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Balkans. By the same token, it is clear that the maximalist objectives of the Serbian state for Kosova are largely unfeasible: they would require colossal funds and would, moreover, doom Serbia to continuing international isolation.

For the Albanian side the option is to leave Serbia, and the main trump cards here are peace and democracy. The Abanians are ready to enter any negotiations, but only as independent subjects, i.e. as a people participating in decision-making rather than as a minority, which they quite simply are not. If democracy is based on a majority decision-making process and the right to the self-determination of peoples, then the establishment of a democratic system will bring a demand for decolonisation and the *exercise* of the right of self-determination of the population of Kosova. Thus for the Albanians, all roads lead somehow to secession. This is true at present, in conditions of oppression and existential insecurity. It will be equally true under the putative democratic regime of the future.

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Chapter 9

The West and the International Organisations

SUSAN L. WOODWARD

Introduction

The international aspects of the Yugoslav crisis pose a particularly difficult subject for analysis. The primary reason is methodological: the crisis was so much a consequence of, and an adjustment to, an international transition, and that international transition was itself being worked out so much in response to the Yugoslav conflict, that the causal relation between internal and external factors became increasingly difficult to disentangle as the conflict evolved. Because the domestic crisis evolved into separate nationalist struggles to create independent states out of one country, including competing claims for sovereignty over the same territory, moreover, the traditional demarcation lines between domestic and international spheres – the sovereign frontiers and prerogatives of the state – did not hold. Was the war in Bosnia, for example, as Western powers debated among themselves, a civil war or a war of external aggression? And are these the only two possibilities?

A second source of difficulty is political and psychological: the case represented a monumental failure for international and regional organisations of collective security and their member states, which had thought their principles and mechanisms were ready for the post-Cold War era. American leadership failed to materialise until late in the day and the Europeans were unable to exploit the opportunity this vacuum presented. The failure to manage the crisis, prevent the ensuing violence, or protect fundamental international principles in its aftermath did not, however, stimulate serious retrospection. The pattern was rather to avoid analysis and seek excuses. The powers and the international organisations did so by declaring the Balkans *sui generis*, and its crisis an unfortunate casualty of timing, occurring too early in the overloaded sequence of the end of the Cold War.

Most damaging to serious analysis, however, is the third reason, whereby these psychological defences constructed a new reality out of what happened. The path of the conflict, from the dissolution of the country to the creation of national states and then the ethnic homogenisation (so-called 'cleansing') of each territory, came quickly to be viewed as inevitable—the *natural* outcome of a logic of partition and nationalism *inherent* in the Balkans. Alternatives, choices and competing proposals and trends were lost in the fog of some distant past. Apart from regret that violence

was not prevented, few questioned the proposition that this was a domestic quarrel, centuries in the making, and that the Yugoslav peoples chose their fate.

In fact, the crisis and path of the conflict cannot be adequately explained without reference to international factors, such as the interdependence between the nature of the Yugoslav socialist regime and its international environment, the fundamental economic, political and strategic changes in that environment during the 1980s, and to the principles and methods of international intervention to help manage the crisis. In fact, the Yugoslav crisis is not *sui generis*, but only a particularly dramatic example of the widespread phenomenon of political disintegration – the collapse of the governmental institutions and social norms enabling peaceful resolution or moderation of conflict – that becomes a contest over sovereignty itself and crosses the (normally) hard border separating *international* and *internal* politics. And the path that the conflict took was driven in part by the decisions of outsiders, by their methods of intervention, towards the self-fulfilling prophecies that the inappropriate categories and outmoded paradigms of those outsiders generated.

The external consequences of conflicts like the Yugoslav, in terms of refugees, the spread of lawlessness, ever deeper fragmentation and the defiance of international conventions, necessarily impel international action. Yet thus far the intervening powers and institutions in the Yugoslav case have found no solutions, either to the immediate problems of war and further disintegration, or in terms of the longer-term requirements of normalisation and regional stability. At the same time, their efforts to contain and end the wars in Croatia and in Bosnia and Hercegovina have become the primary context, in a process of trial-and-error and learning-by-doing, for redefining the international order in the post-Cold War period in the West.

Interdependence and transition: origins of the crisis[1]

Most analyses of the collapse of Yugoslavia, particularly those influencing the policies of governments that intervened in the crisis, have tended to focus on the role of political leaders, and in particular on the death of Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito in 1980 and the rise to power in Serbia after 1987 of Slobodan Milošević. In this story, a domestic power struggle in the waning days of communist rule becomes an expansionary project of one nation against the others, in part through politicians' calculated revival of memories about national antagonisms and threats to the survival of their nation in the past from other nations within their common state (largely involving Serbs and Croats, or Serbs and the rest), and in part through their policies to stifle the emergence of pluralist democratic trends (said to be bursting forth in the republics of Slovenia and Croatia) by strengthening the central state and the socialist order. In these analyses there is a strong element of intention and planning, in accordance with the conspiratorial thinking that flourishes in regions and times where uncertainty is particularly pronounced. Like the theories of regime

[1] The documentation and detailed argumentation for the story presented here will be found in the author's full-length monograph on the collapse of Yugoslavia and the related international intervention. See Woodward, 1995a.

transition in South America, Southern Europe, or Central and Eastern Europe, they focus exclusively on domestic political variables (see O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead, 1986).

The path that led to the dissolution of Yugoslavia was, however, far more contingent. To the extent that there were plans, their purpose was to protect national security and resolve an economic crisis generated by foreign debt, and they were largely written by military and economic professionals on the periphery of power, not the politicians they advised. Such plans and programmatic reform proposals were composed in reaction to events and changes in the international strategic and economic environment, or in alliance with representatives of international organisations and foreign governments. The changes that occurred in domestic policy and institutions, on the other hand, were the result of piecemeal political responses by individual actors who interacted to create the appearance but not the reality of a plan.

The issues at stake were the locus of control over economic assets and governmental power, and the defence of citizens' economic rights and social status (see Chapters 2–5). Thus the domestic political contest came to be focused on competing visions of the state and constitutional reform. Political mobilisation of elite and popular support used the language of constitutional rights and identities, and thus a rhetoric of national rights (Slovene, Croatian, Serbian and so forth) and of political revolution – the communist regime and anti-communism, democracy and authoritarianism. Outsiders responded directly to this rhetoric, either as ideological sympathisers or as mediators in what became an international issue once the battle lines were defined in terms of a struggle for national independence and sovereignty. And while the proximate causes of dissolution originated with policies of foreign economic adjustment adopted more than a decade before the fall of the Berlin Wall in October 1989, by the middle of the 1980s the positions on domestic, economic and political reform could not be separated from the transition taking place elsewhere in Europe and in the international system. It is possible that this adjustment would not have been so cataclysmic, and might have remained within the bounds of the evolutionary predictions of the transition-to-democracy school, if the international system had remained the same. But it did not, and it soon became painfully clear that the collective identity and internal order of socialist Yugoslavia 1945–90 had been shaped by and was inextricably tied to the Cold War international order (Woodward, 1995b).

The secret of Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito's rule (1944–80), usually associated with his personal charisma or with communist dictatorship, lay in fact in the international balancing act he created to protect Yugoslav independence and to maximise its prosperity within a bipolar world of hostile ideological, strategic and economic blocs. The very political and economic identity of Yugoslavia as co-founder of the non-aligned bloc, for example, emerged as a response to exclusion from full membership in either Eastern or Western blocs in the period 1947–49. Although Yugoslavia's third way brought it international prestige and foreign trade flexibility, its independence was in fact a strategic resource that depended on the conviction of the Western powers that national communism in the Balkans was a propaganda asset, and that Yugoslav neutrality could be a vital element of NATO's strategy of containment in the east. The Yugoslav armed forces, under this policy, would

defend Western Europe and the North Atlantic alliance against a Soviet onslaught through south-eastern Europe. In exchange it would receive privileged access to international financial institutions, public loans and Western capital markets. The consequence was a domestic system in part organised around the needs of defence, with economic benefits and international status depending on the maintenance of this system of defence and on perceptions of the country's strategic significance. The dependence grew over time, because the country's rapid economic growth was fuelled by three decades of borrowed capital, funding the import of intermediate goods and advanced technology, and because its political stability was in large part due to the consumerism, the rising standards of living and the relative equality in the distribution of the benefits of growth that that permitted.

The consequences of this international balancing act benefited not only Yugoslavs. It suited the Western powers. It prevented a major confrontation between West and East after the Second World War, against the background of the competition between Britain and the Soviet Union over the Balkans as expressed in the infamous October 1944 'percentages deal' between Churchill and Stalin: Yugoslavia would be shared fifty/fifty. In assuming the British imperial role by stages after 1946, most explicitly through the Truman Doctrine announced in March 1947, the United States in effect maintained the commitment to this division by being the primary (but not always constant) defender of Yugoslav neutrality. In the same way, after the First World War, the new Yugoslavia created at the Versailles Peace Conference had provided a regional compromise within the context of the new principles of international order: between the principle of national self-determination used to legitimise the dismantling of the eastern empires and the principle of the balance of power, under which the creation of a multinational state in the Balkans – the Kingdom of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs – would act as a buffer against the emergence of large, potentially hostile powers (Italy, Austria, Serbia) in the region.

Multinational composition and national independence (and the role this gave to the armed forces and a non-aligned foreign policy) apart, international conditions initiated and shaped domestic Yugoslav economic policy and political change in the postwar period. Throughout the period after the system began to stabilise in 1952, governmental policy alternated between two tendencies that were defined, on the one hand, by East-West relations and their consequences for Yugoslav national security; and, on the other hand, by the availability of, and requirements for, the foreign financing for imports and infrastructural projects, and by the shifts in terms of trade and market access for Yugoslav exports and the effect of those shifts on factor prices for domestic manufacturers and federal customs revenue. The two tendencies in the dynamic of public policy reflected the pattern of microeconomic adjustment necessary to take account of external economic and strategic conditions – in terms of differing emphases in production and in corresponding systems of economic incentives, patterns of employment and political organisation for implementation – and accompanying adjustments in regulations on money, labour and constitutional jurisdictions of governmental authorities. The source of trade financing (public or commercial borrowing) directly defined federal-republican relations. Security threats (nuclear or conventional warfare; from the East or West) defined

what had to be produced domestically for national defence and determined whether the technologically advanced federal army or the guerrilla-based Territorial Defence Forces in the localities were given priority. The pattern of demand for exports (primary commodities or finished goods in light or heavy manufacturing; and whether transactions were based on bilateral contracts in the East, governmental trade agreements in the South, or spot markets or supplier credits in the West) defined the firms, regions and industrial relations that policy would favour.

The decade of the 1980s began with a return to the policy tendency of liberal, 'efficiency-oriented' economic reform that had dominated policy in the 1960s. That policy orientation aimed at stimulating manufacturing exports to Western markets in order to repay foreign debt, reduce the trade deficit and restore liquidity to the external account. By 1979, the Yugoslav foreign debt had reached crisis proportions, at about $20bn, in part as a result of rising Western protectionism, the decline in foreign demand for Yugoslav labour (cutting the contribution of workers' remittances to the covering of the trade deficit from one-half to one-fourth by 1979), and the deteriorating terms of trade for Yugoslav exports. Commercial banks had initially reacted to the Polish debt crisis by stopping all further lending to countries in the area, including Yugoslavia. By 1982 the IMF was taking a much tougher line on conditions for loans, in response to a global debt crisis which had, indeed, resulted from overlending by multinational banks and IMF policy toward newly industrialising countries during the 1970s. The core of this liberal reform for Yugoslavia – a long-term macroeconomic stabilisation programme aimed at cutting domestic demand, labour costs and inflation – was introduced in 1982, in conjunction with yet another conditionality programme of International Monetary Fund (IMF) credits.

In addition to general austerity, with rising prices for most utilities and basic goods, tight quotas on imported consumer goods and a wage and salary freeze, the cuts that were required in public expenditure also put severe pressure on employment which had expanded during the 1970s, with the official unemployment rate rising to 14 per cent. More than half the jobless were young graduates under the age of twenty-five, and the decline in foreign demand for labour was cutting off the primary outlet for the rural labour surplus and for children of private-sector parents. The restrictive policies of the 1980s, oriented towards debt repayment, threatened with unemployment the beneficiaries of socialism – industrial workers and the children of the urban middle class. The government's programme for absorbing surplus labour – to send the actual and potential unemployed back to families, villages, and private sector agriculture and trades – was less than realistic because of the rapid urbanisation and the extension of university education of the 1970s. Transfers of administrative and professional staff to industry or private employment, and cuts in federal subsidies and welfare transfers and development credits for poorer areas, exposed all localities, regions and social groups to declining standards of living and rising unemployment; at the same time, they exacerbated social differences and inequalities. The government's stabilisation programme actually divided the country into two economic sectors of differential investment policy requirements: a high-wage, technologically advanced, export-oriented North and a low-wage, labour-intensive South. By 1985, the federal government was experiencing a fiscal crisis, and the federal system translated this directly into fiscal crises for the republics

and localities. A spiral of hyperinflation began and people who held foreign hard currency were favoured even in domestic transactions.

To implement marketising liberal reforms that were meant to create a long-term capacity to service foreign debt and reduce reliance on internal savings and domestic sacrifice for recovery, governmental reform was needed. According to IMF economists and domestic liberals, the problem was the extreme decentralisation and segmentation of the economy embodied in the 1974 constitution (see Chapter 2) and the subsequent decentralisation to republican control of foreign exchange, foreign borrowing and foreign debt obligations. Delays in decision-making, financial indiscipline and a deadlocked, immobilised governmental administration seemed to point to the absolute necessity of a constitutional reform that would strengthen federal administrative capacity, improve macroeconomic management and create an independent central bank and a system of 'functional integration' appropriate to a market economy. And the League of Communists did indeed set up a commission for political reform that reported in 1985 with the first of a series of proposals to amend the federal constitution (and thereby the republican constitutions).

International conditions changed radically again in 1985–86. Commercial banks resumed lending, the United States Embassy and State Department organised a massive debt-refinancing programme (involving more than 600 banks), the EC[2] countries agreed to the implementation of a programme of further economic integration by 1992, Gorbachev's reforms began in the Soviet Union, East-West economic talks, involving the EC and the Council on Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) resumed, and the CMEA started to move from bilateral clearing to hard currency settlements at world prices for transactions. The first to seize the opportunity of a new opening in the East was the Vatican, while Austria and Italy began to expand economic ties eastwards.

But East-West tension did not subside, nor the threat from the Warsaw Pact, and the threat from NATO continued to mount. So there was little scope for cutting the federal defence budget. Under geostrategic pressures, the reformers' national security policy based on conventional-war doctrine and the decentralised structure of the Territorial Defence Forces was upstaged by a new arms race in sophisticated, high-technology weaponry, while JNA concern for defence of the cities against attack by air and sea mounted, and the perception of military threat in the eastern Mediterranean grew. Foreign developments seemed to require opposing policy orientations – a liberal economic programme and a defence-oriented programme – at the same time. The defence minister redrew borders of military districts across republican lines to improve coordination and prevent regional military cabals, and the army stepped up the campaign to reintegrate the country's major infrastructural systems of transportation, energy and communications. At the same time, foreign investment began to flow into Slovenia and Croatia, and regional organisations in trade and tourism developed links with provinces in Italy and Austria. New

[2] I refer throughout to international organisations by the title in use at the time in question. The European Community was renamed the European Union after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe became the Organisation for Cooperation and Security in Europe in 1994.

opportunities in Western markets, for access to foreign capital independent of the federal government and, it was hoped, of eventual integration into the EC, reshaped the perception of opportunity in Europe. The question that had energised a left-wing intellectual and then political rebellion in Slovenia and Croatia in the 1920s and 1930s – 'Who are we in Europe?' – was again being asked, but this time by the political right.

The changes in the pattern of federal-republican relations entailed in the reform programme appeared, moreover, to deprive the republics and provinces of the sovereignty over economic resources that they had gained between 1968 and 1978. For Slovenia, which led the campaign against all elements that sought to revive federal capacity and authority, the critical resource at issue was foreign exchange. The recentralisation of control over monetary policy and the reform of the banking system and foreign exchange regime would mean the loss of the *right* to retain hard currency earned from exports by firms in a given republic that lay at the heart of the 1968–78 system and, for Slovenia, of the resources it had targeted for its economic programme for technologically driven global competitiveness and rising standards of living within the republic. As a primary export earner, at a time when the Helsinki Accords and CSCE talks had radically reduced its security threat from Italy and Austria, and when foreign investment and commercial bank activity were reducing the advantages of (manufacturing-friendly) federal price regulations and access to public loans, the Slovene republic saw its independent options multiplying. Protesting federal incomes policies that set restrictions on wages, salaries and credit, rising federal taxes, and the proposals to strengthen federal administrative powers, Slovene politicians increasingly campaigned against all manifestations of federal power and expenditure: federal wage regulations, the federal fund for the development of poorer regions, the federal army, federal administration, federal legislation and the supreme court. They began to canvass a proposal for a system of asymmetric federalism, within which Slovenia could define its own internal political system and economic relations with the federal government. By 1985, they were proposing that Yugoslavia should actually be transformed into a confederation of sovereign republics. Sensing the real threat of these proposals, Stane Dolanc, a long-time Slovene party leader known for his pro-Yugoslav views and his stint as federal minister of the interior, warned in January 1985 that a 'free, united Slovenia, joined in a Central European catholic federation ... means the 'destruction of Yugoslavia'.[3]

The external environment also influenced the domestic political battle over the economic and constitutional reforms in the other republics. The combination of an economic policy aimed at promoting exports to Western markets and declining domestic investment in transport, construction and industries such as mining, timber and heavy industry, were leading to deindustrialisation in the poor interior of Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina, areas which also happened to be ethnically mixed. The near collapse of markets in the Middle East as a result of the Iran-Iraq war and in the eastern CMEA bloc was disastrous, particularly for the economies of

[3] Dolanc on responsibility, debts, nationalities, *Delo*, 26 January 1985, as reported in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *East Europe*, 4 February 1985: 116–17.

Macedonia and Bosnia and Hercegovina. Legislation to privatise firms and end the system of workers' self-management and protected employment in order to encourage foreign investment brought the first mass layoffs due to bankruptcy in forty years, beginning in Montenegro. When the largest firms of the republics of Serbia (Smederevo, steel), Croatia (INA, oil), and Bosnia and Hercegovina (the Agrokomerc food-processing conglomerate) were threatened with bankruptcy, and as the banking system attempted to socialise the debt among its members, a banking crisis began to engulf most firms in all republics, followed by a political crisis for republican politicians. Hard-pressed republican parliaments instigated tax rebellions, refusing to pay their federal obligations. They increasingly opposed any loss of governmental rights *vis-à-vis* the economy in the name of marketisation and, by October 1987, were coming to reject the explicit political conditionality for IMF and World Bank loans that required radical economic reform, functional integration of the country and effective federal power.

By 1988, the country was experiencing a social upheaval of revolutionary proportions as a result of the economic hardships occasioned by the debt-repayment stabilisation programme and the resulting ceiling on upward social mobility, the stricter criteria for employment in the public sector and the rising level of internal economic migration. Growing resentments over competition for jobs, unemployment and declining status and income found expression in anger at people and regions considered 'less efficient', at the country's system of proportional representation to protect national equality, at women and minorities, and at the privileges of party members or holders of foreign currency bank accounts. Young people started to play with right-wing symbols and ideas and, particularly in Slovenia and Croatia, developed links with anti-communist movements in East European countries. Growing activism on the part of the churches also introduced an external influence, since the major religions of the country were international and internationally organised: Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy and Islam.

Although these developments had their own logic in terms of the domestic reform of a socialist, multinational and neutral state aiming to participate fully in the international economy, they were less and less separable from similar reforms in the Eastern bloc and from the imminent political revolution. By April 1989, the progress of Soviet reforms and of NATO-Warsaw Pact arms and force-reduction talks had persuaded the United States that NATO no longer needed the Yugoslav policy of armed self-reliance. The special relationship had lost its purpose and Yugoslavia was reclassified according to its pre-1949, geopolitical category, as part of South-East Europe. Gorbachev informed all communist parties that Soviet military and diplomatic aid would no longer be forthcoming. In the same year, Hungary took the decisions that opened the Berlin Wall and ended the Cold War and the Warsaw Pact. Yugoslavia now had to compete on equal terms with Central and East European countries for foreign aid, investment and agreements on entering Europe. The Europeans and the United States began to differentiate their approach to the region according to historico-cultural criteria, declaring the Central European, Roman Catholic countries of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland to be better prepared for transition to Europe than the Orthodox, Uniate and former Ottoman regions. In Croatia, the conservative communist party leadership, seeing the writing

on the wall in Poland and Hungary, began to open up to intellectuals pressuring for democratisation. The new differentiation in Western attitudes gave new urgency to the demands of Slovenia and the Croatian parliament for membership in Europe, if necessary as states independent of a Yugoslavia that appeared to be falling further and further behind in the queue.

As early as 1989, outsiders were taking explicit sides in the domestic quarrels over constitutional reform between confederalists and federalists, and in the debate over human and political rights that raged throughout the country, particularly in Slovenia, Croatia and Kosovo. United States Ambassador Zimmermann campaigned throughout 1989 against the Serbian repression of Albanian rights in Kosovo. Austrian foreign minister Mock began to tour Europe to mobilise attention on the impending crisis in Yugoslavia, and to canvass support for the Slovene decision, announced in September 1989, to begin a process of 'dissociation' from the federation. The Vatican openly lobbied for independence for the two Roman Catholic republics, Slovenia and Croatia. The German press, under the leadership of *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* publisher, Jorg Reismuller, and writer, Viktor Maier, waged a campaign on the dangers of Serbian nationalism, as personified in Slobodan Milošević, Serbian party leader from 1987. The multiparty elections in Slovenia and Croatia in April 1990, however, opened a new phase in international involvement, as the newly elected presidents and parliaments chose to move toward independence. Austrian support became more open, Slovenia began a serious public relations campaign in Western capitals, Croatia sought advice in Bonn, Oslo and Stockholm about how to proceed, and Slovenia and Croatia both made secret arms' purchases in Hungary, Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia, to build up independent, 'national' armies. By 13 March 1991 this had resulted in an extraordinary resolution, in terms of international law and precedent, by the European Parliament, declaring 'that the constituent republics and autonomous provinces of Yugoslavia must have the right freely to determine their own future in a peaceful and democratic manner and on the basis of recognised international and internal borders'.[4]

At least as consequential as the growing support for Slovene and Croatian independence, and for the Slovene and Croat interpretation of the political crisis – that this independence was necessitated by Serbian nationalism and the ambitions of Slobodan Milošević to become a new Tito and to deny their freedom – was the declining foreign support for the federal government. Any internal solution to the crisis would have depended on common institutions for dialogue and compromise among the republican leaders and on progress in a federal reform programme that by 1989 was aimed at complete transformation to a market economy and political democracy. The primary source of federal domestic power and leverage was precisely its international role, including as intermediary for foreign credits and trade. Furthermore, given the growing nationalism within the republics, and the general economic deterioration, the declining numbers of moderates and reformists needed all the external support they could get. In practice, however, Prime Minister Marković was having ever greater difficulty in attracting economic assistance for

[4] See Gow, 1991. The reference to internal borders seemed to imply that Helsinki principles should also apply to republic borders.

his programme: appeals to Washington during the autumn of 1989 fell on deaf ears; renewals of association agreements with the European Community and the European Free Trade Association were repeatedly stalled by the EC and EFTA negotiators. The EC agreed in May 1991 to lend $4.5m towards the servicing of the foreign debt that year, but on condition that the country intensify economic reform and remain united. The Council of Europe paid little attention to the Yugoslav application for membership made in November 1989 by Foreign Minister Lončar with a view to buttressing Westernisers in the parliament. East-West confidence-building initiatives to de-escalate tensions continued to be focused on the two Cold-War blocs and did not move to incorporate neutral states, like Yugoslavia, or their armed forces. And no one within the federal government or in foreign circles wanted to entertain breaches in the prevailing international etiquette on interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state.

Despite growing recognition by intelligence agencies and foreign offices during the autumn of 1990 that a break-up was imminent, and that the break-up would be accompanied by horrendous violence, meetings of NATO and the CSCE in November 1990 both voted not to take preventive action. According to the conservative approach of the Bush Administration toward European security at the time, Yugoslavia was 'out of [NATO's] area' of concern. The United States and the Soviet Union together vetoed CSCE action, arguing that the Yugoslav conflicts were an internal matter. The same month, the first of a series of US congressional actions to withdraw economic aid or impose economic sanctions on Yugoslavia for human rights abuses in Kosovo was introduced by Senator Don Nickles. When the Federal Presidency's effort in January 1991 to de-escalate armed conflict in Croatia between the government and the *Krajina* Serbs was extended to include troop movements by the federal army to secure the border and implement decisions to disarm all paramilitary and militia groups, the United States warned the army that it would not accept the use of force to hold Yugoslavia together. In the spring of 1991 EC delegations finally responded to Prime Minister Marković's request for economic assistance, and to Austrian appeals for mediation of the escalating internal conflict. But their approach was to begin to talk directly to the presidents of Slovenia and Croatia, bypassing the federal government altogether or treating it as a coequal party to international mediation. These subtle denials of Yugoslav sovereignty, reinforcing the view of the Slovene government, were hardly noticed at the time, but they were already helping to shape the outcome of dissolution. Those who needed the protection of the federal government, or an all-Yugoslav political space where they could mobilise sufficient numbers in favour of economic and political reform and against republican politicians willing to risk war for national sovereignty and states' rights, lost any hope of foreign support.

International intervention

The accelerating impetus of Yugoslav disintegration cannot be explained solely by domestic political struggles and constitutional disputes, because the constitutional reforms were part of the stricter terms of conditionality from international lenders

and because domestic actors were making their choices in terms of foreign developments – the changing structure of economic and political opportunity in Europe and the changing security environment. The mixed messages from outside powers, moreover, reinforced conflicts at home.

Those same outsiders like to make a distinction between 'politics as usual', through which countries adjust to their external environment and outsiders actively try to influence domestic behaviour, on the one hand, and explicit acts of international diplomatic or military intervention, on the other. That divide was crossed, in the Yugoslav case, on 25 June 1991, when Slovenia and Croatia went ahead with their announced intention to declare independence. By chance, at the same moment, European Community foreign ministers were meeting at Luxembourg, making it easier for them to act without delay. The 'troika' of foreign ministers (the EC mechanism for common foreign and security policy, made up of the three Member States holding the current, previous and upcoming presidencies of the Council of Ministers) was sent rushing to the scene. The equivalent body of the CSCE – its Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) – followed a few days later to offer its 'good offices', putting into practice for the first time a crisis-management mechanism for emergencies adopted under United States pressure only two weeks previously.

The motivating factors behind these European offers to mediate the domestic Yugoslav crisis were no different from those that had been pressuring engagement since the fall of 1990: intelligence predictions that, if the country fell apart, there would be terrible violence, and national competition to define the institutions and mechanisms for guaranteeing European security after the Cold War. In particular, a serious dispute in January 1991 among Britain, France and Germany, and between them and the United States, over the appropriate pattern of participation in the US-organised, UN-mandated coalition action in the Persian Gulf, 'Desert Storm', revealed how far the Europeans were from being able to formulate a common foreign and security policy, only months before the Maastricht Treaty on further European integration, due to be signed in December, was to make it a critical component (Chapter V) of the Union. At the same time, European non-members of the EC, such as Austria and Hungary, were seeking a far more active role in European affairs than had been possible during the Cold War. Supported by a United States that was looking to reduce its financial burden in relation to European security, and to Germany to take the lead in incorporating Eastern Europe into Europe, they were pushing CSCE involvement in the Yugoslav disputes to demonstrate its capacity for crisis management and conflict resolution as the best safeguard of European security after the Cold War. The Helsinki process had just been enhanced by the Paris Charter for a New Europe, adopted in November 1990. For both the Europeanists within the EC, such as its President, Jacques Delors, and the pan-Europeanists of the CSCE, the Yugoslav crisis in the spring of 1991 appeared almost welcome, as a test of their collective capacity for security policy-making independent of the United States.

The policy shift in June 1991 reflected the temporary success of these proactive Europeanists in the EC and CSCE in redefining the Yugoslav crisis as an issue of European security, and as one that seemed to fit the institutions for conflict resolution they had available. The shift was rapid, from the bankers' approach of the EC

up to late May (promising loans in exchange for economic reform and adding the condition that the republican politicians must solve their disagreements and Yugoslavia remain one country) and the human rights approach of the United States (threatening to withdraw assistance and trade if the human rights record in Kosovo did not improve and (January 1991) if the army became involved in the constitutional quarrel, or in disbanding paramilitaries and illegal armies in Slovenia and Croatia), to crisis mode and the role of mediator on questions of sovereignty and borders. By June, both European and American foreign ministers had accepted the Slovene and Croatian declarations of independence at face value and declared these actions a matter of European security. That meant they had to uphold the principles of European security adopted at Helsinki in 1975 in relation to the newly emerging successor-states: territorial integrity, self-determination, human rights and the unacceptability of border changes implemented by force.

None of these approaches were appropriate to the circumstances, and there was a general refusal to acknowledge that there could be no effective mediation if Western powers did not first overcome their own disagreements about what should result, and recognise that the principles they were applying were in conflict. Political conditionality in exchange for loans assumed that compliance on the part of prime minister Marković was only a matter of his political will. States that refused active intervention, such as the United States, were simultaneously making intrusive demands in terms of the domestic actions of Yugoslav parties, such as the army and the Serbian government. Instead of choosing between the principles of territorial integrity and national self-determination, the Europeans chose to adapt their norms to their preferences and apply both principles to the federal republics, as if they already were states and the bearers of national sovereignty, and as if international law did not oblige them to apply the principles of territorial integrity and self-determination to the Yugoslav state, its entire population and its external borders. By assuming that conflicts over foreign exchange, federal taxes, the defence budget and the legitimate jurisdiction of the federal government in respect of the economy were indeed matters of national rights of self-determination, they accepted that territorial sovereignty rather than domestic reform was the issue at stake. By limiting their role to neutral mediation, they were forced to define the dispute between Slovenia and the federal government as a border dispute between two equal parties. And by defining the conflict as an issue of borders and sovereignty, they foreclosed the option of a domestic solution, including the protection of human rights regardless of national identity, and legitimated the view that this was an international conflict. The dominant view of most major powers, including the United States, Britain, France and the USSR was, as late as 1991, that it would be better to preserve Yugoslavia. But because the country lacked strategic significance for the West after the end of the Cold War, the powers had little interest in making that happen, and the assumptions lying behind the European intervention effectively ratified the break-up.

It is generally accepted that the international community, and particularly the Europeans, did too little, too late, to prevent the violence that began to unfold, first in Croatia and later in Bosnia and Hercegovina. In fact, there was plenty of international action. But at each stage it was troubled by disagreements among the major

powers and an absence of common strategy and sustained commitment to see the crisis through.

The first disagreement, over which institutions and states should act in relation to Yugoslavia, was resolved temporarily by the crisis mediation of the European Community and the CSCE in June. The Brioni declaration of 7 July 1991 was its product: it predicated a ceasefire between the Slovene militia and federal army, under which the Slovene government (and also Croatia) would accept a three-month moratorium on moves toward independence, and that the army should return to barracks. Under CSCE mandate, the EC also set up a first-ever monitoring mission (the ECMM), thereby intervening directly in the internal affairs of a sovereign state – to monitor the Slovene ceasefire and the rising tensions in Croatia.

It soon became apparent, however, that crisis mediation was insufficient to stop armed violence, as incidents multiplied between Serb and Croat paramilitaries in Croatia, between local Serb authorities and the Croatian national guard, and eventually between the Croatian government and the federal army aiming to prevent Croatia from winning independence and to protect the Serb minority in border areas in the context of their expressed wish to remain within Yugoslavia. A second disagreement then arose over how to stop the fighting: whether to interpose foreign troops between the parties and negotiate a peace, or to recognise Slovene and Croatian independence, thereby declaring the actions of the federal army and the Serb minority to be illegitimate acts of aggression.

The proposal to send interposition forces demonstrated that the first disagreement – over who should act – had been only temporarily solved. If the United States continued to insist that the one source of organised, collective military force in Europe – NATO – should not be involved, could it also permit the Europeans to field their own forces? The answer, set out in the Dobbins Démarche of spring 1991, was no: a force put together by West European Union (WEU) planners was unacceptable, and the French suggestion to pursue French and German proposals for a Eurocorps calculated to replace a retreating American military presence in post-Cold War Europe was even less acceptable. Moreover, domestic politics in Germany had by late summer pushed its Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, towards the view that Croatia had a right to independence – and also that the Serbs were aggressors and that immediate recognition of Croatian independence would defeat the Serbs and stop the army. Unwilling to confront Germany directly within the EC and to jeopardise the more important issue of the Maastricht Treaty, but strongly opposed to what Germany now called *preventive recognition*, Britain and France turned to the United Nations as an alternative institutional forum (where the non-permanent members of the Security Council at the time, Hungary, Canada and Austria, were already trying to draw attention to the violence). There, the Soviet Union and the United States vetoed intervention, but the proposal of the Yugoslav federal government for an arms embargo, on itself, so as to restrict the scope for the escalation of the armed conflict (and, some would argue, to stop the illegal flow of arms to the secessionists) *was* adopted.[5] Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar sent an envoy,

[5] UN Security Council Resolution 713, of 25 September 1991, taken under Chapter VII of the Charter.

former US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, to investigate whether conditions were suitable for deploying United Nations peacekeeping troops.

Undeterred by the unavailability of troops and the lack of internal consensus, the EC also continued its efforts to mediate, with a more serious endeavour: a peace conference for all of Yugoslavia opened at the Hague on 7 September 1991 under the chairmanship of Lord Peter Carrington. By 8 October, when the three-month moratorium on secession had expired, an arbitration committee of legal advisers set up by the EC in August to help mediate the economic disputes of succession in relation to Yugoslavia (the Badinter Commission, named after its chair, French jurist Robert Badinter) gave its legal opinion, following a request by the conference, that Yugoslavia 'was in the process of dissolution', and that the republican borders were, on the principle of *uti possidetis* (keep what you have) legitimate international borders. European civil servants sitting in Brussels drafted a convention for a 'comprehensive settlement' of the Yugoslav question which proposed to the leaders of the Yugoslav republics and federal state that the six republics be recognised as sovereign states, that they form a customs union among themselves, and that special status (territorial autonomy) be given to national minorities in Croatia (the *Krajina* Serbs) and in Serbia (Kosovar Albanians). Meanwhile Lord Carrington continued to work to obtain a ceasefire between Croatia and the federal army. After fourteen signed but ineffective ceasefires, Cyrus Vance managed to make one stick on 23 November 1991, and over the following two months the conditions were laid for the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping troops to monitor the Vance Plan in Croatia. The federal army would withdraw, as had already occurred in Slovenia, but the areas of contested sovereignty in the Croatian *Krajina* would be placed under the protection of UN troops – 'without prejudice to the final political settlement' – while the EC Hague conference proceeded.

The second disagreement among the foreign powers – on the issue of recognition – was settled in favour of Germany, as it gained ever more converts to its policy of fast-track recognition in the course of the autumn of 1991. Within three weeks of the Vance-negotiated ceasefire, on 16–17 December 1991, the European Community agreed to recognise Slovenia and Croatia and invited (in a bargained compromise) the other four republics to request recognition. Unable to veto under the common foreign and security policy mechanism of the Maastricht Treaty, adopted the previous week, Greece abandoned its isolated opposition to the break-up in favour of a provision that would hold up recognition of Macedonia for another four years.[6] The German policy did, in fact, represent a renunciation of the EC policy committing the twelve collectively to a 'comprehensive settlement'. As Lord Carrington protested before the December decision, this would end the Hague conference. It would also, as UN Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar protested, deprive the efforts of Cyrus Vance of any leverage over Croatia (and it did eventually undermine the United Nations mission by altering the political terms under which it was deployed). And, as Cyrus Vance, US Secretary of State James Baker, and Bosnian

[6] The provision specified that any state requesting recognition should have no territorial claims against any neighbouring EC state, and should not use a name that implied any such claim.

president Alija Izetbegović protested, the decision would ensure that war broke out in Bosnia.

Although the EC finessed this second disagreement, by in fact opting for both recognition of Croatian sovereignty and the deployment of interposition troops in Croatia under United Nations authority, the problem had to be resolved for Bosnia and Hercegovina. With the Germans insisting that the right to self-determination be legitimised through a popular referendum, as had been done in the case of German reunification in 1990 (but *not* accepted in that of the *Krajina* Serbs in Croatia), and on the legal advice of the Badinter commission, the EC now required a referendum on independence among the Bosnian population, in pursuance of the Bosnian government's request for recognition. At the same time, although the Hague conference was by now a dead letter, EC negotiators redirected their diplomatic effort to the three national parties governing Bosnia in coalition, in the hope of finding a political settlement over the political future of Bosnia prior to granting recognition.

The EC had finessed the contradiction in its own principles by dismissing multinational Yugoslavia as an artificial creation and applying both self-determination and territorial integrity principles to the republics, specifically in the cases of Slovenia and Croatia. However, this would not do for multinational Bosnia and Hercegovina. The negotiators, now at Lisbon, entertained proposals from Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs for ethnic cantonisation, so as to prevent a break-up of Bosnia into national units. But when one-third of the population of Bosnia, namely one of its three nations, the Bosnian Serbs, rejected independence in the referendum held 28 February–1 March 1992, and the United Nations envoys, Cyrus Vance and Marrack Goulding, declared that conditions were not ripe to send peacekeeping troops to Bosnia, the worst-case scenario began to appear increasingly probable. Then, in a direct parallel with European actions *vis-à-vis* Croatia, the United States insisted on extending the German policy of preventive recognition to Bosnia and Herzegovina on 6–7 April 1992, ending all efforts at negotiating a settlement as localised clashes and ethnic terror erupted into full-scale war.

The spread of the conflict to Bosnia and Hercegovina once again confronted the West with its unresolved disputes: Who should be involved, should they send troops and what political outcome could they agree to support? In contrast to the Central European patronage of Slovene and Croatian independence, European policy toward Bosnia shifted to *containment* – to prevent the war from spreading further to Kosovo and Macedonia, which might ignite a full-scale Balkan war and could engage Greece and Turkey, obliging NATO to act. But while the Bush Administration had largely stayed on the sidelines during 1991, the US commitment to Bosnian independence and its Muslim president was reinforced in 1992 by its geopolitical interests in the Middle East.

Sharing the German view that the war erupting in Bosnia was also a case of Serbian aggression (based on a plan of President Milošević to create a Greater Serbia with the aid of the federal army), the United States now redefined the conflict in terms of the contours of its policies toward Iraq and Libya. Serbia was a *rogue state,* defying international norms, and extensive economic sanctions should be applied until it ended its cross-border aggression against Bosnian sovereignty. Under pressure from its Middle Eastern allies, Turkey, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and

from domestic lobbies pressing for intervention in support of Bosnian Muslims, the Bush Administration also began to pressure its NATO allies, through the UN Security Council, to take action that would further limit the military capacity of the Serbs (imposition of a no-fly zone over Bosnia, a naval and riparian blockade to enforce the sanctions, and possibly bombing the Serbs and lifting the arms embargo on the Bosnian government). At the same time, the Bush Administration continued to hold to its strategic view that Yugoslavia was not an issue of vital American interest, and was outside of NATO's area of commitment, which meant that it would not commit American or NATO combat troops to stop the fighting.

While lobbies in the US mobilised in support of the Muslim victims of Serb aggression (in the siege of Sarajevo and with the widespread terror, expulsions and cultural destruction taking place in eastern Bosnia) on the basis of moral principles and international humanitarian law, Europeans faced a new wave of refugees fleeing the fighting. Despite opposition from United Nations officials, French pressure now succeeded in committing the UN to an humanitarian mission to aid refugees, displaced persons and innocent civilians, beginning with the city of Sarajevo; Britain began to float the idea of safe areas in Bosnia, on the model of the intervention on behalf of the Kurds in Iraq, as a way of reducing the flow of refugees. The remit of the United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR), created to protect four areas populated by the Serb minority in Croatia (and the Croatian minority remaining in these areas), was extended to the protection of humanitarian convoys of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This soon turned into the largest, most complex and most expensive operation ever undertaken by United Nations peacekeeping troops. While the United Nations came increasingly under attack for sending peacekeeping troops (lightly armed, acting under rules of engagement defined by consent, impartiality and the use of force only in self-defence) into a war (see Rieff, 1995), the mission reflected the criteria adopted by the European powers and the United States from the beginning: that the norms of sovereignty govern (and limit) international intervention, that the sovereign units were the republics of former Yugoslavia, and that because the area no longer affected the vital, strategic interests of any of the major powers, or of Europe in general, they should not send troops into combat. UN intervention suited the major-power interests of the Security Council, in that it neutralised domestic critics by sending humanitarian assistance, while containing the fighting and refugee exodus within Bosnia and Hercegovina, so that it did not spread to areas that *were* of strategic concern.

In contrast to the emerging American position – that the war would only end with the defeat of the Serbs (although they would not commit troops to that end) – the Europeans tended to view the Bosnian war as a civil war which required a political, negotiated solution. Under the British presidency of the Council of Ministers in the summer of 1992, the EC accordingly revived the idea of a peace conference. Joining offices with the United Nations (which under Vance had been more successful in the case of Croatia, and which the Serbs saw as a vehicle for engaging the United States, in the mistaken belief that it would be less anti-Serb than the Europeans), the EC called a new conference in London in August 1992 and established a permanent peace conference at Geneva – the *International Conference on Former Yugoslavia* (ICFY) – to negotiate all aspects of the succession crisis. Its co-chairmen, Lord David Owen for the EC and Cyrus Vance for the UN, soon became consumed by the task of only one of its six commissions – trying to negotiate an end to the Bosnian war. Like the Hague conference and the follow-up negotiations at Lisbon in February–March 1992, the ICFY drew up a set of political principles on sovereignty, a constitution and a map allocating territorial jurisdiction among the three warring parties. In place of the three-canton proposals made at Lisbon, the Vance–Owen peace plan of January 1993 divided Bosnia into ten provinces and aimed, by establishing a weak central government, to preserve a multinational and multiethnic Bosnia. When the plan was rejected by the Bosnian Serbs, Owen and Vance's successor, Thorvald Stoltenberg, drew up a new peace plan in August 1993 (revised as the Invincible Plan in September). This partitioned Bosnia again into three areas, but retained the extensive international monitoring of human rights from the Vance–Owen plan. This in turn was rejected by the Bosnian Muslims. The ICFY negotiators fell back on trying to keep communications open among all the parties, meanwhile quietly proposing that there could be no solution to the Bosnian war without a return to the comprehensive approach, based on the recognition of Bosnia's link to the rest of the former Yugoslavia: that meant finding a more global solution to the Croatian and Bosnian problems, proposing small adjustments in republican borders to satisfy the strategic interests (such as access to the sea) of independent states, and negotiating with the leaders seen to determine events, in particular Presidents Milošević and Tudjman. At the same time, the United States became re-engaged in the issue, under pressure from the European Commission and France, and began a series of manoeuvres with the opposite tactic: breaking down each conflict into ever smaller pieces and dyadic relations, rather than treating the crisis as a set of interrelated conflicts. It thus insisted on separating the Croatian and Bosnian conflicts on the principle of their recognised sovereignty and then, in the Washington Agreement of March 1994, negotiated (together with Germany) a ceasefire for half of Bosnia between two of its three parties, the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats.

The failure of the ICFY negotiations in 1993 left the major powers contributing troops to the United Nations protection force (above all, the UK and France), increasingly impatient with the Bosnian war. It also revealed that the larger problem remained – conflicts among the major powers and the continuing inability of those powers to work in concert toward an agreed objective. In practice, it seemed, the powers often worked at cross purposes, sending mixed messages to the parties that encouraged each to hold on to its maximal goals. By the end of 1993, there were three competing approaches in play at the same time. The United Nations forces sought to improve conditions for peace on the ground through classic peacekeeping principles: negotiating ceasefires, if necessary one village at a time, and using the lull in hostilities to restore daily life and open up communications across battle lines – e.g. through family visits, trade and restored utilities – in such a way as to rebuild the confidence and trust necessary to a political settlement in the long run. The ICFY negotiators shuttled tirelessly among the political capitals of Belgrade, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Knin and Pale, and gathered the leaders of the warring parties and neighbouring states in Geneva to negotiate a peace plan, with endless hours spent poring over detailed maps. And the United States talked incessantly of creating a

military balance through the arming and training of Croats and Bosnians, air strikes against Serbs, and a military alliance between Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims, directed against the Bosnian Serbs.

The conflict between the ICFY and US approaches led in time to the demise of the ICFY and a loss of credibility on the part of of UNPROFOR, largely because of the encouragement the US position gave to the Bosnian leadership, under President Izetbegović and General Rasim Delić, not to sign a ceasefire with the Bosnian Serbs, and to seek an improved bargaining position through military offensives rather than accepting peace plans it did not like. By April 1994, the conference was being replaced by a third diplomatic mechanism: a 'Contact Group' of the five major powers (the United States, Germany, Russia, Britain and France). The peace plan presented, in July 1994, simplified previous plans to little more than a map dividing the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 51–49 per cent, between two entities, a Muslim-Croat federation and the Bosnian Serbs. But when the Bosnian Serbs demanded adjustments before they would sign, the long-standing division between the US and Germany, on the one hand, and Britain, France and Russia, on the other, came out into the open. And, once again, disagreements led to diplomatic impasse, episodic attention from Washington, and growing impatience with the costs of the humanitarian mission and with the increasing risks to soldiers' lives as the war intensified.

By mid-1995, French pressure on the United States once more to take the lead, and the silent but steady withdrawal of British, French and Canadian troops from UNPROFOR, forced the issue. The Clinton Administration persuaded its allies that NATO bombing of Bosnian Serbs would complete the strategic reversal taking place on the battlefield through the medium of well-trained, well-equipped and well-informed Croatian troops, who had invaded and taken control of three of the UN protected areas in Croatia (one in May, and two in August) and overrun much of western Bosnia, expelling the Serbs (see Chapter 11). Meanwhile the Clinton Administration had come around to the European view that the Bosnian war could only end through a negotiated solution. Between August and November 1995, American negotiators ran a marathon of shuttle diplomacy between Balkan capitals. They managed to set up a new peace conference (under the name of 'proximity talks') in Dayton, Ohio, to get signatures on a political settlement and enable a NATO-led, peace implementation force (I-For), under American command, to replace UNPROFOR.

Toward new frameworks?

What are the prospects that international intervention in the former Yugoslavia will, finally, create, or stumble upon, new frameworks to promote stability in the region? Is the international transition, encompassing the transformation of Europe, coming to a tardy fruition in the Balkans?

Most Western leaders, policy-makers and diplomats are quick to insist, when looking at 1990 and 1991, that they could not have acted much differently than they did in the early stages of the Yugoslav crisis because the end of the Cold War

brought a huge overload of problems, some of them, like the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, of much greater strategic significance to the Western world than Yugoslavia. At the same time, however, they continue to insist that the institutions of European security – the OSCE, NATO, the WEU, the EU, the Council of Europe – are well-prepared to manage crises that threaten the stability of Europe.

In reality, not only did those institutions fail in the case of Yugoslavia, but they also revealed little capacity for learning. The actions of Western governments over the period 1991–96 repeated over and over the same approach, the same thinking – and the same mistakes. Certainly, the confrontation with the Yugoslav crisis has forced fundamental changes in those institutions – but the changes have been of a fumbling, *ad hoc*, reactive nature, rather than reflecting any strategy or learning. Thus, for example, Germany overturned its post-Nazi constitutional prohibition on participating in foreign wars, first sending pilots to help enforce the no-fly zone over Bosnia, then a hospital to Croatia to assist UNPROFOR in Bosnia, then Tornado fighter-bombers to police the no-fly zone, and finally troops to participate in the NATO implementation force. Russia was granted major power status, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, through diplomatic partnership in the ICFY, the 'Contact Group', and the Dayton peace implementation process, sent soldiers to the Balkans for the first time since 1944 – but in blue helmets – and even placed troops under NATO and American command in I-For. And France took major steps to rejoin NATO. NATO engaged in its first military action since its founding – firing weapons to bring down Bosnian Serb aircraft in September 1994, deploying its Rapid Reaction Corps (created in 1991) to assist UNPROFOR in summer 1995, engaging in a massive bombing campaign against the Bosnian Serbs in September, and finally deploying fully as a peace implementation force in December of that year. Eastern European countries hoping to join NATO used participation in the NATO-led I-For to prove their readiness, and the WEU organised its first military operation: namely, joint patrolling with NATO of the naval blockade on the federal republic of Yugoslavia. The United Nations appeared on the ground in Europe for the first time ever, lost practically all credibility in terms of future peacekeeping missions, and saw its office of the High Commissioner for Refugees completely transformed in the process. The Nuremberg precedent was revived for the first time since 1945 with the creation of an International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia at the Hague, to investigate, indict, and prosecute the perpetrators of war crimes.

Yet none of these changes amounted to a reaffirmation of the institutions for European and global security. The common foreign and security policy of the EU had proved a failure; its most ambitious ventures into the security field – the Balladur stabilisation pacts in eastern Europe – were structured around bilateral roundtables, and its Member States seemed ready to accept, by 1995, that Europe could not act in its collective interest without American leadership. Balkan initiatives for regional cooperation in security, transportation and trade relations taken in 1989–90 were interrupted by the Yugoslav wars and were being replaced, by 1994–95, by, again, a series of bilateral agreements. The CSCE had developed its instruments for human-rights monitoring and peacekeeping in Macedonia and the Caucasus, but had not overcome the limits imposed by sovereignty in its attempts to monitor in Kosovo, or the limits of political commitment on the part of its Member

States to fund and train a staff to organise and monitor elections and human rights in Bosnia. NATO's credibility was being tested not by war, but by peacekeeping in Bosnia and Hercegovina, its very survival tied to the uncertain outcome of a peace-implementation process in which NATO commanders insisted on the narrowest mandate so as to avoid the fate of UNPROFOR. Far from NATO and the EU containing Germany, in accordance with their original remits, Germany was now acting unilaterally to secure its eastern and southern flanks with a ring of friendly, prosperous, stable states from Poland to the Czech Republic, Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia, and without regard for the destabilising potential of this new, if invisible, border in eastern and south-eastern Europe. As a result of the Yugoslav crisis, a new forum for resolving major issues of European security is replacing existing institutions – an informal gathering of five major powers based on the 'Contact Group' set up in March 1994 to negotiate a Bosnian peace – which seems to imply a return to balance-of-power and balance-of-interest principles.

All the major players in the Yugoslav drama gave priority to national over collective interests. It was not only Austria, the Vatican, Germany and the EC Europeanists who saw the Yugoslav crisis as an opportunity to take advantage of changing times. France saw a chance to enhance its declining resources and prestige in Europe with its power in the UN Security Council and as a potential military guarantor of Europe. Britain used the crisis to bolster its status as a major power, balancing its own position to keep centre stage. Russia used it to gain acceptance at major economic forums (such as the G-7) and for financial assistance to its reforms. Turkey has found a new foothold in the Balkans, with its support of the Bosnian Muslims and a role delegated to it by the United States in equipping and training the Bosnian army. And the United States, while acting for the most part as a conservative power and reluctant leader, managed to protect NATO's centrality to European security and America's position of dominance in Europe and the Middle East.

Despite the conviction that dominated public commentary during 1991 that 'this is no longer 1914' (when an assassination in Sarajevo could ignite a world war) – because the institutions of collective security and common market had ended the era of national competition among the major powers for spheres of interest and local clients in the Balkan playground – the Balkans retain the capacity to lure the major powers into its local conflicts and create conflict among them over national interests. And, just as in 1914 and 1947–49, this capacity is not a reflection of some cultural predisposition on the part of the Balkan peoples, but of the state of relations among the major powers.

The powers' policy of containment *vis-à-vis* Bosnia and Hercegovina does, however, demonstrate some change relative to 1914 and 1939. On the pretext of preventing a local war from spreading, Europe and the United States *were* able to contain their own conflicts within peaceful channels. But the *ad hoc*, strategy-less character of their actions left them as unprepared in 1996 as they were in 1990–91 to manage successfully the remaining conflicts within the former Yugoslavia. Although patient diplomacy by American envoys (Cyrus Vance, Herbert Okun, Matthew Nimitz and Richard Holbrooke) had established a *modus vivendi* between Macedonia and Greece by September 1994 that appeared to resolve the main challenges to Macedonian sovereignty and survival, major issues between the two states

remain unresolved. In addition, the interdependence between the two Albanian communities in neighbouring Kosovo and Macedonia, together with the economic disaster and its social and political consequences inflicted on Macedonia by the economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, could still destabilise the new state (see Chapter 13). The scenario of a classic Balkan war to partition Macedonia, with all its wider consequences, which the policy of containment aimed to prevent, has still not been definitively put to rest.

Moreover, the Europeans have not yet addressed the conflict between different Helsinki principles that had wreaked such havoc in Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina. They have, therefore, no solution to the issue of Kosovo that might prevent the competing claims of sovereignty over the province between Serbia (of which it is legally a part) and the Kosovar Albanians (who form the vast majority and have voted for independence – see Chapter 8) from being resolved through war. Who has a right to a state, and what procedures exist to guide the process of 'state-creation' peacefully? The Croatian 'solution', to encourage the mass exodus of Serbs (whose position and claims in Croatia were very similar to those of Kosovar Albanians in Serbia), and the *de facto* partition of Bosnia into three areas of ethnically pure population, are surely not acceptable models for the future. Yet Europe and the United States continue to support Croatia, economically, diplomatically and militarily, and to accept the priority of sovereignty norms, under which human and minority rights are internal affairs of states. While they have opposed the population transfers, both voluntary and violent, in Bosnia and Hercegovina, they have done little to prevent them, and they continue to insist that the recognised borders of the republic are inviolable.

The most dramatic illustration of the absence of new frameworks to promote stability in the region (and regions like it) comes in the form of the (likely) outcome of the massive international intervention (which contrasts starkly with the approach taken toward Croatia) to implement a peace agreement and reintegrate Bosnia and Hercegovina. In the first months of the Dayton process, the combined efforts of NATO, the EU, the OSCE, the US, the IMF and World Bank, the UNHCR and hundreds of non-governmental organisations, were no more sufficient to reverse partition and put Bosnia back together than they might have been to prevent Yugoslav dissolution and war. The Dayton agreement, signed at Paris on 14 December 1995 was certainly a victory for the realists, but it came wrapped in the idealism of the moralists supporting the Bosnian government. In order to get signatures from warring parties, it created a constitutional system *with all the flaws of the former Yugoslavia*: extensive regional autonomy legitimised by national rights, and a weak central government with no functions that could bind the loyalty of all its citizens. Its ambitious deadlines for a political process that would enable international military forces to leave within twelve months will yield electoral results after nine months that give democratic legitimation to the three nationalist parties and produce a parliament stalemated by block voting and countervailing vetoes. International supervision of human rights for five years has been juxtaposed with a denial of constituent nation status to the Serbs within the federation, and of Croats and Muslims within the Serb Republic, and few safeguards for the rights of minorities (political and economic as well as cultural and religious) in any of the three; one-party-dominated

areas. The international operation continues to talk to representatives of the three official parties who had gone to war, and who still control the armies, not to those who had opposed the war, the nationalist propaganda, and ethnic partition. American officials continue to favour the federation of Bosnian Muslims and Croats that their agreement of March 1994 created, and to treat the Serb Republic as an aggressive threat, to be isolated economically and diplomatically, whereas the Europeans insist that there will be no Bosnia if external programmes do not treat the country as an integral unit. An American policy, mandated by Congressional legislation and manifest in promises made to the Bosnian leadership at Dayton, to equip and train a Bosnian army that would be able to defend its state when the international force leaves after twelve months, is in sharp conflict with the European policy for long-term regional stability based on an OSCE-defined arms control regime, the 'draw-down' of all forces in the region rather than the 'build-up' of some, and Vienna-based negotiations to prevent a new arms race. If the three constituent units of Bosnia and Hercegovina choose to go their own way – to dissolve, as did former Yugoslavia – the international community will be faced again with a *fait accompli* it cannot recognise. Finally, the programme of economic assistance from the IMF, the World Bank and the European Union – on which the survival of Bosnia and Hercegovina depends – repeats the same conditionality, the same policies to ensure that debt is repaid, and that give little attention to the fiscal consequences of inevitable defence interests, and the same proposals for economic and political reform to create a market economy that raised all the political-legal conflicts over economic assets antecedent to the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1980s.

The ceasefire in Bosnia and Hercegovina, and the hopes that there will be no more war, has only brought the region's peoples back to the beginning: the process, first adumbrated in the 1980s, of transition of all the parts of the former Yugoslavia to a market economy, democratic government, legal safeguards for individual rights, regardless of group identity, and a new position in a European and global order no longer based on strategic bipolarity and nuclear threat, has barely begun. And the external conditions in terms of regional and European economic integration and a stable, reliable European security regime that are so essential to the process, and that were so palpably missing in the 1980s, remain, in the late 1990s, just as uncertain and ill-defined.

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Part Three

The Successor States