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The EU has just experienced its most substantial enlargement since its establishment. At the same time, the disagreements over the European constitution appear to be resolved - allowing for its signing in June 2004. In the Western Balkans, the developments in recent months have been more ambivalent. The positive avis of the European

Commission to the Croatian application for EU membership sends an important signal to the Western Balkans. External Relations Commissioner Patten emphasised that "Croatia is the first of the western Balkan countries to get to this stage," suggesting that more countries are to follow if they are ready. Macedonia did follow suit with a formal application. The violence in Kosovo and the political instability in Serbia suggest that parts of the region are struggling with stability. Both the transformation process and the EU accession process appear fragile in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and Kosovo. As Gerald Knaus of the European Stability Initiative suggested recently, there is a danger that the Western Balkans might be divided between those countries capable of engaging in the accession process and those who are not.

This issue of the European Balkan Observer examines four aspects of recent developments in the region. The first article by Vladimir Gligorov re-examines the Stabilization and Association Process and explores

the new EU strategy of European Partnerships with the countries of the region. In the second article, Islam Yusufi examines the record of the EU's security policy in Macedonia over the past years, and is of particular relevance for Bosnia-Herzegovina where the EU is poised to take over the role of international security presence from NATO control. Neophytos Loizides surveys the prospects of a peace-settlement in Cyprus in light of the failed referendum. The case of Cyprus not only puts pressure on the EU to improve its conflict-resolution capacity, but also sheds light on the interplay between accession and conflict management in the Western Balkans. The final contribution surveys all the plans for the final status for Kosovo and examines both their key features and their likelihood for success.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the European Balkan Observer. Comments and contributions are welcome!

Florian Bieber

European Partnership with the Balkans

By Vladimir Gligorov

The EU has launched a new initiative in regard to the Western Balkans—The European Partnership. Vladimir Gligorov examines this new approach and relates it to the established Sap and the Southern and Eastern enlargement of the Union. He argues that the EP is a recognition of the importance of accession in the reform process of the countries in the region.

On the eve of the European Union's (EU) Eastern enlargement, the European Commission published its third Annual Report on the Stabilisation and Association process (SAP) for South East Europe in the last days of March 2004. At the same time, it announced the launching of the European Partnership (EP) with the countries of the Western Balkans (WB) with the list of short and medium term changes that these countries have to introduce to advance on the path to EU integration. As the plethora of acronyms in this passage suggests, it is not altogether easy to make sense of what kind of a change this new initiative introduces and who it refers to precisely. Therefore, some of the key names and concepts will be clarified first, then the process of EU relationship and policies towards the region of South East Europe will be described, which should make it possible to discuss the substance of the SAP and EP and to assess where it is now and where it is going. For the latter, the Annual Report and the separate country reports provide the elements of an answer.¹

Who are the partners in the EP?

There is a growing confusion about who is the EU talking about when it says South East Europe, the Western Balkans, the SAP countries and now the EP countries. This is mainly because of the evolving nature of the EU's relations with the Balkans. The political and geographical criteria do not fit together with those relations with a lot of constancy. Here is an attempt at a clarification of the political geography of that region, in part as seen through the eyes of the EU. The Balkans is a relatively fixed term in political geography. It combines a geographical concept of the Balkan peninsula with the concept of political regionalism. The former defines the area south of the rivers Sava and Danube. The latter uses the criterion that every country that participates with a territory, however small, in some geographical area belongs to that political region. Thus, to give an example of a usual political geography classification, Turkey is a Balkan and a European country, because it has a territory in the Balkans and in Europe, though that territory is quite small compared to the total territory either of Turkey or of the Balkans or of Europe. In the same way, Slovenia and Romania are Balkan countries, though only small shares of

small shares of their territories are on the Balkan peninsula. It can be noted, as that is sometimes a cause of the confusion, that the geographical concept is exclusive, something is either on the Balkans or not, while the political one is inclusive: a country can be a European and an Asian one, a Balkan and a Central European one, for instance.

Thus, the Balkans are a rather clear concept in political geography. The same cannot be said of South East Europe. That is because it does not define precisely any geographical area, e.g., the geographical borders of the Balkans cannot change, while those of South East Europe can and often do. It is most often just the political grouping, together with a loosely defined geographical location, that determines the territorial extension of South East Europe. The same applies to such regions as the Western Balkans. These two are defined as follows: South East Europe has been defined to include seven Balkan countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia and Montenegro (sometimes Moldova is added as the eighth member of this group complicating the matters even more, as Moldova is not a Balkan country). This was done in the context of the launching of the Stability Pact for

¹ Third Annual Report and the related documents, as well as the previous two reports, can be found at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/sap/rep3/index.htm

South East Europe, an initiative that came into being after the Kosovo war in 1999. Sometime before that, the region of the Western Balkans was distinguished and it included five of the SEE countries, i.e., all South East European countries except Bulgaria and Romania. The driving motivation for these groupings was the belief that the Balkan security problems can be dealt with more easily if they are put in a regional and developmental context. Indeed, the move from the WB to SEE was an attempt to enlarge the context in order to be able to deal with the security and stabilisation problems after the end of the war in Kosovo.

One difference between the SEE and the WB is in their path to EU integration. Bulgaria and Romania have Europe Agreements with the EU and are, as candidates for membership, negotiating their accession to the Union.² For the Western Balkan countries a new contractual relationship was devised and was called the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) in 1999. It became a part of the Stabilisation and Association process (SAP, sometimes written as SAP) which offers a prospect for EU membership to all WB countries. It is that process which is now enriched with the new instrument, the European Partnership (EP). Thus, WB is a sub-region of SEE in terms of political geography while it is a separate region in terms of the process of EU integra-

² The expected date of accession is 2007. These two countries are already included in the financial projections for the period 2007-2013.

tion. Both are sub-regions of the Balkans, where, apart from EU member states of Greece and Slovenia (latter from May 1, 2004) one finds Turkey, which is a candidate for EU membership, though the decision on the start of its negotiations with the EU on the accession to membership should be made by the end of 2004 (which may or may not be positive or may be conditional).

These rather clearly defined concepts get blurred and confused in publications by the EU and the other international institutions and organisations. Thus, the latest Annual Report of the European Commission refers to South East Europe, but deals mainly with only four of the five WB countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro. Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey are mentioned for purposes of political and economic comparisons.

The role of Croatia in the report is more complicated. It is not assessed as far as its progress in the implementation of its Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU is concerned. However, the Report refers to Croatia in some of its economic assessments. This ambiguity is the consequence of the fact that the SAP is implemented on case by case basis and thus reflects the diversity of the region's relationship with the EU and contributes to it in turn. It is not clear, in the case of Croatia since the positive decision of the Commission regarding its membership application, what will be the role of the EP, except perhaps as a time-table for the adoption

of the *acquis communautaire*. Similar issues can be raised in the case of Macedonia that has applied for membership this year.

As a consequence of the changing relationships of the EU with the countries in the Balkans, the definitions of SEE and WB have become somewhat blurred. Still, the Annual Report refers to the WB throughout, its title and the coverage of countries notwithstanding. In view of that, it can be concluded that the concepts of political geography have become less useful than those that determine the stages on the path to EU integration. Those will be discussed next.

SAP: Prospects and Instruments

When it was introduced, the SAP consisted mainly of the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA) that were offering the perspective of EU membership to the WB countries. Those were fashioned after the Europe Agreements, but were initially seen only as an intermediary step towards these agreements. This was changed at the Thessaloniki Summit of the EU and the WB in late June 2003. The SAA was to be the first and the last contractual agreement between association and membership.³ Thus, the SAP in essence consists of an SAA and its implementation. Then, the accession process takes over.

SAs consist of a detailed part on asymmetric trade liberalisation (EU opens its

³ See Council Conclusions on the Western Balkans from June 16, 2003. Those were adopted by the Summit.

markets to the WB faster than *vice versa*)⁴ and a more general part consisting of the Copenhagen conditions supplemented with specific conditions that reflect the post-conflict character of the SAP countries. Thus, the cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the return of refugees are among the more important additional conditions. Also, there is a regional dimension to the SAAs: WB countries are required to work hard to improve political and economic relations in their region.⁵ Therefore, the EPs contain sections that note the advances in the regional cooperation and list further policies that should be adopted to improve it.

The SAAs are negotiated with each country separately. The EU insists that each country will be treated individually and its speed of EU integration will depend only on how it is able to implement its own SAA. So far, two countries have managed to sign their

⁴ EU liberalised its trade with the WB unilaterally in 2000. From then on (or somewhat later in the case of Serbia and Montenegro), WB has tariff-free access to the EU markets with only few exceptions. Details of the arrangement and of its significance and impact can be found in the annex to the Annual Report. The schedule of trade liberalisation on the part of the WB countries is put down in the SAA, once it is negotiated.

⁵ Initially, in the late nineties, the regional approach was formulated differently: a country could not expect to advance in the EU integration faster than in the regional cooperation. This has been all but dropped in the formulation of the SAP and EP.

SAAs: Macedonia in the spring of 2001 and Croatia in the autumn of the same year. Together with the SAA, an interim agreement is signed, with which the implementation of the trade part of the agreement starts immediately, while the SAA as a whole becomes operational once it is ratified by all the member states of the EU and by the EU Parliament. In the case of Macedonia, the SAA has come in force on April 1, 2004. In the case of Croatia, the ratification process has not been finished yet.⁶ The other SAP countries are at different stages of the whole process. Albania is negotiating its SAA, but the progress has been slow so far. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been given a conditional go-ahead to start SAA negotiations as soon as it fulfils a number of conditions (in 16 so-called priority areas). EU is working on the feasibility study for Serbia and Montenegro, which should assess the readiness of this state to start negotiating its SAA.⁷ Finally, there is Kosovo, a province of Serbia, which is under UN administration and is participating in the SAP via a Tracking Mechanism (called Stabilisation and Association Tracking Mechanism or STM) which is nominally the same as the SAP only it does not include the SAA, because Kosovo is not a sovereign entity and thus cannot en-

⁶ United Kingdom, Netherlands and Italy are yet to ratify the agreement.

⁷ The study was to be finished by the spring of this year, but has been postponed because Serbia and Montenegro are late in implementing the Constitutional Charter of their state union.

ter into international contractual relations.⁸

At the Thessaloniki Summit in late June 2003, the idea of an European Partnership with the WB countries was introduced. The initial proposal called for the European Integration Partnership,⁹ but the word integration was dropped in the end. This change reflects the ambiguity that is inherent to the SAP. It offers a perspective of membership in the EU to the participants in the process, which are the WB countries. But not a pre-accession status. This ambiguity has two parts: the one that relates to the ends and the other that identifies the means.

The premise on which the third Annual Report is based is that the WB countries are to become EU member states: they have a perspective of membership and are potential candidates. With that in mind, the offer of EP is made. But the partnership offered is not on the process of integration and accession, but on the preconditions that the WB countries should fulfil in order to become eligible for accession to membership. One way to see this rather subtle difference is to observe that

⁸ On that see the Annual Report and the Commission Staff working paper on Serbia and Montenegro. It is mentioned in the Annual Report that the Kosovo part of the EP may have to be rewritten in view of the recent ethnic conflicts there.

⁹ See "European Commission proposes new European Integration Partnership for the Western Balkans" to be found at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/news/ip03_721.htm.

the SAP is the responsibility of the directorate for external relations and not of the directorate for enlargement.

When it comes to the instruments, the ambiguity is easier to see. The SAAs are just like Europe Agreements in terms of the areas of integration and harmonisation that they cover, but do not come together with the pre-accession financial assistance and institutional support. They are supported by the CARDS (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation) programme, which again came into being after the Kosovo war and was initially intended to support the process of reconstruction. If the word reconstruction is taken in a wider sense, that includes economic and institutional development, that is what it is still mainly concerned with. This approach is out of date for some countries in the WB region. There are issues of post-conflict reconstruction to be dealt with in Croatia, but the issues of EU integration are becoming much more important. Indeed, the former are more easily tackled within the latter process. Similar statement can be made about Macedonia and increasingly about Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the case of Albania, reconstruction has really to be seen within a development agenda, while the security problems are mostly of a criminal nature. Thus, it is only in the case of Serbia and Montenegro that the initial idea underlying the setting up of the CARDS still applies to. And that mainly because of the unresolved issue of the status of Kosovo and the

connected issue of the constitutional set up of Serbia and Montenegro. There are of course other security issues that are connected with that of Kosovo and its unresolved status.

Thus, though in an ambiguous way, the fact that the process of EU integration is starting to dominate the SAP is being recognised with the introduction of the EPs. Thus, the next question is: What are they about?

Fragmentation of the Sap

The SAP and the EP have to be seen in the context of the evolving, not to say at times confused, Balkan policy of the EU. One aspect of it is the so-called regional approach. The other has to do with the objectives of this policy. Finally, there is an issue of the role of the EU in the Wider Europe, which will be commented on in the final section of this article.

Current EU policy towards the Balkans is still informed by the process of disintegration of Yugoslavia and the security problems that it brought about. In addition, the initially slow transition in Romania and Bulgaria, which has led to the consequence that these two countries are the only ones with the Europe Agreements that have failed to be part of the EU eastern enlargement of 2004, has made it difficult for the EU to develop a consistent strategy of Balkan enlargement.¹⁰ Thus, the policy has tried to combine (i) the bilateral approach of EU integration, (ii) the pol-

icy of crisis management with the (iii) introduction of the regional approach developed after the ending of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of 1995.

The newly introduced EP is supposed to combine the three. In principle, this is feasible if it is put in the context of an accession process. Here perhaps it might be useful to distinguish the various concepts that refer to the relations that the EU may have with the countries on its ever expanding borders. Integration, association, neighbourhood and accession are used again often with some ambiguity and confusion.

Integration is a process that has a *de facto* and a *de jure* side. It makes sense to say that the countries in the WB are quite integrated with the EU, in the *de facto* sense. EU is their main trading partner, it is the main source of investment and other types of financing and it is certainly the case that both share the same European culture, whatever that might be. Integration in this sense will increase spontaneously with or without contractual or other formal arrangements. As economic growth returns to the WB, its integration with the EU will increase as the latter is the main engine of growth for this region and because of the process of convergence that will take root.

This could take a while, however. Being in the neighbourhood of the EU will already lead to this factual economic integration. Of course, various arrangements with the neighbours can be made

¹⁰ Of course, if Turkey is added, situation becomes more complex still.

and some of those apply to the Wider Europe, which is the policy of the EU towards its neighbours.¹¹ It is made clear in the Annual Report that this policy does not apply to South East Europe.¹² The latter group of countries are considered as future members of the EU, though their date of accession is not determined yet.

The process of *de facto* integration can be strengthened by formal agreements. There are various types of contractual relations, of which the association agreement is the most prominent one. Some of those do not imply the eligibility for membership, while the others like the Europe Agreements and SAAs do. The latter, however, do not trigger the accession process. The difference is important because of the asymmetry of the commitments that it implies.

In the case of the Europe Agreements, both sides commit themselves to working for the accession to full membership. In the case of the SAA and thus of SAp, the commitment is asymmetrical in the sense that the SAp countries have to commit themselves to fulfil conditions that will make them eligible for accession to the EU, while the EU is mainly monitoring the process. Thus, the SAp countries make a stronger

commitment to the process than the EU.

This asymmetry was noted and discussed extensively in the preparation of the Thessalonica Summit. Proposals were made with the aim of strengthening the commitment of the EU to the region. The main proposal was to apply the pre-accession strategy to the whole region. The main argument for that was that it is only that process that can lock in the whole region and each country within it on the path of internal transformation and regional cooperation. The EP, adopted at the Summit, meets these demands half way. It introduces some elements of the pre-accession process, but falls short of full commitment either in institutional or in financial terms. It still asserts that the WB countries have a perspective to join the EU and the main goal of the financial assistance is to support stabilisation and reconstruction. However, it also introduces new instruments fashioned explicitly on the experience of the previous rounds of enlargement. Such as: the economic policy dialogue, twinning and monitoring (annual country reports). It also opens up some possibilities to the WB countries to participate in the community programmes.

The introduction of the EPs signals the recognition on the part of the EU that it is the process of accession that is the key to the transformation of the South East Europe. The countries of the region themselves have already demonstrated that this is the case. In most cases, it was the realistic prospect of EU membership that influenced the internal

political developments decisively. Indeed, increasingly, the WB countries are looking for the ways to shorten the period of the SAp, and now EP, and to join the accession process. Thus, Croatia and Macedonia have applied for membership and are looking forward to a positive answer from the EU. If granted, however conditionally, it can be expected that the process of EU integration in the whole region will be speeded up. With that, the process of the transformation of the Balkans will become irreversible. The implications for stability and development cannot be overestimated.

Thus, it is increasingly the tangible prospect of membership in the EU that is becoming the key instrument of the transformation of the South East Europe. The evolution of the SAp into the EP and the fragmentation of the various regional approaches all point in that direction.

EU as an anchor

Thessaloniki Agenda and the third Annual Report recognise that EU has to perform the function of the anchor for the transformation of the Balkans. Both, however, do not go far enough. This is the perception within the region as can be concluded from the fact that two WB countries have applied for membership though they have an SAA with the EU and the implementation of it, within the context of the EP, should, in principle, be sufficient for the eventual accession to the EU. The countries in the region, however, want firmer commitment on the part of

¹¹ See the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on „Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A New Framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours“, March 3, 2003.

¹² Though they are invited to participate in some of their programmes.

the EU and they want a more structured and more financially supported relationship with the EU, which only the pre-accession process can provide.

The EP has adopted a number of accession instruments, as already mentioned. EU engages in economic and political dialogue with the WB countries. The economic dialogue is intended to make the countries familiar with the process of the economic policy making in the EU. It could also serve as a vehicle for regional policy coordination, but that goal is not mentioned in the Annual Report. The same is the function of the political dialogues, though they have a regional dimension too. A number of such meetings have been held and more are being planned.

The EU is shifting resources from reconstruction to institution building and is encouraging harmonisation via the adoption of the *acquis communautaire*. It is also stepping up the monitoring, not only through the annual reports, but also through the introduction of the detailed short term and medium term tasks that the WB countries have to fulfil. Indeed, the EPs are nothing else but a list of changes and reforms that the WB partners should introduce. Because the list covers all the areas delineated by the Copenhagen criteria and because there is a temporal structure to them, they clearly imply that if those are fulfilled, the accession to the EU will follow.

Still, this type and level of commitment seems not to have been perceived as being enough for the process of Europeanisation to

start to dominate the internal political agenda of all the WB countries. This is not primarily the financial question, though it is partly that too. It is primarily a political issue for two reasons.

One is that the internal constitutional and other institutional changes that the EP demands are politically and otherwise costly and can be justified to the domestic public only if seen as investments in the future membership in the EU, where future is defined in politically relevant terms, e.g., within two mandates of the government. This is clearly the lesson learned in Macedonia where the constitutional reform can be sustained only if it is anchored in the realistic hope that the process of EU accession will start. That prospect will quicken the reforms and ultimately shorten the time needed to reach the ultimate goal. In that sense, the process has an element of the self-fulfillment prophecy.

The other is that the regional normalisation and cooperation have to be seen within the context of the EU membership. For instance, the internal institutional integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina has to be seen as being part of the EU integration, otherwise further balkanisation, i.e., disintegration may prove to be the preferred option. The same goes for Serbia and Montenegro and even more when it comes to the issue of the final status of Kosovo.¹³

This is an illustration of the famous Jean Monnet

¹³ The issue of Kosovo is especially complex and important, but cannot be dealt with here in more detail.

method of solving problems: "Enlarge the context".¹⁴ The regional approach to the WB was an application of this principle, but was not efficient enough because it pushed for the enlargement within the Balkan context, while double enlargement is required: that of the Balkan and of the European context. The EP is an attempt to do that, though the region seems to signal that nothing short of fully fledged accession process will do the trick, but it may trigger the above alluded to process of self-fulfilling prophecy.

EP and Wider Europe

The EP with the Western Balkans may have wider implications, because it has been hitherto the case that instruments introduced in one place tend to be used in another if they prove to be useful. At the moment, the EU does not look further than the Balkans, including Turkey, for future enlargements. This is remarkable if seen in the historical context, but raises a number of issues besides those. As already pointed out, the process of integration has a spontaneous aspect that comes with the economic development. On the institutional side, it always triggers contractual relationships, at least in the area of trade, but then investment and movement of people inevitably come in. The policy of Wider Europe is designed to address that.

¹⁴ More on that in Vladimir Gligorov, "Delaying Integration: The impact of EU eastern enlargement on individual CEECs not acceding or acceding only later", WIIW Research Report 267 (2000).

If one takes the Balkans as an example, it is evident that once the decision to take in Romania and Bulgaria was made with that on the accession of Croatia and then Macedonia to follow, it is practically impossible not to integrate the rest of the Balkans. Similar considerations may apply to other regions further to the east and to the Mediterranean.¹⁶

It is possible that the instrument of partnership may be used in the evol-

ing integration of these regions with the EU too. Or rather, the existing partnerships may increasingly become European Partnerships, fashioned after the ones now inaugurated for the Western Balkans.

¹⁶ Indeed the Barcelona process is that of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. On the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue see the Report of the High-Level Advisory Group established at the Initiative of the President of the European

Commission, "Dialogue Between Peoples and Cultures in the Euro-Mediterranean Area", October 2003, to be found at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/policy_advisers/experts_groups/doc/s/rapport_complet_en.pdf.

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Europeanizing the Western Balkans through Military and Police Missions: The Cases of Concordia and Proxima in Macedonia

By Islam Yusufi

How does the security presence of EU in the Western Balkans interlink with the integration of the countries into the European Union? Islam Yusufi traces the success of the military and police mission in Macedonia and argues that these two missions had an overall positive impact on the Europeanization of the country.

President Trajkovski of Macedonia described the first ever military mission of the European Union (EU), named Concordia, as a symbol of Macedonia's ambition to establish tighter links with the EU in all areas, including full membership in the Union. He noted that the more of the EU that there is in Macedonia, "the more of Macedonia there will be in the EU." He called the mission one "dimension of the European integration" of Macedonia and a symbol of "an ever-closer union and partnership" between the EU and Macedonia.¹

¹ Speech of the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Boris Trajkovski at the welcome ceremony to the EU Forces, March 31, 2003, Skopje, (*Last accessed March 30, 2004*) <http://www.president.gov.mk/>

Javier Solana, the EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), remarked that with Concordia, the partnership of Macedonia with the EU is growing stronger. He called the EU police mission that succeeded Concordia, Proxima, part of the wider Stabilization and Association Process and a mission that will support the efforts of Macedonia to move closer to membership in the EU. He also referred to the police mission as a milestone on the path leading Macedonia

[eng/info/govori.asp?id=92](http://www.president.gov.mk/info/govori.asp?id=92); Speech of the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Boris Trajkovski at the ceremony of completion of the mission Concordia, December 15, 2003, (*Last accessed March 30, 2004*) <http://www.president.gov.mk/info/govori.asp?id=110>.

towards "integration with, and eventually into, the EU."²

To what degree can military and police missions influence the European integration of a country? Aren't such missions limited to matters of security and defense, areas that have no overt function in bringing a country into the EU? The specific experience of the EU's military

² Speech of EU High Representative, Javier Solana held at the European Union Welcoming Ceremony on March 31, 2003, (*Last accessed March 30, 2004*) <http://ue.eu.int/arym/pdf/transferAuthority.pdf>; Council of the EU, "EU HR Javier Solana attends ceremonies for termination of Operation Concordia and launch of Mission Proxima," December 15, 2003, Nr: S0256/03, (*Last accessed March 30, 2004*) <http://ue.eu.int/pressdata/EN/discours/78413.pdf>.

and police missions in Macedonia helped Europeanize the country, transforming the country's security, defense, and political situation in ways that made it more compatible with European standards.

The Europeanization of Macedonia

When the EU expressed its readiness at the Copenhagen European Council to take over NATO's military mission in Macedonia, named Allied Harmony, the country gained the opportunity to experience the Europeanization process intensively. It was the first Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) country to sign the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). It had proven its democratic credentials with the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement of August 13, 2001, which is seen as a tool for consolidating democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It plays a leading role in bringing together the countries of the Balkans to tackle challenges facing the region. Moreover, by inviting the EU to launch military and police missions, Macedonia signaled its willingness and ability to adopt the logic, norms, patterns of behavior and regulations associated with European integration into its political, security and defense system.

One of the three key objectives of the EU laid out in the recently adopted European Security Strategy refers to the western Balkans and includes re-

storing good government, fostering democracy, enabling the authorities in the region to tackle organized crime and to put the failed states of the western Balkans back on their feet. The strategy document puts it thus: the credibility of EU foreign policy depends on the consolidation of the EU's achievements in the western Balkans.³ In this context, Macedonia was the first political-military testing ground of the EU's European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). This was also a crucial test of the EU's ability to undertake a military operation and to develop operating procedures that would be vital to a potential EU takeover of NATO's Stabilization Force (SFOR) operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) later this year.⁴ Furthermore, the missions were seen as critical to the Europeanization efforts in the region. Indeed, EU's intention was to increase its credibility in the region by treating it as an area into which the EU intends to expand, rather than as a distant region that needs to be stabilized.⁵

³ Council of the EU, "A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy," December 12, 2003, p. 6.

⁴ Alistair J. K. Shepherd, "The European Union's Security and Defense policy: A Policy without Substance?," *European Security*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Spring 2003), p. 47.

⁵ Daniel Serwer, "The Balkans: From War to Peace, From American to European Leadership," Testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on Europe, April 10, 2003, quoted in CEPS, *Europa South-East*

Military and Police Missions as a Tool in the Europeanization Process

Given the centrality of security to the governance system of Macedonia, it will not be surprising to discover that the Europeanization effect of the EU military and police missions has been considerable. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Concordia and Proxima have had a considerable impact on the system of governance in Macedonia and made it more compatible with EU standards.

In order to better understand the Europeanization effects of the EU military and police missions, it is necessary to bear in mind the complementary work of other EU institutions and programs present in Macedonia, including SAA, Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization (CARDS), the European Agency for Reconstruction, the EU Special Representative, and the Delegation of the European Commission. The success of the EU military and police missions is in large part thanks to the work of these complementary instruments. Indeed, almost all the challenges that Macedonia and other countries in the region face are not only a matter for the police or military, and as such they cannot be tackled purely by security and defense means. They require a mix of instruments: military, po-

Monitor, Issue 45, April 2003, p. 3.

lice, diplomatic, reconstruction and other means.

Of course, when referring to the missions, one always needs to bear in mind that when they were first established they were aimed primarily as a means of stabilization. In this capacity Concordia and Proxima contributed to the stabilization of the country and its neighbors. However, by stabilizing the country and by including reform tools, the missions laid the foundation for the Europeanization of the country and also assisted in drawing the country closer to EU membership.

Concordia

At the request of the authorities of Macedonia, the 26-nation military mission Concordia started on March 31, 2003 with an initial six-month mandate (later extended until December 15, 2003⁶). In its eight and a half month mandate, the mission contributed to minimizing the risk of further destabilization in the country, to achieving the EU's overall policy of promoting a stabilization and association process, and to further rapprochement of the country with the EU⁷.

⁶ See Official Journal of the European Union, "Council Decision 2003/563/CFSP of July 29, 2003 on the extension of the European Union military operation in Macedonia," No. L 190/21, July 30, 2003.

⁷ The Concordian, "Concordia Fully Operational Until End," No 11, December 2003, p. 4, (Last accessed April 1, 2004) http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/Concordia/Newsletter/CONCOR-DIA11/Concordia_11_PAGE_4.jpg.

Concordia's presence enabled the government of Macedonia to concentrate on the reform process and SAA. It demonstrated crucial support for the current political process and legitimate institutions in the country and led to the establishment and maintenance of an environment conducive to the democratic governance, multi-ethnicity, rule of law and economic regeneration that are the prerequisites for European integration.⁸

In the sphere of improving the social and economic situation of the country, Concordia conducted civil-military cooperation projects in the villages of former crisis areas, with the aim of improving the living conditions of the people. These projects helped the members of Concordia to establish close relationships with the local population that contributed to improving their mutual rapport.⁹ This was crucial because before the launch of the operation there were fears that the local population would not welcome the EU soldiers, preferring instead to have NATO soldiers remain.

The shift and transfer from a military mission (Concordia) to a police mission (Proxima) signaled a readi-

⁸ The Concordian, Interview: Ambassador Donato Chiarini, No 6, August 2003, p. 1, (Last accessed April 1, 2004)

<http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/Concordia/Newsletter/CONCOR-DIA6/CONCORDIAN%206%20P1.jpg>.

⁹ Concordia Soldiers Improve Relationship with Community, September 15, 2003, (Last accessed April 1, 2004) <http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/Concordia/news2003-09-15.htm>.

ness on the part of the EU to adapt to the new realities in the country and the region, as the whole of the western Balkans was moving from a context of post-conflict reconstruction to genuine development, prosperity and European integration processes.¹⁰

Also, as the political and security situation in the country evolved positively, there was a need for more appropriate means to reflect the situation in the field. It became more relevant for Macedonia to deal with police matters than with matters of a defense character. As the main threat to the stability of the country was no longer armed conflict but criminality, EU support had to focus instead on civilian instruments.¹¹

Proxima

Launched on December 15, 2003 with a mandate of one year¹² and deployed in

¹⁰ See ESI, "The Road to Thessaloniki: Cohesion and the Western Balkans," Berlin, March 12, 2003, <http://www.esiweb.org>; Greek Foreign Ministry, Working Document: Greek Presidency Priorities for the Western Balkans, <http://www.eu2003.gr/en/articles>.

¹¹ Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, "A Milestone on the Path from Conflict to European Integration," *Dnevnik* and *Fakti*, December 15, 2003, (Last accessed March 30, 2004) <http://ue.eu.int/pressdata/EN/articles/78462.pdf>.

¹² Council Joint Action 2003/681/CFSP on the European Union Police Mission in Macedonia (EUPOL 'Proxima'), September 29, 2003, Official Journal of the

response to the request of the authorities of Macedonia, the police mission Proxima has taken an enhanced role in policing and police reforms. The EU police experts, who number around 200, monitor, mentor and advise domestic forces in promoting European policing standards. This includes the fight against organized crime, reforming the Ministry of the Interior, the establishment of a border police as part of the wider EU effort to promote integrated border management, supporting local police in building confidence with the population at large, and enhancing co-operation with neighboring states in the field of policing.

One of the striking features of governance in Macedonia is the over-dominance of defense and security structures in domestic politics, as well as the over-centralized nature of the political and security system of the country. This over-dominance and over-centralism is exemplified (1) in the country's borders being controlled by the army, a fact that runs contrary to European standards; (2) the police structures being overly centralized; and (3) in the lack of sufficient rule of law in all parts of the country, a fact that for a period of time classified Macedonia as a non-functioning state, or a state whose future was in question.¹³

European Union No. L 249/67, October 1, 2003.

¹³ See Jeffrey Simon, Prepared Statement for Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Hearing on Nato Enlargement, April 3, 2003, p. 4, (*Last accessed*

One of the most important components of the Proxima mission that affected the governance system in the country was the restructuring of the border management system, as Macedonia is vulnerable to exploitation of its geographical, political, social, economic and ethnic situation for criminal ends.¹⁴ This restructuring was inaugurated with the adoption of a national strategy of Integral Border Management on December 22, 2003 by the Government of Macedonia, with the support of EU mission Proxima.

According to EU standards, border control in Macedonia is now a matter of law enforcement, rather than national defense. A military conception of border security--which characterized the Cold War era--is no longer relevant given the changed security environment in Europe, including the western Balkans. The task of creating an effective law enforcement system now confronts Macedonia. It will be put into practice in May of this year, by transferring border authority from the military to the police, and by changing the understanding of the border as a defensive perimeter to a concept that will be more comprehensive and entail other issues, including us-

April 1, 2004
<http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2003/SimonTestimony030403.pdf>.

¹⁴ Republic of Macedonia, "National Integrated Border Management Strategy," Inter-ministerial Working Group on Integrated Border Management / European Agency for Reconstruction, European Agency for Reconstruction project 01/MAC05/02-001, Skopje, October 2003, p. 9.

ing the border as a trade tool. This integrated border concept will be increasingly oriented towards regulating the efficient flow of people and goods.

Another important area of Proxima is its support of police reform. With embedded police officers, Proxima is supporting the Ministry of the Interior of Macedonia in its efforts, framed in the recently adopted Police Reform Strategy. The strategy aims to deepen and strengthen democratic values, increase community policing and overcome the confidence gap between citizens and police.

In the context of policing reforms, the most important element that holds significant implications for the Europeanization process is the decentralization of the police authority and part of police oversight functions to local governments. Following its independence and until the adoption of the Ohrid Framework Agreement in 2001, Macedonia did not participate in the common European trend of decentralizing police powers and empowering local governments. In Macedonia, all organizational and functional features of the police were centralized and the municipalities were not given any authority in respect to the police departments. However, with the constitutional and legal changes of 2001, the authority to appoint the local police chiefs was given to the local elected authorities.

By providing help and support to security and related reforms, Concordia and Proxima have established benchmarks and a frame-

work that will aid the country and the EU to tackle the challenges that lie ahead in the Europeanization process of the region. It now has concrete examples of how to deal with organized crime, corruption, porous borders, weak governance, and other challenges that threaten the very existence of the countries of the western Balkans.

Through their work, Concordia and Proxima have thus far enabled Macedonia to adapt its democratic institutions to meet the accession criteria of the EU set in Copenhagen in June 1993. Regarding the monitoring of law enforcement in the country, these missions have contributed to the strengthening of the stability of democratic institutions for guaranteeing the rule of law in the country (*first Copenhagen criterion*). By transposing the standards and best practices of the EU to the security sector of the country, the missions have launched a process for preparing Macedonia to take on the obligations of membership (*third Copenhagen criterion*). Ensuring overall stability as well as stability in the institutions of the country, the process has begun to contribute to the overall economic growth in the country that in turn will enhance the functioning of the market economy of Macedonia (*second Copenhagen criterion*).

In this context, the military and police missions of the EU, together with the complementary instruments of

the wider EU presence in the country, could be seen as a *pre-accession strategy* tool to prepare a country for EU membership.

Concluding remarks

The example of police and military missions in Macedonia suggests that, when supported with complementary Europeanization tools, such missions can play a significant role in transforming the governance system of countries in transition. They do this by strengthening democratic institutions and widening the scope of the democratic process, making them more compatible with EU standards. Similarly, the police and military missions of the EU can give rise to new institutional structures, bodies, and channels of democratic governance, particularly in countries where democratic structures and processes appear weak.

While the EU has been a central actor in the economic development of the Balkans, and there is no doubt that the EU's political significance has been increasing, countries of the western Balkans themselves have played a significant role in the success of EU security and foreign policy in the region. It was the readiness of Macedonia to have the EU take over NATO's mission that made the transition a success. It was mainly the progress achieved by Macedonia that allowed it to say, in the words of Solana,

"good-bye"¹⁵ to the military missions and to invite the police mission. Building on that progress will allow Macedonia to handle the contemporary challenges facing its people. In this context, it will be the readiness of BiH that will dictate whether the EU will be able to take over the SFOR mission from NATO. The deployment of the EU's military and police missions in Macedonia symbolized its recognition of Macedonia as part of a wider EU system, that the problems of Macedonia are European challenges, and that the solutions to be sought to the problems are to be European solutions. The missions became a powerful force for the promotion of Macedonia as a European country. It is because of this reason that Moldova is eager to host an EU military mission on its soil and get onto the map of an enlarged EU system.¹⁶

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¹⁵ Slobodanka Jovanovska, *Utrinski Vesnik*, "Interview with Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP," February 23, 2004.

¹⁶ Interview with a Moldovan official, July 2003, Bucharest.

In the Aftermath of the Cyprus Referendums

By Neophytos Loizides

The recent rejection of the Annan 5 plan by the Greek Cypriots might lead to a permanent partition of the island. Neophytos Loizides argues that the United States and the European Union can nonetheless increase their influence in northern Cyprus and channel their resources towards minimizing the consequences of this decades-old conflict.

With the announcement of the results of the April 24th referendum, thousands of young Turkish Cypriots marched towards their leader Rauf Denktash's presidential palace to remind him of his promise to resign, after he gathered only 35 percent of the vote in his anti-settlement campaign. Meanwhile, on the other side of the Nicosia wall, the reunification of Cyprus had once again been postponed, this time by the Greek Cypriots, who voted overwhelmingly against the so-called Annan plan. While a minority of 25 percent felt that Cyprus had missed its greatest rendezvous with history, the political forces representing the majority "no" vote pointed out several reasons for their rejection of the plan.

Who to Blame?

Why did the negotiations fail to deliver a mutually acceptable settlement? For their part, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots have accused the European Union of endorsing a GC application for the whole island before the final settlement of the issue. Yet the commission responds that the Turkish side accepted the plan and the idea of the referendums too late for their acceptance to have any impact on its decisions. Had they say "yes" to the plan at least a year earlier, says the commission, a settlement could

have been possible while moderate leaders Glafkos Cleridis and Costas Simitis still held power in Cyprus and Greece, respectively. They also point the finger at current Greek Cypriot leader Tassos Papadopoulos, who surprised the international community with his hitherto unrevealed opposition to the plan. One should mention, however, that while it was a majority vote, the Greek Cypriot "no" was not a uniform one: President Papadopoulos rejected the content of the plan outright, while its strongest ally, AKEL, merely asked for credible guarantees in its proper implementation by Turkey. For the most part, the Greek Cypriots argued that they did not reject the proposed relationship with the Turkish Cypriots; nevertheless, they said, the plan disproportionately favored Turkey's interests with respect to the settlers and the unilateral rights for intervention. More importantly, a threat played up by President Papadopoulos was that Turkey would renege on its commitments and refuse to return land to the Greek Cypriots after receiving all the benefits of the settlement. In a final analysis, however, while AKEL's decision to reject the plan disappointed many Turkish Cypriots, it gives the party some flexibility in future scenarios for a second referendum.

Turkey-EU Scenarios

One possible scenario sees Turkey changing its mind on the Annan plan and returning to its old intransigent position. Thus, by voting "no" in this referendum, the Greek Cypriots made a risky bet. Notably, if Turkey's application to join the European Union is turned down this coming December, it could have unprecedented consequences in Cyprus. And Turkey's admission to the EU is by no means a sure thing; countries like France have already expressed their reservations about granting Turkey a negotiations date. If Turkey fails in its major ambition to join the EU, it is hard to imagine the Turkish leadership endorsing a peace settlement in Cyprus, let alone agreeing to more concessions for the Greek Cypriots.

Moreover, the agitated and excessively confident Greek Cypriot public might fail to recognize a more promising settlement, even if necessary improvements are made to the plan. Therefore, while a second, more positive scenario combining Turkey's accession with legitimate Greek Cypriot demands is possible, one can imagine additional difficulties, particularly concerning the international credibility of President Papadopoulos and his willingness to submit a slightly improved settlement into a second referendum. Finally,

and most disturbingly, there is a well-funded rejectionist camp on the island, capable of controlling the media, distorting facts, terrorizing the "yes" voters, and spreading fear among the conservative GC public.

Unilateral Endorsement

A third and more positive scenario envisions a unilateral Turkish Cypriot adoption of the Annan plan in exchange for American and European support. This is a proposal suggested by CTP, the major political party in the North. Ideally, this proposal could lead to the return of the homes of approximately 120,000 Greek Cypriot refugees from Famagusta, Morphou, and another fifty villages. The largest part of Famagusta is currently a ghost town, and there will be no negative repercussions for the Turk-

ish Cypriots if they return it to its former residents. For the remaining regions, the international community has already committed to financing the relocation of approximately 45,000 Turkish Cypriots. Because after 1974 these areas were under negotiation, their inhabitants did not take the risk of investing and improving their newly acquired but disputed properties. More importantly, they lived in a type of limbo, neglecting the beautiful orange groves, building houses for their children in nearby Nicosia, and even burying their dead relatives elsewhere. It is not surprising that the current Morphou inhabitants voted overwhelmingly in favor of the settlement in the latest referendum. Rebuilding their city five kilometers to the north will allow them a feeling of permanency, a

necessary condition for economic and social development boosted by their anticipated incorporation into the European economy and society. Another program could finance the resettlement of Turkish settlers to Anatolia, while at the same time helping Turkish Cypriot from the diaspora to return to Cyprus.

Overall, these measures would create a catch-22 situation for Cypriot President Papadopoulos. He would soon run out of reasons to reject the Annan plan, and if he stubbornly continues to do so, he might as well bury the just cause he is fighting for.

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What Final Status is Possible for Kosovo? Plans and Their Critiques

By Florian Bieber

The violence against Serbs in Kosovo on March 16-17 2004 revived discussions about a need for resolving its final status. Florian Bieber argues in this article that of the seven plans or options for the status of Kosovo only few are likely to lead to a lasting solution. While partition has gained support after the March events, the overall development suggests that 'conditional independence' remains the most probably long-term solution.

At the same time that the President of Kosovo Ibrahim Rugova asserted in his response that "Kosovo needs independence to speed up democratic and economic development", the Serbian parliament declared that "Kosovo and Metohia is an inalienable part of Serbia and the state union of Serbia and Montenegro." The international community both recognized the failure of the status quo, but also opposed any

hasty changes to the status, as was made clear by the Irish EU presidency: "In the light of the recent unrest in Kosovo, we need to reaffirm the EU's support for a multi-ethnic Kosovo and the 'standards before status' policy." However, the issue of Kosovo's status will continue to loom in 2005 even under this concept of 'standards before status', and the question remains: What status is possible?

Human creativity in this conflict—certainly the most entrenched in all of former Yugoslavia—is constrained by both geography and the rigidity of the parties' demands. Here we shall review some of the more common proposals that address the final status (not how to govern Kosovo internally, i.e. cantonization vs. decentralization) in order to examine where Kosovo might eventually be heading.

Autonomy within Serbia (or SCG)

This option preferred by most political parties in Serbia has been reaffirmed in multiple declarations, as well as in the Constitutional Charter of Serbia and Montenegro, and would create some degree of self-governance for Kosovo within the constitutional framework of Serbia. The obvious problem here is that this solution enjoys

close to the status of Kosovo under the 1974 constitution. However, such a solution would not result in a practical structure of governance, as the role of Kosovo Albanians in the central institutions would need to be resolved considering the relatively large size of Kosovo (approx. 20% of the population of Serbia and Montenegro). Any far-reaching autonomy without representation at the center—which seems likely as

cation in Serbia—would more closely resemble the option of de-facto statehood.

Full Independence

The primary demand of the Kosovo Albanian political elites is the immediate establishment of full independence for Kosovo. Despite such calls by the Kosovo Albanian elite, renewed after the violence in March, independence is unlikely to

Proposal	Main Aspects	Problems	Prospects
Status Quo	Leaving the issue of status unresolved until it is less politically relevant and EU membership can bridge the gap	Record to date suggests no reason to believe in its success, the importance of the status question is unlikely to change	Medium-High, would be the easiest solution, but is unlikely to survive future incidents of violence and attacks against international presence
Conditional Independence	International Recognition, Conditions on minority rights, relations with neighbors, international presence and veto rights	Would not address concern of Serbian authorities and set a precedent for international recognition	High, would address key concerns and has some support in international community, although not soon
UN Trusteeship	UN sovereignty, international presence with increasing Kosovo self-governance	Similar to status-quo, not a long-term solution	Medium-High, would face similar problems as status quo
Full Independence	Full international recognition of Kosovo, no conditions	No support from Kosovo Serbs or Serbia, reluctance of international community, no explicit guarantees for inclusion of Kosovo Serbs	Low, no international support
Partition	Territorial division of Kosovo mostly following current division, Serb part joins Serbia, Albanian part becomes independent	Drawing the border, achieving mutual consent, minorities left on either side of the border, implications for other states in the region	Medium-Low, international community has repeatedly excluded this option. Might become more realistic in the long term
Autonomy within Serbia	Kosovo is self-governed, but some competencies rest with the state, only Serbia (and Montenegro) is sovereign, not Kosovo	No support of the overwhelming majority in Kosovo, likelihood of violent opposition, no willingness of either side for joint governance	Low, no support among Albanians or among international community
De-facto Statehood	Serbia and Montenegro continue international sovereignty over Kosovo, Kosovo has total internal self-government	Does not resolve status, but postpones without international presence, high possibility for conflict	Low, especially international presence is likely to continue until status is resolved

Options for the Final Status of Kosovo

virtually no support among Kosovo Albanians. Any autonomy would have to be far-reaching and come

no one in Serbia or in Kosovo can imagine a Kosovo Albanian minister of defense, the interior or education in Serbia—would

resolve all the difficulties that Kosovo currently faces. Not unlike Montenegro, the issue of status has pre-

vented debates and orientations along other political lines. All key international organizations and countries have rejected full independence at the moment as incompatible both with the international mission and for fear of setting a precedent by recognizing state-disintegration too eagerly. Most serious concerns arise from the fact that this solution is rejected by Serbia and Kosovo Serbs. Thus, like reverting Kosovo's status to being a province of Serbia, it is too unrealistic to be acceptable and provide for the necessary stability.

Partition

In the aftermath of the violence against Serbs in March 2004, there has been visibly more support for the idea of partition in the international media, and many observers have endorsed this option as the logical solution. This concept has been advocated since the early 1990s in Serbia by Dobrica Ćosić and Branislav Kristić. While echoed by some politicians, there has been more support for internal autonomy within Kosovo rather than outright partition. Any partition could only be legitimate if accepted by both sides—unilateral border changes (such as partitions) are clearly rejected by the Helsinki Charter of the OSCE. Such an agreed division is unlikely to occur in the face of strong opposition from the Kosovo Albanian side. Moreover, most international organizations and key countries have rejected this option on two grounds: 1. the proposal seeks to draw borders along ethnic lines

which would, in the words of Reno Harnish, the former chief of the American Office in Pristina, be "nothing else but attempts for the creation of mono-ethnic regions and new separations in the Balkans". 2. There is a fear that any partition would set a dangerous precedent in (re)drawing borders—possibly jeopardizing the stability of Macedonia and Bosnia, as well as Southern Serbia. Although an agreed partition could reduce the problems mentioned under the second point, partition is likely to have a negative impact on Serbs remaining in the area, which will not join Serbia, and runs the risk of encouraging the re-drawing of borders in the region. Either is unlikely to bring stability or peace.

UN Trusteeship

The idea of a UN trusteeship essentially builds on the continuation of the current status quo, but recognizes formally that the UN and not Serbia has sovereignty over Kosovo (as it does de facto today). It was most recently formulated at the Centre for Applied Politics in Munich and the Bertelsmann Foundation specifically as an attempt to resolve the competing claims over sovereignty. It would address the fears of many Albanians in Kosovo about a return to Serb sovereignty while addressing Serb concerns over Kosovo's independence. Such a solution is based on defusing the explosiveness of the status question and would enable policymakers in the region to focus on other pressing problems in Kosovo, such as the econ-

omy and the social structure, and building a viable Kosovo. The problem of this plan is its limited difference to the—clearly unsustainable—status quo. While it might formally 'look different', it is unlikely that Albanians would stop seeing UNMIK as an obstacle to full self-government, and could result in the instability seen recently. Furthermore, it appears unlikely to accommodate Serb concerns, especially as a trusteeship would appear to eventually result in independence. The hope that the conflict over status can be postponed until some future EU membership seems exceedingly optimistic—the EU might be wary of 'importing' any unresolved territorial issues in the light of recent developments in Cyprus.

De-Facto Statehood

Some have argued for the development of Kosovo as a de-facto state which would be self-governed but lack international recognition. The model for this approach is Taiwan which is not recognized by most countries, but is able to conduct its politics separately from mainland China and maintains non-diplomatic relations with most countries. While it would accommodate the desires of the Kosovo Albanian political elite to full self-government and not curtail the Serbian claim to sovereignty, it would allow for the continuation of competing claims. The ethnic dimension, unlike in the case of Taiwan, is not likely to be mitigated through such a solution.

Conditional Independence

First proposed by the Independent Commission on Kosovo in 2000, initiated by the Swedish prime minister Persson and led by the South African judge Richard Goldstone, conditional independence was also endorsed by the International Crisis Group in a 2002 report. According to this approach, Kosovo would be self-governing and independent, but international organizations would retain either veto rights or direct competencies in sensitive areas, such as security. In addition, Kosovo would be obliged to fulfill clear standards in regard to minority rights and be barred from either joining Albania or promoting secessionist movements in Macedonia. Aspects of this approach have found resonance in the 'standards before status' approach—although the latter does not promise independence, only discussions about independence. It also builds on the conditions identified by the European Community in 1991 in recognizing the successor states of SFRJ. The plan obviously follows more closely Kosovo Albanian demands, and even though it gives Serbia and Montenegro only a very limited role, it does potentially address the concerns of the Serb community in Kosovo.

Recent years have seen the emergence of numerous plans for Kosovo. Neither the 'ideal' of the Serbian government and most Serbian political parties (a return to some form of autonomy), nor of the Kosovo Albanian political elite (immediate and unconditional independence) are attainable. In terms of establishing long-term stability in Kosovo, a solution has to a) resolve (or promise to resolve) the relations between Kosovo and Serbia; b) to offer Serbs in Kosovo security, a certain role in determining the political future of Kosovo and the ability to govern themselves; and c) provide for regional security. The options are further constrained by the reluctance of the international community to recognize new states or to redraw borders—even if based on mutual consent. These international constraints, as well as the Kosovo Albanian response to plead for unconditional independence and the Serbian government's conflation and confusion of policy for Kosovo Serbs with policy for Kosovo, suggest that resolving the final status might not yet be possible, even though all parties are bound to benefit from resolving the uncertainty which has been hanging over Kosovo and Serbia. In response to the question of Kosovo's

status, rather than comment on the concrete outcome itself Daniel Serwer of the US Institute of Peace outlined four 'no's' for any final status. These include no return of Serb government over Kosovo, no partition in Bosnia or Macedonia, no alienation of Serb property and churches, and a rejection of violence.

In fact, more important than the external 'status' of Kosovo, will be the internal status of Kosovo, i.e. the way authorities govern the inhabitants of Kosovo. Indeed, before confronting the issue of status, a discussion needs to take place, one not shaped by the symbolic burden of international sovereignty, but by the need for joint governance of the entire population and self-governance for minorities, especially Serbs.

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