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The Role of Natural Resources in International Conflicts: The Cases of Oil, Water and Gas

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Department of Politics and International Relations of the University of Johannesburg

By

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In Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICS

January 2019

Johannesburg, South Africa

Prof. Suzanne Graham
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the Master of Arts in Politics to the University of Johannesburg, apart from the help recognised, is my own work and has not been formally submitted to another university for a degree.

Yanoulla Theodosiou

January 2019
Natural resources are integral to societies, not only for their continued existence and growth, but also for income and influence globally. It is for this reason that poorly managed natural resources such as land, water, timber, minerals, metals and oil cause tension within and between countries. Natural resources can either exacerbate existing tensions or be the cause for new tensions as populations grow, environments are destroyed and competition for these resources intensifies. It is not surprising then that experts and governments alike expect natural resources to be significant drivers in an increasing number of disputes that would have domestic, regional and international consequences for peace and security.

The primary purpose of this dissertation was to analyse the role of natural resources – oil, water and gas – in related international conflicts. In the case of oil, the two conflicts in the South and East China Seas were examined as a whole, and included in these two conflicts were China and Japan in the East China Sea conflict and China, Vietnam, Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, and Taiwan in the South China Sea. In the case of water, the international conflict between Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo regarding the Nile River was examined. In the case of gas, the international conflict between the Republic of Cyprus, Turkey, the Occupied North/The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (only recognised by Turkey), along with Israel, Lebanon and Egypt was examined.

The key findings of the study are that although these examined conflicts take place not only in different regions but also involve different natural resources, the similarities in all case studies are striking. Should tensions keep rising at the current rate, with the international community having little calming effect, any of the three conflicts has the potential to spark international wars (when conflict becomes weaponised and violent).
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1.) My supervisor - Professor Suzy Graham, without whom this thesis would never have been completed. Thank you for constantly pushing me to complete this endeavour and for never giving up on me!

2.) My grandmother - even though you passed away before I completed this, I know you are immensely proud of me. This one is for you.

3.) My parents - the constant support and motivation you gave me enabled me to finish and I am so grateful to you for this. You will always be my pillars of strength.

4.) My uncle - for constantly reminding me I should be studying instead of drinking tea!
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<tr>
<td>ADIZ</td>
<td>Air Defence Identification Zone</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFD</td>
<td>French Development Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIIB</td>
<td>Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API</td>
<td>American Petroleum Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of South East Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCM</td>
<td>Billion Cubic Metres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>British Petroleum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF</td>
<td>Cubic feet</td>
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<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Cubic metres</td>
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<tr>
<td>COP21</td>
<td>Conference of Parties (United Nations Climate Change Conference 2015)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNOOC</td>
<td>China National Offshore Oil Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNPC</td>
<td>China National Petroleum Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEZ</td>
<td>Exclusive Economic Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOKA</td>
<td>National Organisation for Cypriot Fighters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<td>GCA</td>
<td>Greek Cypriot Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>GERD</td>
<td>Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam</td>
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<td>ICCON</td>
<td>International Consortium for Cooperation on the Nile</td>
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<td>ICJ</td>
<td>International Court of Justice</td>
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<td>IR</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
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KM³ Kilometres cubed
LNG Liquefied Natural Gas
MENA Middle East and North Africa region
MDG Millennium Development Goals
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NBI Nile Basin Initiative
NBSF Nile Basin Sustainability Framework
NELSAP Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme
PLA People’s Liberation Army
PRC People’s Republic of China
RoC Republic of Cyprus
ROC Republic of China
SDG Sustainable Development Goals
SINOPEC China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation
TCF Trillion cubic feet
TRNC Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
UK United Kingdom
UN United Nations
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNEP United Nations Environmental Programme
UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFICYP United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNSG</td>
<td>United Nations Secretary-General</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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<td>WWII</td>
<td>World War II</td>
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CHAPTER 1: MOTIVATION, METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

1.1. Introduction

For many people living in developed and developing nations, accessing natural resources such as clean water, energy and petroleum is as easy as turning on the tap, switching on a light or filling up their vehicles with petrol. Yet this is not the reality for many people all over the world. For example, the United Nations (UN) has estimated that around 842 000 people die each year from diseases related to undrinkable water (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2017). Natural resources are integral to societies, not only for their continued existence and growth, but also for income and influence globally. It is for this reason that poorly managed natural resources such as land, water, metals and oil (amongst others) cause tension within and amongst countries. Natural resources can either exacerbate existing tensions or be the cause for new tensions as populations grow, environments are destroyed and competition for these resources intensifies. It is not surprising then that experts and governments alike expect natural resources to be significant drivers in an increasing number of disputes that would have domestic, regional and international consequences for peace and security (UNEP, 2015: 7).

Briefly, natural resources are defined as resources that naturally occur in nature and are indispensable or valuable to human beings. Natural resources can be either renewable; such as water, forests and croplands (if used cautiously) or non-renewable; such as oil. Non-renewable resources are particularly prone to cause conflict due to their finite quantity (United States Institute of Peace, 2007).

Conflict does not necessarily equate to war, although many tend to use the terms interchangeably. As noted by Kegley and Blanton (2014: 197), armed conflict between sovereign nations or states involves the use of military might and strategy to defeat an opponent on the field or until the opponent “sues for peace in the face of inevitable destruction and greater loss of human life”. Johan Vincent Galtung, the founder of the peace and conflict studies discipline, is well known for contending that conflict is about contradictory goals. For this study, conflict is defined as a perceived incompatibility over material or symbolic resources. It is a struggle (physical, verbal
or emotional) between individuals or groups over value, status, power and scarce resources (McCandless and Karbo, 2011: 28).

The conflicts in question in this study are ‘latent conflicts’ as they have not turned violent, but this is both possible and expected (Allwood, 1993: 2; Pia and Diez, 2007: 2). The three natural resource conflicts in this study are between: 1) China and its neighbours, involving oil; 2) Egypt and its neighbours, involving water and 3) Cyprus and Turkey, involving gas. In accordance with the above definition of conflict, these latent conflicts are ongoing, involve different natural resources, involve a variety of nations and actors and are occurring in different regions.

An examination of intrastate conflicts (civil wars) over the past 60 years demonstrates that at least 40% were related to natural resources. Around 18 violent conflicts since 1990 were related to the misuse of natural resources. Some of the more recent intrastate conflicts that were fuelled by natural resources were those in: Angola from 1975 - 2002 (oil and diamonds); Cambodia, from 1978 -1997 (timber and gems) and the Sudan, from 1983 - 2005 (oil) (Ross, 2003: 29). Two theories are proposed by scholars to explain the role of natural resources in conflict. The first theory refers to scarcity by which some scholars (Gleditsch and Urdal, 2002) believe that conflicts occur due to rapid population growth, unequal access to resources, inequality, resource depletion and environmental degradation. The second refers to the theory of abundance (de Soysa, 2002; Le Billon, 2008) and this suggests that resource-rich nations are vulnerable to the ‘resource curse’. The ‘resource curse’ is defined as corruption and economic mismanagement of natural resources, which oftentimes encourages the rise of rebel groups and groups that oppose the incumbent government due to the resources being easily accessible (United States Institute of Peace, 2007: 9).

A great deal of research is currently addressing intrastate conflicts involving natural resources in terms of conflict prevention (measures to keep disputes from escalating into significant violence); conflict management (measures aimed at limiting and containing the conflicts by addressing the root causes), and conflict resolution
(measures employed to settle disputes through open processes) (United States Institute of Peace, 2007: 14). However, conflicts involving natural resources are not wholly intrastate. Interstate conflicts (conflict between two or more nations) involving natural resources are not a new phenomenon. Although, scholars agree that an increase in international economic interdependence, the explosion of democracy (Hegre, 2014: 160), the increase in international institutions and increasing levels of education have all contributed to the decline of interstate wars (Human Security Report, 2013: 33).

While intrastate conflicts involving natural resources are complex as they involve political, social, economic and ecological factors, interstate conflicts involving natural resources often use natural resources as a smokescreen to hide far more sinister agendas. For reasons outlined below, this study will limit itself to the conflicts involving natural resources between China and its neighbours (oil), Egypt and its neighbours (water) and Cyprus and Turkey (gas). If the consensus amongst scholars holds that interstate conflicts are on the decline (Human Security Report, 2013: 33), then it is prudent to examine why these three interstate conflicts are emerging. To successfully examine this question, concepts such as ‘nationalism’ (Nye, 2007: 185 - 187), ‘geopolitics’ (Condelescu, 2009: 10), ‘resource abundance and scarcity’, ‘the security dilemma’ (Glaser, 2011: 171) and ‘balance of power’ (Morgenthau, 1985: 237) need to be examined.

1.2. Purpose of the study
The aim of the study is to examine the role of natural resources in conflicts by using three different cases involving oil, water and gas. This will be achieved by creating a framework using six key areas (to be elaborated upon in Chapter 2). These areas have been derived from multiple sources in the literature and combining them in a holistic framework will guide the analysis of conflicts driven by natural resources:

1. The natural resource/s at stake
2. The historical build up to these conflicts;
3. The parties involved in the conflicts;
4. Other possible contributing factors to the conflicts (i.e. are the conflicts wholly caused by the natural resources or are there other factors to be considered?);  
5. Obstacles to resolving the conflicts, and  
6. The role of the natural resource/s in the conflict.

1.3. Conceptualisation of key terms
As outlined above, for the purpose of this study, conflict is defined as a perceived incompatibility over material or symbolic resources. It is a struggle (physical, verbal or emotional) between individuals or groups over value, status, power and scarce resources (McCandless and Karbo, 2011: 28).

1.3.1. Definition of natural resources  
As outlined above, natural resources are defined as resources that naturally occur in nature and are indispensable or valuable to human beings. Natural resources can either be renewable; such as water, forests and croplands (if used cautiously) or non-renewable; such as oil. Non-renewable resources are particularly prone to cause conflict due to their finite nature (United States Institute of Peace, 2007).

1.3.2. Classification of natural resources  
For the purposes of this dissertation, natural resources are classified according to their origin, renewability, stage of development and occurrence. Figure 1.1 in this chapter provides a visual snapshot of this classification.

I. Based on origin:  
Biotic resources are classified as biological beings. This type of resource includes plants, animals and insects. Biotic resources provide a large variety of necessary and useful products. If the environmental conditions are favourable, biotic resources have the capacity to reproduce and are renewable. However, many species are in danger of extinction due to human activities (Guo, 2018: 39). Abiotic resources are derived from the physical or non-physical environment. Abiotic resources are not renewable and include land, water, air, soil and minerals. Abiotic resources are in high demand due to their uses in the development of industries. Their state of
formation takes a long time and as such they run the risk of being exhausted (Guo, 2018: 39).

II. Based on renewability:
Exhaustible or non-renewable resources are certain minerals and fossil fuels that cannot be replaced. As the world’s population increases, there is a greater need for development of industries, and it is for this reason that many non-renewable resources are facing depletion (Kumar, 2014: 6; Guo, 2018: 39). Inexhaustible resources are resources that can be replenished quickly, not only by nature but also through human efforts as well. Some examples of inexhaustible resources include solar energy, water, plants and wildlife (Kumar, 2014: 6; Guo, 2018: 39).

III. Based on the stage of development:
Potential resources are resources that have been identified but have not yet been utilised. For example, Africa has the potential to be a major source of hydroelectricity due to the number of waterfalls, height of the waterfalls and volume of water flowing down the waterfalls. Developing countries have many potential resources but due to a lack of funds or investment, these countries are unable to tap into the potential resources (Kumar, 2014: 7). Actual resources are resources that have been surveyed in relation to quality and quantity. An example of an actual resource is the oil reserves of Saudi Arabia. Reserve resources are parts of the actual resource that can be developed profitably at a later stage (Guo, 2018: 40). Stock resources are resources that have been identified but are not utilised due to a lack of technology. An example of a stock resource is hydrogen (Kumar, 2014: 7).

IV. Based on occurrence:
Ubiquitous resources are resources that are available everywhere. These types of resources include sunlight and air (Kumar 2014: 8). Local resources are considered common but are not found ubiquitously. Examples of local resources include agricultural land, fertile soil and water. Rare resources are only found in a few places and are generally considered to be of great economic value. Rare resources include petroleum and coal. Unique resources are resources that are only found in one or
two places on earth. Examples of such resources include Cryolite (which is only found in Greenland) (House and House, 2010: 375), Tanzanite (almost exclusively found in the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania) and Benitoite (found in California and Japan) (Mining Global, 2015).

Figure 1.1: Classification of natural resources

Source: author’s compilation and drawn from information supplied by Kumar (2014: 5-8).

1.3.3. Importance of natural resources
The significance of natural resources can be divided into three key areas. First, natural resources are vital as they are the raw materials used in the production processes. Most of the products humans use every day originate from natural resources, including the fuel needed not only for energy but also for transport. As a result, they form a key part of humankind’s social and economic systems. Second, natural resources maintain what is called ‘ecosystem services’. This is vital to the continuation of life on earth as this relates to the provision of freshwater by the cycle of water, clean oxygen in the air and an array of other crucial functions (Logan City Council, 2017). The third and most complex area regarding the significance of
natural resources is economic growth. The economic significance of natural resources to a state cannot be overemphasised. If utilised fairly and successfully, natural resources can contribute towards fiscal revenue, income and the alleviation of poverty. The utilisation of natural resources can also lead to employment and job creation (OECD, 2011).

1.4. Literature review
The literature review is separated into two parts. The first part discusses the literature available regarding the link between natural resources and conflict and the second part examines literature regarding the three above-mentioned case studies.

Key sources used for this study in terms of natural resources and conflicts are: the United Nations Environmental Programme (2015); the United States Institute of Peace (2007); Le Billon (2001, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010); Allwood (1993); Ayling and Kelly (1997); Brunnschweiler and Bulte (2009); Dannreuther (2010); de Soysa (2002); Doucey (2011); Garrett and Piccinni (2012); Gleditsch and Urdal (2002); Humphreys (2005); Klare (2001); Maphosa (2000); Neumayer (2000) and Nie (2003). These scholarly contributions offer information regarding natural resources, conflict and conflict resolution.

The literature available for China and the other Asian nations involved is not holistic and deals with the various key areas mentioned independently. In terms of the conflict between China and other Asian nations, the following literature - pertaining to: the history behind the conflict (Chubb, 2014; Guan, 2000; Kim, 2015); the parties involved in the conflicts (Jaehyon, 2016; Jianjun, 2009; Storey, 2013; Rowan, 2005; Thayer, 2011); the natural resources at stake (Ba, 2011; Charney, 1995; Tonnesson, 2002); the role of the natural resources in the conflicts (Forsyth, 2015); other contributing factors to the conflict (Cronin, 2013; Lee, 2013; Storey, 1999); obstacles to resolving the conflicts (Scott, 2012; Simon, 2012); and parties involved with ending the conflicts (Fravel, 2012; Glaser, 2012; Shephard, 1995; Song and Tonnesson, 2013) - was examined.
The second conflict examined is that of Egypt and other African nations. The six key areas examined in this conflict are as follows: the history behind the conflict (Howe, 2013; Kalpakian, 2004; Wegerich and Warner, 2010); the parties involved in the conflicts (Swain, 1997; Wolf, 1995); the natural resources at stake (Madani, Kheinheimer, Elimam and Connell-Buc, 2011); the role of the natural resources in the conflicts (Beyene, 2004; Jacobs, 2012; Kendie, 1999); other contributing factors to the conflicts (Adar, 2007); obstacles to resolving the conflicts (Swain, 2008); and parties involved with ending the conflicts (Deng, 2007; El-Fadel, El-Sayegh, El-Fadl, and Khorbotly, 2002; Kameri-Mbote, 2007).

Although there is a great deal of literature available regarding the original Cyprus-Turkey conflict, the natural gas conflict between the two states is relatively new and there are currently no academic sources providing a holistic analysis of the conflict. As mentioned above, six key areas are examined in order to analyse and examine the conflict: the history behind the conflict (Lindley, 2007; Mallinson, 2011); the parties involved in the conflict (Apostolides, 2014; Pope, 2014); the natural resource/s at stake (Hemingway and Hemingway, 2004) and the role of the natural resource/s in the conflict (Rolandsen, 2012); other contributing factors to the conflicts (Gürel, Mullen and Tzimitras, 2013) and obstacles to resolving the conflicts (Eminel, 2016).

A survey of the literature reveals the absence of a framework in which to adequately examine the role of natural resources in the above-mentioned conflicts. The framework identified under section 1.2 in this chapter will be applied to the chosen case studies.

1.5. Research methodology
Methodologically, this is a qualitative study and it will use a case study approach to analyse the role of natural resources in international conflicts. The aims of qualitative research are to examine areas where partial or no preceding data exists. The merits of the qualitative method include:
Obtaining a more realistic feel of the world that cannot be experienced in the numerical data and statistical analysis used in quantitative research; flexible ways to perform data collection, subsequent analysis, and interpretation of collected information (Matveev, 2002: 2).

The case study approach is a research technique that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin, 1984: 23). The case study method has been accused of not only lacking rigour but also allowing “equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions” (Yin, 1984: 21). Nevertheless, one of the key advantages of using the case study approach is that it provides comprehensive qualitative accounts which not only assist in examining the information in the actual environment but also to explain the intricacies of actual scenarios (Yin, 1984: 23).

The cases studies in this dissertation are: China and its neighbours over oil discovered in the South and East China Sea; Egypt and its neighbours’ conflict over water and Cyprus and Turkey’s conflict over gas.

Six key areas are utilised to create a framework that will be used to examine the specific case studies and the role of the natural resources in these international conflicts.

The information gathered for the study has been taken from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include speeches and statements. Secondary sources include journals, academic contributions and online articles. As most of the reports and documents were generated from international organisations, the majority of the information for the study was gathered by referring to these secondary sources. Sources utilised for the framework were: reports (for example, Barfi, 2018; Black, 2018; Chavez, 2018; Colonna, 2018; De Waal, 2018; Geropoulos, 2018; Harris, 2018; International Gas Union, 2018; Weinberger, 2015); journal articles (for example, Eminel, 2016; Gebregziabher, 2018; Gebrehiwot and Gebregziabher, 2018; Hafeez, 2015; Jaehyon, 2016; Kim, 2015; Yamaguchi, 2016); working papers
(for example, European Commission, 2018; Forsyth, 2015); and books (for example, Guo, 2018; Nye and Welch, 2016).

1.6. Organisation of the study
The study is divided into six chapters. The current chapter provides a general introduction to the study, the motivation for the study and its methodology and structure. The chapter also features the literature review as well as the analytical framework. Chapter 2 examines natural resources and international conflicts. It specifically provides a detailed examination of natural resources in terms of: historical and past conflicts fought over natural resources; the two theories of abundance and scarcity; the various types of natural resources; the causes of conflicts involving natural resources; as well as how some of these conflicts have been resolved.

Chapters 3 - 5 discuss the conflict between China and its neighbours over oil; Egypt and its neighbours over water and Cyprus and Turkey regarding gas. Each chapter will utilise the identified framework to analyse the role of natural resources in relation to its international conflict.

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the study by recording the main findings and suggesting areas of future study.
CHAPTER 2: ANALYTICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction
Chapter 1 introduced the purpose and motivation for the study and indicated the three cases to be examined in this dissertation. It also defined and briefly discussed the concept of ‘natural resources’. This chapter determines the parameters of the study in terms of how the three selected conflicts, and the role of their respective natural resource, will be analysed in later chapters. The first section will define conflict analysis and examine the importance of this type of analysis; as well as delineate guiding principles, outline the main elements and explain the concepts used in effectively analysing a conflict. Three tools commonly used in conflict analysis are also investigated. The next section of the chapter discusses the six key areas that will be used in this dissertation for the analysis of international natural resource conflicts. Key questions within each of the six key areas will be used as guidelines in each of the case studies.

2.2. Conflict analysis
Conflict analysis is the examination of the sources, actors and dynamics of conflict. It aims to clarify and prioritise the scope of issues as well as identify the impact that the conflict may have on a national, regional and global scale. It also aids in the identification of the original causes of the conflict and it determines the motives and incentives of the main actors involved by examining their interests, positions and means of power and influence. Conflict analysis also clarifies the links between the political, social and economic context in a conflict. Conflict analysis is an integral component of monitoring, evaluating and understanding conflicts (CDA Collaborative, 2015: 9 - 10). Academics, peace practitioners and various other actors engage in conflict analysis as a means to not only understand conflicts but also to proceed with an effective peacebuilding programme. However, the multifaceted nature of many, if not all conflicts, results in various methods of conflict analysis being designed. Many approaches to conflict analysis have emerged, both on an informal and formal level. While some models place emphasis on the actors involved in the conflicts, other models emphasise the issues surrounding the conflict. Other
approaches develop alternative scenarios to how the conflict may develop as a means by which to establish peacebuilding programmes (CDA Collaborative, 2015: 9-10). At present, there is no conflict analysis model specifically aimed at an international natural-resource-based conflict. It is for this reason that it is necessary to design a conflict analysis model or framework for the purposes of this study.

2.2.1. Guiding principles of conflict analysis
The first guiding principle of conflict analysis is that it must be founded on a wide assortment of views regarding the sources and causes of the conflict as conflicts occur due to perceptions and significances that people associate with events, institutions and policies.

The second principle aims to aid stakeholders to alter their heavily emotionally-based perspectives. One of the main issues surrounding conflicts is the inability to balance reason and emotions. The third principle of conflict analysis entails examining a broader development context in terms of social, economic and political issues and not only natural resource issues. Finally, being selective, in terms of the information being used, is crucial as not all information would be relevant to the conflict and it may not be factual (CDA Collaborative, 2015: 11).

2.2.2. Strategic conflict analysis
Strategic conflict analysis is mapped to understand the dynamics, causes and forces promoting conflict. Three areas are examined within the first element: structural analysis; actor analysis and conflict dynamics analysis. Structural analysis entails the examination of sources of tension and the root causes of the conflict (SIDA, 2006: 9-12). For example, the causes of conflict are examined in terms of: the deep historical grievances (long-term causes of conflict); the structural and underlying causes of conflict (intermediate causes of conflict); and the potential triggering causes of the conflict. Actor analysis is crucial at it recognises the main players in the conflict and identifies their positions, interests and power regarding a certain conflict. This is integral as it allows for a deeper understanding of the conflict and its possible solutions. Finally, conflict dynamics analysis identifies events and decisions that may
serve as trigger factors that could ultimately result in the intensification of the conflict (SIDA, 2006: 9 - 12).

2.2.3. Concepts used in conflict analysis
There are certain concepts associated with international conflicts that greatly enhance the overall analysis and evaluation thereof. Without these concepts, it is not possible to gain a comprehensive understanding of a conflict. It is for this reason that the concepts relating to international conflicts will be examined and discussed in terms of their relevance to international conflicts, with specific reference to natural resources.

I. Levels of analysis
The three levels of analysis refer to the systems level; domestic or state level and the individual level. The systems level of analysis is examined in two parts; the structure and process levels. The systems level is the most comprehensive level as it examines international relations as a whole. Moreover, the systems level encompasses all interactions that occur between the system and its environment. The structure level refers to the distribution of power in international society and the process level denotes the patterns of relations between states (Nye and Welch, 2016: 55 - 63; Singer, 1961: 80). The process level can be examined in terms of the culture that exists and how it affects the incentives and capabilities that would induce states to cooperate and the type of foreign policy goals states have. The domestic level examines the internal politics of a state and the patterns of their internal activities. In other words, the domestic level examines the domestic policies of a state and the regime or type of government running that state. The third level of analysis, the individual level, examines the individuals of various states and notes their personality traits (Balaam and Dillman, 2011: 12 - 13; Heywood, 2011: 58).

II. Geopolitics
By definition, it is clear that geopolitics is concerned with the geography of a state and how that geography affects a state’s international politics and relations. Moreover, geopolitics focuses on boundaries, territory, and location. With this in
mind, an examination of the world today provides insight into how states operate. International politics today is considered by Nye (2007: 3) to be governed by territories. Natural resources are part of a state’s territory. As territory plays such a central role in a state’s actions, it can be argued that geopolitics is an important tool in understanding the way in which states react to their environments.

When it comes to the link between natural resources and conflict, according to Dannreuther (2010: 2), although there are many varieties of methodological, descriptive and normative theoretical approaches in International Relations (IR), there is a gap in the direct application of IR theories to the “understanding of energy and mineral related conflicts” (Dannreuther, 2010: 2). The limited sources that are available in understanding the politics of international energy are viewed from a realist and geopolitical perspective. As such, the key arguments are as follows (Dannreuther, 2010: 3):

- The fundamental ingredient regarding national power and interest is controlling and accessing natural resources, specifically energy.
- Energy resources as a whole are becoming rarer and more uncertain.
- Competition for the control and access of these resources by states is becoming fiercer.
- The likelihood, and, in some instances, inevitability of war and conflict is increasing.

III. Nationalism

Nationalism in itself is a complex concept to define, however, it involves a sense of pride in one’s nation, religion or ethnicity. However, nationalism, if radically inclined, can result in extremist tendencies. An increase in nationalism within a state can lead to the increase in a conflict due to the element of pride and the need to demonstrate the country’s power and influence on a regional and global scale (Heywood, 2011: 158). Nationalism, natural resources and conflict are linked in various sectors, but their interrelatedness is most visible in conflict diamonds (Ward, 2009; 600). From 1991 to 2002, Sierra Leone’s rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front, seized control and possession of the diamond mines in Sierra Leone. The type of nationalism resulted in tens of thousands of people being displaced as the
Revolutionary United Front’s wartime practice affected the people of Sierra Leone with children being the greatest victims (Howard, 2016: 141 - 143).

IV. National interests
One of the most vital concepts in understanding international conflict is that of interests. Although liberal, realist and radical theories exist in terms of state interests, all states pursue their national interests. These interests could be those pertaining to the military, territorial interests or those economic in nature. Natural resources themselves also become national interests. In terms of conflict analysis, the national interests of the main actors or stakeholders are key to identifying the causes of a conflict as well as determining methods to effectively resolve a conflict (Heywood, 2011: 130; Neuchterlein, 1976: 246).

V. Phases of conflict
Generally, conflicts proceed over time in recognisable stages, consisting of the initiation, escalation, de-escalation and cessation phases. The phases of a conflict are not dependent on the dynamics of a conflict. Instead, the phases follow a common process that occurs after events that signal the beginning of a conflict. In most cases of unresolved conflicts, the cycle will restart and may even reach higher levels each time. As a conflict evolves and lengthens, so does the number of causes, issues and actors involved. Furthermore, a conflict may become cyclical when each wave of renewed conflict results in similar patterns of behaviour (Oliva and Charbonnier, 2016: 55 - 56).

VI. Political ecology of resources
Political ecology has, since the Cold War period ended around 1989, been connected to the political economy and geography of natural resources. According to Le Billon (2001: 562), political ecology has contained ‘very little politics’ as gaps exist regarding: resource control and access; the definition of political ecology and natural resources; and the contestation and negotiation in various political arenas. Billon (2001: 564) goes on to note that it is not the availability of natural resources but rather innate human greed that allows conflicts to occur. Furthermore, the political
ecology approach requires an engagement with resource scarcity and abundance perspectives (discussed further below).

VII. Abundance versus scarcity
The two theories of resource abundance and resource scarcity are integral to studies of conflict and conflict analysis. The theory of resource scarcity, which involves renewable resources, states that nations and individuals will fight one another in order to secure access to resources vital to their survival (Le Billon, 2005: 11 - 12). However, counterarguments have caused many advocates of this perspective to rethink their stance. Some of these counterarguments state that, as nations continue to develop, they discover innovative methods to limit their dependency on a resource (for example, electric vehicles as opposed to petrol-run vehicles). Another counterargument states that with the development of international trade, a counterbalance has occurred regarding localised scarcity (Wright and Czelusta, 2004: 6 - 7). An abundance of resources would entice states to seek territorial control as an abundance of natural resources would affect the political economy and the type of regime (Strüver, 2010: 5).

2.2.4. Useful tools in conflict analysis
There are practical tools available to gain a deeper understanding of a conflict. For the purposes of this study, three tools will be utilised: the root cause analysis, issue analysis and stakeholder analysis.

The root cause analysis technique aids in the examination of the history and origins as well as the underlying causes of the conflict. It illuminates the links surrounding the various issues and the roots that may have prompted the conflict initially. It also demonstrates the underlying dynamics of a conflict. The areas of focus for a root cause analysis include: the origins, levels and issues of a conflict; the history and timeline of events; geographical relationships and early attempts to resolve the conflict (Doucey, 2011: 9 - 10).
A study of the stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the analysis is another commonly used method of conflict analysis. It involves the tracing of the relevant stakeholders in terms of their interests, issues, capacities as well as sources of power. Although it is a relatively simple tool in conflict analysis, the stakeholder analysis tool allows for the development of profiles of each major stakeholder as well as some minor stakeholders. This tool allows for the identification of each stakeholder’s interests, issues, source of power, as well as their influence on the conflict as a whole (Oliva and Charbonnier, 2016: 64).

Key areas examined are the issues surrounding the conflict in terms of specific problems involved as well as whether the parties are concerned with identity, land, territorial boundaries and recognition or status. The positions of the parties involved are examined in terms of their public declarations regarding the conflict in question and the interests of the stakeholders are examined (Oliva and Charbonnier, 2016: 64).

Another area of examination is the means of influence or power. Some stakeholders may hold power as they control resources such as land, economic wealth or military strength; while other stakeholders may have leverage due to their political position in the global political arena (Oliva and Charbonnier, 2016: 64). The final area of analysis is a stakeholder’s willingness to negotiate. Table 2.1 below is an example of the stakeholder analysis tool. The content within the tool is generic.
Table 2.1: Stakeholder Analysis Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Means of power/Influence</th>
<th>Willingness to negotiate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country A</td>
<td>Aggressive neighbouring state</td>
<td>Ensure integrity of territorial borders</td>
<td>Preserve current territorial borders due to natural resources</td>
<td>Strong allies in the global political arena</td>
<td>Depends on alliance with Country C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country B</td>
<td>Claim back land lost</td>
<td>Claim back land that was taken away in a historical conflict</td>
<td>Reclaim land lost</td>
<td>Wealth and military capabilities</td>
<td>Distrust of international organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country C</td>
<td>Attempt to act as mediator</td>
<td>Conflicting parties must comply with international law</td>
<td>Ensure regional peace</td>
<td>Influential state in world politics</td>
<td>Prefer to reconcile conflicting parties to ensure regional peace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CDC Collaborative (2015)

2.3. Six key areas of analysis

As stated in Chapter 1, currently there is no standard conflict analysis method to analyse international natural-resource-based conflicts. Hence, it is necessary to design a method of analysis that encompasses elements of commonly used conflict analysis methods as well as other key areas discussed below when applying it to the three case studies in this dissertation.

I. Historical context

The importance of context, and specifically historical context, is vital when attempting to understand a conflict. The historical context of a conflict provides a deeper understanding of the current conflict as it can shed light on significant historical events in terms of political, social, economic and cultural circumstances that have shaped its dynamics. Furthermore, it provides clarity whether a conflict originated or escalated from geographic boundaries, political structures, cultural differences or
even diplomatic relations (or lack thereof). In order to effectively engage in an analysis of a conflict, the first step is to acknowledge and examine the history of the underlying conflict. It is through an understanding of the history of a conflict that it becomes possible to assess the impact on the development of the current conflict as well as possible remedies to the conflict (Humphreys, 2005).

Key areas of analysis include: a background of the conflict in terms of the long, medium and short-term triggers; important events pertaining to the conflict; as well as a brief discussion of the political, economic, social and cultural context of the conflict (Humphreys, 2005).

Key questions to be addressed:

- What is the historical context of this conflict?
- What, if any, are significant historical events pertaining to the conflict?
- What is the political, economic, social and cultural context?

II. Actors directly involved in the conflict

The identification of the actors involved in the conflict is a key area that needs to be examined in order to effectively analyse a conflict. Generally, actors involved in a conflict can be divided into two groups: conflict parties and third parties (Apostolides, 2014; Pope, 2014).

The conflict party in the area of this study alludes to the states that are actively engaged in the conflict and have vested interests in its outcome. These parties take actions that they believe would most likely aid them in achieving their goals. Conflicting parties may be the main, direct or indirect actors in a conflict and may have supporters that are not involved in the conflict. Third-party actors, however, are not directly involved in the conflict and their purpose is to remain impartial (Apostolides, 2014; Pope, 2014).

Key questions to be addressed:
• Who, or what, are the main actors (state actors/corporations)?
• What are their interests?
• What are their power bases and resources?

III. Natural resource/s
The natural resources examined in this study will be limited to shared oil, water and gas resources. These natural resources will be classified and analysed according to the classification in Chapter 1 of this study. The concept of abundance versus scarcity, which was discussed earlier in this chapter, is also used in conjunction with the classification system in order to determine the value of the natural resources in question (Maphosa, 2012; Pirani, Henderson, Honore, Rogers and Yafimava, 2014).

• What type of natural resource is involved in the conflict?
• Has this natural resource caused similar conflicts in other areas?

IV. Other contributing factors
In conflicts over natural resources, it is frequently the case that natural resources are not the sole factor in a conflict, but rather form part of a larger conflict involving political, economic, social and cultural issues. Other key areas that are examined are the structural causes of the conflict and new factors that may have escalated the conflict (Le Billon, 2001).

Key questions to be addressed:
• What are the key sources of tension as well as the underlying structural causes of the conflict?
• What are the roots of the conflict?
• What triggered the current conflict?

V. Obstacles to resolving the conflict
An examination of the obstacles hindering a peaceful settlement of a conflict include: the natural resource itself in terms of its classification; scarcity or abundance; the demand for the natural resource in the global market; internal state affairs; the
various actors involved; as well as concepts, such as, the geopolitics of the region and a rise in state nationalism (Siddi, 2015).

Key questions to be addressed:

• What are the positions of the key actors?
• How do these positions hinder a resolution to the conflict?
• What concepts of international conflict are obstacles to resolving the conflict?
• What are the interests of the conflicting parties?

VI. The role of the natural resource in the conflict

Finally, once the above five key areas are examined, it is possible to examine the actual role of the natural resource in the conflict, utilising the levels of analysis discussed earlier.

2.4. Conclusion

As mentioned above, conflict analysis is vital when seeking to understand conflicts from a holistic perspective. It examines different areas by investigating the sources of conflict, the actors involved, as well as the dynamics of a conflict. It is for this reason that international conflicts involving natural resources require a unique approach as oftentimes the conflict is not rooted in the exploitation or discovery of natural resources, but rather existing conflicts that are exacerbated by the discovery of natural resources.

The three case studies in this dissertation will be analysed and examined using the various tools and concepts discussed above in order to fully understand the nature of these conflicts as well as ascertain the role of natural resources in them. The levels of analysis, the stakeholder analysis as well as the concepts of geopolitics, nationalism and national interests are also utilised. They are researched along with the six key areas of: the natural resource at stake, the historical context; the actors directly involved in the conflict; other contributing factors; obstacles to resolving the
conflict and the role of the natural resource in the conflict. All of this is executed in order to effectively examine what the role of the natural resource is in the conflict.

The next three chapters examine the case studies in which the above methods of conflict analysis will be applied. The first case study will examine the role of gas in the South and East China Sea conflicts. The second case study will examine the role of water in the conflict between Egypt and its neighbours and the third conflict examines the role of gas in the conflict between Cyprus and Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean.
CHAPTER 3: THE SOUTH AND EAST CHINA SEAS AND OIL

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the conceptual framework. This chapter focuses on the role of crude oil in the South and East China Seas conflicts. The South China Sea conflict and East China Sea conflict are separate conflicts, both of which will be examined in this chapter. On the east side, Japan and China are embroiled in a conflict over territorial and jurisdictional claims, while, on the south side, China, Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei are in conflict due the same issues of territorial and jurisdictional claims.

To wholly comprehend the complexity of the conflicts, crude oil is discussed in terms of its description, origins and diverse types. The process for the extraction of crude oil is the same as natural gas as discussed in Chapter 5, although it will be highlighted how the two hydrocarbons differ. The importance and role of oil is discussed in global and societal terms as well as the legality surrounding the South and East China Sea conflicts - it must be noted that it is similar to the Eastern Mediterranean gas dispute, to be discussed in Chapter 5, in that it utilises the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Next, the history and political context of oil conflict in the South and East China Seas is examined. Following this, an examination of the main actors in the conflict is provided as well as the positions and responses of third parties. Other contributing factors are discussed and the obstacles and incentives to resolving the conflict are examined. Finally, the role of crude oil in the South and East China seas is analysed utilising the three levels of analysis.

3.2. Natural resource: Crude Oil

Crude oil and natural gas are oftentimes found together. Traditionally, natural gas was regarded as an unwanted by-product, but this outlook has changed.
3.2.1. Description and origins of oil

Crude oil and natural gas are both fossil fuels that were created over millions of years and are formed from the remains of prehistoric plants and animals. The organic matter was trapped as the rocks and silt settled and formed layers without air. Pressure and temperature changes turned the organic matter into petroleum (Devold, 2013: 1 - 5).

3.2.2. Types of oil by economic standards and energy

As oil is found around the globe, the quality and quantity found varies greatly. Classification is divided into extra heavy oil and bitumen, heavy oil, light oil and condensate. The American Petroleum Institute (API) Gravity is utilised to regulate the characterisation and quality of crude oil. As such, a lower API Gravity means a heavier oil, which results in a more difficult refining process (Wintershall, 2018).

Crude oil prices are determined by international oil bourses (a commodities exchange). In Europe, Brent crude oil determines the oil price and, although mostly only used by European markets, it is considered a better (compared to other oil bourses) indicator of global oil prices due to its status as a benchmark for West Africa, the Mediterranean and some Southeast Asian crude oils (Wintershall, 2018).

3.2.3. The process for the location, exploration and extraction

The process for locating, exploring and extracting crude oil starts with geologists surveying sedimentary basins (rock formations are too impermeable for natural gas to escape through) that may possibly trap reservoirs of oil. Seismic surveys are then utilised in order to determine the right place to drill for the oil (Voiland, 2016). The method to determine how much oil is in a reservoir is by drilling a single vertical hole into the sedimentary basin. This is not very efficient, however, as oil estimates are limited to what is found in the well. Another method of drilling is hydraulic fracturing (fracking), which is a procedure by which the rock is fractured by using a high-
pressure stream of water in order to extract gas or oil within. Once the split is made, drilling into the ground is initially applied vertically then horizontally. Fracking is mostly used when exploiting shale gas, although it has been used in deep waters for gas and oil extraction. While fracking does allow for more oil and gas to be extracted, it has massive negative impacts on the environment as it pumps a mixture of sand, chemicals and thousands of litres of water into constructed tunnels. While lucrative, it is expensive, damaging to the environment, and, as a result, this process has been banned in many countries (ASMAA, 2018).

Current total proven global reserves are at 1696.6 thousand million barrels (239.3 million tonnes). Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Iran and Iraq make up the top five countries with proven reserves globally (BP, 2018a).

3.2.4. Importance and role of oil in society

Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 below demonstrate the use of oil and other sources of energy throughout the world from 2004 - 2015. The charts show that global energy demand has increased substantially due to the development of the Asia Pacific region. In more industrialised regions such as North America and Europe/Eurasia, there is a general trend towards energy diversification with the increased use of renewable energy. There has also been an increase in the consumption of crude oil energy in Africa, the Middle East and South/Central Europe. The use of coal in Asia Pacific is double that of crude oil, but this will shift if countries in Asia Pacific commit to the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement is a global climate change agreement that was reached in Paris in December 2015. The global agreement offers an action plan to limit global warming (European Council, 2015). Coal emits higher levels of carbon monoxide and as such switching to oil or gas is perceived to be the ‘better’ alternative (BP, 2018b).
The role of oil in society cannot be understated. In nearly every facet of human life oil is used, most notably in the motor and transportation industry which utilises approximately 66% of all available fuel. The remaining 34% (approximately) is used in the medical, household and technological industries (World Petroleum Council, 2018). Furthermore, it is worth repeating that the appeal of energy wealth either emboldens a country - especially a regional hegemon which is defined by Heywood (2011: 18) as leading power - to instigate conflict or compete over unclaimed resources (Stulberg, 2015: 114).

3.2.5. UNCLOS

From a legal perspective, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), examined below, is the Law of the Sea Treaty. China (1996), Japan (1996), Brunei (1996), Vietnam (1994), Philippines (1984) and Malaysia (1996) have ratified the UNCLOS (UN Oceans and Law of the Sea, 2018). In the case of Taiwan, China continues to block its membership to the UN and as such Taiwan cannot ratify the UNCLOS.
UNCLOS, or the Law of the Sea Treaty, is an international treaty that was opened for signatures in 1982. Today the convention has been ratified by over 160 states, although Venezuela, the USA, Israel and Turkey voted against the treaty and have still not signed it to date. Although they have not signed or ratified the treaty, some of the provisions in UNCLOS have become customary international law and are a requisite for all states. One of these provisions is the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). UNCLOS divides marine space into several zones as can be seen in Figure 3.3 below.

Figure 3.3: Maritime zones

Within the EEZ, states have sovereign rights to explore and exploit natural resources. Furthermore, UNCLOS allows for the delimitation of maritime zones between states and states with adjacent or opposite coasts. States also have sovereign rights over their territorial sea and the airspace above the territorial sea (Gürel, Mullen and Tzimitras, 2013: 9 - 10).
A nation has sovereignty over its territorial sea of up to 12 nautical miles and sovereign rights over natural resources found within its EEZ, which is up to 200 nautical miles. In the event that states are within closer proximity than 200 nautical miles, the UNCLOS stipulates the boundaries for the delimitation of maritime boundaries among states.

As will be discussed in the next section, the South China Sea is a multilateral issue with six nations in conflict over maritime boundaries and the EEZ, as can be seen in Map 3.1 below. In contrast, the East China Sea is a bilateral conflict between the two regional powers as can be seen in Map 3.2 below. At the centre of both is China - the claimant.

Map 3.1: Territorial claims in South China Sea

Source: South China Sea (n.d.)
3.3. Historical and political context of the conflicts in the South and East China Seas

3.3.1. South China Seas

The South China Sea has a complicated history that dates back to the second century CE and Chinese legal claims are based on the assertion of first discovery of the Paracel and Spratly Islands. Vietnamese, Philippines and Malaysian claims on the islands in the South China Sea are derived from subsequent European colonisation and independence. The Philippines became an American colony after the Spanish were defeated in 1898 during the Spanish-American War. Malaysia was a colony of Great Britain, while Vietnam was colonised by the French (Engerman and Sokoloff, 2006: 6). China also maintains that the possession and occupation of the Spratly and Paracel islands by the French (on behalf of Vietnam) in the 1930s were both illegitimate and contradict Chinese claims based on history (Black, 2018).

The 19th and 20th centuries shaped the future relationships of states as this period is synonymous with colonialism, which saw France and Great Britain dominate prior
European colonialism in the South China Sea. An important change occurred in the region as nations were created on the idea of territorial sovereignty. Great Britain was the main merchant power, while France was driven by competition with Great Britain in becoming a global power (Black, 2018). Towards the end of the 19th Century, Japan and the USA joined Britain and France which paved the way for a naval race between Britain, France, the USA, Japan and the Netherlands. The Great Depression of 1929 to 1930 pushed Japan into a period of military expansion, which resulted in Japanese control of Manchuria (a region in East Asia) in 1932 and a war with China in 1937. Japanese expansion and aggression ultimately triggered a crisis in the South China Sea with the other four powers seeking ways to mitigate Japanese expansion and bolster their positions. It was due to the colonial powers that ‘territorial sovereignty’ and ‘freedom of navigation’ were brought to the region (Tønnesson, 2002: 575). Fear of Japanese expansion directed France to claim the Paracel and Spratly islands, although France only established a lasting presence in the Paracel islands in 1938 alongside the Japanese (Tønnesson, 2002: 575).

The period 1942 to 1968 saw a drastic modification to the global system due to the Second World War, independence from colonialism and the subsequent Cold War. States went from being colonies to independent states with colliding ideologies in a matter of two decades. Noteworthy is the fact that, from 1942 to 1945, Japan controlled all the countries in the South China Sea, a first time occurrence in the region’s history (Tønnesson, 2002: 575). Another lasting change to the system was the victory of the Communist Party of China in the Chinese civil war. It led to the subsequent formation of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 under Mao Zedong and the Republic of China government fleeing to Taiwan. This new communist threat saw the USA’s once biggest enemy, Japan, turn into one of its closest allies - a relationship still very much evident today.

In understanding the South China Sea today, it is integral to understand what took place during the 1940s and 1960s in the region. The developments of decolonisation and the Cold War are fundamental as they shaped the terrain. The USA had no interest in the Paracel or the Spratly islands as their key concern was halting the
spread of communism in the region. Had the USA been interested in the islands, they may have been able to provide resolutions to the sovereignty disputes surrounding the islands today. Similarly, before the threat of communism, the USA had only been concerned with freedom of navigation and declined to support any state’s claim on the uninhabited islands (Tønnesson, 2002: 575).

As noted above, it was the Republic of China (before they fled to Taiwan) that immediately sought to claim the Paracel and Spratly islands after WWII ended. In 1951, at the San Francisco Peace Conference, Japan officially relinquished its rights to Hainan, Taiwan and all the islands in the South China Sea (see Map 3.1). Two major faults of the conference were that neither of the Chinese governments were present, nor were the islands in the South China Sea ceded to other states. It was stated that Taiwan and Hainan would be Chinese (Peace Palace Library, 2018).

An important change during the 1960s was the Sino-Soviet split (the end of political relations between China and the USSR) and a thawing in the cold relations between the USA and China. Subsequently, a new naval rivalry emerged in the South China Sea, but this time between China and the Soviet Union. China was able to launch its own naval programme without the ire of the USA and Japan due to the de facto alliance between China and the USA. Chinese economic growth from 1971 to 1989 was unprecedented (Chase, Medeiros, Roy, Rumer, Stutter and Weitz, 2017: 3-4). This period is also important due to oil and the UNCLOS, as mentioned previously. British and American oil companies already demonstrated interest in the likelihood of oil discoveries in the Spratly area, but it was only after the 1969 geological publication that oil became a real factor in sovereign disputes. Oil prospects allowed nations to motivate their interests in the islands in the South China Sea and the UNCLOS pushed this further. Natural resources and UNCLOS go hand-in-hand as UNCLOS unintentionally made owning islands of any size important. This is due to the UNCLOS provisions of EEZs and sovereign rights to exploit natural resources found within the zone (as well as the exploitation of fish). Oil entered the agenda of the South China Sea states from 1969 onwards and increased with importance due to the 1973 oil crisis (Song and Tønnesson, 2013: 238).
In 1971, the Philippines was the first state to declare that the western half of the Spratly islands belonged to the Philippines and in 1974 awarded a consortium of companies the rights to explore for oil. Vietnam, Brunei and Malaysia followed. The People’s Republic of China was last to claim the Spratly islands. In 1974, the Chinese Foreign Ministry stated that:

The Nansha (Spratly) islands, Xisha (Paracel) Islands, Zhongsha (Macclesfield Bank) Islands and Dongsha (Pratas) Islands, are all part of the Chinese territory. The People’s Republic of China has undisputable sovereignty over these islands and their surrounding area (Song and Tønnesson, 2013: 240).

While tensions have always lingered in the South China Sea, a re-emergence in 2007 saw Beijing accusing Hanoi (the capital of Vietnam) of infringing on Chinese sovereign rights by granting British Petroleum (BP) exploitation rights. BP halted exploration due to China’s intervention (Song and Tønnesson, 2013: 240).

The Philippines presented a case against China to a tribunal in 2013 established in accordance with the UNCLOS. China declined to participate in the tribunal even though it is a member of the UNCLOS. China, like a few other states, has failed to participate in cases brought before the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The tribunal examined 15 submissions made by the Philippines and the tribunal stated that they had jurisdiction to look at most of the submissions. An important point is that UNCLOS makes no mention of whether or not a state appearing before a tribunal affects the binding nature of the tribunal’s judgment or award. In 2016, the judgement of the tribunal was heavily in the favour of claims made by the Philippines, and China’s Foreign Ministry stated in response that the 2016 Award in favour of the Philippines has “no binding force” (Xinhua, 2016). Regarding Chinese claims on historic rights in the South China Sea, the tribunal ruled that “China’s claim to historic rights to the living and non-living resources within the ‘nine-dash line’ (the territorial area claimed by China in the South China Sea as demarcated by dashed lines) is incompatible with the Convention” (McDorman, 2016).
3.3.2. East China Sea

The dispute in the East China Sea is similar to that of the South but the main difference is that the East is considered to be a bilateral conflict whereas the South is regarded as a multilateral conflict. Similarly, it involves uninhabited islands. The Senkaku Islands (*Diaoyu* in Chinese) cover a total surface area of around 6 km² (Huang, 2012). Similar to the Paracel and Spratly islands in the South China Sea, the Senkaku/Diaoyu were considered to be of little economic value and it is for this reason that there was limited interest from the international community regarding these islands. Beijing once again maintains that they belong to China due to historical records mentioning the islands’ discovery by Chinese Imperial Envoys as early as 1372. China further claims that the islands were utilised for its maritime defence in 1556, although a permanent settlement of any kind has never been established (Bendini, 2014: 4-5).

It was not until 1895 that the government of Japan formally incorporated the islands as *terra nullius* (unclaimed and uninhabited territory) (Costa, 2018: 16 - 17) and in 1932 the status of the islands was changed and they were sold to a private Japanese family (Bendini, 2014: 4 - 5). This private family was the Koga family who allegedly discovered the Senkaku islands in 1884. The family was granted permission in 1896 to lease four of the islands for thirty years (Costa, 2018: 16 - 17).

Although Japan relinquished all claims to Taiwan and the Pescadores/Penghu Islands - an archipelago off the western coast of Taiwan that consists of around 90 small islands covering an area of 128 square kilometres (Huang, De Voogd, Cleary, Li, Mok and Ueng, 2016: 418) - after Japanese surrender and subsequent treaties, the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands fell under the USA’s control in accordance with the San Francisco Peace Treaty (Han, 2013: 63). While the islands were used by the USA for almost 20 years, they were transferred back to Japan in 1972. The Okinawa territory was returned under full sovereignty to Japan whereas the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands were only placed under Japanese management (Han, 2013: 62). During the negotiations of the 1972 diplomatic relations and the 1978 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China (PRC), the issue of the
Senkaku islands was avoided so as not to hinder the positive outcome of the talks. It was not until 1996 that the issue of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands re-emerged when a nationalist Japanese organisation sought to perform maintenance to a lighthouse built on one of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands (Bendini, 2014: 8). As a result, anti-Japanese protests erupted in Hong Kong and Taiwan and activists from both states were able to evade the Japanese coastguard and plant flags on one of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islets (Bendini, 2014: 8). Furthermore, an increasing number of research and naval vessel incursions have put a strain on relations between Tokyo and Beijing as it has become a serious domestic political issue in Japan. Neither Japan nor China seems able to keep the issue at bay and it is gaining traction in Chinese and Taiwanese internal affairs as they view the actions of Japan as aggressive (Bendini, 2014: 8).

Tensions reached new heights in 2010 when a Chinese trawler working in disputed waters near the Senkaku/Diaoyu Island purposely crashed into the Japanese coastguard patrol vessels (BBC, 2014b). In 2012, the Japanese government concluded an agreement to purchase back the islands from private ownership. This move was not well received by Beijing and the Chinese Foreign Ministry subsequently released a statement harshly criticising Japan’s move of nationalising the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (Hafeez, 2015: 84 - 85). The Chinese Foreign Ministry maintained that Japan was encroaching on Chinese rights and altering the status quo. The protesting in 125 Chinese cities against Japan became violent and Japanese businesses were forced to suspend operations in some instances (McCurry, 2013).
### 3.3.3. Stakeholder analysis tool: South and East China Seas

#### 3.3.3.1. South China Sea Stakeholder Analysis Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Means of power/Influence</th>
<th>Willingness to negotiate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>Completely reliant on oil and natural gas imports, biggest importer alongside Japan.</td>
<td>Historical rights to Paracel and Spratly islands, Sole right to natural resources within the nine-dashed line</td>
<td>Paracel and Spratly islands according to the nine-dashed line</td>
<td>Global power and influence, Regional hegemon, One of the Permanent 5</td>
<td>Only bilaterally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Chinese expansion and aggression in the region, Right to explore for natural resources in EEZ</td>
<td>Claims both island chains are entirely within Vietnam’s territory</td>
<td>Paracel and Spratly islands</td>
<td>Very little economic and military strength compared to China</td>
<td>Believes multilaterally and under the auspices of the UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Chinese expansion and aggression in the region, Right to explore for natural resources in EEZ</td>
<td>Invokes geographical proximity to Spratly as base of claim</td>
<td>Spratly islands as it is an area of great strategic value and</td>
<td>Traditionally US ally but under President Duterte shift towards China</td>
<td>Believes multilaterally and under the auspices of the UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Chinese expansion and aggression in the region, Right to explore for natural resources in EEZ</td>
<td>Claims all island chains</td>
<td>Paracel and Spratly islands according to the U-shaped line</td>
<td>Very little as it is not a recognised by the UN</td>
<td>Believes multilaterally and under the auspices of the UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Chinese expansion and aggression in the region, Right to explore for natural resources in EEZ</td>
<td>Claims made according to UNCLOS</td>
<td>Territory according to UNCLOS including a small number of Spratly islands</td>
<td>Low economic and military capabilities as compared to China</td>
<td>Believes multilaterally and under the auspices of the UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>Chinese expansion and aggression in the region</td>
<td>Claims made according to</td>
<td>Territory according to</td>
<td>Economic wealth from</td>
<td>Believes multilaterally and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.3.3.2. East China Sea Stakeholder Analysis tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Means of power/Influence</th>
<th>Willingness to negotiate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>One of the biggest exporters of oil and natural gas</td>
<td>Historical claims predating 1885 when Japan claimed the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands</td>
<td>Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands Potential oil and gas</td>
<td>Global power and influence.</td>
<td>Only bilaterally and to an extent as China believes claims are historical. Also seeking to correct grievances from Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands belong to China under historical claims</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese ownership illegal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>One of the biggest exporters of oil and natural gas</td>
<td>Japan claimed the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands under international law of terra nullius</td>
<td>Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands Potential oil and gas</td>
<td>Global power and influence. USA very strong ally</td>
<td>Yes, but does not support or acknowledge Chinese historical claims on the islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japan formally claimed the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in 1895</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Chinese aggression and expansion in the area</td>
<td>Supports Japanese claim on islands</td>
<td>Regional stability Freedom of Navigation $5 trillion trade route</td>
<td>Global power and influence. Strong supporter of Japanese claims</td>
<td>Should be bilateral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4. Various actors involved

3.4.1. The Chinese perspective and response on the South China Sea conflict

The Chinese perspective on the South China Sea maritime boundaries, often called the 'nine-dashed line', is traced back to 1947. However, the present day nine-dashed line (see Map 3.1 above) is closer to the shores of other nations compared to the 1947 map (highlighted in red) (Map 3.3 below).

Map 3.3: 1947 China’s claims on the South China Sea

Source: Hayton, 2016
It is clear that China is taking an increasingly aggressive approach to what it believes are its historical rights to the South China Sea. Chinese President Xi Jinping warned that China is “strongly committed to safeguarding the country’s sovereignty and security and defending our (China’s) territorial integrity” (CFR, 2018).

Since 2014, China has constructed artificial islands on the reefs in the South China Sea. Images released in 2017 demonstrate the extent to which China has militarised these islands. Missile systems, radar jammers, airstrips and other infrastructures have been built on various Spratly Islands (CNBC, 2017).

In April of 2018, China conducted its biggest-ever maritime exercises in the South China Sea, and, in May, landed a warplane on an airstrip on Woody Island (largest of the Paracel Islands) (Rahn, 2018). However, this is not the first time that a country has sought to militarise these islands. Vietnam built the first runway on the Spratly Islands in 1976, and Taiwan built a runway in Itu Aba (also known as Taiping Island and the largest of the Spratly Islands) in 2008 (Strait Times, 2018).

3.4.2. The Philippines

The Government of the Philippines was one of the most vocal regarding the South China Sea clash, going so far as to take the matter to a UNCLOS tribunal in 2013, as mentioned earlier in this Chapter. The tribunal awarded in favour of the Philippines in 2016, although China publicly made it clear that they would not acknowledge the ruling of the tribunal. While traditionally the Philippines favoured the use of international structures to try to keep Chinese expansion in check, Rodrigo Roa Duterte, current President of the Philippines, has changed the game by appearing more aggressive. In a recent speech, Foreign Secretary Cayetano noted the Philippine regime’s new stance. The Foreign Secretary described the Scarborough Shoal and Second Thomas Shoal (in the Spratly Islands) as well as Chinese drilling in Philippine-claimed territory as acts that would result in repercussions. As a militarily-weak state compared to China, it would not be plausible for the Philippines to declare war. However, the Philippines’ previous policy seems to have yielded little results as China stepped up its military position in the South China Sea and
organised nuclear-capable H-6k bombers to Woody Island (Asean Today, 2018). In August 2018, Duterte publicly stated that:

You (China) cannot create an island, it's man-made, and you say that the air above these artificial islands is yours...That is wrong because those waters are what we consider international sea...the right of innocent passage is guaranteed. It does not need any permission to sail through the open seas...I hope that China would temper ... its behaviour... (VOA News, 2018).

3.4.3. Vietnam

Vietnam disputes Chinese historical claims of the Paracel and Spratly islands as they maintain China only claimed sovereignty in the 1940s. Vietnam maintains that both island chains fall within its territory according to UNCLOS and as such legally belong to Vietnam. The Vietnamese Prime Minister stated in 2016 that:

We must resolutely and firmly defend our independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, be determined to defend Vietnam's sovereignty in the East Sea (South China Sea) and call on parties to respect and comply with international law and not to further complicate the situation (SCMP, 2016).

3.4.4. Brunei

Brunei has always adopted a silent stance compared to the other South China Sea claimants. Brunei does not lay claim to any of the island chains, but it does claim territory according to the UNCLOS. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2016 stressed that:

Brunei Darussalam views the South China Sea as a very important area for maintaining peace, stability and prosperity, especially as much of its trade passes through the South China Sea...We are fully committed to ensuring the peaceful resolution of disputes, without resorting to threats or use of force in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) (Global Times, 2016).
3.4.5. Malaysia

Malaysia’s stance is similar to that of Brunei with the difference being that Malaysia claims a small number of the Spratly Islands. The Prime Minister of Malaysia stated in 2018 that:

China claims the South China Sea is theirs, but those islands have always been regarded as ours for a long time. So, we want to retain them...There are certain rocks which we have developed into islands. And we hope that we will stay on those islands because it is a part of our keeping the sea safe from pirates and others (Strait Times, 2018).

3.4.6. Taiwan

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan) website states that:

The South China Sea Islands are part of the territory of the Republic of China. That the ROC is entitled to all rights over the South China Sea Islands and their relevant waters in accordance with international law and the law of the sea is beyond dispute (MFA Taiwan, 2018).

Taiwanese and Chinese claims are the same, although Taiwan is not recognised internationally.

3.4.7. Japanese position and response to the East China Sea conflict

As discussed in the previous section, Japan first claimed the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in 1895 under the terms of terra nullius. The Japanese response to growing Chinese expansion in the East China Sea is demonstrated by a speech given in 2017 at a CEO Council Dinner Programme:

…unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in the East China Sea and South China Sea are continuing...The rule of law has been infringed upon and freedom of navigation is also under threat. It is against this backdrop that Japan is strengthening the bonds of its alliance with the United States more than ever before and is working closely at every level from the summit level through to defence cooperation on the ground... We are deepening our maritime security cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, including assistance to build capacity in the area of maritime security. (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 2017).
The Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, warned that “Provocations against Japan’s sovereign sea and land are continuing, but they must not be tolerated” (CFR, 2018).

3.4.8. Chinese position and response on East China Sea

Much like the South China Sea, China claims the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in the East China Sea under historical claims. The establishment of the first Chinese Air-Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea is a “defined area extending beyond national territory in which unidentified aircraft are liable to be interrogated and, if necessary, intercepted for identification before they cross into sovereign airspace” (Bendini, 2014: 9). The Chinese ADIZ extends past the border of what Japan believes to be its exclusive airspace.

3.4.9. Third party perspectives on both seas

South China Sea

The UN tribunal in 2016 made the UN’s stance clear on the South China Sea problem by ruling in favour of Vietnam and stating that the tribunal found no legality to the historic claims made by China with regard to resources found within the ‘nine-dashed line’ (Phillips, 2016).

China has, however, made it clear that it would not heed the judgement made by the UN tribunal and it is unclear what power (if any) the UN possesses if China continues to blatantly ignore the judgement.

East China Sea

Although the UN Secretary-General, as well as many other UN bodies, has not made any statements regarding the East China Sea, it is evident from the verdict of the South China Sea that Chinese historical claims in the East China Sea are not acknowledged by the UN.
South China Sea
The US Defence Secretary James Mattis has publicly cautioned Beijing, saying that “(USA) oppose countries militarising artificial islands and enforcing excessive maritime claims”. He went on to add that “we cannot and will not accept unilateral, coercive changes to the status quo” (BBC, 2017).

The USA’s interests in the South China Sea are twofold. Firstly, the South China Sea acts as one of the largest trade routes on the globe and one third of global trade uses this trade route. Secondly, the USA, along with other global players, seeks to safeguard the concept of ‘freedom of navigation’ which allows the USA and other states to make use of the South China Sea and other parts of the world. The USA has also traditionally been the dominant player in the region and has not taken kindly to Chinese challenges. The USA maintains that,

Our concern in both issues is we have managed the relations with the status quo for decades, and China is changing the status quo on both Taiwan and the South China Sea, and this is leading to tensions…We want to contribute in any way possible to the success. But how can you have a dialogue at the same time, where a country is building, reclaiming and militarising (SCMP, 2018).

China has made it clear that it disputes American naval actions in the South China Sea and that it is essential for China to build military facilities on the uninhabited islands to defend its territory. A spokesman for the Chinese Ministry of Defence strongly urged “the United States to immediately mend its ways and end illegal provocations in the name of so-called freedom of navigation” (Buckley, 2017).

East China Sea
While the USA has no official position on the claims regarding the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, the USA does have an obligation to defend the territories under Japanese administrative control. Both the presidencies of Barack Obama and Donald Trump have reiterated this obligation and reaffirmed commitment to the USA-Japan mutual defence treaty (Panda, 2017). Former President Barack Obama stated that: “We do not take a position on final sovereignty on the Senkakus… historically they’ve been administrated by Japan and should not be taken to change unilaterally” (McCurry,
Obama further stated that: “Our commitment to Japan’s security is absolute and article five (of the security treaty) covers all treaties under Japan’s administration, including the Senkaku islands” (McCurry, 2014). Similarly, President Donald Trump’s defence secretary reaffirmed this stance by stating that the USA “want to make certain that Article 5 of our mutual defence treaty is understood to be as real to us today as it was a year ago, five years ago - and as it will be a year, and 10 years, from now” (Stewart and Takenaka, 2017).

Furthermore, the USA would protect unimpeded freedom of navigation in the East China Sea the same manner it is protecting it in the South China Sea (Hass, 2017).

South China Sea
Russia has not had a presence in the South China Sea since the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, in April 2018, Russia agreed to new military cooperation between Russia and Vietnam that would bring Russia into the mix in the continuing supremacy struggle among China and the USA in the South China Sea. Although the current Vietnamese-Russian military cooperation is based on search and rescue operations, it would allow Russia direct access to the South China Sea (Brennan, 2018). Currently, Russia has taken no sides in the dispute regarding freedom of navigation, something it would practice with military cooperation in Vietnam. However, President Putin supported China’s position with the tribunal decision on the grounds that China did not participate in the tribunal. President Putin has maintained that third party involvement in the South China Sea issue “will only hurt the resolution of these issues… (and) is detrimental and counterproductive” (Thayer, 2016).

East China Sea
Much like the South China Sea, Russia has taken no official position and does not have allies in the East China Sea region, except for China. It can be assumed that Russia’s position in the East China Sea is comparable to that of the South China Sea.
South and East China Sea
The Chinese position on the South and East China seas was discussed previously. However, if the South and East China Seas issue had to be taken to the UN Security Council, it would be impossible for a resolution to be made as China would most definitely veto any resolutions against their interests.

South China Sea
Both the UK and France have made their intentions clear – to challenge China in the South China Sea – by sailing through what China maintains is its territorial waters. The British Secretary of State challenged Beijing’s stance by stating that “We have to make it clear that nations need to play by the rules, and there are consequences for not doing so” (Zhen, 2018).

East China Sea
Although France and the UK have taken no official position on the East China Sea, presumably their position is similar to that of the South China Sea. The issue of freedom of navigation is their top priority and as such would challenge China should freedom of navigation be in jeopardy in the East China Sea.

South China Sea
The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been criticised numerous times on what is perceived to be a weak attempt in reigning in Chinese ambitions in the South China Sea. At the 51st ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Singapore in August 2018, a joint communiqué was released that stated the following:

We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and recognise the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability and prosperity... We discussed the matters relating to the South China Sea and took note of some concerns on the land reclamations and activities in the area, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region. We reaffirmed the need to... exercise self-restraint...and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasised the importance of non-militarisation... (ASEAN, 2018: 24).
East China Sea
Similarly, ASEAN has made no clear or official statement regarding their position on the East China Sea. However, it can be understood that as the two conflicts are similar in nature, ASEAN would adopt the same stance as it has adopted in the South China Sea.

3.5. Other contributing factors
Other contributing factors will examine the South China Sea and East China Sea simultaneously as these factors are relevant to both disputes.

3.5.1. Rise of nationalism and anti-Japanese sentiments
As noted previously, with the Japanese governmental purchase of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands from a private Japanese owner, the Chinese Government and Chinese public reaction was harsh and resulted in anti-Japanese protests in over 125 Chinese cities. The violence and protests against Japanese companies forced many of them to limit or suspend operations (Bendini, 2014: 9). However, anti-Japanese sentiments were not created from this purchase of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. Rather, they stem from what China views as the "Century of Humiliation". The Century of Humiliation started with the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 when Western powers forced China to expose its ports to trade, pay reparations and grant Western powers extraterritorial rights within Chinese territory (Lei, 2017). The modern Chinese identity has been constructed from the Century of Humiliation due to conflict, chaos and corruption which fragmented the Qing dynasty. Chinese people are taught from a young age that it was not only European Imperialism but also an American-imposed Asian order that robbed the Chinese nation of its “rightful place in the world” (French, 2015). A popular book released by a retired People’s Liberation Army colonel discusses and lays out China’s plan for supremacy. The book writes (in an albeit selective fashion) that China was the superior state and that,

This was a special regional system through which they maintained friendly relations and provided mutual aid. The appeal and influence of ancient China’s political, economic and cultural advantages were such that smaller neighbouring states
naturally fell into orbit around China, and many of the small countries nominally attached to China’s ruling dynasty sent regular tribute … The universal spread of China’s civilisation and the variety of nations that sent emissaries to China were simply a reflection of the attractiveness of the central nation, and the admiration that neighbouring countries had for China’s civilisation. (French, 2017).

The Yuanmungyuan Ruins (in English referred to as The Old Summer Palace) have been fastidiously maintained as it was destroyed during the Second Opium War when French and British troops looted the city. Atrocities committed by colonial and Japanese troops are used constantly in speeches and Chinese filmmakers produce anti-Japanese films pertaining to two successive Japanese invasions as well as the atrocities committed by Japan (Lei, 2017).

While nationalism has seemingly worked to reinforce autocratic controls and stability in China, Chinese youth are becoming increasingly intolerant, which can be linked not only to the vast propaganda in China but also to the education system that alters and omits the narrative as the Communist Party sees fit. The problem with this is that nationalism can be either dangerous or beneficial and can (and has) lead to neighbours and international states becoming wary of Chinese intentions and their rise to power (Xiangwei, 2017). This can be seen in the South and East China Seas where states are unwilling to enter into joint ventures with China.

3.5.2. China’s rise as a superpower

One of China’s most well-known IR academics, Shen Dingli, has stated that,

In 10 years’ time, our (China) GDP will be bigger than the US, in 20 years our military spending will be equal to the US, 30 to 40 years from now, our armed forces will be better than the US. Why would the US defend those rocks? When you have power, the world has to accept. The US is a superpower today, and it can do whatever it wants. When China is a superpower, the world will also have to accept it (French, 2015).

Chinese re-emergence as a global economic power is remarkable considering its economy was decimated. Dynamic growth started in the 1950s with agrarian reform and in the 1980s it opened its economy to large scale foreign direct investment.
China’s unrivalled and sustained growth in the manufacturing sector enabled it to launch the regime’s export strategy that has made China one of world’s largest creditors, holding $1.1 trillion in US federal debt. In 2010, China replaced America and Europe as the largest trading partner for numerous states in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Petras, 2012).

In 2016, in a bid to reduce Asian dependence on western international banks, China launched the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), much to the dismay of the USA that attempted to block its allies from joining the AIIB. A variety of the USA’s closest allies have joined the AIIB, including; Australia, Israel, Britain and South Korea (Perlez: 2015). In conjunction with the new bank, China has also introduced its “One Belt, One Road” programme which would witness the construction of a network of infrastructure along the old Silk Road route. This route runs from Central Asia into Europe (Perlez: 2015).

At its current momentum, China is steadily on the way to becoming the world’s leading global economic power.

3.6. Obstacles and incentives to resolving the conflict over oil

3.6.1. Obstacles and incentives

The first major obstacle to resolving the South and East China Sea dispute is China’s challenge to US power in the region. The second major obstacle applicable only to the South China Sea is the Chinese approach to resolving the conflict with bilateral deals instead of a multilateral deal.

Traditionally, since the end of WWII, the USA has been the regional power in Asia Pacific and has promoted a liberal rule-based order since the Pacific war. With the American presence, the stage was set for economic growth and regional peace and prosperity without the threat of repeated war. The USA attempted (and largely succeeded) to settle any maritime and territorial disputes within the framework of international law through negotiation. The regional stability allowed for the cultivation
and development of trade and regional cooperation, which most of the South and East China Sea states have benefited from (Buszynski, 2009: 175-177).

This is how the USA views the region. It is for this reason that the USA sees China’s rising power and militaristic approach in both the East and South China Seas as a major concern. The USA views China’s aspirations as detrimental to the current regional order and the security of Japan, South Korea and the Philippines. The USA sees maintaining its geopolitical position as integral to the regional system and a ‘defender’ of smaller states and their claims which are supported by the UNCLOS (Buszynski, 2009: 175-177).

In total contrast, China views America as interfering in an area where the USA has no inherent rights and that the USA’s sole aim in the region is to thwart Chinese ambitions of becoming not only a regional hegemon but also a global superpower. It is easy to see that for China, the USA should abandon its interests in the area and allow China to claim its historical rights in terms of land and regional power (Buszynski and Sazlan, 2007: 155).

However, one major obstacle faces the USA as it tries to force China to abide by the UNCLOS and this obstacle is the USA’s failure to ratify the Law of the Sea Treaty. China monopolises on the basis that the USA has not signed or ratified the treaty as a whole. The USA’s very position is undercut as Beijing refuses to even acknowledge the UNCLOS tribunal ruling that favoured the Philippines and the other claimants. In June 2016, former President Barack Obama advised congress to ratify the UNCLOS stating that “If we’re truly concerned about China’s actions in the South China Sea, the Senate should help strengthen our case by approving the Law of the Sea Convention, as our military leaders have urged” (Buszynski and Sazlan: 2007).

The two defence treaties - the 1951 US-Philippines Mutual Defence Treaty and the 1954 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security - are also of concern. These two treaties would force the USA to defend both the Philippines and Japan if China had to go to war in either the South or East China Seas (Kim, 1982: 310-312).
However intractable the situation seems, the incentives for a peaceful resolution to the situation far outstrip the incentives for war. The South and East China Seas are considered to be one of the last untapped areas rich in hydrocarbons (a major source of tensions discussed in the next section). Hence it is imperative that a multilateral – not bilateral – agreement is reached as it would aid in a peaceful region. At present, China favours bilateral agreements which the smaller claimants in the South China Sea do not favour due to mistrust of China’s true intentions. The incentive for ASEAN to strengthen its status as a regional organisation is paramount to easing territorial disputes (Tong, 2016). Although a binding multilateral code of conduct could be used to ease tensions of all natures in the region, the lack of consensus among ASEAN member states (China) has hindered any potential progress thus far (Kurlantzick, 2011).

3.7. The role of oil in the South and East China Seas conflicts

Although China has repeatedly stated that their claims over the islands in the South and East China Sea stem from historical rights, potential oil and gas reserves undoubtedly play a role in the region’s desirability. Although the South and East China Seas conflicts are two separate conflicts, both conflicts have heavily monopolised the media since 2009. The similarities between the two conflicts are significant. In both disputes, the challenging claimant is China. The second similarity (arguably the driver of the conflict) is that both disputes involve vast untapped deep-sea hydrocarbons. Third, both conflicts involved an American ally that it is bound to protect should a war breakout. Finally, both involve international law issues (Forsyth, 2015: 3). The differences between the two conflicts are that South China Sea is a multilateral issue and the East China Sea is bilateral. The second issue is that the South China Sea dispute has been taken to international adjudication. The third issue, and one of the more important differences, is that Japan is a formidable opponent to China as compared to nations in the South China Sea (Forsyth, 2015: 3).
In order to examine whether or not both or either of these two conflicts could erupt into a ‘hot war’ and which would be more catastrophic, the levels of analysis are used.

3.7.1. Levels of analysis South China Sea

I. System level

The system level of analysis examines the international system and can be divided into parts – the structure (the distribution of power) and the process (patterns and types of interaction between states).

The current structure in the South China Sea is hegemonic in nature, with the USA being the superpower in the region since the end of WWII.

China is a rising power in the region that is challenging the status quo. At the structural level, the lack of hydrocarbon development is due to two factors; the first being the territorial conflict in the South China Sea and the second being the previous lack of deep-water technology needed for deep water off-shore oil and gas exploration and exploitation (Weinberger, 2015: 17).

Within the process level of the South China Sea, four key changes can be seen that are affecting the already fragile stability of the South China Sea:

The first major change that altered the power balance in the South China Sea was the formation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the subsequent ratification thereof by the nations in the South China Sea. The UNCLOS made it important for small and even uninhabited islands to be claimed as it would extend a country’s EEZ. The South China Sea is not an exception to the above as states are claiming the Paracel and Spratly island chains. China, Vietnam, Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan have all claimed various parts of the South China Sea in accordance with the UNCLOS, expect for China who is demanding the South China Sea according to the nine-dashed line (based on a map by the Chinese nationalist party of 1947). The subsequent limitations of the UNCLOS are apparent
in the award in favour of the Philippines. China refuses to acknowledge the award on the grounds that China did not participate in the tribunal. The USA has not ratified the UNCLOS, which gives the USA very little leverage in forcing China to adhere to the UNCLOS tribunal judgment (Song, 2015).

The second issue, as mentioned previously, is that the current climate in the South China Sea is a result of WWII and US involvement in the region as a superpower. The USA has a security treaty ally in the South China Sea and is bound by the treaty to protect the Philippines should China wage war due to the island chains.

China has been steadily increasing its navy and military in the region since the 1980s and has clearly stated that it believes that it has historical rights to the South and East China Seas regardless of the UNCLOS. The militarisation of some of the islands is an indication that China views the Paracel and Spratly islands as integral to its strategic and national interests. China also views US involvement in the region as a direct attempt to thwart China’s rise to regional and global superpower status. China views their rise to superpower status as inevitable (Buszynski, 2017).

Oil, the third major issue, can be viewed in two parts. The first part is China’s and other South China Sea state’s strategic need for reliable and continuous oil and gas sources. The second part is the possibility of oil and gas reserves in the South China Sea. The existence of possible energy resources in the South China Sea has exacerbated territorial claims. The South China Sea has come to be viewed as necessary for acquiring the energy sources needed for the South China Sea nations to thrive economically. The Sea’s “undersea resources are subject to overlapping and contested claims, and the states involved in these maritime disputes appear prepared to employ military force in defence of what they view as vital national interests” (Klare, 2002: 109). A US government report has suggested that the South China Sea may hold approximately 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. China estimates the reserves to be much higher at 125 billion barrels of oil and 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas (Muscolino, 2013: 81). China
consumes 12799 thousand barrels per day while Taiwan consumes 1051, Malaysia consumes 803, Philippines 455 and Brunei 16 (BP Statistical Review, 2018a).

It is for this reason that states in the South China Sea have started to view the natural gas and oil reserves in the South China Sea as a zero-sum game and the need to exploit these resources first is exacerbated. According to the US Geological Survey in 2010, “there is a 95% chance that there is at least 750 million barrels of oil in the South China Sea Platform, a median chance of around 2000 million barrels, and a low probability (5%) of over 5000 million barrels” (Daiss, 2018).

Finally, technological advancements in offshore hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation has aided in raising tensions. The current increasing demand for oil has led gas and oil companies to search in previously untapped areas due to this.

II. Domestic level

At the domestic level, fossil fuels and the rising demand of oil and gas in China is spurring the nation’s need to find alternative sources. At present, China imports oil from the Persian Gulf, Russia, Angola, Iran, Iraq and Venezuela – countries subject to political instability, civil unrest, price volatility and supply disruption (Weinberger, 2015: 17). China’s government refers to the South China Sea as the ‘Second Persian Gulf’ and it is due to the belief that there are vast untapped hydrocarbons in the South China Sea that China will not only continue to militarise the area but also to defend it, possibly by force (Daiss, 2018). In 2010, the Chinese Government publicised that the South China Sea would be a “core interest” to China, which places the South China Sea on par with Taiwan and Tibet in terms of national sovereignty. Although China has stated that the development of offshore hydrocarbons would be a joint effort, the South China Sea states are wary as they would be forced to accept China’s sovereignty over the South China Sea. China’s strategic oil security policy is based on supply, availability, diversity and reliability and these are in line with its goals in the South and East China Sea. The US Energy Information Administration has estimated that the South China Sea would be more viable for its natural gas as opposed to its crude oil resources due to the extensive
geological, political and technological challenges of hydrocarbon development (EIA, 2013).

China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) along with China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec) and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) are in charge of the exploration and exploitation of the South China Sea’s oil and gas resources. CNOOC actions in the South China Sea account for one third of its daily oil production of around 193,000 barrels per day. In 2011, CNOOC completed construction on its most advanced deep-water oil drilling platform and this drill is responsible for locating and developing deep-sea hydrocarbon reserves (EIA, 2013).

Domestically, Brunei has been producing oil since 1972 and the government is prioritising locating new reserves as the older fields are declining. Since Malaysia and Brunei were able to resolve their offshore territorial disputes, Brunei’s National Petroleum Company along with Malaysia’s PETRONAS Company have entered a joint development and production agreement (EIA, 2013).

The Philippines is driven to seek oil and gas reserves in the China Sea due to increasing domestic demand for hydrocarbons. The Philippines began offshore oil exploration in the 1970s. It was not until the oil crisis in 1973 that exploration of the Reed Bank materialised and the global increase in oil prices made exploration of the bank a cost-benefit. When word got out that the Philippines was drilling for gas, China and Vietnam protested. Both China and Vietnam lay claim to the Reed Bank, arguing that it falls within their territories. China went further and warned that China has “indisputable sovereignty over these islands and their adjacent sea area and that the resources belong to China... Any foreign country’s armed invasion and occupation...or exploitation of oil...is impermissible” (Muscolino, 2013: 87).

It is important to note that, in the South China Sea, competition it is not only based on a state’s territorial claim but also on that state’s ability and capacity to access these hydrocarbons. If, like the Reed Bank, the cost outweighs the ability to generate a profit from the hydrocarbons, the competition would most likely fade away. If
smaller claimants are economically or technologically incapable of exploring and exploiting deep offshore hydrocarbons, they require partnerships with foreign oil and gas companies. In contrast, China today (unlike during the 1970s) is economically and technologically in a position to explore and exploit hydrocarbons and this adds a new factor to the transitional dynamics of resource exploitation in the South China Sea (Muscolino, 2013: 100).

III. Individual level
The individual level examines the region’s hegemon in order to analyse the hegemon’s propensity and possibility for war.

China’s President, Xi Jinping, has achieved a remarkable consolidation of political power in only 5 years as president of China. Although Chinese foreign policy has become more assertive since 2009, Xi Jinping’s maritime and territorial policy has ramped up Chinese ‘aggression’ with regard to the South and East China Seas. Xi Jinping has boldly asserted power and prestige over the administrative machines of the state and his new approach can be examined in seven concentric circles (Rudd, 2018).

- Sovereignty of the party
- Harmony of the country
- Significance of maintainable economic growth balanced against ecological worries
- Monitoring China’s 14 border states
- Forecasting regional naval authority
- Investing its financial sovereignty across its continental periphery
- Steadily reforming parts of the post-war international rule-based order to fit China’s interests (Rudd, 2018).

From these, the fifth concentric circle is the most important for the purposes of this thesis. China has placed the South and East China Seas as one of its fundamental strategic interests alongside Tibet and Taiwan. The maritime conflicts in the South and East are considered by China and Xi Jinping to be the most hostile environment due to the USA’s military presence in the region, along with its allies - Japan, the Philippines and South Korea. Hence Jinping views these as wholly against the
interests of China. Ultimately, China’s maritime policy seeks to crack US alliances in the South and East China Seas. However, two views exist on whether China’s maritime actions are unsystematic or coordinated (Yamaguchi, 2016: 23). Chinese maritime actors can be divided into 5 actors: Maritime law enforcement agencies, local governments, CNOOC, Maritime Militia and the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Navy. While coordination is immensely difficult, Jinping’s power consolidation and reforms demonstrate greater control of these 5 maritime actors and their actual behaviour hints at increased cooperation amongst them (Yamaguchi, 2016: 24). Telling evidence of Xi Jinping’s influence is his participation in the drafting of the overall direction of policies since 2012 which stated that “We should enhance our capacity for exploiting marine resources, develop the marine economy and protect the marine ecological environment, resolutely safeguard China’s maritime rights and interests, and build China into a marine power” (Yamaguchi, 2016: 24).

In 2014, CNOOC established a deep water drilling rig 120 nautical miles (NM) off the coast of Vietnam and 17NM from Triton Island. The rig was accompanied by Chinese Coast Guard, Maritime Militia, PLA Navy vessels and engineering experts. What made this remarkable was that it was the first time China had approved drilling in an EEZ claimed by another nation. This feat would not have been done without the knowledge and approval of Xi Jinping. The land reclamation and militarisation on various Spratly Islands serve to strengthen China’s sovereignty claims and enhance its military might. The scale and speed at which the islands are being transformed are in line with Xi Jinping’s strategic plans and decisions (Yamaguchi, 2016: 27 - 28). Xi Jinping’s influence on China’s maritime and foreign policy strategies cannot be underestimated. The aggressive nature with which China is challenging the USA demonstrates that China plans to change the status quo in the region.

3.7.2. Levels of analysis: East China Sea

I. System level

The structure in the East China Sea is that of two regional powers forming a bipolar system.
Within the process level of the East China Sea, five key changes can be seen affecting the already fragile stability of the East China Sea: 1) UNCLOS, 2) Chinese rise to power and its challenge to American dominance, 3) Chinese historical claims and 4) technological advancements are the same as the South China Sea. For that reason, only oil will be discussed as the fifth key change.

The two major differences between oil in the South China Sea and oil in the East China Sea are the quantities and demand. China is the second greatest consumer of crude oil globally behind the USA. Japan is the fourth largest consumer of crude oil globally. These two states are Asia’s largest energy consumers. This puts Japan and China’s need for diversifying their oil supply on par and in competition over the seemingly rich hydrocarbons at the bottom of the East China Sea. At present, oil estimates in the sea are around 100-160 billion barrels of oil. In terms of demand, it is thought that oil and gas estimates would be sufficient to meet at least 80 years of Chinese needs. Japan’s manganese needs would be sufficient for 320 years, cobalt would be sufficient for 1,300 years and there would be sufficient nickel for 100 years. Japan’s natural gas needs would be met for 100 years. This outlook suggests that should Japan or China gain control of these resources, the country would be transformed into a natural resource powerhouse (Huang, 2012).

The theory of resource scarcity is valid when it comes to oil and natural gas as globally these resources are being depleted. Geopolitics is a direct result of resource scarcity (Huang, 2012).

At present, China’s position is favourable in terms of exploiting hydrocarbons in the East China Sea. This is due to most oil and gas fields in the East China Sea being either entirely or mostly in undisputed Chinese maritime territory. Comparatively, China is far less aggressive towards Japan in the East China Sea as it is towards Vietnam and the Philippines in the South China Sea. The reasons for this are twofold; first, Japan is a formidable military opponent (as compared to Vietnam and the Philippines) and second, Japan is a US treaty ally. While the Philippines is also a security treaty ally of the USA, they are only bound to consult one another. In the
case of Japan, it has been publicly acknowledged by the USA that they would be bound by the treaty should China use military force to reclaim the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands (Forsyth, 2015:7). China also realises that a war with Japan would not only be deadly in terms of lives lost but also costly to China’s global reputation. Although, in theory, it is, in part, due to Japan’s military strength that China is weary to start a war, it would be detrimental to the South China Sea should these nations increase their military strength and quality (Forsyth, 2015: 13).

II. Domestic level
Domestically, the East China Sea is considered tactical for Japan. To the north, the East China Sea protects the Tsushima Strait, which leads to the Sea of Japan. In the South of the East China Sea is Taiwan, a thorny issue between China and the USA. Japan’s apparent increasing nationalism is also viewed with concern by China who fears a revival of Japanese militarism. Chinese research and naval vessels make regular incursions to the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands and this has become a severe national political problem in Japan and is causing strain on relations between China and Japan (Valencia, 2007: 130).

Major issues in the early 2000s altered Japan’s perception of China and for the first time Japan viewed China as a threat and suggested various threat scenarios involving the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. It is significant that nationalist domestic policies are generally a prime factor in the East and South maritime disputes (Valencia, 2007: 166).

III. Individual level
China
(See above)

3.8. Conclusion
The South and East China Seas are complex conflicts due to the historical claims made by not only China but also by the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and
Taiwan in the South China Sea conflict and by Japan and China in the East China Sea conflict.

China’s aggressive stance on the reclamation and militarisation of the Paracel and Spratly islands demonstrates a change in China’s foreign policies since the election of President Xi Jinping. Chinese aspirations of re-emergence as the regional hegemon are evident through its policies and relations with other South China Sea neighbours in addition to the blatant disregard for the UNCLOS and its tribunal favouring the Philippines. China has made it clear that it will act in whatever way it sees fit in the South China Sea. China has clearly stated that it believes that the USA has no right to be in the South China Sea and views the freedom of navigation as a tool the West uses to encroach on the sovereign rights of China.

The role oil plays in both conflicts cannot be underestimated. It is deeply entwined with China’s historical claims. China needs oil and natural gas and it requires a stable supply for its needs to be met and growth to occur. It is for this reason that China (along with the other claimants of both seas) are moving towards deep offshore exploration and exploitation.

At the current momentum, it seems inevitable that China is prepared to go to war over these resources not necessarily because China is war hungry, rather due to the number of military actors from different nations in the South and East China Sea. Nationalistic domestic politics is egging the already tense situation into dangerous territory as neither of the nations can back down out of fear of seeming weak back home.

While the East China Sea appears more predisposed to a hot war, it is less likely that China will wage war against Japan, not only due to Japan’s military prowess but also due to the strong relationship and treaty between Japan and the USA. For these reasons, a war in the South Sea is more likely due to the military weakness of the South China Sea states. It is apparent that China has been pushing hard to see what the South China Sea states will do if China forcibly takes the Paracel and Spratly
islands. Thus far very little has been done by the South China Sea states besides international arbitration which China has elected to ignore without many repercussions.
CHAPTER 4: THE HYDRO-POLITICS OF THE NILE RIVER

4.1. Introduction
Chapter three examined the role of oil in the South and East China Seas conflict. This chapter will use the analytical framework outlined in Chapter two to investigate the second of this dissertation’s three case studies: hydro-politics and the role it plays in international (interstate) conflicts. The chapter will start by discussing water as a natural resource. It will examine the importance and role of water in society and the legality of water sources. From here, the historical and political context of the conflict between Egypt and other African states on the Nile River will be discussed. Next, the main actors and third parties involved will be discussed, including their positions and perspectives. Thereafter, the other possible contributing factors will be examined, followed by the incentives and obstacles to utilising water fairly and efficiently in the region. Finally, the role of water in the conflict is examined by utilising the three levels of analysis in international relations.

4.2. Natural resource: Water
Water is the most valuable natural resource as it connects every aspect of life. The earth’s surface, around 70% thereof, is covered in water, while 97% of water is located in the oceans. Only 3% of water is fresh water, of which 2% is frozen in glaciers and ice in the North and South poles. The 1% that is available for consumption is mostly groundwater. Therefore, only a small amount of water is potentially accessible for human consumption (NASA, 2018). It is not hard to see or to understand why the planet is facing a water crisis. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2017), there are 2.1 billion people globally that are not able to access drinkable and safe water. Water can also destroy societies in physical ways. For example:

The vast majority of natural disasters (over 90 per cent) are water related, including drought, flood and tropical storms, with significant impact on societies and the economy (UNEP, 2018).

Water affects every aspect of life, including commerce (trade), economics, and even peace or war within and between countries.
4.2.1. The importance, role and challenges facing water

“Experts agree: if there was no access to water, there would be no world peace” (BBC, 2017). The reason for this is the importance and the role that water plays in the world. If fresh water supplies were interrupted, the very existence of humankind would be jeopardised (Waddington, 2012: 5).

The economic effect of freshwater is paramount. Without access to clean freshwater, states would struggle to develop. This is due to the limitation of developing various sectors such as agriculture and industry. It is estimated that 4000 km$^3$ are consumed by humans annually, with around 69% of that total being utilised by the agricultural industry (FAO, 2014).

Freshwater, as mentioned previously, is limited as it is constantly moving through the hydrological cycle. As such, one of the greatest challenges facing the modern world is the maintenance of global water supplies.

On a health level, unsafe or contaminated drinking water can result in a variety of waterborne diseases, causing approximately two million deaths worldwide each year (WHO, 2017). Contaminated water can transmit a variety of diseases, which include cholera, dysentery, polio, typhoid and diarrhoea. This is due to the mismanagement of urban, industrial and agricultural wastewater. The WHO estimates that by 2025, more than half the global population will be residing in regions where the water system is under pressure (WHO, 2017). Furthermore, it is imperative to the economic growth and the subsequent reduction of poverty for a country’s water supply and sanitation to be improved.

The economic effect of unsafe water has ripple effects throughout the economy of a country. When water is readily accessible, people spend time physically collecting water. In most countries, women (and girls) are disproportionately affected by this as it is usually their responsibility to collect water. For women, this results in time away from school, their families or work (WHO, 2017).
4.2.2. International freshwater treaties and conventions

While there are many international treaties and laws for the safeguarding of the world’s oceans, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water, the only international convention that deals specifically with international freshwater sources is the Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (UNCLNUIW) of 1997. The convention’s scope is the use of international watercourses and the protection, preservation and management thereof. Article 5 of the convention highlights that:

Watercourse States shall in their respective territories utilize an international watercourse in an equitable and reasonable manner. In particular, an international watercourse shall be used and developed by watercourse States with a view to attaining optimal and sustainable utilization thereof and benefits therefrom, taking into account the interests of the watercourse States concerned, consistent with adequate protection of the watercourses. (Audiovisual Library of International Law, 2018)

However, by 2018, only 36 (UNTC, 2018) states had ratified the UNCLNUIW due to issues pertaining to the convention not recognising the special needs of developing countries situated upstream by favouring the downstream user instead (Zumerchik and Danver, 2010: 517).

Another international treaty, the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, was initially only open to countries in Europe and was adopted in 2003. However, since 2013, it has been open to all states that wish to use the mechanisms, good practises and management of international water systems. It is the only international treaty that is universally applicable. According to McCaffrey (in UN Legal, 1997), the treaty is important for the “strengthening of the rule of law in this increasingly critical field of international relations and to the protection and preservation of international watercourses”. The convention is steadily growing in membership, with 43 parties to the convention.
In 2010, the UN General Assembly unequivocally acknowledged the human right to water and sanitation. By acknowledging this human right, it has encouraged states to satisfy this basic human need and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The MDGs were agreed upon in 2000 by 189 countries which aimed at achieving eight measurable goals by 2015. In 2012, the Rio+20 conference on Sustainable Development galvanised efforts to create a new set of goals which would carry the MDGs beyond 2015. SDG ‘Goal 6’ specifically calls for nations to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” (UN).

4.3. Historical and political context of water conflict in Africa
The hydro-political conflict involving the River Nile is nearly a thousand years old. During a prolonged drought in the 11th Century in Egypt, the Egyptian Khalif beseeched the Ethiopian King to let the Nile River flow once more (Madani, Kheinheimer, Elimam and Connell-Buck, 2011: 98). The White Nile starts in the Equatorial Lakes region while the Blue Nile starts in the highlands of Eritrea and Ethiopia. The two converge in Sudan (NASA, 2013).

The hostilities between these two states have not ceased. Due to the extent of the river basin (thought to be the longest river in the world) that covers over 10% of the African continent, over 300 million individuals rely on the Nile River. Moreover, the population in the Horn of Africa region is growing dramatically and as such the need for safe and easily accessible water is a necessity for the region to develop (Madani et al, 2011:98). During the 19th Century, over 16 battles were fought between Egypt and Ethiopia in Egypt’s pursuit of a single unified basin under its control. As such, the goal of a single unified basin dominated Egyptian hydro-politics in the Horn of Africa (Madani et al, 2011:98). Hydro-politics continues to dominate the region today and tensions are continuously rising. Although the original conflict is mainly between Egypt and Ethiopia, the rapid regional growth of the region has resulted in 11 states (Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Eritrea and Uganda) having a stake in the freshwater resource. Map 4.1 below demonstrates the 11 states of the Nile River Basin. Egypt
has remained aggressive, not only in its use but also in the rhetoric used regarding sharing the Nile River. This has been exacerbated by the 1929 and 1959 treaties which shall be discussed next.

Map 4.1: The Nile River Basin

Source: World Bank (n.d.)

Egypt came under the control of Great Britain in 1884 to secure Britain's national interest in the Suez Canal. The other basin states were also split into spheres of
influence by colonial powers. Britain controlled Egypt, Sudan and East Africa – thus
controlling most of the Nile River. To protect its own national interests, Great Britain
had to ensure that Egypt received a reliable water supply for agricultural purposes
(cotton farming). In 1922, Egypt gained independence as a colony and in 1929,
Britain and Egypt signed the Nile Waters Agreement which would ensure the bulk of
the Nile River freshwater as well as water allocation went to the Sudan (Madani et
al., 2011: 99). In 1959, the agreement was renegotiated by Sudan and Egypt as the
water allocation of 1929 was insufficient for Sudan’s development. One major issue
shared by both treaties is the complete lack of allocation of Nile River freshwater
sources to other upstream nations. Considering that Egypt is a downstream nation, it
is problematic for them to control the Nile River. The two agreements, as mentioned
previously, gave Egypt complete control over the Nile River and as such Paragraph
27 of the 1929 Treaty stipulates:

Save with the previous agreement of the Egyptian Government, no irrigation or
power works or measures are to be constructed or taken on the River Nile or its
branches or on the lakes from which it flows, so far all these in Sudan or in countries
under British administration, which would, in such a manner as to entail any
prejudice to the interests of Egypt, either reduce the quantity of water arriving in
Egypt, or modify the date of its arrival, or lower level (quoted in Lumumba, 2007: 15).

Furthermore, the yearly projected discharge of the Nile River is around 84 billion
cubic metres (bcm). 10 bcm was considered seepage and evaporation and the treaty
allots 55 bcm of water to Egypt and 19 bcm to Sudan (Wolf and Newton, 2014).

Until now, the 1959 treaty remains the most recent treaty and is upheld by both
Egypt and Sudan, even though it does not make allocations for any of the upstream
riparian countries. Paragraph 27 quoted above demonstrates that these upstream
states are not allowed to construct any obstructions. As a result of the exclusionary
nature of the 1959 treaty, Ethiopia along with the other upstream nations do not
recognise the treaty. The main concern for Egypt regarding the construction of
obstructions by other upstream nations is that their water supply would be affected.
This is life or death as Egypt is extremely reliant on the Nile River as the Nile
provides more than 96% of the water used in Egypt annually (Abebe, 2014:31).
This exclusion by Egypt and Sudan of the upstream nations is wholly unsustainable and it was due to this that the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was formed in 2002. The purpose of the NBI is to promote cooperation and equitable use of the Nile River. The Nile Basin Sustainability Framework (NBSF) was accepted by the Nile Council of Ministers as a ‘policies, strategies and guidance’ document (NBI).

In 2011, Ethiopia started building the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) – which would be one of the biggest hydroelectrical dams in Africa once completed and would double the current electricity production of Ethiopia. The dam has also sparked greater tension between Egypt and Ethiopia (Adam, 2018). The Ethiopian Minister of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, Seleshi Bekele, emphasised (BBC, 2018):

> It's one of the most important flagship projects for Ethiopia...It's not about control of the flow but providing opportunity for us to develop ourselves through energy development. It has a lot of benefit for the downstream countries.

By 2018, the dam was approximately two-thirds finished, and Egypt cannot stop the construction of the dam, except by taking military action which would result in a war between Egypt and Ethiopia (ENCA, 2018).

4.3.1. Stakeholder analysis tool

The Stakeholder analysis tool examines the stakeholders in terms of their interests, issues, capacities as well as their sources of power.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Means of power/ Influence</th>
<th>Willingness to negotiate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Country is drought stricken. Not allowed to build dams or reservoirs. One of the poorest nations globally. Aggressive neighbouring state.</td>
<td>As a riparian state, right to develop water sources. Treaties between Egypt and Sudan are not valid.</td>
<td>Developing water obstructions in order to construct hydroelectrical plants and provide water to the public. Development of the agricultural sector.</td>
<td>Ethiopia’s means of power is in its geography and its bargaining power.</td>
<td>Ethiopia is extremely willing to negotiate with both Egypt and Sudan. The Nile Basin Initiative was created in order to negotiate and provide alternatives to the current status quo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>The water received from the Nile would be affected if any water obstructions are built in other riparian states. This would affect all aspects of Egypt.</td>
<td>Willing to go to war to protect its Nile River interests. Cannot afford to lose any water due to the building of the dam in Ethiopia.</td>
<td>Preserving the status quo that ensures Egypt controls the Nile and gets the vast majority of water from the Nile.</td>
<td>Basin hegemon. In relation to other riparian states and Sudan, it has powers in all dimensions.</td>
<td>Egypt is unwilling to negotiate as Egypt believes this would mean a diminished share in its Nile River water sources. Egypt is fearful that negotiating with Ethiopia and the other riparian states would result in a water shortage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Apparent support for Ethiopia and other riparian states to negotiate a new treaty.</td>
<td>Support for the negotiation of a new treaty that would benefit everyone in the region.</td>
<td>Support for Ethiopia comes as the Renaissance Dam is close to the borders with Sudan. Cheap hydroelectricity is expected from Ethiopia. Continued use and increase in use of the Nile.</td>
<td>Sudan’s means of power is in its geography, material power and bargaining power.</td>
<td>Sudan is willing to negotiate not only to ensure a bigger slice of the pie but also to benefit from the hydroelectricity that would be generated from the Renaissance dam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other upstream countries</td>
<td>Not allowed to build dams or reservoirs. Some of the poorest nations globally.</td>
<td>As a riparian state, right to develop water sources. Treaties between Egypt and Sudan are not valid.</td>
<td>Ability to develop water sources and provide water and sanitation to citizens as well as develop the agricultural sector.</td>
<td>Power as a collective.</td>
<td>Much like Ethiopia, other riparian states would stand to boost their economy through developing water systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4. Various actors involved

This section examines the next of the six key areas, framing each case study and includes the perspectives and responses of the three key actors in the conflict over the Nile River as well as the positions of the other riparian states.

4.4.1. The Egyptian perspective and response

Egypt has had control of the Nile for centuries and this control was solidified by the 1929 Nile Water Agreement in which Egypt and Sudan (both British colonies) would split the Nile sources, with Egypt guaranteed 55 bcm and Sudan 19 bcm. This agreement, as well as the renegotiations in 1959, wholly excluded the other upstream riparian states from any water allocations. These agreements also stipulated that any construction or changes regarding the Nile have to get the approval of Egypt, even though it is a downstream state. One of the reasons for this control is Egypt’s near 100% reliance on the Nile water for the agricultural and industrial sectors as well as all other spheres. Herodotus (the Greek historian) recorded in the fifth Century B.C. that “Egypt is a gift of the Nile” (Swain, 1997: 676). Out of its 55 bcm annually, nearly all it is utilised. For this reason, Mohamed Abdel Aty, Egypt’s Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, emphasised in response to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam that:

We are responsible for a nation of about 100 million...If the water that's coming to Egypt reduced by 2% we would lose about 200,000 acres of land. One acre at least makes one family survive. A family in Egypt is average family size about five persons. So this means about one million will be jobless. It (the Renaissance dam) is an international security issue (BBC, 2018).

Egypt has also issued threats to Ethiopia and gone as far to ensure domestic instability in Ethiopia in order to ensure their continuous dominance over the Nile River. Former Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat, stated on May 13 1978 that “any action that would endanger the waters of the Blue Nile will be faced with a firm reaction on the part of Egypt, even if that action should lead to war” (quoted in Samaan, 2019: 109). Furthermore, it is noted that Egypt is still pursuing
expansionism and it views its southern neighbours as part of its sphere of influence. Egypt is essentially attempting to hinder the development of other riparian states in order to ensure no other state is able to rise and challenge Egypt's power and control over the Nile (Kendie, 1999:141). Hence, it is understandable why Egypt's foreign policy has been substantially influenced by hydro-politics. Although Egypt has not publicly admitted whether or not one of its foreign policy initiatives is to destabilise Ethiopia, the fact that Egyptian politicians were caught suggesting hostile acts to stop the building of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam speaks volumes (Maher, 2013). Egyptian politicians were live on television in May 2013, carelessly discussing options such as utilising the Egyptian Special Forces to hinder the progress of the dam by means of destruction, supporting dissident groups fighting against the Ethiopian government and even sending fighter jets. The politicians later stated that they were unaware that the broadcast was live (The National, 2013). Needless to say, this caused alarm internationally and the leader of the Egyptian secular Reform and Development party, Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat, apologised officially and stated that “…the statements made during the meeting do not represent the Egyptian official stance. It was just a chat between politicians who were angered by Ethiopian plans” (Maher, 2013). It is clear that military action has been discussed as an option for Egypt. In 2017, Egypt’s President, el-Sisi, declared that, “No one can touch Egypt’s water...(it is) a matter of life and death” (Barfi, 2018).

4.4.2. The Ethiopian perspective and response

From the Ethiopian people’s perspective, the 1929 and 1959 Nile Water Agreements are not valid or fair as these treaties do not make water allocations for the upstream riparian states. These treaties also do not allow for any obstructions. Therefore, even though Ethiopia is a state through which the Blue Nile flows to Egypt, it cannot use the water sources to develop their country. As such, the Ethiopian government started the GERD project that would see Ethiopia emerge as a hydroelectrical energy giant in Africa. Energy, coupled with one of the biggest dams globally, would propel Ethiopia into a hegemonic seat and a regional power.
Talks between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan on possible water shortages because of the dam have broken down a number of times since Ethiopia announced its GERD project.

Recently, the death of the chief engineer of the GERD project, along with the announcement that the dam could take another 10 years to complete, has stoked anger in Ethiopia (Getachew, 2018; John, 2018).

4.4.3. Sudan’s perspective

Relations between Egypt and Sudan have been increasingly strained, not only due to Sudan’s support for the GERD but also due to the water allocations for Sudan (which Sudan deems as unfair) and the Hala’ib Triangle border dispute (20500 km of land on the Egyptian-Sudanese border) (Adam, 2018).

Sudan supports the GERD because of the benefit of potentially cheaper energy it can buy from Ethiopia, as well as the drafting of a new Nile agreement that would possibly benefit Sudan with an increase in water allocations. The Ethiopia-Sudan alliance is increasing Egypt’s fear as Ethiopian and Sudanese military chiefs have agreed to use force if necessary to protect the GERD project (Shaban, 2018).

4.4.4. Other upstream states

The eight other upstream riparian states have argued that, as they are not party to the Nile Agreement between Egypt and Sudan, they are not bound by the agreement. Furthermore, these states argue that the agreement places them at the mercy of Egypt, which is a downstream riparian state. The consensus between these eight states is that they are in favour of a new comprehensive agreement regarding the governing of the Nile River, in agreement with the NBI (Nile Basin Initiative) (Kimenyi and Mbaku, 2018). The NBI is directed by a common vision: “To achieve sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilisation of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin resources” (World Bank, 2009).
4.4.5. Third party perspectives

Various UN agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), have demonstrated support for an equitable and sustainable management of the Nile River Basin that would benefit all affected riparian states. UNDP and UNEP have funded the NBI in an effort to have all riparian states take on a shared benefit view as opposed to a state-centric view (Karyabwite, 2000: 40). Amongst the UN Permanent 5, the United Kingdom (UK), France and the United States of America (USA) are considered bilateral partners for the development of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI).

The UK government has stated that they:

...support the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), a partnership of nine of the 10 countries that share the Nile, which seeks to ensure that the water resources of the Nile are equitably and sustainably managed (UK Parliament, 2008).

As France is one of the donors of the NBI, the French Development Agency (AFD), a French public financial institution, supported the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme (NELSAP) (one of the NBI investment programmes) by granting one million Euros to the programme. The AFD supports technical assistance in four areas, namely:

• The definition of a strategic approach to financial empowerment;
• Support for the establishment of a future reorganisation of the basin;
• The maintenance and upgrading of NELSAP’s information systems by acquiring new tools;
• The strengthening of NELSAP’s regulation of dam safety (Embassy of France in Uganda, 2015).

The USA has made no official statements regarding the NBI or GERD, although it is a donor member of the NBI. It is significant to note the importance the USA places on its relations with Egypt and this will be discussed later in this chapter.
China’s involvement and support for the GERD has emerged from resilient bilateral relationships concerning the two countries. China is not only the largest foreign investor in Ethiopia, but also its biggest trading partner. The Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia recently stated that Chinese companies are being encouraged to invest in Ethiopia’s energy sector, specifically wind and hydro energy (Xinhua, 2018). While Russia has not publicly supported either the NBI or the GERD, or sided with Egypt, it would seem Russia is trying to maintain its good relations with both Egypt and Ethiopia. This is due to Russia trying to re-establish its sphere of influence in Africa, and more specifically the Horn of Africa. During the Cold War period, Russia (then Soviet Union) financed and built the Egyptian Aswan Dam (Copp, 1986: 89). Egypt has, since the Cold War period, been an important strategic partner for Russia. More recently, relations between the two states have increased with Russia supporting Egyptian President Sisi’s ousting of the Muslim Brotherhood and Egypt supporting Russia’s role in Syria (BBC, 2014a). Russia is also interested in investing in the Ethiopian energy sector with the Russian Foreign Minister stating that:

Russia sees huge opportunities to elevate its cooperation with Ethiopia at bilateral, regional and international levels. And it is also desirous to serve additional boosts to Ethiopia’s infrastructural development such as hydropower, energy and others (Gebrehiwot and Gebregzabiher, 2018).

The World Bank has been a staunch supporter of the NBI since its inception in 1999. Along with the 10 riparian states (excluding Egypt) and the International Consortium for Cooperation on the Nile (ICCON), which includes countries such as Canada, Germany, the UK, the USA, the NBI has created a common vision programme that aims to attain maintainable socio-economic growth through equal use of the Nile Basin (NBI).

Furthermore, the role of the World Bank in the NBI consists of support in the form of four areas:

- Enable the political procedure of engagement;
• Technical aid and developmental support at both nationwide and transboundary level;
• Endorse, prepare, package, and organise investment funding;
• Explore/investigate issues such as water resources and finance, benefits of collaboration, and ground-breaking economic tools amongst other enterprises (World Bank, 2004).

In January 2018, Egypt proposed that the World Bank act as a neutral mediator in the stalled discussions with Ethiopia and Sudan regarding the construction of GERD. Egypt maintains that “…this would allow Egypt to expose the stalled negotiations and disclose Egyptian concerns before the international community” (Aman, 2018). Ethiopia has, however, rejected the suggestion, stating that “seeking professional support is one thing, transferring (arbitration) to an institution is another thing” (Engineering News, 2018).

The European Union (EU) has supported the NBI over the last 15 years, and in 2017 it granted the NBI $15.8 million with the purpose of supporting and cultivating water administration knowledge and the development of sustainability and cooperation among the riparian states (Ghebrehiwot, 2017). The EU Action Document for the Programme for Transboundary Water Management in the Nile River Basin states that support for the NBI is a direct contribution towards conflict prevention (European Commission, 2017: 2).

Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (the former Chairperson of the African Union (AU)), advocated in 2013 that:

On the road to negotiations or cooperation, Ethiopia and Egypt should look at the win-win situation in a new context, that is, not in the context of colonial powers, but in the context of Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance (Yassin, 2013).

While the AU represents a mechanism that could aid in the sustainability, cooperation, use and management of the Nile, it has so far failed in its mandate and the Nile conflict persists and strengthens. This is due in part to the ideological approach the AU has taken as seen in the above quote. The other reason that the
AU has failed to mitigate the Nile conflict is due to the power relations of the downstream and upstream riparian states within the AU (Carroll, 1999:279). According to Leijenaar (2017), around 15% of the AU’s general budget is financed by Egypt and the Arab states, and these Arab states support the position of Egypt. The AU has so far been unable to decrease tensions or take a leading role in the NBI or GERD negotiations.

4.5. Other contributing factors

4.5.1. Nationalism

The GERD has become a symbol of nationalism – much like the Aswan Dam for the Egyptians – as Ethiopia attempts to establish itself both regionally and internationally. Ethiopian nationalism has emerged from various historical experiences. These experiences include Egyptian hydro-hegemony, conflicts with Sudan and Somalia and the Eritrean independence war. The domestic issues of poverty and famine due to prolonged droughts have only increased nationalism (Gebrewold, 2009: 80). Similarly, since the Arab Spring, Egyptian nationalism is on the rise as el-Sisi attempts to bolster his legitimacy by recalling the nationalist legacy of Egypt’s second president, Nasser. El-Sisi’s nationalist rhetoric is focused on national security by strengthening Egypt’s ties with Israel and restoring diplomatic ties with the USA (Elbenni, 2017).

4.5.2. Geopolitics

The diversity of the Nile riparian states has allowed for proxy politics to emerge. The importance of the Horn of Africa and Egypt to the international community is evident from the presence of the USA, China and the increasing presence of Russia. The “new scramble for Africa” (Volman, 2009: 7) is due to the continent’s energy and natural resources.

China’s interests in Africa are comparable to those of other major foreign actors, especially with regard to oil as China aims to diversify its energy and raw material
imports. One of the major differences between Chinese and EU investment in Africa is the Chinese principle of non-interference, which allows Beijing to cooperate economically and militarily with undemocratic states. China imports (around 80%) four main commodities from Africa – oil, iron ore, diamonds and wood – and Africa provides China with about 30% of its oil imports. It is therefore understandable that the increasing dependence of China on Africa has resulted in cultivating good relations with African states. One method China uses is to increasingly establish itself as a donor country (Dreher and Fuchs, 2011: 6).

Throughout the Cold War, the Soviet Union had significant influence and power in Africa as a superpower. However, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia ultimately withdrew from Africa. In the last decade, Russia has sought to re-establish its presence in Africa. This is not necessarily for oil or gas as Russia is one of the major oil and gas producers in the world, but rather to control the supply of natural gas and oil to Europe from Africa (Volman, 2009: 12). Russia has gained particular traction in Egypt due to weakening ties with the USA because of the ousting of the Muslim Brotherhood by current President Sisi. As a result, relations have proved fruitful. Most recently, Russia and Egypt signed a 50-year agreement in which Russia can establish a Russian Industrial Zone, which is important to Russia as it faces continued sanctions from the EU and USA. Other areas of cooperation between Russia and Egypt include the signing of a nuclear power plant deal (Russia would provide a $25 billion loan), arms sales and strategic cooperation which would allow the utilisation of one another’s air space and military airbases. This deal demonstrates the increasing military presence of Russia in Africa. Importantly, the purchase of a 30% stake in Egypt’s Zohr gas field by Russian oil giant Rosnett also demonstrates the increasing influence Russia is seeking in their bid to maintain their power over Europe (Paraskova, 2017).

The USA views the increasing influence and presence of China and Russia as a direct challenge to American interests in Africa. The USA imports over 30% of Africa’s total oil and in 2002, Africa’s oil was defined as a strategic national interest for the USA. By declaring it a strategic national interest, the USA has committed to
using any means necessary to protect these interests, including military force (Volman, 2009: 14). Ultimately, the USA sees Africa as vital to its national security as transnational threats of terrorism, weak governance, poverty and civil conflicts allow for terrorism and criminal activities to develop. Comparatively, China (as mentioned before) is gaining a foothold in Africa due to increased trade and foreign direct investment in the area. The USA has underinvested in a continent that would by 2050, constitute a quarter of the world’s populace (Harris, 2017: 1). In terms of Egypt and Ethiopia, the deteriorating relationship between Egypt and the USA has opened the door for Russia to step in and to strengthen relations with Egypt. Similarly, China has gained influence in Ethiopia through various energy programmes and trade (Colonna, 2017).

4.6. Obstacles and incentives to resolving the conflict over water

4.6.1. Obstacles and incentives

Obstacles to resolving the water conflict can be summed up as colonial agreements, decreasing water supply, and population growth.

The Nile River Basin (as well as the natural resource of water) is the main driver in the conflict amongst upstream and downstream riparian states. As mentioned previously, the current status quo of Egypt as the hydro-hegemon is due to various colonial agreements dating back to 1891 with the delimitation of spheres of influence between Britain and Italy to the 1929 and 1959 agreements which would divide the Nile River Basin resources between Egypt and Sudan. Britain had control over most of the Nile riparian states and sought to secure Egyptian interests due to Egypt's cotton industry (Tvedt, 2011).

The other reason for excluding the upstream riparian states was the thought that the upstream states had rainy equatorial environments and so did not need the Nile for irrigation. However, as has been evident, some upstream riparian states such as Ethiopia have been suffering from recurring and prolonged droughts. This is crippling Ethiopia as its populace is rapidly increasing, yet most of the population does not
have access to clean drinkable water or sanitation. Ethiopia has a population of around 105 million people (CIA World Factbook, 2018) and around 61 million Ethiopians do not have access to safe drinking water and around 65 million lack access to enhanced sanitation. Staggeringly, around 27 million Ethiopians practice open defecation (WHO, 2017).

Deaths from water-related diseases are also costing upstream riparian states, not only monetarily but also in terms of human development. Often a women’s education is compromised as women are predominantly the water collectors and women and girls have to walk at least three hours to collect water. Recurring droughts and famine have led to food shortages and it has pushed people to use shallow wells and unprotected ponds which are breeding grounds for water-related diseases (WHO, 2017). This problem is not only limited to Ethiopia. The sheer population size of Ethiopia of 105 million people denotes the need for a dependable water source as 61 million Ethiopians do not have access to clean drinking water and 92 million do not have access to enhanced sanitation. In comparison, Egypt has a population size of 97 million where 1.5 million people do not have access to clean drinking water and 6 million do not have access to enhanced sanitation (CIA World Fact Book, 2018).

Furthermore, the Horn of Africa is considered one of the most politically dynamic areas in the world due to armed conflicts, ethno-linguistic conflicts and religious radicalism. The combined geopolitical, regional aspirations as well as state-centric policies have produced volatility (Bereketeab, 2012: xiii).

Incentives to resolving the water conflict can be summed up as equitability, sustainability, and regional stability. As acknowledged above, the Eastern African region, or the Horn of Africa, is amongst the poorest areas in the world due to various interstate and intrastate conflicts (Bereketeab, 2013: 3-4). The clear disparity between upstream and downstream states of the Nile River Basin demonstrates that Egypt has unilaterally benefited from total control and utilisation of the Nile River. By improving access to clean water and hygiene, risks of death via water-related diseases, time wasted collecting water and staying away from school,
disproportionate effects on women and the economic crisis that is the result of unsafe water, are decreased and/or eradicated. The benefits of this are immeasurable (WHO, 2017).

By sharing and managing the Nile River water sources, the upstream Nile states can develop similarly to Egypt as the inequality in terms of economics, development and infrastructure, as well as in meeting basic human rights, is causing conflict. The total population of the upstream riparian states (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda) is 355.5 million, and of this the total number of people that lack access to safe drinking water is 189 million and improved sanitation is 255 million. In other words, 53% and 71% of people in the upstream riparian states lack safe drinking water and sanitation respectively. In contrast, only 16% of downstream riparian state populations do not have access to safe drinking water and 29% do not have access to sanitation. Thus, it is imperative that the Nile water sources are shared equitably to promote stability in the region.

4.7. The role of water in international conflicts

Former Secretary-General of the UN as well as former Foreign Minister of Egypt, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, publicly stated in 1985 that the next conflict would not be over politics, but rather over water (United Nations University, 2011). The theories of resource scarcity and abundance are necessary for this discussion, as, although the Nile River has an abundance of water, it is being mismanaged and controlled solely by Egypt. Water is unique compared to other natural resources as it is required to sustain biological life. Other natural resources, such as oil and gas (on a global daily basis) have only become a necessity in the past 200 years. Water has been used for thousands of years in agriculture, industry and a variety of other human needs (Thrall, Bever and Burdon, 2010: 405). Hence, it is not farfetched to see that war over water could become a norm as environmental issues are affecting water sources around the globe. Unlike gas or oil, water is the main issue in the Nile conflict and is exacerbated by unfair control by Egypt and high poverty rates in the eight upstream states.
4.7.1. Levels of analysis

In order to analyse whether the pursuit of natural resources could result in a regional and possibly even international conflict, the three levels of analysis are used. These levels are the system, domestic and individual levels.

I. Systems level

As discussed in Chapter 2, the systems level of analysis examines the international system and can be divided into parts – the structure (the distribution of power) and the process (patterns and types of interaction between states).

The current structure of the regional system has been created by the former colonial power, Great Britain, and the current superpowers. The unilateral power of Egypt as a hydro-hegemon has created an unequal distribution of water sources. From an international perspective, the USA, China and Russia all have their fingers in the Nile conflict pie and are serving their own interests (a pattern that may continue in discussions later in this dissertation). Russia is attempting to make a comeback on the continent after its withdrawal following the fall of the Soviet Union. China is fostering stronger relations with African nations through trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The USA sees the actions of China and Russia as direct threats towards their strategic national interests (Thrall, 2015: xii).

Under process, four key issues are affecting the relationship among Nile riparian states and the stability of the region. The first is Egyptian independence from colonial powers. This changed the dynamic of the Egyptian and Sudanese monopoly on the Nile. With independence, the governments of the eight upstream states started expressing their unhappiness with the 1929 and 1959 Nile agreements. Independence also meant that many of the upstream riparian states started rejecting the very nature of the agreements as they were created during colonial times and as such were not applicable to the states once they gained independence. One specific example is former Tanzanian President Mr Julius Nyerere who argued that treaties of the colonial period are non-binding when considering state interests in a post-colonial world (Kimenyi and Mbaku, 2015).
The GERD is the third issue affecting Egypt and its relations with the other riparian states. The benefits of the GERD are not restricted to Ethiopia alone, and include Sudan and Egypt, as the dam will create hydro-energy, regulate steady water flow throughout the year and remove up to 86% of sedimentation and silt. Furthermore, the dam would also help to prevent unexpected flooding of downstream states and highland water evaporation would be lowered due to conservation of water (Tawfik, 2016: 580). On the other hand, Egypt fears its immediate losses would be greater than any longer-term gains as it is believed that if the dam is filled within three years, Egypt stands to lose greatly. This is exacerbated due to Egypt’s near 100% reliance on the Nile. If Ethiopia fills the dam over six years, the impact on Egypt would be greatly diminished (Halawa, 2018).

The fourth issue relates to environmental changes, such as global warming, caused by humans, which may contribute in different ways to conflicts from terrorism to trade and diplomatic disputes. Environmental changes are affecting precipitation around the globe and the Nile is included. Environmental changes include increasing populations, environmental refugees and warmer temperatures. In the case of the Nile, the environmental change causing conflict is the construction of the GERD by the upstream Nile state Ethiopia (Tawfik, 2016: 580).

II. Domestic level

Domestically, Egypt has experienced great change to its political system since the Arab Spring in 2011 that saw long-time Egyptian President Mubarak resigning from office, the ousting of former President Mohamed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood by the Egyptian army and the subsequent controversial election of President el-Sisi. Under Morsi, provocative statements regarding the Nile were made more than once. At a conference regarding the protection of water sources in Egypt, President Morsi declared that, “If our share of the Nile water decreases, our blood will be the alternative” (El-Behairy, 2013). President el-Sisi has been seen to be more proactive in terms of finding a solution to the Nile crisis in order to avoid a war. However, in
2017, he made statements declaring that “no one can touch Egypt’s water” and going further calling it (the Nile) “a matter of life or death” (Barfi, 2018).

Ethiopia has the second largest population in Africa at 105 million, beaten only by Nigeria, and it is the 15th poorest country in the world. As its population continues to grow, it has to improve water and sanitation, and this is the policy and aim guiding the domestic level in Ethiopia. Ethiopia seeks to transform itself and this can only be achieved through water and electricity. Once completed, the GERD would be one of the biggest hydroelectrical power stations in the world. The Ethiopian Minister for Water, Irrigation and Electricity, Seleshi Bekele, stated that control was not the aim of the GERD but rather for “providing opportunity for us to develop ourselves through energy development. It has a lot of benefit for the downstream countries” (BBC, 2018).

An Egyptian academic recently told BBC News that:

It’s [GERD] very much a game changer, a new order is beginning in the whole region now…Ethiopia for the first time is combining both the physical power of being an upstream country that can in one way or another control the River Nile’s flow, and the economic power of being able to construct a dam depending on its own domestic resources (BBC, 2018).

Sudan is in the middle when it comes to the conflict between Egypt and Ethiopia, but it has of late started challenging Egypt’s monopoly on the Nile. It has also recognised the benefits the GERD, approximately 60 km from its borders, would bring to Sudan by purchasing renewable electricity from Ethiopia (BBC, 2018).

III. Individual level
The individual section will examine the regional power’s hegemon in order to analyse the propensity and possibility of conflict becoming armed and violent. Abdul Fattah el-Sisi became president of Egypt in 2014 following the ousting of the first democratically voted president of Egypt, Mohammed Morsi. President Morsi appointed el-Sisi as head of defence and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Anti-Morsi protests rocked Egypt and el-Sisi and the army removed him from office a year later in 2013. Protestors (for the release of the overthrown Morsi) were
forces dispersed by the army and around 1000 people died. Elections held in 2014 had a 96.9% vote in support of el-Sisi (Aljazeera, 2018a).

Although democratically elected, controversy surrounds el-Sisi internationally due to his ousting of President Morsi, the arrests of the Muslim Brotherhood and subsequent forceful dispersion and violence towards Morsi’s supporters (News24, 2018). El-Sisi also announced in January 2018 that Egypt would be building a major water treatment plant. El-Sisi stated that, “We are only doing what we need to do so we can solve a potential problem” and further stated that, “We will not allow a water problem to materialise in Egypt. Water must be secured for everyone” (News24, 2018).

4.8. Conclusion
The Nile conflict exists because of water. The Nile conflict is complicated and has a history immersed in colonialism. The increasing environmental changes and subsequent damaging of the environment is wreaking havoc on developing states, especially in Africa. The water crisis is, however, a global phenomenon and if drastic measures are not taken, the continuing increase of global temperatures could be devastating. States in Africa are already experiencing prolonged droughts and loss of human life.

The increasing populations of Africa, and Ethiopia specifically, are placing massive strain on the already non-existent freshwater sources. African economies are facing challenges such as time lost when collecting water and lack of water for development and agricultural purposes. Similarly, inadequate sanitation causes massive loss to human life through waterborne and related diseases.

Water in the riparian Nile states is a major issue due to the hydro-hegemony of Egypt and Sudan, with total control and division of Nile water between these two states. This is due to colonial agreements created by Britain in order to ensure its national interests as well as protect its cotton farms in Egypt and Sudan during this period. Upstream riparian states contend that colonial agreements are no longer
applicable. However, Egypt fears large-scale loss of water and, as a result, has used threatening language to deter riparian states from pursuing water programmes. Ethiopia has, since 2011, ultimately ignored Egypt and pursued a water programme in the form of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam which would not only serve as a water source but also as the largest hydroelectrical dam in Africa. The GERD will also generate much needed electricity, not only for Ethiopia but for other riparian states too.

Water is a surprisingly scarce resource in a world covered with water. Unless drastic measures are taken to reduce the damaging effects of global warming, water wars will start appearing all over the world. Egypt would stand to lose a lot if it chose to go to war against Ethiopia. However, water is an absolute necessity for life and unless an agreement is reached in the form of the Nile Basin Initiative, increased conflict would emerge due to the unequal control Egypt and Sudan have over the Nile. Therefore, war is highly likely and in all cases, Egypt is fighting for its control over the Nile. In order to halt this, serious negotiations between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia need to take place to determine the best amount of time to fill the GERD. Compromise is the only solution to this complicated issue, without which the first major freshwater war may take place in an already volatile region. As the USA, Russia and China have interests, the world may well see the start of World War III and it could start over water. The next chapter examines the role of gas in the conflict between the Republic of Cyprus and Turkey.
CHAPTER 5: THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN GAS BONANZA

5.1. Introduction

Chapter 4 examined the role of water in the conflict between Egypt and other African states. This chapter will examine the next case study, specifically the rising tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean between Republic of Cyprus and Turkey over gas. Although the current gas situation in the Mediterranean seems to be solely based on gas at first glance, the conflict between Republic of Cyprus and Turkey is an ancient one. It is imperative to first examine the pre-conflict history of Republic of Cyprus and Turkey before the current escalation can be understood and analysed. To put it simply, Cyprus is complex and riddled with political, ethnic, geopolitical and now natural resource issues.

This chapter will use the framework outlined in Chapter two. It is imperative to examine the underlying factors of the conflict and this chapter will begin by examining the historical roots of the overall conflict by dividing it into eight sections: the 16th Century Ottoman invasion and subsequent rule; British rule over Cyprus; the liberation movement; independence in 1960; post-independence issues; the Turkish Invasion in 1974; the period of illegal occupation, and, finally, the discovery of natural resources. Following an examination of the historical roots of the conflict, the lead up to the conflict will be examined as well as the various nations involved. However, it is necessary to examine this specific case as it is currently developing and tensions in the Mediterranean are high. By examining this case, this study will shed light on the role of natural resources in international conflicts.

Finally, the role gas in the conflict is analysed utilising the three levels of analysis. This case study is particularly interesting as it has already erupted in an international and ongoing conflict, culminating in the 1974 invasion. It has “its reputation as a mediator’s graveyard” (Martin, 2006: 30) due to the various factors that will be discussed in this chapter, but also due to the number of stakeholders involved. The levels of analysis will be utilised to understand not only the conflict that erupted in
1974, but also to examine the current build up as there are new players involved as well as a new cause for conflict, namely a natural resource.

5.2. Natural resource: Gas
During antiquity, Cyprus was known for its copper and the word ‘copper’ is a derivative from the word Kupros which is ‘Cyprus’ in Greek. Evidence has recently emerged that copper from Cyprus was internationally traded (Hemingway and Hemingway, 2004). Nearly 4000 years later, Cyprus is once again contending to be a major exporter of a ‘new’ natural resource, namely hydrocarbons. The discovery of natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean has the potential to solve the many political issues faced by the region. Alternatively, it has the potential to start a new world war as old rivalries are being rekindled, new alliances are forming, and old alliances are falling apart. Such is the nature of natural resources. They are either a curse or a blessing as mentioned in Chapter 2.

5.2.1. Description and origins of Gas
Natural gas is the cleanest non-renewable fossil fuel and is found beneath the earth’s crust. In its natural state, it is colourless, odourless and mainly consists of methane (one carbon atom and four hydrocarbon atoms - CH4) and it is primarily used to make chemicals and materials. Natural gas, as the name suggests, occurs naturally over millions of years. It is formed when the remains of animals and plants sink to the bottom of the sea and are, over time, covered by numerous layers of sand, silt and rock. This biomaterial converts into natural gas when heat and the pressure of compaction are combined (U.S. Energy Information Administration).

This is not the only source of natural gas. Natural gas can also form from methanogens, which are tiny organisms. Natural gas that results from methanogens breaking down composing matter is called ‘biogenic methane’. The natural gas that is created deep underneath the earth’s crust, and which will be the focus of this chapter, is called ‘thermogenic methane’ (U.S. Energy Information Administration).
5.2.2. Types of natural gas by economic standards and energy
There are two economic categories which natural gas falls under: the first being ‘conventional’ and the second being ‘unconventional’. Conventional natural gas is considered to be easily accessible, and is therefore economically viable to extract. Unconventional gas denotes that the geological situation does not render extraction practical or economical. However, as technology is developing, gas once considered unconventional may soon be easily extracted (U.S. Energy Information Administration).

Conventional gas is gas that is trapped and found in permeable material beneath impermeable rock. Most of the major gas sites that produce gas today are the result of exploration for conventional gas. An example of conventional gas is the natural gas plants in Russia. Russia holds the largest natural gas reserves globally, with approximately 45% of its gas located in Siberia (Duddu, 2013).

Deep natural gas, shale gas, tight gas, coalbed methane, gas in geo-pressurised zones and methane hydrates are all considered to be unconventional gases due to the difficult and costly process to extract them. Briefly, deep natural gas is gas that is found at least 4,500 metres below the earth’s crust. Shale gas is unconventional due to its impermeability. Tight gas is similar to that of shale gas but utilises acidising instead, which is the injection of hydrochloric acid into the natural gas reserve, where the acid dissolves the rock. Coalbed methane, as the name suggests, is natural gas found along the seams of underground coal. Geo-pressurised zones are unconventional due to their depths of 3,000-7,600 metres below the earth’s crust. Finally, methane hydrates were only recently discovered in permafrost regions in the Arctic and in ocean sediments. Due to changes in the environment, methane hydrates are being released into the atmosphere as they form at low temperatures and high pressures (Voiland, 2016).

5.2.3. The process and measurement of natural gas
The process for locating, exploring and extracting natural gas is the same as that of crude oil as discussed in Chapter 3.
Natural gas is measured in cubic feet (cf) or cubic metres (cm). Current global natural gas reserves are around 6,916,464 billion cubic feet (193,500 billion cubic metres). According to BP Global (2018b), “Global proved gas reserves in 2017 rose slightly by 400 billion cubic metres (bcm) or 0.2% to 193,500 bcm. This is sufficient to meet 52.6 years of global production at 2017 levels.”

5.2.4. Importance and role of hydrocarbons
As stated by British Petroleum (BP), at current usage levels, the world’s natural gas reserves will be depleted within 52.6 years. However, global demand for natural gas is rising each year. This section will discuss what makes natural gas so important and what its uses are in everyday life are. Figure 5.1 below indicates the consumption of natural gas per region.

Figure 5.1: Relative gas consumption growth by region

![Relative gas consumption growth by region](Source: International Gas Union, 2018: 11)

Natural gas is important for the following key areas. First, the air pollution created by coal will be greatly lessened by switching to natural gas. Second, a higher efficiency of energy is generated by using natural gas compared to coal. Third, natural gas
produces less greenhouse gases compared to other fossil fuels and the cost and construction time for liquefied natural gas plants are much shorter compared to the construction times of coal or nuclear plants (Colombo, El-Harak and Sartori, 2016: 19 - 21).

One of the most important aspects of natural gas lies in the connection with the so-called ‘2°C target’, which is one of the most globally embraced goals. The 2°C target is a priority for most policy-makers world-wide as it attempts to limit the destructive effects of climate change. In 2015, the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) set a target of keeping “a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels” [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 2015].

While natural gas is still a non-renewable energy resource that does emit greenhouse gases, it is considered the ‘bridge fuel’ towards a wholly decarbonised energy sector. Compared to coal, natural gas represents 27% of total generation whereas coal represents 39%. As natural gas is the lowest carbon emitting fossil fuel, it is possible to use all the earth’s natural gas reserves and some of the global oil reserves and still be within the 2°C budget (Van Der Veen, 2015: 21). Gas emits the lowest amount of carbon per kilogram and generates the highest amount of energy compared to coal and oil.

Hence the importance of natural gas should not be underestimated or ignored if the 2°C climate change goal is to be achieved. However, natural gas faces serious obstacles that are not constrained to production costs. The various uses of gas are developing at a significant rate. Production and consumption patterns are changing with the emergence of technological breakthroughs. Globally, the role of gas has seen an increase in China as it seeks to diversify its energy usage in part to combat its ever-growing pollution and in part to combat its CO2 emissions. The USA seeks to become a part of the gas exporter group as it continues its shale production through fracking and horizontal drilling techniques. In various parts of the world, gas
has radically changed the foreign policies of many states, including the EU that seeks to diversify its suppliers of natural gas. Natural gas has the ability to provide alternative sources of energy to the Southern Mediterranean and Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions. Through providing alternative energy sources, gas has the potential to relieve regional and internal tensions if effective policies are put in place (Van Der Veen, 2015: 9 - 10).

However, the perception of natural gas is that it is a highly politicised commodity. As more than half of the world’s entire confirmed gas reserves are located in Russia, Qatar, Turkmenistan and Iran, it comes as no surprise that this concentration raises tensions. Due to the inflexible nature of gas in terms of the pipeline exchanges, the physical characteristics of gas as a gaseous energy, the hefty costs involved with investments into Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plants and pipelines and the merging of state and company interests have all given credence to the view that natural gas is a highly politicised fossil fuel. Furthermore, Stulberg (2015: 4) notes that:

States are either emboldened by energy wealth to instigate conflict and exploit market advantages and corporate profit-seeking as foreign policy tools, or prone to compete over unclaimed resources out of fear of vulnerability.

In many cases, this is the case for natural gas. However, while natural gas has the propensity to ignite new tensions, it also has the ability to inflame pre-existing tensions - as can be seen between Israel, Lebanon and Egypt, and more specifically between the Republic of Cyprus and Turkey.

5.2.5. United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
As Turkey continues to protest the Republic of Cyprus’ (RoC) right to explore for natural gas, it is important to examine the legality of a country’s rights regarding the sea and maritime zones. In this regard, the UNCLOS was briefly examined in Chapter 3.

Through the Territorial Sea Law, the RoC declared a territorial sea of 12 nautical miles (nm) which was passed in 1964. The RoC delimited its waters through separate bilateral agreements with Egypt, Israel and Lebanon (although this has not
yet been ratified by Lebanon). In 2004, Turkey published a statement in Bulletin 54 of the Law of the Sea raising its concerns and disagreeing with the delimitation between Cyprus and Egypt. Furthermore, in 2007, the government of Turkey directed a letter to the UN Secretary-General to convey its views and stated that the policy pursued by the Greek Cypriot side creates tensions in the region, and “continues to be a source of instability in the area…further complicates the efforts aimed at bringing a… settlement to the Cyprus Problem” (MFA Turkey, 2007: 1). Turkey further states that the delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas in the eastern Mediterranean is an example of the Greek Cypriots trying to further exclude Turkish Cypriots and undermine Turkey’s own interests in the Mediterranean (MFA Turkey, 2007: 1). The Turkish view is demonstrated in Map 5.1 below. Map 5.2 shows the RoC’s view of delimitation in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Map 5.1: Turkish view of maritime delimitation between the RoC, Egypt and Turkey.

![Map 5.1: Turkish view of maritime delimitation between the RoC, Egypt and Turkey.](source: Gürel et al., 2013: 53)
5.3. Historical and political context of the conflict between the Republic of Cyprus and Turkey

As this case study specifically focuses on Cyprus and Turkey, the complicated and unresolved conflict(s) between the two will be examined in terms of its historical and political contexts. This will be done in order to understand the many complexities and layers of the current tensions regarding natural gas being explored and discovered by the RoC at the Aphrodite gas field in 2011 (Hazou, 2018).

Although the history of Cyprus is littered with invasions and conquests of the island, from the ancient Phoenicians and Greeks, to the Byzantium Empire’s influence, to the Frankish (Germanic-speaking people) and Venetian conquests, these will only be discussed in brief. The Ottoman period, British Colonial rule and Cyprus’ subsequent independence and the 1974 Turkish invasion are discussed and examined as these periods provide an understanding of why the initial war and invasion took place, why Turkey is still occupying 37% of the island and what obstacles exist to resolve the status quo. Following this, the Eastern Mediterranean gas context will be examined by analysing the region as a whole. The remainder of the chapter will briefly discuss the legality of the RoC’s natural gas exploration, Turkish claims to the gas, as well as the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) (only recognised by
Turkey) claims. These will be analysed using issue analysis and stakeholder analysis tools.

16th Century Ottoman invasion and subsequent rule
Throughout Cyprus’ history, which dates back to the 9th millennium B.C., the island has been fought over and conquered many times by many different empires and peoples. Alexander the Great freed Cyprus from the Persian Empire in 333 B.C. Following his untimely death, the Romans controlled the island for approximately 250 years. Christianity was introduced in 45 A.D. to the island by the apostles Paul and Barnabas (Mallinson, 2011: 5).

Towards the end of the Middle Ages, Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire and Cyprus transitioned from the Franks to the powerful Venetian Empire. During this time of transition, a vast majority of mainland Greece was already under Ottoman occupation. Cyprus became one of the most important Christian bases in the Eastern Mediterranean and became heavily fortified. In 1570, Nicosia fell and in the following year, Cyprus transferred from Christian European rule to Muslim Asian rule (Mallinson, 2011: 15).

The Ottoman Empire controlled Cyprus for 307 years from 1571 - 1878 A.D. Of the many changes and policies that the Ottoman Empire imposed, two measures specifically shaped the island. The first measure was the introduction of the millet system which made provisions for the Church of Cyprus to conduct its own matters (Dodd, 2010: 2). The second provision was the relocation of thousands of Ottoman Turks (many of whom were proselytised Greeks and Slavs) and these included janissaries (elite infantry units) (Lindley, 2007: 228). This demographic manipulation became a key issue in the future. It is also recorded that a minor amount of Christian Orthodox and Roman Catholics also converted to Islam in order to avoid the high taxation and lower social status imposed on non-Muslims (Mallinson, 2011: 17).

In the beginning of the 1800s, nationalist movements were spreading across Europe and finding expression through the Greek and Balkan worlds. Cyprus, like many
other islands in the Mediterranean, was drawn to the ‘Megali Idea’ (Great Idea) which had the aim of uniting all Greeks. As mentioned previously, the millet system introduced in Cyprus allowed for a strong Church. This became significant when the Ottoman’s relinquished power in Cyprus and the Church would later be integral in the pursuit for liberation and enosis (union) with Greece (Mallinson, 2009: 18).

British Rule
In 1878, Britain acquired the island (as diplomatic aid for the Ottoman Empire against Russia) and controlled the island until 1960 (Dodd, 2010: 3). While this was one of the shorter periods of control, the effects of British rule are still felt today. Initially, the main motive Britain had for acquiring Cyprus from the dwindling Ottoman Empire was to combat an ever-growing Russian influence in the Mediterranean and to safeguard Britain’s path to India. Historian, A.J.P. Taylor, (Mallinson, 2011:19) stated that Cyprus was acquired as a “place d’armes, and to watch over an unstable Anatolia”. The transition from Ottoman control to British control was relatively smooth and done in relative secrecy. France was particularly angered as they had their own designs on the island (Dodd, 2010: 5; Mallinson, 2011: 19).

The British administration established a legislative body comprising of Christian Orthodox, Muslim and British officials. This council gave the local population a greater degree of autonomy but also caused a lot of frustration as the British officials and Muslims (18% of the population) balanced the Christian Orthodox (the colonial power would oftentimes support the minority), with the deciding vote in the hands of the British High Commissioner (Mallinson, 2011: 19).

Following the Ottoman Empire’s involvement in the First World War, in 1914, in support of Germany, Britain seized Cyprus and offered it to Greece on condition that Greece enter the war against Germany. However, the offer was withdrawn by the time Greece joined the war in 1917. Cyprus was formally ceded by the new Republic of Turkey to Britain in 1923, in accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne, and, in 1925, Cyprus was declared a ‘Crown Colony’. Cyprus can be likened to the island of Crete. Crete was under the control of the Powers in 1897 and ceded to Greece with
the ensuing Balkan Wars (Dodd, 2010: 7). The same had been done with the Ionian Islands and it is logical that the Christian Orthodox population of Cyprus supported the movement for a union with Greece (Dodd, 2010: 3). Furthering the agitation felt in Cyprus, it hit a new high when, in 1931, a Turkish Cypriot united with the Greek Cypriots in voting against British taxation processes. The vote was disregarded, rioting ensued and the Government House was burnt down. The constitution was revoked and did not get reinstalled (Mallinson, 2011: 20 - 21).

The liberation movement

The idea of enosis was pushed aside due to the Treaty of Lausanne, and there was firmer British rule, following the riots of 1931 and the Greek Prime Minister’s (Venizelos) pro-British policy and friendship Treaty with Turkey. Following the end of the Second World War in 1947, enosis gained momentum when the Dodecanese Islands were ceded to Greece (Dodd, 2010: 11). This, together with the British withdrawal from Palestine and impending withdrawal from India, sparked renewed calls for enosis. However, Britain came to see Cyprus as its Near East base after giving up Palestine (Dodd, 2010: 13). Some British officials maintained that enosis would reinforce Greece in its civil war, while others argued that the communists would seize power in Greece by Christmas in 1947. As enosis gained momentum, Anglo-Greek relations deteriorated rapidly (Dodd, 2010: 12; Mallinson, 2011: 21). Turkey, at this time, had demonstrated a renewed interest in Cyprus and demanded that Britain give up its claims and return Cyprus to Turkey (Dodd, 2010: 14).

The British Foreign Minister, Anthony Eden, had refused to discuss the issue with the Greek government. As a result, the Greek government presented the issue of enosis with Cyprus to the UN General Assembly. During this period another important event took place – the Bishop of Kition (the future president of Cyprus) became the charismatic Archbishop Makarios III, and assumed political control of the anti-colonial movement (Dodd, 2010: 12-13). At the same time, Colonel Georghios Grivas created and led a guerrilla movement (considered a terrorist organisation internationally) through Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA - National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters) on the 1st of April 1955. EOKA's aim was to oust
the British and to achieve a union with Greece (Mallinson, 2011: 22; Dodd, 2010: 20).

In order to keep the issue of enosis out of the UN, the British held a multilateral conference with Greece and Turkey to discuss “political and defence questions, as concerning the Eastern Mediterranean, including Cyprus” (Mallinson, 2016: 36). This was done in order to work around Article Sixteen of the Treaty of Lausanne which forbade Turkey from having any rights regarding Cyprus (World War I Document Archive).

Although the USA initially showed reluctance to get involved, it pressured the British to release Makarios. Over a year later, he was released from the Seychelles but was not permitted to return to Cyprus (Dodd, 2010: 30). Furthering this, the USA was anxious regarding the tense relationship between the two North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) states - Greece and Turkey. Consequently, the USA increased pressure on Britain, Greece and Turkey to find a solution to the stalemate. The Turkish and Greek Prime Ministers met in Zurich in February 1959 (Mallinson, 2011: 24).

Independence in 1960

In Zurich, on the 11th February 1959, a draft plan was agreed upon for the liberation of the island under a Greek Cypriot president and Turkish Cypriot vice-president. The Greek, Turkish and British governments met in London on the 19th of February 1959 to finalise the arrangements. These encompassed a (problematic) constitution and three treaties: The Treaty of Guarantee, the Treaty of Alliance, and the Treaty of Establishment (Gürel, Mullen and Tzimitras, 2013: 31). Archbishop Makarios was allowed to attend and subsequently aimed to lower the territories demanded by the British - from 414 km² to 256 km². While this may not seem like much, the overall size of the island is only 9,251 km². To this day, Britain retains 3% of the island - Akrotiri in Limassol (where the British Royal Air Force is based) and Dekalia (where a British Garrison is stationed) in Larnaca. Access to these two sights is limited and considered British sovereign land (Gürel et al, 2013: 31).
These three treaties coupled with the sovereign bases and rights of overflying and passage detracted from the idea of complete independence as all the arrangements allowed for continued British presence on the island (Mallinson, 2011: 25).

The three treaties stated the following:

• The Treaty of Establishment:
The Treaty of Establishment reinforced the Constitution of the new Republic of Cyprus. Most of the text in the Treaty was dedicated to the Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs) and connected securities of the British. The remaining text dealt with questions regarding nationality from the end of colonial rule as well as financial issues (Dodd, 2010: 41; Ministry of Foreign Affairs Greece, 1960).

• The Treaty of Alliance:
The Treaty of Alliance structured the cooperation between Cyprus, Greece and Turkey and the training of a Cypriot Army. It also structured the placing of 950 Greek soldiers and 650 Turkish soldiers, a ratio of 60:40, which did not represent the true ratio of the island’s Greek and Turkish Cypriots of 82:18 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Cyprus, 2016; Dodd, 2010: 41).

• The Treaty of Guarantee:
The Treaty of Guarantee prohibited enosis with any countries as well as partition. This treaty ensured that Britain, Greece and Turkey were equally accountable for Cyprus’ security and sovereignty (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Greece, 1960; Dodd, 2010: 41).

The three treaties, along with the Constitution, gave a vast amount of power to the Turkish Cypriots. They held 30% of civil service posts as well as veto powers in terms of international affairs, defence, security and taxation (Dodd, 2010: 39). The intricacy of these arrangements demonstrated that unity of the island was not the main goal, but rather the preservation of outside interests such as American and
British interests in maintaining sovereign military bases; the apparent necessity to retain Cyprus in NATO (although it was not a member), and the need to combat Soviet influence in the region. Although the Greek and Turkish communities of the island signed the Zurich and London agreements, the reality was that they had no real influence or role in their drafting (Dodd, 2010: 37). Thus, in reality, the agreements were imposed on Cyprus (Mallinson, 2011: 26).

The British recognised that the complex and distinctive legal package, specifically the Treaty of Guarantee, was conflicting with Article 2.4 of the UN Charter:

All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations (UN Charter).

As well as completely overridden by Article 103:

In the event of a conflict between the obligations of the Members of the United Nations under the present Charter and their obligations under any other international agreement, their obligations under the present Charter shall prevail (UN Charter).

The guarantor powers, the 70:30 voting rights, interests of external actors, coupled with propaganda on both sides led to a much-expected civil crisis as will be discussed in the next section (Mallinson, 2011: 26; Dodd, 2010: 44-45).

Post-independence issues
“F*** your Parliament and your Constitution, America is an elephant, Cyprus is a flea. Greece is a flea. If those two fleas continue to itch the elephant, they just may get whacked by the elephant’s trunk, whacked good” – USA President Lyndon B Johnson to the Greek ambassador in Washington, 1964 (quoted in Melakopides, 2016: 57 - 58).

The complex nature of the Constitution, together with national pride and strategic interests was just too much pressure for the new RoC. In terms of practicality, the greatest issue was the grass-roots administration and proper functioning of the
republic (Dodd, 2010: 46). The newly elected and first President of the Republic of Cyprus, President Makarios, thought to propose 13 amendments to the Constitution in what he believed would allow for functional governing of the new republic:

The Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, in its present form, creates many difficulties in the smooth government of the State and impedes the development and progress of the country… the Zurich and London Agreements, has made clear the necessity for revision of at least some of those provisions which impede the smooth functioning and development of the State (Press and Information Office, 1963).

The suggested alterations were instantly rejected, first by Turkey and consequently by the Turkish Cypriot leadership. With the declaration that the Constitution was dead from the Turkish Cypriot Prime Minister, tensions escalated on the island, resulting in intercommunal clashes fuelled by outside interference (Gürel et al., 2013: 33). This incident led to widespread fighting in all the cities and the crisis drew international attention. Turkey threatened to invade and President Makarios handed the situation over to the UN. It was decided on the 4th of March 1964, through Security Council Resolution 186, to utilise the UN Secretary-General’s mission of good offices to come to an agreement in line with the UN Charter. Troops under the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) were to be stationed on the island and a UN mediator would be appointed to endorse sovereignty and the ongoing survival of the Republic of Cyprus (Gürel et al, 2013: 33).

However, violence continued with Turkey’s air force bombing Greek Cypriot villages and the Soviet Union declared that they would defend Cyprus should an incursion occur. Britain and America feared that a confrontation between Greece and Turkey would harm the relations between the two NATO countries, ultimately weakening NATO’s southern flank. The president of the USA, as a result, strongly warned Turkey against invading Cyprus. The UN was able to steadily calm tensions on the island, but it resulted in a de facto division between the two communities (Mallinson, 2011). Figures 5.2 and 5.3 below show the de facto division between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities of the island.
The estimated population of Cyprus in 1960 was 547000, with the ratio between Greek and Turkish Cypriots being 82:18. As can be seen from Figure 5.2, the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities were living all over the island and Turkish Cypriots lived in all the main cities. Of the villages, 392 were entirely Greek Cypriot, 123 were Turkish Cypriot and 114 were diverse populations of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

Figure 5.3: Turkish enclaves in December 1964

Source: Lindley, 2007: 232
Figure 5.3 demonstrates the results of ‘Bloody Christmas’, the name given to the intercommunal fighting that started on the 21st of December 1963. A true historical analysis of this period is near impossible. However, there are two main versions that will be examined (Dodd, 2010: 52). The first version of the Greek Cypriots states that Turkish Cypriots mounted an insurrection, effectively withdrawing from the Republic of Cyprus. The second version, according to the Turkish Cypriot official narrative, holds that the Greek Cypriots never regarded them as equal and provoked the conflict by attempting to scrap the 1960 Constitution (Lindley, 2007: 233).

A true account of the events surrounding 1963-1964 is near impossible to come by, however, it can be analysed in terms of the security dilemma as noted by Lindley (2007: 231):

If the security dilemma plays a big role in ethnic conflict, what might we expect to see as a result? Changes in ethnic demography. If insecurity is higher and attacking is easier when communities are intermixed, then we should expect those who are most vulnerable to try get away... to concentrate themselves, and to reduce the amount of intermixing. Arms races may also occur between the adversarial communities.

The crisis resulted in the deployment of UN peacekeeping troops who are, to this day, stationed on the island. In 1964, US President Lyndon B Johnson tasked Dean Acheson with devising a solution to defuse the tensions in Cyprus. The resulting ‘Acheson Plan’ would see a double enosis. President Makarios rejected the plan. In the mid-1960s, the balance of military forces in Cyprus turned Cyprus into a place d’armes: a Greek Cypriot National Guard (between 8,000-11,000) against Turkish Cypriot fighters (11,000); the treaty forces of Greece (950); the treaty forces of Turkey (650); the Greek division (10,000) and between these two forces, 6,000 UN forces spread all over the island (Mallinson, 2011: 27 - 28).

In November 1967, another crisis emerged as tensions in Cyprus were driven by nationalist elements in both camps. The bridgehead, discussed earlier in this chapter, took the main focus as the National Guard, led by General George Grivas, was tasked with clearing the enclave receiving weapons, materials and
reinforcements from Turkey. Over 20 Turkish Cypriots died compared to 1 Greek Cypriot. Turkey sent an ultimatum demanding the removal of General Grivas and the Greek division from Cyprus as well as the disbandment of the Cypriot National Guard. Pressure from the international community (namely Britain and the USA) forced Grivas to leave the island in November 1967 and the Greek division in December 1967 (Mallinson, 2011:28 Dodd, 2010: 82-85). The situation in Greece had also been altered with a military junta taking over in April 1967. The Greek Junta had shown a unique activism with regard to the Cyprus question. This uneasy situation led to a radical policy change by President Makarios who stated in a public speech that although enosis may be the dream of the Greek Cypriots, it was not achievable and the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities should instead focus on strengthening and retaining the independent state. Although this new policy change was realistic, it deepened the divisions amongst the Greek Cypriots – those pro-Makarios and those pro-enosis (Dodd, 2010: 82-85; Mallinson, 2011: 29).

The Turkish invasion of 1974

With Greece being controlled by the junta hardliners in November 1973, relations amongst the junta and President Makarios reached rock-bottom. At the behest of the junta, General Grivas returned to Cyprus to dispose of President Makarios and his new policies. However, Grivas died from a long-term heart condition in early 1974. Instead of the underground movement dissipating, a power struggle ensued between the leaders of the movement, and hastiness as well as extremism led to a Junta coup against Makarios in July 1974. President Makarios survived the attempted assassination which saw the presidential palace in Nicosia being bombed. He fled to Paphos where the British flew him to Malta. Whether by design or mistake, President Makarios was delayed in getting to the UN in time to attend the UN Security Council deliberations on this matter. Other than the delivery of President Makarios to safety, the British did not honour their obligations as a guarantor for peace. As a result, Turkey invaded Cyprus on the 20th of July 1974 (Gürel et al., 2013: 33).

Three days later, following a ceasefire, the Athens junta was removed from office and the Speaker of the House, Glafcos Clerides, was instated as acting president,
enabling some restoration of constitutional order to the Republic. Despite the apparent truce, Turkish forces continued to consolidate their position and advance. Frantic negotiations were taking place in Geneva between Britain, Greece and Turkey. Britain followed American policy which was now directed by the Secretary of State and head of the USA’s National Security Council, Henry Kissinger (Mallinson, 2011:31).

Although apparent constitutional order was re-established with the Clerides administration and the initial reason for a Turkish invasion was over, Turkey staged a second attack mid-August. The result of this second attack was devastating. An estimated 180,000 Greek Cypriots were removed from their houses and displaced to the southern area of Cyprus. A further 20,000, who initially refused to leave, were forced to the southern part (Mallinson, 2011: 31).

Today the total number of Greek Cypriots living in the occupied side has diminished to 338 and the total number of Maronite Cypriots has reduced to 105. To date, over one-third of the population (over 160,000) of Cyprus are refugees that lost their homes as a consequence of the 1974 invasion (De Waal, 2018: 50). Following the second invasion by Turkey in mid-August 1974, the percentage of area controlled by the Greek Cypriot government is 57%, the percentage of area occupied by Turkey is 36%, the percentage of area controlled by the British is 3% and the percentage of area considered the green line is 4%.

Post 1974 to current climate
Although it may seem that the Greek Junta simply overthrew President Makarios and that Turkey invaded as a response to the coup, murky details have been emerging for years demonstrating that the USA (specifically Henry Kissinger) had a much larger influence on what happened than previously thought. The diplomatic dealings will be examined in greater detail below in the section that deals with the various actors involved in the conflict (Theodolou, 2016).
Turkey initiated a “unilateral declaration of independence” in the occupied territory of Cyprus in 1983. The UN, along with the rest of the world, condemned this step and the UN Security Council declared this “legally invalid” (Cyprus Mail, 2017). Only Turkey recognises the ‘Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Map 5.3 below shows the division of Cyprus clearly.

Map 5.3: Map demonstrating Cyprus division

The negotiations surrounding reunification of the island have been accurately likened to the Gordian knot of Alexander the Great and it may be the case that the only way to break this knot will be by using out-of-the-box thinking which has not yet been utilised.

In order to examine the gas situation, it is essential to briefly examine the negotiation efforts and why they have failed thus far. This is vital in order to recognise why the discovery of gas could well erupt into a hot conflict once again.

Although hope was restored with regards to finding a solution with the election of pro-settlement President Nicos Anastasiades (Republic of Cyprus) and pro-settlement Turkish Cypriot Leader Mustafa Akinci, the fatal issue of the Cyprus issue is that Cyprus' fate is not in the Cypriot's hands. This will likely ensure that the
Cyprus issue will not be solved in the foreseeable future due to the various interests of outside parties. In the last talks that ended abruptly in Crans Montana in 2017, progress had been made on issues of governance, EU matters and the economy. However, like always, the three main stumbling blocks were:

- **Property issues:**
  Property issues refer to the Greek Cypriot properties in the occupied territory of Cyprus. This issue has been one of the most sensitive as Greek Cypriots lay claim to their properties that they lost in the 1974 invasion. The Loizidou v Turkey case is a landmark case which was presented to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The ECHR ruled against Turkey, stating that all refugees have a right to return to their houses in the occupied north (EDAL, 1996).

- **Security and guarantees:**
  Turkey insists on maintaining military intervention rights on an independent EU state under a tripartite ‘guarantor power’ which is based on the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. This issue was the reason the latest negotiations failed in July of 2017. Up to 40,000 soldiers are stationed in the occupied side and the Turkish Foreign Minister has stated that “For Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot side it is not acceptable for troops to be withdrawn” (quoted in Smith, 2017). The Greek Foreign Minister responded by stating that, “Cyprus is an independent EU state. It is not acceptable for a third state to have unilateral right of [military] intervention in 2017” (quoted in Smith, 2017).

- **Turkish mainland settlers:**
  The third contentious issue has already been discussed in previous sections. The Turkish mainland settlers on the island are illegal in terms of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court Article 8, 2 (b.viii):

  The transfer, directly or indirectly, by the Occupying Power of parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, or the deportation or transfer of all or parts of the population of the occupied territory within or outside this territory (Legal UN).

According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, “even though Turkey is not State Party to The Rome Statute, the activities of the ICC are closely followed
and the annual meetings of the Assembly of States Parties which take place in The Hague or New York are attended by our officials" (MFATurkey).

The historical context and background outlined above has demonstrated that Cyprus has had two periods of civil conflicts which erupted between 1963 and 1964 and in 1967. The Greek junta’s assassination attempt on President Makarios’ life on the 15th of July 1974 shows direct Greek interference in the affairs of Cyprus. The subsequent invasion of Turkey, as an apparent result of the military junta, is another example of a foreign country’s interference in the affairs of Cyprus.
### 5.3.1. Stakeholder analysis tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Means of power/Influence</th>
<th>Willingness to negotiate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Protection for Turkish Cypriots against Greek Cypriots.</td>
<td>Resolution only possible with Turkish troops permanently stationed in Cyprus. Natural gas should only be exploited with a united Cyprus.</td>
<td>Preserve status quo. Change demographics by sending Turkish mainlanders to the occupied side</td>
<td>Military capabilities. Part of NATO. Previously good standing in global political arena.</td>
<td>Distrust of international organisations, EU and other states. Not willing to end military occupation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus</td>
<td>As the minority, fear of the Greek Cypriot majority. Feels they are treated as lesser citizens and not equally.</td>
<td>Natural gas should only be exploited as a unified issue. Left in Limbo after RoC accession to EU.</td>
<td>Preserve status quo Preference for partition.</td>
<td>Supported by Turkey.</td>
<td>No agreement to 3 key issues Puppet state to Turkey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITED NATIONS</td>
<td>Attempt to act as mediator.</td>
<td>Conflicting parties must comply with international law.</td>
<td>Ensure regional peace.</td>
<td>Influential in world politics.</td>
<td>Aim is to reconcile conflicting parties to ensure regional peace.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Information drawn from Gürel et al., 2013; Lindley, 2007; Mallinson, 2011.
5.4. Various actors involved

This chapter began by discussing gas as a natural resource. It then moved on to highlight the historical and political context of the pre-existing conflict between Cyprus and Turkey. In this next section, the renewed escalation as well as the regional tensions shall be examined. Although Cyprus and Turkey are the main focus of this case study, it is important to examine the region as a whole (namely Turkey, Cyprus, Israel, Lebanon and Egypt) as the Mediterranean energy bonanza would ultimately affect, directly and indirectly, all the players.

In 2003, Royal Dutch Shell, commonly referred to as Shell, made a significant natural gas discovery that prompted further exploration in Egypt’s EEZ. The North East Mediterranean Deepwater block is estimated to hold over 1.5 tcf (trillion cubic feet) (42 bcm). It was due to this discovery that other countries in the Eastern Mediterranean were encouraged to begin serious exploration. In 2003, Egypt and Cyprus also signed delineation agreements (Gürel et al., 2013: 1).

Although Israel started drilling in the 1960s, it was not until 2009 that a substantial discovery of natural gas was made. The next major find was in 2010 in the Leviathan block. It is estimated to hold 17 tcf (491 bcm). Although small compared to Russia, Qatar and Turkmenistan, it is enough to allow Israel to be energy independent and/or a regional natural gas exporter. In 2010, Cyprus and Israel signed their delineation agreements (Gürel et al, 2013: 2).

To date, there has been no drilling in Lebanese waters, although 3D and 2D seismic surveys have placed the natural gas reserves at a high of 25 tcf (708 bcm). Lebanon has not ratified the delineation agreement with Cyprus as Lebanon disputes the EEZ agreement signed between Cyprus and Israel. Lebanon claims that one part of Israel’s delineation overlaps with Lebanon’s EEZ zone. Stergiou (2016: 381) notes that Lebanon has not yet ratified due to possible pressure from Turkey not to ratify the agreement.
Previously, Turkey had focused all exploration for natural gas in the Black Sea. However, by 2011 it had shifted its focus to the Mediterranean due to limited success with deep-water exploration in the Black Sea. In 2011, Turkey and the (unrecognised) TRNC delimitated their maritime borders. No drilling has taken place, but it is assumed that any drilling performed by Turkey would be done in the name of the TRNC (Gürel et al., 2013: 6).

As mentioned before, Turkey has not signed or ratified the UNCLOS although it does, through customary law, adhere to certain provisions. The main reason Turkey has not signed the Law is due to its conflict with Greece as certain provisions, namely Articles 3, 33 and 121, directly jeopardise Turkey’s interests in the Aegean. In 2015, Greek Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras, stated that: “What is happening in the Aegean is outrageous and unbelievable…We’re spending billions on weapons. You [Turkey] — to violate our airspace, we — to intercept you” (quoted in Reuters, 2015).

Cyprus began prospecting an exploration area in 2006 for natural gas (see Map 5.3). As delineation agreements were signed and ratified by Egypt and Israel and an agreement was made with Lebanon, Cyprus launched the first round of international tenders for three-year oil and gas exploration licences. Although there were only three bids initially, Nobel was awarded the licence for block 12 and Nobel announced that it had discovered gas reserves of between 5-7 tcf (198 bcm). Block 12 is known as Aphrodite. The second round of international tenders attracted 15 bidders as well as protesting and threats from Turkey. This did not deter bidders. The successful bidders included Total, Eni, Novatek and Kogas (Hazou, 2018).

Due to the pre-existing conflict and the threat of Turkey, Cyprus only chose giant gas conglomerates from nations that had a substantial military strength and the RoC had chosen not to add the blocks that Turkey had claimed for exploration (Gürel et al., 2013: 5) as can be seen in Map 5.4 highlighted in purple.
This demonstrates that although the RoC was eager to explore for natural gas, they made sure that if Turkey acted on their threats of blocking the drilling that the gas conglomerates could be backed up by their ally countries. This was tested in February of 2018 when Turkish Navy Vessels blocked and threatened to sink an Eni drilling ship. The Eni drilling ship eventually returned to Italy. ExxonMobil and Qatar Petroleum signed a contract together to explore an area close to where Eni was blocked. Possibly in response to what happened with Eni, the USA’s Navy has enlarged its fleet in the Mediterranean with the expected drilling by ExxonMobil (Paraskova, 2018).
It is important to not only examine the increasing tensions between the RoC and Turkey, but the region as a whole as it is only through regional cooperation that the natural gas discoveries can be profitable. This is due to the high costs involved in constructing LNG plants and subsequent gas pipelines. The increasingly icy relations between Turkey and Israel have resulted in a halt in plans to construct pipelines running from Israel through Turkey in order to supply the EU, which would be the most cost effective (Cyprus Profile, 2018).

However, two options are available for Cyprus. First, Cyprus signed a memorandum of understanding with Egypt in 2016 to transfer gas via a subsea pipeline for the Aphrodite gas field. The other, more costly option is currently being discussed with Cyprus, Greece and Israel. There is the potential for gas to be transported from the gas fields of Cyprus and Israel via Greece and Italy to Europe. This project would cost around €5.5 billion and would establish the largest underwater pipeline in the world (Cyprus Profile, 2018).
The main actors in the current gas conflict are the RoC, Turkey and TRNC. This section examines the perspectives of the main actors as well as the positions of the international community.

5.4.1. Greek Cypriot perspective
The Greek Cypriot perspective, i.e. the RoC, can be examined in three ways: first, the RoC’s right of exploration of hydrocarbons within its internationally accepted EEZ (Mullen, 2014); second, the distribution of expected revenue generated from exploration and subsequent sale of natural gas (Apostolides, 2014); and third, whether or not the right of exploration and distribution of revenue should be discussed within the UN-sponsored peace talks (Pope, 2014).

I. RoC’s right of exploration
The RoC maintains that they have the right to explore for hydrocarbons in their agreed upon EEZ as they are following international law. Furthermore, as the RoC is the sole government on the island recognised as legitimate by the international community, it is their sovereign right to explore for natural gas. The previous Minister of Foreign Affairs, Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis, stated in 2012 that: “…Cyprus is not party to any alliances and does not possess military strength, its only shield remains scrupulous observance of international law” (address by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Kozakou-Marcoullis in MFA Cyprus, 2012). The minister further noted that the “decisions and actions [of the RoC] to explore and exploit natural resources within its EEZ… (are) within its sovereign rights” (address by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Kozakou-Marcoullis in MFA Cyprus, 2012).

The President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicos Anastasiades, echoed these words, speaking in response to Turkish and Turkish Cypriot statements:

In relation to the issue of exploration and exploitation of natural resources of the Republic of Cyprus, the convergence reached during the negotiations between President Christofias and Mr Talat, which provides that decisions with regard to the maritime areas…will constitute a federal competence in reunited Cyprus, remains valid (Press and Information Office, 2018).
II. Distribution of revenue

In recent years, the official position of the RoC has become clearer in terms of revenue sharing as it is agreed upon that income made from the exploitation of natural gas would be shared by both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot citizens. The then Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Praxoula Antoniadou-Kyriacou, said in January 2012:

…the Turkish Cypriots are citizens of the Republic of Cyprus and as such they can enjoy within the framework of a reunited homeland the benefits of any natural wealth that Cyprus has (Antoniadou-Kyriacou, 2012).

Recently, President Anastasiades has stated that a bill has been presented to the parliament establishing a “state fund for the management of revenues from the exploitation of hydrocarbons in the standard form of the Norwegian model, international principles and best practices” (quoted in Christou, 2018).

III. Discussing the issue in the sponsored talks

The position of the Greek Cypriots, on whether or not any issues pertaining to the hydrocarbons should be within the negotiations for a reunited Cyprus, are that hydrocarbons should not be a matter for the negotiations or any UN-sponsored mediation. The reason for this position, according to the then government spokesman, Stephanos Stephanou in 2011, is that: “exploration and exploitation of our natural resources constitutes a sovereign right of the Republic of Cyprus… Our sovereign right is not negotiable” (quoted in Cyprus News Agency, 2011).

Summing up the arguments made by the RoC, they maintain that because they are the only internationally recognised government on the island, it falls within their sovereign rights to explore and exploit any resources discovered in their EEZ within the confines of the UNCLOS. Although it is clear that the Greek Cypriots are willing to share the revenue accrued from the exploitation of natural gas, this will only be done after a settlement is reached. The RoC further maintains that the Turkish Cypriots do not have influence regarding how the RoC exploits or manages the hydrocarbons before (or in the absence of) a solution. Finally, it can be understood
that the reason the RoC takes such a firm stance on finding a settlement in order to coax the Turkish Cypriots into a settlement (Gürel, Mullen and Tzimitras, 2013: 45).

5.4.2. Turkish Cypriot perspective and response
The Turkish Cypriot’s overriding objection to the RoC’s activities is that the RoC is acting at the international level and that these sovereign rights should only go forward once there is a settlement. They state that they, as Turkish Cypriots, are equal constituents of the 1960 Constitution. As such, they argue that the RoC’s continued actions, such as their delimitation of maritime boundaries and organisation of international tenders for exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons, expressly ignore Turkish Cypriot rights and interests. Although the international community views the RoC as the only legally valid governmental body on the island, the Turkish Cypriots do not accept that there is any authority existing on the island that represents both sides (Gürel, 2013: 61 - 64). While they strongly feel that hydrocarbons should not be explored until there is a solution, the Turkish Cypriot negotiator stated that:

Now as for the talk on the Greek Cypriot side about setting up a heritage fund for the gas revenues, with the proceeds be shared with the Turkish Cypriots in the event of a solution; that's not the real issue... Money is not the issue... What matters is to generate wealth together... Having a heritage fund or not, or giving a share to Turkish Cypriots or not - that's not really germane (quoted in Hazou, 2012: 96).

One could argue that the main issue for the Turkish Cypriots regarding the exploration and exploitation is not only the revenue sharing, but rather that they are not involved as is there right according to the 1960 Constitution. Along with the large error of granting only the RoC accession to the EU in 2004, according to the Turkish Cypriots, the international backing of RoC venturing alone in the exploration and exploitation is another folly. Since the international community back the RoC, the Turkish Cypriots proceeded with a new agenda, which is based on the 'principle of reciprocity'. Ultimately, this means that the Turkish Cypriots would proceed to sign their own agreements for hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation for the maritime areas of Cyprus as a whole with Turkey. Map 5.6 demonstrates the above-mentioned blocks.
In 2012, with the backing of Turkey, the Turkish Cypriot side handed the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) their proposal for activities related to hydrocarbons. The proposal stated that a new bicommunal technical committee should be created. This new committee would be tasked with obtaining consent from both sides regarding the concluded international treaties and determine the revenue sharing. The committee would also oversee and govern the account in which all the revenue would be kept and use this revenue for financing provisions for a settlement. The proposal also contained a suggestion that natural gas should be transported through Turkey as this method is most feasible and profitable, according to the proposal. (Inner City Press, 2012).

5.4.3. Turkish perspective and response

Turkey objects to the ‘Greek Cypriot Administration’ (GCA) for two key reasons. The first reason is that Turkey objects to the RoC being the only legitimate government on the island. Furthermore, they object to the RoC making unilateral decisions by
signing maritime area agreements and granting licences to oil and gas companies for exploration and exploitation (Uras, 2018). Turkey, like the Turkish Cypriots, believe that “there is no single authority which in law or in fact is competent to represent jointly the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots” (Council of Europe, 2016). The second reason for objecting is centred on the interests of Turkey in the Mediterranean and the Aegean. Map 5.7 below demonstrates what Turkey believes should be their maritime zones.

Map 5.7: Proposed maritime area of Turkey as believed to be fair by Turkey

In response to the continued hydrocarbon exploration efforts of the RoC, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots having consistently protested against these efforts through official public pronouncements, letters communicated to the UN in various capacities and official governmental statements. Since 2011, when the first exploratory drilling started, the rhetoric used by Turkey has increased in severity. Since the discovery of hydrocarbons in the region, regional tensions have been increasing with the blunt determination Turkey has conveyed in stopping the RoC’s maritime activities.

Recently, the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu, stated in a written interview with the Greek newspaper, Ta Nea, that:
Along with the Turkish Cypriots, Turkey has been warning the Greek Cypriots from the very beginning not to take such irresponsible steps. If they still believe they have nothing to lose, they are mistaken. Turkey will continue to protect the rights of the Turkish Cypriots, as well as its own rights and interests in the Eastern Mediterranean (Psyllides, 2018).

How Turkey is prepared to safeguard the rights of the Turkish Cypriots as well as their own interests is unclear yet, the Turkish government has on numerous occasions since 2011 stated that “…it goes without saying that we will never allow unauthorized hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation activities on our continental shelf” (The National Herald, 2018). The President of Turkey since 2014, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, expressed that:

Our warships and security units are following all developments in the region with the instruction to do whatever is necessary. We warn those who overstep the mark in Cyprus and the Aegean. They are standing up to us until they see our army, ships and planes (quoted in Reuters, 2018).

5.4.4. Third party perspectives
As the main parties in the conflict have been discussed in the previous section, it is imperative to examine the international community’s perspective regarding the RoC’s exploration and exploitation of natural gas in their EEZ. It should also be noted that the positions and issues presented by Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots have not been reciprocated by the international community.

The UN Secretariat has attempted to maintain neutrality as tensions increase between the RoC and Turkey over the exploration in the RoC’s EEZ. In January, the Report of the Secretary-General on the UNFICYP activities noted that:

Exploration for hydrocarbon reserves in Cyprus’s exclusive economic zone remains an issue that could lead to tensions between the various stakeholders. As I have repeatedly stressed, it is important to ensure that any natural resources found around Cyprus will benefit both communities. I remain of the view that the existence of common natural resources provides a strong incentive for all parties to find a durable solution to the Cyprus problem and should engender deeper cooperation for the benefit of all Cypriots and stakeholders in the region. I recall that Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders had previously agreed that natural resources in a unified Cyprus would lie within the competence of the future federal government. It remains
essential that all parties make every effort to defuse tensions (quoted in Cyprus Mail: 2018b).

As Russia is the RoC’s closest ally on the UNSC Permanent 5, they have referred to and emphasised the UNCLOS:

In this situation, as in any such situation, there is a need for restraint from this threat of using force and from using force itself. There is a common understanding that international law, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, has to prevail in all circumstances (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Russia, 2011).

The UK’s stance on the exploratory drilling of the RoC remains that they support the right of the RoC government to explore for natural resources in its EEZ. However, the UK also notes that natural gas should be developed and exploited for all Cypriots. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has discussed activities in Cyprus’ maritime EEZ with Turkey:

We support the Republic of Cyprus’ sovereign right to exploit natural resources in its EEZ and want to see exploration go ahead. We believe Cyprus’ hydrocarbons should be developed for the benefit of all Cypriots, and urge all parties to look for ways by which the development of hydrocarbons can support the search for a settlement (Cyprus Mail, 2018a).

According to the website of the US Embassy in Cyprus:

The U.S. policy on Cyprus’s EEZ is longstanding and has not changed: the United States recognizes the right of the Republic of Cyprus to develop its resources in its Exclusive Economic Zone. We continue to believe the island’s oil and gas resources, like all of its resources, should be equitably shared between both communities in the context of an overall settlement. We discourage any actions or rhetoric that increase tensions in the region (US Embassy in Cyprus, 2018).

As the Chinese economy expands and the demand for cleaner energy rises, the Chinese government seeks alternative gas sources in the world. With the increasing cooperation between Cyprus and China, specifically the increase in Chinese investments in Cyprus, the former Ambassador of China to Cyprus stated in 2013 that:

The discovery of natural gas has been a great development for Cyprus. Chinese companies and the Chinese government are very supportive of Cyprus’
hydrocarbons exploration efforts. We have had many discussions with the Cypriot government and local companies and hope that Chinese businesses can be a part of the developing oil and gas industry. So far there have been many business delegations from China and I am confident we can find suitable projects in the energy field for Chinese investors in the future. We hope that China can make a contribution to the budding Cypriot energy industry (Cyprus Profile, 2013).

The French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Jean-yes Le Drian, stated that:

France has always supported the right of Cyprus to explore and exploit its natural resources, in accordance with European and international law. We have directly mentioned it to the Turkish authorities. This position was also expressed without any ambiguity by the European Council on 22 March (Paraschos and Papacostantinou, 2018).

The European Council President, Donald Tusk, made a remark at an informal EU summit meeting in February 2018 about “Turkey’s illegal violation” in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean. His statements came after Turkish warships successfully blocked ENI from drilling in the RoC EEZ. In harsh language, Tusk expressed “(EU leaders)…solidarity with Cyprus and Greece, and urgently call on Turkey to terminate these activities” (IN, 2018). Tusk further stated that the EU Council supports the sovereign right of the RoC “to explore and exploit its natural resources, in accordance with EU and international law” (IN, 2018).

It is important to examine the position of Greece as they are not only a guarantor according to the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee and a staunch supporter of the Republic of Cyprus’ right to explore for natural gas in their EEZ but also for the abovementioned prospective pipeline that would see gas transported from Israel and Cyprus, through Greece and Italy into Europe. With the blocking of Italy’s ENI drill vessel by Turkish warships in February of 2018, the Greek Foreign Ministry stated that, “Turkey continues to question international rights by grossly violating the sovereign rights of Cyprus in Eastern Mediterranean” (Armen Press, 2018).

5.5. Other contributing factors
This case study has examined the conflict between the RoC and Turkey and examined the various issues that have affected the current escalation of tensions. This section summarises these tensions.
5.5.1. Realist geopolitics of hydrocarbons

The current developments in the Eastern Mediterranean between the RoC and Turkey are examined from a realist and geopolitical perspective.

The geopolitics of natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean can either bring prosperity to the region or cause instability in an already volatile region. Oftentimes natural resources will either lead to cooperation or tension between states. As noted previously, the RoC is determined to exercise their sovereign right as the only internationally recognised government on the island and continue exploring and exploiting natural gas found within its EEZ. However, for any gas operation to be profitable, regional cooperation between states in the EEZ is paramount. It is due to the detection of gas in the Eastern Mediterranean that relations among states and the geopolitics of the region are rapidly changing. Since the souring of relations between Turkey and Israel in 2010, when 10 pro-Palestine Turkish activists were killed, and the recent harsh words exchanged between the two states, there appears to be no thawing of relations between the two states (Knews, 2018). Turkish President, Erdogan, accused his Israeli counterpart, Benjamin Netanyahu, of being a ‘terrorist’, and accused him of killing 15 Palestinians in April 2018. Furthermore, he stated, “We [Turkey] don’t have the shame of invading on us, Netanyahu. You are an invader and right now are present in those lands as an invader.” In response to this, Netanyahu tweeted:

Erdogan is not accustomed to being answered back to, but he should start getting used to it. He who occupies northern Cyprus, encroaches on Kurdish territory and massacres civilians in Afrin cannot preach to us on values and morals (in Knews, 2018).

The continued hostilities between Israel and Turkey have seen Israel-RoC-Greece relations flourish since 2010 with Greece being the key to the potential natural gas pipeline linking Israel and Greece to Europe. The former president of Greece, Karolos Papoulias, noted that:
The convergence of interests in (the) Eastern Mediterranean allow for the establishment of a strategic relation - with the Republic of Cyprus being an integral part - considering the discovery of significant underwater natural gas deposits and the transport of Israeli and Cypriot natural gas to Europe via Greece change the geo-economic and geo-political framework in the greater region (KIS, 2012).

As Cyprus, Israel and Greece continue to strengthen their trilateral cooperation, with the possible inclusion of Egypt, Turkey is the only nation in the area with no oil or gas resources to date. This is in line with the first point of “access to and control of natural resources, of which energy is the most critical, is a key ingredient of national power and national interest” (Dannreuther, 2010: 3).

Although Turkey is already an important energy hub globally, its interests are at stake should a consortium between Cyprus, Israel, Greece and possibly even Egypt develop. Unless relations between Turkey and its neighbours in the Eastern Mediterranean improve drastically, the more expensive but more suitable southern gas corridor may become a reality. As RoC exploration continues, Turkey has increasingly resorted to gunboat diplomacy - defined as a threat or actual use of naval force (Wong, 2000: 93) - due to competition for access to and control of the hydrocarbon deposits in the Eastern Mediterranean. As a result of this, tensions are increasing exponentially in the Eastern Mediterranean (Mediterranean Affairs, 2018).

While there is great potential for the Eastern Mediterranean gas bonanza to bring stability to the region, the current rate of exploitation and exploration will only cause further tension and instability in the region.

5.6. Obstacles and incentives to resolving the conflict over gas

The continual exploration of hydrocarbons in the EEZ of the RoC has the ability to worsen current instability in the Eastern Mediterranean or bring about a solution to the Cyprus issue and bring stability to the area. The obstacles of natural gas exploration can be summed up as hindering the road to a solution for the Cyprus issue and regional instability.
As hydrocarbons can be a force for settlement, it can also deepen the division between the two communities as is currently happening. Turkish Cypriots and Turkey maintain that the RoC does not speak for the Turkish Cypriot community and as such cannot make unilateral decisions on the RoC EEZ. As mentioned, although the international community is supportive of the RoC’s sovereign right to explore for natural gas in its EEZ, arguments have been made that:

Hydrocarbons in and around Cyprus may turn into an incentive only if international community and international companies refuse to finalize the exploitation and exportation of the natural resources by saying that the Cyprus problem should be resolved beforehand (Eminel, 2016: 274).

The other option is to have a joint bicommunal committee with Greek and Turkish Cypriots on hydrocarbons. The Greek Cypriots are greatly opposed to this as they argue that natural resources are to be managed by the federal government. Furthermore, since ENI was successfully blocked by Turkey in the RoC’s EEZ, Hubert Faustmann – a professor of political science and history notes that two lessons can be learned from the actions of Turkey:

First, Turkey is prepared to go further than anyone else. Secondly, that energy firms will now think twice about projects in the Cypriot EEZ unless they are assured of the backing of their respective countries, because it’s now beyond clear that Cyprus, which is responsible for providing security to the drillships, is unable do that (Hazou, 2018).

The incentives for gas exploration can be summed up as regional stability as well as possibly solving the Cyprus problem.

The potential for the detection of natural gas to aid in the solving of the Gordian knot that is the Cyprus problem is arguably the most important benefit of discovering natural gas. For Turkey, the desire to import natural gas from Israel via a pipeline may be the catalyst needed to back the reunification of the island. However, without a settlement, a pipeline via Cyprus and Israel to Turkey would not happen even if it is the cheaper option (Euractiv, 2016).
Natural gas reserves exploited in the region would allow for the gas to run through Turkey should a resolution to the Cyprus problem be found. Relations between Turkey and a reunited RoC could result in trade and cooperation benefits between the two states. Cyprus could benefit economically and internationally from a reunification and Turkey could be on the road to becoming an EU member. This could allow for better relations between Greece and Turkey as NATO members. Relations between Turkey and Israel can improve as well as an end to the conflict between Israel and Lebanon. Israeli-Egyptian relations can also improve. Hence the natural gas discoveries and subsequent exploitation could promote regional stability, energy security and cooperation, something that has not been obtainable for decades and even centuries. However, for this to happen, the states involved will have to set aside their political agendas and national interests, which is a nearly impossible task (Tagliapietra and Zachmann, 2015).

As the number of actors involved in the exploration of the RoC’s EEZ increases with the USA and French navy warships. It has not been publicly confirmed, but it is assumed these warships are based in the RoC’s EEZ to protect Total and ExxonMobil drilling vessels without a repeat of what happened to Italy’s ENI. Officially, the USA and Israeli Navy have been conducting joint exercises just off Cyprus waters (Geropoulos, 2018) (The National Herald, 2018).

Mustafa Akinci (self-elected leader of the TRNC), has emphasised that:

I cannot say that everything is fine and everything will be under control, sometimes certain things happen unwillingly and accidentally... I see a big opportunity there, if treated properly, handled properly, without any fear of accidents [ourselves] and the others we can get mutual benefit out of it ... If not handled properly, you may expect accidents at any time (Aljazeera, 2018b).

This comment was made in connection with the RoC giving permission to the USA’s energy giant, ExxonMobil, to begin explorations and the policy of reciprocity followed by the TRNC, giving Turkish firms permission to drill in the claimed EEZ of the TRNC.
5.7. The role of natural resources: curse or blessing?
As mentioned in Chapter two of this thesis, two perspectives commonly exist when examining natural resource conflicts, namely resource scarcity and resource abundance. With regard to the escalating tensions between Turkey and the RoC, the possibility of hydrocarbon abundance may spark a conflict.

Consequently, it is integral for any country that is expecting a sudden resource abundance, including Cyprus and other states in the Eastern Mediterranean, to understand that:

The resource curse first and foremost enhances whatever negative trends already exists within a country and between neighbours involved in the exploitation of natural resources. The curse, and in particular the negative consequences of hydrocarbon production and revenue, can put considerable stress on a country’s political system and financial sector (Rolandsen, 2012: 79).

The continuing exploration for natural gas has seen tensions greatly increase among the north and south administrations of the island, and consequently among Greece and Turkey as the guarantors of the island. It can already be seen that hydrocarbon exploration is dominating domestic and international policies and affairs of both the RoC and Turkey. On the economic front, the Cypriot economy may suffer if revenue is not managed effectively and transparently (Rolandsen, 2012: 80).

5.7.1. Levels of Analysis
In order to analyse whether the pursuit for natural resources could result in a regional and possibly even international hot conflict, the three levels of analysis are used. These levels are the system, domestic and individual level.

I. Systems level

The present structure of the regional power is complicated due to the involvement of many other powerful nations like the USA, China, Russia, the UK and EU (mainly France). The basic international rule of the game is that:
There is a great deal of politics in energy. Energy is politics. It is money. It is power. It is geostrategic. In short, it is “The Prize”, because energy makes things happen. It gives a country power and influence (Lakes, 2012: 85).

Within the process level of the Eastern Mediterranean, four key changes are affecting the already fragile stability of the Eastern Mediterranean:

1) The major powers (Russia, USA, UK, EU and China) are competing for the redistribution of power and “the Eastern Mediterranean is rapidly becoming a big laboratory where balance of power policies are being tested” (Tziampiris, 2016). The balance of power is continually shifting. Each of these major international powers is protecting its own national interests, with the overriding interest being the exploration and exploitation of natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean.

2) Russia’s increasing presence in the Eastern Mediterranean is raising suspicions for the USA, UK and EU in terms of Russia’s intentions and influence. This is not only the geopolitics in the region but also Russia’s attempt at obtaining a key role in the energy resources of the Eastern Mediterranean (Chavez, 2018).

3) The multipolarity of the region has resulted in a shifting of previous alliances and the continual and oftentimes aggressive relations between Israel and Turkey have allowed for the emergence of new alliances. The new alliance between Israel, Greece and Cyprus and talks of a new pipeline agitate Turkey’s regional aspirations of not only an energy hub but also as a regional power (Chavez, 2018). Furthermore, Cyprus and Greece are EU members and Turkey and Greece are both NATO members, which ensures the EU and NATO’s involvement in Eastern European stability.

4) Due to technological advancements, a surge in oil and gas prices and the depletion of shallow water gas reserves, gas production companies are searching for oil at greater depths (World Ocean Review, 2014: 10). This has greatly affected the Eastern Mediterranean as previous gas exploration technology did not allow for deep-offshore drilling, which is now possible.
II. Domestic level

According to Getz (2018):

Turkey was effectively an authoritarian state before the election. It remains one today. Through the referendum last year and these elections, [Erdogan] has put into law what was already the practice. I don’t see the election as doing more than consolidating an authoritarianism that was already in place. And its failing economy (Getz, 2018).

The decline of democracy and the rise of authoritarianism since the apparent unsuccessful coup in Turkey is integral to the explanation of the change in Turkey’s foreign policy, which has seen Turkey employ more aggressive tactics such as gunboat diplomacy.

Another issue that is caused by the rise of authoritarianism in Turkey and that is affecting the stability in the Eastern Mediterranean is the gunboat diplomacy. Turkey has opted to use these tactics against international companies seeking to drill in the RoC’s EEZ. This demonstrates that Turkey is on a collision course aimed directly at the interests of the EU, but also the USA and Russia in its goal to protect its national interests (Getz, 2018).

Furthermore, the collapse of the Turkish Lira, and worsening debt and inflation issues have infected the global markets due to fears of a default (Tisdall, 2018). The other domestic level policy that could spark a war in the Eastern Mediterranean is the bold continuation of hydrocarbon exploration by the RoC. President Erdogan, speaking at the opening session of the 27th Term of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, stated:

We would like to reiterate from this rostrum that no step may be taken in Cyprus or the Aegean in spite of Turkey. Those who try to disregard our presence in this region ought to know that they endanger their overall existence by doing so (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2018).

Based on this declaration, it would appear that Turkey will do everything necessary to protect its interests in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean.
III. Individual level

Since taking office as Prime Minister in 2003, Erdogan has effectively taken democracy in Turkey and reshaped it into an “elected autocracy” (Cook, 2018). Erdogan managed to do this by “establishing new institutions, manipulated existing ones, and hollowed others to confront political challenges” (Cook, 2018). In June 2018, elections were held that crowned Erdogan the first president in a new system that ultimately gives one man (Erdogan) control over the judiciary, legislature and obviously the executive. Erdogan has the power to dissolve parliament and rule by decree. Power is now wholly and completely centralised in Erdogan’s hands (Gumrukcu and Solaker, 2018). Like all authoritarian rulers before him, since the collapse of the Lira, he has taken no political responsibility, rather blaming foreign conspirators for the lira meltdown (Elliot, 2018).

The already fragile geopolitical stability of the Eastern Mediterranean will be under great strain as Erdogan continues to consolidate power at home and abroad. The emergence of an authoritarian nationalistic state may just be the tipping point in bringing about a war on an international scale in the Eastern Mediterranean.

On the RoC side, President Anastasiades won a second five-year term in February 2018, securing 55.9% of the votes. This is due in part to his handling of the economic meltdown of 2013 as well as his apparent attempts to renew peace talks with the Turkish Cypriots. Although the talks failed, two narratives exist within the Greek Cypriot community; either bearing responsibility or as Anastasides has done, blaming Turkey for its continual intransigence. Anastasiades was blamed not only for allowing too many concessions to the Turkish Cypriots but also for allowing the Crans Montana talks to crumble (these talks were viewed as the best chance at a solution) (Channel News Asia, 2018).
5.8. Conclusion: The role of gas in conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean

The Eastern Mediterranean is a complex region inundated with historical conflicts of ethnicity and religion. As a result, the region has always been wrought with instability. It has been this way for decades, especially with the Cyprus Problem, Palestinian Problem and Israel and Lebanon’s conflict. While gas was not the cause of the original conflicts, it is certainly causing existing tensions to flare to levels that have not been seen in decades. The international community would much rather keep the current status quo as opposed to risk their own national interests – in the case of the EU, they do not want to risk impeding their gas supply that runs through Turkey, nor do they want the three million refugees that are currently in Turkey to spill over into Europe. The USA does not want to risk losing Turkey as a NATO member due to the slow but steady rise of Russian power and influence around the globe, and specifically in the Eastern Mediterranean region. However, Turkey is risking a lot by being an ally to both the USA and Russia and going directly against American interests in Syria and impeding the possibility for the EU to get alternative sources of gas from Cyprus, Israel and Egypt.

The emergence of Erdogan as an authoritarian leader greatly changes the dynamic of the region and this is emphasised by observing the way Turkey engages with other nations in the Eastern Mediterranean. While natural gas may not be the sole cause of war in the Eastern Mediterranean (if the tipping point was reached), it could be the catalyst. This is clear from the continually aggressive language Erdogan uses and by his blocking of the ENI drilling ship in February of 2018. With the USA’s navy deployment as well as French navy ships in and around the RoC’s waters, it remains to be seen how far Erdogan is prepared to go to protect Turkey’s national interests. Currently it is not a matter of ‘if’ but a matter of ‘when’ and ‘how’ energy politics in the Eastern Mediterranean will lead to an armed and violent conflict or war. If this does happen, it could involve many states in the international community.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1. Summary of study

The key purpose of this dissertation was to analyse the role of natural resources – oil, water and gas – in international conflicts. In the case of oil, the two conflicts in the South and East China Seas were examined jointly. The actors involved in these two conflicts were China and Japan in the East China Sea conflict and China, Vietnam, Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan in the South China Sea conflict. The role of oil in this conflict is central. Due to the nature of oil being non-renewable and found in a select few places as well as the global demand for oil, China, as a major consumer of oil, has sought to discover its own crude oil resources so as not to rely on imports or the global market. Since the oil crisis in the 1970s, the search for oil has driven China’s behaviour in both the East and South China Seas as well as its interests in African states with proven oil reserves. The South China Sea has become a national interest to China due to the possibility of large oil reserves that could turn China into a leading oil player, not only in the region but also globally. It is this same drive that has pushed China to ignore the UNCLOS and make claims on the Spratly and Paracel Islands on the grounds of historical claims. Thus, the role of oil in the South and East China conflicts is central.

The second case study investigated the role of water from the Nile River in the international conflict between Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The role of water, like oil, is central to the conflict between Egypt and its neighbours in Africa. The need to develop water resources in Ethiopia as well as Egypt’s dependence on the Nile are driving the actions of the two states. Egypt has historically always been dependent on the Nile, but the 1929 and 1959 treaties altered the regional dynamics by turning Egypt into the regional hegemon and giving it control of the Nile River. The rapid growth of the region has pushed Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda to all seek a stake in the water resources of the Nile.
River. Ethiopian nationalism, coupled with a need to develop the Nile River water resources, is driving Ethiopia. It is clear that the role of water is central to the conflict.

In the case of gas, the international conflict between Cyprus, Turkey, the Occupied North/The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (only recognised by Turkey), along with Israel, Lebanon and Egypt was examined. With regard to the third natural resource, the role of gas is not as clear as it is in the previous two natural resource conflicts. This is due to the complicated history of the island and the pre-existing conflict. However, the discovery of gas is not only complicating existing issues but creating new issues and new layers to the existing conflict. The increased tensions surrounding Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus since the early 2000s is a direct result of the maritime delimitations and subsequent exploration for gas within the Republic of Cyprus’ EEZ. It is becoming increasingly difficult to separate the two conflicts. Although the original conflict was not created from the discovery, exploration and exploitation of gas, the role of gas is fuelling tensions and exacerbating the original conflict while creating a whole new conflict.

As mentioned, the aim of the study was achieved by creating a framework using six key areas (elaborated upon in Chapter 2). These areas have been derived from multiple sources in the literature and combining them in a holistic framework guided the analysis of conflicts driven by natural resources:

1. The natural resource/s at stake;
2. The historical build up to these conflicts;
3. The parties involved in the conflicts;
4. Other possible contributing factors to the conflicts (i.e. are the conflicts wholly caused by the natural resources or are there other factors to be considered?);
5. Obstacles to resolving the conflicts, and
6. The role of the natural resource/s in the conflict.

Methodologically, this was a qualitative study and it used a case study approach to analyse the role of natural resources in international conflicts.
The first key area, the natural resource at stake, examined the description and origins, the type of natural resource by economic standards (applicable to gas and oil), the process of locating and extracting the natural resource (applicable to gas and oil), the importance and challenges facing the natural resource and finally the legality in terms of international treaties and conventions and whether or not the states in question are party thereof.

The second key area, that of the historical and political context of the natural resource conflict, investigated the historical roots of the conflict. The Stakeholder Analysis Tool was used to map out the conflict, the issues of the states involved, their interests and positions, means of power and influence as well their willingness to negotiate.

The third key area was the analysis of the main actors as well as the third-party perspectives involved in the conflict. The third-party perspectives involved the UN as an organisation, the UN Permanent 5, along with regional organisations (EU, ASEAN and AU).

Other contributing factors, the fourth key area, examined concepts such as nationalism and geopolitics in order to understand if other factors were driving the conflicts and what impact these could have on the conflicts.

The fifth key area, the obstacles and incentives to resolving the conflict, observed the key obstacles in the conflict and the subsequent incentives that could be used in the resolution of the conflict.

The sixth and final key area, the role of the natural resource in the conflict, utilised the levels of analysis to determine the role of oil, water and gas in the three conflicts.

An examination of the resource conflicts demonstrates that there are distinct differences between the conflicts. The three case studies involve different natural resources and are based in different geographical locations: Asia, Africa and Europe.
respectively. The conflicts of gas and oil are not rooted in the natural resource, but rather the resource has exacerbated pre-existing conflicts/tensions. The water conflict, on the other hand, is rooted in hydro politics. Another major difference is in terms of the regional power being a USA ally. In the case of water, Egypt is regarded an ally of the USA and the USA has supported Egypt in the water conflict. However, this is not the case with Turkey - a NATO member. The USA has publicly supported the Republic of Cyprus’ right to explore and exploit natural gas expressly against the views of Turkey.

The similarities between these three conflicts are striking. The USA, as a global superpower, along with China and Russia, has varying degrees of involvement in these three conflicts, yet their involvement is important to note. The USA’s most visible involvement is in the South and East China Seas, where its own strategic interests in the region as an important trade route are at stake. In the gas conflict involving Cyprus, the USA is involved in order to aid Europe in diversifying its natural gas supply away from Russia. In the water conflict in Africa, the USA supports Egypt. China’s involvement in the water conflict is deepening as it becomes the major trade partner for many African countries along with Russia. China’s involvement in the South and East China Seas is as a claimant. Oil and gas drive the involvement of the USA, China and Russia as these two natural resources are of strategic interest.

Another similarity between these three conflicts is the colonial policies that were put in place, and that have either caused or exacerbated the conflicts. The conflict in Cyprus was a direct result of colonial policies or colonial interference. The three treaties and subsequent constitution of Cyprus drafted by Great Britain, Greece and Turkey resulted in civil conflict, invasion and division. This has had a lasting effect since the 1960s and is felt today through the escalation of conflict surrounding the exploration of gas. In terms of Egypt, which was also a colony of Great Britain, the 1929 and 1959 Nile Water Agreements not only left Egypt in a position of regional hegemony controlling the Nile River for decades, but also deprived other states, such as Ethiopia, from developing their water sources and hindering Ethiopia’s economic development. In the case of China, the various colonial powers of the
USA, Great Britain and France especially have not only influenced the regimes in the area but also caused uncertainty regarding the administration, control and possession of the Senkaku/Diaoyu, Paracel and Spratly Islands in the East and South China Seas, respectively. This has allowed China to not only claim historical rights but also act aggressively in its pursuit for oil.

All three of the conflicts analysed in this dissertation are exacerbated by the regional hegemons. These three hegemons - Turkey, China and Egypt respectively - are autocratic regimes (although Egypt sees itself as a new democratic regime) with the propensity to act aggressively if they view their strategic interests to be at stake. These three countries have charismatic leaders who inspire nationalistic feelings of lost empires. These empires fell (as Erdogan, Jinping and el-Sisi have lamented) due to colonialism, imperialism or various wars. These three leaders speak of rebuilding the nations to their former glory.

Erdogan and el-Sisi are also paranoid figures. Erdogan survived a failed coup attempt, whereas el-Sisi orchestrated a successful coup and subsequently imprisoned all powerful opponents. Erdogan jailed thousands of academics, teachers, journalists and army personnel as traitors, invoked emergency law, changed the constitution and became the most powerful man in Turkey.

While natural resources play a central role in the conflicts in terms of exacerbating and raising tensions, it is clear that these natural resources could be used to foster peace. However, the hegemons prefer using threats and gunboat diplomacy (in the case of Turkey, Egypt and China) to force smaller (based on economics and/or population size) nations to yield. Interestingly, Cyprus has taken great measures to ensure that the oil companies it partners with are giant conglomerates with powerful government and military support, such as ExxonMobil and Total. It has also avoided releasing bids for blocks that Turkey claims as their own.

The aggressive manoeuvres of Turkey, Egypt and China, in their respective regions, are worrying as all three hegemons have made it clear that they would resort to any
means to protect their national interests. As these conflicts develop and smaller nations continue their pursuits, it may just be a matter of time before a hot war emerges and it could start in Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean or Asia. However, the conflicts involving either China or Cyprus could result in a much greater war as the USA would be forced to defend its allies in the South and East China Sea and the EU would be forced to intervene should Turkey wage war against Cyprus. This would place the USA in an awkward situation as Greece would readily defend Cyprus against a fellow NATO member.

6.2. Continued academic interest

This chapter concludes by focusing on issues that may be of interest for further academic study.

Firstly, as the conflicts are based in realist theory, using different theories in IR may elicit different results. What other theories in IR can be used to analyse the conflicts? Would the results be different? If so, why?

Secondly, which conflict resolution tools can be utilised in these conflicts? Which resolution tools have already been used? Have they failed? Why?

Thirdly, the USA’s role in these three conflicts demonstrates varying roles of involvement: from being an opponent to China in Asia; supporting Cyprus’ right to explore and exploit natural resources, to echoing Egypt’s fear regarding the GERD project. Would the USA’s diminishing superpower status be replaced with China? Is China capable of reaching superpower status or merely regional hegemon status?

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