

# **EFFECTS OF THE CONFLICTS IN THE SOUTH-SLAVIC- ALBANIAN AREA ON EUROPE**

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## **Introduction**

The South-Slavic-Albanian area, even three years after the signing of the Dayton agreement, is characterised by a multitude of order policy and ethnic conflicts and is, therefore, together with Russia and the Caucasus, also for the future among the most unstable regions of Europe. The conflict factors to be found in this area do not only make the political and economic consolidation of the whole south-eastern European area more difficult and prevent the initiation of economic integration processes in the Balkans but also show danger potentials for the stability of Central and Eastern Europe. Especially the escalation of the Kosovo conflict which led to the NATO military attacks against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the spring of 1999 represents the thus far biggest security policy challenge for a coalescing Europe. In the following, first a short overview of the most important conflict zones in the South-Slavic-Albanian area shall be provided. Subsequently, the regional effects of these conflict potentials on the neighbouring states will be presented. Then, in a third step, the effects of the Balkan conflicts on all of Europe will be analysed.

## **1. Armed Conflicts, Crises and Conflict Potentials in the South-Slavic- Albanian Area**

### **1.1. Bosnia-Hercegovina: Big Shortcomings in the Implementation of the Dayton Agreement**

From the beginning, the Dayton peace accord (1995) had the blemish of being a contradictory political construct. On the one hand, it expressed the intention of the international community to prevent renewed warlike fighting between the main adversaries of the Bosnian war (Muslims and Serbs) by dividing the country into two ethnically defined entities (Serbian Republic and Muslim-Croatian Federation). On the other hand, Bosnia-Hercegovina should remain intact as a subject of international law by means of the Dayton agreement. All three parties in the conflict (Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats and Muslims) accepted the Dayton agreement only because of international pressure. While the majority of Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs would have preferred an alignment of the areas controlled by their armed forces with their mother countries (Croatia and Serbia) to being part of the Bosnian-Hercegovinian state, the Bosnian Muslims regarded the division of Bosnia-Hercegovina into two entities as a legitimisation of the ethnic cleansings of the war of which they had been the primary victims.

Although the agreement of Dayton provides for a series of common political institutions and agencies of the entities (amongst other things, a parliamentary congress consisting of the house of peoples and the house of representatives, a state presidency consisting of one Croat, Serb and Bosnian Muslim each, as well as a council of ministers which is, together with the state presidency, responsible for the areas of economic, monetary and foreign policy), most state functions are carried out by the two entities.

The biggest flaw of the Dayton construct is the division of foreign and defense policy. The existence of two armed forces within a state territory (armed forces of the Serbian Republic and armed forces of the Federation) first contradicts the idea of a Bosnian state entity and, second, does in no way give consideration to modern security policy principles, the premise of which is the unity of foreign and defense policy.<sup>1</sup>

The successful implementation of the military aspects of the Dayton/Paris peace agreement can be listed as the most important positive element in taking an assessment of the peace process in Bosnia-Herzegovina until now. By the military presence of the international peacekeeping forces IFOR (Peace Implementation Force) and, respectively, their follow-on missions SFOR I and SFOR II (Stabilisation Force) under the high command of NATO, the international community succeeded in bringing about an untangling of troops of the former war enemies in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as in achieving a military balance of power between the conflict parties by pertinent armament measures and thus in preventing a renewed flare-up of armed combat until now. However, this positive balance in the military area is countered by big shortcomings in the implementation of the civil aspects of the Dayton agreement. The forefront of the negative balance is represented by the unsolved refugee problem. The international community was able to realise its most important objective in connection with the peace process in Bosnia-Herzegovina, namely the return of the majority of refugees to their home areas, only to a very small degree. Of the 140,000 refugees returning in the year of 1998, only approximately 35,000 to 40,000 Bosnians of all three ethnic groups returned to those areas which are under the control of the police and armed forces of the other ethnic groups. In total, there are still approximately 370,000 refugees in the neighbouring countries of Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Western Europe, as well as 860,000 displaced persons in Bosnia-Herzegovina itself.<sup>2</sup> Especially in the areas controlled by the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian Serbs, the return of larger groups of refugees is being torpedoed by excessive outbursts of violence against returning refugees, initiated by local rulers. The unbroken dominance of ethnic-nationalist political forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina further makes the functioning capability of the all-Bosnian institutions more difficult and also leads to continuing tensions between the "federation partners" in the Croatian-Muslim entity. Progress in the implementation of the civil aspects of the Dayton agreement is therefore also in the future tied to a longer-term presence of the international peacekeeping force and of the international community in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The latter has constructed de facto structures of a protectorate in Bosnia-Herzegovina by the stepwise extension of the powers of the so-called high commissioner who is the principal person responsible for civil reconstruction. A lack of success in the implementation of the Dayton agreement – despite the intensification of the international engagement – could result in a "Cyprus-ization" of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the longer term. On the other hand, a too early retreat of the international peacekeeping force would involve the danger of new warlike hostilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina – with all the negative side effects on the European environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Gustav Gustenau/Predrag Jureković, *Bosnien-Herzegowina*. In: Hans-Joachim Gießmann (Editor), *Handbuch Sicherheit 1997. Militär und Sicherheit in Mitteleuropa im Spiegel der NATO-Erweiterung (Daten – Fakten – Analysen)*, Baden-Baden, 1997/98, pp. 73f.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, December 17, 1998

## 1.2. Disintegration Processes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Since its foundation in 1992, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia/Montenegro) is experiencing a disintegration process which is caused by order policy and ethnic conflicts. The order policy conflicts include the following conflict situations:

**The Demands for Autonomy of the Vojvodina Region vis-à-vis the Belgrade Central Government:** At the time of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Vojvodina, situated in the northwest of Serbia, which is regarded the bread basket and the economically most important region of Yugoslavia, had, just as Kosovo, a far-reaching autonomy within Serbia, which was very close to the status of the six Yugoslav republics. In the year of 1989, the autonomy of Vojvodina was abolished by the Serb government and the region has been centrally administered from Belgrade since then. The autonomy movement, supported by wide layers of the population and by most of the relevant political groups, demands a "federalisation" of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the reinstatement of the autonomy status for this specific and multiethnic region. With regard to a possible conflict escalation and possible spill-over effects on the national environment it is of significance that the autonomy movement is not only supported by the majority Serbian population of Vojvodina but also by the large group of Vojvodina Hungarians (appr. 400,000), whose mother country borders on the conflict region.

**The Order Policy Conflict between Serbia and Montenegro:** The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is experiencing a constitutional crisis since the beginning of 1998 because the pro-Western political leaders of Montenegro who came into power with the president of the republic, Milo Djukanovic, are not recognised by the Serb government and the president of the Yugoslav republic, Slobodan Milosevic. In return, the Montenegrin leaders deny any recognition of the Yugoslav federal government, because the new political power situation in Montenegro is not reflected in the composition of the federal government and because the old Montenegrin cadre, loyal to Milosevic, still represents Montenegro in the federal government.

The political background for the constitutional crisis in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia represents itself in the incompatible interior and foreign policy concepts of the Serb and Yugoslav government on the one hand and of the new Montenegrin leaders on the other hand. The Montenegrin leaders criticise that Yugoslavian federalism is a "fake federalism" and that Montenegro, small with regard to its population and size (13,800 square kilometres, 615,000 inhabitants) in comparison to Serbia (88,300 square kilometres, appr. 9.8 million inhabitants), is politically and economically dominated by Serbia. In foreign policy, Montenegro pursues the goal to be included in the political and economic integration processes of the West while the Serbian leaders regard most Western European states as potential enemies and are considering joining the union agreed on in 1997 by Russia-Belarus. Belgrade accuses the Montenegrin leaders of secessionist intentions and, since their investiture, has threatened several times to deploy Yugoslav armed forces (Vojska Jugoslavije, VJ). However, an intervention in the order policy conflict between Serbia and Montenegro was refused by the commander-in-chief of the VJ, Momcilo Perisic. Perisic's replacement in his function as commander-in-chief by a general loyal to Milosevic, which took place in November of 1998 against the will of the Montenegrin leaders, is perceived by them as an intentional step taken by Belgrade towards a further radicalisation of the conflict between the two Yugoslav republics.<sup>3</sup> In 1999, the order policy conflict between Serbia and Montenegro shows all symptoms which also characterised the order

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3 Vreme (independent Serbian news magazine), November 28, 1998, pp.6f. and Vreme, January 02, 1999, p.23.

policy conflict between Slovenia/Croatia and Serbia until the outbreak of hostilities in 1991. This includes above all the deep crisis of the federal institutions, Serbia's threat of the use of armed forces, as well as a trade and customs war started by Serbia for "punishing the secessionist forces".

The following conflict regions in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have, apart from the order policy conflict component, also an important ethnic conflict component. Latent Tensions in the Sandzak:

The Sandzak, with a population of appr. 500,000, belongs half to Serbia and half to Montenegro, while the political, economic and cultural centre of the region, Novi Pazar, is located in the Serbian part. The region is mostly inhabited by South-Slavic Muslims<sup>4</sup>, who have a similar ethnic background as the South-Slavic Muslims in Bosnia-Hercegovina. The most important order policy objective of the political parties of the Muslim population in the Sandzak consists, since the breakdown of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in accomplishing an agreement for autonomy and an independent administration for the region vis-à-vis Belgrade.

With this, the political leaders of the Sandzak Muslims differ very substantially in their objective from the Albanians in Kosovo who only seem to strive for the maximum option of an independent state. Serbian government authorities, however, view the demands for autonomy of the Muslim population of the Sandzak as a longer-term strategy of the political leaders there who, as a final goal, would strive for a secession of the Sandzak and its alignment with the Muslim areas of Bosnia-Hercegovina. The often voiced Serbian accusation that the Muslims in the Sandzak (similar also as with the Albanians in Kosovo) were "potential separatists" served as an excuse for ethnic cleansings for radical Serbian groups especially in 1993 and 1994 during the war in Bosnia-Hercegovina. In July of 1997, the Muslim administration in the Serbian part of the Sandzak was declared dismissed by the Serbian authorities. Since then, a Serbian "emergency administration" rules in the Sandzak. This step was justified by Belgrade as a "preventive measure" against an impending declaration of independence by "Muslim separatists". Even though the political leaders of the Muslims in the Sandzak, despite Serb coercive measures, have announced a violence-free strategy for obtaining the autonomy demanded by them also for the future, a radicalisation of parts of the population of the Sandzak can, in the context of a possible conflict escalation, not be precluded in analogy to the so-called "Kosovo Liberation Army".<sup>5</sup>

The Dynamization of the Serbian-Albanian Conflict in Kosovo: The radicalisation of the conflict in Kosovo since March of 1998 in the form of armed clashes between Serbian security forces and the Albanian "Kosovo Liberation Army" (Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosoves, UCK) is to be seen as the inevitable result of the longstanding neglect of the autocratic Serbian leaders to conduct a policy adequate for the requirements of a multiethnic state.

The repressive Serbian police rule in Kosovo, almost exclusively inhabited by ethnic Albanians (appr. 90%), as well as the elimination of its political autonomy in 1989/90 by the Serbian parliament had the consequence that in July of 1990 the Albanian representatives of the Kosovo parliament proclaimed the independence of the "Republic of Kosova" from Serbia. As a result, Belgrade dissolved the parliament and the government of Kosovo. In September of 1990,

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4 The proportion of the South-Slavic Muslims in the total population of the Sandzak, according to official Serbian figures, is close to 58%. Representatives of the political parties of the Sandzak Muslims, however, cite the Muslim part of the population at up to 70%.

5 Report of the International Crisis Group on the situation in the Sandzak of November 1998.

the "Republic of Kosova" created a constitution and designated the writer Ibrahim Rugova as its president. The failure of Rugova's strategy to increase the willingness in the Western international community to support the demands for independence of the Kosovars ("The forgotten ones of Dayton") by a passive resistance of the Albanian population, based exclusively on peaceful means, against the Serbian state power has led to a change of strategy since 1996. Armed fighting of the Kosovars took the place of passive resistance. From 1996 until the beginning of 1998 the UCK acted in small groups. The actions of the UCK in this phase represented the activities of a politically motivated terrorist organisation (precise individual attacks against outposts of the enemy's security forces). Since the beginning of 1998 the UCK is assuming more and more the structure of a guerrilla movement which step by step develops into the people's army of the Kosovo Albanians because of the support of wide groups of the population.

The international community which had for the most part remained passive in the phase of the peaceful resistance of the Kosovo Albanians against the Serbian police system in the Kosovo conflict started to develop conflict solution options only at the outbreak of armed fighting in the crisis region. The basis for a solution as supported by the international community, which makes provision for a far-reaching autonomy for the Kosovo Albanians within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as well as a demilitarisation of the Kosovo, failed at the Kosovo peace conference at Rambouillet/Paris (Feb. 6-23, March 15-19, 1999) because of the Serbian refusal to allow the presence of NATO troops in Kosovo. The then following NATO air strikes against military targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which began on March 24, are a logical consequence of the military threat potential built up step by step vis-à-vis Belgrade by the alliance since the fall of 1998 with regard to an obstruction of a peace solution in Kosovo caused by Belgrade.

Because of the policy to expel the majority of the Albanian population from Kosovo by "ethnic cleansings" as openly pursued by Belgrade since the breaking off of relations with the Western international community, the one and only acceptable solution for Kosovo and its population to be considered after an end of the fighting can only be the establishment of an international protectorate in which Belgrade cannot any more exert its state power.

### **1.3. "The Albanian Question"**

The Albanian question, the main element of which are the independence aspirations of the appr. 1.7 million Kosovo Albanians, includes, due to the geographical scattering of the Albanian living areas, also the mother country Albania (3.1 million Albanians), as well as Macedonia (460,000-600,000 Albanians<sup>6</sup>), bordering on Kosovo and Albania. Although, in the course of the conflict until now, the political forces who view the "Kosovo liberation war" as the beginning of the unification of all Albanians in a greater Albanian state, represented a marginal number in all three important living areas of the Albanians, fighting in Kosovo also touches the security interests of Macedonia and Albania to a decisive degree.

The Slavic Macedonians fear that a success of the Albanian independence movement in Kosovo would lead to a further radicalisation of the Albanian majority population in western

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<sup>6</sup> While according to official Macedonian census results from 1994, Albanians represent 23% of the appr. 2 million inhabitants of Macedonia, Albanian representatives claim at least 30% of the population for their ethnic group.

Macedonia, whose representatives demand changing Macedonia into a binational Albanian-Macedonian state. A destabilisation of the Macedonian state, initiated by a secession of the Albanian population of western Macedonia, represents also one of the main reasons for the prevailing position of the international community not to include the option of state independence in a political solution for Kosovo.

Albania, whose socialist dominated governments have stressed since the escalation of the Serbian-Albanian conflict in Kosovo that they do not support the UCK by any active measures, does assume the role of a player in the Kosovo conflict if only because the UCK uses northern Albania as a retreat area and has training camps there. In the course of the conflict until now, fighting between the UCK and the Serbian security forces in the border area has led to mutual accusations of the Yugoslavian and Albanian governments. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia accuses the Albanian government to support the secessionist movement in Kosovo because it would not do anything against arms smuggling and the training camps of the UCK in northern Albania. In return, Albania accuses the Serbian security forces of violating the territorial integrity of the Albanian state several times during fighting in the border area.

At the end of March, Albania decided in the course of the NATO air attacks against military targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to place all of its airspace and its territory at the disposal of the alliance for military actions against Serbia. With this, the danger of military retaliatory attacks from Serbia increases for Albania which until then was mainly affected by the Kosovo conflict by the floods of refugees.

Apart from the danger of a possible spill-over of the fighting in Kosovo onto Albania, it is above all the deep economic and political crisis which the Albanian state experiences even two years after the civil-war-like unrest which makes this country a crisis factor for its neighbours as well as for Central and Western Europe. Especially the unstable security situation in Albania, caused by the large amount of illegal weapons in circulation, makes Albania an "exporter of instability" in the form of big floods of refugees and organised crime.

## **2. Regional Effects of the Conflict Potentials in the South-Slavic-Albanian Area**

### **2.1. Interweaving Conflict Potentials in the South-Slavic-Albanian Area**

An essential characteristic of the conflict potentials in the South-Slavic-Albanian area outlined above is the interweaving which exists between them. This means that both the development of conflicts in the individual problem zones and also the measures taken by the international community for conflict solution have effects on the other momentary conflict zones. The final consequence is that a strategy for stabilisation of the South-Slavic-Albanian area as pursued by the international community can only be successful if it develops conflict solution options for the whole area and is not directed towards the "current" problem case at any given time. Especially, connections between the following "problem zones" in the South-Slavic-Albanian area can be determined:

- **Kosovo – Sandzak – Vojvodina – Montenegro:** The radicalisation of the Kosovo conflict has brought about that requests for autonomy in Vojvodina and in the Sandzak are voiced more strongly than before. Political measures of the Montenegrin leaders which aim at a

reduction of Serb dominance in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have contributed to a reinforcement of this development.

- **Kosovo – Bosnia – Hercegovina:** A further connection exists between the crisis management of the international community in the Kosovo conflict and the international stabilisation measures in Bosnia-Hercegovina. Many members of the political elite of the Bosnian Serbs who hold positions of power especially in the east of the Serbian entity in Bosnia- Hercegovina view their entity as an actual part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and identify with the political objectives of the present Serb and Yugoslav leaders. This ensues that the military action of NATO against Serbia is perceived as a hostile position vis-à-vis "the Serbs" in the context of the radicalisation of the Kosovo crisis also by part of the Bosnian-Serbian elite against which "all the Serbian people" must fight. Thus the Bosnia peacekeeping force SFOR had to be put in higher alert since the beginning of the air attacks of NATO against targets in Serbia because radical Bosnian Serbs had threatened retaliatory actions. An international recognition of the independence of a state of Kosovo – which is at least for the time being not (yet) being considered – could be taken as a reason by the Bosnian Serbs, but also by the Bosnian Croats, to request the inclusion of the areas of Bosnia- Hercegovina controlled by their armed forces in the Croatian, or, respectively, the Serbian "mother country" which could initiate the end of the concept of a Bosnian-Hercegovinian state as decided upon in Dayton.
- **Kosovo – Macedonia:** As already discussed in connection with the Albanian question, the stability of Macedonia is endangered above all by spill-over of the armed clashes in Kosovo. For Macedonia, whose armed forces are being built at the moment and are at present not in a position to provide adequate frontier protection, until now a relatively small danger of a military spill-over from the Kosovo existed in the course of the conflict due to the UN soldiers from the USA and Scandinavia (United Nations Preventive Deployment Force, UNPREDEP) stationed along the Macedonian-Albanian and Macedonian-Serbian border.

Since 1993, the UNPREDEP mission had the task of observing the security situation along the Macedonian-Serbian and Macedonian-Albanian border and to prevent a spill-over of conflicts into Macedonia by its presence. Due to the Chinese veto in the UNO Security Council against a renewed prolongation of the UNPREDEP mission<sup>7</sup>, since March, the approx. 10,000 NATO soldiers stationed in Macedonia are de facto responsible also for the protection of the Macedonian-Serbian border. The original mission of the NATO soldiers had been the evacuation of the OSCE observers active in Kosovo in case they would be in danger.

For Macedonia, above all, psychological spill-over effects of the "liberation war" of the Kosovo Albanians on the Albanian population in Macedonia, which could destabilise this state from within, represented a bigger danger during the course of the conflict until now. This danger potential is rising due to the increase in the floods of refugees from Kosovo since the end of February, which could become a further burden on the fragile ethnic balance in Macedonia.

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<sup>7</sup> With its veto, China reacted to the establishment of diplomatic relations between Macedonia and Taiwan in January of this year.

## **2.2. The Status of the Vojvodina Hungarians as Potential Source of Conflict Between Serbia and Hungary**

Although the conflict between Vojvodina and Belgrade has been above all an order policy conflict until now, the centre of which were autonomy requests of the population of Vojvodina – independent of national origin – ethnic components gain increasing weight also in this conflict in the context of the escalation of the conflict in Kosovo.

Approximately 60% Serbs and 25-28% Hungarians, as well as a multitude of further ethnic minorities, live on the 22,000 square kilometres of Vojvodina. The Hungarian population in Vojvodina lives for the major part along the Hungarian border. The relative freedom in former un-aligned Yugoslavia and the higher standard of living in comparison to communist Hungary suppressed the question of minority rights for the Hungarian population in Vojvodina which was not satisfactorily solved even in the late 80s. The democratisation of Hungary and the policy of guarding minorities as actively practised by the Hungarian governments since 1990 on the one hand, as well as the deterioration of living conditions in Vojvodina due to the breakdown of former Yugoslavia on the other hand, have led to an increase of "ethnic sensitivity" within the Hungarian population of Vojvodina.<sup>8</sup>

Like other ethnic minorities living in Serbia, members of the Hungarian minority have become victims of numerous encroachments by extremist Serbian groups since the beginning of the disintegration process in the South-Slavic area in 1991. Members of the Hungarian population are sent to fight in Kosovo in unproportionally high numbers in the framework of the Yugoslav armed forces (Vojska Jugoslavije, VJ), which has led to increased desertions of Vojvodina Hungarians from the VJ, especially since the spring and summer of 1998.<sup>9</sup>

Political representatives of the Vojvodina Hungarians demand, apart from a territorial and political autonomy for their region, which also represents a political demand of the majority of the Serbian population living in Vojvodina, in addition also cultural autonomy. The autonomy plan for Kosovo, designed by the US negotiator for the Kosovo crisis, Christopher Hill, is seen by the Vojvodina Hungarians also as a possible model for the solution of the Vojvodina question. However, a prerequisite for that would be a general "federalisation" of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which, however, does not seem realisable under the present Yugoslav and Serb leaders.<sup>10</sup>

It is to be expected that the Vojvodina Hungarians, above all after a political solution for Kosovo is forced by the international community, will articulate their demands against Belgrade more strongly. This could lead to a reinforcement of the repressive measures of Belgrade in Vojvodina which, in turn, could have the consequence that this region becomes an ever increasing security problem for the potential protectory power, Hungary. Armed clashes in Vojvodina in which also the Hungarian minority could be involved would include the danger of a direct involvement of Hungary in the Yugoslav disintegration process. With the admission of Hungary into NATO, Vojvodina thus also becomes a security problem for the Northatlantic

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<sup>8</sup> Lajos Keresztes, Vojvodina. In: Europäische Sicherheit 3/95, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup> BBC Monitoring Service, Central Europe & Balkans, August 26, 1998 (Hungary Grants Asylum to Ethnic Hungarians Deserting Yugoslav Army over Kosovo) and BBC Monitoring European – Political, December 1, 1998 (Hungarian Official Draws US Ambassador Holbrooke's Attention to Vojvodina).

<sup>10</sup> BBC Monitoring Service, Central Europe & Balkans, November 25, 1998 (Vojvodina Hungarian Parties Want Observers to Monitor Minority Rights)



alliance which makes an essential contribution to the crisis management of the international community in the Balkans with its military engagement in Bosnia- Hercegovina and in Kosovo.

The geostrategic role of Hungary, important already until now for NATO with regard to the various conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia is made clear by the circumstance that the military stronghold of Taszar, once used by the Soviets in the framework of the Warsaw Pact and now under American command, in the southwest of Hungary, has been serving NATO as a rear base in its operations in Bosnia-Hercegovina since 1996.<sup>11</sup> Although placing this strategically important military base at disposal, the Hungarian government has until now rejected an active participation in military actions of NATO directed against Serbia, referring to the sensitive situation of its minority in Vojvodina.<sup>12</sup>

### **2.3. Reinforcement of the Turkish-Greek Antagonism in the Context of a New Order of the South-Slavic Area**

The process of creating a new order for the South-Slavic area, initiated 1991 by the breakdown of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and still not completed yet, led to a reinforcement of the antagonisms between the "historic enemies" and NATO-"partners" Greece and Turkey and thus to a further deterioration of the action capability of the so-called south-east flank of NATO. The two Balkan states which are in disagreement above all on the boundaries of the territorial waters, the limits of the landmass in the Aegean Sea, the boundaries of the airspace, as well as the solution of the Cyprus question, have supported different conflict parties in the Yugoslavian "secession wars".<sup>13</sup> Greece so far has always stood up for reversing international sanctions, or at least weakening them in intensity, imposed against its traditional orthodox ally, Serbia. In addition, within the Northatlantic alliance, Greece is the state which raised the biggest reservations against possible NATO air strikes against Serbia.<sup>14</sup> In contrast, Turkey sided with Serbia's adversaries in war which was demonstrated above all during the war in Bosnia-Hercegovina by the Turkish engagement for a lifting of the arms embargo against the Bosnian Muslims.<sup>15</sup>

The "rediscovery" of the Balkans as historic sphere of interest by Turkey, which finds its expression above all in Turkey building intensive political but also military relations with Croatia, with the Muslim-Croatian entity in Bosnia-Hercegovina, with Albania, and with Macedonia, is interpreted by a part of the political elite in Greece as hostile "encircling intentions" of Ankara. Especially the good relations of Turkey with the northern neighbour of Greece, Macedonia, whose right of existence as an independent state was put in question for a long time by Greece as well as by Serbia<sup>16</sup>, are watched with distrust by the government in

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<sup>11</sup> Neue Zürcher Zeitung, July 31, 1998

<sup>12</sup> Die Presse, April 17, 1999, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Jürgen Reuter, Außenpolitik und außenpolitische Strategien Griechenlands in den neunziger Jahren. – Athens Balkan- und Europapolitik nach dem Zusammenbruch der sozialistischen Systeme. In: Südosteuropa 9-10/1996, p. 660.

<sup>14</sup> Die Presse, January 25, 1999, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Sabine Riedel, Die griechisch-türkischen Spannungen vor dem Hintergrund des Kriegs im ehemaligen Jugoslawien. Neue Aspekte eines alten Konfliktherds in Südosteuropa. In: Südosteuropa 1/1996, p. 24.

<sup>16</sup> Greece accused the Macedonian leaders of nurturing aspirations for northern Greek territory. This was justified with the name of the South-Slavic state which is identical with the name of the northern Greek region, Makedonia. Further points of dispute were national symbols (as. e.g., the star of Vergina) which are claimed by the Greek state as exclusively "Greek" symbols. A trade embargo imposed by Greece against Macedonia in 1994 decisively

Athens. Although both Greece as well as Turkey declared their willingness in the fall of 1998 to provide soldiers for the newly to be created "mixed Balkans division"<sup>17</sup> alongside Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia and Italy, which is supposed to put the southeastern Europeans in a position to provide an essential contribution to the danger and crisis management in the region themselves, the pursuance of a more consenting policy in the region is to be regarded as improbable in the medium term due to prevailing conflicts of interest of the two players.

### **3. The Effects of the Conflicts in the Balkans on All of Europe**

#### **3.1. The Refugee Problem and Organised Crime**

The problem situations caused by the refugee movements from this region represent an immediate effect of the armed conflicts as well as of the political and economic instability in the Balkans for all of Europe. Due to the geographic proximity to the conflict area, the central European states, especially Germany, Austria and Switzerland, as well as Italy and Greece, are more heavily affected than the rest of Europe.

In the course of the Yugoslav "secession wars" above all the fighting and the "ethnic cleansings" in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995) led to larger refugee flows to Central and Western Europe. Apart from the neighbouring country Croatia which admitted 184,000 refugees from Bosnia,<sup>18</sup> Germany and Austria were the European countries which admitted the majority of the total 900,000 refugees who fled from Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Germany there were appr. 345,000<sup>19</sup> and in Austria 70,000-95,000 refugees and displaced persons from Bosnia-Herzegovina<sup>20</sup> who were admitted. For Austria, the Bosnia-program was the largest aid program ever carried out for refugees and displaced persons. The cost of this activity for the Austrian state amounted to appr. 5 billion Austrian shillings<sup>21</sup> from the spring of 1992 until end of July of 1998. While Germany started to reduce the number of Bosnian refugees by return-home programs successively from the beginning of the peace process of Dayton of 1995/96,<sup>22</sup> Austria integrated a majority of the Bosnian refugees in its work force.

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damaged the Macedonian economy. Only in September of 1995, a slow normalization of the relations between Greece and Macedonia began due to the inclusion of an interim agreement between the two states which was brought about by international pressure on Greece. The Serb leaders under Slobodan Milosevic have provoked the Macedonian state with numerous border violations since its independence in 1992 and have demonstrated open territorial aspirations vis-à-vis Macedonia which in the Greater Serbia circles is traditionally referred to as "South Serbia", until in April of 1996 they had to recognize Macedonia under international law because this was one of the conditions for the reintegration of Serbia and Montenegro into the international community.

<sup>17</sup> The creation of this multinational peace force for the Balkans and the Black Sea region was decided by the defense ministers of Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia, as well as Greece and Turkey, on the occasion of their annual conference which took place in Skopje from September 26 to 27, 1998. See *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, September 29, p.5.

<sup>18</sup> Bernd Weber, *Flüchtlinge und Migration – ein Weltproblem*. In: *Europäische Sicherheit* 5/1998, p. 49.

<sup>19</sup> Austria Presse Agentur (APA396), November 24, 1998.

<sup>20</sup> Österreichischer Bundespressdienst (Editor), *Drehscheibe Österreich. Österreichs Aktivitäten in den mittel- und osteuropäischen Ländern*, Vienna 1998, p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> *Die Presse*, August 13, 1998

<sup>22</sup> Until the end of 1998, the number of Bosnia refugees in Germany was reduced to appr. 80,000. See Reuters News Service of November 20, 1998 (Deutschland: Minister zufrieden mit Bosnien-Rückkehr)

The radicalisation of the conflict in Kosovo caused a new wave of refugees in the South-Slavic-Albanian region in the spring of 1998. The fighting between the Serbian security forces and the UCK turned appr. 300,000 Kosovars into refugees from the spring to the fall of 1998 (phase of Serbian military offensives against UCK core areas). A large part of the refugees of this phase (appr. 235,000) were refugees in their own country, who fled to other parts of Kosovo, Serbia or to Montenegro; appr. 20,000 Kosovo Albanians fled to Albania and a total of 10,000-15,000 to Bosnia-Hercegovina, Slovenia and Macedonia. Of the 57,000 requests for asylum raised by Yugoslavian nationals (appr. 90% of these are Kosovo Albanians) in 22 states of Central and Western Europe from January to September 1998, more than 80% were raised in only 5 states: 39.2% of the requests were placed in Germany, 20% in Switzerland, 8.6% in Great Britain, 7.1% in Austria and 6.4% in Belgium. In proportion to its population, Switzerland had the highest number of requests during this period. This can be explained mainly by the high number of Albanian-Kosovar "guest workers" living in Switzerland.<sup>23</sup>

Since the end of March of 1999 a dramatic increase in the number of displaced persons and refugees is registered in the neighbour countries of Kosovo due to the mass expulsion of the Albanian population from Kosovo initiated by the Serbian authorities in the course of the NATO air attacks. The number of refugees admitted in the neighbour countries of Kosovo increased from the beginning of the NATO air attacks (March 24, 1999) and the middle of April of 1999 to a total of appr. 500,000 – 550,000 people. Of these, the majority went to Albania (314,000), Macedonia (116,000) and Montenegro (67,000).<sup>24</sup> The EU wants to first provide for taking care of the refugees in the neighbour countries of Kosovo by financing aid projects, to create better prerequisites for a later return of the refugees to their home areas.

The circumstance that in Central and Western Europe, apart from Switzerland, Germany and Austria had to bear the main burden of the refugee movements from the southeastern European region until now, had the consequence that the governments of these two states request a more just division of the burden as well as the formulation of a common refugee policy within the EU in connection with the refugee problem. Thus, according to the opinions of Germany and Austria, a common EU fund should be created for the cost of admitting refugees and the refugees should be distributed to all states in the EU<sup>25</sup>, according to a quota to be determined. In addition, it is the governments of these two states who request a stronger emphasis on preventive measures in the Balkans within the EU, to prevent new floods of refugees which could be caused especially by the radicalisation of the conflict between Montenegro and Serbia, between Belgrade and the autonomy movement in Vojvodina, as well as between the Serbian government and the Muslim leaders in the Sandzak.

Apart from the economic burden arising for countries admitting refugees from ethnic conflict zones, flows of refugees also affect the internal political stability of these countries negatively. Especially in Germany, the admission of 1.6 million refugees<sup>26</sup> has sharpened the political confrontation between supporters of a "hard" and a "soft" position in the so-called "foreigner question". A large part of the native population in the Central and Western European countries takes an increasingly rejecting position towards the admission of refugees because for them it is

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<sup>23</sup> "Kosovo-Fakten". Information of the UN High Commissioner's Office for Refugees of November 27, 1998

<sup>24</sup> UNHCR News – Refugees Daily, April 16, 1999.

<sup>25</sup> Reuters News Service of October 29, 1998, (Österreich: Flüchtlinge – Deutschland für Lastenteilung in EU).

<sup>26</sup> Weber, *ibid.* p. 49.

connected with being ousted from the work force as well as with dangers for the religious, ethnic and cultural identity of the state.

A further possible negative consequence of refugee movements for the admitting countries are "imported civil wars"<sup>27</sup> in the form of attacks against institutions of the "hostile" ethnic group also living in the host country or against institutions of the host country itself. The latter may be the case above all if the admitting or host country sharply criticises the objectives of a refugee group or even tries to prevent their realisation by definite measures. In the context of the escalation of the Kosovo conflict, the danger of violent clashes between members of the hostile ethnic groups rises in those Central and Western European countries where a large group of the Serbian population lives as well as an Albanian one (especially Austria, Germany and Switzerland). Germany, which takes part in the NATO air attacks, could become the preferred target of Serbian retaliatory strikes in case of a longer-lasting air war by NATO. The danger of retaliatory strikes of exile-Albanian groups could become relevant again in Switzerland, Germany and Austria if the international community should put pressure on the governments of these countries to prevent funds collections of Albanians for the armament of the UCK in Kosovo in order to push through a political solution. In Germany, reportedly up to a total of 1.5 million German Marks are collected per month for the purchase of weapons for the UCK through not always voluntarily provided "donations" by Kosovo Albanians living there, to a fund with the name "Das Vaterland ruft" ("Your country is calling you"). Above all in Germany, but also in Switzerland, money from organised crime (especially drugs dealing and series of burglaries) reportedly goes more and more often into the money flow destined for the UCK.<sup>28</sup>

While the refugee movements as a consequence of the ethnic conflicts in the ex-Yugoslav territory represent above all a problem for Central and Western Europe, especially Italy and Greece are affected by the mass immigration from Albania.

As a consequence of the political and economic instability Albania is subject to, appr. half a million of the in total appr. 3.1 million Albanians have, according to estimates, reportedly left their country from 1991 to 1998. The biggest emigrant group is the intellectuals. According to an Albanian study,<sup>29</sup> 31.5% of the university teachers and research scientists have reportedly emigrated. The preferred destination countries for the Albanian immigrants are, apart from Greece and Italy, above all the USA and Canada. Since the opening of Albania, Greece is confronted by a trek of illegal or semi-legal Albanian migrant workers which is said to have reached the number of 300,000 people in 1998 according to the Greek authorities (this would be appr. 10% of the total Albanian population). Per year, the Albanian migrant workers remit a sum of appr. 400 million dollars to their home country which are indispensable for the survival of the Albanian society for the foreseeable future. They are distributed all over Greece and mainly work as seasonal workers in the agricultural sector. Their legal status is most of the time "illegal", however, as a rule, they are rarely bothered by the authorities because this inexpensive work force is highly welcomed by many Greek small entrepreneurs and farmers. The migration across a border which marks a poignant difference of income and standard of living is connected with a high degree of vagabonding and petty crime. In addition, the illegal status of the migrant

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<sup>27</sup> Egbert Apfelknab, *Konfliktträume und Migration*. In: Erich Reiter (Editor), *Jahrbuch für internationale Sicherheitspolitik 1999*, Hamburg/Berlin/Bonn 1999, pp. 791f.

<sup>28</sup> Focus, July 13, 1998 and Focus, July 27, 1998.

<sup>29</sup> The study was made by Ilir Gedeshi of the government-independent center for economic and social studies in Tirana. Cited according to Austria Presse Agentur, December 28, 1998 (APA291).

workers is easily exploited by mafia-like Albanian groups – but also by corrupt elements in the Greek police. In order to curb the latter abuses, but also in order to prevent a new "collapse" of Albania, which could be caused by deportation of the Albanian migrant workers, the Greek government decided at the end of 1997 to legalise the Albanian migrant workers successively. A legalisation of many of the Albanian migrant workers could, however, fail for the reason that part of the Greek small entrepreneurs and farmers do not have adequate financial means for the social security payments connected with the legalisation of the migrant workers. Since the deportation of non-legalised Albanian migrant workers by Greece could have the consequence of a renewed economic destabilisation of Albania – which would confront in particular Italy with a new wave of Albanian economic refugees that cannot be coped with – it would be a useful preventive measure if the EU would fund part of the social security cost, which Greek small entrepreneurs have to provide, from a common budget. According to the opinion of experts, such a common expenditure would constitute the presently most effective contribution to a stabilisation of Albania.<sup>30</sup>

Italy, apart from Greece the country most strongly affected by the economic and political crisis in Albania, had listed a total of 12,000 illegal immigrants on its southern coast in 1998. Apart from the North Africans, the Albanians represent the largest group of immigrants. More than in Greece, the illegal Albanian immigration is connected with organised crime in Southern Italy. This circumstance is caused by a close cooperation between mafia-like groups from southern Albania and the southern Italian Mafia who use the flows of refugees for drugs, weapons and people smuggling. For the Italian government, the inability of the Albanian government to effectively counteract people smuggling, therefore by now represents a steadily increasing security problem because Albania has also become a big transfer point for emigrants from various other countries. Thus, in the Albanian refugee quotas of 1998, there were more and more often immigrants from politically unstable zones of the Middle East and a large number of Kurds.<sup>31</sup>

### **3.2. The Danger of a Politisation of the Balkans-Islam**

The concept of the Islam of the South-Slavic Muslims who represent the relative majority in Bosnia-Herzegovina has experienced a development negative for the security interests of Central and Western Europe due to the four-year war in this state (1992-1995), the main victim of which was the Muslim population.

Before the Bosnian "civil war", the Bosnian Islam was for the most part non-political and still the central source of identity for the Bosnian Muslims. The secular understanding of Islam of the Bosnian Muslims was absolutely compatible with European values and standards. A connection with the world of the Islam outside of Europe, i.e. an inclusion of the Bosnian Islam in the universal Islamic "Umma" did not exist before the Balkan war.<sup>32</sup>

The reluctance of the Western European states to intervene in the Bosnian war and to prevent the genocide committed against the Muslim population by Bosnian-Serbian soldiers and

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<sup>30</sup> Niels Kadritzke, Ungleiche Nachbarn. Entwicklung und Perspektiven der griechisch-albanischen Beziehungen jenseits der "Nordepirus"-Frage. In: Südosteuropa Mitteilungen 3/1998, pp. 237f.

<sup>31</sup> Neue Zürcher Zeitung, October 29, 1998

<sup>32</sup> Bassam Tibi, Der Bosnische Islam, von säkularer Religion zum Fundamentalismus?. In: Internationale Politik 7/1997, pp. 21f.

guerrillas was perceived by many Bosnian Muslims as religiously caused siding of the West with the "Christian" Serbs. This assessment was supported by the "Western" arms embargo which made the Bosnian Muslims dependent on arms shipments from Iran during the war. In addition, also the legitimisation of the Serbian state, created on the basis of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Republika Srpska) within the frame of the peace agreement of Dayton, was viewed by many Bosnian Muslims as a measure deliberately taken by the West, with the goal to "contain" Islam in the Balkans.

The opinion of the Bosnian Muslims that Western Europe is also guilty of the suffering born by them during the war has initiated a process of turning away from the concept of a secular Islam with the Bosnian Muslims. Certainly, the major part of the ordinary population might still practice a "people's Islam" even after the war, but above all in the ruling Bosnian-Muslim party, Party of Democratic Action (Stranka Demokratske Akcije, SDA) the forces are gaining ground who speak out against a strict separation of state and religion. These forces are working towards a Muslim, "truncated" Bosnia, which in its foreign policy shall be oriented above all towards the Islamic nations. An essential indicator for this tendency in the political elite of the Bosnian Muslims is the increasing loss of the multiethnic character of the army of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Armija Bosne i Hercegovine, ABiH) since the end of the war. It had been founded in May of 1992 as the army of all three peoples forming the constituent assembly of Bosnia – Croats, Serbs and Muslims – as defense instrument against the military aggression of the Yugoslav People's Army and of parts of the Bosnian-Serbian population, and it had as its most essential objective the preservation of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian state. After the end of the war, almost all Bosnian-Croatian and Bosnian-Serbian generals in the army of Bosnia-Herzegovina were replaced by Muslim officers by order of the Bosnian-Muslim leaders.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, Bosnian-Muslim authorities in the central Bosnian town of Zenica promoted at least until 1997 the "nationalisation" of Arabic mujaheddin who had fought alongside the Bosnian Muslims during the war, as well as activities of radical Islamic groups from the Middle East who, under the cover of humanitarian organisations, brought their fundamentalist concept of Islam to the Bosnian-Muslim population.<sup>34</sup>

Should the movement which rejects the separation of state and religion become the determining force in the Bosnian-Muslim elite, which at present is not the case yet, it could have negative consequences for the security of Central and Eastern Europe. The EU could be confronted with fundamentalist forces from the Middle East building bases in the Muslim controlled part of Bosnia-Herzegovina in order to be able to conduct attacks in EU countries more easily than until now. In addition, in the case of a politisation of the Bosnian Islam, in the longer term there would also be the danger that possible terrorists recruit themselves from the circle of the members of the Bosnian-Muslim immigrant communities in Western Europe.

The prevention of the establishment of anti-Western movements in the strategic environment of the south-eastern border zone of the EU can only be strengthened by tying the Bosnian Muslims to the West. The strengthening of the ties of the Bosnian Muslims to the West seems in the longer term only possible through the consolidation of the Muslim-Croatian federation which is under strong American influence and whose survival is dependent on the existence of a Bosnia-Herzegovina state entity.

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<sup>33</sup> Svijet (independent Bosnian-Herzegovinian news magazine), January 9, 1997, p. 8.

<sup>34</sup> Tibi, *ibid.*, p. 27.

How real the danger of the construction of bases of Islamic fundamentalists from the Middle East is in the Balkans was demonstrated in another Balkan state, in Albania, at the beginning of 1999. In Albania, whose majority Muslim population is regarded as even more secularised than the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, due to the atheistic phase under Enver Hoxha, an alleged Albanian confidant of the Saudi-Arabian Islamist and terror chief Osama Bin Laden was arrested by the Albanian authorities. The sympathiser of Bin Laden is accused to have spied on US diplomats.<sup>35</sup> Bin Laden is said to have received the invitation to become active in Albania from the former chief of the Albanian secret police, Bashkim Gazide, an Islamist and confidant of the former state president, Sali Berisha. With the establishment of bases in Albania it would have been possible above all for Bin Laden to infiltrate Italy with terrorists.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.3. The Economic Dimension of the Conflicts in the Balkans

The ethnic, political and economic conflict potentials in the southeastern European area also have effects on an economic level on the European environment. The Central and Western European states must not only carry the main burden of the financial cost connected with the floods of refugees from the Balkans but they also provide an essential financial contribution to reconstruction in the conflict area itself. In Bosnia-Herzegovina international reconstruction aid, in which the EU states are decisively involved, amounts to appr. five billion dollars<sup>37</sup> for the period from 1996 to 1999. In Kosovo, the EU wants to provide in total appr. half a billion Euro for reconstruction measures and the return of refugees.<sup>38</sup>

Within the EU, the fact that in the Balkans until now there have been no real start-up efforts for political or economic integration is regarded as a negative development. The EU, for which above all the transportation corridors through the Balkans (Ljubljana-corridor, Pannonia-corridor and Morava-Vardar-corridor) are of significance as transit routes, always viewed the development of a regional cooperation in southeastern Europe as a necessary prerequisite to be provided by the Balkan states for a later admission to this organisation. This principle regional concept was brought to the foreground again more strongly after the signing of the Dayton agreement and was meant to support the consolidation of peace in the area. The basic idea of the EU was, and still is, that on the one hand continuing stability in the region cannot be formed without the reconstruction of a far-reaching economic cooperation of the neighbouring countries, and that furthermore there exists a high degree of complementarity of economic structures in these countries and that therefore similar problems would arise in the development of their market economies and that, finally, the support of the international community would be more effective if economic stability and a revival of trade relations would be noticeable in the region. The regional concept of the EU was intended to include the countries of former Yugoslavia – with the exception of Slovenia – , as well as Romania, Bulgaria and Albania.<sup>39</sup> Reasons for the lacking economic cooperation between the southeastern European countries which make the Balkans an economic passive area in the immediate neighbourhood of the EU are the, even after

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<sup>35</sup> Austria Presse Agentur, January 10, 1999 (APA291).

<sup>36</sup> Die Presse, December 11, 1998, p. 4.

<sup>37</sup> Neue Zürcher Zeitung, December 17, 1998.

<sup>38</sup> This number was announced by the EU before the NATO air attacks (see Austria Presse Agentur, February 14, 1999 – APA323) and will therefore presumably have to be corrected to be higher.

<sup>39</sup> Franz-Lothar Altmann, Die Balkanpolitik der EU – Regionalansatz und Prinzip der Konditionalität. In: Südosteuropa 10-11/1998, pp. 504f.

"Dayton", partly bad bilateral relations of the ex-Yugoslav states as well as the lack of any tradition of cultivating intensive economic relations between the Yugoslav successor states and the former Comecon countries Bulgaria and Romania.<sup>40</sup>

### **3.4. Effects on the Development of a European Security System**

The conflicts and wars in the Balkans since 1991 had and still have lasting effects on the structure of a future European security system.

It was an important impulse for the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU that, due to the lessons learned from the wars in former Yugoslavia, the aspect of crisis management was put in the foreground in the treaty of Amsterdam of the summer of 1997. In Amsterdam, it was agreed to include the so-called Petersberg tasks of the WEU (humanitarian missions and rescue missions, peacekeeping tasks, as well as fighting missions in crisis management, including peacemaking measures) in the treaty as missions of the European Union. The initiative for this came from the two new EU members not tied to the alliance, Sweden and Finland, who are experienced in questions of peacekeeping within the framework of the United Nations.<sup>41</sup>

Bosnia, but especially the radicalisation of the conflict in Kosovo, showed, however, that NATO for the time being is the only effective instrument of the international community for peace enforcement. This has the consequence that the WEU will in the longer term be dependent on NATO resources for crisis management tasks and that the Europeans therefore are dependent on a close cooperation with the USA for the management of larger crises in Europe for the time being.

In addition, in the context of the international crisis management in the Balkans, the usefulness of the program Partnership for Peace showed itself. Thus, the participation of Russian soldiers in an international peace mission under NATO high command, as was the case of IFOR and SFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina, would hardly have been possible without the military cooperation between NATO and Russia initiated by the PfP. The inclusion of Russia in a solution for the conflicts in the southern Balkans is necessary, in spite of (or exactly because of) the massive Russian criticism of the NATO attacks against military targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, for two reasons:

(a) Despite the weakness of her military, Russia still is a nuclear power and thus remains a relevant security policy player in Europe.

(b) A European Balkans policy without the inclusion of Russia could have the consequence that Russia pursues in its own sphere of power (the Baltic states, Ukraine, Caucasus region) more than until now a policy directed against the security interests of Central and Western Europe.

By its military engagement in the Kosovo conflict, covered neither by its treaty (obligation of assistance in case of an attack on a member) nor by a clear UNO mandate, the Northatlantic alliance has taken the most far-reaching step in the development from a defense alliance to an all-European security organisation. This development, however, also contains risks: a failure of

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<sup>40</sup> For more details on this question see Vladimir Gligorov, Trade and Investments in the Balkans

<sup>41</sup> In: Vladimir Gligorov/Hermine Vidovic (Editors), On the Way to Normality. The States on the Territory of Former Yugoslavia in the Postwar Period, Vienna 1998, pp. 1-18.



the NATO military actions, the objective of which is above all to end the "ethnic cleansings" in Kosovo, would not only do heavy damage to the "image" of the alliance as the leading military power but could in the medium term also have the consequence of a renationalisation of the defense policies of its members.

## Summary

As this study tried to demonstrate, the numerous ethnic and order policy conflicts in the South-Slavic-Albanian area not only have effects on the stability in South Eastern Europe, but they also negatively affect the stability of Central and Western Europe. In this context, above all the refugee problem, as well as organised crime often connected with it, have been mentioned as the most important problem situations. In addition, the danger potentials not to be underestimated for Central and Western Europe were pointed out, which could result from an increasing politisation of the Islam in the Balkans.

In connection with the escalation of the conflict in Kosovo the problem was addressed that the result of the military engagement of NATO could be relevant in the respect of whether the alliance can maintain its role as the most important security organisation in Europe built up step by step since the end of the Cold War, or whether – in the worst case – there will again be a renationalisation of security policy in Europe.

With regard to the representation of the conflict issues in the conflict area itself and their effects on the whole southeastern European area, the study tried to show the interweaving conflict potentials. A mutual influence is given both between the various order policy and ethnic conflicts in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as well as between the course of the peace process in Bosnia-Herzegovina and some aspects of the Albanian question (Kosovo). Since both conflict development in the individual problem zones of the Balkans as well as the measures taken by the international community for conflict solution have effects on the other conflict areas in the South-Slavic-Albanian area, a strategy pursued by the international community for stabilising the South-Slavic-Albanian area can only be successful if it develops options for conflict solution for the whole area and not only for the problem "current" at any given time.

A meaningful strategy for the Balkans must be start from the basic premise that in the conflict area, due to the autocratic structures prevailing there, the political forces which would be in a position to initiate a stabilisation process on their own, do not exist to a sufficient extent. The consequence of this premise is that the stabilisation of the conflict zones in the Balkans can only be initiated from outside, be it by political, economic – or, in case it is necessary – also military measures. In the context of these considerations also the concept of a protectorate, as inadequate and provisional it may seem, must be evaluated as a positive stabilisation basis. A permanent and comprehensive stabilisation of the Balkans, going beyond the mere prevention of fighting between the conflict parties can, however, only be achieved by inclusion of the southeastern European countries in the European integration process. An important prerequisite for this again is economic integration processes in the Balkans themselves which could be initiated by e.g. a "Marshall Plan" for South-Eastern Europe.

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