This limitation will be made because these three dimensions correspond more to the potential of intrastate conflicts in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. This naturally does not mean that the threats related to military and environmental dimension do not affect the two countries at all. Yet, I assume that military and environmental factors are more relevant in the regional and global terms of the countries and thus more likely to influence interstate conflicts.

2.1.2.1 Political dimension

As defined by the Copenhagen school, the object of political security regards state sovereignty. This can be threatened either by subversion of legitimacy or by denial of recognition. (Buzan, Wæver, & de Wilde, 1998, p. 150) With this view, the authors approximate classical Weber's definition of the state. According to him, the state should have unchallenged control of the territory within the defined boundaries under its control, monopolisation of the legitimate use of force within the borders of the state, and the reliance upon impersonal rules in the governance of its citizens and subjects. (Weber, 1990, p. 10) While Weber stressed the role of administration as a pillar of the state power, the scholars of the Copenhagen school find the "relatively stable institutionalisation of authority" important for political security. (Buzan, Wæver, & de Wilde, 1998, p. 143) Accordingly, institutions are stable when they enjoy general support from the population, are legitimate. This involves existence of orderly and durable mechanisms for transferring power that thus is not accompanied by use of force. (Buzan, 1983, pp. 59-60) On the other hand, the nonexistence of the "rule of law" means the dominance of informal institutions based on particularistic rules and norms like clientelism and/or corruption. Formal institutions then either serves as a "façade" of informal dominance or do not matter at all. (Gel'man, 2001, p. 10)

2.1.2.2 Economic dimension

The Copenhagen school attributes factors threatening economic security of states to those of individuals. As such, it relates to food security, welfare, access to resources, unemployment, and various inequalities. (Buzan, Wæver, & de Wilde, 1998, pp. 103-105) In these terms, institutional diversity provides many ways of regulating and managing social conflicts through participatory means and the rule of law. In particular, Rodrik discusses five types of crucial institutions: property rights; regulatory institutions; institutions for macroeconomic stabilisation; institutions for social insurance; and institutions of conflict management. (Rodrik, 2002, p. 6) As such it serves as a key prerequisite for stable development. This is observed in democratic regimes that bring about many positive economic attributes: predictable and long-run growth rate, better distributional outcomes and better capacity to handle adverse shocks. (Rodrik, 2002, pp. 16, 23, 29)

2.1.2.3 Societal dimension

As far as the societal sector is concerned, the Copenhagen school puts a special emphasis on identity. This is mostly threatened by fragmentation into national, racial and religious groups. In these terms, the threats can stem from migration, horizontal (e.g. fears from russification) and vertical competition (e.g. due integration), or from depopulation. (Buzan, Wæver, & de Wilde, 1998, p. 121) Wallensteen finds roots of societal conflicts in identity discrimination that can lead to social frustration of the affected groups. (Wallensteen, 2007, p. 165) Another danger stems from protracted social conflict.⁵ The people involved in such conflicts create their own identity groups and pursue their need for recognition, security and participation. Bad management of such situations can bring about an identity crisis that threatens the national, sub-national and personal structures of a society. (Azar, Jureidini, & McLaurin, 1978, p. 57) Another factor to consider is everyday contact and interactions that are reflected in social and cultural practices and institutions. Societal conflict is often rooted in suspicions or hostility expressed in inter-group attitudes and perceptions. (Lund & Garner, 2001, p. 31)

2.2 Conflict prevention

2.2.1 Terminology: Conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy

So far, preventive diplomacy has no agreed-upon meaning. The confusion over its terminology partly relates to a lack of consensus on the nature of war and peace. This may make conflict prevention policy hard to formulate. (Stewart, 2003, p. 16) At the same time, there are many notions with similar or identical meaning, such as preventive action, preventive engagement, preventive deployment, and conflict prevention. These are often used together with other terms such as peacemaking, conflict management, conflict resolution, democracy building, and peacekeeping. (Lund, 1996, p. 31) Considering this ambiguity, I will try to capture the meaning of conflict prevention when comparing it to the one of preventive diplomacy.

One of the most known definitions of preventive diplomacy characterises it as a set of activities aimed “to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent

⁵ Protracted conflict (sometimes also called intractable conflict) is characterised by hostile interactions which extend over long periods of time with sporadic outbreaks of open frequency and intensity. (Azar, Jureidini, & McLaurin, 1978, p. 50) As examples of such conflict, we can mention situation in Israel or Sri Lanka.

existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur". (Boutros-Ghali, 1992) As seen here, its agenda concerns not only violent conflicts but also the ones that have not become violent. The target thus regards not only conflicts themselves but also their "thresholds" and developments.⁶ (Lund, 1996, p. 34) Using the same term "preventive diplomacy", Lund focuses his attention only on prompt, short-term, interventions that are implemented to avoid the potential escalation of a dispute to violent conflict. He thus defines "preventive diplomacy" in a narrow meaning as "actions or institutions that are used to keep the political disputes that arise between or within nations from escalating into armed force". (Lund, 1995, p. 161)

However, many other scholars find this definition too narrow and have come up with a broader concept of "conflict prevention". As Swanström and Weissmann point out, while preventive diplomacy focuses on diplomatic efforts of conflict prevention during the early stages of a conflict, conflict prevention defines a wider set of preventive measures of which diplomacy merely is one aspect. (Swanström & Weissmann, 2005, p. 20) Furthermore, conflict prevention is understood as a long-term activity and hence involves careful strategic planning. (Carment & Schanbel, 2003, p. 10) As claimed by Stedman, while preventive diplomacy attempts to stop conflicts from becoming violent, conflict prevention aims at the supposed roots of such conflicts: poverty, environmental degradation, over population, resource competition and the lack of legitimate political institutions. (Stedman, 1995) Some authors call such prevention structural as to distinguish it from direct prevention, which is specifically aimed at a dangerous phase of military escalation, intensification or diffusion. Unlike direct prevention, a structural one seeks to avoid conflict and disputes from escalation into militarised action. In doing so, it strengthens economic development, political participation and cultural autonomy. (Swanström & Weissmann, 2005, p. 14) On the contrary, Lund considers the concept of structural prevention too broad, difficult to distinguish from more general processes of

⁶ This is a huge change in the understanding of the term "conflict" that traditionally implies violence. This traditional view can be observed in the work of Galtung who defines peace as "absence of violence". (Galtung, 1969, p. 168) Similarly to his distinction between peace and conflict, Galtung defines positive and negative peace. While the former regards the nonexistence of personal/direct violence, the latter is conditioned by the absence of structural/indirect violence (where the acting subjects are not recognised). This view makes peace not only a matter of removing war, but also of ridding society of other obstacles to basic human aspirations. (Galtung, 1969, p. 183) Applying Galtung's distinction, Lund argues that today's prevention means more than simply avoiding violence, or "negative peace", but rather aspiring to "positive peace". (Lund, 2009, p. 290)

democratisation or economic development, and eventually even closer to the concept of peace-building. (Lund, 1996) Finally, the most comprehensive view offers Stewart who seeks to define conflict prevention by involving some other concepts with similar meaning: “*Conflict prevention is a multifaceted, complex process ranging from long-term or structural policy to promote stability, to short-term intensive diplomacy to resolve disputes (“preventive diplomacy”) and civilian or military intervention to monitor and/or control the early stages of conflict (“crisis management”). It also refers to attempts to stop the recurrence of violence in conflict zones (“peace-building” or “post-conflict reconstruction/rehabilitation”)*”. (Stewart, 2003, p. 3)

There is no “one-size-fits-all” definition of conflict prevention. As seen from the discourse outlined above, capturing the notion is accompanied by considerable discrepancies, especially when being compared to the seemingly close concept of preventive diplomacy. Nevertheless, although the terminology is not properly defined yet, I will further use the broad term of conflict prevention. Simplified, it will be understood as short-term (preventive diplomacy) and long-term activities (structural diplomacy) designed to prevent conflicts from escalation. Thereby, any characteristics of preventive diplomacy or structural diplomacy will be involved in this paper as affiliated to conflict prevention. This decision will enable me to trace preventive actions in my case studies provided later.

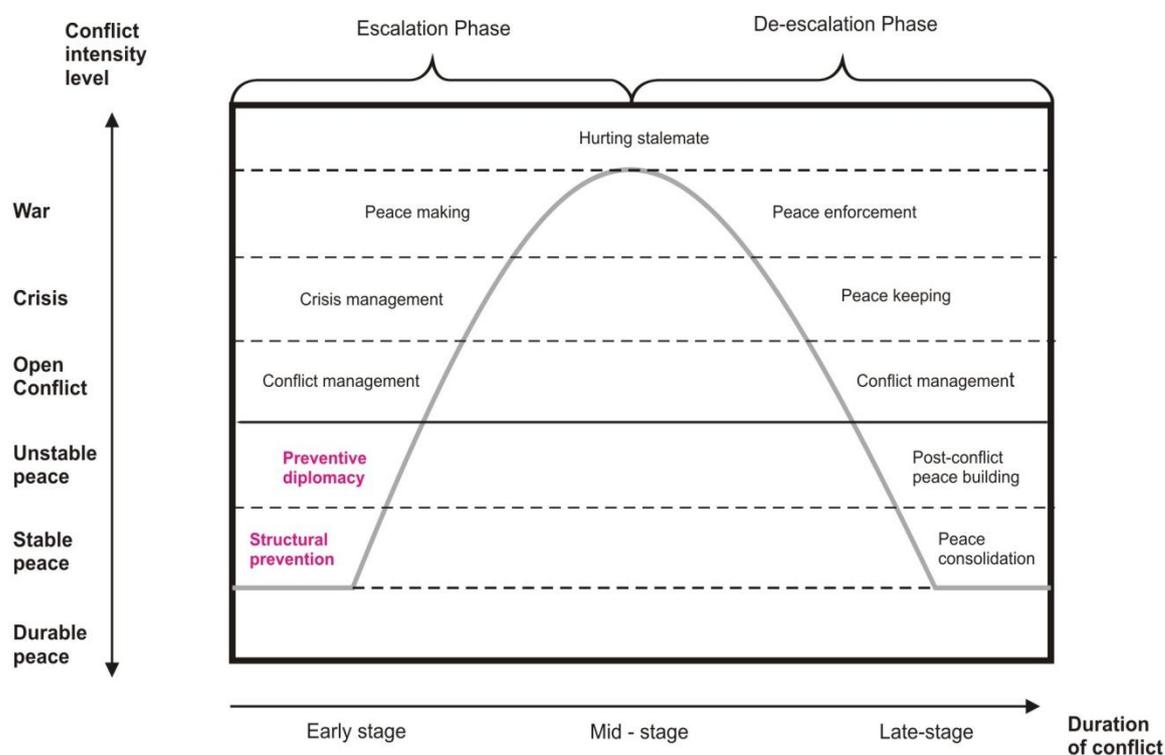
To demonstrate the above mentioned discourse, I will use the position of preventive diplomacy/ conflict prevention in the well-known conflict cycle. Lund attributes the activities of preventive diplomacy to the unstable peace stage.⁷ Among priority tasks here is to create channels for dispute resolution, to build or strengthen political and civic institutions and to alleviate worst conditions breeding conflict. (Lund, 1996, p. 149) Some scholars name this initial stage of conflict also a “latent conflict phase”. Defined as a contrary to manifested/emerged conflict, latent conflict stems from deep political and social antagonism. Preventive actions here involve building democratic

⁷ According to Lund’s definition, unstable peace is characterised by high tension and suspicion among parties, but with absent or very low violence. Even without any armed forces to be deployed, the parties perceive each other as enemies and maintain deterrent military capabilities. As stated by Lund, government repression of groups is one domestic variety of this level of conflict. (Lund, 1996, p. 39) Noteworthy, the conflict cycle as presented here is just an ideal model; the evolution of real conflicts mostly generates a different shape of the cycle where not all the stages are necessarily represented. Besides, more conflicts can reflect more curves of the cycle.

institutions, constructing common identity and facilitation. (Brahm, 2003) Some authors find preventive actions also applicable already in the stable peace stage because their acceptance should be higher at low levels of inter-party suspicion. This endeavour thus can be far-reaching and lead to successful implementation of institutional measures. (Swanström & Weissmann, 2005, p. 14) Referring to my selected definition of conflict prevention, as a combination of structural and preventive diplomacy, I will see the scope for preventive actions in stable as well as unstable peace stage. (Figure 1)

Figure 1 Conflict prevention in conflict cycle

(Adjusted according to the models of Lund, 1996; Swanström & Weissmann, 2005; Brahm, 2003)



2.2.2 Focus: Actors and actions

When concerning subjects of conflict prevention, they are mostly understood as “third party” actors. In other words, this limits the focus to external actors only. Given their variety and status, their categorisation can follow the one of multi-level governance. As seen in Tab 1, this approach categorises actors of conflict prevention according to two axes: the vertical axis (local communities, states, regional arena and global arena) and the

horizontal one (state and non-state).⁸ With a little simplification, we will get international organisations, regional organisations, states, communities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs). As already mentioned, the concept of conflict prevention places the emphasis on third parties. Thus, as preventative actors, we define international and regional organisations, states and INGOs.

ACTORS	Official		Non-official
	Supra-national	international organisations	INGOs
	regional organisations		INGOs
National	states		NGOs
Sub-national	communities/ grass roots		NGOs

Tab 1 Actors of conflict prevention derived from the concept of multi-level governance

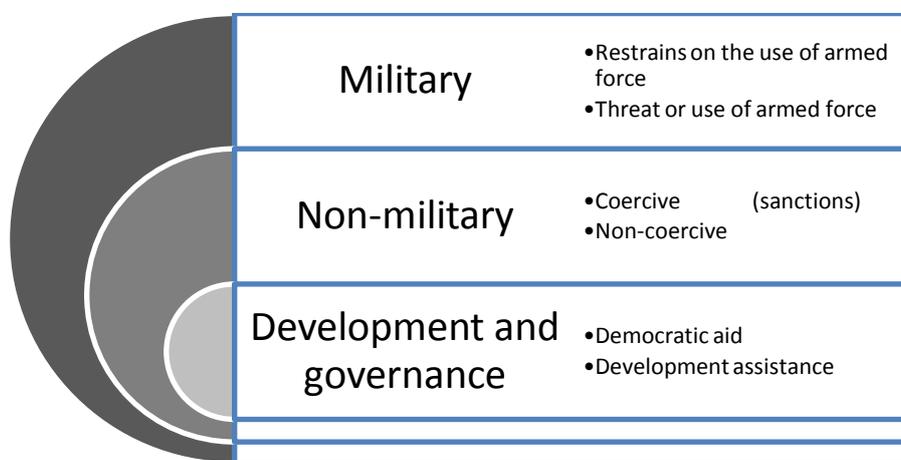
Loosely following this approach, the combination of the axes can generate many other typologies of preventative actors. Möller, Öberg, and Wallensteen define seven categories of third parties: 1) the UN, 2) intergovernmental organisations (IGO), 3) regional actors, 4) neighbouring countries, 5) major powers (permanent members of the UN Security Council) and 6) prominent persons (such as Pope John Paul II., Jimmy Carter). The seventh type, or “other actor”, here regards all other third parties not included in the above-mentioned categories. (Möller, Öberg, & Wallensteen, 2005, p. 7) Similar but more US-centrist listing is offered by Jantleson who grouped the actors into five categories: 1) the USA as the major world power; 2) other major powers (e.g. Russia); 3) the UN and its agencies; 4) regional multilateral organisations (e.g., the OSCE); 5) on- and off-site NGOs. (Jentleson, 2000, p. 14) One way or another, any detailed listing is possible only in ad hoc cases. As will be shown in the case studies, this paper will refer to the simpler categorisation of actors: international organisations (regional ones included), states and INGOs.

Another issue discussed here regards preventive actions and the tools of conflict prevention. To describe activities of conflict prevention, the term “preventive actions” is used broadly among scholars as well as practitioners. (Lund, 2009, p. 294; Möller, Öberg, & Wallensteen, 2005; Wallensteen & Möller, 2003; Annan, 2001; Boutros-Ghali, 1992)

⁸ This approach is based on the concept of multi-level governance, which was developed in terms of European integration. (Marks, 1993; Bache, 2005).

These activities range from bi-lateral and regional high-level diplomacy to NGO projects in peace building at the local level, such as dialogues, peace radio, and inter-ethnic community development programs. (Lund, 2009, p. 294) However, there is no generally acknowledged categorisation of preventative actions or their tools. Among tools, Lund defines conflict resolution training, human rights standard setting and monitoring, peace committee structures, fact-finding missions, commissions of inquiry, economic reform, standards, integration, collective security regimes and rule of law programmes. (Lund, 1996, p. 149) Crocker, Hamson and Aall point out the essential character of institution building, good governance, transparency, rule of law, fact finding, education, practitioner training, and development assistance. (Crocker, Hampson, & Aall, 2001, p. xxvii) In this regard, early warning mechanism is of a huge importance.⁹ Statistically, the most successful seems to be verbal attention, facilitation, and third party coordination. All of them are involved in the typology of the preventive tools, provided by Möller, Öberg, & Wallensteen. They combine military/ non-military and coercive/ non-coercive measures. This combination can serve as the basis for successful conflict prevention. (Möller, Öberg, & Wallensteen, 2005, p. 9)

Figure 2 Preventive diplomacy toolbox (adjusted according to Lund, 1996)



Finally, all these measures can be merged in “preventive diplomacy toolbox”, which consists of military, non-military and development and governance approaches.

⁹ Referring to a broader concept of conflict prevention, early warning represents an instrument aimed at early detection of developments that may result in the eruption of violence. Nevertheless this instrument has a rather short-term objective. Aimed at finding out when and where violent conflicts can erupt and at preventing their occurrence, it does not concentrate on the background variables, which function as a cause of conflict. This long-term objective is to be a province of international development cooperation that can be a complement to early warning. (Van Walraven, 1996)

(Lund, 1996, pp. 203-205) In our case, the emphasis will be on the latter one. Lund distinguishes development and governance approaches as 1) Policies to promote national economic and social development, 2) Promulgation and enforcement of human rights, democratic, and other standards 3) National governing structures to promote peaceful conflict resolution. (Lund, 1996, pp. 204-5) To make my case studies better arranged, I will mostly refer to the first two categories, in terms of development assistance and democracy aid. (See the Figure 2)

2.2.3 History: Treatment of short-sightedness

Although scholars are still struggling to capture conflict prevention theoretically, it has already gained its practical recognition. In the contemporary history we can find some similarities with peacekeeping activities embedded in Chapters VI and VII of the UN Charter (1945). In particular, Chapter VI recognises the procedures in peaceful settlements of disputes that may be followed by the more coercive measures in Chapter VII, such as sanctions and peace enforcement. However, the focus of the UN Charter mostly concerns already escalated disputes that could lead to war and the threats that are likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. (UN Charter: Chapter VI, 1945; UN Charter: Chapter VII, 1945) At the same time, the emphasis is mostly on international disputes. This is in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter prevents from intervening in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state. (UN Charter: Chapter I, 1945) In other words, intrastate conflicts are not solved unless they are recognised as a threat for international peace and security. This context also affected the first official use of the word “preventive diplomacy” in 1960. As observed by Lund, UN Secretary General Hammerskjold, who coined the term, had in mind the UN keeping superpower proxy wars in third-world countries from escalating into global confrontations. (Lund, 2009, p. 288) The similar approach is seen in the Helsinki Act (1975) aimed at peaceful settlement of interstate disputes without intervention in internal affairs. (Helsinki Final Act, 1975)

Conflict prevention has risen to prominence in the 1990s due to changing political agendas of states, organisations and NGOs after the end of Cold War. In 1992, UN Secretary General Boutrus-Ghali created his Agenda for Peace, which was intended to not only keep regional conflicts from going global but also to prevent them from ever

starting. Thus the emphasis was not on how to alleviate current crises but on how to prevent future conflicts from developing. (Boutros-Ghali, 1992) The agenda partly reflected the evidence of violent nationalism, unleashed at the end of Cold War, which reached its peak with the war in Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, following years brought about other bloody conflicts not only in Balkan but also for instance in Rwanda.¹⁰ This experience has contributed to further strengthening the concept of conflict prevention. The biggest shift in the UN's agenda "from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention" is attributed to Boutros-Ghali's successor Kofi Annan. (Ackermann, 2003, p. 341) His report, "Prevention of Armed Conflicts" (2001) emphasises "*a comprehensive approach that encompasses both short-term and long-term political, diplomatic, humanitarian, human rights, developmental, institutional and other measures taken by the international community, in cooperation with national and regional actors*". (Annan, 2001, p. 2) It should address the deep-rooted socio-economic, cultural, environmental, institutional, political and other structural causes that can signalise danger of conflicts. (Annan, 2001, p. 36) This emphasis brings about a new generation of development projects, and is specifically focused on conflict prevention; for instance the UNDP project entitled "Preventive development in the south of Kyrgyzstan" aimed to enhance government capacities to undertake preventive measures as part of the process of nation-building. (Annan, 2001, p. 24) Similar policy has been observed among other major multilateral organisations. Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was institutionalised and expanded in 1992, and now plays an important role in election and human rights monitoring (Helsinki Document, 1992), and NATO has changed its focus from Cold War defence into post-Cold War crisis management. Since establishing Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 1991, the EU has started to play a huge role in conflict prevention. (Common Foreign Security Policy, 2010) Last but not least, conflict prevention has been also accommodated in development agendas. In its new report, the WB states conflict prevention along with post-conflict, reconstruction as critical factors to the bank's mission of poverty reduction. (Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy, c2010)

¹⁰ Rwanda atrocities also called for conceptualisation of humanitarian intervention and coined a new term of human security that found its embodiment in the concept of Responsibility to Protect, initiated by Boutros-Ghali's successor Kofi Annan in 2000.

2.2.4 Trends: New actors, old problems

2.2.4.1 Emergence of non-state actors

The previous section that traces the evolution of conflict prevention may have left the impression that conflict prevention regards official actors only. However, as mentioned in the section dealing with actors, they can be also non-official. Actually, the influence of the non-official actors is even increasing. This follows the general trend of the emergence of new actors, such as the sub-national levels of governments, religious sites or private corporations. This plurality is additionally managed by NGOs, professional associations, and intellectuals in the academic sphere. Non-state actors can contribute with their heterogeneity, flexibility and impartial status. On the other hand, their activities are negatively affected by the lack of diplomatic skills, immunity and influence as a result of minimal governmental support. (Mawlawi, 1993, pp. 403-406)

Considering their benefits, non-state actors are of a big potential when applying to the concept of conflict preventions. This is the special case of unofficial, non-structured interaction, called “track two diplomacy”. It is based on the assumption that actual or potential conflict can be resolved or eased by appealing to common human capabilities to respond to good will and reasonableness. (Davidson & Montville, 1981, p. 155) Accordingly, NGOs and other non-state actors constitute an alternative approach for a community that is wishing to achieve change, but is not convinced that violence is an appropriate action. (Wallenstein, 2007, p. 36) In this regard, unofficial (“track two”) and grass-roots dialogues are of a big importance, creating a new approach of multi-track diplomacy. (Notter & Diamond, 1996) Furthermore, local networks of civil groups or associations, educational institutions, or NGOs can be effective in monitoring day-to-day changes in a society, since they are familiar with the context in which they are working. Among international organisations, INGOs are often essential for monitoring activities and for providing resources for local activities (Fusato, 2003; Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict , 1997, p. xxviii). Such measures can provide early warning and thus prevent conflict from actual escalation. Additionally, the INGOs are more aimed at long-term solutions and place a higher emphasis on the commitment to a just peace. (Mawlawi, 1993, p. 401) This can be used in particular regard to structural diplomacy. To sum up, involving non-state actors in conflict prevention is crucial due to their emerging

influence and potential. Considering their multiple activities, neutral character and flexibility, the further engagement in preventive actions is very likely to be developed.

2.2.4.2 Persisting challenges

Conflict prevention is mostly provided by Western actors. These often, in regard of “projecting stability”, project Western models that are sanctioned by international financial institutions. As a result, countries in the biggest need of help, fail to receive financial aid because their governments do not meet the stringent conditions on democracy and human rights. (Stewart, 2003, pp. 12-13) Furthermore, such strategies are not uniformly effective and in weak, heterogeneous states can even increase the chances of conflicts. (Gurr, 2000, p. xiv) Assertive provision of democratic aid encounters not only reluctance from nondemocratic governments but also from the broader public.¹¹ (Carothers, 2006, p. 59) Accordingly, a short-sighted emphasis on Western values can, especially in the case of authoritarian or transforming countries, lead to counterproductive conflict prevention. In the long run, political and economic liberalisation, highly correlated with lower levels of both poverty and conflict, brings about political stability. Nevertheless, rapid democratisation can be dangerous. (Mansfield & Snyder, 2002) In this regard, conflict prevention needs to be led in a more dispassionate, deliberate, contextualised, and multidimensional way that places a higher priority on the desire for improved livelihood and the need for security than on instant democracy. (Lund, 2006, p. 57)

Overestimating of preventive diplomacy is criticised by Stedman who characterises it as an approach that finds early international responses to avoid potential crisis easier than more belated interventions. He also affirms that preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention are today slogans taken again commonly by the politicians,

¹¹ As a result of this “backlash against democracy aid”, organisations dealing with democratic aid have changed their focus. To maintain their in-country presence, they concentrated on training programmes and provision of technical assistance to local activists. More time and attention was also devoted to promotion and quasi-diplomatic activities justifying their work in front of authorities and public. (Gershman & Allen, 2006, p. 47) All in all, the development approach in democracy assistance has dwarfed the political one. In his 2010 article, Carothers supports the narrowing of the gap between development assistance and democracy aid, which is needed due to complementarity of their aims - market economy and liberal democracy. As he argues, this convergence came up in the last decade when developmentalists embraced a general imperative of “taking politics into account,” while democracy promoters accepted the need to “help democracy deliver.” (Carothers, 2010, p. 13) Thus, democracy aid and developing assistance are closer to each other, although some relevant differences will not allow merging of both approaches. Nevertheless, this development should be traced and also reflected in conflict prevention.

especially when those are claimed to be the pillars of the American foreign politics. As he concludes, the potential of preventive diplomacy is being oversold, its difficulties underestimated and its risks undervalued. This results in just another false and misleading “alchemy for a new world order”. (Stedman, 1995)

Another problem regards the inability to determine what successful conflict prevention is. This may be partially caused due to the above-mentioned conceptual ambiguity. At present, there are no precise indicators to determine the outcome, and therefore each case must be interpreted separately. (Wallensteen & Möller, 2003, p. 7) When reflecting conflict prevention, Jentleson defines three methodological obstacles: use of counterfactuality, relativity, and transitoriness. The first, in assessing success or failure of a preventive action, one has to rely on counterfactual reasoning. It means arguing that a violent conflict would have been avoided or limited if a particular factor had been different. Or, conversely, a conflict would have occurred if there had not been the impact of preventive diplomacy. The second, in the case of conflict prevention, measurement scale looks as follows: the main indicators are success of avoiding the negative and success of fully achieving the positive. Interpreting the factors is however very relative. The third, it is very hard to design success, as benchmarks are very changeable (e.g. how to measure the robustness of institution-building?). (Jentleson, 1996, p. 8) Last but not least, conflict prevention has to tackle the problem of how to reach the ultimate peace stage without encountering a destructive conflict on the way. (Lund, 2009, p. 302) This actually represents the biggest challenge for all those engaged in conflict prevention.

2.2.5 Operationalisation: Focus on Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan

This section will show how the above-mentioned theoretical framework can be applied to the case studies of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. First, the potential of intrastate conflict in the both states will be researched. In this regard, I will try to define the threats of national security in accordance with the Copenhagen school. From a political perspective, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are authoritarian regimes and as such they are more likely to initiate and to be the target of disputes. The main factors of interest here will be institutions: their weakness, constituency and possible development

in the transition process.¹² Institutions will be understood in the broader sense, as explained in the section dealing with political dimension. This notion will thus involve state apparatus, opposition, norms and procedures as well as traditions and attitudes to power and leadership. Given the specifics of Central Asian regimes, a special attention will be paid to succession and transfer of power. To conclude the political dimension, the main threats will stem from authoritarian/ sultanistic regime, institutional weakness, lack of democratic values and questionable succession. From an economic perspective, neither of the countries has successfully advanced to a market economy.¹³ Instead, the persistent state monopoly has significantly contributed to many inequalities: structural (as a result of the resources-oriented structure of industry from the Soviet); resource- and income-related (due to centralised distribution of state benefits); and regional (stemming from centralist policies implemented in a fragmented society). Therefore, the main emphasis of the economic section will be placed on threats of mismanaged transition and socio-economic inequalities.¹⁴ From a societal perspective, both states are relatively young. Their nation-building process has been inflamed by radical nationalism and intensified by the continuous suppression of ethnic, religious and language minorities.¹⁵ In addition to the nationalistic rhetoric and harsh discrimination, there are many signals indicating protracted social conflict.¹⁶ In the societal dimension I will thus point out the factors contributing to societal fragmentation (such as tribalism) as well as ethnic and religious clashes.

¹² Generally, authoritarian regimes are institutionally inconsistent as they lack a set of institutions that are mutually reinforcing. Without such equilibrium, elites in the system are tempted to get more power for themselves and thereby compete with one another, creating an inherently unstable system. (Gates, Hegre, Jones, & Strand, 2006, pp. 893-895) Furthermore, poorly consolidated institutions negatively affect transition process. (Diamond, 1999)

¹³ On the whole, the state's capacity to define social opportunities, regulate exchange, extract revenue, distribute privilege, and establish order is extremely weak. Moreover, deeply rooted principles of tribalism, patriarchy, collectivism, seniority and hierarchy raise questions about the chances for Central Asia to create and sustain Western-style capitalism, which is grounded in democratic institutions and individualism. (Trushin & Trushin, 2002)

¹⁴ This reflects competing socio-economic needs and interests: over scarce essential land, water, or other valued natural resources; shelter; education; jobs; and other income or wealth resources or future opportunities. In addition to this, another conflict-prone factor regards distribution of these vital resources. (Lund & Garner, 2001, p. 31)

¹⁵ Nationalist rhetoric, previously used to mobilise mass support, can unleash belligerent foreign policies. (Mansfield & Snyder, 2002, p. 299) Referring to Mansfield and Snyder, there is a high risk of belligerent nationalism that could fill the ideological vacuum appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union and communism.

¹⁶ A common feature for authoritarian regimes usually is social injustice that is a condition of already-mentioned structural violence. (Galtung, 1969, p. 171) The situation in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan meets Aznar's criteria: there is enduring economic and technological underdevelopment as well as disintegrated social and political systems.

Once defined as conflict-prone, the case studies can be researched in regard to conflict prevention: Current conditions of both states indicate stable and unstable (latent) peace stage of the conflict cycle.¹⁷ Given their strict regimes, Turkmenistan's (at to some extent also Uzbekistan's) isolation and hostile policies, especially towards Western state and non-state actors, the scope for preventive actions will be considerably limited. Using the distinction "international organisations, states and non-state actors" coined above in the section concerning actors, the main focus will be on the work of the former ones while the NGOs' activities will be present in a very limited extend. As the role of states will be limited to the most active, this logically assumes the emphasis on US-driven preventive actions. As far as preventive actions are concerned, they will mostly regard the ones of structural diplomacy. As mentioned before in the section dealing with preventive actions, I will mostly examine the development and governance approach from Lund's "toolbox". This will mostly concern democracy aid and development assistance, with a special respect to institutions- and capacity- building. Democracy aid will be mentioned to the extent it is provided in the region.

To assess conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, I will use SWOT analysis, which was outlined in the methodological part. Strengths will regard resources or capacities the actors can use when pursuing preventive actions. On the contrary, weaknesses will relate to the limitations, faults or defects of the actors. Opportunities and threats will represent any favourable and unfavourable situation in the local environment of Uzbekistan or Turkmenistan. The resulting mix will reflect conflict prevention in the countries.

¹⁷ Referring to Conflict Barometer provided by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, in Uzbekistan's case, conflict "opposition vs. Government" is entitled as a stagnating latent conflict, "IMU vs. government" is characterised as a decreasing, manifest conflict (e.g. demonstrated by verbal pressure, threatening explicitly with violence, or the imposition of economic sanctions). Turkmenistan's data has not been published. (Conflict Barometer, 2010)

3 Case studies

For many years, the image of Central Asia appeared like as follows: politically, relatively stabilised under the long-term rule of authoritarian presidents; economically, fragile and on the verge of poverty due to mismanaged transition; and finally geopolitically, irrelevant – as a godforsaken region left behind with all its problems.¹⁸ Today, Central Asia has become a geopolitical question mark in the midst of the 9/11 war against terrorism. As a result of neighbour Afghanistan, the region has attained a geopolitical importance from the West.¹⁹ Likewise, the global need for diversification of energy sources has made Turkmen and Uzbek gas as well as Kazakh oil appealing for Western countries, the newly emerging China and their traditional partner Russia.²⁰ Along with this new global strategic importance, Central Asian countries have encountered many significant domestic challenges. The Tajik civil war in mid 1990s and Kyrgyzstan's pogroms in 2010 show the omnipresent threat of conflict. Another problem these countries face is the possibility of a regime change, such as Kyrgyzstan's 2005 "tulip" revolution that was followed by a Bishkek-based coup d'état in 2010. To compound these issues, the narcotic trade and organised crime threaten to further destabilise the region. Despite these challenges and the region's growing importance for international community, the domestic development of the Central Asian republics has been primarily neglected without any external intervention. However, given the current conditions, the regimes' political shortcomings, imperfect institutions or economic fragility will not be able to prevent any serious social, ethnic and religious tensions from escalating into violent conflicts. More alarmingly, the possibility that recent Kyrgyzstan's events might not be an exception in Central Asia, nobody can predict when the citizens of other Central Asian states, having reached their pain threshold, will refuse to tolerate their regimes, toppling them with another autocracy. Although the case of Kyrgyzstan does not shed any light on the region's complexity, it emphasises that the similar curse of events can occur quite unexpectedly. As claimed in the previous chapter, political transition can bring

¹⁸ I refer to a narrower definition of Central Asia, which defines the region as the five landlocked states Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, which share borders with Russia, Iran and Afghanistan, and China. On the west, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan neighbour the Caspian Sea, an area with significant resources of oil and gas. This can be stated after the end of Tajik civil war in 1997 when the president Rahmon gained power.

¹⁹The moderate Muslim states of Central Asia have a critical role to play in the war on terrorism. Notwithstanding their importance, the establishment of U.S. bases, expanded U.S. aid programs, and the conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom.

²⁰To a lesser extent, there are also other players, e.g. India, Iran or Turkey.

about many new destabilising factors or let old hatred erupt more easily. Thus, in order to prevent this escalation, one should take into account the likelihood of such course of events also in the case of other Central Asian states. (Quinn-Judge, 2010)

Despite the euphoria accompanying the fall of iron curtain, the “third wave of democratisation”, a term coined by Samuel Huntington, did not include the countries of the entire former Soviet bloc.²¹ On the contrary, the five Central Asian republics belong to the less successful category for democracy has not been taken root there. They have all ended up somewhere halfway between democracy and authoritarian regime, adopting political systems with varying levels of liberalisation. In the post-Soviet power vacuum, the newly elected Central Asian presidents became extremely powerful. This fact actually helped secure state unity due to lack of legal regulations on politics or strong military structures. The formal adoption of articles from Western constitutions was aimed more for international recognition than at its actual implementation. In reality, the heads of state do not only symbolise the state’s unity but also stand as the de-facto guardian of political stability and state order. (Geiss, 2006, p. 33) Within this context, completely free democratic elections can paradoxically pose considerable threats and challenges to the political stability of the state. Due to the low level of legal constrains, political succession is often problematic and fuels domestic unrest, which may lead to civil wars, as showed the case in Tajikistan. Moreover, the problem of political succession encounters the ethnicisation of state and cultural preferences of economic and political elites which replaced informal arrangements. (Geiss, 2006, p. 33) Another factor to be considered is the regional complexity when several values and norms exist parallel to each other: the Soviet heritage, regionalism, clientelism and tribal affiliation, among the most influential ones. Additionally, formal and informal institutions mix steadily with the effect of control deficits. (Geiss, 2006, p. 11) These regional preconditions complicate any research on changes happening in Central Asian region conducted according to standard (mostly Western-originated) theories of regime change.

This section will concern the most rigid and isolated Central Asian regimes, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. In accordance with the theoretical framework provided in the previous chapter, each of the case studies will first be examined in terms of conflict

²¹More can be found in Huntington’s book: Huntington, S. *The third wave: democratization in the late twentieth century*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1st ed., 1991.

potential. The aim here is to show that both seemingly stable regimes are coping with many destabilising factors. The focus of “Preventive actions” will be on external preventive actions in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Logically, given the already mentioned domestic and international preconditions, this section will outline not only implemented but also thwarted actions. This step will provide a better and more balanced basis for analysis in the next chapter.

3.1 Uzbekistan

As the most populated country in Central Asia, Uzbekistan competes with Kazakhstan, the one with the largest territory, over the regional leadership.²² On the side of comparative advantages, Karimov’s state is the most militarised among all the Central Asian republics, borders all of them and many Uzbek minorities live in the neighbouring countries. Moreover, Uzbekistan’s significance today is not only in terms of rich oil resources but also in regard to war against terrorism. While the country’s proximity to Afghanistan has made it a crucial partner for Western military operations in the region, domestic emergence of radical Islam has brought about terrorist Islamic Movement for Uzbekistan with a good regional linkage of terrorist organisations and many radical offshoots.²³ Given the country’s importance for the whole region, its potential political and social breakdown would affect the stability of the entire Central Asia.

3.1.1 Threats of national stability

As mentioned above, the US war against terrorism in neighbouring Afghanistan has placed Uzbekistan in the foreground of international security policy. This continues to happen despite the overthrow of Taliban rule in the country. Lacking any functioning regional structures in Central Asia, Uzbekistan’s national security has been solitarily

²² 45 % of Central Asian population lives in Uzbekistan. (Uzbekistan: Country Brief 2010, 2010) Importantly, the term “Uzbek” refers to members of the Uzbek ethnic group as well as to citizens of Uzbekistan (however, Uzbekistan is a heterogeneous state and ethnic Uzbeks constitute around 75 % of the population). More politically correct label “Uzbekistani” will not be used here due to its cumbersome character and because the leadership is almost exclusively Uzbek in its ethnic origins as well as its nationalist posturing is primarily aimed at the ethnic Uzbek majority in Uzbekistan. (Akbarzadeh, 2005, p. 5) All the Central Asian states but Kazakhstan refused to use a politically more correct term “Uzbekistani” or “Turkmenistani” and, in accordance with their nationalistic policies, stress the presence of the titular nation in their countries by referring to citizens as “Uzbeks” or “Turkmens” only. (Roy, 2000, p. 174)

²³ This situation has enabled the Central Asian ruling elites to strengthen authoritarian regimes by securitising international terrorism and making declarations about terrorist groups’ activities within their borders. Moreover, the international community accepted the fight against international terrorism as a central theme, creating conditions that encourage securitisation of this fight. (Chernykh & Burnashev, 2005, p. 142)

exposed to many external and internal threats.²⁴ The external threats have included environment deterioration, terrorism and Islam fundamentalism, mostly stemming from the neighbouring countries. Also, regional problems related to drugs, arms, and human trafficking have strengthened the role of mafia groups, and keep contributing to criminalisation of the state. The further sub-chapters will however focus on the latter category, internal threats, which mostly regard undeveloped institutions and undemocratic character of political system. As such, these threats cause serious violations of human rights, thwarted economic transition and regional, religious and ethnical tensions. In accordance with the theoretical framework, there will be three main areas to discuss. The first, political dimension will regard state control, state policies, regime change, and secession issues. The second, economic dimension will reflect the transition process in regards to social well-fare as well as the distribution of state benefits among local communities and groups. Finally, the third, societal dimension will focus on sub-national ethnic or religious tensions.

3.1.1.1 Political dimension

Strict authoritarianism

In political terms, the potential for tensions stems mainly from Uzbekistan's authoritarian political system based on traditional patrimonial²⁵ culture. Karimov's regime is one of the world's most repressive dictatorships.²⁶ Even when compared to other Central Asian countries, Uzbek state structures stand out because of their tight control over the population, which is managed by police and security apparatuses. Since the country's independence, Karimov's rule has borne many characteristics of authoritarian regime, with a strong position of president. At the same time, the regime has consistently worked to generate an image of a multi-party political system. Karimov has declared his adherence to democracy proclaiming that sooner or later there will be democratic institutions and a democratic political culture rooted in Uzbekistan. (Tolipov, 2006, p. 74) This however has contradicted the real domestic development of the country. The regime has done little to address democratic aspirations. Beyond the seemingly pluralistic façade, Uzbek politics kept its authoritarian character, similar to the one from the Soviet times. It

²⁴ Just to demonstrate (The Failed States Index, 2010)

²⁵ Using Weber's terminology, Uzbekistan serves as an example of the "patrimonial" state where the authority is based in traditional rules and powers distribution.

²⁶ For more information, see the latest Freedom in the World report. (Country Report: Uzbekistan, 2010)

remains fully committed to maintaining complete control over the political processes, institutions and discourse. Although the constitution of Uzbekistan guarantees a democratic system of government, the political system is tightly controlled by a narrow group of people led by the president. The political elite, which emerged from the old communist nomenclature, is without any public legitimacy because the elections and electoral laws do not meet democratic standards and there is no honest electoral rivalry or campaigning. In the recent presidential election, held on 23rd December 2007, Karimov won with 88 % of the votes cast. In terms of elections observation, ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) could send only a limited mission there. This was caused partly because of visa complications but also due to almost no opportunities to assess the election comprehensively, as there is only “limited nature of the competition” in the country. (Election observation mission: Presidential election in Uzbekistan, 2007) This statement actually describes the current political system very well. Lack of significant differences in the agendas of registered political parties does not provide the electorate with a genuine choice. Five pro-government political parties hold all seats in the parliament, while two major opposition groups, the Birlik (Unity) movement and the Erk (Freedom) Democratic Party, have been banned and their attempts to come back to public life face persecutions of their representatives and supporters, and lack of public support. Apparent freedom of association, present in Uzbekistan’s constitution, does not extend to public initiatives that have the potential to question the political legitimacy of the ruling regime. Reported cases of prosecution just highlight the political nature of charges against NGO activists and reveal the Uzbek judiciary’s lack of independence from the ruling regime. State repressions mostly regard the activities of their political opponents but also grass-roots organisations that are seen as a threat to stability and security of the state. (Akbarzadeh, 2005, p. 102)

Such harsh repressions should sooner or later bring about some reaction. Yet, anti-regime protests have been focused just locally with a slight chance to develop into country-wide demonstrations. Moreover, different groups within the Uzbek political opposition as well as among human rights defenders have not demonstrated any real ability to cooperate. As a result, although opposition to the Karimov regime is widespread, there is little indication that these scattered subjects will cohere into an effective national movement. (McGlinchey, 2009, pp. 129-130) Last but not least, the

bloody crackdown on protesters against the government during May 2005 in Andijan, the Ferghana valley, seemed to answer the question whether Karimov's government would resort to violence to remain in power.²⁷ In these terms, although stricter limits of democratic reforms, as a result of the Andijan events and "democratising" wave of colour revolutions, have not been accompanied with other significant demonstrations, the further development is barely predictable.

No democratic values rooted

Another important factor regards the regime recognition in the eyes of the public. One of the features of 75-year Soviet rule was the passive attitude of the population towards local authority which had been carried over from the patriarchal past.²⁸ Repression of entrepreneurship and political initiative within Communist Uzbekistan led ineluctably to "indifferent attitudes" towards political life which is seen as distinct from the life of the family, clan or village. (Spechler, 2008, p. 27) As a result, the complaints of the majority of ordinary citizens in fact do not refer to the authoritarianism and harsh repressions, but rather concern the high prices and shortages of goods, corruption, arbitrariness of officials and the police, and the poor public health system. (Rumer, 2005, p. 28) Moreover, the power of a strong ruler is historically embedded in the Uzbek mindset and even in the present-day Uzbekistan this concept forms the backbone of the nation's social structure. This is because the Uzbek authoritarianism seems to be adaptive and self-generating: it has exhibited a remarkable ability to preserve itself while entering a new and more challenging international environment. (Akbarzadeh, 2005, p. 107) As claimed by Russian scholar Naumkin, when Western analysts speak of Karimov's authoritarianism, they overlook the fact that authoritarianism is not a whim or a political

²⁷ The fourth largest Uzbek city Andijan is located in the Ferghana Valley, which has suffered both from the government's repression of Islamic groups and from high poverty and unemployment. In May 2005, the government accused Islamic extremists of orchestrating the demonstrations, though most of the protesters appeared to have been motivated by economic and social grievances. Karimov repeatedly rejected calls from the UN, the EU, the OSCE, and the USA for an independent international inquiry into the violence. The crackdown unleashed by the Uzbek authorities after the Andizhan violence continued in 2006, targeting potential political opposition figures, human rights defenders, and even former officials. According to human rights activists, it is more than obvious that the government used the Andijan events to maintain tight control over all possible sources of dissent. ("Saving its Secrets", 2008)

²⁸ Instead of traditions of tribal democracy, which were strong among nomadic peoples, Uzbek people tend to adhere to the traditions of hierarchy and authoritarianism, which characterises the sedentary people of the river valleys. Among nomadic people discussion is considered positive. However, among the sedentary people, disagreement and opposing a decision are considered to be rude; whereas obeying is regarded as polite and the right form of behaviour. (Gleason, 1997, p. 117)

line, but the integral feature of Uzbekistan's traditional political culture. Nevertheless, *“authoritarian rule in societies such as Uzbekistan's can better control various competing clans during painful periods of transition, but it can also doom society to a stagnation fraught with explosion if it does not soften its grip on power and conduct changes and reforms”*. (Naumkin, 2009, p. 132)

In addition to this, the vast majority of the Uzbekistan's population has none or just very little understanding of what a democratic citizenship really means. Western conceptualisations of human and civil rights are based on the rights of individual not on the rights of community. In Central Asian societies, including Uzbekistan, individual is traditionally subordinate to the society. (Kubicek, 1998, p. 30) Besides, Karimov has been successful in achieving the de-intellectualisation of the Uzbek society. His extraordinary control over any manifestation of critical thinking in society has in many spheres reached even a greater degree than was true in the Brezhnev era. As argued by Rumer, people do not believe what Karimov says, they are just used to having him rule. (Rumer, 2005, p. 28) Moreover, there is one important factor which influences this attitude. Horrors accompanying the 1992-1997 civil war in neighbouring Tajikistan have affected public consciousness in Uzbekistan and paralysed the will and capacity to oppose the regime. As a result, many Uzbeks fear that the collapse of the Karimov regime would only lead to bloody chaos in Uzbekistan and to destabilisation in the region as a whole. (Rumer, 2005, p. 28) Nonetheless, the mindset lasting here for many years seems to be changing due to the current development. The traditionally firm public trust in the state is seen as weakening in the light of permanently increasing economic problems and the inability of state institutions to appropriately deal with them. (Dadabaev, 2004, p. 162) This combined with the state repression might be counterproductive.

Weak institutions

The Uzbek transition failed to produce institutional forms that are consistent with democratic systems. Uzbekistan has not developed media and speech freedoms that often promote the growth of civil society; nor have democratisation programmes been implemented that could spark ethnic nationalism among political actors seeking power at high levels. (George, 2009, p. 96) Although de jure Uzbekistan has a clear separation of powers, de facto only the president and the cabinet of ministers initiate new laws while

the parliament remains passive. (Pikulia, 2006, p. 145) While Uzbekistan faces universal dominance of regionally based actors, preferences and power imbalance, its electoral system can be described as centralist and more restrictive than in the other countries.²⁹ Yet, this accumulation of power does not serve to Uzbekistan's citizens. The state institutions still maintain major social welfare programs but the capacity of the state to provide a comprehensive package of social protection measures is limited.³⁰ As a result, traditional family and neighbourhood community (mahalla) are now the most effective shock-absorbing social units even in modern Uzbekistan.³¹ (Dadabaev, 2004, p. 165) However, in today's Uzbekistan mahallas cannot function autonomously; together with aqsaqals (assembly of elders through which the government channels financial assistance to the mahallas), they have been incorporated in the administrative hierarchy of power controlled by the government. (Akbarzadeh, 2005, p. 111) Hence, the traditional regional organisations rather help authoritarianism remain in the country.

As seen from the above mentioned, due to the current weakness of Uzbekistan's institutions, the ruling elites can continue to dominate the process by which institutions are designed, and hence, reduce the likelihood for institutional innovation and political liberalisation. According to Jones Luong, these elites are motivated to adopt political reform only if they perceive that changing circumstances can help them acquire or retain as much power as possible. (Luong, 2002, p. 3) Thus, the actual change can come only with a dramatic shift in power which is now both hard to gain and to predict.

Questionable succession

Similar to the other countries in the region, Uzbekistan faces the lack of legitimate, reliable mechanism for the transfer of supreme power. Although Karimov appears to be the strongest leader in the region, he simply lacks anyone else of equal

²⁹For instance, the electoral laws limit the right to nominate candidates to one per electoral district for each officially sanctioned political party and regional-level legislature as well as concentrate the supervision of all electoral procedures and outcomes in the president-appointed Central Electoral Commission. (Luong, 2002, p. 8)

³⁰ Just to demonstrate: WB Governance Indicators 2009 (Governance Indicators, 2009)

³¹ Interestingly, one third of the Uzbekistan's population considers their local mahalla to be a source of their identification. (Dadabaev, 2004, p. 149) More on the mahalla concept can be found in Daniel Steven's article NGO–Mahalla partnerships: exploring the potential for state–society synergy in Uzbekistan published in *Central Asian Survey* 24(3) (September 2005), pp. 281–296 or Massicard, E. and Trevisani T., *The Uzbek Mahalla: Between state and society*, In: Everett-Heath T., (ed), *Central Asia: Aspects of transition*, Routledge-Curzon 2003

calibre, in terms of his political experience and his ability to manage such a complex society that is represented by the regional and clan structure of Uzbekistan. (Rumer, 2005, p. 18) Accordingly, many think there is no real alternative to Karimov. Considering the ruler's high age, the problem of his successor is thus gaining awareness in Uzbekistan. Although a dynastic succession is often discussed in this case, prospects of Karimov's daughter in a secularly Muslim society of Uzbekistan are under dispute. In fact, the current loyal and relatively stable political system is based on a forced consensus between Uzbekistan's major clans.³² While the constitutional system remains weak, it is very likely that it will be the clan membership, together with economic and personal ties between various groups, what will matter the most in the heightening struggle for power. Given this situation, no one can exclude a possibility of a bloody struggle between several clans if the country's leadership came into question. As Olcott says, while there is a slim chance that the transfer of power will be accomplished peacefully, one fact can be taken for granted- this will not occur through democratic means. (Olcott, 2005, p. 156)

3.1.1.2 Economic dimension

Mismanaged transition

The dissolution of the Soviet Union put a huge question mark over the future economic development of all the former Soviet republics. In Uzbek case, Karimov rather embraced past policies and tried to preserve the command economy. The reason for this step was twofold: he wanted to avoid the risk of social turmoil, as well as did not dare to confront the existing mafia-clan Uzbek elite, which had an extremely strong interest in preserving the status quo and which enjoys his protection.³³ (Rumer, 2005, p. 27) This approach has resulted in a less painful economic and social transition than experienced in most countries of the CIS countries and, in recent years, a strong macroeconomic

³²The balance is between the Samarkand clan of the president and the ones from Tashkent and Ferghana. (Zasada, 2004, p. 74) Importantly, Uzbekistan is quite a large country, with several historically developed regional and ethnic groups, and these constitute the basis for the corresponding clans. Clan affiliation is the most important factor in group identification and a pass to career or political influence.

³³According to Rumer, Karimov did not demolish the old command economy probably because he understood what would happen if the WB and IMF prescriptions were superimposed on the actual conditions of Uzbekistan. Thanks to that decision, the economic downturn in Uzbekistan was less severe than in the other post-Soviet countries. This view is quite visible in Karimov's current book „The global financial-economic crisis, ways and measures to overcome it in the conditions of Uzbekistan“, where he refers to “Washington consensus” as the shock therapy that should not be recommended for Uzbekistan emerging economy. (Rumer, 2005, pp. 25-26; The Global Financial-Economic Crisis, Ways and Measures to Overcome it in the Conditions of Uzbekistan, 2009)

performance. (Uzbekistan: Country Brief 2010, 2010) Nevertheless, the sustainability of the positive development is questionable. The actual purpose of this “gradualist” approach to a market economy was to concentrate all economic control and activity in the central government.³⁴ (Luong, 2002, p. 130) State intervention remains considerable in many areas of the economy and continues to hold back long-term economic development. This negatively affects development of the private and financial sector. GDP growth reached in the recent years, has been driven by world market prices of gold and cotton and expanded natural gas (the country’s key export commodities).³⁵ (Uzbekistan: Country Brief, 2010) In this regard however, there is little diversification away from the production of primary commodities and agriculture is still an important sector of the economy, accounting for a third of employment. The trade regime, both domestic and external, remains restrictive and the government continues to suppress imports. Therefore, except for export revenues from Russia and Kazakhstan, doubly-landlocked Uzbekistan is relatively isolated from the global economy. Governance is undermined by low government accountability and transparency to public and corruption is perceived as pervasive.³⁶ Uzbekistan’s fiscal system lacks transparency, and there are large discrepancies in official statistics. At the same time, unidentified capital outflows, smuggled imports in particular, have also significantly increased whereas foreign direct investment has remained one of the lowest among the transition economies. (2010 Index of Economic Freedom: Uzbekistan, c2010)

All in all, since the country's gradualist reform strategy has involved postponing significant macroeconomic and structural reforms, the sustainability of the policy remains in question. Karimov is, finally, seeking to modernise the economy but at the same time he is also trying to block the modernisation of the society. Diminishing the latter can however ruin the development of the former with any sign of instability.

Growing social inequality

³⁴ According to Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, there is certain delegation of power from state to business that has decreased state intervention. In 2010, only 25 percent of Uzbekistan’s GDP was attributed to government spending; whereas, ten years ago it was almost 100 percent. (Sodiq, Artikova, Saidov, & Olcott, 2010)

³⁵ In the WB Ranking, Uzbekistan is placed the 158th with 2850 USD (Purchasing power parity method), or the 166th with 1100 USD (Atlas method) respectively. (Gross national income per capita 2009, Atlas method and PPP, 2009)

³⁶ Just to demonstrate: Corruption Perceptions Index, 2010 (Corruption Perception Index 2010 Results, 2010)

The negative impact of the state-led economy on the population is especially seen in regard to the unequal distribution of the states benefits among the population. While jobs generation and private consumption have lagged, the country has not experienced any notable reduction in poverty as growth has been poverty-inelastic. Incomes and living standards have improved little since the early 1990s and rural poverty continues to be significant.³⁷ The enormous social problems of Uzbekistan- unemployment and poverty in the villages and much of the urban population- are being aggravated by rapid demographic growth. (Rumer, 2005, p. 27) Given the country's weak economy and the government's inability to provide adequate social services to its population, Uzbekistan runs a serious risk of alienating its poorer classes and facing increased competition from alternative social movements. These may seek external support and become less willing to compromise with the idea of a national state. The demographic reality appears bleak: the rapid growth of Uzbekistan's population in the medium term will put considerable pressure on the ability of the state to meet the burgeoning demands placed on it. (Everett-Heath, 2003, p. 200) The current benefits still regard only narrow social groups –the ruling elite, emerged from regional and clan structures, which has links to those structures as well as mafia groups. (Zasada, 2004, p. 69) While these groups of Uzbekistan's population considerably benefited from the post-Soviet privatisation, the position of the middle class remained very weak. This has resulted in a sharp increase in the income inequality which has hurt the lower ranks of society. Due to low salaries and high prices of goods and services, Uzbek families face serious difficulties when trying to provide enough sources to live off of. As fewer and fewer jobs are created and payments are chronically delayed, many Uzbeks are forced to seek jobs abroad.³⁸ Needless to say, unemployment also deepens people's frustration which might undermine the state's stability. This especially regards youth unemployment, as young people represent the majority of Uzbekistan's population. Additionally, the complicated economic and environmental conditions are significantly affecting the way people live. As such, they can help deepen intra-societal divisions along ethnic, regional and local lines.

³⁷ Just to demonstrate, Uzbekistan's Human Development Index is 0.617, which gives the country a rank of 102 out of 169 countries with comparable data. (Uzbekistan: Country profile of human development indicators, 2010)

³⁸ According to various estimates, between 2 million and 8 million Uzbek citizens work abroad. These migrants send over \$1.3 billion home in remittances annually, making up to 8% of Uzbekistan's GDP. (Marat, 2009)

3.1.1.3 Societal dimension

Since their very beginnings, Uzbekistan's state-building policies have concerned the perceived dangers of cultural identification, whether ethnically or religiously construed. As a result, this policy has been overtly authoritarian and hostile to identity politics. (George, 2009, p. 96) The government of Uzbekistan relentlessly bombarded the population with the idea that the state was in mortal danger, a move which exemplified the boundaries of the state's identity, and legitimised the authoritarian rule of president Karimov as the defender of the state against that danger. (Megoran, 2005, p. 556) As a tool of this state-led identity-building, "official" Uzbek culture was promoted as part of the drive to consolidate its nationalist credentials. However, this Uzbek culture was neither democratic nor ready to challenge authority. (Akbarzadeh, 2005, p. 109) As a result, it has worsened regional, ethnic and religious clashes.

Regional antagonism and tribalism

The nation-building process has been always challenged by the importance of regional identity. In Uzbekistan, regional and local integrity together with clan affiliation play an important role in gaining loyalty. The regional groups primarily try to pursue their own group interests at the expense of common and national goals. They attempt to promote their people in the state hierarchy.³⁹ Region of origin is perceived as the main source of political support for the ruling elite. The central executive is expected to maintain the national elite and mediate between regional rivalries. Also in regard to national sources, there is strong pressure to allocate national resources to the regions. Citizens perceive disruption or fundamental alternation of the regional balance of power as a big threat. (Luong, 2002, pp. 57-58) Tribal relations continue to be of a great importance in the rural regions, where traditional modes of lifestyle have greater influence. In this regard, mahalla ties are also of profound importance to the organisation of the society. As already explained, the ties however represent the mechanism through which government policy can be transmuted from having significance in the public sphere to influencing activities in the private one. Karimov's control over mahalla has given him

³⁹Uzbekistan's regional structure can be described as hierarchical. At the national level, the president, along with his administration, functions as the supreme authority. The same situation regards the provincial level, where the governor controls the provincial administration, the provincial council and the provincial courts. The head of district controls the district administration, the district council and the district courts. On the whole, power structures are very hierarchical and not separated at any level. (Pikulia, 2006, p. 146)

an element of control at the microsocial level and a highly efficient information network that can be used to prevent the growth and organisation of opposition to his rule. (Everett-Heath, 2003, p. 197)

Tribalism is perceived as a threat for national stability by Karimov, who does not come from a major clan. Bearing this in mind, the president has tried to diminish the influence of certain families by frequent rotation of the most influential posts in the state hierarchy. (Tolipov, 2006, pp. 73-4) Nonetheless, as mentioned in the political dimension, this fragile balance can break down when Karimov leaves office. The probable scenario is that the clans will confront one another and the most powerful candidates will vie to take control of the country, replacing Karimov's position. This will entail a reorganisation of the political scene and a new division of influence in the economy. Given the bad economic situation of the Uzbek society, the absence of prospects for a rapid improvement and the rising radicalism, the unequal position between the strong clans and the weak central institutions can in the worst case scenario result in the country's division; either de facto or even de jure.

Ethnic antagonism

Like all societies in post-Soviet Central Asia, Uzbekistan has a multi-ethnic structure hosting more than 100 nationalities. However, with Uzbeks constituting 80 % of the population, the country is the most homogeneous in the region. (The World Factbook: Uzbekistan, 2011) As a negative effect of Soviet legacy, there are still many administrative-territorial divisions which were artificially created across the whole Central Asia regardless of natural ethnic borders.⁴⁰ These also affect Uzbekistan's two major regionally concentrated minorities: the former forms the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpaks, localised in the west of Uzbekistan that is badly affected by the dessertification of the Aral Sea. The latter represents Tajiks, inhabitants of the important cities of Bukhara and Samarkand.⁴¹ Although the Uzbek Constitution guarantees equal

⁴⁰ The current design of the states was created in 1936, when so-called ethnically based republics were established, each of them named after its numerically strongest ethnic group. Due to this command-based division, each of the republics inherited large minorities of its Central Asian neighbours or other states which posed a threat of political instability in each of them. This state became even more dramatic after SU dissolution which lifted strict centralisation from Moscow.

⁴¹ Although the republic has its own constitution, parliament and president, it exists within the structure of the Uzbek republic and Uzbek laws are superior to those of Karakalpakstan.

rights to all citizens irrespective of their origin, strong nationalisation policy implemented by Uzbek officials has however led to animosity and suspicion between these groups.⁴² (Tolipov, 2006, pp. 73-4) The active recruitment of ethnic Tajiks by the Islamic Movement for Uzbekistan (IMU) has resulted in increased repression on Tajik minority in Uzbekistan. Another important minority group represents Russians. The previous overrepresentation of Russian speakers in many aspects has been reversed and now they are generally under-represented in the critical areas of political and economic life. Yet, chances of Russian protest in the incumbent regime seem low. Ethnic Russians in Uzbekistan seem likely to deal with grievances in the future as they have in the past: through reliance on Moscow to pressure Uzbekistan and through immigration to Russia. (Assessment for Russians in Uzbekistan, 2006)

Religious antagonism

In addition to Uzbekistan's multiethnic character, there is also a multitude of religions spread throughout the country. At the same time Islam, the most significant, comprises many branches and divisions. Under such conditions, the only rigid model to keep inter-ethnic, inter-religious and inter-fractional tolerance and peace is a secular state. (Tolipov, 2005, p. 269) Compared to radical Islam movements in neighbouring Tajikistan, Sunni Muslim community, grouping the majority of Islam believers in Uzbekistan, is not as likely to radicalise. One of the reasons for the prevailing secularism here is that Uzbeks are rather gripped by the fear that Islamists will come to power as they have already seen, from the cases of Iran and Afghanistan, and they understand what the rule under theocratic dictatorship can be like. (Rumer, 2005, p. 28) However, as already mentioned in the political dimension, authoritarian Uzbek regime does not allow any opposition which can minimise the chance of any serious secular alternative to the existing order. This policy currently has a significant impact on changing religious views in the country. While moderate and from state independent Islam ideology has been markedly eliminated, the fundamentalist Islamic ideology now attracts growing numbers of supporters. (Zasada, 2004, p. 69) The extreme Islam represents the exiled Islamic

⁴²A new wave of "Uzbekisation" was initiated shortly after gaining the independence. Government employees had to pass a test in Uzbek language, while the public service jobs gradually became the preserve of native Uzbek speakers. (Hiro, 2009, p. 178) Karimov regime also rehabilitated a deliberately falsified version of ancient ruler Timur as to draw attention to the importance of strong leadership and centralised statehood in Uzbek history. (March, 2003, p. 229)

Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), listed by the US State Department as a terrorist organisation since 2000. Among its aims, the IMU's agenda involves creation of an Islamic state whereas this can be also accomplished with violent means. The IMU's activity has rather stagnated since its neutralisation by the US-led military operations in Afghanistan in 2001–2002 but the current evidence indicates its renaissance. The Islamic movement Hizb ut-Tahrir (Party of Islamic Liberation), which on the contrary professes non-violence in pursuit of the creating a global Caliphate, is more active on the ground and its decentralised cell structure makes its following hard to measure. (Stevens, 2007, p. 53) Both the IMU and Hizb ut-Tahrir are branded terrorist in Uzbekistan; despite the fact the latter explicitly rejects political violence and maintains a legal operation in Europe. (Akbarzadeh, 2005, p. 91)

In an attempt to address the Islam issue, Uzbekistan's authoritarian government has promoted a form of official Islam, much like the government-controlled institutions tolerated in Soviet Uzbekistan. Accordingly, religious leaders, imans, and seminary teachers are closely watched to prevent any political dissent, and several thousands of Uzbeks are in prison for exceeding the boundaries of permitted Islam and/or revolutionary activities. The authorities' treatment of those suspected of affiliation with Islamic groups is harsh. The meaning of term "Wahhabi" is usually understood as a group of orthodox Sunnis that is dominant in Saudi Arabia. Yet, Wahhabi has been broadened by the Uzbek officials to refer to religious expression or behaviour that departs from official governmental definitions or is perceived by Uzbek Muslims as inappropriate. (Hilgers, 2006, p. 84) Such a method of combating political opposition, religious extremism and fundamentalism can have many negative side-effects especially targeting moderate Islam. As a result of the restrictions, there are not any established independent Islamic organisations or any Islamic leader in Uzbekistan, either official or independent, who feel free to express their views publicly. (Spechler, 2008, p. 5) On the other hand, relative deprivation, unemployment, and harsh authoritarian methods provide conditions for young men to join Islamist opposition groups, such as Hizb-u-Tahrir. (Spechler, 2008, p. 5) Consequently, while the radicalism of the Uzbek society is increasing, so is the conflict potential of the country.

3.1.2 Preventive actions

The previous subchapter pointed out the key factors that can cause escalation of intrastate conflict in Uzbekistan. Linking to this, the following subchapter seeks to introduce current preventive actions of external state and non-state actors have implemented in the country. Given the particularities of the domestic regime and the rather irrelevant international status of Uzbekistan, there will barely be any initiatives explicitly referring to actual “conflict prevention”.⁴³ Hence, the main aim here is to focus on the policies and actions which can diminish the potential of conflict. As already mentioned in the theoretical framework, such activities, specifically implemented in Uzbekistan, will concern more development aid and democracy assistance, including institution- and capacity-building. Given that such focused activities are mostly West-driven and all the other relevant actors (either states such as Russia or China, or regional organisations) prefer other policy orientation to conflict prevention, the main stress will be on the West-lead initiatives. Nevertheless, if relevant, other than the West perspective will be also outlined.

3.1.2.1 International organisations

This part will concentrate on the international organisations with the agenda of conflict prevention. Quite surprisingly, NATO activities in Uzbekistan will not be introduced as their depth and focus does not appear significant for this topic matter.⁴⁴

UN

In Tashkent, the United Nations (UN) is represented by eight of its agencies.⁴⁵ In regard to the focus and limits of this paper, solely activities dealing with the above-mentioned political, economic and societal threats will be examined here. In the aftermath of the Andijan events, the local office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees

⁴³ This is partly due to their its isolationist approach in foreign policy, partly due to general perception of the Central Asia abroad- the countries are perceived as remote and thus not in the focus of the international community (not members of the Council of the Europe, EU membership not discussed...).

⁴⁴ While Uzbekistan-NATO relations declined to some extent following the events in Andijan in 2005, currently NATO and Uzbekistan engage in regular dialogue through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council EAPC, and are actively developing cooperation in a number of specific fields.

⁴⁵ UN agencies in Uzbekistan: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank (WB).

(UNHCR) had to stop its activities in the country. Likewise unwelcome have been other UN officials dealing with human rights. Due to the failure in addressing human rights issues, preventive actions has more concerned with development policies. In this regard, the agenda of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides a sound ground for conflict prevention.⁴⁶ Economically, one of the most profound activities regards policy advice. For instance, the UNDP and the World Bank (WB) have played a key role in the formulation of the Welfare Improvement Strategy (WIS), a medium-term national development document for 2008-2010 with the aim to significantly accelerating poverty reduction, improve living standards and reduce inter-regional inequalities in socio economic development. (What we do, c2010) The UNDP keeps providing analytical support to the further reform process in Uzbekistan and seeks to create a platform for nationwide debates on development issues as a basis for social and economic reforms. (Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) 2010-2015). Other numerous economic projects are aimed at the development of the private sector - here UNDP assists the Government in strengthening investment and export promotion institutions. A special instrument represents dialogues between the government, the private sector and the communities. Another group of projects relates to rural development and employment generation. In this regard, development projects in Karakalpakstan, and Kashkadarya are of a particular interest. They try to promote income generation, microfinance and job creation. (Area Based Development Programme, 2010) Rural development projects are often implemented via mahallas where communities are trained and advised for instance on local income generation. (Enhancement of Living Standards in Fergana Valley, 2010)

In its good governance section, UNDP seeks to strengthen the capacities of the national human rights institutions and relevant bodies. The main objectives are community-based centres with free Internet access, a network of volunteers, methodological and technical support to the legal clinic where practicing lawyers can provide tutor work. (Development of Capacities of the National Human Rights Institutions in Uzbekistan , 2010) Among its activities, UNDP also helps build core competencies of the local NGOs as to support their organisational development, fundraising, or networking. (UNDP in Uzbekistan, 2010, p. 23) There is a special focus

⁴⁶ The UNDP programme in Uzbekistan involves three spheres: economic governance and welfare, environment and energy and good governance. In regard to our paper, we will focus on the first and third sphere, which can partly correspond to the economic and political dimension discussed earlier.

on participation and civic engagement where especially young people are involved in programmes of civic education promoting volunteerism and community participation in development initiatives. (UNDP in Uzbekistan, 2010) Yet, the UNDP approach has become quite wide-ranging. To increase effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact, UNDP should consolidate its programmes focusing on fewer substantive areas in which it has demonstrable comparative strength, and take a more comprehensive long-term approach in these selected areas. Consolidation of the programme more focused on the areas with the biggest success-likelihood and best capacity needed. (UNDP in Uzbekistan, c2010, p. 10) All in all, this can be also argued with the respect to the UN itself.

OSCE

Given the character of Uzbekistan's regime, the OSCE has had to balance between its commitments and its fragile position in the country.⁴⁷ (Kreikemeyer, 2006a, p. 108) To remain in the country after the Andijan events, the OSCE had to turn its liaison centre in Tashkent into the Office of the OSCE Project Coordinator with annually renewable mandate, limited budget, staff and activities. The new representation has downplayed the importance of human dimension and been largely confined to indirect efforts to promote rights norms. As a result, its current activities in Uzbekistan also involve the political-military, the economic and the environmental dimension.⁴⁸ (Survey of OSCE Field Operations, 2009) Economically, the OSCE seeks to promote entrepreneurship via workshops and trainings, and to contribute to greater transparency in decision-making via methodology elaboration. (OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan- Economy) Due to lack of technical expertise, instruments and respective resources, it coordinates its activities with other international financial institutions which are much better equipped and prepared. (Kreikemeyer, 2006a, p. 111) Politically, the OSCE has launched several initiatives to help reform the judicial and legal system in Uzbekistan and also organised a

⁴⁷ The OSCE Centre opened in Tashkent in 1995. The situation changed after the Andijan events when the government started to drive international human rights organisations out of the country. For instance, the government refused to allow visits by any of the UN special representatives and ordered closure of the UNHCR's office in Tashkent.

⁴⁸ At the beginning of the 90s, the OSCE activities in the region solely concerned human dimension which was linked to human rights agenda with far-reaching but mostly illusory expectations of democratisation. These were led by the assumption that institutional strength is necessarily linked to democracy. However, as proved by practical evidence, there are also some stable autocracies. (Kreikemeyer, 2006a, p. 109)

number of seminars, roundtables and workshops to form and strengthen civil society in the country. Similar to the UNDP, OSCE projects seek to assist in enhancing the institutional capacities of the National Association of NGOs via training courses and roundtables in the regions. It also focuses on human rights education, and the promotion of human rights standards and rule of law principles towards a sustainable system via re-training of lawyers-practitioners. (Demokratization and the Rule of Law, c2011) Nonetheless, many consider the OSCE to have failed to reach its potential since its activities are mostly narrowed to raising issues only via monitoring and public statements. For instance, the OSCE condemned Uzbekistan presidential poll in 2007 and repeatedly has expressed its concern over bad human rights record in the country harassment and intimidation of human rights activists and journalists. The limited nature of its activities is partly because the OSCE lacks room, technical expertise, instruments and resources for its functioning. As pointed out by Alexander Keltschewsky, OSCE ambassador to Kazakhstan, Central Asian stability is just artificial, chimera-like. The functioning of the states depends on their respective leaders. However, this order brings about huge risk of the leader's death. The risk is serious because there is no transparency, institutions or capacities ready to cope with such a situation. What is even worse, nobody can discuss such issues publicly. As Keltschewsky concludes "*we know about the problem but are not allowed to solve it.*" (Keltschewsky, 2010) Yet, what is difficult in Kazakhstan, naturally worse under the even more authoritarian regime in Uzbekistan.

EU

The European Union's activities in Uzbekistan are framed by a comprehensive Central Asia strategy that is aimed to share its "experience and expertise" in a number of areas, such as "good governance, the rule of law, human rights, democratisation, education and training."⁴⁹ (The European Union and Central Asia:the new partnership in

⁴⁹ Adopted in June 2007, the strategy replaced the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) programme that aimed to promote the transition to a market economy and to reinforce democracy and the rule of law in the partner states in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. (Summaries of EU legislation: Tacis programme (2000-2006), 2007) Through the new Central Asian strategy, the EU seeks to deepen its engagement in Central Asia, promote stability and security in the region. The focus is also on economic diversification, the promotion of sustainable development by improving local skills and potential, promotion of SMEs and developing basic infrastructure, enhancing living standards and improving welfare in the rural areas through increased income. Its mechanisms include political high-level meetings and visits, human rights dialogues, twinning and seconding staff between EU and Central Asian administrations or companies, and public-private partnership initiatives. The strategy was

action, 2009, p. 10) The basis for EU-Uzbek bilateral relations provides the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), signed in 1999 but suspended in 2005 due to the Andijan events.⁵⁰ Economically, the EU seeks to promote the creation of regulatory and institutional frameworks for an improved business and investment environment and to further support economic diversification.⁵¹ (The EU and Central Asia:the new partnership in action, 2009, p.19) Other programmes involve management building focused on small and medium enterprises, capacity and institution building and poverty reduction. The latter is aimed to empower communities in the less developed regions via self-help mechanisms and income generation. (Ongoing development projects in Uzbekistan, 2010)

Among EU political activities in Uzbekistan, the protection of human rights and the creation and development of an independent judiciary rank highly. These efforts in particular involve annual human rights dialogues with the Uzbek government as well as a Rule of Law Initiative aimed at reform of the judiciary. (The EU and Central Asia:the new partnership in action, 2009, p.16) However, there are almost no on-site projects regarding NGO's empowering or democracy and human rights. Also, civil society projects mostly stay within socio-economical sphere and develop skills and techniques of socially underprivileged people.⁵² (Uzbekistan: Civil Society, c2010) One of the most discussed issues has recently been the EU's reaction after the Andijan events. Its expression of "deep concern" was backed by visa restrictions on key individuals and an embargo on arms supplies. The sanctions however started to be eased two years later in November 2007, and currently none remain effective. EU foreign ministers justified their action by saying Uzbekistan had made progress in human rights. More probably, the sanctions were unsuccessful, partly due to vague targeting and partly because they were not a part of an overall coherent policy that is a crucial prerequisite for effectiveness. Neither did they succeed in bearing a strong symbolic and psychological message.

welcomed even by NGOs such as Human Rights Watch although they demanded some benchmarks on progress. (Benchmarks, Consultations and Transparency: Making the EU Central Asia Strategy an Effective Tool for Human Rights Improvements, 2008)

⁵⁰PCAs establish a legal basis for bilateral cooperation in such areas as the economy, trade, legislative approximation to EU laws and standards and improving the business and investment climate. Focus is on a political dialogue covering human rights, constitutional reform and regional affairs, although specifics are not elaborated. (EU's relations with Central Asia- Partnership & Cooperation Agreements, 2010)

⁵¹ While Uzbekistan does not belong to main EU trade partners (import 97th place, export 73rd place, respectively in 2009), from Tashkent's perspective is Brussels the third most important partner in regard to export (after Ukraine and Russia) as well as to import (after Russia and China). (EU Bilateral Trade and Trade with the World- Uzbekistan, 2010)

⁵² The only exception is youth empowerment leading to improved local environment in mahallas.

(Schmitz, 2009) The current EU policy towards Uzbekistan is thus accompanied by certain schizophrenia- on the one hand, idealistically trying to advance human rights and democracy issues and, on the other hand, pragmatically seeking to enhance the security, economic and energy interests of the Union and its member states. These two directions contradict each other to a certain extent and create an inconsistent picture. Needless to say, the EU member states are still driven by their own national interests rather than by the EU's common strategies.

Regional organisations

As regards Central Asian regionalism, it exists more de jure than de facto. Although there are a few organisations that might be understood as regional, none of them has actually advanced to such a stage. For instance, the purposes of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) are, first, to strengthen peace and international and regional security and stability and, second, to ensure the collective protection of independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Member States. Despite this ambitious mission, the organisation is actually an instrument for Russian security and geopolitical interests and, as shown by the recent example of Kyrgyzstan in June 2010, does not contribute to conflict management in the region. Likewise, the toothless regional organisation represents the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC) which cannot overcome regional rivalries stemming from a narrow export base and overlapping commodity consumption. (Trushin & Trushin, 2002, p. 381) The most outstanding regional cluster, involving China, Russia and all the Central Asian republics except Turkmenistan, is the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (CSO). It initially served as a confidence-building measure trying to settle disputes relating to the former Sino-Soviet border and strengthen security in this region. (Olcott, 2005, p. 63) Nowadays, the common goal of its members is the fight against three "evils": "separatists, terrorists and extremists". This policy can be considered a consequence of the analogies between the member states when dealing with their Muslim minorities (Muslim Uyghur minority in the Chinese case, Chechnyan and other Muslim minorities in the Russian one). (Deklaratsiya glav gosudarstv-chlenov Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva, 2001) ⁵³ However, in the particular case of Uzbekistan, such a backup only even more

⁵³. Yet, the cooperation was later broadened, involving issues such as security, crime, and drug trafficking.

justifies the government's suppression of Muslim opposition, which can add fuel to the fire. To sum up, the Central Asian regional organisations mentioned above are currently not performing any meaningful role; neither in general terms, nor in the particular regard to conflict prevention. On the contrary, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is of a big importance due to its grants aimed at the development of infrastructure with a regional orientation, water and municipal services, and expansion of the private sector's access to financial resources. (ADB: Uzbekistan- Evaluation Resources, c2010) Likewise, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) promotes the development of the private sector, provides non-financial support for businesses.⁵⁴ In a reaction to the Andijan events, the EBRD limited its activities to private sector only and did not undertake any new public sector projects. (EBRD: Uzbekistan Factsheet, 2010; Uzbekistan Strategy, c2010)

3.1.2.2 States

Due to the limited scope of the paper, this part will deal only with the most important international partners of Uzbekistan (USA, Russia and China). Also development agencies of Japan (Japanese International Cooperation Agency) and some of Western states (Swiss Corporation, German development agency GTZ) have done much work in terms of development aid or civil society building. (JICA: Activities in Uzbekistan, c2010; Swiss Cooperation: Activities in Uzbekistan, c2010; GTZ: Economic Development in selected regions of Uzbekistan, c2010) However, due to paper's limitations, provide a deeper reflection of their activities will not be provided.

China and Russia

In the theoretical section, I mentioned problems when Western actors condition their support with implementation of human rights and democracy reforms. In Uzbekistan, such attempts are prone to be counterweighted by unconditional support from China and Russia. These countries perceive stability mainly in terms of staying in power and therefore they will not interfere in Uzbekistan's internal affairs unless this understanding of stability is in danger. (Kreikemeyer, 2006b, p. 244) In accordance with this premise, Russia together with China, for example, supported Karimov in his approach

⁵⁴ As the world's only transition bank, the EBRD supports projects that serve the transition to market economies and pluralistic democratic societies.

towards Muslims even after the Andijan events. If we look at the both countries' motives, China's engagement should be seen through its strong interest in the region to ensure future strategic advantage while minimising the risk that Central Asian states might create immediate security threats for China. (Olcott, 2005, p. 14) This attitude was also demonstrated by the mutual statement on China's support in Karimov's fight against "separatists, terrorists and extremists" published shortly after the Andijan events. (Berg, 2006, p. 223) Interestingly, while these three topics became a part of Chinese policy, understood as a protection against possible democratic spill-overs and the demands of the Uyghur minority in Xinjiang region, they were also stated in the SCO common declaration from 2005. As regards Russia, although the interconnected nature of their relations, they are rather cold.⁵⁵ In recent years, the situation has though improved, mostly with intensified economic cooperation. (Uzbekistan- Rossiya: ispytannye druzya, nadezhnye partnery (Uzbekistan-Russia: reliable friends, promising partners), 2010) Yet, neither Russia's nor China's activities in Uzbekistan could be described in terms of conflict prevention. This is partly reasoned by the fact that both nations, with similarly autocratic regimes, face many problems described above as threats for intrastate and regime security in Uzbekistan. Moreover, any Western action is viewed geopolitically- that means as a threat of their interests in the region. This is especially the case of Russia, which looks at Central Asia as a traditional sphere of influence.

USA

The USA and Uzbekistan cooperated closely following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the start of the war in Afghanistan. However, this trend was subsequently reversed when a clash between US economic and security interests, on the one hand, and the US's declared goal to secure freedom and democracy, on the other arose following US and EU demands for an independent, international investigation into the Adijan events. The US final decision was a double-edged compromise: insisting on democracy and freedom while not giving up economic and security-political interests in the region. (Kreikemeyer, 2006b, p. 245) This ambiguity however brought about not only

⁵⁵Karimov has for example attacked Russia for Soviet-era decisions for distorting and damaging his country's economy and environment. (Olcott, 2005, p. 48)

critique, addressed mostly by NGOs, but also radically chilled US-Uzbek relations.⁵⁶ Yet, since mid-2007, the USA and Uzbekistan have begun to rebuild cooperation on issues of mutual concern, including security and economic relations, as well as political and civil society issues. The current US Government assistance to Uzbekistan seeks to mitigate potential instability while bolstering social protection mechanisms and providing the basis for economic growth. In this regard, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), introduced below, provides the vast number of the US activities.

USAID's programmes range from technical assistance for political parties to support for small, issue-based organisations. Its economic agenda has involved assistance in strengthening Uzbekistan's central bank, establishing the legal environment for private sector growth, and adopting international accounting standards for greater transparency of business transactions. (USAID Uzbekistan: Overview, 2010) USAID democracy assistance programmes seek to provide business and professional association leaders with opportunities to receive practical training in the USA as well as to strengthen the capacities of political and civil society organisations. The projects have been aimed at civil society leaders as to help them engage with the media on critical civic issues; at political groups as to improve their communication with constituents; and at organisations addressing women's issues and the rights of the disabled. The USAID also works to increase sub-national government's abilities and capacities, cooperating with Uzbekistan's traditional institutions, including mahallas, or village communities. (USAID Uzbekistan: Overview, 2010)

Many democracy activists argue that it is not suitable for the USA to fund some reform programmes in partnership with a repressive government, and they advocated working solely with independent groups. (Olcott, 2005, p. 179) In terms of conflict prevention, other activities could involve low-cost interventions such as studies, polls, surveys, round table seminars, TV materials, short-term local or international dispute resolution specialists, and physical infrastructure activities that could be put into place to help to defuse looming conflicts. (Lund & Garner, 2001, p. 22)

⁵⁶ US criticised the human rights abuses in the country and demanded an independent, international investigation into the May 2005 Andijan violence. Consequently, articles in the state-controlled Uzbek media accused the USA of trying to undermine Uzbek sovereignty through the "Trojan horse of democratisation". (Carothers, 2006, p. 57) Finally in July 2005, Uzbekistan terminated the agreement which had previously permitted US Forces to use the Karshi Khanabad (K2) airbase in the country's south.

3.1.2.3 Non-state actors

The current position of INGOs in Uzbekistan is non-existent. After the recent wave of “colour revolutions”, viewed as a democratisation effort in post-Soviet space, and the Andijan events, Uzbek officials implemented a more restrictive policy toward the third sector that touched international actors as well. This resulted in a withdrawal of all the INGOs (IREX, Counterpart, and Soros’s Open Society Foundation, among others) that registered in the country. None of the numerous INGOs, which were forced to close or otherwise end their operations in Uzbekistan after the Andijan massacre, have been permitted to resume their activities in Uzbekistan as well as no new INGOs have been registered.

Nevertheless, these actors still try to affect the country’s development externally with the goal of providing increased access to information- via computers and internet access. Trainings and exchange programs are, on the other hand, designed to produce new “Westernised” elite. (Adamson, 2002, p. 196) This was the focus of the Counterpart International, which focused on leadership, enterprise and association development, small reconstruction projects or on creating volunteer executive service teams. (Counterpart: Uzbekistan, c2010) Another potential tool is to promote civic education, educational reforms, and cultural events which are at a very early stage of development in the country. This was the case of the IREX, which provided a number of travelling grants for students, researchers, technical assistance mostly in the form of internet centres where along with free internet access also some PC training courses were provided. (IREX: Uzbekistan, c2010) Human rights issues cannot be addressed due to repressive government policies. Due to the absolute character of the state control, international NGOs are supposed to cooperate not only with a variety of local groups in the region, including religious organisations and mahallas, but also with government-organised Institute for Studies of Civil Society and National Association of NGOs (NANNOUZ). (Adamson, 2002, p. 200) Before, INGOs provided technical grants, aimed at creating new NGOs, which resulted in a significant increase of new local NGOs, although this way of civil society building was quite artificial, and due to no local fundraising causing NGOs’ dependency on foreign grants.⁵⁷ Considering the current prospects, the ability of international non-state actors to

⁵⁷ Grants for office space, equipment and staff salaries, as well as provided educational programmes, fundraising, critical thinking, management and governance, attracted many former entrepreneurs, teachers,

directly influence Uzbekistan's domestic development is null. Also their indirect influence, through external support of the local NGOs is rather minor, given the weak position of civil society in Uzbekistan, fragmentation of its members, the high level of corruption regarding foreign grants in general and the minimal presence of NGOs that could succeed in catalysing the country's development.

3.2 Turkmenistan

To depict a real picture of Turkmenistan is an impossible task: information available to an outside observer is limited due to the strong isolation of the country; state-issued statistics are in a striking contrast to the ones of international bodies and much of the data is not published at all. Any endeavour to obtain direct, on-location access to information is accompanied by a high risk of being arrested. On the other hand, although interviewing exile leaders of the Turkmenistan's opposition can doubtlessly provide a valuable source of information, it is still of a highly subjective nature. Hence, as far as research on Central Asia is concerned, many studies necessarily get a speculative colouring. In this regard, Turkmenistan still remains outside the mainstream, even when compared with its regional counterparts. This situation has been a result of the deliberate international isolation that was initiated during the bizarre rule of "Turkmenbashi" Saparmurat Niyazov (1990-2006).⁵⁸ Due to a huge cloud of mystery held over its actual domestic development, Turkmenistan's affairs were discussed only in regard to its rich carbohydrate reserves and extravagancies accompanying Niyazov's rule.⁵⁹ Yet, this was just the tip of the iceberg. Since its independence, Turkmenistan has witnessed the emergence of extreme authoritarianism, the rehabilitation of "traditional" political institutions, deliberately mystifying some parts of its past, and the introduction of ruthless methods of social engineering that have heavily paralysed its education and health

professors and medical doctors who suffered from low salaries. When foreign donors entered in 1992, they immediately started building institutional infrastructure for civil society, without waiting for local groups to self-organise naturally. The newly created NGO sector thus lacked public trust and community roots. (CIVICUS, 2007, p. 2)

⁵⁸ Given several transcriptions related to the names of both rulers (originally in Turkmen Saparmurat Niyazov / Türkmenbaşy Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow), I will stick to "Saparmurat Niyazov" / "Turkmenbashi", and "Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov".

⁵⁹ For example, a calendar with brand-new names of months and days (among others, named also after president, his relatives or book *Ruhnama*); a gold-plated statue of the country's leader that slowly revolved so that the president always faced the sun (the statue was thrown down in 2010); CDs with songs about the president always reaching top of the local hit parade, every computer sold in the country (special software with speeches by the president included). In Olcott's words: "Turkmenistan is bombastic, bizarre, a combination of the Gulag Archipelago and Absurdistan". (Olcott, 2005, p. 171)

system. After sudden Niyazov's death in 2006, not much has changed. Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov who quite surprisingly became Niyazov's successor, has removed some of the most striking shortcomings of the previous regime, announced some reforms mostly focused on economic matters, and initiated opening to the outer world. Yet, the results of his four-year rule rather point out following the fashion of Niyazov era with only a modest transformative input.

3.2.1 Threats of national stability

As already mentioned, Central Asian region has recently faced many different types of conflict. Like in Uzbekistan, the apparent stability of Turkmenistan's regime can be challenged by many factors involving popular unrest, Islamic extremism, international smuggling, spill-over effects of Afghan conflicts, foreign intervention, war with a neighbouring state, or a coup d'état within the ruling elite. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 2) To prevent any of these threats from escalating, it is necessary to investigate the nature of Turkmenistan's regime and derivate factors crucial for the country's stability. Bearing this in mind, this part will follow the fashion already applied in the case of Uzbekistan. The main focus will be on internal threats that could lead to escalation of intrastate conflicts. Also analogically, the research will be limited to the three dimensions of the Copenhagen School classification – political, economic, and societal – that are of the biggest relevance when considering the potential of intrastate conflicts in the country.⁶⁰

3.2.1.1 Political dimension

Domestic development of independent Turkmenistan has been characterised by failure to follow constitutional procedures and to advance the democratic process. In this regard, the four-year rule of Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov has not resulted in any significant move forward. Although some minor improvements have been initiated, they mostly deal with economic issues and their full implementation is in question. The current political system is thus still negatively affected by a strong personality cult, harsh authoritarianism, almost no understanding of democratic values, institutional weakness and questionable succession.

“Turkmenbashi phenomena”

⁶⁰ This is also argued by Global Peace Index (GPI), which ranked Turkmenistan 117th out of 147 countries. (Global Peace Index: Turkmenistan, 2010)

Turkmenistan's regime was, and to a certain extent still is, characterised by a special feature, here called as the "Turkmenbashi phenomena". This extreme form of authoritarianism significantly distinguished the country even from its regional counterparts. Like in other patrimonial, formal-bureaucratic states, Turkmenistan's unity is based on personal loyalty and obedience of the official as well as on the ability of the head of state to rule freely and unrestrained. (Geiss, 2006, pp. 36-7) However, with its overwhelming and omnipotent nature comparable to the Stalin era or to the North Korean regime only, Niyazov's rule transcended the typical authoritarian mode and turned into what Max Weber called sultanism.⁶¹ The president's absolute power actually led to total disempowerment of other institutions that could anyhow represent alternative sources of power. This was achieved by endless rotating of elites in and out of office that prevented anyone from developing a power base. Nonetheless, the most outstanding feature of the regime doubtlessly was Niyazov cult of personality, apparently designed to promote nation-building in newly independent and tribally fragmented Turkmenistan.⁶² (Tolipov, 2006, p. 73) Yet, with its totalitarian and omnipresent character, state ideology started to play a big role, truly evoking atmosphere of Orwell's books.

The stability of the regime was challenged in December 2006 when Niyazov suddenly died without leaving any recognised successor. Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, who came to power in the end, was relatively unknown and until then not a very influential Minister of Health. Quite naturally, this surprising course of events brought about a huge question mark over the next direction of Turkmenistan's politics. However, despite some optimistic expectations, the Stalin-like personality cult has not been followed by Khrushchev-like critique and thaw. Given the significance that Niyazov's cult played in the development of Turkmenistan's national ideology, its complete and immediate dismantling would have significantly destabilised the country. Thus, while the legacy of his predecessor has been fading out very slowly, Berdymukhammedov appears to come up with his own version of the cult. In addition to his own museum and a mosque in Mary named after him, portraits and writings of new

⁶¹ Interestingly, M. Brill Olcott calls the regime more explicitly "Stalinism in one country" or "one-man show". (Olcott, 2005, pp. 157-8)

⁶² Niyazov's cult of personality served several functions: 1) social integration in a society where national identity remains weak; 2) political socialisation- mainly through normative Niyazov's books; 3) strategic resource for officials who, by originating ever more extravagant projects, hoped to preserve or advance their own and/or their region's interests. (Denison, 2007, p. 2)

president have gradually replaced those of Niyazov. (Horak, 2010, p. 39). Like Niyazov, who was in his late era called “Turkmenbashi”- “Father of Turkmen”, Berdymukhammedov is currently presented as “The Creator of the Great Renaissance in Turkmenistan”.⁶³ Last but not least, an outstanding instrument of state’s ideology, Niyazov’s “Holy book” Ruhnama, continues to be taught in schools, although some chapters referring to Niyazov and his family are skipped. Needless to say, there are also books of new president extensively promoted. (Peyrouse, 2010, p. 49).⁶⁴

Strict authoritarianism

In accordance with its totalitarian character, Turkmenistan’s regime still remains one of the most rigid authoritarian systems in the world, systematically violating human rights and restricting civic freedoms of its citizens.⁶⁵ The government deliberately keeps institutions weak and fully submissive to its interests and excessively limits and suppresses any opposing activities. As a result, any opposition is only of a marginal importance, unable to seriously challenge the ruling elite. Lack of activism, persistence and competence is also obvious from a short list of anti-regime activities which involves the 1988/1989 protests against rising prices and high unemployment and the 1995 anti-governmental demonstrations. Therefore, the biggest incident so far represents an attempt on Niyazov’s life on 25 November 2002 although its actual opposition character is disputable. Almost immediately, the assault was declared to be a prophase for another planned coup and Niyazov laid blame on the exiled opposition and claimed a foreign link in the assault.⁶⁶ Without any relevant explanation, state authority then arrested former

⁶³ The Berdymukhammedov government invented the concept of the “Great Renaissance” era of Turkmenistan, following the “Golden Age of the Turkmen” promoted under Turkmenbashi.

⁶⁴ The book, translated in Turkmen as a “Holy book”, describes a history of Turkmen people and prophesises. It also provides some prescriptions according to which all Turkmen should lead their lives.

⁶⁵ This can be illustrated by several examples: To an NGO event accompanying the recent OSCE summit held in Astana in December 2010, Uzbekistan’s and Kyrgyzstan’s NGOs managed to send ten people, Tadjikistan’s ones five but Turkmenistan’s third sector was represented by only one NGO activist from diaspora-based organisation. (Turkmen Rights Activists Speak Out Ahead of OSCE Meeting, 2010) Additionally, in 2009, approximately 50 students were unable to secure permits to study abroad at US-funded institutions. (Country Report: Turkmenistan, 2010) And last but not least, Freedom House rating-Political Rights Score:7 Civil Liberties Score: 7 (Country Report: Turkmenistan, 2010) or Democracy index 165th out of 167 (Democracy Index, 2010).

⁶⁶ The wide publicity devoted to the attempt and the subsequent arrest in the capital Ashgabat of an exiled, leading opponent to the Niyazov regime, dispelled the notion that any rumours of attempted palace coups against the Turkmen government were exaggerated. Besides, Niyazov accused the Uzbek ambassador to Turkmenistan of giving shelter and providing assistance to the members of the assault team. Consequently, these accusations led to heated exchanges between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

foreign minister Boris Shikmuradov and some other high positioned officials who were reportedly involved with the attack. Their destiny remains unclear, with no prospects for transparent investigation. As seen above, the systematic and persistent repressions have totally paralysed any constitutional alternatives to omnipresent power of the government. Therefore any further opposition activities are very likely to be radical ones, willing to use violence when pursuing their goals.

No democratic values rooted

Similar to Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan has witnessed almost a century of the Soviet and then Niyazov's dictatorships. Given the lack of democratic experience, its citizens naturally expect to be guided from above. This attitude is moreover encouraged by traditionalism and conservatism that cause Turkmenistan's society to prefer evolutionary development without large social shocks and divisions in society. (Dadabaev, 2004, p. 148) With such a mindset at hand, Turkmenistan's governments have used it as an ideal tool to justify its authoritarian rule. For instance, political plurality was dismissed as antithetical to Turkmen historical evolution and its nomadic heritage. Also, minority rights were dwarfed by emerging nationalism while Tajikistan was cited as an example of the sort of disunity the government sought to prevent.

Considering the above mentioned, just a few observers see a society ready for democracy in Turkmenistan. As claimed by Blank, the most likely and safest course for the foreseeable future appears an oligarchy based on an intra-elite compact mitigating repression in return for loyalty and more secure possession of the spoils by those elite. (Blank, 2007, p. 6). According to Horak and Sir, democratisation is not a realistic option with the current cadres, who seem to lead the country into deeper regression instead of relinquishing some of their power. Moreover, prospects to replace these cadres in the short term are markedly limited due to the large-scale exile of educated people in the past years. (Horak, S.; Sir, J., 2009, p. 95) Although Turkmenistan has a young population that could serve as a breeding ground for popular movements opposing to the regime, the country has neither tradition of popular opposition nor of student activism on university campuses to do so. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 13) Thus the current harsh political system is likely to prevail at least for some time which can let internal tensions grow and erupt with even greater power once the regime is lifted.

Weak institutions

As already discussed in the case of Uzbekistan, transition in Central Asia is likely to be non-transparent to outsiders. Given the patterns of regional domestic politics, the real actors represent a few individuals chosen according to their affiliation to government, clan ethnic group, family or region. Due to institutional weakness, the actors can use the existing constitutional vacuum to get unlimited authority as well as adopt new legal arrangements to legitimise their decisions and actions. (Denison, 2007, p. 5) This also characterises the situation in Turkmenistan. Both presidents, Niyazov and Berdymukhammedov, have modified Turkmenistan's legal system according to their own interests. For instance, special constitutional amendments were created to oust Berdymukhammedov's rivals and make him an eligible candidate for presidential elections. (Horak, 2007, p. 4) Another example represents Turkmenistan's new constitution adopted in 2008 that on the one hand abolished in Niyazov era powerful People's Council Halk Maslahaty and pronounced the parliament Mejlis. Yet, on the other hand, the constitutional text kept "eternal and permanent" presidential form of government without any explicit time limitations for presidents in office. (Horak, S.; Sir, J., 2009, p. 25) (Constitution of Turkmenistan, c2010)

Malfunctioning law system has inherently created a constrained and static political environment. This has also paralysed Turkmenistan's party system. The only registered party in the state was for the long time the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan that superseded the Turkmen Communist Party after being renamed in 1991. In 2010 Berdymukhammedov publicly called for a multi-party system when approving the registration of another party, the Farmers' Party. This, however, stands for an official, would-be opposition. The real opposition parties, the Democratic Party and Agzybirlik ("Unity"), are banned, permanently suppressed and therefore partly active only abroad. (Nichol, 2010, p. 6) Likewise miserable situation regards the third sector and media. Additionally, with vague NGO law regulation and difficulties accompanying registration of any organisation in Turkmenistan, NGO activity is very limited.⁶⁷ As a result, there is no functional civil society that could serve as a social base for some sort of challenge to authoritarianism. Work of those few dedicated grass-roots activists active in

⁶⁷ NGO sustainability index in Turkmenistan can illustrate the situation very well. (NGO Index: Turkmenistan, 2009)

Turkmenistan is little known beyond their immediate communities and they are often subject to government disapproval or harassment. Also media freedom is extensively limited. Although Berdymukhamedov permitted the establishment of private media, this step was made only to provide a semblance of a free press. Beside this, there is almost no access to foreign publications.⁶⁸ Whereas a few internet cafes, mostly Ashgabat-based, have been opened recently, the state controls the entire network limiting access for internet users. The state monopoly in the media and strict censorship also affect schools and universities where the ruling elite dogmatically regulate length, character and ideological content of education.

With much of the active political opposition in exile, and the majority of citizens lacking access to unbiased information, there is a little chance of any spontaneous rebellion. Furthermore, given state interventions in education, the next political leadership will very likely come from ideologically indoctrinated and under-educated generation. For the time being, weak institutions and society do not offer any other stable alternative but the continued dominance of a strong leader and narrow elite. (Horak, 2007, p. 5) Hence, there is a serious concern whether Berdymukhammedov is able to maintain the fragile stability by bargaining with clans or the further course of events will cause him to take some steps toward constitutionally embedded system of checks and balances.

Questionable succession

In terms of Central Asian succession, Luong distinguishes three possible paths of further development: 1) the new ruler will come to power after a revolution, 2) a dynastic succession or 3) the leaders will successfully select their own successor. (Luong, 2002, p. 1) While the first example matches the latest Kyrgyzstan's events and the second is discussed in the case of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, the last possibility resembles Turkmenistan's development.⁶⁹ Due to the nature of Niyazov's rule and the confluence of internal and external pressures upon the country, the way of his replacement in late 2006

⁶⁸ In the latest Media Sustainability Index, the country is ranked 173th of 175 countries. (Turkmenistan Media Sustainability Index, 2010) Reporters without borders used even more explicit terms- Berdymukhammedov is called "a predator", the state itself "an internet enemy" with "Turkmenet" as a special form of internet. (Predators: Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov - Turkmenistan, c2010) (Internet Enemies: Turkmenistan, c2010)

⁶⁹ Dynastic succession was not taken into account in Niyazov's case as his family relatives had shown no inclination to return to Turkmenistan: his daughter Irina lives in Moscow and his son Murat runs an oil and gas company in Austria.

can set the table for work of the successor generation. (Blank, 2007, p. 2) Post-Niyazov development had been discussed many years ago which had brought about several scenarios, including a violent power struggle.⁷⁰ However, when Niyazov died from a reported heart attack without any identifiable successors, power over the country was transferred surprisingly smoothly. Chairman of the Mejlis Ovezgeldi Atayev, who would have been constitutionally designated interim successor to Niyazov, was arrested and deposed from his post. Instead, the compromised candidate Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov was quickly named interim president by the Security Council and Cabinet of Ministers.⁷¹ Eventually, the first multi-candidate elections held in February 2007 confirmed Berdymukhammedov in the function and enabled him to build up his position. (Blank, 2007, p. 1) In the end, although initially perceived as weak and easily manipulated, new president managed to establish his own power base and created a personal regime.

When considering Turkmenistan's peculiarities, the smoothness of the succession is not as surprising. As observed by Horak: *"In Turkmenistan, although there was no strong successor in the leadership, the struggle for power finished almost before it started. The most informed and powerful individuals in the state took advantage of their positions."* (Horak, 2007, p. 4) Weak institutions and society do not offer any other stable alternative but the continued dominance of a strong leader and narrow elite. (Horak, 2007, p. 5) In this regard, however, the sole change of a president does not necessarily bring about any significant liberalisation as long as the same elites are in place. The current status quo can keep the elite interests unleashed in the short term but it is highly unlikely to remain in the long term. The way of succession in Turkmenistan is thus still highly unpredictable, leaving the country ruled by leadership without any transparent interests.

3.2.1.2 Economic dimension

As a resources-rich state, Turkmenistan has great potential for development. This is however negatively affected by Turkmenistan's harsh political system researched in the

⁷⁰ For instance, Fredholm in 2003 wrote: *"Considering Niyazov's age, he may even have time to die from natural causes - which might cause an unprecedented and possibly quite violent power struggle as Niyazov never groomed a successor."* (Fredholm, 2003, p. 25)

⁷¹ Interestingly, Berdymukhammedov was the only minister in the Turkmen government who kept his office for many years while receiving only sporadic criticism from the president.

previous subchapter. While a non-democratic regime may not necessarily pose a threat for market development in the short and medium term, economic prosperity is yet unsustainable when combined with arbitrary use of government authority, high level corruption, and a general disregard for social institutions and norms such as law. (Sir, 2010, p. 92) Nonetheless, the reluctance against reforms is the main but not the only threat for Turkmenistan's stability. As also shown in this subchapter, weak control over peripheries deepens regional differences and encourages various forms of trafficking. Last but not least, government populism materialised in provision of some free goods contributes to inefficient economy, which can inflame popular disapproval.

Slow economic reforms

In terms of economic transition, Turkmenistan appears to have chosen the Chinese and Kazakh way, where the state monitors and controls the speed and character of liberalisation. Although Berdymukhamedov has undertaken some minor reforms, he is generally expected not to diverge from the trend set by his predecessor that did not bring any significant liberalisation to the authoritarian system. The current economic environment in Turkmenistan is thus still characterised by a Soviet-style command economy. State ownership remains in the oil and gas industry, electrical power generation, as well as in the textile, construction, transport, and communications sectors. At the same time, private entrepreneurship is limited, and consists mostly of petty businesses. (Sir, 2010, p. 92) This stagnation has mainly been a consequence of government inefficiency and widespread state regulation. For instance, although the 2008 constitution establishes the right to private property, it remains still unclear how it will be implemented in practise. Meanwhile, local entrepreneurial environment has to face the lack of sound regulatory and legal frameworks. This is especially true in the case of foreign investors who struggle with a highly politicised and corrupt system.⁷² In addition to strictly limited international trade, the government chooses its investment partners selectively whereas personal contact with high political officials serves as the best guarantor of approval. Not surprisingly, Turkmenistan hence offers the most inhospitable investment climate in the region. Furthermore, integration into the global economy remains slow due to the country's isolation that on the one hand has prevented the

⁷² Turkmenistan's economic freedom score is 42.5, making its economy the 171st (out of 179 countries) freest in the 2010 Index. (Index of Economic Freedom: Turkmenistan, c2010) See Tab 1.

economic crisis from affecting Turkmenistan to a greater extent but, on the other hand, it has considerably limited the international trade of the country. Another problem regards pervasive corruption which considerably diminishes equality of opportunity.⁷³ Oddly enough, widespread bribes even serve as one of the factors stabilising the regime. High officials, who usually bribe their way into their positions, tend to illegally enrich themselves whenever they recognise prospects of high turnover. However once they lose the trust of the ruling elite, their frauds make them an easy target of inspection after which they are usually accused of corruption and embezzlement. This method can efficiently limit any token opposition against the ruling regime. (Peyrouse, 2010, p. 65)

Similarly to Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan's economy is excessively dependent on energy. Its diversification is difficult due to negative development in cotton-processing which is the only other significant industrial sector there. Despite new investments, it has been negatively affected by poor harvests in recent years and the gradual decline is expected in the future.⁷⁴ (Repression and Regression in Turkmenistan: A New International Strategy, 2004) In 2007, new Berdymukhammedov's government announced new economic reforms that should lead to diversification of productive base and reduce the country's reliance on income flowing from energy exports. Nonetheless, as their implementation is very slow, many concerns over the future development have been raised. The status quo is characterised by dependence on energy exports, a gradual decline in agriculture and little growth in other sectors. All of the above-mentioned brings about serious pressure on employment and budget. Given the natural resource wealth of Turkmenistan and increasing gas and oil output, the economy is unlikely to collapse in the short term unless there is a major drop in world commodities prices. The long-term sustainability of economic policies however remains questionable. Considering the fact that Turkmenistan's citizens perceive economic issues more sensitively than political ones, the marginal and unstable transition to greater economic freedom can inflame public unrest as experienced in 1989.

Weak control over peripheries

⁷³ Corruption perception Index (CPI) ranked Turkmenistan 172th, together with Uzbekistan. Only Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar and Somalia got worse score. CPI 2010 report, p. 2. (Corruption Perception Index: Results by Country, c2010)

⁷⁴ This is not very surprising when considering that 80 % of the country is desert.

Negative socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of Turkmenistan also contribute to huge differences between the rural and urban population. Similar to developing countries, approximately half of Turkmenistan's population still lives in rural areas. According to CIA estimations, about one-third of the citizens live in poverty, and about 60% are unemployed. (The World Factbook: Turkmenistan, 2010) This is a result of the careless state policy that has invested revenues mostly coming from energy and cotton exports in grand construction projects such as palaces, water fountains, and parks, which do not generate jobs. Moreover, due to centralised distribution of the state revenues, peripheries are not provided with basic health and social service. Facing the harsh life in rural areas, people are more prone to become narcotics addicts. (Tomohiko, 2010)

This contributes to an increased activity of narco-clans that are very strong especially along the Iranian and Afghan border. Although organised crime is typically secular in nature and more interested in maintaining the status quo than in causing any form of unrest, it can help extremism spread more easily. Criminal groups frequently play a major role in providing any kind of extremists with a ready supply of military hardware. Considering that Turkmenistan's territory is already used for the transit of narcotics mostly from Afghanistan and Iran, there is a certain risk that the smuggling routes fall into the hands of Islamic extremists. (Denison, 2007) Given this dangerous neighbourhood and considering harsh conditions in peripheries overseen by the central government, the situation can radicalise very easily.

Inefficient distribution of state benefits

Turkmenistan's society has undergone many socio-economic changes that affected Turkmen mindsets. Formerly the nomadic way of living has turned into a sedentary one where the number of the urban population has also increased. Adapting to the changing environment, people also became more interested in the material incentives of a welfare society. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 14) In this context, Niyazov tried to portray himself as an authoritarian but benevolent ruler always striving for "common good". One of the tools following this fashion was state provision of free benefits, such as public water, gas, electricity, and salt. This "Bread and Circuses" policy however did not function properly due to frequent shortages in the provision of the free services. These were caused partly

by aging infrastructure and partly by the overall attempt of the government to limit internal energy consumption as to increase exports. (Dadabaev, 2004, p. 148) Even more strikingly, notwithstanding these state-founded benefits, vast majority of population lacked access to drinking water. (Dadabaev, 2004, p. 137)

Despite obvious character of these shortcomings, Berdymukhammedov continues in the direction by his predecessor. Using the same populism, he pursues acceptance of his government and confidence of the majority of the population. This policy is based on traditional public attitude towards the regime: regardless authoritative character of Turkmenistan's regime, many people will tend to prefer its stability and social benefits over civil freedoms. In other words, they will accept a certain level of repression in exchange for material benefits. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 3) Therefore, in the pursuit of regime survival, the elite allows just a few carefully designed reformist initiatives that cannot threaten the wider social contract between the regime and the population, which is essentially based on the preservation of the free Soviet-style subsidies. However this precondition of stability can easily turn into a destabilising factor. Any slight change negatively affecting beneficial character of this system will encounter significant popular disapproval that can lead to anti-regime protests.

3.2.1.3 Societal dimension

Although a numerous dominance of Turkmen and Shiite Muslims seemingly proves its homogeneity, Turkmenistan's society is in fact fragmented due to a complex clan structure. As seen below, while ruthless government policies deepen the existing intra-societal divisions, their repression also induces higher tension among minorities and religious groups.

Influential clan network

The Turkmenistan's population consists of a number of tribes which have had a significant influence on all aspects of the state.⁷⁵ In their nomadic past, Turkmen were scattered into several tribes that never lived together in a unified state. Accordingly, they recognised no hereditary dynasty as they have little reverence for titles. The heads of clans and tribes were traditionally chosen for their abilities, not appointed from above,

⁷⁵ The most common distinction of Turkmenistan's clans corresponds to the seven major dialects of the country.

and their authority was based on conduct. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 13) This status also brought about responsibility to own social group, with obligations to provide it with protection and means of subsistence. (Horak, 2010, p. 40) The influence of traditions remained in the Soviet era, when positions of authority were often filled by traditional groups of the titular nationality, and is also strong in present-day Turkmenistan, as the most prestigious positions are usually held by members of the Tekke tribe.

This dominance of tribal ties seemed disadvantageous for Niyazov who as an orphan lacked any apparent affiliation with Turkmen tribal networks. However, he masterly took advantage of his position. Since he did not need to act as a patron bound by the unwritten laws of lending support to his own clan members, his power over Turkmen elites could become absolute. (Sabol, 2010, p. 8) In contrast to his predecessor, current president Berdymukhammedov is much more engaged in Turkmenistan's traditional family and tribal structures. Accordingly, he often selects members of his Tekke tribe, to fill important but also less important posts. However, such an engagement can threaten the president's position. Explicit preference to one closed network is more likely to alienate other important groups which can disrupt fragile inter-clan balance in the country.

Minorities

Turkmenistan has a relatively small population of five million. Beside the Turkmen majority, the biggest ethnic minorities are Uzbeks and Russians.⁷⁶ Both of them struggle with extensive restrictions and repression. For more than two decades, Russian representation has been decreasing due to their massive emigration. This was a result of "Turkmenisation", a policy adopted by Turkmenbashi in the early 90s, pursuing a state with an ethnically homogeneous population. The same direction was followed shortly after Niyazov's proposal to revoke the agreement permitting dual citizenship of both Russia and Turkmenistan. Subsequently, Russian citizens who wanted to keep their Russian citizenships were told to leave the country. (Brown, 2003, p. 215) Also the Uzbek community has not escaped from state repressions. Its members have had to face cutbacks in Uzbek-language education and media. As a result, Uzbeks do not play any

⁷⁶ Ethnic groups according CIA World Factbook: Turkmen 85%, Uzbek 5%, Russian 4%, other 6% (2003). (The World Factbook: Turkmenistan, 2010)

real role in the country's public life. (Olcott, 2005, p. 162) Besides the two biggest majorities, there are also other ethnics, for instance Turkmen Iranians living in southern Turkmenistan, who are also exposed to permanent obstructions.

The negative attitude towards minorities is partly based on perception of Turkmen superiority that was already prevalent in Soviet times when Turkmen despised marriages outside the Turkmen race. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 4) However, Niyazov's government came up with extensive discrimination which was subsequently justified in respect to nation-building of independent Turkmenistan. Consequently, minorities were deprived of public expression and could not receive education in their national languages. The same discriminatory policy has been adopted by Berdymukhammedov. As seen in the 2009 military doctrine he also tries to justify the repression when stressing internal dangers potentially stemming from ethnic separatism. (Peyrouse, 2010, p. 54) Permanent harassment of minorities coupled with unhealthy nationalism yet constitutes a dangerous tension with possible implications for Turkmenistan's domestic and foreign policy.

Islam

Turkmenistan's biggest and only state-recognised religions are Sunni Islam (89 %) and Eastern Orthodox Christianity (9 %). (The World Factbook: Turkmenistan, 2010) Sanctioned or not, any belief is however jeopardised by government's hostile attitude towards religions.⁷⁷ At the beginning of his rule, Niyazov seemed supporting Islam in the country: for instance, in March 1992, he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, being the first CIS president to do so. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 5) Also, 2500 mosques were built in the country within a short time, whereas one of the biggest and most luxurious ones, in Geokdepe, even bears name of the president. Yet, Niyazov soon realised that Islam can dwarf his own position of the nation leader and from 1993 on he initiated many restrictions on activities of religious organisations stressing the secular character of the state. (Rybllov, 2004, p. 155) Like in Uzbekistan, present-day Turkmenistan does not enable any religious freedom. Government strictly controls and represses all religious with special attention paid to Islam. A somewhat dissident person, even if he or she belongs to a Sufi movement, may be imprisoned for "Wahhabism" that is, similarly to

⁷⁷ This also excludes the Shiite community and no Shiite mosque can be officially registered. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 16)

Uzbekistan, in contradiction to its original meaning used as a label for any Islam extremism. Consequently, mosques in the country are empty, as believers want to avoid being controlled by the police and assimilated to the Islamists. (Peyrouse, 2010, p. 54)

Needless to say, the presented threat of radical Islam is deliberately exaggerated as to justify excessive repressions. Historically, Turkmenistan's citizens were not interested in radical Islam and even today there are many other issues more likely to pose the threat for internal security. Nevertheless, as claimed by Fredholm, although the current risk appears small, there is a long-term potential for religious popular unrest. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 15) Most likely, the actual threat can stem from a stagnant economy. Poverty and no job prospects bring about disaffected middle-classes and young generation who are then more prone to religious extremism. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 16) Such a development can be also encouraged from regional spill-over, given many Islamist movements active in neighbouring countries.

3.2.2 Preventive actions

The previous subchapter sought to discuss key factors that can cause the escalation of intrastate conflict in Turkmenistan. The following section will introduce current preventive actions of external state and non-state actors implemented in the country. In these terms, it is first important to consider local particularities conditioning their work in Turkmenistan.

Turkmenistan is a strictly isolated country with an internationally recognised status of positive neutrality. This affects not only domestic issues, but also has a significant impact on its foreign policy. Thus, since gaining official UN recognition in 1995, Turkmenistan's neutrality status has generated many crucial implications for external preventive actions.⁷⁸ Initially, there were multiple reasons for this isolationist approach:

⁷⁸ Interestingly, Turkmenistan's positive neutrality regards reluctance against integration in international bodies and no need to recognise some internationally-binding standards. On the other hand, neutral status of Switzerland was justified in regards to preservation of peace. Accordingly, the country is highly cooperative and largely involved in international community- this is obvious just when considering how many international institutions have their seats in Swiss cities. (Tomohiko, 2010) In this regard, see Turkmenistan's status of Ratification of the Main International Human Rights Treaties, Conventions and other instruments. (Legislation Online- Turkmenistan, c2010)

- 1 The territorial integrity of Turkmenistan was not automatically recognised by all of its neighbours in the period following its independence. (Fredholm, 2003, p. 15)
- 2 Greater security; as the country lost its strategic significance after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.⁷⁹
- 3 More favourable conditions for political and economic development without becoming politically dependent on its neighbours, across whose territory the major export energy routes would have to pass; (Anceschi, 2010, p. 94)
- 4 External non-intervention in domestic affairs, especially in regard to human rights violations.

The change of Turkmenistan's ruler appears to have brought about a change in the country's isolationist foreign policy, too. Driven mostly by economic interests, Berdymukhammedov started opening the country to the outer world by recreating political and economic linkage. This new approach can also lead to more external prevention initiatives in the future.

Referring to this setting, this subchapter will seek to describe external policies that can diminish conflict potential. Similar to the previous case study, the focus will be on development and democracy assistance, involving institution- and capacity-building, which are mostly driven by interventions from Western countries and international organisations. Other initiatives will be introduced as long as they are of any relevance in regard to Turkmenistan's internal stability.

3.2.2.1 International organisations

The following section will concern international organisations whose agendas contribute to conflict prevention. The focus will be on the UN and its agencies, the OSCE and the EU. Unlike Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan has for a long time avoided any regional activities in Central Asia, with the only form of participation regarding its associate membership in the CIS. Although the country has recently increased its participation in the multilateral organisations, its Central Asian affiliation is still not significant enough to be highlighted here.

⁷⁹ The country did not have any particular strategic value, as its territory no longer marked the Soviet border with hostile neighbours Iran and Afghanistan and raw materials present in its territory were of such an advantage when compared to its neighbours. (Anceschi, 2010, p. 94)

UN

Among eight UN agencies present in Ashgabat, the focus of the UNDP is the most relevant to this topic.⁸⁰ The major expansion of the programme occurred in 2007 in response to Berdymukhammedov's call for support of his new reform agenda. Today, the UNDP Country Programme in Turkmenistan deals with several areas that involve the promotion of democratic governance, sustainable development, poverty reduction and human rights initiatives. (UNDP office in Turkmenistan, c2010) In more concrete terms, these principles are mostly implemented through technical assistance that seeks to develop "comprehensive, multi-hazard community risk management strategies and integrate them into planning processes at district, regional and national levels".⁸¹ (Country programme document for Turkmenistan (2010-2015), 2009) Among others, political activities aim at institutional- and capacity-building to ensure better protection of human rights, strengthening legislation and development of policy frameworks, grassroots projects, and promotion of civic and political awareness on electoral rights. (Country Programme Document for Turkmenistan (2010-2015), 2009) In this regard, it is worth mentioning the EU/UNDP/OHCHR joint project "Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights". (UNDP Turkmenistan: Project Brief , 2010) Nevertheless, the role of the UNDP is mostly supportive and dependent on Turkmenistan's government, which is the key factor for any locally implemented project. The UNDP thus has to find the way to match its own agenda with the interests of the local government.⁸²

⁸⁰ The UN agencies in Turkmenistan: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), World Health Organisation (WHO), World Bank (WB), International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

⁸¹ For example, as regards electoral assistance, the UNDP provides a series of trainings and other initiatives to develop electoral legal framework as well as directly supports actors of electoral process (voters, candidates and their representatives, media representatives and national observers) through tailor-made trainings and public education materials. (Cooperation on Enhancing Electoral System and Processes in Turkmenistan- Project Brief, 2010)

⁸² For instance, on the request of the government, the UNDP has provided policy advice and technical assistance in parliamentary development aimed at strengthening its legislative, oversight and representative functions. (Parliamentary Development Support Programme- Project Brief, 2010) Another example, a joint EU/UNDP/OHCHR project, is focused on improving the capacity of the government to comply with the international human rights standards and develop a wide scale public awareness strategy on human rights for people. (Strengthening the National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights EU/UNDP/OHCHR Project, 2010)

In a special regard to the economic threats mentioned above, other UN-based organisations relevant for this paper are the WB and the IMF. In the past, Turkmenistan barely expressed any interest in their assistance, as it would have brought about a required scrutiny of its financial affairs. Besides, during the 1990s the IMF and the EBRD suspended their activities in Turkmenistan due to systematic violations of human rights. (Boss, 2003, p. 478) This still-stand was changed after Berdymukhammedov came to power. The new president has reinitiated cooperation in a number of areas (such as SME development, health and pension reform, etc) that should be provided in the form of loans, advisory activities and technical assistance. Despite this promising gesture, the majority of projects are still inactive, in a closed and dropped stage. (WB- Turkmenistan: Projects and programs, c2010)

Another UN-affiliated institution represents the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), established in Ashgabat in 2008. Its main purpose is to “*assist and support the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in building their conflict prevention capacities through enhanced dialogue, confidence building measures and establishing genuine partnership.*” (UNRCCA Mission Statement, c2010) This is implemented by a number of specific workshops and dialogues.⁸³ The main focus of the cooperation is on regional and trans-boundary challenges; namely terrorism, organised crime, drug trafficking, environmental security and instable situation in Afghanistan. (UNRCCA Programme of Actions, c2010) Thus, the UNRCCA does not actually concern threats regarding political, economic and social development of the Central Asia states. This was seen prior to the Kyrgyzstan 2010 crisis, when the organisation was not directly involved in mediation efforts. Therefore, the UNRCCA’s impact on conflict prevention in Turkmenistan can only be seen in a very particular regard to organised crime and religious extremism.

OSCE

⁸³ The former seek to gather policy makers, practitioners and policy makers to elaborate on preventive diplomacy, mediation, and negotiation skills. The latter address local diplomatic academies and institutes of security studies and international relations that should bring more opportunities for training, study, and exchange of experiences to the young generation in Central Asia interested in conflict prevention diplomacy. At the same time, the dialogues should strengthen linkages between think tanks within the region in order to improve analysis and assessment of common vulnerabilities and mechanisms for cooperation. (UNRCCA Programme of Actions, c2010)

Compared to the UN, cooperation between Turkmenistan and the OSCE has been more constrained. To keep its mission active in the country, the OSCE had to adopt a very careful policy. This involved balancing its critique of the government for human rights violations and lack of democratic principles with more pragmatic cooperation with local authorities, universities, research institutions and NGOs. The harshness of Turkmenistan's regime has evoked many critical reactions from the OSCE. For instance, in 2002-2003 ten OSCE member states used the Moscow Mechanism to investigate a reported attack on the President."⁸⁴ (Human Dimension Mechanism, c2010) Equally critical was the OSCE statement on the December 2008 parliamentary elections in Turkmenistan, which stated that "*the current political context does not allow for a meaningful competition*". (Turkmenistan's Early Parliamentary Elections 14 December 2008- OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report, 2008) In its reaction to the OSCE criticism, Turkmenistan's government tried to limit OSCE field activities. For example, Ashgabat did not enable the organisation to investigate the background of the alleged attack in 2002 as an OSCE special rapporteur Emmanuel Decaux was not allowed to enter the country.⁸⁵ (Repression and Regression in Turkmenistan: A New International Strategy, 2004)

Despite the significant pressure, the OSCE tried to continue with local projects, "ready to assist to build constructive relationship with the country". (Kreikemeyer, 2006a, p. 110) Consequently, the organisation has established contacts with local authorities, universities, research institutions and NGOs and run some projects, involving courses on international human rights law, support of youth development or gender equality. (OSCE Centre in Ashgabat- Recent Projects, c2010) Nevertheless, the organisation's activities remain limited. While the 2010 crisis in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the OSCE raised international interest in Central Asia and improved OSCE status regionally, this has not significantly affected the marginal character of its activities in Turkmenistan.

⁸⁴ Together with the Vienna Mechanism, the Moscow Mechanism is an instrument for protection of the OSCE Human Dimension. Established in 1991, it allows OSCE member states to establish ad hoc missions of independent experts to assist in the resolution of a specific human dimension problem. (Human Dimension Mechanism, c2010)

⁸⁵ The final report nonetheless detailed arbitrary arrests, torture, death in custody, and forced displacement of ethnic minorities and relatives of opposition figures. (Repression and Regression in Turkmenistan: A New International Strategy, 2004)

EU

In the Berdymukhammedov era, the EU represents a Western actor that is engaged with Turkmenistan more regularly and through a more diversified range of initiatives. Priority areas of current EU assistance regard economic reforms, market and regulatory reforms, education and capacity building, good governance, rule of law, promotion of civil society, agriculture and rural development. However, the EU currently does not carry out any grass-root project in the country. (EC External Cooperation Programmes: Turkmenistan, 2010) Besides, Turkmenistan is supposed to participate in EU education, training, and research mobility programmes within the TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus framework. By far the biggest dynamics accompanies economic cooperation as the EU represents a key trade partner of Turkmenistan.⁸⁶ In contradiction to these activities, the conditionality imposed from different EU authorities has complicated the normalisation of the mutual relationship. This particularly regards the ratification of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the EU and Turkmenistan, which has been postponed due to negative human rights record of the Turkmenistan's regime.⁸⁷ Furthermore, the EU Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia (2007) came up with a new instrument of Human Rights Dialogues that should, through annual meetings, broaden and deepen cooperation in this field. So far, the results are rather vague though; notwithstanding the conclusions of the three rounds realised in Ashgabat, the government continues to violate human rights and suppress civic freedoms. As claimed by Anceschi, the institutionalisation of the EU- Turkmenistan's Human Rights Dialogue thus caters more to pragmatic interests: it improves the image of the current regime of Turkmenistan and legitimises the EU's policies in Central Asia. In reality, the EU's intention is yet to privilege economic (or more specifically, energy) cooperation. (Anceschi, 2010, p. 106) Such schizophrenia is also obvious from official EU statements appreciating positive reformist development under the current president, Berdymukhammedov, which

⁸⁶ Interestingly, while the EU 27 is ranked among the top three import and export partners of Turkmenistan, conversely from the EU perspective, Turkmenistan occupies the 106th and 122nd position respectively. (EU External Action: Turkmenistan, 2010)

⁸⁷ As the PCA, signed in 1998, still has not been ratified, mutual relations are framed by the Trade and Cooperation Agreement signed with the Soviet Union in 1989. Yet, more linkage has occurred recently: in addition to Interim Trade Agreement (2009), the parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of energy (2008). (HRW- Turkmenistan: Events of 2009, c2010)

contradict critical reports of European think-tanks and NGOs.⁸⁸ Denison views the EU's assistance as genuine cooperation which, unlike heavy-handed democracy promotion, should bring "*a more significant and uncomplicated, security and commercial dividend in medium term.*" (Denison, 2007, p. 2) One way or another, there is still a huge potential for mutual cooperation to be developed.

Regional organisations

The ADB continues to provide assistance and loans at a low level as well as limited expertise. This is likely to improve with ADB local mission in Ashgabat, intention to open which was notified in 2010. (ADB President Announces Plan to Open Resident Mission in Turkmenistan, 2010) Another regional organisation, the EBRD, has recently increased its engagement in Turkmenistan. This followed after a long-term policy of suspending some of its lending programs to Turkmenistan on the basis of the government's unwillingness to take to implement agreed upon structural reforms. (Turkmen Leaders Unlikely to Heed EBRD's Reform Call, 2010) Currently, it works together with private sector investors, the Turkmen authorities and other financial institutions to address key transition challenges. In particular, the EBRD financially supports private sector micro, small, medium-sized and large businesses and financial institutions and will lead respective policy dialogues with the authorities, donors and NGOs. (EBRD- Turkmenistan Strategy, 2010)

3.2.2.2 States

External actors, especially superpowers, can significantly influence the contours of change in Central Asia. However, energy and geopolitical interests combined with concerns over security threats from the region, place the emphasis of these nations on ensuring stability. The result is that most external initiatives in the region are directed towards supporting the status quo and keeping authoritarian regimes at power. This is certainly the case of Turkmenistan, whose significance regards the country's neutrality,

⁸⁸ For instance, in July 2009 the EU formally approved an Interim Trade Agreement (ITA) that gives preferential treatment and promises broader upgraded relations with Turkmenistan. At the same time, there was no reference to human rights concerns, despite the fact that the agreement was introduced as an encouraging factor towards the reform process in Turkmenistan. (HRW- Turkmenistan: Events of 2009, c2010)

its geopolitical position and involvement in the Afghanistan conflict.⁸⁹ In contrast to Niyazov's isolationistic policy, when, due to non-existing bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, only relations with Russia were relevant, Berdymukhammedov has integrated Turkmenistan more in the global community and diversified the country's foreign partners. (Anceschi, 2010, p. 103) As a result, Turkmenistan enjoys stable relations not only with three superpowers present in the region (USA, Russia, China) but also with EU member states, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey. Given the character of the most relevant partners and considering the agenda of their foreign policies, this paper will further introduce the initiatives of Russia and the USA with a reference to conflict prevention.

Russia and the USA

With the exception of the Caspian's status and other energy-related issues, Turkmenistan is not of a big significance to Russian interests. Besides, Moscow's status of a popular destination among Turkmenistan's dissidents, along with gas crisis in 2009, contributed to cooler mutual relations. (Hiro, 2009, p. 224) In regard to Turkmenistan's domestic development, Russia seems to tolerate any regime capable of keeping the country stable and thereby ensuring a continuity of gas supplies. (Sentinel Security Assessment - Turkmenistan, 2009) Although Kremlin officials are not pleased with Berdymukhammedov's attempts to diversify Turkmenistan's foreign policy further from Kremlin centrepiece, they nonetheless find him to be the most secure current presidential option given the peculiarities of the domestic scene in Ashgabat. This view, along with undemocratic domestic character of the regime in Kremlin, anticipates no preventive initiatives or activities coming from Russia.

Due to its geographical distance, isolationist policy and relatively small interest in development, Turkmenistan is on the margin of US foreign policy. (Blank, 2007, p. 28) Although its significance has dramatically increased with the US-led war on terror, the scope of mutual cooperation is still considerably limited.⁹⁰ This is also caused by Ashgabat's reluctance to deepen the cooperation with Washington, keeping in mind that a pro-Western or pro-American regime can deteriorate its relations with other actors, Iran in

⁸⁹ Noteworthy, Turkmenistan supported Taliban till the regime's overthrow in 2001 and intends to build up pipeline transferring its gas supplies through Afghanistan to Pakistan.

⁹⁰ After 9/11, Niyazov finally turned against the Taliban and helped the US anti-Taliban build-up in the region in terms of shipping humanitarian assistance, providing landing rights and other support services for the allied forces active in the region.

particular. Additionally, Turkmen regime is not very pleased by the US's critiques on the alarming human rights record in the country. Therefore, the scope of cooperation between the two countries is rather narrow. Besides some limited military and border security aid, the biggest US contribution towards development assistance is provided by the USAID. Its projects involve various exchange programmes, technical assistance, training on NGO development, business and economics, water resource issues and agriculture. Local communities have been provided with legal advice and free internet access. (USAID Asia- Countries- Turkmenistan, 2010) The current US engagement in Turkmenistan is still far behind its potential; greater promotion and diversification of its activities in Turkmenistan so as to better cover potential threats there is needed.

3.2.2.3 Non-state actors

As regards the third sector in Turkmenistan, international activities are far more restricted than in previous examples. International NGOs find it impossible to obtain visas. Another problem, common for both international and domestic NGOs, regards obligatory registration with the justice ministry. The application process is often dragged out or turned down without reason. Also, functioning NGOs are in danger because their registration needs to be prolonged and their activities are under permanent state control. An example of the consequences these issues can have is when Doctors without Borders, the last international humanitarian NGO active in Turkmenistan, withdrew from Turkmenistan in December 2009 due to a lack of cooperation from the local government. (Freedom in the World 2010: Turkmenistan, 2010) The overall situation is very accurately described by the Human Rights Watch (HRW) in one of its assessments: *“Independent NGOs and media cannot operate openly, if at all, in Turkmenistan. No independent organisation has been permitted to carry out research on human rights abuses inside the country, and no international agency-governmental or nongovernmental-has had access to detention facilities.”* (HRW- Turkmenistan: Events of 2009, c2010)

Therefore, there are just a very few international NGOs still active directly in the country. One of them is a US-based NGO IREX, which tries to strengthen quality education, independent media, and empower communities. In doing so, their activities also include conflict resolution, technology for development, gender, and youth. INEX's

agenda in Turkmenistan involves projects aimed at civil society strengthening, conflict resolution quality education, media support, internet access, as well as fellowships, short-term travel grants and training and programmes.(IREX Turkmenistan, c2010)Another NGO, the ABA Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI), has been specifically focusing on legal education and legal service programs. Its regional projects involve Criminal Law Reform and Anti-Human Trafficking, Legal Education Reform and Civic Education. (ABA Rule of Law Initiative- Turkmenistan, c2010) A very important partner for Turkmen local NGOs represented a global development organisation Counterpart. Together with the Urban Institute and the ABA/ROLI, they selected 18 communities where Turkmenistan Community Empowerment Program was implemented. The goal of the project was to improve the skills of active citizen groups within the country, and thereby increase participation in local governance at the community level. This was accompanied by several resource centres that provided free internet access. (Turkmenistan Community Empowerment Program, c2010) However, since the completion of its local programmes in fall 2009, the organisation has not been active any longer in the country. Its withdrawal had a huge impact on regional NGO support centres that lost their financial support. (NGO Index: Turkmenistan, 2009)

Considering the above mentioned, the activities of international NGOs are limited in terms of quality as well as quantity. Those few NGOs still working in the area must significantly narrow their agenda and run “neutral” projects approved by the Turkmen government only. Needless to say, as any non-state activity is a priori considered suspicious and thus closely watched by the state, there is almost no chance to advance with preventive initiatives.

4 Analysis

This chapter will seek to analyse conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. The analysis will be provided in three subchapters. The first will reflect the preventive actions in the both countries, which will later serve as a basis for comparison. In accordance with the theoretical framework, I will point out the development and governance approach from Lund's "toolbox" (Figure 2). Namely, the emphasis will be placed on development assistance and democratic aid. Besides this, many Western actors have tried to conditionality, which belong to the non-military approaches from Lund's "toolbox". These cases will be stressed separately as well. The results of the first section will be demonstrated in a tab. The second section will seek to assess conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan by applying SWOT analysis. As discussed in the methodological section, SWOT analysis is used as a method to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In accordance with this distinction, conflict prevention will be evaluated in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, which will be demonstrated also schematically. Finally, the last subchapter will compare the two case studies referring to the results of the previous two subchapters.

4.1 Case studies revisited

4.1.1 Uzbekistan

As seen from the case study, the complexity of Uzbekistan's domestic situation brings about a variety of conflict-prone situations. The most outstanding threats represent economic stagnation (economic dimension), the rising emergence of radical Islam (societal dimension) and persistent political repressions (political dimension). While each of the threats can bring about a serious conflict, it is also possible that one event will cause a snow-ball effect, resulting in several concurrently escalated conflicts. Although it is not clear when a conflict scenario will happen, a change in Uzbekistan's leadership will surely bring about a big challenge. Importantly, considering the old age of the current president, this situation could arise in the short term. Thus, the existing conflict potential in the country is serious enough to implement a variety of preventive actions.

Despite the manifest conflict potential in Uzbekistan, preventive actions have encountered many difficulties when being implemented in the country. As discussed in

the case study, there are considerable constrains and shortcomings regarding all the actors of conflict prevention.

Tab 2 Preventive actions in Uzbekistan

	Preventive actions	International organisations	States	Non- state actors
Development assistance	Fact finding	UN, OSCE, EU, ADB, EBRD	x	x
	Institution building	UN, EU, ADB, EBRD	USA, Japan, Switzerland	x
	Advisory services	UN, EU, ADB, EBRD	USA, Japan, Germany, Switzerland	x
	Technical assistance	UN, EU, ADB, EBRD	USA, Japan, Germany, Switzerland	x
	Education and training	UN, OSCE, EU, ADB	USA, Japan, Germany, Switzerland	x
Democratic aid	Fact finding	OSCE	x	x
	Institution building	UN, OSCE, EU, EBRD	USA	x
	Human rights standard setting and monitoring	OSCE, EU, EBRD	USA	x
	Advisory services	EU	USA	x
	Education and training	UN, OSCE, EU	USA	x
Conditionality	Rule of law programmes	UN, OSCE, EU	USA, Germany	x
	Sanctions	EU	x	x
	Conditioned aid	EBRD	x	x

Sources: (ADB: Uzbekistan- Evaluation Resources, c2010; Swiss Cooperation: Activities in Uzbekistan, c2010; Area Based Development Programme, 2010; Counterpart: Uzbekistan, c2010; EBRD: Uzbekistan Factsheet, 2010; EC- Development and Cooperation: Uzbekistan, 2010; GTZ: Economic Development in selected regions of Uzbekistan, c2010; IREX: Uzbekistan, c2010; JICA: Activities in Uzbekistan, c2010; Uzbekistan: Civil Society, c2010) (Demokratization and the Rule of Law, c2011)

Tab 2 divides preventive actions according to their measures and actors, which were discussed in the theoretical part. While the selection of the preventative actors is the same as in the case study, the distinction between democratic aid, development assistance and conditionality was made for a better structured comparison. In this view, preventive actions in Uzbekistan will be re-examined.

International organisations

Compared to the other actors, international organisations seem to have the biggest room for operation in the country. This is reasoned by their institutional capacities, staff and resource opportunities and, most importantly, by their relatively neutral status. In this regard, the UN and its agencies represent the actors with the broadest spectrum of measures that can be used in conflict prevention. However, this spectrum is significantly limited due to the authoritarian character of the Uzbek regime. This mostly regards democracy assistance and in particular human rights programmes, which have been significantly constrained especially in the post-Andijan period (e.g. expulsion of the UNHCR). As a result, only a few projects on democracy assistance are now carried out, mostly under UNDP good governance scheme. On the other hand, the strongest UN performance is seen in development assistance, also implemented primarily by the UNDP. With this respect, the activities may be divided into two major categories: 1) “top-line”- regarding expertise, analytical support, advisory services and technical assistance provided to government as to advance economic transition and cope with the current economic shortcomings and 2) “bottom-line”- relating to grass-root projects, which are mostly targeted at community empowerment. As regards the former category, some success has been indicated in regard to several liberal steps and strategies announced by the government (e.g. the Welfare Improvement Strategy, discussed in the case study). Nonetheless, there has been minimal potential for their full realisation and no conditionality mechanisms have been applied. On the other hand, the grass-roots projects have been successfully carried out across the country and are of a big potential due to their decentralised character (e.g. educational programmes on volunteerism and community participation). However, as discussed in the case study, a more focused and long-term approach would make them even more effective.

On the other hand, the OSCE has encountered many more obstacles. Its promotion of democracy and human rights logically clashed with state restrictions. As a result, human rights dimension was downplayed by politico-military, economic and environmental issues, which were newly incorporated. Nevertheless, the organisation per se could not stop criticising the regime and supporting human rights activists and opposition completely. This together with the post-Andijan restrictions threatened the continuance of its local office. Although the OSCE managed to stay in the country, the quality and quantity of its operations has suffered considerably. Without a full mandate, underfinanced and understaffed, it cannot adequately act as a preventative actor. As regards its preventive actions in Uzbekistan, the EU is more successful in developmental assistance. Like in the case of the UN, we can see the distinction between “top-line” and “bottom-line” projects, whereas the EU has mostly implemented the former ones: dialogues, seminars and conferences on human rights, advisory services on political and economic reform. On the other hand, there are just a few grass-roots programmes (“bottom-line”). Another shortcoming regards the implementation of the EU conditionality in Uzbekistan. Imposing the post-Andijan sanctions, which were highly inefficient, did not adequately respond to the events. As far as regional actors are concerned, Central Asian organisations (CSTO, EURASEC, SCO) are due to its vague agenda of a little importance here. On the other hand, the role of the ADB and EBRD is much bigger, especially in terms of development assistance (e.g. loans supporting regional infrastructure or private sector). Similar to the EU, the EBRD also conditioned its aid for Uzbekistan in regard to the Andijan events. Limitation its activities to private sector only appears to be a more targeted and thus better chosen measure, although it is hard to measure the actual impact of these steps on the government.

State actors

The preventive actions taken by particular states are determined by their official relations with Uzbekistan and by their overall geopolitical importance. Swiss, German and Japanese agencies have successfully implemented some projects, mostly concerning development aid. Considering superpowers in the region, neither Russian nor Chinese activities can refer to conflict prevention. Rigid regimes in both countries face similar problems are thus more likely to leave Uzbekistan’s domestic affairs aside and intervene

only when the situation escalates into a conflict threatening regional stability. Moreover, by providing unconditional aid to Uzbekistan, they can downplay Western efforts to implement conditionality there. The US, on the other hand, has applied a number of tools to pursue its economic and security-political interests as well as to carry out its promotion of democracy and human rights. Yet, failure of the latter has sometimes downplayed the success of the former, which was obvious after the Andijan events (e.g. withdrawal of US troops from the Karshi Khanabad military base). Structural preventive actions are mostly found in the USAID agenda, which carries out a big range of projects similar to the UN. Also similarly, there are “top-line” projects (e.g. assisting the government in the reform process) and bottom-line projects (e.g. community empowering in mahallas). Yet, there is some more potential for preventive actions to take.

Non-state actors

In terms of international NGOs there is actually none of them in the post-Andijan Uzbekistan. Many US-based NGOs, such as Counterpart or IREX, were forced to close their offices and now can provide only a limited number of off-site activities that are essentially dependent on cooperation of their local partners.

As seen in the case study, the Uzbek authoritarian regime is a priori suspicious of (EBRD- Turkmenistan Strategy, 2010)any international intervention. This is fuelled by the fact that most of the preventive actions are Western-based. The resulting picture of the preventive activities, as present in Tab 2, shows a bigger emphasis on development assistance than democratic aid. Among coercive tools, conditionality was applied with the EU sanctions only.

4.1.2 Turkmenistan

Recently, Turkmenistan has experienced a big change in its leadership, which has to some extent resulted in a moderate shift towards liberalisation. Nevertheless, the reforms mostly regarded the economic sphere and, even there, their actual implementation (IREX: Turkmenistan, c2010; Lund & Garner, *The Potential for Violent Conflicts in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan*, 2001)has significantly lagged behind the declared promises. Thus, the shortcomings of Niyazov’s policy still come into play and the likelihood for conflict remains substantial. As seen from the case study, the threats country faces are

similar to Uzbekistan although some of them are not as strong due to better economic situation and less Islam radicalism. Yet, Turkmens have been more ideologically indoctrinated and brainwashed by Turkmenbashi ideology. Thus the future development of their mindset and their reaction to potential challenges are hard to predict.

Tab 3 Preventive actions in Turkmenistan

	Preventive actions	International organisations	States	Non-state actors
Development assistance	Fact finding	UN, EU, ADB, EBRD	x	x
	Institution building	UN, EU, EBRD	USA	x
	Advisory services	UN, EU, ADB, EBRD	USA	x
	Technical assistance	UN, EU, ADB, EBRD	USA	IREX
	Education and training	UN, OSCE, EU, ADB	USA	x
Democratic aid	Fact finding	OSCE	x	x
	Institution building	UN, OSCE, EU, EBRD	USA	IREX
	Human rights standard setting and monitoring	UN, OSCE, EU	USA	x
	Advisory services	UN, EU	USA	x
	Education and training	UN, OSCE, EU	USA	IREX, ABA
Conditionality	Rule of law programmes	UN, OSCE, EU	USA	IREX, ABA
	Postponed ratification of the PCA	EU	x	x
	Conditioned aid	UN (IMF) EBRD		

Sources: (ABA Rule of Law Initiative- Turkmenistan, c2010; Country Programme Document for Turkmenistan (2010-2015), 2009; EC External Cooperation Programmes: Turkmenistan, 2010; EU External Action: Turkmenistan, 2010; OSCE Centre in Ashgabat- Recent Projects, c2010; EU External Action: Turkmenistan, 2010; Strengthening the National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights EU/UNDP/OHCHR Project, 2010)

The re-examination of preventive actions in the country is shown in the Tab 3, which use the same distinction between the actors and actions as used in the case of Uzbekistan.

International organisations

In Turkmenistan, the character and activities of the preventative actors are similar to the ones in Uzbekistan. So are their problems and challenges. The strongest actor, the UN, has implemented some projects through its agencies (e.g. EU/UNDP/OHCHR joint project “Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights”). However, most of them are coordinated and thus controlled by the government (“top-line” projects), which considerably limits their scope and impact. The UNRCCA, uniquely dealing with challenges of the regional security, covers intrastate issues only and does not intervene in domestic affairs. After the thwarted initiative to implement Moscow Mechanism in the country (when OBSE special rapporteur Emmanuel Decaux was not allowed to enter the country), the OSCE is not allowed to fully perform its function and its activities are extremely limited by so called “constructive relationship” with Turkmen government. On the other hand, the EU’s approach appears double-edged: while it pursues development assistance and economic cooperation with the government (e.g. new Interim Trade Agreement), it keeps responding to human rights abuses with criticism and partial conditionality (for example, the PCA has not been ratified yet). In contrast to Turkmenistan’s reluctant attitude towards Central Asian regional structures, prospects for the cooperation with other regional organisations, namely the ADB and EBRD, seem more promising (e.g. the planned opening of the ADB local mission in Ashgabat). Especially the case of the EBRD, which together with the IMF limited its activities in Turkmenistan due to human rights violations, signalises quite a significant shift in the policy.

States

The number and scope of the states active in Turkmenistan is even more limited than in Uzbekistan. Russian-Uzbek relations appear cool, whereas Moscow will not interfere in Turkmen domestic issues as long as Berymukhammedov represents the best option for the national and regional security. Considering the absence of Japanese, Swiss

or German development agencies, USAID remains the only significant state actor in the area. Its agenda mostly concerns development assistance and, to a lesser extent, a few democracy aid projects (e.g. exchange programmes, technical assistance, training on NGO development, business and economics, water resource issues and agriculture). Compared to USAID activities in Uzbekistan, less work is carried out in local communities (legal advice and free internet access only).

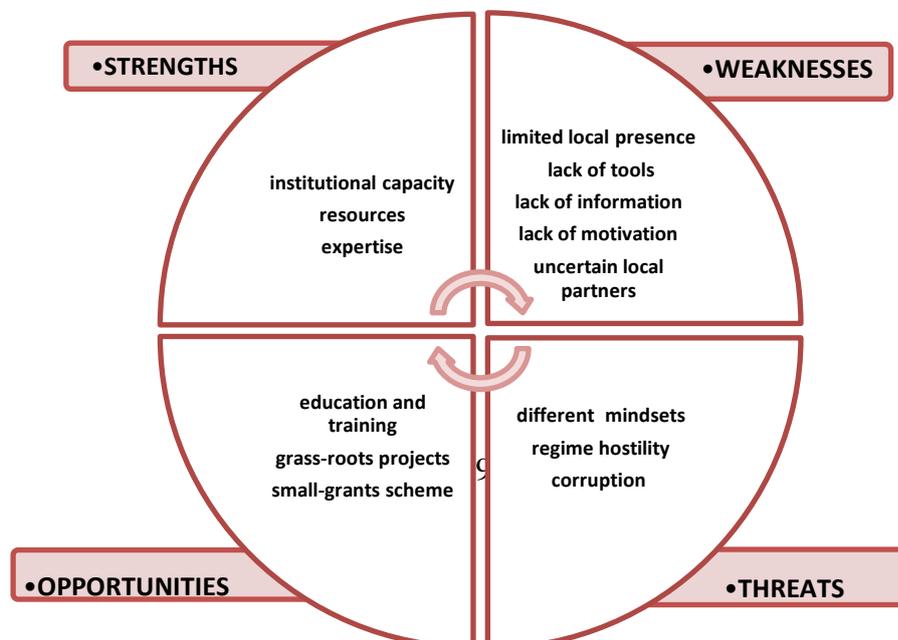
Non-state actors

Numerous restrictions have resulted in almost no INGOs in Turkmenistan. One of the exceptions is the US-based IREX with projects regarding both development assistance and development aid. Grass-roots projects were successfully carried out by the Counterpart International (Turkmenistan Community Empowerment Program) but the NGO left the country after they were accomplished in 2009. This has negatively affected local resource centres dependent on Counterpart’s technical and financial assistance (e.g. free internet access).

4.2 SWOT analysis

As already mentioned in the first chapter, preventive actions in both Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan will be evaluated according to SWOT analysis. This method is used because of its clear structure and logical distinction (between external and internal influences). Both internal characteristics (of the preventative actors) and external conditions (of the domestic environment in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) can be shown in one scheme, which makes evaluation much easier.

Figure 3 Conflict prevention in Uzbekistan (SWOT analysis)



4.2.1 Uzbekistan

4.2.1.1 Strengths

Institutional capacity

Most of the actors represent well-established organisations and agencies with highly-skilled staff and activities framed by many internationally recognised documents. Some of the actors also cooperate with each other, taking advantage of compatible agendas. For example, the UN in Uzbekistan is represented by eight agencies, which can carry out programmes of a great complexity. Moreover, many of them are compatible: for instance, the WB along with the UNDP assisted in creation of the Welfare Improvement Strategy. Although the EU has not advanced with its local presence as much as the UN, there has been a considerable shift in its policy with the new CA strategy and the EU special representative Pierre Morel, who has visited Uzbekistan several times. Furthermore, preventive actions can be implemented within its CFSP agenda. Despite its weak position in the country, the OSCE's has some potential as well, as it uniquely links Western countries as well as the ones from the former Soviet bloc. Last but not least, Western development agencies (USAID, German GTZ, and others) represent a very valuable measure for Western actors to be active in the country.

Resources

Within the framework of development assistance and democracy aid, there has been a considerable amount of money spent on the local projects. A majority of the actors have provided the local partners with numerous large and small grants programmes, fellowships, free trainings and educative programmes, free internet access and technical assistance. For instance, between 1992 and 2005 Uzbekistan received €41.95 million from the European Commission (EC). (EC- Development and Cooperation: Uzbekistan, 2010) The average annual International Development Association (IDA) allocation to Uzbekistan was approximately US\$77 million between 2006 and 2008. (Republic of Uzbekistan. Country Assistance Summary for the period FY08-FY11, 2008) Moreover, as far as human resources are concerned, they generally have a broad database of many skilled and experienced professionals to work on the projects in Uzbekistan. And finally,

via their programmes, the actors have created networks of volunteers who can be employed in numerous grass-roots projects.

Expertise

In terms of conflict prevention, most of the actors can provide multiple skills and valuable experience gained from their long-term engagement in conflict prevention as such or in development assistance and democracy aid. As many of them came to Uzbekistan shortly after its independence, their long-term presence in the country as well as lessons learned from the previous projects are very useful when planning out new ones (e.g. the UN started to work in Uzbekistan in 1991). Furthermore, in their preventive actions, many actors employ specialised agencies, departments or representatives who can come up with a narrow-focused and hence more efficient approach (e.g. UNDP, development agencies,).

4.2.1.2 Weaknesses

Limited presence

The number of external actors present in Uzbekistan is very small as the regime is extremely suspicious of their presence and activities. For instance, as mentioned in the case study, the UNHCR office had to stop its local activities, or OSCE agenda has become significantly restricted due to its criticisms on human rights abuses in the country. Interestingly, some actors limited their presence deliberately as a conditionality means. (EBRD) Despite their global emergence, there are no INGOs active locally, whereas many of them were expelled despite previous registration guarantying legal status (e.g. IREX, Counterpart).

Inefficient tools

Many projects implemented in Uzbekistan have been too broad, inadequate or not properly targeted. For instance, EU sanctions responding to the Andijan events did not work out due to their vague targeting and no other supporting mechanisms. Moreover their symbolic message was downplayed by national interests of the EU members.

Lack of information

Due to fake official statistics, censored domestic media, controlled internet access and no presence of foreign journalists in the country, preventive actors can gain just little information about the actual on-site situation. As shown by the case of OSCE observation mission in 2007, which was discussed in the political dimension, actors are significantly restricted from getting unbiased information. The lack of information however makes the implementation of any preventive action extremely difficult.

Lack of motivation

In spite of increasing geopolitical significance in the recent years, Uzbekistan still remains relatively unimportant for the international community. Moreover, the risk that a preventive action will negatively affect economic or political relations is quite high. In economic terms, the costs of a preventive action are still viewed much higher than its benefits (e.g. the case of US military base in Karshi Khanabad mentioned in the case study).

Uncertain local partners

The paralysed third sector in Uzbekistan does not offer to foreign actors many options for networking with local partners. As mentioned in the political dimension, local NGOs suffer from harsh oppressions and the state turned local mahallas into an instrument of its power. Likewise biased is Uzbek National Association of NGOs. Moreover, due to the above-mentioned lack of information, it is hard to find reliable partners. Finally, state interferences, widespread corruption and huge grant-dependency can ruin fundraising of the local NGOs .

4.2.1.3 Opportunities

Education and training

Education programmes are most likely to succeed when being addressed to young people who are more liberal and open-minded. Considering the young population and the demographic development of Uzbekistan, this approach is of a huge potential also as a preventive mechanism against youth unemployment mentioned among economic threats. At the same time, training programmes for local communities are also very crucial as they can provide skills needed for their growth and empowerment. This can also narrow the

gaps between the regional and social differences, which are of a huge importance in the economic and societal dimension of national security.

Grass-roots projects

Community-based projects can downplay weaknesses already present in some preventive actions. As implemented in a small scale, they can be more precisely targeted, following the actual needs of the community. Furthermore, their decentralised design can contribute to empowering the local people and motivate them to participate in the local activities. This is especially crucial when we consider the huge role of mahallas for the local population. As seen among preventative actions, such projects have been already carried out by the USAID or by the UNDP (Ferghana Valley). Finally, output of such projects is better visible and thus easier to measure. To carry out sustainable activities in the communities, small grants are of better use. Providing small amount of money for ad-hoc projects can diminish the grant-dependence of local NGOs as well as encourage their own activism and project management. For instance, as mentioned in the section dealing with preventive actions, community projects in Karakalpakstan, and Kashkadarya also brought about income generation, microfinance and job creation.

4.2.1.4 Threats

Different mindsets

Uzbek mindset does not correspond to Western one, which is represented by the most of external actors. As discussed in the political dimension, this was caused due to a different historical, cultural and social background. As a result, promoting democracy and human rights without previous consideration of the local particularities may be counterproductive. This is also problem of conflict prevention in general, considering the discussion provided in the theoretical framework of this paper.

Regime hostility

As seen in the third chapter, Uzbek authoritarian regime views any external intervention as a threat to its incumbency. This also applies to preventive actions, whereas programmes devoted to development assistance are more tolerated than the ones focusing on democracy aid. As a consequence, the prevalence of the former over the latter is

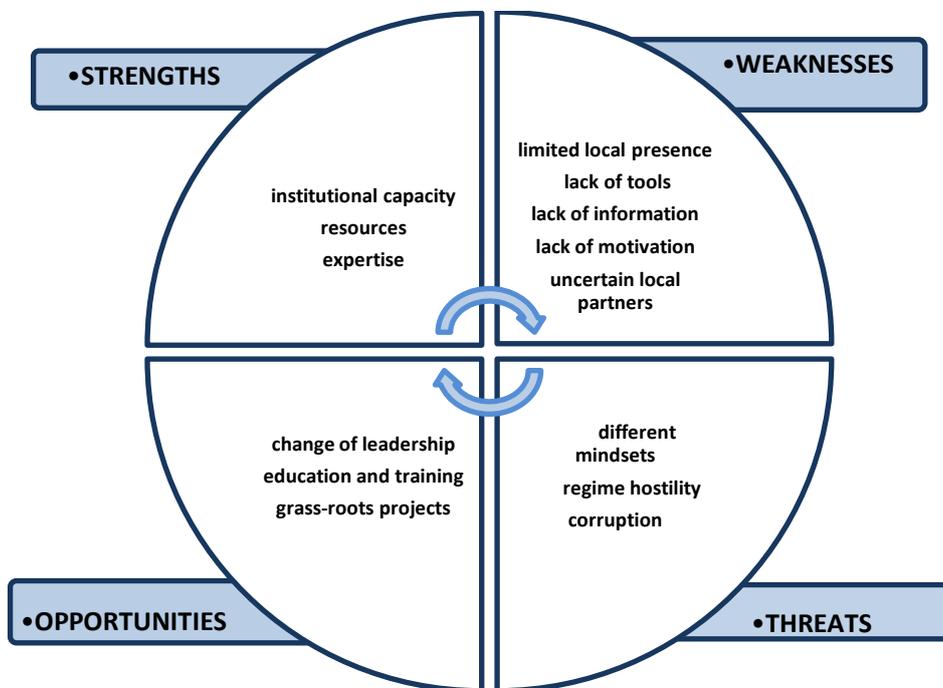
observed among current projects. This was also demonstrated in the reflection of preventive actions, which was provided in the first section of this chapter.

Corruption

The economic section of the case study stressed out the erosive character of corruption in Uzbekistan. Its impact is even strengthened by the lack of transparency and unpredictability of the local environment. In such conditions, generally tolerated and widely spread corruption can ruin any project.

4.2.2 Turkmenistan

Figure 4 Conflict prevention in Turkmenistan (SWOT analysis)



In the case of Turkmenistan, analysis will follow the same structure. The four categories of SWOT analysis will group the most outstanding factors regarding conflict prevention in the country.

4.2.2.1 Strengths

Institutional capacity

Like in Uzbekistan, most actors present in Turkmenistan, are globally acknowledged organisations and states with undisputable mandate. Moreover their

agendas are combinable, as proved the EU/UNDP/OHCHR joint project “Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights”, which was mentioned previously. Compatibility is possible as almost all the actors share the same (Western) values and recognise similar approaches towards the Turkmen regime. Another positive point represents the establishment of the UNRCCA, which deals with preventive diplomacy in the region. Although, as discussed in the case study, UNRCCA’s agenda is currently more focused on interstate conflicts, such an institutional framework is of a big potential for intrastate conflicts, too.

Resources

Preventative actors have significant volumes of financial, material and human resources to be employed in preventive actions. This is especially important when considering the social and economic conditions in the country, whereas in some cases such services can be provided by external actors only. For instance, in the country with almost no access to the internet, the provision of free PC services in the Counterpart resource centres played a big role. The importance of the internet as an educative and early warning instrument, and is especially appreciated when considering restricted access to unbiased information in Turkmenistan.

Expertise

Another crucial factor regards sharing experience and know-how with transition processes. As the political culture in Turkmenistan is really low and its population undereducated due to mismanaged educational system, skills and knowledge are needed. As mentioned in the evaluation of preventive actions provided in this chapter, actors try to transfer this expertise to all the levels- from state high-ranked officials (“top-line”) to grass roots (“bottom-line”).

4.2.2.2 Weaknesses

Limited local presence

External actors face even harsher restrictions than in Uzbekistan. As shown in the case of the OSCE or the IREX, staying active in the country is often compensated by considerable neutralisation of their agenda. Actors are tolerated in the country as long as they do not challenge the regime, or constitute any alternative power base. Also, as

mentioned in the case study, the majority of WB projects are still inactive, in a closed and dropped stage.

Lack of tools

Whereas tools used for the preventive actions in Uzbekistan were discussed in terms of their inefficiency, the actions in Turkmenistan mostly suffer from the lack of appropriate measures. This factor correlates with the one of limited local presence as staying in the country is compensated by radical restrictions of actors' agendas. As seen in the case of the OSCE, this almost automatically excludes any meaningful policy of democracy assistance.

Lack of information

Turkmenistan's case study described the "huge cloud of mystery", which has been held over its actual domestic development since Niyazov's era. The regime succeeded in creating an ambiguous external picture of Turkmenistan's domestic situation. Some of this ambiguity has also remained under new leadership, which in combination with strict censorship, fake official statistics and biased media make any attempt to get field data extremely difficult.

Lack of motivation

In the case of Turkmenistan's risky environment, entry costs downplay potential benefits of preventing violent conflicts there. Moreover, recent evidence shows that Berdymukhammedov is willing to develop economic cooperation with Western partners unless they discuss Turkmenistan's domestic issues. At the same time, there are many other actors who can provide Turkmenistan with unconditioned aid. These circumstances do not generate a high number of preventative actors.

Uncertain partners

The above-mentioned lack of information together with Turkmen dysfunctional third sector and state restrictions against local NGOs cause finding local partners extremely difficult. Moreover, fundraising of the local third sector can backlash due to corruption, which paralyses the economic activity in the country.

4.2.2.3 Opportunities

Change of the local leadership

With the new president, Turkmenistan is breaking its long-term international isolation and preventative actors should make the most of this shift. Along with intensified economic relations, there is also some potential for other forms of cooperation that can contribute to conflict prevention. For instance, the president called for advice to advance with some of his reform steps (SME development, health and pension reform).

Education and training

As mentioned previously, Niyazov's interventions in Turkmen education system significantly harmed the young generation. Without proper education and under the threat of ideological indoctrination, Turkmen youth are in a substantial need for other forms of education. However, educational and training programmes can be also realised with all age groups. In these terms, the case study especially pointed out IREX fellowships, or EU education, training, and research mobility programmes.

Grass-roots programmes

Like in Uzbekistan, grass-roots projects can leave a huge positive impact on the local communities. In Turkmenistan however, actors have a worse position because not as many grass-roots projects have been carried out here. One of the few positive examples mentioned in the case study represents Turkmenistan Community Empowerment Program organised by Counterpart, the Urban Institute and the ABA.

4.2.2.4 Threats

Different mindsets

Historically, Turkmen society shares values different from the ones of external actors. This gap has been even broadened by radical nationalism and the ruthless state interventions in education. Thus, external actors must approach the country very carefully in respect to local specifics. These are very hard to research due to lack of information.

Regime hostility

As already mentioned, repressions and restrictions of the Turkmen regime have a huge impact on prevention activities in the country. As shown by numerous examples in the case study, any preventive action in the country is under the threat being ruined by the Turkmen state.

Corruption

Without independent judiciary in the country, wide-spread corruption poses a threat for any fundraising and investment activities as well as over networking with local partners. The seriousness of this threat demonstrates the fact the country is regularly ranked among the most corrupted countries in the world.

4.3 Comparison

Tab 4 Conflict potential Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan

Index	Uzbekistan	Turkmenistan
Failed State Index	36/177	65/177
Bertelsmann Transformation Index- Status	120/128	115/128
Bertelsmann Transformation Index- Management	124/128	119/128
Political stability	18,4 %	50,9 %
Global Peace Index	110/149	117/149
Democracy Index	185/194	185/194
Press Freedom Index	163/178	176/178
NGO Sustainability Index (2009)	5,7/1	5,7/1
Economic Freedom Index	158/179	171/179
Corruption Perception Index	172/176	172/176
Gini Index	36,7 %	40,8 %
Economic Growth	8,2 %	11%
GDP (Atlas Method)	1100 \$ (197/213)	3420 \$ (126/213)
GDP (PPP Method)	2910 \$ (159/213)	6980 \$ (118/213)
Human Development Index	97/135	N/A

Legend: Highlighted position indicates higher conflict-proneness of the indicator.

Sources: (Corruption Perception Index: Results by Country, c2010; NGO Sustainability Index, 2010; Freedom in the World, 2010; Global Peace Index , 2010; Transformation Index 2010, 2010; The Failed States Index, 2010; Press Freedom, 2010; Gross national income per capita 2009, Atlas method and PPP, 2009; Worldwide Trends in the Human Development Index 1970-2010, 2010; Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2010)

4.3.1 Threats of national stability

Both Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have a significant potential for intrastate conflicts. It stems from the characteristics of their domestic regimes, which are similar to each other: authoritarian regimes characterised with harsh repressions; weak institutions, minimal democratic values, disputable successions, mismanaged economic transition; unequal distribution of state benefits; religion and ethnic antagonism; religion differences; and big influence of local clans. Many of these characteristics are shown in mutual comparison of the both countries provided in Tab 4. As also emphasised there, Uzbekistan's conflict potential seems more likely, which is partly due to worse economic situation. Other factors, not seen in the tab, are Islam radicalisation and bigger oppositional activity.

4.3.2 Preventive actions

As already seen in the first subchapter of this chapter (Tab 2 and 3), preventive actions in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan mostly deal with development assistance, which outweighs democracy aid. Most of the projects are implemented by international organisations, which can provide a broader scope and more resources for conflict prevention. Additionally, they are the most accepted third parties due to their more or less neutral status. The UN, which is in both countries represented by eight agencies, plays a key role with its development assistance programmes and, to a lesser extent, with some projects regarding democratic assistance. In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, these activities are realised in two lines. The first regards advisory services assisting in reform programmes that are initiated by government. The second relates to grass-roots projects carried out in local communities. While the latter category of activities is hard to realise in the both countries, their smaller presence in Turkmenistan indicates bigger problems with their implementation in this country. Other international organisations present in the region are the OSCE and the EU. The agenda of the former, concentrated on human rights and democracy issues, has encountered serious problems in the both countries. As a result, its representation in Tashkent does not have a full mandate and the OSCE mission in Ashgabat de facto has a very limited scope for operation. Due to the lack of opportunities and insufficient resources, OSCE's preventive actions in the both countries are mostly limited to fact finding and education projects. Given the EU importance for international economic relations of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, EU preventive actions

are more successful. They mostly concern development assistance, while democracy aid is mostly implemented in the “bottom line”- through human rights dialogues and policy advice, both realised in cooperation with Uzbek and Turkmen government. There are just a limited number of grass-roots projects that would deal with human rights or democratic issues in local communities. As a reaction to human rights abuses in the both countries, the EU tried to apply conditionality measures. However both sanction imposed in Uzbekistan after the Adijan events and postponed ratification of PCA with Turkmenistan were highly ineffective. As regards regional preventive activities, given the on-functioning regionalism in Central Asia, the only fruitful regional initiatives can represent only activities of the ADB and ERBD. Both organisations mostly provide grants for development projects, advisory services (mostly top-line). The EBRD has also tried to condition its aid in regard the human rights violations and non-democratic development of the both countries. Yet, at least as regards Turkmenistan, the organisation resumed some of its programmes, seeking to take advantage of the Post-Niyazov’s “thaw”. Considering state actors, their presence in the both countries is extremely limited. The only meaningful policy is carried out by development agencies. While in Uzbekistan there are several projects of US, Japanese, German and Swiss agencies, in Turkmenistan only USAID activities are tolerated. As far as non-state actors concerned, if we exclude humanitarian organisations (that rather than conflict prevention concern post-conflict reconstruction), there are no such activities. In Uzbekistan, no INGOs work in the country. In Turkmenistan, only IREX and ABA was allowed to keep its office but their agendas had to be extremely limited to educational projects and legal assistance. (Tab 3)

4.3.3 Conflict prevention (SWOT analyses)

Assessment of preventive actions, as present in SWOT figures (Figures 3 and 4 provided in the previous subchapter), points out almost identical results. This is caused by the same challenges conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan poses. In the both cases, the external actors are institutionally strong, resource-rich and skilful. Their international and domestic experience, be it with development assistance, democratic aid or conflict prevention in particular, is extremely helpful in regard to content and to project management of local preventive actions. Moreover, as a number of the actors have been working in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan for many years, the knowledge of the local environment creates the best asset for future preventive actions. Considering weaknesses,

Uzbek and, mainly, Turkmen authoritarian regimes have not allowed the prevailing majority of external actors to carry out local projects in the countries. Even those, who have succeeded in keeping their offices in Tashkent and Ashgabat, on a daily basis, encounter many difficulties which worsen their conditions and put them under permanent threat of being ousted from the country. This is negatively affected by the lack of tools and information they have at hand. Considering the tools discussed in the theoretical section, fact-finding missions, for instance, are a priori limited due to the excessively limited access to any local information. Additionally, the external advisory services and assistance in reform process are effective to the extent the local governments allow their full implementation. For example, even the Welfare Improvement Strategy, which was perceived as a reformist step in Uzbekistan, has not been fully implemented yet. (Uzbekistan Country Report, 2010) Local partners, who are really needed for any meaningful work to be carried through in these countries, are very hard to find due drastic state oppressions against the local third sector. Most of the real NGOs lost their legal status due to the restricted registration. Instead, the governments promote “official” NGOs, for instance the above-mentioned Institute for Studies of Civil Society and National Association of NGOs in Uzbekistan, which despite its name does not represent any independent organisation of local NGOs. Moreover, even if INGO finds local partners, these might have just little knowledge and skills needed. For example in Turkmenistan, there are currently no designated training providers for NGOs. (NGO Index: Turkmenistan, 2009) Another problem represents corruption-proneness of the local NGOs, which can ruin international fundraising of on-site projects. As regards opportunities, the biggest prospects are seen in education and training programmes, which are really needed in the both countries and, due to their rather neutral colouring, have a big chance to be tolerated by the regime as well.⁹¹ Another opportunity represents grass-roots projects, which can diminish some weaknesses mentioned before. Designed in a small-size scope, they are more efficient, better focused, easier to assess and less prone to corruption. Last but not least, such projects are more attractive for the communities themselves, as they can more identify with the purpose of the project and be more accountable for its success. In addition to the grass-roots projects, small-grant scheme programmes can be more likely to succeed. Their scheme encourages ad-hoc and tailor-

⁹¹ For example, projects developing leadership skills are more likely to be accepted by the regime than the ones dealing with human rights issues.

made projects that can better meet the local needs. Also due to their small scope, they are more transparent, which is especially helpful in the highly corruptive environment of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, which was described in the case studies. Also, due to their smaller scope, they can better correspond to the local needs, which is especially important when considering regionally fragmented societies of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. As regards the threats, there is a striking difference between the Uzbek and Turkmen mindset and the one of the external actors. As discussed in the theoretical section, projecting Western values in the culturally different environment is neither welcomed by the locals nor effective. Accordingly, the both case studies indicate that this is also the case of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. In addition to paternalistic, conservative and still rather traditionalistic societies, any rapid democratisation or any other short-sighted promotion of Western values can bring about a huge destabilisation and result in violent conflicts. Local particularities hence need to be taken into account in any project. Another factor discussed above regards regime hostility against external actors, which a priori puts any project under suspicion. Actors thus have to realistically consider what is manageable. Finally, as widespread corruption can erode any cooperation with local actors, a very thoughtful strategy and permanent financial control is needed.

To sum up, many above-examined cases pointed out counter-productivity of implementing democracy aid in the agenda of conflict prevention. This is not only because of the logical opposition of the authoritative governments but also due to the lack of understanding and insight from the local societies. As discussed in the cases studies, people generally accept the local authoritarian regimes and their only serious objections generally regard bad socio-economic conditions. Thus, development assistance seems to better meet their needs. The bigger impact on this approach can serve as a confidence-building mechanism that will later link to other, democratic assistance stage of conflict prevention. In the meanwhile, preventative actors need some time- to address the countries' political threats more appropriately to the local particularities; to get better overview of the local partners and their work; and to create alternative ways of conflict prevention. In the both cases, their endeavour will represent a long-term activity; mostly understood in terms of structural prevention.

As mentioned previously, both SWOT analyses are almost identical. This is not as surprising when considering the similarities of the domestic regimes, likewise cultural backgrounds and common past. The analysis of conflict prevention in the both countries thus rather pointed out the same trend and, in this regard, it will be interesting to discuss the possibility of common approach towards similarly looking regimes of Central Asia with some general guidelines for the whole region. At the same time, particular features of the each case should not be left aside. Although Turkmenistan's case indicates even more limited opportunities for preventive actions, the recent change in the country's leadership, accompanied by dismantling of the long-term international isolation and some modest reforms, can bring about a bigger room for external actors. In this regard, more research should be conducted on Berdymukhammedov's actual objectives in domestic and foreign affairs. Better local insight of the preventative actors might help find common ground for bargaining with the regime or at least discover some gaps where conflict prevention can be implemented without being stopped or suppressed already in the beginning.

5 Conclusion

This dissertation dealt with conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. The key prerequisite for any conflict prevention is the existence of conflict potential, which can be examined and assessed in many ways. Referring to the Copenhagen School, the first chapter of this paper thus introduced the concept of broader security from which three dimensions of national security were derived. These three dimensions then served to categorise the threats indicating the conflict potential in the selected case studies and thus to reason the use of conflict prevention. Once conflict potential was demonstrated, the concept of conflict prevention could be finally discussed. The notion was first framed theoretically. While its conceptualisation pointed out terminological ambiguities, historical overview emphasised its rising emergence in the recent practise of international politics. The focus was then placed on defining actors and actions of conflict prevention because these represented the key terms for the next chapters. Both terms of actors and actions also echoed in the section dealing with the current development and challenges of conflict prevention, which stressed the emergence of the non-state actors in conflict prevention and outlined difficulties in addressing and assessing preventive actions. The conceptualisation of conflict prevention was then adjusted for the selected empirical cases. The focus of the second chapter was to complete this theoretical framework with the empirical data from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. First, it was examined whether there is any conflict potential and thus reason for applying conflict prevention measures. Then, it was shown in what way conflict prevention has been carried in those regions so far. The focus of the latter section was on particular preventive actions, from the perspective of three groups of actors: international organisations (regional ones included), states and non-state actors. The case of Uzbekistan showed a considerable threat potential, mostly based on emerging Islamic radicalism, unfavourable economic conditions and a harsh authoritarian system. The latter has also affected the preventive actions in the country. Their number is substantially limited and so is the evidence of their actors. Because democratic assistance programmes are hardly tolerated by the regime, the most sustainable and numerous preventive actions in the country regard development assistance, which mostly involves institution-building, educational and grass-roots projects. This logic can be also applied to preventive actors: the most successful are UN agencies with development agenda or development agencies of some states. The EU has

gained some success with its development projects but completely failed when imposing conditionality against human rights abuses. OSCE activities have been extremely limited and there are no INGOs active in the country. In Turkmenistan, the situation looks very similar. Its conflict potential is a bit lower, which may be explained by the better economic situation and less Islamic radicalisation there. Nevertheless, clan politics, internal antagonisms, social inequalities and omnipresent state interventions constitute serious threats of national security. In response to them, just a few preventive actions have been allowed. The state has expelled many external actors from the country and keeps limiting the activities of those who managed to retain their in-site offices there. This situation results in a similar combination of activities as described in the Uzbek case but in an even lesser scope and with fewer actors. Thus, while democracy assistance and conditionality have not met much success, development assistance is one of the few approaches manageable here. Along with INGOs, Western development agencies have extremely restricted access to the country. Thus, international organisations remain the only relevant actors in Turkmenistan.

Given such an extreme environment, assessing what is a success and what is a failure within conflict prevention requires a bit different angle. In both countries, there are no “genuine” preventive actions, explicitly engaged in conflict prevention. This is not surprising when we take into account the strictly limited scope for operation and the conflict character in the countries, which is in a non-escalated, latent phase. Thus, the “lenses” used in this paper measured the “success” of preventive actions in terms of their sustainability and manageability in the country as well as their positive, impact on political, economic or societal conditions, at least locally. According to these criteria, SWOT analysis assessed conflict prevention in each country and generated its internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats. The results are summarised as follows:

- The character of conflict prevention in both countries is almost identical. Common concept / guidelines for similar cases should be discussed.
- External actors are usually skilled, well equipped, and institutionally strong.

- The preventive actions in the countries have been diminished due to the limited presence of actors as well as because of the lack of tools, information, motivation and reliable local partners.
- Despite their global emergence, the contribution of non-state actors to conflict prevention in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan is very limited.
- Preventive actions should be long-term, better targeted, more appealing and compatible with each other.
- Grass-roots projects together with educational and training programmes are most likely to create sustainable and fruitful preventive actions.
- Small grants can result in better targeted, efficient and transparent projects.
- The recent seemingly positive shift in Turkmenistan's foreign policy should be carefully considered and subsequently used for the local promotion of conflict prevention.
- As regards preventive strategies, their manageability (due to repressive character of the states) and transparency (due to highly corruptive environment) should be emphasised.
- The short-sighted projection of Western values without consideration of local particularities might be counterproductive.

To conclude, conflict prevention represents a dynamic approach of conflict studies. As also shown in this paper, it involves many activities that seemingly do not correspond to conflict but in the end they can contribute to the country's stabilisation and thus prevent conflicts from escalating. In a hostile environment, conflict prevention is challenged by many obstacles that cause its implementation almost impossible. Nevertheless, a precisely focused and thoughtful approach that will realistically consider what is manageable and implementable can, little by little, help to improve these situations. Really meaningful policy cannot be realised through assistance in state reforms alone, which are unlikely to be realised de facto despite their de jure adoption; due to insufficient internal will and inefficient external conditionality. Although grass-roots work cannot bring about any far-reaching results either, it can at least contribute to the empowerment of local communities. These then may turn into a cornerstone of sound institutions, which are the key prerequisite for the state's stability.

The above-mentioned points of the conclusion proved the hypothesis that the both countries are conflict-prone, whereas high risk is indicated in the case of Uzbekistan. Also in accordance with the hypothesis, it was demonstrated current conflict prevention in authoritarian regimes is hardly manageable. This situation thus demands modification of the approach, which poses many questions for further research:

- 1) How to measure the success of preventive actions in hostile authoritarian regimes (such as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan)? Given the regimes' character, the sustainability of such actions might be one of the criteria; however this does not say anything about their effectiveness and efficiency.
- 2) How to better involve non-state actors in conflict prevention if the regimes are strictly opposing this?
- 3) What can be alternative preventative measures to development assistance? When and how to implement conditionality and democratic assistance? How to strengthen early warning mechanism when facing the lack of unbiased information on the spot?

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UNIVERZITA KARLOVA

FAKULTA SOCIÁLNÍCH VĚD

Institut politologických studií

Studijní obor Bezpečnostní studia

Projekt magisterské diplomové práce

Prevenca konfliktov v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku

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Úvodná časť

Téma

Diplomová práca bude skúmať úspešnosť preventívnej diplomacie v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku z pohľadu neštátnych aktérov, pričom budem vychádzať z konceptov prevencie konfliktov.

Tieto koncepty bude aplikované na situáciu v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku, pretože oba tieto štáty majú viacero spoločných charakteristík, relevantných pre tému práce: autoritársky režim, štýl doživotných vládcov s koncentráciou moci vo svojich rukách, ktorý zosobňujú „dlhodobo vládnucci stredoázijskí cháni“; podobná východisková pozícia, vývoj po získaní nezávislosti, pozícia transformujúcich sa ekonomík, spoločná minulosť,... Napriek týmto spoločným znakom však predpokladám, že po vzájomnej komparácii medzi nimi vyplynú určité rozdiely.

Argumenty

Podnetom pre zvolenie témy práce sú režimy v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku, ktoré sa vyznačujú značnou rigiditou a represívnym charakterom. To má výrazne negatívny dopad na stav občianskej spoločnosti v oboch štátoch a potláčanie ľudských práv. Vzhľadom k demokratizačným tendenciám v susedných štátoch, ktoré viedli k zmene ich režimov, je pravdepodobné, že v horizonte pár rokov nastanú podobné zmeny aj v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku, čo by výrazne destabilizovalo ich súčasnú vnútropolitickú situáciu a mohlo viesť k vojnovým konfliktom. Vzhľadom k tejto hrozbe je nutné použiť prostriedky prevencie konfliktov, ktoré by mali zabrániť eskalácii napätia pri potenciálnej zmene režimov.

Cieľ

V náväznosti na vyššie zmienené argumenty chcem v práci posúdiť súčasnú situáciu dosiaľ neeskalovaných konfliktov v oboch štátoch. Cieľom je zhodnotiť, aké prostriedky prevencie konfliktov boli zatiaľ použité, aby sa tejto eskalácii zabránilo, zanalyzovať, do akej miery boli úspešné (pomocou SWOT analýzy) a na tomto základe ponúknuť alternatívu, ako by sa k tomuto želanému výsledku dalo dopracovať. Hlavným

cieľom mojej práce je teda preskúmať úspešnosť TTD v prípade Uzbekistanu a Turkménska, čo by som chcela dosiahnuť pomocou prešetrenia relevantných faktorov.

Výskumná otázka

Hlavnou premennou mojej práce je úspešnosť či neúspešnosť použitia prostriedkov prevencie konfliktov v oboch štátoch. Preto by som v práci chcela zodpovedať na otázku, ako sa oba štáty líšia z hľadiska ich ne/úspešného aplikovania. Vhodne zvolenými prostriedkami prevencie konfliktov sa dá účinne predchádzať eskalácii konfliktov. Na druhej strane, vo vysoko rigidných autoritatívnych štátoch sú ich efekt a nástroje značne obmedzené, hlavne keď aplikujeme jeden z prostriedkov štrukturálnej prevencie „state-building“. Na prípadoch Uzbekistanu a Turkménska sa budem snažiť ukázať, prečo tomu tak je, a či by sa zvolením iného prístupu dal dosiahnuť lepší výsledok. Jedna z vedľajších otázok sa bude venovať rozlíšeniu medzi oficiálnymi a neoficiálnymi aktérmi, zrovnaniu ich nástrojov. Predpokladom je, že neoficiálni aktéri majú väčšiu šancu uspieť v tak rigidných a izolovaných režimoch. Ďalšia otázka by skúmala povahu a charakter konfliktov samotných, kde sa budem koncentrovať na vnútornú destabilizáciu..

Metóda

K cieľu mojej práce by som chcela dospieť pomocou komparácie situácie Uzbekistane a Turkménsku, za použitia teórie štrukturálnej prevencie konfliktov. Komparácia miery úspechu tohto prístupu v jednotlivých štátoch bude vedená podľa SWOT analýzy, pri ktorej budú faktory relevantné pre úspech či neúspech združené do 4 kategórií.⁹²

Štruktúra

Práca bude vzhľadom k môjmu študijnému pobytu v zahraničí a neustálenosti niektorých terminologických pojmov vedená v angličtine. Na začiatku práce bude

⁹² SWOT analýza sa ako nástroj strategického plánovania používa na hodnotenie silných a slabých stránok, príležitostí a hrozieb, ktoré spočívajú v danom projekte, obchodnej príležitosti, prípadne v inej situácii, v ktorej sa nachádza organizácia so snahou uskutočniť určitý cieľ. Hoci sa väčšinou vyhotovuje pre podnikové účely, pre svoju prehľadnosť a jednoduchosť sa analogicky dá aplikovať aj pre analýzy z iných oblastí.

ohraničená téma, predstavená metodológia, hlavná a vedľajšie otázky a vyslovená hypotéza. V teoretickom rámci budú predstavené prístupy štrukturálnej prevencie konfliktov, stručne a ne/úspešné prípady ich aplikovania do praxe. Treťou časťou bude samotná case study, popisujúca konfliktný potenciál a súčasnú pozíciu oficiálnej diplomacie (Track One Diplomacy) v Uzbekistane a Turkménsku, ktoré sú predpokladmi pre použitie TTD v oboch štátoch. V nasledovnej analytickej časti bude prešetrovaná úspešnosť použitia tohto princípu pomocou relevantných faktorov, ktoré budú na základe SWOT analýzy združené do 4 skupín (silné stránky, slabé stránky, príležitosti, hrozby). Na konci práce budú predstavené závery vychádzajúce z tejto komparácie, s prihliadnutím k hypotéze a výskumnej otázke.

Predpokladaná osnova práce

Úvod

1. Hlavná otázka a metodológia

2. Teoretický rámec

2.1. Definícia „Track Two Diplomacy“ (TTD)

2.2. Prístupy TTD

2.3. Úspešné prípady použitia TTD

3. Case study

3.1. Predpoklady pre použitie TTD v Uzbekistane

3.1.1. Konfliktný potenciál

3.1.2. Pozícia „Track One Diplomacy“

3.2. Predpoklady pre použitie TTD v Turkménsku

3.2.1. Konfliktný potenciál

3.2.2. Pozícia „Track One Diplomacy“

4. Analýza

4.1. Úspešnosť TTD v prípade Uzbekistanu

4.1.1. „S“ Silné stránky

4.1.2. „W“ Slabé stránky

4.1.3. „O“ Príležitosti

4.1.4. „T“ Hrozby

4.2. Úspešnosť TTD v prípade Turkménska

4.2.1. „S“ Silné stránky

4.2.2. „W“ Slabé stránky

4.2.3. „O“ Príležitosti

4.2.4. „T“ Hrozby

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