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*Problems of International Security and the Balkan Crisis*

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**Conflict and Security Community on the Balkans**

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*Summary*

On the present-day Balkans conflicting desires for self-determination and for recognition of legitimate rights of the new states are confronted, which might lead to new regional frictions. The conflict on the territory of former Yugoslavia has affected a specific attitude-profiling of the Balkan states and reconfirmed the existence of Balkan security community, which makes it impossible to view national security outside the regional Balkan framework. Using various means, each of the Balkan states strives to overcome the afflictions brought about by the latest Balkan crisis and create conditions for strengthening its national security.

The new arrangement of political power on the international scene has caused new disruptions on the regional level.<sup>1</sup> A certain stability in top world politics and the absence of threats of a new world conflict turned into several small-scale instabilities which complicate the situation in particular world regions.

The region of former Yugoslavia is topping the list of such new regions that are clearly characterized by all the features of crisis development. Upon the disintegration of the former state and the creation of new entities, this region witnesses continued struggle for the completion of the self-determination process thus making new ground for further instabilities. Conflicting desires for self-determination and recognition of legitimate rights for the new states have brought about new concepts of a liberal and realistic approach to the conflict in the region of former Yugo-

<sup>1</sup> In fall 1992, one of leading French politicians, Pierre Hassner, wrote that Europe was stepping into new Middle Ages, which would for some mean flexibility and multifacial forms of belonging and participation, while for others it would mean a new religious war and an overflow of armed gangs, beggars and pirates; in other words - anarchy and constant fighting (*Le Monde*, November 6, 1992).

slavia.<sup>2</sup> These concepts include both theoretical and practical premises for a possible solution.

Conflict has become almost a normal situation in that part of Southern Europe and the Balkans in which certain entities are seeking their national interest or possibilities of bare survival. Attempts to resolve the conflict<sup>3</sup>, though steadily monitoring the cataclysm of the new Balkan relations, are shaded by the conflict and continuous fighting, but are, nevertheless, clearing the view of a possible war conclusion.

Therefore, we might say that in spite of the changing face of the war and new proposals, plans and scenarios that have been offered as possible solutions from outside, both processes are taking place simultaneously and are adding a specific dynamics both to the local Balkan region<sup>4</sup> and to the efforts of the international community to put an end to the conflict.

When stating the openness of both processes and their dependence on local and international factors, one should emphasize that any analysis of the conflict has been limited by the time and number of contacts among different parties. Local processes are immediately and directly affecting international protagonists, and on the other hand, international activity has been imprinted in the behaviour in those areas, which can make an impact on the dynamics and the scope of any particular crisis.

Starting from this point it can be stated that the conflict is currently at such a stage that either its weakening and a transition to gradual normalization of relations<sup>5</sup>, or its further expansion can be expected (within certain irrational moves which have additional value in this area), which would be difficult to control considering the new parties and regions.

<sup>2</sup> Out of abundant existing literature on the conflict in former Yugoslavia, we have selected the following:

M. Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War*, London, 1992; J. Gow, *Legitimacy and Military: The Yugoslav Crisis*, London, 1992; H. Wiberg, *Divided States and Divided Nations as a Security Problem: The Case of Yugoslavia*, Kobenhavn, 1992; P. Garde, *Vie et mort de la Yugoslavie*, Paris, 1992; J. Zametica, *The Yugoslav Conflict*, London, 1992; R. Vukadinović, *The Break up of Yugoslavia: Threats and Challenges*, The Hague, 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. Papasotiriou, *Liberal Idealism Versus Realism: Yugoslav Case*, Athens, 1994.

<sup>4</sup> R. Vukadinović, *La fin de la Yugoslavie et l'instabilité Balkanique*, Paris, 1992.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. Cviic, "An Awful Warning: The War in ex-Yugoslavia", *Balkan Forum*, 1994, 2, 3, p. 68.

Bearing in mind such complexities as well as the dispersive character of local and international determinants, the picture of the ongoing conflict can be divided into three levels:

— the conflict between the Republic of Croatia and rebel Serbs on Croatia's territory, creating a state of neither war nor peace, which has not been completed — at least in the area of Eastern Slavonia — and that can be activated at any time by either an incident or by previously planned moves;

— the war in the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had its own logic of armed conflict with phases of varied intensity and which is presently being settled through the implementation of Dayton peace agreement;

— a possible conflict in the south of former Yugoslavia (Kosovo and Macedonia), where new conditions leading to new large-scale Balkan conflicts, alongside with the involvement of other Balkan states and their statement of their strategic and political goals, could be created (either by transferring or by initiating independent elements).

The disintegration of Yugoslavia, besides numerous internal and international issues, shed a new light on the problem of security on the Balkans. The security system on the Balkans kept the balance between members of the Warsaw Pact (Bulgaria, Romania) and the members of NATO (Greece, Turkey) for many years. Standing between these two political blocs, alongside with Albania, Yugoslavia acted as a non-bloc party which formed a specific Balkan balance. The disintegration of the Warsaw pact and Yugoslavia led to a political-strategic vacuum in the Balkan area thus creating conditions for establishing new relations within the Balkans and Europe.

The Balkan states responded differently to the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the ensuing conflict. Having traditionally good relations with Serbia and due to its geographic position, Romania was not hiding its concern and readiness to help; Bulgaria was politically divided in its acceptance of the new Balkan relations; Greece attempted to define clearly its national interests as well as its friendly attitude to Serbia, while Albania greeted the disintegration of Yugoslavia with most enthusiasm, convinced that the chances for the creation of new relations on the Balkans as well as the solution of the Albanian problem finally became real. Announcing its big plan of nearly global action, Turkey estimated that the disintegration of Yugoslavia resulted in a new situation which itself opened new possibilities for Turkey's much more intensive involvement on the Balkans.

The conflict in the area of former Yugoslavia, its intensity and expansion, confirmed that the vacuum created on the Balkans would be of a

more permanent nature, and due to that each of the Balkan states had to build their new strategies of Balkan relations with utmost care.

Alongside with the desire of each Balkan state, former members of the Warsaw Pact, to enter NATO as soon as possible, and the European Union as well, the development of the Balkan relations became a permanent factor which should be taken into consideration. On one hand it has brought dynamics into their claims directed towards Europe, and on the other hand, it has limited possible political action, redirecting it in the first place back to the Balkan area.

Thus, each of the Balkan states created their own approach to the crisis in the area of former Yugoslavia, simultaneously trying to find possibilities for developing a new security system nationally and regionally, making way for entering the European military-political and economic structures.

### *Romania: between friend and mediator*

Being the biggest state on the Balkan peninsula, despite its complex internal economic and socio-political problems, Romania carefully monitored the development of the situation ensuing the disintegration of Yugoslavia from its very beginning, fearing that the conflict would expand. For Romanian diplomacy the biggest danger lay in the possible expansion of the conflict to Kosovo or Macedonia, which would, undoubtedly, bring about the involvement of the other Balkan states. Although Romania was not directly included in the group of states which could take part in any action, it was aware of all the disruptions and dangers that could emerge on the Balkan in regional proportions.

Therefore, Romanian politics attempted to act as a mediator having good relations with all the states in the area of former Yugoslavia, not placing its friendly relations with Serbia first. Romanian politics never concealed this traditional friendship, and it was equally ready to help Serbia in humanitarian matters as before. The two socialist regimes on the Balkans had many opportunities for political contacts, too. However, Romanian diplomacy made contacts with Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina as well, trying to express its readiness for mediation.

Emphasizing that Romania had neither any territorial claims for parts of former Yugoslavia nor that there were problems with national minorities in Romania or Serbia, Romanian politics created an appearance of objectivity in resolving the crisis.

Showing flexibility in its global approach to the issues of strategic relations, Romanian politics tried to create possibilities for wide action on different levels. Immediately after accepting the Partnership for Peace, Romania signed the Agreement of Military Cooperation with Russia in an

attempt to show to the Russian side that cooperation with NATO did not at all mean an end to its good relations with Moscow. Also, implementing sanctions against Serbia, Romania tried to use its political influence in order to alleviate the sanctions. At the same time together with other states affected by the implementation of sanctions Romania demanded compensation from the UN, with no success.

Knowing the Balkan situation, the Romanian politics emphasized that there was no military solution and that foreign military intervention in Bosnia was counterproductive. Advocating any peaceful solution, Romania seeks to prevent possible action by Balkan states military forces in the crisis area, believing that this could create severe and long-lasting effects on Balkan relations. At the same time, on several occasions Romanian politics argued that the embargo is counterproductive as well and that it cannot bear political results. This was also based on the damages that Romania experienced due to the embargo policy. Romania estimated a direct damage of \$2 billion and an indirect damage of more than \$5 billion.<sup>6</sup>

Aware of the intensity of possible disruptions on the Balkans, Romania continues to support all initiatives for a peaceful solution of the crisis in the area of former Yugoslavia. Although Romania has recently been labeled as a 'Central European' state in official foreign affairs terminology, it is quite clear that Romanian politics cannot act smoothly in Europe as long as the Balkans relations are not resolved. Striving for a development of peaceful relations on the Balkans, Romanian politics seeks ground for its faster integration into Europe and the creation of new relations which would enable its prosperity. Combining friendly relations with Serbia and the orthodox church and wishing to pave its way to a new European position, Romania has become the first of the member states of the former Warsaw Pact which signed the Agreement on the Partnership for Peace with NATO, receiving associate member status in the Western European Union and signing the Agreement on the associate status in the European Union. The Brussels announcement about Bulgaria and Romania, besides the Visegrad four, becoming full members of the European Union clearly shows the main directions that Romanian politics has taken.

### *Bulgaria: desire for a new security regime*

Unlike Romania and its undivided political attitude to the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Bulgarian politics (burdened by internal political conflicts) was divided in the creation of uniform policy. Official Sofia accepted all UN and EU measures and supported the embargo policy toward Serbia.

<sup>6</sup> Together with Ukraine and Russia, Romania was among the first countries that demanded international compensation for damages caused by the implementation of sanctions against Yugoslavia.

However, unlike Romania's constant emphasis on not having any territorial claims for parts of former Yugoslavia nor having problems related to minorities, Bulgaria emerges as a state directly interested in the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

Starting from a firm standpoint defined as early as in 1953 that both Macedonian nation and the Macedonian language are non-existent, Bulgarian politics renewed its attitude to so-called Western provinces (Macedonia) which Bulgaria gained in the St. Stefan Agreement. Although one of the first countries to recognize Macedonia, Bulgaria clearly stated that it only recognized the state, and not the nation, and that this issue remained to be solved at some time in the future.

Offering assistance and cooperation to the newly formed state, Bulgaria also immediately sought Macedonian political forces with most similar political views and whose political program did not conceal an aspiration for closer connections with Sophia. Ultranationalist party VMRO bought arms in Sophia, which led to the fall of the then Bulgarian government.<sup>7</sup> In its attempts to develop cooperation, Sophia does not give up on its denial of Macedonian nation and language, thus creating an impression of transitory relations which will sooner or later be replaced by a different status of Macedonia.

Taking into account both the historical ties and political activity of some of Macedonian political forces which see Macedonia closely tied to Sophia in the future, Bulgarian politics is, nevertheless, extremely worried about the dangers Macedonia is facing. Working of Albanian forces which ever more clearly express their secessionist tendencies and their wish to have stronger ties with Albania, represent a serious threat not only for Macedonia but also for Balkan stability. In case of renewed conflicts and a need for military action, Bulgarian politics would not like to be driven into saving militarily either Macedonia as a whole or those parts of Macedonia which could be attached with less difficulty.

For Sophia, regardless of which party or party coalition is in power in Skopje, it is easier to develop permanent connections which strengthen Bulgarian influence and, through Macedonian political parties, to spread the belief that one day Macedonia could become part of Bulgaria, either in case of a more severe economic and social crisis, or simply by majority vote. In present circumstances direct military action, saving a part or the whole of Macedonia is not considered beneficial for Bulgaria, which has enough of its own difficulties. Besides, the whole idea of the so called incorporation of Macedonia is not planned to be realized at present. It involves a longer period of time within which Bulgaria would become stronger and when it would be much easier to incorporate Macedonia.

<sup>7</sup> *The Economist*, November 14, 1992.

Another problem related to Macedonia and concerning Bulgaria is Turkish politics. The politics of the former socialist regime in Sophia was clearly a result of essentially good relations between Bulgaria and Greece. This was an answer to a possible penetration of Turkey in this part of the Balkans. This alliance was at the same time supposed to create a special balance preventing broader Turkish action relative to Greece or Bulgaria. By the fall of socialism in Bulgaria, the new Bulgarian government at first expressed little interest in cooperation with Greece. Turkey, whose capital started entering Bulgaria, is making more and more use of the presence of its minority (almost a million people) and it is through their minority and in areas where the Turks represent the majority that it develops the strongest economic ties with Bulgaria. Presently, Turkey is one of the biggest foreign investors in Bulgaria and numerous channels have been opened between these two countries.

However, regardless of the positive economic effects that have resulted from Turkish action, most political parties in Bulgaria have been increasingly fearing that such Turkish action could go too far. The fact that Turkey has a strong presence in Macedonia is an additional reason for Bulgaria's concern. Albanian secessionist tendencies in Macedonia<sup>8</sup> and Turkish penetration into Macedonia, which certainly has broad political-strategic and economic implications, are presently slowing down the realization of Bulgarian intentions.

On top of all this, Belgrade's attitude towards Macedonia is seeing it as a constituent part of the whole (of some new Yugoslavia) and as a direct geographic connection between Belgrade and friendly Athens.

Bearing in mind all this facts, Bulgarian politics observing the crisis in the area in former Yugoslavia would not welcome any new deepening. Economic damage caused by the embargo is so huge that it can be directly felt and Sophia continuously requires its lifting. The disintegration of Yugoslavia made way for the expansion of Bulgaria and creation of new concepts of "Great St. Stefanian Bulgaria". However, there are clear obstacles which Bulgaria at present state of affairs is not able to overcome.<sup>9</sup> The breaking out of a conflict in Macedonia or Kosovo therefore would not suit Bulgaria, which is still counting on long-term actions in terms of getting Macedonia closer to Bulgaria and on creating belief in the Macedonian majority that Sophia is not only a natural ally, but also a future solution to their problems.

The intensification of relations with European institutions and entering the Partnership for Peace as well as the announcement of a possible dis-

<sup>8</sup> D. M. Perry, "Une crise en gestation? La Macedonie et ses voisins", *Politique étrangère*, Paris, 1994, 1, p. 218-219.

<sup>9</sup> E. Tsenkov, "The Geopolitical Dilemmas of Former Satellite", *Bulgarian Quarterly*, Winter 1991.

discussion on Bulgaria's entrance to the European Community, are imposing certain limitations regarding direct Bulgarian involvement in Macedonia. Greece as a member of EU has been actively monitoring Bulgarian behaviour and any kind of action which would not be in accordance with the maintenance of the current situation in the south of the Balkans, would be easily used against Bulgaria in the long process of its entering NATO and EU.<sup>10</sup>

Developing cooperation with Skopje, struggling against sanctions, and maintaining contact with Belgrade (especially Bulgarian socialist forces), Bulgaria has strongly opposed the participation of Balkan states in military UN forces in the area of former Yugoslavia. The inclusion of Turkish forces into UN troops in Bosnia was received with great indignation and was seen as adding fuel to the flames and not as helping the peaceful solution of the crisis.

Creating new relations with Greece, Bulgarian politics is trying to regain their one-time significance, which would also weaken Turkey's influence in Bulgaria. Balancing between big aspirations and limited possibilities, Bulgarian politics remains a keen participant, particularly in Macedonia, which understands all the dangers and challenges resulting from any irrational political move or open crisis, which could lead to direct Bulgarian action. Various past connections with Serbia and the orthodox church, which is something the two countries share, did not lead to any firmer connections between Sophia and Belgrade, but they managed to maintain basically good neighbourly relations.<sup>11</sup> Due to its keen interest in entering Europe, Bulgaria was motivated to act fairly, trying not to aggravate the already difficult situation on the Balkans.

### *Greece: friendship and common interests*

Greece, a country with a traditionally friendly attitude to Serbia and having a lot in common with Serbia (history, political ties, orthodox religion, economic cooperation), has never concealed its inclination to Belgrade. Moreover, Greece used every political or diplomatic opportunity to speak for Serbia and to support solutions which would be in favour of Belgrade either within EU, CSCE or the UN. On a pragmatic-political level this resulted in numerous meetings of Milošević and Mitsotakis and later Papandreu and also in activities which were supposed to help find a solution to the crisis. Humanitarian aid to Serbia has kept coming from

<sup>10</sup> Some also believe that Bulgaria is very interested in creating a so-called buffer zone between Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania and Greece. See: St. Alifantis, *Bulgaria: The Dilemmas of a New Era*, Athens, 1993, pp. 64-65.

<sup>11</sup> P. Fileva, "The Balkans: A Region Free of Regionalism", *Bulgarian Military Review*, No. 2, 1994, pp. 15-16.

Greece and the Greek Church, community and political organizations and groups of citizens have also been very active.

However, this multifacial Greek support of Serbia and all it stood for, should not be accounted for solely by traditional friendship or orthodox religion. It is a combination of friendship and important Greek interests, which in this case correspond with Serbian standpoints and activities on the Balkans in two major questions.

The first refers to the new role of Turkey on the Balkans. Greece, which is almost obsessed with Turkey as a threat despite common membership in NATO, sees any Turkish step towards the Balkans as another evidence of Ankara's anti-Greek politics and as an expression of the desire to create new great "Turkish bow" to encircle Greece.<sup>12</sup> Strengthening of Bulgaria — Turkish ties, strong Turkish position in Macedonia as well as the establishment of special axis Ankara-Tirana is felt in Athens as an overt expression of Turkish attempts to encircle Greece, to isolate it and to disrupt its development despite its membership in EU. Five centuries of Turkish presence in the Balkans are strong arguments and a warning to all who would like to have more intense contacts with Turkey. Analyses which are attempting to show that Turkey plans to return to the Balkans have been supported in Belgrade as well. In that respect both countries, Serbia and Greece, are considered as the chief defenders of Christianity in the Balkans, that are faced with a lack of understanding by the international community and that are exposed to direct threats.

Greek politics, almost completely convinced that the Cyprus problem will not be resolved, facing Turkish military force, seeks allies on one hand in NATO and Greek's position in the European Union, and on the other hand in Serbia, which is said to be confronted with the same enemy in Bosnia and in the broader Balkan area (Sandžak, Kosovo). Common stand regarding Turkish threats is a solid ground of a common front, which has been developing for the last few years between Athens and Belgrade.

Another issue about which Belgrade and Athens are expressing a high degree of agreement is the approach to Macedonia. Even though after the Macedonian referendum the Yugoslav army left the newly established Macedonian state without hesitation, Milošević still holds that it is an artificial product, which has neither good nor long-term prospects of normal existence. At the time when Macedonia seemed to be close to an economic collapse, a scenario for the acceptance of Macedonia in the so called FR Yugoslavia had already been completed in Belgrade. However, partly due to foreign assistance, partly due to profits made from breaking the sanctions and transporting goods into Yugoslavia, Macedonian economy

<sup>12</sup> J. Pattifer, "Greece into the Balkan Crisis", *World Today*, November 1992, Vol. 48, 11.

has strengthened and is still maintaining its level. This made clear even to Milošević that Macedonia had to be considered as an existing state which had not been recognized by Serbia, but which for him posed two identical problems: economic isolation and the existence of hostile Albanian people.

The creation of Macedonia as a state caught Greek politics unprepared. It was not able to use its European military-political and economic channels in order to prepare for such an act, and the Macedonian acceptance of symbols, interpretation of history as well as statements that about 250,000 Macedonians live in Greece were in Greece soon seen as Macedonian overt provocations. Macedonian Constitution which announced possible protection of Macedonians living in neighbouring countries (primarily in Bulgaria and Greece) caused even more anguish in the Greek public opinion. Athens government was faced with home criticism which claimed that the government was completely unprepared for the creation of the new state on its borders and that it did not do anything to stop further "Macedonian provocations". As a reply to that criticism, Greece initiated an embargo against Macedonia, at the same time closing the port in Thessalonica, which had been Macedonia's natural communication with the world, for all Macedonian goods.

Within the European Union Greece started a big campaign against the recognition of Macedonia under this name and these symbols, fearing in fact some further development of relations on the Balkans. According to those fears, the newly created state might find itself connected with forces hostile towards Greece — in the first place Turkey. In that case, the so called minor issues of emblem, flag, etc. could be considered as a serious pretext leading to more complex relations.

Although isolated within EU, where the Greek standpoint about the need not to recognize Macedonia was finally abandoned, Greek politics still managed to block any kind of EU's economic assistance to Macedonia. Thus, Greece was faced with political isolation in EU, at the same time being rather successful in blocking Macedonia economically by its actions.

Since the long-lasting anti-Macedonian action made the Greek public opinion accept the premise that the new state wants a part of Greek territory as far as Thessalonica<sup>13</sup> and that therefore Greece should oppose it, the voices of some Greek politicians appealing to reason and seeking compromise are not easily heard. Attempts to create conditions for the recognition of Macedonia and the normalization of relations, are also obstructed by the Macedonian side, where incidents only straighten

<sup>13</sup> Albanian support of Macedonia, which was seen as a provocation of Serbia, irritated Greece as well and contributed a great deal to Greek politics towards Macedonia. See: J. Patiffer, "The New Macedonian Question", *International Affairs*, Vol. 68, 2, Spring 1993, p. 270.

the positions of Greek nationalists. Claims that Greece should recognize Macedonia, solve by political negotiation the questions of the preamble of the Macedonian Constitution, which can be interpreted as an intrusion in the internal affairs of other states, and that Greece through its economic actions might become a more significant partner of Macedonia than Turkey is today, do not have any reflections in the Greek political leadership.

Considering Milošević's non-recognition of Macedonia as an additional argument, Greek political circles are even more ready to persist in their standpoints. Squeezed by sanctions, which will be gradually lifted, Serbia has a lot in common with Greece, which due to the Macedonian issue brought itself into isolation at a political-diplomatic level. Having a very narrow perspective, both countries consider themselves deprived, think that there is a big international conspiracy against them and that they are both paying a high price due to their confrontation with Islamic forces. This was also the basis for rumours that even in the days of the biggest pressure on Serbia, Milošević offered to create some confederation with Greece, which was denied by the Greek side. Nevertheless, it was only one more proof of close positions the two states took in their isolated view of the world and the Balkan events.

The most recent tension between Athens and Tirana is seen as further proof of the big conspiracy. In Athens it has been emphasized that Albanian politics gained significant support after the military pact with Turkey, that large shipments of arms have been delivered and that some Turkish consultants work in Albania. In order to prepare the ground either for possible actions against Serbs in Kosovo or in Macedonia, Berisha's regime started harassing Greeks in Albania in order to force them to leave Albania. In that way the area would be cleansed and the chances for Albanian military actions would be created, either in Kosovo or in Macedonia. Then Greece would have no reasons for intervention in case of a conflict since there would remain no Greek citizens in Albania. Even though this premise is rather far-fetched, it has its supporters among some Greek politicians.

All this creates solid enough grounds for maintaining the axis between Athens and Belgrade, but at the same time, it does not allow Greece to put an end to its diplomatic-political isolation soon.

### *Albanian powerful rhetoric*

The disintegration of former Yugoslavia was welcomed with overt satisfaction in Albania, where the newly elected president Sali Berisha stated that the formation of "new great Albania does not seem unreal" in the

new circumstances.<sup>14</sup> Decisive support to Albanians in the area of former Yugoslavia — in Kosovo and Macedonia — became a permanent trait of Berisha's Albania. The declaration of independence of Kosovo, by which Albanian state of Kosovo was officially organized, was recognized by Albania only, and a network of "bodies" of the new Kosovo state operates in Tirana. Simultaneously, Macedonia was asked to treat Albania as a constituent people, which would enable them to vote for their independence. That was in accordance with Rugova's requests addressed to the Macedonian government regarding Albanian autonomy or the possibility of their union with Kosovo. In 1992 in one part of Macedonia Albanians established their republic "Illirya", which was to show their future direction.<sup>15</sup>

Not concealing his aspirations for creating a great Albania, Berisha frequently repeats that Albanians are one of the very few nations of 7 million people who live in five different states. New Albania should direct its efforts towards getting Albanians to live in one state and making conditions for creating a single state.

Despite this powerful nationalist rhetoric, which seeks to create a great Albania on the Balkans and which counts on huge numbers of compatriots in other countries, Albania is still far from realizing such ideas. Being primarily the poorest country in Europe facing existential problems, Albania is a country with permanent braindraining and political fights between Berisha's opponents and followers. Albanian army, despite a certain degree of modernization, Turkish support and new armament is far from being able to confront Milošević's military and police forces in Kosovo. Although Albanian army could threaten the small and ill-equipped Macedonian army, one should not forget the extent of possible consequences which might result from such a conflict, and the definite involvement of other participants in the conflict with Albania.

Despite certain changes, the division according to tribal structure is still dominating Albanian society and it is not likely that Albania's Toski would simply welcome Kosovo's Gege, which are better educated, better-off and have more international experience because they lived in former Yugoslavia.

A country which is almost completely dependent on international support, from food to arms, has to take these realities into account. The United States has on several occasions made clear that it counts on Albania's rational thinking and that at this moment it is not interested in opening a new front in the south of the Balkans. By including Albania into the Partnership for Peace, a new framework of Albanian behaviour

<sup>14</sup> R. Austin, "What Albania Adds to the Balkan Stew", *Orbis*, Vol. 37, 2, Spring 1993, p. 270.

<sup>15</sup> S. P. Ramet, "War in the Balkans", *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1992, Vol. 71, 4.

was set, and even with powerful political rhetoric (which has its internal political purpose) Albania is not capable of doing all it would like to do towards the creation of a great Albania.

Accordingly, Berisha's statements have to be understood as a form of such limited behaviour, which has its own political reasons but which, in reality, is far from bearing actual results. It is, of course, significant that Berisha gave his friends licenses for selling fuel to Serbia and Montenegro, at the time of strictest international embargo against the so called FR Yugoslavia.

Albanian politics of avoiding confrontation in Kosovo resulted in the existence of two socio-political systems of education, medical care, university, etc. As the Serbian system does not interfere with the Albanian, or vice versa, we could talk about "successful" parallel existence of two systems which are, of course, under surveillance of powerful Serbian police and military forces.

Most Kosovo leaders feel that it is not the right time for starting any big actions and that, in present circumstance, any such attempts would be stopped. Support from outside Albania could be expected only in terms of humanitarian aid, and a possible big exodus from Kosovo to Albania could have disastrous effects on the already poor Albania.

Rugova's claims that Albanians in Kosovo will win by patience could make sense.<sup>16</sup> However, we should not forget certain weaknesses in political leadership of independent Kosovo and Milošević's attempts to get closer to a part of Albanian politicians by promising autonomy which would take place at the very moment when the conflict in Yugoslavia is resolved. It is also very likely that primarily young people wishing to emigrate and those dissatisfied with the too long wait might lose their patience which could lead to conflicts in either Kosovo or Macedonia.

Clearly, politics of restraint cannot last forever. There is not much time left for waiting for the possible weakening of Serbia and for starting an uprising. The international community is well aware of those facts at times using the K+K formula, which would mean that giving autonomy to the Krajina Serbs would be followed by requests for autonomy by Yugoslavia's Albanians. This could also represent another solution for the status of Albanians in Macedonia.

Unless the solution of the status of Yugoslavia's Albanians is not approached comprehensively, within the peaceful solution in the former state, it will remain an open issue, which could represent a permanent Balkan sparkle. At the same time, it might allow the formation of various alli-

<sup>16</sup> H. Stark, "La question albanaise", *Politique étrangère*, Vol. 59, Printemps 1994, 1, p. 219.

ances, in which new relations could be built on the basis of a referendum for or against "Great Albania".

Of course, we should not forget the question of religion, which is becoming more and more prominent in this area. Most Albanians from Kosovo and Macedonia are Moslems. Together with Bulgarian Moslems — the Pomacs, Moslems from Sandžak and Moslems from Albania they form a powerful group. Balkan states, which have been closely monitoring the development of the relations in the south of the Balkans, see it as a permanent threat, which could easily lead to a new conflict. An explosion in Kosovo and Macedonia would start an avalanche of new relations in the entire area and it could lead to even more complex relations in the present conflict area in former Yugoslavia. If such a development is not stopped on time, it could become a pretext for the third Balkan war. We can only hope that Albania will consider the dangers which it is being exposed to by its militant rhetoric and that the international community will find a way to a peaceful resolution.

### *Turkish return to the Balkans*

The fall of the socialist system, particularly that in the USSR, as well as the conflict in the area of former Yugoslavia, was seen by Turkey as an opportunity for its own promotion on a broad international level. A country which has lately been developing its economy with a lot of success, whose attempts to enter the European Community have failed, and which has all the attributes of a regional power, saw in the new circumstances a chance to act in the area of former Soviet-Asian republics, in the Black Sea area and on the Balkans.

According to Ozal who claims that the 21st century belongs to Turkey, Turkish politics has taken a forceful economic initiative in Asia, competing with Iran and Saudi Arabia for gaining influence in the newly established states. The cooperation in the Black Sea region should confirm that Turkey is capable of acting towards bringing together all the region's states while the Balkans and its conflicts became a testing range for powerful political-diplomatic actions.

Since the beginning of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina most Turkish politicians have seen Western actions as inadequate and thought that Moslems were tacitly sacrificed. Many have become aware that the West has no intention of letting Moslems create a state in Europe and that by various divisions, cantonizations and confederations it has attempted to deprive Moslems of their right to self-determination.

Such circumstances in Turkey facilitated the development of organized media activities supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina. Soon after that Turkey emerged as the first donator country in Bosnia. Alongside with humanitarian aid donations included military supplies for the Bosnian army

and significant financial support has been provided as well as assistance in the Bosnian diplomatic missions.

In order to create a more powerful front which might deal with the Serbs, president Ozal personally saw to bringing closer Croatian, Macedonian, Bosnian, Albanian and Turkish standpoints, being convinced that it was these countries that were most exposed and most threatened and that — with the support of Turkey and some other countries — they could survive the conflict with Serbia.

After the creation of Macedonian state, Turkey offered safety guarantees to it, and some time later the agreement on military cooperation between Albania and Turkey was signed. On the political level, significant efforts to weaken the connections between Bulgaria and Greece and to get Bulgaria to develop better relations with Turkey were made. That was also followed by large Turkish investments mostly through Bulgarian Turks. As a result, a special safety regime limiting military forces was established between Turkey and Bulgaria. In Turkey this was seen as a success of Turkish politics.<sup>17</sup>

Monitoring the events in Kosovo and Sandžak, Ozal warned Serbia on several occasions that what was going on in Bosnia and Herzegovina must never be repeated in this part of the Balkans because the response (primarily that of Turkey and Albania) could be very dangerous.

As a member of the Islamic Conference, Turkey made a significant effort to provide permanent support was given to Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as to make other members of the Islamic Conference advocate the lifting of arms embargo towards Bosnia. Although this is not as meaningful after the Washington Agreement in 1994, since when the Bosnian army has been receiving military supplies on a regular basis, for Turkey and other Islamic countries this is a principle issue which is to confirm the right of victims to protect themselves. This is also a way of testing the readiness of the Western world to provide support to Moslems in their fight.

However, soon after that it became clear that the great plan of new Turkish action was running into obstacles.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Agreements on Confidence Building and Security Measures (CBSM) were reached between Bulgaria and Turkey in December of 1991 and in November of 1992. They broadened the scope of CBSM given in the Vienna catalogue.

<sup>18</sup> A number of American military analysts pay special attentions to problems Turkey's politics faces in various parts of the world. In Europe Turkey runs into obstacles related to its entering the EU, which is not to take place very soon. An especially difficult problem is the Kurd issue and their desire for selfdetermination. Turkish regional position in former Russian-Asian republics is weakened by Iranian and Saudi Arabian activity. Wars from "Yugoslavia to Tadzhikistan have made Turkish regional activity in Europe and Asia less likely". See: S.J.

In the former Soviet-Asian republics Turkish politics has to compete economically with other Islamic states (Iran), which offer a fundamentalist approach to religion and the development of new relations instead of the Turkish secular variant of Islam. This conflict of secular and fundamentalist Islam is a part of a larger conflict in Islamic countries and it is reflected on Turkey, too. The REFAH party (Prosperity)<sup>19</sup> as a party seeking Moslem solidarity and the formation of a Moslem commonwealth of Islamic people, from Mauritania to Bangladesh, is in conflict with the existing concept of Turkish politics in which entering the European Union is still officially dominating. As this process of joining the European Union has lasted too long not only because of Greek opposition, but also because of the attitude of most members of EU, which think that Turkey should not be a part of Europe, radical forces claiming that Turkey need not be in Europe and that the recent economic successes confirm that Turkey does not need the EU are becoming stronger in Turkish politics.

This conflict of the secular and the religious concept has extended to Bosnia-Hercegovina, where Turkish support meets that of other Islamic countries. Moujahedins entered the formations of the Bosnian army and all this was accompanied by attempts of islamization of Bosnian fighters and people.

Limited economic resources and the conflict of two Islamic concepts weaken the possibilities for a faster Turkish return to the Balkans. The truth is that Turkey managed to get its troop sent to Bosnia within the UN, it maintains close relations with Albania and continues to develop relation with Macedonia. However, a new alliance which would embrace all Serbian enemies from Zagreb to Sarajevo and Tirana and to Skopje was not established. Also, Turkey experiences increasing difficulty in defining its standpoints in the Islamic community, where other members appear to be protecting the Bosnian Moslems as well.

One should not forget that Turkey is still a member of NATO and that American influence is felt in Turkish politics in many respects.<sup>20</sup> It is evident that Turkey could not independently and without control undertake any serious action in that area, especially because this is a question of preservation of the fragile Greek-Turkish relations. The scenarios ac-

Blank, S.C. Pelletiere, W.T. Johnson, *Turkey's Strategic Position at the Crossroads of World Affairs*, Carlisle Barracks, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army and War College, 1993, p. 90-91.

<sup>19</sup> P. Avirović, "The Challenge Called REFAH: New Actor on the Turkish Political Scene", *Balkan Forum*, Vol. 2, 3, September 1994, pp. 205-207.

<sup>20</sup> For a detailed analysis of Turkey's foreign politics, as well as for circumstances in which it has been created, see: G. E. Fuller, "Turkey in the New International Security Environment", in: F. S. Larrabee (ed.), *The Volatile Powder Keg: Balkan Security After the Cold War*, Washington, 1994, pp. 135-153.

ording to which in case of a broadened conflict in the south of the Balkans the Turkish army would immediately rush to help the Moslems in Kosovo, Sandžak or in Macedonia are definitely overdramatized.

With its existing politics of getting closer to the Balkans by establishing new economic relations and developing military cooperation with Albania and by providing assistance for the Bosnian Moslems, it seems that Turkey has done as much as it could.<sup>21</sup> Other actions which would, for example, include a bigger engagement of Turkish military forces in the UN, their presence in Bosnia, or their taking part in some crisis in the south of the Balkans directly using its military resources, exceed the framework of Turkish politics. This would be decided on in other places which, of course, would have to take Islamic connections into consideration, but would still make decisions depending on broader international interests.<sup>22</sup>

Viewed within the framework of international relations, the Balkans presents a good example of a "safety complex"<sup>23</sup>, which clearly shows that the safety of any Balkan state cannot be achieved separately from other Balkan states. In terms of models, it is an ideal example of safety community which could be, in Deutsch' terminology<sup>24</sup> classified as a group of states, alliances or international organizations which are geographically and functionally connected, and which operate within the model of conflict and cooperation.

Analyzed in these terms (of conflict and cooperation), the Balkans has so far provided different examples with the two taking turns, leaving the Balkan safety complex as a permanent segment of togetherness. The most recent conflict in the Balkan area placed the focus in this subregional part of Europe back to a conflict stage with a vague notion of a possible model for ending the crisis and making grounds for cooperation.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> A number of American analysts advocates immediate Turkey's joining all Western structures (primarily the EU) in order to prevent the Moslem involvement in Turkey. See: F.S. Larrabee, *Western Strategy toward the Former Yugoslavia*, RAND, Santa Monica, 1994, pp. 17-18.

<sup>22</sup> The Turkish prime minister Tensu Ciller emphasize the importance of Turkey's role in the Balkan and Caucasian crisis when she talks about "Turkish restraint" and Turkey's desire to act within the NATO framework. *NATO Review*, 2, April, 1994, pp. 6.

<sup>23</sup> B. Buzan, *People, State and Fear*, Brighton, 1991, p. 190.

<sup>24</sup> K. Deutsch, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton, 1957.

<sup>25</sup> About existing forms and some possibility for cooperation on the Balkans see: R. Vukadinović, "Balkan Cooperation: Realities and Prospects", in: F.S. Larrabee (ed.), *The Volatile Powder Keg*, op. cit., pp. 185-201.