

## **Abstract**

This thesis investigates United Nations role in mediation of intractable conflicts through the case of Cyprus. Intractable conflicts are identified as complex, long-standing and resistant to conflict resolution. We examine the complexity of intractable conflicts regarding its persistence, deep-rooted fear, the existence of historical grievances, political and social asymmetries, and lack of communication between conflict parties. Mediation is a conflict resolution method which is a third-party intervention and aims to encourage conflict parties to produce a permanent solution to the conflict. The case of Cyprus is an obvious example to understand and analyze the UN mediation as a conflict management policy in intractable conflicts. The UN, Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities have tried to find a permanent settlement over 50 years. Despite all efforts, the conflict remains unresolved. Although the UN mediation has managed to prevent further escalation and violence in Cyprus, it has limits to encourage parties to produce a permanent solution. This thesis empirically analyzes the historical development of the UN engagement in Cyprus and examines its role in the mediation of intractable conflicts through the UN-sponsored inter-communal talks in Cyprus.

**Keywords:** Intractable conflict, conflict resolution, Cyprus conflict, United Nations mediation, inter-communal talks.