

The Stability Pact and New Relationships in South Eastern Europe

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The Stability Pact aims at achieving a lasting peace and stability of the region and is based on the support from the main international organisations and integrations. The objectives of the Pact relate primarily to fostering peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity. Permanent peace and stability in South East Europe will be attainable when the democratic principles and values that many countries in the region already promote take deeper roots. The Stability Pact is not an international treaty, nor does it have the legal force of such, rather the Pact is a political agreement resting on several elements. Among different countries the Pact was not received with equal enthusiasm: On the one hand, delighted champions of the Pact call it a "millenarian project", while on the other, its opponents think of it as of a dangerous precedent causing a series of new difficulties. The major aims of the Pact are related to the solution of human rights problems and democracy, economic growth and security matters.

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1. Introduction

The adoption of the Sarajevo Declaration and the acceptance of the Stability Pact in Sarajevo on July 30 1999 set in motion a process marked by a logo of eight stars in Sarajevo's Zetra. This was meant to indicate that the eight states of South East Europe had set off in a new direction, and that in the future they should be able to get closer to those real stars on the flag of the EU.

Heads of state and international organisations played up the Sarajevo meeting, and thus also gave a certain guarantee that the Pact should become a framework for the great process of getting S. E. Europe closer to European union and the European political and social order.

2. The Stability Pact in South Eastern Europe: Objectives and Mechanisms

The Preamble to the Pact¹ says that the countries of South Eastern Europe recognise their responsibility for working together within the international community and developing a strategy for the stability and growth of the region and for cooperating, together with the major donors, so that the strategy should be achieved. Lasting peace, prosperity and stability for South Eastern Europe will be achieved via a comprehensive approach to the region involving the EU, OSCE, Council of Europe, UN, NATO, OECD, WEU, IFIs and the regional initiatives. Particular attention was given to the fact that the Pact would be helped by the USA and that it would obtain priority in dialogues between the USA and Russia.

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Among the principles and norms of the Pact are listed the documents that are to be adhered to by the conference's participants: the UN Charter, the Final Act from Helsinki, the Charter of Paris, the Copenhagen Document of 1990 and others, with the aim of promoting good neighbourly relationships. It was agreed to build upon regional multilateral and bilateral agreements that were an integral part of the Pact.

A particularly important clause, which in a sense is an important new departure, relates to the so-called human dimension. The obligations, it is stressed, that have been taken on through membership in OSCE, are the concern of all the states that take part in the Pact, and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of a given state. Bearing in mind events in ex-Yugoslavia, this provision clearly sets out the need to respect these obligations as one of the foundations of international order.

Further, stress is laid on the countries of the region taking part in the Pact:

- committing themselves to continued development of democratic and economic reforms,
- developing bilateral and regional cooperation that will accelerate their integration, on an individual basis, into Euro-Atlantic structures,
- having the right to choose or change their security arrangements including treaties and alliances, respecting the rights of others and not strengthening their security at the expense of the security needs of others, while EU members will help them on the way to integration.

The objectives of the Pact relate primarily to fostering peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity. The countries of the region to which the Pact relates, together with the other participants of the Pact, stressed these objectives:

- putting an end to tensions and crises, as a condition of stability, which implies implementing together multilateral and bilateral agreements as well as internal measures to prevent conflicts,
- the construction of a mature democratic society, based on free and fair elections, the rule of law and respect for human rights and liberties, including minority rights, and the existence of independent media and an independent judiciary capable of fighting against corruption and thus deepening and strengthening civil society,
- the creation of good neighbourly relations based on respect for the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, confidence building and reconciliation, and the encouragement of mechanisms leading to cooperation in the field of security,

- preservation of the multinational and multiethnic diversity of the countries of the region and protection of minorities,
- the creation of a dynamic market economy, based on sound macroeconomic policies, increased foreign trade and private investment, transparent tariff and commercial regimes, the development of a powerful capital market and diversified ownership, including privatisation, leading to a wider circle of prosperity for all citizens,
- the encouragement of economic collaboration within the region and between the region and Europe and the rest of the world, and the creation of areas of free trade and the promotion of unlimited contacts among citizens,
- combating organised crime, corruption and terrorism and all criminal and illegal activities,
- the prevention of forced depopulation and migrations brought about by poverty,
- ensuring free and safe return for all refugees and displaced persons to their homes and help for countries in the area to bear the costs, and creation of the conditions for the countries of South Eastern Europe to attain full integration into the political, economic and security structures of their choice.

Permanent peace and stability in S. E. Europe will be attainable when the democratic principles and values that many countries in the region already promote take deeper root, including in the FR of Yugoslavia. It is hoped that this country too will become a full member of the Pact, and until that happens, the efforts of Montenegro, a constituent part of FR Yugoslavia, to take part in the meetings of the Pact are welcomed.

The mechanism of the Pact consists of a central Regional Table for South Eastern Europe to supervise the progress of the Stability Pact, carry it forward and provide leadership for the attainment of the ends. The Stability Pact will have a Special Coordinator, who will be appointed after consultation with the OSCE Chairman in Office and other participants. He is responsible for achieving the Pact's objectives within and among the individual countries. The special coordinator will submit periodic progress reports to the OSCE.

The Regional Table will set up three Working Tables:

- the Working Table on Democratisation and Human Rights
- the Working Table on Economic Reconstruction, Development and Collaboration and
- the Working Table on Security Questions.

In the Regional Table and the Working Tables participants of the Pact will be involved. Countries assisting the Pact, international organisations and institutions, and regional initiatives, if they so wish, can also take part in the work of the Regional Table and the Working Tables. Neighbouring and some other countries interested in joining the EU and other international organisations can also be invited as observer-members or observers, without thereby taking on any future obligations to collaborate.

The fifth chapter of the Pact considers the roles of and cooperation among the participants. The Pact should ensure effective coordination among the member states, states that are helping the Pact, international organisations and regional institutions. Here stress is placed on the roles of the EU, OSCE, CE, UN, UNHCR, NATO, the USA, the Russian Federation, IFIs, OECD and the WEU. In Chapter VI regional initiatives and organisations are cited: Royaumont, the Organisation of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the Central European Initiative and SECI (South East European Cooperation Initiative).

In the Annex to the Pact, the manner in which the Regional Table and the Working Tables act. They are supposed to:

- discuss issues in the multilateral framework
- identify projects that make it easier to achieve the arrangements and measures related to the objectives of the Pact,
- and they should give momentum for further action whenever necessary.

The Working Table about Democracy would consider: democratisation and human rights, including minority rights, freedom of the media, the building of civil society, the rule of law and so on.

The Working Table on Economic Development: economic development in the region and between the region and the rest of Europe, promotion of free trade zones, border-crossing transport, energy supply issues, promotion of the private sector, environmental protection, reintegration of refugees.

The Working Table on Security Matters: issues of the judiciary, migration, measures for combating crime, corruption and terrorism, transparency and confidence building, the implementation of Dayton and Paris Article IV Arms Control Agreement and negotiations about Article V in order to step up control, security and the building of confidence, taking into account existing obligations and commitments under the CFE Treaty. It is supposed to be supplied with regular information from the competent bodies addressing cooperation on defence/military issues aimed at enhancing stability in the region and among countries in the region, and facilitating the sustained engagement of all concerned to ensure regional secu-

urity, conflict prevention and management. The work of this Table will be coordinated with the activities of European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

The Working Tables will inform the Regional Table about their work. The Working Tables will have meetings either in individual states of the region or in the venue of the Permanent Council of the OSCE in Vienna or in the member countries of the EU or in the HQ of the EU.

The S. E. Europe Security Pact is not an international treaty, nor does it have the legal force of such. This is a political agreement that is fairly specific in terms of several of its elements.

a) In terms of participation in the Pact, it is quite evident that there is never any clear talk of its *members*, but only of its *participants*, which are then clearly split. Into the first group go participants from the Region (Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina). While a place is reserved for a democratic Serbia, Montenegro has already started cooperating with the Pact. In the second group are participating states that will help in the attainment of the objectives of the Pact: Turkey, Russia, the US, Canada and Japan. After that come participants that are international organisations and regional initiatives.

b) What is particularly significant and has its own political weight is the provision of item 7, which says that "commitments with respect to the human dimension undertaken through our membership in the OSCE are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all States participating in the Stability Pact, and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned". Thus human rights and the protection of them are raised to a special place, for this has after all been to a very large extent neglected in South Eastern Europe. It is, at the same time, a message to all countries that the international community will not tolerate violations of human rights and considers them a foundation of the international order, and that it is on this basis that the degree of possible approaches of an individual country to Euro-Atlantic unification will be looked at.

c) Among the aims that are mentioned in various other international documents, or in those that only have to do with issues relating to the region (Dayton) an important one is certainly the urging of the creation of a free trade zone, which should result in closer linkage within the region.

d) The Working Tables are also new departures, and in particular with their emphasis on the

importance of democratisation. This is in line with the lessons of development in ex-Yugoslavia, where it is understood that without democratisation in the region there are no conditions, not even in a situation in which the forces and measures of a protectorate exist, for the building of new relations. Democratisation and human rights have gained a highlighted position and together with economic and security issues form a triad on which the Europeanisation of the area is to be expected.

e) Another novelty is the requirement for the building of civil society and the stress on the need for action from the most important actors and individuals.

3. Proponents and Opponents

The very appearance of the Pact was received in different ways in the countries of South East Europe. After the Sarajevo conference, the dynamics of pro and contra evaluations was enhanced, all in the expectation of the beginning of the functioning of an instrument supposed to change the position of this region of Europe.

Delighted champions of the Pact say that this is a millenarian project, and that the new millennium had begun in Sarajevo.² This was mainly to do with the framework of the Pact, the sheer numbers of countries from the region participating and the 24 assisting participants, as well as the numerous international organisations and institutions.

Opponents of the Pact, on the other hand, think that this is a dangerous precedent, that the Pact brings with it a whole series of new perils that will not solve the issues in this part of the world, but can only exacerbate relations, thus distancing South Eastern Europe still further from Europe.

As was to be expected, the most vehement criticism of the Pact and the Sarajevo meeting came from Serbia, where the Milošević regime, immediately after the war and the loss of Kosovo, claimed that this was a new document meant to keep the countries of the region in subordinate positions. The Sarajevo meeting was branded a group of enemies of Serbia. On the other hand, some Serbian opposition leaders and representatives of their opposition that were present in Sarajevo expressed their satisfaction with the Pact and the belief that this was a relatively easy way for Serbia to get out of the isolation that the Milošević regime had got it into. One important thing was the participation of President Djukanović of Montenegro, who found the doors of the Pact open for him and who is obviously hoping

that it will be of some use to him in any confrontation with Milošević, and perhaps in preserving Montenegrin independence.³

In Hungary, just as in the case of SECI, political circles were not all that thrilled, thinking that the greatest danger in the whole thing was that it might take Hungary away from Europe.⁴ In the situation in which Hungary is in the group of countries negotiating about membership in the EU, it considers that any linkage with the Balkans is unnecessary and can only make the road to Brussels longer. But the assurances that came from Washington and EU headquarters made it quite clear that participation in the Pact would not militate against Hungary's joining the EU and that Hungary's new membership in NATO was a guarantee of the possibility of getting into the overall Euro-Atlantic structure. Hungary is expected to be a kind of help with and link to South Eastern Europe and to, on the one hand, help with the work in its area and, on the other, through its new closeness to the EU, to serve as a signpost of development, which those countries might one day follow as well.

Romania and Bulgaria see in the Pact an opportunity to stabilise their positions vis-a-vis Brussels, and take their associate memberships as something that gives them a better position than that of the group of five, or, as the Pact says, of the countries of the West Balkans that do not have this form of linkage with the EU. Apart from that, for both countries, this collaboration in the region might be useful, because there is a considerable interest in the development of transportation, the provision of energy paths and environmental protection in the Pact, and with political and security stability, they also see possible concrete effects.

The Pact provoked particularly virulent criticism in some Croatian media. A country that has been in a war and that has suffered enormous human and material losses is understandably chary of being lumped together with a country that it was in conflict with. There was also fierce opposition to any possible Balkan integration, attempts to push Croatia into the Balkans. From independence on, official Croatian politics had attempted to show that Croatia had once and forever left Yugoslavia and accordingly snapped every link with the Balkans as well, and was aiming at Europe. In the development of the idea of the Pact about new democratic, political, economic and security relations, an endeavour was seen to pull Croatia firmly back into a region that it was constantly trying to get out of and put behind itself.

An important argument supporting this thesis can be found in Article 135 Paragraph 2 of the Croatian Constitution, which says: "It is forbidden to start off any procedure for associating the Repub-

lic of Croatia with other states, an association that might lead to a renewal of the Yugoslav state community, or a Balkan state connection in any form".⁵ Critics of the Pact insist on this "in any form", also calling for a referendum to determine whether Croatia should take part in the Pact or not. Criticisms of the Pact say that it is written "in Mandarin" but does nevertheless talk of countries of the "Western Balkans" (placing Croatia in it), and that in the text the term "States of South Eastern Europe" is used, which leads to the idea that there is an ambition to create an alliance of these states; that the Special Coordinator has too great powers, and so on.⁶

Some other critics pay particular attention to questions of sovereignty, claiming that accepting the Pact means truncating it, and that it has in it "leadership and management mechanisms that de facto turn Croatia into a kind of non-democratic protectorate". This can be seen in the position of the Special Coordinator, who is ascribed the role of "a kind of Governor", and then in the authorities of the Regional Table, which is identified with "a kind of super-government where attaining the aims of the Pact is concerned." All this means that Croatian sovereignty will be essentially reduced, with the spin-off that the chances of getting Croatia into Euro-Atlantic associations will be increased and accelerated.⁷

Croatian official policy insists that the Pact is a free, adaptable and dynamic agreement, that it is a broad framework for possible collaboration that can be filled up with initiatives and that "we can leave the Pact of our own free will if we note the slightest indication of any threat of harmful linkage with the Balkans".⁸

The Croatian Employers' Federation, paying attention to the economic elements of the Pact, came out in resolute support of the document, seeing it a chance to develop collaboration with countries where Croatian products might be sold more easily. Alleging that the western market is very picky and crammed with goods and services, they say that the South Eastern European market is more suitable. All this, of course, on condition that the need to keep technological pace with Europe is not neglected.

In the great debate being waged in Slovenia about the Pact, contrary opinions are also encountered. According to one of them, the Pact is "the most dangerous regional initiative for Slovenia since it attained independence and started to get closer to the EU".⁷ Along with the question of what the Pact actually gives Slovenia, political evaluations linked with life in the former state are also essential, as are fears that the Pact might lead to certain forms of federation or confederation. But what is particularly vital is that Slovenia, like part of the Hungarian political

public, is afraid that getting up closer to the South East might slow down progress towards full membership in the EU.

In his visit to Ljubljana in June 1999, President Clinton said that Slovenia had to be a link between Europe and the Balkans. It seems that this is the idea of President Kučan too, who says that in the Pact Slovenia can show its worth, and reap some economic benefit as well. He understands that contemporary European processes are set at the level of integration and that little Slovenia too had to help in these undertakings. Seeing the wish of the international community to take part in solving the problems of the Balkans and having experience in this area, the Slovene government supports the Pact, believing it to provide an opportunity for new European legitimacy for the Slovene state.

Opposition politicians say that it could happen that by strengthening the South Eastern Europe region, Slovenia might lose the status of a Central European state. Apart from that, to be first in South Eastern Europe might mean being the last in the Central European area, and this could be induced by a certain formalisation and institutionalisation of relationships that the opposition cannot stand the thought of.

Important though is one opinion that sees the whole initiative of the Pact as just one of the forms of Conference Tourism and empty proclamations that are not backed up by any financial support. Political linkage would be a mistake, and the idea that Slovenia might be the locomotive of the Balkan train, seems, to the chief figure behind this idea, Dr Mencinger, a little too hasty. He recalls that not even in Yugoslavia did Slovenia have the power to take on this role, and that after all the events and all the existing differences, it could not do this now.

The host country, Bosnia-Herzegovina, which has rich experience with the workings of the international community, greeted the Pact with a mixture of praise and caution. It is said that the Pact shows an open warning to the states of the region that there will be no allowance of the creation of tension and that there will be no redrawing of borders or cutting up territory. A chance can be seen for the states of the region to move in concert with other European countries along the road of security, accelerated democratic development and economic progress. The Pact should also help in the solution of the very complex question of the return of the refugees and the displaced to their homes, which can be helped by a regional approach and the help of friendly countries. A country that has today only reached 40% of the level of pre-war GDP is aware of the most important thing: the need for financial support and investment,

without which there can be no progress nor achievement of the aims of the Pact as set out.¹⁰

4. The Pact as an instrument for security and cooperation

The Stability Pact has still to show its first concrete results on the basis of which it will be possible to discuss how much it has contributed to the settling of affairs in South Eastern Europe. The major aims of the Pact are related to the solution of human rights problems and democracy, economic growth and security matters. In any event, they are major challenges that will require a great deal of work and resources and good will in order to achieve solutions that can be positive both for the region and also for the whole system of new European relations.

For this reason, at this moment it is possible at least to sketch in those elements in support of the Pact, elements that might help in the creation of better relations and the development of the region. All these elements are, of course, inter-related and interdependent, while the success of the whole undertaking depends upon them being implemented successfully.

- The South Eastern Europe Stability Pact is in substance an integrated project and endeavours to take in all the main problems of the region. It is also integrated from a geographical point of view, because it does not count on setting this region to one side in any way, but insists on the intention of opening up the way for the area to get into European integrative currents, thus setting forth the main objective. If Europe, particularly the countries of the EU, wish to create a united European space on which a triad of objectives (democracy, economic development and security) is successfully put into practice as a project for the present and the future, then it is impossible to relegate South Eastern Europe to its own tensions, hostilities and potential conflicts.
- The ability of the countries of the region to work together and set up good neighbourly relations and to achieve reconciliation within and among themselves is also not just an aim in itself, but is a criterion for judging their concrete achievements in coming closer to Europe. The region of the South East that has lagged behind the Baltic and the Central European can now speed up its transitional pace, for its own sake and that of Europe. Although the Pact has no binding legal force, neverthe-

less its political intentions and objectives are so clear that it would be difficult to give up on its implementation. Only if one of the countries really wanted to enter total isolation, with all the consequences that follow from this, could it leave the Pact and opt for some kind of non-European life within Europe. Europe as aim and objective is, it seems, an adequate motive and stimulation, and, at the same time, an inescapable factor of development, without which it is impossible to imagine any progress in life in this area.

- The area of South Eastern Europe, composed today of eight countries, and in the future perhaps of 9 or 10 (Yugoslavia – Montenegro), is certainly a considerable region, if not in terms of economic growth, then at least from the point of view of population size. In it there are developed countries, medium developed countries, and the three most impoverished European countries, Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the group there is one member of NATO (Hungary) and two probable candidates for the next round of expansion (Slovenia and Romania), two states that have started negotiating to enter the EU (Hungary and Slovenia), two countries that have associate status (Romania and Bulgaria) and the “Group of Five”. This market, if rapid economic development got under way, could to a great extent strengthen internal connections and also win a better position with respect to the EU. Apart from satisfying the traditional demand of the EU that countries show their ability to work together, this new development of links could politically reveal the capacity for linkage in the region and be the way towards a joint solution for certain problems.
- A country that is for the moment outside the Pact and that in its position, size and importance certainly has an important place in the centre of the region, Yugoslavia, can, with the introduction of democratic conditions in its political life, settle, via the Pact, the issues of isolation, reconstruction and return to Europe. Without Yugoslavia a whole series of projects (transport, power, trade) will be hard to achieve in this part of Europe, but it is also equally clear that, without getting into Europe, Serbia will have no way out of a crisis that is increasingly distancing it from trends in contemporary civilisation and economics. The creators of the Pact have counted on this, and the empty seat in Sarajevo was a clear indicator of the demands that the international com-

munity is making on Serbia or Yugoslavia, as well as a call to it to make some changes as soon as possible so this country too can be a part of the new positive trends. In any case, it is quite clear that until the situation in Serbia is cleared up, there can be no discussion of stability in the area, for lurching from crisis to crisis, Serbia will constantly spread instability in its neighbourhood.

- If Europe has become aware that it is simpler and easier to pay for the prevention of a crisis than to find the resources to clear it up afterwards, then the Pact too can be considered a success. The political will of the main actors, the USA and Western Europe, will be crucial in determining the direction of development of this region and not a single serious solution can be achieved without these actors. This understandably includes readiness to work calculatedly and over the long term. The USA has already, in a series of steps, shown that its entry into South Eastern Europe is a strategic movement and that it intends to stay here.¹¹ The EU has become involved in the process and made common cause with American policy, which now requires wide ranging engagement of a political, economic and financial and military nature. Only with a clear comparison of objectives that already figure in the Pact, and with suitable instruments and means, will the Pact have much of a chance of succeeding and speeding up the integration of S. E. Europe into Europe. All solutions that are only partial, indecisive and inadequately supported by appropriate instruments and financing will not be productive of success and just turn the Pact, in spite of its considerable glamour, into another project that fails to achieve results. Elements that ask us to be cautious and can also act as permanent warning correctives to all great plans show the connection between the objective state of affairs and individual subjective evaluations and moves that are made after it. This group of elements can be seen in the realistic balancing and comprehension of the Pact, or in the chances that it marks up some successes.
- Bearing in mind the particularities of development in the Balkans it can be remarked once again that the great powers have been attempting for almost 150 years to settle Balkan affairs and bring some kind of peace into them. With its diversity of nations, religions, styles of civilisation and political viewpoints, the Balkans is more of an anthropological than a

political problem. To attempt to subsume the development of this world under some readymade and ongoing scheme conceptions or strategies that might perhaps produce results in some other parts of the world is to succumb to illusion. The same goes for calls for some solutions that have their foundations in other political climates, for it means being unable to take account of the Balkan specificities, and to aim at quick-fix solutions, the kind that have to date proved their lack of success, irrespective of how long certain forces have stood behind them.

- The possibility of regional cooperation, whose main motto of action should be the formula "through cooperation to security", cannot achieve everything here. Anyway, the Balkan region is one of those that has never seen the establishment of a centre capable of pulling in other countries, nor of any forms of collaboration capable of leading to the determination of the existence of a common interest. And without visible common interest it is those dark pages of Balkan history that have space for their primary domination. Economic analyses, on the one hand, speak of potentials for collaboration, but on the other there are numerous qualifications visible that point out every one of these countries has always been more interested in relations outside the region, that there have never been any attractive arrangements among the countries, and, finally, that there has always been a fear that too close linkage with the Balkans would make the route to European integration longer and more difficult. With such bad historical experience, and so many fears from the present, it is difficult to develop a regional form of cooperation to be the first step to demonstrate maturity and the capacity of these countries to solve their problems and, within this, find some useful forms of common action.
- The wars in ex-Yugoslavia additionally heightened differences and hostilities, even those segments that could have been taken as prejudices in the face of large connections, collaboration and community were negated, taking the whole of the development and the mental set called collaboration backwards. This is today certainly an important exacerbating factor on which it is difficult to build new relations of a European nature, and the feelings of countries that have gone through the destruction of war certainly have to be borne in mind. Beliefs that some picture of future material benefits might

at once cancel this inheritance of evil are nad've and have little correspondence with reality. Similarly, the attempt to shove all these countries together without solving certain basic questions, just equating aggressors and victims, can be one approach for the bureaucratic mind, but in no way can it be a basis on which the cooperation that is desirable and useful to everyone can grow.

- Bureaucratic approaches, which from higher political reasons, or from the irresponsibility of sinecure, aspire to the quick fix, coming on as supervisors or perhaps as the only initiators of action also cannot succeed here. There are plenty of adequate examples of the mechanism of bureaucratic decision-making in the international community in recent years and they do not need careful study or analysis to prevent them reappearing in the Pact. However poor these countries might be and devastated by the war, they are not prepared to welcome moves to weaken their sovereignty significantly; indeed, such attempts might produce quite the opposite results. Powerful pressures from outside, attempts to create and install alternative solutions closer to such centres of bureaucratic power have not so far been well received by the people, who have voted instead for the national option, in spite of it being perhaps less useful. Only projects that pay attention to the realities of relations, the mood of the main actors and the chances for stepwise implementation have much chance of success and thus becoming projects for successful development and achievement of the objectives of the Pact. This particularly relates to the danger of certain spur-of-the-moment institutionalisations, which might very rapidly not only cool certain nations down, but even prompt them to consider backing out of the Pact.
- As distinct from the EU regional approach, which tended towards closing groups of na-

tions up in their regional frameworks, the Pact has to make it very clear in every move it makes that its work is directed towards the ultimate objective of entry into Europe. Every step has to be taken in this way, whether it is about human rights and democracy, economic development and reconstruction, or security approaches. For the political leaders of the region, but still more importantly for the broad public, Europe is a phrase to which there is no alternative and the great mass of citizens are aware that this is the future for this region. For this reason, only if this is consistently carried out, and if every project established in the region is based on or linked to European solutions, can it count on being easily accepted. And vice versa, attempts to set up structures or institutions leading to regional exclusiveness and partiality have no chance of success.

- Because of its historical inheritance, its recent bloody past and lack of development it is impossible that S. E. Europe can suddenly fall into step with Europe. For this reason, the work of the Pact has to be designed in such a way that it creates for all those involved, the states, NGOs, associations and individuals, long term conditions for linkage, the creation of joint views and projects and accordingly the gradual development of better mutual relationships. Europe cannot come to S. E. Europe at once and all of a sudden. The process of Europeanisation of the Balkans will be long and complex, and the Stabilisation Pact can be an important instrument with the assistance of which a constant link can be maintained with Europe. If there is a start to the achievement of the objectives and principles of the Pact, this will be the most effective manner to date of building overall new relationships in the region, through which new approaches and solutions will accrue to the wide-ranging ideas of the phrase "security".

Notes

1. "The Stability Pact", Dossier, Croatian International Relations Review, Vol. V, No. 15/16, 1999, Dossier.
2. *Oslobođenje*, 31.7, 1.8.1999
3. *Neu. Zur. Zeit.* 31.7 and 1.8.1999
4. Hungary was particularly against introducing formal membership of the Pact, and, just like Slovenia, Hungary was upset at being put in the area of the West Balkans. *Vjesnik*, 28.7.1999
5. *Vjesnik*, 27.6.1999
6. *Vjesnik* 13.6.1999
7. *Globus*, 23.7.1999

8. Dr Mate Granić, *Globus* 23.7.1999
9. *Vjesnik* 26.8.1999
10. *Oslobođenje*, 31.7 and 1.8. 1999
11. It is significant that just after the acceptance of the Pact it was decided in Washington that a SE Europe section be founded at the NSC to keep an eye on developments in Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia. These are the seven countries of the Pact, to which after changes Serbia will be added. Hungary, as member of NATO, is not in the purview of this section. *Vjesnik* 28.8.1999.