Proceedings of the International Conference on the POTTENTIAL CRISIS AND CONFLICTS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

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Edited By
NURŞİN ATEŞOĞLU GÜNEY - FUAT AKSU

Joint Conference Series No. 1
Proceedings of the International Conference on the

POTENTIAL CRISIS AND CONFLICTS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

December 14, 2004
AUDITORIUM

YTU Auditorium / Yıldız Campus
Yıldız- Beşiktaş

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NURŞİN ATEŞOĞLU GÜNHEY - FUAT AKSU

Joint Conference Series N. 1
Foundation for Middle East and Balkan Studies (OBİV)
Y. T. U. Department of Political Science and International Relations
Foundation for Middle East and Balkan Studies (OBİV)

Yıldız Technical University
Department of Political Science and International Relations

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POTENTIAL CRISIS AND CONFLICTS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

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Programme

Welcome Addresses and Opening Remarks

09.30-09.40

Prof. Dr. Aykut Polatoğlu
(Head of DPSIR / YTU)

09.40-10.00

Ambassador Güner Öztek
(Chairman of OBİV)

I. SESSION

Chairperson

Prof. Dr. Haluk Ülman
(Yeditepe University, Turkey)

10.00-11.30

11.30-11.45 Coffee Break

11.45-12.30 Discussion

II. SESSION

Chairperson

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gencer Özcan
(Yıldız Technical University, Turkey)

14.00-15.30

15.30-15.45 Coffee Break

15.45-16.30 Discussion

16.30-17.00 Conclusion Remarks
I. SESSION
10.00-11.30

Chairperson
Prof. Dr. Haluk Ülman
(Yeditepe University, Turkey)

Security Issues in the Western Balkans
Arian Starova
(MP, President of the Albanian Atlantic Association / Albania)

Final Status of Kosovo: Is It Still an Open Issue
Prof. Dr. Enver Hasani
(Director, Office for International Cooperation and Regional Dialogue Office of the Prime Minister / Kosovo)

Crisis in Macedonia in 2001 and the Implementation of Ohrid Agreement
Iso Rusi
(Journalist / Macedonia)

Serbian Dilemmas in Post-Milosevic Serbia
Milan St. Protic
(Former Ambassador / Serbia and Montenegro)

The Role of the International Justice in Reconciliation after Ethnic Conflicts: The Example of ICTY and Countries Issued From Former Yugoslavia
Assist. Prof. Dr. Ozan Erözden
(Yıldız Technical University, Turkey)

10.00-11.30
11.30-11.45 Coffee Break
11.45-12.30 Discussion
II. SESSION
14.00-15.30

Chairperson
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gencer Özcan
(Yıldız Technical University, Turkey)

The New Security Strategies: EU and NATO Experiences in the
Western Balkans
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurşin Atesoğlu Güney
(Yıldız Technical University, Turkey)

South East Europe and the European Union
Verena Knaus
(Senior Analyst /ESI)

The Stabilizing Role of Bulgaria in the Region of South East
Europe
Stoyanko Petrova
(General Coordinator of the Diplomatic Institute / Bulgaria)

Romania and the Western Balkans: Past and Present
Prof. Dr. Mihai Maxim
(Director, Center for Turkish Studies, University of Bucharest
/Romania)

Exploring the Role of the Organized Crime in Crises in the Western
Balkans From A Systemic Perspective: The Case of FYROM”
Dr. Eugenia Vathakou
(European Perspective Hellenic Humanitarian NGO / Greece)

15.30-15.45 Coffee Break
15.45-16.30 Discussion
16.30-17.00 Conclusion Remarks

* Milan St. Protic and Dr. Eugenia Vathakou did not attend to the
Conference at the last minute.
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Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania in 1997. Currently, he is both the member of the Albanian Parliament and the President of the Albanian Atlantic Association.
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PREFACE

The Foundation of Middle East and Balkan Studies with the Department of Political Science and International Relations of Yıldız Technical University organized a conference under the title of “Potential Crisis and Conflicts in the Western Balkans” on 14 December 2004.

Today, Western Balkans is surely a more secure and stable place when it is compared with the last decade. The war is over and democratically chosen governments are in position. But, continuing serious problems of the region make this part of Europe still a matter of concern for the international community. The region still opens to certain potential conflicts that might have spill over effects beyond the borders of the certain countries.

Thus, as a means of security guarantee in the Western Balkans, from 1995 onwards the deployment of first NATO then EU forces has been realized. The existence of the unresolved problems of the certain Western Balkan countries still hinders the region’s whole integration with the rest of the continent. Despite this, the Western Balkan countries’ integration process with the Euro-Atlantic community is continuing.

The participants who are all experts in their fields have come together at this very important conference, so as to (i) first determine the current problems of the Western Balkans that might well be the reasons of future conflicts and (ii) secondly come up with alternative policy recommendations about “what ought to be done” in the region.
We consider the contributions of the conference participants highly valuable in terms of providing an insight to the current problems of the region. For this reason, the conference papers are published in the format of proceedings. By this way, we hoped to encourage further discussions in the field of international relations.

We would like to thank all the individuals involved in the preparations of the conference.

Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney - Fuat Aksu
WELCOMING REMARKS

Aykut POLATOĞLU’

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to the Yıldız Technical University on behalf of the Department of Political Science and International Relations.

Today in this meeting attentions will be focused on peace and stability in the Western Balkans. One may argue that peace and stability are now finally starting to take roots in the Western Balkans. Although the situation is heading towards stabilization, this has not been fully achieved yet. As the title of this conference “POTENTIAL CRISIS AND CONFLICTS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS” implies everything is so fragile, there seems to be a temporary delicate balance which needs to be strengthened. I hope this meeting produces a positive message that the Western Balkan nations are cooperating and they are doing their best to fully consolidate peace and stability in the region.

I would like to take this opportunity and extend our gratitude and thanks to our dear students, to the members of Politics and International Relations Club, for their efforts and contributions in the realization of this conference.

* Prof. Dr.; Head of the Department of Political Science and International Relations-YTU.
OPENING REMARK

Güner ÖZTEK

Mr. Chairman

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you all to the Conference on “Potential Crisis and Threats in the Western Balkans” which is jointly organized by the “Foundation for Middle-East and Balkans Studies” and the Yıldız Technical University. Whole day long we will discuss different aspects of the situation in the Western Balkans.

In the history the Balkans are associated with wars, ethnic conflicts, division and political turmoil. Today, the region is in full transition period from totalitarian regimes to democracy and from the central state ruled economies to free market economies. For the last decade, we are witnessing a progress towards peace and stability despite the persistence of certain shortcomings. It is encouraging to see the peoples of the region to understand and realize that their future lie at the peaceful co-existence based on mutual respect within the multiethnic societies.

I am confident that during the course of the Conference we will be provided with the valuable opportunity of sharing first hand information through the contribution of our distinguished participants, on the recent history of the Balkans region, in particular the humanitarian tragedies we have encountered there in a number of crisis.

* Ambassador, Director of the Foundation for Middle East and Balkan Studies-OBIV.
This, I think, is not only important for understanding the root-causes of these crises, but also bears particular importance in terms of avoiding their recurrence in the future.

The Balkans has played a significant role in the European and World History. This region also occupies a distinct place in Turkey’s foreign policy since Turkey, herself, is an inseparable part of the Balkans. Thus, the preservation of peace and stability in the Balkans has always been of vital importance for us.

In this context, Turkey, attaches special attention to the further development of its relations with the Balkan Countries on the basis of mutual respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as non-interference in domestic affairs.

Another important aspect of the importance of the Balkans region for Turkey is the existence of Turkish minorities in various Balkan Countries. On the other hand, there are Turkish citizens whose grandparents, parents or themselves have immigrated to Turkey from the Balkan peninsula.

Last but not the least, conflicts in this region often create serious consequences for the neighboring countries and in particular for Turkey in terms of huge numbers of refugees pouring in after each major conflict.

Therefore, Turkey’s interest in the Balkans is strong and this is why Turkey has been at the forefront of international efforts to stop bloodshed and ethnic cleansing during the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and the Republic of Macedonia. Turkish troops, police officers and observers continue to serve in various parts of the former Yugoslavia to contribute international efforts in order to ensure the safety and well-being of the peoples there. Turkey has also provided substantial amount of assistance to war-torn Balkan nations, to help them with their reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts.
In addition to its bilateral efforts, Turkey has traditionally aspired for conciliation, stability and peace in the Balkans at a regional level. Turkey’s role in launching major initiatives such as the Southeastern European Cooperation Process (SEECOP) and the Multinational Peacekeeping Force for Southeastern Europe is a proof of the importance it attaches to forging closer ties among Balkan countries and to the creation of a durable atmosphere of understanding and peaceful cohabitation. In this regard, it is determined to play its full part within the regional economic initiatives as well, and in this context has been active within the Stability Pact and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI).

Since economic and political aspects of international relations and cooperation are inseparable, Turkey believes that better coordination must be established and maintained between the Stability Pact and the Southeastern European Cooperation Process (SEECOP), which is the only genuine initiative emanating from within the region. Southeastern European Cooperation Process (SEECOP) is a symbol of the common objective of the countries of region to improve cooperation among themselves and to bring lasting stability to Southeastern Europe.

It is Turkey’s firm belief that it is now the right time that the word “Balkans” is freed from its negative connotation and made to stand for such positive meanings as “mutual respect” and “peaceful cohabitation.” The peoples should spare no efforts to avoid the region falling again into balkanization.

The level of individual economic well-being and prosperity of the Balkan nations has a direct impact on the security and stability of the region. In turn, stability and security in Europe as a whole cannot be achieved and sustained if the southeastern part of the continent is dragged into economic or social turmoil.

Turkey believes that, it is indeed high time for Euro-Atlantic and European institutions to embrace the region with a vision of projecting lasting peace, stability and prosperity, and
at the same time, cultivate the diverse historical heritages as constitutive elements of European culture and civilization. This will speed up the process of democratization and reform to establish basic universal standards of human and minority rights in the cultural, educational, linguistic and other fields.

The EU’s confirmation for the European Perspective can be seen as an indication of the Union’s determination in forming closer relations with the region. This is a very important development. The Stabilization and Accession Process of the EU with the Balkan countries will no doubt foster the concept and implementation of democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, protection of minorities and adoption of free market economy in the region.

If an outline is made on the recent situation in the Balkans, the overall conditions are much better compared to the picture of ten years ago, important development and progress has been achieved in field of democracy although only modest progress on the issues of organized crime, immigration and corruption has been accomplished, regular and free parliamentary and local elections have been held in every Balkan country, democratic governments came into power, reconstruction and development activities have been initiated, a certain number of people who fled their homes returned, some social, economic and institutional reforms have been accomplished.

The first time in history the Balkans with its eastern and western regions are willingly getting together around Europe and Euro-Atlantic organizations with the purpose of achieving more democracy, peace and stability. This initiative can possibly serve as a proper stopper to give an end to the violence and instability which broke up in the region since 1991 upon Germany’s recognition of Slovenia’s and Croatia’s independence that created a domino effect on the clashes to spread over the whole region. For the stability to be sustained, the Balkan countries first of all have to adapt themselves to the requirements of the EU perspectives for
the implementation of democracy, respect for human and minority rights and give up their imaginary “great state” illusions and respect for the inviolability of borders.

I am certain that this day in Istanbul will bring forth fruitful discussions and will lead to concrete results as to the benefit of the Balkan region. With these thoughts in mind, I would like to wish you all every success in your deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.
SECURITY ISSUES IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Arian STAROVA

Mr Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me thank the “Department of Political Sciences and International Relations” and the “Foundation for Middle East and Balkan Studies” for having invited me to make a lecture here, today. I am very grateful and honored for that.

I might begin my lecture by trying to define what countries are included in the Balkans or in the Western Balkans, but I will not do this not only because there might be debates on the issue, but also there is a tradition, which I would like to follow. So, I presume that the countries of our Balkan region are Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia & Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia, Albania, Greece and Turkey.

I would like to start by saying some words about the importance of the Balkan security and then, I will go on with two other issues, namely, the current security situation in the Balkans and I will conclude by talking about the current security threats as I perceive them.

What are the elements, which give attach importance to the Balkan security?

* Prof.; Member of the Albanian Parliament and the President of the Albanian Atlantic Association.
1-The Balkans historically was a particular area of instability. I think that among many other causes of this characteristic of the region might be the following.

- If we consider only the last century in the Balkans, we have had two world wars (1914-18 and 1939-1945), the Balkan wars (1912-13), the recent war in the territories of the former Yugoslavia (1991-2001), the violent events of the year 1997 in Albania that resulted in the destabilization of the Albanian state with a risk to spill over its boundaries. Being here and having this opportunity to talk on security issues in the Balkans, I would like to mention the specific role of the Turkey in that year, not only with the presence of its military forces in Albania but with all what it could do as a state for stopping and then restoring the peace and stability there, in my country. This is an example of the stabilizing role a country like Turkey can play in our region and I have this opportunity to mention the fact here. In the Balkans, we recently had the violent events of March 2004 in Mitrovica, in Kosova, even if it is my personal conviction that those events did not sprang out from the Albanians alone. For centuries, Albanian had witnessed that they had protected the orthodox churches and had not made any assassination against Serb common people. There are other reasons underneath those events that some time will be thrown light upon.

- The Balkans also was almost forever an area of backward economic development where there were always big flows of immigrants, informal economies, various illicit traffics, high rates of unemployment, etc.

- The presence of the big well-known private industrial companies has for long been a feature in the Balkans.
• In the Balkans we have had many changes of the borders throughout its modern history, which have created ground for ethnic conflicts of interests.

• Still today, when the security situation is far better than before in the Balkans, there are fears coming around of probable conflicts in our region, which might be viewed as a real element in our analysis.

2-The Balkans historically is an important geo-strategic area for the International Community. I would like to rank some of the arguments to this idea in the following.

• The most common feature of this importance is the frequently mentioned idea of the Balkans to be considered as a link between Europe and Western countries in general on one side, and the Near and Middle East.

• The Balkans has for long been viewed upon as an important area for future world economic developments. Today, it is part of future important projects on oil and gas pipelines, trade, road connections, such as Corridor-8 linking going through Bari-Durrës-Skopje-Sofia-Istanbul, etc.

• In the same time, the centuries-long experience had shown that instability was a common situation in the Balkans and it either had spilt over into wider wars or had arisen a deep concern in Europe and beyond, in important state-actors like USA and Rusia.

• Also, after Nuremberg international trial, it is the second time in history we have a tribunal for the war criminals in the former Yugoslavia, namely the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

• The Balkans was the place where NATO for the first time launched an out of area military operation, first in Bosnia-Hercegovina (1995) and later in Kosova (1999).
• It is also the Balkans where a significant number of stabilizing cooperative initiatives have been undertaken recently, the Stability Pact being just a particularly significant one among many others.

• Most of the countries in the Balkans have fragile democratic institutions and, therefore, are on the focus of the International Community for their improvement and development.

• Nowadays, USA and EU do want to stabilize this region and this is why the Balkans is widely considered to be on the way to Euro-Atlantic integration and the military missions of either NATO or EU are already present there for a long time.

• It is to be stressed here the huge support given by the International Community to the regional dialogue and cooperation in all the levels between the countries in the Balkans.

• There is also a very visible awareness of the International Community of the shared Euro-Atlantic values in the Balkans countries.

Let me now turn to my second main issue of my today’s presentation. What is the present situation of the Balkan security versus the far and recent past history?

To my opinion the security situation of the Balkans today versus its past history is undoubtedly much better for a number of reasons, since the events of the deep democratic changes that began in the end of the years 1980 and the beginning of the years 1990. Let me again enumerate some of them.

• We don’t have any longer either wars or any major armed conflicts in the Balkans. It is a widely accepted idea that the Balkans has ended to be a “powder keg”.
• The presence of the international forces is a guarantee that the return of large-scale hostilities or armed conflicts is almost unthinkable. Just to add something to this idea I quote what is mentioned in one of the numerous informative materials the NATO Public Diplomacy Division publishes: “NATO remains committed to building long-term stability throughout Southeastern Europe”.

• European Union and NATO are deeper and deeper cooperating between them for the security of all the Balkan region. In April 2003, NATO’s presence was replaced by EU military presence, whereas one week ago NATO stabilization force (SFOR) was replaced by EUFOR in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

• The countries of the region are either NATO members (Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and Turkey) or NATO candidates (Albania, Croatia, Macedonia or the Adriatic Group) or PfP candidates (Serbia & Montenegro and Bosnia-Hercegovina). “The turnaround in relations between NATO and Serbia & Montenegro is probably the most spectacular security-related development to have taken place in the former Yugoslavia” (NATO Public Diplomacy Division). No matter of this piecemeal progress towards NATO membership, all the Balkan countries will be some day in a near future NATO members, and this means they are more secured now.

• The most important development in the Balkans is the spirit of dialogue and cooperation between the countries followed by numerous activities either multilateral or bilateral. Numerous mutual official visits of all the levels, numerous conferences and round-tables discussions or workshops anywhere in the cities of the Balkans organized by the NGO-s or the governments, joint military exercises, cooperation for the border control or against illicit traffics or against international terrorism or organized crime, many agreements on the free trade, visas regime, etc., continuous
official statements of good will for the regional dialogue and cooperation, many other exchange or joint activities in the area of culture, art, science, music, education, etc.

- All the countries in the Balkans are on the way to EU accession with the exception of Greece, which is already a member. Just two days after the EU will consider the decision for Turkey’s membership in the EU and it will be a positive decision for sure.

- In the after-war period (namely after the wars in the former Yugoslavia) a gradual economic development has started which promises to continue well. Now, there is an added interest of the big private companies to settle in the Balkans.

- In the Balkans we observe a further consolidation of the democratic developments and institutions. The market economy operation, rule of law, democratic reforms in the Armed Forces, cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), improvement of the situation of the ethnic minorities, intense cooperation with NATO and EU, the failure of the referendum in Macedonia in November (meaning endorsement of the Ohrid Agreement), etc., etc. are some of the related facts.

- The Balkans has changed from a consumer of security into a provider of security out of its area. Its military missions of several countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey) are nowadays in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Despite this good situation of security in the Balkans compared to its past, still, there are a number of security threats, which raise concern in the International Community as well as within the Balkans itself. Again, let me mention them and try to reason about.

- Bosnia-Hercegovina is one of these issues. There are still a lot of problems there with regard to the economic
development, democratic reform in the military, cooperation with the ICTY, return of refugees, human ethnic relations, etc. As long as these and other problems will remain the security concern will persist and, of course, this is a security threat.

- Kosova is another serious issue of the regional security. In general, I would say there is a current gap between the economic development and its social aspects of life, in Kosova, because the International Community is asking from Kosova people governing standards when the people themselves have a lot of problems of managing an everyday life. The unemployment rate in Kosova is around 60% or more, the privatization process remains blocked, the people don’t have identity documents for traveling abroad and around 3 thousand corpses of assassinated Albanians are still in Serbia under the Serb pretensions that they don’t know who they are. (!) Very delicate are being considered the present ethnic relations in Kosova, now, especially following the tragic events of March 18, 2004, in Mitrovica. I repeat here, what I said before: Those events were very strange (deterring myself to use other words) because Albanians had lived for centuries with the Serbs and never destroyed their churches, nor killed any common Serb for attaining political goals. On the contrary, historically they have protected the Serb churches and they have only fought against the Serbian regime in Kosova. Also, Albanian authorities in Kosova have always, before and after those Mitrovica events, repeated in official statements their respect for the minority rights of Serbs living there. The government of Kosova immediately after those events approved a financial fund to reconstruct churches and houses of the Serbs that were damaged. Trying to view from another aspect these ethnic relations in Kosova, I rhetorically ask why Belgrade authorities launched an appeal to Kosova Serbs not to participate in the recent
general election in Kosova. Does that help?! Hence, in order to resolve the problems in Kosova, first, the International Community should deal with the everyday problems of the Kosova citizens and second, transfer the power in a progressive way to the local authorities without waiting for the standards to be fully completed, and third, issue another UN Security Council Resolution on Kosova, which surpass the existing one numbered 1244 with a clear idea of Kosova not belonging to Serbia. The latter idea, namely the new UN Resolution would appease not only Albanians, but Serbs as well because it would unload them from the burden of playing the nationalist inside their country. This resolution would be another step towards Kosova independence, or moving faster towards it. As for the full independence of Kosova it would be then not such a pressing question, but one left for a future time to be decided.

- The status of the Albanians in Macedonia is also a security issue. The situation of the Albanian there has changed very much for better, after the year 2001. More Albanians are being employed in the state administration, such as the military, police, etc. The Albanian language has been accepted to be officially used, Tetova University was legalized, etc. The feelings of the Albanians are very positive of these changes, but they expect that the whole range of the articles of the Ohrid Agreement be implemented. I think that the Albanians status in Macedonia will remain a security threat only at the measurement of the implementation of Ohrid Agreement. Albanian do not want to separate from Macedonia; they want to live there together with the Macedonians. Just to give an example, in the days of war in Macedonia (2001), the Albanian military quarter released rather strange statements saying that they are not against the integrity of Macedonia. In fact, these were strange for those non-Albanians who were thinking of
diffusing the idea of the “Greater Albania”, which didn’t exist among Albanians.

- The referendum on the independence of Montenegro is presented as a security issue only if it would face the resistance of Serbs living there. For as long as one doesn’t know about their exact reaction with regard to the referendum, its independence will remain a security threat.

- The debate between Greece and Macedonia over the name of the latter is another issue of security for as long as it brings ethnic tensions. Of course, I don’t think it might create ground for war, but it can block the process of integration of Macedonia into the European Union. This is a security issue at excess, because names are labels in their essence, without mentioning the fact of the regional and world integrations.

- A hidden aggressive nationalist mentality, which still exists in the Balkan region, might be a latent security issue to be activated in different situation and dependent on many other security issues. For example, the decrease of cooperation between Serbia & Montenegro and NATO this year (2004) might be viewed as a sign of it, or the assassination of Prime Minister Xhinxhiç in Belgrade, two years ago, or the need for more cooperation of Serbia & Montenegro with the ICTY, or the Greek policy for the name of Macedonia, or other examples of nationalist behavior in the Balkans, etc.

- The weak state democratic institutions in the fight against corruption, organized crime, illicit traffics, informal economies, and other illegal and illicit activities, or in maintaining law and order. This weakness might be translated as a weakness of the judiciary, media, police, political actors, civil society, etc., and it could be incapable to keep under control certain unexpected situations that might emerge out of various reasons, what makes a security threat
for both the individuals and the state. For example, it is a concern of the International Community nowadays that the Albanian government is incapable to organize free and fair elections, or that the democratic reforms in Serbia & Montenegro are not going with the needed speed. And, these might result, respectively in domestic tensions in Albania, or wider tensions in Serbia & Montenegro.

- Organized crime and its links with the politics. It is already well-known as an issue of security. In the recent years, much criticism has been made to the region, on the side of EU and USA. It is also well-known that organized crime is a hotbed of international terrorism and cultivates it. No need to go on further talking about the respective implications.

- International terrorism.

- The economic situation still lagging behind what is needed.

These were some of the ideas I wanted to bring with this presentation today. I am sure I have laid some ground for questions and discussion and I am ready to be involved in them later during this session. And here, I conclude.

Thank you!

FINAL STATUS OF KOSOVO: STILL AN OPEN ISSUE

Enver HASANI*

Introduction

Five states emerged following the collapse of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992. The bid of Kosovo for an independent status following this collapse was not successful due to the fact that Albanians did not have enough forces to mobilize against Serb police and military forces installed in Kosovo at the time.

Two factors have been of importance in the lack of success on the side of Kosovars in their bid for independence. First one relates to the unfavorable European political climate prevailing after the end of the Cold War: Europe could not see in front of its eyes that new state was being violently dissolved along the lines European were trying to prevent by setting up new supranational structure of the kind based on the opposite principles from those already in action in the former Yugoslavs territory, such as the rule of law, democracy and the respect for human and minority rights. This European approach did not have any viable political initiative and has resulted in a total inability to effectively to fill in the power and moral vacuum left behind the failure of Communisms. This period of a geo-strategic transition is still going on and was at the outset used very cunningly by Mr. Milosevic and his aides resulting in a speedy

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military and political victories of the Serbian regime of the time.

Although Serbs did prove capable to running long battles with others, mainly Croats and Bosnians, their initial success in Kosovo lasted longer than excepted. The very reason for this state of affairs rests in the fact that Europe, and the West in general, had been reluctant to accept, encourage and support any effort for the independent statehood of other than federal-type republics composing the former Yugoslav federation. This stance was based in the belief that any such acceptance, encouragement and support for independence would lead to unforeseen destabilizing processes. During this time of the Yugoslav vortex we miss the US component and that is explained by the fact that at the time Europeans believed that, as stated by Italian Foreign Minister Giani de Michelis, “the hour of Europe” had come. No support for other than non-violent menas for the achievement of political goals was possible until the Dayton Accords were reached in 1995. What has been decisive in the change of Italian, and other European politics, towards Serbia were Milosevic aggressive policies that new no ends. This brings us to the second factor discussed above. Namely, with a weak Albanian, Kosovar Albanians could nourish no real chances to resist Serbia and its military that was inherited from former Yugoslavia and designed to protect well beyond twenty million citizens. Police and semi-police forces of Kosovo, the so called “territorial defense of Kosovo”, were neutralized and made Serbian by Milosevic regime long before the war in the territory of former Yugoslavia started. This is a period that Kosovar Albanian label as the period of the abolition of their autonomous status they enjoyed under Tito and its 1974 constitution of Yugoslavia during the years before Milosevic take over in 1986. In fact, it was Milosevic that abolished that autonomy of Kosovo and that marked the beginning of the
destruction the last common state of the South Slavs (apart from Bulgarians).

While the other militarily opposed Milosevic war efforts, Kosovar Albanians opted for non-violent means to pursue their goals. Very few would able to believe that Albanians would not go for violent means first. That path turned pretty successful until 1998 when an open conflict between Serbian forces installed in Kosovo and an armed wing of the Kosovar Albanians, “Kosovo Liberation Army” (KLA) started. Serbia by the time this conflict started had been very much existed due to its war efforts against others, mainly against Croats and Bosnians. The conflict between Albanians and Serbs ended in June 10, 1999, as a result of NATO intervention lasting three months. Before the last days of conflict between Serbs and Albanians, Milosevic did not want to sign a peace agreement that was aimed at peacefully ending the war. This agreement was supposed to be signed in Rambouillet (France) during February - Mart 1999. This rigid position held by Milosevic, along side with his genocidal policies against civilians in Kosovo fleeing the terror of his forces (well beyond million Albanians fled the country within three months of NATO intervention and clashes between the KLA and the Serb forces), stand for NATO intervention and the defeat of his forces in June 1999.

Status of Kosovo has been and remains a key word in public discourse, both within and outside the Euro-Atlantic community. For Kosovar Albanians that is an open issue and invariably means full independence, while for Serbs the status of Kosovo means that there should be an unconditional respect for Serb sovereignty over the territory, notwithstanding the fact of atrocities and committed against majority Albanians. As for the international community, the status of Kosovo is an issue looked at differently depending on the country. For some European countries, including Kosovo within European Union,
its “Europeanization”, the prior thing is stability through overall restructuring of Kosovar society through the so-called policy “Standards for Kosovo”, while for the United States and Britain, Kosovo represents itself mainly as a serious security matter. That is to say, these countries do not put in front of their concerns issues such as fight against drug trade, organized crime, prostitution and the like, as means to the achievement of peace and stability but instead other matters, such as terrorism of the kind exercised by Al Qaeda, non-proliferation of nuclear arms and materiel, as well as the issue of failed (weak) states and the consequences of their collapse.

I. Kosovar Albanian Perspective

Peace-keeping in Kosovo and its mission, United Nation Interim Administration Mission, or UNMIK, represent the most ambitious endeavor of the United Nations ever. This included a wide array of institutions and actors, which is reflected in the Resolution 1244 of the UN Security Council, in force since June 10, 1999. This document has a relaxing spirit. The approach pursued by its drafters was aimed at satisfying all key players within the UN Security Council. In line with this, all three state functions have been concentrated, according to this document, at the hands of UNMIK acting via its head, the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the UN, SRSG. That is to say, the head of UNMIK is supreme authority in legislative, administrative and judicial matters within the territory of Kosovo. This stance of the UN has provoked dissatisfaction and reactions among local population, the most dramatic one being the violent March 2004 events causing the death of more than 20 locals. Powers and prerogatives of UNMIK administration are nothing but the fulfillment of the bad prophecy of Montesquieu from his “De l’esprit des lois” (1748) proclaiming a “failure of the
society once all three functions are held at the hands of one single man”.

Current position of Kosovo can be labeled as a de facto protectorate of the UN over it. However, de jure, it forms part of the state called “State Union of Serbia and Montenegro” (USM). This great discontent among Kosovar Albanians who see UNMIK as an agency of Serbia, protecting its state and national interests IN Kosovo. In addition to this, the very large presence of the citizens from Third World countries working for UNMIK is seen among Kosovar Albanians as Titoite and pro-Serbs. These are very important factors that make local Albanians fearful for UNMIK intentions towards Kosovo and its final status.

Although the mandate of UNMIK should have lasted until the time the Kosovar political organization reached a “substantial autonomy”, something like that did not happen. This become more obvious during March 2004 riots, when local and international security mechanisms, apart from military ones (KFOR), collapsed and no discussion over their autonomous status could even take place. The very concept of "peace building", which first and foremost means the establishment and creation of a viable local structures of local self-government, consisted in the establishment of connection between relief, development and security and peace. In stead of these kind of structures we saw the establishment of structures of domination, not partnership, producing cultures of dependency among locals. This in turn fired back so that now internationals are seen as arrogant and colonizers without any regard and understanding for local habits and interests and the realities on the ground. Power and moral vacuum left behind following the collapse of the local parallel structure that operated during Milosevic era have been filled in, thanks to UNMIK, with underground structures and mechanism that work incessantly against any effort to the
establishment of the rule of law and democracy in Kosovo. Kosovar Albanians see the current situation as one created by the international community, which is proving incapable to rule over two millions and a territory less than twelve thousand square kilometers, having no regard for their long and rich tradition of self-government and self-organization under Milosevic oppressive regime. This stands for the very firm stance of the Kosovars regarding the independence of Kosovo: going back to Serbia is not a feasible at all but it is equally impossible to go on with the current status quo of UNMIK. This means that the only viable solution remains full independence and sovereignty of Kosovo.

II. Serbian Legacy

Serb approach towards Kosovo issue remains the same as that under Milosevic. In fact, public discourse in Serbia is much the same as when Milosevic was in power, with a light difference when it comes to the Milosevic Socialist Party of Serbia which is now more radical than others. Kosovo scores high on the agenda and serves as a tool against any reasonable action and project within Serb society. In addition to this, Serb opposition does not look at the role of the international community in the same way Milosevic did. It sees it as an ally of the Serb national interests, instead, above all when it comes to the common stance between Serbs and internationals regarding the territorial integrity of Serbia and its sovereign rights over Kosovo.

What is called as democratization process in Serbia, which is a precondition for the solution of the issue of Kosovo in a long run, is far from being a sold one. Regarding Kosovo, in Serbia have taken place only some nominal changes while the phenomenon remains much the same. It goes without saying that today’s regime in Belgrade, as opposed to the
previous one, cannot project any credible force beyond Serbia’s borders even if it wanted to.

It is a mistake that some among us believe that Kosovo issue can be settled without taking into regard internal developments within Serb society. It is our belief that without real progress in the process of democratization within Serb society there can be no tangible and positive trends in Kosovo. This is a result, inter alia, of international community’s decision to firmly peg Kosovo status on the legal criteria of international law which, in turn, privilege Serb positions and their national interests, their nationalism and approach towards Kosovo issue and its final status, including its future in general. The opposite view, which prevails in Kosovo and among internationals, says that Kosovo can engage in democratic process notwithstanding internal development in Serb society regarding democracy and the rule of law. This is hard to believe due to the fact that only proper and real democratic developments among Serbian society may help real progress in the development of democracy in Kosovo. The process of democratization that started in Serbia with the downfall of Milosevic regime in October 2000 seems to have been stopped. Tragic violent murder of Serb Premier Zoran Dindic in March 2003 bears witness to this, despite the fact that some in Serbia tried to present the police purges of political adversaries that took place immediately afterwards as a democratization process of Serb society.

Serb behavior towards Kosovo and its final status still shows signs of political irrationality, instead of being the opposite. This destroys all efforts at the democratization in Serbia and its integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. It is our believe that if there is no external help, a support from outside, to back up Serb tiny layers of democracy, there can be no progress and any democratization of Serbia. It shall
for sure remain outside European mainstream in all regards: Serbia in Euro-Atlantic structures with Kosovo high on the agenda and having the same status as during Milosevic era, that is, serving as a tool of Serb nationalists to fight each other.

III. International Community

At the beginning, it was hoped that the status of Kosovo can be postponed indefinitely. This opinion crystallized was due to the fact that all believed that from the opening of the status talks over Kosovo no one would benefit. All would loose, instead. This soon proved, though, that this is wrong. Not because the talks on the status of the country are not possible per se but due to the fact that nothing seriously has been undertaken to correct basic parameters standing for stability, such as employment, social and cultural aspect of the life in Kosovo, economy, and so on. Since 1999 very little achievements have been recorded in this regard. Then, it come the stance that said that a step-by-step approach covering various fields of the daily life in Kosovo should be tried. This is the reason behind the UNMIK current policy “Standards for Kosovo” which aims at the overall restructuring of the Kosovar society and its shaping along the Western standards.

International community should make clearer its positions regarding the final status of the country and the modalities for its solution, instead of going on with the abstract steps along the lines of the policy “Standards for Kosovo”. This should be done because the unsolved status issue of the country has been the crux of the March 2004 violence and one of the motives for the outburst of that violence. The unsolved issue of the status of Kosovo is regarded by majority of the Kosovar Albanians as something that UNMIK wants to use in the opposite direction from their wishes and political will for full independence and sovereignty of the country. This
prevailing opinion among Kosovar Albanians, that is, the view that UNMIK is trying to bring Kosovo back into Serbian rule and jurisdiction, stems form the Resolution 1244 of the UN Security Council and its possibilities for different reading from all sides: Kosovars, Serb and the international community. The reason for this is that the drafters of this document, seems apparently to have had as their aim the very satisfaction of all key players within the UN Security Council. This satisfaction of the will of the key players in the UN Security Council has nothing to do with the internal dynamic and the political will of the majority Kosovar Albanians. The same applies, mutatis mutandis, to the local Serbs and the Serb society inside Serbia as well.

Resolution 1244 closes the issue of status, if analyzed succinctly. It does not leave room for interpretation that would enable the solution of Kosovo outside the FRY (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, now the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. Only few among its pretty vague provisions speak of unsettled status of Kosovo and the need for a political solution, but always within the context of preservation of the borders of the newly established State union Between Serbia and Montenegro. The so-called “Solana Agreement”, or the Agreement between Serbia and Montenegro establishing this new state union (March 2002), bears witness to this. On the other side, statements of the international officials, both within UNMIK and outside it, talk on the unsettled issue of the country. Every political dialogue shall have to bear these issues in mind and try to find ways how to reconcile the legal drafting of the Resolution 1244 with the new reality created on the ground after June 1999.

UNMIK stance that the status of Kosovo remains unsettled imposes on it a necessary duty as to how to find out new fact to justify this official position, which clearly runs counter the provision of the Resolution 1244, as noted above. This
should be undertaken, if for nothing else, than for the sake of majority Kosovar Albanian population that gradually sees the status issue of the country as a closed matter and every efforts by UNMIK interprets as steps aimed at brining Kosovo back into Serb jurisdiction and rule. This is a very challenging task that goes far beyond current abstract UNMIK policy “Standards for Kosovo”.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

Kosovar Albanians consider the presence of UNMIK unnecessary. There is a widespread believe that it is an agency representing Serb national interests in Kosovo. In addition to this, Kosovar Albanians believe that UNMIK and the international civil administration are not capable of running their country properly and along the Western standards and that they are first and foremost responsible for the moral and power vacuum created after the defeat of Serb policy, military and paramilitary forces led by Milosevic and his proxies in June 1999.

The above shows that the ongoing process of the so-called “transfer of competencies” into local authorities aimed at the empowerment of the local population is not a solution to the acute problems of Kosovo and negative trends prevailing within the country. This is so due to the fact that the problems of Kosovo have a deep and structural nature and cannot be solved only through the sheer transfer of powers and authorities onto the locals. This does not mean, on the other hand, that local authorities should not be fully and entirely empowered and made owners of their own affairs. Instead, this is what should be happening in the times to come. But, again, this is not enough.

Serbian stance over Kosovo remains pretty much the same when it comes to its final status. This does not bode well for Serb society and the development of democracy and the rule of
law along Western standards. It is very hard to believe that Serbia can enter EU in the future with the current obscure and nationalist discourse over Kosovo. Serbs have become hostages of their own policies and beliefs. It is therefore necessary to have developments in the field of democracy, rule of law and human rights both in Kosovo and Serbia at the same time. It makes no sense that Kosovars are pushed and forced to democratize in a time when Serb nationalism remains much the same: primitive, rigid and egalitarian kind of an ideology.

For most of the Kosovars the issue of status of Kosovo is a closed one. If it ever happens, its discussions should lead, according to majority Kosovar Albanians, to an independent and sovereign Kosovo. This is obvious from the statements of the Kosovar politicians issued daily. This clearly clashes with Serb positions as well as with those of internationals (as represented by UNMIK). They are eve more obviously expressed in and around the destiny of the divided city of Mitrovica in the Northern part of Kosovo.

The two extreme positions lead nowhere. In fact, they may lead to new clashes and violence. None is entirely feasible. There is always a third way and every discussion over the issue of the status of Kosovo leads there, that is, to this third medium way. Whatever its nature, though, one should take into account that this third way shall have to fully take into account general feelings of the majority Kosovar Albanians. The stability and security of the country and its surroundings depend on the general perception of the majority Albanians living in the Balkans. This is due to the fact that currently their status in the region is not on par with that of others, with the Serbs first and foremost. This is a long way ahead. Until then, and between now and then, there is a need to change the current political discourse and practice in and around Kosovo, meaning that other ways in addition to ones we
have been hearing since June 1999 for the interpretation of
the UN 1244 Resolution should emerge and be allowed for.
MACEDONIAN STORY: TO THE CONFLICT IN 2001 AND BEYOND

ISO RUSI

1. Background

When at the beginning of the nineties in the last century SFRY was falling apart, Macedonia was the only part of the former state in which the peace survived. Republic of Macedonia was the only former republic of Yugoslavia that gained its independence without war. Although more than 100,000 soldiers of the existing Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) were deployed on its territory, the Macedonian leadership elected at the first pluralist elections had not a single armed formation on its disposal which could oppose the military force controlled by Belgrade.

Macedonia at that time was called “an oasis of peace”, and the politics of its leadership “wise”. But from today's perspective it can be noted that Macedonia at that time has faced serious problems and the inability to solve them or their postponement has brought the country at the verge of an internal conflict in 2001.

With the establishment of the new states from the former SFRY republics, the interethnic problems, except in Slovenia, were first on the agenda.

In Macedonia the newly established parties were also ethnic. The parties of the major minority - the Albanians

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decided to participate in the politics through the institutions of the system.

At the first pluralist parliamentary elections in 1990 VMRO-DPMNE won, gaining 38 of 120 seats in the Parliament, which was insufficient for establishing a Government. Refusing to sign a coalition with the Albanian political parties (The Party for Democratic Prosperity – PDP and the National Democratic Party – NDP) VMRO-DPMNE started negotiations with the reformed communists (Alliance of Communist of Macedonia – Party for Democratic Reformation – SKM – PDP) and the Alliance of Liberal Forces of Macedonia – SLSM regarding the division of power. As a result of the agreement the leading functions in the country were allocated and an expert government was established with Albanian ministers. So, on one hand the nationalist upheaval of VMRO-DPMNE was eliminated, and the Albanian politicians were present in the Parliament and in the Government at least as experts.

Putting aside the nationalist outburst, an impression was created that with the mediation of the first President of the Republic of Macedonia Kiro Gligorov and with the help of the Council of Europe and OSCE some of the problems in the relation between the two major populations Macedonian and Albanians will be solved.

The intentions of the Albanian politicians in that period were to restore the rights of the Albanians, they have already enjoyed in the previous system and the previous state, such as the education in mother tongue in the high schools and higher education in Albanian, official use of the Albanian language, reopening of the cultural institutions and fostering the traditions etc. These rights were abolished in the second half of the eighties when Slobodan Milosevic's star rose in SFRY, whose politics referring to the Albanians was followed by the leaderships of the other republics.
Unfortunately, this period was not used for eliminating the problems.

Two events from that time portray the dissatisfaction of the Albanian politicians and the Macedonian Albanians regarding the realization of their requests.

First, the Albanians did not participate at the referendum for declaring Macedonia's independence on September 8, 1991. Formally, the Albanian political parties neither called their members and supporters to boycott the referendum nor to vote for the future status of Macedonia, but their absence from the referendum was more than obvious.

Second, the Albanian deputies in the Macedonian Parliament did not vote for the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia adopted in November 1991, which has formally promoted Macedonia's independence considering the results from the referendum.

Furthermore, we should mention the Albanian "referendum for Ilirida" or the territorial and political autonomy of the Albanians in those parts of Macedonia, where they are majority. Although the facts for the organization and results from this referendum have never been entirely revealed, neither the intention to establish Ilirida, the idea was an obvious threat for the government at that time that the Albanians dissatisfied with the treatment of their requests can abandon the institutions of the system and can apply the Serbian recipe already seen in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The affair "Paramilitary" has also remained a mystery, during which several persons were arrested and convicted, including the secretary general of PDP for organizing the Albanian paramilitary formations.
However, serious negotiations were held between the Albanian parties and the Macedonian top officials with the participation of the President as well as with international mediation by Gerd Arens and Max van der Stoel.

In the meantime, although the expert government in 1992 was replaced with a party one, led by the newly named reformed communists (currently the Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia – SDSM) in which the Albanian PDP participated, but not VMRO-DPMNE, the results of these talks were dissatisfactory for the Albanian part, most of all due to the slowness in the realization of what was hardly agreed at the aforementioned talks.

The Macedonian – Albanian relations were burdened with a series of incidents in the period between 1992 and 1997 in which the special police forces played the main role, and the Albanian population was victim.

The events such as the police intervention in the village of Radolista (surrounded and thoroughly searched in order to collect the illegally possessed weapons), the intervention at the largest green market Bit Pazar in Skopje (November 1992) with three casualties, which was explained as part of the fight against tobacco smuggling, the police operation at the day of the opening of Tetovo university (February 1995), the largest intervention of police specialists in Gostivar in June 1997 for displaying the flag of the Albanian ethnic community with five victims and hundreds injured people have kept the interethnic tensions at high level despite the illusion of peace and stability.

Direct consequence of the parallel flow of events (slow acceptance of Albanian requests on one hand and the incidents with the Albanians as victims on the other) is a radicalization of the political positions of the Albanian political parties in Macedonia.
So the criticism for inefficient participation in SDSM governments and especially the inability to solve the problem with higher education in Albanian language, was the ground for breakup of PDP and the emergence and growth of the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) which represented more radical political options.

The parliamentary elections in 2002 brought to an interesting ending. On the Macedonian part, the pre-election coalition between VMRO-DPMNE and Democratic Alternative (DA) won. On the Albanian part, as a result of the pre-election agreement between PDP and DPA, the Albanians had no choice, because they voted for one list. But, after the elections DPA independently decided to enter the governmental coalition of VMRO-DPMNE and DA.

Many analysts have interpreted the fact that the two most confronting parties from the Macedonian and Albanian part have entered the government as definite suppression of the political ethnic extremism on the political scene. It seemed that some of the events that followed have confirmed this thesis.

Since the very beginning the new government was exposed to serious challenges, Kosovo refugee crisis in Macedonia has brought 35 000 refugees, and the country was prepared to accept ten times less refugees. The new government has successfully faced this problem not allowing for these events to affect the especially sensitive interethnic relations.

The next challenge, the Presidential elections in 1999 were under serious doubts regarding their regularity. It is still claimed that they were forged and the winner Boris Trajkovski became president thanks to the stolen Albanian votes by DPA. The consequence of these accusations was the worsened inter Macedonian relations - between the Macedonian parties VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM and their supporters.
Similar effect had the inter Albanian incidents during the local elections in 2000, when series of incidents emerged between the activists, but also the persons paid by DPA and the other Albanian parties.

Somehow the main weakness of this government was shadowed by the results achieved with the economic reforms, but has seriously entered the corruption and organized crime.

However, at the beginning of 2001 the government has intensified the negotiations with EU regarding the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, which unfortunately has been signed in April 2001, when it was already clear that there was a conflict in Macedonia.

2. Conflict with plenty unknown

The village Tanushevci, on Kosovo-Macedonian border, because of it's geographic position, for years before and after the brake up of ex-Yugoslavia, was better connected to the Kosovo side rather then with its domicile country Macedonia. In fact, Macedonian army did not control that part of the Macedonian border since the independence, and it remains an open question if Macedonian police ever entered in it between 1990 until 2001. Because of that the region of the village was presented as a fragile part of the border used by smugglers.

In this village beginning of February 2001 comes a smaller group of ex-fighters in Kosovo Liberation Army, mainly people born here or some other regions of Macedonia. At that time they are not connected with any organization of Albanian immigration, or has any political or military leadership from outside, so it is very hard to assume that their presence at the beginning was part of previously planed military activities in Macedonia. The fact is that after their arrival in the village most of the population left the village to their relatives and friends mainly in Kosovo. TV reporters
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from the national station Al discovered the presence of this group, but it remains unclear why they went there in the first place. Anyhow, when the crew tried to enter the village they were detained by the group lead by Xhezair Shaqiri - Hoxha, now member of the Macedonian parliament. Before the reporters were released they were told that Tanushevci is now liberated territory.

Attempting to gain the control in the region Macedonian army position itself around the village and the first victims were killed in the shootings. At the beginning of the conflict, which was happening around Tanushevci was marginalized in the public because of the lack of information from both sides - the group in the village and the official Macedonian institutions. Under the pressure of the Macedonian Army the group of Shaqiri leaves Tanushevci and goes to the villages near by - Morane and Bojane. Beginning of March, other (second) group of armed Albanians starts with actions around Tetovo, hill known as Kale. Meanwhile the activities in Kumanovo region (area around Tanushevci) are quieting. At that time the Albanian rebels call themselves National Liberation Army (NLA) with their political representative Ali Ahmeti. The chief of the headquarters of NLA is Gzim Ostreni, ex-colonel in Yugoslav Peoples' Army, and high military officer in TMK (Kosovo defense troops after establishment of the protectorate in Kosovo). NLA at that period establishes internal military organization and communicates their political goals - direct negotiations about the status of the Albanians in Macedonia with the international mediation.

The fact that the initial group of NLA came from Kosovo, although they are Albanians born in Macedonia, as well as the fact that ex-fighters from Kosovo and Albania came to their assistance, was enough for the Macedonian government on power to claim that the aggression came from Kosovo, in which the main players are the members of TMK and the ex-troops lead by
one of the commanders in OVK (Liberation Army of Kosovo), Ramush Haradinaj.

These claims were proven misleading with the development of the events.

Most of the fighters in NLA were from Macedonia, their logistic was also coming from Macedonia. One can even say that this was result of the involvement of the official Macedonian structure in giving logistic assistance of the Kosovo Liberation Army (OVK) during the period 1998-99 and the participation of Macedonian Albanians in OVK in that period. But, the most important for the Macedonian character of the NLA was the support from the local Albanian population of the conflict and their joining in the NLA after March 2001.

In the conflict in Macedonia in 2001 there were no direct confrontation between the two sides. Partly that was because of the military tactics chosen by the Macedonian security forces (use of tanks and artillery, and partly use of helicopters and plains for air attacks), but also because NLA were engaging into military actions only with the Macedonian security forces in uniforms.

The number of victims on the both sides including the 22 missing civilians is not more than 150 people. Most of them were killed in few direct confrontation or incidents (ambush, mines...)

For calming of the conflict, especially preventing its escalation in the urban areas, the international representatives had the key role, especially the general secretary of NATO, Lord George Robertson, and the EU first diplomat Havier Solana. After the unsuccessful initiative for peace lead by the special OSCE representative Robert Frowick (May 2001) the cease fire agreement was reached with NATO involvement on 5th of July 2001.
The cease-fire was direct result of the unsuccessful military action of the Macedonian security forces to gain control in the Skopje village Aracinovo, which was controlled by NLA and was a threat for spreading the conflict into the capital of the state, Skopje.

Right after the truce the meetings between the representatives of the political parties in the parliament and the president of the state intensified especially after they moved from Skopje to Ohrid and the international mediators got involved (the special representatives of EU and US). These discussions ended with signing of the Framework Agreement in Skopje on August 13, 2001 by the leaders of four political parties (two Macedonian and two Albanian) the president of the state, and by the representatives of the international community as the guarantors of the agreement.

According to the agreement, during the month of September, in three phases, the NLA had to disarm, while the Parliament starts with the procedure for making the changes in the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, which was agreed in Ohrid and written in the Framework agreement.

3. The Framework Agreement and its implementation

With the Ohrid agreement were not fully happy neither Macedonian nor Albanian side. But, no doubt, it was a compromise that save the peace in Macedonia and moved the aim from the military confrontation in finding solutions through negotiations within the institutions of the system. One of the key principles of the agreement was that the territorial decisions were not solution of the ethnic problems.

The constitutional changes done according to the Framework agreement change the character of the state. If before that, although unmentioned in the Constitution, Macedonia was perceived as a national state of the Macedonians, this ethnic exclusivity was lose with the changes
made according to the Framework Agreement. The changed Constitution, specially because of the inbuilt mechanism for protection of minorities rights - so called Principe of Badinter (by which it is not possible implementation of certain laws or constitutional changes without majority support by the minorities on those issues) become the base for building of Macedonian society as society of equal citizens.

The implementation of the Framework agreement, in which the key legal changes were suppose to happen by previously agreed dates were not happening according to the schedule from the beginning.

Anyhow, by the end of September 2001, with the end of the first NATO mission in Macedonia, the “Essential Harvest” NLA had self-dissolved.

As it was envisioned the implementation of the agreement in bigger part was suppose to be finished by the end of the mandate of the previous parliament (by the autumn 2002). But the deadlines were broken and the implementation was carried over to the present parliament.

On the parliamentary elections in 2002 the voters obviously gave their vote to the political players who were promising full implementation of the agreement. From the 120 members in the parliament only two are members of political parties who had remarks or were against the Framework agreement.

But this does not mean that the present government, whose first half of the mandate was marked by the slow implementation of the agreement, was not facing serious problems in finishing this process. The implementation, in form of passing of all agreed laws, even now is not finished yet. In the next few months the law for official use of the languages and the law for national symbols are to be voted on.
It was thought that the decentralization process would have go easy, because it was the only issue which did not had the ethnic exclusivity in the Framework Agreement - the price of the centralized government away from the people was paid by all citizens in all local municipalities regardless the ethnicity. Unfortunately, almost all 2004 passed in bitter discussions on the legal decisions around decentralization, especially the new territorial organization. The most serious challenge for the fragile stability and interethnic relations in Macedonia was the recently held referendum for enacting the old model of territorial organization of the state, which if successful could have stopped the decentralization, but also bring Macedonia back before the conflict in 2001. Namely, the referendum mobilized not only those who were unhappy with the changes in Macedonia as a result from the implementation of the agreement (so in the referendum saw opportunity for it's redefinition), but also people who were unhappy with their economic and social status.

Right after going through the dangers of potentially successful referendum, Macedonia faced another crisis when the Prime Minister Hari Kostov resigned. As a main reason for his resignation he point on the corruption, nepotism and narrow party interests of the Albanian coalition partner in the government - the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) whose members are mainly ex-members of NLA and lead by it's political representative Ali Ahmeti. That brought back the interethnic frustrations in which after long time the media got also involved.

In the post referendum atmosphere beside the resignation the negative influence on the worsening of the interethnic relations has also the case of Kondovo. The recent events in this village, which is part of the capitol, Skopje - where in the last few months a group of 50 or so ex members of NLA, but also some criminals from Kosovo and fugitives from the central
Macedonian prison Idrizovo gathered - is compared with the events that happened in Tanushevci in 2001. The political parties in opposition view the events and particularly the lack of action from the state as prelude in a new conflict and new negotiations and agreements similar to the Ohrid agreement as new cessions for the Albanians, and against the interest of the Macedonians.

In the meantime the clash within the structures of the Islamic Religious Community (official representative of the Muslim religion in Macedonia), which among the ethnic Macedonians is identified as Albanian organization (although there are Muslims among Turks, Romas and Macedonians themselves), the media in Macedonian are seeing it as a attempt of the radical islamists, who are even as claimed connected to Al Qaeda, to gain control over the organization.

All these events again are marking the fragility of the relations in the Republic of Macedonia in the moment when it’s state leadership is trying to concentrate on the “Agenda 2006” - year when we hope to receive an invitation for NATO membership and a status of candidate country for European Union. These desires are further problematised with the newest cooling of the relations with Greece after the American official recognition of Macedonia under its constitutional name and the fear that if the internal problems are not resolved by the time the status of Kosovo is decided there are possibilities for complications in the Macedonia as well.

Unfortunately Republic of Macedonia again is sailing in un-calm waters and it’s future is uncertain puts it in the potential crisis area in the Balkans.
THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE IN RECONCILIATION AFTER ETHNIC CONFLICTS: THE EXAMPLE OF ICTY AND COUNTRIES ISSUED FROM FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Ozan ERÖZDEN

Introduction

The International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) was established by a resolution of the UN Security Council (# 827) as an appropriate measure that would contribute to the restoration and maintenance of peace threatened by “widespread and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law” in former Yugoslavia. This argumentation meant that the Tribunal was conceived, inter alia, for a long-term aim as well. By a broad interpretation of the aim “to contribute to the maintenance of peace threatened by widespread and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law” one can easily come to the following conclusion: The idea was that this judicial instrument would, inter alia, personalize the responsibility for the crimes committed during the conflict, thus contribute to the creation of a climate freed of the civil war heritage’s burden in the newly established states that are issued from and are multiethnic like former Yugoslavia.¹

¹ This interpretation can be supported by the following fact too: The same type of ad hoc Tribunal was established for Rwandan case by the resolution # 955 of the UN Security

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Thus it would not be inappropriate to make a research on whether the collective guilt belief, which accuses the "other" ethnic group as a whole for the crimes while claiming a total innocence for "their own people", can be decreased or even totally dismantled by the existence and activities of the ICTY in especially Croatia, Serbia & Montenegro, and Bosnia & Herzegovina. Formulated in a different way, the principal question of the research will be the following: Is the ICTY successful enough to create an atmosphere of reconciliation in and between these countries?

To come to an appropriate and comprehensive answer to this question a double sided analyze / research is required: One side of the research would consist in examining the "nature" of judicial efforts concretized in the work of the ICTY. The ICTY had to face, from the very beginning, a legitimacy challenge grounded in the discussion whether this organ was a political tool or a tribunal per se. Already in Tadić case the Tribunal overcame this dispute by confirming that it was established as a fair and impartial judicial body. Taking into account this "self-declaration", indictments, decisions and judgments delivered by the ICTY can be analyzed

Council. In the wording of this resolution the same aim was formulated as "(to) contribute to the process of national reconciliation and to the restoration and maintenance of peace" (emphasize is mine - O.E.). As the armed conflict in former Yugoslavia was generated over a dispute of secession, the term "national reconciliation" would, surely, not be appropriate to be used in a resolution creating a special organ to put an end to the conflict. Nevertheless, in the Yugoslavian case the Security Council should have, implicitly, thought of the "national reconciliation" of each new independent state issued from former Yugoslavia. See also Diana Johnstone; "Selective Justice in The Hague", Nation, 9/22/1997, Vol. 265 Issue 8, pp. 16-21.

to see whether the “versions” of the belligerent sides concerning reasons and general conduct of the conflict are examined on an equal footing by the Tribunal. To put in other words, from one side, the analyze will be directed to find the answer to the question whether there was an “official historiography” of the ICTY as far as events happened during the conflict are concerned.

The second side of the research will consist in understanding how the work of the Tribunal is perceived by policy-makers of the countries issued from former Yugoslavia and presented to their respective national communities. Through an analysis of different sources reflecting public opinion in the countries in question and field research as well, answers to the following questions can be searched: What are the political considerations in shaping co-operation policies with the ICTY on national level? Do the political actors of these countries use the ICTY as a tool of internal politics? What are the common points of antagonistic nationalisms in opposing to policies of co-operation with the ICTY?

Here in my presentation I will try to treat the issue only from the second side and only for Croatia, relying on a media survey in which printed media3 were scanned in a period of five years (January 2000 – November 2004). On the other hand, in order to make a rough comparison and to make Croatian case more understandable, I will describe shortly the situation in Serbia-Montenegro after the fall of Slobodan Milošević (October 2000).

**A General Overview of Croatia’s Relations with the ICTY**

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3 Dailies: Vjesnik and Novi list, weeklies: Globus, Nacional, Feral Tribune.
Croatia, as Croatian politicians love to emphasize especially whenever the country is facing serious problems in her relations with the ICTY, was the first country to request from the international community the establishment of an international criminal tribunal to investigate and try war crimes committed during the armed conflict in former Yugoslavia, which then had just started. When Croatia was sending these calls (end of 1991), she was under the attack of the Serbian paramilitary and the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) troops loyal to Belgrade. Thus, she was claiming to be the victim of the Serb aggression. Nevertheless, when the “requested” tribunal was established by the UN Security Council resolution # 827 in 1993, Croatia had already assumed a second role in the series of civil wars within the former Yugoslavia territory because of her involvement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and this time as the aggressor rather than the victim of aggression.\(^4\) This “double identity” marked Croatia’s

relations with the ICTY during the whole Tuđman-HDZ\textsuperscript{5} rule (between 1990 and 2000). Croatia would incline towards co-operation as long as she would be defined as the victim of Serb expansionism. However, she would become reluctant to co-operate as long as her involvement in Bosnia and the manner in which she stopped the rebellion of ethnic Serbs in her territory would be put under serious investigation.

Here, to concretize the issue, it has to be noted that co-operation with the ICTY means taking active position concerning the following four subjects:

a) Arrest and handover of indictees.

b) To ensure access to state archives and documents during investigations.

c) Release of witnesses and suspects from the burden of observing “secrecy for crucial information on state politics” while giving testimonies.

d) To ensure a protection programme for witnesses.

In the beginning of 2000 a coalition led by Social Democrat Party (SDP) came to power and the discourse at the government level concerning the co-operation with the ICTY changed considerably. The new government promised to fulfil strictly Croatia’s obligations vis-à-vis the Tribunal. In time, however, this discourse turned out to be an ambitious one as in concrete cases that are going to be described in further text the co-operation encountered serious difficulties.

**Blaškić Case:**

Tihomir Blaškić, is a general that once assumed the position of head of general staff of armed forces of Bosnian

\textsuperscript{5} HDZ = Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica (Croatian Democratic Union).
Croats, namely the HVO.\textsuperscript{6} Blaškić was indicted by the ICTY in 1995 under command responsibility because of actions taken by HVO forces against Bosnian Muslim civilians in Central Bosnia.\textsuperscript{7} Claiming his innocence, Blaškić went voluntarily to The Hague to face trial in front of the ICTY. Nevertheless, the Tribunal arrested him and decided to carry out the trial while keeping him in custody.

Blaškić was the first high ranking army official to be tried in front of the ICTY. Thus, such a trial attracted great public interest. At the first stage the Tribunal’s decision to arrest him despite the fact that had gone to The Hague voluntarily was used by the nationalist camp as a proof that ICTY was not an impartial organ and had prejudices against Croats. During the trial the Trial Chamber of the ICTY and the Croatian government entered in a severe conflict over the issue whether the Tribunal has the authority to issue sub poena duces tecum for national governments, other national public authorities and governmental officials. Despite the fact that the crisis was solved by the Appeal Chamber with a reconciliatory decision\textsuperscript{8}, the HDZ government used this development to reinforce anti-ICTY stance that reigned over Croatian public opinion.

The Trial Chamber condemned Blaškić to 45 years of imprisonment in March 2000, i.e. almost immediately after the

\textsuperscript{6} HVO: Hrvatsko Vijeće Obrane (Croatian Defence Council)

\textsuperscript{7} For the indictment see at http://www.un.org/icty/indictment/english/bla-ii951110e.htm (13.7.2004).

take over of power by the new coalition government after 10-year HDZ rule. The severity of the judgement pronounced against a general that has been considered innocent created harsh public reactions in Croatia. This fact put the new government that has been defending a close co-operation line with the ICTY in a very critical situation. The first reaction of new State officials was to declare that they were surprised by the severity of the sentence, but mentioning at the same time that the country would continue to co-operate with the ICTY. A couple of days later Prime Minister Račan declared that the government had discovered in State archives some documents that could help to the defence of the general at appeal stage.\(^9\) Thus, Račan managed to put the blame on the former government who had refused to hand over official documents to the ICTY in Blaškić case. By promising the transfer of newly found documentation to the Prosecutor’s office, the new government marked two successes at the same time: First, by solving one controversial issue, which was inherited from the old government, it proved that the co-operation is going to be much better than during HDZ time. Secondly, it calmed down the furore in the public opinion without loosing the support for its co-operation policy.

Taking into account new documents delivered to the Tribunal, Appeal Chamber cut Blaškić’s sentence by 36 years, reducing it to 9 years of imprisonment.\(^10\) Nevertheless, by the time appeal procedure reached its end another change of government took place in Croatia. HDZ that won the elections of December 2003 without ensuring a majority in the Parliament returned to the power with a minority government supported by

\(^9\) See interview with Prime Minister Račan, in Globus, 10 Mar. 2000.

the deputies of national minorities, including Serb one. This political party, during the years in opposition had reformed itself considerably and turned itself from a radical nationalist movement into a moderate one. This change of line showed its effects in Blaškić case too. The new HDZ government started an investigation to find the responsible persons for not sending appropriate documentation to The Hague concerning Blaškić case during former HDZ rule.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11} See Novi list 11 Aug. 2004
Stipetić Case:

General Petar Stipetić was among a few officers of the JNA (People’s Army of the Socialist Yugoslavia) that joined Croatian army at the moment of break-up of former Yugoslavia. Because of his “socialist regime army career” background, during HDZ time he was considered as not very reliable and was given only secondary roles in the so-called “Homeland’s War”.\(^\text{12}\) The coalition government that came to power in the beginning of 2000 appointed general Stipetić the head of general staff of the army in order to create a counter power against those generals that were affiliated to HDZ and kept the armed forces under their total control. On the other hand, general Stipetić was known in the public as an honest and totally professional officer.

In August 2000 a weekly reported that ICTY was going to indict Stipetić because of his involvement in Homeland’s War.\(^\text{13}\) The news created the expected effect and a public hysteria, supported by populist statements of politicians, began to gain shape. This time, notorious figures from some parties of the ruling coalition were also among those who gave heated speeches against the ICTY.\(^\text{14}\) The old rhetoric declaring the ICTY as the enemy of the Croatian nation and accusing it to prosecute not the aggressor (i.e. Serbs and Muslims) but the victim (i.e. Croats) was reincarnated.

\(^\text{12}\) In Croatian official jargon “Homeland’s War” (domovinski Rat) defines the armed struggle between regular Croatian forces and the rebel Serbs that opposed to Croatia’s independence, between 1991 and 1995.

\(^\text{13}\) Globus, 4 Aug. 2000.

\(^\text{14}\) For the speech of Zdravko Tomac, the then Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives and Deputy President of SDP, i.e. the biggest political party in the Parliament and the coalition government, see Nacional, 16 Aug. 2000.
The crisis, on the other hand, destabilised relations between the partners of the coalition government. As a first reaction the Prime Minister gave the lie to the news. Upon this the weekly announced that its source was Dražen Budiša, the leader of HSLS\(^{15}\), the second biggest party of the coalition. Budiša, on the other hand, declared that the information was giving to him by the Prime Minister himself. Thus, the leaders of the two biggest party of the coalition found themselves in the situation of publicly giving the lie to each other. The break-up of the coalition government, which became predictable at that stage, was avoided by the initiative of Zlatko Tomčić, the Speaker of the Parliament and leader of the third biggest coalition partner, HSS.\(^{16}\) He organized a “summit” where the leaders of the six coalition parties got together and discussed the origin of the crisis. The concrete outcome of the “summit” was the continuation of the coalition. According to the organizer, a common policy on how to react in case of ICTY issues indictments against Croatian generals was discussed too.\(^{17}\)

Nevertheless media kept covering “Stipetić case” further, claiming that a sealed indictment against the general was already filed in The Hague. Each time these “news” were published harsh criticisms against and between the coalition partners occured. Finally, in the beginning of 2001 the secret laying behind the “Stipetić case” revealed: While investigating some military actions of the Croatian army that took place between 1991 and 1995, the Prosecutor’s office of the ICTY wanted Stipetić also to testify. Nevertheless, in

\(^{15}\) HSLS = Hrvatska Socijalno Liberalna Stranka (Croatian Social Liberal Party)

\(^{16}\) HSS = Hrvatska Seljacka Stranka (Croatian Peasant Party).

\(^{17}\) For a detailed media report on the meeting see Globus, 25 Aug. 2000. For an interview with the organizer, Zlatko Tomčić, on the content of the meeting see Globus, 25 Aug. 2000.
order not to put him in situation to accuse himself by his own testimony, the Prosecutor’s office offered Stipetić the status of “suspect”, which granted him the right to silence, instead of the status of simple witness. In the end, Stipetić testified on the 27th and 28th of March 2001 in front of ICTY investigators and no further legal proceeding was taken against him.

Norac Case:

Mirko Norac was one of the prominent commanders of the Homeland’s War. In the beginning of February 2001 County Court’s Prosecutor in Rijeka issued an arrest warrant for Norac because of his alleged involvement in the killing of around 100 civilians of Serb ethnic origin in Gospić town during 1991. Already in September 2000 five people, among whom a retired colonel, had been arrested by the same judicial body in a case related to Gospić killings. This decision had provoked a serial of protests. Beside mass gatherings, 5 retired and 7 active army generals had issued a public declaration criticizing government’s policies to prosecute war crimes committed by Croatian soldiers, upon which the President of Republic sent to retirement 7 active generals taking part in this move.

Arrest warrant for Norac created even harsher protests than those that took place in September 2000. War veterans blocked roads, right wing political parties organised mass demonstrations. Norac, after being at large for two weeks, got from the government the guarantee to be tried in front of Croatian courts and not being handed over to the ICTY. At the end of his trial before the County Court of Rijeka, Norac was sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment because of Gospić killings and the Supreme Court confirmed Rijeka Court’s
decision in June 2004. The same month the ICTY indicted Norac for Medački Džep case that will be described below.\textsuperscript{18}

The interesting point concerning last developments in Norac case is the following: Ivo Sanader, who had attended and gave a heated speech in the biggest mass rally for Norac’s support organized in February 2001, was occupying the seat of Prime Minister when Norac’s sentence was confirmed by the Supreme Court and when Norac was indicted by the ICTY.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{Gotovina Case:}

Ante Gotovina was the general who commanded the operation Oluja (Storm) that put an end to the autonomy rule of rebel Serbs in Croatia. Because of the role he played in the successful end of the Homeland’s War, he was considered a national hero in Croatia.

In the beginning of July 2001, after a meeting that Chief Prosecutor of the ICTY Carla del Ponte had with Croatian governmental officials, media started to report that the Tribunal had prepared sealed indictments for the commanders of the Homeland’s War. After a short while it revealed that, on the contrary to what happened in Stipetić case, these news were reflecting the truth and that one of the sealed indictments was against general Gotovina.\textsuperscript{20} This development provoked, from one hand mass protests similar to those that took place in the beginning of Norac case and, on the other hand, a tension between the two biggest coalition partners, SDP and HSLS like in the beginning of Stipetić case.

\textsuperscript{18} For the indictment see at http://www.un.org/icty/indictment/english/ade-ci040730e.htm (13 Jul. 2004).

\textsuperscript{19} On Sanader’s change of attitude see Novi list 26 May 2004.

\textsuperscript{20} See Vjesnik 8 and 9 Jul. 2001.
Prime Minister and the leader of SDP Ivica Račan was supporting the idea that the government should fulfil its international obligations and send Gotovina to The Hague, while the leader of HSLS Dražen Budiša was completely against such a move that would, according to him, undermine the dignity of the Homeland War and thus the independence of Croatia. The crisis grew as ministers from HSLS ranks quitted the government. Nevertheless, the government won a vote of confidence in the parliament on 15 July 2001. During this political turbulence, however, general Gotovina escaped. The general is still at large and this issue constitutes an open problem between Croatia and the ICTY to date.

**Medački Džep Case:**

Medak region was situated in the territory that rebel ethnic Serbs opposing to Croatia’s secession from former Yugoslavia took control towards the end of 1991. This region that was called in military jargon as Medak pocket (Medački Džep) was captured in 1993 by Croatian army by a military operation in which they were many civilian casualties. In the framework of Medački Džep operation several Croatian officers would be indicted by the ICTY.

The first officer to be indicted in Medački Džep case was Rahim Ademi, whose sealed indictment arrived to Zagreb together with Gotovina’s one.\(^{21}\) Ademi, because of his Albanian ethnic background, did not obtain any support from the Croatian right wing and, unlike Gotovina, went voluntarily to The Hague to claim his innocence. He was set free by the Tribunal until the hearings in his case begin. The most important military figure indicted in Medački Džep case, on the other hand, was Janko Bobetko who assumed the position of

the head of general staff of the Croatian army during Homeland’s War.

As the indictment against Bobetko became public in the end of September 2002, the hardest and longest crisis that coalition government would face in its relations with ICTY started. Upon this indictment the government led by Račan entered first time in open conflict with the Tribunal. Formerly, when Gotovina indictment was made public, the government insisted on the necessity of fulfilling its international obligations while claiming that the indictment in question was unfair because of its content that incriminated Homeland’s War as a whole. In Bobetko case, however, this rhetoric would be used without mentioning Croatia’s commitment to co-operate with the ICTY. To put in other words, the government refused to accept the indictment against Bobetko, stating that to incriminate the military head of the Homeland’s war would incriminate the independence of Croatia.

The combination of several factors was dictating such a stance to the government: First, the coalition was about to loose its majority in the Parliament after both Gotovina crisis and a border dispute with neighbouring Slovenia that had occurred a couple of months before Bobetko indictment. Second, Bobetko’s charisma among military and police was to such degree that an order to arrest the general might risk facing an open resistance even from the ranks of security forces. At this stage the only politician who defended that Bobetko had to be arrested and sent to The Hague was the President Mesić. The open refusal of Račan’s government to arrest Bobetko and hand him over deteriorated considerably Croatia’s relations with the ICTY. Nevertheless, Bobetko was already very old and suffering a hearth disease. He died in the end of April 2003 and thus this crisis between Croatia and the ICTY came to a “natural” end.
Relation between Croatia and ICTY during HDZ Minority Government

In the elections held in the end of 2003 HDZ obtained the biggest number of seats in the parliament without securing a majority. Immediately after the elections, speculations over HDZ’s intention to form a coalition with the extreme right party HSP\(^{22}\) occurred. Nevertheless, in the end HDZ opted to form a minority government backed by deputies of national minorities. Because of HDZ’s critical stage against co-operation with the ICTY during its opposition years and because of its short flirt with HSP, independent observers were very sceptical about the fate of Croatia’s relations with the ICTY under the rule of the new minority government. The developments, however, showed that there was no room for scepticism. During first months of HDZ minority government ICTY issued indictments against two other Croatian generals and six Bosnian Croats that had hold high ranking civilian and military positions during the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina.\(^{23}\) The government took all the necessary steps to make these indictees available for the trial. These efforts to fulfil Croatia’s obligations vis-à-vis ICTY gave results soon. Upon the avis of Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte on Croatia’s good records, despite the unsolved Gotovina issue, in co-operation with the Tribunal, in April 2004 the European Commission

\(^{22}\) HSP = Hrvatska Stranka Prava (Croatian Party of Rights)

declared Croatia ready to start full membership talks with the European Union.\textsuperscript{24}

**Serbia-Montenegro**

In order to compare Croatia with another example that presents similar patterns as far as the transition process is concerned; here I will briefly describe Serbia-Montenegro’s relations with the ICTY.

Transition process in Serbia-Montenegro (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until 2003) started with the fall of Slobodan Milošević. The alternation took place, in fact, in two different steps. After the federal presidential elections Vojislav Koštunica who was supported by the anti-Milošević coalition DOS\textsuperscript{25} became the president of the federation of Serbia and Montenegro in October 2000. In December 2000, on the other hand, the same coalition won the parliamentary elections in Serbia and Zoran Djindjić became the Prime Minister of this biggest component of the federation. Nevertheless, these two political figures had completely different visions, especially, concerning the prosecution of war crimes. Koštunica, who is a fervent nationalist and legalist at the same time, was in favour of war crime trials in front of national courts, while Djindjić was advocating a total fulfilment of Serbia-Montenegro’s international obligations, including those that are vis-à-vis the ICTY.

The first open dispute between Koštunica and Djindjić on ICTY issue occurred over the handover of Milošević to the Tribunal. Koštunica condemned the decision taken by Djindjić’s government in June 2001 as being anti-constitutional. After

\textsuperscript{24} See Novi list 21 Apr. 2004

\textsuperscript{25} DOS = Demokratska Opozicija Srbije (Democratic Opposition of Serbia)
this event Koštunica’s party DSS\textsuperscript{26} tried to obstruct the enactment of the co-operation law with the ICTY and finally quit the coalition DOS. On the other hand, Koštunica’s term at the presidency of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia expired in the end of 2002 as the federation changed shape and became the union of Serbia and Montenegro.

A dramatic event, the assassination of Djindjić in March 2003, put an end to the personal dispute between him and Koštunica. Nevertheless, the antagonism between the isolationist nationalists and integrationist democrats in Serbia is still lasting and the issue of co-operation with the ICTY constitutes one of the most important points in political duel between these two forces. The most powerful political organisations in isolationist block are SRS\textsuperscript{27}, SPS\textsuperscript{28} and DSS of Koštunica. The leaders of the first two parties, respectively Vojislav Šešelj and Slobodan Milošević are in The Hague facing trial in front of the ICTY. Both men accuse the ICTY as being part of an international conspiracy aiming to destroy Serbian people. In the parliamentary elections that took place in December 2003, the isolationist block got more than 55 % of total votes in Serbia. After the elections Koštunica formed a minority coalition government with two other liberal parties, but he preferred to get the backing of Milošević’s socialists instead of letting Djindjić’s formation DS\textsuperscript{29} to join the coalition. Currently, there are several problematic issues concerning Serbia’s relations with the ICTY, among which the most important ones are the followings:

\textsuperscript{26} DSS = Demokratska Stranka Srbije (Democratic Party of Serbia)
\textsuperscript{27} SRS = Srpska Radikalna Stranka (Serbian Radical Party)
\textsuperscript{28} SPS = Socijalistička Partija Srbije (Socialist Party of Serbia)
\textsuperscript{29} DS = Demokratska Stranka (Democratic Party)
a) Several indictees, including retired generals Nebojša Pavković (former head of general staff of Yugoslav army), Vladimir Lazarević (former commander of Priština corpus), Vlastimir Djordjević (former commander of police forces) and an active police general Sreten Lukić are still free in Serbia and there is no concrete intention of state officials to arrest and hand them over. There are also allegations that the former head of Bosnian Serb Army, another indictee of the ICTY, General Ratko Mladić is hiding in Serbia.

b) Serbia-Montenegro authorities deny access to state archives for documents dating earlier than 1996. The official argument for this attitude is that these documents can be used in genocide case initiated by Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in front of the UN’s International Court of Justice against Serbia-Montenegro.

c) The same argument is also used to justify Serbia-Montenegro’s refusal to release potential witnesses from the burden of observing state secrets.

**Conclusion**

Effectiveness of international judicial organs depends, mainly, on a good co-operation with especially those nation-states that are directly linked with events and persons that fall under the jurisdiction of the international justice. Nevertheless, a narrow understanding of the “national sovereignty” principle and an unusual weight of ethnic nationalism that reigns over the public opinion occur as important factors to undermine a fruitful co-operation. On the other hand, even the harshest nationalists can not totally oppose with open discourse to the idea of supporting supranational bodies having jurisdiction over national organs, simply because the value that is protected by these supranational bodies, namely human rights, is of global
nature. Therefore, nationalist politicians have to cover their “core” opposition by arguments like “unfairness and partialness of supranational judicial bodies”. Simply because of this reason, newly flourishing international criminal tribunals should be careful twofold on the fair and just nature of their judicial activities. And, furthermore, they have to make this point crystal clear despite the counter propaganda of the nationalist side. In this task, politicians that preach a full integration of their country with the international community become a natural ally of international justice. A comparative analysis of developments in Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro between 2000 and 2004 shows this link clearly.

It has to be noted that, according to the so-called “exit strategy” drawn in UN Security Council resolution # 1503, dated 23 August 2003, all indictments must be raised by the ICTY Prosecutor’s office by the end of 2004 and all the first instance trials before trial chambers must be finished by the end of 2008. This “exit strategy” implies a handover of war crime cases to national judicial instances. Thus, after the task of high level co-operation with the ICTY, another important task occurs in front of the newly independent states issued from former Yugoslavia: The task of carrying out fair trials in war crime cases prosecuted by national organs. Let’s hope that this task would not encounter as many difficulties as the first one had.
THE NEW SECURITY STRATEGIES: THE EU AND NATO EXPERIENCE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Nurşin ATEŞOĞLU GÜNEY*

The major changes that took place in the field of international relations at the end of the 20th century are familiar to all of us. The two important events; first the end of the cold war, secondly the September 11th considered by many as the most important turning points in the field of security studies. These two events certainly affected the foundations of international relations, alliances as well as concept of threat and security.

At the end of Cold war period, Europe captured the chance of free from all of the previous ideological and military confrontations but on the other hand the continent could not prevent itself from the affects of new and unpredictable security challenges (like regional conflicts and civil wars etc.). In this regard, the Balkan conflicts in the early 1990s to a certain extent challenged the conduct of US and mostly the European foreign policies. Thus, in a way Balkans had become a test case for the newly introduced foreign and security policies.

As it is known, in the first half of the 1990s the world community had witnessed the dramatic results of the war in the former Yugoslavia. And, the military conflicts on the ground were finally stopped (to a certain extend of course) only

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after the realization of the NATO’s “peace enforcement” operations in 1995.

In the previous decade, so many actors got involved in the business of creating urgently needed conditions of peace and security in the Balkans. NATO and the EU were among the ones that got heavily engaged in the region. This was due both to the radically changed conditions of security as well as transformation process that had begun in the two organizations.

As it is known, NATO tried to respond to the radical changes of the new era by adapting new two strategic concepts and initiating its enlargement process. On the other hand, the EU by accepting a new Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and also initiating its enlargement process tried to be an effective security actor.

Today, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure/failed states, organized crime are considered by both NATO and EU as the main threats to Europe. Since 1990s, the two organizations tried to stabilize the area beyond their member state’s borders through different tools and tactics. Thus, today the maintenance of security in the immediate and beyond neighborhood has gained at most importance for NATO and the EU.

For this reason, since the 1990s the two organizations (NATO and the EU) had assumed new “crisis management” roles as along with the traditional roles. By this way, they tried to address the new security challenges of the 20th century.

In this regard, the major test in the early 1990s was experienced in the former Yugoslavia—today’s Western Balkans. During the first years the performance of the EU can not be considered successful. But, since the outbreak of conflicts “the Union has operated in the region both as a “foreign policy” and “enlargement” actor”. During the EU presence in
the Western Balkans “the Union tried to imply both a “security-building” and an “institution building” strategy”. So, “the Union in the region pursued a rather dual strategy”.

“In the first strategy, the basic aim of the EU was to preservation of the peace in the territory of the five Western Balkan states. Thus, for this reason the Union facilitated peace agreements, imposed charters, run cities and administered economies, dispatched peacekeepers and police officers”. In the second strategy, “EU through the means at its disposal (like the SAP process) tried to realize the integration of the individual Western Balkan states into EU”.

So far, EU used both enlargement and the other means of CFSP tools so as to be an effective international security actor. This holds true for the Western Balkans as well.

The radical pace of change in the EU had started with the Maastricht Treaty in 1991 when the development CFSP was introduced. “Then, especially after 1998 the developments towards a common security gathered speed. In this regard; The Union was strengthened the CFSP by adding the so called “Petesberg Tasks” into the Amsterdam Treaty (went into force in 1999) and thereby made these tasks of the Union. And, the December 1998 Saint Maola meeting was also significant where the participant countries (France and Britain) reached to an agreement that EU should have autonomous civil and military crisis management capabilities. At the Helsinki Summit of 1999 the EU, a headline goal was agreed on that a European military force of considerable size (50–60.000) would set up by the 2003. Then, in 2003 when the Treaty of Nice went into force WEU’s existence came to an end.” And, by the end of 2002 the “Berlin plus” agreement between NATO and the EU was finalized. This cooperation agreement that was signed between the two organizations relieved the EU in terms of procurement
of the required military means and capabilities that might be needed in times of crisis.

So, nearly after a decade long preparations in the field of security, the EU finally became able to give start to its “peace-keeping” operations first in the Western Balkans. And, thus by this way the Helsinki summit goal of realizing the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has also become an operational reality.

The first civilian operation of the EU had started in Bosnia on January 2003. This police mission was in fact a follower of the UN’s International Police Task. In the same year, EU’s first military operation Concordia in Macedonia has taken over from NATO. As it is known, the operation of Concordia was used in the implementation of the Ohrid agreement that was achieved between ethnic Albanians and Macedonians. And, as accepted in Istanbul NATO Summit in July 2004, the EU forces (EUROFOR) has taken over the responsibility of the SFOR forces in Bosnia on December 2. The latest operation Althea is certainly the largest peacekeeping mission that is ever been launched by EU.

Before and after the Iraq war, for some time the EU could not perform a clear foreign policy and this naturally ruined the Union’s credibility. But, having assumed the negative effects of US led Iraq war the EU tried to overcome the divergent views in its CFSP. And, the remedy was found in December 2003 where the EU members agreed on the new European Security Strategy (ESS).

This strategy outlined the basic threats that the EU perceives in today’s world. And, the “regional conflicts” was one of them. In the EU’s new foreign policy doctrine; the importance of its neighboring area that starts outside EU’s members was underlined. For this reason, the “New Neighborhood Policy” (ENP) is introduced as the stabilization factor that
is hoped to prevent likely threats emanating from the region. It seems like; EU now plans to use ENP as a new “conflict prevention” tool as along with its other means at her disposal in the neighboring area. But nobody knows whether it could be an attractive tool as enlargement was so far.

After having a major break-through in the field of CFSP in 2003, the EU realized its last phase of enlargement in May 2004. The process of enlargement in Balkans is still continuing. In this regard, Croatia have in 2003 presented its membership application for the EU where as Macedonia has applied for membership this year.

During the EU’s integration process in the Balkans, the Stability and Association Process that was agreed in November 2000 process has only brought benefits to some of the countries of the region. As we all know it was not much help in the case of Serbia for instance.

As already been mentioned, the Balkans is a region where the EU is not only actor. The important NATO presence in at least Kosovo is an example of this. Of course this is related with the unresolved problems of Kosovo itself.

In the post-Cold war years, NATO tried to extend the stability zone beyond its member state’s borders through the means at its hand. Thus, in the last decade or so NATO had performed both its traditional collective defense (article-5) mission, as well non-article five missions like; the peace enforcement operations and building the partnerships etc.

Since, 1997 in accordance with the Alliance’s “open door policy” the continued enlargement process was used as one means of extending stability in Europe. Finally, at the NATO’s Istanbul Summit a commitment to this object was again underlined. Currently, the Alliance under the Membership Action Plan (MAP) program is helping the three aspirants
Western Balkan countries (Macedonia, Albania and Croatia) for the NATO membership. Today, both Bosnia and Serbia and Montenegro that had been once the target of NATO bombardments just five years ago are the candidates of NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) Program. The three Western Balkan countries (Macedonia, Albania and Croatia) are contributing personnel to the Alliance’s operations beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. So, this cooperation between NATO and the Balkan countries matches with the Alliance’s new policy of developing partnerships in the immediate and beyond neighborhood. In the last NATO’s summit in Istanbul the Balkan countries like; Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia have already become NATO members.

As it is known, NATO has started its first peace enforcement operation in Bosnia in 1995 nearly just about nine years ago. And, this was followed the signature of the Dayton peace agreement and the deployment of NATO-led peace-keeping forces both in Bosnia and Kosovo. Within the passage of time, when a relatively better situation on the ground is attained NATO gradually decreased the number of its military forces in the Western Balkans except Kosovo. As already said, the Alliance had already terminated one of its important peace-keeping missions (SFOR mission in Bosnia) in the region.

So, today the NATO’s role of peace-keeping gradually in the Western Balkans is passing on to EU, where as the Alliance is focusing on the threats outside of the Euro-Atlantic area. In the future, if the Berlin plus agreement can function properly then one can expect “the EU more specializing in intra-European conflicts where as NATO operating out of its traditional area of operation”. At the moment, a de-facto division of labor seems to be working to a certain extend in the Western Balkans. We will all observe in the future whether there is going to be a success or failure story in this regard.
Conclusion

Certainly, today Western Balkans is incomparably more secure and stable place when one compares to the last decade. The war in the Balkans is over and democratically chosen governments are in power. But, it is still early to say that the region is free from certain challenges. Despite to some good news that is coming from the Western Balkans the still unresolved issues like the future status of Kosovo, the war crimes issue, stagnant economies and like undermines this region’s prospects for further Euro-Atlantic integration. Thus, the continuing security problems of Western Balkans still make the region a potential area for another explosion of violence if not handled properly.

Especially, at a time when US attention has shifted away from the Western Balkans in the wake of continuing security risks in the region there is still a need for a credible peacekeeping and diplomatic involvement.

And, that is why, the EUROFOR presence in Bosnia gains at most importance. Surely, in the near future this newly deployed EUROFOR mission going to be tested on three grounds: (i) The EU force is going to be tested on, whether it could maintain the security of Bosnia Herzegovina and prevent likelihood of the spill over effects from the Kosovo (ii) And naturally the success or failure of EUROFOR surely going to affect the credibility of European Security and Defense Policy, (iii) and finally, the future of the “Euro-Atlantic partnership will also be tested depending on the functioning of the Berlin plus deal during the presence of the UE forces in Bosnia Herzegovina.
SOUTHEAST EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION*

Verena KNAUS**

A coloured map of Europe captures a history of success: dark blue stretches over the old continent, from Andalusia to the Finnish Highlands, from Galway to Eastern Slovakia. The European project and the attraction of membership of the club has gradually united and stabilised countries as diverse as Spain and Estonia. The recent enlargement culminating in the membership of ten new former communist countries on 1 May 2004 has marked a milestone in Europe’s recent history. Many bureaucrats and European publics have since been busy lamenting about the need to ‘digest’ and consolidate, instead of continuing the EU’s most successful foreign policy: enlargement.

In fact, the next wave of countries queuing in front of the EU’s gates is as significant in terms of Europe’s geo-strategic, political and economic interests. The front-runners Bulgaria and Romania, whose membership in early 2007 is practically a done deal, will add another 30 million. Turkey’s membership prospects have been confirmed twice in 2004, first by the Commission on 6 October, certifying that Turkey has

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* This paper reflects the views of the author and is intended to be thought-provoking. It draws on in-depth research and analysis done by the European Stability Initiative (ESI), a Berlin-based policy and research institute, in Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Turkey. To find out more about ESI’ views on Europe and the Western Balkans, please go to www.esiweb.org.

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fulfilled the key criteria for negotiations to start, and secondly by the European Council on 17 December, again confirming the EU’s commitment to keep the promise of opening membership talks. Turkey, despite its size of nearly 68 million\(^1\), and its position spanning two continents and two economies— a dynamic highly-industrialised economy in the west and a rural economy, dominated by subsistence farming and feudal landownership structures in the east, is on its path to EU membership. In addition, a longer list of smaller, but no less significant countries, is already in the waiting room. Croatia has been promised the beginning of membership talks in 2005. Macedonia, under the energetic leadership of Deputy Prime Minister Cekerinska, is pacing ahead in fulfilling the EU’s strict demands, questionnaires and other criteria.

If one were to paint all EU member states and real candidates in dark blue, the most visible and glaring gap would remain in the Western Balkans, or what is left of former Yugoslavia: Serbia and Montenegro, including Kosovo, and Albania. Judging by the EU’s unwillingness to get actively involved in helping these economies ‘catch up’ and reform their ailing economies and weak state institutions, these countries are not yet even light blue. They form a new ‘white hole’ in the middle of Europe. Their status as ‘potential candidates’ instead of pre-accession candidates puts them in a different category than neighbouring countries like Croatia. Instead of erasing the last ‘white holes’ in Europe’s midst, the lack of a clear European vision for the Western Balkans creates a new European periphery— from the Vojvodina in North Serbia to Butrint in South Albania— within the borders of the new Europe.

Instead of fireworks and celebrations, one can sense a feeling of gloom among those Eurocrats responsible to design

\(^1\) Population census 2000
and administer the next wave of enlargement, that would include Croatia, Turkey, Serbia and Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania. Reading European dailies and listening to political talks one easily gets the sense that the European Union is a reluctant empire. The aspirations of around 100 million future Europeans are perceived as a threat, not as a tool to stabilise Europe, to export the rules of liberal market economies and to transform these countries into accountable democracies. The sense of historic duty and political drive that turned Greece and Spain from weak democracies emerging from dictatorship into stable political partners, and helped transform Poland and Slovenia from socialism to dynamic free market economies, seems to be lacking today.

The next enlargement is a sizable challenge, combining post-conflict countries, former socialist countries and the first Muslim-majority country to join the European club. Taking a closer look, the next enlargement is complicated further by the lack of
clear borders and sovereignties. In the case of Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo, international protectorate structures hold the EU transformation process hostage. The EU is a club of sovereign states, and not a laboratory for political sovereignty experiments like the High Representative Office in Bosnia Herzegovina or the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo. But unresolved sovereignty and borders are not the only challenge, Albania’s chronically weak state is testimony that the existence of full sovereignty—as is often claimed in Kosovo—is not enough to liberate a country trapped in a vicious cycle of underdevelopment, subsistence farming and migration.

Amidst all the gloom, I dare say that Europe underrates its own success and strength. The ability of the European Union to “exert influence in countries wishing to join the EU has been nothing short of revolutionary (...). This form of ‘regime change’ EU style is cheap, voluntary and hence long-lasting”.

By merely offering the massive carrot of prospective membership, Europe has successfully inspired voluntary regime change across the European continent. The example of Turkey, which is currently undergoing revolutionary changes in order to meet European criteria, shows the transformative power of prospective membership.

As Daniel Cohn-Bendit recently announced: Europe is witness to a miracle on the Bosphorus! From the day that Turkey was given the green light for EU membership at the historic Helsinki Council meeting in 1999, Turkey has experienced a virtuous cycle of democratic consolidation. The EU-inspired miracle of the Bosphorus, led by Turkey’s Islamic-conservative party under Prime Minister Erdogan, triggered key reforms that reformers and human rights activists in Turkey,

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2 Steven Everts
and the EU and US had long demanded. The military was successively removed from political control, the death penalty was abolished, the infamous state security courts were closed down, the government is pursuing a 'zero tolerance' policy on torture, and Kurdish-language television broadcasting—unthinkable a few years ago—was finally introduced in summer 2004. The Turkish state was even willing to accept the UN-brokered peace plan on Cyprus.

All these reforms happened as part of Turkey’s bid to fulfil the EU’s criteria for opening membership talks. Political stability and a clear sense of vision also translated into economic stability: Turkey has experienced the lowest inflation rate in 27 years and economic growth rates of 8% for some years. Turkey had been a member of many illustrious international clubs for decades, in the 50s Turkey joined the World Bank and the OECD, for long Turkey has been a member of NATO and Turkey had signed an Association Agreement with the European Community in 1963. However membership of these clubs has not been able to do what the real prospect of EU membership has successfully done in the past few years: transform Turkey.

Given the EU’s own successful track-record in transforming unstable and weak countries into competitive and stable democracies, it is surprising that the EU is not more actively pursuing the same policies in the Western Balkans. For the moment, the European tool-kit for the Balkans includes three types of instruments: authoritarian state-building currently pursued in the international protectorates of Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo, traditional capacity-building, including various non-coercive instruments to promote democracy, reconciliation and institutional-building efforts in Serbia and Montenegro, and finally, member-state building, which is what the EU is doing in Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia and Turkey.
The structures of the Office of the High Representative in Bosnia Herzegovina and of UNMIK\textsuperscript{3} were designed for the immediate post-war emergency phase. As the emergency phase is long over, the structures need to change. Today, the protectorate-like structures in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo, and the traditional capacity-building programmes in Serbia and Montenegro act as substitutes for a serious European engagement. But they don’t come cheap.

If one were to assess the rate of return of EU funds in terms of money spent and sustainable reforms achieved, the rate of return of an active member-state building policy is clearly the highest. Whereas in Bosnia Herzegovina highly-paid international consultants, democratisation officers and a policing mission combined cost the EU over € 75 million a year, the EU spends €1.38 billion on Bulgaria’s public investment programme. But while Bulgaria and Turkey are clearly catching up with European member states, Kosovo, Albania, Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina are falling further behind.

Albania for example has experienced deceptive growth for the past decade. According to official statistics, 33 percent of the working age population hold a full-time job. According to these statistics, in mountainous areas employment is 58%, while in Tirana only 39% of the working age population have a job. These figures hide the fact that ‘employment’ in Albania’s mountainous north consists mostly of subsistence farming on small and unproductive family-owned plots. Between the lines, the official data reveals more truths: net school enrolment in secondary schools in Albania has gone down from 44% in 1998 to 39% in 2002. Economic growth has slowed down

\textsuperscript{3} United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo- UNMIK, established per UN Security Council Resolution 1244, 1999.
from 8% in 1998 to 4.7% in 2002. Albania is falling further behind.

In Kosovo official and reliable figures are even harder to come by. Five years of international administration have not helped resolve the puzzle of Kosovo’s economy. Without a proper census since 1981, nobody knows if the population of Kosovo is 1.7 million or 2.4 million. IMF ‘guesstimates’ of Kosovo’s GDP have continuously been revised downwards, from €1.6 million in June 2003 to €1.3 million in December 2003. The level of remittances sent home from the large Kosovo Albanian diaspora is estimated to be between 450 and 750 million euros. What is clear, though, is that Kosovo is not producing anything today and subsistence agriculture is by far the largest employer.

Lubishte village in Viti municipality⁴, in Kosovo’s Southeast on the border with Macedonia, is a microcosm of Kosovo’s underdevelopment trap. There are 228 households in Lubishte, but only the main road leading into the center of the village is paved, the water system is partially broken down and services only a couple of houses, there is no sewage system and no telephone lines. For the total population of 1,565 people living in the village, there are only 77 regular jobs and a handful of seasonal jobs.⁵ Most of these jobs do not earn enough to feed a family. This means that most families depend on agriculture and money sent home from relatives living abroad. A quarter of the village population has migrated abroad, mostly to Germany and Switzerland, and their remittances provide a lifeline for the families that remained behind. Agriculture is primitive. The size of average land

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⁴ Viti/Vitina.

⁵ Research undertaken by ESI analysts for the Lessons Learned and Analysis Unit, a joint project of ESI and the European Union Pillar of UNMIK, February 2004.
holdings per household is 1.7 ha, and most families own between one or two cows and some chicken. Raising productivity in this farm sector, will put more people out of ‘jobs’. And what alternative jobs can be provided? In 2004, only 16 inhabitants in the whole village held a university degree. This will not change quickly, at this moment only 9 youngsters from Lubishte are currently enrolled at University.

The picture is similarly bleak across the border in Macedonia. In Kumanovo municipality, close to the capital Skopje, 29% of a total population of 93,457 have quit or are without primary school education, 38% have finished only primary school and only 6% have completed higher education or university.  

Given these structural problems across the countries of the Western Balkans, it is surprising that the European Union is not addressing the challenges of rural underdevelopment, the skills gap and the legacy of socialist industrialisation heads-on. But it takes more than just money. The case of Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo show that it is not the amount of money spent by the EU, but it is the instruments and the institutions spending the money that make all the difference. In Bosnia Herzegovina, for example, in lieu of a serious National Development Plan and multi-annual investment programmes, the OHR\(^7\) convened an ad hoc Bulldozer Committee to push through 50 economic reforms in 150 days. The depth and sustainability of such reforms remains highly questionable.

In Kosovo, the performance of the EU-funded Pillar of UNMIK and its highly expensive privatisation programme has been poor: in nearly three years, no more than 13 companies out of around 500 have been privatised, and not a single

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\(^6\) Macedonian census.

\(^7\) Office of the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, www.ohr.int
company has been liquidated. The short-lived post-war boom financed with international reconstruction funds and remittances of the Kosovo Albanian diaspora, is already giving way to economic stagnation and the real threat of an imploding budget. Whereas the European Commission, the same institution that finances the EU pillar of UNMIK every year with around 20 million euros, spends €166,8 million on restructuring the Bulgarian agricultural sector and will soon do the same in Southeast Anatolia, the budget of the Kosovo Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development is a mere 0.6% of Kosovo’s small budget. One-year budget cycles of the European Agency for Reconstruction, the EU’s main donor institution in Kosovo, make medium-to longer term planning impossible. As a result, Kosovo’s structural economic problems remain unaddressed.

The different instruments applied by the European Commission to solve similar structural problems in Bosnia Herzegovina or Kosovo on the one hand, and Romania or Bulgaria on the other hand, reflect the two types of assistance offered by the European Commission to potential candidates and ‘real’ candidates: in Bosnia or Kosovo the European Union offers ‘passive assistance’, in the case of Romania or Bulgaria it provides ‘active assistance’. In short, passive assistance has a short-term perspective and largely ignores the structural problems of the economy, instead focusing mostly on ‘security’ issues. Of course, in the immediate post-war context and during the emergency phase, security was the main concern. However, both Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo have – with the generous support of European reconstruction funds – successfully emerged from the emergency and reconstruction phase and have entered the development phase, where a concrete

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8 To find out more about the agricultural sector in Kosovo, please visit [www.mafrd-kos.org](http://www.mafrd-kos.org) or [www esiweb.org](http://www.esiweb.org).
vision how to restructure their economies and build sustainable institutions is needed.

The instruments of the European Union in these countries, from OHR\textsuperscript{9} to EAR\textsuperscript{10} or European Union Pillar of UNMIK in Kosovo\textsuperscript{11}, have not yet adjusted to this transition from emergency to development phase. The fact that they ‘govern’ without adequate statistical or macroeconomic data, reflects that they are not interested in longer-term development planning. Both OHR and the European Union Pillar of UNMIK largely bypass local institutions instead of building partnerships with domestic institutions. Such an approach, is very different to the EC’s own intense twinning programmes and institution-building efforts applied in pre-accession countries.

Active assistance and passive assistance are very different: Active assistance builds on multi-annual programmes, it is information intensive and requires rigorous planning, it believes in co-financing and additionality instead of donations, and it invests in real partnerships to strengthen local institutions. Active assistance is the tool to build future member states, it has a clear vision and goal.

The clear objective of active assistance is ‘Europeanisation’, it is a tool for transforming states willing to internalise European values and standards. ‘Europeanisation’ offers powerful incentives. The process of Europeanisation has three main ingredients 1) an administrative revolution 2) a political revolution and 3) a process of social and economic convergence or ‘catching up’ with European living standards. All countries, on their path

\textsuperscript{9} Office of the High Representative, www.ohr.int
\textsuperscript{10} EAR- European Agency for Reconstruction, www.ear.eu.int
\textsuperscript{11} European Union Pillar of UNMIK, www.euinkosovo.org
to full membership, have seen such a dramatic transformation, and Turkey is experiencing it as we speak.

The administrative revolution entails the incorporation of all twenty-nine chapters of the Acquis Communautaire, in other words a complete incorporation of European legal norms and standards into domestic legislation and political practices. The political revolution entails the internalisation of European-style democracies. Economic and social convergence, the result of targeted assistance in the areas of human resource development, infrastructure development and rural development, helps those regions lagging behind ‘catch up’ with European living standards.

Macedonia just recently experienced the first part of this dramatic transformation. On 1 October 2004, Romano Prodi as President of the last European Commission, delivered a questionnaire with 1,400 detailed questions to the Macedonian government in Skopje. These questions ranged from describing the system of subsidies by the Ministry of Agricultural to drawing organigrams of key public institutions. The Commission requested no less than a complete ‘x-ray’ of the Macedonian state, its institutions, its functions and its financial implications. In February 2005, the Macedonian government returned the completed questionnaire for review and feedback by the Commission. This diagnosis is the prelude to a complete overhaul of the Macedonian public administration. Macedonia, like all previous candidate countries, is expected to review existing functions of public institutions, rationalize them or create new ones. This is exactly the process of ‘state building’ - or ‘member state building’ in the European context- that Francis Fukuyama defines as ‘the creation of new institutions and the strengthening of existing ones’.
The political revolution goes in parallel to the administrative revolution. The goal of membership creates a common focus and political direction. Suddenly, the system of governance starts to matter more than individual politicians. Countries like Bulgaria have experienced series of government crises, inflation and economic downturns, but the ‘final goal’ and the vision of ‘Europeanisation’ has kept changing parties and governments on the same track to Brussels. In Bulgaria, the exiled king Simeon Saxecoburgotski has - to the surprise of many- become one of Bulgaria’s greatest Europeanisers, in Croatia, the former hard-line nationalist party HDZ is heading the ‘Europeanisation camp’ and in Turkey, it is the former Islamist party AKP around Prime Minister Erdogan that is pushing the European agenda. The common goal unites political foes and friends alike.

Europeanisation also establishes new relationships between different levels of government and different levels of society. It redefines the importance of regional development, which in Turkey’s case for example has long been a political taboo. It also redefines the relationship between social partners, civil society and the private sector. Many funding instruments by the Commission are conditioned on the full participation in decision-making of civil society and the private sector. In short, Europeanisation introduces a new form of political dialogue.

Thirdly, Europeanisation sets in motion a process of social and economic convergence to help less developed regions ‘catch up’. As the Maastricht Treaty puts it, it is one of the EU’s core values to ‘reduce the disparities between the levels of development in various regions’. The EU’s own regional and development policies are in fact the EU’s second largest budget item after the Common Agricultural Policy, because of the consensus that a common market and a political union cannot allow some regions to fall further behind.
The precondition for receiving substantial assistance from the Commission is a European-style National Development Plan, prepared by each candidate country. These plans first diagnose the country's structural economic problems, and based on broad consultation, set out multi-year strategies for agricultural and rural development, infrastructure, education and policies to enhance the competitiveness of the national economy. Such NDPS\textsuperscript{12}, based on a rigorous diagnosis and an inclusive planning process serve as the guiding instrument for both national public investment programmes and the Commission's 'additional' grant assistance. The Irish economic miracle of the past 20 years and the case of Estonia are just two examples, how targeted EU assistance on the basis of NDPS, can help economies turn around. Ireland, receiving substantial amounts of Structural and Cohesion Funds, has completely changed its image from 'the poorest of the rich' to the 'Celtic Tiger'.\textsuperscript{13}

The success of the EU's own pre-accession instruments and enlargement policy speaks for itself. What is needed now is to extend these instruments to the countries of the Western Balkans, as they are struggling with the same structural economic problems as previous candidate countries. It makes no sense that aid to countries like Bosnia Herzegovina or Serbia is declining, while financial aid to candidate countries increases as these countries prepare for EU convergence. Just like Bulgaria now receives €1.38 bio in EU assistance over three years, Serbia, Montenegro or Albania need additional funds to restructure their agricultural sectors, enhance the competitiveness of their industries and invest in their human capital. It seems bizarre that international missions, like

\textsuperscript{12} National Development Plan

\textsuperscript{13} In two different issues of The Economist, Ireland was once described as 'the poorest of the rich' and several years later the headline read 'Ireland- the Celtic Tiger'.

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the OHR or the EU Pillar of UNMIK, do not demand accurate information—clearly a pre-condition for accurate policy planning—while accession candidates are requested to prepare detailed diagnoses and National Development Plans as a precondition for assistance. It is paradoxical, how in semi-protectorates like Bosnia Herzegovina or Kosovo, EU-funded international institutions ‘own’ the decision-making process without serious external review, while in accession countries the reform process is subject to rigorous evaluations in the form of annual reports prepared by the European Commission. The countries of Southeast Europe urgently need investments in human capital. Their economies need investments in physical infrastructure, policies for rural development and they need a different—more ‘European’—public sector.

The countries that today form the new ‘white hole’ on the European map are in dire need of the same administrative, political and socio-economic transformation that has been triggered by the process of ‘Europeanisation’ in other countries. To initiate this process, the European Commission must extend its pre-accession funding instruments to these countries and treat them equally as ‘real’ candidate countries. Europe must offer a concrete ‘vision’ to help the Western Balkans break out of the vicious cycle that keeps these countries trapped in underdevelopment and conflict.
During the last more than ten years the world witnessed events unthinkable for the end of 20th century and the beginning of the new millennium, events of hostility and intolerance, events that have written one of the darkest pages in the history of Western Balkans. All this happened in a time when other countries of South-East Europe advanced and progressed in cooperating and integrating with Western Europe.

Today all Balkan countries, though carrying quite different historical background, project their future and connect their prosperity with the membership in EU and NATO. The road to this future, for all the countries in the region, passes through regional cooperation, which makes it first priority on their political agenda. Regional cooperation between the Balkan countries for years remains a constant priority of Bulgarian foreign policy also.

The emergence of such perspective is a positive precedent for the Balkan region that should be assisted and developed further. This common for all of us future became possible because it stepped on two political realities: the EU policy
for further enlargement and integration of South East Europe to the Union and the NATO enlargement strategy.

The European Project on the Balkans became real initiative nowadays. The visibility of that perspective is guaranteed by both partnering structures: European Union and NATO. Now 'when' and 'to what extent' this positive project will be implemented entirely depends on the governments and nations of the countries in the region. Today we may state with enough confidence in our voice that there are no problems on the Balkans that are not secured by answers, which, however, does not make the problems less important and less serious as the March events in Kosovo have strongly shown. Still, it is always good to know and remember that the answers are backed up with a strong political will and our only concerns are securing the time and capacity. Today on our disposal are real resources, unique experience earned throughout the years of transition and we can rely on quite significant involvement of the international factors.

The commitment of the European Union and the member-countries of the European Project on the Balkans is illustrated by a vast range of events and initiatives. Unfortunately, there is still an obstacle for achieving the best results and that is the adequacy and sufficiency of the methods applied. The enlargement strategy of the Alliance is based on the assumption that the countries already have well established, well functioning state institutions and good governance practices and the only requirement is to comply those with the European standards. The reality, however, shows that the countries in the region operate with old state systems, that, to make it more complicated, are corrupted in addition. This makes 'the Agenda' of each country differing from that of the others and in best-case focusing on restoring and modernizing the system. In other words, the countries form the Balkan region along with coping with strong and severe
social problems have to deal with the demanding challenge to meet the European Union’s requirements and standards.

Besides that, the level of reforms differ from country to country and by this make their individual agenda very specific, with different goals, purposes, resources and dynamics, and the overall process difficult to be effectively coordinated. The existence of so to name ‘weak countries’, non-governmental actors, current and future protectorates complicates the combat of problems and forces the policy makers to set up short-term and fragmental goals for development of the region.

On the other hand, decentralization and integration processes progressing in parallel are quite big challenge for the political governance of these countries. In that respect the fragmentation of conflicts resulting from state or public ambitions in the region of Western Balkans is a source of potential risk. The issue of eliminating that risk should be on the table today, because it is directly related to the closest interests of EU and NATO member countries and the proper functioning of the organizations themselves.

The efforts of Bulgarian policy for stabilizing the region will contribute to achieving the goal of integrating Europe politically, economically and in the sphere of security. Stabilizing the region is seen as a very important topic in our political agenda and because this will release many resources, EU, NATO and regional ones, and for transferring and concentrating them over other hot issues of today. Integrating Europe with all countries in the region will gradually transform Bulgaria from a border country to a ‘central one’ in the framework of the Euro-Atlantic community of security, stability and prosperity.

Bulgarian Foreign Policy
Constant goal of Bulgarian foreign policy in the region of the Western Balkans is to identify and widen the areas of common interests of our country, the leading international factors and those of the countries in the region, that follow practices of civilized behavior, implement the democratic political standards and have economic behavior oriented towards further development of the regional cooperation.

In a short-term context Bulgarian foreign policy is oriented towards identifying mechanisms that will help the enlargement processes of EU and NATO bring higher security, political, economic and social stability to the region; open more and broader options for further development of not only member-states’s economies but also of those of the countries that stay outside both organizations. The processes of reducing NATO presence in the region, transforming military missions to police task missions, and transferring authority to EU should not open “vacuum” or “niche” that could be filled up with destructive and retrograde forces.

In long-term perspective Bulgarian foreign policy is aiming at achieving synergy between stabilization and democratization of life, on one side, and improvement of the economic environment in all countries in the region, on the other. Such approach will facilitate the processes of transforming state initiatives into private ones; will open new opportunities for regular political contacts between similar formations; will foster direct and open relations between civil society’s institutions from the region. Following such pattern of political behavior Bulgaria is ready to give a hand to all countries aiming at accessing EU and NATO and share its experience in the demanding job of preparing the whole society for a EU membership. Only then the individual interest of building a political, economic stability and security for Bulgaria will be completed.
Western Balkans are linked to fundamental and vital interests of Bulgaria related to economic development and security of the whole region, interests related to counter international organized crime internationally. It is a vital interest of Bulgaria to be surrounded by integrated states and friendly nations, by societies respecting the democratic values and practices, by societies built on functioning market economies. This will guarantee to Bulgaria that all countries along with sharing the positive dividends will be able to adequately respond to the increased responsibilities and future challenges that come with the European and Euro-Atlantic enlargement processes.

A fundamental pillar of Bulgarian policy towards the region is the very fact that the integration is an essential and principal goal to all countries and nations here. By excluding the Balkans from The Neighbourhood Policy EU gave a clear and visible European perspective to the region. It is a matter of joint efforts and willingness now to near the time of making that perspective a reality.

Bulgarian foreign policy considers the fact that the region is still suffering from many unsettled problems, but strongly believes that all problems of the Balkans are solvable with political means.

Bosnia and Herzegovina needs new Constitution that will keep the positive results achieved up till now and will compensate all deficiencies of the current Constitution. One new Constitution could guarantee the stability of the Federation, eliminate ethnic divisions, and guarantee an effective functioning of the state administration. The new fundamental law should preserve the Dayton Agreement’s spirit and should be written with the decisive participation of local people and all ethnic groups. If initiated soon enough the process could reach to an end at the 2006 elections.
Along with all other measures this will cease linking the most important problem in the region – that of Kosovo status – with the “domino effect” regarding Republic of Serbia. Kosovo status dilemma should be answered as soon as possible and should be followed by revising all measures for further stabilization and development of the region in compliance with that answer.

“Standards prior status” or “status prior standards” dilemma led to a postponement and did not help the crisis solving process. The philosophy of Dayton Peace Agreement for “peaceful existence and cooperation within the existing borders” is a central one in Bulgarian foreign policy. All the efforts of the international community should be mobilized to provide an answer not only to Kosovo status but also to all other territorial entities that, though hypothetically, may have future aspirations. Bulgaria and this view is shared by all other countries in the region do not support new conflicts over the state borders especially when they provoke blood conflicts, hostility among different ethnic groups and aggressive actions. Fast and final decision on Kosovo status will also counter the arguments of Serbian nationalists and will reveal prospects for new political, civil and economic rising.

The division of Serbia and Montenegro has been stimulated by the strategy for weakening the Milosevic regime. Today the Federation is a conglomerate of institutions that function neither politically nor administratively. Montenegro was among the first three countries that have received a direct financial assistance by USA Government, which, however, did not lead to any improvement on economy. Quite significant smuggling channels are still passing the territory of the two Republics. The unemployment rate is above 35 %. 

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Bulgarian foreign policy supports a three-component decision that includes:

- Functionality – the Federation or individual entities’ capacity to function should prevail the idea to stay together or form separate states by all means;

- Completion - decision should cease the decentralization processes in Western Balkans countries;

- Justice - decision should consider the interests of all ethnic groups without damaging the first two principals.

Further growth of the Western Balkan countries should be stimulated by development and implementation of National Development Plans. Considering the accumulated experience within the European Union those National Development Plans should be applied and interpreted as "Road maps" which consist very specific timing, schedule and parameters for achieving the following results: reaching and maintaining a high GDP level; increasing the number of work places along with increasing the qualification of work force; integrating into the trans-European transport and communication infrastructures; increasing the share of high productive economic branches and technologies necessary for the proper functioning of the "information society"; involving all regions and social groups in the modernization and development processes in the country.

With constructive answers to all problems, which are the basis for increasing the effectiveness of the international support, Bulgaria and the other countries from the region will be able to identify better areas for joint initiatives, projects and investments.

Bulgarian interest as concerns security issues lies in resolving certain key problems that may result in resumed violence or acts of terrorism. Solutions should be directed
mostly to remove the particular reasons, which have led to conflicts, and to guarantee the stability necessary for accelerating the economic development. Nevertheless, in order to get the key problems steadily resolved, the process must actively involve both the international factors, which can maintain the strategic prospects of the region, and the population, which is directly affected by such problems. By such engagement only, the commitment to and the practical realization of the decisions made will be ensured. Bulgaria is strongly interested in the establishment of effective government practices in the neighboring countries, functioning democratic political systems and fast developing economies and markets.

Bulgaria’s intention is to be actively committed to prevent the Western Balkans from becoming a territory used by terrorists for preparation, coordination, supply, and attacks. Terrorist attacks can target many objects, including some US units in the region, states participating in the anti-terrorist coalition and the Multinational Forces in Iraq. Targets of any possible attacks may also be the contingents within the composition of KFOR, SFOR, Altea, etc. The resistance forces of the countries from the region are not well developed; they also lack sufficient coordination, which could provide an opportunity for a possible extension of activities of various terrorist organizations.

It is to Bulgaria’s interest to actively organize, encourage, and maintain joint efforts for prevention of terrorism. Cooperation and close interaction at all levels of secret intelligence and counter-intelligence services of Bulgaria with those of the other allies and partner-states, including the neighboring countries, is accepted as foreign policy’s priority under the new circumstances. Such cooperation, especially with the US security services, the NATO and EU member states, will help Bulgaria’s related
services to improve their technical and operational capacities.

In order to become a factor of stability in the region security and defense structures should be set under complete political control and they should become sufficiently transparent in their activities. The existence of paramilitary units of whatever nature and kind, which escape actual political control and sometimes really become "a state within the state", must come to an end.

Bulgaria is willing to share its unique and in many aspects successful expertise in restructuring the military forces, crisis reaction system, introduction of program control. In this regard we encourage participation of Bulgarian experts in international teams for assistance, training and experience sharing programs and projects.

Along these lines, it would be purposeful if a multilateral initiative is undertaken for building up the capacity for utilization of ammunition and removal of war equipment and portable firearms which could be located on Bulgarian territory.

The region of Western Balkans is one, to which are linked some crucial economic interests of Bulgaria such as transcontinental, transport, energy and many other infrastructure projects, tourism, trade, etc. Failure to get such projects due to conflicts, lack of willingness to cooperate, or poor organization will expose to a considerable risk the objective to build-up Bulgaria as a modern state with competitive economy and a vital and dynamic civil society.

Neutralization of the transborder channels of the organized crime, trafficking in people, and corruption are ranked as the top three priorities of policy for ensuring the home and foreign public security.
The trend towards normalization of the state of affairs on the Balkans through consolidation of the intergovernmental relations and increased integration of the states from the region within the NATO and EU will have a twofold impact on organized crime. On the one hand, the criminal groups will be no longer able to use the regional chaos, institutional collapse within each separate state and the embargo regimes. On the other hand, however, the restoration of the regional transport communication system and the favorable visa regime will create conditions for an intensified and better structuring of illicit transborder traffic.

Transnational criminality represents the major newly-emerged risk for the Balkan security. The tendency for accelerated integration of national criminal groups into the international traffic gives some new trend of concern. It is manifested in the export of organized crime from the region to the Western Europe. There is a noticeable profiling of criminal activity: illegitimate recruitment and transfer of low-paid labor from the region or via the region to the Western Europe, increased export of prostitutes, counterfeit money and their distribution throughout Western Europe, illegal traffic in antique items, etc.

Due to the enormous resources invested in such transborder operations, the organized criminal groups can maintain corruption networks. The symbiosis of organized crime on the one hand and the security services officials and politicians, on the other, are becoming the Achilles’ heel of new democracies.

Public authority officials often define and consider the illicit transborder operations as “crimes without victims“. The organized “small smuggling trade“, “gray economy“, the semi-legal import of goods, financial offences, etc. destabilize the democratic institutions and annul the
supremacy of law. In terms of economics they directly reflect on public wealth and violate the market laws. The threat of smuggling in commodities is often underestimated at political level and within the regional cooperation.

Not to be ranked last are the risks resulting form new forms of criminal activity in the field of “money laundering”, financial fraud, computer crimes, and other manifestations of organized crime’s entry into the cybernetic space and the world of electronic services.

Another challenge to the security in the Balkans presents the symbiosis between organized crime and terrorism. Unfortunately, there exist various channels for infiltration and interaction between criminal and terrorist interests.

The most dangerous threat for the security of the region seems to be the trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials, including such used for non-military purposes. It is well known that these materials may be used for terrorist acts with higher destructive consequences. Another aspect of this threat is the non-authorized storage of such materials and waste within the territory of the country, which may threaten the ecological security thereof.

Last, but not least is the risk of illegal trade with ordinary arms and decreased control on small arms and light weapons, as well as on explosives.

**Foreign policy resources in the region**

The new risks for security necessitate a qualitative improvement of interaction between the countries in Southeast Europe and European Union, as well as between the Balkan countries. The transnational character of the new crime requires a transnational response to this challenge. It should be noted in this regard, that especially after year 2000, a definite progress has been made in that direction. The
governments of the countries in the region were involved in the efforts for restricting of trafficking and corruption practices related therewith. Along with the number of significant political changes in this part of the world, one of the most significant sources for such positive development was the increased international pressure on these governments aiming the initiation of effective actions against criminal activities.

The regional and international cooperation in fight against the transborder crime in the region increases gradually. The activities of the Missions of European Commission for support of customs authorities in the region, OSCE efforts aiming elimination of trafficking of people, the role of the Stability Pact for SEE, Southeast European Cooperative Initiative and its Regional Center for Combating Trans-border Crime, Southeast European Legal Development Initiative as well as numerous other projects, assisted to the progress in this field during the recent years.

It was improved the regional cooperation against the trafficking and smuggling as well as the cooperation with such Pan-European organizations as Europol. The countries in the region became parties of different bilateral and multilateral treaties and joint programs for combating the crime. Such processes demonstrate that the governments became aware that no country is able to combat alone the trans-border crime and this is only possible within the framework of effective regional cooperation.

Bulgaria will be actively involved in the development of a long-term vision of NATO and EU towards the Black Sea region, considering the increased geo-political significance of the country, especially at the presence of the new challenges to the international security. When Bulgaria becomes external border of EU in 2007, the role of the country
will increase as regards the fight against trafficking, especially through the Black Sea and its establishment as a zone of trans-border cooperation in then field of security. For this purpose, for any actions in the international area of the Black Sea water basin may be used the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (BLACKSEAFOR), and as concerns the territorial waters, namely the interaction between naval border police of neighboring naval countries - the established legal framework and mechanisms within the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

The main resource of Bulgaria as of the present is the political one. Bulgaria possesses an impressive reference list of foreign policy achievements, which are representing a good basis for implementation of purposeful, constituent and effective regional policy. Such resource is demonstrated by the factual ability of the Bulgaria to attract the attention of the strategic international factors on the problems in the region, to develop, argue and presents its positions for solving those problems.

An important argument for the valuable Bulgarian foreign policy resources is the experience gathered in the field of consolidation of common policy and position concerning any crisis in the region, the successful two-year period as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, the occupancy of OSCE Chairman-in-Office position, active position within the framework of meetings of the ministries of defense of the SEE, and all mentioned above in combination with the NATO membership of the country and its successful completion of the accession negotiations with EU.

As concerning the economy, the resource of Bulgaria is represented mainly by its ability to create and maintain macroeconomic stability, to find solutions for one of key issues of our neighboring countries - unemployment, and to
attract investors in the region. Very important resource represents also the fact that the country has a key geo-economic location in the region.

Another specific resource is represented by the efforts of Bulgaria to reform the defense and security sector, especially the armed forces and some offices of public order protection. The capital accumulated from the regional cooperation in the military field and in combating the crime is a real, actual and capable to be shared with the countries of Western Balkans.

There is also a very considerable resource in the field of non-governmental sector. We believe, Bulgarian civil society is one of the most developed in the region and possesses actual potential as to participate in the formulation of its own foreign policy, so to assist the establishment of civil society structures in the neighboring countries. Bulgaria intends to increase the number of instruments of its foreign policy through involvement of business, non-governmental organizations and academic community. It is not possible any more to make a foreign policy by institutional experts only. The example of inclusion of Bulgaria and six other countries in the last enlargement of NATO shows the power of unidirectional interests and interaction between the business and NGOs in the support of national objectives and governmental priorities. As of the present, the joint activities of the civil society and private businesses are more realistic when compared with the intergovernmental ones. In this way the social basis of the achievement of public, political and business standards of life will be extended.

The foreign policy potential should be increased systematically and purposefully by maintaining constant efforts in the establishment of a system for permanent studies
in the field of international relations, security and armed forces, which could generate and consolidate foreign policy theses. By involving the non-governmental and business sectors will be increased the potential for effective foreign policy making.

Realization of the “European project” of the Balkans has a vital importance for the security and economic prosperity of Bulgaria and the region as a whole. It should be turned into a priority and integral part of the foreign policy’s strategy of the region by transforming all resource, accumulated during the recent years, in factual political, economic and security-based dividends. That is why it is important an objective and overall evaluation of this resources to take place.

In order to achieve compatibility between the national interests with those of the European Union and NATO, countries from the region should optimally mobilize their internal resources and actively participate and react to important regional initiatives.

The time resource, however, is limited. There is no time for any “waiting strategy”. The waiting did not solve any important problem in the countries of West Balkans. The attention of the international factors on the region may not be maintained too long, especially when it concerns actions with anti-crisis character and use of military forces.

The Regional cooperation between the Balkan countries is a permanent priority of Bulgaria’s foreign policy. Its European and Euroatlantic integration is already directly bound by the integration Euroatlantic policies of the neighboring countries and by the NATO’s and EU’s strategy for enlargement and integration of the South East European countries.
Bulgaria is already a full member of the NATO and together with Greece and Turkey and Romania makes its best to elaborate a regional pattern for the NATO integration of the candidate-countries such as Croatia, Albania, FYR Macedonia. On the other hand, as a forthcoming member of EU in the year 2004, Bulgaria, together with Greece, Cyprus, and Romania makes its best also to elaborate another regional pattern for the EU integration of all countries from the region having a clear European perspective: Croatia, Turkey, FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bulgaria’s policy as concerns the Western Balkan countries is inseparable from the strategy for the region. Moreover, it is and integral part of the Joint Approach of NATO and EU to Western Balkans. However, at the same time given the specific nature of the state of affairs, conditions and factors in the western part of the peninsula, Bulgaria must determine some specific interests, objectives, and approaches in its foreign policy. The main argument in favor of that are the considerable differences in the agenda of each country, the availability of political formations of unclear status and the international peace-keeping operations currently in progress. In addition to all said before, Bulgaria in its capacity of a NATO member state welcomes the new opportunities and responsibilities for getting the regional problems resolved.