

CONFLICT RESOLUTION- TESTING EU'S CREDIBILITY AS A POLITICAL ACTOR: A STUDY

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Abstract: EU is undoubtedly an economic power block, in order to accelerate its economic growth political role became imperative from 1990s onward. EU had to face a tough challenge in this journey. This paper tries to analyse the limitations (lack of political experience in facing the challenges- effective foreign policy and its tools in handling conflicts, defence of its own and so on) on which the political role of EU was constructed and also how it embraced and converted its civilian power in developing its role in conflict resolution. This paper tries to test the credibility of EU as an effective political actor by analyzing its role in different conflicting environments. In overcoming its initial drawbacks, this paper tries to observe how EU's involvement in fragile conflicts facilitated in emerging as a significant political actor. Overall, the attempt is to analyse EU's role in conflict resolution in proving as a political actor.

Keywords: European Union, Political Actor, Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Fragile Conflicts

Introduction

Peace, soothing phenomena, but it is tedious to bring into reality. The parties involved in conflict need to feel genuinely the need for peace and need to come and work together in converting conflict into peace. This looks as easy task. If so, why numbers of conflicts are increasing over a period? Besides number, conflicts have turned out to be more complex than ever before. Post-Cold War has opened-up the doors for many vendors of conflict and for the actors to engage in the resolution of conflict. The European Union (EU) has emerged as one among such actors in conflict resolution beyond its borders at the turn of the twentieth century; this is the result of EU's decision to stretch its foreign policy even to the political domain. Though EU has begun its political journey of engaging in conflict resolution process after the post-Cold War, the idea of conflict resolution is not new to it. By acknowledging the significance of conflict resolution the prominent members of Europe gave an inception to the predicament peregrination of building a Union, which at present known as EU. The core idea behind the origin of EU was conflict resolution; farseeing the possibilities of catastrophe, the members of post-War Europe came together and built the Union under the debris of conflicts. At first glance, the EU appears to be a natural actor in conflict resolution.¹ This comfort zone of EU being a natural actor does enjoy because of the legacy developed over a period by tuning its foreign policy more or less as a civilian actor. This facilitated EU in developing its approach to conflict resolution more comprehensively. Irrespective of the nature of conflict be it frozen or violent the approach of EU has taken into account the larger dimension, that is, by encouraging peace, strengthening democracy, rights and law.² EU has backed on human rights, the rule of law, and an active civil society. In ensuring this, EU has tuned itself to socio, cultural, economic, diplomatic and military actions, which it refers as 'Constructive engagement'.³

The aim of this paper is to analyse the EU's role in conflict resolution which were carried out even beyond its borders. In this process, the paper tries to explore whether EU has raised its approach to the theoretical

¹ Emma J. Stewart., *The EU as an Actor in Conflict Resolution: Out of its Depth?.*, p.2 Available in, <http://www.politics.plymouth.ac.uk/PIP/ConflictResolution.pdf>

² Nathalie Tocci., *The EU and Conflict Resolution Promoting Peace in the backyard* (London, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2007) pp.7-8 Available in, <http://b-ok.org/book/885115/41893e>

³ Ibid., p.1

framework of conflict resolution or was it brought down to the nativity of EU. By summing-up the role and the outcome of EU in conflict resolution, this paper tries to understand the status of EU in the global political context.

Before getting into the details of EU's role in conflict zone, it is important in understanding the meaning of conflict resolution, as it surrounds with the greater debate. Conceptualising conflict resolution will give a foundation to the study and thereby facilitate the paper in deriving at a critical analysis on the role of EU.

Conflict Resolution

Understanding the term 'Conflict Resolution' involves a detailed theoretical study as many a time the term 'Conflict Resolution' is brought as an umbrella term as a result many in the intellectual community dare to take the term for granted and use it as synonym to other terms. This has led to many intellectual stunts and has diluted the crux of the concept, eventually the approach to it intellectually as well as practically by the actor involved in conflict resolution process has corrupted it. So this paper tries to take the responsibility of coming out with a conceptual clarity on the term 'conflict resolution'. Prior to it, the term 'conflict' also needs to be presented explicitly. Generally conflict is attached to the understanding of dispute, war, battle and so on, but all these carry different interpretations, dispute goes more or less with the materialistic difference or at least there is a room for legal action in addressing it, war and battle are military oriented, use of force will be and target group will be evident. Unlike all these, conflict is deep rooted in emotions, more of a socio-cultural, ethnic oriented, here legal intervention has less scope and addressing such differences which have developed in the minds of the sections of the society from ages together will be challenging task even to a powerful actor.⁴ Use of force also has some limitation in addressing the conflict. On the base of the understanding on conflict, the term conflict resolution will be analysed. As the term conflict resolution is understood and used as conflict prevention and management there is a need to make a distinction between these which will facilitate in developing a proper approach towards conflict.⁵ The primary task of the conflict prevention is to prevent the conflict from getting escalated; here the initiative will not solve the problem. More or less management also does the same role but one can find the intervention by the actor who does the management between the conflicting parties tries to create an environment that facilitates them from settling down to normalcy. Whereas, conflict resolution moves ahead with the task of facilitating the conflicting parties to have a dialogue and its applies its strategy by addressing the root cause of the problem so that peace last long and conflict do not occur again in the future. Even this function has been criticized by many stating that conflict resolution process will more or less be neutral and just the facilitator for negotiation such effort will not take forward the task a logical end, hence there is a need for an active intervention by the actors engaged in conflict resolution process.⁶

This paper tries to cover the conflicts engaged in the international level and do not cover the conflicts that take place at the individual, institutional, and societal level. Taking conflicts involving political factors influenced by socio-cultural ethnical factors, such if it need to be analysed and to achieve resolution, the actors involved need to take into account internal and external factors of conflict adding to it the conflict will be influenced by the political culture, so actors involved in the decision making process of a state also need to be taken into account.⁷

EU and Conflict Resolution

Given this theoretical framework the paper tries to examine how the EU has developed its understanding on conflict resolution. Here one needs to take into the fact that as integration and eastern enlargement agenda was before the EU's table and turned out inevitable, under such condition it had to come up with

⁴ Many studies have been carried on conflict, understanding and differentiating from similar terms has been worked out, for more on this refer, John. W. Burton., *Conflict Resolution and Prevention* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1990); John W. Burton., *Violence Explained: The Sources of Conflict, Violence and Crime and Their Prevention.*, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1997)

⁵ For more on this read, Georgi Kamov., *EU's role in conflict resolution: the case of the Eastern enlargement and neighbourhood policy area* (Institu European des Hautes Etudes Internationales) p.4 Available in, <http://www.ie-ei.eu/IE-EI/Ressources/file/memoires/2006/KAMOV.pdf>

⁶ For more on making conflict resolution process more effective and in coming out of the criticism of being a mere facilitator, read, Bernard S. Mayer., *Beyond Neutrality Confronting the Crisis in Conflict Resolution* (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2004) p.2 Available in, <http://b-ok.org/book/893910/43d707>

⁷ For further refer, Benjamin MacQueen., *Political Culture and Conflict Resolution in the Arab World Lebanon and Algeria* (Victoria, Melbourne University Press, 2009) pp.14-22 Available in, <http://b-ok.org/book/889468/8cb0f4>

European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Accordingly with an objective to tune to the ENP the EU formulated its conflict resolution understanding and its strategy. Meanwhile EU had made-up its mind clear that the task of formulating its understanding and approach on conflict resolution do not turn out as mere rhetoric rather get connected with the EU policy.⁸ EU backs strongly in guaranteeing human security as its core under conflict resolution strategy without undermining territorial integrity and sovereignty. Backing the mediator involved and meanwhile upholds transparency and thereby proves as the torchbearer of conflict resolution; turn out to be the real challenge for the EU's strategic credibility.⁹ In proving its credibility over a period, EU laid a strong foundation and a clear cut direction to its foreign policy in 1991 what was called as Maastricht Treaty.¹⁰ The focus of formulating foreign policy considering conflict resolution into account continued in the consecutive treaties. So EU was very cautious on emphasizing conflict resolution and its strategy while formulating foreign policy as it wanted to have eastern and Mediterranean region of Europe free from conflicts and establish stability and good governance, if not there was every fear of spill of effect into the EU region, resulting in the failure of tranquility. So EU came up with ENP. Establishing human rights, rule of law, sound socio-economy in the conflicting zone were the priority of ENP as a conflict resolution strategy.¹¹

Given the tendency of EU in upholding territorial integrity besides ensuring democratic environment that support groups and individuals and by abiding to the international law it has strongly defended its stand on sovereignty-sharing, under such wide range in its approach it is important to know how EU will go ahead in addressing conflicting situations. EU has focused and strengthened its approach to conflicts in finding more or less a permanent answer by opting for federal, power-sharing, autonomy, territorial integrity, collective rights of the minority population and working for their self-determination and even working for the resettlement of refugees by providing compensatory measures.¹²

The preliminary report if one does on EU to call it as a particular (civil/normative/political/economic/diplomatic/military/strategic) power, then the role of external factors have played vital role, especially in developing as a security guarantee towards its neighbor. The role of the US undoubtedly goes saying in making EU's security and in its emergence as a credible political and security actor in the region, as US has a lion's share in it. But very interesting to observe is the post-Cold War scenario, US a regular custodian of Europe's security had seen a drastic change in its foreign policy, which is, it began to stretch beyond Europe's neighbourhood.¹³ If one try to read the condition of EU in the post-Cold War, engaging in conflict for EU was inevitable and demanding. Addressing or involving in the conflicts was a daunting task because there was a major question before EU, was it well prepared and matured enough in handling conflicts and resolving it? The answer was no. Besides the hard reality of EU being not prepared, the major setback to EU was in establishing internal coherence. Gulf crisis- Iraq war on Kuwait in August 1990 turned to be a stage for EU's coherence, as member states failed to respond quickly and in unison.¹⁴ Yugoslavia, the second in the list, turned even worst, had unearthed all the lacunas in proving EU's credibility in the conflict zone, among them the striking area where EU proved more problematic was its internal coherence, member states refusing to come under one umbrella at the cost of

⁸ Emma, n-1, p.3

⁹ Nina Caspersen and Antje Herrberg., *Engaging Unrecognised States in Conflict Resolution: An Opportunity or Challenge for the EU?* (Initiative for Peacebuilding) p.14

¹⁰ Article J. 1 of the Maastricht Treaty gave a direction to EU's foreign policy encompassed by the objectives reflecting on strengthening international security, encouraging regional cooperation, fight against international crime and backing democracy, the rule of law and human rights. All these elements have backed EU in developing Conflict Resolution strategy. Eventually when the consecutive treaties were formulated, focus was not shifted. The draft Constitutional Treaty pointed that the EU's external action would work in 'preserving peace, preventing conflicts and strengthening international security (Art III-193(2c)) in achieving, it would be 'guided by, and designed to advance in the wider world, the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement' (Article III-193(1)). Principles stated under Maastricht Treaty are also reflected here. (Article I-2 and I-3) For more on this refer, Nathalie., n-2., p.7

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Nathalie Tocci., *Regional origins, global aspirations: the European Union as a global conflict manager.*, Stefan Wolff and Christalla Yakinthou (eds.), "Conflict Management in Divided Societies: Theories and Practice" (London, Routledge publishers, 2011) p.135

¹³ Georgi, n-5, p.13

¹⁴ Ian Bache and others., *Politics in the European Union*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015) p.518

sovereignty. This threw a fundamental question for EU being a Union in the future.¹⁵ This reality pushed EU to the “capabilities-expectations” gap syndrome, and surrounding to it there arouse a debate.¹⁶ Over a period EU’s commitment for conflict resolution role became stronger than ever before and did not wish to be as a mere civilian actor. In support to this EU came out with a concrete action plan at Amsterdam European Council in 1997 by appointing High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). This boosted EU’s foreign policy in the coming days in making a strong actor in the area of conflict resolution.¹⁷

EU and Eastern Neighbourhood

After EU stretching its activities to conflict zones eventually it began to establish its own identity towards foreign policy, what is called as Europeanization. Under this caption with regard to the conflict resolution, Union developed its broader understanding accordingly it reflects two important features, that is, as an actor it wished for comprehensive approach towards conflict through deploying its instruments such as involvement by executing civil character and conditionality or the extreme use power or military.¹⁸ In general, it is a policy of ‘stick and carrot’.

Eastern Europe turned out to be a hotspot for the EU to put its tools and tactics of conflict resolution into experiment as the region was the basket of conflicts. The places which came under the domain of EU under enlargement process such as Kosovo, Cyprus¹⁹ and Kurdish region were succumbed to conflicts. EU did not have a direct rather indirect role in addressing and resolving these three conflicts.²⁰

EU was thrown to a dilemma over the question of approaching conflicts especially towards its eastern neighbour. Though it has come up with neighbourhood policy, EU had an intention to increase its leverage, by doing so it did not wish to have membership as a conditional clause. In the case of Moldova and Georgia, EU moved ahead and backed more than what it was earlier wished to offer. Every interesting to pay once attention is the EU failing to win the sovereign member states confidence to back its conflict resolution policy towards its eastern neighbourhood. Though approaching its neighbourhood conflicts were inevitable, but the member states had a fear of getting invited to all kinds of hazardous problems, spill-over effect.²¹

EU beyond Europe

EU in Africa- EU’s response to Africa has developed over a period significantly especially in the development programmes in the conflict zone, in pushing this task towards a logical direction, EU came up with a Cotonou Partnership Agreement, through which European Development fundings were chanelised to African Peace Facility in ensuring peace keeping operation with the joint effort of African Union.²²

EU in Asia-

The East Timor case- EU failed to stand as one, even dare to criticize Indonesia for its provocative approach on East Timor. EU turning neutral spoiled the expectation of East Timor of EU becoming a knight in shining armor to it until Portuguese backed in 1986. **The EU’s response in Aceh-** Besides external, internal too Indonesia indulged in controversy, Free Aceh Movement was gaining significance as it was able to draw the attention of the world politics towards its side, as the internal chaos went to the extreme level, exchange of firing took place between people of Aceh and the government forces placing its demand for autonomy.²³ From the other end government made all its efforts to keep the global attention out of the

¹⁵ Nathalie, n-2, p.3

¹⁶ Georgi, n-5, p.16

¹⁷ Ibid., p.17

¹⁸ Ibid., p.24

¹⁹ For more on conflict in Cyprus and Kosovo and the role of EU, read, Boyka Stefanova., *The Europeanisation of Conflict Resolution Regional integration and conflicts in Europe from the 1950s to the twenty-first century* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011) Available in, <http://b-ok.org/book/2565394/e77207>

²⁰ Georgi, n-5, p.45

²¹ Ibid., p. 67, 68

²² James Mackie., *Continuity and Change in international Co-operation: The ACP-EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement and its First Revision.*, Perspectives on European Politics and Society (Volume 9, 2008, Issue 2) p.149 Available in, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850801999636>

²³ Caroline Bivar., *Emerging from the shadows: the EU’s role in conflict resolution in Indonesia.*, European Policy Centre Issue (Paper No. 44, December 2005) p.8, 9 Available in, http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/89442424_EPC%20Issue%20Paper%2044.pdf

issue.²⁴ Though it succeeded to some extent, could not keep away things in control, eventually led to the intrusion by the external actors. Unlike East Timor, EU in the case of Aceh showed all positive signals to the world as a sensible and genuine actor in the world politics. EU's initiative for peace-monitoring programme in Aceh gave a momentum in carrying out conflict resolution initiatives in Asia from then onwards. Aceh furnished a platform to EU in testing its tools in an unfamiliar conflict and post-conflict conditions. EU's success in Aceh gave confidence to move ahead in conflict resolving process and succeed in establishing peace even where conflicts have turned into war.²⁵

EU and Fragile state

EU's involvement directly or indirectly in conflicts in the initial days of its political role has been with mixed results. EU had to except the reality that it was neither well prepared nor developed to shoulder the responsibility of resolving the conflicts across the world. Fragility is one among the complicated conflicting scenario to which EU was unfamiliar. This did not give any excuse to EU; it had no other option rather to go ahead in addressing the fragility so as to prove its competency in resolving the conflicts. EU had to address this issue and handle under European Community Development policy and it even want to know the credibility of the policy in addressing the issue, so it opted for a pilot study, that is, it wished to test its techniques developed under the policy framework in some selected fragile states such as Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Timor-Leste and Yemen, for which European Council pursued the European Commission.²⁶ This attempt did not turn out to be positive as there was huge disparity between policy and action taken due to failure in understanding the ground reality (socio-political-economic dimensions) of the fragile states. In short, actions taken were not supporting the local condition of the fragile states.²⁷

Having handful of mixed experiences resulting from the pilot cases, EU continued its involvement in Ivory Coast as it enjoyed its legacy of involvement under African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) partnership. When state started to become fragile, EU could not keep state under control rather by 2010 especially the post-election scenario unearthed the defects of EU approach. This compelled EU to bring modification on its approach from primitive way of being a mere aid facilitator to a political and strategic actor.²⁸

In building the economy of Pakistan the role of EU is vital as it is the largest tradition partner. Indeed fragility resulting from spillover effect of NATO's withdrawal from Afghanistan, militant's nexus with military, ethnic and internal de-stability; all these have hampered Pakistan economic momentum. In such case, Pakistan need to keep its economy and its programme in right track, in such effort the role of EU is indeed crucial.²⁹

Over a period the global attention began to drift towards 2008 and onwards financial crises and Arab revolution (Arab Spring). Eventually, EU was acting and moving towards the direction of these global changes so EU underwent a leapfrogging in its policy, priority and approach, that is, European External Action Service (EEAS) cancelled the Action Plan on Fragility and Conflict (Action Plan) and the review of the Gothenburg Programme on conflict prevention (Gothenburg Review) which was directed towards fragile states. This shift in EU's policy is not in a right direction as the experiences have shown clear in fragile conflicts ranging from Somalia to Pakistan and even in the present scenario in Libya and Syria that if EU would have developed its conflict resolution tools and techniques effectively and then if it would have intervened then EU could have evaded many precarious conditions.³⁰ Here one thing needs to be analysed that, if EU is interested in playing a significant role in the global and international political affairs, then it has to prove its credential. In achieving so, fragile conflicts cannot be eluded from the action plan and give due regard to only those conflicts that hit the headline. This is because; fragile conflicts will have a chance of spillover effect and will have a larger impact if neglected.

²⁴ Ibid., p.18

²⁵ Ibid., p. 19

²⁶ Will Hout, *Between Development and Security: the European Union, governance and Fragile states*, Third World Quarterly, (Vol.31, No.1, 2010) p.147

²⁷ Ibid. p.152

²⁸ Cristina Barrios., *From aid manager to diplomatic power? The EU's role in addressing State fragility in Ivory Coast.*, FRIDE, (No.120-November 2011) p.1

²⁹ Clare Castillejo., *Pakistan's Crisis: What Role for the EU?.*, FRIDE, (No.1, December, 2011) p.4

³⁰ Clare Castillejo., *Improving European Policy towards fragile states*, FRIDE, (No.95, September 2011) p.1

EU and Iraq

Having set the objective of taking larger responsibility in international politics, EU began to take initiative in most of the developments. Though initially EU had encountered difficulty in addressing conflict (Yugoslavia) which even exposed its shortcomings in emerging as a significant actor, eventually it managed to overcome those loopholes. It is true that EU have not developed full-fledged in resolving conflicts independently till date. This criticism against EU holds true due to the complexity involved in presenting itself as a credible actor. (Internal fragmentation, lack of strong institutional functional mechanism that can command member states against the priority of a state's national interest, lack of defence, relations with US and NATO turning more complex internally and externally in its decision on the conflict ground, lack of strong political drive and so on) EU's response to conflict is such a complex and varied that it approached one common strategy towards different conflicts, rather it differed. Iraq is one such conflict which has taken all kinds of extreme conflicting scenarios internally and externally for EU.

The war on Iraq (2003) paradoxically turned out as the avenue in knowing critically further for EU, as it unearthed even more hidden drawbacks which were holding it from emerging as a credible political actor in the global level. Fragmentation among member states of EU was such as sharp to the extent that even the new countries who joined the Union were not ready to acknowledge the leadership of prominent countries such as France and Germany. When France and Germany strongly opposed the legitimacy of US and its allied forces over attacking Iraq many countries opposed them as they were eager to remain close ally of US and NATO as more priority than the Union.³¹ Internal disparity has brought down EU from playing as an international political actor before the eyes of the world, that too in the area of ensuring security. Though Iraq turned out to be a setback to EU, from the long term interest of EU if it is considered then it served as a reminder as to know to what extent EU has to develop so as to prove its credibility in playing a significant role as an international political actor.³² When France opposed to go for a war on Iraq by placing its valid defensive argument, it was trying to score a point against US and aimed at uniting the member states of Union under single objective of having a strong and effective foreign policy which would come into form free from the clutches of US. The design and its formation would take place depending upon the consensus arrived among the like-minded countries. France aimed with this objective and expected the countries of the Union would join hands as the circumstance was very apt and this would turn out to be the last and the best and the last chance in rejuvenating its political role. But all these plans and attempt tumble down.³³

What power is the EU?

Taking the track of EU's involvement in different conflicts across the world, there lies a fundamental question that challenges the credibility of EU in calling it as a global actor or not? Undoubtedly one cannot undermine the capacity of EU in making a huge impact in the global politics. But all its energies have been pooled and directed towards building economic force and its emphasis on developing political and security capacity has been very negligible. Lack of coordination resulting from the fragmentation among member states has failed them to come under a single banner has been the reason for the negligence.³⁴ EU, to come out of the criticism framed a treaty called Lisbon treaty which aimed at integrating the members states and brought all institutions to function under a single framework which would facilitate EU in working towards political role. But the same treaty has been criticized for being more technocratic and centralized in decision-making process that has created more complexity in defining the role as it involves the clash of interest of its member states.³⁵ In overcoming all these hurdles and in making as a global actor, the present status as economic superpower is not significant, it need to enhance its diplomatic role even significantly and push its foreign policy even more effectively, then only it can earn recognition from rest of the actors. Over a period the global development during 1990s facilitated European leaders to take the idea forward in developing a common foreign, security and defence policy for Europe.³⁶

³¹ Michael O'Neil., *The Struggle for the European Constitution A past and future history*, (Oxon, Routledge publications, 2009) p.303

³² Ibid. p.304

³³ Ibid. pp.304-05

³⁴ Simon Hix., *The Political System of the European Union* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan publications, 2005) p.404

³⁵ Barfit, Political Overview, (Germany Defence & Security Report Q4 2010) p.25

³⁶ Dacian Duna, *Defining the European Union as a global security actor*, Eurolinemes- Journal of the Institute for Euroregional Studies, (Vol.10, Autumn 2010) p.19

Lacking military capacity, EU has been limited to civilian power because of its soft power skills. One of the main reason for confining its role to more of a civilian is because of strong backing of US and NATO military which has come to the rescue of EU in many conflicting situations. Many a time when EU engaged in conflicts it could not take the matter to a logical end, in such case US and NATO came to its rescue and carried out peace-keeping, post-conflict reconstruction. Over a period, EU began to develop its techniques and tools that can enhance its functionality in conflicting scenario by developing “European Battle Group” under this EU can accommodate its role as a civilian as well as military role, this pushed in intervening in conflicts and trying for conflict resolution.³⁷

Conclusion:

Ever since the setback to EU’s foreign policy towards Western Balkan conflicts (Yugoslavian crises) in 1990s, it made all efforts to see that no stone unturned in building a strong and effective foreign policy which could be functional in handling conflicts and in finding a resolution. Keeping this objective into account, EU began to work in that direction step by step. Eventually it succeeded in handling both civilian as well as military role in the conflicting zones especially that carried in the most complex environments such as Middle East, Africa and South Caucasus.³⁸ EU role in addressing conflicts in 1990’s and in late 2000 if it is taken for comparative analysis, then the result itself speaks the level of maturity what EU has gained and developed as a credible actor over a period.³⁹ Adding to this, Lisbon treaty facilitated EU in channelizing the resources, which enabled EU to engage effectively in carrying out conflict resolution.⁴⁰ Though the treaty appeared as a panacea in proving EU as a credible actor in global politics, things did not prove right in the days to come as the economic crisis hit hard most of the European states very badly, resulting to this states found difficult to contribute and work in unison in making EU’s conflict resolution move effective.⁴¹ It is argued that EU need to come up with a more realistic, coordinated and effective approach in facing, handling conflicting scenario and the groups involved in it and this only could bring the difference in result, that is, long lasting peace- conflict resolution.⁴²

Apart from all these developments the biggest challenge for EU is the way it is moving ahead. At one end it tries its best to be organized to achieving its objectives in the international level, but from the other end when the question of sovereignty or the matter of security and defence arises especially in the conflicting zones EU haven’t proved effective in bringing its members within one fold. So this has allowed critics to call EU and its member state’s role as double standard. This was evident even in the recent conflicts such as Libya and Syria. In many occasions EU has been called as a soft power as it mixes its strategies in approaching the conflicts. Brexit and US moving out of taking the burden of ensuring security at the cost of its budget, has facilitated as well as alarmed EU member states to come united and work effectively in building security and defence mechanism of its own. The firm response of EU to US withdrawal from Iran Nuclear deal is a good example. To conclude, EU has to come strongly in resolving conflicts in proving it as a global political actor.

³⁷ Idbi.p.2

³⁸ Kutsutilaisuus, *The EU as a Conflict Manager*, (Helsinki, Finnish institute of International Affairs, 2011).p.1

³⁹ Ibid., p.2

⁴⁰ Ibid., p.1

⁴¹ Dacian., n-36., p.21

⁴² Emma., n-1., p.17

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