



WELCOME TO KOSOVOSSETIA

THE CONTROVERSIAL RECOGNITION OF KOSOVO'S SECESSION AND THE UNCONVINCING RHETORIC OF LABELLING IT A "UNIQUE" CASE HAVE BACKFIRED EARLIER THAN EXPECTED.

The Warnings

"Separatist regions like the Basque country or Abkhazia might not resemble Kosovo right now – as Washington is quick to note – but by explicitly stating the merits of Kosovar self-determination and independence, Washington is essentially creating an innovative code, only to make the cipher publicly available. Current and future separatists merely have to manufacture the same conditions and sequencing that have compelled the West to embrace an independence Kosovo: terrorize locals, invite government crackdowns, incite a rebellion and lure in foreign intervention and commitment to rebuild. Once militants get this far, Kosovo will no longer be unique – even by Washington's peculiar standards – and areas that share Kosovo's characteristics will be equally deserving of independence."

- David Young, *Christian Science Monitor*

"Whatever trickery the West uses to override UN Security Council Resolution 1244 – which kept Kosovo in Serbia – the proclamation of the new state will have incalculable long-term consequences: on secessionist movements from Belgium to the Black Sea via Bosnia, on relations with China and Russia, and on the international system as a whole."

- John Laughland, *The Guardian*

"Kosovo: Coming soon to a theater near you."

- Michailis Firillas, *Haaretz, Israel*

"Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's claim that 'Kosovo cannot be seen as a precedent for any other situation in the world today' misses the point. It is doubtful that separatists from Xinjiang to Catalonia will accept the niceties of Rice's argument that Kosovo is exceptional due to its political and legal history. It is much more likely that these separatists will view the conflict for the precedent that it is: the carving off of a sovereign state's territory in favor of an ethnic and religious minority threatening violence -- a model to be replicated elsewhere."

- James E. Palmer, *Detroit Free Press*

"The EU and the US can write in a million documents that Kosovo is a unique case, the facts on the ground worldwide will prove that mantra to be a farce."

- Vladimir Chizhov, *Russian ambassador to the EU*

"By recognizing the unilateral independence of Kosovo, a taboo will be broken ... All those who are favoring independence in the world will be encouraged by the fact that the only thing that remains to be done is to convince



the USA and Europe that their fight is a just cause."

- Dmitri Trenin, *Carnegie Foundation*

"What Kosovo does is to set a precedent that suggests that in certain cases, there is a moral imperative that allows the often arbitrary lines of states to be redrawn. And this will be felt not only in Abkhazia, but in unrecognized territories and separatist movements across the world."

- Shaun Walker, *The Prospect*

"The Kosovo precedent is a terrifying precedent. In essence, it is breaking open the entire system of international relations that have prevailed not just for decades, but for centuries. And it will undoubtedly bring on itself an entire chain of unforeseen consequences."

- Vladimir Putin, *Prime minister of Russia*

"The 'Kosovo precedent' is a convincing confirmation that the resolution of regional conflicts is not necessarily based on the principle of state's territorial integrity. The 17-year period of South Ossetia's independence confirms its viability, we demands only the legitimization of our sovereignty in accordance with the charter of the United Nations."

- Resolution of the Assembly of South Ossetia

"If Kosovo can be independent, so can Abkhazia."

- Sergey Bagapsh, *President of Abkhazia*

"We are saying loud and clear that we have never planned to recognize Kosovo, nor do we plan to do so in the future. The solution for Kosovo was a hasty one."

- Mikhail Saakashvili, *President of Georgia*

The Denial

The EU Council of ministers conclusions paving the way for the recognition of Kosovo's secession from Serbia due to its "uniqueness":

"The Council reiterates the EU's adherence to the principles of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, inter alia the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity and all UN Security Council resolutions. It underlines its conviction that in view of the conflict of the 1990s and the extended period of international administration under SCR 1244, Kosovo constitutes a sui generis case which does not call into question these principles and resolutions."

Press conference by former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and president of the Russian Duma Committee of Foreign Affairs Konstantin Kosachev on whether Kosovo is a precedent:

Holbrooke: "Russia has to adopt an identical position to the one which have the US and the EU - that Kosovo is a unique case ... There is no precedent!"

Kouchner: "Holbrooke is absolutely right. We did not have a choice ... when two communities cannot speak to each other, but they only speak through arms, there is no choice but to separate them!"

Kosachev: "You are absolutely wrong on Kosovo. It is a terrible precedent!"

Kouchner: "History will judge..."

Four months later, Bernard Kouchner, now president of the EU Council of Ministers, was visiting the war zones around South Ossetia, trying to broker a ceasefire and pleading for the territorial integrity of Georgia.

The Aftermath

"Who will believe appeals to respect the territorial integrity of Georgia by those who only a few weeks without any shame destroyed the territorial integrity of Serbia when they recognized Kosovo?"

- Javier Ruperez, *ABC Madrid*

"The recognition of Kosovo was a foolhardy, poorly thought through policy which may reverberate violently all over the world for decades. This is not to defend Russia's actions in Georgia but it does show how the Americans, British and others want things both ways - and it also shows how the recognition of Kosovo has destroyed the hallowed concept that you don't change borders through force."

- Tim Marshall, *Sky News*

"Bush administration officials repeatedly stated that Kosovo was a unique case, apparently believing that they could define what Kosovo's independence meant to others."

- Paul J. Sanders, *U.S. News and World Report*

"The subjectivity of international factors in assessing the conditions on the ground, general inconsistency in respecting international law and the double-standards of the great powers were all crucial factors in the developments that led to Kosovo's proclamation of independence. After Kosovo, we should expect other separatist movements – both outside and inside of Europe."

- Oliver Ivanović, *Serbian State Secretary for Kosovo and Metohia*

"Kosovo rid the West of time and space for maneuver and political influence in Transcaucasia."

- Regnum, *Moscow*

"It is impossible at the same time to recognize Kosovo's independence from Serbia and repeat relentlessly that the territorial integrity of Georgia must be respected over South Ossetia and Abkhazia... If one does not recognize the territorial integrity of Serbia in Kosovo, he'd better keep quiet about the territorial integrity of Georgia."

- Dmitry Rogozin, *Russian Ambassador to NATO*

"The Kosovo case has become a nightmare. The new international law which the West wanted to create with this case has now turned against its authors and their interests."

- Die Presse, *Vienna*

10 KEY RELATIONSHIPS FOR KOSOVO'S STABILITY



1) Pristina and Kosovo Serbs

What's at stake: Kosovo Serbs are rejecting Pristina's authority and are supporting Belgrade's state institutions. Without acceptance by Kosovo Serbs, there can be no full territorial integrity nor sovereignty of Pristina.

Expected dynamic: Pristina's actions are likely to be two-fold. It will reject all institutions created by Belgrade, while launching appeals to the Kosovo Serbs (through the international presence) to get closer to Pristina in order to resolve practical problems. It will tolerate the Serb institutions up to a point, but only if the process is leading to their gradual disappearance. In the meantime, it will play internationally the "multiethnic show" through "loyal" Serbs which recognize Kosovo's institutions but have less than one percent of support among the Serb population. Kosovo Serbs will remain opposed to Pristina, and the degree of cooperation of legitimate Serb leaders with Pristina will vary from none in the north to minimum (practical, non-political) in the enclaves.

2) Belgrade and Kosovo Serbs

What's at stake: In current circumstances, Belgrade has two strategic goals over Kosovo: preserve the Kosovo Serb community and fight internationally for the territorial integrity of Serbia. The creation of the Belgrade institutions in Kosovo Serb areas has been one of the key actions for the smooth passage through the turbulent times of Pristina's UDI. A good relationship between Belgrade and the Kosovo Serbs remains crucial for the stability and well-being of the Serbs, but also for Serbia's authority in parts of its province.

Expected dynamic: The majority of Kosovo Serbs have voted for political parties which are now in opposition in Serbia. This caused certain concern over whether this could lead to the damaging of the relationship between Belgrade and Kosovska Mitrovica-North. Pristina is trying to exploit this possible friction, along with some international circles aiming to "restore order" in northern Kosovo. However, this is likely to be to no avail. Despite

political differences, both the Kosovo Serb leaders and leaders in Belgrade realize that their policy could not hold without a common front.

3) Kosovo Serbs and EU

What's at stake: Without a Kosovo Serb acceptance, the already weak legitimacy of the Eulex mission would suffer yet another serious blow.

Expected dynamic: Pressure will be exercised on the Kosovo Serbs living south of the river Ibar in order to persuade them that the Eulex mission is about rule-and-law and that it is not connected to the secession of Kosovo. Their reaction will be a litmus test. Acceptance in northern Kosovo is currently virtually impossible.

4) EU and Belgrade

What's at stake: Serbia has signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU, and wants a candidate status by mid-2009. At the same time, it has fundamental differences with both the ESDP actions (Eulex)

of the Council and with the actions of the Commission (Donors conference) which is acting under the presumption of an "independent Kosovo". Serbia's EU membership depends of whether its speedy accession and the preservation of its territorial integrity over Kosovo can be reconciled.

Expected dynamic: A key EU demand from Belgrade will not be a formal recognition of Kosovo's secession, but a policy of "constructive disagreement". Under this policy, Belgrade would object to the fundamentals of Kosovo's independence, but would be asked not to derail it, particularly in the field. This entails pressure on Belgrade to recognize the Eulex mission and thus exercise a pressure on its own on the Kosovo Serbs. Down the road, a key demand will not be accepting to formally recognize Kosovo, but to accept its parallel existence – which was the concept of "two Germanies" already proposed (and rejected in Belgrade) by the German/EU mediator in the Troika process Wolfgang Ischinger.

5) EU countries which do and those which do not recognize Kosovo

What's at stake: EU's united policy on Kosovo. The deal among the EU countries was: "let's agree to disagree" on recognition, but keep united in terms of EU joint actions. Twenty countries have recognized, seven have not. Supporters of Kosovo's independence in Brussels, and some key member capitals consider this number must be lowered and the policy must be transformed down the years into perfect unity.

Expected dynamic: Despite the agreed policy, pressure to recognize has been high. This has resulted in countries like the Czech Republic having to recognize despite obvious opposition. This pressure is likely to continue, with the goal of having as few member countries not recognizing as possible. The fewer the opponents, the easier it will be to get an "independent Kosovo" through EU's path, by using various methods of "creative" legal interpretation. On the other side, opponents of Kosovo's secession are encouraged by the worldwide support to their stand. In the meantime, differences will continue over all status-related questions, be it in terms of the Donors conference (no contributors from countries which

do not recognize) or the implementation of the Ahtisaari package (no support to the "International Steering Group" made up of countries which did recognize Kosovo).

6) Pristina and EU

What's at stake: The implementation of the Ahtisaari plan, at least in the Albanian-dominated areas of Kosovo.

Expected dynamic: The ethnic Albanian leadership will follow Brussels advice in implementing the key elements of the Ahtisaari plan. However, a possible EU incapacity to provide a clear EU path to Kosovo due to internal disagreements on recognition, as well as possible compromises between the EU and Belgrade on the situation of the Kosovo Serbs could result in ethnic Albanian discontent. This frustration is likely to increase since the catastrophic socio-economic situation in Kosovo will not and cannot be resolved by the EU.

7) EU and UN

What's at stake: The appearance of Eulex and/or the survival of Unmik.

Unmik has been put in a schizophrenic situation: the UN Security Council never approved its "reconfiguration", under which it apparently has a task both to remain in charge and make itself disappear in favour of a body (Eulex) which has no proper UN legitimacy.

Eulex wants to take power alongside a self-styled "International Civilian Representative", who is a "double-hatted" EU representative, but has absolutely no legal basis in any international documents – his function is a pure product of Ahtisaari's plan – which itself isn't UN-approved either.

Expected dynamic: Brussels is likely to continue a close cooperation with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in bypassing the UN Security Council. It is hard to imagine Eulex not finishing up its deployment. It is also hard to imagine Eulex gaining relevant UN legitimacy - which in turn could seriously hamper its authority, especially in Serb areas.

8) Belgrade and Moscow

What's at stake: A common strategy

aimed at resisting Kosovo's recognition worldwide. Expected dynamic: Despite its clear pro-EU orientation, the new Serbian government has immediately underlined that it will pursue the common policy on Kosovo which it has shared with Moscow over the last two years. There seem to be no relevant political actors in either Belgrade or Moscow – in power or in opposition – which could turn their back to this policy.

9) Moscow and Washington

What's at stake: Geostrategic impact in the Western Balkans and in Europe in general, respect for international law or the undermining of the UN system.

Expected dynamic: Russia's smooth transition from Vladimir Putin to Dmitry Medvedev has resulted in virtually no change in Moscow's policy on Kosovo. A strong support from three quarters of the world to respect international law can only strengthen this policy.

On the other hand, the US is awaiting an election which could result in

a change of the administration. John McCain has been a strong supporter of Kosovo's secession since the late 90s, while Barrack Obama has shown more moderation and nuance. It remains to be seen whether the virtually-unchanged, hawkish team dealing with Kosovo at the State Department will be influenced by possible changes. It would be difficult, though, to imagine Washington backing away from a case in which it had invested ten years of intensive lobbying and masterminding – and which serves perfectly its case for undermining the UN.

10) Washington and Pristina

What's at stake: Kosovo Albanian restiveness.

Expected dynamic: As a U.S. client, Pristina is unlikely to say 'no' to Washington. It will continue to follow its advice, including if/when it contradicts with the EU position.

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UDI AT THE ICJ

What does Serbia want?

Serbia has filed a draft resolution in which it asks from the UN General Assembly to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice in The Hague on the legality of the unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) of Kosovo.

Belgrade has proclaimed two objectives with this initiative. The first, immediate goal is to have the ICJ provide its stand on the UDI and to stop the recognition of Pristina's act by UN members. The second, mid-term objective is to have Belgrade and Pristina go back to the negotiating table on the status question.

The constraints

- The resolution needs to be supported by the simple majority of UN member countries at the UN General Assembly in September.

- Apart from the 40+ countries which have already recognized Kosovo's secession, states can also decide to remain impartial.

- The main supporters of Kosovo's secession have announced increased pressure ahead of the General Assembly on those states which have not recognized the breakaway region. This might increase the number of countries which would remain impartial.

- The vote at the General Assembly might

be a result of bargaining on other items on the agenda.

- Countries which would want to profit from the Kosovo precedent are unlikely to support the initiative.

- The opinion of the ICJ is non-binding.

- States which have recognized Kosovo could decide not to respect it.

- Serbia is under pressure to drop the case if it wants to pursue European integration.

The advantages

- The low number of countries which have recognized Kosovo's secession so far reflects a deep sense of concern in the international community over Pristina's right to independence. Most UN member countries reject the view that Kosovo is a "unique case" and have serious doubts about recognizing a move which has not been accepted by Serbia nor endorsed by the UN Security Council. They would thus like to have legal guidance.

- Some of the most important members of the international community, including Russia, China, Brazil and India, have given it a clear support.

- The conflict in Georgia has given prominence to the cases of independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. It has shown that the "unique case" argument is an empty mantra.

Ironically, states which have undermined Serbia's territorial integrity over Kosovo are now loudly calling for Georgia's territorial integrity over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, thus falling into their own double-standards trap.

- If the court rules in favor of Serbia, it could seriously hamper the process of further recognition of Kosovo.

- Moreover, states which have already recognized Kosovo could face with domestic and international pressure to step back.

- States pressuring Serbia to drop the case would reveal their own doubts about the legality of the decision to recognize Kosovo, as well as their own fears about international law and related judicial proceedings.

- Serbia shows that it wants to resolve this dispute in court and in respect of international law - and not through violence, as exercised in the past by all parties involved.

- It moves the question of Kosovo from the sphere of pure political opportunism into the arena of international law.



BLURRED RESPONSIBILITIES IN KOSOVO

ATTEMPTS AT ENGINEERING KOSOVO'S INDEPENDENCE HAVE CREATED A NUMBER OF DEEP-SEATED PROBLEMS FOR THE PLETHORA OF INTERNATIONAL ACTORS - UNMIK, EULEX, THE INTERNATIONAL CIVILIAN OFFICE AND KFOR - VYING FOR INFLUENCE AND AUTHORITY IN THE PROVINCE.



By attempting to bypass both international law and the United Nations, those international actors supporting Kosovo's independence have contributed to mounting confusion over the roles, responsibilities and mandates of the international presence in Kosovo, undermining the very clarity and stability that independence was intended to bring.

Concurrent to these on-going disputes, the establishment of a Kosovo Serb Assembly and the entering into force of Kosovo's Constitution on June 15th has further clouded the notion of empirical sovereignty in Kosovo. The international community's collective failed to foresee and plan for such legal, political and technical obstacles to consolidating peace and stability in Kosovo, making further fragmentation and mandate ambiguity inevitable.

The deployment of the EU's much lauded rule of law mission has been severely delayed due to uncertainty about its legal framework. Under Ahtisaari's plan for internationally supervised independence, EULEX – the EU's largest civilian crisis management mission, conceived to train and mentor police, customs officials and judges – and the international civilian office (ICO), established to supervise and advise the Kosovo government, were supposed to supersede the UN's mission in Kosovo (Unmik) after a 120-day transition period.

To date, however, it is estimated that only 220 of the planned 1,900 EU personnel are in place. Ban Ki-Moon, the UN Secretary General, has attempted to disentangle the legal situation by insisting that Kosovo's Constitution has created 'profound new realities' that obliges the reconfiguration of the international civilian presence for a "limited dura-

tion". Whilst insisting that the UN remains status-neutral, Ban acknowledges an agreement between Kosovo and the EU for an "enhanced operational role in the area of rule of law" and proposes the deployment of EULEX under a UN legal "umbrella". UNMIK's adapted role, meanwhile, will include monitoring and reporting, facilitating arrangements for Kosovo's engagement in international agreements, and facilitating dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade on issues of practical concern.

Whilst Ban Ki-moon's proposal allows for "increasing operational responsibilities in the areas of international policing, justice and customs throughout Kosovo" the establishment and operation of EULEX "throughout Kosovo" is increasingly untenable given the growing reality of Kosovo's de facto partition.

Though Joachim Ruecker, the former Head of UNMIK, insisted that, "there should be no geographical, ethnic, or functional division of labour in the rule of law sector between different organisations", Kosovo is now facing a de facto partition of international deployments, with the EU largely excluded from Serb-controlled areas. Due to the EU's reluctance to take deeper responsibility for Kosovo until the issue of its impending declaration of independence catalysed consensus around deployment of EULEX, its mission is now inescapably tied to the status issue.

Objections to EULEX therefore stem from its determination to implement the Ahtisaari plan for supervised independence – a plan which lacks Security Council approval - and from widespread recognition by EU member states of Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence; both of which undermine the

neutrality of its mission with respect to Resolution 1244.

Whether the Secretary-General actually has the right to re-configure UNMIK in the absence of Security Council approval remains a matter of further debate. Serbian President, Boris Tadic, has firmly re-iterated that any re-configuration of UNMIK without Serbia's permission or UN Security Council approval is illegitimate.

That re-configuration of UNMIK is required is beyond doubt; however, it is driven not by the supposed new reality on the ground but by the need to re-invigorate an international presence that, in spite of the widespread powers of an international protectorate, has failed to stimulate economic growth, uphold minority rights, encourage refugee/IDP returns or prevent widespread power outages. UNMIK has increasingly become something of an embarrassment for the UN, particularly following a string of corruption scandals involving senior figures, and its legitimacy has been increasingly challenged by both Kosovo Albanians and Serbs.

As a 2007 study by the Institute for European Politics in Berlin concluded, "the international community and its representatives in Kosovo bear a significant share of responsibility for the alarming proliferation of mafia-like structures". Kosovo remains an 'economic basket case' dependent on international support.

This confusion is demonstrated best in relation to the consolidation of Serbian parallel institutions in Kosovo and the lack of a coherent international response. On 28th June, Kosovo Serbs established an Assembly of Municipal Communities in the northern part of Mitrovica, comprised of deputies from 26 municipalities elected on the basis of local elections held in Kosovo on May 11th.

The Assembly, which will serve as a mediator between Kosovo Serb municipalities and governing institutions in Belgrade, has been condemned as illegal by the Kosovo government, the UN and the EU. However, the words of UNMIK's regional spokesmen in Kosovska Mitrovica, Georgy Kakuk, who refused to comment on whether the "assembly is legitimate or not", betrays the confusion and loss of credibility afflicting international actors in Kosovo.

Whilst some in UNMIK insist that they will not co-operate with Serbian parallel structures, other UNMIK officials have provided tacit legitimisation and encouraged the interaction of Kosovo Albanian

municipal officials. Reports also suggest that the UN could accept the new Serb local authorities elected in May and previously proclaimed invalid, and work to "ensure coexistence with the local bodies of authority in Serbs municipalities". This confusion will likely be further compounded when the Kosovo Assembly requires, as part of Ahtisaari's Plan, to adopt decentralisation measures that establish new Serbian communities, in shape and form which will not be recognized by the Kosovo Serbs.

Such uncertainty and confusion has also had damaging ramifications for security arrangements within Kosovo. Whilst NATO has agreed to train a new 2,500-strong Kosovo Security Force, initially responsible for crisis response and civil protection, in spite of previous expectations, NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, has said that Kfor will remain in Kosovo and that it will "keep its present strength" of 16,000 peacekeepers.

It remains unclear, however, how both NATO and the Kosovo Security Force will work together with the EU mission in the absence of agreed frameworks. NATO has also previously expressed considerable concern that Kfor would be asked to assume policing duties; a task for which it is neither trained nor equipped. Difficulties in re-organising security arrangements in Kosovo will continue to blur and compromise NATO's mission and its relationships with other actors.

The many supposedly new realities of Kosovo and are suggestive of the confusion and uncertainty that lead to the privileging of some realities over others. The blurring of roles and responsibility within Kosovo has contributed to the strengthening of Serbian parallel institutions, a hardening of Kosovo's de facto partition and a freezing of the current state.

Until the UN Security Council decides otherwise, Resolution 1244 remains in force. Combined with weak recognition of Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence, there is a significant risk of dissatisfaction and disappointment as Pristina struggles to cope with a plethora of sizeable and growing socio-economic challenges.

Though proposed as a means of clarifying Kosovo's status and delivering stability throughout the region, this period has served to demonstrate the misplaced optimism of these twin hypotheses underpinning Kosovo's independence.

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SOUTH AMERICA'S KOSOVOS

THREE ANDEAN STATES IN SOUTH AMERICA – ECUADOR, VENEZUELA AND BOLIVIA - HAVE BEEN FACING IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS TOUGH SECESSIONIST MOVEMENTS WITH GEOPOLITICAL FRAMEWORKS SIMILAR TO THE ONE IN KOSOVO. SINCE KOSOVO'S UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, THEIR PROBLEMS HAVE ONLY WORSENED.



In Ecuador, the mayor of Guayaquil, supported by the media and conservative pro-American parties, claimed in late 2007 a status of autonomy for its department. In Bolivia, a referendum on May 4, 2008 saw 80 percent of votes favorable to the autonomy of Santa Cruz, followed only a week later by the formation of a government resembling secessionist states. Finally, a very conservative governor of the province of Zulia in Venezuela, Manuel Rosales, has been asking for autonomy since 2000: he created in 2006 the movement "rumbio propio", which is promoting a "free territory".

The similarities do not stop there, as the support of the US through the government offices of USAID and non-governmental organizations, such as the National Endowment for Democracy – already in place in Kosovo since the 1990s – is also found in Latin America. This is certainly no coincidence, since the US ambassador in La Paz, Philip Goldberg, was Washington's envoy to Kosovo just prior to the war in the late-1990s, after helping out Richard Holbrooke in the partition of Bosnia.

In Bolivia, Goldberg allowed the distribution of 125 million dollars to secessionist civil organizations through the anti-drugs program of USAID. Through the consulting firm "Chemonics Inc", this money had been helping the development of democracy in a certain number of municipalities, and was, after 2005, distributed to civil movements.

Since the nomination of Goldberg, however, this financing has been clearly promoting "federal autonomies", like the

one in Santa Cruz. Similarly, USAID has given some 5.6 million dollars between 2004 and 2007 for so-called "decentralization" programs in Ecuador. These convergences between Kosovo and the Andean Arc are not surprising, because all of the three South American regions where secessionist movements have « spontaneously » erupted bear great richness both on and under the soil.

Kosovo has some of Europe's riches reserves in coal, zinc, lead and lignite – estimated according to a World Bank report to 13 billion dollars. The state of Zulia in northwest Venezuela is neighboring the most important Latin American water mass (the lake of Maracaibo); it also covers important resources in hydro-carburates, which assures the petrol power of Venezuela, whilst it is also an important agricultural zone. In Bolivia's Santa Cruz department, some 80 percent of the country's agricultural production is concentrated and it is rich in gas reserves. Its capital, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, is the richest city in the country, representing 35 percent of Bolivia's GDP. In Ecuador, the province of Guayas represents the majority of the country's GDP, with the capital Guayaquil hosting 40 percent of the country's companies.

In Latin America, the 'Andean Initiative' or 'Plan Colombia' – programs inspired by the Pentagon – have been initially created to help the fight against drugs and terrorism. But the true stake is rather strategic: control by the American army of the petrol reserves of the arc Orinoco/Andes/Amazon, the rich

deposits of the eastern Colombian fields and the promising but as yet unexplored regions of Putumayo; along with the gulf of Guayaquil in Ecuador and the departments of Santa Cruz in eastern Bolivia.

In the Balkans, Kosovo is situated in the heart of an infrastructure network of primary importance: at the intersection of corridors VIII and X and close to corridor IV (Germany-Turkey). Russia's South Stream pipeline project and the Washington-sponsored plan for the AMBO pipeline on Corridor VIII intersect just above Kosovo, on the very spot where corridor X north-south already exists. Thus, Russia's projects are competition for the US AMBO project to transport though the Balkans hydro-carbonates from Central Asia.

In this geo-strategic context it is thus easy to understand US efforts to implant bases in Kosovo – controlling the Balkans – and along the Andes on the axis Colombia-Ecuador-Bolivia.

Since 1999, the strategy of the American government has been to transfer towards the Balkans key elements of its European forces in order to better redevelop them towards the Middle East. The result is Kosovo's Bondsteel base, as the central US base in this part of Europe.

Colombia, with its central position on the intersection of Central and South America, can serve to control the Andean petrol arc. After losing control of the Panama canal in 1999, the US has devoted massive military aid to Colombia through the Patriot Plan and in this context has constructed two bases in

strategic locations. The base of Arauca is situated on the border with Venezuela, neighboring the immense reserves of the Orinoco fault. Two other bases created recently in the provinces of Putumayo and Caqueta are installed directly on the petrol arc.

However, in the rest of the Andean petrol arc, the US has not ceased to implant military bases during the last several years, just as they did in the Balkans. On the mouths of the Orinoco and their delta rich in gas, the accord from 2007 between the US and Trinidad and Tobago approved the construction of an aero-naval basis: this would "close" the grip on Venezuela, with the base in Aruba neighboring the Venezuelan states of Zulia and close to the world's largest petrochemical refinery complex in the world - Punta Cardon.

In the same manner, the construction of the naval base of Manta in Ecuador has in itself the only geo-strategic explanation: to control the Colombian Putumayo, as well as Ecuador's Gulf of Guayaquil. In order to exercise pressure on the secessionist provinces of Bolivia, the US have begun constructing the base of Boriscal, planned to host 16,000 men as well as runways for B-52s.

The Andean autonomist movements supported by the US are thus echoing in a disturbing manner the geopolitical endgame already played in Kosovo.

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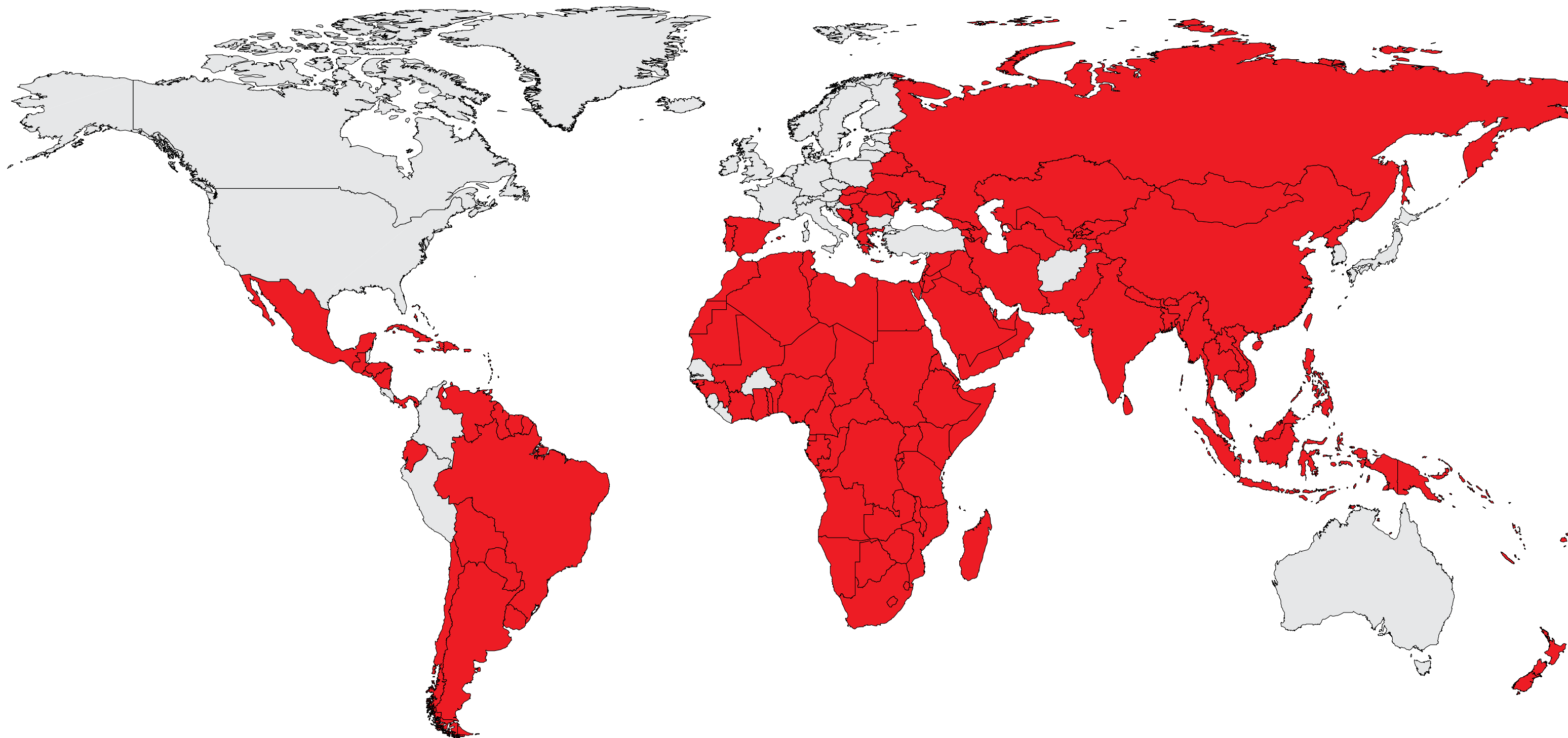
WHY THEY SAY “NO”

LIST OF COUNTRIES WHICH RECOGNIZED KOSOVO

1. Afghanistan.....Feb 08
2. Costa Rica
3. Albania
4. France
5. Turkey
6. United States of America
7. United Kingdom
8. Australia
9. Senegal
10. Latvia
11. Germany
12. Estonia
13. Italy
14. Denmark
15. Luxembourg
16. Peru
17. Belgium
18. Poland
19. Switzerland
20. Austria
21. Ireland
22. Sweden
23. Netherlands.....Mar 08
24. Iceland
25. Slovenia
26. Finland
27. Japan
28. Canada
29. Monaco
30. Hungary
31. Croatia
32. Bulgaria
33. Liechtenstein
34. South Korea
35. Norway
36. Marshall Islands.....Apr 08
37. Nauru
38. Burkina Faso
39. Lithuania.....May 08
40. San Marino
41. Czech Republic
42. Liberia
43. Sierra Leone.....Jun 08
44. Colombia.....Aug 08
45. Belize

LIST OF COUNTRIES WHICH DON'T RECOGNIZE KOSOVO

1. China
2. India
3. Sri Lanka
4. Vietnam
- ...
10. Indonesia
11. Singapore
12. Philippines
13. New Zealand
- ...
45. Brazil
46. Argentina
47. Venezuela
48. Mexico
49. Cuba
- ...
70. Russia
71. Ukraine
72. Georgia
73. Armenia
74. Azerbeidjan
75. Kazakhstan
- ...
99. Iran
100. Israel
101. Lebanon
102. Syria
- ...
116. Algeria
117. Tunis
118. Lybia
119. Egypt
120. Mali
121. Ivory Coast
122. Angola
123. South Africa
- ...
140. Spain
141. Portugal
142. Slovakia
143. Romania
144. Greece
145. Cyprus
146. Montenegro
147. Bosnia and Herzegovina



WHY THEY SAY “NO” TO KOSOVO’S SECESSION

Algeria
“There are international laws and they must be respected.”
Mourad Medelci, Foreign Minister

Angola
“We express solidarity with Serbia in regard to the preservation of the sovereignty and integrity of the country, which includes Kosovo.”
Eduardo Dos Santos, President

Argentina
“If we were to recognize Kosovo, which has declared its independence unilaterally, without an agreement with Serbia, we would set a dangerous precedent that would seriously threaten our chances of

a political settlement in the case of the Falkland Islands.”
Jorge Taiana, Foreign Minister

Azerbaijan
“We view this illegal act as being in contradiction with international law. Azerbaijan retreated its troops from Kfor in reaction, and opposed support for Kosovo’s secession at the OIC summit.”
Foreign Ministry of Azerbaijan

Brazil
“The Brazilian government will recognize the independence of Kosovo only if Serbia does.
A peaceful solution must be sought through dialogue and negotiations, under the auspices of the UN and the legal framework of the UN Security Council resolution 1244.”
Celso Amorim, Foreign Minister

China
“The unilateral move taken by Kosovo will lead to a series of consequences. China is deeply worried about its severe and negative impact on peace and stability of the Balkan region... and calls to continue negotiations for a proper resolution within the framework of the international law.”
Chinese Foreign Ministry

Cyprus
“Cyprus will never recognize a unilateral declaration of independence outside the UN framework, and in particular by side-stepping the Security Council.”
Foreign Ministry Statement

Georgia
“Tbilisi will not recognize Kosovo’s independence. I think everyone in Georgia, regardless of political orientation, is unanimous on this.”

Davit Bakradze, Foreign Minister

Greece
“Greece is in favor of achieving consensual and mutually-acceptable solutions based on respect of international law.”
Yannis Valinakis, Dep. Foreign Minister

India
“It has been India’s consistent position that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries should be fully respected by all states.”
Indian Foreign Ministry

Indonesia
“Indonesia does not see Kosovo as a religious, but as an ethnic and political problem as well as a question of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity of a UN member.”
Hassan Wirajuda, Foreign Minister

Iran
“After considering the region’s issues and conditions, Iran decided not to recognize the independence of Kosovo.”
Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President

Israel
“Israel will not recognize Kosovo’s independence, in part because of the possibility of Palestinians using recognition of Kosovo to justify their own unilateral declaration of independence.”
Israeli Foreign Ministry

Kazakhstan
“The Kosovo issue should be solved peacefully in accordance with UN principles on national sovereignty and territorial integrity.”
Kazakh Foreign Ministry

Libya
“Libya strongly supports the position

of Serbia regarding Kosovo, despite the pressure from the European Union and some Islamic states... Libya considers Pristina’s unilateral declaration of independence illegal.”
Libyan Foreign Ministry

New Zealand
“It has never been the New Zealand government’s position to recognize in such circumstances.”
Prime Minister Helen Clark

Romania
A joint session of Parliament voted not to recognize Kosovo’s independence by 357 to 27.

Russia
“Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence is a terrible precedent that breaks up the entire system of international relations that have taken centuries

to evolve, and undoubtedly, it may entail a whole chain of unpredictable consequences to other regions in the world.”
Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister

Slovakia
“I do not exclude the possibility that Slovakia will never recognize Kosovo. Kosovo is not some independent territory, it is an integral part of Serbia where Serbs, and members of the Albanian ethnic minority live.”
Robert Fico, Prime Minister

South Africa
South Africa calls for further negotiations between Serbia and Kosovo.
Foreign Ministry

Spain
“The Government of Spain will not recognize the unilateral act proclaimed by the assembly of Kosovo ... We will not

recognize because we consider this does not respect international law.”
Miguel Angel Moratinos, Spanish Foreign Minister

Sri Lanka
“The act could set an unmanageable precedent in the conduct of international relations, the established global order of sovereign states and could thus pose a grave threat to international peace and security.”
Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry

Vietnam
“Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence is not a correct implementation of UN SC resolution 1244 and it will complicate the situation in Kosovo and the Balkan region.”
Le Loung Minh, Ambassador to the UN

KOSOVO'S "INVISIBLE" GHETTOS

THE UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE HAS WORSENERD THE ISOLATION OF THE KOSOVO SERBS. CONDEMNED TO THEIR "ENCLAVES" SINCE 1999, THEIR FUTURE IN THE PROVINCE IS CONSIDERED WITH SERIOUS DOUBT.



Keep an eye open, in turns if necessary, every night. Radenko Dunić, the mayor of Goraždevac, keeps telling this to his neighbors, repeating it like a mantra: "If you fall asleep, you never know whether you will wake up alive". His caution has nothing to do with paranoia. In 2003, two kids, Panto Dakić and Ivan Jovović, were killed in broad daylight in the Bistrica, a small river in which they were swimming with friends as they were used to do every summer. Since then, the 1,200 Serbs of Goraždevac have hardly once dared to leave their doorsteps, avoiding whenever possible the outskirts of their lonely village, isolated deep inside the Metohija plain. They will not linger on the village high street, either, if they wish to avoid meeting Albanians from the neighboring hamlets who like to take a shortcut to their homes whenever they choose to.

There are dozens of enclaves like Goraždevac in Kosovo. Almost 80,000 Serbs survive there in solitude and fear of the worst. Their isolation became visible as soon as the NATO bombings were over: the KFOR had deployed its units

around Serbian villages to help protect them from Albanian violence. To enter these zones, one had to show one's credentials, get through checkpoints and sometimes clash with the intransigence of soldiers on duty. This may have limited the overall damage, but has not prevented attacks and murders. According to an OSCE report for the year 2006, since 1999, 1,700 ethnically motivated murders (all minorities included) have been registered in Kosovo in peace time.

Nowadays, the Serbs are bumping into invisible walls. Tangible symptoms of their imprisonment have disappeared, but the danger is all the more bigger. The irreparable was done as soon as the "chevaux de frise", the barbed wire and the soldiers were removed. Less than a year later, all the enclaves of the province became a scene of anti-Serbian riots. The powerlessness of the UN and the NATO is hardly masking their will not to intervene. On the very day of the unilateral declaration of independence, haven't the KFOR soldiers recommended the Serbs to stay at home and avoid

"provoking" the Albanians? Assuring the protection of minorities (Serbs, Roma, Goranis) is tantamount to actually recognizing the fact that they are in danger in a supposedly pacified and multiethnic Kosovo. And talking about "enclaves" (from Latin clavis = field or territory completely surrounded by another one) is tantamount to minimizing their fate, watering it down to the level of a geographic problem. "Ghetto" (an Italian word meaning a place where a minority lives separated from the rest of the society) is a more suitable term since it better reflects their everyday reality.

The invisible is by definition something impossible to be seen and therefore impossible to notice, either. That is why, the terrible isolation of the Serbs in their enclaves has become totally uninteresting for the world media. The gentlemen of the press, who have never been too keen to pay them a visit anyway, have now lost all interest in their fate. The enclaves, rather elastic in their shape, are daily snuggling into small acts which would anywhere else be considered as perfectly ordinary, but not here because

here, they can cost you your life: giving out one's name, speaking one's own language, driving a car with Serbian number plates (not as a "provocation", as the KFOR would say, nor out of patriotism, but because the KS plates for Kosovo are too expensive). In Prizren last March, it took the police less than 15 minutes to locate and stop our vehicle.

The Albanian policeman, speaking fluent Serbian, thought he was funny when he said that the driver was lucky to be with foreign journalists, otherwise he (the policeman) would have been at him the whole day. Everyday pressure and stress such as this, which the Serbs are exposed to as soon as they leave their little enclaves, is forcing them to shut themselves away even more. The most isolated ones, those who used to live in flats, in the city, have finally joined the people living in the enclaves.

Since 1999, almost 22,000 displaced people have abandoned their homes in order to find shelter in Serb zones. To make them leave, one can resort to two methods: a radical one (the Serbian district in Prizren, destroyed by fire in 2004, is today in ruins) or a tricky one (as proven by the case of this teacher from Peć who had been so much harassed that he finally had to flee from his flat. The teacher, now living in Goraždevac, knows the identity of the person occupying his flat, but he would never dare put up a demand for a rent). Robbed of their property, their land, their cattle, the Serbs have no possible recourse left. Neither the police nor the local justice are showing any will to investigate the crimes or acts of aggression of which Serbs are victims. In 2003 in Goraždevac, about a hundred bullet cartridges were found on the crime scene. But after ten days of a rather negligent investigation, not a single suspect was anywhere in sight.

On April 27th in Leposavić, during the Orthodox Easter, on April 28th in Lešak, on May 20th in Gračanica, on May 24th in Dečani, Serbs were everywhere attacked with grenades, knives, fists. Some were young, one was a grandfather, but they all were simple citizens. Most of the incidents were not even considered worth mentioning in the miscellaneous news stories regularly published by the European media - as if they had become so banal and so inevitable that it would be useless to denounce them or at least give an account of them, as if nothing could possibly justify spoiling the eu-

phoria of the Albanians just after their unilateral declaration of independence. The war in Kosovo has taken another dimension: a psychological, demographical and a cultural one. The ravaging of Orthodox religious places, four of which are on the UNESCO list of World Heritage, is taking place in the midst of total indifference of the international community only too ready, however, to take offence if Bamiyan Buddhas were attacked.

Yet the aggressors' aim is crystal clear: push the last remaining Serbs out of the province, rob them of their freedom, security, jobs and access to hospitals, schools and universities. Schoolchildren living in the enclaves will have no other choice but to go to Serbia proper if they wish to attend school. Why then return later to the province, to which they are certainly attached, but where there is no future in store for them? Nataša, born in Priština, where she went to high school till completing the last grade, now "displaced" to Mitrovica, has finally admitted that she will never set foot in "her" town. Only 40 km are separating the two cities.



Left to their own resources, the Serbs have the choice between exile and madness. On the spot, the few doctors and nurses working in the clinics of the

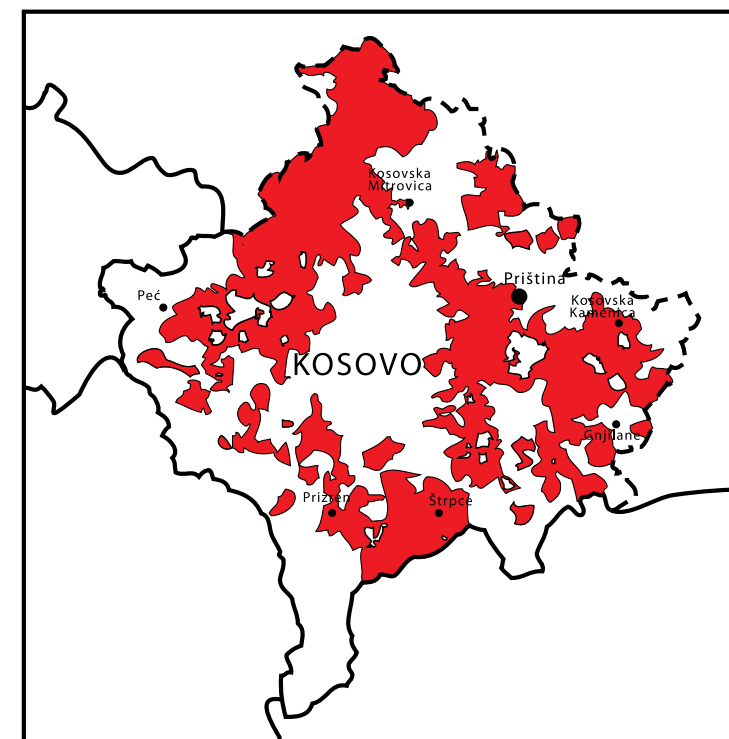
enclaves, emphasize the increase of nervous pathologies, especially among young children. Having no access to medicines, people suffering of chronicle

diseases or cancer cannot be treated. In the absence of anxiolytics, alcohol and cigarettes are there to ravage the souls. In Brezovica, in the halls of former ski centre hotels, now turned into a displaced persons' home, we meet pale, hollow faces and skinny bodies supported by crutches.

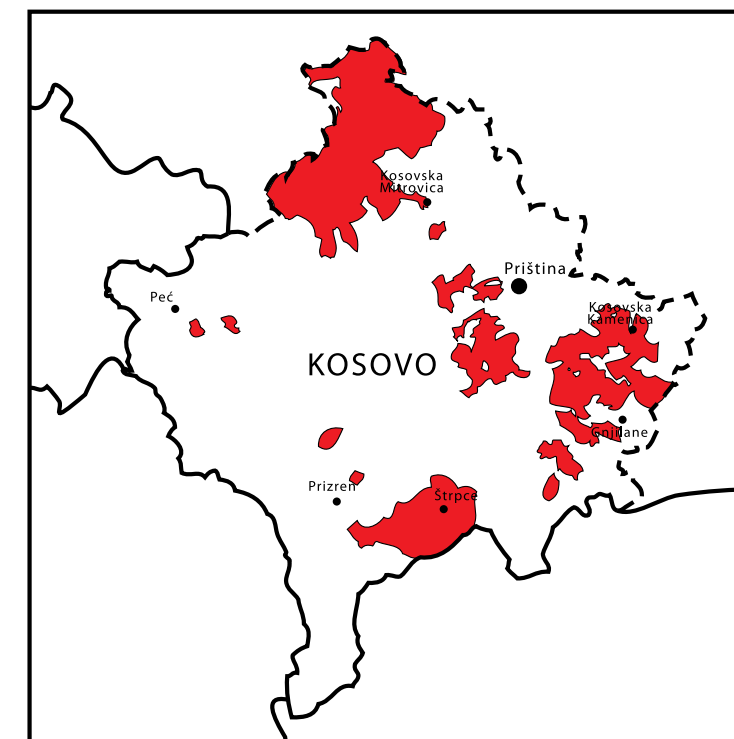
The Red Cross of Serbia is the only body bringing some relief aid here, providing soup for the poorest. Here, a humanitarian and health drama is going on right under the nose of international NGOs which do not seem to care too much for it. In April this year, when Russia sent urgent food aid in several convoys to the enclaves, some people giggled maliciously, insinuating that the convoys were filled with ammunition and not rice.

And yet, the last Serbs remaining in Kosovo have not even strength to fight. Their ultimate fear is to be forgotten by Belgrade. The old will stay because they think they have nothing more to lose. But the young?

Marie Bay is a French reporter.



Kosovo Serb population 1999



Kosovo Serb population 2008

APHORISMS

"I took a loan.
I am buying an apartment... to my bank."
- Zoran Doderović

"They are applying a sticks and carrots policy on us. First they beat us with sticks... then with carrots."
- Djordje Otašević

"The distance between here and a brighter future can only be measured in light years."
- Rastko Zakić

"Relax. We are not facing ANY future."
- Vesna Denčić

"A black cat crossed our way.
The next day, it died."
- Momčilo Mihajlović

"The Lie would tell you that it was the Truth which started first..."
- Ratko Dangubić

"Nobody knows who fired first, but they didn't hesitate to shoot back!"

"We wanted the war to finish as soon as possible.
That's why we started it first."

"The enemy surprised us again.
We expected that he would attack first!"
- Rade Jovanović

"We are learning from our mistakes and perfecting ourselves from our catastrophes."
- Milko Stojković

"Everything could have been solved in a peaceful way. But who could have thought of that?"
- Slobodan Simić

"Every conflict can be solved in a peaceful way. That's why we are warning you not to show any resistance."
- Aleksandar Baljak

"The enemy never sleeps.
We are shelling him day and night."
- Aleksandar Cotrić

"We will not listen to the voice of reason, because it is yelling at us."
- Rastko Zakić

"Which regime is worse?
The new one or the old? - Yes."
- Milovan Ilić

"If everybody else agrees,
I will also vote for change."

"I caught myself speaking to myself
and then the three of us went for a beer..."

"At any given moment, we know what we want. We just don't know when that moment is."
- Aleksandar Baljak

(N)EITHER EAST – (N)OR WEST

ALTHOUGH A DOMINANT MAJORITY OF SERBS WANT TO JOIN THE EU, THEY ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT NATO AND THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY AGAINST THE INDEPENDENCE OF KOSOVO. THINGS BECAME EVEN MORE COMPLICATED WITH KOSOVO RECEIVING OPEN SUPPORT NOT ONLY FROM THE USA AND NATO, BUT ALSO FROM THE EU.

The Serbian general public is practically undivided when it comes to opposing Kosovo's independence, and even though it is lacking a clear idea about what would be an ideal solution, it is almost as unanimous in its rejection of the full independence of its southern province as it is in the sense of injustice inflicted on Serbia by means of that independence.

On the other side, even though it had never been made official at the state level, the pro-European course and entering the European Union were declared as more or less an undisputed national cause of post-Milošević Serbia, and there was no differentiating about it, in principle, between the actors in the Serbian political scene.

Literally speaking, not one single parliamentary party in Serbia, including the parties of the old regime (Milošević's socialists and Vojislav Šešelj's radicals), ever openly opposed Serbia's entry into the EU – until this last culmination of the Kosovo crisis.

The only significant point of divergence regarding Serbian foreign policy alignment was its relation towards NATO, which was never supported by more than a quarter of the population. Still, up to a year ago, NATO was regularly and successfully smuggled into the public arena through the syntagm 'Euroatlantic integrations', and it was prospering from the popularity of the EU. This rhetoric came to an end when the party of the recent Prime Minister, Vojislav Kostunica, managed to keep it under constant attack and eventually dismantle it.

Once the above-mentioned, all but insignificant and not merely lexical vagueness about what is in fact implied by 'Euro-Atlantic integration' and whether NATO is a must-stop on the road to EU is cleared up, the Serbian geopolitical equation becomes fairly easily solvable and not really complex. Although a dominant majority of Serbs want to join the EU, they are skeptical about NATO and they are absolutely against the independence of Kosovo.

But things became drastically more complicated with Kosovo receiving open support on its road to independence not only from the USA and NATO, but also from the EU, which pushed Serbian foreign policy as well as its public opinion into a state of almost nightmarish chaos. Serbian officials, like most of the citizens, have declared themselves in favor of entering the EU, and at the same time, oppose the independence of Kosovo – which this very EU in its majority recognizes, supports and finances. In short, the Serbs care about Kosovo, but they also care about the EU, and the EU, aided by the USA, is de facto taking Kosovo away.

This slightly schizoid situation was reflected in the slogan 'Both Kosovo And Europe', cast by the ruling political coalition gathered around President Boris Tadić and used in this last electoral cycle, grasping feverishly at the proverbial branch offered by the Brussels administration, claiming that Serbian accession to EU and resolving Kosovo's status are two 'parallel processes', independent of each other.

However unconvincing this might ap-

pear, on top of being incessantly repudiated by the ever more direct pressure the West is applying on Belgrade to give up Kosovo and 'turn to the future', this point about 'two parallel processes' still managed to have a strong impact on the majority of the Serbian electorate – and not only as a result of aggressive marketing, but also because it reflects the real ambivalent longings of the same body of the electorate.

Still, however handy the slogan 'Both Kosovo and Europe' is for the pre-election campaign, the message will be very hard to translate into an operational foreign policy, especially in conditions of intensified political pressure from Western capitals, and it is highly likely that the Serbian political elite as well as the electorate would in the near future again face the dilemma Kosovo or the EU – only with sharper differences.

Finally, to make the whole thing even more complicated, this foreign policy confusion also involves Russia which, by consistently opposing imposed solutions in the Security Council and upholding the principles of international law, managed to come forward as a factor insisting on preservation of the existing international order, and after a while, returned to the Balkans as a relevant political player.

By doing this, the Serbian political life and public opinion were injected with another geopolitical constant. Russia was once non-existent here, whether due to the political and economic problems it had during the nineties, or due to the one-sided pro-western orientation of the post-Milosevic authorities.

But the closeness of the stands arising from the Kosovo crisis and the determining contribution of Russia in opposing the intention of the leading western countries to pass and adopt Ahtisaari Plan in the UN Security Council, played a key role in the growing sympathies of Serbs towards Putin's Russia. Even though the option in surveys of 'closest links with Russia' is lagging some 10% behind the popularity of the EU (60:73,5%), it is still on average two or three times more popular than entering NATO (60:24%). This might not be enough for some huge shift and realignment of Serbian foreign policy, which never did coincide to a great extent to the public mood and opinion, but it could become a trigger for its partial correction and geopolitical balancing.

Djordje Vukadinović is editor in chief of the magazine Nova srpska politička misao (New Serbian Political Thought)

In your opinion, what would be the most just way to resolve the Kosovo status?

	%
Kosovo independence	6.83%
Kosovo autonomy within Serbia	54.10%
Partition of Kosovo into the Serbian and the Albanian part	27.09%
Permanent international protectorate	3.64%
No opinion/no reply	8.35%
Total	100 %

Are you in favor of Serbia entering the EU?

	%
Yes	73.51%
No	18.79%
No opinion	7.69%
Total	100%

Are you in favor of Serbia joining NATO?

	%
Yes	23.98%
No	60.70%
No opinion	15.32%
Total	100%

Are you in favor of closest links with Russia?

	%
Yes	59.97%
No	21.51%
No opinion	18.52%
Total	100%

If quicker EU membership were conditioned by recognition of Kosovo independence, should such condition be accepted?

	June 2008
Yes	23.14%
No	65.63%
No opinion/no reply	11.23%
Total	100%

Source: Politikum



KOSOVO AND THE RISE OF SERBIA'S "EURO-SKEPTICISM"

SERBIA HAS TODAY A NEW PRO-EU GOVERNMENT, A MAJORITY OF ITS POPULATION IS IN FAVOR OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATIONS, BUT IF BRUSSELS AND WASHINGTON PURSUE THE POLICY OF SUPPORTING KOSOVO'S SECESSION AND PRESSING SERBIA INTO RECOGNIZING IT, IT SHOULD BE NO SURPRISE IF "EURO-SKEPTICISM" BECOMES A DOMINANT FEELING.

After the fall of Slobodan Milosevic in October 2000, EU membership appeared to the majority of Serbian public opinion as a goal without an alternative. This was not due to the billions promised to Serbs by some European politicians in the case of the downfall of Milosevic. No, Serbia did not opt for Europe because of money. It did so because it saw Europe as its natural surroundings, and almost all of us from the Serb intelligentsia were convinced Westerners.

It seemed to us that, with the fall of Milosevic, the disagreements between Serbia and the West were forever resolved. It seemed to us that a thousand-year golden era of peace and prosperity was ahead of us. A democratic Serbia would stand shoulder to shoulder with its Western friends and we would be united in marching towards a brighter future.

It did not turn out that way. Although Serbia extradited to the Hague two of its presidents, a prime minister, a vice-prime minister, a bunch of ministers and the entire wartime chief of staff, she was still accused of "not cooperating enough with the Tribunal" and that as a result, cannot even enter the antechamber of the European Union.

Although Serbia had recovered and strengthened democracy, as well as offered Kosovo all the self-rule imaginable, she was still being told that she had "lost the moral right to rule Kosovo" and that "there was no return of Kosovo to Serbia".

We began to understand that there was something wrong with our friendship. It was clear that we had understood our friendship in a different way. Serbia is sentimental, but not so naïve. And maybe those who orchestrated talks between Belgrade and Pristina in such a way that Belgrade could not obtain anything and Pristina must obtain everything – are not our great friends after all?

The problem was that the conditions for Serbia's integrations kept on increasing, much more than for other candidate countries.

After the EU summit in December 2007, UK and French leaders clearly said that the next step for Serbia's entry into the EU would be recognizing the secession of Kosovo. Of course, this is an individual opinion which does not have a majority in Brussels, but "Euro-realists" warn that



accession includes 35 chapters, and each of these can be blocked by any of the 27 EU members at their beginning or end. Crudely put, this amounts to 1890 possibilities of blocking one's country's accession to the EU.

It is thus of little importance if, in the near future, only Britain and France officially renew this additional condition to Serbia. It is not important either if the European Commission or all other states have a different view. It is enough to have one single EU country insisting on a single additional condition and Serbia – if it maintains its current position – will never be able to join the EU.

The Serbian elite is not united in its view



towards the EU in the context of the Kosovo issue. There are now two clearly separate groups.

The first one is rather enthusiastic about European integration and it is led by Serbian President Boris Tadić. Its strategic goal is deeper integration into the EU, in order to be able to use EU funds, while at the same time fighting for Kosovo from inside the Union. This group believes that such a strategy is feasible and it is quoting the example of Cyprus, which is fighting as a member of the EU for the return of its state sovereignty. However, the problem is that no EU country has recognized "Northern Cyprus". That is why Cyprus was able to join the EU.

In Serbia's case, some of the most important countries of the EU have already recognized Kosovo's independence. This is why it is perhaps naïve to expect that Serbia would not face in the nearer future a demand for "resolving neighborly relations".

The second part of the Serb elite is "Euro-skeptic". It is symbolized by the opposition from the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) and the Serb Radical Party (SRS). The strategic goal of this group is not to wait for a situation in which, after years of talks with the EU, Serbia finds itself in a situation in which it must recognize the secession of Kosovo. This group believes that Serbia must already now get a "clear answer" from Brussels about the status of Kosovo. The main problem of this part of the elite is, however, a lack of a clear exit strategy. It does not have a plan about what it should do if Belgrade gets a "no" answer from Brussels. What can Serbia really do if Brussels asks from her to recognize Kosovo's secession?

Serbia has today a new pro-EU government, a majority of its population is in favor of European integrations, but if the "Kosovo factor" continues, that is if Brussels and Washington pursue the policy of supporting Kosovo's secession and pressing Serbia into recognizing it, it should be no surprise if "Euro-skepticism" becomes a dominant feeling.

Slobodan Antonić is an associate professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade.

KOSOVO VERBATIM

“Europe had made great mistakes in the Balkans. The question is: how is it possible that such an important principle as territorial integrity can be ignored?”

- *Carolos Papoulas, President of the Republic of Greece*

“We consider Kosovo as a dangerous and unfortunate precedent. Europe will pay for it for decades. It's obvious that a whole host of other separatist regimes will exploit it to justify their own desire for legal status.”

- *Dmitry Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation*

“Romania supports only those tasks which are based on UN Security Council Resolution 1244 and do not in any sense imply recognition of Kosovo.”

- *Trayan Basesku, President of the Republic of Romania*

“The question of status of Kosovo must be solved in line with the norms of international law, with the leading role of the United Nations, and based on an agreement of the sides ... The unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo is against UN Resolution 1244 of the UN Security Council, which - until a new decision by this organization is made - must remain the legal basis for the resolution of the Kosovo problem. Russia, India and China call for the resumption of talks between Belgrade and Pristina under the framework of international laws to seek a solution for the Serbian territory.”

- *Joint statement by Russia, China and India*

“I pledged that the United States will continue to work with those nations that have not recognized an independent Kosovo in order to convince them to do so as quickly as possible.”

- *George W. Bush, President of the United States of America*

“We do not have the intention, nor will have it in a foreseeable future to recognize Kosovo.”

- *Vatican Cardinal, Valter Casper*

“The unilateral declaration of the independence of a part of the Serbian state and the recognition of that secession, are contrary to the norms and principles of international law: state sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders.”

- *Resolution adopted by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) in Tokyo*

“And the question that we should now address to the USA and the European Union is the following: What would you say, you who have recognized the independence of a region of Serbia - a region without national flag or anthem, without historical tradition as a nation - if we, Catalonians, were to declare independence? We DO have a historical tradition, we have the oldest national anthem in Europe, we have an ancient national flag, our own language and culture. Would you support us in the same way you supported Kosovo?”

- *Xavier Hereu, El Periodico*

“Five months after the unilateral declara-

tion of independence by Kosovo Albanians on February 17th, the situation in this formerly Serbian province resembles every day more to a «frozen conflict», an embarrassment to the European Union which is trying to save the face of its foreign and security policy.”

- *Christophe Chatelot, Le Monde*

“A large number of states have not recognized it, and that means that Spain must avoid walking on razor's edge and keep in Kosovo a mission that is contrary to the UN law.”

- *Beatriz Rodriguez-Salmones, Member of Parliament, Spain*

“Courts in Kosovo frequently failed to take into account ethnically motivated factors, which were the cause of many of the crimes. Suspects convicted of serious crimes, such as setting alight religious monuments or injuring people, including policemen, often received lenient sentences, many of which were suspended.”

- *Report of the OSCE*

“Kosovo has a problematic human rights record. Violence, impunity for common and political crimes, intimidation and discrimination are commonplace. If that is to change, Kosovo's government, with the help of the United States and its EU partners, must make human rights a top priority.”

- *Human Rights Watch*

“Kosovo will be largely dependent on EU aid, and in the meantime nobody knows

if the new entity is really viable, or if it is going to be a ‘failed state’ whose economy will go on being largely based on corruption and organized crime.”

- *Eric Bonse, Europe's World*

“Heroin represents the highest value contraband flow and, since the mid-1990s, ethnic Albanian traffickers have been said to control the trafficking of this commodity west into Europe ... Past estimates suggested that ethnic Albanian traffickers controlled 70 percent or more for the heroin entering a number of key destination markets, and they have been described as a ‘threat to the EU’ by the Council of Europe.”

- *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the report “Crime and its Impact in the Balkans”*

“Even after independence, Kosovo's status is far from being resolved, and the splits amongst its population are only likely to get wider.”

- *Harry de Quetteville, The Daily Telegraph*

“Another fine mess in Kosovo... For weeks it has been an uncomfortable secret in Brussels that the European Union's law and order mission in Kosovo is stuck in a political, diplomatic and legal morass... You can safely add Kosovo to your list of long-term trouble spots on the EU's periphery.”

- *Tony Barber, The Financial Times*

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www.kosovocompromise.com
Institute 4S, Brussels

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