

Silent Conflicts

Presentation delivered during the ECMI Summer School 2013 by

Astghik Khachaturya, Bledar Bashanoviq, Giorgi Tabagari, Nasiba Abbasova,
Trajkoska Jasmina, Malkhaz Toria

Integrated Version, ECMI 2013

Structure



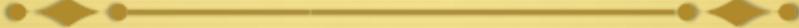
- ✦ Definition of Silent Conflict
- ✦ Elements of Conflicts
- ✦ Similarities vs Differences between Balkans & Caucasus
- ✦ Recommendations

Silent Conflict



Is a non-violent type of conflict that is hidden, tensed, hinders peaceful coexistence of people and might lead to escalation in future.

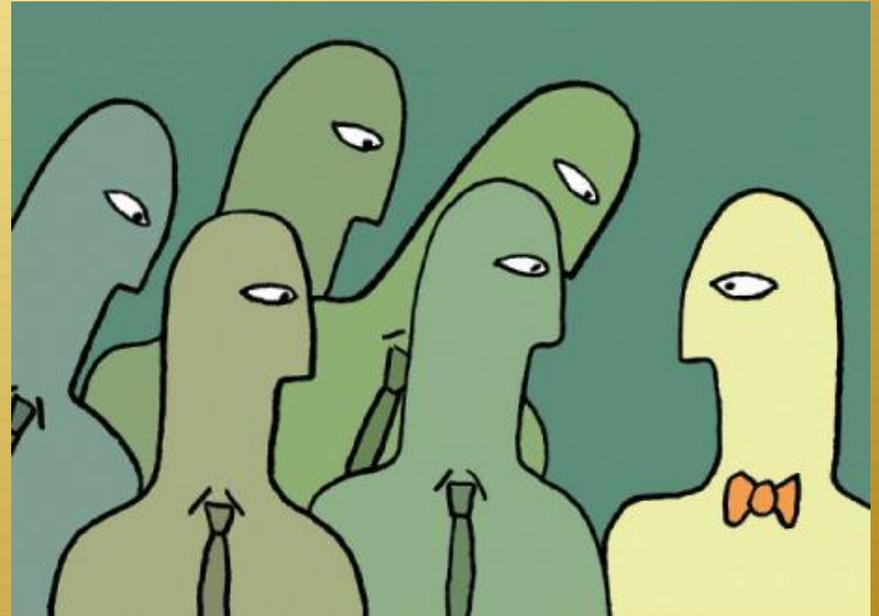
Elements of Conflict



- Conflicting values,
- prejudices and stereotypes (towards different groups)
- contested narratives,
- fear and security concerns
- public policies (when they fail to address or neglect the problems of minority groups)
- discrimination on institutional level,
- differing interests,

Elements of Conflicts

- role of the leaders,
- hate speech
- media,
- limited access to education,
- miscommunication,
- power division,
- lack of democratic governance,
- institutional oppression.



Similarities vs Differences



- ✦ There are more similarities between the causes underlying the silent conflicts in the regions of Balkans and Caucasus than differences.
- ✦ Similarities can be identified between the models of how hidden conflicts transform into open conflict, although development of processes, conflict intensity and outcomes are different

Similar Causes



- ✦ border regions
- ✦ language issues
- ✦ education
- ✦ representation in public live
- ✦ legal regulations
- ✦ adaptation to new norms
- ✦ discrimination
- ✦ social problems (Roma issues)
- ✦ imperial legacies
- ✦ authoritarian legacies
- ✦ historical and cultural heritage

Silent Conflicts Examples



✦ **Macedonia**

The Ohrid Agreement (2001) provided the minorities with the possibility for education in mother tongue language. As an outcome now there is a whole generation of young people (predominantly from the Albanian community) who do not speak Macedonian language. Although this issue is not currently on the agenda for discussions within society, it has a negative potential that could lead to tensed majority-minority relations in the nearest future.

✦ **Georgia**

Language has always been among the most important identity markers even during the Soviet period. The language issue has been used by the Abkhazian minority in Georgia to claim collective (also political) rights and even independence.

Positive Examples



✦ **Macedonia**

Albanian minority is represented at every level of society. At the University of Tetovo there is a programme for joint Albanian-Macedonia education

✦ **Georgia**

Programme for improving knowledge in Georgian for minorities so now access to higher education (HE) has been simplified. Governmental scholarships on a contractual basis for members of minority groups (only) who want to study abroad – graduates agree to return and work for the government afterwards.

The recent reform of historical books eliminated the Georgia-centric views on history of the territories!

Recommendations



- granting right of citizenship and creating civic nation,
- Introduction and implementation of legal framework (to address concerns of all communities),
- defining language policy that will provide equal opportunities to citizens and while maintaining the cultural diversity of the groups, (higher educations/simplified procedures),
- ensuring political participation and representation of different groups,
- access to decision making system (ensuring representation and participation of different groups),
- providing civic education,
- ensuring security of citizens,

Recommendations



- regional development,
- promoting reconciliation (media, public diplomacy, education),
- raising awareness,
- demographic policy,
- promoting people-to-people dialogues,
- personalising international conflicts,
- raising political culture,
- cooperation with kin states,



Solving conflicts through cooperation

The background of the slide is a light yellow color with a subtle pattern of faint, overlapping postmarks and stamps in various colors (red, blue, black). These stamps include words like 'POSTAGE', 'AIR MAIL', and 'RECEIVED' along with some illegible numbers and dates.

Thank You

Questions?