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**THE CONFLICT AND CRISIS HANDLING FUNCTIONS OF  
INTERNATIONAL CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS, BETWEEN COUNTRIES  
AND AMONG GROUPS**

Summary of PhD thesis by the Author

Theme consultant

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**IDENTIFICATION OF THE SCIENTIFIC PROBLEM**

As the pastor of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Hungary and as Master of Arts in International Affairs, on the evidence of my scientific activity and by the gained study and research experiences as well as the gained knowledge of military sciences as the doctorandus of Miklós Zrínyi National Defence University **I established, that international church organizations from the scientific point of view, and have conflict- and crisis handling function specialization which are worth for research. I would like to work up this in my dissertation, and of this point of departure I make an effort to draft the following:**

Until we talk about conflict, theoretically we can handle it with suitable means and methods, but there can be a situation, when a state or states are unable to handle their conflicts in a suitable way, and this can end to crisis. In this case it can result in civil war or in war. In this kind of situation helped e.g. the Vatican as mediator. In 1980 cardinal Sodano, at that time as nuncio, solved the Chile-Argentin crisis with its intermediary negotiations by the side of the Vatican. We can think on the late cardinal Sin also, who in 1986 in the Philippine Islands, who led a civil war without blood. We can approach to the conflict in several ways, but I think we can't leave out the examination of the purpose which led to the present situation. Obviously a conflict can have psychical reasons, when countries psychically get in touch with each other in such away, which surpass on that relation what can be still said friendly. The conflict has components, that results in unwanted atmosphere at the end.

There are factors, that can't leave out in the point of view of the research. One of is the role of the **mental factor**, in other words, in what way does the thinking of people influence the formation of conflict, and the continue to form of public opinion. The situation is much easier, if in the formation of a conflict mentally we face such community of people, who knows, that what is the solution to the goal, and even if it differs from the others point of view, they know what to do, to solve at the end the issue. The **psychological factors** have influence on the way to the solution too. What kind of spiritual status has a community, which comes to a crisis, or to the formation of a conflict? Much depends on that, how can they handle in the given situation the conflict, and to this handling they need suitable frame of mind, which doesn't means only peace or good concentrate ability, but all the more, far much other things. The spirituality is the question of education too, which can't be learned fast, but it needs time to formate, which means a changed identity. The education plays a big role in this. It is not all the same, that what kind of education we all go through, because the education can give for people such an emotional and spiritual fixation, which can give in this case strength and courage to bring a decision. This is the reason, why can the constructivist thinking play role in the field of education, because it creates such values which helps in the seeking and finding of reality. Solving a conflict, it needs an operative thinking, because we have to act to unfasten the tension, so we can handle it.

The **sociology** helps too to understand and handle the conflict. We can think on the situation of ethnic minority also, when they are under in such way pressure, that results in conflict or by chance in crisis opposed to majority. This is the reason why can the politology give in such way point of reference that on this base it can better see certain groups interests, moves and values. The politics unfortunately often plays role in breaking out conflict and crisis, (e.g. Balkan, Iraqi, Liberian war etc.). The task of politic should be theoretically the develop of responsible governing and protect of secure living. Evidently this is not easy, but this the authorization for the politic, with which it is possible to live or to abuse.

One important difference between the churches and states is, that until the church always thinks in joint liability, till the state is only able to think national, in other words it can't always overstep its limits. The church carries universal theology and ideology, on the other hand the state orients towards its interests. The national constitution and character may differ, and differs country by country. This type of difference manifests in the relation to the homeland, to the society and to the public matter. In this way of thinking the holding and resolving of questions related to nation is very strong.

**Communication** plays great role in conflict handling and prevention. It not all the same, that what kind what kind of temperament do I come to conflict to given parties, how I look upon them, how I behave with them, how I say my message to them. Much depends on the presentation

and empathy. Do I feel the substance and the problem, or I pass over above. In personal communication the personal relation and the others extent emotion's should be counted, whether I participate as mediator or as harmed. This is hard task, but with attention, and with taking seriously the other party, it can work.

Taking into consideration the above, **I arrive to a result**, that in the one hand for the churches war and peace conception, I have to do **explore in facts and analytical work**, with using national and international sources. On the other hand **on the base of this systematization I have to try to give direction to the further handle of problem groups**, that are very important.

## RESEARCH AIMS

Considering the above mentioned factors, **the following research aims have been identified** by me:

- *to present* the way of conflicts and crisis development among states, to see those structures which can be dangerous for a state and can be instructive for Hungary in national security view,
- *to illustrate* what kind of political, diplomatic, economical, ethnical, military interests can be discovered by a sudden crisis (America-Iraq, Palestine-Israel, Balkan conflicts),
- *to explore and analyze* the conflict absolve function of the churches from 1990 since nowadays *in the war* against terrorism,
- *to offer* a historical *survey* of the international church organizations,
- *to put a proposal* for the probable tasks of the international church organizations in the aspect conflicts and those solving possibilities,
- *to draw conclusion* from the conflicts and crises followed until now in the fields of solving possibilities.

## RESEARCH METHODS

During my researches I considered as *basic point* of view the effort to scientific establishment, to system-theory approach, to analyze, to develop conclusions build up on synthesis, to support the scientific propositions with practice.

*I made an effort* to form the vertical and horizontal relation of the thesis, to keep cohesion of the aims, methods and new scientific results.

1. I have **seeked out** the academic results until now about the topic and I **studied** other dissertations.
2. I have **analyzed** the discovered home and international specialized literature. I **used** the literature and the publication list.
3. I **examined** the seconder carrier information, which can help in the seeking out primer specialized literature.
4. I **assessed** relevant and pertinent informations, which can help solving the drafted problem and the research of the topic.
5. I have **mixed** suitably the empirical methods, abstract thinking and practical knowledge.
6. I have **compared** and **used** in the occasion of work up the topic, the conclusions get to know from special and general methods.
7. I **made** consultation and interview series with the experts of academic, state, church research institutes in certain cases of countries.
8. I **made an effort** by using the scientific channels **to exchange experience in the research area with researchers in the possession of scientific results**. Without this it would have been difficult to make sure that my conclusions are new.

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPLETED WORK ACCORDING TO THE CHAPTERS**

About the **title** of the thesis I would like to say, that I didn't wanted to draft too long. I think, that organizations belong to “ international church organizations” have so great tradition and experience, that is well known and acknowledged among other international secular organizations. Definitely I deal with conflict and crisis handling between countries and among groups, which forms the object of my research. In temporal point of view I based up the establishment of international church organizations (1948), but especially I deal with the developed conflicts from 1990.

Of course **there is possibility to do research in this topic only without the completeness of demand**, because the international church organizations nowadays have widely tasks in conflict handling, so it can't be completely discovered. Now we can get a picture about that wide and self-sacrificing work and the effort for peace, that the international church organizations deal with. With the help of the case studies we can get an inspection for the **effort for peace, which is one of the most important task of the churches.**

In my thesis **I prove**, that the international church organizations have serious influence for conflict and crisis handling between countries and among groups.

**I. CHURCH VIEWPOINTS ABOUT THE PEACE AND WAR.** In the first chapter **I examine** religions, but focusing on the opinion of churches about peace and war, in short the problem, that need answers to be found, if we are serious about dealing with conflict and crisis resolutions. **I analyze** the responsibility of churches from the perspective of defense. The threatened population must be defended in case of military force. The churches have expressed their opinions in various documents on the above mentioned events, that I will present and analyze.

**II. THE INTRANATIONAL CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR RELATIONS AND THE INTERCHURCHAID.** In the second chapter **I analyze** the conflict handling possibilities of the international church organizations (World Council of Churches, Conference of European Churches, Lutheran World Federation, Vatican, Hungarian Interchurchaid) focusing on the secular international organizations and their interaction with states. The Vatican, though not an international church organization but a smallest state of the World, however due to its clerical organizational structure I have positioned in the order of international church organizations and this is where I analyze it. **I compare** the work and work areas of the international church organizations. After this I analyze their work in conflict resolution and **analyze** the areas that apply today too.

**III. SOME OF TODAY'S INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS.** In the third chapter based on the facts of the previous chapters **I draft** those case studies by which I can demonstrate on to the named cases the reactions and act programs of the International Secular organizations and the international church organizations. **I analyze** the cases, **and** I examine that out of the old methods which are applicable into the challenges of the system of new conflicts and crisis and what other **new methods** must be introduced.

**IV. CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND RECONCILIATION.** In the fourth chapter **I examine** the function and place of churches in between problematic cases and their preventive function in the development of a conflict. **I present** the biblical conflict resolutions as a source for the ecclesiastical conflict handling of the church. **I state by** analyzing the possibilities of a counterstrike and peace the **recommendations** that can be for a Christian person in both moral, ethical and behavioral a model.

**The final chapter of the thesis** in the usual scientific way in accordance with the goals is the summary of the executed analysis, final conclusions, the summary of the to be expected new scientific result, and the recommendation of their usability and the defining of the forthcoming other examinations and thanks giving.

## **SUMMARIZED CONCLUSIONS**

After presenting the international church organizations, and talking about the inter state and inter group conflict and crisis handling functions and summarizing the individual chapters, my task is not too hard to when creating the final combined conclusion. **Security politics** is not a theoretical science such as ethics or philosophies, since it **can not make it self independent of life** such as the churches, theologies, national defense, conflicts, crisis and their reality and problems.

Security politics in other words conflict and crisis handling extends to the methods and areas of conflict handling by the international churches. Therefore Security politics is such a scientific field that is applied in a wide range and follows international and national decisions.

The actions taken by the international church organizations and the ecclesiastical humanitarian services are important “fields” for the security politics. This also means the we can count and should count on churches from the perspective of security politics.

### **My further statement in relation of each chapter**

**In the first chapter I examined the** religions, but focusing on the opinion of churches about peace and war, in short the problem, that needed answers to be found, if we were serious about dealing with conflicts and crisis resolutions. The discipline of the new and old testament of Theology sets peace with out doubt the goal for a Christian.

**I analyzed** the responsibility of churches from the perspective of defense. Based on my researches on this topic I am convinced that I was successful during the given time, to make it easier to understand to the people interested in the topic knowing the extremely large collection of documents and information and that I pointed out in certain fields of the subject to raise the interest for further investigations.

**In the second chapter I analyzed** the conflict handling possibilities of the international church organizations (World Council of Churches, Conference of European Churches, Lutheran World Federation, Vatican, Hungarian Interchurchaid) focusing on the secular international organizations and their interaction with states.

**I pointed out** the tasks involved that must be faced during their action. The international church organizations utilize their given freedom in acting among these fields, and their positive affect is easily measured.

**I compared** the work and work areas of the international church organizations and came to the conclusion that the international church organizations have divided the tasks among themselves, but in certain cases there might be overlapping between them.

After this **I analyzed** their work in conflict resolution and **analyzed** the areas that it applies to today too.

**In the third chapter** based on the facts of the previous chapters **I drafted** those case studies by which I could demonstrate on to the named cases the reactions and act programs of the International Secular organizations and the international church organizations.

**I analyzed** the cases, **and** I examined that out of the old methods which were applicable into the challenges of the system of new conflicts and crisis and what other **new methods** should have been introduced.

At the end of the chapter I summarized, that in the examined period and case the conflict handling from a security politics view point did not always turned out to be complete. Although the international church organizations and the international humanitarian organizations have fulfilled their tasks to their best, however the political life changes very slow, there fore “the country is not fully secure”. The achieved results do not always end up in a balance of security politics.

**I the fourth chapter I examined** the function and place of churches in between problematic cases and their preventive function in the development of a conflict. The ecclesiastic conflict handling is by stressing the reconciliation which takes the case into a whole new dimension.

**I presented** the biblical conflict resolutions as a source for the ecclesiastical conflict handling of the church that also gives a theological base to finish our tasks.

**I stated by** analyzing the possibilities of a counterstrike and peace the **recommendations** that can be - for a Christian person in both moral, ethical and behavioral - a model.

**The final chapter of the thesis** according to the results of the examination, can be and is expedient to summarize in the following chapters.

## **NEW SCIENTIFIC RESULTS**

**I have realized my research purposes and the designated tasks** and I think I managed to attain some results by it.

**I am evaluating as new scientific result – the following:**

- 1. I have proved that the churches are thinking in a responsible way about peace and war and the the endangered population in a military crisis is ought to have protection. The outstanding addition from the churches in the light of security politics is the service of the reconciliation.**
- 2. Based on my researches I have defined the role of conflict handling tasks of the International churches and their role in the secular international organizations, through which they can get involved in more intensive way to help conflict resolution.**
- 3. I proved that in conflict resolution the churches feel it is their moral obligation to get involved whether it is conflict prevention or conflict or a crisis.**
- 4. I have come up with a recommendation for the national church leaders (bishops), in the ecumenic level and to the general secretaries of international church organization in the handling of conflicts and crisis among countries and groups considering these new perspectives.**

## **PRACTICAL USE OF RESEARCH RESULTS**

After analyzing this thesis both the theological, the international relations and on fields of the military science we are to expect scientific results that today would be hard to comprehend that will help future scientific researches. On one side I was trying to make a scientific catalogization using theological and international relations areas according to the international churches crisis handling function. On the other hand I was trying to prove that the **international church organizations have a great influence** in the interstate and intergroup conflict and crisis handling.

The development of military science – from its nature – is in a close relation with the operation of the national defense that is defining the relations between the international and church relations. Therefore my these can influence and help the development of military since specially that security politics is a discipline in the Doctoral School of Military Science.

In my opinion The intended audience of my thesis can be found in various disciplinary areas.

The first and fourth part of my theses can aid in the theological education and aid those soldiers that must work together the church within the army, such as military pastors.

The second and the third part of my theses is relevant to the scientific life and provides practical help in the area of research results, mostly in the work of the Hungarian diplomacy, the government agencies, the historical churches, workers in international church organization and soldiers that are in relation to international church organizations.

The works researched during my thesis can be a good bibliography for future students.

## **FIELDS, WORTH OF FURTHER RESEARCH**

these has directed our attention to the colorfulness of security politics, and therefore on conflict and crisis handling of the international church organizations between countries and their critical perspectives. Many areas however are only partially and not at all have been touched by my

thesis. These required **more research**. These areas could be:

- in the given time period the elaboration of the type and method of protection provided for the endangered population;
- in case of a disaster the elaboration of tasks, requirements, contents, methods, tools of international church organizations;
- Analysis of the services provided by the Hungarian interchurchaid in those countries where there is a lack of legal security;
- elaborate the results of international church organizations within secular international organizations;
- elaborate the methods of preparation for international conflict handling;
- elaborate the possibilities of conflict prevention in case of self interest conflict when it is raised from a national level to an international level
- the analysis of the statements of the 2006 WCC assembly in Brazil

### **PUBLICATIONS OF THE CANDIDATE RELATING TO THE THEME**

*-The role of Conference of European Churches among the international organizations.* Society and National Defence. The Scientific Publication of Miklós Zrínyi National Defence University. 2006/3. ISSN 1417-7293

*-Ecclesiastical point of view about the Peace and War.* Sword and Pen. PhD Scientific Periodical Journal. 2006/3. ISSN 1587-558x

*-The Role of the Church Charitable Organizations in Crisis management, with the participate of the Hungarian Interchurch Aid.* Sword and Pen. PhD Scientific Periodical Journal. 2006/2. ISSN 1587-558x

*-Small State – Big Influence. The role of the Vatican in international diplomacy.* Lutheran Life. National Evangelical-Lutheran Weekly Paper. 70. Volume. 28 Issue. 10. July 2005. 4.p. ISSN 0133-1302

*-Some issues in the Emergence of Conflicts.* Human Review. Issue 02/2005. 124-134.p. ISSN 1219-929X

*-Counter strike and the possibility of peace.* New MilitaryReview. 11. Issue. November 2004. 110-116.p.HU ISSN 1585-4167

*-Just War?* Lutheran Life. National Evangelical-Lutheran Weekly Paper. 68. Volume. 8. Issue. 22 February 2003. 3.p.ISSN 0133-1302

*-Islamic Threat?* Evangelical-Lutheran Periodical Journal. 1999/5. 175-176.p.ISSN 0133-2821

International conference, foreign language presentation

*-Divine Commandments: Common Ethical Values and Moral Obligations of Man.* Presentation on an International Consultation in Sarajevo in English. 13-16 November, 2005. 1-5.p.

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## **Postgraduate studies**

2005. September. One month scholarship from World Council of Churches, Geneva to study the conflict and crisis management  
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1997-2000. Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration Faculty of Social Sciences and European Studies. H-1093 Budapest, Fővám tér 8.  
1995-1996. University of Kuwait, Arabic Faculty, Government Scholarship of Hungary



## **Languages**

English – Certificate of advanced level 1999.  
German – final exam 1995.  
Hebrew – University examination 1992.  
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Latin – Theological final exam 1993.  
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International Association of Civil Aviation Chaplains (IACAC)

## **The title of dissertation is:**

The conflict and crisis handling functions of international organizations, between countries and among groups.