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OTAN

# NATO REVIEW

## HISTORIC CHANGE IN THE BALKANS





*By creating a safe environment for other institutions to come in and do their job, NATO has laid the groundwork for bringing Bosnia and Herzegovina back into the European mainstream*

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer



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**Cover photos:** The Old Bridge in Mostar before the war, damaged in the war, destroyed, in reconstruction and rebuilt (© Mostar's Center for Peace and Multi-ethnic Cooperation)

# foreword

This is a one-off, hardcopy special issue of *NATO Review*, the Alliance's on-line magazine, to mark the end of the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As the Alliance hands responsibility for providing security in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union, it is worth reflecting on the progress that has been made both there and throughout the Balkans in recent years and the challenges ahead.

The series of photos of the Old Bridge, or *Stari Most*, in Mostar on the front cover tell their own story. Originally built in 1566 by the Ottoman architect Mimar Hayruddin, Mostar's *Stari Most* represented a crossroads between East and West, Islam and Christianity for more than 400 years. It survived many conflicts, including two world wars in the 20th century, before being destroyed on 9 November 1993. Just over a decade later, on 23 July 2004, the *Stari Most* was officially reopened after a €15 million reconstruction project, financed by a multitude of donors and coordinated by the World Bank. SFOR, too, played its part. After the Bosnian War ended, Royal British Engineers constructed a temporary bridge where the *Stari Most* had been and, starting in 1997, a Hungarian Engineering Contingent brought the original stones out of the river.

The *Stari Most* now stands as a tribute to nine years of post-war reconstruction and peace-building. As great a physical achievement as this is, it is easier to span two sides of a river than to build bridges between communities that had been at war with each other less than a decade ago. The work, therefore, is not complete. Indeed, NATO is not leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina. Rather, the peace process is entering a new phase in which the Alliance will be focusing its efforts on defence reform and preparing Bosnia and Herzegovina for membership of the Partnership for Peace programme.

Most of the writing for this special issue, which covers all countries in the region, was especially commissioned for it. Several articles had already appeared in earlier on-line issues of *NATO Review*. The article by Nano Ruzin originally appeared in the summer 2003 issue. The article by Zvonimir Mahečić originally appeared in the winter 2003 issue. The piece by Albert Moisiu was published in the spring 2004 issue. The article by Pavle Janković and Srdjan Gligorijević originally appeared in the summer 2004 issue. And Lionel Ponsard's contribution was originally published in the autumn 2004 issue.

*The Editor*

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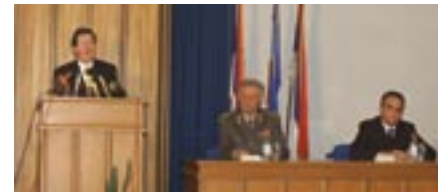
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# Triumph of principle, patience and persistence

*Jaap de Hoop Scheffer places NATO's achievements in Bosnia and Herzegovina in historical perspective.*

*All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.*

Edmund Burke

On 2 December, NATO will conclude its Stabilisation Force (SFOR) mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Alliance's first peacekeeping operation, which started in late 1995, will have come to a successful end. Supported by NATO, the European Union will launch a mission of its own. An important chapter in the history of the Balkans – and that of NATO – will be closed.

It has been quite a few years since our newspapers and television news bulletins were dominated by outbursts of violence from the Balkans. It might be easy to forget how bad it was. But we must not forget. That was a terrible time, for the people of the region and for the entire Euro-Atlantic community.

The violent collapse of Yugoslavia threatened to undermine many of the gains we had made with the peaceful end of the Cold War. More than 200,000 people were killed, and hun-

dreds of thousands more were driven from their homes. The stability of neighbouring countries was put at risk. And the longer the international community hesitated to take decisive action, the greater the strains on relations between countries all across Europe.

But there was another threat as well. A threat to our values, to our ethics, to our sense of ourselves. To have turned our backs on the Balkans would have been to betray those values. Had the richest and most powerful countries in the world failed to act, it would have been an historic failure, and a deep shame. For all these reasons, it became increasingly clear that not taking action was not an option. Not for the international community at large. And not for NATO.

When the question of NATO intervention was still under discussion, many analysts were sceptical about what the Alliance would be able to achieve. NATO was entering a "Balkan quagmire" from which there was no way out, the sceptics argued. The Alliance would try in vain to defuse the "Balkan powder keg", since instability in the Balkans was endemic. And military intervention could never resolve the "Balkan imbroglio", they claimed, because the causes were supposedly hundreds of years of "ethnic hatred".

There is a proverb that says that those who claim "it can't be done" should at least not disturb those who are already doing it. The Alliance did intervene in the Balkans. At first by supporting, and then enforcing, a weapons embargo and a no-fly zone. When these steps did not produce the desired results, NATO went further. In the summer of 1995, the judicious use of air power finally brought the warring parties to the negotiating table. The result was the Dayton Peace Agreement and a new lease of life for a new country.

But history shows that the end of war does not necessarily mean the beginning of peace. Bosnia and Herzegovina needed enduring security if it was to get back on its feet. And it needed the assistance of other international actors, including the European Union and the United Nations, to help rebuild its economy, its government, its judiciary, police forces and all the other elements of a normal, self-sustaining country.

NATO provided the platform for that, too. Allies sent in 60,000 troops to keep the peace, with a clear message that



*Jaap de Hoop Scheffer is Secretary General of NATO.*

we would tolerate no more fighting. This Implementation Force was a coalition without historical precedent. By uniting all the major nations in the Euro-Atlantic area behind a common strategy, the Alliance managed to break the fateful cycle by which great powers supported traditional client states in the Balkans. At the beginning of the 20th century, a Balkan crisis had led to a World War. At the end of that same century, all the major powers were united on the same side – the side of peace. And by creating a safe environment for other institutions to come in and do their job, NATO also laid the groundwork for bringing Bosnia and Herzegovina back into the European mainstream.

Progress over the past years has been amazing. Sarajevo, the capital, has become a normal city again. People can move freely anywhere in the country, and the different ethnic groups have realised they must work together. Political differences are being settled peacefully. And the country has made clear its aspiration to join NATO's Partnership for Peace programme and one day to become a full member of both the Alliance and the European Union. This is a huge success – a success that is based on the lesson that indifference is not a strategy. The only sensible strategy is engagement.

That lesson is still being applied. This means that although SFOR will end, NATO will stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even after the European Union deploys, NATO will remain engaged in the country and committed to its long-term future. The Alliance will retain a military headquarters in Sarajevo. While the European Union will be responsible for ensuring day-to-day security, NATO will focus on defence reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina and preparing the country initially for membership of the Partnership for Peace and eventually of the Alliance itself. The NATO headquarters, which will be headed by a one-star US general with a staff of around 150, will also work on counter-terrorism, apprehending war-crimes suspects and intelligence-gathering. In short, engagement remains our strategy.

It is important to note that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made great progress in defence reform in the recent past. When hostilities ended in 1995, the country's security establishment consisted of three rival armed forces – an absurdity that needed to be rectified. Today, thanks to the close cooperation between NATO and other international organisations, together with the national authorities, the country's defence structures have been thoroughly reformed, and a single state-level Defence Ministry has been created. Again, the logic of sustained engagement has borne fruit.

As NATO's engagement with Bosnia and Herzegovina changes in the months and years ahead, the Alliance will work together with the national authorities to maintain the pace of reform. In addition to seeing through its defence-reform programme, Bosnia and Herzegovina must demon-

strate that it is cooperating to the best of its ability with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague, before it is able to join the Partnership for Peace. Once Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Serbia and Montenegro, have joined that Partnership programme, all countries of the Balkans would be in a structured security relationship with NATO. This would be a major boon for Euro-Atlantic security at large – which is why we want to hasten the day.

The success of NATO's mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina is testimony to the wisdom of taking a long-term perspective with regard to peacekeeping and reconstruction. With patience and persistence, we can succeed. And it is precisely this patience and persistence that we need to finish the job that is still unfinished elsewhere in the Balkans – above all in Kosovo. Clearly, Kosovo is a unique challenge, as the unrest of last March dramatically reminded us. As a result, any comparison with NATO's role in Bosnia and Herzegovina must not be overstated. But Bosnia and Herzegovina does offer some broad lessons that are relevant to Kosovo as well.

One key lesson is not to put oneself under artificial time pressure. One must stay as long as it takes to create a self-sustaining peace. Clearly, one must exercise great care to prevent a culture of international dependency. In the end, true progress will only come if the war-torn societies "own" the process of reconstruction and reconciliation. But this "ownership" will only be exercised if the different political groups or ethnic factions are confronted with an international community that does not let them off the hook. The international community, including NATO, must make it clear that it is simply not an option to wait for the disappearance of the foreign presence in order to revert to previous patterns of behaviour.

Another lesson is that NATO must be more than a provider of military services. The Alliance should play a security-political role commensurate with its military importance, and this role should be based upon more profound, and more sustained political dialogue among the Allies. NATO's South East Europe Initiative and the way in which the Alliance has facilitated regional security cooperation are signs that this broader political role is both feasible and yields tangible results.

The most important lesson of all is the need for transatlantic cooperation. NATO's intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina was preceded by considerable transatlantic debate about the proper course to take. In the end, Europe and North America decided to act together. By confronting a major challenge head-on the Alliance was able to make progress few believed possible at the time. Transatlantic unity was the key for success. Today, as NATO is taking on even more ambitious – and dangerous – missions in other parts of the world, this is a central lesson that we must never forget. ■

# From Dayton implementation to European integration

*Javier Solana assesses the significance of the deployment of EUFOR and considers how the European Union can assist Bosnia and Herzegovina's European integration.*



*Fast forward: With the termination of SFOR and the deployment of EUFOR, Bosnia and Herzegovina is entering a new phase in its post-war reconstruction*

The best part of a decade has elapsed since the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a conflict that dominated international affairs in the first half of the 1990s, left more than 200,000 people dead and forced half of the country's population from their homes. While some wounds are yet to fully heal, the process of reconciliation, reconstruction and return has come a long way. The country is now at peace. Most of what was destroyed has been repaired. And people who once fled for their lives have returned in impressive numbers.

Clearly, the NATO role has been crucial. Through the Implementation Force (IFOR) and the Stabilisation Force (SFOR), the Alliance has underpinned international efforts, often under difficult circumstances, to help the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to build a stable, unified, and democratic state. All those who have contributed to this NATO effort can today be proud of what has been achieved.

*Javier Solana is EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy.*

Bosnia and Herzegovina is now preparing to enter a new phase in its post-war reconstruction, moving beyond Dayton implementation towards European integration. During this new phase, the focus will increasingly be on the future, not the past. It will undoubtedly be a challenging time. The journey is long and complicated. Reforms in a multitude of sectors are required, and all the country's resources must be mobilised. But there is no reason to despair. The countries in Central and Eastern Europe have shown both that it is possible to reach the final destination and that the process of getting there can sometimes be as important as the event of joining itself.

On the EU side, the next step in Bosnia and Herzegovina's process of *rapprochement* is a Stabilisation and Association Agreement. Such agreements, including provisions for upgraded political dialogue and cooperation in a multitude of areas, have already been concluded with two countries in the Western Balkans region: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* and Croatia. Negotiations are



ongoing with Albania. We hope the conditions to begin negotiations for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina will be met soon.

At the same time as Bosnia and Herzegovina is entering this new phase, the international presence in the country is undergoing an important transition. The European Union has decided to launch Operation *Althea* after the termination of NATO's SFOR on 2 December. This EU-led operation will have roughly the same force levels as the departing Stabilisation Force. It will have the same core mandate: to contribute to a safe and secure environment. And just like NATO, the EU force will have robust rules of engagement based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Together with the European Union's already substantial engagement in other areas, this operation will form part of a comprehensive EU approach: an approach designed to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina to meet the new and complex challenges as it moves from Dayton implementation towards European integration.

One part of this comprehensive approach is the EU political commitment. The first important step towards European integration is the Stabilisation and Association Process. But in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is also the growing day-to-day political engagement. The High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lord Ashdown, is also the EU Special Representative. He is the one who has been tasked to ensure coordination of the various EU components in the country.

Another part of the comprehensive approach is the EU economic commitment. The European Commission and the EU Member States have provided well over €4 billion in assistance since the beginning of the conflict. As the country makes progress towards the European Union, more and more of the EU assistance will be geared towards advanced institution-building and technical help with adjustment to EU standards. In line with the commitments made at the 2003 EU Western Balkans Summit in Thessaloniki, a country-specific European Partnership has been elaborated. So-called twinning projects are being extended through the CARDS assistance programme, and participation in a series of EU Community Programmes is being opened to Bosnia and Herzegovina and its neighbours in the Western Balkans.

The EU engagement in police matters is the third part of the comprehensive approach. In addition to Operation *Althea*, there is the civilian EU Police Mission, which was the first ever operation within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy when it was launched in January 2003. Following the UN-led International Police Task Force, approximately 500 police officers monitor, mentor, and advise their Bosnian colleagues

to help them improve standards and strengthen the rule of law.


As the European Union assumes greater responsibilities, it needs to cooperate closely with its partners. There is no doubt that this will be the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As far as NATO is concerned, we will in the coming years be working literally side by side in the security field.


First, because the EU-led Operation *Althea* has been prepared in close consultation with NATO. As was the case last year with Operation *Concordia* in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* this operation will be conducted under the "Berlin-Plus" arrangements, by which the European Union has access to NATO common assets and capabilities.


Second, because the NATO engagement is not coming to an end. Even after the SFOR flag has been lowered and the EUFOR flag hoisted, the Alliance will retain a military headquarters. The main task of this headquarters will be to continue to assist the Bosnian authorities in the area of defence reform and preparation for joining the Partnership for Peace Programme. The headquarters of Operation *Althea* will, as was the case with SFOR, be located at Camp Butmir in Sarajevo. The European Union and NATO will also work together on some important issues, such as providing support to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

As Secretary General of NATO, one of my first responsibilities was to oversee the deployment of IFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, NATO's first major peace-support operation. As EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, I look forward to seeing the EU-led mission building on the achievements of the NATO operations. I also look forward to working closely together with the Alliance in the future, while assisting in the best possible way the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina as their country moves out of the era of Dayton into that of Brussels. ■

 For more on the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, see [ue.eu.int](http://ue.eu.int)

 For more on the work of the European Union's Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, see [www.eusrbih.org](http://www.eusrbih.org)

 For more on the work of the European Commission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, see [www.delbih.cec.eu.int](http://www.delbih.cec.eu.int)

 For more on the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, see [www.eupm.org](http://www.eupm.org)

# Between integration and disintegration

*Carl Bildt examines the key issues facing Southeastern Europe in the coming year and ways in which they might be addressed.*

In the coming year, the Balkans is likely to be back in the news. But this time the headlines should not be about war, but about attempts to achieve peaceful settlements and resolve some of the key outstanding issues facing the region.

The two most pressing issues to be addressed are the future of Kosovo, that is how to build a lasting peace in the UN-administered province, and of Serbia and Montenegro, that is whether the two republics stay together in some sort of common structure or go their separate ways. But there are also major issues to be addressed in the two complex, multi-ethnic states of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\* And in Albania, Croatia and Serbia reform questions will continue to dominate political discourse.

We have, nevertheless, come a long way in the region in recent years – though not without difficulties and setbacks. A decade ago, war was still raging in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The winter of 1994-95 was desperate. The preceding summer, a half-baked peace plan presented by the Contact Group for Bosnia and Herzegovina failed to break the deadlock. Everyone was preparing for a new spring of war and for a summer of carnage that was likely to be even worse than the previous ones. And in Croatia, there were increasing signs that the Tudjman regime was preparing a military offensive against the UN-protected areas.

The summer of 1995 turned into a summer of horror. Bosnian Serb forces conquered the UN safe area of Srebrenica, and the massacre of thousands of men and boys that followed was the worst war crime Europe has seen since 1945. The UN-protected areas in Croatia were attacked, overrun and hundreds of thousands of Serbs were driven from their homes in a blatant campaign of ethnic cleansing.

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The story of how Bosnia and Herzegovina went from a war without end to a peace with some hope is a complex one. The popular mythology that it was the air campaign that forced the Serbs to sue for peace is almost entirely wrong. The single most important change was the willingness by the entire international community, including the United States, to consider a political deal that was both comprehensive and realistic. We ended up with the compromise negotiated at Dayton, which included deployment of a massive NATO force to oversee and ensure the end of hostilities.

Nearly four years later, we stumbled into war over Kosovo following the failure of peace talks at Rambouillet in France. Although Belgrade was eventually persuaded to back down, the prospects for a lasting settlement in Kosovo were in many ways poorer after the war than before it. Worse still, for an initial period at least, Slobodan Milosevic seemed even more entrenched in power in Belgrade. Then, two years later, we were confronted with the risk of another major explosion of violence as Albanian insurgents took up arms in both Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\*

## Need for renewed international focus

Nine years after Dayton, five years after the NATO air campaign in Kosovo and three years after the Ohrid Agreement on the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* there is an urgent need to address the core issues of the region again. And although Kosovo is by far the most pressing issue, we should have learned by now that no issue can be viewed in isolation from all others in this region.

When I took up my first international assignment in the Balkans as EU Special Representative for the former Yugoslavia in 1995, I described the key issue confronting the region as the battle between the forces of integration and disintegration. This was always a difficult balancing act. The international community had, with some reluctance, agreed to the break-up of old Yugoslavia, but had been firm in insisting that it applied only to its constituent republics, and that their previous administrative borders should be respected.



*On Kosovo's front line: The big issue in Kosovo is whether Serbs and other minorities have any long-term prospects as the province moves towards some kind of independence*

This solution seemed simple enough, but failed to resolve some of the most difficult issues. Indeed, the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were to a large extent a result of the failure to combine support for the independence of the constituent republics with internal arrangements that secured the position and hence the loyalties of the minorities that had been created in the process. It was easy for those with little interest in peace to play on old fears to generate support for their aggressive designs on the integrity of these new states.

When we defended the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, our interest was in stopping the forces of disintegration from tearing apart these and other areas where ethnic groups and cultures lived side by side. We succeeded – but only to a degree.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the shortcomings of this approach contributed to the creation of some 100,000 additional refugees immediately after the end of the war. Although international persistence has brought significant refugee return in Bosnia and Herzegovina after years of hard effort, the country remains divided. In Croatia, large parts of the Krajina, where Serbs traditionally formed a significant part of the population, remain a wasteland with empty villages and burnt-out Orthodox churches.

Our hope is that time will gradually lead to a situation where reforms and reconciliation will make it possible for people of different ethnic origins to live normally together again. As Croatia starts its accession negotiations with the European Union, and as both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro try to move in the same direction, they are increasingly aware that the

true meaning of Europe is integration between different nationalities.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina today, there are no visible signs of the so-called inter-entity boundary line so laboriously negotiated in Dayton, though the knowledgeable observer quickly notes when one passes from one area to another. Between Croatia and Serbia, people are now able to travel without the elaborate visa arrangements that blocked genuine contact as recently as a year ago. And throughout this part of the Balkans, there is a common understanding that trade and economic integration is the road to a better future.

An EU-led force is taking responsibility for providing day-to-day security in Bosnia and Herzegovina following the completion of NATO's mission there. No one expects hostilities to break out again in the country, but an ongoing military presence remains useful. Attention will now focus on the future of the international civilian presence in the country. In my opinion, the tenth anniversary of Dayton is the appropriate occasion to end the mandate of the High Representative and to transfer full powers and responsibilities to the various elected Bosnian representatives. After all, it seems odd for a country without full sovereignty to be seeking membership of the European Union.

In areas of conflict between Serbs and Croats, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the tide of history is clearly moving towards a common European future for both peoples. However, in areas of conflict between Albanians and Serbs or more generally Slavs, the issues remain far more intractable.

### Kosovo conundrum

In Kosovo, we managed to help around a million Albanians who had fled or been forced to flee during the war return to their homes in the aftermath of the NATO air campaign. However, having taken responsibility for the province, we failed to prevent an exodus of Serbs and other minorities. Five-and-a-half years and massive efforts later, the big issue remains whether the remaining Serbs and other minorities in Kosovo have any long-term prospects there as the province moves towards some kind of independence. The aim of our policy was certainly more than turning a situation in which the Albanians were a persecuted minority in Serbia to one in which Serbs and other minorities are persecuted in Kosovo.

This question is critical for Kosovo, but it also goes to the heart of our entire, decade-long effort to stem the tide of disintegration and assist the currents of integration in the region. The task of true statesmanship in the years to come will be to devise region-wide solutions and structures that achieve a balance between the forces of integration and disintegration that is both stable and in conformity with our long-term vision for the region.

There are numerous options for Kosovo on the table. The return to Belgrade rule, on the one hand, and outright independence, on the other, are the extreme proposals on either end of the spectrum. But such solutions are as likely to generate immediate new problems as are any thoughts of revising existing borders and boundaries. There has already been enough disintegration. Even a solution leaning towards independence must be firmly embedded in policies and structures of integration.

This will be important for the entire region. Over time, the outcome of any decision on Kosovo is bound to have repercussions for both the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* and Bosnia and Herzegovina. If we succeed in building a stable and lasting solution in Kosovo, these countries will also be more stable and secure. But if we fail, we risk creating new streams of refugees across the region, thereby swelling the already large numbers of potential irridentists.

Most attention during the past decade has been focused on the fracture zones in the Balkans. That is where the conflict potential is most obvious and the challenge of integration most difficult. But over time much of the future of the region will be dependent on what happens in the more or less consolidated states of Croatia, Serbia and Albania. If they are stable, forward-looking and confident, the room for manoeuvre for mischief-makers will be severely diminished.

There is no doubt that they are all making some progress. Although the pace of internal reforms in Croatia leaves much to be desired, the process of accession to the European Union should help drive further change. Serbia has launched some impressive economic reforms and results are beginning to show, but remaining political conflicts over relations with Montenegro and cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague remain a brake on development. Albania is facing an election next year, and unfortunately remains the only country in the region where a peaceful and normal transfer of power has yet to take place. The election will accordingly be a true test of the country's political maturity.

### European future

In the year ahead, we are likely to see a gradual restructuring of the international presence in the region. If the United Nations was the dominant international organisation in a first phase of Yugoslavia's dissolution and NATO the key actor in a second, the role of the European Union is now likely to grow in a third phase. These are, of course, changes of emphasis and all three organisations, as well as bodies like the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, will continue to play important roles.

Although it seems natural for the European Union gradually to assume the lead role in all aspects of the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this is not an option in Kosovo in the near future. As a result, NATO will likely have to continue to exercise the responsibility that it took upon itself in 1999 for several years to come. Indeed, the fact that the final-status question will be on the table next year may raise tensions in the province, which will, in turn, oblige the Alliance to increase the focus and resources it devotes to it. In operations like these there are sometimes quick entries – but never quick exits.

In forming the new European Commission, new Commission President José Manuel Barroso combined EU enlargement with responsibility for the Western Balkans in one portfolio under Finnish Commissioner Olli Rehn. This key step recognises that there is continuity between the European Union's present diverse efforts in the region and the process of EU enlargement. Moreover, it should make it easier to develop more coherent and credible policies that are seen as leading, step by step, from the present situation to eventual EU membership.

The European Union desperately needs a new grand strategy for enlargement. To date, however, debate has largely centred on the issue of possible future Turkish membership. It seems logical now to start a discussion in which enlargement with Turkey and the Western Balkans is treated as a single process by which some 100 million people could eventually become EU citizens. Moreover, it would certainly be possible to bring such a process to conclusion within a decade so that citizens of all these states can participate in the elections to the European Parliament in June 2014. Since this date is exactly one hundred years after the assassination of Archduke Franz-Ferdinand in Sarajevo, the event that triggered the First World War, such elections would provide a fitting way to mark the end of a tragic period of history.

NATO also has a key role to play in this process, since the countries of Southeastern Europe will likely be in a position to join the Alliance before they have fulfilled all criteria for membership of the European Union. Major efforts should therefore be undertaken to accelerate the process of the integration of all of these states into the security structures of NATO.

The security that integration with and in NATO brings will also be critical in starting, as part of the process of European integration, to address the many outstanding economic issues in the region. Here again, there is a struggle between the forces of integration and disintegra-

tion. The disintegration of the economic fabric of the region brought by war, sanctions and new borders has been truly devastating in economic and social terms. As a result, young people in large parts of the region see no alternative to emigration – legal if possible, illegal if necessary. The lure of criminal activities to earn a living will always be stronger if there are no legal and open ways to sustain a family and build a future.

Within the framework of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, a series of bilateral free-trade agreements in the region has already been signed. However, at the same time, trade barriers have also been raised in the region, most notably the administrative boundary between Serbia and Montenegro.

What is needed now is a Brussels-driven offensive for a multilateral arrangement that brings truly free trade, leading to a customs union and eventually integration with the European Union's single market. Such a move would undoubtedly involve a certain loss of sovereignty for all states involved. Indeed, it would effectively amount to the development of structures of layered sovereignty that the region so obviously needs.

During the past decade and a half of conflict resolution, stabilisation operations and state-building in the Balkans, we have learned many lessons. While some of these lessons could no doubt have been learned from a closer reading of the history of this and other ethnically mixed regions, some are unique to our time

and the challenges our generation is facing. But many are also relevant when it comes to managing and resolving conflict in other parts of the world, conflicts that are increasingly drawing international attention away from Southeastern Europe.

To be sure, the task is not complete in the Balkans. Critical political issues remain to be resolved, economic and social challenges are only now being addressed and, as the eruption of violence in Kosovo in March of this year indicates, tensions remain close to the surface. But by effectively addressing these issues here, we demonstrate that we can also deal with them elsewhere. The security and stability of Europe is the precondition for a Europe that can make a contribution to the security and stability of the wider world. ■



For Carl Bildt's web site on international affairs, see [www.bildt.net](http://www.bildt.net)

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The tenth anniversary of  
Dayton is the appropriate  
occasion to end the mandate  
of the High Representative  
and to transfer full powers  
and responsibilities  
to elected Bosnian  
representatives

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# Staying the course

*Robert Serry and Christopher Bennett analyse the future of NATO's engagement in the Balkans after the end of SFOR.*

When the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) comes to an end and the European Union takes responsibility for providing day-to-day security in Bosnia and Herzegovina, an important phase of the Alliance's engagement in the Balkans will be over. SFOR's termination should not, however, be viewed as the beginning of a NATO withdrawal from the region, but of a process aimed at embedding the entire region into Euro-Atlantic structures.

Almost exactly nine years since NATO deployed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina in what was the Alliance's first peacekeeping operation, it has been possible to bring the mission to a successful conclusion because of the improvement in the security situation in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region. But in recognition of ongoing security threats, NATO will retain a presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and remains committed to building long-term stability throughout the region.

In the years since NATO's intervention, the prospects of the Balkans and its peoples have changed almost beyond recognition. Whereas war or the threat of war hung over the entire region, today the likelihood of a return to large-scale hostilities is almost unthinkable. Whereas the Balkans appeared politically to be headed in a very different direction to the rest of the European continent, today Euro-Atlantic integration is a realistic goal for all countries and entities – in large part as a result of the security presence that the Alliance has provided.

Today, both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro – target of a sustained NATO air campaign only just over five years ago – are candidates for the Alliance's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* aspire to NATO membership and are already contributing personnel to NATO operations beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. And neighbouring countries – Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia – have become NATO members, thereby extending Europe's zone of stability in and around the region. Indeed, even before the hand-over in Bosnia and Herzegovina it had been possible to reduce the number of

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NATO-led troops in the Balkans to around 25,000 – little more than a third of the number deployed in 1999 – some 7,000 of whom were in SFOR.

To be sure, challenges remain that should not be underestimated. Individuals indicted for war crimes from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro remain at liberty and undermine their countries' prospects of further Euro-Atlantic integration. Serbia and Montenegro's international rehabilitation may only become irreversible when it has met all the requirements for PfP membership, including surrendering the most notorious war-crimes suspects on its territory, and is admitted into the programme. The future political status of Kosovo has not been resolved and a robust international security presence remains necessary to pre-empt outbreaks of violence in the run-up to status talks. Moreover, stagnant economies undermine even the most determined international peace-building efforts.

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

Even after the European Union deploys its force, EUFOR, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, NATO will retain its own military headquarters in the country. As the European Union takes on the main peace-stabilisation role under the Dayton Peace Agreement, NATO will focus on defence reform, preparing Bosnia and Herzegovina for PfP membership and eventually for Alliance membership. The NATO headquarters, which will be headed by a one-star US general with a staff of around 150, will also work on counter-terrorism, apprehending war-crimes suspects and intelligence-gathering. In addition, the United States will retain a residual presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Tuzla with some 200 troops. The US presence will serve as a forward base and training centre for other operations.

Cooperation between the European Union and NATO in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be in accordance with a package of arrangements known as "Berlin Plus". The term is a reference to the fact that the 1996 meeting at which NATO foreign ministers agreed to create a European Security and Defence Identity and make Alliance assets available for this purpose took place in Berlin. In practice, the arrangements seek to avoid unnecessary duplication of capabilities between the two organisations and to ensure that they work together hand in glove.

The strategic commander of the EU mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied



*Looking to the future: NATO is helping enable people of all ethnicities to aspire to a better life for themselves and their families*

Commander, Europe, who is also the most senior EU officer and is based at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers, Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. The chain of command will run from an EU cell at SHAPE through another EU cell at Allied Joint Force Command Naples, which is at present responsible for both SFOR and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), to ensure that the missions operate seamlessly together. Contingency plans exist for NATO to provide over-the-horizon forces if required.

EUFOR will derive its mandate from a new UN Security Council resolution and will have an initial strength of 7,000, that is equal in size to SFOR. This compares with an

initial NATO-led force, the Implementation Force or IFOR, of 60,000 more heavily armed and equipped troops that deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 1995.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's security architecture at the end of hostilities in 1995 – which consisted of three rival armed forces – was not conducive to long-term stability. As a result, NATO and other international organisations have worked together with the various Bosnian authorities in the framework of a Defence Reform Commission to reform the country's defence structures. This approach bore fruit in 2003 with the creation of a single state-level Defence Ministry, and subsequently a Joint Staff and an Operational

Command. (For a discussion of defence reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, see *Reforming Bosnia and Herzegovina's defence institutions* by James R. Locher III and Michael Donley on pages 26 to 28 and an interview with Bosnian Defence Minister Nikola Radovanović on pages 44 to 46.)

NATO is now taking a leadership role within the Defence Reform Commission and will work together with Bosnian authorities to maintain the pace of reform in the coming years. In addition to implementing the defence-reform programme, Bosnia and Herzegovina must demonstrate that it is cooperating to the best of its ability with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague, including helping apprehend Radovan Karadzic, before it is able to join the Partnership for Peace. The lack of ICTY cooperation in Republika Srpska is currently holding up Bosnian membership of the Partnership for Peace.

### Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*

The model for EU-NATO cooperation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was established in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\* There, NATO handed responsibility for its peacekeeping mission to the European Union in April 2003 but retained a 180-strong military headquarters in the country. The NATO headquarters remains there to this day assisting the Skopje authorities with defence reform and preparations for eventual Alliance membership, as well as providing support to other NATO-led missions in the Balkans.

The Alliance originally deployed a military force in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* in August 2001 to oversee the voluntary disarmament of ethnic Albanian rebels, calling themselves the National Liberation Army, who had taken control of large swathes of territory in the east of the country. This step was a key pre-condition for a peace process to get underway as set out in the Ohrid Agreement, the framework document laying out the way forward for the country. A NATO crisis-management team had earlier helped negotiate a cease-fire with the rebels and persuaded them to support peace talks. NATO also played a leading role in brokering and then overseeing implementation of an amnesty, which in turn facilitated the transformation of the former National Liberation Army into a new political party. That party joined the government after landmark elections in September 2002. (For more on NATO's involvement in and relationship with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* see *Looking forward to a Balkan Big MAC* by Nano Ruzin on pages 47 to 49.)

The European Union's military mission, Operation *Concordia*, came to an end in December 2003 and was succeeded by an ongoing police monitoring and advisory mission. In

spite of the absence of an international military presence in the country and the premature death of President Boris Trajkovski in a plane crash, the moderate coalition government in Skopje has continued faithfully to implement the Ohrid Agreement. In the security sphere, the ethnic balance within the armed forces has improved and a key phase of the country's Strategic Defence Review, in which an assessment of the forces required to meet the country's defence objectives, their capabilities, equipment and support were agreed, has been completed.

A referendum that took place in November on the law on decentralisation, which was a requirement of the Ohrid Agreement, failed to derail the peace process. However, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* is still not out of the woods. The economy continues to stagnate and, as in 2001, there is always the risk of importing instability from neighbouring Kosovo, the province of Serbia and Montenegro that has been under UN administration since 1999.

### Kosovo

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NATO is providing the essential pre-conditions for the development and growth of civil society

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While conditions have improved in Kosovo in recent years, the economy has failed to take off and the province's political climate remains tense. Indeed, the threat of an eruption of violence, as happened in March 2004 when NATO deployed additional forces and Alliance-led peacekeepers were obliged to use force to maintain order and protect beleaguered Serb communities, is very real. For this reason, NATO is maintaining a robust military presence with some 17,500 troops in KFOR. This is, nevertheless, considerably fewer troops than the initial KFOR deployment in June 1999 of some 50,000.

In the wake of the March 2004 riots, all international organisations have examined their policies towards Kosovo and several important initiatives have been taken to revitalise the political process in the province to head off further violence. While it is critical that violence is not seen to pay and the perpetrators of the March riots are being brought to justice, the issue of Kosovo's final status, effectively on hold ever since the 1999 NATO air campaign, is likely to come onto the agenda next year.

With the approval of the Contact Group, the new Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Kosovo, Søren Jessen-Petersen, has identified several priority areas in which progress needs to be made before status talks could begin. An assessment of progress should be made in the middle of 2005 and, if positive, talks should begin soon after. (For more on Jessen-Petersen's plans for Kosovo, see an interview with him on pages 41 to 43 and for a discussion of Kosovo's future, see *Kosovo: the way forward* by Kai Eide on pages 18 and 19.)



As long as Kosovo's status remains unresolved, the Kosovo Force (KFOR) bears special responsibility for maintaining a stable environment with a mandate derived from UN Security Council Resolution 1244 and a Military-Technical Agreement between NATO and the Yugoslav Army. Moreover, in the run-up to and during status talks, tensions are likely to be heightened.

Since the March riots, KFOR and the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) have developed detailed contingency plans with clearly delineated responsibilities to deal with a similar outbreak of violence in the future. They have also sought to engage local communities more on security matters by bringing together KFOR, the Kosovo Police Service, the UNMIK police and the nascent Kosovo institutions in a new body called the Kosovo Security Assistance Group. To date, however, Kosovo Serbs have chosen not to participate in this body, thereby undermining its potential.

One of the great challenges in Kosovo is to persuade the province's Serbs that it is in their interest to participate in political life. However, whereas some 90,000 voted in the first Kosovo Assembly elections in 2001, only some 2,000 did so in October this year. The vast majority of Kosovo Serbs, whether out of conviction or intimidation, heeded a boycott called by Belgrade. Indeed, the key to changing Serb attitudes in Kosovo at a time when status talks appear imminent may ultimately depend on decisions taken in Belgrade.

### Serbia and Montenegro

Developments in Serbia and Montenegro continue to have wide-reaching implications both for Kosovo and for much of the rest of the region. After the ouster of former President Slobodan Milosevic in 2000, Belgrade set a very different foreign policy course and has generally pursued pragmatic and constructive policies towards the Alliance, even at times of heightened tension such as during the upsurge in violence in Kosovo in March 2004.

In June 2003, Belgrade formally applied for membership in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. Since then, military officers and civilians have been participating in NATO orientation courses. These aim to provide participants with a basic knowledge of the Alliance as well as an introduction to crisis-management issues, peace-support operations and civil-military cooperation. Moreover, relations between NATO and Serbia and Montenegro had improved to such an extent by November 2003 that then Secretary General Lord Robertson was able to visit Belgrade on his farewell tour of the former Yugoslavia.

Serbia and Montenegro has made progress in the field of defence reform in the recent past and has cooperated with the ICTY, notably in the surrender of former President

Milosevic. However, that cooperation has waned during the past year and several requirements must still be met before the country will be admitted into the Partnership for Peace. Belgrade has to deliver the most notorious indicted war criminals that it is harbouring – in particular Ratko Mladic – to the ICTY. And it must drop its lawsuit against eight Allied countries and their leaders at the International Court of Justice, which is also in the Hague.

The incentive to meet NATO's requirements is the potential assistance that Belgrade can look to in the Partnership for Peace. NATO is already assisting neighbouring countries in security-sector reform with, among other initiatives, programmes aimed at retraining military personnel to help them adjust to civilian life and at converting former military bases to civilian uses. Moreover, by becoming a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Serbia and Montenegro would have taken the first step on the ladder of Euro-Atlantic integration and acquired a voice in a NATO forum. The benefits of Serbian and Montenegrin membership of the Partnership for Peace to NATO and the international community are also considerable, as it would be difficult to rebuild long-term security and stability in the region without Belgrade as a constructive partner. (For an analysis of NATO's relationship with Serbia and Montenegro, see *Burying the hatchet* by Pavle Janković and Srdjan Gligorijević on pages 50 to 53.)

Despite many unresolved issues in the Balkans, progress is clearly being made. While that progress is often painstakingly slow, the Balkans has certainly not proved to be the quagmire that many analysts predicted when NATO first intervened militarily in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995. Hence the decision to bring SFOR to an end. By remaining committed and staying the course, NATO is providing the essential pre-conditions for the development and growth of civil society and enabling people of all ethnicities to aspire to a better future for themselves and their families. While respective roles and responsibilities may change, the European Union, NATO and other international actors must continue their effective partnership for as long as it takes to make reconstruction and stabilisation in the region self-sustaining and irreversible. ■



For more on IFOR, see [www.nato.int/ifor](http://www.nato.int/ifor)



For more on SFOR, see [www.nato.int/sfor](http://www.nato.int/sfor)



For more on KFOR, see [www.nato.int/kfor](http://www.nato.int/kfor)



For more on NATO's role in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* see [www.nato.int/fyrom/home.htm](http://www.nato.int/fyrom/home.htm)

# Kosovo: the way forward

*Kai Eide summarises his impressions from working on the report on Kosovo's future that he produced this summer for UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.*

The international community was taken by surprise by the violence in Kosovo in March. It failed to read the mood of the population or to understand the depth of the dissatisfaction of the majority and the vulnerability of the minority. Worse still, it gave the impression of being in disarray, lacking strategy and internal cohesion. The UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) became the main target of criticism. But UNMIK was itself a victim of an international policy that lacked vision. The international presence was little more than a holding operation seeking to avoid the question of Kosovo's future status.

The Kosovo I found when I arrived in June was characterised by growing frustration. From the perspective of the Albanian majority, the cause of the violence was not primarily inter-ethnic conflict, but the lack of economic opportunities and the absence of a clear political way forward. As a young Albanian said: "You gave us freedom, but not a future." The Serbs, for their part, believed they were victims of a campaign to either drive them out of Kosovo or to reduce their presence to that of a scattered, rural population.

In the wake of the riots, a new and dynamic international strategy was urgently required, one which would also address the thorny issue of Kosovo's future status. Whereas until this point, the province's future status had been considered too dangerous even to discuss, it had now become too dangerous to ignore. The international community would have to come up with a comprehensive and integrated strategy for the period until the end of 2005, able to deal with the immediate challenges, to develop and manage an interim approach and finally to address the future-status question.

Some positive trends were, nevertheless, emerging in the summer as a result of clear messages from the international community. The Kosovo Albanians seemed to accept that they had done "too little, too late" to stem the violence and understood that the riots had damaged their reputation and cost them international support. Many also realised that a serious effort was necessary to reassure the international community and the Serbs of their intentions to preserve a

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multi-ethnic society. This required repairing the damage caused by the violence as well as developing meaningful local government. Agreement to begin such work had been reached, but the pace and level of commitment left much to be desired.

The Serbs require more autonomy in those areas in which they are concentrated as well as mechanisms to help protect and promote their identity. Such measures, if implemented, would help facilitate the return of those Serbs who fled during the riots and persuade their leadership to resume political dialogue. Many Serbs understood that they should not remain outside the political process when their Albanian counterparts were seen to be taking steps to accommodate their demands, since such an approach risked costing them international good will. It was, therefore, disappointing when Serb leaders urged Kosovo Serbs to boycott the October elections.

To address the immediate challenges, it was critical to speed efforts in the areas of security, reconstruction and decentralisation so that Serbs and other minorities would have the confidence to return home. Insufficient progress would make it extremely difficult to repair the political damage caused by the March violence, for the international community to regain the credibility it had lost, for Albanian leaders to repair their image and for their Serb counterparts to return to the political process. Four months on, some progress has been made and the UN Secretary-General's new Special Representative (SRSG), Søren Jessen-Petersen, has launched a series of new initiatives. However, the pace of progress remains slow. (For more on Jessen-Petersen's plans for Kosovo, see an interview with him on pages 41 to 43.)

In the interim, the international community has, on the one hand, increasingly to be seen to be transferring competencies and authority to Kosovo's own institutions – a key Albanian demand – and, on the other, it has to develop a more realistic and dynamic standards policy. An ambitious policy of transfer should, however, be accompanied by two further elements. First, the new SRSG should instigate a robust policy of sanctioning obstructionist behaviour, akin to that adopted by successive High Representatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Second, he must develop and implement a more systematic approach to building local capacities. To date, with the exception of the Kosovo Police Service, capacity-building efforts have been sporadic and have failed to have much impact.

The “standards-before-status” approach that the international community adopted early in the peace process had come to lack credibility and needed to be replaced by a priority-based standards policy. Implementation of standards should in future be seen as part of a wider policy guiding efforts to bring Kosovo closer to European norms, even after the conclusion of future-status negotiations. Implementation of a highly ambitious and very detailed set of standards as a pre-requisite for status talks was rightly seen as unrealistic and unachievable. By treating the issue as part of the broader and longer-term agenda, it would be possible to focus efforts on a set of more immediate priorities, designed to assure minorities that they have a future in Kosovo. These priorities must be achievable and the results visible, leading to concrete progress on the ground and a better climate between the majority and minority populations. A priority-based standards policy would also help mobilise pressure on both Albanians and Serbs and send a more convincing message indicating what is expected of them. A series of standards reviews under the auspices of the SRSG and with Contact Group participation should take place before the scheduled mid-2005 review.

The timing of future-status discussions will never be ideal. However, given the reality that the international presence is likely to decline in the coming years and the fact that the economy is continuing to deteriorate – thereby adding to the level of frustration and dissatisfaction – raising the final-status question sooner rather than later seems to be the better option and is probably inevitable. The United Nations, together with key member states, should, therefore, initiate its own thinking as to how to take this process forward.

At the same time, the international community should intensify its dialogue with Belgrade. The Belgrade authorities feel that they have not been sufficiently included to date. That impression needs to be corrected as soon as possible, since Belgrade’s support and participation will be a key to success at each and every stage of the process.

In the wake of the riots, UNMIK needed to be re-energised to bring its various components more closely together and

help it focus on key priorities in a more organised way. However, a complete overhaul at that stage would have been counter-productive, probably leading to more internal discussion and confusion at a time when a concentrated effort on urgent priority issues of substance was required. A major restructuring of the international presence should, nevertheless, take place next year. With the future-status question looming, UNMIK should be looking to reduce its presence and to hand increasing responsibilities to the European Union.

The challenges that the international community faces in Kosovo, many of which have to be dealt with in parallel,

will require an integrated, comprehensive strategic approach. This will have to be based on commitments from all major international organisations and countries involved. UNMIK will not be able to mobilise the strength and credibility required for carrying out its responsibilities without strong support from the international community at large.

A more concerted effort is, therefore, urgently required to ensure that the international community regains the initiative and maintains it throughout 2005. Such a coordinated strategy will have to include comprehensive and cohesive engagement from the European Union, politically as well as economically, including the formulation of a set of economic and political carrots and sticks. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of

Europe should play prominent roles in a more robust capacity-building effort. And NATO should ensure that it maintains a sufficiently robust presence to deal effectively with potential unrest in the run-up to, during and after future-status talks.

UNMIK will only be able to oversee this process in an efficient manner if it can count on constant and strong support from the Security Council and the Contact Group. The international community cannot afford to perform in a fragmented, uncoordinated and often competitive way. The stakes are too high and the challenges too demanding. We do not have much time, if we are to succeed in shaping and implementing such a comprehensive policy. ■



*Holding the front line: NATO must maintain a sufficiently robust presence to deal effectively with potential unrest*

# The dawning of a new security era?

*Lionel Ponsard examines the significance for the European Union and NATO relations of the termination of SFOR and deployment of EUFOR.*

When the European Union takes primary responsibility for providing security in Bosnia and Herzegovina this December, it will be the greatest sign to date of its emerging defence capabilities and ambitions. It will also be indicative of how far EU-NATO relations have progressed in recent years. And it will put this strategic partnership, which is increasingly vital to Euro-Atlantic security, in the spotlight. In this way, both the strengths of the relationship and the weaknesses will rapidly become evident.

As formally announced at the Alliance's Istanbul Summit, NATO is bringing its peacekeeping mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Stabilisation Force or SFOR, to an end, nine years after the original deployment. In its place, the European Union will deploy 7,000 peacekeepers in Operation *Althea*, that is a force of equal size to SFOR, and take responsibility for day-to-day security in Bosnia and Herzegovina. NATO will not, however, be withdrawing from the country. Rather, it will be maintaining a small presence in the form of a new Military Liaison and Advisory Mission in Sarajevo. This mission, which will be headed by a one-star American general with a staff of some 150, will focus on defence reform and preparing the country for membership of NATO's Partnership for Peace. It will also work on counter-terrorism, apprehending individuals indicted for war crimes and intelligence gathering.

The European Union and NATO will be working together in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the basis of a series of cooperation documents known as "Berlin-Plus", named after the venue of the 1996 meeting of NATO foreign ministers at which the Alliance first agreed to make assets available for European-led operations. Under these arrangements, the European Union will benefit from NATO's planning capabilities and use the very same military headquarters operating through EU cells located both in Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers, Europe in Mons, Belgium, and at Joint Forces Command Naples, the operational command for NATO's Balkan missions, in Italy. Contingency plans exist for NATO to provide additional "over-the-horizon" reserve forces if necessary.

Some observers have questioned the wisdom of deploying an EU force or EUFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the one hand, they argue that the change is driven by Washington's

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desire to reduce its commitment in the Balkans rather than by an objective assessment of the situation on the ground. On the other, they fear that Bosnia and Herzegovina is being used as a testing ground for the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), at a time when the European Union is not equipped for so great an undertaking, and that failure would both undermine stability in the Balkans and erode support for ESDP. Many Bosnians in particular have indicated that they would prefer SFOR to remain in their country and, as a result of Europe's perceived weakness during the 1992-95 Bosnian War, are sceptical about the European Union's ability to maintain a robust military posture when required.

## Evolving ESDP

Such concerns, while understandable, are perhaps misplaced, given both NATO's and Washington's enduring commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the progress that the European Union has made in recent years to develop a credible military dimension – in terms of both structures and capabilities – in response to its failings in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Today, the European Union has a Political and Security Committee, a Military Committee supported by a military staff and a High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Moreover, in May 2003, it declared operational an EU Rapid Reaction Force of up to 60,000, deployable within 60 days and sustainable for up to a year.

In April 2003, the first EU-led military mission – Operation *Concordia* – deployed in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* in succession to a NATO-led force. The mission provided security back-up for international monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union and helped develop practical EU-NATO coordination mechanisms. Moreover, in June 2003, the European Union deployed 1,800 troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo in Operation *Artemis*. Despite its limited size and scope, this mission was of enormous significance since it was the European Union's first military deployment outside Europe and was an autonomous mission organised without recourse to NATO assets at short notice into a dangerous arena.

The EU Security Strategy has also taken EU thinking on security issues forward. This document, that was agreed in December 2003 and prepared under the auspices of Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for CFSP, envisages a



*Building stability: The European Union's performance in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be judged by its ability to contribute to the creation of a stable state*

role for both “soft” and “hard” power in EU foreign policy. To this end, the European Union has to continue to reform its defence spending to transform EU militaries into more mobile and flexible forces. Moreover, here again progress is being made with the creation of a European Defence Agency to promote harmonised and coordinated procurement efforts and help find solutions for Europe’s capabilities shortfalls. By the same token, the development of rapid reaction battle groups of some 1,500 troops designed to respond to global crises should give the European Union the capabilities to take on the full range of so-called “Petersberg tasks”, that is humanitarian and rescue missions, peacekeeping, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace enforcement.

#### Complement or competitor?

While a stronger European defence policy is generally popular among both European publics and governments, the key unanswered question is whether this capacity will develop as a complement or as a competitor to NATO. Differences in security cultures on the two sides of the Atlantic some-

times appear to hamper the development of a complementary partnership between the European Union and NATO. Indeed, divisions over the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 led four Allies – Belgium, France, Germany and Luxembourg – seriously to consider the creation of an autonomous EU military headquarters in Tervuren, on the outskirts of Brussels.

In theory at least, the European Union and NATO need not be in competition with one another. NATO should remain the foundation on which its members build their collective defence and the development of EU capabilities should enable European countries to contribute more to their own security and take on missions where the United States does not wish to become or remain involved. Clearly, the precise division of labour between the two organisations should also reflect the nature of each crisis and the kind of intervention that is required. Operations requiring a heavy military presence, for example, such as the separation of warring armies, should remain, for the time being, within NATO’s jurisdiction. The European Union, by contrast, is gearing its efforts to peacekeeping, humanitarian action and disaster relief rather than the rapid deployment of larger forces over long dis-

tances able to undertake combat operations. Furthermore, deploying an international police force in crisis situations or preventing the collapse of the local authorities may often be vital in avoiding the need for subsequent military action.

Since the mid-1990s, crisis-management diplomacy in Europe has seldom been the sole responsibility of one institution. Two or more institutions have tended to work together, thereby bringing a greater combination of pressures and incentives to the resolution of crisis. This was the case, for example, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* where the European Union, NATO and the OSCE worked together from the outset and to great effect to head off conflict. Moreover, the US-led war on terror has further added to the number of actors, including in particular intelligence agencies, and the importance of coordination among them.

The Alliance's ongoing transformation will also have an impact on the EU-NATO relationship. As NATO reforms its structures and policies to combat new threats such as that posed by international terrorism, its focus will increasingly shift away from crisis management of the type envisaged in the "Petersberg tasks" taken on by the European Union. As a result, the European Union may also have to expand its ambitions and to develop additional capabilities. Moreover, as the European Union's capacity for crisis management increases, the European Union and NATO will need to work out a more systematic division of labour, requiring the two organisations to coordinate their security policies and priorities more closely. Indeed, the joint *EU-NATO Declaration on ESDP*, the December 2002 breakthrough document between the European Union and NATO, was clear about the need to maintain effective interaction between the two organisations across a broad range of issues.

### Remaining challenges

While the Balkans is incomparably more secure and stable today than it was before NATO's intervention, security risks remain and the potential for another explosion of violence – even in Bosnia and Herzegovina – should not be underestimated. Indeed, the EU-NATO hand-over in Bosnia and Herzegovina comes at a time of rising tension in the wider region, especially in Serbia and Montenegro. This is in part the result of imminent discussions on the future of Kosovo, the Serbian province currently under UN administration, which the Contact Group promised would begin in mid-2005. Whether or not the review takes place as intended, there will certainly be increased calls from radical Serb factions for directly linking the futures of Kosovo and the Republika Srpska. To put it bluntly, discussions will almost inevitably raise the issue of whether Serbia should be compensated

for the potential loss of Kosovo with territory in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

EUFOR will need to take this and other potential factors of instability into account to prevent the spill-over of trouble into Bosnia and Herzegovina. Here, it would do well to take a leaf out of SFOR's book and, as EU representatives have already indicated, adopt a particularly robust posture from day one. The fact that EUFOR will be exactly the same size as SFOR and will be divided into three geographic sectors, giving it an almost identical structure, is indicative of the new force's intentions. But whereas SFOR's primary mission was to contribute to creating the safe and secure environment required to consolidate peace by implementing the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement, the accord ending the Bosnian War, that of EUFOR will be more ambitious. In addition to maintaining a secure environment, EUFOR's declared intention is to pursue a more multi-faceted approach to security, specifically supporting implementation of the civilian aspects of Dayton.

Remaining security challenges in Bosnia and Herzegovina include those posed by weapons and drugs smuggling, human trafficking, border security and organised crime. These are all areas in which the European Union is well placed to respond as a result of the wide range of instruments it has at its disposal, including the provision of targeted economic assistance, judicial, policing and customs expertise, and reconstruction programmes. Moreover, the European Union already has two missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina with monitoring functions related to security and law enforcement, namely the EU Monitoring Mission and the EU Police Mission.

Given the scale of the Alliance's achievements in ending the war and building a stable environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the past nine years, NATO is a hard act for the European Union to follow. The precedent of Operation *Concordia* in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* is encouraging. But the magnitude of the task and the stakes for all involved are much higher this time. Ultimately, the European Union's performance in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be judged by its ability to contribute to the creation of a stable state, capable of running its affairs without external assistance. If the European Union rises to the challenge and demonstrates that in addition to the soft-power mechanisms it has traditionally used in its foreign policy, it is also capable of deploying hard power effectively, Operation *Althea* may come to be regarded as a turning point and the dawning of a new security era in Europe. ■



For more on the NATO Defense College, see [www.ndc.nato.int](http://www.ndc.nato.int)

# Examining the SFOR experience

*Admiral Gregory G. Johnson examines problems encountered and lessons learned from NATO's operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

As the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina comes to an end, there is much to celebrate and much to reflect on of relevance for future operations. In the course of the past decade, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made remarkable progress, from a nation at war to one moving rapidly towards integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. At the same time, the Alliance has become an extremely effective crisis manager able to deal efficiently with complex peace-support operations.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the end of hostilities was far more than a cease-fire. It ushered in a process of reform and reconstruction during which self-governance capacities have been developed, armaments and munitions destroyed, and war criminals pursued and prosecuted. In this way, former belligerents have been able to develop a dialogue, using the structures and instruments of the democratic process, to facilitate the path to a peaceful and prosperous future. This has been achieved through the efforts of Bosnian authorities and the international community acting in both its civilian and military capacities.

NATO's operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina – both the Implementation Force (IFOR) and SFOR that replaced it – required war-fighting, deterrence and humanitarian capabilities all at the same time. As a result, the Alliance faced a huge range of challenges that it has worked diligently to address, ensuring it is equipped to adapt to new circumstances in the most effective ways possible.

The difficulties of the logistics support required to conduct the kind of operations that NATO has been leading in the Balkans during the past nine years are of themselves daunting. Moreover, with soldiers from some 43 NATO and non-NATO countries participating at different times in IFOR and SFOR, disparities in the technology and equipment capabilities among them have also been potential obstacles. To enhance efforts to ensure the effectiveness of similar operations in the future, training will have to be more rigorous and standardised with a focus on greater interoperability, especially in Command, Control, Communication, Computers and Intelligence.

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Since NATO's deployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Alliance has sought to develop a Balkans-wide, long-term approach to peacekeeping and reconstruction. Since 2001, Allied Joint Force Command (JFC) Naples has been responsible for all NATO-led operations in the Balkans and has thus been able to view the entire region as a single joint area of operations. This has enabled it to make effective use of over-the-horizon reserve forces and to contribute to a more secure environment in an increasingly flexible and agile manner. The advantages of this approach were demonstrated by the rapid deployment of four SFOR companies to augment the Kosovo Force (KFOR) during the March 2004 resurgence of violence in Kosovo. Given their proximity, troops were able to arrive within hours of the request for reinforcements by the KFOR Commander. As the first reserves to arrive, even before elements of the over-the-horizon forces or strategic reserve forces, they played a crucial role in demonstrating NATO's ability to stabilise a difficult situation rapidly and effectively.

## More lessons learned

While a robust field presence was initially necessary throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, NATO commanders immediately set about working with civilian authorities to develop local multi-ethnic rule-of-law and security capabilities. This policy proved far-sighted as minority rights and freedom of movement have tended increasingly to be guaranteed by indigenous rule-of-law institutions. Moreover, as these institutions have grown in competence and gained the trust of minority populations, SFOR has slowly been able to reduce the number of its fixed sites and proactive patrols and to hand over responsibility to local agencies. The key lesson here is the importance of developing local capabilities as soon as possible. The broader lesson is that without this concerted development effort, a cycle of dependency is created and NATO missions risk becoming unnecessarily protracted.

SFOR has made great use of forward operating bases and liaison and observation teams. These teams consist of groups of eight to ten soldiers and interpreters that operate from small houses or shop fronts in local communities, enabling close interaction with citizens and local authorities. This approach has also been adopted by other international organisations. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe built a significant number of field offices coordinated through four regional centres. The Office of the High Representative also developed an extensive presence on the ground. A field-based structure enables more thorough



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*Rapid reaction: Reinforcements arrived in Kosovo in March to stabilise a difficult situation within hours of the request by the KFOR Commander*

monitoring and situational awareness, and improves the capacities of organisations seeking to oversee the implementation of reforms to do so effectively. It also sends a clear message to local authorities and citizens that the international community is committed to change and reform.

From the first day of IFOR's deployment, the international military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina had a sufficiently robust mandate to oversee military implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement and was determined to do so. By contrast, the civilian presence in the country did not initially possess similar authority. The powers of the High Representative were increased at the 1997 Peace Implementation Council meeting in Bonn, Germany, in such a way that the High Representative was effectively empowered to do whatever was necessary to end obstruction and ensure implementation of reform measures. Each of the High Representatives to benefit from the so-called "Bonn powers" – Carlos Westendorp, Wolfgang Petritsch and Lord Ashdown – has made the most of them and, by doing so, has been able to exert significant influence on the evolution of the peace process. However, virtually all observers agree that it would have been more effective had civilian institutions had the authority to establish themselves forcefully at the outset, and then gradually to have relinquished power to the relevant

and responsible local authorities, as conditions allowed and the situation warranted.

Some critics complain that too little reform has taken place in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement and the end of hostilities. While it is always possible to achieve more, nation-building, economic development and democratisation are slow and long-term processes. Indeed, an argument can be made that reconciliation and social reconstruction after the Civil War in the United States continued right up to the civil-rights movement and legislative changes of the 1960s. Moreover, Germany and Japan were both subjected to prolonged international attention after the Second World War, before eventually emerging as political and economic powers constructed on a Western democratic model.

### Operational hindrances

One of the greatest operational difficulties faced on the ground is that posed by the imposition of national restrictions or caveats, whether formal or informal, on the way in which the force contributions made by different countries may be used. This is a cancer that eats away at the effective usability of troops. Denying the NATO commander the authority



to use the forces assigned to him as he deems appropriate, whether because of national caveats or restrictions on the rules of engagement, seriously undermines his ability to accomplish his mission. Such restrictions also open up potential weaknesses that those opposed to NATO and its peace-support operations will seek to exploit to undermine and even attack our forces. To be fair, nations have begun to realise that the caveats they impose on the use of their forces may in some circumstances not only fail to protect their soldiers but even put them at greater risk. As a result, there have been recent improvements and several countries have removed or reduced caveats. The issue, nevertheless, remains a critical one that has to be addressed.

Another area critical to the success of every crisis-management operation where NATO must improve its capabilities is that of intelligence collection, analysis, dissemination and sharing. The Alliance cannot simply sit back and hope that once a crisis develops, nations will come forward with the necessary information and intelligence. Rather, it is up to NATO to develop its own intelligence and regional expertise to support ongoing operations as well as potential future missions.

In seeking to improve capabilities in this area, JFC Naples established the Joint Information and Analysis Centre (JIAC). This Centre brings together intelligence collected from all our operations to give us an integrated intelligence product, not only for the benefit of SFOR and other Balkan commands, but also for missions such as Operation *Active Endeavour* in the Mediterranean. The key to the Centre's success will not be a better register of information, but the degree to which we can effectively collate, analyse and then disseminate data as actionable intelligence to the appropriate command or institution. It is hoped that this will encourage a two-way exchange of timely information with non-military agencies, ranging from civilian intelligence agencies to law-enforcement entities. Currently, this is not done in a systematic way and the political will to undertake this kind of development does not exist. I am, however, convinced that this is the path that NATO must follow.

Another problem area is the Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR) system. This is the system that facilitates the generation of forces for military operations. While the environments in which we operate are extremely challenging, we have gone to great lengths to make sure that we only ask nations to provide forces that are absolutely necessary. I wish to ensure that future operations do not suffer from chronic CJSOR shortfalls, since such shortfalls, and the very public discourse associated with the CJSOR process, jeopardise the successful accomplishment of the Alliance's military missions and damage its credibility. Moreover, the resulting lack of resources, both human and material, places those forces that are deployed at greater risk.

The outlook for Bosnia and Herzegovina today appears bright. A return to the hostilities of the first half of the 1990s is virtually unimaginable. That said, much work remains to be done. Bosnia and Herzegovina's Tripartite Presidency and virtually the entire political class want NATO to remain committed and engaged. Indeed, the decision to do so has been taken and NATO is retaining a military headquarters in Sarajevo. This headquarters will have a key role in the continued pursuit of war-crimes suspects, in close coordination with the EU Force (EUFOR). It will also take the lead role in overseeing and promoting defence reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the country prepares to join the Alliance's Partnership for Peace programme. Here again, continued close cooperation with both High Representative Lord Ashdown and EUFOR will be essential.

NATO's continuing dynamism is one of the key impressions I take away from my three years as a NATO commander. Moreover, as the Alliance transforms to meet the challenges of the 21st century, learning the lessons from the SFOR experience will contribute to this vitality. I have been impressed with the ability of NATO and the European Union to work together to set up a seamless transition from SFOR to EUFOR. Only NATO could have provided the war-fighting capability to bring about an end to hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But building on this foundation, the European Union is now equipped to continue the process of developing mature, indigenous institutions to provide a safe and secure environment for all, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or gender. The full range of EU capabilities can be brought to bear to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in developing its law enforcement, judicial, economic and political institutions as it strives for Euro-Atlantic integration. This shared responsibility between NATO and the European Union is a model, which could be applied elsewhere, including in Kosovo, when the conditions are right.

I recall a conversation last year with the three members of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Presidency, who, though accepting in principle the rationale for the hand-over from SFOR to EUFOR, worried aloud that NATO would no longer be paying sufficient attention to their country. I pointed out that NATO had already demonstrated the depth and scale of its commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina and explained that as the country matured politically, so the nature of NATO's engagement and the way in which the Alliance demonstrated its support would also evolve. Indeed, I look forward to the day when Bosnia and Herzegovina is a member of the Partnership for Peace and the cooperative relationship it enjoys with the Alliance is akin to that of any other Partner country in the Euro-Atlantic area. ■



For more on the Implementation Force, see [www.nato.int/ifor](http://www.nato.int/ifor)



For more on the Stabilisation Force, see [www.nato.int/sfor](http://www.nato.int/sfor)

# Reforming Bosnia and Herzegovina's defence institutions

*James R. Locher III and Michael Donley analyse the progress that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made in the field of defence reform.*

Given that Bosnia and Herzegovina was at war less than a decade ago, it is remarkable how far the country has progressed in the intervening period in many areas and, especially in the recent past, in the security field. Despite ending the war with three rival ethnic armies, today Bosnia and Herzegovina is well on its way to meeting the defence-reform benchmarks identified by NATO as prerequisites for entry into the Alliance's Partnership for Peace programme. Indeed, the only obstacle standing between Bosnia and Herzegovina and PfP membership is cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague (ICTY).

The pace of military reform has been particularly rapid during the past 18 months since the creation of a Defence Reform Commission to oversee the process. Under Commission auspices, Bosnian officials have established new state-level defence institutions to support their country's strategic objective of integration into Euro-Atlantic political and security structures. Moreover, as NATO hands responsibility for day-to-day security provision in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union, the Alliance will refocus its efforts and take on a leadership role in the Defence Reform Commission to promote an ambitious defence-reform agenda.

High Representative Lord Ashdown established the Defence Reform Commission in May 2003 in the wake of revelations about illegal arms sales to Iraq, tasking it with drafting the legal and constitutional changes necessary to make Bosnia and Herzegovina a credible PfP candidate. The Commission's 12 members and four observers brought together for the first time under a single mandate the full range of local officials and international organisations involved in security and focused their work on a specific set of institutional reforms. NATO has been represented by Ambassador Robert Serry, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Crisis Management, and by the commander of the Alliance's Stabilisation Force (SFOR).

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*James R. Locher III, a former US Assistant Secretary of Defense, is co-chairman of the Defence Reform Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Michael Donley, a former US Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, is a special adviser to the Commission.*

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Working with the High Representative and Bosnian officials, the NATO Secretary General set out NATO's expectations for a credible PfP candidature. These included introduction of a state-level, civilian-led command and control structure including a state-level Defence Ministry; democratic parliamentary control and oversight of the armed forces; transparency in defence plans and budgets; development of a Bosnian security policy; and common doctrine, training and equipment standards. These expectations provided the basis for the High Representative's guidance to the Defence Reform Commission and the Commission's work plan for 2003. In addition to these defence reforms, the Secretary General made clear that Bosnia and Herzegovina needed to cooperate fully with the ICTY by detaining and surrendering individuals indicted for war crimes.

Defence reform has proved a complex process in almost all post-communist countries that have joined the Partnership for Peace. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, the challenge has been that much greater since, in addition to having to reform defence structures inherited from its communist past, the country has had to come to terms with and address the legacy of three-and-a-half years of war.

The communist inheritance included highly politicised command elements, weak civilian control below the head of state, almost no connectivity or communication between the Defence Ministries and general staffs, lack of transparency in budgeting and administration, and weak parliamentary oversight. The post-war environment was characterised by fragmented political authority and lack of trust.

Under the terms of the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, defence matters were largely left in the hands of the entities – Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – rather than with the new state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unique among its post-communist counterparts, therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina embarked upon its defence-reform process with two Defence Ministries and divergent military establishments with competing political and ethnic loyalties. Bosnia and Herzegovina also had a third defence establishment: a weak Standing Committee on Military Matters at the state level.



© Bosnian MOD

*Marching to the same beat: Bosnia and Herzegovina now has a state-level Defence Ministry, Joint Staff and Operational Command*

### Political breakthrough

Despite these challenges, Bosnia and Herzegovina has managed to meet nearly all of NATO's expectations. Following an intense period of consensus building and negotiation between May and September 2003, the Defence Reform Commission reached unanimous agreement on a 293-page report setting out the way forward. This report included draft changes to the two entity constitutions, three entity-level laws and two state-level laws, as well as proposals for two new laws, including a state-level defence law.

Constitutional and other legal changes approved by the state and entity governments made the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina supreme in defence, established civilian control over the military and created a new state-level Defence Ministry, Joint Staff and Operational Command. New laws set out the roles and functions of key officials, establish operational and administrative chains of command, and create new procedures for planning and coordinating defence budgets. Entity armies were made part of a single military establishment – the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina – commanded by a single operational chain of command. The

Bosnian Parliament created a Joint Commission on Security and Defence to oversee these new state-level institutions, officials and procedures. Entity Defence Ministries retained responsibility for administrative matters, such as manning, training and equipping the entity armies.

In addition to legal changes, Bosnian officials agreed to reduce active forces by a further 40 per cent to a total of 12,000 personnel; to shrink reserves by 75 per cent to 60,000; and to slash the annual intake of conscripts and the length of their service.

In the wake of this breakthrough, the High Representative extended and refocused the mandate of the Defence Reform Commission to assist Bosnian officials in the implementation of legislated reforms. The Commission's primary focus in 2004 has been to assist in building up the state-level Defence Ministry, Joint Staff, and Operational Command. Three major initiatives supported this work.

First, the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest decision-making body, endorsed 14 implementation benchmarks to measure Bosnia and Herzegovina's readiness for PfP

membership. Although it had been hoped that Bosnia and Herzegovina might be ready to join the Partnership for Peace by the December 2003 NATO Ministerial Meetings, the legislative process continued through the end of the year leaving no time for Bosnia and Herzegovina to demonstrate that reforms were being implemented. The 14 benchmarks outlined the progress in implementation – such as appointment and installation of key officials, Defence Ministry staffing, and reductions in force levels – expected to be accomplished by the Alliance's June 2004 Istanbul Summit. These benchmarks assisted the Defence Reform Commission in developing specific goals and timetables for implementation of agreed reforms.

Second, anticipating that Bosnia and Herzegovina would accomplish NATO's benchmarks by the middle of 2004, the Defence Reform Commission established a broader strategic agenda for 2004-5. In addition to completing the benchmarks, this agenda outlined other priority tasks and initiatives consistent with building up state competencies in defence. These include the renovation of buildings and infrastructure to support new institutions, establishment of a state-level command and control system, implementation of force restructuring leading to common equipment and training, development of a common military personnel system and reforming military intelligence.

Third, the Defence Reform Commission created nine teams – covering such areas as personnel, education and training, budget, finance and audit – to help Bosnian officials meet the NATO benchmarks and plan the actions necessary to implement the strategic agenda. The teams, co-chaired by local and international experts, often deliver products in the form of recommended policies, procedures or instructions for the Defence Ministry to consider issuing to the broader Bosnian defence establishment. The Defence Reform Commission also provides a neutral political environment in which the state and entity Defence Ministers can debate the relative merits of various policy options.

These three Commission initiatives have enabled the new Defence Ministry, which is headed by new Bosnian Defence Minister Nikola Radovanović, to focus on its most important tasks and have given it the political support and technical means necessary to continue and extend the successful implementation of defence reforms. In recognition of the role he has played in this process, Minister Radovanović was appointed a DRC co-chairman in May 2004.

### NATO's reform role

At their Istanbul Summit, NATO leaders confirmed that they would bring SFOR's mission to an end in Bosnia and Herzegovina and hand responsibility for day-to-day security to the European Union. In the course of this transition, a new NATO military headquarters has been established in Sarajevo with the principal task of providing advice on defence

reform, along with supporting tasks related to counter-terrorism, ICTY support and intelligence sharing. A senior NATO civilian will co-chair the Defence Reform Commission under a new mandate from the High Representative.

NATO will take on new responsibilities within the Defence Reform Commission. In addition to coordinating and administering the Alliance's own security cooperation – and eventually PfP – programme with Bosnia and Herzegovina, the NATO co-chair will be responsible for leading the broader international involvement and assisting local officials in reaching the political compromises and consensus necessary to take defence reform forward. These new responsibilities will require insightful leadership and close collaboration with the High Representative.

The Defence Reform Commission that NATO will be working through is overseeing a politically successful process with an ongoing reform agenda and team infrastructure to support it. However, the scale of the task has been so great that significant challenges remain. Bosnia and Herzegovina now has three Defence Ministries; its armed forces remain divided into two armies; and the entities rather than the state still fund the defence establishment. In addition, the Defence Reform Commission in partnership with Bosnian officials has had difficulty coordinating bilateral and multilateral offers of training and assistance. Aligning these offers with actual Bosnian priorities and attracting international funding remain challenges. For example, substantial international financing – perhaps through the UN Development Programme and/or NATO trust funds – will be required to dispose of surplus arms and ammunition safely. Finally, ongoing failure to cooperate with the ICTY has continued to deny Bosnia and Herzegovina the benefits of participation in NATO's PfP programme.

Initially conceived as a temporary, technical effort to draft new or amended defence laws, the Defence Reform Commission has evolved into an engine of continuous change addressing all the ongoing strategic, operational and technical issues relating to Bosnian defence reform. This process has not only assisted Bosnia and Herzegovina in identifying, planning, and implementing necessary reforms; it has also significantly improved coordination within the international community.

Additional reforms are necessary, such as further movement towards a single army (perhaps modelled along the lines of those NATO countries with regional units) and elimination of overlap between the new state-level Defence Ministry and each entity's Defence Ministry. These changes will be difficult, requiring further internal political commitment and compromise. But the experience of the past 18 months suggests they can eventually be accomplished as long as all sides in the Bosnian political leadership see change as necessary to gain the strategic benefit of closer integration into the Euro-Atlantic community. ■

# Partners in peacekeeping

*Alexander Nikitin assesses the Russian experience of participating in NATO-led peacekeeping operations in the Balkans.*

One of the most challenging aspects of the international intervention in the former Yugoslavia has been the relationship between NATO and Russia. Despite a series of political disagreements, Russian peacekeepers served alongside their NATO peers for eight-and-a-half years with the common goal of building stability in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo. This experience was generally positive and will likely be relevant in future operations.

Russia withdrew its peacekeepers from both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo in the summer of 2003. At the time, Moscow argued that the objectives of the deployment had essentially been achieved, while expressing reservations about the impartiality of the NATO-led operation in Kosovo. This withdrawal followed more than a decade of a continuous military presence in the former Yugoslavia, beginning with deployment of a contingent in Croatia in the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in 1992 and covering most of the UN-mandated missions during the next 11 years.

The size of the Russian military presence in the former Yugoslavia changed over the years. It grew from 900 soldiers in 1992 to 1,500 in 1994 in UNPROFOR in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, was around 1,340 in the Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1996, with an additional 1,500 in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) from 1999. Given the actual size of these forces – IFOR consisted of 60,000 soldiers – the Russian troops were not decisive to the success of these missions. But since Russia provided the largest non-NATO contingent to the Alliance-led operations, the Russian contribution was certainly significant.

If IFOR, SFOR and KFOR are viewed as falling within the broad tradition of UN-mandated peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations, Russian participation in them is not exceptional. After all, the Soviet Union had contributed military observers to UN missions on various continents during the preceding decades. If, however, they are viewed as a new form of political-military intervention in which NATO, operating under a UN mandate, leads an international coalition, then Russian participation must be considered a new departure. For Moscow, as well as for Washington and Brussels, the decision to deploy a Russian brigade in IFOR was not taken simply to help rebuild stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but

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has to be seen within the context of relations between Russia and the West in the post-Cold War era.

The precedent of political and military cooperation between former adversaries, who had trained for decades to fight each other, was extremely powerful. Moreover, Moscow chose to operate in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo in an even-handed way, rather than siding with the Serbs, where most Russian sympathies lay. Clearly, these sympathies did not disappear, but they were curbed in the same way as the Albanian, Croatian and Muslim sympathies of some NATO nations.

The decision to contribute forces to the NATO-led operations in the former Yugoslavia was exceptional since it involved a reallocation of military, economic and diplomatic resources away from operations in which Russia had a more obvious interest. These included operations in Chechnya, an integral part of Russia, and Georgia, Moldova and Tajikistan in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Moreover, at the time, Moscow was less than enamoured with Alliance policies, firstly as a result of NATO enlargement and secondly because of the Alliance's decision to launch air strikes against Yugoslavia without UN Security Council authorisation.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Russian brigade was deployed in the Multinational Division North (MND North), together with a Turkish brigade, a combined Nordic brigade including contingents from Denmark, Finland, Norway, Poland and Sweden, and the bulk of US forces. The Russian brigade, which consisted of airborne troops, had an area of responsibility of 1,750 square kilometres, including 75 kilometres of the inter-entity boundary line, the line running between the two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska. Moreover, some 20 Russian officers were assigned to the MND North Command. The firepower of the Russian peacekeepers in the NATO-led operations was greater than it had been between 1992 and 1995, though it was never fully used. Russian casualties – four dead and eleven wounded – were primarily victims of land mines.

## Command arrangements

The structure and chain of command in IFOR and SFOR were problematic for Russia, since they were extremely NATO-centric. This was in contrast to the arrangements governing other UN-mandated operations in which Russia had a strong voice and the military side of the mission was subordinate to the political side. The solution that was eventually

found involved the appointment at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers, Europe (SHAPE) of a Russian general as a Special Deputy to NATO's highest-ranking officer, the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR), responsible for coordinating with SACEUR all matters concerning Russia's participation in IFOR and then SFOR.

In this way, Russian peacekeepers in MND North received their orders and instructions from SACEUR through his Russian Deputy, but were under the tactical command of MND North for day-to-day operations. The Russian general, who had a staff of five officers, worked out strategic and operational issues with SACEUR. Meanwhile, the commander of the Russian brigade on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina coordinated day-to-day operations with the US general commanding MND North. The terms of Russia's participation in KFOR were slightly different. Russian peacekeepers were dispersed throughout Kosovo and the Russian general at SHAPE, in addition to being a Special Deputy to SACEUR responsible for Russian participation in SFOR, was also the representative of the Russian Defence Ministry for Russian KFOR matters.

Despite effective cooperation on the ground in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, many Russians remained suspicious of the Alliance's ultimate intentions, viewing the entire exercise in terms of its impact on Russia. These attitudes, very much the legacy of Cold War zero-sum thinking, reflected poor understanding among most Russians of NATO's transformation and an enduring image of the Alliance as a Western military machine designed to wage war.

The relative success of NATO's peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* failed to impress either the Russian public or policy-makers. This was in part because NATO's actions were generally viewed as being biased against the Serbs. In part, it was because NATO contravened international law when it launched an air campaign against Yugoslavia. And in part, it was because NATO appeared far more effective using force than trying to build peace, thereby confirming Russian prejudices about the militaristic and aggressive nature of the Alliance.

Many Russian policy-makers had high expectations of NATO's transformation but were disappointed when the anticipated shift from collective *defence* to collective *security* failed to materialise. Russians had hoped that the Alliance would change the relative emphasis it put on military preparations in favour of a more multifaceted approach to security, including conflict prevention, mediation and peace-building, in which the use of force was just a last resort in a wider conflict-management arsenal.

To be fair, NATO has moved some way towards developing a more multifaceted approach to security. Indeed, the peace-



*Brothers in arms: The precedent of political and military cooperation between*

keeping and peace-enforcement operations in the former Yugoslavia and more recently the post-conflict stabilisation mission in Afghanistan are all illustrative of how the Alliance has transformed itself since the end of the Cold War. But it has not evolved into a true collective-security organisation because of the selective nature of both its membership and its decision-making. Unlike the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO does not include all European countries. It ignores conflicts between or within Alliance members. And it intervenes in certain conflicts, while leaving others to fester.

### Kosovo crisis

Intervention in Kosovo was, from the Russian perspective, illustrative of the Alliance's selective approach to security. In response to the launch of the NATO air campaign, Moscow froze all NATO-Russia military and political cooperation, including the Permanent Joint Council, withdrew its peacekeepers in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the NATO command structure and expelled the NATO information office. The disagreement was over who has the right to act on behalf of



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former adversaries was extremely powerful

the international community, the circumstances under which intervention was legitimate and the limits to that intervention.

For Russia, the Alliance was in violation of the UN Charter and therefore acting illegally when it launched coercive military action against a sovereign state in the absence of a specific mandate from the UN Security Council. The humanitarian justification for the intervention was dubious since genocide had not been established by recognised OSCE or UN mechanisms and the refugee exodus was greater after the beginning of the campaign than before. Moreover, NATO was creating a dangerous precedent by failing to exhaust diplomatic means of resolving the conflict before resorting to force and ignoring Chinese, Indian and Russian objections.

To be sure, Russia was not only reacting to events in the former Yugoslavia, but also to the way it believed it was being marginalised in terms of decision-making on key issues of European security. In principle, Moscow did not rule out the use of force in Kosovo and had no vested interest in the conflict nor particular sympathy for Slobodan Milosevic. The issue was simply the rules and procedures concerning the decision

to use force and the need to exhaust all diplomatic options, including political and economic sanctions, beforehand. As soon as consensus was reached in the United Nations and a UN Security Council resolution on Kosovo adopted – 11 weeks after the beginning of the air campaign – the Russian military rushed to participate in the international peacekeeping operation, which had a UN mandate.

The speed of the Russian deployment in Kosovo probably surprised NATO. Russian peacekeepers travelled south from Bosnia and Herzegovina across Serbia to Pristina airport where they met NATO forces advancing northwards from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\* The ensuing stand-off illustrated the importance of coordination in such operations and the need for political unity among coalition participants. Despite this incident, NATO and Russia managed to re-establish effective cooperation in peacekeeping during the next four years. Moreover, after the creation of the NATO-Russia Council in May 2002, a NATO-Russia Working Group on Peacekeeping was formed to analyse the experience from the former Yugoslavia and develop a *Generic Concept of Joint NATO-Russia Peacekeeping Operations*.

While traditionally Russia has looked to either the OSCE or the United Nations as the primary organisations dealing with conflict resolution and been sceptical of NATO's peacekeeping aspirations, it has come to recognise the need for the more muscular, peace-enforcement capabilities that the Alliance can provide. Indeed, Moscow can certainly envisage the Alliance being employed to lead military operations within the framework of a UN mandate. During the past decade Russian ambitions for the OSCE have been scaled back, but Moscow still looks to the United Nations as the focal point for political coordination of peacekeeping efforts.

The practical cooperation between NATO and Russia in the former Yugoslavia has proved especially useful in terms of building interoperability between forces, which, in turn, has contributed to the development of the *Generic Concept of Joint NATO-Russian Peacekeeping Operations* mentioned above. In the future, it should be possible to upgrade NATO-Russia peacekeeping from practical interaction in the field to political and operational planning of joint conflict-resolution efforts.

The NATO-Russia relationship that developed in the course of the best part of a decade of joint peacekeeping in the former Yugoslavia clearly experienced highs and lows. In the process, some opportunities were missed, but much was also achieved. However, given the need for this kind of mission, it is in the interest of both NATO and Russia to continue to work together to provide the United Nations with effective peacekeeping instruments. It is surely only a question of time, therefore, before NATO and Russian peacekeepers are again cooperating in the field. ■

# Does the international presence in the Balkans require radical restructuring?

Gerald Knaus is director of the Berlin-based European Stability Initiative.



Nicholas Whyte is director of the Brussels-based International Crisis Group's Europe Programme.

Dear Nicholas,

Over five years after the end of NATO's Kosovo campaign and nine years after the Alliance intervened in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international military presence in the former Yugoslavia has been scaled back from a highpoint of about 70,000 troops in 1999 to a little over 25,000 troops today. This is a clear sign that the threat to security has declined and that significant progress has been achieved. As NATO reduces its presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina to a 150-strong headquarters and hands primary responsibility for day-to-day security to the European Union, it is worth asking whether the international presence in the Balkans as currently configured corresponds to the needs of the region today.

I'm pretty sure that both of us agree that the outside world has an important role to play in helping the weaker states and entities of the Western Balkans – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* – overcome the problems they face. Neither of us believes that the region should be left to its own devices or wishes to design an “exit strategy” for outside involvement. I suspect that both of us also want to see outsiders playing a more proactive and imaginative role in helping address the one remaining open status issue, namely that of the future of Kosovo and, related to it, that of Serbia and Montenegro. Moreover, both of us believe that the precondition for progress on the economic and social development front is

the containment of any possible hard-security threat. Any international strategy must, therefore, reassure the citizens of the region that the outside world – whether in the form of a NATO presence or a combination of a NATO and an EU presence – will never again tolerate warfare in the Western Balkans. Aside from this fundamental objective, the benchmark for measuring the success of international intervention should be the progress that these countries and entities make towards European integration in the coming period, that is the extent to which they become capable of meeting the requirements for pre-accession talks with the European Union and eventually for joining it.

Where I suspect we disagree is in our assessment of the capabilities of



The wide-ranging emergency powers of international organisations constitute an obstacle to democratisation

Gerald Knaus

the international institutions and the policy instruments they are currently using to address the region's challenges. Allowing for a wide diversity of circumstances across the region, I believe that parts of the international presence have become ineffective, and in some ways run directly counter to the goals of Europeanisation and economic development.

I see two major problems with today's international presence, which was mostly put in place following the end of different conflicts, and which was designed to deal with very specific post-conflict emergencies.

Firstly, in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, the wide-ranging emergency powers of international organisations constitute an obstacle to genuine democratisation by their very nature. Simply put, as long as a High Representative is able to wield so-called "Bonn powers" in Bosnia and Herzegovina, enabling him to overrule domestic institutions, impose legislation and dismiss local officials, the country will be unable to become a full democracy and will not meet the political criteria that are a precondition for signing a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union. Since the emergency is over in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the High Representative should give way by the end of this year to a regular EU Special Envoy without special powers. Likewise, in Kosovo, the intrusive nature of the UN Mission there and its powers risk undermining the development of a functioning multi-ethnic democracy, rather than nurturing it and giving it sustenance.

Secondly, much of the international presence in the region distorts the institution-building process that needs to take place for governments and administrations to become more effective. In both Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo, the international community literally crowds out domestic institutions, hiring many of the most qualified young people at salaries that neither the public nor the domestic private sector can ever pay and setting the policy agenda without assuming real responsibility for the consequences. There is in effect a negative internal brain drain. Across the region most so-called institution-building and democratisation efforts are *ad hoc*, badly designed and ineffective. In the protectorates, fundamental strategy in most areas changes every two years (sometimes sooner) as key people in the international missions change. What is lacking is continuity of the reform process, in marked contrast to the process involved in EU accession.

So how should one deal with this? I have two concrete suggestions. Firstly, we need to bring the protectorate in Bosnia and Herzegovina to an end and reduce its influence sharply in Kosovo. Bosnia and Herzegovina should be treated no differently to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* where a protectorate has never been established. In Kosovo, the reserved powers of the international community should in the near future be exercised rather like the reserved powers of the Allies in Berlin in the 1960s, that is they should be nominal, and fully respectful of the emerging political dynamics. The United Nations should get out of direct management of economic matters and concentrate efforts on core institution-building tasks, such as building a multi-ethnic Kosovo Interior Ministry. It should also focus on pushing Kosovo institutions to meet two key standards, namely the full return of all property to the displaced and the provision of effective security to all of Kosovo's citizens. Above all, it

– and KFOR – must ensure that they are prepared for any repetition of outbreaks of violence such as took place in March. In short, the international presence should give meaning to the notion of substantial self-governance and concentrate on its core mandate of security and minority protection. What the United Nations should not do is manage municipal land or chair the supervisory board of the local telecom provider, waste collector and other businesses.

Thirdly, we should replace the current *ad hoc* international arrangements in the different countries with a much clearer European-driven pre-accession process, even if the countries are not yet able to begin full membership negotiations. This would entail a stronger Commission presence in each country, a focus on issues of economic and social cohesion and pre-accession financial instruments to target causes of structural underdevelopment and national absorption capacity (such as the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development or the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession). From 2007, every South-eastern European state that concludes a Stabilisation and Association Agreement should be offered full access to pre-accession programmes. Assistance levels and funds should be sufficient to ensure that the gap between present candidate countries in the region, such as Bulgaria and Romania, and future candidate countries does not widen.

The lasting stabilisation of the region will come with its Euro-Atlantic integration. The immediate stabilisation will come when the local elites realise

So long as the most notorious war criminals remain at large, it seems premature to declare that "the emergency is over"

Nicholas Whyte



We should replace the current *ad hoc* international arrangements with a much clearer European-driven pre-accession process

Gerald Knaus

that this prospect is real, and follow their neighbours – Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and most recently the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* – in forging a cross-party, cross-entity consensus that integration and economic reform are the central political issues.

Yours,  
Gerald

Dear Gerald,

As ever, there are points of agreement and disagreement between us. I don't differ with you on the medium to long-term strategic aim of the international community in the Balkans – full integration into the Euro-Atlantic institutions, both the European Union and NATO. Would that such a firm anchor of future stability were available to other troubled parts of the world!

However, I think you have underplayed the importance of the remaining hard-security threats in the Balkans. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, so long

as the most notorious war criminals remain at large, it seems a little premature blithely to declare that “the emergency is over”. This is not a mere technicality. It is fundamentally important not just to prevent future warfare, but also to establish that the credibility of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state will not be challenged again, and that those who were responsible for the worst of the wartime atrocities will be punished. The emergency is certainly in a different phase, but while state structures are protecting these people I do not think it is completely over.

I agree that other things are going in the right direction in Bosnia and Herzegovina. State-level defence, intelligence, police and indirect taxation institutions are all essential before the international community can start scaling down its presence. These welcome developments now appear imminent and the country is close to joining NATO's Partnership for Peace programme – but this could not have been achieved without the sort of muscular international intervention that we have had since Dayton. You imply that the presence of a High Representative with “Bonn powers”, able to impose legislation by internationally backed fiat, has been a brake on recovery. I think it was essential to get us this far. Do you really think that an international withdrawal from Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1997 would have resulted in a peaceful, democratic and prosperous country by 2004?

I have greater sympathy with your remarks on Kosovo, where economic powers were assumed by the international community right from the start, and indeed should be transferred to local actors as soon as possible. Nobody should underestimate the potential explosiveness of the demographic time-bomb represented by Kosovo's two million population, half of whom are under the age of 20, in a situation where unemployment is endemic and the traditional safety valve of emigration, whether tempo-

rary or permanent, is blocked by the European Union's Schengen frontier. It seems strange to me that we insist on the peoples of the Balkans acquiring European values, yet block them from coming to the European Union to learn about those same values.

Unfortunately, to most Kosovo politicians, these economic matters are mere window-dressing compared to the burning issue of future relations with Belgrade – and if their voters really think differently, they have failed to indicate it in elections, which are the only opinion polls that count. To talk of downsizing the international presence in Kosovo without factoring in the single most important reason why we are there – the dispute over its sovereignty – is really to ignore the elephant in the living room. Transfer more powers to locally elected representatives by all means. But the real test of credibility of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) will be its ability to manage the path to final status over the next year or so. And the big test for the international presence there in the next few months may well simply be to maintain the security situation rather than its record in delivering on economic development. That will require a hands-on rather than a hands-off approach.

The Macedonian example is instructive of the value of a sustained and serious international engagement. Without the direct personal involvement of EU and NATO officials at the very highest level, the situation would certainly have deteriorated into another large-scale conflict. And the continued presence of an EU Special Representative in Skopje, along with all the other instruments of the international community, has been an important stabilising factor in the period since the 2001 crisis. It is unfortunate that the international community has not yet been able to sort out the problem of the country's name, and thus send its inhabitants a reassuring message about the state's long-term viability.

To me, that points up the advantages of establishing a more visible international presence in Belgrade. The hard-security questions of accountability for war crimes and democratic control of the security services also remain salient in Serbia. They are also obstacles blocking Belgrade's membership of NATO's Partnership for Peace. The experience of having a High Representative or a Special Representative (something more than the "stronger Commission presence" you propose) in the Bosnian and the Macedonian situations has been positive: they have ensured that the international community was able to speak with one voice and that local actors were not able to go "forum-shopping". Of course, it is also important to have the right policy objectives in the first place. As long as the international community – the European Union in particular – remains wedded to the futile policy of implementing the State Union between Serbia and Montenegro, progress in both countries can be expected to be slow.

The two countries that do not have the same unresolved hard-security issues – Albania and Croatia – are instructive of the limits of external engagement. In Croatia, a clear decision has been made by all sections of the political elite to deal with past issues and move forward. Albania, on the other hand, remains hampered by the unwillingness of its leaders to engage in meaningful reforms which would open up the country. In both cases we have seen a rejection of the 19th century game of territorial aggrandisement in favour of the 21st century game of international integration. That is a political decision, not an economic one. But it's one that is made by the elites of the countries themselves, rather than by the European Union and the international community. You can take a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink. And in countries where the governments are not prepared to move forward, the European Union should not

be compelled to offer additional carrots rather than more sticks.

Yours,  
Nicholas

Dear Nicholas,

Let me answer your direct questions first. In 1997, there was a need for an assertive international role in Bosnia and Herzegovina and withdrawal then would have been a disaster. And yes, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2004 is a very different country from 1997. In 1997, people who have since been indicted for war crimes controlled the Interior Ministry, the Presidency and the Army of Republika Srpska. In 1997, not a single Bosnian Muslim had returned to Republika Srpska and whenever return was tried houses were burned down. At this very moment, however, the process by which more than 220,000 properties are being returned to pre-war owners is coming to a successful conclusion. Mosques are being rebuilt, not blown up, in Republika Srpska. Indicted war criminals are either in The Hague or hiding in the mountains on the country's borders (or in neighbouring countries). This is why the vast international powers assumed in 1997 are neither needed nor suited to today's situation.

You are right to insist that Karadzic and Mladic need to be brought to justice for the crimes they committed, but this hardly justifies a permanent international institution able to overrule politicians elected by Bosnian citizens, most of whom were actually the victims of these crimes. You do not limit Bosnian democracy because Mladic may be hiding somewhere in Serbia. The most appropriate response to the tragedy of the early 1990s is a democratic, multi-ethnic country on the path to EU integration. This is not a long-term strategic aim, as you put it: I would like to see this Bosnian government follow Ankara, Skopje and Zagreb and submit an official application to the European Union before the end of 2006.

Let me pose a direct question to you: why is the mechanism that you praise for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* – a respected EU Special Envoy, an international police mission that focuses on capacity building, plus a realistic European perspective for a fully sovereign country – not suited to Bosnia and Herzegovina? Ankara and Skopje have achieved tremendous progress and carried out painful and sensitive reforms in recent years as a result of, not despite, democracy. Bosnia and Herzegovina has also achieved progress, but as long as the "Bonn powers" exist, its people will not get the credit. Many observers will always argue – as you do yourself – that no progress would be possible "without muscular international intervention". You could continue to make this argument for another decade.

I'm not sure how much we disagree on the international role in Kosovo. Let me ask you directly: would you support the establishment of a multi-ethnic Kosovo Interior Ministry and then make the protection of minorities the key standard that Kosovo institutions –



The big test for the international presence in Kosovo in the next few months may simply be to maintain the security situation

Nicholas Whyte



Giving local institutions responsibility to provide security for minorities has always involved a leap of faith, but it has worked well

Gerald Knaus

and not only, as at present, an internationally led UNMIK Pillar – must meet? Giving local institutions responsibility to provide security for minorities has always involved a leap of faith, but it has worked well in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* and in the Presevo valley in southern Serbia. In the Balkans as anywhere else, making institutions accountable to the people they serve produces better outcomes.

I doubt most Kosovo politicians would regard economic matters as “mere window-dressing”. However, as long as UN lawyers argue, for example, that giving licences to investors to mine Kosovo’s minerals may be in breach of the UN mandate in Kosovo, there is a link between its status and its prosperity. Kosovo may soon find itself in the absurd situation that the “Kuwait of lignite” cannot legally mine its own coal to supply its own power station. This is why I believe that UNMIK must change the way it interprets its role as trustee now. It is, after all, trustee on behalf of the Albanians,

Serbs and others who live in Kosovo, whose economic plight grows more desperate by the day.

Yours,  
Gerald

Dear Gerald,

The idea that the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina is now or could ever become “a permanent international institution” is a straw man. Nobody advocates that, certainly not the present holder of the office – in almost every utterance he has made since taking up the position, he has made it clear that the task is finite rather than ever-expanding. Speaking to the UN Security Council immediately after the September 2002 elections, he said: “My approach will be to distinguish ruthlessly between those things that are truly essential, and those that are simply desirable. The OHR, with the executive power it wields, should focus on the first. There are many other agencies to undertake the longer-term, developmental tasks once we have gone.”

The question is, therefore, not whether the OHR should hand over to something resembling the international regime in Skopje, but when. You seem to think the ideal moment would have been somewhere between 1997 and 2004, though you don’t say exactly what date or why. I think it will not be this year, but it should and could be within another year or two. The situations are very different. The Ohrid Agreement, which ended the Macedonian conflict, reaffirmed the state’s structures and provided mechanisms for embedding the ethnic Albanian minority more securely within that state. The leaders of the 2001 insurgency now proclaim their commitment to the integration of their people with the rest of the country.

That was not the case after the Bosnian conflict. The Dayton Peace

Agreement established a Bosnian constitutional system in which all the incentives were for the leaders of the three national groups to build three different polities and to ignore or, as far as it was possible, further weaken the central state. War crimes indictees are indeed in the mountains on the country’s borders, and they remain under the protection of the security forces of parts of the Bosnian state. The destruction of Bosnian democracy was caused not by the High Representative but by the war. When the Bosnian state has the same level of credibility with its own people that the Macedonian state has, then the transition to a Macedonian level of engagement will be appropriate. I don’t think that day is far off and I observe that the OHR is planning for it. It certainly should not be many years before Sarajevo’s application for EU membership is submitted, following those from Ankara, Skopje and Zagreb.

I wish I shared your confidence that Kosovo’s politicians regard economic development as more than window-dressing. Any snapshot of press reporting of their statements will show comments on big-picture political issues (over many of which they have no formal control) outnumber those on substantive economic issues by two to one. Moreover, half of the economic statements concern the extraordinary legalistic cul-de-sac that the UN administration has got itself into on privatisation. I’m therefore happy to agree with you that UNMIK’s interpretation of its trusteeship mandate is far too restrictive in the economic field. I’m also in agreement with you on the need to empower the Kosovo Protection Corps to protect Kosovo’s citizens of whatever ethnicity, though I think you skate a little rapidly over the problems experienced in the return of refugees elsewhere in the Balkans. The key factor determining the success of returns in Bosnia and Herzegovina has not been the level of local ownership and accountability of the security forces,

but the fact that those who drove out the displaced in the first place have been held accountable.

Yours,  
Nicholas

Dear Nicholas,

I suggest substantially reinforcing the multi-ethnic Kosovo Police Service, not the Kosovo Protection Corps, which has much lower credibility among Kosovo Serbs. Otherwise, I think we agree that the United Nations needs to devolve more powers, and that it needs to do so quickly. The priority for the international mission in Kosovo in the coming year should be local institution-building in the security sphere and a major campaign to allow all displaced persons to repossess their property. Kosovo needs a real government to confront its deepening economic and social crisis and this means institutions controlled by its citizens, not by international administrators. No other arrangement is going to provide stability.

Let me be precise about my proposal for Bosnia and Herzegovina. By the end of this year, the “Bonn powers” should be revoked for good. Lord Ashdown should be the last High Representative, as he himself announced when he arrived in Sarajevo more than two years ago. There should not be another flurry of last-minute impositions towards the end of this year, as was the case in the months before his predecessors left office. Instead, a fully sovereign Bosnian government should aim to begin negotiations for an Association Agreement with the European Union in early 2005. This would constitute a major success for Bosnians, the international community and for Lord Ashdown himself. It would truly mark the end of the post-war period.

In general, the international presence should look very different in 2006

from today. Everywhere, democratically elected governments should be in charge of governance. Everywhere, the primary focus in the security field should be to strengthen the capacity of domestic (multi-ethnic) police forces, not to replace them. Everywhere, the European Commission’s presence should be substantially reinforced, focusing on both setting European standards and helping domestic institutions meet them. In Skopje and Zagreb, EU membership negotiations should be in full swing. What Pristina and Sarajevo need as much as Belgrade and Tirana to catch up with their regional neighbours are governments capable of taking responsibility. One cannot teach political elites to run a marathon by attempting to carry them towards the finishing line.

Yours,  
Gerald


Dear Gerald,

Certainly one should not carry the runners to the finishing line – the problem has been to get them to the starting line! We should not set dates for the sake of setting dates. Much better, surely, to define the tasks that need to be done for the mission to be declared complete. Lord Ashdown clearly expects to have substantially completed those tasks in Bosnia and Herzegovina by this time next year. I don’t believe that any value is added to the process by introducing the further sense of urgency that you propose. In any case, the end of this year is also the date that the European Union takes over from NATO as the main security provider in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is surely more prudent not to change everything at once. You yourself rightly complain about the lack of continuity in the international missions in the region.

While I agree with your portrait of the desirable – indeed, the likely – shape of the international presence in 2006, I remain worried that we do

not actually know what the shape of the region’s borders will be. The one thing missing from your prescription for Kosovo is a sense of movement towards resolving its final status. The promise of a mid-2005 “review” made by the Contact Group is a step in that direction but needs to be made more substantive. Without this crucial element of the broader political context, all the effort invested in institution-building and economic development will be worth nothing. I’ll leave the debate about whether or how we should pick and choose which indigenous Kosovo security structures to nurture for another time, but note in closing that a continued NATO presence in Kosovo is also going to be necessary for several years to come.

Yours,  
Nicholas

 For more on the European Stability Initiative, see [www.esiweb.org](http://www.esiweb.org)

 For more on the International Crisis Group, see [www.crisisweb.org](http://www.crisisweb.org)



The destruction of Bosnian democracy was caused not by the High Representative but by the war

Nicholas Whyte

# Lord Ashdown: Bosnian High Representative

*Lord “Paddy” Ashdown has been High Representative of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina responsible for overseeing the Bosnian peace process since May 2002. He is also the EU Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. A former officer in the Royal Marines and British diplomat, Lord Ashdown made his name in British politics where he led the Liberal-Democratic Party between 1988 and 1999. During the Bosnian War, Lord Ashdown was one of the most vociferous advocates for decisive international intervention. At the time, he argued that this would help bring the conflict to an early close and that this was in the interests of all Bosnian citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin.*

**NATO Review: What are the greatest challenges facing Bosnia and Herzegovina?**

Lord Ashdown: There's one big challenge that stands between us and integration in Euro-Atlantic institutions, and that is cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague (ICTY). This country has done amazingly well over the past nine years. I know of no country, save perhaps East Timor, which has moved so rapidly from war to peace. Indeed, during the last couple of years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has achieved what most people considered virtually impossible. The country has fulfilled almost all conditions for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union and made a serious application to NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. If the issue of cooperation with the ICTY, which is a fundamental principle of Dayton, can be resolved, then this country should have secured a future for itself by early next year. The only possible future for this country is via integration in Euro-Atlantic structures. Eventual membership in NATO will give this country, which was ravaged by war only nine years ago, the most priceless gift of all, namely security. Eventual membership in the European Union will bring with it investment and other opportunities. Our task is to help them to get into Euro-Atlantic institutions as fast as possible without lowering the entry standards.

**NR: How severe is the economic crisis facing Bosnia and Herzegovina?**

LA: This is the issue that keeps me awake at night. I don't think that this country is threatened by a return to war. That is not the mood of the nation. The real threat is that the

economy does not improve fast enough, living standards don't rise quickly enough, or, for some, don't rise at all, and that this leads to a period of instability and social unrest. The threshold of pain in this country is pretty high. Bosnians have lived in these conditions for a very long time, but there are limits even to their patience. The economy is not, of course, a new problem and even in this field considerable progress has been made. We have the most stable currency in the Balkans and we have the lowest inflation rate in the Balkans. We are also beginning aggressively to strip away the many legal impediments that prevent business being reformed. We've got rid of some 150 of those in the past couple of years. We should have started the process of economic reform much earlier, but the economy is now growing. This year, the gap between exports and imports has narrowed for the first time. Investment is rising more quickly than anticipated and growth in GDP is faster than predicted. That said, the economy is growing from a very low base and it's going to take a long time before the benefits of growth have an impact on the lives of ordinary people.

**NR: How do you view the termination of SFOR and the deployment of EUFOR?**

LA: I view it very positively and am glad to say that most Bosnians also view it in the same light. What is helpful in terms of peace stabilisation is that the destination for Bosnia and Herzegovina and the driver of the process are becoming one and the same. If there is one issue that everybody in every ethnicity, every political party and in every corner of the country is agreed upon, it is that Bosnia and Herzegovina's ultimate destination is Europe. With the deployment of EUFOR and the other EU missions in Bosnia

and Herzegovina, Europe is increasingly driving the process. The magnetic pull of Brussels is now becoming more important than the push of the High Representative. That's a very good thing.

There is another question of concern to Bosnians, namely can Europe rise to the challenge. Here again, despite initial misgivings, I think most Bosnians have been reassured. We are all aware of the failings of European policy here between 1992 and 1995. Today, however, the situation is very different. Most Bosnians know that 80 per cent of the soldiers who will form EUFOR were also part of SFOR. Although there will be a change of badge and flag, there will be no change of policy, tactics or strategy. Delivery on the ground will be exactly the same.

**NR: What kind of precedent does the termination of SFOR and deployment of EUFOR set?**

**LA:** It is certainly a groundbreaking development because increasingly we're seeing the European foreign and security policy in practice on the ground. This is by far and away the biggest EU operation to date. The EU military mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* was in effect a pilot project. Europe is now taking the lead and will have to show in the coming months and years what it is capable of to ensure that the Bosnian peace process remains a success.

I would argue that the deployment of EUFOR is important on a still wider scale, namely in transatlantic terms. Iraq has done terrible damage to the transatlantic relationship and that relationship must be repaired. The only way to repair it, in my view, is to realise the vision of Kissinger and Kennedy of a twin-pillar NATO in which Europe is prepared to carry its share of the burden. The stage upon which this new relationship is being worked out is Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**NR: As High Representative, you have extensive powers, which some analysts argue is undermining the prospects for democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Is the role that you currently play in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the long-term interest of the country?**

**LA:** It is in the long-term interest, as long as it's done in the right way and doesn't last for too long. You could have asked the same question about the Allied Commission that ran Germany for some nine or ten years after the Second World War. Was that in Germany's long-term interests? Was German democracy damaged by virtue of the fact that it was governed by an international administration possessing absolute power, including even the power to impose the death penalty? These extensive international powers certainly didn't do German democracy any harm.



It's not unusual to have an international administration for an interim period in the aftermath of a conflict. This was the case in both Germany and Japan in the aftermath of the Second World War to very good effect. It is the case in Kosovo today. And it has been the case in East Timor, where the international engagement is, in world-record time, now coming to an end after five years. International administration is a perfectly normal thing, but it has to be managed in such a way as to build independence and not dependency. We're now coming up to the tenth year of a strong international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The peace process to date has been highly successful. But it is now time to discuss whether the continuation of international engagement in its current form will have more upside than downside.

What is clear is that the international community cannot simply close up shop and walk away. There has to be a transition. As Bosnia and Herzegovina becomes embedded in Euro-Atlantic institutions, the international presence within the country, and most notably the Office of the High Representative, has to move away from the current heavy-weight interventionist role and to evolve into something else. In the future, the powers of the High Representative may well be reduced. The High Representative might, for example, be replaced by a Special Representative of the European Union. That will, however, be a decision for the Peace Implementation Council.

## Interviews

NR: What obstacles are blocking Bosnian membership of the Partnership for Peace?

LA: The only obstacle is cooperation with the ICTY.

NR: What are the consequences if Bosnia and Herzegovina, or more specifically Republika Srpska, fails to cooperate in arresting Radovan Karadzic?

LA: There have to be consequences, though I cannot say in advance what they might be. They will obviously depend on Carla Del Ponte's assessment of the level of ICTY cooperation, since she is the arbiter in these matters. Moreover, before taking any decisions, I will also have to listen to what NATO has to say. At the Istanbul Summit, NATO was clear that Bosnia and Herzegovina would not be allowed to join the Partnership for Peace in the absence of ICTY cooperation and explicitly singled out Republika Srpska as the obstacle. Clearly, there is a small group of obstructionists who believe it's more important to preserve corrupt structures and hide war criminals than to uphold international law. These obstructionists are effectively holding the country to ransom. I, nevertheless, hope that they cooperate with the ICTY so that I do not have to take further action.

NR: What does Bosnia and Herzegovina have to do to begin a stabilisation and association process with the European Union?

LA: The European Union set Bosnia and Herzegovina 16 tasks, 14 of which have already been completed. The key hurdle to get over, however, as for NATO, remains that of cooperation with the ICTY. As long as Bosnia and Herzegovina continues along the same road, then it's not unreasonable to expect the country to fulfil all tasks and to be able to move to the next stage. That's a remarkable achievement for a country in which more than 200,000 people were killed and a million made homeless less than ten years ago. Just compare progress here with the situation in Cyprus or in Northern Ireland. Whereas Cyprus is still a divided island, there's complete freedom of movement here. I was present in Belfast in 1969 to see Catholics burned out of their homes. In the intervening period, not one has gone back. Here a million have returned home. Bosnia and Herzegovina is arguably the world's first major successful peace-stabilisation mission. But success will only become irreversible when Bosnia and Herzegovina passes into the Partnership for Peace and into Europe.

NR: Some analysts argue that the structures imposed on Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Dayton Peace Agreement

are unworkable and will condemn the country to remain dependent on the international community. Does it therefore need revisiting?

LA: Dayton wasn't framed to build a state, it was framed to end a war. Dayton may need reforming, but it's not our job to revisit Dayton. This is an issue for Bosnians to resolve. This is their state and the Dayton constitution is their constitution. A state is, however, dysfunctional if it spends 65 per cent of its revenue on government and only 35 per cent on its people. In these circumstances, it's not likely to create the conditions in which people feel any loyalty to it.

Bosnians do have to start reforming Dayton to make their political system more functional. Indeed, they have already started doing this. The decisions taken last year to combine the armed forces under state control was a change to Dayton done by their agreement, not by my imposition. The decision to create a single state-wide taxation system was another change to Dayton designed to make the state more functional. And similar proposals have been drawn up for reform of the police force. All these are changes to Dayton. The process of changing Dayton using the Dayton framework has begun and will have to accelerate.

NR: How long do you intend to remain in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

LA: Until November next year.

NR: Have you been keeping a diary during your time as High Representative? Can we, therefore, look forward to a Bosnian sequel to your best-selling diary on British politics?

LA: I have been keeping a diary. However, I suspect that not many people in Britain or elsewhere would be interested in the intricacies of Bosnia and Herzegovina which fill my diaries at the moment, much as the intricacies of the Liberal Democrats and our arrangements with Labour used to in the past. There is a very limited market for this kind of material. There are, however, some broad lessons to be learned from the Bosnian peace process and it may be worth trying to identify these and other basic principles of peace stabilisation. ■



For more on the Office of the High Representative, see [www.ohr.int](http://www.ohr.int)



For more on the work of the European Union's Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, see [www.eusrbih.org](http://www.eusrbih.org)



# Søren Jessen-Petersen: Kosovo Protector

*Søren Jessen-Petersen has been Special Representative of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in Kosovo since June 2004. A Danish diplomat with vast experience of both the former Yugoslavia and refugee issues, he came to Kosovo from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* where he had been the Special Representative of the European Union from February 2004. Prior to that, he was Chairman of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe's Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative where he initiated, developed and directed a strategy to manage population movements in the Western Balkans. Between 1998 and 2001, he headed all UNHCR operations as Assistant UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva. Between 1994 and 1998, he was Director of the UNHCR Liaison Office at UN Headquarters in New York. From December 1995 to September 1996, he was based in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' Special Envoy to the former Yugoslavia.*

**NATO Review: What are the greatest challenges facing Kosovo?**

Søren Jessen-Petersen: The overall challenge is to build a stable, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo. The immediate challenge is to take forward implementation of a series of priority standards that we have identified as key to building a multi-ethnic Kosovo. We have identified security, rule of law, freedom of movement, return of the displaced and decentralisation as priorities, since it is unrealistic to try to make progress in all areas. In addition to identifying these priorities, we have ensured that the Contact Group has endorsed them and will assess what progress has been made in their implementation in mid-2005, with a view to launching a process leading to status talks in the event of a positive assessment. In this way, we have an agreed way forward, which is well understood both in Pristina and in Belgrade. The other great challenge is the economy. Indeed, the economy may be the most serious challenge, because if we don't make progress in this area, even in the short term, we risk future instability.

**NR: Since the outbreak of violence in March of this year, every international organisation has been examining what went wrong. What lessons has the United Nations drawn from this event?**

SJP: I think we have drawn the same conclusions as the other institutions concerning what led to the outbreak of violence, our level of preparedness and the way we responded. There is now fairly broad agreement that several factors contributed to the outbreak of violence. It was in part the result of frustration over the lack of progress on the economy, in part frustration concerning the security situation, and in part uncertainty about the lack of a clear way ahead. Having analysed the reasons for the outbreak of violence, there is now a new sense of urgency on the part of the international community to address some of the causes.

There is no question, however, of rewarding violence. Indeed, since March there have been several arrests and both local and international judges are working on bringing those responsible to justice. But since maintaining the status quo would only have led to more violence, we could not simply ignore the causes of the March violence. For this reason, there is now agreement that Kosovo could not be left as a holding operation for much longer. Moreover, we came up with a new strategy with an accelerated way forward focusing on a number of priority standards.

By addressing issues such as lack of protection for minorities, lack of freedom of movement, security, rule of law and lack of progress in the return of the displaced, we are addressing the legitimate concerns of the minority communities. At



the same time, we are saying to the Kosovo Albanians that if, and only if, there is significant, demonstrable progress in those areas, will we be able to move forward.

NR: Given the events of March, it's easy to be pessimistic about the state of the peace process. Is there also a case for optimism?

SJP: First of all, I think it's important to say that there has been only one serious, ethnically motivated violent incident since March. That was in early June. We have just gone through four weeks of electoral campaigning and there has not been a single serious violent incident. As far as security is concerned, both KFOR and UNMIK have learned a lot since March. We are now better prepared. We coordinate better with each other. We have better response mechanisms. We have invested in riot-control training. And we are better at intelligence-gathering both individually and working together

with the Kosovo Police Service. As a result, I think that the security environment is already significantly improved.

Secondly, I believe that there is a case for a very, very cautious degree of optimism. The reason for this is that whereas to date Kosovo has essentially been a holding operation, we now have an agreed way forward for the province for the first time. Status is finally on the agenda and that gives us both carrots and sticks to use. In many ways, therefore, it will be easier to take the peace process forward. That said, as we get closer to status discussions, the situation risks becoming more complicated and security could easily become a problem again.

NR: The European Union is taking responsibility for day-to-day security in Bosnia and Herzegovina in December of this year. Would a similar arrangement make sense in Kosovo in the near future?

SJP: Like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo is in Europe. The future here lies in Europe. Irrespective of what emerges from status talks, it is a European perspective that will drive this process. As a result, I think it would make a lot of sense for us to start looking ahead now already at what would and should be the successor arrangements to UNMIK. Indeed, I would say that UNMIK has already begun a gradual scaling-down process. This process should not, however, be about phasing out the entire international presence, but rather about organising a transition. Irrespective of status talks, I believe that there will be a need for some sort of international presence, both military and civilian, for many years to come. Given that Kosovo is in Europe and its future is in Europe, we should be looking to the European institutions to take on a greater role.

NR: As Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Kosovo, you have extensive powers, and some analysts argue that these powers risk undermining the prospects for democracy in Kosovo. How much power does someone in your position require to help nurture a peace process?

SJP: The powers are extensive and based on UNSCR 1244. That said, they are considerably weaker than they were in 1999, since during the past three or four years my predecessors have already transferred considerable powers to local authorities. Moreover, I, too, am in the process of transferring more power to local authorities. Indeed, I'm preparing to transfer almost every power that is not specifically linked to the issue of sovereignty, because I cannot do that as a result of UNSCR 1244. We are now establishing new ministries and we are "Kosovising" the economy and other areas. This is also essential when it comes to preparing for eventual local administration whatever the outcome of talks on the province's final status.

One problem we are facing is that local capacities do not necessarily exist. That said, I don't believe this is a valid reason not to move forward with the transfer of powers. It is simply a reason to increase our focus on building local capacity. But as we entrust more and more responsibilities to the local authorities, we have to insist on greater accountability and be prepared to sanction non-performing authorities.

**NR:** Given that only about one per cent of Kosovo's Serbs voted in the recent election, how do you intend to persuade them to participate in the province's political life?

**SJP:** This is evidently one of the great immediate challenges. To go out and campaign for a boycott, as many Serb politicians did, is not difficult, because there are many good reasons why the Kosovo Serbs should not wish to participate. We have to recognise this. But what I will never accept is the deplorable methods that were used to enforce the boycott. Nevertheless, the fact is that less than one per cent participated, either because they didn't want to be part of it or they were intimidated.

We will now seek to work with the legitimate elected representatives of the Serb community. The Serbs who were elected are legitimate because the constitutional arrangement in Kosovo is such that seats are reserved for minorities, irrespective of the number of votes cast, in order to protect them. The province's Serbs do, therefore, have legitimate representatives, though there is a question mark about the credibility of these representatives. Indeed, they themselves are concerned about lacking credibility in the eyes of the people they are supposed to represent. The only way we can address that and the concerns of all those Serbs who either chose not to vote or were intimidated into observing the boycott is to make immediate progress in the priority areas I have outlined.

We need, above all, to address the issue of freedom of movement, since this remains a major problem. Indeed, there are villages in Kosovo that are still surrounded by barbed wire and dependent on KFOR protection. Promoting decentralisation is another way to win over some Kosovo Serbs. If, for example, they are able to take charge of local issues, such as the provision of local services, in municipalities in which they form a majority, they should begin to feel that they do, after all, have a future in Kosovo and a stake in the peace process. The few Serbs who live in the north of Kosovo close to Serbia may feel they have little to lose by boycotting elections. But the majority of Kosovo Serbs, who live in southern Kosovo, are clear los-

ers. We now have to reach out to them and others worried about their security, human rights and the future.

**NR:** As you've mentioned, final status talks on Kosovo are likely to begin in the middle of next year. How do you envisage these discussions, and what do you hope emerges from them?

**SJP:** These are still early days. I think that it is likely that all the key stakeholders – Belgrade, Pristina, key countries, the Contact Group and the Security Council – will begin informal reflections early next year, focusing on the modalities of the status talks, that is who, where and how, and then the principles. Some of the principles are likely to be straightforward, others less so. I can imagine a situation in which certain parties seek to limit the options and possibly try to reach agreement on what should not be on the agenda. In the first instance, what is important is to find agreement on the principles and modalities for status talks.

**NR:** Some analysts argue that the Balkans require the convening of a major international conference to address all outstanding issues in one go, much like the Congress of Berlin in the 19th century. How do you view such an idea?

**SJP:** If we were to do that, we'd probably be here until the 22nd century. That's not the way forward.

**NR:** How long do you think the United Nations will have to remain in Kosovo in its current configuration?

**SJP:** I think that the United Nations will already, early next year, begin a major restructuring of its operations. That restructuring will be on the basis of the way forward that I have referred to several times, focusing on the priority standards, getting to a review of standards, working with the parties to achieve a positive assessment, and then moving to status talks. Managing Kosovo during this process will be both critical and difficult. I, therefore, think we have to restructure UNMIK in such a way that it is better equipped to respond to the needs of this process. I believe also that in this restructuring, we should already start looking at what follows UNMIK. Irrespective of what emerges from status talks, the United Nations has to be looking forward to scaling back its operations and handing responsibility to other organisations and local authorities. ■



For more information on the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, see [www.unmikonline.org](http://www.unmikonline.org)

# Nikola Radovanović: Bosnian Defence Minister

*Nikola Radovanović became the first Defence Minister of the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 March 2004. As such, he is overseeing reform of the country's armed forces and defence structures. A 44-year-old ethnic Serb, he was a professional soldier in the Yugoslav People's Army before the outbreak of hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992. He served in the Bosnian Serb Army during the Bosnian War and remained a soldier in the Bosnian Serb Army until 2000 when he joined the Bosnian Foreign Ministry. At the Foreign Ministry, he headed the Section for Peace and Security of the Multilateral Relations Department.*

**NATO Review:** What are the principal security challenges that Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing?

Nikola Radovanović: Bosnia and Herzegovina is a European state and we are at the beginning of the 21st century. On the one hand, therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing so-called modern threats and challenges that are similar to any other country in this part of the world. These are the threats posed by organised crime, corruption, illegal trafficking, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. On the other hand, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a special case in the sense that it is a post-conflict country. It is undergoing economic transition; its domestic institutions are weak and there is a strong foreign, civil and military presence under the mandate of the United Nations. In this context, the principal security challenge is the slow integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Europe and in Euro-Atlantic structures. As Minister of Defence, I can safely say that the traditional military threat is no longer a major issue in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**NR:** How are Bosnia and Herzegovina's armed forces currently structured and what proportion of GDP is spent on defence?

NR: Bosnia and Herzegovina's armed forces consist of defence institutions at the level of the state, as well as at that of the entities. At the state level, there is now a Ministry of Defence for Bosnia and Herzegovina, a Joint Staff of Bosnia and Herzegovina and an Operational Command. State-level institutions now have supremacy over entity-level institutions and the Bosnian parliament has oversight over defence structures.

The armed forces consist of 12,000 professionals and some further 60,000 reservists. There are also up to 10,000

conscripts every year. The ratio between forces in the Federation and Republika Srpska is two to one. That means there are 8,000 soldiers on the Federation side, and 4,000 in Republika Srpska. The same ratio, more or less, also applies to the reservists and to the numbers of generals. We now speak of the Army of Republika Srpska and the Army of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as two elements of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are more and more elements of jointness rather than of division. There is now, for example, one law on defence and a whole range of different policies, covering areas such as resource and personnel management, as well as training and doctrine, which are either already being applied everywhere or will be very soon. We can still identify differences, but there are more and more common elements.

The proportion of GDP devoted to defence has been significantly reduced in recent years. At 3.2 per cent of GDP, defence expenditures are still higher than they should be. Due to reforms, further savings are expected, as well as growth of the GDP at the other side. I expect that in a very short period of time it will come down to a typical European level of two per cent of GDP or maybe a little bit less.

**NR:** A joint Bosnian unit is coming together for the 2 December ceremony at which EUFOR takes over from SFOR. How is that structured?

NR: An honorary unit is being formed as the first permanent joint unit. Since it is an honorary unit, it has deliberately been drawn up according to the structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina itself. In this way, it consists of three platoons, each of them being from one of the constituent peoples. In addition, it has a band and a special section to escort the flag. In total, there will be just over 60 officers and soldiers.



more relevant for combating modern security threats. But for now, we will be working to implement the reforms that have already been agreed.

NR: What military assistance is currently provided to Bosnia and Herzegovina by neighbouring countries, and within what framework?

NR: At ministerial level, there is now good defence cooperation throughout the region. This is a relatively recent development that is good news both for the countries in the region and the wider international community. We use these ministerial meetings to exchange information about the process of integration into both the Partnership for Peace and NATO and I find it especially useful to learn from countries such as Croatia, Hungary and Romania that have gone much further down this path. Otherwise, we have identified further areas of mutual cooperation. These include dialogue at high political and military level and the exchange of information, as well as regional training and education initiatives.

NR: What military reforms are currently under way and what more are planned?

NR: We are in the first year of implementation of what are probably the most ambitious and comprehensive reforms in any area since the Dayton Peace Agreement came into force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These reforms have made the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina the supreme commander of our armed forces. We are re-establishing state-level institutions in this field and bringing all military structures under democratic control. We are also downsizing in terms of personnel, military facilities and stockpiles of weapons and ammunition. And we are re-establishing joint policies and strategies to manage the system, especially in the field of resource management and logistics. Another important area of reform is that of military intelligence.

As Minister of Defence, I wish to continue working on this already agreed set of reforms and see it implemented during 2005. In addition, I anticipate that during this period we will identify further steps that need to be taken. It's already obvious that professionalisation and specialisation will become increasingly important themes in the coming years. We're not going to need as many tank drivers or gunners in the future and will have to invest in skills that are

The most visible manifestation of regional cooperation that is currently available to Bosnia and Herzegovina is probably the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre in Zagreb in Croatia. In Sarajevo, we have established a Peace-Support Operational Training Centre. This Centre is important for Bosnia and Herzegovina, but we also see it as an important institution at the regional level. For Bosnia and Herzegovina it's important because we don't have any state-level training institutions, and we see it as an opportunity to bring military officers together for their professional development. But 25 per cent of those who are supposed to attend programmes come from elsewhere in the region. The Centre should be recognised by the United Nations so that all attendees will be issued with certificates that will enable them to participate in UN or other peacekeeping operations.

NR: What cooperation programmes currently exist with NATO?

NR: Our situation is specific because we're not a member of the PfP programme. We are, nevertheless, working with NATO within the framework of a Security Cooperation Pro-

gramme, which is focused on professional development seminars. Some of these seminars take place at the SHAPE School in Oberammergau in Germany. Others take place in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are, however, expecting to become PfP members any day and, as such, anticipate widening the areas of cooperation very soon.

**NR: What would membership of the Partnership for Peace mean for Bosnia and Herzegovina?**

NR: Membership of the Partnership for Peace would be important both to the way that Bosnia and Herzegovina sees itself and the way that it is seen by others. In effect, it would be a sign that Bosnia and Herzegovina had become a credible member of the international community. By becoming a NATO Partner, we would be a good way down the path towards a democratic, safe and more prosperous future. On the practical side, PfP membership would also bring with it access to more training programmes and activities that will speed our efforts to build stability.

**NR: Since membership of the Partnership for Peace depends largely on cooperation in arresting Radovan Karadzic, why are the Republika Srpska authorities not being more cooperative?**

NR: Full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague is the most important precondition Bosnia and Herzegovina has to fulfil to join the Partnership for Peace and Republika Srpska has not been sufficiently cooperative. That is a fact. The reasons for the lack of cooperation are many and complex. However, they essentially boil down to the behaviour of individuals. For me, it's extremely important that this last obstacle that stands between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Partnership for Peace is removed as soon as is possible. On the positive side, I think a new political climate is emerging in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska and that there is greater understanding of the importance of this question and more political will to resolve the issue.

**NR: How difficult do Croat, Muslim and Serb soldiers find it to cooperate today, given that many of them were fighting each other less than a decade ago?**

NR: I can't claim that they do not face problems. However, the problems are significantly smaller than one might expect, especially if you compare Bosnia and Herzegovina with other post-conflict countries, either elsewhere in Southeastern Europe or elsewhere in the world. Indeed, throughout our history we Bosnians have frequently demonstrated a remarkable capacity to work together and

rally together. That is the key. Otherwise, the reform process is helping build mechanisms by which we can live and work together.

**NR: Is war now unthinkable in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or could it break out again?**

NR: Everything my colleagues and I are doing is based on the premise that the war is well and truly behind us. I hope that my generation is the last in this country to have to go through such an experience.

**NR: How do you view the termination of SFOR and the deployment of EUFOR?**

NR: I see it as an opportunity for Bosnia and Herzegovina that will help us get closer to our ultimate goal, which is admission into NATO. SFOR has been extremely successful. It has created a safe environment and it has enabled us to reach the level of stability we enjoy today. However, it's now increasingly up to Bosnian institutions to take responsibility for the peace process and to think to the future of our country beyond the foreign military and civilian presence. We have to take our destiny in our own hands. The process by which SFOR is handing over to EUFOR is helping focus minds on Bosnia and Herzegovina. EUFOR should be the last foreign military presence under a UN mandate in this country and will likely come to an end in the not too distant future. On the practical side, I am hoping to establish good working relations with the European Union's military structures and am happy that a NATO headquarters will remain in Sarajevo to help speed our reform efforts.

**NR: How might Bosnia and Herzegovina contribute to enhancing security in Southeastern Europe and beyond?**

NR: In the Balkans security is everything. Without regional security there can be no security for any individual country. Bosnia and Herzegovina is in many ways a microcosm of the wider region with cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. Many see this diversity as a handicap. But I think that this can be an advantage and that our diversity should be viewed as a strength and as a bridge to other countries. On a practical level, we will contribute most to the stability of the region by maintaining the pace of reform and ensuring that we are not a source of instability, but rather a source of stability and security. We have also decided to prepare our forces to be able to play an active role in future peacekeeping operations world-wide. ■

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# Looking forward to a Balkan Big MAC

*Nano Ruzin analyses how Macedonia<sup>†</sup> has benefited from its relationship with NATO and other international organisations during the past three years.*

Macedonia<sup>†</sup> has come a long way since 2001 when the country appeared on the brink of civil war. Indeed, although Macedonia<sup>†</sup> was disappointed not to be invited to join NATO at both the Prague and Istanbul Summits, the experience of working together with the Alliance and other international organisations to defuse tensions in the country and rebuild stability has been extremely positive. As a result, Macedonia<sup>†</sup> aspires to joining the Alliance, together with Albania and Croatia, at its next summit, which after Prague's Big Bang could be a Balkan Big MAC.

Macedonia<sup>†</sup>'s brush with disaster has been a sobering experience, shattering the casual optimism that had earlier characterised Macedonian attitudes to their country's security, stability and economic prospects. Indeed, during the first decade of their country's independence, Macedonians of all ethnicities were probably complacent about the dangers lurking beneath the surface. In part, the lavish praise of foreigners, who variously described Macedonia<sup>†</sup> as an "oasis of peace", a "multi-ethnic miracle" and the "only former Yugoslav republic whose sovereignty did not bear the scars of an armed conflict", contributed to this false sense of security. The 2001 crisis brought both Macedonians and their leaders back to reality with a bump.

The reasons behind the Albanian revolt that brought Macedonia<sup>†</sup> to the brink of civil war are many and complex. They include social factors, such as high unemployment among Albanians, low participation in state institutions and minimal welfare provision; demographic factors, such as an extremely high Albanian birth rate and increasing immigration from neighbouring countries; sociological factors, such as the structure of the traditional Albanian family, mutual distrust and lack of contact between communities as a result of cultural and linguistic differences; institutional and educational factors, such as constitutional grievances and unsatisfied higher-educational aspirations; and political and cultural factors, in particular the issue of Albanian identity, which came to the fore in the wake of NATO's intervention in Kosovo and the withdrawal of Serbian forces from that region. Taken together, it is easy to understand why inter-ethnic relations were degenerating in early 2001.

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*Nano Ruzin is Macedonia's<sup>†</sup> ambassador to NATO.*

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By May 2001, it had become increasingly clear that the conflict was spiralling beyond the control of the country's security forces. The magnitude and the intensity of the clashes indicated that the country could easily disintegrate into civil war, with consequences that had the potential to destabilise not just Macedonia<sup>†</sup> but the wider region. The options were stark: armed conflict, civil war and self-destruction, on the one hand, or peace through compromise, on the other.

Skopje chose the path of compromise and solicited international assistance to facilitate a stabilisation process. In this way, the Macedonian government worked closely together with representatives of the European Union, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to create the necessary conditions for a return to peace. That said, the international involvement in Macedonia<sup>†</sup> was very different to that in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, since it was primarily political. Macedonia<sup>†</sup> was both a NATO Partner aspiring to becoming an Alliance "member" and a sovereign state. For this reason, any action by the Alliance and other international bodies required the support of both the country's president and government, which in response to the crisis had been reconstituted with the addition of representatives of the opposition.

## NATO assistance

On 14 June 2001, the late Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski requested NATO assistance to oversee the disarming of the extremists. In parallel, the European Union and the United States sent envoys – François Léotard and James Pardew respectively – to Macedonia<sup>†</sup> to help facilitate dialogue between the country's political parties. Meanwhile, crisis management in the field was entrusted to Pieter Feith, a pragmatic and flexible NATO diplomat, whose shuttle diplomacy helped carve out an opening for communicating with the rebels.

Against the odds, a cease-fire was brokered and the belligerents committed themselves to the political process. This was a huge achievement, but media on all sides were dubious about the merit of the negotiations and hostile to the international involvement. Moreover, NATO, in particular, suffered from an especially negative image in many Macedonian eyes. For this reason, at President Trajkovski's request, then

NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson tasked his Special Adviser Mark Laity to work with the president's cabinet to put together an effective public information campaign.

Macedonian military experts determined that the NATO mission in Macedonia<sup>†</sup> had to be limited in scope, objectives and duration. On the political level, NATO had to persuade the Albanian extremists to respect the cease-fire and hand over their weapons. Meanwhile, the Macedonian coalition government, which contained both hard-liners and moderates, committed itself to controlling and preventing the use of heavy weapons by the state's security forces. In parallel to those efforts, the country's parliamentary political parties had to commit themselves to four measures: adopting the general political agreement; creating an appropriate legal framework for the presence of NATO forces leading the peace-building process; presenting a plan for the terms and details of handing over weapons for adoption by the Macedonian government and NATO; and ensuring a sustainable cease-fire.

Following several weeks of intensive talks and once all conditions had been fulfilled, a framework for peace was signed in Ohrid on 13 July 2001. This cleared the way for the deployment on 27 August 2001 of NATO troops in Operation *Essential Harvest*, the purpose of which was to collect and destroy the weapons handed over. The operation involved 4,800 soldiers from 13 countries in a multinational brigade under the command of the United Kingdom, which itself contributed more than 1,700 soldiers. In the 30-day, hand-over period that ended on 26 September 2001, the mission collected and destroyed some 3,875 weapons. In October of the same year, the rebel army was disbanded, changes to the Macedonian constitution were adopted soon after and an amnesty was granted to the Albanian rebels so that the Ohrid Agreement could begin to be implemented.

As Operation *Essential Harvest* drew to a close, President Trajkovski requested an extension of the international presence to underwrite what had already been achieved. A new German-led NATO mission, Operation *Amber Fox*, with some 700 soldiers took over to ensure the security of 280 EU and OSCE civilian observers until 15 December 2001. That mission was followed by Operation *Allied Harmony*, which came to an end in April 2003, at which time NATO handed responsibility for the operation to the European Union, thereby enabling it to launch its first mission, Operation *Concordia*.

The modest ceremony that took place just outside Skopje to mark the hand-over of command in Macedonia<sup>†</sup> and the formal establishment of the first EU mission was not just the celebration of the beginning of a new stage in European

security; it also confirmed the enduring ties between transatlantic partners. Indeed, it is in part a result of Macedonia's<sup>†</sup> positive evolution since the 2001 crisis that it has been possible, in spite of great obstacles, for NATO and the European Union to come together and agree formal working relations.

### Shared lessons

Both the international community – that is the European Union, NATO and the OSCE – and Macedonia<sup>†</sup> learned important lessons from the experience of defusing the crisis of 2001, including the following:

- While various international organisations and NATO in particular played an important role in resolving the crisis, it is Macedonia,<sup>†</sup> its people and leaders who deserve most credit. The government had to prevail over hard-liners who were hostile to the international community, rejected compromise and preferred to seek military solutions to the crisis. Moreover, even though the number of casualties remained comparatively low, Macedonians and Albanians have had to overcome deep prejudices to begin to forge new relations.

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The differences in preparedness between the Prague invitees and the remaining aspirants are no greater than two or perhaps three MAP cycles

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- The fact that Macedonia<sup>†</sup> has been a NATO Partner since 1995, that it has aspired to join the Alliance for nearly as long, and that to this end it has been participating in the Membership Action Plan (MAP) since 1999 facilitated good relations between Skopje and the various international actors and contributed to a swift resolution of the crisis.

- The existing presence of NATO forces in the region, including a KFOR logistical base in Skopje, and NATO's earlier experience in crisis management elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia contributed greatly to the success of the NATO operations. The Alliance's missions were extremely effective and the number of weapons collected exceeded expectations. Moreover, NATO operated within a limited mandate in a particularly flexible way, alternating between exerting political pressure and using force. To harmonise its strategy, NATO stayed in constant contact with both the Macedonian government in Skopje and the rebels.

- The international community reacted in a timely manner and collaborated closely with the Macedonian authorities, who understood that they could not allow a large-scale civil war to erupt in their country and risk massive destruction, loss of human life, crime, refugees and destabilisation of the entire region. In spite of some reservations, the Macedonian authorities chose to cooperate fully with the international community. In this way, Skopje took a series of unpopular measures that ran counter to prevailing attitudes among the public.





*Historic harvest: The number of weapons collected by NATO soldiers exceeded expectations*


- In the beginning, the Alliance underestimated the level of hostility that it faced in local media. To put this right, improve its image and counter the conspiracy theories that were gaining ground, it dispatched a team of media experts to Macedonia<sup>†</sup> to work with the local authorities and explain the nature of its work.
- International collaboration and cooperation on crisis management in Macedonia<sup>†</sup> were exemplary. Each international organisation contributed in its own way to strengthening the peace missions. The European Union and the United States facilitated the talks, while frequent visits by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson – who conducted 19 visits to Macedonia<sup>†</sup> in 19 months – EU High Representative Javier Solana and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Mircea Geoana lent political importance to resolving the crisis.
- Ongoing monitoring of the situation in the post-conflict period has proved a highly effective means of stabilising

the country. The signing of the Ohrid Agreement was in fact just one step in the peace process. Subsequent phases have involved the return of security forces to crisis areas, proper application of the amnesty law, the holding of free, legal parliamentary elections in September 2002, the organisation of a census and the promulgation of a series of other laws.

- In addition to seeking to improve relations between communities within Macedonia<sup>†</sup>, Skopje has to focus in the coming years on building better relations both with Albania and with the political leadership in Kosovo. Only by working closely together with the neighbours will it be possible to build long-term security.
- The 2001 crisis demonstrated clearly the shortcomings of the Macedonian Armed Forces when confronted by asymmetric threats. Macedonia<sup>†</sup> is currently undergoing a far-ranging defence review with an aim to rationalise both the armed forces and procurement practices. The experience of three years ago must now serve as a spur to more ambitious military reforms to equip the country to deal with asymmetric enemies, criminal groups and terrorists.
- Rebuilding confidence is a long-term process requiring expertise, wisdom, patience, tolerance and energy. The actors in the crisis as well as the international community have understood this.

Three years after the crisis and following parliamentary elections, former adversaries sit side by side and work together both in the Skopje parliament and in the coalition that governs the country. That is the best guarantee for preserving peace and stabilising the country. Indeed, today Macedonia<sup>†</sup> is no longer a destabilising factor in the region. Rather, it is a potential role model for other countries. Moreover, Macedonia<sup>†</sup> continues to work towards becoming a NATO member and to play its part in the war on terror.

While the 2001 crisis undermined Macedonia's<sup>†</sup> chances of becoming a full NATO member at the Prague and Istanbul Summits, Alliance membership remains a key foreign policy goal. The country is committed to following the MAP process and has initiated trilateral cooperation with Albania and Croatia along similar lines to those successfully pursued by the Baltic Republics. An Adriatic Charter was signed in May 2003 by all three countries in the presence of US Secretary of State Colin Powell and the message from the trio is clear: the differences in preparedness between the Prague invitees and the remaining aspirants are no greater than two or perhaps three MAP cycles. Who is to say that a Balkan Big MAC won't be on the menu at the Alliance's next Summit? ■

 For more on NATO's operations in Macedonia,<sup>†</sup> see [www.nato.int/fyrom](http://www.nato.int/fyrom)

# Burying the hatchet

*Pavle Janković and Srdjan Gligorijević analyse Serbia and Montenegro's relationship with NATO and urge the Alliance to admit their country into the Partnership for Peace.*

Serbia and Montenegro is the only country to have been the target of an extended NATO air campaign. But that was five years ago. Today membership of NATO's Partnership for Peace represents the country's immediate foreign and security priority. This reflects a remarkable shift from war to peace through a period of *détente* and now *rapprochement* that holds out the promise of a more stable and potentially prosperous future entente and the normalisation of relations between Belgrade and the Euro-Atlantic community.

At present, Serbia and Montenegro is together with Bosnia and Herzegovina the only significant continental European country outside the Partnership for Peace. This situation is in stark contrast to that of the neighbouring states. Hungary has been a NATO member since 1999; Bulgaria and Romania joined the Alliance in March of this year; and Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* are on the road to membership via NATO's Membership Action Plan. The irony for Belgrade is that as the capital of Tito's Yugoslavia it began building a relationship with the Alliance more than half a century ago.

In 1951, Yugoslavia was included in the US Military Assistance Programme and, a year later, it established a political-military alliance with Greece and Turkey that remained in effect until mid-1955. During negotiations on this Tripartite Alliance, Belgrade sought unsuccessfully to insert a provision in the treaty to the effect that an attack on one ally should be considered an attack against all three. In this way, given that Greece and Turkey had just joined NATO, Yugoslavia hoped indirectly to be covered by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, the Alliance's collective-defence clause. In the event, the Tripartite Alliance withered, in part because of a thaw in relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union following Stalin's death and in part because of disagreements between Greece and Turkey. From then until Yugoslavia's dissolution in the 1990s, the country pursued a policy of non-alignment, refusing to take sides in the bipolar world. In retrospect, however, it is safe to assume that Yugoslavia would not have had the luxury of such a policy had it not been for the existence of NATO.

Belgrade came into indirect conflict with NATO in the early 1990s as the Alliance helped enforce an arms embargo

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against the whole of the former Yugoslavia and economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. In 1994 and 1995, NATO launched air strikes against Bosnian Serb targets in order to force compliance with UN Security Council resolutions designed to bring an end to the conflict. These acts helped turn the tide of battle and paved the way for the negotiations that culminated in the Dayton Peace Accord. After the signing of this agreement, a NATO-led peacekeeping force, the Implementation Force, deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina to oversee implementation of Dayton's military aspects. As a signatory and guarantor of the agreement, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, since renamed Serbia and Montenegro, was obliged to offer logistic support.

## NATO air campaign

Relations with NATO disintegrated as a result of a deteriorating situation in Kosovo. In the wake of escalating fighting between ethnic Albanian insurgents and Serbian security forces and failed peace talks, NATO launched air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in March 1999. These lasted 78 days and caused substantial material and environmental damage and, worse still, numerous civilian casualties, as well as a potentially unbridgeable chasm between NATO and Serbia and Montenegro. The human rights violations against ethnic Albanians were brought to an end, but the dynamics of inter-ethnic relations within Kosovo remained unchanged. Violence and other extremist measures continue to be used by different groupings within the province to achieve their goals, but now Serbs are generally the victims.

At the end of NATO's air campaign, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1244, which authorised deployment of a NATO-led force in Kosovo, known as the Kosovo Force or KFOR. In parallel, the first KFOR Commander, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Jackson, negotiated a Military Technical Agreement with the Yugoslav military authorities. This covered the withdrawal of the Yugoslav Army and police from Kosovo, the creation of a demilitarised, five-kilometre Ground Safety Zone in western Montenegro and southern Serbia adjacent to Kosovo and the establishment of a Joint Consultative Commission as a tool for permanent contact between KFOR and the Yugoslav Army. Relations with NATO remained tense until the Yugoslav electorate rejected Slobodan Milosevic in elections in October 2000 and street protests forced him to accept his defeat.

The post-Milosevic, democratic government immediately set a very different foreign policy course, whose cooperative

spirit was reflected in the way that Belgrade worked together with the Alliance to defuse an ethnic Albanian insurrection in southern Serbia during the winter and spring of 2000 and 2001. In January 2001, then Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic visited NATO Headquarters and, in February, together with then Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic, he briefed the North Atlantic Council on plans to resolve the conflict in southern Serbia peacefully. Since then, these two officials and other Yugoslav and Serbian representatives have regularly visited NATO Headquarters. In March 2001, Yugoslav security forces began a phased return to the Ground Safety Zone, a process that was accompanied by confidence-building measures for the local Albanian population and coordinated with NATO. In December 2002, in accordance with the terms of both the Dayton Peace Accord and UNSCR 1244, NATO aircraft began over-flying Serbia and Montenegro in support of the SFOR and KFOR missions. And in June 2003, Foreign Minister Svilanovic officially applied for membership in NATO's Partnership for Peace.

Two historic events in November 2003 illustrate the extent of the *rapprochement* that has taken place. Firstly, then AFSOUTH Commander Admiral Gregory G. Johnson, the officer responsible for SFOR and KFOR, met with then Defence Minister, now Serbian President, Boris Tadic, and Yugoslav Chief of Staff General Branko Krga in Naples, Italy. Secondly, Lord Robertson became the first serving NATO Secretary General to visit Belgrade on his farewell tour of those parts of the former Yugoslavia in which the Alliance was engaged. In addition to meeting with the highest political and military representatives, Lord Robertson made a speech at the Military Academy in Belgrade.

#### Kosovo violence

The upsurge in violence in Kosovo in March this year seemed to take NATO by surprise and threatened to undermine much of the progress that had been made in relations between Serbia and Montenegro and the Alliance. As Albanian extremists turned on the province's remaining Serbs, the peacekeepers initially appeared paralysed. The situation was, nevertheless, rapidly brought under control by the decisive intervention of key NATO officials – in particular KFOR and SFOR Commander Admiral Johnson, Supreme Allied Commander



*Serbian speech: Lord Robertson became the first serving NATO Secretary General to visit Belgrade where he spoke at the Military Academy*

General James L. Jones and Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer – and the dispatch of reserve forces.

During the crisis, the Serbian and Montenegrin authorities – civilian and military alike – avoided an emotional response and took a series of measured actions. Despite differing views within the government, the authorities focused on establishing permanent communication with NATO and other organisations responsible for security in Kosovo. In cooperation with NATO, Serbian and Montenegrin officials helped to create the best possible conditions for the restoration of order and an end to the attacks on Serbs and on their property, historic monuments, churches and monasteries. Throughout this period, Defence Minister Tadic maintained permanent telephone contact with both Secretary General De Hoop Scheffer and Admiral Johnson. This proved to be of incomparable importance and demonstrated that only through cooperation between NATO and Serbia and Montenegro can effective stability in Kosovo be achieved.

Education is proving to be another field for fruitful cooperation. Since June 2003, military officers and civilians have been participating in NATO Orientation Courses. These aim to provide participants with a basic knowledge of the Alliance as well as an introduction to crisis-management issues, peace-support operations and civil-military cooperation. In support of these goals, the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, has ongoing intensive training programmes that include military personnel from Serbia and Montenegro. The Defence Ministry has also developed

bilateral educational links with several NATO countries. Moreover, a number of foreign advisers are now embedded in the Defence Ministry and are available at all times to the Minister and his staff.

In late May, the Army of Serbia and Montenegro participated in joint anti-terrorist exercises named *Blue Road 2004*, together with the Romanian Army. Since Romania is now a NATO member, the Army of Serbia and Montenegro was obliged for the first time to comply with NATO standards. The exercises were also an opportunity for Serbia and Montenegro to demonstrate how it could contribute to PfP activities as well as NATO-led peace-keeping missions.

During a visit to the United States in July 2003, then Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Zivkovic announced that his country was willing to participate militarily in ongoing peace-keeping missions. Specifically, this meant participation in the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan. Serbia and Montenegro's Supreme Defence Council passed a decision soon afterwards allowing the armed forces to begin preparations for participation in international peacekeeping missions and since then a National Centre for Peace-keeping Missions has been established. However, the federal parliament, which is responsible for final approval of troop deployments beyond state borders, has yet to give its consent.

According to the most recent reliable opinion polling, carried out by Belgrade's Centre for Civil-Military Relations in January and February of this year, two-thirds of those polled – 69.8 per cent in Serbia and 54 per cent in Montenegro – believed that Serbia and Montenegro should join the Partnership for Peace. Moreover, more than two-fifths thought that PfP membership would bring more benefits than costs to the country. Compared to earlier surveys carried out in May and July 2003 and October 2003, these results show that the public is warming to the idea of PfP membership. On the other hand, about half of those polled – 56.2 per cent in Serbia and 50.2 per cent in Montenegro – do not wish Serbia and Montenegro to join NATO. When asked about their level of trust in NATO, only 4.3 per cent in Serbia and 3.2 per cent in Montenegro said that they would “trust” the Alliance.

The evolution of public attitudes towards NATO will likely depend on future interaction between the Alliance and Serbia and Montenegro and on NATO actions in South-eastern Europe. Specifically, popular attitudes to NATO will depend on the Alliance's ability to provide security for ethnic Serbs in Kosovo and on the way its forces conduct themselves in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

## Outstanding issues for Serbia and Montenegro

### *ICTY Cooperation*

Of the various preconditions for PfP membership, the most difficult to fulfil is that of full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. In practice, this means surrender of the most wanted indictee: Ratko Mladic. At present, however, no one appears able to say for sure whether he really is living in Serbia. Moreover, the NATO-led force operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the past eight years has failed to track down either Radovan Karadzic or Mladic in spite of the intelligence-gathering resources at the disposal of Alliance members.

The Serbian government has made it clear that if and when it is presented with reliable information about Mladic's whereabouts in Serbia, appropriate forces will arrest him. Moreover, it has already extradited several individuals, including former President Milosevic. As a result, even moderate Serbs find it unacceptable that their country is effectively held to ransom by this

issue. Moreover, most Serbs find it hard to view the ICTY as an impartial body, given the overwhelming preponderance of Serb indictees. And many point to double standards. Countries whose democratic credentials are no better than those of Serbia and Montenegro are already members of the Partnership for Peace.

Clearly, cooperation with the ICTY is important and must continue. However, care also needs to be taken not to undermine Serbia and

Montenegro's nascent democratic institutions. Zoran Djindjic, the late Prime Minister who was murdered in March 2003, may have paid the ultimate price for his cooperation. Despite this, some outsiders appear to prefer to focus more on criticising Serbia and Montenegro for failing to meet all ICTY obligations, than on seeking to help build a viable, democratic system.

### *Lawsuit against eight Allies*

Since the 1999 NATO air campaign, Serbia and Montenegro has had a case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague against eight NATO member states (though not against the Alliance itself). As long as this exists, it is another obstacle to PfP membership. In April, legal representatives of Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom asked the ICJ to dismiss the case on the grounds that at the time of the indictment Serbia and Montenegro was not a member of the United Nations. In the opinion of the authorities of Serbia and Montenegro, this case is linked to two other cases at the ICJ, namely genocide charges against Serbia and Montenegro brought by Croatia and by Bosnia and Herzegovina respectively. In the Bosnian case, the ICJ ruled that it has competence, even though Serbia and Montenegro was not a member of the United Nations at the

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Two-thirds of Serbs and Montenegrins believe their country should join the Partnership for Peace programme

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time of the indictment. Belgrade has proposed the simultaneous dropping of all three lawsuits as the only way to overcome the current deadlock. To date, there has not been a response from the other two parties, but the proposal remains on the table.

#### *Other matters*

Other NATO preconditions for a closer relationship between the Alliance and Serbia and Montenegro have largely been met. These include the ending of covert support to the Army of Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the progress that has been made in the field of military reform.

#### *Landlines of NATO communication*

Serbia and Montenegro could still take additional steps to improve relations with the Alliance, which would simultaneously help provide better security in Kosovo. Belgrade could, for example, make Serbian and Montenegrin territory available to NATO for road and rail transport, thereby improving links between SFOR and KFOR. Since the first reinforcements deployed in Kosovo in March involved transporting troops stationed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such a move would be in the interest of both NATO and Serbia and Montenegro.

#### **Outstanding issues for NATO**

##### *PfP membership for Serbia and Montenegro*

Serbian and Montenegrin membership of the Partnership for Peace (together with that of Bosnia and Herzegovina) would clearly help build stability in the Balkans. Given the importance of the Balkans to wider European stability, such a move would also likely have wider benefits. Moreover, within Serbia and Montenegro, it would help strengthen the hand of reformers and speed the reform process to help the country play a constructive role in regional security. Since both Serbia and Montenegro and the region as a whole are lagging far behind the rest of Europe, the earlier that Serbia and Montenegro joins the Partnership for Peace the better.

##### *Coordination with the European Union*

Serbia and Montenegro has a vested interest in strategic cooperation between two key Western institutions, the European Union and NATO. In July 2003, the two organisations published a framework EU and NATO concerted approach for the Western Balkans, reaffirming a common vision for the Balkans characterised by “self-sustaining stability based on democratic and effective government structures and a viable free market economy”, leading, eventually, to EU and NATO membership. NATO, the strongest and most cohesive political and military alliance in history, and the European Union, the only institution capable of bringing political and economical order and prosperity to the region, have inseparable roles to play in this historical undertaking.

#### *KFOR*

According to the UNSCR 1244, KFOR is responsible in Kosovo for dissuading hostile acts and providing a secure and safe environment for all ethnic communities, their property and historical and spiritual heritage. In practice, this means protecting Serb and other non-Albanian minorities and enclaves throughout the province – an enormous undertaking for the Alliance as the tragic events of March demonstrated. At the time, while most contingents in the NATO-led forces responded in an effective and professional manner, this was not universally the case. For KFOR successfully to carry out its mission, it has to demonstrate at all times its professionalism, unity of purpose and impartiality. It must also remain sufficiently large to deal with all contingencies. Serbian military analysts believe that KFOR should not have been reduced below 25,000 troops and that to improve the security of Serb enclaves and monuments, it should now consider the deployment of up to 1,000 Serbian and Montenegrin troops, as originally foreseen in the 1999 Military Technical Agreement.

#### *Way forward*

The issues of Serbia and Montenegro’s cooperation with the ICTY and the outstanding ICJ lawsuits need to be resolved. However, they should not prevent Serbia and Montenegro from joining the Partnership for Peace. Nobody who cares about stability in both Serbia and Montenegro and the wider region could wish to deprive the country of access to one of the most effective mechanisms for responding to contemporary security threats and challenges. Serbia and Montenegro’s continued exclusion from the Partnership for Peace would only fuel conspiracy theories at home and provide further ammunition for extremists.

Progressive elements in Serbia and Montenegro crave a more open and “warmer” approach by NATO and to NATO. Both the political elite and ordinary citizens still have to confront the country’s past, but they have already taken bold steps in that direction. The wounds of the recent past and, in particular, the NATO air campaign, remain deep. A show of remorse by NATO for civilians killed in Allied air strikes would contribute to the healing process and help the Serbian and Montenegrin authorities make the case for wider international cooperation – including that with the ICTY – to the general public.

Serbia and Montenegro desperately needs policies which tend towards its inclusion in the international community rather than its continued exclusion from it. Future prosperity lies in international cooperation and access to the process of Euro-Atlantic integration. A great start would be an invitation from NATO to join the Partnership for Peace at the earliest opportunity. ■



For more on the G17 Institute, see [www.g17institute.com](http://www.g17institute.com)

# The Albanian dream

*Alfred Moisiu analyses Albania's relationship with NATO and its aspirations for eventual Alliance membership.*

Albania holds a special place in the history of NATO relations with the former Eastern bloc. This is because it was the first former communist country publicly to announce that it wished to join the Alliance. That was in December 1992. Four months later, then NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner formally travelled to Tirana and this groundbreaking visit opened a new chapter in the history of relations between my country and the most successful alliance of modern times. At the beginning of 1994, Albania endorsed the Partnership for Peace concept and on 23 February of that year became one of the first countries to sign the Partnership for Peace document. Since then, we have systematically pursued a flexible yet comprehensive approach to NATO membership.

Having been both Defence Minister and chairman of the Albanian Atlantic Association for eight years before becoming President, I can testify to the fact that integration into NATO has been and remains a top priority for Albania. Indeed, throughout this decade I have had the pleasure to observe the huge support that the Albanian public has given to this endeavour, support that has made it possible for the government to undertake the necessary reforms to bring our standards up to those required by NATO.

Both the government and wider Albanian society view Euro-Atlantic integration as critical for our country and its future. In this way, we are faithfully implementing our annual national programme of the Membership Action Plan, a process that involves the participation of both executive and legislative branches of government, as well as political parties and wider civil society. Both public and political opinion in Albania perceive Alliance membership as a key step towards the development of a stable democratic system and a functioning market economy. Moreover, the goal of membership reflects an active foreign policy and is helping us restructure the Albanian Armed Forces to improve their ability to defend the freedom and sovereignty of our country.

We are aware, however, that we will not be invited to join NATO simply because of the level of public support for Alliance membership or for our contribution to NATO-led peacekeeping operations. Rather, when we are invited to join the Alliance, it will be in recognition of much hard work and the successful conclusion of a long and comprehensive reform process to bring our standards in line with those of the Alliance. This reform process is now moving forward

smoothly and I have had the pleasure to witness the steady improvement in our relations with NATO.

## European integration

In addition to pursuing NATO membership, Albania is simultaneously seeking closer integration with Europe. To this end, Albania is currently negotiating an Association and Stabilisation Agreement with the European Union, a process of special importance for the development and future of our country. In close cooperation with other countries in Southeastern Europe, Albania is now working towards bringing its standards up to European levels and following the example of the ten countries – eight of which are from Central and Eastern Europe – that joined the European Union on 1 May.

In recent years, Albania has demonstrated both moderation and vision in establishing mutually beneficial and enduring relations with all countries in Southeastern Europe. This has been manifested in a series of high-level political contacts, bilateral and multilateral agreements, and a series of common projects that are currently underway. Improvements in the overall political climate suggest that the countries of Southeastern Europe may be on the verge of a definitive break with the conflict that has characterised their past and especially the 1990s, and on the way – via bilateral and multilateral cooperation – towards closer European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

A significant example of today's more cooperative atmosphere in Southeastern Europe is the Adriatic Charter that was signed last year by the three countries aspiring to NATO membership – Albania, Croatia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* – and the United States. The process that has since been set in train and is being generously supported by the United States aims at promoting cooperation among these countries in order to meet NATO's entry criteria. In this way, our countries are able to serve as an example for the entire region.

Albania supports democratic processes in Kosovo as well as ongoing efforts by both the international community and NATO to build stability there. We believe that the Alliance's presence in the region remains indispensable. This is because stability in parts of the Balkans remains fragile and certain questions of vital importance for our security remain unanswered. We have been impressed by progress achieved to date in Kosovo and in particular the way that the Kosovar institutions that emerged from free and

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*Alfred Moisiu is President of Albania.*

fair elections are increasingly taking responsibility for the province's government. We believe in and support the talks that have now started between Belgrade and Pristina on practical matters and recognise that the international community must seek to uphold minimal standards in Kosovo. Nevertheless, we believe that a decision on Kosovo's ultimate status should not be delayed, since any such delay risks benefiting extremists on both sides.

### Meeting membership criteria

Albania is determined to work to meet all NATO membership criteria, in particular the reform of our Armed Forces. This involves the consolidation of civilian control over the military, increased state spending on defence and reform of the way in which we educate, train and drill our soldiers. We are grateful to the United States for its support for these reforms, as well as to other Alliance members, including Germany, Italy, Turkey and the United Kingdom, for fruitful bilateral cooperation and assistance. The reform package is being carried out in accordance with the *2001-2010 Reform Plan*. This provides a new legal framework covering the best possible security for our country, our participation in peacekeeping operations, and our contribution towards peace and stability in South-eastern Europe and beyond in the fight against terrorism.

The Albanian Armed Forces are active in NATO's peacekeeping missions as well as those of the United Nations and the US-led International Coalition against Terrorism. Our soldiers are deployed in the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Albania joined the International Coalition against Terrorism as soon as it was formed and has supported it in every possible way, politically, diplomatically and financially, as well as militarily. Indeed, special units of the Albanian Army are currently deployed in Iraq.

The Prague Summit was a watershed for NATO and a diplomatic triumph for the seven countries that were invited

to join the Alliance on that occasion. NATO grew stronger; Europe's zone of security was substantially extended; and, critically from the Albanian perspective, the Summit both reaffirmed NATO's open-door policy and recognised our achievements and those of the two other countries aspiring to membership towards meeting Alliance entry criteria and in the field of military reform, as well as the vigorous support that Albania has given to NATO.

We are aware that Albania's historical political and economic under-development, internal instability and wider conflict in Southeastern Europe undermined our membership aspirations at the Prague Summit. We, nevertheless, remain committed to the accession process and meeting NATO's political, economic and military membership criteria is a key national objective.

We believe that Albania merits its eventual NATO membership both because Albanians have a powerful emotional commitment to the Alliance and because our country has already been behaving as a *de facto* Alliance member for many years. The NATO-led missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* and our own participation in SFOR and ISAF have helped strengthen the feelings of sympathy and support towards NATO, the United States and Euro-Atlantic values, among the wider population. Moreover, the reforms that we are

undertaking to strengthen the rule of law and democracy, as well as our contribution to the fight against organised crime and international terrorism will make us a reliable and capable Ally.

Every citizen, politician and president has some idea, some project or goal in his or her life that he or she is willing to fight for above all other. My dream is to witness my country's integration into NATO. It is a dream that I share with the vast majority of my fellow citizens and it is the unanimous goal of tomorrow's generation that is growing up today. Through our combined efforts, I hope and believe that this dream will one day soon become reality. ■



*Looking up: Meeting NATO's political, economic and military entry criteria is a key national objective*

# Aspiring to NATO membership

*Zvonimir Mahečić examines Croatia's relationship with NATO and its Alliance membership aspirations.*

Croatia's January 2000 elections represented a watershed in the development of the country's security and defence structures. They brought to power democrats committed to promoting the rule of law, human rights and civil liberties and aspiring to deeper and closer relations with the European Union and NATO with a view to eventual membership in both organisations. In the intervening period, Croatia has come a long way, but the country still has even further to travel if it is to meet these goals.

The change was immediate and manifested itself in improved relations and increased cooperation both with neighbouring countries and the wider international community. Moreover, this new state of affairs was rapidly recognised by NATO, with the result that Croatia was able to join the Partnership for Peace programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in May 2000. Two years later, Croatia joined the Membership Action Plan (MAP).

Today, Croatia actively participates in many regional security initiatives. These include the Quadrilateral Initiative, together with Hungary, Italy and Slovenia, and the Adriatic Charter, together with Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* as well as the South East Europe Defence Ministers Meeting and the South East Europe Brigade. And Zagreb is host to the Regional Arms Control and Verification Implementation Centre. This is a regional forum for security dialogue, enhanced cooperation and confidence building that is now deepening and expanding its involvement in regional security and defence cooperation.

Representatives of the state and its political institutions as well as much of the public are aware that our credibility as a partner remains to a large extent dependent on ongoing cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. While the administration is committed to such cooperation, some Croats resent the intrusion of a foreign court in internal matters. As a result, opinion-formers in all institutions have to renew efforts to explain the importance of war-crimes trials to reconstruction, reconciliation and the embedding of clear moral and ethical principles and the rule of law in our society. For, as all senior Croatian officials argue, guilt is individual, not collective. The ICTY is one of the elements that should help build a framework for reconciliation, but it

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remains remote from its beneficiaries, ordinary people on all sides who were victims during the war. For this reason and to build effective state structures, efforts also need to be made to establish the conditions for proper war-crimes trials in our own domestic courts.

## Defence reforms

Since the change in regime, many security-related constitutional and legal reforms have been passed. These include the Defence Act and the Military Service Act, both of which helped establish appropriate civilian control of the armed forces and security agencies. The *Hrvatski Sabor* (parliament) and its Committee for Internal Affairs and National Security now has authority over the Armed Forces as far as their financing, deployment, and appointment procedures are concerned. The Defence Ministry is responsible for their daily management in close cooperation with the President who, as Commander-in-Chief, is solely responsible for defending the country's political independence and territorial integrity. Under the new arrangement, the role of the Chief-of-Staff has been clarified. He is now directly accountable to the Defence Minister and, in some cases with the Prime Minister's consent, to the President, and responsible for preparing key documents concerning the Armed Forces' daily operations.

Similar reforms have been applied to the security agencies. Under the provisions of the National Security Act, a National Security Council has been established, including the President, the Prime Minister and some of the more prominent ministers, which manages and commands the security agencies.

The adoption of a *National Security Strategy* and *Defence Strategy* in spring 2002 and a *Military Strategy* a year later also represent important milestones for security and defence structures. Under the new legal provisions, the General Staff, Defence Minister, President, government, and parliament all played a part in drafting, assessing and adopting these strategic documents. Although there may still be shortcomings both in their substance and in the process by which they were prepared, the effort invested and the learning experience have been extremely positive. The fact that Croatia now possesses these strategic documents adds coherence and efficiency to the state's activities in this area and future versions will no doubt be improved with the benefit of experience.

The desire to upgrade Croatia's military capabilities is motivated by two main considerations. Firstly, since we are not a





*New horizons: Croatia intends to maintain the pace of military reform in the expectation that one day soon the country will be invited to join NATO*

member of NATO, we have to maintain sufficient independent military capabilities to ensure our national security. Secondly, at the same time, we have to think about the kinds of military capabilities that we might be able to bring to NATO in the event that we are invited to join the Alliance and the standards that we will have to meet. At the same time, however, the military reform process is constrained by limited resources.

Work on defence reform began with organisational restructuring in the Defence Ministry, General Staff and Armed Forces. In the Defence Ministry, many departments have been reduced; the Croatian Army has been reorganised into four corps; and a new Joint Education and Training Command as well as a Logistic Command have been created. At the same time, the Armed Forces are being downsized. Some 7,000 soldiers either left or applied to leave voluntarily between 2000 and the end of 2003. A special programme has been set up with NATO support to assist the reintegration of former soldiers into civilian life, by, for example, organising workshops to help them acquire skills for alternative employment. In addition, several superfluous military installations are being converted for civilian use, thereby enabling the Defence Ministry to save funds that would otherwise have been spent on refurbishment and maintenance.

#### Budget matters

Savings – wherever they can be made – are important to help fund further reforms and improvements in military capabilities, since reducing the numbers of active soldiers

is, in the short-term at least, costly and is placing great pressure on both the military and the state budget. In common with many European countries, Croatia suffers from a “zero-growth budget” mentality that has seen the resources allocated to the military decline in both absolute and relative terms every year for the past seven years. As the economy improves, with greater stability throughout the region and the return of mass tourism, this situation should improve and it might be possible to increase military spending without significantly changing the proportion of national wealth allocated to this area.

If everything goes to plan, the mid-term projection for the military budget is 2.2 per cent of GDP, which is almost 10 per cent more in relative terms than in 2003. And the projected military budget structure is 50 per cent for personnel (compared with 70 per cent in 2003), 30 per cent for operational costs and infrastructure and 20 per cent for acquisition. But these issues still need to be properly debated by politicians and public alike in order to build a national consensus on what we should expect from our Armed Forces and what resources we are prepared to invest in them.

Since joining the Partnership for Peace in May 2000, Croatia has progressively intensified its dialogue with NATO and made the most of Alliance expertise, structures and programmes, including the Planning and Review Process, to assist and guide the military reform process. MAP participation has helped build awareness that preparations for NATO membership involve far more than the Defence

Ministry, thereby making inter-agency coordination essential. Whereas the early focus of Croatia's relationship with the Alliance was on preparing forces to participate in NATO/PfP operations, today they cover a much broader range of activities. Indeed, Croatia is working on implementing 48 Partner goals, 38 of which fall under the jurisdiction of the Defence Ministry and General Staff, and 10 of which involve inter-agency cooperation.

Successful and timely implementation of these goals will result in reformed defence structures and in the Armed Forces' ability to meet NATO standards of interoperability. This in turn will affect the most important elements of our defence policy, especially those connected to training and education, acquisition, financial and material management. In our efforts to install sufficient safeguards and procedures to make secure the most sensitive exchange of information with NATO, considerable progress has already been made. Under the provisions of the Security Services Law, which was passed by the *Hrvatski Sabor* in March 2002, a legal framework has been established for the creation of an Information Security and Cipher Protection Agency. The main function of this agency will be to protect the secure flow of information through government departments and agencies.

Under the same law, an Office of the National Security Council has also been created. This body is designed to provide the National Security Council with the expertise, analytical capabilities and administrative support that it requires and includes a central register for distribution of documents. In the future, one of its tasks will be to carry out security clearances to NATO standards of individuals who might have access to sensitive documentation or information.

These changes and others brought in in recent years, as Croatia changed its political system from one that was semi-presidential to one that is parliamentary, have generally streamlined relations between political institutions and security and defence structures. Some discrepancies, nevertheless, remain. One example is that the President, who is Commander-in-Chief responsible for national defence, is not yet legally involved in the process of preparing the military budget or the long-term development plan for the Armed Forces. But this and other discrepancies can be worked out, given good will throughout the political spectrum.

### NATO focus

Several further NATO-related documents are currently being developed. This includes a *Long-Term Development Plan of the Armed Forces*, a *Modernisation Plan*, a

*Strategic Defence Review*, a *Study on the Professionalisation of the Armed Forces* and a *Joint Doctrine of the Armed Forces*. In combination, these documents should contribute to further improvements in Croatia's defence structures and greater efficiency in defence matters. Despite this, much legislation – including laws concerning the stationing of foreign troops on Croatian soil and the deployment of the Croatian Armed Forces abroad in response to Article 5, collective-defence obligations – still need to be overhauled before Croatia is ready to join NATO.

In this context, a new challenge will be to reinforce domestic support for NATO membership while making it clear that the Alliance's collective-defence provisions involve both benefits and opportunities and costs and responsibilities. The latest opinion polls indicate support for Alliance membership in Croatia to be between 50 and 60 per cent. For this figure to increase, the government will have to address the obstacles ahead and engage the wider public in a forthright debate.

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As a small country that has experienced the consequences of war and instability, we cannot take security for granted and have to invest in it ourselves and, additionally, to use all available international tools and mechanisms. In this way, Croatia is eager to play its part in addressing the most crucial security problems of today; is helping develop regional cooperation and understanding; and is participating actively in

both the war against terrorism and efforts to combat the threat of organised crime, an issue of special concern in Southeastern Europe.

Croatian military observer teams and civilian experts are involved in a variety of UN peacekeeping missions – in Sierra Leone, West Sahara, Eritrea-Ethiopia, Kashmir and East Timor. Moreover, we have deployed a military police platoon to Afghanistan within the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force and are supporting ongoing international efforts in peace-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in resolving ethnic unrest in Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\* Our troops have learned a lot through their foreign deployments and been praised for their professionalism by the United Nations, the officials of host countries and by field commanders.

Croatia remains focused on the MAP process and intends to maintain the pace of military reform in the coming years in the expectation that NATO's door will remain open and one day soon the country will be invited to join the Alliance. In the words of President Stjepan Mesić at the Prague Summit: "We are well aware of our obligations and know that only by fulfilling them can we achieve our aspirations." ■

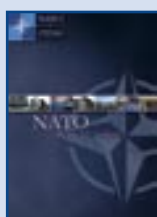


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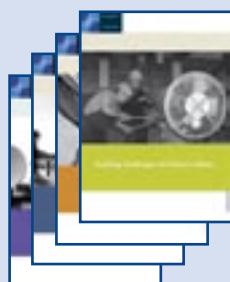
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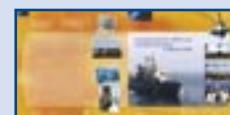
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