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THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA: MAIN SECURITY CHALLENGES –THE WAY TO OVERCOME THEM

General Remarks

The organizers of this Conference have chosen proper and very real topics for the discussions. Building stability in the South East European states is simply a *conditio sine qua non*. It is well known that almost all ex-communist countries in this region are "weak states" regarding their internal security and international standing. However, it is quite obvious that one conference is not able to build stability in a single country, even less in a group of countries. What a conference can do is to identify crucial problems and to show the paths leading toward resolving them. And that is just - according to my opinion - what is expected from this Conference.

Crisis Management is another demanding topic when South East European countries are at stake. In the absence of stability armed conflicts usually arise. In between, there is a period of crisis, and the crisis should be appeased through crisis management.

In politico-military literature crisis management is often - as a concept - mixed with peace-keeping and peace-making/enforcing concepts. However, crisis management should be considered as a conflict-prevention, rather than conflict-control or peace-building activity. The main task of crisis management should be to obviate the escalation of a crisis out of an armed conflict. It could be achieved by political, economic and other non-military means. Military assets, as a last resort, could be used, eventually, when crisis management fails.

It has been so thoughtful to organize such a conference in Tirana, the capital of Albania. I have a feeling that Albania has somehow been neglected in the matters of building peace and stability in the Southeastern European region. It is obvious, however, that no serious security problem in the Balkans, at least in its South-Western part, can be properly solved without full Albanian participation.

Security Challenges in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) is facing, in essence, the same security problems as the other transitional South East European countries, with some additional, specific issues arisen from the differences resulted from her specific development during the last ten or so years.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is a federal, multi-ethnic and multi-confessional state. None of these qualities, unfortunately, gets along in harmony. Misunderstandings between the Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Montenegro and tensions among ethnic and religious groups characterize current the situation in FRY.

Almost for a full decade, at the very end of the last century, Yugoslavia was directly or indirectly involved in wars, including the 78 days it was subjugated to Nato's air campaign. For the same period of time, the people of Yugoslavia and her economy were subjected to international sanctions. Due to such occurrences, Yugoslavia's infrastructure has been seriously damaged and her economy devastated. Today's GNP per capita in Yugoslavia, for example, is less than half of her GNP per capita twelve years ago.

The sanctions and Nato's air campaign had serious consequences on the development of the South Eastern European region in general. They caused serious implications on the

relations not only between the FRY and the so-called International Community, but also between Yugoslavia and her neighbouring countries.

International sanctions and the wars waged in her neighbourhood as well as within Yugoslavia worked strongly in favour of the black market, corruption and crimes. These evil phenomena have struck deeply the roots of Yugoslav society and also overflowed across the borders in the neighbouring countries.

As a consequence of the war (Kosovo case), the FRY lost - for the time being - control over a part of her territory. Now ruled by the International Community, Kosovo remains one of the most sensitive spots in Europe.

Most of the South East European countries started to build their political and social-economic system in accordance with the Western European standards more than ten years ago. In that respect, Yugoslavia was too late. She got rid of the government which hampered economic transition and political-social transformation much later - less than a year ago. The new democratic government is now passing through so called l'enfant disease.

The ruling coalition is made up of too many parties and their leaders express their views in public with different approaches towards the current problems. Clearer differentiations and regroupings of the Yugoslav, or rather Serbian, political milieu are rather slow. The process of the economic and social reforms is still not giving satisfactory results. Foreign support, financial assistance and direct foreign investment are far below the level previously expected. Industrial production continues to decrease, and living standards are in stagnation. The opposition of the left or right tries to exploit the ruling elite's weaknesses for the promotion of its own views.

Yugoslavia has seven neighbours plus one across the Adriatic sea. Relations with all of them are still not built upon a good neighbourhood basis. Besides, some of Yugoslavia's neighbours are facing serious security problems. Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, is imposed and kept under foreign/international control. It is more or less the same with Macedonia. Albania is still in the process of recovering from 1997, with numerous internal problems. In case some disturbances would occur in the surroundings, the country's own security would be in peril.

Yugoslavia has been for more than ten years in some kind of isolation. Apart from (or a part of) the international sanctions, the country was excluded from almost all international organizations, including financial and monetary institutions, and so deprived of the possibility to express her views on current internal and/or regional issues or on the demands for a particular kind of support or economic and financial assistance. Such positions had grave consequences upon Yugoslavia's development as well as security. These obstacles have finally been lifted and the doors for new opportunity are now widely opened.

Searching for Solutions

Internal security, sustainable development, a strong international position and good relations with neighbouring countries are preconditions for peace and stability of any country, including Yugoslavia.

The FRY has many internal problems, and her international position is still unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, at the present level of development and international standing, there is no real threat to the country's national security from outside, nor is there any kind of internal disturbance. However, if the issues are not met in a proper way and at the right time, then some kind of threat might appear. Therefore, additional efforts made in searching for the paths that lead to solutions concerning the most crucial issues as soon as possible and to create conditions favourable for building enduring peace and stability are a necessity.

The uncertain status of the Federation and long-lasting discussions on its future are simply no longer tenable. They hamper development and slow down the country's integration in the International Community.

Excluding the current setting, one could see three possible solutions:

1. A federation with significantly reduced responsibility of the Federal Government;
2. A union of the two semi-independent countries, and
3. Two independent countries with a friendly and good neighbourhood relationship.

Each of these settings has advantages and disadvantages. The first one would offer more stability and faster development, provided the relations between the federal authority and the authorities of the two republics would work properly and efficiently. The third one, I am convinced, would carry with itself more uncertainty and challenges.

As far as the future of the Federation is concerned, the forthcoming referendum and/or the elections in Montenegro seem to become decisive. The possibilities of the development in the aftermath remain in the sphere of hypotheses and estimates, without any solid foundation.

Along with the solution of the Federation issue, misunderstandings stemming from that issue should disappear. The rivalries among Serbian leaders might be considered as normal - as a part of the new democratic development. They could slow down that development but should not threaten it. In any case, further and faster democratisation of society is of crucial importance for building peace and stability in Yugoslavia and in the region.

In Kosovo, for decades (not to say centuries), inter-ethnic animosity and misanthropy have been fostered. The most recent war and its aftermath strengthened the results of that fostering. Given the deepness of that seeded hatred and the current situation in Kosovo in general, it seems that it might be necessary to wait for some years (if not decades) before the leaving of the UNMIK and KFOR institutions from that province would be recommendable. In the meantime, additional efforts should be made in promoting inter-ethnic confidence, tolerance and mutual understanding. The main tasks and objectives of all influential factors, directly or indirectly involved in the Kosovo matters, should be to build multi-ethnic, multi-confessional and truly democratic surroundings.

After becoming a member of the United Nations and the OSCE, the FRY is now looking forward to join other international and regional organizations. The country's first goal is the Council of Europe. The Nato program "Partnership for Peace" is becoming more and more attractive for the highest Yugoslav polity and military. Nato full membership and the European Union are her next, long-term goals. Attaining those goals, however, depends very much on Yugoslavia's internal development, that is, on her economic development and socio-political integrity, as well as upon her regional and international standings. Therefore, for full integration into the International Community, Yugoslavia will have to work very hard at building her integrity and strong international standing.

Peace and Stability through Development

Peace and stability are in a very close correlative linkage, together with development. "Without peace it is impossible to achieve sustainable development and without development there is no chance for a real peace" (Boutros-Boutros Ghali, "Agenda for Peace, 1992"). The validity of B.B. Ghali's statement can be proved in reality. Small and medium-size highly developed countries enjoy higher internal stability and they are less imposed to the foreign political pressures and military interventions. They are also lesser prone to war and violence than underdeveloped countries. Starting from that point of view, it is not hard to state that the

main goal of underdeveloped countries should be to enter the club of high-developed countries. As far as Yugoslavia is concerned, it seems that this will not be easily attainable.

Recent estimates show that between 1989 and 1999, Yugoslavia - due to the troubles she was facing, lost more than 500 billion USD in non-realized GNP. To that amount an additional sum of 100 billion USD of the losses directly or indirectly inflicted by the Nato bombardment should be added. Today, Yugoslavia is at the very bottom of the European scale in terms of GNP per capita.

For faster development and at the same time stronger prevention of internal unrest and regional perils Yugoslavia needs and deserves corresponding foreign aid. The current Yugoslav leaders work very hard to obtain such aid, but with moderate results. In doing so, they are somehow neglecting possibilities of better and more profitable use of domestic resources which are contained, first of all, in natural wealth and in human capacities.

For better usage of the domestic resources, the introduction of modern management – a measure which is deficient not only in Yugoslavia but also in other South East European countries - could be of enormous help. Faster development can be achieved also by an improvement of the public governance, where modern management is badly needed.

Considering development to be a major determinant of peace and stability in a country, it should be emphasized that not only economic development is meant. Rather, it is also social (democratic, cultural, etc), technological and other. Only regarded as multi-dimensional, with an synergetic approach to the problems, development can mitigate the perils and lead to peace and stability.

Education for Peace and Stability

The famous Irish author, George Bernard Shaw, said: "Peace is not only better than war, but infinitely more arduous". It would be hard not to agree with the respected author. Peace, certainly, is better than war because war is destructive, while peace is constructive. Unreasonable leaders easily start and wage war, while wise thinkers endlessly fought for peace without too much success.

It would be hard to oppose another genius, Albert Einstein, who, speaking on the advantages of peace, said: "Peace cannot be presented by force. It can be achieved by understanding". It is true, peace can be achieved by understanding, but how can understanding be achieved? How can understanding be achieved among peoples of different heritage, among states whose leaders have different aims and objectives, among rich and poor peoples or countries?

One of the ways to achieve peace by understanding might be through education. Not education per se, but education deliberately planned and programmed for the promotion of peace and stability. Today, in the world there are so many schools in which the young ones are taught how to wage war, how to kill someone or to destroy something, either for offensive or defensive purposes. One can hardly encounter a place or institution where teaching is designed particularly to the promotion of peace, how peace is obtained and sustained. Building a culture of peace, tolerance and togetherness in life is not part of CURRICULA of schools and universities - at least this is not the case in Yugoslavia.

Education for peace and stability can be performed by organizing and carrying out the following forms and levels of education:

1. Specialist courses and seminars for selected participants,
2. Specialist and post-graduate studies, including the elaboration of master's and doctor's theses, and

3. Incorporation of Irenology (The Science of peace), as a separate subject, into the regular teaching programs of particular schools and/or colleges.

Education for peace does not anticipate the promotion of idealized pacifism or the negation of a need for defence, but, rather, the promotion of the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence; the promotion of cooperation among nations and states; acting towards the elimination of real and/or potential dangers to peace and stability etc. Education for peace should also include activities relating to the strengthening of knowledge and understanding of the nature and causes of war and violence and advantages of peace, development of new humane values of patriotism (in contrast to nationalism), a culture of peace and joint life; cherishing and improvement of cultural and civilizational heritage based on the principle "live and let others live".

Education for peace is most important for elementary school teachers, who are in a position to transfer their knowledge to the younger generations. Studies in Irenology could be useful for the students of international relations and the ones who work or intend to work in that field.

The program of education for peace and stability, in case it would be developed and accepted, should be implemented in all Balkan or South East European countries. Only in that way it would, in the long run, produce favourable results.

Concluding Remarks

All South East European, transitional countries have more or less the same problems and the same longings. All of them belong to the Balkans, which are as a region often designated as the "European powder barrel".

Besides being the least developed countries of Europe, they are wrestling with problems arising from economic transition and socio-political transformation. Multi-ethnic and multi-confessional tensions and inter-state rivalries remain to be remarkable characteristics of the Balkan region. In such circumstances, crisis management should be raised to the level of the art or science of conflict prevention and of creating conditions for peace and stability in each of the South East European countries and in the region in general.

Today, all South East European countries in transition demonstrate their willingness to join NATO and the European Union. To be eligible for the accession, however, they have to fulfil numerous conditions. A good relationship with the neighbouring countries and, as a result of that, regional stability, stay among that conditions. Therefore, each of the South East European countries should coordinate the efforts with the others in their striving to become full members of the International Community. A major contribution to that aim would be to develop a credible pre-accession strategy for South East European countries in transition to join Nato and the European Union.

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