

# Conflict In Macedonia: A Challenge For New Reform Policy

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**Abstract:** Despite the fact that it has been almost twelve years since the escalation of conflict in Macedonia, the conflict is still a subject of serious theoretical analysis and remains particularly popular in the internal policy circles, especially in creating the new reform policy in the Republic of Macedonia. Actually, from the Macedonian example of relatively successful prevention sprang out a general lesson for both international and domestic actors. That is to say that conflict prevention cannot be illustrated as a formula that mends problems on the surface, but in fact it leaves open deep political (ethno-political mobilization, corruption, crime), economic (independence, unemployment, lack of investments, illegal trade), social (poverty, low standard) and security (illegal possession and trafficking in arms, illegal trafficking in people) reasons for conflict. The intersection of conditions in Macedonia before and after the conflict in 2001 is an obvious example of that. Therefore the elaboration of contents in this paper develops in three directions: firstly, there is an attempt for rational analysis of socio-economic, political and ethnic premises in Macedonian society, so as to indicate its immanent but important potential which led to armed violence between Albanian and Macedonian communities. The second line of analysis refers to the challenges and efforts of the Macedonian state for resolving the crisis, while the third line of analysis refers to political reforms as crucial for peace building, a stable and secure Macedonia.

**Key words:** conflict, reforms, policy.

## 1. Introduction

Conflict prevention supports numerous strategic political actions and new reform policies, which should contribute to the hindering of the re-emergence of violent conflict. Apart from the diplomatic and military approach to prevention, developing work can also be oriented toward stressing the roots of a conflict in a way that the state prone

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to conflicts will be capable of evading the re-emergence of violent conflict. Therefore, in the context of the majority of analyses regarding the conflict of 2001, a justifiable question is raised in Macedonia today: whether the new reform policy, emerging from the Ohrid Framework Agreement, will contribute to evading the re-emergence of the conflict. Thus, conflict prevention cannot be presented as a formula that will mend the problems on the surface, essentially leaving open deep political (ethno-political mobilization, corruption, crime), economic (independence, unemployment, lack of investments, illegal trade), social (poverty, low standard) and security (illegal possession and trafficking in arms, illegal trafficking in people) reasons for conflict.

The intersection of events in Macedonia before and after the conflict is an obvious example of that, because the Macedonian conflict ended with a political solution and full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, representing political capital with special political and legal influence, which opens up new horizons for a new reform policy.

## **2. Socio-economic, political and ethnic premises in post-independence Macedonian society**

In socio-economic terms, the Republic of Macedonia did not see an increase of its gross domestic product (GDP), which highlighted that the system based on socialized property was not able to generate positive economic effects any longer. The changes that occurred once the transition had been launched also initiated other negative tendencies, such as demographic trends, and enhanced social differences among Macedonian citizens. These elements increased the level of social and economic insecurity.

At the same time, it was expected that democratic institutions, market economy and the introduction of political pluralism would run smoothly and in harmony with the nascent free civil society. In particular, people expected much more rapid economic development. However, at the very outset of the transition, Macedonia encountered foreign political and economic pressures. According to some expert judgments, these pressures – inefficient privatization and economic restructuring – significantly decreased economic performance; which in turn resulted in mass redundancies, a serious decrease of the standard of living and a rapid increase in poverty.<sup>1</sup> Under such conditions, independence only exacerbated the situation. The former Yugoslav economic market was lost at the exact same time when the country faced additional economic problems triggered by the double embargo – one by Greece due to the name problem, and the other imposed by the need to respect the UN resolutions for economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). As a result, socio-economic conditions

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1 Macedonia was one of the least developed republics in the former SFRY.

in Macedonia developed in an increasingly negative direction. It should be underlined that the ethnic premises were also specific. Namely, along with the Macedonian population, population of other ethnic backgrounds has been living within the borders of the Republic of Macedonia. As in most countries in the region, such demographic conditions are the result of population displacements, taking place in the past, due to wars, political, and economic reasons. According to the 1948 census data, Macedonians were represented with 789,648 inhabitants, or 68.49 per cent of the total population; in 1953 the percentage of the Macedonian population was 65.98 per cent. In 1961, Macedonians comprised 71.19 per cent of the total population. This increase was primarily a result of the mass emigration of the Turks in the period from 1953 to 1961. According to the 1971 census data, Macedonians comprised 69.35 per cent, in 1981 they comprised 67.01 per cent, and in 1994 the number was 66.6 per cent of the total population; by 2002 they comprised 64.17 per cent (Mileski, 2005:236).

During the same time period, the Albanian population increased continually. According to the data from 1948, they were represented with a total of 197,389 inhabitants, or 17.12 per cent of the total registered population. The 1953 census registered an evident decrease in the Albanian population percentage. This is explained by the fact that Turks, Macedonian Muslims and Roma, who had been recorded as Albanians in 1948, were now registered as Turks due to their interest to emigrate to Turkey. From 1961 to 1981 the percentage of Albanians in the entire population was continually increasing. In 1994 the percentage increased rapidly to 22.6 per cent. In 2002 it reached 25.17 per cent.

Based on these findings, we can conclude that the proportion of the Albanian population in the Republic of Macedonia has been continually increasing relative to ethnic Macedonians partly as a result of higher population growth. Such an increase inevitably leads to changes in the composition of the ethno-territorial map of the Republic of Macedonia; often creating enclaves, which – under certain circumstances – can have a negative impact on the overall security of the state.

The Republic of Macedonia, as an independent and sovereign state in the Balkan Peninsula on the one hand, experienced all the processes, shifts and changes that have occurred in this area, and on the other, obtained sovereignty and statehood at a time of great uncertainty, facing a series of security challenges unique to its context, but also sharing characteristics with the rest of the Balkans. Nevertheless, in terms of specific political, socio-economic and ethnic conditions, Macedonia was long considered an “oasis of peace” in a region plagued by severe inter-ethnic clashes triggered by the dissolution of the FRY.

### **3. The Genesis Of The Conflict In The Republic Of Macedonia (From Latent To Active Phase)**

The surprisingly rapid escalation of violence in the Republic of Macedonia shocked the public, as well as parts of the political establishment. The rhetoric towards marginalized groups was intensifying quickly; initially it was called a “hysterical reaction of the rebels” or “freedom fighters”, “fighters for rights” and an act committed by “terrorists”. At the same time, tensions and incidents in Kosovo and Preševo Valley were chronically threatening and added to the gravity of the situation (Mitrevska, 2009:110). Increasing tensions in the province of Kosovo and South Serbia added to the emerging conflict, and the extremists continued to use the buffer zone for their own protection. Namely, in South Serbia the Liberation Army for Preševo, Medveđa and Bujanovac (LAPMB) was formed. The LAPMB was created in order to encourage mass participation in the so called «uprising», hoping to destabilize parts of South Serbia with the goal to secede to join Kosovo. In the meantime, the Liberation Army (LAPMB) had been formed in South Serbia as a response to provocations by the Yugoslav security forces.

In Kosovo the situation was unfolding in a very different manner. In accordance with the UN Resolution 1244, an international military and civilian presence had been established. Within Kosovo, Yugoslav security forces withdrew, and security in Kosovo was to be provided by international forces, mostly comprised of the NATO troops. Furthermore, the resolution established a civilian administration within Kosovo, “under which the citizens of Kosovo can enjoy essential autonomy within FRY, which can ensure a transitional administration by establishing and executing supervision on the development of the temporary democratic self-government institutions” (United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, Annex 2.4, Annex 2.5, Paragraph 10). The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) officially ceased to exist and was transformed into the “Kosovo Protection Corps”.<sup>2</sup>

With the introduction of an international security and civilian presence in Kosovo the process of returning Albanian refugees from Macedonia, Albania and elsewhere began. Almost simultaneously, Serbs were leaving Kosovo on a massive scale. For example, UNHCR announced that some 164,000 of the approximately 200,000 Serbs in Kosovo had left by the end of June 1999. This was also confirmed by the then head of the UN mission in Kosovo, Bernard Kouchner. The international community and the UN failed to understand properly the hardened attitudes of the Kosovo Albanians towards the minority of Serbians left in the region. Kouchner urged the Kosovo Albanians to stop the violence and the killings of Serbs, and warned them that in the eyes of the international community they had turned from victims into oppressors (Ku-

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2 The Kosovo Liberation Army officially ceased to exist in September 1999.

zmanovski, 2003:34). One startling example of violence against Serbs took place on February 16, 2001, when a bus explosion killed 11 Serb civilians. These events, i.e. the continuous tensions in South Serbia and Kosovo, had direct implications on the security of the Republic of Macedonia. Violence spilled over the borders and focused on the triangle of Kosovo, South Serbia and Macedonia.

With hostilities increasing within the Republic of Macedonia, the situation and the perception of what was happening was drastically changing. While the ruling political parties insisted that inter-ethnic relations were peaceful, in reality tensions were increasing and spiralling out of control. The Republic of Macedonia saw terrorist attacks directed against state security institutions, for which the so called Special Unit Team of the National Liberation Army (NLA) claimed responsibility. This confirmed the formation of the National Liberation Army of the Albanians within the Republic of Macedonia (Mitrevska, 2009:111).

In the meantime, the government of the Republic of Macedonia looked to address the demand of the ethnic Albanians for an institution of higher education in their (Albanian) mother tongue. As a result, the board of the new College of Teaching in Albanian inaugurated the South East European University in Tetovo.<sup>3</sup>

Parallel to the evolving situation described above, the “joint Macedonian-Yugoslav commission on demarcation and delineation of the state border”, continued talks in Skopje.<sup>4</sup> The joint commission reached the agreement for demarcating the border between the two states (the Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), signed by the presidents of Macedonia and Yugoslavia on February 22, 2001. On the one hand, this decision was met with approval of the international community, as the closure of this issue was to contribute to improving international relations in the Balkans and the wider region. However, on the other hand, ethnic Albanians from Kosovo and South Serbia were not satisfied. Several days after the decision, dissatisfied Albanians from Kosovo penetrated the border region in Macedonia, entered the village of Tanuševci as well as other villages on the northern border of the Republic of Macedonia (Kodra Fura, Brest and Malino Malo). The militarized action and subsequent occupation of territory was seen as an organized group’s violation of the state’s territorial integrity.<sup>5</sup> The days that followed the occupation confirmed that the mobilization of people was not a sporadic incident, but a planned series of aggressive actions. Macedonian security forces reported movements of large numbers of armed people in black uni-

3 The university, at a cost of about 22 million dollars, was to have the following faculties: Law, Pedagogy, Public Administration and Computer Communications.

4 On January 16, 2001.

5 More precisely, the village of Tanuševci was under extremist control from February 16 to March 12, 2001.

forms grouping and regrouping on the Kosovo side of the border. Macedonian security personnel felt the groups were intent on crossing the border and entrenching themselves on Macedonian territory. All this was followed by reinforced political activity as well as numerous armed incidents (Kuzmanovski, 2003:63). The motives behind these developments were disparate and varied. A wide range of explanations were given as reasons for mobilization; either the acts were due to internal destabilization, caused by dissatisfaction with the political system, or to external geo-political motives, or they were a reflection of turf wars among smugglers. However, seen in their entirety, the events of 2001 confirmed that there had been an interest in the destabilization of the state inside the Republic of Macedonia (Mitrevska, 2009:113).

Despite enhanced political activities by the Government and the President of the Republic of Macedonia, the armed incidents did not stop and on March 14, 2001, in Tetovo<sup>6</sup> the Macedonian security forces came under heavy fire.<sup>7</sup> The security situation worsened and presented a high potential for further escalation. The conflict did indeed escalate, spreading rapidly to another region (Kumanovo-Lipkovo) in the Republic of Macedonia. The escalation of the conflict led to mass displacement of non-Albanian population in the region. Several analysts concluded that the aim of the armed attacks by the Albanian extremists was to occupy as much territory of the Republic of Macedonia as possible – especially in the areas bordering Kosovo – and to destabilize the region by shifting major population groups. That is to say, the main aim was to realize the dream of a “Greater Albania”, where all Albanians who lived in the Balkans would unite in one common state. This goal was officially announced by the NLA in February 2001 upon the entrance of the armed Albanian groups from Kosovo into the Republic of Macedonia, focused in the village of Tanuševci and other villages bordering Kosovo. During the later phase of the armed conflict, the NLA changed their rhetoric. In another communiqué the NLA stated a completely different goal. Namely, the announcement stated that the aim of their fight was to promote human rights and equality for the Albanians in Macedonia by amending the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia. Several questions quickly arose in response to the shift by the NLA. Why did the NLA change its aim? Did the change of their goals mean that the NLA had abandoned the idea of creating “Greater Albania”? Who was responsible for the shift of rhetoric, the international community or the NLA itself? Through the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, a territorial exchange between the Republic of Macedonia and Albania was promoted. The idea entailed an exchange of territories and population in the western part of the Republic of Macedonia with a dominant Albanian population for the areas in Albania where Macedonians prevailed. The territorial exchange would last for

6 Tetovo is mostly inhabited by Albanians.

7 According to the findings of the Ministry of the Interior, the group which had attacked the police forces in Tetovo on that day was around 200 strong, out of which 140 were from Kosovo.

4-5 months, during which time both countries would open passage ways for the transfer of populations. This solution was certainly influenced by the thesis that the Albanians in Macedonia did not want greater equality within the Republic of Macedonia, but instead opted for the secession of territories from the Republic of Macedonia and their annexation to Kosovo or Albania. Such a “quick fix” of the situation was completely at odds with the basic principle of the inviolability of borders, and was not approved by the international community or the Republic of Macedonia (Mileski, 2005:87). The beginning of the second phase of the conflict in the Republic of Macedonia was directly connected to the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between the Republic of Macedonia and the EU in April 2001. The signing event directly coincided with the second phase of the acts by Albanian nationalist in the Republic of Macedonia, beginning in May of 2001. The conflict was clearly escalating and destabilizing the region. The breadth and the intensity of the conflict were suggesting that the crisis in the country could easily degenerate into a civil war with severe consequences for the state and stability in the region (Ružin, 2006:130). The stability and security of the Republic of Macedonia were in such peril that it seemed impossible to find another solution apart from military conflict, civil war, and self-destruction. This may explain why the political authorities in the Republic of Macedonia and the international community tried to find a political solution for managing the conflict. Thus, one of the advocated solutions was the formation of a new government – the Government of Political Unity.<sup>8</sup>

During the escalation of the conflict, the political elite of the Albanian national block was in close coordination with the political and military management of the NLA. Leaders of the Albanian political parties Arben Xhaferi (DPA), Imer Imeri (PDP), and the political (and military) leader of the NLA, Ali Ahmeti, signed the Prizren Declaration in Prizren, Kosovo.<sup>9</sup> The declaration meant to be an opportunity for the NLA to be recognized as a legal entity, granting them credibility to negotiate a settlement. This combined effort led to a coordination of demands and attitudes between the political and military wings of the NLA with the Albanian parties (DPA and PDP) in the Republic of Macedonia. With the very act of signing the Prizren Declaration, a symbiosis was created between political and military wings of all the Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia (Mitrevska, 2009:116). A broad coalition including the President of the Republic of Macedonia Boris Trajkovski and the international community (NATO, EU, and OSCE) joined the efforts to create the necessary conditions for peace agreement. However, regardless of a united effort towards peace, the armed conflict continued to escalate, leading to more human casualties and increased material costs.

8 On May 13, the new Government elect comprised of VMRO-DPMNE, as the ruling party, and its coalition partners – Liberal party and DPA, as well as SDSM as the opposition party, together with PDP and VMRO.

9 The Prizren Declaration was signed on May 23, 2001 in Prizren, Kosovo.

#### **4. Endeavours Of The Macedonian State To Resolve The Conflict**

Through the Macedonian lens, the activities of 2001 put great pressures on the internal workings within the Republic of Macedonia. Armed groups occupying several villages in western Macedonia jeopardized the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state, the life and safety of its citizens, as well as regional stability and security. In order to address each of these issues a unique approach was applied by all political entities within the Republic of Macedonia both in terms of the manner and methods for dealing with the crisis. On May 13, 2001, with the support of the international community, the Government for National Salvation, a broad coalition of parliamentary parties, was formed in Skopje. There was a conviction that the creation of this broad coalition was a highly valued opportunity for dialogue to be accelerated between the differing political parties. The coalition and the dialogues would be a part of the attempt to isolate terrorism, extremism and paramilitary formations. The efforts to prevent violence would be driven from a centralized effort within the institutions of the Macedonian political system. In that sense, it is particularly noteworthy that both Albanian parties joined the newly formed government, especially given the fact that declarations of the NLA stated very clearly that they did not recognize the governmental political parties. After the formation of the broad coalition a coordinating body was established to deal directly with the issues relating to the crisis. Within this body a crisis management centre was set up. The two bodies were tasked to strengthen the coordination among the institutions responsible for maintaining security and defence of the state. Furthermore, the bodies were to coordinate and efficiently secure available resources of the state, as well as to ensure appropriate responses to the security threats against the Republic of Macedonia (Mitrevska, 2009:118). The Coordinating Body was headed by the Vice-President of the Government. Several ministries participated as well (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice, etc.). The Coordinating Body was to organize the efforts to manage the escalating conflict in the Republic of Macedonia. The Crisis Management Working Group located at the Crisis Management Centre, and a subordinate government body were tasked to gather information from all institutions (domestic and foreign) and to exchange it with the international community. The Crisis Management Centre was tasked to gather, process, analyse and forward data and information to the Coordinating Body. The Coordinating Body would use this information to deal with crises, to propose measures and activities for dealing with crisis situation, and to submit information to the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior and the Intelligence Agency.

It was impossible, however, for this Working Group to manage the crisis entirely as the Crisis Management Centre did not have a legal framework to establish three important needs:



1. the foundations for national security system, which would define cooperation and coordination among all intelligence-security segments in the state;
2. an entity within the crisis management system where the highest ranking elite from the ministries and government agencies would be responsible for defence and security of the state;
3. clear competencies and well-defined executive powers that would hold someone directly responsible to respect and apply its recommendations and solutions.

Furthermore, in order to ensure a quick and efficient resolution to the crises, the Government carried out several other activities:

- providing security forces for the protection of all citizens and the prevention of terrorism and extremism, implementation of appropriate measures when necessary;
- promotion of the political process, encouraging legally elected representatives of the Macedonian Albanians to build the civil society in order to ensure that all civil and human rights be protected.

The Republic of Macedonia anticipated full support from the international community and, at the same time, expected assistance in the realization of these activities. Moreover, within the efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution of the crisis, the Republic of Macedonia prepared and implemented a Disarmament Plan (in 2001) by establishing cease-fire and giving the armed extremists an opportunity to surrender their weapons and reintegrate into the society.

The disarmament plan stipulated several key activities that should have been carried out. Namely:

- complete disarmament and disbandment of the armed extremists;
- elimination of all forms of threats to state sovereignty and territorial integrity and assurance of a complete normalization of the work of state institutions and other legal bodies on the territory affected by the crisis;
- complete personal and property safety of all citizens and free movement and actualization of other civil and human rights and liberties on the entire territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

The parameters for successful termination of the crisis were established through the realization of the following key procedures:

- any solution that implies autonomy whatsoever, or a special status of any part of the Republic of Macedonia or a change of the border was unacceptable;
- the crisis, involving the entry of armed groups from Kosovo, could not be resolved with military-police means alone;
- the solution to the crisis also required political measures and diplomatic activities to isolate and thereby neutralize armed extremists;

- all relevant political parties and institutions in the Republic of Macedonia supported the plan and the program for dealing with the crisis and actively participated in the political process which had been initiated by the President of the Republic of Macedonia;
- KFOR and UNMIK undertook measures against those who supported and managed the terrorist actions against the Republic of Macedonia;
- the Republic of Macedonia called on all countries to undertake all possible measures in order to stop the financial and material support for the armed extremists;
- confidence-building measures were crucial in paving the right path to the future; they were visible at the local level and known to the population in the area; for this purpose a coordinated campaign of public information was undertaken;
- the international monitors played a role in the confidence building process.

In addition to the above measures, the Republic of Macedonia undertook a number of activities. It isolated the armed extremists who operated in the northern and north-western parts of the country by preventing the support from their accomplices within and outside the state. ARM, in cooperation with KFOR, intensified the controls on the border between the Republic of Macedonia and Serbia, in the areas adjacent to Kosovo, as well as on the border with the Republic of Albania. In addition, confidence building measures were developed, which were crucial for the establishment of long-term peace. Infrastructural and social projects were undertaken in the areas affected by armed activities (including repairs of facilities, improvement of public health conditions, water supply, roads etc.). One important measure was the process of disarmament and reintegration of locals. The disarmament process was coupled with unilateral cease-fire, enforced by neutral security forces. The disarmament process would target specific regions and slowly expand to the entire country; beginning in the Kumanovo-Lipkovo region, then to the Tetovo-Šar Planina region, the Debar region, and finally to the rest of the country. The overall process of disarmament would be based on a gradual process carried out in several phases, leading to a comprehensive solution to the conflict (Mitrevska, 2009:122).

Amnesty and reintegration would be offered to the members of the Albanian armed groups who were willing to lay down their weapons. After the disarmament had been completed, state security forces, along with the ethnic Albanian police, assumed normal peacetime law enforcement duties. As security forces returned to duty, they strictly abided by the international humanitarian standards and the common principles of human rights, and were monitored by the OSCE and the EU. The Redeployment of the Security Forces Plan envisaged a return of the police in three phases.

- Phase one: entry into the villages estimated to be the most stable
- Phase two: entry into the villages with disrupted security condition
- Phase three: entry into the villages with more complicated security situation

Each of these phases was carried out with specific dynamics, according to the six sub-phases with planned measures and activities that were envisaged, as follows.

The first sub-phase (information and preparation) included: conducting a campaign with media information; networking with non-governmental organizations; demining of roads; assessment of the status of the village (to determine the phase in which the village would be included) and deciding on the structure of the patrols. The second sub-phase (entry) included: entry to the villages, contact with leaders from the villages and initiating cooperation with the population, beginning of patrol and identification of initial problems. The third sub-phase (patrolling) included: assessment of damages and that of the threat of unexploded mines/explosive devices, coordination with the tasks of non-governmental organizations, continuation of the patrols (to increase the presence of the police patrols in the villages), execution of traffic control (without undertaking full legal measures – using warning and notification), establishing – setting up of contact bureaus (for immediate communication of the citizens with the police) and preparing for the establishment of police stations. The fourth sub-phase (regular police duties) included: investigation and reporting on criminal actions, 24-hour police work and removal of the police checkpoints and their replacement with police patrols from mixed ethnic composition.

The fifth sub-phase (continued police duties) included: the investigation of incidents occurring during the silent hours and the establishment of regional police stations. The sixth sub-phase included: 24-hour police patrols without the presence of monitors from foreign missions.

After carrying out the responsibilities and the measures envisaged in the Redeployment of the Security Forces Plan (police), the Ministry of Interior continued its activities and measures to fully establish the rule of law in the former crisis regions. For that purpose measures were envisaged to maintain the confidence building activities between the police and the locals, along with the commitment for a joint resolution of specific problems. It contributed to help citizens regain confidence in the institutions of the state. The “Work of the Police in the Community” project has also contributed to this purpose through the establishment of counselling groups for the citizens, in which the police members had active participation. Furthermore, in order to provide a 24-hour police presence, there was a need to reconstruct a significant portion of the police facilities destroyed during military actions in the crisis region. The damaged facilities of the police stations were reconstructed and the working conditions of the police in those regions have greatly improved.

In addition, the Government undertook activities to care for displaced persons; some were placed in host families, and others were accommodated in collective centres in Kumanovo and Skopje.

For the purpose of the implementation of the provisions of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, as a determined strategic priority, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted a Plan for the Implementation of the Framework Agreement. The framework lays out the following measures for the promotion of the inter-ethnic confidence and security of the persons and property: the strengthening of safety and security in the territories affected by the conflict in 2001, through reconstruction and rebuilding of the destroyed and damaged facilities of the police stations (Matejče, Tearce, Žerovjane and Raduša) and the creation of conditions for their normal functioning, as well as construction of new police stations in areas where a need for enhanced security is acknowledged (Aračinovo); enhanced presence of police services with mixed ethnic composition; continuation of activities aimed at building mutual trust between the police, the local population, and the local government in the populated areas. In order to address the major economic hardships of the conflict zones, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted a Programme of Activities for Economic Revitalization of the Former Crisis Regions. After the reconstruction of damaged houses within the conflict zones, efforts were to be intensified towards economic revitalization. The economic sector to be focused on was to include: agriculture, public works and business.

## **5. Employment in public and state institutions**

Results from the activities and concrete measures of affirmative action undertaken in the sphere of employment were evident in less than four years. During the period of implementation, the level of equitable representation of less represented communities in state institutions and public administration increased. In the period from 2006 to 2010, the number of Albanians employed in state institutions and public administrations was continually increasing. In this context it is also important to note that before the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the representation of ethnic minorities within security forces (that is the uniformed structures of the army and police) was relatively small. In 2001, the percentage of Albanian civil servants in police services was 2.5 per cent. However, in 2003 this percentage increased to 10.5 per cent and by 2006 rose to 16.5 per cent. Representation of the ethnic communities in the army, especially in the uniformed and civilian structure, was significantly improved, which is evidenced by the following tables.

Table 1. Representation of the Members of the Ethnic Communities in the ARM in the Period from 2001 to 2012

No.	Nationality	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1	Macedonians	5241	91,58	7407	91,19	7479	89,09	6823	85,87	5810	81,37	5940	77,60	5912	75,06	5707	73,59	5779	73,31	5353	73,60	5321	74,08	5135	73,27
2	Albanians	116	2,03	252	3,10	483	5,75	679	8,55	871	12,20	1183	15,45	1411	17,92	1467	18,92	1418	18,79	1350	18,56	1318	18,35	1336	19,06
3	Turks	27	0,47	32	0,39	41	0,49	51	0,64	70	0,98	110	1,44	135	1,72	158	2,04	174	2,21	162	2,23	153	2,13	153	2,18
4	Roma	13	0,23	27	0,33	29	0,35	25	0,31	32	0,45	57	0,74	73	0,93	79	1,02	92	1,17	86	1,18	86	1,2	86	1,23
5	Serbs	166	2,90	238	2,93	178	2,12	186	2,34	176	2,46	178	2,33	167	2,12	165	2,13	164	2,08	145	1,99	136	1,89	131	1,87
6	Boshnjaks	5	0,09	12	0,15	22	0,26	24	0,30	42	0,59	46	0,60	45	0,57	46	0,59	45	0,57	43	0,59	41	0,57	41	0,59
7	Vlahs	14	0,24	16	0,20	23	0,27	26	0,33	45	0,63	58	0,76	58	0,74	60	0,77	63	0,80	60	0,82	58	0,81	57	0,81
8	Others	141	2,46	139	1,71	140	1,67	132	1,66	94	1,32	83	1,08	75	0,95	73	0,94	85	1,08	74	1,02	70	0,97	69	0,98
<b>Total:</b>		<b>5723</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8123</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8395</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7946</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7140</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7655</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7876</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7755</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7883</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7273</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7183</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7008</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Macedonia, General Staff of the Republic of Macedonia, file 07 no. 102/20 from 08.04.2013

Table 2. Representation of the Non-Commissioned Officers in the ARM According to their Ethnic Affiliation in the Period from 2001 to 2012

		NATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS BY YEARS																							
No.	Nationality	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1	Macedonians	1209	90,36	1606	86,30	1848	86,60	1687	79,16	1430	76,59	1275	71,39	1248	70,59	1283	70,88	1329	71,92	1307	72,25	1293	72,48	1285	72,64
2	Albanians	44	3,29	164	8,81	191	8,95	329	15,44	316	16,93	405	22,68	417	23,59	420	23,20	410	22,19	397	21,95	391	21,92	385	21,76
3	Turks	8	0,60	7	0,38	8	0,37	19	0,89	27	1,45	31	1,74	33	1,87	36	1,99	36	1,95	32	1,77	29	1,63	29	1,64
4	Roma	2	0,15	3	0,16	4	0,19	3	0,14	6	0,32	11	0,62	14	0,79	15	0,83	15	0,81	15	0,83	15	0,84	15	0,85
5	Serbs	25	1,87	29	1,56	31	1,45	38	1,78	32	1,71	27	1,51	23	1,30	25	1,38	27	1,46	27	1,49	26	1,46	26	1,47
6	Bosnjaks	3	0,22	3	0,16	4	0,19	9	0,42	18	0,96	13	0,73	12	0,68	11	0,61	11	0,60	11	0,61	11	0,62	11	0,62
7	Vlahs			1	0,05	2	0,09	3	0,14	7	0,37	6	0,34	6	0,34	7	0,39	7	0,38	7	0,39	7	0,39	7	0,40
8	Others	47	3,51	48	2,58	46	2,16	43	2,02	31	1,66	18	1,01	15	0,85	13	0,72	13	0,70	13	0,72	12	0,67	11	0,62
<b>Total:</b>		<b>1338</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1861</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2134</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2131</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1867</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1786</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1768</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1810</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1848</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1809</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1784</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1769</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Macedonia, General Staff off the Republic of Macedonia, file 07 no. 102/4 from 08.04.2013

Table 3. Representation of the Officers in the ARM According to their Ethnic Affiliation in the period from 2001 to 2012

		NATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE OFFICERS BY YEARS																							
No.	Nationality	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1	Macedonians	1372	90,80	1531	90,91	1499	90,79	1418	88,79	1226	87,89	1058	86,37	989	86,30	959	84,42	940	84,38	868	83,06	823	82,63	798	81,94
2	Albanians	34	2,25	45	2,67	51	3,09	68	4,26	68	4,87	89	7,27	86	7,50	104	9,15	103	9,25	108	10,33	106	10,64	109	11,12
3	Turks	6	0,40	8	0,48	10	0,61	14	0,88	13	0,93	15	1,22	16	1,40	17	1,50	17	1,53	18	1,72	18	1,81	18	1,84
4	Roma	1	0,07	2	0,12	2	0,12	3	0,19	3	0,22	3	0,24	3	0,26	3	0,26	3	0,27	3	0,29	3	0,30	3	0,31
5	Serbs	35	2,32	34	2,02	30	1,82	33	2,07	24	1,72	20	1,63	17	1,48	17	1,50	17	1,53	15	1,44	14	1,41	14	1,43
6	Bosnjaks	2	0,13	2	0,12	2	0,12	2	0,13	12	0,86	8	0,65	7	0,61	8	0,70	8	0,72	8	0,77	7	0,70	7	0,71
7	Vlahs	6	0,40	6	0,36	6	0,36	11	0,69	18	1,29	13	1,06	12	1,05	12	1,06	12	1,08	12	1,15	12	1,20	12	1,22
8	Others	55	3,64	56	3,33	51	3,09	48	3,01	31	2,22	19	1,55	16	1,40	16	1,41	14	1,26	13	1,24	13	1,31	14	1,43
Total:		1511	100	1684	100	1651	100	1597	100	1395	100	1225	100	1146	100	1136	100	1114	100	1045	100	996	100	975	100

Source: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Macedonia, General Staff off the Republic of Macedonia, file 07 no. 102/20 from 08.04.2013

Based on the tables, one can conclude that the representation of the Albanians in the ARM has a positively rising trend. However, during the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the favouring of representatives of the biggest ethnic community, that is the Albanian one, is evident on account of the smaller ones, such as the Vlachs, Serbs, Turks, Roma, Bosniaks etc. The analysis leads to the conclusion that the time frame for realization of the measures for rapid integration in the area of employment of the less represented communities was not determined during the preparation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, nor upon its implementation. In such conditions it was possible ***to achieve exactly the opposite effect rather than the desired one***. That is why the Macedonian majority and smaller ethnic communities felt disadvantaged, in view of the favouring and rapid employment of the representatives of the Albanian community, especially in the context of a high rate of unemployment and unfavourable social and economic situation in the country. In other words, the need to apply the principle of appropriate and equitable representation of the communities, as well as the concrete measures of affirmative action in the function of consistent implementation of this principle in multi-ethnic, multi-cultural societies is apparent. However, the application of this principle demonstrates only a part of the overall process of social integration. In order to achieve real positive effects in terms of integrations in the society, an integral and overall approach in solving this complex yet necessary issue is needed (Cvetanova, 2006:178).

## Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis of the armed conflict in Macedonia, which took place in the spring of 2001 and which can be classified as the type of internal conflict that emerged after the Cold War, we can draw the following conclusions.

- An important consequence of the radical strategic, geo-political, and geo-economic changes that took place after 1990 is the shift from international to internal conflict, as has been the case in Macedonia.
- The study shows that the “hot” phase of armed conflict in Macedonia was curbed in relatively short time. One of the main reasons for this was the uncompromising support by the international community and its main agents in the region (the UN, EU, OSCE, NATO, USA and others).
- The conflict reached a latent phase and the signing of a formal and legal framework (the Ohrid Agreement), which anticipates an improvement of the overall status of the Albanian population in Macedonia. Tensions were reduced, but the basic contradictions and causes for the outbreak of the conflict were not eliminated. In view of this, it can be concluded that, for some ethnic Macedonians,



the Ohrid Agreement widened the rift between the two ethnic communities as it has been interpreted as being too concessionary to the Albanians.

- Under certain conditions, the conflict in Macedonia, which is now in a latent phase, can again become acute and manifest itself. An important argument in the support of the assertion that Macedonia is still far from resolving the fundamental differences between the two ethnic communities is the fact that Macedonia underwent a serious political crisis in early 2008, which arose from the accusations by the Albanian coalition partners that the Ohrid Agreement is being implemented too slowly.
- It follows from the analysis that corruption and organized crime are important factors hindering the stabilization of the country and contributing towards the sense of ethnic inequality. These two phenomena are common to Macedonia and the wider region.

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### *Sažetak*

Unatoč činjenici da je prošlo gotovo dvanaest godina od izbijanja sukoba u Makedoniji, sukob je još uvijek predmet ozbiljne teorijske analize, te je i dalje naročito osobito omiljen u unutarnjim političkim krugovima, pogotovo u stvaranju nove politike reforme u Republici Makedoniji. Zapravo, u makedonskom primjeru relativno uspješne prevencije, pouku mogu pronaći međunarodni i domaći akteri. To znači da se prevencija sukoba ne može predočiti kao formula rješavanja problema samo na površini, već ostavlja otvorene duboke političke (etno - politička mobilizacija, korupcija, kriminal), ekonomske (neovisnost, nezaposlenost, nedostatak investicija, ilegalna trgovina), socijalne (siromaštvo, nizak standard) i sigurnosne (ilegalno posjedovanje i krijumčarenje oružja, ilegalna trgovina ljudima) razloge za sukob. Skup svih navedenih razloga u Makedoniji prije i nakon sukoba 2001. godine je očigledan primjer. Stoga se razrada sadržaja u ovom radu razvija se u tri smjera: prvo, to je pokušaj racionalne analize socio-ekonomskih, političkih i etničkih premisa u makedonskom društvu, da bi pokazao svoj immanentan, ali značajan potencijal koji je doveo do oružanog nasilja između albanskih i makedonskih zajednica. Drugi smjer analize odnosi se na izazove i napore Makedonske države za rješavanje krize, dok se treći smjer analize odnosi na političke reforme, kao ključne za izgradnju mira, stabilne i sigurne Makedonije.

*Ključne riječi:* sukob, reforme, politika