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POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS IN A “PROTRACTED” CONFLICT: THE CASE OF PRIDNESTROVIE

Abstract: The object of the research is unresolved conflicts in the post-Soviet space. The subject is political communication between the subjects of the conflict at the post-military stage of its development. In modern literature, insufficient attention is paid to the theoretical problem of de-escalation in the conditions of frozen conflicts, as well as to the factors influencing the emergence of new political communication between the parties in these conditions. In this regard, the author analyzes the terms “frozen conflict” and “post-military stage”, which he uses in relation to unresolved conflicts, mainly in the post-Soviet space. The methodology of this article is based on the principles of synthesis and analysis, historicism, objectivity and consistency, with the help of which the author highlights the features of the formation of political communication at the post-military stage of the Moldovan-Transnistrian conflict. As a result, it is concluded that the development of new political communication in conditions of protracted conflicts is possible only if the post-war stage of the development of relations begins between the parties.

Key words: conflict resolution, frozen conflicts, protracted conflicts, Transnistrian conflict, post-military stage, post-Soviet space.

Introduction

Unsettled, or as they are commonly called, “frozen conflicts” in the post-Soviet space continue to remain in the focus of the attention of many

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researchers, both in Russia and abroad.^{2,3} The situation in Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh is a “classic” example of such situations that have not been resolved for more than three decades.

The relevance of studying such conflicts has grown even more after the outbreak of the crisis in eastern Ukraine in 2014, which added to the list of “European” frozen conflicts.^{4, 5}

At the same time, since the cessation of large-scale hostilities in Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Donbass, the relationship between the conflicting parties over the years has developed according to different scenarios.

What factors influence the normalization of relations between conflicting parties, and which ones remain at high risk of renewed hostilities? The answers to these questions are complex.

The main scientific discussion around long-term unresolved conflicts has turned out to be focused on finding the causes of conflicts, analyzing their current state, as well as the prospects for solving them.

Much less attention is paid to the theoretical aspects of the settlement, in particular to the analysis of conditions and factors affecting the development of relations between the parties at the stage of de-escalation of the conflict.

The purpose of this article is to provide theoretical and methodological substantiation of the emergence of political communication at the “post-war stage” of the development of the conflict.

Before moving on to the characteristics of political communications, it is necessary to clarify the terminology that we use to describe this kind of conflict.

In particular, we are talking about the use of the concepts of “frozen conflict”, as well as the “post-war stage” arising in the relations between the parties.

² “Frozen Conflicts” in Europe/A. Bebler (ed.). Toronto: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2015. 215 p.

³ Frozen and Unfrozen Conflicts (Junior Research Group)//Leibniz-Institut für Ost-und Südosteuropaforschung [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://www.ios-regensburg.de/forschung/frozen-and-unfrozen-conflicts.html> (дата обращения: 01.12.2018).

⁴ Putin: the situation in Donbass is acquiring signs of a frozen conflict//MIA Rossiya Segodnya. 11.01.2018. URL: <https://ria.ru/world/20180111/1512459586.html> (date of access: 01.12.2018).

⁵ German politician: Frozen conflict is the best scenario for Ukraine//eutsche Welle. 05/16/2015. <https://p.dw.com/p/1FQbR> (date accessed: 01.12.2018).

To the concept of “frozen conflict”

The concept of a “frozen” state of conflict is not new in political science from the point of view of characterizing relations between the parties. For example, Luis Chrisberg, a professor at the University of Syracuse, singled out the category of “frozen” disputes, to which he attributed conflicts where “both sides remain fully committed to their incompatible positions, in which not one of them wants to resolve the issue through reconciliation, concessions or military conquest”.⁶

The use of the definition of “frozen conflict” has been spreading since the early 2000s, 10 years after the emergence of conflicts in the post-Soviet space.

In his speech to the Philadelphia Council on Foreign Affairs on 5 November 2003, US Ambassador Alexander Vershbow, describing the US-Russia relationship, mentions the need to “work together and resolve what we call “frozen conflicts”- separatist problems in Georgia and Moldova”.⁷

Such a dynamic spread of the definition of “frozen conflict”, in our opinion, was caused by the need to identify the situation in Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan in the context of building relations between Russia and the West on European security issues.⁸

At the same time, a number of authors, who used the term “frozen conflict” themselves, began to criticize it more and more over time. Thus, the “unfreezing” of the conflict in South Ossetia in 2008, as well as the results of the war in Karabakh in 2020, demonstrated once more eloquently that such conflicts can quickly shift from the status of “frozen” to the opposite “hot” state, with difficult and predictable consequences.^{9, 10}

⁶ Louis Kriesberg, *Social Processes in international relations: A Reader*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1968. 577

⁷ Grant, Thomas D. “Frozen Conflicts and International Law,” *Cornell International Law Journal*: Vol. 50: No. 3, Article 1. 2017. URL: <https://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cilj/vol50/iss3/1> (дата обращения: 10.04.2021).

⁸ William H. Hill. *Russia, the near abroad, and the West: lesson from the Moldova-Transnistria conflict*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press Washington, DC, 2012. 261 p.

⁹ Markedonov S. *Regional conflicts: reset // Russia in global politics*. 2008. No. 5. URL: http://www.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_11631 (date of access: 01.12.2018).

¹⁰ Not Frozen! *The Unresolved Conflicts over Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh in Light of the Crisis over Ukraine*/Fischer S. (ed.). Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2016. URL: https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2016RPO9_fhs.pdf (дата обращения: 01.12.2018).

The aggravation of the conflict in Donbass in April 2021 again questioned the validity of the term “frozen conflict” in relation to the real situation in eastern Ukraine.¹¹

The term “frozen conflict” also does not correspond to the dynamics of relations between the parties in the Transnistrian settlement, despite the fact that, since the start of the peacekeeping operation in 1992, approximately 120 thousand people have been detained for violating the security regime, 250 small arms have been seized, approximately 160 thousand cartridges and more than 1.3 thousand hand grenades have been seized.¹² The created peacekeeping mechanism ensured the restoration of direct contacts between Tiraspol and Chisinau, which made it possible not only to prevent the emergence of new hostilities, but to build a political dialogue between the parties.¹³

Thus, the term “frozen conflict” has a dual meaning. On the one hand, it reflects the length of the negotiation process with the aim of finding a political formula for resolving the conflict. On the other hand, the term “frozen conflict” does not disclose the existing dynamics of relations between the parties, both during the negotiation process and in the emergence of new military clashes.

There are several alternatives to this definition, the most preferable of which is the concept of “protracted conflict” in the author’s opinion. This concept is more appropriate for analyzing the internal dynamics of the conflict, and it is generally recognized at the level of international organizations.¹⁴

¹¹ The Ukrainian military assessed their strength in case of an aggravation of the conflict in Donbass // “Lenta.ru”, 17.04.2021. URL: <https://lenta.ru/news/2021/04/17/voennie/> (date accessed: 17.04.2021)

¹² The emergence and development of an armed conflict in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova // Russian Ministry of Defense URL: http://structure.mil.ru/mission/peacekeeping_operations/more.htm?id=10336232@cmsArticle (date of access: 01.12.2018).

¹³ Grund M., Sieg H. M., Wesemann K. Transnistria and the Future Security Architecture in Europe. KAS International Reports. 9/10/2011. URL: http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_28726-544-2-30.pdf?110908154525 (дата обращения: 01.12.2018).

¹⁴ Romashkina N.P., Rastoltsev S.V. Unresolved conflicts in the post-Soviet space in Europe and the role of Russia in their settlement (on the example of the Transnistrian and Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts) // Strategic stability. 2016. No. 4 (77). С. 55-68, p. 59-60.

“Post-war stage” in protracted conflicts

Traditionally, in conflict studies, the end of hostilities is characterized by the beginning of the post-conflict stage of settlement, which, as a rule, is analyzed from the point of view of the military-political victory of the “center” over the “periphery”.¹⁵

As a result of the military victory, the “center’s” programs and strategies are being implemented in the “periphery” to restore infrastructure, social security, and law enforcement agencies. In some cases, the “center” uses international peacekeeping experience and also attracts external financial resources to restore the legal field in yesterday’s rebellious territory.¹⁶

In our case, we cannot use the concept of the post-conflict stage since it does not correspond to the essence of existing relations in protracted conflicts. The end of hostilities in Transnistria in 1992, in Abkhazia in 1993, in South Ossetia in 1992, as well as in Nagorno-Karabakh in 1994, demonstrated that neither Chisinau, nor Tbilisi, nor Baku managed to solve the problems with the proclaimed independent republics by military means.

Two main patterns of behavior directly affect the emergence and intensity of political communication between the parties in a protracted conflict.

The first model provides for the development of relations within the framework of a conflict with “low combat intensity”. Its essence is that, although large-scale hostilities are not being conducted, a complete ceasefire cannot be achieved. Contacts between the parties are minimized in this situation, and official representatives are usually included in the framework of the negotiation process. In this case, the threat of the resumption of hostilities and armed clashes remains extremely high. This model, in our opinion, is typical for describing the relations between the parties in the east of Ukraine and in Nagorno-Karabakh (1994-2020).

¹⁵ Aklaev A.R. *Ethnopolitical Conflictology: Analysis and Management: Textbook. Benefit.* - М.: Delo, 2005. — 472 p.

¹⁶ Maheshika M. Sakalasureiya, , Richard P Haigh , Dilanthi Amaratunga. A Conceptual framework to analyze consequences of post conflict reconstruction interventions, *Precedia Engineering*, Volume 212, 2018. P. 894-901 URL: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877705818301383> (дата обращения: 18.04.2021).

The second model is characterized by a complete ceasefire between the parties and the creation of a mechanism to control the non-resumption of hostilities (Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

Today, the opposing sides have either equivalent military parity, as in the Transnistrian conflict, or one of the parties (Sukhumi and Tskhinvali) is protected by Russia under the framework of agreements on friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance.¹⁷ Although this situation creates neither war nor peace, it does provide an opportunity for the development of a peaceful dialogue.

The cessation of hostilities and the provision of a control mechanism over the situation allow us to speak of the emergence of a post-war stage in relations between the parties.

The post-war stage can be defined as *“the period of peaceful relations between the parties to the conflict from the moment of the cessation of hostilities until the conclusion of a political agreement on the settlement of the ethno political causes of the conflict”*.

It is quite logical that the parties use this time, including for the modernization of their armed forces, from the moment the ceasefire is declared. However, when we talk about the beginning of the post-war stage of the conflict, in practice, this means the implementation of at least two mechanisms that minimize the possibility of the resumption of hostilities. First of all, we are talking about the conduct of a peacekeeping operation on the line of contact between the conflicting parties, as well as about the direct participation of the parties to the conflict in the negotiation process.

At the same time, even in these conditions, it is impossible to completely exclude the possibility of the resumption of hostilities. Moreover, the parties are well aware of each other’s pain points and, if necessary, can use this to destabilize the situation.¹⁸

¹⁷ Yesterday Russia signed historic agreements with Abkhazia and South Ossetia on September 18, 2008 URL: <https://rg.ru/2008/09/18/dogovor.html> (date of access: April 18, 2021).

¹⁸ Overview of the problem of small arms and light weapons in Moldova URL: file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/Anatolyi/%D0%9C%D0%BE%D0%B8%20%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BA%D1%83%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%82%D1%8B/Downloads/Moldova_survey_Russian_sec4.pdf 1.11.2007 (date accessed: 18.04.2021).

The resumption of hostilities in 2008 in South Ossetia demonstrates not only the fragility of the post-war stage, but also the lack of a strategy for the “center” to resolve the conflict by political, non-violent methods.¹⁹

The results of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020, as shown by the experience of Azerbaijan, retain the attractiveness of the forceful method of resolving the conflict despite all the costs and risks for the initiator of such actions.²⁰

Political communications in the post-war stage

The experience of the Moldovan-Pridnestrovian conflict shows that the post-war stage not only made it possible to ensure the beginning of the negotiation process but also helped to build new channels of communication between the conflicting parties.

Today, political relations between Tiraspol and Chisinau can be conditionally divided into two levels.

First, these are official contacts within the framework of the 5 + 2 negotiation format, in which Moldova and Transnistria act as parties to the conflict, Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE as mediators, and the EU and the United States as observers.²¹

Despite the fact that the military-political situation has remained tense for more than two decades, more than 72 documents were signed between Tiraspol and Chisinau between 1994 and 2009, regulating relations in the fields of customs, the economy, the police, transportation, and other spheres of life. Such complex interaction between the parties could not but affect the political aspects of the conflict settlement.²²

¹⁹ Angela E. Stent Putins World. Russia against the west and with the rest, Twelve, 2019. p. 161-163.

²⁰ Victory came from where they did not expect / The second war between Azerbaijan and Armenia changed the status quo in Transcaucasia, 12/30/2020. URL: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4625906> (date of access 04/18/2021)

²¹ Danilov D.A. Transnistrian settlement: external context // Modern Europe. 2015. No. 2. S. 20-33. Doi: 10.15211 / soverope220152033

²² The negotiation process between the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic and the Republic of Moldova in documents / Under total. ed. V.V. Yastrebchak. - Bender: Polygraphist, 2011.

A striking example of the political interaction of the parties is the work on the project of the asymmetric federation of Moldova, in which two subjects of the federation were supposed to be represented- Transnistria and Gagauzia.²³

The refusal of the Moldovan side to sign the “Kozak Memorandum” in 2003,²⁴ which fixed the basic principles of the future federation, as well as the actual absence of negotiations from 2006 to 2012, did not become an obstacle to the development of new contacts between the parties at the regional level. The value of such communications lies in the fact that their development took place even against the background of the cooling of official relations between Chisinau and Tiraspol.

In this regard, we will analyze three examples of different political communication between Transnistria and Moldova, which go beyond the negotiation process.

First, the interaction between Transnistria and the Gagauz autonomy of the Republic of Moldova.

Relations between Transnistria and Gagauzia have a long tradition. Namely, since the beginning of the 90s when the two unrecognized, self-proclaimed republics of Transnistria and Gagauzia coordinated their actions in the fight against Chisinau. So, on 26 January 1993, the first “Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the PMR and the Gagauz Republic” was concluded.²⁵

Characteristically, this was the first treaty signed by Tiraspol after the “Agreement on the principles of peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova” (July 21, 1992).

At that time, the official negotiation process with the Republic of Moldova began on 28 April 1994 with a Statement by the leaders of Moldova and

²³ Moldova will become a federation on 05/27/2004. URL: <https://www.apn.ru/index.php?newsid=5199> (date of access 04/19/2021)

²⁴ Weakness of President Voronin. Dmitry Kozak told Kommersant about the reasons for the breakdown of the Transnistrian settlement on November 25, 2005. URL: <https://lenta.ru/articles/2005/11/25/kozak/> (date of treatment 04/15/2021)

²⁵ International treaties, the consent to be bound by which is expressed by the Supreme Council, the Government and the President of the PMR, 7.07.09. URL: <https://mid.gospmr.org/ru/TLj>

²⁶ The phenomenon of Transnistria. Tiraspol, RIO PSU them. T.G. Shevchenko, 2000, p. 251.

Transnistria on “the need for a stage-by-stage program for the establishment and implementation of state-legal relations”.²⁶

Such interaction between Transnistria and Gagauzia served as the basis for the development of relations at the municipal level as well. Therefore, in October 2011, an agreement “On friendship and cooperation” was signed for the first time between the capital of Transnistria, Tiraspol, and the capital of the Gagauz Republic, Comrat.²⁷

In 2012, an agreement on cooperation was signed by the parliament of Transnistria and the People’s Assembly of Gagauzia, which was prolonged in 2018.^{28, 29}

This interaction between the parties allowed a number of experts to believe that the Gagauz settlement experience could be an example of resolving the Transnistrian issue. At the same time, other researchers believe that Tiraspol uses relations with Gagauzia, as well as with the northern capital of Moldova, the city of Balti, with the aim of “transnistriizing” Moldova. In other words, to extend its influence to these Moldovan territories.^{30, 31}

Second, cooperation between the political parties of Transnistria and Moldova.

Over the 30 years of conflict in Moldova and Transnistria, various political systems have developed, including their party formats: proportional in Moldova and the majority system in Transnistria.^{32, 33}

²⁷ Official site of M. Comrat, URL: <https://comrat.md/goroda-pobratimy.html>

²⁸ Expansion of forms of cooperation between the legislative bodies of Transnistria and Gagauzia, 12.03.12. URL: <http://www.vspmr.org/news/supreme-council/rasshirenie-form-sotrudnichestva-mejdu-zakonodatelnimi-organami-pridnestrovjya-i-gagauzii.html>

²⁹ Gagauzia - Transnistria: reset of relations, 5.07.2017. URL: <http://www.vspmr.org/news/supreme-council/gagauziya-pridnestrovje-perezagruzka-otnosheniy.html>

³⁰ Petru Bogatu, Great Transnistria, 8.11.2011. URL: <https://inosmi.ru/moldova/20111108/177287282.html>

³¹ Filipenko Artem, What is “Transnistrovization” and what does it threaten? 12/14/2019. URL: <https://ava.md/2019/12/13/chto-takoe-pridnestrovizaciya-i-chem-nam/>

³² Protsik Oleg, Igor Bukutaru, Andrei Volentir, Party competition in Moldova: ideology, organizational strategies and approaches to resolving ethno-territorial conflicts. Ch. CEP USM, 2007, p. 214.

³³ Dirun A.V. The party system of Transnistria (1990–2015): the experience of the “unrecognized” state / Collection of scientific articles based on the materials of the All-Russian scientific-practical conference (with international participation). Orenburg State University. 2016. pp. 262-275.

Despite the fact that the thesis of territorial integrity is fundamental for the Moldovan parties, this does not prevent some of them from having relations with the Transnistrian organizations advocating the independence of Transnistria.

First of all, we are talking about cooperation between the Parties of Communists (PCRM) and Socialists of Moldova (PSRM) with the Transnistrian Communist Party. Transnistrian representatives of the Communist Party have repeatedly become participants in the events of Moldovan communists and socialists in different years.^{34, 35}

The interaction between Moldovan socialists and the Party of Communists of Transnistria is still the only example. However, in the conditions of a protracted conflict, this interaction is indicative from the point of view of the emergence of such a communication channel.

Third, the participation of residents of Transnistria in the Moldovan elections

Since the official restoration of relations between Tiraspol and Chisinau in 1994, the parties have not been able to resolve the issue of opening Moldovan polls on the territory of Transnistria.³⁶

In this regard, the citizens of Transnistria, who wanted to take part in the Moldovan elections, had to travel to the settlements under Moldovan jurisdiction.

The Transnistrian leadership adhered to two rules related to the organization of electoral campaigns in Moldova. First of all, Tiraspol was ready to work with any composition of the parliament and government formed following the elections. Second, in Transnistria, they closely followed to ensure that the Moldovan Central Election Commission, as well as political parties, did not spread their activities, especially during the electoral period, to the territory of the republic.

³⁴ What tasks does Oleg Khorzhan solve in Chisinau? / 7.05.12. URL: <https://ava.md/2012/05/07/kakie-zadachi-reshaet-oleg-horzhan-v-kishineve/>

³⁵ Igor Dodon met with Oleg Horzhan, 17.10.17 URL: <http://www.vedomosti.md/news/igor-dodon-vstretilsya-s-olegom-horzhanom>

³⁶ The competent authorities of the PMR see no grounds for opening a polling station on the territory of the Korzhevo microdistrict of the city of Dubossary, 3.04.09. URL: <http://mfa-pmr.org/ru/tjp>

Thus, it can be stated that from 1994 to 2016, there was a certain “model of non-interference” in the Moldovan elections, within which the participation of the residents of Transnistria was, first of all, their personal initiative.

This approach was first violated in 2016 during the presidential election campaign in Moldova. More than 17,000 Pridnestrovians voted in favor of Igor Dodon in the second round, in which he competed against Maia Sandu. This allowed a number of political parties in Moldova to declare, for the first time, the interference of Transnistria in the Moldovan elections.

During the parliamentary election campaign in 2019, which for the first time took place under a mixed electoral system, the territory of Transnistria was included in two majoritarian constituencies: constituency № 47 (districts of Kamenka, Rybnitsa, Dubasari, Grigoriopol) and constituency № 48 (district of Slobodzeya, municipality of Bendery and Tiraspol).

Tiraspol did not take seriously this unilateral decision of Chisinau on the allocation of two deputy mandates for Transnistria, rightly considering it solely the cost of the internal political struggle in Moldova.

However, the course of voting in the parliamentary elections demonstrated that residents of Transnistria can be more closely involved in Moldovan politics than it might seem at first glance. So, in total, more than 37 thousand voters from Transnistria took part in the elections for the Moldovan parliament. The massive participation of residents of Transnistria in the Moldovan elections was organized by the largest holding in the republic, “Sheriff”.³⁷

As a result, the Socialist Party won 52% of the votes on party lists. The winners in the majoritarian constituencies were “independent candidates” Alexander Oleinik- constituency № 47 and Viorel Melnik- constituency № 48. It should be noted that the big businesses of Transnistria were actively campaigning for these candidates.³⁸

Such massive participation of Pridnestrovians in the 2016 presidential elections and the 2019 parliamentary campaign has become a factor that will

³⁷ Lina Grau, Parliamentary elections and Transnistria? 4/03/2019. URL: <https://moldova.europalibera.org/a/pridnestrovskie-dialoghi-/29831846.html>

³⁸ Dirun Anatoly, Elections to the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova: Lessons for Transnistria, 4.03.2019. URL: <http://edinstvopmr.ru/news/1028-vybory-v-parlament-respubliki-moldova-uroki-dlya-pridnestrovyia.html>

seriously affect the Moldovan presidential campaign already in 2020. The fact is that at the time of the presidential elections in Moldova, there were 256,230 registered voters living in Transnistria. This is about 7% of the total number of 3,287,140 Moldovan voters. And given that the margin of victory between the winner of the elections and his opponent in 2016 was 4%, such a large number of Transnistrians with the right to vote represents a huge reserve. Even if only a small part of voters vote.³⁹

In November 2020, the main struggle unfolded, as before, between Maia Sandu and Igor Dodon. However, unlike in 2016, the supporters of Maia Sandu made serious organizational and diplomatic efforts to neutralize the massive participation of Transnistrian citizens in the elections.⁴⁰

There was a paradoxical situation when the Moldovan political parties opposed the participation in the voting of the citizens of Transnistria with Moldovan citizenship. Thus, they formally violated their constitutional rights. At the same time, despite 85.8% of the Transnistrian votes, which Igor Dodon again received, for the first time, 14.2% of voters from Transnistria voted for Maia Sandu. Interestingly, the result of support for Maia Sandu from Transnistria turned out to be higher than she received 5.34% in the Gagauz autonomy.⁴¹

Thus, it should be recognized that participation in elections has become a new communication, the influence of which has grown significantly in the relationship between the parties. Today, Tiraspol looks like a party that has learned to profitably use this situation and turn it into the “profit networks”.⁴² At the same time, it cannot be ruled out that the involvement of a larger number

³⁹ OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Limited Election Observation Mission Republic of Moldova Presidential Election 1 November 2020 Interim Report 22 September – 8 October 2020 12 October 2020 <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/a/3/466965.pdf>

⁴⁰ Defeating Dodon: how the diaspora and the blockade of Transnistria changed the winner of the elections in Moldova, 2.11.2020 URL: <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/rus/articles/2020/11/2/7116016/>

⁴¹ Pridnestrovians supported Dodon in the presidential elections in Moldova with a result of 85%, 11/16/2020 URL: <https://iz.ru/1087552/2020-11-16/pridnestrovtsy-podderzhali-dodona-na-vyborakh-prezidenta-moldavii-s-rezultatom-85>

⁴² Charles King, The Benefits of Ethnic War: Understanding Eurasia’s Unrecognized States *World Politics* Vol. 53, No. 4 (Jul 2001), pp. 524-552

of voters from Transnistria in the Moldovan elections may create problems for official Tiraspol in the medium term.

The level and quality of the development of political communication between Tiraspol and Chisinau in the field of interregional relations, party interaction, as well as electoral processes, directly depends on the stage at which the parties to the conflict are.

The emergence and development of new communication between the parties at the “post-war stage” clearly show the dynamics of relations in a state of “protracted conflict”, which in turn minimizes the possibility of new hostilities. The value of these relationships lies in the fact that the parties learn to use long-term strategies of influence in relation to each other.⁴³

This approach is much safer and more promising from the point of view of finding common interests than an armed struggle between the parties. At the same time, the military factor in the form of a peacekeeping operation is the main factor for ensuring peace and building relations between the parties.

Despite the fact that each of the protracted conflicts in the post-Soviet space has its own specifics, identifying common patterns and finding the potential for settlement at each stage of the confrontation remains the most important task for a researcher.

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⁴³ Dirun Anatoly, “Operations of influence” in the settlement Moldovan-Transnistrian conflict, Annual Laboratorului Pentru Analiza Conflictului Transnistrian, Universitatea “Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu (Sibiu) Vol: 3 №: 1. 2019. pp. 37-42.

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