

CLASHES ON THE FYROM BORDER: The Regional Context and Prospects for Resolution

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2000 was hailed by many in the international community as the beginning of peace and stability in the Balkans. Slobodan Milošević, one of the Western-identified pariahs, had been removed from power through democratic elections in Serbia. NATO bombing had halted the state-sponsored persecution of Kosovar Albanians and a UN Administration had begun to focus on the political and economic problems of the province.

However, within one year it has become clear that the situation in the Balkans is far from calm. Milošević's successor, President Kostunica, has shown that he will not bow unequivocally to Western pressure in the formulation of his domestic and foreign policy. Additionally, Montenegro is threatening a referendum on independence from Yugoslavia, Bosnian Croats have declared a Croatian mini-state¹ and the Kosovar Albanians that had been 'protected' by NATO air strikes have turned from victims to aggressors, purging Kosovo's Serb villages and supporting guerrilla groups. The international community, for whom the post-1995² Balkan world had been fairly clear, now find its policies contradict one another and the groups it protected one year ago are now instigating and supporting further separatist acts of violence.

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The most recent destabilising factor in the Balkans is the emergence of a second ethnic-Albanian movement operating within the territorial borders of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).³ Much of the international media portrays this emergence as simply the continuation of inevitable "*Balkan Hatred*." However, the conflict in FYROM must be seen within its larger context. This article will examine the conditions under which the clashes emerged, including an analysis of the general situations in both Kosovo and FYROM. It will then examine the roots of the National Liberation Army (UCK-NLA)⁴ and its links with other ethnic-Albanian groups including the Kosovo Liberation Army and the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB). As in the Bosnian War, ethnic rivalry and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity will be shown to be a tool of minority nationalist groups which are striving to maintain and consolidate their power. The response of the international community will also be examined with a focus on prospects for resolution of the conflict.

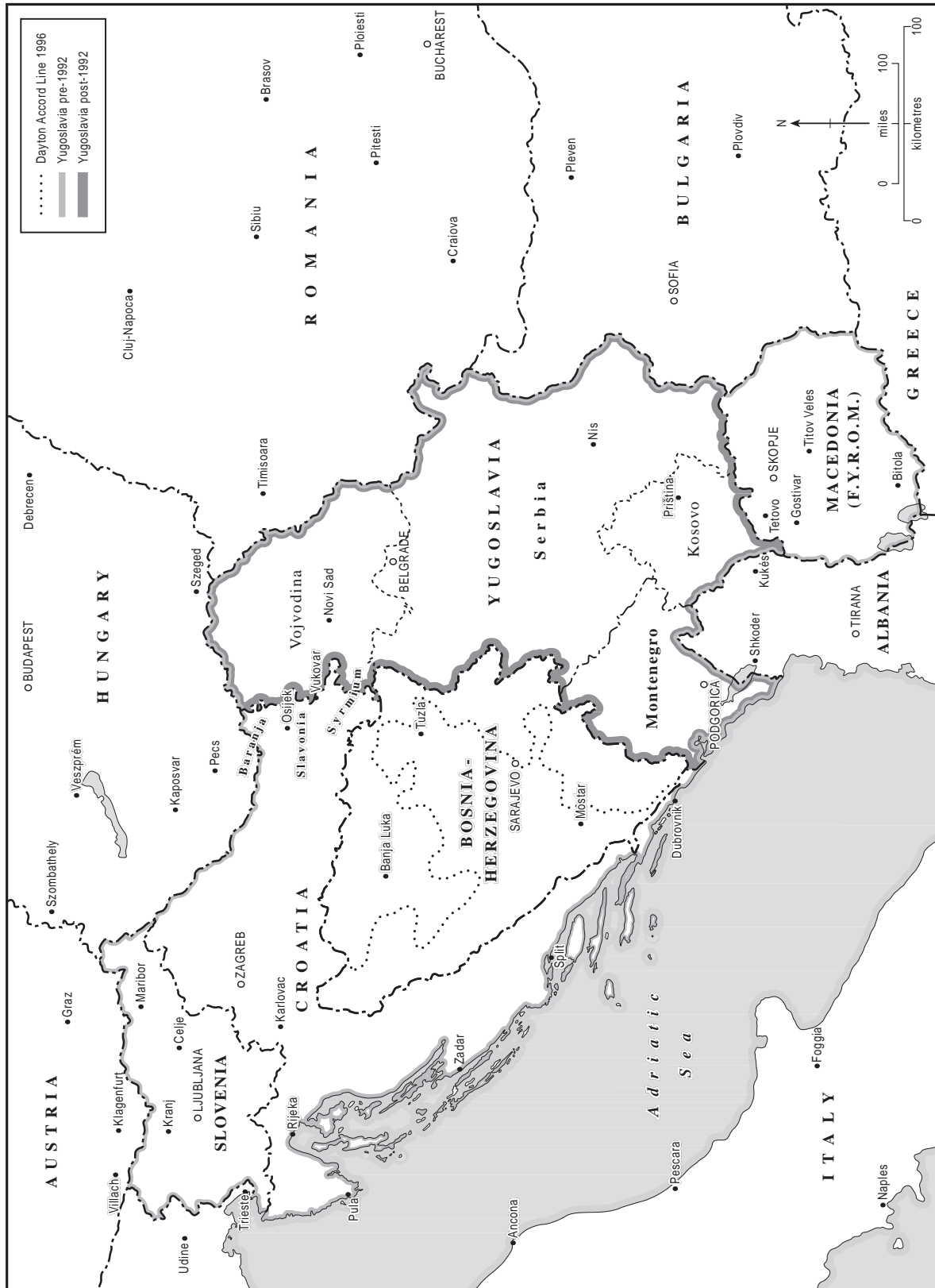
KOSOVO: AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OR INDEPENDENT STATE IN TRANSITION?

The task before the international community is to help the people in Kosovo to rebuild their lives and heal the wounds of conflict.

(Kofi Annan).⁵

Following the removal of Kosovo's autonomous status in 1989 and the repression of Albanian rights (including employment, language, religion and government representation), Kosovar Albanians began a peaceful protest led by Ibrahim Rugova. During the early 1990s Rugova travelled throughout European countries and the United States to plead for renewal of Kosovo's autonomous status and/or independence with a primary focus on the return of basic human rights for its population. The international community was largely silent. When the conclusion of the Bosnian War did not remove President

Former Yugoslavia



Milošević nor involve the international community in halting the repression of the Kosovar population, peaceful non-violence was renounced by a small-scale separatist movement, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).⁶ This armed force quickly rallied popular support within the Kosovar Albanian population and began small-scale attacks against Serbian police, in what could arguably be seen

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as a risky calculation – that if they provoked a reaction by Serbian forces within Kosovo itself, the international community could be shamed into mediating for autonomy and, possibly, for independence. This strategy succeeded and when Yugoslavia failed to agree to the NATO-sponsored *Rambouillet Peace Accords* in 1999 and continued its military activities in Kosovo, NATO forces intervened in Serbia to impose a cessation of hostilities. It was, in fact, the activities of the KLA and the subsequent response of the Yugoslav army which provided the impetus for NATO to bomb Yugoslavia and, consequently, confirmation to the KLA that this tactic, in the face of international silence, works.

Presently Kosovo is governed by UNMIK⁷ and secured by the NATO-led KFOR. Parallel Albanian administrative structures are being set up but full power has not yet been handed over to the Kosovars. Although the KLA has been officially disbanded and partially integrated into the Kosovo Protection Corps,⁸ it is still functioning in the periphery. Revenge attacks against Kosovar Serbs, whose population has now shrunk to 140,000,⁹ continues. The international community's vision of Kosovar Albanians has been shattered by the predictable immediacy and severity of Kosovar rejection (often violent) of everything connected to Yugoslavia. This has resulted in numerous murders of Kosovar Serbs and even the killing of a Bulgarian UNMIK staff member.¹⁰

The international community appears to be undecided as to how to proceed with Kosovo's final status. There are presently two options for Kosovo:

1. Independence, which the West to date does not support; or,
2. Eventual reintegration with Yugoslavia via a UN Transitional Administration.¹¹

The majority of Kosovars, in light of their treatment by Yugoslav authorities during the past two decades, would choose independence.¹² However, the international community has stated that it does not support independence for Kosovo. This is partly a result of regional stability; it would be extremely problematic to fortify Kosovo against re-annexation by Yugoslavia (and Yugoslav President Kostunica has not indicated that he could accept Kosovo's independence).¹³ This would entail formal 'arm and train' programmes (ostensibly for a reformulated KLA force) and/or a permanent international presence. The international community is not willing to commit to a Cyprus-like arrangement of securing Kosovo and funding its administration indefinitely.¹⁴

However, the UN and NATO will face logistical problems in trying to reintegrate Kosovo with Yugoslavia. In the interests of freedom of movement and administrative convenience, UNMIK has already begun distributing certain attributes of independence; Kosovo residents will soon receive UN ID cards¹⁵ reminiscent of the 'Nansen passports',¹⁶ cars will receive new license plates and the region has already abandoned use of the Yugoslav dinar.¹⁷ Perhaps more importantly, independent administrative structures are being established by UNMIK which do not necessarily correspond to the residual Yugoslav structures. If re-integration proceeds, the discrepancy between Kosovo's and Yugoslav structures may prove problematic.

Amidst this contradiction in international policies, the question emerges for Kosovar Albanians: how can Kosovo obtain independence? Based on their previous experience with the international community, many Kosovars believe that they must ensure that the international community witnesses that they cannot live with Yugoslav authority. They must prove that treatment of

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Kosovar Albanians by Yugoslav forces will *always* be brutal. The formation and activation of the UCPMB (approximately 800-1,500 members)¹⁸ in the 5km buffer zone between Kosovo and Serbia is one pragmatic arm of the strategy to ensure independence. Their goals appear to be two-fold:

1. To provoke an armed and brutal response from Yugoslav forces against the UCPMB forces but also against the 70,000 Albanian civilians living in Albanian populated villages in the buffer zone and therefore;¹⁹
2. To encourage the international community to thereby include those Albanian-populated villages in any independent Kosovo.

The international community has had difficulties with how to address the military activity of the UCPMB in the buffer zone. The buffer zone remains Yugoslav territory in international law and KFOR was not keen to extend its own activities further into Yugoslavia,²⁰ with the potential for a KFOR-Yugoslav military clash with its negative repercussions. KFOR is also hesitant to become involved in clashes with Albanian rebels as this could cause a backlash against KFOR troops in Kosovo proper.²¹ Following the emergence of the NLA in FYROM (see below), KFOR came under increasing pressure to secure the border and halt all cross-border activity by the NLA. In response to the dual development of the UCPMB and the NLA, NATO and Yugoslavia agreed that Yugoslav forces would re-enter three sections (25km²) of the buffer zone between Kosovo and FYROM.²²

The re-entry of Yugoslav troops solves two problems for the international community, it eases KFOR's responsibility of securing the border and avoids KFOR casualties while also re-establishing Yugoslav control over this area, a first step in moving towards a handover of Kosovo itself. However, the frontier zone is dangerous and as President Kostunica has stated, "*KFOR is abandoning the border and is inviting our army into the crossfire. The army will of course do this, but it now undoubtedly has to make up for the mistakes of others.*"²³ Although political negotiations are ongoing, sporadic fighting between the UCPMB and the Yugoslav forces reportedly continued.²⁴ KFOR is closely monitoring the Yugoslav forces and is hoping both that no atrocities are committed by Yugoslav forces and that Yugoslav casualties remain low. As will be shown below, the developments in FYROM are directly related to the above-noted situation in Kosovo.

ALBANIANS IN FYROM

The Macedonian constitution... describes FYROM as "a state of ethnic Macedonians and other citizens."

FYROM declared independence in 1991 and managed to escape the violence which spread through many of the other former Republics of Yugoslavia. In the years since independence, FYROM has tried to address the inequalities between Macedonian Slavs and Macedonian Albanians (who comprise between 20 and 30% of the population,²⁵ mostly concentrated in the Northwest of FYROM). Although it has maintained one of the best human rights records in the Balkans, the Macedonian constitution lists Macedonian Albanians as a minority, not as a "*constitutive nation*"²⁶ and describes FYROM as "*a state of ethnic Macedonians and other citizens.*"²⁷ Macedonian Albanians continue to protest this categorisation and demand parity in government representation and university level Albanian-language education.²⁸ FYROM is presently governed by a coalition government including the Democratic Party of Albanians (11 seats out of 120) and hosts an ethnic-Albanian opposition party, the Democratic Alternative Party (13 seats).²⁹ During the past decade, the governing coalition has been successful in addressing these issues via political means and achieving gradual results (such as positive quotas for ethnic Albanians in police,

military,³⁰ civil administration and the passing of a law on higher education which clears the way for an Albanian-language university in Tetovo).³¹

However, economic inequality continues. Even during its days as a Republic of Yugoslavia, FYROM was a relatively poor region. After independence it has been classified as one of the poorest countries in Europe.³² Its economy is based on agriculture and some textiles and metallurgical plants (based in Skopje).³³ While unemployment among Macedonian Slavs reaches 30%, this figure is approximately 60% among the Macedonian Albanian population.³⁴

Links between the ethnic-Albanian communities in FYROM and the province of Kosovo have been solidified by the events of the past two years. In 1999, FYROM received up to 300,000 Kosovar Albanian refugees during the Yugoslav action and the subsequent NATO bombing. They were housed primarily in the northwest of the country.³⁵ Although UNHCR estimates that virtually all of the refugees have since returned to Kosovo, the contacts between the two groups undoubtedly created emotional links of empathy and understanding. Feelings of marginalisation and discrimination, which had already been felt by Macedonian Albanians may have been heightened by the harsh treatment of the Kosovar Albanian refugees by the Serbian Slavic majority.

THE BORDER DISPUTE WITH YUGOSLAVIA AND THE INITIAL CLASHES

Upon independence, FYROM invoked the principles of *uti possidetis* and claimed its previous administrative borders. However, for the past decade Yugoslavia has disputed almost the entirety of the border on the grounds that areas of strategic and historic interest which lay inside this administrative border belonged to Yugoslavia.³⁶

On 23 February 2001, this issue was finally resolved and FYROM began to initiate stricter patrols along the agreed-upon border. It was at this point that Macedonian troops began to come into contact with the extensive smuggling supply lines (primarily run by ethnic-Albanian groups) which crossed the border close to Tanusevci. The smugglers clashed with the heightened patrols and three Macedonian police officers were killed in the initial fighting.

The conflict was soon recognised by the participants on all sides (Kosovar Albanian groups, Macedonian Albanian groups, NATO and the Macedonian Government) as a potentially destabilising force on the southern border of Yugoslavia. It could be argued that the initial clashes as well as the Macedonian Government response provided an opportunity and an excuse for the NLA to emerge.³⁷ The Macedonian Government responded to the gun battles by referring to the smugglers as ethnic-Albanian "*insurgents*."³⁸ However, it was not until two weeks after the first clash that a statement was issued demanding enhanced rights for ethnic Albanians in FYROM.³⁹ The events surrounding the clashes between the black marketers and the Macedonian army provided an opportunity for radical Macedonian Albanians to take the forefront of the political and military stage and form the NLA.

RECENT CLASHES: THE NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY

The present trend of recognition of our rights is trivial...[w]e don't seek killings and war, because for centuries we were the victims...we will bear no responsibility for the future chain of events. We urge the international community to recognise our demands, which are for peace.

(National Liberation Army-Tetovo Branch 40).

WHO ARE THE NLA AND WHAT DO THEY WANT?

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The origins of the National Liberation Army are unclear although the links to Kosovo are indisputable. Although their leaders are Macedonian Albanians, many of them were trained and fought together with the KLA in Kosovo.⁴¹ Two of their leaders, Ali Ahmeti and Amrush Xhemajli, have been identified as founding members of the KLA.⁴² Attacks into Yugoslavia in the late 1990s occurred from such villages and towns as Tanusevci and Tetovo in FYROM. However, observers have noted that the newly emerged NLA soldiers appear to be more professionally trained and better equipped than the former KLA fighters.⁴³ The speed with which the small initial group, which consisted of smugglers, could have transformed into a properly trained and equipped fighting force indicates “*outside interference*”⁴⁴ as well as a rapidly radicalising local population.

All official statements made by the NLA echo the initial demands of the Kosovar Albanians during the early 1990s as well as the platform of the more moderate Macedonian Albanian political parties. They limit their demands to enhanced political and educational rights for Macedonian Albanians. The main planks of their demands, as they have evolved over the past months include:⁴⁵

1. Changes to the constitution to include Albanians as a constitutive nation.
2. Designation of Albanian as the second official language of FYROM.
3. Greater autonomy in Albanian dominated regions.
4. Greater representation in government.

If these demands are maintained the NLA will continue to hold the rhetorical moral high ground of self-determination (without any formal calls for independence yet) and human rights. These are official demands that the international community has supported in other parts of the world and will have a hard time ignoring in light of its intervention in Kosovo to defend such principles.

However, the private statements of the NLA in the field evoke images of a “*greater Albania*” and the unification of western FYROM with Kosovo.⁴⁶ “*Unless direct talks with the government start soon we will be expanding our operations into new territory.*”⁴⁷ The international community is then divided between downplaying the importance of the NLA and addressing the destabilising impact which the group has on the region. This is evidenced by the exchange between NATO Secretary-General Robertson who identified the NLA as “*small groups of politically isolated extremists*”⁴⁸ and the UN Balkans Envoy, Carl Bildt, who criticised Robertson, stating that “*to minimise the role of the Albanian rebels is to show intentional forced optimism.*”⁴⁹

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO DATE?

The situation in FYROM is currently unfolding. Following the initial clashes between smugglers and Macedonian police, the NLA emerged as a formidable force in comparison to the conscript army of FYROM, quickly consolidating control of key locations such as Tetovo and Tanusevci. A group of Macedonian ministers and members of a mediation body for Southern Serbia were trapped under gunfire from the NLA for the whole day on 9 March in Locane, a small village in the north of FYROM. The ministers had travelled to Locane to reassure locals that the region remained under government control following the above-mentioned clashes earlier on in the week.⁵⁰ Continued small-arms fighting caused the Macedonian police and army troops to begin an assault on Tetovo to root out the NLA on 15 March.⁵¹ Official estimates at that time noted that up to 500 well equipped NLA soldiers were dug into the hills above

Tetovo.⁵² By 19 March, the Macedonian Army had placed hundreds of troops, ten tanks and various artillery in Tetovo in preparation for a strong attack on NLA positions.⁵³ A five day assault on the Kale Hill (overlooking Tetovo) commenced. Reports indicate that Macedonian army did not attempt to “differentiate between NLA members and civilians as it entered remote villages”⁵⁴ and numerous houses and farms were destroyed.

The Macedonian Government issued an ultimatum to the NLA to retreat from their positions or face air strikes and a land assault within 24 hours.⁵⁵ Representatives of the NLA announced a unilateral ceasefire in response.⁵⁶ Although the Macedonian Government rejected the ceasefire, it did not initiate the threatened full-scale assault, apparently convinced by international pressure to issue a more measured military response. After protracted small-scale fighting during the next week, Macedonian forces finally took Kale Hill on 22 March.

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However, NLA troops had long since disappeared into the civilian population (and into Kosovo) and the Macedonian military victory is proving to be pyrrhic. By 22 March, the NLA forces were estimated at over 1,000.⁵⁷ The destruction of housing and farms of moderate civilian Macedonian Albanians as well as the displacement, according to UNHCR, of 22,000 mostly ethnic-Albanian Macedonians⁵⁸ is mobilising the ethnic-Albanian population while Macedonian Government propaganda is pushing Macedonian Slavs to respond as well. Each community is listening to the reports of its own media, which do not always provide the complete course of events⁵⁹ and local broadcasts of external media such as the BBC have been discontinued.⁶⁰

During the weeks of fighting in the north west of FYROM, incidents in the remainder of the country, most notably the more liberal capital, Skopje, indicate that the conflict is having an effect on the Macedonian population -at-large. This is evidenced by the wounding of police officers by gunshots and rocket propelled grenades in Skopje,⁶¹ demonstrations on the part of Macedonian Slavs in the capital demanding arms to defend themselves,⁶² as well as demonstrations by Macedonian Albanians in Tetovo and Skopje supporting the NLA and demanding enhanced rights.

The Macedonian Government has stated that its military offensive was a success and that the NLA have been expelled from FYROM. There were reportedly no civilian casualties in FYROM as a result of the offensive. Unfortunately, sporadic reports of fighting between the NLA and government forces continue. NLA commanders assert that “nothing has changed. On the military front, we are in position. On the political front, there has been no progress.”⁶³ The moderate Macedonian Albanian party, the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) is caught between the demands of the radicalising public and the desire to avert war.⁶⁴ The leader of the DPA has stated that his electorate will only allow him one month to achieve a negotiated political settlement. If no progress is made, the support for the NLA could increase and a larger section of the ethnic Albanian population could join the ranks of the NLA.⁶⁵

The Macedonian Government has refused to conduct talks directly with the NLA. However, they have agreed to meet with representatives from the Albanian political parties to discuss the rights of Macedonian Albanians. The EU High Representative for Security and Foreign Policy, Javier Solana, acted as primary mediator for talks in Skopje which began on 2 April. Although the talks have included the DPA, the main ethnic-Albanian opposition party, the Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), boycotted the first days of talks.⁶⁶

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE AND MEDITATION TO DATE

Something went very wrong and we are trying very hard to figure out where. There is a feeling that we incubated this thing.

(An anonymous US official with the UN).

On 11 March 2001, *The Observer* claimed that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) encouraged former KLA "fighters to launch a rebellion in Southern Serbia in an effort to undermine the then Yugoslav President Slobodan Milošević."⁶⁷ This group was allowed to "train, smuggle arms and launch attacks across two international borders."⁶⁸ Included in the article were strong accusations on the part of European officers in KFOR that the American sector in Kosovo created a space, encouraged by the CIA, in which unofficial armed groups, possibly including NLA members, trained and smuggled arms.⁶⁹ It is believed that some of the now-NLA soldiers were a seasoned part of these armed forces. The US State Department blames the previous US administration, stating that there has since been a "shift of emphasis."⁷⁰

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The international community is now struggling to contain the violence both in FYROM and the buffer zone without becoming militarily involved. After substantial public pressure from the Macedonian Government, US KFOR troops belatedly stepped up patrols on the southern border between Kosovo and FYROM and have since had substantial success in intercepting suspected NLA members on the Kosovo side of the border.⁷¹ This indicates the strong role KFOR could play in limiting the NLA's ability to retreat to Kosovo and regroup after each battle. However, KFOR's reluctance to risk casualties as well as EU pressure on the Macedonian government to issue a measured response sends a clear message to the NLA that the international community will militarily intervene neither for nor against them. The US, the UK and Germany have offered instead to supply military advisors and reconnaissance equipment to track rebel movements.

Besides a UN Security Council Resolution which "strongly condemned the extremist violence",⁷² the UN has been largely absent in mediation efforts. The primary roles have been taken by the European Union and NATO. In addition to political involvement, the EU has been involved in offering economic support to the affected regions in the hope that this will prevent economically-spurred radicalism.⁷³ The EU is acutely aware of the leverage it gains over Macedonian government actions via such aid as well as its upcoming consideration of Macedonian membership in the EU. It appears that, in an effort to avoid a backlash from both sides, the EU is presenting "inter-ethnic dialogue as an integral part of the path to EU membership rather than a concession to violence."⁷⁴ The EU seems to be putting pressure on the Macedonian government to accept changes to the constitutional status of Macedonian Albanians and conduct further discussions on the overall rights of ethnic Albanians.⁷⁵ The primary message to FYROM is that it must "keep the moderate Albanians on board and isolate the extremists."⁷⁶ Since casualties and damage to property to date have been fairly minimal, there remains hope of a negotiated settlement. But if the current sporadic fighting continues, this may prove to be an increasingly difficult task.

CONCLUSIONS

One thing these crises have in common is borders. People are trying to redraw borders across the region. Our view is that if the international community allows that to happen it will mean dead people.

(Chris Bird).⁷⁷

The High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Wolfgang Petrisch makes a distinction between the present situation throughout the Balkans and

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that which marked the disintegration of Yugoslavia. *“Those were ethnic conflicts. These are conflicts that are happening as part of progress towards civic society where nationalists are actually on the run.”*⁷⁸ This study would agree that the recent clashes constitute a struggle for power among those whose position is weakening. It should not be forgotten that the NLA consists of ethnic-Albanian nationalists with strong links to the independence-minded residual KLA as well as to the flourishing Kosovo black market (whose power is threatened by the less permeable Yugoslavia-FYROM border). However, the impact of nationalist rhetoric in a poor country among a discriminated ethnic minority cannot be discounted. When the rhetoric, which resonates among the rural population, is combined with prolonged military clashes in civilian (predominantly-Albanian) populated areas and solidified by casualties on both sides, radicalisation of both Macedonian Slavs and Macedonian Albanians will undoubtedly intensify.

The impact of nationalist rhetoric in a poor country among a discriminated ethnic minority cannot be discounted.

Groups of Macedonian Slavs are beginning to demand arms from the government to protect themselves and even moderate Macedonian Albanian villagers are becoming increasingly fearful of the Macedonian mobilisation. *“My family is terrified...the Macedonians will shoot us.”*⁷⁹ Desertion of the Albanian section of the Macedonian army (40%) is also a possibility which could further divide Macedonian society. Moderate villagers state that *“if it is going to go on like this, people are not going to remain with their arms folded. Even I will go to fight.”*⁸⁰ The longer the clashes continue and the stronger the rhetoric becomes, the more ingrained the myth of Albanian identity becomes, and the higher the danger of a protracted conflict which could involve additional external actors.

KFOR, the EU, the UN and the US must take a more proactive role...

It is debatable whether the intense diplomatic pressure of the international community for Macedonian government moderation combined with its reluctance to risk involvement has fundamentally harmed the prospects for solution. It is clear that KFOR, the EU, the UN and the US must take a more proactive role in their activities in the surrounding region, most notably Kosovo. The links between the KLA and the NLA cannot be ignored and the international community in Kosovo, (KFOR and the UN) must continue to tighten its control over Kosovo and the border region, in cooperation with Yugoslav forces. Furthermore, they must enforce the new laws against terrorism in Kosovo itself and continue to encourage the Kosovo population to distance itself (both politically and militarily)⁸¹ from the events in FYROM. Additionally, there are recent reports that former KLA training camps in Albania have been re-opened and that the Albanian-FYROM border will soon serve as the second front for the NLA.⁸² The international community must assist Albania to secure its border⁸³ by providing technical and advisory assistance (similar to its assistance to FYROM). This will send a definitive message to the NLA that they do not have the support of the regional ethnic - Albanian politicians for their military activity.

The ongoing negotiations should be supported and enhanced rights for Macedonian Albanians, in line with the political-based progress of the past seven years, must be initiated. However, it must be firmly stated that separation as a result of federalisation will not be tolerated by the Macedonian government and will not be approved by the international community. This will further deprive the NLA of the stated basis for their armed struggle and could eliminate support from the local populations. Progress must be made quickly. The longer the process takes, and the more fighting which occurs, the harder it will be to achieve a lasting settlement.

It is only with the eradication of economic disparities, and governmental discrimination that the power of nationalist rhetoric in Macedonia will be dissipated.

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Furthermore, a negotiated settlement does not necessarily mean that the fighting will stop. Take, for instance, the ceasefire negotiated by NATO between the UCPMB and Yugoslav forces on 10 March.⁸⁴ The ceasefire remains shaky and ethnic Albanian leaders in the southern part of the buffer zone have stated that they may continue to fight. In the case of FYROM, economic measures must be initiated (which could be helped by the EU membership) to encourage economic parity between the Slav and Albanian communities. It is only with the eradication of economic disparities, and governmental discrimination that the power of nationalist rhetoric in Macedonia will be dissipated.

The regional implications of protracted fighting are substantial. Instability in the region could affect the future for other countries. If Montenegro does vote for independence this year, they will face difficulties in the region of Muslim-populated Sandzak which straddles the Montenegro-Serbian border and which would then be divided into two provinces in two independent countries. Kosovars are already looking for an indication of their future status. Bosnian Croats continue to clamour for their own entity within Bosnia and Herzegovina while Hungarians in Yugoslav Vojvodina discuss their autonomous status. Armed conflict in FYROM, especially if dialogue shifts towards a separate Albanian entity, could encourage further armed struggles for separation throughout the region.

¹ Thereby threatening the Dayton Peace Accords (1995).

² Following the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords.

³ This study will use the title acknowledged by the United Nations, in recognition that the name 'Macedonia' remains disputed.

⁴ UCK is the same Albanian-language acronym which was used by the Kosovo Liberation Army. In order to distinguish between the two, for the purposes of this study, the English language acronym NLA will be used.

⁵ <http://www.un.org/peace/kosovo>.

⁶ The KLA received large amounts of arms from Albania when the Berisha regime collapsed and massive amounts of Albanian federal arms 'disappeared' from army storehouses. See Calvocoressi, P. (2001) *World Politics: 1945-2000*. London: 352.

⁷ UNMIK staff are actually fulfilling the main structures of government and administration for the region. There are five Regional Administrators and 30 Municipal Administrators.

⁸ For activities related to 'emergency response and reconstruction services.'

⁹ <http://www.nato.int>.

¹⁰ On his first day in Kosovo, the staff member had the misfortune to speak words which were misidentified as Serbian.

¹¹ Similar to UNTAES which effectively ran Eastern Slavonia until re-integration with Croatia. However, considering the continued economic and political discrimination of Croatian Serbs in that region, prospects for Kosovar Albanians under renewed Yugoslav authority are not bright.

¹² 'Kosovo: State in Embryo' in *The Economist*, 27 November 1999.

¹³ Kosovo is the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Pec and the site of the battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389, a symbol of Serbian resistance. Additionally, it is a region rich in mineral wealth. Kostunica would face strong domestic political pressure if he considered Kosovo's independence.

¹⁴ The United Nations has been involved in securing the two effectively separate sides of the island of Cyprus for over 35 years.

¹⁵ By the end of June 2001 these travel documents will replace Yugoslav passports for those Kosovar Albanian who apply for them. See Islami, N. (2001) 'Kosovo Travel Breakthrough', in *Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)*, 8 February 2001.

- 16 Joly, D. (1997) 'Refugees in Europe: The Hostile New Agenda', in *Minority Rights Group*, March.
- 17 'Kosovo: State in Embryo', in *The Economist*, 27 November 1999.
- 18 Huggler, J. 'NATO push for Rebel Deal in Kosovo' in *The Guardian*, 11 March 2001.
- 19 34 Serb forces have been killed in the Presevo Valley as of May 2001.
- 20 KFOR appears to be very concerned about the possibility of 'mission creep,' the expansion of KFOR duties beyond their original mandate.
- 21 Erlanger, S. 'Options Pared, West Gropes for a Response to Balkan Clashes', in *The International Herald Tribune*, 19 March 2001.
- 22 Yugoslav Federal troops are not allowed to bring heavy weapons or armour into the buffer zone. Although this is an attempt to keep the Yugoslav troops under strict controls, it can also render the troops vulnerable.
- 23 Filipovic, M. 'Yugoslav Forces to Enter Buffer Zone', in *IWPR*, 9 March 2001. [Http://www.kforonline.com](http://www.kforonline.com).
- 24 This figure is disputed. Although the 1994 census notes 22.7% Albanian, the Albanian communities state that their population is much higher.
- 25 Surroi, V. 'Ending the Violence', in *IWPR*, 21 March 2001.
- 26 Mehmeti, K. 'Futile Dialogue Exposed', in *IWPR*, 21 March 2001.
- 27 In 1992 this culminated in a self-organised referendum on the establishment of an autonomous entity within FYROM entitled Ilirida. See Mehmeti, K. 'Futile Dialogue Exposed', in *IWPR*, 21 March 2001.
- 28 Elected in the November 1998 elections. See Wright, R. 'Bitter History Haunts Latest Balkan Hotspot', in *The Financial Times*. 19 March 2001.
- 29 For example, 40% of the Macedonian conscript army consists of ethnic Albanians.
- 30 The privately funded Stoel University. See Johansen, K. 'West Should Step Up Macedonia Support' in *IWPR*, 21 March 2001 and Ordanoski, S. 'DPA Likely To Stay in Power', in *IWPR*, 28 March 2001.
- 31 <http://www.brittanica.com>: entry on Macedonia.
- 32 <http://www.brittanica.com>: entry on Macedonia.
- 33 Raxhimi, A. 'Macedonia: A Pattern of Inequality', in <http://www.CNN.com>, 22 March 2001.
- 34 Johansen, K. 'West Should Step Up Macedonia Support' in *IWPR*, 21 March 2001.
- 35 The three main areas of contention include Cupino Brdo, near the border with Bulgaria, the Korab mountain pastures, near the border with both Serbia and Albania, as well as Skopska Crna Gora, near to Skopje. See Nikolic, D. 'Macedonian Dispute Nearing End', in *IWPR*, 22 January 2001.
- 36 Rumours of a radical Macedonian Albanian group operating out of Tetovo and Tanusevci had circulated during 2000. However, the group had not emerged officially until after the clashes of late February-early March.
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- 58 Carroll, R and Steele, J. 'Macedonia Stands on the Edge of War', in *The
Guardian*, 23 March 2001. See also 'Bush Warns Macedonia Rebels', in
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- 59 See the case of the two ethnic-Albanians killed by Macedonian forces after
being stopped at a checkpoint. One of the ethnic-Albanians attempted to throw
a grenade at the soldiers. Albanian-language media does not show the initial
part of the tape which shows the men throwing the grenade, only the dead men
lying on the street. Macedonian Albanians have since questioned whether the
men actually provoked the shooting or not. See Beaumont, P. 'Minute of
Madness Watched By the World', in *The Guardian*, 23 March 2001.
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in Power', in *IWPR*, 28 March 2001.
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- 81 After much arm-twisting by NATO and the UN, Kosovo's main political leaders Rugova, Hasim Thaci and Ramush Haradinaj issued a statement in which they "call on the extremist groups which have taken up arms in Macedonia to lay them down immediately and to return to their homes peacefully." See 'Bush Warns Macedonia Rebels', <http://www.bbc.co.uk>, 24 March 2001.
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- 83 During the week of 2 April 2001, the Albanian government requested NATO surveillance of their border with FYROM to deter cross border support of the NLA. See Patros, G. 'Discussion on Macedonia', at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 3 April 2001.
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