

# Models for the settlement of territorial conflicts

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**Abstract.** The article presents the materials of a round table held at the The National Communications Development Research Institution (Moscow, Russia), the main topic of which was the experience of resolving territorial conflicts.

A wide range of issues related to the theory and practice of crisis resolution practices is considered. The main political and legal approaches and diplomatic instruments to international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts are characterized. The results of the study of the historical experience of international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts are presented. A data-based methodology is proposed that allows evaluate information sources covering the conflict.

The conflicts in Central Asia and the Caucasus that took place in different periods are considered. Territorial conflicts are numerous in the Central Asian region. They are mainly related to the absence of official state borders between the three countries: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. The most complex, large-scale, and bloody is the conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in 2021, which was supported by the armed forces of the two countries. Negotiations, delimitation, and demarcation of borders are still the most significant alternative to existing conflicts.

The tools for managing these events are highlighted. A set of recommendations is proposed that has scientific and practical significance in terms of anti-crisis response strategies in the post-Soviet space.

**Keywords:** International mediation, intermediary States, demarcation line, local plebiscite, regional organizations, territorial conflict, enclave, negotiations, conflict resolution, open borders, information

## Introduction

A comparative analysis of the effectiveness of using various political and legal approaches and diplomatic tools for resolving territorial conflicts is of great research interest in order not only to provide a generalization of the historical experience of the peaceful settlement of armed conflicts, but also to offer the most effective, optimal model of international mediation in the context of modern reformatting of the world political system and exacerbation of geopolitical contradictions.

Territorial conflicts are among the most widespread in the world. Although they are for the most part quite intense (the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the conflict between Cyprus and Turkey, the Kashmir conflict, etc.), they can be resolved in principle. The post-Soviet space has its own specifics of managing territorial conflicts. These conflicts are, as a rule, prolonged, and the methods of their settlement have not changed for decades. The best-known method is negotiations, in which parties to the conflict agree on the delimitation and demarcation of disputed borders and enclave ownership.

The creation of information flows is an important aspect of the resolving various types of crises. The ongoing situation shows that information today can be assessed as an integral part of any, including territorial, conflict; thus, the use of methodological approaches such as content analysis and web analytics makes it possible to obtain a verified set of data, the analysis of which will make it possible to draw reasonable conclusions, on the basis of which point management action can be taken.

## Materials and methods

The authors used different methodological approaches for their research. The scientific discussion made it possible to identify those that are most effective and promising: the system method, the historical perspective method, the comparative method, the statistical method, modeling, concrete historical analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis using a number of specialized utilities.

V.V.Froltsov presented brief results of a comparative historical analysis of the experience of international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the main approaches used to solve this urgent problem of international relations.

T.V.Marmontova involved in the content analysis the materials of the regional media of the border areas of Russia and Kazakhstan (nine media in six regions) from February

24 to March 1, 2022, conclusions were drawn on how to use instrumental methods of analysis in the information policy. The presented materials, based on the analysis of the historical experience of conflict resolution, allow showing the logical continuity in the process of their settlement. The post-Soviet space is potentially associated with the possibility of many conflicts, due to ethnic diversity, different orientations of geopolitical interests, and a high degree of influence of different actors. Potentially, the conflict should be considered one of the phases of socio-political development; the experience of going through the conflict is dramatic, painfully reflected in the public consciousness. It is important to remember that any crisis tends to recur, and having an analytical backlog, how to resolve it, what consequences are long-, medium- and short-term in nature etc., will help decision makers in building an algorithm for managerial action. As a result of the study, you can see the principles of the analysis and a set of data related to the study of the real situation.

A.G.Bolshakov used the case study methodology, which analyzes specific cases of border conflicts, that allow you to explore territorial claims and disputes between the countries of Central Asia, especially those located in the Ferghana Valley. Various cases are compared with each other to construct a holistic theory of conflict resolution in the region.

A.V.Ataev involved materials of the Sharia court during the territorial dispute between Chechnya and Ingushetia, materials of the Ceasefire and separation of forces Agreements in the Georgian-Abkhaz armed conflict of 1992–1993 signed in Moscow, statistical materials on the structure of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces in that conflict.

## Results

### **Historical experience of international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts (V.V.Froltsov)**

A comprehensive characterization and systematic assessment of the historical experience of various international mediators in the process of resolving territorial conflicts is of particular interest to both researchers in the field of international relations and practitioners. In the current situation of reformatting the system of international relations, they need to find optimal models and mechanisms for preventing and resolving territorial conflicts, which not only have not disappeared, but have become noticeably aggravated at the beginning of the 21st century.

The traditional mediator in the settlement of such conflicts for centuries was a third side - the state, whose interests were not directly or indirectly affected by the conflict and which the sides to the conflict could equally trust. The choice of such a mediator was always difficult, since the degree of confidence in him of the sides to the conflict could change in the process of negotiations and under the influence of various external factors.

Thus, in order to reach a peace treaty following the results of the first major armed conflict of the 20th century, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, US President T.Roosevelt

was invited as a mediator, as was supposed, he could provide acceptable conditions for both sides. As a result, they did not suit either Russia or Japan, and that created the conditions for a permanent territorial dispute in the Far East<sup>1</sup>. The dispute continues in the 21st century, taking into account the actualization of Japan's claims to the Russian South Kuriles, once again these claims were voiced in March 2022 against the backdrop of the introduction of Western sanctions against Russia<sup>2</sup>.

Intending to create long-term conditions for peace in Europe, in 1919–1921, former participants of the conflict came up with new ways to resolve territorial disputes: the work of special commissions to study the ethnic, confessional and linguistic situation in the disputed regions, including on the basis of ethnographic research. Thus the “Curzon Line” was established. Named after the Head of the British Foreign Office in 1919–1924, Lord J.N. Curzon, the demarcation line took into account the peculiarities of the resettlement of the Belarusian, Ukrainian and Polish population in the territory from Grodno to the Carpathians and was recommended by the Supreme Council of the Entente in December 1919 to draw the eastern border of Poland<sup>3</sup>. As a result of the Polish-Soviet War of 1919–1921 and the Riga Peace Treaty of 1921, it passed much to the east. However, following the results of World War II, the victorious powers returned to the Curzon Line. It was the Line which, in 1945, with minor adjustments, formed the basis of the Polish-Soviet border, and since 1991, the current border of Poland with the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine<sup>4</sup>.

Another instrument of national-territorial delimitation was the holding of local (cantonal) plebiscites, which were designed to determine the desire of the population of certain regions to live as part of a particular state. According to this principle, the current border line between Germany and Denmark was established in 1920, which remained unchanged even after the German Nazi invasion of Denmark in 1940<sup>5</sup>.

During the functioning of the UN as a universal international organization, the mechanism of independent arbitration was quite effective for determining the territorial affiliation of disputed areas, especially between the newly independent states in Asia, Africa and South America. Their borders were established during the colonial period and based on the interests of the European metropolises and, as a rule, did not take into account the ethno-confessional structure of the population.

1 Peace Treaty Between Russia and Japan Concluded in Portsmouth on 1905 August 28 – September 5. Collection of treaties between Russia and other states. 1856–1917. Moscow. 1952:337–341.

2 Statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry on Response Measures to the Decisions of the Government of Japan. MFA of the Russian Federation. Available: [https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/1805541/](https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1805541/). Checked on: 21.03.2022.

3 Note of British Foreign Secretary Curzon dated July 11, 1920 («Curzon Line»). Documents of foreign policy of the USSR: in 24 vols. Moscow. 1959;3:54–55.

4 Conference Decisions. 1945 February 4–12 (Yalta (Crimean) Conference in 1945). The Soviet Union at International Conferences During the Great Patriotic War, 1941–1945. Doc.: in 6 vols. Moscow. 1984;4:247–253.

5 Teil II. Deutschlands Grenzen. Artikel 27. Friedensvertrag von Versailles. Vom 28. 1919, Juni. Available: Documentarchiv.de. <http://www.documentarchiv.de/wr/vv02.html/> Checked on: 03.01.2022.

## **Socio-political version of the Kazakh-Russian border area through the prism of regional media (T.V.Marmontova)**

An analysis of the communicative space plays an important role in solving the problems of preventing and regulating conflicts. It is largely determined by the regional press.

The Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation have strong ties. The legal framework for bilateral cooperation is about 300 different agreements and memorandums.

The research hypothesis was that all social and political processes are reflected in the information field. The regional press makes it possible to evaluate the activity of such interactions and draw conclusions about their depth.

To confirm the hypothesis, a study of the regional press was conducted both of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation.

In particular, the content of regional media in such cities of Kazakhstan as Pavlodar, Petropavlovsk and Kostanay was analyzed. Taking into account close cultural and economic ties between the cities of the border regions, the regional media of the Russian cities of Novosibirsk, Omsk and Chelyabinsk were studied.

A content analysis of timelines between February 24 and March 1, 2022 of 9 media in 6 regions (three each from Kazakhstan and Russia) was carried out. In addition, to determine the features of information flows in the Internet space, a web analysis of the sites of these media was carried out using a number of specialized utilities.

As a result of a comparative analysis of information in the media of Pavlodar and Novosibirsk, the following results were obtained. During this period, 75 notes were published in the regional media of Pavlodar<sup>6</sup>, and only 5 on the international situation. In the regional media of Novosibirsk<sup>7</sup>, 542 notes were published, on the international situation - 49 notes.

Assessing the content of the latter, we note that on the part of Kazakhstan, topics related to outgoing migration, the number of those who left the region, dominated.

The Novosibirsk media focused on the main event, the conflict in Ukraine and the consequences for the Russian Federation related to this: sanctions, restrictions, and so on.

As a result of a comparative analysis of information in the media of Kostanay and Chelyabinsk, the following results were obtained. During the specified period, 163 notes were published in the regional media of Kostanay<sup>8</sup>, and 16 of them were on the international situation. In the regional media of Chelyabinsk<sup>9</sup>, 378 notes were published, on the subject of the international situation – 53 notes.

The analysis of the content made it possible to determine the informational dominants, the reaction to the situation in Ukraine, to assess the economic effects of

6 Pavlodar online. Available: <https://pavon.kz/>; Review of the week. Available: <https://obozrenie.kz/>; Our life. Available: <https://lifepvl.kz>.

7 Taiga.info. Available: <https://tayga.info/>; Novosibirsk-online. Available: <https://ngs.ru/>; VN.ru - Novosibirsk region all news. Available: <https://vn.ru/>.

8 Kostanay News. Available: <https://kstnews.kz/news>; Our Newspaper. Available: <https://www.ng.kz/>; Kostanay-agro. Available: <https://qagro.kz>.

9 74.ru, 101.ru, Portal Chelyabinsk Today. Available: <https://cheltoday.ru>

sanctions (both direct, on Russia, and indirect, on Kazakhstan), as well as to identify private topics (sports, migration, etc.).

As a result of a comparative analysis of information in the media of Petropavlovsk and Omsk, the following results were obtained. In the regional media of Petropavlovsk<sup>10</sup>, 171 notes were published during this period, and 40 of them were on the international situation. In the regional media of Omsk<sup>11</sup>, 443 notes were published, on the international situation – 67 notes.

An analysis of the content of timelines indicates the presence of topics related to military operations in Ukraine, but it is more typical for the Russian press. The media of Kazakhstan appeal not only to the main, but also to local newsbreaks.

As for the content, it is worth talking about its fragmentary, non-systemic nature. Notes are episodic and are associated with some specific events. The only assessment material was found: in one of the media in Chelyabinsk there was information about high-quality and inexpensive goods from Kazakhstan.

Web analytics of sites showed that there is no news information from Kazakhstan as a trigger. This is evidenced by the analysis of incoming and outgoing traffic, as well as the study of the geography of visits to sites. When analyzing the geography of visits to media sites from Kazakhstan, one can see that traffic from Russia ranks second or third.

## Discussion

As recommendations, we can propose to intensify work with regional media that have a state information order to inform about the situation in the region. Moreover, the regions of the Russian Federation, in the face of growing sanctions pressure and the importance of Kazakhstan as a valuable partner, need to constantly inform their citizens about what exactly can be obtained in a neighboring country when the resources of their own region are limited. The lack of quality information about the neighboring country, in fact, creates a perfect backdrop for the flow of «toxic» statements from media people in the center of the country – they simply do know nothing about Kazakhstan.

### **Experience in the settlement of territorial conflicts in the post-Soviet period (on the example of the Central Asian region)** (A.G.Bolshakov)

The region of Central Asia is considered by researchers in different ways. Some scholars deny it subjectivity; others expand it to include even South Asia (Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, part of India, part of China, and part of the Russian Federation).

<sup>10</sup> Petropavlovsk News. Available: <https://pkzsk.info>, Available: <https://www.7152.kz>, My city. Available: <https://mygorod.kz/>.

<sup>11</sup> Super Omsk. Available: <https://superomsk.ru/>; City 55 Available: <https://gorod55.ru/>; New Omsk. Available: <https://newsomsk.ru/>.

In modern Russia, the region is considered to include five former Soviet republics, that variant replaced the Soviet version, which includes 4 Soviet republics: Kazakhstan and Central Asia. According to that understanding of the region, we evaluate experience of regulating territorial conflicts.

In Soviet times, the borders in Central Asia were drawn arbitrarily, according to the planned Soviet economy. But in a single state, the republics did not have territorial problems [3]. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the situation changed. For the population of border regions and enclaves, their native places turned into a neighboring independent country, and their relatives turned out to be citizens of other sovereign states. Currently, there are no enclaves and exclaves in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan has no enclaves, but has two exclaves in Uzbekistan, no enclaves in Tajikistan, but has two exclaves in Kyrgyzstan and one in Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan has four Uzbek and two Tajik enclaves, and Uzbekistan has one Uzbek enclave, one Kyrgyz enclave, and two Kazakh enclaves. True, in one of them there is simply no population.

Enclaves exist quite harmoniously on the territory of many countries, but the main problem of enclaves in Central Asia is hundreds of kilometers of uncoordinated borders [4:45–46]. The process of negotiations and the first agreements on the demarcation of borders in the region began in the late 90s of the XX century. Kazakhstan is a leader in establishing borders, but the process of negotiations on the delimitation of borders with Turkmenistan took 17 years, the Kazakhs negotiated with Kyrgyzstan for 20 years, and with Uzbekistan the process of negotiations is close to the end, but not yet completed.

The most difficult situation is in the Ferghana Valley, where Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan border on each other. The population density here is high; the standard of living is low. The population is engaged in agriculture and cattle breeding. Water and land resources are limited. This situation in itself increases the possibility of conflicts. Youth unemployment radicalizes society [3:75–90]. Organized crime and drug trafficking play an important role in this area. Therefore, due to the interweaving of many contradictions, it is difficult to solve the territorial problems of the Ferghana Valley [3:148–150].

Uzbekistan borders on all the countries of Central Asia, its former leadership pursued a tough policy in resolving border disputes. It is widely known that, fearing the penetration of Islamic extremists into the country, Uzbekistan in 2000 mined the border with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Since the border in many places remained conditional, civilians were blown up by mines.

With Sh.Mirziyoyev coming to power in Uzbekistan, improving relations with the closest neighbors became important. Discussion of border issues resumed. States are ready to compromise. For example, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan resumed negotiations on uncoordinated sections of the border – this issue has not been discussed since 2000. The total length of the border between the countries is 1650 km. The final documents are expected to be signed in the near future.

Negotiations between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on border demarcation began in 2003 and intensified in 2017. The parties have almost completed the process of demarcation of the border, which is about 2,300 kilometers long, and are preparing the final documents. The states do not have disputed border areas.



Of the 1,300 km of the Uzbek-Tajik border, 20% were disputed. Sh.Mirziyoyev and E.Rahmon signed an agreement on separate sections of the border in March 2018. Since then, the joint border demarcation commission has met regularly.

Positive changes are also taking place between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. In September 2019, the two states exchanged equal parts of territory for the first time. The agreed border lines are already 92%.

But the situation on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is still unstable. The line of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border is about 980 km, of which only 60% are delimited and demarcated. In July 2019, the Presidents of the two countries, S.Jeenbekov and E.Rahmon, met in the border area between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to discuss border issues. Then high hopes were pinned on the meeting of the leaders, but two months later there was another clash at the border.

In 2020, more than a dozen violent conflicts took place between the citizens of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan over disputed territories. As a result of the clashes, soldiers and residents of the border areas were killed and injured.

The bloodiest conflict in the region over the past 20 years was one in late April – early May 2021 near the borders of the two countries. Not only by local semi-partisan detachments, but also by the military of the two states took part in it, mortars, aircraft and heavy equipment were used, as a result, dozens of people were killed and hundreds were injured. About a dozen villages were also affected, houses and other objects burned down, more than 50 thousand people were evacuated from the conflict zone. But even after the settlement, small incidents at the border continue.

The conflict began in the area of the water distribution point «Golovnaya», which in Kyrgyzstan is considered their territory, and in Tajikistan - theirs. According to the Kyrgyz authorities, Tajik officials have begun installing video cameras on a pole near a water distribution point (replenishing the Tortkul reservoir) in the Batken region. This caused discontent among the locals and led to another incident. At first, the sides threw stones at each other, but then the border units of the two countries joined the conflict. In Tajikistan, they say that, in accordance with the maps of 1924–1927 and 1989, “Golovnaya” “entirely belongs to the Republic of Tajikistan.” According to the Kyrgyz side, the water distribution hub “Golovnaya” is a «strategic facility and is located on the territory of Kyrgyzstan.»

Most of the violent clashes along the Kyrgyz-Tajik border are due to disputes over infrastructure, land and water resources, and construction on disputed sites. Due to conflicts in these areas, border guards often block checkpoints, which leads to the fact that access to the territory of neighboring countries is blocked, including for citizens of these countries living in enclaves.

The armed border conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in 2021 brought mutual hostility from the previous local level to a national scale in both countries. However, unlike other global territorial conflicts such as in Karabakh, Tibet or Cyprus, Central Asian leaders publicly espouse peaceful rhetoric and call for good neighborly relations, and the conflict is called «the tragedy of two kindred peoples.» In the current situation, it is necessary to continue negotiations on borders, although it is becoming more difficult to agree on disputable situations, the most controversial points have remained unresolved.



## **Approaches to the resolution of territorial disputes in the Caucasus: legal, forceful, contractual (A.V. Ataev)**

In international practice, an international territorial dispute is defined as a dispute between states, and in an intrastate territorial dispute, the parties to the conflict protest the existing administrative-territorial principle of dividing the internal territory.

Territorial disputes in the Caucasus exist as an “objectively existing clash of interests” and proceed at the international and domestic levels. By 2022, territorial disputes in the Caucasus have acquired the status of already “crystallized and formulated disagreements.” This is facilitated by the fact that states, heads of states, heads of subjects, public institutions, large public organizations of the Caucasian states and republics are the subjects of the territorial dispute.

It should be emphasized that the classification of territorial disputes remains debatable. There are three main ways to resolve conflicts: regulatory, negotiation and force.

The normative-legal approach involves the appeal of the parties to the conflict to an international court or other body. In administrative-territorial disputes between the subjects of Russia, there are facts of appeals to the Sharia court. For example, during the dispute between Chechnya and Ingushetia, the Head of the Chechen Parliament M. Daudov appealed to the Sharia court and thus initiated consideration of the territorial dispute between Chechnya and Ingushetia. This territorial dispute began in the autumn of 2018, when an agreement on the regulation of the territorial dispute was signed by the Heads of Chechnya and Ingushetia, Ramzan Kadyrov and Yunus-Bek Yevkurov.

The controversy has reached its climax after protests organized by social activists and some non-profit organizations.

With this approach, the independent actions of the sides to resolve the conflict are limited, they are included in the framework of the established rules. As a result, the dissatisfaction of at least one of the sides with the decision taken threatens to result in a new conflict in the future.

The positive part of this approach is the consent of both sides to resolve the conflict by going to court. These are not unilateral, but joint actions of the sides that seek to resolve the conflict situation. The problem is that Sharia court decisions, as a rule, do not change the specific of the relationship between the sides. Often they remain in conflict, which increases the likelihood of a new conflict; court decisions are limited, not extending to the secular part of society. The Sharia court does not have the right to resolve conflicts, and acts only when all the conflicting sides turn to it.

The forceful approach presupposes a violent resolution of the conflict: it can be the actions of international peacekeeping forces or forceful intervention or the presence of one or more states.

Let us give a number of examples concerning the Transcaucasian states. Thus, the basis for the peacekeeping activities of the Russian Federation in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict are the Sochi Agreement of 1992, as well as the decisions of the Joint Control Commission (JCC), created in accordance with the said Agreement. In South Ossetia, Russian

troops, along with the Georgian and Ossetian military, became part of the Joint Peacekeeping Forces (JPKF) in the conflict zone. The JPKF included three peacekeeping battalions. Each side – Georgian, Russian and Ossetian – has the right to deploy a peacekeeping battalion of no more than 500 military personnel in the conflict zone. In addition, they can also deploy an additional 300 troops with the permission of the JCC.

It is known that the main goal of peacekeeping operations is to stabilize the situation in the conflict area, create favorable conditions for its resolution through negotiations, and establish and maintain peace. Peacekeeping actions are carried out with the consent of all sides of the conflict, but cannot carry out coercive measures. Positive aspects of the forceful approach: peacekeeping forces separate the conflicting sides, prevent armed clashes between them, create and patrol areas of separation, monitor the cessation of armed clashes, and the development of the situation between the adversaries.

Forceful actions are an ineffective way to resolve the conflict; it only creates the basis for future interaction, now extinguishes the violence between them, but does not resolve the conflict on its merits. The conflict goes into a latent state and persists until the sides resolve the problem by other means. In the situation of the use of force, there is not a resolution of the conflict, but its regulation.

But in the Caucasus there is a precedent for a successful Russian peacekeeping operation under a UN mandate. We are talking about the actions in Abkhazia. On May 14, 1994, after several rounds of complex negotiations led by the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, the opposing sides in the Georgian-Abkhaz armed conflict of 1992–1993 signed the Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces in Moscow. The sides agreed to deploy the Collective Peacekeeping Forces (CPF) of the CIS to monitor compliance with the Agreement. Under the control of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces, deployed in June 1994 and fully manned by Russian military personnel, there was a security zone 24 km wide along the line of contact between Georgian and Abkhaz forces.

As of August 1, 2008, the KSPM group consisted of 1,561 people (including 199 officers). It was equipped with 135 armored vehicles, 267 vehicles, 4 helicopters (Mi-8, Mi-24). The KSPM was armed with 30 mortars and 2943 small arms.

The third and main way to resolve conflicts in the second half of the twentieth century was negotiations. Their significance is evidenced by the fact that the number of conflicts that ended thanks to negotiations has increased. The scope of negotiations has also expanded, more people are involved in them, and there are not only participants in the negotiations themselves but experts.

The main difference between negotiations is that the decision is developed jointly by all participants in the negotiations. Negotiation is primarily a process of joint decision-making. The negative feature of the negotiations is that they can last for a very long time, the conflicting parties, not bound by any obligations, can interrupt or completely stop them.

The main difference between negotiations and other ways of resolving conflicts is that the solution is developed jointly by all the participants. Negotiation is a process of joint decision-making. The negative feature of the negotiations is that they can last for a long time, the conflicting sides, not bound by any obligations, can interrupt or completely stop them.

## Conclusions

In the context of a sharp aggravation of international tension against the backdrop of the formation of a new architecture of international relations, modern models and tools of international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts are becoming especially in demand. Such influential states as China, India, Brazil, Indonesia, and South Africa can play an important role. They consistently refrain from interfering in any interstate conflicts and are able to become effective mediators in their resolution. Significant potential has new regional organizations, including the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, whose mediation efforts can be combined with the activities of both UN institutions and other regional organizations.

The lack of media coverage of the life of a neighboring state is a worrying trend, especially in the face of open conflict. This leaves possibilities for fakes and manipulation, as it is evident today in the rise of toxicity on social media.

In general, the situation can be assessed as potentially problematic. Despite the great length of their border, the Russians do not have official, verified regular information about neighboring Kazakhstan. Of course, there are enough information channels today: television, social networks, print media, but at the same time, the regional press can and should serve as the main means of implementing the information policy of the region.

Thus, territorial conflicts (as opposed to ethnic and religious ones) in Central Asia are fundamentally amenable to political settlement. Relations at this stage between the states can be called mostly good-neighborly, so the existing contradictions and destructive conflicts can be resolved in the coming years. There is no ethnic or religious hatred between the peoples of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and this is a guarantee that territorial conflicts in this region will end in the next decade.

The main method for resolving territorial conflicts is lengthy (for many years) bilateral negotiations followed by borders delimitation and demarcation. However, the importance of mediation by Russia and Uzbekistan may soon increase [1:145–164]. Their proposals may be related, for example, to the creation of a common economic zone or to the interaction of all three countries in the EAEU (currently only Kyrgyzstan is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, Uzbekistan is an observer, and Tajikistan has not yet joined this international organization – note by A.B.).

Common economic zones and open borders are no less effective means of overcoming conflicts between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Attempts to seek forceful solutions to problems are futile, and diplomacy, compromises, constant dialogue and negotiations are gradually becoming the leading methods in resolving territorial conflicts in Central Asia.

An analysis of the ways to resolve the conflict allows us to say that negotiations occupy a dominant position in resolving conflicts. But negotiations by themselves will not be effective; their relationship with other ways of resolving the conflict is necessary. When force is used, for example, negotiations are secondary and determine the composition of the peacekeeping forces, their mandate, size, time and place of introduction, location, and so on. At the same time, the use of force stops violence between opponents, stimulates

cooperation between them, establishes contacts, and start of a new round of the negotiation process. With a legal approach, the sides of the conflict are negotiating on the transfer of the case for consideration to mediation structures, on post-conflict interaction. In addition, negotiated decisions must also be legally enforceable.

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The authors contributed equally to this article.

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

## Article info

Submitted: Mart 25, 2022. Approved after peer reviewing: April 11, 2022. Accepted for publication: April 27, 2022. Published: 27.06.2022.

The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

## Peer review info

«Russia & World: Scientific Dialogue» thanks the anonymous reviewer(s) for their contribution to the peer review of this work.